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THE ELIXIR OF LIFE — *Leoline L. Wright*

That which in the beginning is as poison and in the end as the water of life. . . . — *The Bhagavad-Gita*, ch. xviii

This is an age when personality is the supreme fetish. Everywhere, in salons and offices, in marriage and in the pulpit and in almost every human relationship, we are all trying to "get by on our charm." Schools of pseudo-psychology for the cultivation of an irresistible personality flourish by the score. It reminds one of a phrase used by Katherine Tingley as a title for one of her Temple lectures: 'The World Upside Down.' For that is what it amounts to. It is an inverted psychology. It represents our failure to sense the real meaning of things, the basic elements of life and human nature which we must understand and master before we can solve the appalling problems which beset the individual and the world.

The solution of this difficulty is to turn things right side up again. Theosophy has given us the method in the teachings about impersonal love. Perhaps there is no expression in Theosophical literature which is so little understood by the inquirer as 'impersonality.' Yet impersonality is the true Elixir of Life — at first almost always a bitter draught, but cleansing, refreshing, life-renewing if often and deeply quaffed.

Impersonality means just one thing — NOT living in the personality. But here many will exclaim: "Where then shall I live? My personal consciousness is the only part of me I know and understand!" The answer is very simple: By *not* living in the personality. By setting aside even for one day the desire to shine, to dominate, even at the expense of others, or to 'put across' one's own methods or opinions, something rare and unsuspected will open up in the nature — a spiritual center of peace and well-being. It is there. We do not need to search for it. All we need is to think and feel and act so that it is possible for it to function.

One can make a beginning in any moment. Just setting aside the sense of superiority which leads us to ridicule or resent or disparage, even in thought; one effort to further the welfare of a friend before our own; a quiet sacrifice that a brother or sister may have a larger share — anything that one can find to do which will set aside the insistence of ME and MINE — these things will accumulate into the first push against the once closed door where waits the companionship of the Inner God.

The personality is designed by evolutionary law as a marvelous psychological instrument, but, like the body, it has its un-self-governed insatiable lusts. It is complex and invisible and harder than the body to understand and control. But until we master it and dedicate it to impersonal service we shall continue to be led astray from the true goals of evolution.

Then we often see a corresponding personal dominance in the family, where one or the other parent imposes personal prejudices to the detriment of the children; or in the neighborhood where the rights of 'My family' or 'My children' cause trouble for everyone in the vicinity. Perhaps nowhere else are the qualities of impersonal love more urgently needed than in the duties and problems of the home. Yet if one were to suggest this fact to the average parent, what a stare of outraged incomprehension he would meet! Among nations it is the same — we have only to read the daily news columns to find a satiety of examples.

Some may imagine that self-forgetfulness might result in loss of individuality; but the grandest characters in history, men like the Buddha, Jesus, and Confucius have swayed enormous sections of the world's population for millenniums, just because they were the grandest exemplars of self-forgetful love.

We must of course beware of neglecting our material duties to those dependent upon us or of the tendency to feel in self-sacrifice a sense of power or complacence, for then we are robbed of the perfect result. The spiritual circulations of the individual cosmos are in this way diluted with the old familiar virus and do not pass on to us the pure

essence of the Inner God.

Daily practice in impersonal love dissolves the densities that shut us into our self-wrought prison from communion with the Gods. We are permeated and surrounded in our higher natures by the divine Akasa where flow the Circulations of the Cosmos. We might, if we would, know in our own being the dazzling currents of spiritual vitality and joy which are the life-streams of those Gods, the great Nirmanakayas and Dhyani-Buddhas from whom we derive our spiritual heredity, and to whose Hierarchy of Compassion our own Inner God belongs. To find these great beings, to live where they do, to let their spiritual energies flow out through us in love and blessing, we have only to set aside persistently the self-demanding personality. As we "nourish the gods by sacrifice," the gods will nourish us.

The Theosophical Forum

WHY STUDY THEOSOPHY? — A. Trevor Barker

Before we can answer this question at all satisfactorily and present reasons as to why we should study Theosophy, we naturally ask ourselves, 'What is Theosophy?'

Theosophy is not something new; it is not the invention of one or two men or women, either modern or ancient; it is not a progressive system which is subject to change from day to day, following upon experiments in the realm of science, where any morning we may wake up to find that that which we had thought to be Truth has actually had to be changed, modified, or altered. This is the difference between the Ancient Wisdom and scientific methods.

A passage from our teachings will show you in language much better than I could employ, just where Theosophy comes from:

Theosophy is the Primeval One Truth taught Humanity in the infancy of its Races by every First Messenger — the Planetary Spirit whose remembrance lingers in the memory of man as Elu of the Chaldees, Osiris the Egyptian, Vishnu and the first Buddhas — for there was a primeval revelation and it still exists; nor will it ever be lost to the world but will reappear. The Wisdom religion has been Esoteric in all ages: it was ever One and the same and being the last word of possible human knowledge was therefore carefully preserved. It is the substratum and basis of all the world-religions and philosophies — but its doctrines are the exclusive possession of none of them. They are the birthright of every human soul and pertain exclusively to man's knowledge of his own nature and the higher life of the soul. It was the universally diffused religion of the Ancient and prehistoric world. Proof of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with

the teaching of its great Adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts and libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity.

This Ancient Wisdom which was preserved by the elect of mankind literally from the birth of humanity on this planet, has been restated for us by one of that Brotherhood who was sent to the Western world, and whom we know as H. P. Blavatsky. It was she who founded the Theosophical Society and gave Theosophy to us. Now this does not mean that Theosophy is limited to the writings of Blavatsky. That is not true. You will find the literary records of Theosophy spread everywhere. For example, you will find traces of Theosophy amongst the writings of the early Christian Fathers; you will find it in the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament; you will find it in the Egyptian 'Book of the Dead,' and in the teachings, literally, of all the great Sages and Seers that the world has ever known. Take the teachings of Gautama-Buddha, for example. From our point of view as Theosophists, there is no difference between the teachings of the Buddha and the teachings of Theosophy, though I must enter one little word of warning in case the record of what the Buddha taught may not be exactly as he gave it in all respects, any more than the record of the teachings of Christ is exactly as he gave them. Nevertheless, whatever we have of the real teachings of these great Masters of Life and Wisdom is Theosophy.

You will find Theosophy in the *Upanishads* of ancient India; you will find it in the *Bhagavad-Gita*; and in the writings of Confucius and Lao-tse. So it is no narrow, sectarian idea of some kind of religious philosophy, but it is literally the essence, both ethical and philosophical, of all the world-religions.

And yet, strange as they may appear, the writings of Blavatsky were not the mere synthesis, if you understand me, of what those different religions contained — and this is a very important point. If that were so, then you or I, if we had had the brains, could have merely gone through these different records and books, and put them together in some kind of fashion, and said: "There, that is your Theosophy!" It

would have contained possibly a great deal of Theosophy, but it nevertheless would not be the real thing; and that is why I say that Theosophy is the mother-root, the essence, of all these great religions. It is the mother-root from which these great teachings originally came. I want to emphasize this because Theosophy is the Esoteric Doctrine, the real truth about man and the universe; the real truth about the human soul and its pilgrimage, and what we are here for, and what the whole universe is about. These Truths are preserved by a living Brotherhood of Holy Men, and it was that Brotherhood from whom came the Great Teachers. It is that Brotherhood which is the root from which all the great religions sprang — a root imbedded in the consciousness of living man.

What is the great need of man today? It is not, mind you, something that is exclusively a need of our own times, but it is particularly emphasized in this moment of the world's history. Every man sooner or later asks himself the question as to the nature of the universe. He comes in conflict with his environment, and he seeks an explanation — as a rule outside of himself first of all, because we seem to be built that way. If we suffer, we tend to think that it must be the world around us which is wrong, and therefore when faced with problems which to us are unfair, or which seem at a given moment insoluble, we start to ask ourselves about the universe!

Therefore the first great reason why we study Theosophy is because it gives us an explanation of the universe around us — an explanation that you will find nowhere else in modern literature. It gives us an explanation of the origin not only of our planet, but of the solar system of which the planet is a part — aye, and the universe, which is full of solar systems. And by extending, as it does inevitably, our vision of the universe in which we live and move and have our being, we come as it were out of the little tight box in which — we recognise after the event — we were confined, all our life, up to that moment. That is why honestly I can sincerely envy the man or woman to whom at any moment — perhaps the present — Theosophy comes for the first time; because I remember what it meant to me when as a very sick man

during the Great War I was in the situation where, suffering very much in all sorts of ways, I sought an answer to the problems of my own life. Sooner or later I believe we all get into this position. Life drives us until we come up against some great enigma; then, if our longing is sincere and true enough, we find Theosophy. It comes as a revelation to the mind, as if one's whole soul were opened to the sunlight for the first time. The effect of this upon me was to get me in touch with the nearest Theosophical library, and no power on earth could have stopped me from taking an armful of books away, and then reading till I had dragged the inside out of them, and absorbed them. That is a wonderful experience, and any one of us can have it. It is part of the work of the Theosophical Society — in fact, the main part of our work — to bring to others these truths which have meant so much to us, and to ask them to take them in their turn to still others.

It is quite obvious that we cannot pass on these truths unless we know something about them ourselves. But one of the beautiful things about Theosophy is that one who hears its teachings for the first time reflects upon what he has heard; and then he starts to read for himself a few relatively simple manuals or books, and immediately the mind becomes quickened; the hunger for truth is aroused. The next step is that the longing which is bound to be present in a man or woman who is ready for these teachings must be satisfied: the longing to help all those around him who also are perplexed with the enigma of life, who suffer.

This is the background of experience, therefore, which every server in the Theosophic Cause goes through; because the way for the individual and the race to acquire this knowledge opens only when the human soul has been brought by suffering to the point where the teaching is received as a trust, as something more precious than earthly gold or jewels, something which is to him literally the breath of life. Every one of us has received these teachings from the work and efforts of others, and as we receive them we make of ourselves a chalice into which gradually the out-pouring of the Life of the Spirit flows. But our life obviously has to be cleansed of its material propensities; we have to

empty ourselves; the vessel in which we would hold the waters of life and give them to others must be made a clean vessel — otherwise, we cannot give clean water to those who seek it.

One of the great reasons for the study of Theosophy is that in process of discovering ourselves we necessarily discover that at the root of our being is a Divinity, a God. The source from which flow those things in our lives which are sweet and beautiful, those thoughts and dreams of a higher life, the love which we bear to our fellows, all aspirations that encourage one to lead a different kind of life, all deeds that are helpful in character and of a truly spiritual and divine nature: all that is eternal in our being — these qualities flow from this Divine part of us. But, having discovered the existence of this spiritual pole of our being, we want to know how we are going to strengthen the Divine and vanquish the lower. That gives us another reason for the study of Theosophy: to find the way of life — the ethics of conduct in our daily lives. We know in a vague sort of way what we ought to do. We have heard from our childhood the golden rule of not doing to others what we would not have them do to us — a summing-up of the ethics of all the great Teachers; but still we need something further.

Let me put it to you from another angle: what are you going to study if you do not study Theosophy? For example, you have the Christian Churches. There are some 320 varieties of Christian sects and what not. Why do so many people find that they still have an unsatisfied need and hunger? One of the reasons is that although the New Testament has sublime ethics — you cannot find a better ethical standard anywhere than in the 'Sermon on the Mount' — what it lacks is philosophy. Men and women in these days want a reason why they should be better and do better. They are no longer satisfied with being told "Be good and you will be happy," even if you have a dull time of it! No, they want to know why they are here, where they came from, where they are going, and what it feels like to be in that state that all men must come to when their earthly life is finished. Have we not all asked ourselves these questions? And was there any orthodox religion in the world, with the noble exception of Buddhism, and to some extent

Hinduism, that could answer you? I do not believe so.

You will find in the teachings of Theosophy, once you understand them correctly, food of a religious nature for the spiritual part of your being; philosophy for your aspiring intellect; and a code of ethics for living your daily life.

"No philosophy in the world can meet the great human 'question and answer' as does Theosophy. This I know, for it includes the best in all others. . . . What but Theosophy can meet the great need of the hour?" — Katherine Tingley

The Theosophical Forum

TIBETAN YOGA: I — C. J. Ryan

In this Transition Age, we, who have the good fortune of being here to watch the new developments and to do our share in their unfoldment, are naturally interested in the progress of scientific discovery and the steady advance of the new science — a philosophic science — toward the Ancient Wisdom. But there is a still more important change taking place in the high intellectual regions of Western thought which likewise is directly traceable to the untiring work of the Theosophical Movement, outwardly started by H. P. Blavatsky in 1875, but originated and constantly energized by the Masters of Wisdom. This change is shown by the new attitude of Western scholarship to the philosophy and Yoga teachings of Tibet. Not many years ago the stories of mysteries and magic in Tibet were utterly ridiculed by serious scholars; it was not respectable to listen to them in academic good society, or perhaps anywhere. The deadly, stodgy opposition from which H. P. Blavatsky suffered so terribly, largely arose from the complete ignorance of such possibilities on the part of the Western cultivated classes, elated and enthusiastic over the triumphs of materialistic science. "There ain't no sich animal," as the farmer said, and when H. P. Blavatsky said there was and that she could prove it — well, the natural consequences followed.

When Col. Olcott, the then President of the Theosophical Society, interviewed the great Sanskrit authority, Max Müller, about fifty years ago, the latter pleaded with him to advise the scholars in the Theosophical Society to abandon their belief that there was anything more in the Hindu Scriptures than what appeared on the surface, or that there could be any basis for esoteric or occult interpretations of them, as claimed by the 'superstitious' Hindus.

Today, however, we find great Orientalists not only accepting as a matter of course the existence of *yogis* possessing some occult powers, but whole-heartedly speaking of esoteric interpretations of the Hindu

Scriptures, and some, like Mme Alexandra David-Néel, even claiming personal, though limited, knowledge of the *rationale* of certain psychomagical processes. Dr. Richard Wilhelm the great German Sinologist, Dr. Carl Jung the psychologist, Sir Wallis Budge, late Egyptologist to the British Museum, and others, have given open support to the fact of that Eastern occult knowledge which was regarded as the purest superstition before H. P. Blavatsky began "to break the molds of mind" in the West. Today we see an audience of eminent scientists in England seriously studying the 'impossible' Fire-Walk and finding it a fact, but also finding no physical explanation!

The latest revelation of Oriental psychology is Dr. Evans-Wentz's *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* (1) This is the third volume of a trilogy, the others being *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and *Tibet's Great Yogi, Milarepa*, also published by the Oxford University Press. Thus, as Dr. Marett says in the Foreword, in regard to the collaboration between the author, or 'editor' as he modestly calls himself, and his Tibetan teacher, the late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup, the translator:

Its fruit is the trilogy of substantial works, based on translations from the Tibetan, and accompanied by an interpretation from within such as demands something even rarer with Western scholars than the ordinary scholarly equipment, namely, a sympathetic insight transcending the prejudices which render the average man antipathetic to any type of unfamiliar experience.

This is hardly surprising in view of the fact that Dr. Evans-Wentz has been closely associated for many years with the teachings of Theosophy and the International Headquarters at Point Loma, and that he has also spent much time in India in the intensive study of the *Yoga* philosophy at first hand.

Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines consists of seven treatises translated from the Tibetan and "representing a more or less comprehensive and unified expression of the most important tenets of Mahayanic Buddhism," elucidated by a masterly Commentary and exhaustive

explanatory footnotes by Dr. Evans-Wentz. The translation was made by the Lama Dawa-Samdup, assisted by the editor, and the difficulty of rendering subtil philosophical and technical Tibetan expressions into good English has been brilliantly overcome. The Lama was an initiate of the *Kargyutpa* School of *Mahayana* or Northern Buddhism and had profound practical knowledge of the *Yoga* philosophy and methods. He was, therefore, unusually qualified to help in the interpretation of Tibetan esoteric doctrines and secret lore hitherto hardly known, if at all, outside the precincts of Lamaism. They are not easy of comprehension by the Westerner, with the exception of a few students of Theosophy, or the like.

Dr. Evans-Wentz speaks very highly of his Tibetan *guru's* learning and marvelous interpretive ability, and of his splendid spirit of helpfulness and desire to serve by bequeathing these translations of the abstruse doctrines of "the master minds," so-called, of Tibetan Lamaism. Mme David-Néel was also associated with the Lama Dawa-Samdup, of whom she gives an account that shows he was a quaint and unique character. He ended his days as Professor of Tibetan at the University of Calcutta.

The Lama is a valuable witness in defense of H. P. Blavatsky against the absurd charges made in her lifetime that she invented the teachings of Theosophy. In his *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Dr. Evans-Wentz says:

The late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup was of opinion that, despite the adverse criticisms directed against H. P. Blavatsky's works, there is adequate internal evidence in them of their author's intimate acquaintance with the higher lamaistic teachings into which she claimed to have been initiated.

We venture to suggest that, while the Lama was right so far as he goes, H. P. Blavatsky belonged to a far *higher Order*, and a far nobler, than the term 'lamaistic' suggests.

The seven treatises are arranged in a definite order, though each can be profitably studied by itself, but they are not all of similar origin. The first four are from the *Kargyutpa* School of the *Mahayana* or 'Great

Path,' and are decidedly interesting to students of Theosophy. Dr. Evans-Wentz says that the entire Seven, however, "represent a more or less comprehensive and unified expression of the most important tenets of Mahayanic Buddhism, some of which in the form herein presented are as yet unknown to the Occident save for a few fragmentary extracts."

Much, if not all, of the *Kargyutpa* Treatises are fairly in harmony with the Theosophical teachings on inner development, but parts of the others deal with extremely perilous psychological exercises which cannot be attempted safely, if at all, without an adept teacher and without the previous attainment, after almost incredible labor, of a power of self-control hardly conceivable in the West. These parts treat of occult forces, and of powers that are said, perhaps with truth, to arise as by-products of deep insight into occult laws or of spiritual development, but we are compelled to state that high spiritual Teachers would never give the real facts outside the privacy of the *asrama*. Most of the Treatises which touch on these matters are derived from the primitive unreformed Bonpa sources. The Bon religion, as H. P. Blavatsky mentions it, is:

itself a degenerated remnant of the Chaldean mysteries of old, now a religion entirely based upon necromancy, sorcery and soothsaying. The introduction of Buddha's name into it means nothing. — *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, III, 271

The Ritualistic Texts contain instructions for the development of occult knowledge little or not at all known in the West, such as immunity from fire, levitation, materializing of thought-forms, "transfer of consciousness," and the Tummo, or the control of bodily temperature. In the last case the *yogi* keeps warm and comfortable while sitting on the snow in a furious blizzard with the temperature far below zero! Mme David-Neel describes her observations of this feat, and even mentions her own application of the Tummo to a limited degree when caught without fuel in a Tibetan wilderness!

The Fifth Treatise, which largely comes down from the pre-Buddhistic

Bon faith, presents the *Chod* Rite of the 'short path' method, a desperate method of rapidly breaking the fetters of Maya and separateness by the mystical sacrifice of the body to the elementals, which sometimes brings insanity or death to the impatient venturer. Mme David-Neel gives a rather horrifying account of personal experiences in connexion with Chod in *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*. The ostensible aim of this grim Rite is to deliver the candidate from the necessity of rebirth, but it seems only too probable that it would be more often used to gain control of the elementals for personal power. Mme David-Neel frankly states that many so-called *yogis* enter the psychic training for selfish reasons such as revenge and vanity.

It is interesting, and should be of great significance to Western ill-informed and skeptical psychologists and other students for whom this work is written, to see in what a matter-of-fact way these occult and psychic matters are regarded by the *yogi-authors* of the Treatises. All such things are known to be strictly governed by natural laws, however obscure and 'miraculous' to the profane. Also, as we are told, they are treated by the most respected lamaistic teachers as being insignificant in comparison with the attainment of the Cosmic consciousness, the transcending of Maya, the Great Illusion in this and higher worlds.

It would be an error to condemn these Treatises as a whole, though some of the instructions, derived from Bonpa practices entirely at variance with the pure, impersonal, and beneficent *Yoga* of the Lord Buddha, are not at all consonant with the wholesome self-disciplinary methods advised by H. P. Blavatsky for her pupils. It seems a pity that the excellent precepts of the first Treatise on 'The Supreme Path of Discipleship' should have to be associated in the same series with certain phenomenalistic instructions, useless though the latter may be without the guiding and warning hand of a real teacher. Are not such texts, while perhaps informative for scholars as exhibiting the weaker side of lamaistic Buddhism, doubtfully suitable for wide publication to the Western world which is turning more and more toward the development of psychic powers for purely selfish purposes, or, at best, for the gratification of curiosity disguised under high-sounding names?

The *Kargyutpa* School, to which the Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup belonged, originated in a purifying reform under the famous *Gurus* Marpa and Milarepa in the 12th century when it separated from the Singmapa School, the "Red Caps" founded in 747 a.d. by the Hindu University Professor Padma Sambhava, who introduced the Tantrik element into Buddhism. The improvement brought about by the *Kargyutpa* reform was important, and its Tibetan *Gurus* followed *Marpa* (11th-12th cent.) in regular 'apostolic succession,' as Dr. Evans-Wentz mentions with approval. The word *Kargyutpa* means 'Followers of the Apostolic Succession,' and the line from which the Order was derived traditionally goes back for unknown centuries before the Christian Era. In this esoteric method each successor was obligated to hand on the teachings as received, and even Gautama-Buddha "is but One who handed on teachings which had existed since beginningless time." The author praises the followers of the reforming *Gurus*, Marpa and Milarepa, for "their insistence upon the Bodhisattvic ideal of world-renunciation and selfless aeon-long labor looking to the ultimate enlightenment of every sentient being."

Dr. Evans-Wentz states that Tsongkhapa, the greatest and wisest Reformer of Tibetan Buddhism, was "an eminent apostle" of the *Kargyutpa* School, but he refers to him only very briefly. Tsongkhapa did not, however, utilize that School as the nucleus of his sweeping reform in the fourteenth century, but associated himself with the *Khadampas*, "Those bound by the Ordinances." This was the School which Atisha, another great Reformer, joined in the eleventh century. A good deal was written by H. P. Blavatsky about Tsongkhapa, but significantly she does not mention the names of the *Kargyutpa Gurus*. It was Tsongkhapa as Avatara of Buddha, she says, who established the *Gelugpa*, 'Yellow Caps,' the now Established Church, and also "the mystic Brotherhood connected with its chiefs." Tsongkhapa must have had good reasons for choosing the *Khadampas* rather than the *Kargyutpas* as the foundation of his new and completely reformed institution. Is it not possible that there was too much old Bonpa sorcery, or at least phenomenalism, in the *Kargyutpa* Order?

(To be concluded)

"The Esoteric Philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life." — H. P. Blavatsky (quoted in *The Esoteric Tradition*)

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path*, according to the late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English rendering. Arranged and Edited with Introductions and Annotations to serve as a Commentary by W. Y. Evans-Wentz. Oxford University Press. \$6.00. pp. 385. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: I — *H. T. Edge*

INTRODUCTORY

This series of articles deals with the interpretation of symbolism and mythology, and in introducing this subject it will be advisable to give a brief summary of those Theosophical teachings most concerned therewith. And while it is not possible to expound and demonstrate these teachings within the necessary limits, the inquirer will find what he needs in this respect in the Theosophical literature which is so readily available.

Theosophy is the recent presentation of a body of doctrine known as the Secret Doctrine, the Wisdom-Religion, the Esoteric Tradition, etc., which has existed in all ages, and which constitutes the basis of all religious and philosophical systems. This knowledge concerns the deeper mysteries of man and the universe, and was communicated to the early races of mankind by man's divine ancestors. It has been handed down throughout succeeding ages by those qualified to be its guardians, by whom it is still preserved at the present day.

There have been times in past history when this knowledge was commonly known; and other times, including the present, when it has been esoteric or hidden from public view. But in this latter case, the Wisdom-Religion is communicated to mankind by Messengers, who are the founders of great religions or the teachers of great philosophies. Theosophy accords to the human race, and even to civilization, a far greater antiquity than is allowed by our timid scholars, not yet emancipated from the narrow purview to which theology has accustomed us. But when this prejudice has been overcome, it will be possible to give due value to the evidence of archaeology, which conflicts with the foregone theories of science, but supports the teachings of Theosophy.

Humanity has been on earth for many millions of years, during which the earth has witnessed the rise and fall of countless races and cultures, succeeding each other like waves. It follows from this general plan of cyclic evolution that some of the races of antiquity have been further advanced in knowledge and culture than we as yet are; we stand, towards such ancient races, in the same relation as a child stands to its parent; the child belongs to a more advanced stage of evolution, but the parent has attained greater maturity. Hence we, though at a more advanced stage in evolution, can learn from our ancestry because they had reached greater maturity in their cycle than we have in ours.

The course of evolution is, broadly speaking, double: there is an evolution upward from below, and an evolution downward from above. (1) The result of this twofold action is that humanity first descends from spirit into matter, and then reascends from matter into spirit. The earliest races of mankind (represented by Adam in Eden) lived in the presence of God (so to speak); they were in a Golden Age of innocence. In subsequent races, the natural course of evolution led man to become less spiritual and more material (represented by the expulsion from Eden and the acquisition of 'coats of skin'). The spiritual faculties became latent as the physical faculties developed. Man had no longer direct communication with the Gods, and this communication was kept up indirectly by the means of divine instructors. The traditions of these divine instructors are preserved in allegorical form in the ancient mythologies, which tell of Gods, God-men, Heroes, the founders of cities and civilizations, the teachers of arts agricultural or technical. In still later stages, the progress of materialization had so far supervened that even this means of communication was no longer open. In these ages knowledge was kept alive by the sending out periodically of Messengers, from the Lodge of Initiated Adepts who preserve the sacred knowledge, to reawaken the light among men by founding schools of the Mysteries, which schools afterwards became the great religious systems which we find today, or great philosophical schools like those of Pythagoras and Plato.

Thus man is essentially a God, having latent within him the germs of divine faculties, which are ready at some time to germinate and fructify. And this germinating is effected by the action of other men, of more advanced evolution, who act as teachers and pass on the light which they themselves have received, kindling in their pupils and successors the latent spark of knowledge that is within all men. This is the esoteric tradition in one sense of the term; light is handed down from man to man and from race to race; and history shows us that progress of all kinds is due to the inspiration imparted by individuals and by the movements which they start.

But for our present purpose there is one particular mode of preserving the esoteric tradition which most concerns us; and that is the method of symbolism and sacred allegory. Before H. P. Blavatsky wrote her great work *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888, various scholars had studied this subject and become convinced that there is a system of symbols common to all religions, diffused over the globe, identical in essence among the most widely scattered and diverse peoples; and that the mythologies of Greece, India, Egypt, Scandinavia, etc., have a common basis. But the works written by these scholars were few and sporadic, not generally known, and merely contributing to the rare exotics of literature. It was H. P. Blavatsky who put together these scattered fragments, wove them into a consistent whole, and gave them their real significance; for they are not mere items of curious lore, but facts of the most important character; and in our endeavor to interpret some of these myths and symbols we shall show their bearing upon an understanding of the mysteries of the life we all have to lead.

There are certain broad general truths which transcend the power of expression in ordinary verbal language; and this must necessarily be the case. For verbal language is the instrument of a certain portion of the mind which has limits; the knowledge of which we are speaking relates to powers of the mind which transcend those limits; and therefore they are beyond the power of words. Such profound ideas are expressed by symbols; the full meaning of these symbols has to be grasped intuitively by the exercise of higher faculties of the mind; but

we can approximate to such a comprehension by studying the various meanings which the symbol conveys, and holding all these meanings in the mind, until finally we gain some sense of the real underlying meaning.

It is these symbols which constitute the mystery-language; which thus becomes at once a means of preserving and conveying the knowledge, and a means of concealing it. For mysteries are revealed to those who have eyes to see, and doors are opened to those having the keys. The classical mythology is a much altered form of ancient mystery-teachings which were conveyed to the public in the guise of dramatic presentations. For the Mystery-Schools had outer and inner mysteries, the inner for candidates for initiation, the latter for the public; just as Jesus had private instructions for his disciples, but spoke to the multitude in parables. In the course of our interpretation of symbols, we shall give illustrations of the real meaning of these classical myths and of similar myths in other lands.

FOOTNOTE:

1. We do not enter here into the distinction between evolution and involution, in order not to confuse the beginner with too many details.
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The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: LIGHT AND COLOR — G. de Purucker

G. de P. — Brother Clark I believe spoke of light and color. Now the sevenfold solar beam we perceive as what we call white light or yellow light. We call it white light. Let this ray pass through a prism — and you have a beautiful series of colors. Now each one of these different colors is an individual color. Nature produces it every time under the right circumstances. We have here seven different forces of Father-Sun occupying space. *Question:* These seven different forces of the solar beam when joined form what we call white light. It needs all to form our common or ordinary light. Is white light then the most spiritual or the most material? To form the complete man we need all his seven principles.

B. de Zirkoff — It is neither the most spiritual nor is it the most material, as it combines all in one unity. I think that the white light referred to can be symbolically, or rather by analogy, spoken of as Space, and white light has within it the polarity of the most spiritual and the most material and all the rays in between. So is space that polarity which manifests as consciousness and substances — as the consciousness-side of the universe and the substance-side of the universe. If neither is unitary throughout in its methods of manifestation and functioning there should be and there is a perfect analogy from one realm to the other. Therefore we can see in white light the sum-total of all colors as the sun is the sum-total of all the energies of its own universe. And so is space by analogy that which doesn't merely contain all there is but is all that can have existence.

O. Tyberg — I quite agree with Mr. de Zirkoff. If you regard for instance the physical body as a representation of the spiritual as well as the material cause, white light stands in relation to all the colors as does the physical body to the organic body which manifests itself by six distinct forces or, as we say in Theosophy, by six principles. Those

came out of the one, but that one we do not see, and that one is Darkness. It seems to me really that the most divine is darkness and the least divine, the most material, is the white light, that which we see in space.

L. Plummer — A reflexion has been going through my mind in this way: that as you may pass a beam of white light through a prism, causing it to split up into the seven prismatic colors, so this spectrum may be passed through a second prism, thus bringing the colors together, and making white light once more. Symbolically the prisms are like laya-centers. The light, which in itself is perfectly invisible until it strikes the eye, represents consciousness on its way to manifestation as a seven-principled entity, which latter is represented by the multicolored spectrum. The return of the consciousness-center into unmanifested life is here symbolized by the passing of the seven colors through the second prism. It does not seem, therefore, that white light in itself is more spiritual than colored light in general. Which of the *colors* is the more spiritual and which the more material, is determined by the law of correspondences, wherein it is found that each color is directly associated with one of the human principles. That white light is the sum-total of all the colors shows that it contains within itself, though undifferentiated, the spiritual as well as the material.

[Several more responses followed, here omitted for lack of space.]

G. de P. — The answers have been splendid. I think these thoughts are very suggestive if we do not wander off into too distant spaces of abstraction. Now for instance, this thought occurred to me, Mme. Chairman. All the different colors of the solar spectrum originate in the sun and are represented on our earth in the form of light, of forces — forces in the sun, every color of which is the outflow or efflux of a distinct force or principle. *Question:* Although all these forces and substances are in essence divine to us human beings with our scale of relativities, which one of the seven colors is the most spiritual, or the more spiritual color than some other color? That is a very interesting thought to me. It is suggestive.

[The meeting of April 14th was given over to a lively discussion of the Leader's question last quoted. Space does not permit the inclusion of the many interesting remarks, but the gist of them may perhaps in degree be gathered from G. de P.'s own comments which follow, from which also the Theosophical teaching will be made clear.]

G. de P. — May I ask the indulgence of the Chair to say a few words. Companions, I had it in my mind to ask you to think over this very interesting theme of thought not so much from the standpoint of color as a pigment, as one of the speakers has pointed out; but from the standpoint of recollecting that as the Sun is the vehicle of a Divinity, whatever flows forth from it is rooted in the Divine. There are seven — or ten — solar forces or elements. From these seven solar individualities, powers, forces, flow streams of substance or force, combined in the light which we receive and recognise by our eyes as daylight, white light. Pass this solar beam through a prism, and you have it broken up into its component parts, which we call colors. *Question:* Which one of these colors, forces, energies, rivers of life, is the most or the least spiritual? Is the question clearer now?

[Discussion]

G. de P. — I am very anxious to clear our thoughts with regard to the substantial meaning of this question. Now, the mere matter of color as a pigment or a light can be found in the science-books. We do not need to bother about that. But the seven colored rays of the solar spectrum are seven effluvia, seven auric flows of vitality, from the solar heart. That is what I am after — not so much the difference of the colors, and which one is to be preferred. That thought may be valuable to us as a side-thought; but the heart of my question, the essential idea, is: which one of these effluvia combining to make light as we understand it, which one is the most spiritual? Which one of these effluvia flowing forth from the Sun, its aura, the seven effluvia of its vital aura, of its life — which one, so to speak, comes from the Sun's highest part? Is the question plainer now?

G. de P. — Madame Chairman: Just like Brother Tyberg, I feel that all

that has been said has been beautifully said, informative, instructive; and personally, putting myself in the mind of each speaker, I think I can truthfully state that I agree with everyone, which means, *however*, coming to the answer that I was hunting for, I agree with none! A strange paradox! Everything that has been said has been true; but yet it was not that one answer to the question that I was seeking for. In all humbleness of spirit, with all the reserve which I feel that I should make, subject to correction by a greater mind than anyone here, than my own certainly, I would say this: that not one of the colors in essence is superior to any of the others. They are all divine in origin. That statement was made. But by comparison on the plane of material existence, and having in view the work which each of the effluvia from the Sun does on this scale of matter, of differentiated life, we are bound to make distinctions (and this was not what I had in mind), and say that Atman is colorless, Buddhi is yellow, and so on. Kama is red.

But now listen carefully. As Brother Fussell pointed out — and I speak of it in especial because the same thought was running in my mind — do not get it in your heads that red is an evil color. It is no more evil than gold or than green or than yellow or than any other color. It is misuse of force which is evil, not the force itself. "Desire [Kama is the Sanskrit term] first arose in the bosom of It" — the Boundless — the spiritual yearning, the desire to manifest its transcendent glory. Every time you have an aspiration in your heart for greater things, every time you yearn to become at one with the Spirit within you, you are in the Kama-principle; and every time when in this beautiful aspiration you guide your steps wisely, with wisdom, then you are likewise in the color of the indigo, Buddhi-Manas, both working together.

Now, here is the answer that I was aiming for. Any one of the seven colors of the Solar spectrum is itself septenary — or denary, as you will. You can divide it into seven or ten; and these subdivisions merely repeat in the small what the great originates. Isn't it obvious? You cannot cut a slice out of an apple and get something different from the apple. Consequently, every minutest portion of infinity contains every essential element and force that infinity contains. Consequently, every

subdivision or sub-plane contains its own repetitive septenary which it derives from the surrounding universe. The microcosm simply repeats the Macrocosm.

Now, then, examine: A man whose swabhava or swabhavic character let us say is in the red or kama, if he lives in the Atman part of it is living on a far higher plane than a man whose essential swabhava is golden yellow, and yet who lives in the lower. Do you get my thought? It is the principle that you live in that places you on the Ladder of Life. If you live in the Atman, the highest part, the spirit, the essential Self, the divine part of any color, of any force, of any element, you are matched only by your own feelings, and you are in the higher state of consciousness, and living far more nobly than a man who may be dwelling let us say in the indigo, but on a very low plane of it. A humble man born in a humble station of life, without education, crippled in body, everything against him — I am using this as an illustration — but nevertheless who has the mind of a Seer and the heart of a god, is planes above a man who is born with a golden spoon in his mouth, with all the education that the world can give to him, and yet who lives with a heart filled with vipers and evil.

Now this is not politics. I plead with you, this is Theosophy. I am not referring to politics at all. H. P. B. once told her students that an artist — and you know what irregular and foolish lives artists often live — that an artist who in his heart sincerely yearned to be a better man, and to live a better life, even if he failed constantly, had greater chances of chelaship than a priest in a church who was wearing the skin over his knees hard by kneeling and praying to "Almighty God" every day, and who inwardly had a heart which was a den of vipers. That was the idea. It is the plane on which you live which places you where you belong. The thing is to strive to live in the highest plane where there is no color, where all is colorless glory. As soon as you descend into color, you descend into manifestation and differentiation producing a corresponding amount of maya, and consequent ignorance. Color shows manifestation, differentiation, the world around us, matter, in their densest and most condensed form.

Now take the spectrum: Red, orange, yellow, run through the scale to the ultra-violet. A new red begins, and if you follow it into invisible light, you will be passing upwards, till you reach a still higher red, after passing through the intermediate stages. Deduction: There is a divine kama, there is a debased kama; there is a divine Buddhi, there is a human Buddhi, which is the reflexion of the other. The point is that every plane is subdivided and is patterned after its grand plane. Therefore no matter in what station of life a man may be born, no matter to what "Ray," as some say, he may belong, this does not place him. What places him is where his consciousness is focussed. If it is focussed upwards, rising into the Atman, into the colorless sphere, then he contains divinity. In the Absolute no one color is more spiritual than any other, because all are born from the heart of Divinity. When we come down into the worlds of differentiation, of existence, then we are obliged to make divisions. In the abstract — and this is not contradictory of what has been said — it is perfectly true that the more rapid the vibration, the greater the frequency of vibration a color has, the closer to matter it is; because what we call matter, physical matter, is intensity of vibration, of force. That is what produces the atom, the electrons, and all the rest of it. Modern science is now saying that they are all composed of energy-points, points of electricity, intense vibration. The greater the frequency of vibration, the more condensed the substance is. Follow out the thought, but do not jump to the conclusion that because violet is a very intense vibration, therefore it is the least spiritual of the colors. There is an Atman to the violet, a Buddhi in the violet, and so on down the scale. It is a tangled theme of thought, and I asked the question to try to clarify our ideas. I think we have succeeded!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 290-292

QUESTION 290

What were the first men like, and how did they come to earth?
(From *Amsterdam, Holland*)

J. H. Fussell — The question is not clear in respect to the meaning attached to 'earth,' either as to 'Globe' or 'Round.' We however take the question to mean, What were the first men like on this Globe D, and how did they come to our Globe D in this Fourth Round?

In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 180, H. P. Blavatsky, speaking of man at the beginning of the Fourth Round on Globe D, states that for reasons given by her, "his frame should be of the most tenuous matter that is compatible with objectivity" (see also *op. cit.*, I, 183, last paragraph).

To answer the question more specifically: The first men on Globe D in this Fourth Round were astral forms, having more or less the present human shape but less refined, and somewhat ape-like in appearance, although they were men, not apes (*Op. cit.*, II, 57, 185, 688). The apes sprang from men in the manner described by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, and, because the apes have had a retarded evolution physically, the apes today resemble their Lemurian and Atlantean progenitors or sires, but only as caricatures, because of the stronger beast-strain in them from the other side of their ancestry.

"How did they — the first men — come to earth," i. e., to Globe D in this Fourth Round? (a) As a life-stream or life-wave from Globe C of the Earth-chain (after an interglobal nirvana) *via* the circulations of this planetary chain. Obviously there must be pathways or channels by and along which the various life-streams pass from globe to globe, for the Universe is an orderly Universe, hence every part of it is orderly, not helter-skelter, (b) The human life-wave was drawn from Globe C to Globe D 'magnetically,' attracted hither because of previous experience

on Globe D. This was in order that the Monads composing the human life-wave might continue their evolution on this Globe from the stage previously attained here during the Third Round, with the added experience gained on Globes E, F, and G of the Third Round and on Globes A, B, and C of this Fourth Round.

Obviously, however, the human life-wave did not come hither from Globe C in any material, physical, or even astral form, but as 'human monads' through and by way of a laya-center.

From another aspect, the first men on Globe D in this Fourth Round were the human Sishtas who had remained on this globe when the human life-wave passed from it to Globe E in the Third Round. It was they who, waiting for the oncoming human life-wave in the Fourth Round, became the first Teachers and Guides of our Fourth Round Humanity on this globe.

The human life-wave reached our Globe D, coming from Globe C as monads, in very much the same manner as the human Monad today reincarnates on Earth. The Sishtas provided the first bodies of our present humanity which became more and more prolific as the pressure of the incoming life-wave became steadily greater.

QUESTION 291

According to human history numerous civilizations have arisen, reached their zenith, and disappeared. Now, in view of the present continued depression, and the great moral degradation: from the viewpoint of Theosophy, can this civilization survive?
— *F. B.*

G. B. — This question can hardly be answered by a simple affirmative, or negative. To which civilization does the querent refer, Eastern or Western, Northern or Southern? Or again, to which continent? One can but answer in generalities. In the first place, what is the standard that one has set for judging whether a civilization has reached its zenith? Is it spread of empire, strength of army and navy, in short, material wealth and power? That seems to be the standard taken by the querent

— a view all too prevalent in the West. For if a man achieves affluence he is regarded as being in the forefront of 'civilization'; if he fails to do so he may even take his life in despair — as the newspapers only too often relate.

Indeed, another standard should be set, and we believe it was voiced by the prophet of old in saying, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." So then, the flower of civilization is in evidence when the leaders of a nation have 'vision,' when the arts and sciences flourish, when great souls are coming into the race and stimulating activity in these fields. Thus then, so long as the people have this 'vision,' civilization will flourish — but when it has receded, woe to the nation!

It may be pointed out, furthermore, that the depression is hardly a 'cause' for the downfall of civilization; it is rather an effect of causes previously set in motion. Yet if it be the means of arousing the people to a greater spirit of brotherhood and a broader and farther-reaching vision, it may truly be said to be a blessing rather than a curse.

In accordance with cyclic law, races are born, have their youth, reach their zenith and then wane: such is the law of Nature and may be studied in every known field of manifestation. But whether or not any sub-race will 'survive' during a period of quiescence depends upon the efforts of the members of that race.

Let us therefore labor, brother, you and me, to bring Vision to the people, and if mayhap ten virtuous men be found 'in Gomorrah' the 'city' will not perish!

A. C. — In other words, Can civilization be saved? One might ask, How much of it is worth saving? You cannot save the essentially transitory and perishable. All that has survival-value *will* be saved.

The Masters of Wisdom have called this a "transition age." Why not control emotions, fears, and pessimisms, and stand free and watch the transition? The depression and many other evils are but incidental to a changing order — the 'New order of the Ages,' *Novus ordo seclorum*, as the Great Seal of the U. S. A. says.

In the transitory period there is a life-and-death struggle taking place between the two forces of good and evil, the rising tide and the ebbing or descending one. No one can remain indifferent. It is a matter of supreme importance which side we take. Either we join the forces of Light and spiritual progress, or those of darkness and moral degeneracy. Our choice determines our future.

A transition age is inevitably an age of confusion and those who are the builders of a great, a mighty, and a beautiful future, and whose work takes all their time, attention, and energy, are optimists and are not depressed by depressions.

Our Teachers, the Masters, have laid the foundations on the bed-rock of eternal realities, of eternal Truth. The plans are well made and the process of construction is well begun. Let us get to work and help. It is a great enterprise — this building of the civilization of the future. All of the past and of the present which has survival-value will be saved and will fall naturally into place. These are the spiritual qualities: clean living and high thinking. These are the Dharma of the future, for Dharma means right religion, right science, right philosophy, and the essential moral order and rightful duty of each man.

The nature of this present cyclic transition is expressed in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, chapter iv, where Krishna, who represents the Logos or solar spiritual energy which now is infilling the world like the coming of spring, says:

I produce myself among creatures . . . whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked and the establishment of righteousness.

This Krishna-Christos spirit has to work through men, and the Masters and their Messengers are the men. They are the wise master-builders, and they work through and by means of organizations. The Theosophical Society was founded by their Messenger and at their

request, for the work in this cycle. In so far as it succeeds, civilization will be saved.

Their Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, in 'The Esoteric Character of the Gospels,' published in *Lucifer*, in December, 1887, writes:

But if the voice of the MYSTERIES has become silent for many ages in the West, if Eleusis, Memphis, Antium, Delphi, and Cresa have long ago been made the tombs of a Science once as colossal in the West as it is yet in the East, there are successors now being prepared for them. We are in 1887 and the nineteenth century is close to its death. The twentieth century has strange developments in store for humanity, and may even be the last of its name.

W. E. S. — As W. Q. Judge says in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 47, in respect to the intermediate principle of man's constitution — the kama-manasic — as reflecting his present stage of development:

This fourth principle is like the sign Libra in the path of the Sun through the Zodiac; when the Sun (who is the real man) reaches that sign he trembles in the balance. Should he go back the worlds would be destroyed; he goes onward, and the whole human race is lifted up to perfection.

True, as we know too well. Life is a great see-saw between what we might nobly do and what we permit our personal selves to gravitate down to. Kama-manas dominates. The left hand denies what the right asserts; we are torn between our intuitive recognition of truth and our struggling desires for the gilded transitory. We mustn't forget, however, that the lowest point of the manvantaric evolutionary cycle has been passed — passed some few billions of years ago at the half-way mark of the rounds on the Moon-chain; and that more particularly, on our present Earth-chain, since the end of the Atlantean Race a distinct change for the better has taken place, so that today, in the middle-point of our Fifth Root-Race of this Fourth Round, the scales are tipped slightly more toward the spiritual as contrasted with the heavily

material. The tide of all Nature is upward. The stress of activity in man's constitution is then more toward the manas-kama-manas, so to say, with a growing tendency to become ever more manasic. But, on the other hand, we must not close our eyes to the ignorance — and the evil arising therefrom — which still floods the world, evidenced in the unbridled longing for the sensuous, the craze for psychism, the emotional appeal of the dance of the shadow-world — part and parcel of Atlantean karman, part and parcel of our humanity today. It stares us in the face. It holds the grip of thousands of lives, overpowering them with almost hopeless despair, from which they stupidly think to save themselves by a still further abandonment of control, an almost wanton embrace of those same empty non-essentials of life, which reflect the shifting, the unreal.

The Theosophist is no pessimist; but he faces the facts of *life*. The moment is critical. We are indeed in the throes of unrest, of disintegration, of chaotic upheaval. But we believe the danger-point will be passed; and out of it all — *if we do our duty* — a nobler and better civilization will arise. Those who believe in Theosophy know what an important part Theosophy has to play. Their duty is plain: it is to spread the teachings of the ancient Wisdom-Religion — Theosophy: it is to work to change for the better the hearts and minds of men: to give them courage, to give them hope, to give them light — to work to do this vigorously, steadily, kindly, persistently, unreservedly.

QUESTION 292

Why is psychism wrong when it is used by great Teachers like Jesus Christ?

E. D. W. — It is not really accurate to say in general terms that psychism is wrong, any more than that dynamite is wrong. Just as we protect the public from handling the latter, which is useful in the hands of a constructor, who even then heavily safeguards its use, so we claim the same for the former. The reason for this is imbodyed in the Theosophical teaching of the Seven Principles of Man, through any one of which principles he may express his consciousness. Those which are

related to the physical plane of everyday life are easily recognised, as for instance the principle of kama, the emotions and desires, or of manas, the mind. All of us are aware how distinctly different are the two forms of the latter — the one which dwells in the plane of sensations and actions, which is called the lower manas, and the other full of higher thoughts and aspirations which belong to a higher mind. Besides these there are other faculties or principles belonging to man which are not so easy to define because they belong to inner planes of consciousness which have not yet been generally evolved. These we speak of as astral and psychic, and they are as much a part of us as the others. We know that when we allow the mind to dwell entirely on the emotional plane we become a prey to those emotions, and the mind becomes confused; but when our thoughts are in the higher consciousness our emotions become aspirations, full of service and unselfish love for others.

The same rule holds good on all the lower planes of consciousness. What the querent refers to as psychic powers are those which are expressed on the astral plane as psychic phenomena. The astral plane is the picture gallery in which are impressed all our words and acts, even our thoughts. We *may* train our senses to be open to that plane, but once we do we become victims to everything upon it, because the door if forced open cannot easily be re-shut. Astral vision in itself is not wrong; psychic powers are natural possessions, but the plane of our present development is still so material and personal that forced training or attainment of either astral or psychic faculties would make us mediums at the mercy of the forces of those planes.

Those whom we call the great Teachers of the Race were able to use the higher psychic faculties normally because they had trained themselves through many lives by unselfish service to humanity to attain the Spiritual Will and Spiritual Powers. Yet if you were to study carefully the lives of the great Teachers you would discover that they rarely used psychic phenomena, and then only for helpful service. Jesus, as the story is told, refused to use his psychic powers to prevent his crucifixion, and was taunted with the words: "He saved others; himself

he cannot save"; and the same may be said of every spiritual Teacher.

H. P. Blavatsky many times openly deplored the necessity of having to use psychic powers, because they tended to cloud men's minds to their higher spiritual possibilities; but she did so in order to break the molds of materialism which blinded men even to the existence of inner realms of consciousness. When humanity shall have reached to heights beyond the lower planes of mere physical existence, then psychic powers will become a normal, sane heritage, just as physical vision is now.

The Theosophical Forum

SONS OF THE SUN — *Linda C. Barlow*

The earnest thinkers of this world appear to me like men fishing in a vast pool stocked with innumerable varieties of fish. Every man who lands his catch thinks he has caught the biggest, and goes off to tell everybody about it. The fact is that every fisher in the Pool of Truth uses a different bait and catches a different fish, and while no one specimen is representative of the whole, it yet has a value of its own and is not to be disregarded. It is this thought, in the mind of a very ignorant beginner as yet angling in the shallows, which has given him courage to submit his catch — a mere stickleback — for inspection.

To begin with, it would be interesting to know how many of the millions of human beings alive today believe truly in any conscious existence apart from this life on earth. Most of us don't, until we meet with Theosophy. Whatever we profess to believe, we act most of the time in accordance with the prevailing creed of the age, which is that this life is everything. It's a case of 'every man for himself, all the time.' Says Everyman: It all ends at death anyway, so what does it matter? We believe in what we can see with our eyes, clink in our palms, and stub our toes on. We believe in grabbing all that we can while we are here, for after death there is — nothing.

This doctrine leads to pettiness, feverishness, perpetual buzz and scurry. It is the doctrine of the so-called 'practical man,' who teaches his children to regard all time as wasted which is not spent in attending with a frown of concentration to the business of getting money. As we grow out of childhood, we are all infected by this attitude to a greater or less degree. Numbers of people are perfectly satisfied with it, and these for the time imagine themselves happier — being more completely drugged with materialistic dope — than those who stir uneasily in their sleep, disturbed by half-glimpses of infinity.

I like to think that these latter are in the majority: that there are few

who do not at some time or another stop short, feeling shaken at the unexpected sight of something beautiful. It might be anything — the sun, the moon, the sea, a tree or a flower, or even so microscopic an organism as a diatom. The beauty of Nature is disturbing because it is mysterious. It hints at forces and laws and plans outside the ken of the 'practical man,' and fills him momentarily with doubt and misgiving as to the adequacy of his doctrine. It tugs at his soul because it is akin to the beauty hidden and unguessed within himself: because like calls to like, and that divine essence which some call the godspark, but which I prefer to call absolute beauty, streams through men in common with everything else in Nature. There is hope of growth in a man so long as he can be so disturbed. If he cannot, he is at best standing still. Your money-grubber has not time to consider the lilies; which amounts to saying that he has no time to consider the possibility of his having a soul. It remains to the often-despised poet to give expression to that overwhelming feeling of 'something beyond' which is all that the untaught masses know of their own divine inner nature.

Then to the fortunate few comes Theosophy, like a flood of light, like a door suddenly opened to one who has been peering painfully through the keyhole. We are taught that this life, far from being everything, is only a very tiny stage on the inner man's pilgrimage towards perfection. And what a difference that makes! Boundaries vanish; mountains become molehills; the horizon widens into infinity. We begin to acquire a sense of proportion, and we are able to stop and think, because we know that if all infinity is ours we can afford to do so. We have time to relax — I don't mean, of course, to shirk our duties, but to relax from the strain of the physical into the calm of the spiritual, to open the windows of the soul and let the fresher air come through. We know that death is not the end, and so we can afford *to appear* to die. We know that there is ultimately no injustice, and so we can afford *to appear* to be *cheated*. We can pity the drugged slumber of the materialists, and strive after the inner peace of those Great Ones who have dared to become themselves.

The difficulty is to remember what we are. We are princes disguised as

peasants; gods in the skins of beasts; pilgrims bearing a high responsibility of which we should be proud. We are so encompassed around with material things that they tend to assume too great an importance. Could we but bear our great heritage always in mind; could we but remember through every minute of every day that we are Sons of the Sun, bearing within ourselves the light which is absolute truth, then, although Karman might decree that we spend our time oiling engines or peeling potatoes, we should automatically think and act with that dignity and sanity which alone are worthy of the Higher Self.

And how are we to remember? I should say by keeping the imagination alive, by refusing to become hidebound, by retaining that triumphant broadness of vision in which we rejoiced when, as children, hoping all things and believing all things, we were able to see beauty where our elders saw nothing.

It is this awareness, this sort of domesticated clairvoyance, for which I am pleading: a perpetual sense of the bigness of things; an imagination wide enough to span the gulf between itself and the unseen; wide enough to accept gods and fairies, mysteries and miracles and magic; an unshakable conviction that life is ultimately beautiful and good; and a realization that, although this earth is temporarily our school, the true home of the exiled spirit is in the heart of the Infinite.

And if we hold to this firmly enough, what becomes of death? It becomes as simple as stepping through a doorway. School lessons for the time being are over, and the higher man is bound for holidays and unimaginable happiness.

The Theosophical Forum

THE CLOCK OF HUMAN PROGRESS — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

Stars move in their courses, planets in their orbits, we live in an ordered universe, in which law rules. And one of the laws whose workings is most plainly evident is the law of periodicity. What happens once, happens again, given the right moment. When Halley's comet flashed into the western sky in May, 1910, appearing for the 27th recorded time, it came because it was time for it to come. It is possible to make astronomical calculations of the positions of the heavenly bodies in distant periods of the past and of the future. For instance, in the great cycle called the Precession of the Equinoxes the Sun returns to its original position in relation to the zodiacal constellations. In the interim the Cosmic Family has swung through vast and varied regions of Space, as the Sun moved from one zodiacal house to another, and has gained untold wealth of experience as yet unrecorded by us. And for man, who has the mind to conceive of an ordered universe and observe the working of its laws, is there no organised history of his part in the vast whole? Is it not possible so to widen the horizons of human history that a more ancient past may suggest what conditions may recur in the future life of mankind? Has no one ever read around the clock of human progress? Is there such a clock?

The conditions prevalent in the world at present clamor for such wider horizons. We *must* "look before and after" — the present is so poignant an experience that it tears veil after veil from our eyes — but humanity has not yet seen where the earliest dawns broke or where the light breaks through ahead of us. We know that civilizations *fall*, and that present conditions echo those that were a portent of fall in the past; but we cannot be resigned to this; something stirs in us that forbids us to entertain the idea of inevitable, irretrievable fall. We seek a new unity of history. We feel intuitively that there is a rationale of enduring progress that includes and explains the problems we are facing. We desire, in fact, to orient ourselves to the Cosmos. Has the world lasted

3000 millions of years, as the scientists are telling us in 1935, without anyone having found the way to do this?

Only 60 years ago amazingly few persons in the West had begun to doubt what is known as the Biblical chronology, according to which the world was created in 4004 b. c., or to question the view that man's cycle of life in this world was for three score years and ten with an eternity somewhere else to follow. The view of materialists was that man had descended (or ascended) from the brutes, acquired mind in some way not thoroughly understood, and that, when his one life on earth was over, that was the end. Limited horizons these. How construct a cosmic history of mankind upon such a basis? But the West was soon to have a salutary awakening to the fact that the whole world had never held such inadequate, such parochial notions. It was to learn of the existence of an Archaic Science, a complete science of man's life-cycle, recorded and tested during hundreds of thousands of years, a science which at stated times in that long period of development is restored to the knowledge of man.

It was as a Messenger of the Guardians of the Archaic Wisdom and Science that H. P. Blavatsky, in 1875, came to the Western World. The Message that she brought, the systematic and universal restoration of the Archaic and the Ancient which her work initiated, mark the end of the nineteenth century as an extraordinary crisis in the writing of the history of history. *Isis Unveiled* and her writings in *The Theosophist*, led the way to *The Secret Doctrine*, published in 1888, which presents an outline of the dawn of a period of manifestation, the development of a universe with its family of Sun and planets, with particular reference to the history of the Earth and Man. In this great system, which spans millions and millions of years, man is shown as developing *pari passu* with the universe from the beginning, living in form after form corresponding to the state of matter of the Globe on which he was functioning, storing in his enduring individuality the experience gained in race after race, civilization after civilization, the forms perishing, the essential entity never, rounding many lesser cycles of life, descending and ascending, but ever moving forward in the Great

Cycle of his destiny with his home-planet and his home-universe. H. P. B.'s statement in 1888 that man in his present form had 18,000,000 years of history behind him was at that time a startling one, but every year since then has witnessed the receding of the horizons of human history, towards the long chronology, with which the Brahmanical system and some of the Hindu records are in harmony, and of which traces are to be found in many ancient and prehistoric religions, including the Hebrew. H. P. B. thus boldly placed the history of the human race in its cosmic setting, thereby accomplishing that basic "historical orientation" now recognised as an urgent need of our time.

Here, then, in this vast system covering millions of years we find the long range that permits of correlated recurrences quite impossible to perceive without it, a range including not only all that the scientific observation of the last few hundreds of years has found but taking into account an intelligent plan in the whole, and the interaction of visible and invisible planes of human and cosmic life. Here we find the possibility of reading the clock of human progress. And in the ascending arc of some of these mighty cycles that opened in the morning of time we may read of spiritual heights, of ages to recur, when the Inner Light shall be less obscured than in the lower arcs, those valleys of experience that must be traversed in every cycle.

As to the import of the hour towards which the hands of the great clock were moving surely and swiftly in 1888 when *The Secret Doctrine* was published, its statements were explicit; and H. P. B., in many articles in *Lucifer* as well, uttered stern notes of warning and of challenge, pointing out that beneath the surface of comfortable security of the 1880's there lurked all the menacing conditions which characterize what is called in the Eastern chronology the Kali-Yuga or Dark Age. She stated that owing to the fact that several cycles would close in 1897, this would be a fateful turning-point in human story, and that striking changes would occur in scientific, religious, and philosophical ideas. We have now no difficulty in recognising the changes, nor the peculiar conditions that mark a Dark Age — long ago clearly described in the *Laws of Manu* and the *Vishnu-Purana* — inordinate desire for riches,

enjoyment of luxury on the one hand and dire poverty and misery on the other, increase in the number of criminals, inharmony between the classes of society, decay of spiritual ideals, and disregard of the spiritual life. Every day now brings its stint of war-omens, political upset, and calamitous destruction of human life.

Where in all this shall we find and "follow the gleam"? The twentieth century finds great rents in the materialistic conceptions of man and the universe, as H. P. B. prophesied, and the menace of a retrogressive scientific dogmatism may be averted. Distance has vanished. The whole world now can know the whole world's woe and weal. There is what might be termed a physical basis for the united life of Humanity. There are indications that the human heart does more fully utter itself in compassionate acts. The teaching of the Ancient Wisdom is that in the Dark Age — the shortest of the yugas, though there are 426,962 years of it left to run — effects can be more rapidly brought about than at any other time, and that any effort in behalf of the whole of humanity invokes more direct assistance from the spiritual hierarchies in the universe, makes a channel for such help to reach us. Why should there *not* be descending celestial influences in time of test and need? It is in this very Kali-Yuga that an awakened human race must bend their backs to create the conditions of the Krita-Age that follows — so far it seems, but *we* must bring it to pass — when, as the teaching is, "Justice is four-footed and entire, and so is truth; nor does any gain accrue to men by unrighteousness." Every brotherly act, every unselfish aspiration, every sincere desire to help the whole of humanity, draws upon the spiritual resources of mankind and awakens the higher intelligence that makes it possible for man consciously to move onward with the cosmic purpose.

To be able correctly to read the clock of human progress would mean the power to avail oneself of the outflow of energy that accompanies the opening of all the myriad lesser cycles in the life of nations, races, etc. H. P. B., in presenting the Theosophical system in *The Secret Doctrine*, gives us the key to this knowledge concerning the destiny of man. Moreover she sounded the call to right action here and now.

Modern life offers possibilities for united life hitherto undreamed of, though preoccupation with the material aspects of these possibilities and the manipulation of means of increasing power and enjoyment have so far been the rule. The kernel of united life is in the spiritual oneness of all that lives, in the belief in this and in the inner divinity of man, which can illumine the outer life and lead to the establishment of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity — the avowed object of the Theosophical Society H. P. B. was sent to found. For it is Brotherhood *in actu* only that will enable us consciously to ascend in our cycle, to ride the hurricane and rule the stars in the present crisis of human affairs.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: II — *H. T. Edge*

II — THE CIRCLE

As was said in the Introduction, a symbol sums up in a single picture a meaning which can appear to the mind only as a number of separate meanings; it is beyond the power of the ordinary mind, but not beyond the power of human Intelligence, to visualize the entire meaning at once; hence we must see it in a series of separate pictures, much as we might get an idea of the shape of a crystal by looking at its various aspects separately. This is of course true of the particular symbol under consideration — the circle. Considered as a line it is infinite, so that it represents endless duration. It can be regarded either as a figure contained by one single line, or as a polygon with an infinite number of sides; which indicates that the One and the Many are extremes which meet. The circle seems to enunciate the proverb, 'Extremes meet.' So it denotes cyclic motion; in virtue of which, continued movement from a point will bring us back to the same point again. So it stands for the repetition of cycles, the course of evolution, resurrection and rebirth, birth after death, death after birth. Of course, as we know, it can be elaborated into the spiral (helix), and this again into still more involved curves, so that we may thus obtain a completer picture, though not so concise and radical a one.

The circle denotes unity, especially as compared with the line, triangle, and square. It cannot be divided into similar parts, or built up out of similar parts. The number One is at the same time the least and the greatest of numbers. It heads the series of odd numbers, and also the series of powers of Two; so that it is neither male nor female in symbology. It is the first principle, number one, in any hierarchy; it is the First Cause. We see it again in the symbol of the Sun, and the Sun itself is also a symbol; it is the radiating center of our solar system and is typical of other suns which the universe contains.

In the geometrical symbolism found at the beginning of *The Secret Doctrine*, the circle is the first figure. The very root of all cannot be represented by any figure at all, as it is boundless and formless, and the *tabula rasa* or clean slate is the best we can do in the way of representation. When on this we draw a circle we have the symbol of Space, sometimes called the container of all, or better, the root of all, the common parent. For Space is not emptiness, it is utter fulness; it is that from which all springs. Its characteristic is unity, and by virtue of its unity it is all-comprehending. A variant of the circle is the Serpent, which is represented with its tail in its mouth, denoting the union of beginning and end, or rather the absence of beginning and end. But the Serpent has other meanings, as will be seen later.

Motion, eternal ceaseless vibration, is said to be inherent in the nature of things; together with Infinite Space and Infinite Duration, it is a primary postulate which can neither be conceived nor excluded from the mind. This Motion is essentially circular, therefore vibratory; or it is essentially vibratory, therefore circular. A pendulum with its motion unrestricted, vibrates in ellipses, which vary from the straight line to the circle, as extremes; a circular motion can be compounded of, or resolved into, two mutually perpendicular rectilinear motions. A pendulum whose bob describes a circle will throw on the wall a shadow which vibrates to and fro in harmonic motion. We thus see the connexion between vibrations and circular motion; and this is shown in symbolism by the cross within the circle.

The great problem of squaring the circle means knowing how to accommodate life in the world of limitations with the limitless life at its root. The corresponding mathematical problem is also capable of solution, though it remains insoluble as long as the greater problem is unsolved.

The circle denotes Space, which is not an empty container but the mother of all things. This aspect is also represented by the symbol of the egg, circular in form, productive in function. The egg is more exactly an ellipsoid, whose plane figure is an ellipse; a derivative of the

circle, wherein duality begins to supervene over unity. In solid form the circle becomes the sphere, whose surface is a boundless plain. The circumference of the circle stands for zero; it contains no parts, and is divided into one part when a point is taken in it. Thus we obtain the finite line, which is the symbol of the number 1.

What impresses one most in these Theosophical studies is the marvelous unity of thought that prevails throughout. The Theosophist does not (or should not) keep his religion and his science in separate compartments, each pining for the loss of its partner; his deepest devotional feelings are illuminated by knowledge, and his studies made sacred by his understanding of their meaning. Heart and Head unite in one and are not at war. The meaning of these sacred symbols should enter deeply into our heart, and not be left as a barren and interesting pursuit. Our life here seems all ends and beginnings because our view is so contracted that we cannot discern the unity and wholeness. Here we are reminded of that spiritual Sun, which, universal, has its focus in every heart of man — man the world in miniature, a solar system of planets in rhythmic motions attendant upon their Lord; and we may rise in thought to a forgetfulness of our petty limitations. Through such a symbol illumination may come, so that we may re-enter our humble world renewed and strengthened for the duties we perform. Know that thou art a Sun, whose function is to illumine all, not to expect benefits. Thus man will rise to his true dignity, fearing neither God nor Devil. Man is deathless, infinite, in his essence; nor is the quality of that essence beyond his reach. At any moment of our life / *am* immortal, eternal; "end and beginning are dreams."

The Theosophical Forum

TIBETAN YOGA: II — C. J. Ryan

II

In resuming our consideration of Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz's *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* (1), a work which contains much information hitherto entirely unknown to Western scholars, we must draw special attention to the "general Introduction" to the subject of Mahayana or Northern Buddhism. Dr. Evans-Wentz gives a concise and sympathetic outline of the teaching, which is shown as the most systematic, philosophical and logical form. He points out that without the Mahayana the Southern or Pali canon would be very difficult to understand, as it contains so many obscure passages and doctrines. As outlined in his brief analysis, the Mahayana Buddhism is very closely akin to the philosophic and devotional teaching of Theosophy as presented by H. P. Blavatsky.

We regret that there is not room here to quote the first twenty-one pages of the "General Introduction," which with very slight alteration would make an excellent introductory handbook to Theosophy. The supreme aim of Buddhism, according to our author, is the Deliverance of the Mind from ignorance, illusion, and thereby the attainment of Nirvana — or perhaps more properly, of the right to enter Nirvana — for the Lord Buddha taught, above all, the Great Renunciation — never finally to pass out of the Samsara or phenomenal world into the ineffable Bliss of Nirvana until the weary pilgrims in all the worlds have reached "the Other Shore."

According to the deepest teaching given in the Seven Treatises translated from the Tibetan and contained in Dr Evans-Wentz's scholarly work, the emancipated yogi reaches actual perception of the unity of the Universe, the consciousness that Samsara, the phenomenal, and Nirvana, the noumenal, are really One. Of this supreme attainment, the author writes with justified enthusiasm:

The Conqueror of *Maya* becomes a master of life and death, a Light in the Darkness, a Guide to the Bewildered, a Freer of the Enslaved. In the transcendent language of the Great Path, the *Mahayana*, no longer is there for Him any distinction between the Sangsara and Nirvana Like an unbridled lion roaming free among the mountain ranges, He roams at will through the Existences. [See page 12 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*]

Samsara is the state of conditioned being, the realm of phenomena, of impermanence; while Nirvana is beyond lower "Nature," beyond all "paradises" and "hells." It is "the Other Shore." As Shelley intuitively divined, we have to wake from "this dream of life." The Tibetan-Yoga use of dreams is very different from that of the Freudians. By studying them and controlling their content it is seen that they are mere playthings of the mind, and from this a further step in yoga-training shows that the essential nature of "name and form" is equally unreal, and that the Reality must be looked for outside this or any other phenomenal world.

Many of the more profound and less familiar teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, to which in recent years Dr de Purucker has drawn attention, are referred to in these Treatises. One of these is the problem of Renunciation and the Pratyeka-Buddhas, about which there has been much confusion in some places. Dr. Evans-Wentz says:

Self-Enlightened (Skt. *Pratyeka*) Buddhas do not teach the Doctrine publicly, but merely do good to those who come into personal contact with Them, whereas Omniscient Buddhas, of Whom was the Buddha Gautama, preach the Doctrine widely, both to gods and to men . . .The *Gurus* of the Great Symbol Schoolteach that *Nirvana* is not to be regarded as a final state, wherein its realizer selfishly abides in absolute bliss and rest. That is to say, *Nirvana* is not a state to be realized for one's own good alone, but for the sake of the greater good which will accrue to every sentient thing merely in virtue of a realization of it. Thus it is that in Tibet all aspirants for the Divine Wisdom,

for the Full Enlightenment known as *Nirvana*, take the vow to attain the state of the *Bodhisattva*, or Great Teacher. The vow implies that the *Nirvanic* State will not be finally entered, by the one taking the vow, until all beings, from the lowest in subhuman kingdoms on this and every other planet to the highest of unenlightened gods in many heaven-worlds, and the most fallen of dwellers in hell-worlds are safely led across the Ocean of the *Sangsara* to the Other Shore. Southern Buddhists are inclined to regard *Nirvana*, at least when attained by *Pratyeka* (or Non-teaching) Buddhas, as a state of finality. Mahayanists, however, say that *Nirvana* is a state of mind reached as a result of evolutionary spiritual unfoldment, and that It cannot, therefore, be regarded as a final state, inasmuch as evolution has no conceivable ending, being an eternal progression.

Students of Dr. de Purucker's recent answers to questions, etc, on the paradoxical question of the Pratyeka-Buddhas and Nirvanic Bliss, will see the way to harmonize these conflicting opinions. The "Selfishness" of the Pratyeka-Buddha, spoken of in several places by H. P. Blavatsky, is not the ordinary kind of selfishness but, as she says, a "Spiritual" kind. Efforts have been made by ill-advised editors to suppress H. P. Blavatsky's remarks about Pratyeka-Buddhas by leaving them out of *The Voice of the Silence* in certain editions. They apparently forget that she gave half a page to the subject in her *Theosophical Glossary*! Her observations should be carefully studied, as they are *very practical*.

The first of the Seven Treatises is called "The Supreme Path of Discipleship: the Precepts of the *Gurus*" and it consists of 290 aphorisms for the use of those who enter the career of the yogi. Some are strictly practical, and some are not easily comprehended but are open to misconstruction unless explained by the guru, but the majority are clear. Among these are definite teachings in regard to the Nirmanakaya Path of the Great Renunciation, the highest spiritual ideal possible to man. Many of these texts closely resemble those translated by H. P. Blavatsky for *The Voice of the Silence*, though, as presented, they lack

the exquisitely poetical rhythm and loftiness of diction that distinguishes that immortal textbook for aspirants. Here are a few, selected from the more ethical part:

Unless the mind be trained to selflessness and infinite compassion, one is apt to fall into the error of seeking liberation for self alone.

For a religious devotee to try to reform others instead of reforming himself is a grievous mistake.

The smallest amount of merit dedicated to the good of others is more precious than any amount of merit devoted to one's own good.

If only the good of others be sought in all that one doeth, no need is there to seek benefit for oneself.

For him who hath attained the Sublime Wisdom, it is the same whether he be able to exercise miraculous powers or not.

The fact that there are Those who have attained *Bodhic* Enlightenment and are able to return to the world as Divine Incarnations and work for the deliverance of mankind and of all living things till the dissolution of the physical universe showeth the virtue of the Holy *Dharma*.

Having acquired practical knowledge of spiritual things and made the Great Renunciation, permit not the body, speech, or mind to become unruly, but observe the three vows, of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

One text is decidedly "practical" and worth the attention of some would-be ascetics:

One who professeth religion and is unable to live in solitude in his own company and yet knoweth not how to make himself agreeable in the company of others showeth weakness.

A sense of humor is not absent in Tibet:

To preach religion and not practise it is to be like a parrot saying a prayer; and this is a grievous failure.

Dr. Evans-Wentz prefaces these "Precepts of the Gurus" by a page from H. P. Blavatsky's *Voice of the Silence*, though he does not mention her name. While the subject-matter of the aphorisms in both is closely alike in parts, the impression produced by the Kargyutpa precepts is not so inspiring; the latter do not radiate the magnificent Buddhic compassion for all that breathes with the fervor that inspires the noble teaching given in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Much of great interest in this remarkable book cannot even be mentioned here, especially the exceedingly useful notes which explain the original text. Very many of the most difficult teachings of Theosophy are shown to be stated in the Treatises, or in the oral explanations of obscure passages given by the Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup. It is not surprising that he immediately recognised that H. P. Blavatsky's books contained proof that she was acquainted with the deeper teachings. To the Western scholar the book will be a revelation of something new — the fact that the Orient has made overwhelming discoveries in human psychology beside which much Western psychology is almost infantile. The author quotes the following from the eminent English philosopher Dr. C. D. Broad:

[Progress] depends upon our getting an adequate knowledge and control of life and mind before the combination of ignorance on these subjects with knowledge of physics and chemistry wrecks the whole social system. Which of the runners in this very interesting race will win, it is impossible to foretell. But physics and death have a long start over psychology and life.

And, as Dr. Evan-Wentz adds:

Is Occidental man for much longer to be content with the study of the external universe, and not know himself?

In place of psychoanalysing dreams, trying crude experiments with

hypnotism, studying the reactions of mentally sick patients, and so forth, the Oriental psychologist boldly plunges within himself and tries to find something greater than his surface-personality, namely, a Universal Self. In this process he discovers unthought-of "magical" powers, but as already mentioned they fade into nothingness when the greater goal is glimpsed. In fact, in many cases they are hindrances.

In this process the Oriental has found that true psychology is not a cold, intellectual study, such as can be learned in classrooms, but that it deals with the highest and most spiritual parts of man — begins there, in fact. Without self-sacrificing devotion to the interests of others, the sense of universal brotherhood and the burning desire to lift the heavy burdens of the world, all intellectual knowledge, all development of personal psychic powers, turns to dust and ashes. Dr. Evans-Wentz never loses sight of the spiritual basis of Mahayana Buddhism and Tibetan Yoga, and he would be the last to advocate yoga as a means to attain personal occult powers, to satisfy cold intellectual curiosity, or for other selfish ends; but here and there in the Treatises passages occur which might be construed or misconstrued as leading that way. One of these occurs on page 326, as the author himself points out.

This book should do much to awaken Western scholars and anthropologists from their ignorance of man's nature, and to arouse a proper respect for Oriental science, but it is difficult to appraise its value to the Theosophist who already has his glorious yoga-teachings in H. P. Blavatsky's *Voice of the Silence*, and elsewhere. These are the principles and practices that the world needs for its salvation, and the work of the Theosophical disciple is well marked out therein. As H. P. Blavatsky says, "Occultism is the Science of Life, the Art of Living." And, "It is *altruism*, not *ego-ism* even in its most legal and noble conception, that can lead the unit to merge its little Self in the Universal Selves." It may be, and probably is, an excellent provision of Nature that scientific Tibetan Yoga, even on a lower level than the highest Atma-Vidya of the Masters of the Great Lodge, and more or less entangled with inferior practices, should be kept alive by a small section of that remarkable, isolated race; but, except as an intellectual study for Western scholars,

useful in breaking up the false view of Oriental "superstition" so-called, it does not seem that its introduction in any widespread form in the West would be advantageous. In this hotbed of personal ambitions, personal desires, unrest and emotionalism, the results would be dangerous in the extreme. Already the craze for so-called "occultism" has done much harm in the West. At best, under present conditions here, the Tibetan semi-esoteric yoga would produce Pratyeka-occultists, while the probability of making proficient in Black Magic is almost infinitely great. The wise words of W. Q. Judge express what is the real need of the West:

What then is the panacea finally, the royal talisman? It is DUTY, Selflessness. Duty persistently followed is the highest yoga. . . . If you can do no more than duty it will bring you to the goal. . . . It is that boundless charity of love that led Buddha to say: "Let the sins of this dark age fall on me that the world may be saved," and not a desire to escape or for knowledge. It is expressed in the words: THE FIRST STEP IN TRUE MAGIC IS DEVOTION TO THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines, or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path*, according to the late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English rendering. Arranged and Edited with Introductions and Annotations to serve as a Commentary by W. Y. Evans-Wentz. Oxford University Press. \$6.00. pp. 385. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHY OF GEORGE RUSSELL ("Æ") — H. F. Norman

How can Theosophy be other than one and single; can it mean one thing for Boehme and another for Paracelsus? If such questions should spring to the reader's mind on reading the title to this inquiry into the meanings which life disclosed to George Russell, and with which, in turn, his poet's insight illuminated the minds of others, his contemporaries, let me hasten to explain that neither is this the occasion nor have I the equipment for so minute an inquisition into philosophical technique. It may be contended that human capacity being limited relatively to ideas, there must be as many Theosophies as Theosophists, but it may be retorted, divine wisdom must be fundamentally one. I shall contest neither thesis. I would neither entangle my pen in those intellectual thickets through which the heterodox may seek an escape from heresy-hunters nor ply it to tighten the knots of some straitlaced orthodoxy. I aim merely at some partial revelation based on an intimate knowledge extending beyond four decades of the life and ideas of a friend, one to whom the debt of his generation is greater than it knows and who constantly declared himself to be the debtor of early inspirations which he knew and named as Theosophy.

Two streams of influence flowed from him which watered the mental and spiritual soil of his time and environment. He was in love with brotherhood; he was perhaps equally enamored of liberty. Generally commingling, though the currents of each could be severally traced, they were his river of life. Nourished, himself, upon the scriptures of the world and their great interpreters of ancient times — Plato, Plotinus, Patanjali, Lao-Tse, the Evangelists, Paul, and of later date Blake, or amongst his own contemporaries Blavatsky, Judge, and "Jasper Niemand," — he passed on to his associates the inspirations he had imbibed. Beyond this, the substance of his incommensurable conversation, the rhythm, form, or content of his writing, and in the

ennobling texture of his own life, he wrought a rich tapestry of being which transferred itself pictorially from his own visioning to the mind-stuff of his contemporaries by virtue of a gay and unpretending spirit, dear to his intimates and sensed by all who knew him. It is fitting, therefore, to inquire into these achieved consummations of ideal and reality, the inspirations which enriched him, the response they evoked within him, and their influence on others.

The psychical elements which make of an individual man the poet or the seer are his own secret, if indeed they are known even to himself. There may be some scarcely decipherable prescription for it: the mixture, so much sensibility and so much courage, so much integrity and so much love, add life *quant. suff.* But the quantities are never clearly written and in George Russell when — to change the metaphor — we find the commingling of two loves in a common flame, the love of brotherhood, the love of freedom, we cannot say that either of them was the aboriginal fire, kindled first, or whether one was the actual flame and the other the warmth it shed. But the greater love, though we must think of both as one, the love of universal brotherhood, he would without hesitation have traced to an archaic source. His earliest thinking concerned the *Archaeus* or World Soul, on which he brooded continually — "one thing in all things" though multiple in manifestation, made concrete in meditation as stones, animals, men, gods, all but images of the real as he fastened his mind and fashioned his will towards the evolution of spirituality within him and without him. It did not relate itself to humanity alone, this spirit of the universe, but descending into the soil spoke in the green beings that flower upon it no less than in the beast springing out of it, the bird in the tree-top, the light in the sky. Here was spiritual Nature, "the Mighty Mother" inspiring love for the lovely things she made. The *ethos* of this brotherhood was thus no less an *aisthetikon*, visionary, beautiful. If in this constantly returning mood *Æ* felt moved towards and for blossoming things in their lowly setting of earth as others feel for squirrel or deer, and showed more concern for the voices of the plants than with the songs of birds, and if to his sensitive inner ear primrose

or anemone raised its meek plaint when he plucked it, and the texture of soil or stone became fuel for his imagination as he handled it, he infected his companions with those experiences until we asked ourselves: is there indeed a true clairaudience in these heard protestations of the blossoming weeds, or is all this but wilful phantasy? And to companions training their will like him upon the *Yoga Aphorisms* of Patanjali such flower-voices became the attainment of that delicate intuition they sought themselves as the crown of a similar discipline of concentration: "He hears the music of the opening buds and knoweth what is passing in the mind of the ant."

And for him, as devotee of Nature: As below, so above! Kinship with the One Life, which he drank at Oriental fountains, extended beyond the confederacies of Earth and the waking world, through the mid-world of dream in which he was so much at home, into the realm of deep sleep to the demi-gods and other denizens of vision, beings of romance to others, of a deeper reality to him. "But isn't he a bit of a humbug," said one intelligent and not unfriendly critic, "he and his fairies?" No; there was no make-believe on his plane of vision, no puckishness in his world of faery. And if in these phases of the life of the psyche there was withdrawal from the light of common day, the munificent universality of comradeship re-earthed him swiftly in the presence of those who studied with him the Theosophical literature reminding him that "the universe exists for purposes of soul."

Yet not only those whose characters were storm-proof experienced the pleasures of his companionship. I know not how many were led — though I could name several — to seeking truth or to right living because his moral generosity rescued them from a life of mere excitement and sensation, men whose sensitive but infirm wills he drew to Theosophical study and exercise. For, as he drew his cosmogony from *The Secret Doctrine* and his psychology from kindred sources, he drew his individual ethics mainly from Judge, from the *Letters That Have Helped Me*, still more from the redaction of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and most of all from a vivid, pervasive, albeit externally slender, personal contact. The loss by death of that spiritual

chieftainship did not lessen Æ's reliance on the faiths in which it was rooted, and I believe he would wish to have that asserted. Of those faiths the most comprehensive was also the most poignant: "cast no one out of your heart." And this the reader should understand was no mere sentimental emotion. Brotherhood was accepted in a spirit of realism as "a fact in Nature" and it followed that many who stumbled by the wayside found in George Russell a potent helper. At his funeral one mourner, some untoward act of whose in days long past had brought suffering in its train, a lapse which would have caused scorn or aversion from others but compassionate aid from him, being questioned by a bystander at a most lavish gift of flowers being carried to his coffin, answered with unemotional cogency, "I would have died for him."

Nor were his beneficences isolated to occasional cases of distress. They were habitual and they were imparted in that spirit in which Madame Blavatsky had written: "Whoever feels his interests are one with those poorer or less fortunate than himself . . . who is ready to hold out a helping hand to the suffering is a Theosophist by birth and right." Thus public causes which were external lime-lit activities for others who espoused them were for George Russell lit up by an illumination from within, shining as through the stained glass windows of a richly colored soul. Claims for labor which he held to be fundamentally just ceased for him to belong to polemical politics and became a challenge from karman causing him to trample on a natural shyness, mount the rostrum, and rain down upon a mass meeting the fire of a burning eloquence.

A like impartation of moral beauty overflowed from the private heart into the commonwealth when he placed his great gifts at the service of the co-operative movement. Horace Plunkett had felt that that movement of which he was the mind and will needed a soul. The poet W. B. Yeats, a friend of both, brought them together and Russell became the inspirer of Irish co-operation, whose reverberations flowed out into Europe, Asia, the United States, and Africa.

Just as brotherhood in its widest scope was the sun in Russell's horizon, so freedom lit the campfires on his advancing path as he battled for justice, illuminating the dark places in human life. This light was perhaps less fixed than the other and there are those who felt that its fervent energy imparted less light than warmth. But that light, as he saw it, was one in kind with noble inspirations: the "righteousness" of Hebrew seers, the 'equality' of Greek thinkers, Emerson's ideal of compensatory justice. In his concept of freedom he gave to others without reservation the rights he felt he must claim for himself and for his view of life. I was to learn this early in our contacts. Upon some diversity of outlook on a minor point of belief he had written to me, quoting Blake, "Your heaven doors are my hell gates." I was aghast, remembering the caustic amenities with which John Wesley had retorted upon Whitfield, "Your God is my devil." But I had misapprehended. Æ, painter as well as mystic, knew well that black and white are not the sole pigments upon the palette of the universe. He was in fact asserting the freedom of all souls to their own truth. He had imbibed a modern statement of an old teaching, one to which he made frequent reference in the words of Jasper Niemand, in 'The Vow of Poverty': "Come, go, do, abstain; an equal right is mine." I learned later that another aphorism of Blake's was always in his mind. "One law for the lion and the ox is oppression." Therefore a 'tolerance' of the beliefs of others was not a gift to be patronizingly bestowed; it was their right. Obligations of belief may only be imposed upon the self by the Self. If any misapply this liberty of thought and act, mistaking for weakness of will a refusal to constrain others towards one's own ethos or to requite evil with evil, well, karma would see to that. So, one must never question the motive of another but only one's own. This, as I apprehend him, was basic in George Russell. Those familiar with Judge's writings will hear in it an echo of his voice. Those who knew Russell will know it as wool in the texture of his being.

But I would not here overstate claims made on his behalf and which he would never have put forward for himself. It may well be that the beacon-fires of freedom are more fitful in their windblown flame than

the more tranquil light cast by the sun of brotherhood. What it is just to maintain is that in lighting fires of freedom he was prompted by the same sense of human dignity that inspired his early work for the Theosophical Society in whose interests they were first lit. That he did not continue in the Society, leaving it at about the time he became absorbed in public work, is no doubt the reason for a rumor I have heard, and now challenge, that he left Theosophy. It would be impertinence in me to apologize for facts which were exclusively his own concern, but disingenuous in discussing his relation to the Theosophical Movement to ignore them if, as I believe, a few brief sentences may help to dissipate mistaken inferences. Devoted to the T. S. of Madame Blavatsky's founding and Judge's fosterage and having, too, associations of respect and affection for their Successor, his attachment to the Society was strongly identified with a type of organization into which all could enter who deeply cared for brotherhood, whether they might call themselves 'freethinkers' or 'mystics' and for a title 'Theosophical' which yet proclaimed a mystical influence. With universal brotherhood as its single 'dogma,' an open membership, a spiritual objective, a free platform, he held the T. S. to be unique. I think that when Mrs. Tingley felt impelled to change its name and alter some articles in the Constitution he was of opinion (as was I) that membership must in practice become restricted to those who accepted the principle of hierarchies. It seems to some that in placing a more fully organized, more carefully selective and restrictive governing body at the center, responsibility became transferred from the rank and file to a more deeply indoctrinated group, so lessening the moral burdens borne by those furthest from the center. To others it seemed that acquiescence in these principles carried greater and not less responsibility for activities or ideals emanating from the center, and whose inner causes were not known. I think George Russell came to feel thus. The Constitution has since been modified and the questions and interpretations mooted here are not now matter for discussion. But I mention them because I realize that he himself had a feeling for the hierarchical principle, which gave me ground for surprise at his withdrawal from the new Constitution (shortly after my own) and

because I see in his bifurcation of outlook at this point the basis of the fallacious supposition that he had shifted his spiritual center of gravity. It is to that misconception that I demur. For, in fact, in re-constituting the old Hermetic Society, out of which the first Dublin Lodge of the T. S. had evolved, he was re-affirming his mystical outlook whilst offering a broad platform to all truth-seekers. The correspondence with Mrs. Tingley on points of difference was, I am sure, marked by good-will on his side. I know it was marked with affection on hers, and though it marked a phase in George Russell's activities it did not mark a break with archaic beliefs.

What those beliefs meant to him we have seen: faith in the oneness of life, in its spiritual laws, brotherhood, reincarnation, karman, these and the corresponding ideals inseparable from them, compassion, justice, the evolution of the human soul. Their vitality and continuousness were tested again and again. In Dublin on 'White Lotus Day,' 1933, he expressed, to a gathering met to commemorate the life and work of Madame Blavatsky, the extent of the debt to these incurred by the Irish Literary Movement of the nineties. In a letter I had from him in 1933 or 1934, he wrote that he would like his Hermetic Group to join the Dublin Theosophical Club. About the same time he expounded to me his idea in testing out karman by living in London for a while without informing people of his plans, and how there flowed to him naturally those who belonged to him, mystics, poets, artists; justifying his experiment. To a friend in London, who had launched with him on one of those broad swift rivers of interchanging talk which he loved, whose hurrying flow not even the traffic of Regent St. could retard, he turned sharply to emphasize a point and, "Surely, surely," he said, "you don't imagine that you and I have met for the first time in *this* life?"

So much for doctrines, but we have seen that these were not for Æ so vital as the spirit in which they are applied. That "old secret" to which he made perennial reference, that "what a man thinks, that he is," lived within him less as conceptual thought than as thinking actualized through the imagination and realized in deed and in spiritual achievement. Objectivized as reality, ideals which remain precepts to

others became 'things'; children of the soul, for him. Those ideologies of propaganda which shed a vague nimbus of half-thinking around the twilight moods of the sectarian and the partisan, remaining in the region of opinion even when they have crystallized into formal dogma, did not attract him; nor was he of those to whom complicated apprehensions of truth are seized by a strenuous exercise of the intellectual muscles, as athletes train lungs and limbs. Such training he reserved for the soul, exalting 'wisdom' above 'reason.' Because of this distinction, those of a different school did not always realize that his mental attitude was one of scrupulous integrity — but always to life, not always to those facts which the imagination has failed to inspire and illuminate. Thus though he gave mental hospitality to many aspects of the intellectual life, his own philosophy was of the inspiration and required an aesthetic setting, such as he found in the classic scriptures of the world or created in his own verse or prose. Great teaching always made for itself great — though it might be greatly simple — utterance. 'Lordly' was the adjective oftenest on his lips when he spoke of the *Upanishads* or quoted from the *Shepherd of Hermas* or the *Fourth Gospel*, over a partial translation of which he and his dear friend James Pryse worked together long ago. I believe that the aesthetic test may have influenced him in his relation to modern Theosophical literature and was perhaps an additional reason why his contacts with mystical writings of a later date than Judge's were not very close. But to compensate for this there was within him a growing comprehension of the needs and, yes, of the importance of the "souls of common men." Here no hyperaesthesia insulated him from the call of humanity. The mystic, he felt, is above all things practical and so must deploy his spiritual energies upon the field of human effort.

"There is no great and no small
To the Soul that knoweth all.
And where He cometh all things are
And He cometh everywhere."

But whilst, in his later years, Russell as editor and pamphleteer was so fully preoccupied with public events that except for the weekly

gatherings of his Hermetic Group the meditations of earlier decades filled a smaller part in the landscape of his life, it was still with those who cared to ascend with him the peaks of spiritual aspiration or revive the memories of spiritual experience that he found his most satisfying companionships; and as these companionships lessened — the last of the old Dublin Lodge Group to die was Dan Dunlop and this severance he felt acutely — he renewed again the companionships of the soul which he had made for himself through his intimacy with the spiritual classics, some of the simple subtil utterances of Blake, of Lao-Tse's *Tao Teh King*, or the grave beauty of the Gospels or the visions of the Apocalypse or, what moved him most of all, I think, the dialogs of Krishna with Arjuna. All these he found had wave-lengths synchronous with winged soaring words born in his own mind. Yet it was as hopes and faiths for all men, as a source for high deeds and for tempering the soul to the fires of daily living, not as remote symbols of a future golden age — he left that for the period of devachanic dream — that he applied his meditations and reveries to contemporary life, or translated them into picture and poetry. More than any of his generation whom I have intimately known he matched vision to life. Fundamentally poet and painter no less than seer, his was, as perhaps it must happen with every man, a Theosophy not of textbook, maxim or precept, not even primarily a body of cosmical doctrine — though all these were influences from behind — but a vision through the spiritualized imagination of what life intends, reaches out to, and means us to become.

The Theosophical Forum

WHY STUDY THEOSOPHY? — T. W. Willans

Because by such a study we will find the truth about life, showing us how to live, to understand life and value its wonderful possibilities and opportunities. To do this we shall find it necessary to acquire its basic propositions, and then work them out in our own lives with the rules and axioms given in Theosophy for that purpose, so that a study of Theosophy is not merely reading the books and trying to understand the teaching, but is a practical application of its basic propositions. This unfolds for us as we become skilled in the performance of action, the true meaning of the propositions. The reason for this is that with our present brain-mind consciousness we are mostly filled with erroneous ideas of life, so that we have to remove these false conceptions and replace them with true ones. This is done by demonstrating the Theosophical propositions and so convincing us of their truth, by making our actions harmonize with our words, and thus clarifying our consciousness.

For instance, the principal object of the Theosophical Society was originally to form the *nucleus* of a Universal Brotherhood, and scientifically this is perhaps the most fundamental principle of Theosophy, for I know of no other principle so far-reaching, with such marvelous ramifications in both universal and individual life, and conducive to such superb results for the good of all. Yet this intensely practical object was in the early days overlooked and put aside as a sentimental ideal, impossible of realization in our modern world, a mere ethical dream, by those who busied themselves with what they considered more useful or ornamental objects in the Theosophical program. Yet there were some members of the Theosophical Society, knowing something of the Mahatmans and their Divine Wisdom and knowledge of human life, who followed this principal object of the Theosophical Society, and under no consideration would permit it to be dropped, under pain of their complete severance from the Society.

While H. P. Blavatsky was alive she stood, with a few others, resolutely against every attempt made to subordinate that object to other interests, so this noble object was kept alive, not as a soulless thing of mere words only, or a kamic body of sentimental gush, but a *living entity* of true brotherhood, made by individuals united together in this common purpose: to be *themselves a universal brother*, bound in heart and mind together as one entity, though living physically in different nations and pre-eminently in our International Center, day by day and year by year growing more skilled in the particular part they had volunteered to play in the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood.

That this was actually done is a matter of historical record, and the influence of this determined action connected each one with all the progressive nations of the world through the individuals who formed this nucleus and were a living part of their particular nation; and some, being more international through strong past connections, were more deeply the nucleus than others, all together forming the fulcrum to move the world into better conditions with this 'lever of Archimedes.' We now see how this has had a most marked effect on the consciousness of modern life. On every hand we now hear most prominently advocated the vital necessity of brotherly action: in religion, in political life, amongst all classes of people, of all colors, and in all grades of social life. There cannot be an effect without a cause, and if a small number of men and women, intimately connected with the progressive nations throughout the world, made this stand for Brotherhood, and in themselves were strongly connected with infinitely more powerful brotherly interests, it is easy to understand the change of consciousness in public life. For we are all brothers, and bound together in one Universal Life, whether we know it or not.

If such a result has come about by the determination of a few to enjoy the life of impersonal Brotherhood, no matter what opposition might be placed before them, how much more will be done by further voluntary recruits! In the sacred cause of Universal Brotherhood there is room and work for all, for many generations to come, before we reach the flower of full fruition. Do you know that from the same

source by which we were inspired to join in this nucleus of Universal Brotherhood — in a word, from Those who speak only the truth — we hear that two-thirds of the world's evil will disappear into thin air when this preliminary work is accomplished? And mark this well: in our own natures, when we are sufficiently devoted and become a living expression of this nucleus, long before the general fruition is accomplished, two-thirds of *our* evil will disappear into thin air.

To be a true brother we forget self in working for others. Where? In our home, with the people we meet, and pre-eminently in any Lodge of the Theosophical Society; because it is in that Society that the nucleus has been growing to my knowledge for over forty years. Consequently we can get better results for our energies by joining with a living body, or with others, than by trying to do it all by ourselves.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — conducted by *C. J. Ryan*

"Consider the Heavens" (1)

Professor Moulton, the well-known astronomer of the University of Chicago and author of important standard works on astronomy and mathematics, has struck an entirely new note in his latest book. *Consider the Heavens* appears at the first glance to be nothing more than another guide to the stars similar to many which have been written of late by leading astronomers, but it is far more than this. While it gives an up-to-date though not too technical outline of the main facts and the historical sequences, and brilliantly discusses the most modern hypotheses, what gives it a unique distinction is the mental attitude of the author, his cultural background. We all know how bitterly Darwin regretted his alienation from poetry and the arts, owing to intense concentration on his own limited field. He said that he had practically become "a machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts"; he had atrophied his higher faculties in large measure. Dr. Moulton has not limited his outlook in that way and so it is more comprehensive and generous. He is not cramped by technicalities and, above all, he is not carried away by arguments based on assumptions. For instance, speaking of recent evidence that light has apparently been observed to travel across a distant nebula far more rapidly than the Einstein supposed limit, he says with dry humor:

We know, of course, that now one of the assumptions of relativity is that no velocity greater than that of light is possible, but it would be unscientific in a domain where so much is assumption to permit this fact to curtail our freedom.

While a master in so-called cold mathematics, Dr. Moulton is keenly alive to the 'warm glow' of art, music, and poetry, and is an ardent lover of Nature. All this cultural background has prepared him to extend legitimate scientific speculations to far wider horizons than

those of less comprehensive and intuitive minds. Yes, *intuitive*; for here is a profound thinker who has discovered for himself, so it seems from this book, some of the fundamental conceptions of the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy, facts about the cosmos and the great Intelligences behind appearances, which are of vital importance for the understanding of universal brotherhood and evolution. A Theosophical writer pointed out some years ago that a mental background of poetry, history, and the like, was almost a necessity for deep study of Theosophy, because it opened the heart and permitted the play of the intuitive faculty without which only an elementary understanding is possible. When scientists as a whole move in the direction indicated by our author and develop the other side of the nature it will be easy for them to grasp Theosophy and make their own work a thousand times more effective and beneficial to mankind.

While Dr. Moulton is a typical scientist in the highest sense and is naturally in sympathy with the general scientific attitude of concentration on the visible and the inductions therefrom, yet many passages in his book approach so closely to the Esoteric Philosophy that they might have been taken from Theosophical literature. However strongly his scientific training may try to keep his mind in mechanistic grooves, he is constantly climbing out of them and letting his intuition speak. He is a striking example of the highest scientific minds who are veering toward occult thought today.

In many places Dr. Moulton lifts his readers high above the ordinary scientific precedents and gives free rein to his 'scientific intuition,' showing, as we think, a courage and imagination greater than that of Jeans or even Planck in his treatment of the much-disputed problems of modern astro-physics. The general reader of scientific books and magazine articles is frequently puzzled by bald statements of high authorities that this or that doctrine is the teaching of 'Science,' while another equally responsible scientist either ignores them or calmly offers a contradictory doctrine in the name of 'Science'! We could give a dozen cases offhand, such as the nature of the Earth's core, the ancestry of man, natural selection, the 'canals' of Mars, the origin and

future of the moon, or 'the expansion of the universe.' Dr. Moulton treats of various disputed questions without dogmatism and with such independence that the reader will surely wish that more space had been given to them.

Dr. Moulton doubts the validity of the so-called Expansion of the Universe, regarding it as more probable that the universe is infinite, and that if any expansion is going on it is only a local and temporary phenomenon. If asked how the 'red shift' of the lines in the spectrum of the galaxies is to be explained unless the expansion is a universal process, he replies that the displacements are only *assumed* to be due to the velocities of recession, and that there are other reasonable explanations. He mentions other known displacements of spectral lines whose cause is not even guessed, and rightly declares that we are not justified in assuming that light itself suffers no changes in its journey through the depths of space and that the shift toward the red end of the spectrum is an illusion, a Doppler effect. He strongly supports the suggestion that the photons ('light-packets') coming from great distances have 'wasted away' a little during the journey, and that this fully explains the red shift. If so, and if Planck's 'constant h ' is really a constant as generally believed, the wave-frequencies of light would steadily increase in length with the increase of distance, as observation of the red shift shows, and the so-called expansion or explosion theory can be safely discarded. Dr. Zwicky of Mount Wilson Observatory has lately declared that there is more than one possible explanation of the red shift and that the expansion hypothesis has fatal defects.

Dr. Moulton objects to the expansion idea on another ground. It brings in the impossible notion that the *entire cosmos*, the all-inclusive order of Nature — not merely the visible galaxies and super-galaxies — is a comparatively recent creation. In fact, it would be far newer than the age of the majority of the stars — an absurdity. The reader must study his brilliant argument about so-called primordial creation for himself as it cannot even be summarized here. Dr. Moulton sees that there can never have been a primordial creation, but that the universe is infinite in every way, both in time and space, although it may have suffered

innumerable periodic or cyclic changes. He denies that the weird hypothesis of an expansion or explosion from "an original cosmic atom" has been established or even shown to be probable.

The Ancient Wisdom teaches a theory of rhythmic expansion and contraction in the cosmos, but of a different kind from the modern one. It is a periodic manifestation from the invisible to the visible, 'from within without,' *manvantara* and *pralaya*, a universal process which is reflected by analogy from the greatest to the smallest. This is a fundamental in all the world philosophies, and the modern notion is a distorted and materialized travesty. Dr. Moulton's intuition has rendered him very good service in this matter.

Analogy and cyclic repetition — purely Theosophical tenets of prime importance — are strongly insisted upon by him as keys to Nature's secrets, and he gives much attention to them in relation to the orderliness of the universe. Students of Theosophy are familiar with the concept of an orderly universe as opposed to a helter-skelter one. H. P. Blavatsky made this a first essential in understanding the teaching of Karman: cause and effect, not only in the physical world but in all planes of being, mental and spiritual. It is the basis of the need for reincarnation. It is encouraging to find Dr. Moulton emphasizing the orderliness of the universe.

In regard to Analogy we find him again in perfect harmony with some of the most profound teachings of Theosophy. In fact, he is using almost the words used in some of Dr. de Purucker's recent lectures. Starting from the varied suns and nebulae of our own galaxy, he leads us to the enormous star-clouds which in their aggregation compose the Milky Way (our native home-galaxy of billions of stars, etc.), and then onward to the neighbor galaxies, and ultimately to the farthest we can see, now measured to be five hundred million light-years away! But the analogy is more complete; the distant galaxies are grouped in clusters so as to form super-galaxies, fifty of which are now known. And where is this analogy to stop? He denies that it ever stops, or can stop in an *infinite* universe. Hard as it is for us to follow the concept of higher and greater

super-galaxies to the 'endless end,' any finite concept is still more unthinkable.

But that is not all; Dr. Moulton turns his attention toward the infinitely small, and works downward from the familiar earth to the molecule, the atom and the electron. Why should the electron or the proton be the minutest particle of matter any more than the galaxy is the greatest? He demands sub-electrons of the first order composed of still lesser particles, and so on *ad infinitum*. Perhaps if he understood the Theosophical teaching about the *laya* centers when 'matter' changes its nature, he would modify his view about the *infinite* series of diminishing *physical* particles. But his argument in favor of the universality of analogy and cycles in Nature is admirable so far as it goes.

This harmonious agreement with the Ancient Wisdom is not all. There is a still more surprising claim, and one which we do not recollect having been made by any Western philosopher till now. The steady increase in size of the material building-blocks of the universe, from the electron to the inconceivably vast super-galaxies, is associated in Theosophy with a hierarchical arrangement of conscious beings. What does Dr. Moulton think? He dares to suggest that the sub-electrons smaller than the electron may well be "*molecules of conscious being* that live through a million generations in what is to us a second of time," and that the enormous super-galaxies "may similarly be the *molecules of conscious beings* whose life-cycles consume unimaginable intervals of time"! (italics ours). In fact, that all is composed of conscious hierarchies of beings, one of the simplest and most beautiful facts in Nature, the foundation of the reality of universal brotherhood. As the Lord Buddha said:

To the eye of flesh, plants and trees appear to be gross matter. But to the eye of a Buddha they are composed of minute spiritual particles. . . . Grass, trees, countries, the earth itself, all these shall wholly enter into enlightenment.

Dr. Moulton brings forward many other views in harmony with

Theosophy which we unfortunately have no room to mention, but a word must be said about the 'running down' of the universe to final absolute death, entropy, with no probability of its ever 'winding up,' the notion so strongly advocated by Jeans and many other physicists. Dr. Moulton will have none of it. The discovery of the tremendous forces released by the disintegration of the radium atom makes it extremely probable that still greater energies are stored in the subatomic or sub-electronic levels, and are only awaiting appropriate means of release. Carried farther still, it would seem that we might approach an *infinite* source of energy, and that the idea of a running-down universe is nothing but a bogey. If there is no need to assume an end of all things, there is no necessity to imagine a beginning, or a 'Creator' separate from his 'Creation.' Dr. Moulton handles this logical argument with the same skill that he uses in his other criticisms of the numerous unproved assumptions in astro-physics now current, which are too readily supposed by the lay public to be established facts.

We strongly recommend students of Theosophy to read this remarkable book, for it not only contains a fascinatingly interesting account of the 'stars in their courses' suitable for the non-technical reader, but it provides a wealth of scientific argument in favor of the Esoteric Wisdom. Naturally, we cannot expect Dr. Moulton to sympathize in all points with the teachings of Theosophy, and we regret being unable here to touch on some of his differences. It is sufficient to say that we believe a still deeper call upon his intuition would lead to the discovery that there are an infinitude of planes of being and consciousness beyond or, more properly, *within* the physical plane to which our everyday perception is confined through the limitations of our senses. If the galaxies and super-galaxies extend in gradation of immensity beyond conception, so do the hierarchies of *beings*, and also planes of consciousness and corresponding grades of subtil 'matter' up to Nirvana and beyond. "In my Father's house are many mansions." The nature of the universe is far more mysterious than science suspects, and the physical worlds are only the visible part of the training-ground for immortal spirits.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Consider the Heavens*, by Forest Ray Moulton. Doubleday, Doran & Co. New York. 332 pp. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 293-297

Question 293. *Much has been said of the blackness of our present age, the Kali-Yuga, and indeed we witness such tragedies around us today that the natural cry arises: Is there good in Kali-Yuga? Is mankind doomed to spiritual disaster, inescapably destined to go under without hope?*

G. de P. — We live in a very interesting age, a time when history is in the making. I do not think that in the recorded annals that are open to us at the present time there has ever been an epoch when serious-minded students of the Ancient Wisdom, which we call Theosophy, have the opportunities that now *we* have. It is precisely the stress and the strain which are opening our hearts and tearing the veils away from our minds. It is the same thought that our Masters have told us applies to Kali-Yuga, the Iron Age, a hard, rigid age where everything moves intensely and intensively and where everything is difficult; but precisely the age in which spiritual and intellectual advancement can be made most quickly. There actually have been ages in the past when chelas or students have longed for conditions to be more difficult than they were, to give them the chance to advance faster.

In the Golden Age, which it is beautiful to dream about, in the so-called "Age of Saturn," in the age of man's innocence, everything moved smoothly and beautifully and all surrounding being co-operated to make everything beautiful and pleasant; and there is something in our hearts that yearns to return to it; but it is not what the chela longs for. He longs for opportunity; he longs to climb; he longs to test what is in him, to grow from within.

Isn't it a strange paradox that the hardest, cruelest, of all the yugas is precisely the one in which the quickest advancement can be gained? I think there is a world of wisdom in this thought. Is there not something good in the kali-yuga? Must mankind go under without hope? Why it is the very time when the chances are the most frequent for progress! It

is the opportunity-time.

(The Editors draw attention also to W. Q. Judge's words quoted in *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Letter VII, Vol. I, p. 30:

"The age is black as hell, hard as iron. It is iron, it is Kali Yuga. Kali is always painted black. Yet Kali Yuga by its very nature, and terrible, swift momentum, permits one to do more with his energies in a shorter time than in any other Yuga. . . .")

Question 294. *What is the manner in which the great Cycles in the evolution of a Root-Race are repeated on a smaller scale in the development of the various sub-divisions of it? Do they not overlap each other to a considerable extent?*

G. de P. — You are asking what may seem to you to be a very simple question, but you yourself will see, after a moment's reflexion, that it is an extremely involved one, because your question calls for an entire elucidation or explaining of the intricacies of Nature's cyclical workings, and how the large includes the small. This is a tremendous order! It would take a volume just to answer your one question, which is a question which has occurred to many, and precisely because it is so involved is one reason why it has always been side-stepped from H. P. B.'s time to our own. It would take literally hundreds of pages to give a complete exposition, and days and days of hard work in dictation.

However, there are always general rules, and until the gods give me a year or two of more time, I am afraid you will have to be satisfied. The general rule is — and it is a wonderful key — that the small repeats the great, that little yugas not only are included in the greater yugas, but repeat them on their own little scales. Example: The present Fifth Root-Race, considered as a whole, and including all its minor sub-races, whether great or small, is now in its Kali-Yuga, which began something over five thousand years ago, at the death of Krishna, and will last into the future for about 427,000 years. Keep in mind that this is the Kali-Yuga of the entire Root-Race, the great Kali-Yuga.

Now, then, all the minor cycles or yugas of this Fifth Root-Race will,

some of them, be rising, and some of them be falling, and inter-working with each other, and yet will all be subject to the great Kali-Yuga of the Root-Race, which has just begun. Thus, a minor yuga or race may be in its youth, and rising to its flowering, but yet, because it is included in the great descending Kali-Yuga, will, although having a sharp rise, be nevertheless subject to the general decline of the great Kali-Yuga.

Next, every minor cycle, great or small, included in the Root-Race, in its turn is septenary, and therefore has its own little kali-yuga, and its numerical relations are about the same. Just as the great Kali-Yuga is 432 thousand years long, so a little kali-yuga may be perhaps only 432 years long, or possibly 4,320, or possibly even 43,200. The Hindu or Aryan Race, which was one of the very first sub-races of our own Fifth Race, is now in its own racial kali-yuga, in addition to belonging to the Fifth Root-Race, and therefore of course belonging to the great Kali-Yuga of the Root-Race. But it is striving to rise into flowering again, and will do so in the future.

In the small scale, Spain is in its short kali-yuga, as also Portugal. Italy has just ended a short kali-yuga and is striving to rise again.

Unfortunately, our Fifth Root-Race being a very materialistic one, i. e., being heavily sunken in matter due to our Fourth Round, these rises are mostly along the lines of materialisms. Furthermore, our own European general stock of Races, which we may call the European sub-race or family-race perhaps, has been steadily rising since the downfall of the Roman Empire, and will continue to rise, with various smaller shocks and falls and risings again, for some six or seven or possibly eight thousand years more. And then there will be a rapid descent until their kali-yuga is reached, a small kali-yuga, when there will be a great European catastrophe of Nature. This will be some sixteen or eighteen thousand years from now, possibly fifteen or possibly seventeen thousand years. I have never had time to get any really exact figures. But you can say 'about' 16,000 years hence. This period will see the submersion of the British Isles. Most of France will be under the water, also Holland, some of Spain, a good deal of Italy, etc., and other places.

Of course all this won't take place in a night. There will be premonitory signs, such as slow sinkings of the coast, and great earthquakes, etc. I hope the answer is helpful. If I get your main idea or question, its answer is in the first part of this my reply, to wit: that although the Fifth Root-Race as a whole is in its great Kali-Yuga, which had just begun some five thousand years ago, the smaller races may nevertheless each one be rising or falling, according to its own time-periods; and each such sub-race or smaller race has its own little kali-yuga repeated after the great one, and bearing the same proportion to the entire length of any such small race that the great Kali-Yuga does to the Root-Race. And this is the same, whether the sub-races are great sub-races, or small sub-races. Thus we have the hour of sixty minutes; we have the minute of sixty seconds; and we have the second of sixty thirds, although of course this last is almost never used in our days.

Thus it is that the rises overlap each other — and sometimes very considerably — but in the manner above outlined.

Question 295 (From Amsterdam, Holland). *What is the outward manifestation or physical body of the Silent Watcher of a Globe of the Planetary Chain, and of the Silent Watcher of the Planetary Chain itself?*

J. H. Fussell — First, let us bear in mind the most important of all keys: the law of Analogy; man is the microcosm of the Macrocosm; as above, so below. Thus there are many grades of Silent Watchers; every Galaxy, every Solar System, every Planetary Chain, every Globe, man, or even atom, has its Silent Watcher. So too is there a Silent Watcher for every Round, and for every Root-Race. But in each and every case the Silent Watcher has no physical body, and has no direct contact with the physical plane, although hierarchically working through imbodyed beings.

Let us then apply the law of Analogy. The Silent Watcher of each individual man is his Spiritual Monad, Atma-Buddhi: the Divine Flame, Atman manifesting through its spiritual vehicle, Buddhi, and thus hierarchically reaching down even to the physical body. Thus, also, the Silent Watcher of our Solar System is the Solar Spiritual Monad, verily

a God, one of the Cosmic Divinities. Man has a physical, material body, an earth-body, builded of the matters of this earth-plane (which is the lowest of the four manifested planes, on or in which four planes are the seven globes of our Planetary Chain). So too, our Planetary Chain Terra, and similarly each of the Planetary Chains of the seven Sacred Planets and of the Sun, may be said to have a physical body, namely, Globe D of each such Planetary Chain, and of the Sun. Otherwise these planets and the Sun would not be visible to us. This is explained in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (p. 176).

This cannot however be said of the other Globes (i. e., except Globe D) of the various Planetary chains, for the Globes A, B, C, and E, F, and G, are on planes other and higher than the physical, their outer manifestations being composed or built of the matters — corresponding with the 'physical' on this plane — of the planes on and in which they are. Thus, in each case, the outer manifestations of Globes A and G are formed of the matters of the 'Archetypal World' or plane; of Globes B and F of the matters of the 'Intellectual or Creative World' or plane; and of Globes C and E of the matters of the 'Substantial or Formative World' or plane (see *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 200).

From all the above it is therefore clear that the Silent Watcher has no physical body, because it is on the spiritual plane. And only indirectly, or hierarchically, through the many intermediate vehicles, through the intermediate planes, does the influence of the Silent Watcher reach the physical body, whether of man, or of the respective Globes D of the various Planetary Chains. It may perhaps help us to understand this if we consider the Silent Watcher as sending forth rays of light, of spiritual influence, from itself, which rays, passing from higher plane to lower plane, through vehicle after vehicle, finally reach the physical worlds and the physical body. For, truly, we may — and we do, at times of high aspiration and of noble unselfish endeavor — feel the inspiration of our Silent Watcher, the source of all our spiritual yearnings, and the inspirer of all the impersonal, unselfish love which at times we feel in our hearts. The Silent Watcher is the Spiritual Intelligence behind and permeating, but not imbodyed in, any physical

vehicle or body.

There is a deep occult truth contained in the Invocation given to us years ago by Katherine Tingley: "O my Divinity, thou dost blend with the earth . . . Thou dost radiate a Golden Light that . . . doth illumine even the darkest corners of the earth . . .", passing through the many intermediate planes and vehicles.

There are innumerable Silent Watchers, of varying rank, namely all those who have reached self-conscious spiritual status, who have made the Great Renunciation, who form the 'Guardian Wall' (spoken of in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*), who refuse to go beyond the 'Ring Pass-Not.' (See *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 207-8; *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, 183, 441, etc.)

Question 296 (from Holland). *Why is it that the ancients seemed to be so much cleverer than we?*

J- H. Fussell — Due to cyclic law — periods of comparative light alternating with periods of comparative darkness. As with men, so with nations and races: they are born, grow old and pass, and new ones take their place; so also with civilizations. Evolution and progress are not 'end-on'; they are never in one continuous, straight line, but are marked by rises and falls. Many such rises and falls occur in the history of every race, every people; periods of material advancement alternating with periods of material decline; periods of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment alternating with periods of intellectual darkness, ignorance, and superstition; periods of inquiry, research, and mental freedom, alternating with periods of mental slavery and dogmatism. "Light and darkness are the world's eternal ways," and along these ways individual men, nations, and whole races travel: now in the light, now in darkness. It is to be understood, however, that these rises and falls, these alternating periods, now of civilization and order and again of 'barbarism' and confusion, are all relative.

Individual men are born, pass through childhood, youth, maturity, and old age, and then die; but only to be reborn, reembodyed in new forms,

new times, and new conditions. So also do nations and races. In every case such re-embodiment, such new forms, conditions, and opportunities are the karmic results, the consequences, of the former embodiments; men, nations, and races alike reaping what they themselves have sown in the past. Just as a normal child, whatever be its inherent character and latent abilities — its latent 'cleverness,' to use the term employed in the question, its latent intellectual and spiritual faculties and powers — cannot express these during infancy and adolescence save as intimations, promises, of future developments; and just as in approaching old-age there is a dimming, a decline, even in many cases a loss of the powers and faculties, the 'cleverness' which had been more or less manifested during the now closing life — although such need not be if the life has been well lived — so with nations and races, and always in accordance with the national racial karma.

Hence, in accordance with the foregoing, the reason "why the ancients seemed to be so much cleverer than *we*" may be either (a) that 'we' are a young nation, still in childhood or adolescence, and have not yet attained to the flowering of inherent, latent, but as yet undeveloped (although in process of development) faculties and powers; or (b) that 'we' are an old nation which has passed its maturity and may even have reached extreme old age. As examples of the former we may instance (a) all the nations of North and South America; and of the latter (b) Egypt, India, Persia, China, and the North American Indians; while the European nations occupy varying positions between these, i. e., between (a) and (b), some of them on the decline, others in temporary obscurity but karmically destined to enter upon an even higher civilization than they have known in their past history, some again already awaking from obscurity. G. de Purucker writes in his latest work, just published, *The Esoteric Tradition* (pages 340-1): "Our civilization is at present a civilization in transition," and "civilizations . . . go and come again and again: have their life and pass, and return."

The above is a general answer to the question. As to the immediate causes of the loss of the Ancient Wisdom by any one nation, or group of

nations, we would have to consider the past life-history of that nation or group of nations. That however is another story, the telling of which we cannot here enter upon for lack of space.

Question 297. *You mentioned in your article 'Why Study Theosophy?' (1) that Theosophy was the basis of many religions. The majority of these believe in the existence of a personal God. Can you suggest the origin of the idea?*

A. Trevor Barker — The origin of the idea of a personal God is a long story. It is stated in Theosophical teachings that this idea is not an innate one. The real origin of the personal-God idea is found in the tendency of ignorant man to build a conception of Deity in terms of his own personal self, which is all he knows, and which is necessarily limited; and so he merely builds a big idea of himself and calls that 'God.' The personal God means, according to our European conceptions, an extra-cosmic Deity — that is to say, a being somehow outside of his universe (that is this universe), because he is said to be infinite, boundless, omnipresent, and at the same time somebody who can be prayed to, supplicated to save us from the effects of all the silly things that we have done in our lives.

I have always thought that the translation of the Latin word 'persona,' meaning a mask, is something that helps us particularly to understand our own — what we call — personality, the lower part of ourselves, that which hides the light. It is the external part which is the personality according to the Theosophical teaching, not the higher part, which is real; this lower, material part is the *mayavic*, the illusory part; and it may be helpful to some to look upon the personal-God idea as essentially an illusory concept.

This personal-God idea is one that the Theosophist does not countenance at all; and I should make it clear that it is the limited, dogmatic concept, particularly of the Christian Churches, which gives such a very false idea of Deity, and which exhorts men and women to look outside of themselves for the source of their salvation. But the Theosophist comes in and directs men's attention to the Divinity within

him, which in very truth is a personal divinity for each man; and whilst he takes away with one hand, he gives you something which is really far more sublime; for Theosophy teaches self-dependence; it follows the teaching of the Christian Avatara: that the Kingdom of Heaven is within you. It is to that Deity that we appeal in every man. But this 'personal' God that we aspire towards, and whose light radiates in the heart of every man, this Immortal entity, collectively the aggregate of all the Divinities in our Solar System or our Universal Cosmos together, makes up what is called the Universal World-Soul, and all men are rooted in That, have their being in That, and sooner or later can consciously raise themselves by their unity with that which It represents.

FOOTNOTE:

1. THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, January, 1936. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERY-TEACHINGS — *Leoline L. Wright*

There is a vital relation between our modern age, with its hardbitten objectives and its determinism to the actual, and the purpose underlying a genuine Mystery-School. For it is no exaggeration to say that a Mystery-School, or Esoteric University, is the only place where the Science of the Actual may be found.

It is interesting to observe that though there has never been a time in the history of the known world when so many schools, academies, educational leagues, and universities have flourished as at the present time, it is exactly in this present moment that we are unable to say what is the matter with civilization. We are so far from any knowledge of the actual that we do not really know how to deal with a single one of our problems — poverty, crime, war, drug-addiction, and similar evils. They are all real enough, but their cause and cure is not taught in our universities. We undoubtedly lack some key — some great co-ordinating fact without which we shall never be able to find our way out of the wild disorder which is modern life.

A Mystery-School teaches the facts about the invisible Universe. That is why it is a *Mystery-School*. The Mysteries are not something which cannot be known: they are facts of life which for the time being are hidden from our comprehension. Was there ever a period in man's development when he was aware of so many unexplained conditions as he is at this moment? We are, as already suggested, surrounded by inexplicable mysteries. We need a school where the facts which underlie them can be explained to us.

A Mystery-School, then, is a University which teaches the science of the invisible Universe, where the reason for things can be found. That is where the key, the great co-ordinating fact, lies — in the existence of an invisible Universe.

When we guide and care for a child we are watching the development

of something from the invisible to the visible world — the, to us, occult evolution of an individuality. When we look upon a chair or a crystal we behold a coherence of atoms which we can see only because they are in such rapid motion that they impinge upon our physical vision. But that which the object seen really is — the invisible center of energy holding together those atoms — belongs to the realm of the occult and will never be visible to our physical vision. In the case of the chair it is the idea of some creative brain, co-ordinating visible energies, that has brought the artifact into being: in the case of the crystal it is invisible Nature that has been at work.

What are these energies which are the 'actual' at the back of all visible forms? Is it not here that we must seek for the Science of Reality: in the invisible, the causal worlds?

It is to serve this need, this present insistent demand for a Science of Reality, that the Mystery-Schools of Antiquity have come again into being. Lost to humanity through many centuries, their beacons are once more lighted at this opening of the New Era. And they are restoring to education other lost keys, some among which are imbodyed in famous sayings of antiquity: *Man, know thyself; Man is a Microcosm of the Macrocosm; As it is above, so it is below; as it is below, so it is above.*

It is of course not surprising that science and education have lost these keys. They were, so to speak, thrown upon the dust-heap when Justinian closed the last of the Mystery-Schools. Man's attention was then definitely forced from a study of himself as the key to reality into a study of systems and physical phenomena. When his gaze was directed within it was to a religious phantasmagoria constructed upon theological speculation. And the final return to nature and 'reason' was inevitably hampered by its own unconscious reaction towards the illusive phenomena of the exterior physical world.

But all this has been changing in the last fifty years, particularly since the founding of the Theosophical Society and the publication of *The Secret Doctrine*. So that the man who is in harmony with the *Zeitgeist* is

all for the mysteries — those metaphysical facts and that science of consciousness which even physicists and biologists begin to recognise as the background of life.

The final key to all our problems is the spiritual psychology of the Mystery-Teachings. Man, know thyself, and in so knowing gain understanding and mastery of the invisible Universe! Above the lintel of the newly re-established Esoteric University we can read the invitation of the Great Teachers, the Mahatmans, who have restored its opportunities to the world: *Knock! and it shall be opened unto you!*

The Theosophical Forum

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD — *Clifton Meek*

The purpose of Theosophy and the aim of Theosophists is not that of converting men to a particular form of religious belief, but rather of awakening them to the ultimate truth behind all religion: that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in Nature, and that the difficulties facing humanity today were brought about by the fact that men have persistently refused to recognise this paramount and vital truth, and live accordingly.

Between the lines of recorded history, in the ruins of ancient civilizations, the tragic story of the human race is written. Nations and civilizations flourish and decay, leaving but crumbling ruins in their wake to commemorate their former glory and excite the curiosity and speculative theories of future generations. The monumental relics of antiquity which have withstood the ravages of time and elements and the destructive vandalism of barbarous hordes and religious fanaticism, stand as mute evidence that civilizations greater than our own, having reached the zenith of material and even intellectual progress, crashed for the want of a most necessary counterbalance — the practice of Universal Brotherhood among mankind.

In these days when the thought atmosphere of the world is so impregnated with fear of wars, crime-waves, and economic uncertainty, man is painfully learning that the 'bread and circus' philosophy of life — the glorified materialism which has been dressed in all the glamor human ingenuity could devise — will never satisfy his innate hunger for spiritual light and knowledge. It will not even carry him across the chasm of material difficulties to which it has brought him.

The idea of Universal Brotherhood among mankind is nothing new; every age has talked of it, but none has brought it to a reality in the external conditions of life. Quite to the contrary, the race clings to the

great illusion of human selfishness, which hangs like a pall over mankind and which time and time again has been the undoing of individuals, nations, and civilizations, as one age repeats the errors of the preceding one. Each age has looked upon the idea of Universal Brotherhood as a Utopian ideal, an experiment to be tried out by some future generation. To many it is the fantastical dream of impractical idealists, and is as odious to the twentieth century materialist as it was to the decadent and brutal Romans two thousand years ago. Man persists in climbing over man, nation over nation, and race over race, and as one great Theosophist has said: "Unbrotherliness is the insanity of the age."

Universal Brotherhood has been the keynote of every religion worthy of the name. It was proclaimed by the great teachers of the race before the pyramids were built, and alone will be the ideal of an enlightened humanity after they have resolved into impalpable dust.

It was the basic teaching of Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Lao-Tse, Confucius, and the host of Elder Brothers who have sought to show mankind the way to a happier existence on earth; and it will become a living reality when the creeds and dogmas of their followers are forgotten; for it is the only fundamental religious teaching upon which it is possible for all men to agree. Articles of faith, man-made dogmas, and theological speculations can never successfully be substituted for a love of collective humanity, regardless of race, color, or creed. The former are the fields in which human misunderstanding, strife, and separateness flourish, while the latter sweeps before it all class-hatreds and their resultant train of evils.

Universal Brotherhood is the only panacea for the evils of every age, but the one which really never has been tried. Man rides roughshod over his own kind in defiance of the wisest teachings of all ages; the bitter experiences of the past, the obvious fact that mankind is working out a common destiny, and the stupidity of human selfishness are marvelous to behold. When one-half the world doesn't care how the other half lives, or worse still, when it doesn't want it to live, human

progress cannot be expected to pursue an even tenor.

Theosophy is dedicated to the work of awakening in the hearts and minds of men the realization of the spiritual unity of all, and when once this great truth of Nature is understood by the thinking and intelligent people of our age, the external difficulties confronting mankind will automatically be corrected to a very great degree. In the last analysis, these problems have their origin in the minds of men — wrong thinking, wrong ideals, and primarily human selfishness. It is in the psychological complex of human nature with its present lack of understanding, due to the absence of a permanent and satisfying philosophy of life, that the difficulty lies, and it is there alone that a lasting remedy is to be effected.

Any other, principally those of a political or economic nature, regardless of how worthy they may be in themselves, are merely palliative and temporary, rather than regenerative and permanent.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS TRANSMIGRATION?

First the word itself: what does it mean? *Trans* means across; to *migrate* means to travel into a new country. What does it apply to? It applies to the tiny, tiny lives which go to make up not only man's body, but all his psycho-mental and emotional nature. What are these tiny lives? They are called by science Atoms, but Theosophy goes one step farther and calls them Life-Atoms. These Life-Atoms reside in the heart of and build the physical atom. They are so numerous that they make up everything that is in the Universe, visible and invisible. They help build man's body, his emotional fabric; his thoughts work through them, and there are even life-atoms active in his spiritual life. So much in brief as to what man and his life-atoms are.

The thing to remember is that a life-atom is the 'Soul,' the active principle of the physical atom. Without this 'Soul' or 'Heart-life' an atom would be a mere empty shell, incapable of any action whatsoever.

How do these life-atoms operate? During a man's life, they are limited in their action because the man dominates them. By his stronger will, intellect, and spiritual powers, he controls these tiny lives. They absorb their life from him, just as we live in the Universe and absorb life from it. If we live in harmony, we generate constructive entities; if we lead misshapen lives, we give birth to destructive forces. During our life they must travel as we travel. It might be likened to many people on a railroad train under the dominance of the engineer; we can do nothing but stay on it and do as he says till we come to the end of the journey. If the engineer and the train-crew are friendly, if the train runs smoothly, if the passengers are congenial, we benefit. If the contrary is the case, we leave the train ill and unhappy. Thus it is with the life-atoms we control. It is really a Brotherhood; we help or hinder them and they help or hinder us.

How do they transmigrate? When a man dies his body disintegrates.

The atoms and life-atoms which compose it are freed, and go wherever they find attraction. They go to the place or to the thing they like best or are most nearly akin to. Some go to build the soil, others help build the flowers, the trees; some help build the bodies of animals and other lower creatures. Some go to help build the bodies of other human beings. Those which absorbed the good things from us go to help the beautiful things in Nature. Those which absorbed weaknesses from us, from our evil thoughts and actions, help to build the ugly things in Nature. Those which acted through our emotions, help build the emotions of other people, or of animals.

The most subtil reaction comes from the mental fabric of the man who was. If his thoughts were of the hateful, jealous, murderous type, the mental life-atoms help build the thought-fabric of criminals, dope-fiends, drunkards and weaklings. If his thoughts were centered around acts of beauty, sympathy, understanding, compassion, if in general his thoughts were of a harmonious, kindly, gentle type, these life-atoms help build the mental fabric of the gentler and more advanced beasts, and the higher intellectual and spiritual type of human beings. The whole teaching of Transmigration hinges on the activities of the life-atoms — it is they which transmigrate — not the Soul of Man. The Soul of Man cannot possibly ever retrograde into the beast-kingdom. The saying is "Once a Man, always a Man." The goal of man is Divinity. The Soul of Man reincarnates: the Life-Atoms transmigrate. Involved in this teaching is the basis and foundation of one of the aspects of Moral Ethics and Universal Brotherhood.

"We believe in no *creation*, but in the periodical and consecutive appearances of the universe from the subjective on to the objective plane of being, at regular intervals of time, covering periods of immense duration." — H. P. Blavatsky

HELPERS OF HUMANITY — *Marion Bustin*

What are Helpers of Humanity? How did they come to be Helpers? Why are they able to help us? What kind of help can they give? Who are they? Where? Why do we not know about them generally?

You yourself may some day be a Helper of Humanity. It may be you have already started upon the pathway that will guide you. Your very reading of this would seem to show that, for a searching for Truth is the first step upon the pathway.

And here is one great truth that we all know: that there are two (or more) sides to our natures. We have a higher side — call it the soul if you like, or the spirit. When we are unselfish; when we are helping another who is in trouble; when we are deliberately trying to conquer a weakness within ourselves, such as laziness, envy, or dishonesty, then we are living in the highest part of ourselves, the divine part of us, the part that is close to the Inner God.

Then there is the lower side of us, the something in us that tempts us to be selfish or careless, or to take advantage of another's helplessness.

And between my fine nature and my selfish nature stands — what? What is it between these two? A something that can choose; that can say, I will be honest; I choose to be honest; I will not gain wealth or happiness for myself by hurting another. Or else this 'something' can choose to hurt others. You answer, It is the mind that can choose; the mind that can have such ennobling, unselfish thoughts or that can be very cruel and evil. It is the mind that must decide to follow the Path that leads towards our higher, the highest Self. For it is a Path or a journey; and to guide us there stretches a golden thread between that finest part of ourself — our highest Self that dwells in some upper, or inner, mysterious region — and our mind. And this link that binds us to our best part can be broad and strong; or else weak and ready to break.

But, you ask, what has all this to do with the Helpers of Humanity? It shows us how there came to be such men. There are men in the world today who have lived so unselfishly through many, very many lives, purifying their thoughts, combating each impulse to do wrong; failing often, yet ever trying again, until finally they have made the link between themselves and their divine nature so strong, they have drawn so close to it, that in many cases they have come to live entirely in this finest part. Even as you and I are able to do it for short intervals, they do it all the time.

Why are these men so able to help us? What kind of help can they give? They can give us knowledge, wisdom; they can tell us how to solve all our problems and how to avoid future sorrow. But, how do they know? How do men know anything? Einstein — where do his brilliant thoughts come from? Where did Shakespeare find his immortal poetry, immortal thoughts? Inventors, geniuses, great musicians — whence come their inspirations? Isn't there some mysterious place, some inner hidden side of nature, where inspiration comes from, where our conscience dwells, and our intuition? A world that only those with pure intentions ever reach, a divine sort of world? These great men have so opened their minds, so placed their thoughts away from their own personal concerns and personal desires, that great knowledge comes to them. But greater far could come. It is coming. Look at all the wonders of modern science, only beginning to unfold around us. But the scientists are generally interested only in material results, in knowledge about things we can see or feel or hear. Surely there is a greater, loftier wisdom than this, in the depths of the divine world? There is; and this wisdom comes to these men who have conquered selfishness, who are close to the divine within them. For they are so much closer to the unseen world where knowledge is than are any ordinary geniuses.

These men (or women) who live always in their highest self — as we do only occasionally, but could learn to do always — these men find the answers to the ancient puzzles, such as: — What is life for? Why must we suffer? What happens to our inner, unseen selves when we die? Do

we ever return to this earth again? What is the history of mankind? Were there men on earth a million years ago? They gained this wisdom after lives of unselfishness and earnest striving; and they yearn to help us too, to guide us that we may avoid mistakes and sorrow, that we may advance faster into our highest selves. These men, who were ordinary men long ago, are the Helpers of Humanity. Such men there have always been, and in all ages the truth about life has been known by such as these.

Where are these Helpers, who know the Truths of life? I understand they are everywhere among mankind — men unassuming, for fame and fortune they do not want; men with gentleness and power written upon their brows. Forgetful of self, they work among us, and only the pure of heart, those who strive to be always their best self, can know who these men are.

They, with their divine wisdom, know when any one of us resolves to try to be better. They can perceive the golden link that joins each of us with our soul — I love best to think of it as a ray shining from the soul down into the mind. These Helpers see this ray grow broader, more radiant, as each noble thought or act helps to clear away the mists between the mind and the flaming soul.

You have been thinking perhaps of Jesus the Christ, or of Buddha of India, or of Confucius, the great Chinese Teacher. Yes, they and many others have been our greatest Helpers. And all had exactly the same message, for there can be only one Truth. The truth they teach tells us that we are in this world only to learn to be honest, kind, loyal, all the things we know we should be; that we must return to this Earth again and again, through many lives, until these lessons are learned; but that then we can rise to experiences of great happiness, living in that mysterious inner world that most people feel must exist somewhere. These great Helpers have gained this release from the troubles of Earth, yet they come to help us out of pity for us, sorrow for our ignorance, the desire to show us how to live. They tell us that ignorance is the cause of all evil, all sorrow; that if we fully realized that every

action of ours has a corresponding result, that good brings good, and that if we do wrong we must suffer, then we would consider our actions more carefully. This is a natural law, natural as Newton's law of gravitation, and is called Karman.

Of course there are many helpers less advanced than Jesus and Buddha, who nevertheless have found that happiness lies in helping others. Many are not far ahead of us along the road toward perfection. Encouraging fact! We can join with them. They stretch out their hands to help us, and they must do it, for unselfish service is what takes them, takes us, upward, inward to the shining soul within each one of us: the beautiful something in us that tries always to help us. And as we advance we too must pass on what we have learned — and so we become at once helpers of humanity.

Indeed that is all that the Theosophical Society exists for. Every true Theosophist has no other aim in life but to train himself to be a helper; that is, to show others how they can help themselves, for that is the only kind of assistance that is lasting. You, if you are an earnest seeker after truth, know that that is the only way that one can help another, thus following the Great Helpers.

The Theosophical Forum

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PAIN — *William S. Flathe*

Theosophy should be studied with the idea of taking time by the forelock and hewing out one's own evolutionary pathway — consciously. The one who does not have such a comprehensive, complete philosophy as this Ancient Wisdom of ours suffers an irreparable loss, for, having no adequate idea of what life is all about, no insight into the plan and method of evolution, or the teaching that we are here to progress upward, ever onward, until we realize and express our innate divinity, he will be the one who must suffer thereby. He is the one whom Nature must prod on, or he goes to sleep in personal pleasures and self-sufficiency. But do we who have this marvelous, this golden philosophy of life, test its utilitarian aspects by putting it to use in our daily affairs? Each individual knows the answer to this for himself, and if not, he is no better than the man on the street who thinks personal pleasures are the summum bonum of existence.

Theosophy is nowhere more noble and stimulating than in its philosophy of pain. We see so much of it in this day that we conclude that suffering must play a necessary part in the great drama of life; and this is so. Man may be compared to a diamond in the rough. His personality, or that part of him that we meet in our daily affairs of life, is like the rough, uninteresting exterior of the diamond. Now to bring forth or expose the true brilliancy and beauty of the diamond this rough coating must come off. In other words, if man is to evolve and show forth his true divinity he must break away from his personality, and Nature is the great lapidary who presses this ugly coat of personality against the wheel of terrestrial existence — and man emits a shriek of pain. Yet after each application to the wheel man dispenses with some of his grosser self and exposes something of the brilliancy, the beauty, of his divine self which lies underneath. In this way Nature breaks up that accumulated, crystallized mass called 'personality.'

Oh, that man could only see that Nature is never so prodigal of her

kindness, so bounteous of her benefits and cares, as when she is applying the whip-lash of adversity and making him suffer! How often is it only through pain that rends his whole being, through sorrows that blacken the day, through anguish that seems to make life a veritable hell, that man is made to learn, as on the dead ashes of these he rises to higher things. Apotheosis is ever by way of the Cross; pain and sorrow but lift us higher, for these are the travail of the soul. All birth entails suffering and anguish, and the birth of the soul is a thousandfold more intense. Let us, therefore, not eschew suffering when it comes. Pain is the great teacher, and this is the only way the unawakened man is saved from himself, from his enervating, restricting ways of living.

The Theosophical Forum

INFECTING LIFE WITH DIVINITY — *Kenneth Morris*

Till time's crowning how

To say that nothing's done till all is done.

By entering the Theosophical Society, you have proclaimed your intention to work for the betterment of humanity. You have realized that the world is in an awful condition; that that condition arises out of the wrong thoughts of men, and that those wrong thoughts are the children of ignorance, of false ideas about life. You have determined that in every way possible to you, you will combat ignorance and false ideas by spreading Theosophy; that you will combat wrong thought by making yourself a disseminating center of right thought; that you will leave every condition and situation you come on, better and sweeter than you found it; that you will get to work on human life to infect it with divinity and change it to divine life.

Now, where are you to begin and what is to be your field of labor? There may be great need for Theosophy in Abyssinia; but don't wait till you can meet that need, or you will wait forever. There may be someone in Middle Europe who is causing misery to thousands; but don't wait till you can change him, or you will go down useless to the grave. There may be a fellow-member in your lodge who appears to you to be doing much less than he might for the Work; but that does not concern you. You can do nothing about it. You cannot improve that situation by dwelling on it, by thinking of it, by worrying about it. While you are thinking about it, what is happening to yourself?

You are making of yourself simply a dynamo to generate un-brotherliness and so add to the causes of the world's sorrow. Everyone who thinks hostile or criticizing thoughts about another, is doing just that. He is worsening the one situation he can deal with, which is his own mind. He is throwing away his chances on his own one and only battlefield, which is himself. To think about the mote in your brother's

eye is to cultivate a good hefty beam in your own.

Love is the cement of the universe, the law and truth and inmost being of universal nature. The right or natural attitude of a self to the universe, to all other selves, all being, is harmony or love. All human misery results from living away from this central Law. Therefore the first step in propagating Theosophy, without which all other steps are useless, is, when you think of another person, to think only of what is noble in him; and if that is not apparent, remember that it is there however deeply hidden. Remember the teaching of Theosophy that the innermost self of every human being is a god. Remember it the more forcibly and insistently, the less sign appears of it on the surface. Criticize only yourself, because there your criticism can do good. Criticism of another does harm: to the criticizer, because it is poisoning his mind: to the criticized, because it is emphasizing and confirming him in his fault.

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THEOSOPHICAL NOTEBOOK: XVII

XVII — What is the Difference between a Visionary and a Sage or Seer?

The Seer or Sage is Master of things occult; he knows the ways of Nature because he has worked with her, and Nature has revealed to him her secrets of the universe. Through many initiations he has perfected his own inner self, so that he has resided in many mansions, and experienced true life as it really is.

The Visionary feels intuitively that Nature contains many secrets that he imagines he knows, but his knowledge consists mostly in blind faith that such things do exist; he therefore teaches according to his personal belief, or his limited knowledge of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. — Lucinda J. Turner

A seer is one who has his inner or spiritual eye developed through ages of right living and right thinking; and this mode of life in itself is a pathway that is open to us all if we but follow the Laws of Being. Seers are such outstanding historical figures as the Christ, the Buddha, Lao-Tse, Confucius, Krishna, Apollonius, Orpheus. Those Teachers behind the Theosophical Movement known as the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion may also be classed as Seers.

A Visionary, though not an ordinary man, is still far below the evolutionary attainment of a Seer, for he is still ruled by his brain-mind, and it is only intermittently that his nature is illumined by flashes of the spirit. — W. E. Schwede

When we speak of a visionary our mind immediately calls up something that is not stable, something that is transitory, illusive, or imaginary. A visionary, therefore, is one who has fanciful ideas of things as he thinks they are, or as he would like them to be.

A Seer, however, is one who sees, who knows because he is able to see. He has evolved to the point where his powers of perception are swayed

by nothing outside of himself. He *sees*; consequently he *knows*. A visionary *thinks* he knows. — Mamie Hageman

A visionary is one who visions the Truth, but colors it with his own imagination and personal conception, although he does not realize that he is doing so. The Seer or Sage is one who knows because he has actually seen and experienced the Truth of Divine Knowledge. In the hierarchy of Teachers, the visionary is one 'rung' above the genius; the Sage or Seer is on the highest 'rung,' in so far as we can understand in our present stage of evolution. The visionary is guided by his intuition only. The Sage has been taught through initiation, by those greater than himself. How can you distinguish? Look within your own heart and you will know if the teachings are true. — Claire Turner

A Great Seer or Sage gives teachings to the world which may be found to have existed at the heart of all World-Religions and Philosophies since time immemorial; a visionary gives to the world only the vagaries and intellectual fancies which may emanate directly from his own mind, or from within the intellectual belt immediately surrounding him. The teachings of a Great Seer or Sage are impersonal; the teachings of a visionary generally personal. The teachings of a Great Seer or Sage urge each and every man to look to the Christos within himself — Man Know Thyself! The visionary, on the other hand, teaches — Man, accept what *I* teach — which is but a reflexion of the personality. — Florence Mathews

Aside from natural evolution, the main difference between a visionary and a seer is that of spiritual guidance. A visionary is an untrained and uninitiated seer, whereas a true Seer is an initiated visionary. A visionary is so called because he has 'visions,' but due to lack of training in fully developing the spiritual faculties, the visions are invariably colored by the individual's emotional or imaginative nature. The 'vision' is only partly true, because the visionary's inner faculties are not fully developed.

A Seer is one who 'sees.' Through initiation he has been taught to perceive Truth in all its pristine purity, and thus to pass it on.

Therefore, seeing Universal Truth, his Teachings are universal, both in time and place. — Florence Wickenburg

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THE FOUR YUGAS (1)

Yuga means 'Age,' and all over the world we find traditions of the Four Ages of Man. H. P. Blavatsky says that "tradition is oral history," and we believe that it is. The Greeks called these Ages the Golden, the Silver, the Bronze, and the Iron Ages. The ancient Aryans called them (and we use the same words today) Satya-yuga, Treta-yuga, Dvapara-yuga and Kali-yuga, or, translated, the Age of Truth, the Age of the Three Fires, the Age of the Number Two, and the Age of Strife. The four together make a Maha-yuga or Great Age.

SATYA-YUGA: The 'Age of Truth' or the Golden Age. It is the age of purity and justice, when truth and right conduct were natural to all. Swords, spears, and weapons of war had not been invented. Hatred, selfishness, fear, and sorrow were unknown. Fruits and grain sprang from the earth without labor. There was no winter, only a beautiful, endless spring. No man tried to do the duty of another, but attended strictly to his own; hence there was justice, peace, happiness. There was one religion over the whole earth, the religion of Brotherhood. This is also called Krita-yuga or the 'Age of Perfect Things,' for *krita* means finished, perfected, well made, something that cannot be improved.

TRETA-YUGA: the 'Age of the Three Fires.' Treta means three, or a group of three. It is the 'Age of Triads.' Three parts of good remained, but one part now was evil. Instead of the fires of aspiration burning in the heart, men now began to build fires of wood upon the altars, and make sacrifices there. They thought the gods would overlook injustice if only men made ceremonies and lighted altar fires. Winter came with its chill; men built houses. Quarreling and hatred came in.

DVAPARA-YUGA: the 'Age of the Number Two.' The word *Dvapara* is the name for that side of a die or of dice that has two spots. Two is the ancient symbol of matter (as Three is of spirit). In this Age only two

parts of goodness were left. Two parts were now wickedness. Nature became unkind (as men thought), too hot, too cold, many storms. Hunger and unhappiness came in. There were many diseases. It was indeed the 'Age of the Number Two,' material and unkind.

KALI-YUGA: the 'Age of Strife and Discord,' for this is what *kali* means. Legend says that Kali (strife) was the son of Krodha (anger) and Hinsa (injury), and the father of Bhaya (fear) and Mrityu (death). It is called the Black Age, and also the Iron Age. War and hatred spread over the whole Earth. One by one the bright gods went away, though from time to time they sent their Messengers to tell people about the Golden Age of the past, and inspire them to work for another Golden Age in the future. Kali-yuga is the age in which we are now living. It began at the death of Krishna. It ended its first 5000 years on February 18, 1898. What is our great work, then? It is to bring the Golden Age back, the Age of Truth, the 'Age of Perfect Things.'

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Lotus-Circle Messenger*, April, 1935. ([return to text](#))

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CAGLIOSTRO - A MESSENGER LONG MISUNDERSTOOD: XVIII (1) — P. A.
Malpas

XVIII — CAGLIOSTRO AT ROME

CAGLIOSTRO left for Trent on November 11, 1788, after his brief stay at the little Tyrolese town of Roveredo. Trent was only thirteen miles away, and the local physicians would have instantly denounced any attempt at defying the decree they had extracted from the Emperor against him. By sowing suspicion among Cagliostro's patients, by falsifying his prescriptions, by allowing a dishonest servant to *sell* prescriptions and remedies in his name, they had done everything possible to cause the failure of his cures. These were indeed marvelous in their results and in the sense that they were examples of the utilization of remedies and natural forces not known to the science of the day. But they needed the universal ingredient of all successful medicine — faith; and this being undermined by slanderous tongues, there were naturally failures and relapses.

There was another reason for the departure from Roveredo. The Countess Cagliostro was a Roman and a Roman Catholic. Her husband, the Count, never interfered with religion, but actually sent his patients to the churches to give public thanks to God for their recovery, precisely as others had been told: "Go, show thyself to the priest. . . ." But in these last days the priests persuaded Cagliostro's wife to make public professions of her religion, to confess, and to open her mind to them on religious matters. This, as Cagliostro probably suspected and as afterwards proved to be the case, was in reality one more method of entrapping him. The object was to destroy him as a Freemason, or, alternatively, to gain his wonderful knowledge for their own propaganda or secret advantage.

On the other hand, Cagliostro actually entertained hopes that he could induce the Pope to accept his system, and, with the support of the

Knights of Malta, to make it of use in the Roman Catholic world! We do not know upon what data he based this idea, but it was from Malta that he had set out on his Masonic travels over Europe, and it is probable that he had received his training as a chemist and physician there, under the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta. There were secret associations on both sides and it is not at present known to history whether the Pope was not personally under obligations to support Cagliostro and at the same time, officially, his deadliest enemy. At any rate many believe the Pope knew that Cagliostro was no impostor.

At that period there was a vast amount of heterogeneous thought masked as orthodoxy in official life, and it seemed to have been tolerated where no great scandal arose. An example of this has been seen in the case of the Prince Cardinal de Rohan, in France. Enjoying splendid semi-regal state at Saverne and a vast dignity at the French court, even though temporarily out of favor with the Queen, he was in reality about as worldly as any Frenchman of the day. Cagliostro introduced him to a new world, in fact, when he began to turn the Cardinal's attention to spiritual matters. Similarly, other important dignitaries of the Church were sometimes in reality quite different from what their official position appeared to make them. The converse was also true, that many who appeared to be anything but orthodox Roman Catholics were in reality staunch supporters of that Church.

It is in such a paradoxical world that we have to follow the fortunes of this grand Freemason during the tragic last years of his life in Europe. The task is not easy, nor can it be fully completed until the day when the records of the fraternities to which Cagliostro belonged are given to the world. Many are the missing links and seeming paradoxes, but one thing is certain, that the *Life of Joseph Balsamo* given so eagerly to every country in Europe in 1791 by his self-constituted accusers and judges, is of no more weight than, say, the histories of the Roman Emperors by the early Christian fanatics, their enemies, or the later veracious chronicle for the benefit of monarchical schoolrooms which described the Emperor Napoleon as "the Lieutenant-General of the Armies of the King"!

There was one of Cagliostro's patients in Trent who invited him to that place, and there were others, among them the Margrave of Anspach, who knew him well. We find him high in favor with the Prince-Bishop, who discussed matters of common interest with him in an apparently friendly way. Whether this was merely another attempt to spy upon him or to entrap him, it is difficult to say, but there is no question that those around the Prince-Bishop of Trent were doing all they could, probably under a friendly guise, to collect anything that could be twisted into evidence against Cagliostro. It mattered little what the evidence was, so long as it would serve to get up a plausible case against him. The 'delenda est' had gone forth, and only the formal occasion remained to be developed.

Serafina Cagliostro, his wife, a vivacious daughter of the Church, talked and confessed and chattered to her heart's content. It is customary to declare that this woman, for whom Cagliostro sacrificed so much since their marriage in Rome, betrayed him only from ignorance, or at the most, from a religious 'conscience,' and the reluctance on the part of sentimental writers to condemn her, because she was a woman and a very fascinating one at that, is natural. Yet there is no excuse for her betrayal, even though some things she said without malice were twisted into damning statements against her devoted husband. At Trent, indeed, of all the enemies that surrounded him, she was the worst.

Whether the Prince Bishop was an enemy or, what he appeared to be, a very good friend, is hard to say; but when pressure was brought to bear upon him, again through the Emperor, to get rid of so dangerous a man as one of the Illuminati, and one who was also the Grand-Master of a proscribed rite — a Mason, in short — he let Cagliostro go. The Prince-Bishop gave Cagliostro letters of recommendation for the Cardinals Albani Colonna and Buoncompagni, at Rome. These letters would be accepted as proofs of the good will of the giver, were we not so accustomed to seeing Cagliostro's worst enemies, in the guise of friends, give him similar guarantees — that he might fall into the

waiting hands of their confederates. It is one of the mysteries of such a life that the martyr, accepting his doom, bears his own Cross to his Calvary without a murmur. History is amazed at the seeming blindness with which a man of vastly superior intelligence is apparently so unable to distinguish friend from foe, but history itself does not know that the sacrifice made to help the individual or to help humanity includes responsibility for the consequences of failure on the part of those helped to profit by the Promethean fire from Heaven. The chained God of the Caucasus cannot escape his doom until he has paid the penalty *for* those he has enlightened. Enlightenment has its birth-pangs for those who bring to birth the souls of men.

A month only, and Cagliostro having passed through Venice and Turin, arrived in the Eternal City, the city of doom, where, twenty-one years before, he unfortunately married the girl who was to prove his Delilah.

So in the month of May, 1789, the fourteenth year of the Masonic effort of which he was permitted to form a part, Cagliostro arrived at the Scalinata hostel in the Piazza di Spagna, in Rome, shortly afterwards removing to the Piazza Farnese. He was known in Rome, besides having the introductions from the Cardinals at Trent; and his wife was a Roman. There is no need to suppose that she was of low caste merely because of her ignorance of writing; she had been brought up in the fashion of the time, unable to write, because of the parental logic current in good society — a girl who could not write could not correspond with a lover without the knowledge of her parents! However, the fact remains that Serafina Cagliostro, though not of humble origin, could not even write her name.

If we were dealing with the story of an ordinary man, there is much that would be almost impossible to explain in the conduct of Cagliostro at Rome during this fatal year, 1789, without access to the records of the Fraternity to which he belonged. The indescribable mental agony of the months passed in the Bastille in 1785 and 1786 would have been enough to deter all but one man in a million from taking similar risks again — but Cagliostro was the one man in a million, or in several

millions. He not only took the risks but even seemed to court disaster. Freemasonry was actually a crime by the laws of the Church, which artlessly pointed out that as its practice was secret it *might* be against the public interest. But Cagliostro had not practised Freemasonry within the limits of the Pope's jurisdiction. Therefore he was unassailable, as yet. The situation, however, was one that could be speedily altered, and it was.

A monk, a French Capuchin, Francesco di San Maurizio, attached himself devotedly to Cagliostro, and led the Count to the point of initiating him into the Egyptian Rite. Cagliostro's amazing *appearance* of ignorance as to the man's treachery is the best proof that can be offered of his knowledge of the snare. Again and again, at Mitau, at Lyons, at London, we find this paradox of a man, when judged by ordinary standards, not only walking into the simplest traps set for him by treacherous friends, but actually predicting their treachery. This kind of prediction was a sore trial to Cagliostro's most devoted disciples, because the future traitor always seemed such a faithful and enthusiastic supporter, sometimes until a few hours before the act of betrayal took place. Only disciples who had received his deeper teachings were fully aware that there was not only no coincidence in this, but the working of a well-known law; for those, such as the banker Sarrasin and the Irish Mason O'Reilly, who remained faithful to the end, were really 'worthy and well qualified' to judge; they were balanced and responsible men, and Masons. And even the Prince Cardinal de Rohan, in spite of his worldly dignities and ecclesiastical and social artificialities, remained faithful to him; for the Cardinal had seen much and knew much, and yet remained cool-headed and mentally balanced.

However fantastic such matters appear in print, the elementary phenomena with which Cagliostro illustrated his philosophy were a severe test for any man's mentality. If his mental balance were not strong, the reaction of incredulity might come in a moment and with it a moral obliquity leading usually to treachery. The purity of mind and singleness of purpose required to maintain mental balance under such

circumstances, were no more common then than they are today; but as that balance did not necessarily affect the intellect, it ought perhaps to be called moral balance rather than mental. We are dealing with very obscure mental aberrations and moral cataclysms, but never, so far as we know, clearly explained as to causes. The facts remain. Cagliostro, as an expert in such matters, chose to take incredible risks for the sake of his mission, which was, to give the world through the individuals he contacted an opportunity to progress in spiritual evolution, and only a man capable of making such a superhuman sacrifice of personal interests is really capable of judging his acts. If those acts cannot be understood in the light of the average mentality of our day, it is only a proof that there is a vast field for their action even now. When we can trace a logical purpose in the doings of a Cagliostro, linking apparently disconnected actions and phenomena, it is probable that we shall be closely observing the precise course followed by him, and doubtless understood by his deeper students. For others, we must be content with strange *apparent* paradoxes, such as this one of treating certain inevitable traitors as confidants, after having predicted their treachery in detail.

Francesco di San Maurizio, known as Father Suizzero, was initiated into the Egyptian Rite, and on Sunday, December 27, 1789, when the Sun lay in the tomb of the old year, the Holy Inquisition held a solemn meeting in the rooms of Cardinal Zelada. There were only four cardinals in this terrible tribunal, the other three being Cardinals Campanella, Antonelli, and Pallotta. The Pope himself was the nominal head of this one body, as indicating its importance, but he rarely took active part in its deliberations, reserving his interference for the most serious occasions. *Breaking an absence of years, he attended this council in person. Grave decisions were evidently in the balance.*

And that evening Cagliostro was arrested with his wife and the Capuchin San Maurizio. His rooms were stripped and all his property and papers seized, precisely as in the case of his arrest at Paris some four years earlier. By one of those fatal mistakes which appear so obvious as to be deliberate challenges thrown in the face of fate,

Cagliostro here also appears to have taken no precautions whatever in regard to his papers and precious documents; doubtless some of his priceless drugs were seized in the general confiscation as well.

The gates of the formidable castle of Sant' Angelo closed behind the devoted 'criminal' — and the crime charged was — Freemasonry!

The comedy, which was at the same time one of the greatest tragedies the world has known, was well staged, as might be expected. It is easier to extract the fibers from the mango-fruit than to obtain any degree of real accuracy from the official accounts. Only by the application of other keys can the doors be opened upon the real drama behind the painted curtain. For some of the actors the matter was serious enough. The hue and cry drove out of Rome on the instant all who had ever had the slightest connexion with Cagliostro. High nobles fled, a marchioness escaped in the guise of a Hungarian ameer; the Queen of Naples hastened to disclaim all connexion with him and to declare that she had surrounded him with spies; the Duke of San Demetrio was imprisoned on suspicion; the Margrave of Anspach left Naples with precipitate haste; brother Masons, unable to stand during 'times that try men's souls,' denounced Cagliostro as an adventurer; a high officer of the order of Malta, though with difficulty, fled to that island; the police made mysterious arrests all over the city; rumors of amazing plots by the Masons were set afloat and the police were or pretended to be in mortal fear of revolution; all was chaos, suspicion, terror, rumor, disturbance of the peace — all the machinery of the Inquisition brooded over the city. No one was exempt.

Remember that while Cagliostro was accused only of initiating a Freemason, and was guilty of nothing more, from December 1789 to April 1791, fifteen months (before condemnation), he suffered in the cells of Sant' Angelo things which few men could suffer and live without going insane. That the torture was mostly mental at this time (the physical torture in its worst form came later) only makes it worse.

Warmth is refused him though it is winter and he is suffering. He is manacled and chained by the neck. Every effort is made to 'break his

will.' The accusation that he had practised Masonry at Rome within the jurisdiction of the Holy Father and the Inquisition is a mere pretext. Every hole and corner of his life is ransacked for 'evidence'; anything, no matter what, is used to show that he is a danger to the world. His wife is made to 'confess,' is encouraged to talk about him, and every possible statement that can be used against him is carefully doctored to meet the case. The spies that have surrounded him for years are all utilized for the same purpose. He himself is worried, bullied, cajoled, questioned again and again on the same points until he says something that can be taken *out of its setting* and made to appear against him. He is dismissed, and before leaving is suddenly called back and asked again a question he has answered a dozen times already, in the hope that he will appear to contradict himself; every art and wile that a subtil psychology can invent is used to ruin him. And yet he maintains the power of thinking clearly, even of an occasional hard hit at his persecutors. There is a story that he was asked if he knew the seven capital sins. He had irritated the inquisitors and the question was angrily flung at him.

"Luxury, envy, greed, gluttony, and idleness. . . ."

Cagliostro stopped.

"You forget pride and anger!" he was reminded.

"Pardon me," he replied, gently. "I did not forget. I refrained from naming them out of respect, and in order not to offend you!"

This frankness was avenged in the official *Life of Cagliostro* in which he is shown to be a terrible person because he did not even know, when questioned, how many capital sins there are.

There is some mystery as to the exact position of the Pope. Both Jeanne d'Arc and Jacques de Molay had claimed an appeal to the Pope, and now Cagliostro himself declares that if he is permitted to lay his case before the Pope, the latter will not only adopt Egyptian Masonry as an ecclesiastical order, but will set him free at once! He is reported by the Vatican apologist to have declared:

. . . all that I have done I have done by the command of God, with the power that he has communicated to me and to the advantage of God and the Holy Church; and I can give proofs of all that I have said and done, not only physically, but morally, showing that as I have served God for his own sake, and by the power of God, he has at last given me the antidote to confound and to combat hell, for I know no other enemies than these; and if I am wrong the Holy Father will punish me; if I am right, he will reward me; and if the Holy Father could have the report of this examination in his hands tonight, I predict to all my brethren, believers and unbelievers, that I should be free tomorrow morning.

Cagliostro had spoken.

The offense was the practice of Masonry in the dominions of the Pope. The accusation and examination wandered all over Europe, into every detail of Cagliostro's life, back into the history of Masonry, suggesting, leading, driving, using words of double meaning, bringing the 'evidence' of his wife against him, twisting his words out of their order and circumstance — it was not a trial of Cagliostro, but the trial of Masonry through Cagliostro. One instance of the methods adopted should make Masons think.

He had declared that after his experiences in a London lodge, where he had been treated, after the coarse manner of the time, as a butt for tasteless pleasantries, he had doubts as to the propriety of *such* Masonry. Now he declared that his Egyptian rite (founded on the original and true Eastern Masonry) was for the advantage of religion.

"You have avowed and subscribed to the confession that Masonry is contrary to religion; now you say it is for the advantage of religion. How do you reconcile these statements?" he was asked, in substance. "One of them is evidently a lie."

"I do not understand these verbal subtilities," he replied with asperity. "Surely I know what I am talking about!"

The methods of the examination were neither new nor unusual. Cagliostro attempted to answer freely, and his replies were promptly suppressed because he was wandering from the case. The Vatican reporter says that the judge had to "lead him, as it were by the hand." His wife was easier to "lead," and she said just about what she was told to say. She was not brought into the examination at all, but if Cagliostro attempted to cite her as a witness on his behalf he was met with the information —

"Yes, she has been examined on the matter, and has given evidence against you!"

If he was faced with some new accusation, some new falsehood, he learnt to recognise that she had been induced to make it, and instead of appealing to her evidence in his defense, he remarked:

"If my wife said that, she is a miserable wretch!"

Promptly the answer is entered against him. "If he were not guilty, he would not have suspected his wife of denouncing him on the point. Therefore it is one more admission on his part."

His judges condemned him to death. It was their highest card. It was promptly trumped, but only the lowest trump was used — purposely. An *unknown stranger* demanded an audience of the Pope and on giving his name was instantly admitted. The interview was short, and the stranger departed. The Pope decided that Cagliostro should not die there and then. This is what the Vatican apologist says:

His defense was brought forward; it showed both the talent of his defenders [indeed it did!] and the bad state of his case: finally the time came for judgment. It was preceded, as all the rest of the procedure had been, by the most rigorous forms and practices in use even in ordinary criminal tribunals; these constitute the good administration of justice and prove to the accused that they are not unjustly condemned.

It is the tool of the Inquisition that is speaking; apparently he counts

upon an audience devoid of either information or intelligence. The examination was interminably drawn out so long as there was the least hope of extracting new damaging details from the accused, and if his memory was short, the torture chamber inevitably refreshed it. This "rigorous form and practice of justice" has been well described by a recent Italian author precisely as we state it.

The case was then, after these "rigorous forms of justice," brought to the "assembly general of the Holy Office" on March 21, 1791, and before the Pope himself on April 7th.

"The judgment needed no great discussion," says the Vatican agent. "Cagliostro had confessed; the most convincing proofs demonstrated that he was the restorer and propagator of Egyptian Masonry in a great part of the world, that he had even practised it at Rome, and that he had there received two candidates."

Let it not be forgotten in the maze of Inquisitorial jargon that the last fifteen words are absolutely the whole case against Cagliostro.

It was in vain that he had wished to avail himself of the sentiments of those who commute the penalty incurred by a heretic, a dogmatist, every time that he displays contrition and repentance: it was in vain that he had wished to utilize in his defense the proofs of repentance that he had given at the last: the edict of the council of state, of which we have spoken in the preceding chapter, cannot be put aside: the penalty of death which is there pronounced, is moreover fitting to a man who, both in matters of faith and in matters profane, has given himself up to every sort of rascality, and must be considered as one of the most pernicious members of society. [*This emanates from the Vatican press!*]

But the *consultive* judgment of his destiny was entrusted to persons full of gentleness, the gentleness and the indulgence which inspire religion, and which animate the *consulters* of the Holy Inquisition; and his definitive sentence was reserved to the

great Pius VI, who, in the course of his glorious pontificate, has always known how to unite the characters of a just prince and a clement prince. He desired not the death of the malefactor and preferred to leave him time for a true repentance. Behold then the sentence which the supreme oracle pronounced upon the person of Joseph Balsamo; it entirely accords with justice, equity, prudence, religion, and public tranquillity, both for the estates of the Pope and for the rest of the world; we give it here in its entirety:

"Joseph Balsamo, attainted and convicted of several crimes, and of having incurred the censures and penalties pronounced against formal heretics, dogmatists, heresiarchs, masters and disciples of superstitious magic, had incurred the censures and penalties established, both by the Apostolic laws of Clement XII and Benedict XIV, against those who, in whatever manner, favor and form societies and conventicles of Freemasons, and also by the edict of the Council of State decreed against those who render themselves guilty of this crime at Rome or in any other place of the pontifical domination. However, as a special grace, the penalty which delivers the guilty man to the secular arm [that is to say to death], is commuted to perpetual imprisonment in a fortress, where he will be strictly guarded, without hope of pardon: and after he shall have made abjuration, as a formal heretic, in the present place of his detention, he will be absolved from censures, and there will be prescribed for him the salutary penances to which he has to submit.

"The manuscript book which is entitled *Egyptian Masonry*, is solemnly condemned, as containing rites, propositions, a doctrine, and a system, which open a long road to sedition; as likely to destroy the Christian religion; and as superstitious, blasphemous, impious, and heretic. This book shall be publicly burnt by the hand of the executioner, with the instruments belonging to that sect.

"By a new Apostolic law are confirmed, not only the laws of the preceding pontiffs, but also the edict of the Council of State, which forbid societies and conventicles of Freemasons, making particular mention of the Egyptian sect, and of another vulgarly called the *Illuminati*: and there will be established the gravest corporal penalties, especially those of the heretics, against any person whatsoever who associates with these societies or shall protect them."

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTE:

1. This article is a continuation of a series in *The Theosophical Path*.

[\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

HIGHER EDUCATION — THE TWICE-BORN — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. — *John*,
iii, 6, 7.

When a human being is born, and often for months previous to birth, the tender love of parents, the scientific care of physicians and nurses, are given to prepare for the new-comer a sound healthy body, to insure a successful physical basis for life in the strange world into which the babe is entering. It does not surprise us that the tiny though beautifully complex little body can grow through stage after stage to adulthood, wonder of wonder that this after all is. Nor, when parents, teachers, schools, carefully thought-out systems of education, refined and cultured home and social environment have helped to produce young men and women capable of successful family life, civic duty, patriotic and humanitarian service, are these results any more than we expect from the training of the intellectual and moral faculties as they are understood in our world today. All this may happen, and yet, has the innermost Self that "drew from out the boundless deep," and sought a vesture in the outward world, even been glimpsed? Does this Self brood and hover over the budding human being, only to recede unrecognised? Can this deepest, wisest, permanent one, who is the link with eternity, be educated into conscious function in human life in the world before it "turns again home?" Do human beings get completely born?

There is in our day a severe reaction against lop-sided eternity after death, an eternity of *personal* salvation. Young people and many older ones have outgrown that idea. Hell has no longer any horrors for them. Some have even been heard to say that if they *could* enjoy eternal bliss while their fellow-creatures were burning in hell, they themselves would merit fire and brimstone. It is over-poweringly evident that

religious teaching, to win respect today, to gain response from hearts and minds, must present an all-inclusive, universal view of human destiny, some supremely great unifying purpose, some challenge that will stir into activity the deepest depths of human will and compassion, some call to spiritual adventure that will urge us on to pierce into the unknown, invisible world and win its whole secret.

When in the fifteenth century in Europe there was a revival of ancient culture with a corresponding liberation of intellect, the minds of men turned with joy, with renewed adventurous energy, toward the conquest of the external world. Today again there has been a revival of ancient learning. This renaissance of the archaic Wisdom-teaching, the purpose of H. P. Blavatsky and of the Theosophical Society, draws the attention of humanity to the conquest of that *inner* world of man's own nature which holds the key to the understanding of all Nature's mysteries and makes man a conscious co-operator in the activity of the universe as an entity, the Great Self in which everything lives and moves, and has its being. It is education in this larger sense, incorporating the elements of the archaic training, that will restore the balance between the objective and the subjective life which is so sore a need in our time. The Way opens inwards. It leads to the second birth, the bringing into function of the higher intellectual and spiritual faculties of mankind.

The works of H. P. Blavatsky are full of enlightenment regarding the higher education that is a spiritual birth, the birth of an inner Self of union and will, whose range of activity is not only on earth, not only for one earth-life, but has a range of experience in the visible and invisible realms and preserves an unbroken thread of consciousness through sleep and waking, and through death to rebirth. From the philosophies, religions, mythologies, and traditions of the world she gathers the evidence of the existence of the Great Teachers of mankind; in a stupendous work of higher criticism she traces all of the sacred books to their source in a primal Wisdom-teaching given to races earlier than any our histories record. And, anticipating by many years the findings of archaeological science, she points to the sacred edifices

scattered over the earth, the pyramids, the towers and temples, as the halls of this higher education, which has ever been available to those of any race or any period who were prepared to receive it. For many centuries have these sacred ruins stood in silence and mystery until the wheel of destiny moved upward to the point where the light from the distant forgotten past could once more shine into the hearts of men and quicken the knowledge of the source from which all systems and teachings of wisdom sprang and from which, when the clock of progress strikes a spiritual keynote for mankind, they and all beings can draw renewal.

The most heartening message brought to mankind in the nineteenth century revival of the most ancient wisdom is that for millions of years there have been Teachers, Initiators, who preside at the awakening of man's spiritual faculties in life after life on earth, who guide him from stage to stage of the inner development that makes of him a *dwija* or one twice-born. The existence of this Hierarchy of Compassion, serving in every race and age, directing human beings, who are each and all a part of Truth in the Cosmos, in the finding in their own inner natures the pathway to greater and greater knowledge of that Truth, reveals to us a new and sublime conception of man and his destiny. It gives us a glimpse of the heights to be mounted step by step in love and service by every man. The nebulous eternity of bliss offered by dogmatic religion is replaced by the supreme adventure of conscious rebirth in self-built vestures of ever increasing power and purity. The ancient wisdom gives assurance that man is at home in the universe; that he may learn to traverse earth and sky in freedom and full knowledge of the Way, reading the secrets of Nature, from that of the tiny seed to that of flaming stars. A glorious, all compassionate eternal life — rest when the Great Being in whom we live slumbers for an eternity, and waking with it at the dawn of another Day, with ever the radiant purpose of setting alight in beings lower in the scale of evolution than himself the intellectual and spiritual fires kindled during the initiation or higher education that made of him one twice-born, born of the spirit, who has entered upon not only the inner joy of the mystic, but the peace and

power of one awakened to conscious unity with a divinely intelligent universe.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERY OF BIRTH — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

(Based on a study of the subject in "The Esoteric Tradition")

The mystery of human birth is not solely a physiological phenomenon by any means, but is in fact a very holy one. If men and women only knew the sacredness of it, then for their own self-protection, outside of the sense of mutual respect and of decency that every normal man and woman possesses, at the bottom of his or her heart, this subject would always be approached in a spirit of truly religious awe, and marriage would become what it ever ought to be: a most beautiful, because a most holy state. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 907

In order to understand the mystery of birth certain fundamental postulates must be accepted. These may be summarized as follows: That there is a continuous existence for every entity in the universe; that this continuous existence follows but *one* universal law or rule of being, however greatly the details of its manifestation may differ; that every phase of existence is the result of a precedent one and the cause of some future phase; and finally, that the universe is a living organism, and every entity in it is inextricably and vitally linked, each to each and each to all, by bonds of physical, intellectual, and spiritual affinity.

Through a recognition of these postulates, we are enabled to view birth and death as portals of ingress and egress which mark the boundaries between the states of activity and quiescence, miscalled life and death. 'Birth' is the inscription on the lintel of the portal entered by the incoming Ego, but passing under its arch, 'Death' marks the reverse side — death, or a period of exile from its spiritual home. Similarly, the

portal of exit which marks the end of this phase of existence with 'Death,' bears on its reverse side 'Birth' — birth into another phase of continuous, uninterrupted existence for the individuality.

When we realize that universal Nature works in similar fashion everywhere, the mystery of birth no longer holds us in awesome ignorance, for if we can follow the consciousness-center which comes into being with the sprouting of a seed, we know how atoms, planets, universes, and the human babe are born; and recognising the present form as the result of past fashioning and the causative element in future manifestations, our study stresses the productive consciousness, and mere forms of imbodiment take their proper place, together with the principal actors and the part they play on the background of cosmic eternity.

Let us now enter the arena at that point in space and time when the Monad — our 'Father in Heaven' — after its peregrination among the stars, nears the Earth's atmosphere, and the Reincarnating Ego, dreaming within the heart of the Monad, stirs as the closing scenes of its blissful dream-state are blurred by the attractions of past forging that entice it to Earth. Just as an aeroplane descending from a high altitude breaks through the lower clouds, and encompassing the panorama of its homeland stretched before it, follows the lead of its own beacons to its landing-place, so the Reincarnating Ego dispels the quiescence of the period of assimilation, and pausing, seeks through its ray its chosen media for a period of active manifestation in the life-to-be.

Effect inevitably follows cause, consequence infallibly follows its originating action, and this Chain of Causation lasts from eternity to eternity, as a concatenation of interlinked 'events' succeeding each other in regular and unbroken serial order: an endless chain in Nature of action and reaction, belonging to each peregrinating being or entity, a chain which, precisely because it is made by the being or entity itself, and is indeed itself, is ethically absolutely just and, considered as

consequences, is compensatory or retributive from its beginning to its end. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 649

The earliest contact made by the Reincarnating Ego is in the atomic realms. There it attracts to itself a life-atom, one of intimate past association in its own atomic life-stream, and thereby this particular and hitherto temporarily dormant life-atom is quickened into active participation in the process of a new reimpodiment. As a vital life-germ it enters the aura of the father and mother-to-be, drawn thereto by psycho-magnetic attraction and through the channels of food, water, and air. The positive aspect of this vital germ finds lodgment in the body of the man, and the woman is the bearer of the negative portion of any such seed of future rebirth; and as one of the incomputably great number of life-atoms which form the body of an adult human being, there it awaits the turning of the wheel of destiny. When the moment of conception arrives, and all other conditions are appropriate, the process of reincarnation moves on to its consummation.

In this regard it is fascinating to speculate on the history and affiliation of the numberless life-atoms now sojourning in our bodies. When we realize the intricate interblending, racial and national, presented by the average family 'tree' on the physical plane alone, and quite apart from affinities of thought and spirit, such animosities as racial prejudice and national antagonism are seen to be but the wild phantasmagoria of blind ignorance, for

all human beings are linked together, not only by the bonds of emotional thought or feeling, but by the very fabric of the universe itself, all men, as well as all Beings, springing from the inner and spiritual Sun of the Universe, as its hosts of rays. . . . It is this interior unity of being and of consciousness, as well as the exterior union of us all, which enables us to grasp intellectually and spiritually the mysteries of the universe; because not merely ourselves and our own fellow human beings, but also all other things that are, are the children of the same Parent, Great

Mother-Nature, in all her seven and ten Planes or Worlds of Being. — *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 532

In the case of the genealogy of a family, of what does such inter-blending consist save the constant interchange of life-atoms, and the resultant human impress made on all such transmigrating entities!

From the moment that the Reincarnating Ray of the Ego makes its first contact with our physical sphere, it is attracted to, and attracts unto itself, its atomic offspring of the past, so that the 'new' body is in reality a continuation product, generally improved and not deteriorated by transmigration, of the one used by the Ego in a past life. This aspect of reincarnation is therefore seen to be a gradual and progressive one, and is punctuated by certain events of which the quickening, adolescence, the prime of life, and 'death,' are points which mark definitely increasing contact with the spiritual influences emanating from and through the Ego.

The quickening occurs, when, after its early vegetative growth the embryo first feels the higher and more spiritual influences of its Ego, and this process continues in ever increasingly greater expansion of faculty, until with adolescence the highest attributes in the child's constitution come into relatively full manifestation on this physical plane. But incarnation, through the body taking into its constitution life-atoms on every plane of being, continues right up to the time when, in preparation for birth into realms of greater ethereality and spirituality, the Ego begins to withdraw. With 'death' the entire aggregated unit of physical life-atoms, the physical body, is set aside, and the then excarcate Ego passes once more into a phase of assimilative quiescence within the encompassing protection of the Monadic Consciousness, in other words, into Devachan.

In this assimilative phase all the effects which accrue from the contact and experience of the past life are built into the Ego, so that, with the life-atoms it impressed with its dominant characteristics — and which impress has led them towards further growth during the interval between incarnations — the Ego on its return to another earth-life

builds a body which is the same as that used in the previous life, in that it is constructed of the same atoms. Yet it is different, in that the intervening processes of evolution should have generally strengthened and improved every portion of the entire constitution. This, as the ancient Wisdom teaches it, is the Cycle of Reincarnation.

Thus in the drama of birth, we have as foci, inextricably linked by psycho-magnetic affinity for the coming into being of a consciousness seeking reimpodiment on earth, a triangle formed of the Reincarnating Ego which through its Ray contacts and links a life-atom, its own offspring, to the parents-to-be, who, in the sacred association of marriage, close the triangle and bring into being the diamond, which, with its four points is the symbol of physical manifestation: we can follow the Reincarnating Ego, an offspring from the Monad, as, impulsed by the compassion which is behind all evolution, it leaves the inner, causal realms, and, drawn partly by choice and partly by karmic obligation, enters the visible sphere of Earth, where it is clothed by its life-atoms in the garments fashioned of the sevenfold elements of Nature's physical constitution. Thus the Reincarnating Ego not only cements its contact with the physical universe, but in the sacred bonds of love and marriage unites into a composite whole the manifold aggregated units of its constitution for the purpose of mutual, constant, and ever-greater growth.

Love is the most magnetic thing in the Universe; love attracts love; its whole essence implies and signifies union and reunion, reuniting, and bringing together anew.

The impersonal Eros of the Universe is the cosmic energy which holds the stars and their respective planets aggregated and coherent in their courses, and it governs the building and the structure of the atoms. It is all-permeant and in consequence all-powerful. It is the cause of the energy which works in such myriad forms and everywhere, operative alike in star and in atom, holding them together in inescapable embrace; yet, marvelous paradox, it is the same power which guarantees the

individual integrity of every cosmic Unit. It is also the mystic and wonderful magnetic sympathy which brings together human beings, man to man as brothers, woman to woman as sisters, and, in one of its human fields of action, in the merely human sphere, man to woman and woman to man in a genuine marriage. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 650

The Theosophical Forum

WHY STUDY THEOSOPHY? — *J. Emory Clapp*

In his essay on 'Experience,' Emerson, the great American philosopher, says of life:

We wake and find ourselves on a stair; there are stairs below us, which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one, which go upward and out of sight.

Thus, man is placed in a position of uncertainty as to his origin and destiny, but we note that the wise Sage of Concord postulates a condition of progress. Still, the inquiring and percipient nature of aspiring human beings will not be content with the mere statement of progress. It wants to know where man came from, whither he is going, and why he is here. It requires even more, something that will satisfy the intellect, enlighten the understanding, and give love and peace to the heart. The study of Theosophy will answer the above questions, and with its sublime doctrines it is the only thing that will give a logical and satisfying answer. Therefore, mankind should study Theosophy.

There are three channels through which mankind searches for wisdom, and yet the three are really but aspects of one road or pathway which leads to Truth. These three channels are Religion, Philosophy, and Science. Yet no man can solve the problems of life through any one of these alone. One might just as well try to solve the problems in arithmetic by the sole use of addition or subtraction or division. Unfortunately, most truth-seekers have specialized in but one of the above means for the attainment of knowledge; hence the knowledge which they have obtained has been incomplete and one-sided. Theosophy uses all of these channels to show the pathway to Truth, and thus appeals to all types of minds.

If we go back about fifty or sixty years we find that Religion and Science were at war. Philosophy was standing aloof. Investigation carried on by the scientists of that day had demonstrated the fact that

the Bible could not be relied upon as a source of information regarding the so-called creation, for it showed that this earth, instead of being but a few thousand years old, as estimated by the chronology put forth by Archbishop Usher, was hundreds of thousands, nay, millions of years old, as shown by the records of geology.

At that time there appeared on the scene one who was destined to throw confusion into the ranks of the materialists, overturn dogmatic creeds and beliefs, and revivify age-old teachings which had a basis not only in religion and science but also in philosophy. This individual was a woman of noble Russian parentage, with a penetrating intellect, an all-encompassing mind, and a heart filled with compassion — Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. In 1875, with the assistance of others, she formed the Theosophical Society, and through this as an instrument she began to give out that ancient wisdom which she denominated 'The Secret Doctrine.' She defined this as "the synthesis of religion, philosophy and science," and stated that this doctrine had been brought to primeval humanity by advanced spiritual entities who had attained a high degree of evolution in other worlds and spheres. Furthermore, this doctrine with its teaching had been checked and rechecked by great sages and seers all down the ages, such sages and seers being merely men who through their own efforts had reached a much higher stage of evolution than the average of humanity. The popular name of the philosophy expounded by Madame Blavatsky is Theosophy.

Fellows of the Theosophical Society, students of this ancient wisdom, have found in it an answer to all the problems of life; and, strange and improbable as it may seem, the statements given by H. P. Blavatsky to an unbelieving generation have had their truth demonstrated along many lines time and again, through the discoveries of modern science, the researches of archaeologists, and the general advancement of human knowledge. Furthermore, H. P. B. showed that all the truly great Religions had a common origin, and that their teachings when properly understood were not antagonistic, but complementary. One of the proofs of their common origin was the fact that the same system of ethics ran through them all, like a silken thread linking them together.

All of these facts can be found in her writings, chiefly in *The Secret Doctrine*. In this marvelous work she anticipated all the chief discoveries of science which have been made up to the present time, during the interval since this book was published in 1888. She hinted at the discovery of the X-ray, elucidated the composite nature of the atom, and the electrical basis of matter. She stated that matter and force were but the two opposite poles of the same thing, and even previous to this, in the early '80s, one of her Teachers, to whom she gave credit for all her vast fund of knowledge, made the statement:

For indeed, there is but one thing — radiant energy, which is inexhaustible and knows neither increase nor decrease.

In a popular scientific work published within the last two or three years, under the title *The Great Design*, one of the contributors stated the same thing in slightly different words: namely that radiation is the fundamental stuff of which the universe is made.

A new presentation of Theosophy by G. de Purucker, entitled *The Esoteric Tradition* has recently been published. In it Dr. de Purucker, who is the present Leader of the Theosophical Society, demonstrates that the discoveries of modern science as far as facts are concerned, have agreed fully with the esoteric philosophy, Theosophy, and that even the hypotheses and theories advanced by the most eminent scientific thinkers, such as Einstein, Eddington, Jeans, Millikan, Planck and others, are constantly approaching more closely to the Theosophical concepts. Owing to the great advances made by these outstanding scientific thinkers, Dr. de Purucker has been enabled to give out much more of the esoteric philosophy than was possible when H. P. Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine*. This fuller exposition of Theosophy would not have been understood at that time, simply because so many of the scientific ideas then accepted were erroneous and therefore antagonistic to certain truths which can now be revealed.

While this article is not intended to be in any sense an exposition of

Theosophy the writer believes that a glimpse at some of its most important doctrines will show the logical basis for the philosophy and demonstrate to the inquiring mind that it is worth investigation. He will therefore call attention to a few of its basic teachings.

The most fundamental teaching of Theosophy is that of Universal Brotherhood. This doctrine is not based upon sentiment or emotion, but upon the grand and sublime concept that this great universe is a unit — that every part of it is essential, and that the essence, the Heart of the Universe, is Divinity itself. Every human being, therefore, lives and manifests within that Divinity, and the inmost core of his being is a spark of that Divinity. This was taught by the Christian Initiate known as the Apostle Paul, in the following words: "In Him (or It) we live and move and have our being."

There is but one law in the universe. It is called the Law of Karma, and it is that which tends to restore harmony when it has been violated by conflicting wills of human beings or other entities. From this 'law,' so-called, all other laws of Nature have been derived.

Evolution, or growth, or progress, is another cardinal doctrine of this ancient wisdom. It differs materially from the Darwinian idea, however, although many of Darwin's followers feel that this great scientist himself realized that there were weak points in his conception.

Another doctrine which is essential to the full understanding of the doctrine of Karma, previously mentioned, is the doctrine of Reincarnation, or Re-embodiment. The combination of these two doctrines gives to man hope, and shows him his responsibility to himself and to all other beings.

H. P. Blavatsky and Theosophical teachers who have followed her have made many inspiring statements which I think will help further to demonstrate the need of Theosophy and the reason why aspiring human beings should study it. William Q. Judge, one of the co-founders of the Theosophical Society, made the following statement:

Theosophy is sometimes called the Wisdom-Religion, because from immemorial time it has had knowledge of all the laws governing the spiritual, the moral, and the material.

The theory of nature and of life which it offers is not one that was at first speculatively laid down and then proved by adjusting facts or conclusions to fit it; but is an explanation of existence, cosmic and individual, derived from the knowledge reached by those who have acquired the power to see behind the curtain that hides the operations of nature from the ordinary mind. — *An Epitome of Theosophy*, pp. 1-2

H. P. Blavatsky says of the practical application of Theosophy:

The essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his god-like qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. Kindness, absence of every ill feeling or selfishness, charity, good-will to all beings, and perfect justice to others as to one's self, are its chief features. He who teaches Theosophy preaches the gospel of good-will; and the converse of this is true also, — he who preaches the gospel of good-will, teaches Theosophy. — *Letters from H. P. Blavatsky to the American Conventions*, Letter I, April, 1888

G. de Purucker states that

Theosophy is the explanation of things as they are, the formulation in human language of the principles of the Universe.

— *Questions We All Ask*, Series I, p. 466

He further calls attention to the fact that "Knowledge is of loving deeds the child," and states

This is one of the sublimest truths. Of the mysteries, of the higher mysteries you cannot have knowledge unless your heart is filled with love, and overflowing with it; and knowledge

comes from the exercise of the spiritual powers within you. This exercise is most easily achieved in doing deeds of loving kindness, in feeling and practising brotherhood, in helping and sharing with others, in helping others and sharing with them the blessings that you have." — *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, p. 104

The Theosophist finds in Nature a mighty teacher. To quote from Katherine Tingley,

Out of the great heart of Nature all things proceed, and all things lead back there at last. All worlds and systems of worlds, from the great central Sun to the smallest particle in space, must thrill responsive to the pulsation of that infinite heart of compassion. . . . in every act which partakes of the divine quality of compassion lies concealed the potency of all the spheres. All Nature obeys the command of one whose heart beats constantly for others.

She defined Theosophy as

the inner life of every religion — *Theosophy: the Path of the Mystic*, p. 8. . . think of Theosophy not so much as a body of philosophic or other teachings, but as the highest law of conduct which is the enacted expression of divine love or compassion. . . . Theosophy is the great interpreter of life. — *Op. cit.*, p. 3

To the aspiring human being I would call attention to the following from Katherine Tingley:

Self analysis, self study, self control! These are the divine, protective power, the golden keys to an understanding of the Self. Oh that you might realize what books of revelation are piled up on the shelves of your own lives! — *Op. cit.*, p. 30

To one who is of a religious nature the following quotation from William Q. Judge should appeal:

Theosophy is the divine soul of religion, the one key to all Bibles,

the riddle reader of all mysteries, the consoler of the heartweary, the benign comforter in sorrow, the alleviator of social miseries. You can preach its lesson before any audience in the world. It is the one Pentecostal voice which all can understand.

It matters not what line of endeavor one may wish to follow in life; if it is one that appeals to the higher part of man's nature, one which is generally recognised as partaking of the nature of righteousness (right action) and justice, the study of Theosophy will be beneficial and uplifting. To the true scientist Theosophy will open a new world, the existence of invisible spheres, energies, and beings. To the truly religious man it will show the pathway leading to the Heart of Divinity. To one of a philosophic trend of mind it will illumine every problem. How can one possibly refrain from studying Theosophy if he realizes these facts?

And to those reading these lines who are dissatisfied with their present condition may I address a pertinent question? Are you satisfied with the outer husks of existence? Don't you want to experience the *fulness* of Life — Self-expression in its true sense? If so, study Theosophy, for Theosophy will show you the Way, the Road, the Path. It will show you how to control your tawdry, acquisitive, personal lower self — to raise it, in other words, until it becomes 'at-one' with your higher, superior, Universal Self. Thus even in this life you may begin to manifest the splendor of the Christ within; and as "To live to benefit mankind is the first step" on the path you will doubtless want to join your brothers and companions in a united effort "to benefit mankind" by joining the Theosophical Society and thus participating in its noble effort to enlighten Humanity and to bring about a true expression of Brotherhood.

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — C. J. Ryan

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

THE END OF THE WORLD?

In November, Sir James Jeans, in a lecture before the Royal Institution, claims that the Moon is slowly spiraling toward the Earth and that in 36,000,000 years it will begin to threaten the Earth with destruction. When it gets within 20,000 miles it will break into pieces, some of which will fall into orbits of their own and form rings around the Earth like those of Saturn. Astronomers have already threatened our poor Earth with several methods of extinction — the freezing process, when the universe reaches thermodynamic equilibrium or 'heat-death'; the cremation method, when the Sun blows up as a *nova* or 'new star'; and other methods as well. And now it seems that our old friend the Moon will betray our confidence unless we can find some means of frightening it off when it comes too close! But perhaps the astronomers are a little premature in their croakings. It may be that the solar system is organized on a systematic plan which cannot easily be disrupted by accidental or chance causes. A little Theosophy would be useful to some of our scientists whose theories sometimes make our flesh creep!

But after all, Sir James Jeans is not to have it all his own way. That mysterious goddess 'Science' speaks with more than one voice, it seems, for here comes Professor H. N. Russell of Princeton University, no mean authority in astronomy, who tells us in his new book *The Solar System and its Origin* that owing to the retardation of the Earth's rotation, the Moon's distance is *increasing*. He quotes Dr. Jeffreys, who considers "that the Moon has been separate from the Earth ever since the early catastrophe that formed the planets"; that at its nearest it was about 8000 miles from the Earth; that it spirals *away* from the Earth about

five feet in a century, but that it was, in all probability, never united with the Earth. From Dr. Russell's calculation, supported by that of other eminent mathematicians, it is difficult to understand how the Moon escaped breaking up before it got safely through the 20,000 mile danger zone mentioned by Dr. Jeans. Was it because the Earth and the Moon had not then solidified?

However this may be, it is curious to observe how little scientists really *know* about the Cosmos. Some are more ready to admit this than others. Dr. Russell is one who rightly claims that "the Solar System is most certainly not a product of chance," but also he says that no one can indicate how it originated in detail; all that it is possible to accept is: "that we may reasonably regard its birth as the merest accident in a far vaster process, — the shaping of the material Universe as we know it. What lay behind that shaping we do not know."

Why not dare to conceive that *conscious* creative Power lies behind the processes of 'Nature'?

FIRE-WALKING

Since the second experiment by the Kashmiri yogi, Kuda Bux, mentioned in our last issue, a most entertaining and instructive correspondence has been raging in *The Listener* (London) — instructive to students of Theosophy because it illustrates so bluntly the necessity mentioned by H. P. Blavatsky of demonstrating the existence of the astral and the like, before what she calls 'the quarrel' between physical science and the esoteric teachings can be healed. The difficulty that the regular scientists have in accepting any possibility of so-called occult laws in Nature, and above all, their profound hesitation in accepting the possibility that any human beings — adepts — know these laws and can make use of their knowledge, are plainly set forth in this correspondence.

The facts as described and admitted are undeniable; they are in harmony with similar exhibitions carefully reported from many parts of the world, and by thoroughly responsible people of European and

American nationality; and 'fire-walking' has been done by white men who have all declared that they felt no heat or other inconvenience, and who were not even singed, much less blistered or burnt, even after walking on red-hot charcoal for ninety feet! But as the correspondence and other literature show, the most ridiculous and contradictory 'explanations' are offered to save the admission that there can be anything but jugglery in the fire-walking. One distinguished scientist entered on his investigation not in the scientific attitude of an observer and recorder of an alleged fact in Nature hitherto neglected, but, as he said, with the object of showing up what he claimed to be a fraud! The regular explanations — the supposed rubbing of the feet with salt or alum or other chemical preparations, the horny foot-soles, the 'coolness' of the fire, the thick layer of ashes, the hasty rush, and others — were put out of court by the precautions of the committee in charge. Failing to solve the problem by these suggestions, one prominent critic of high scientific attainments asserted that it was very simple, after all: the performer's feet were *damp*, and were naturally protected by the layer of vapor that immediately arose from the heat. Unfortunately for this brilliant idea, another equally competent observer made the point that the immunity from the least injury arose from the fact that Kuda Bux's feet were perfectly *dry*!

Evidently these learned gentlemen had not taken the precaution of comparing notes before they made their final decisions! Anyway, the present position is that no one has given any satisfactory explanation, and that Kuda Bux promises to give another demonstration at a later date, when he will *stand* on the fire and will place a sheet on it that will not scorch. He also asks for volunteers among his critics or others to make two walks, "one with his approval, and the second without." This experiment has been tried before in India, and the *unprepared* walkers (some of them English) who had 'permission' of the yogi in charge were perfectly comfortable; the others did not go far! In a recent case reported in *The Listener*, the walkers were unharmed as long as the yogi kept up his concentration, but they had to get off the fire quickly when he warned them that it was no longer safe. The yogi did not walk

on that occasion but remained outside the limits of the fire.

IS THE UNIVERSE FINITE?

Dr. Edwin P. Hubble of Mt. Wilson Observatory, in a recent lecture at Yale University, stated that the outposts of the universe have now been found to be 500 million light-years away — so far as measured. The imaginary sphere between the Earth and these outposts, marked by the faintest nebulae or stellar systems detectable, is the observable region of space. When the great 200-inch telescope being built for the California Institute of Technology, which is to be erected on Mount Palomar, San Diego County, is in action, these 'outposts' will be greatly surpassed and we shall see into enormously vaster spaces. Dr. Hubble calculates that about 100 million galaxies resembling the one to which our solar system belongs, the Milky Way, exist in the 'observable region,' and he says they are scattered in a fairly regular way — two million light-years apart on the average — though here and there more concentrated groups and clusters are found. The most interesting point he makes is that nothing whatever has been detected to indicate any frontier to creation, or even to find anything startlingly different. There is no sign of approach to a void, and in the far-off systems the spectroscope detects elements that are familiar on Earth.

IS THE UNIVERSE EXPANDING?

In spite of all the arguments in favor of this strange notion, it is not finally accepted. In fact, reasons are multiplying against such a possibility. Dr. Zwicky of the California Institute of Technology, in *The Physical Review*, shows that while the relativity theory *partially* explains the peculiarity in the light coming from the distant galaxies, which is called the 'red shift' and on which the expansion theory rests, it is not in accordance with observation in several important respects. Certain other theories, he says, meet all demands and may prove far better than the relativity theory. The installation of the great Palomar 200-inch telescope is likely to decide the problem. Dr. de Purucker discusses the expansion theory in his new work, *The Esoteric Tradition*, on pages 435-8, and suggests that the 'red shift' may be due to a

variation in the velocity of light in cosmic space rather than to a supposed explosion in which the galaxies are all fleeing from our locality into some imaginary outer vacancy. Dr. Zwicky has criticized the expansion theory before, and has been partially answered by Sir Arthur Eddington, but he now brings new and stronger arguments.

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

The broad-minded Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, Dr. Matthews, is again startling the Fundamentalists. He told the Church Congress in October that:

Until quite recently almost the whole of Christendom would have given the same answer to the question whether there is a revelation of God, and, if so, where is it to be found? It would have replied with practical unanimity: There is a revelation of God *and it is to be found in the Bible.*

After pointing out that the supreme revelation is *not* wholly external to us, and that we could not recognise the 'Word made Flesh' unless the Word were within us — in short, the divinity of man — he concludes a most remarkable address, which we regret not having space to quote more fully, as follows:

God does not dictate from heaven a creed or articles of faith. He manifests Himself through the experience and personalities of His prophets and of His Son. The doctrines of the Church are formulas in which the revelation has been summed up, guarded and preserved. . . . The revelation is not the doctrine. It may be that more adequate expressions will hereafter be found for the spiritual heritage that they have been formed to express. . . . The Holy Spirit will guide us into new truth. And thus the true conception of revelation is not a dogmatic fetter upon freedom; it opens the road to a spiritual adventure which has no end in time, not only the adventure of bringing the world of affairs into subjection to Christ, but the intellectual adventure of understanding the full meaning of the God who showed Himself

to us as man.

Allowing for the orthodox terminology used by the Dean and the quaint Western obsession that Jesus the Avatara was the *only* Avatara or 'Son' of 'God,' we may welcome this pronouncement as a marked step forward. The time is coming when the 'formulas,' the rigid doctrines and creeds, will be replaced by more and more true expressions of spiritual realities. Is it impossible that some now living will see the Church of England teaching Reincarnation and Karman and their implications in place of the vicarious atonement and salvation by faith doctrines, and the one-life illusion?

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: III — *G. de Purucker*

III

[At the meeting of the Point Loma Lodge of the T. S. on the evening of June 9, 1935, the usual course of study was followed, including an address on 'The Hierarchy of Man,' delivered by E. J. Dadd, followed by the usual questions and answers, both questions and answers being thrown open by the Chairman to any member of the Lodge present. The evening was as interesting in the rapid transfer of thought from mind to mind as all these meetings of the Point Loma Lodge of the T. S. invariably are. Unfortunately, however, because of lack of space in this issue, and with a desire not to interrupt the series of Transactions, which are printed as often as they can be made available for these pages, it is possible to print in this number only the following, which, since it is a question asked by the Leader himself, and finally after a most interesting discussion, answered by himself in his own way, will unquestionably furnish material for further thought to all students. — Eds.]

Question by G. de P. — Can anyone here tell us just what is the difference between the *Monads* in man, and the *Seven Principles* in man? Is the question clear? (Discussion.)

G de P. — I would like to hear a great deal more than I have heard. In fact, I know our people know a great deal more than they have said. I would like to have a clearer picture given of why on the one hand we talk about Monads, and on the other hand we talk about Principles. Are these different and disjunct; or are they identic?

(Discussion.)

G. de P. — Mr. Chairman, Companions: I always hesitate to make comments upon the answers to questions that have been asked, because I invariably admire and like these answers. They show deep

study, profound reflexion; and yet there are times when it seems incumbent upon me, as a fellow-student and listener, to speak with a certain amount of frankness. All the answers that have been given tonight have struck me as being admirably well said, and showing really deep thought; but I for one am not fully satisfied. Of course we can never reach perfection, but I do not think we have yet received a clear picture of why we Theosophists on the one hand divide the Universe and man respectively into septempartite entities or states of being; and almost in the same breath speak of the different Monads in man. The question was: What is the distinction between the different Monads in man, and the Seven Principles — if any? And what are their respective functions? I asked this question because it is really a very important one. It was at the bottom of the dispute between H. P. B. and Subba Row. Each was right, neither was wrong; but the world did not know the 'why' of the dispute. Subba Row desired to follow the teaching of the Brahmanic esoteric school, in fastening attention on individualities of the Universe, on the Monads, looking upon the Universe as a vast aggregate of individuals.

But our great Teachers, through their mouthpiece H. P. B., for that time of the world's history saw that it was needed to give to the then inquiring Western mind, taking a materialistically scientific bent, some real explanation of what the composition of the Universe is as an entity. What is its 'stuff,' what is man as an integral part of it? Now, the Seven Principles are the sevenfold 'stuff' of the Universe, the seven kinds of 'stuffs.' The higher part of each kind is its consciousness-side; the lower part of each 'stuff' or kind is the body-side, that through which its own consciousness expresses itself. But every mathematical point in boundless space can really be looked upon as a Monad, because the Universe is imbodyed consciousness in the aggregate; and imbodyed consciousnesses, individuals, Monads, distributively. Do you follow me thus far? Good!

To take a picture derived from the scientific view of the Universe as it is held today: our scientists now say that the Universe is builded up of chemical elements amounting almost to one hundred — ninety-two, I

believe, up to the present. These together form the 'stuff' of the Universe, divided into so many minor varieties or minor 'stuffs.' Do you catch that thought? Now, replace these different scientific chemical elements with your sevenfold 'stuffs' of the Universe; the Principles or elements of the Universe, all through the Universe, therefore aggregatively forming the 'stuff' or substance of every individual belonging to the Universe. Do you catch that thought?

Therefore, when we speak of the Seven Principles, or seven elements, of man, we mean the septempartite 'stuff' of which the Universe or man is builded, and the same everywhere. Why? Obviously, the part contains what the whole is and contains. If it were different from the whole, it would not be a part of the whole. Therefore, because the whole is sevenfold or contains seven 'stuffs,' which we may reduce to one element-'stuff,' beginning-'stuff,' causal-'stuff,' therefore every portion of the great whole contains just the same. Therefore man has seven (or ten) principles or elements precisely because the Universe has.

Now then, what are these? That is the point that it was so important to bring out in H. P. B.'s time. A background of divinity clothing itself in spirit, these bringing into birth the light of mind; and the light of mind then co-working with the other principles and elements thus far evolved, brought forth 'Cosmic Desire'; and so you go down the scale, until you reach the sthula-sarira, which, by the way, does not mean physical body but substantial body, gross body on whatever plane, concreted, compacted, whether the plane be physical or spiritual or divine or what not. Sthula simply means compacted, concreted, commonly called gross. That is very clear. Even our scientists today teach us that the Universe is builded of radiations, light, energy, the same thing.

Now, these are forces; but when they become enormously concreted and compacted, they become gross stuff, which the higher forms of radiation nevertheless continuously work through. Now then, every mathematical point of space actually we can call a Monad, a point of

consciousness, a center of consciousness, because all infinity is infinite consciousness. Therefore every point of Infinity must be conscious; therefore every point is a consciousness-center. Is that clear? Every such point is a Monad — from the Greek word individuality, a consciousness-center. But we have just heard that all the Universe is compacted of a septempartite 'stuff,' which in man is the seven principles or elements — on the higher side, consciousness; on the lower side, vehicle or veil, vesture, sheath. Thus it is that every monad is septempartite, has its Atman, Buddhi, Manas, right down the scale. Why? Because the Universe is builded of these seven 'stuffs,' reducible to one causal 'stuff' — spirit, consciousness, Atman.

I speak with some emphasis about this, because the time will come when we shall have to give an account of this thing, and we must have our own ideas clear and properly co-ordinated. We must not have our minds confused with the idea that the Seven Principles are one thing, and the Monads are something else which work through the seven principles as disjunct from them. That is wrong. Every Monad itself is septempartite. Of what? The seven principles, which form the 'stuff' of being, consciousness in its highest, body in its lowest. It is a subtil point, and yet it is simple, and is a most important point of thought. Just as the chemical elements form the body of the Universe, which nevertheless forms the clothing of hordes of consciousness-beings, humans among them, so in exactly the same way the seven principles, ultimately reducible to one fundamental or causal principle — spirit, are the 'stuff' of the Universe. And this 'stuff,' every mathematical point of it, is a Monad, and each point is septempartite. It must be, because it is builded of the substance of the Universe, of which it is an inseparable part.

I know that many people say that I am verbose, and that I repeat myself, and that I talk about the "core of the core," and "the heart of the heart," and I continuously say that "man is composite." Why? To drive home key-thoughts; and I tell you frankly, dear Companions, the answers given have shown wonderful reflexion, but they show me that I have not sufficiently driven home what I have been and am trying to

drive home, and what I have tried again now.

Please remember that we have here a distinction but no real difference. The Monad, every Monad, is builded of the 'stuff' of Infinity, of the seven 'stuffs' of Infinity. The seven 'stuffs' are the Seven Principles or elements. And one point more: every such principle or element likewise can represent one of the cosmic planes, from the highest downwards, or from the outermost inwards, or vice versa. And yet, every one of these 'stuffs' is itself sevenfold. So that the kama, for instance, the 'stuff' of the Universe we call kama, that portion of our own 'stuff' or our principle which we call kama, is sevenfold. Consequently, there is an Atman of the kama, a Buddhi of the kama, and so forth throughout the range of element-principles or 'stuffs.'

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WITHDRAW into yourself and look. And if you do not find yourself beautiful yet, act as does the creator of a statue that is to be made beautiful; he cuts away here, he smooths there, he makes this line lighter, this other purer, until a lovely face has grown upon his work. So do you also: cut away all that is excessive, straighten all that is crooked, bring light to all that is overcast, labor to make all one glow of beauty, and never cease chiseling your statue until there shall shine out on you from it the godlike splendor of virtue, until you shall see the perfect Goodness established in the stainless shrine. — Plotinus: *The Enneads*

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: III — H. T. Edge

III — THE CROSS

This subject was treated in special reference to Christianity in *Lucifer* for Nov. 1935, and is resumed here as part of our series on symbolism. The sign of the Cross has been very potent in Christianity, but rather as a glyph than a symbol; which means, according to the distinction made in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 66) a conventional sign, used to bring to mind the ideas which it stands for; whereas a symbol is not arbitrary or conventional, but sums up in its very form certain occult principles. It is the actual correspondence, among figures, of some universal law, too profound and inclusive to be conveyed in language. The Cross is essentially two straight lines of equal length crossing one another at right angles, but has variants, each expressing some particular shade of meaning.

The initial stages of cosmogenesis or the birth of worlds are symbolized by certain simple geometric figures, of which we have already spoken of one, in the last issue. This was the circle, which by itself represents the primordial abyss of Chaos. Within this there appears a central point, the first germ of all that is to become manifest; it is like the germinal speck in an egg — Nature repeats everywhere the same original process, and the egg is a very pregnant emblem of cosmogenesis. This Primordial Point is the First Logos, or Word, and includes in itself both the positive and negative, or active and passive, sides of manifestation, which two have not yet become differentiated from each other. Thus it is sometimes called androgyne or double-sexed; but in using the words 'male' and 'female' in these connexions, we must be careful not to give a physiological sense to them, as they have about as much to do with that as have the terms dextro- and laevo- in chemistry, or positive and negative in physics.

The next stage in Cosmogogenesis is represented by the same Circle with a horizontal diameter crossing it. This signifies a divine immaculate Mother-Nature within the all-embracing infinitude. When the horizontal line is crossed by a vertical one, we have the symbol of Father-Nature added, and the two together form the Mundane Cross and stand for the manifested universe. This duality of Spirit and Matter, Force and Form, Energy and Inertia, etc., pervades the universe, not only in the planes of objectivity, but also subjectively, in our mind, in our feelings; and on the highest plane of all these two intersecting lines may stand for the Divine Thought acting in the Divine Mind. It is impossible to give more than a sketchy and introductory explanation here of these pregnant symbols, but the reader may be referred to the opening pages of *The Secret Doctrine*, where these diagrams will be found, as well as to many other parts of that work.

The Cross is found in a widespread trinity of symbols — Circle, Crescent, Cross, which denote Spirit, Mind, and Matter respectively. The three combine in the symbol of Mercury, denoting a man, with the Crescent for his brain, the Circle for his Heart, and the Cross for his organs — Head, Heart, and Hands, as we may say. Development in biology shows the extrusion of polar elements from the central nucleus, whether in the germ cell or in the seed which sends shoots up into the air and down into the earth. Various combinations of these three symbols make the symbols of planets, and we find them again on standards, as the Star and Crescent of Islam, the Cross of Christianity, and the Sun of Japan. The Circle is the Sun, the Crescent the Moon.

The most interesting meaning of the Cross is its connexion with Crucifixion. It signifies the 'Word made Flesh,' the incarnation of Divinity. And so it stands for the Christ, the Divine Self of every man, which is said to have been crucified on the Cross of Matter, or to have taken up the Cross — that is, worldly life — in order *to redeem* the animal nature of man. Paul in his Epistles dwells much on the idea of the Christ being crucified in us. This is the real sacrifice; for the God is exiled thereby and has to undergo the tribulations of mortal incarnation; but the sacrifice is made in the spirit of Love, and a

reluctant sacrifice is no sacrifice at all. The universal and ancient truth of the redemption of the flesh by the indwelling God has been turned theologically into a special atonement made by a special son of God at a particular place and time; and the sacred allegory found in the Gospels has been taken to refer to an actual execution. But this idea loses force when we find that many other religions besides Christianity have the same story of a crucified Christ. Some confusion may be caused by the fact that Paul uses the word crucifixion sometimes to mean sacrificing: he speaks of crucifying the flesh, but here he is evidently using the word in a different sense from his use of it in speaking of Christ being crucified in us. The Cross in Christianity has descended from a symbol into a mere glyph: its significance is lost, and it remains a reminder, a banner.

We spoke above of the need for avoiding a gross interpretation of symbolism, but this has actually often been done, and a word of comment is required. In degenerate times, there has always been a degradation of symbolism. The two lines of the Cross represent the male and female creative potencies, which on the highest plane are the Divine Thought in the Divine Mind. But, owing to universal analogy, the same symbol may also illustrate the active and passive natural forces in physical organisms; and so we find cults for the deification of the procreative powers. These powers are innocent natural functions when confined to their proper use; but if deified, we get licentious cults, and in this way the Cross may acquire a sinister meaning.

The Cross has other forms besides the equal-armed or 'Greek Cross'; the form adopted in Christianity is sufficiently familiar, and has perhaps been chosen from confusion with the Roman method of execution. Sometimes the crossbar touches the top of the upright, forming the Tau. Each of these variants emphasizes some particular meaning, and it would require many articles to go fully into all. When six squares are arranged so that three are horizontal and four perpendicular, we get a figure like the Latin Cross and representing the six faces of an opened-out cube. If a Cross is inscribed in a Circle, the segments of the lines are in geometrical proportion, and the ratio between the arms in various

cases may suggest mathematical keys. An alternative to the Tau or the Cross is the Tree, found in *Genesis* as the Tree of Life, in the Norse Yggdrasil and the Indian Asvattha Tree. It denotes material Nature, and round it is often twined a Serpent, denoting the life-forces operating in cyclic path through the planes of Matter. When the arms of the Greek Cross are bent at the ends, we get the Svastika, the bends being intended to convey the idea that the Cross is rotating like a wheel. This indicates the eternal motion of the elements and shows how equilibrium is attained by maintaining a neutral center amid continual changes.

Thus we have touched the high lights in this profound subject, and may conclude with the hope that this will lead to further study.

The Theosophical Forum

DIALOG BETWEEN THE HUMAN AND THE SPIRITUAL EGO — *Leoline L. Wright*

I do not know you, but you trouble me. Why do you stand there behind me? I do not wish to listen to you — I cannot see you, and I am tired.

No, you are not tired. You are only tired of being as you are at present.

What do you mean?

If a friend came to you and said: Here are all things necessary for you to make a journey to a wonderful far country, would you be too tired to go?

No indeed! The mere idea puts new life into my veins. But that is the trouble — no one will come to me, a tired, middle-aged failure, with such an offer. Why do you mock me? Go away!

I am your friend. Will you indeed go upon such a journey?

You! — my friend? I cannot even see you. What can you do for me?

Poor slave of the treadmill, I can open the door and set you free!

Treadmill! That just expresses it. That is my life — and I am tired to death of the daily grind.

Yet the door of your cage will open. It is only that you have not found the threshold.

But you spoke of a journey. Have you come to offer me the means for it?

Yes.

And to what far country shall I be going?

What country do you most wish to visit? Think carefully, for if you do not choose aright I may not come again.

Oh, then, let me think! There is Egypt the magnificent, and Persia, land of gardens. I have heard of Samarkand, and Kashmir of romance and roses; India, and Java, Japan. Advise me — where ought I to go?

There is a country more delightful than any of these ancient tragic places.

I have never heard of it.

You have dreamed of it in moments of unconscious longing.

Then it is nothing but a dream! I might have known! You are only mocking me. Begone!

It is no dream. It is more real than the earth you stand upon. Listen! Think! Am I indeed mocking you? . . .

I could almost swear that you are not. I cannot see you, but your voice comforts me. There is a clearness all about me that is like the moment before sunrise. . . . Yes, you yourself come from that country. I feel it! I know it! I will go with you to that far wondrous land — I will follow you!

But first you must pass through the door out of your prison. Shall I tell you how you may discover it?

Yes — yes! I cannot wait to start.

Tonight at midnight, someone, it may be a messenger from the gods themselves, will come to you. He will show you the hidden threshold. Until you have found and crossed it I must bid you farewell.

.....

So! You are come again. Often I have looked for you and longed for that strange bracing clearness I feel again about me now. But I have never found the threshold. The messenger you promised did not come.

Did no one come?

Oh, yes. At midnight, as you said. But not a messenger.

Who then?

The son of my enemy. My enemy himself lives far away but it happened that his son was visiting in this place. And this young man came to me in his terrible need at midnight.

Why was the man your enemy?

Because he had led my boy astray, so that he was sent to prison in that distant town where my enemy lives; and in prison he died of a broken heart. Was not this man my enemy to the uttermost?

It would appear so. But how did this man's son happen to come to you — his father's enemy.

He had heard his father speak of me as living here. He knew nothing of the hatred between us. He supposed I was his father's friend.

And so he came to you at midnight. What did he want?

He had accidentally killed a man, but it did not look like accident. He wanted me to hide him. The police did not know that he knew me, and would not look for him under my roof.

There then you had vengeance within your hand. You could do unto your enemy's son even as he did to yours. You hang your head in shame. I see you must have given him up.

No, you may think me a weak creature, but I could not do that. He trusted me, you see. If there had been someone like me to help my boy in that distant city when he was in danger I might not have lost him. I could not betray this boy. I took him in then, and sheltered him and helped him finally to prove his innocence. Later his father came to me, an old and broken man. And I forgave him.

And you are ashamed of this? You hang your head before me.

Oh no! I am just beginning to feel sorry because I realize I had quite forgotten about the journey. I have been happy in helping these people who have turned from enemies into friends. One thing has led to

another — -

You are no longer tired?

I am busy.

And you will not go to the far, happy land?

I am happy here. All I ask is work, and a chance to love, and the joy of helping all who need me. It is odd, but it seems there are many. Only I would beg that you will remain and be my Companion, shedding upon me the clear beneficence of your shining. . . . For now in this moment I see that You are the threshold and the doorway, and that in my own heart I have found the deep and wondrous country where I may abide in You.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 298-301

QUESTION 298 (Questions 298 and 299 were answered by the Leader in Liverpool, January 6, 1933.) *To the ordinary man in the street it sometimes seems strange that man should have to go through all the sorrow and suffering he has, in order to reach perfection, and that it should have to last such a long time. I should like an answer from you so that I may pass it on.*

G. de P. — Why is it that sorrow and suffering are in the world, and that they are so enduring? My answer may seem a little hard, but some things in life at first blush do seem a bit hard; yet when understood we find that the 'hardness' is merely the strong hand of the Law guiding our footsteps. Here is the explanation: All growth is attended with growing pains; a change of condition is a change of state and of consciousness, and human nature in its weaker parts, such as we human beings possess, is so constituted that it rebels at changes; it likes to remain in the old ruts, to run along the familiar lines which humanity has followed for so many ages. But sorrow, pain, suffering, even sickness, are among our best friends.

Now this seems like a hard saying, a dark saying; but how true it is! Consult your own lives. What is it that has put steel into your characters? What is it that has opened your hearts to compassion, rendered perhaps hard and unkind by prosperity and slothful ease? It is the jars and the knocks of misfortune. It is sorrow that teaches us fellow-feeling, sympathy, pity, compassion, that teaches us to help others, so that we now understand their tribulations, so that we now understand after we ourselves have suffered and sorrowed, what they are going through. It is sorrow and pain and suffering that refine us. We are like the ore cast into the molten furnace, into the melting heat; and sorrow and pain purify us so that we come out bright and glittering gold.

Be not afraid of sorrow; be not afraid of trial. They are our best friends; and see what a manly doctrine this is. It is a doctrine of compassion; it is broad-minded, it is human, it is humane, it is sympathetic, it is full of wisdom and quiet peace. The heart which has never been wrung with sorrow has no fellow-feeling for others. The mind which has never been tormented with sorrow and doubt has a veil before it. Sorrow and doubt awaken us, quicken our intellects, open our hearts, and expand our consciousness; and it is sorrow, suffering, sickness, pain, which are among the gentle agents, the merciful ministers, of the evolutionary process. The man whose heart has never been wrung with sorrow cannot understand the sorrows of others. The man who has never sorrowed, knows no greatness. He is great neither in heart nor in mind. Greatness, ethical majesty, spiritual and intellectual power, spring forth from trial.

QUESTION 299. *Your words come from a temperament that has undoubtedly found peace, but my dilemma is this: and I should like your opinion regarding the universal scheme of things. There is no doubt that we are part and parcel of the Universe; but when we come to think that the scheme of creation that you have been eulogizing is based on universal slaughter, and pain and anguish, I as a man who believes that our lives should be a peaceful transition from youth to old age, and that our life should be a period of enjoyment and happiness and joy — I would very much like your opinion on the origin of evil. This terrible intelligence, this wonderful power, this horrible force, that governs the Universe, whatever it may be — to me it is diabolic. It fashions the tiger, it gives the unfortunate animals no opportunity to get away from the danger that surrounds them. What gives the poison to the snake, the fangs to the tiger, the idea that men should fight each other and slay each other, if it is not that we are nothing but a conflicting hierarchy of conflicting ideals, destined some day to rise out from this cosmic turmoil, and to enjoy celestial bliss?*

G. de P. — What you have pointed out is of course something that occurs to every student of life and of the things around us. I remember that when I was a boy, this very question was the first one of a serious

character that occurred to me, and it was only when my eyes were opened that I learned that happiness without contrast cannot exist; that there is no peace which has not been earned. How many times have I not as a child, as a young man, said to myself: They talk about Almighty God, a merciful Father, and yet the Universe is filled with strife and pain! Evil sometimes prevails over good, at least temporarily; what a monster God must be, the Maker of it all, to have made things thus!

Your thoughts are very natural indeed and have my deepest sympathy; but we must accept things as they are, and the explanation of the problem is this: that no 'God' is the maker or creator of the iniquities of which you speak. Beside the poison is its antidote; beside disorder is order; dishonor proves honor; darkness could not exist except for light. We cannot at once change our portion of the material universe with all its evil phases; but these are only events in the marching army of beings passing forwards and upwards through space-time. As I said, it is out of suffering that we learn; and thank the immortal gods that the Universe is so constituted that we can learn. Fancy a Universe so constituted that there was nothing in it but peace and happiness, and dull, inactive sloth lasting unto eternity! It would be a hell. There is something within me which yearns to bring light to those who have it not; there is something within me which yearns to give the compassionate hand; there is something within me which is more precious than my own being, which makes me yearn to help my fellows. Fancy what it would be if I were deprived of this exquisite joy of doing my bit to raise the world's burden.

Mark you, we cannot make the Universe different from what it is, and it is what it is because of karma — the intricate and intertwined karma of uncounted multitudes of beings learning through growth and suffering and pain to take part in the Cosmic Labor guided by Compassion, infinite Sympathy, and Love for all that is, to join the hosts of the bright gods. The horrors that the gentleman speaks of most certainly exist; but ineffable beauties exist also. Why not likewise speak of the beauties in Nature? Why not speak of its orderliness, its law, peace, growth, and the expansion of consciousness that all beings

undergo throughout the cycling periods of time? Why not speak of the beauty of natural being as well as of its horrors? Disease exists indeed, but so does health. Crime exists, but so do men who are no criminals. Horrors exist, but so likewise are they counterbalanced by the beauties, and by the symmetrical, shapely, and holy things in life that are an eternal joy.

The Universe is as it is; and these horrors I now will explain, giving you the Theosophic teaching of the origin of evil. Briefly, then, all these things exist in and from evolving creatures, imperfect entities, innumerable multitudes of them, all learning through suffering and sorrow and pain to become orderly, to be loving, to be compassionate, to be peaceful, to be inwardly and outwardly beautiful — in the original sense of the word beauty.

All this reminds me of the old Christian idea of Heaven. I remember what my dear father, who was a clergyman, taught me about Heaven: If I were a very good little boy, when I died I would surely go to Heaven and sit on the right hand of God and sing songs eternally. That course of life did not appeal to me at all. It did not answer anything in my own being; and when I grew older and heard the arguments that were given to men, and likewise the philosophical ideas current among men concerning so-called immortality I rejected the immortality as presented, because this immortality was merely a speculative immortality of the personal man with all his imperfections, manifold and sometimes monstrous; and I could not stand the thought that if that doctrine were true, I was destined to pass eternal aeons without end as an imperfect entity; no matter how much I might change, I was supposed to be always the same egoic being. No, I wanted to grow in a different manner; I wanted to become greater, and to give vent and expression to the locked-up spiritual and intellectual and other powers within me. I discovered that there is no immortality for the personal man, because if there were, then the personal man *must* remain relatively unchanged. If he changed in the remotest way, he was then no longer the same — and the supposed immortality vanishes. Do you see my point? Instead of immortality of the personal man, we

Theosophists say that there is eternal, endless evolution, endless growth, endless expansion of faculty, of power, always bringing out more and more what is locked up within, passing from the low and evil regions of the Universe up into the higher; and when there, turning and extending a compassionate hand in help to those in the lower darkness. I learned the great and profound truth that even the ego changes, that even the spirit evolves to vaster things, so that the immortality of the ego, or what is called the personal man, was but the vain dream of an obscured imagination.

Evil certainly exists in the world, but it arises out of the fact that the world is filled full with imperfect beings and entities — just as there are likewise innumerable hierarchies of relatively perfected and godlike beings. Because the former are imperfect, they act in consequence in distorted and what we men call evil ways. This produces the disharmony, the preying of entity upon entity, and the consequent suffering and pain. Follow out this profound teaching. As just stated, above these multitudes struggling in the lower realms, there are the great regions of the gods. It is quite possible that they may have their problems too, and personally I think they have; but they are regions which to us human beings are incomparably light, holy, majestic, and our inner spiritual and intellectual natures are native there. From there, come into our minds and our hearts our noblest impulses to do deeds of good; our noblest intellectual aspirations are born in these inner divine and spiritual realms. In fact, our spirit is native there.

QUESTION 300. *Explain multiple personalities, if true.*

H. T. Edge — I cannot call to mind any authoritative pronouncement on this topic, and do not feel learned enough (or ignorant enough) to be dogmatic on my own account. The first step to explaining a thing is to have a clear-cut idea of what it is one is seeking to explain; and one feels that it would be better to have a definite case of the disease before one, instead of having to prescribe for a mere term. That term may cover more than one different kind of disorder, erroneously grouped

under one definition but being differently caused. The dictionary defines multiple personality as a psycho-pathological derangement wherein two or more different 'personalities' compete for self-expression through the physical instrument; and adds that these personalities may be struggling together at the same time, or may alternate in their possession of the field, and that they may have no knowledge of each other, or that A may have knowledge of B, while B has no knowledge of A, etc. It seems clear that such a condition is a morbid exaggeration of what exists normally in the average man, who is painfully aware of the existence in him of several psychic elements contending for the dominance in that mysterious composite which he calls 'I myself.'

Passing from this, we come to various degrees of dementia, such as may occur in disturbed sleep, in delirium, and similar pathological derangements. Here we may find what may be called a change of personality, with varying degrees of loss of memory. Still further, we have the rare cases, produced by hypnotism, insanity, amnesia, and the like, where the sense of one's original identity is quite lost for the time. A certain Dr. Morton Prince has written a book describing his experiences with a young lady, whom he treated hypnotically for such an ailment. His theory was that the normal personality was a blend of elements which had become dissociated and able to occupy the field alternately, thus producing different personalities acting in the same body. The case might perhaps be diagnosed as obsession by psychic entities of some sort, possibly the cast-off remnants of deceased human beings; yet there is considerable ground for recognising, in some of these subordinate selves that appeared, the manifestation of certain elements in the girl's character which she had suppressed.

It is clear that we cannot talk intelligibly on such a subject without analysing somewhat deeply the nature of what is known as personality, its relation to memory, to the sense of identity, and kindred psychological topics. It would also be necessary to have a better understanding of the functions of the brain and nervous systems, and especially of the connexions and interactions of the psychic with the

physical. Some help may perhaps be found in the idea that what we know as personality results from an interaction of psychic and physical elements, and in comparing the body to a musical machine into which cardboard tunes are fed, so that the same instrument plays various tunes. But this does not solve the whole question. I may be under the influence of a false self, and yet be aware of my condition; or there may come a moment, a stage, at which I cease to be aware that I am deluded, and the delusion becomes a reality. How define that stage? Is it not likely that there is some particular center in the cerebro-spinal system, whose derangement marks this change? When the foreign influence ceases upon *that* center — it is *then* that I lose my sense of identity, my memory of my normal self.

One suspects that this is a subject upon which definite knowledge, such as is looked for in books, is not available, on account of the dangerous abuses which would certainly be made of it; and it is surely wiser to eschew such questions of morbid psychological anatomy. Whether occurring in oneself or in someone else, they should be treated as a disease and dealt with accordingly; and the remedy is of course self-control, physical, mental, emotional.

QUESTION 301. *Can the camera catch a picture of a being invisible to the human eye, and record it upon a film? If so, of what will it be a picture?*

I. L. H. — If you mean by 'a being invisible to the human eye' one that exists on a plane above or below the physical, the answer is a distinct *no*; and all claims made for alleged photographs of that kind may be set down to trick photography or legerdemain; for the camera is a physical instrument responsive to physical light and it functions on the physical plane only. Of course, by means of invisible X-rays, infra-red rays, and long exposures, etc., the camera can record photographs of things to which the human retina is not responsive; but these are purely physical and mechanical methods of aiding the physical senses: they are in no sense to be classed with so-called 'astral' or 'spirit' or 'fourth-dimension' photographs, etc., of claims regarding which it is wise to be extremely skeptical.

THE POOL THAT LOST ITSELF — *H. Percy Leonard*

A little pool among the boulders on the beach lay warming itself in the sunshine. A gentle breeze rippled its surface, and tiny wavelets softly lapped upon the margin of the basin where it lay. "Here is my little kingdom," thought the pool every time one of its wavelets broke upon its boundary line. Other pools lay in sight and it was pleasant to compare its ample size, its graceful contour, and its flashing surface, with the lesser attractions of the neighboring pools. Far down the beach lay the ocean, a vast pool which seemed to have no boundaries and whose immeasurable range terrified the timid little pool lying in its petty isolation, behind the guardian ramparts which protected it from all association with its kind. "Here in solitary splendor I shall lie for ever," it mused, "shielded from all contamination with inferior pools and widely separated by a sloping stretch of sand from that appalling ocean whose rhythmic murmurs sound so faint and far away."

Small fish and gray shrimps darted to and fro about its shallows, and it was pleasant to feel itself the patron and protector of these small fry, and to reign as a monarch without a rival in its little kingdom. The sun grew hotter, and mounted the blue arch overhead, while the murmur of the distant waves grew louder as the time went by. "What would become of me if the waves should ever flood the beach?" thought the little pool. "My beautiful, clear water would be mixed with the other pools, and one and all would be engulfed in that vast ocean whose waves sound louder and louder."

The tide was surely creeping up the beach. The long, blue breakers glided to the front and broke in thunder thereon. The liquid ruins were drawn back over the rattling pebbles; but always rose again with added volume and a louder roar. The pool trembled at the thought of its approaching destruction, until at last one towering billow breaking loose from the tossing multitude fell headlong with a sounding roar,

poured its white cataract of boiling foam into the pool, and floated it away to mingle with the mighty deep.

No longer capable of thinking as a pool, an exultant surge of feeling soon drowned all sense of separated life. Its outlines melted in immensity. It had become the boundless sea itself. The petty throbbing of its individual life took on the grander rhythm of the ocean's giant heart. The breaking up of the limits of personal existence was the moment of its triumphant entry into the larger life, just as the man who loses himself in serving his fellows, grows suddenly great, and finds himself one with the Heart of the Universe.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL NOTEBOOK: XVIII

XVIII — IS THERE SUCH A THING AS CHANCE?

What is really meant by 'chance'? There are at least three meanings one can give to the word. We all know what is meant by the expression "Shall we chance it?" or, we might say that "A certain person has many chances"; or again, "Do things happen by chance?"

I think the latter is what the question refers to. According to Theosophical teaching, things do not happen by chance, although sometimes it may seem so.

All things that happen, and come to us, are the effect of causes we ourselves set in motion in the near or distant past, in this life or even in a former life. The Law of Karman, as it is called, if this is true, should make us very careful indeed to watch our thoughts, which are the causative source of all effects, good or ill. — H. S. Parsons

Theosophical Teaching does not recognise chance as an isolated event or accident for which there is no apparent cause.

It is either the effect of a cause which we cannot remember, or an opportunity which we may take or lose according to our choice.

Our decisions are the causes of effects for good or ill, which in their turn become the causes of further effects.

The realization of this should inspire us to keep careful guard over our thoughts and actions. — Kathleen M. Beatty

CAGLIOSTRO: XIX — P. A. *Malpas*

A Messenger Long Misunderstood

XIX — THE END

Cagliostro was removed to the fortress of San Leo, in the Duchy of Urbino. On May 4th, 1791, the public burning at the hands of the executioner of Cagliostro's papers, effects, and Masonic paraphernalia, was celebrated with all the ceremonial drama of the Inquisition. As each article was thrown into the fire, the crowd clapped their hands and uttered cries of joy. What could they know about Freemasonry? The only plausible reason for their joy, if it was spontaneous, must have been that their God had been saved from the terrible onslaughts of — a Cagliostro!

The abjuration is described by a modern author:

The Holy Office desired to offer the thaumaturge to the populace as a spectacle, to show this heretic Freemason as an abject penitent. Cagliostro, in his penitent's garb, feet bare, a candle in his hand, between the two files of monks, passed from the castle of Sant' Angelo to Santa Maria. There, on his knees before the altar, he asked pardon of God and of the Holy Church and abjured his errors. . . .

Somehow the thing seems overdone: one would like to ask several questions on the matter. However, let us follow what has been published.

On the morrow, the prisoner, suddenly awakened, was conducted by night, under a strong escort, to San Leo. While he was asleep they had taken away his clothes and substituted a new suit which he had to put on. All these precautions were ordered by the Cardinal Secretary of State, who hoped perhaps to find some trace of a correspondence with persons outside. At

any rate the Cardinal Zelada directed the governor of Sant' Angelo (1) to give all possible facilities to the two agents of the Holy Office who had been given orders from the Sovereign Pontiff to make a minute search, both in the cell where Joseph Balsamo had been imprisoned and among his clothes, his rags and books that remained.

They had not yet discovered his secret. The search must go on!

Imprisoned in San Leo, they yet feared a possible escape, for they knew that Cagliostro had really extraordinary powers. Any other man would have been safe enough there, but this man had power that might even laugh at the grave, if he chose to use it. So a convenient anonymous letter being received by Cardinal Doria, denouncing a project of the French for rescuing Cagliostro, gave the needed excuse for putting him in an *oubliette*, (literally "a place forgotten"), practically a well, instead of his stone chamber. Balloons were then attracting much attention, and Cagliostro had declared that before balloons could be steered they must be made in some other shape than globular! Therefore rumor said a balloon was to be used to rescue him; this gave excellent color to the plan of putting him in an underground hole.

The governor of the prison himself is our authority for some of the details of the life of his prisoner in San Leo. The cruel cynicism of his description is revolting. Mysterious confessors visited his cell, ever seeking to drag his 'secret' from him. If Cagliostro showed himself 'obstinate' there were other means of "bringing him to reason." Shrieks and blood-curdling cries are said to have come from his cell and disturbed the whole fortress.

"Cagliostro is drunk again," said the governor of the prison, cynically. As if he could obtain anything more than just enough food to keep life in his body!

The prisoner makes some statement which appears paradoxical. The confessors for the day are irritated at their non-success.

"It is evident that a man who says such things is insane," declares the

governor. "The *bastonnade* was even insufficient to make him keep silence!" says this agent of the Inquisition, Sempronio Semproni, in a letter dated July, 1793.

There is a famous *mot*: "One doesn't live ten years in the Inquisition's hands." That a man should live six months under such a deliberate system of slow death and torture is one of the greatest wonders in connection with this wonderful life. That Cagliostro lived until August 28th, 1795, more than five years from the date of his arrest, is but a proof the more that he possessed powers and a will of extraordinary development — powers such as he exhibited to the public even in such humanitarian work as that of a thaumaturgic healer.

He died, it is said, of an apoplectic attack at the time when the French armies entered Italy, a convenient date for those who feared him and the liberating legions of Napoleon, *the Freemason*.

If the reader is dissatisfied with this veracious account, there is an alternative. The Pope's Secretary told the antiquary Hirt that Cagliostro was really put to death in his cell for having tried to throttle one of the confessors who was paying him a visit.

If still dissatisfied with the second veracious statement of Cagliostro's death, there is a third account which some like to believe, since it is given on the authority of one who made thousands of seemingly impossible statements, not one of which has yet been proved untrue, while most have been absorbed into 'common knowledge' in the fifty or so years since they startled the world with their novelty. We refer to H. P. Blavatsky. Able investigators have done wonders to clear up the story of Cagliostro, though they reject the cornerstone of the whole fabric in denying that he had anything to do with Count Saint-Germain, or that Madame Blavatsky's information is worth consideration, or that even Eliphas Levi (2) (the Abbe Louis Constant, the famous Kabalist) knew anything about him.

The explanation of this is simple. It is Madame Blavatsky who gave to the world information as to the real fate of Cagliostro and of his

connexion with Count Saint-Germain and the learned Dr. Mesmer of Vienna. It is she also who quotes a Polish Count of that name at that time in France, a mystic mentioned in Madame de Krudner's letters which are with the writer's [H. P. B.'s] family, and one who belonged, together with Mesmer and Count Saint-Germain, to the Lodge of the Philalethes. Where are Savalette de Langes' manuscripts and documents left by him after his death to the Philosophic Scottish Rite [Lost?]

In *Lucifer*, Vol. V, p. 393, H. P. Blavatsky writes:

Many are the absurd and entirely contradictory statements about Joseph Balsamo, Count de Cagliostro, so called, several of which were incorporated by Alexander Dumas in his *Memoires d'un Medecin*, with those prolific variations of truth and fact which so characterize Dumas *pere's* romances. But though the world is in possession of a most miscellaneous and varied mass of information concerning that remarkable and unfortunate man during most of his life, yet of the last ten years and of his death, nothing certain is known, save only the legend that he died in the prison of the Inquisition. True, some fragments published recently by the Italian *savant*, Giovanni Sforza, from the private correspondence of Lorenzo Prospero Bottini, the Roman ambassador of the Republic of Lucca at the end of the last century, have somewhat filled the wide gap. This correspondence with Pietro Calandrini, the Great Chancellor of the said Republic, begins from 1784, but the really interesting information commences only in 1789, in a letter dated June 6 of that year, and even then we do not learn much.

It speaks of the "celebrated Count di Cagliostro, who has recently arrived with his wife from Trent *via* Turin to Rome. People say he is a native of Sicily and extremely wealthy, but no one knows whence that wealth. He has a letter of introduction from the Bishop of Trent to Albani. . . . So far his daily walk in life as well as his private and public status are above reproach.

Many are those seeking an interview with him, to hear from his own lips the corroboration of what is being said of him." From another letter we learn that Rome had proven an ungrateful soil for Cagliostro. He had the intention of settling at Naples, but the plan could not be realized. The Vatican authorities who had hitherto left the Count undisturbed, suddenly laid their heavy hand upon him. In a letter dated 2 January, 1790, just a year after Cagliostro's arrival, it is stated that: "last Sunday secret and extraordinary debates in council took place at the Vatican." It (the council) consisted of the State Secretary and Antonelli, Pillotta and Campanelli, Monsignor Figgerenti performing the duty of Secretary. The object of that secret council remains unknown, but public rumour asserts that it was called forth owing to the sudden arrest on the night between Saturday and Sunday, of the Count di Cagliostro, his wife, and a Capuchin, Fra Giuseppe Maurijio. The Count is incarcerated in Fort St. Angelo, the Countess in the Convent of St. Apollonia, and the monk in the prison of Araceli. That monk who calls himself "Father Swizzero," is regarded as a confederate of the famous magician. In the number of crimes he is accused of is included that of the circulation of a book by an unknown author, condemned to public burning and entitled "The Three Sisters." The object of this work is "to *pulverise* certain three high-born individuals."

The real meaning of this most extraordinary misinterpretation is easy to guess. It is a work on Alchemy; the "three sisters" standing symbolically for the three "Principles" in their duplex symbolism. On the plane of occult chemistry they "pulverize" the triple ingredient used in the process of the transmutation of metals; on the plane of Spirituality they reduce to a state of pulverization the three "lower" *personal* "principles" in man, an explanation that every Theosophist is bound to understand.

The trial of Cagliostro lasted for a long time. In a letter of March the 17th, Bottini writes to his Lucca correspondent that the famous "wizard" has finally appeared before the Holy

Inquisition. The real cause of this slowness of the proceedings was that the Inquisition, with all its dexterity at fabricating proofs, could find no weighty evidence to prove the guilt of Cagliostro. Nevertheless, on April the 7th 1791 he was condemned to death. He was accused of various and many crimes, the chiefest of which are his being a Mason and an "Illuminate," an "Enchanter" occupied with unlawful studies; he was also accused of deriding the *holy* Faith, of doing harm to society, of possessing himself by *means unknown* of large sums of money, and of inciting others, sex, age and social standing notwithstanding, to do the same. In short, we find the unfortunate Occultist condemned to an ignominious death for deeds committed, the like of which are daily and publicly committed now-a-days, by more than one Grand Master of the Masons, as also by hundreds of thousands of Kabbalists and Masons, mystically inclined. After this verdict the "arch heretic's" documents, diplomas from foreign Courts and Societies, Masonic regalias and *family relics* were solemnly burned by the public hangmen in the *Piazza della Minerva*, before enormous crowds of people. First his books and instruments were consumed. Among these was the MS. on the *Maconnerie Egyptienne*, which thus can no longer serve as a witness *in favour* of the reviled man. And now the condemned Occultist had to be passed over to the hands of the civil Tribunal, when a mysterious event happened.

A stranger, never seen by anyone before or after in the Vatican, appeared and demanded a private audience of the Pope, sending him by the Cardinal Secretary a *word* instead of a name. He was immediately received, but only stopped with the Pope a few minutes. No sooner was he gone than his Holiness gave orders to commute the death sentence of the Count to that of imprisonment for life, in the fortress called the Castle of St. Leo, and that the whole transaction should be conducted in great secrecy. The monk Swizzero was condemned to ten years'

imprisonment; and the Countess Cagliostro was set at liberty, but only to be confined on a new charge of heresy in a convent.

But what was the Castle of St. Leo? It now stands on the frontiers of Tuscany and was then in the Papal States, in the Duchy of Urbino. It is built on the top of an enormous rock, almost perpendicular on all sides; to get into the "Castle" in those days, one had to enter a kind of open basket which was hoisted up by ropes and pulleys. As to the criminal, he was placed in a special box, after which the jailors pulled him up "with the rapidity of the wind." On April 23rd 1792 Giuseppe Balsamo — if so we must call him — ascended *heavenward* in the criminal's box, incarcerated in that living tomb for life. Giuseppe Balsamo is mentioned for the last time in the Bottini correspondence in a letter dated March 10th 1792. The ambassador speaks of a marvel produced by Cagliostro in his prison during his leisure hours. A long rusty nail taken by the prisoner out of the floor was transformed by him without the help of any instrument into a sharp triangular *stiletto*, as smooth, brilliant and sharp as if it were made of the finest steel. It was recognised for an old nail only by its head, left by the prisoner to serve as a handle. The State Secretary gave orders to have it taken away from Cagliostro and brought to Rome, and to double the watch over him.

And now comes the last kick of the jackass at the dying or dead lion. Luigi Angiolini, a Tuscan diplomat, writes as follows: "At last that same Cagliostro, who made so many believe that he had been a contemporary of Julius Caesar, who reached such fame and so many friends, died from apoplexy August 26th 1795. Semironi had him buried in a wood-barn below, whence peasants used to pilfer constantly the crown property. The crafty chaplain reckoned very justly that the man who had inspired the world with such superstitious fear while living, would inspire people with the same feelings after his death, and thus keep the thieves at bay. . . ."

But yet — a query! Was Cagliostro dead and buried indeed in 1792 [1795], at St. Leo? And if so, why should the custodians at the Castle of St. Angelo of Rome show innocent tourists the little square hole in which Cagliostro was said to have been confined and "died"? Why such uncertainty or — imposition, and such disagreement in the legend? Then there are Masons who to this day tell strange stories in Italy. Some say that Cagliostro escaped in an unaccountable way from his aerial prison, and thus forced his jailors to spread the news of his death and burial. Others maintain that he not only escaped, but, thanks to the Elixir of Life, still lives on, though over twice three score and ten years old!

"Why" asks Bottini, "if he really possessed the powers he claimed, has he not indeed vanished from his jailors, and thus escaped the degrading punishment altogether?"

We have heard of another prisoner, greater in every respect than Cagliostro ever claimed to be. Of that prisoner too, it was said in mocking tones, "He saved others; himself he cannot save . . . let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe. . ."

How long shall charitable people build the biographies of the living and ruin the reputations of the dead, with such incomparable unconcern, by means of idle and often entirely false gossip of people, and these generally the slaves of prejudice!

So long, we are forced to think, as they remain ignorant of the Law of Karma and its iron justice. — H. P. B.

[This concludes the study of Cagliostro, which began in *The Theosophical Path*, April, 1932. It is hoped to publish further researches on Cagliostro in future numbers of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, but in closing we feel that a study of such paramount interest to students of Theosophy and the occult, and involving, as has the present study by

Professor Malpas, so much devoted research, could be no more fittingly justified than by the following direct statements by two Theosophical Leaders who have written on this subject, H. P. Blavatsky and G. de Purucker. We give them *verbatim* and entire. — Eds.]

FOOTNOTES:

1. "In Rome, Darbargiri Nath [a high chela] went to the prison of Cagliostro at the Fort *Sant Angelo*, and remained in the terrible hole for more than an hour. What he did there, would give Mr. Hodgson the ground work for another *scientific* Report if he could only investigate the fact." — *Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 110 ([return to text](#))

2. Eliphas Levi refers to Cagliostro in his *Dogme de la Haute Magie*, I, 219-20, as having "died forsaken in the cells of the Inquisition," a statement which H. P. Blavatsky challenges with the direct assertion that it was a false statement, and that, moreover, the Abbe Constant (Eliphas Levi) "*knew* it was so." ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE CIRCLING YEAR — G. K.

The cosmic life surrounds us, permeates, flows in and through us. In it we live and move and have our being, as mathematical points so to speak, as little knots and eddies on its tide. As it sinks and its cool fire dims we feel the slowing and recession; as it mounts leaping and expands, the rising sap in tree and flower responds no less ineluctably to its urge and call than the inner tides in man, child that he is of the Universe whose garment is visible Nature, whose pulse is the circling year.

Easter points the second milestone in the sweep of the circling year, symbol that it has always been of the mystic threefold life-cycle of man, spiritual, intellectual and psychical — man, who is learning and growing. The second of the Four Sacred Seasons, Easter, is ushered in with the Spring Equinox, the next evolvment after the mystic 'Birth' at the Winter Solstice. It is the 'resurrection' of the Christ-Spirit in man, the awakening of the Inner Buddha.

The coming of Spring has been heralded with festival and ceremony since long before records were made. The Greek *Anthesteria* was but a late instance in a nearby land. The word 'Easter' comes from the name of a Pagan goddess, Eastre or Oestara by name, mythical enough save that no shadow is cast except by substance. Time is expert at taking the figures of Leaders, Helpers, Teachers of Humanity and labeling them 'mythical,' the while we freely admit the reality of the institutions they founded, even walk on the bridges which they built. And when the Christian Church — long after the time of Jesus the Christ, who never mentions Easter nor founds any ritual on the idea — felt the need of ceremonial recognition of this sublime and mystical fact of Universal Nature, it adopted this Pagan ceremony (as it had done with Pagan ceremonies before), so that the 'Spring Festival' of earlier peoples became the Easter of today. And today, on little known and secluded portions of the globe, great initiatory ceremonies continue to take

place, linking the hurried present with the immemorial past, the past of Egypt, of Aryavarta, with Atlantis itself.

Had we no other evidence of the antiquity of Easter as a special season of the year, one fraught with symbolic meaning, the Easter Egg alone would place it as incredibly ancient, and spiritually sublime, for the egg is a universal symbol. It was revered by prehistoric races to whom the First Cause, nameless in its beginnings, was symbolized as "The mysterious Bird that dropped an Egg into Chaos, which Egg becomes the Universe" — Kalahansa the 'Swan of Eternity,' who lays at the beginning of each *mahamanvantara* a Golden Egg. So H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 359 *et seq.* and other places), to whose chapter on 'The Mundane Egg' the reader may be referred. From the mysteries hymned in the ritual of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, through the ancient Mysteries of the Far and the Hither East, down to the Dionysiac and other Mysteries of Greece, the Egg is never absent as a revered and sacred symbol. And of what?

Of the germinating inner spiritual life within every being, with its apparent self-generation, its sublime promise, its unending message of hope. As Ra the mighty one reposes in the Egg of Seb when he crosses, resplendent, 'to the other shore'; as Brahma emerges from the egg resting on a lotus which floats on the waters of Space; as Eros-Phanes is born of the divine Egg, so the World-Egg lies fruitful and waiting, in the deeps of Ginnungagap — Maya. It is a far cry indeed from days when this symbolism was breathed in with the common air and known to all, to the present with its colored eggs for breakfast and its 'egg-rolling' child's play later on the lawn!

Yet it is something that the symbols persist, even though with meaning as concealed as ever the phantom-form of Chemis, within his egg waiting Horus-Apollo. It is something that, even though religion leaves it out, this archaic symbol is unforgotten in the gentler if smaller cycles of domestic life, and that the custom of exchanging Easter eggs as gifts still lingers in some sections to bestow its gracious and kindly touch.

The Wheel of Life turns on and what is now enshadowed will again rise

into the light. From a revered observance celebrating the resurrection of One Divine Man from the tomb, Easter will become, in its own good time, a period of rejoicing in the resurrection of the Divine that is *in every man*, from the tomb of the personal self. Then will this second of the Four Sacred Seasons be observed as holily, and by all, learned and unlearned, young and old. Man will no longer be shamed by Nature, but with each recurring Spring will match her universal burgeoning, her infinite largesse of growth and beauty, her kindly dispensation, with his own.

The Theosophical Forum

CHRISTS BEFORE CHRIST — *Frances M. Dadd*

"Christ — the true esoteric SAVIOR — *is no man*, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being." — H. P. Blavatsky

That Jesus called the 'Christ' was unique in the annals of human history — that he was the only 'Son of God,' the only 'Savior of Mankind' — is no longer the universally accepted belief in our Occidental world. An unbiased study of historic record, an acquaintance, however slight, with the great literatures of India, China, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Scandinavia, and the Celtic lands — coupled with a modicum of common-sense — all tend to dissipate such an idea.

That there did exist, perhaps some hundred-odd years before the Christian Era, a young Syrian Initiate, a pre-eminently holy man, who paid heavily for endeavoring to enlighten mankind and relieve its burdens by teaching his sublime code of ethics and philosophy, is conceded by all students of the Ancient Wisdom. About this mysterious figure, of whose life actually nothing definite is known, the later Christians wove a composite mystic tale. Indeed, the Gospel-story, from the Virgin Birth, the advent of the Magi following the Star, to the Crucifixion, the Descent into Hell and the Resurrection, far from being the life-story of any particular man, actually embodies some of the secrets of the Initiatory Cycle, which the Neophyte, in his training to become a Teacher of men, had to undergo in the Pagan Mystery-Schools. Moreover the term 'Christ' or 'Christos,' as H. P. Blavatsky tells us, "was never applied to any one living man, but to every Initiate at the moment of his second birth and resurrection," that is, when his higher spiritual self is born within him — in other words, when he becomes united with his inner god, the Christos within. It is this event in the spiritual life of the Teacher Jesus (and equally so of every real Teacher), rather than any physical resurrection, that lies at the root of our modern Easter festival.

Moreover there is historic evidence that this term Christos was in use long before the alleged life-time of Jesus. Even at about the beginning of the so-called Christian Era, the coming of a teacher or Messiah (Masshiah) was expected, so that "many persons were thought at that time to be, and undoubtedly thought themselves to be, the Christ." Simon Magus and Apollonius of Tyana, it is said, were both called 'Christs' by some of their contemporaries, although the term was not applied to Jesus until some time after his death.

So that in the broader meaning of the term 'Christ' — - that of an Initiate, one who had been through the mystic ceremony of anointing, who had become one with his inner divinity — it is not farfetched to apply it to other great Helpers of Humanity, other Sages who had earned the right so to serve by giving up their lower personal selves, and who, through following the path of chelaship, had become Masters of Life.

The human race has had its teachers, its saviors, in all ages, and a study of the legends and symbolic stories attaching to these outstanding figures in the drama of human evolution, points irrefutably to the truth that the great Sages and Seers of whatever race, of whatever religion, of whatever epoch of history, have been members or Messengers of one and the same great Brotherhood. They have been trained in the same Secret Wisdom, albeit the outward terms in which they expressed it have necessarily differed with the peoples to whom they came and the language in which they spoke.

For this reason it is that their life-records contain such a great number of similarities. Compare the stories of Krishna, Christ, and Apollonius of Tyana. They are almost identic in general outline. They all, as is also the case with numerous others, are called 'Soter' or 'Savior.' Each came to birth in a miraculous manner; each one in childhood was searched for and threatened with death by an opposing power. They all go through a period of temptation, are all persecuted, and finally meet death — that is, the death of the lower personality. They all descend into the Lower World, Hades or Hell, whence they ascend to union with

their 'God in heaven,' their own spiritual nature, and are 'glorified.' A host of other parallels will reward the search of the earnest student, but a glimpse into the universality of the Easter story will suffice us here: Osiris, the Egyptian Savior, descended into hell and later rose from the dead, bearing the title of 'The Resurrected One.' This event was celebrated annually in Egypt about the 25th of March, with great festivity and rejoicing. Horus, son of the virgin goddess Isis in one of her aspects, underwent the same experience.

Baldur, the Scandinavian Sun-god, after being killed, journeyed to the Nether Regions, but rose again to immortal life.

Adonis, virgin-born god of the Phoenicians, whose rites were widely celebrated in the Mediterranean world in ancient times, descended into Hades and rose again. At his festival in early spring, his image was buried amid weeping and wailing, culminating in a joyful shout: "Adonis lives and is risen again!"

Lao-Kiun of China, also born of a virgin, when his work on earth was completed, ascended to spiritual realms, since which time he has been worshiped as a god.

Atys, the Phrygian, and Mithras, the Persian Saviors, both were put to death, descended into hell, where they remained for three days and three nights, and then both rose again from the dead. In the mysteries sacred to Mithras the priests watched his 'tomb' until midnight of March 25th, when all at once lights burst forth from all quarters and the cry arose: "Rejoice, Oh sacred Initiated, your god is risen."

Bacchus, the Greek Savior, son of the virgin Semele, went down into Hades and later rose from the dead. His resurrection was celebrated with great rejoicings.

Quetzalcoatl, the Mexican crucified Savior, after being put to death, rose from the dead. His resurrection is represented in Mexican hieroglyphics.

Numerous other instances might be mentioned, but the above is

sufficient proof that a spring festival celebrating the resurrection of their gods was held annually among ancient peoples, before the time of Jesus Christ; that it was almost universal; and that it dates back to great antiquity.

To the casual reader these may be but interesting tales and their similarity but a coincidence, but to the intuitive mind the idea inevitably suggests itself that they are symbolic stories of the trials these Teachers had to undergo during Initiation, with which the details of their personal lives have little to do; hence the confusion and in many cases the absolute non-existence of the records of such unimportant details.

The title of Christ, "applied to every initiate at the moment of his second birth and resurrection," is equally appropriate in connexion with those Great Ones of historic times who have left their ineradicable imprint upon men's hearts and minds, ever seeking to awaken in their disciples the consciousness of that same bright Flame of Divinity which was the Light of their own life. Lao-Tze of China was one of these — the Sage of whom legend has it that he was endowed at birth with complete intelligence and the power of speech and that when his life-work was done he rode away upon a white ox into the West, flinging back as he went a pearl of great price — the wisdom of Tao, the Way to Perfection; also that after his passing he was given the title of 'Tan' or 'Master,' equivalent to that of Christ or Buddha. Another was Kung-foo-tze, upon whose work the whole of Chinese education has been based from that day to this, and yet who said: "I only hand on. I cannot create new things" — just as the Sages of India would say: "*Iti maya srutam*" — "Thus it has been heard by me; as I have heard it, so I pass it on."

In the same Golden Chain of Teachers was Gautama the Buddha, than whom it has been said that no more sublime figure has incarnated in human form; and who, though of noble birth, traveled far in quest of Truth, studied Indian philosophy at the feet of the Rishis, became an ascetic, and at last, after a period of meditation under the Bodhi-tree, became a fully enlightened Buddha, ready to enter Nirvana. Choosing

to remain among men because of his divine pity, he taught his high philosophy for forty-five years; and the undercurrent of his teaching was compassion, and the doctrine of becoming — of becoming one with the Buddha within.

Zoroaster of the Persians, "a divine messenger sent to redeem men from their evil ways," whose birth, foretold far in advance, was the occasion of marvelous natural phenomena, was said to have been tempted by the Prince of Evil if he would forego his mission; but, refusing, he invoked Ahura-Mazda, the Shining One, demanding that the Law be revealed to him. With the knowledge thus obtained, because he had been prepared through Initiation, he thenceforward took his place as a Teacher, a Christ among men.

Pythagoras of Greece studied in the Mystery-Schools of Egypt and of Babylon, and, returning to Europe, founded his famous School at Crotona, Italy, where he taught his pupils to understand the science of numbers as divine energies in action in the Universe, and in the lesser universe or man. Among his illustrious successors were Socrates and Plato, and also Empedocles of Sicily, philosopher, physician, and physicist.

And so the Chain of Teachers continues — and indeed has never ceased since the childhood of the Race, when semi-divine rulers, now known dimly through legend and folk-tale, came to earth and taught infant humanity. Springing, as we have pointed out, from one sacred Brotherhood which is in existence today, and where the secrets of nature have been preserved for mankind from race to race, these Messengers come among men when the need is greatest, each bearing the same tidings, but couched in different outward forms. And what is the teaching above all others, that the Christs of the Ages have come upon earth to recall to men's consciousness? It is the knowledge of the God within, the Immanent Christ, the Inner Buddha which enlightens every man, making of him a god in human form, albeit very much disguised and enmeshed by material bonds. Many, oh, so many, do not yet even dream of the greatness that is locked up within their own

being, and of the sublime destiny that is theirs; but some there are who unconsciously approach it at times; and others have definitely set their feet upon the mystic inner path which leads to those spiritual heights.

Theosophists are endeavoring to spread the knowledge of these *facts* concerning the existence of World-Teachers other than the well-known Sage of Syria, thus expanding the consciousness of Occidental minds, held for so long in the thralldom of creed and dogma. This will open wider the door to that vast treasury of knowledge which the Wisdom-Religion holds for mankind.

The Theosophical Forum

DEATH - AND AFTERWARDS: II — *G. de Purucker*

One of the most pathetic facts in modern civilization is the fear that nearly all human beings have of dying. There are of course some people who say that they do not fear to die; yet I wonder! I wonder, because their life does not seem to correspond with the courage which they so loudly profess. Nevertheless I respect the statement as a statement — the statement of any man or woman who says: I fear not to die! It is to be respected because it is the voicing of an unexplained instinct within the breast, which the man himself probably cannot explain but which evidences the intuition of the heart: that death, after all, is but an illusion hiding a grand reality. That which will happen *to all of us*, which has happened to the human race for uncounted centuries in the past, and which will happen unto endless time as long as souls dwell in bodies, evidences a process of Nature which in itself is a Grand Event; and the instinct above-mentioned whispers to us that unless the Universe is a crazy Universe with a demon at its heart, death must be something other than that which ignorant and timid people imagine it to be.

But we do not live in a crazy Universe. Show me a sign anywhere of universal lunacy in the Cosmos. As a first reflexion of the reasoning beings that we are, it comes into our minds that what is so universal, that what happens unto all beings and things which possess bodies, must in its essence and in its process be fundamentally right, and as it ought to be. Think again: Suppose that you or I were to live unto eternity as we now are, without fundamental change, would we, could we indeed, be happy? Assuredly not. As an example, fancy me, an imperfect man with all my relative feebleness of intellect, with all my relative paucity of vision and of feeling, with all the relatively undeveloped powers and faculties and attributes latent within me as an essentially divine but as yet not fully evolved spark of divinity — fancy me, or you, living as now we are unto eternity, without

fundamental and radical change! Speaking as an individual, I can say that to me such a life would be an eternal hell. It is by changing and by changing throughout, even if slowly, that we grow greater, that we enter into new things and better things and grander things for ever. If there were no law of progressive change operative throughout the Universe and in all its parts, then we should have babies who never grow up, who remain eternally babes; and what a grotesque, indeed ridiculous, picture this reflexion gives to us! We adults, we human beings are but infants, cosmic infants, in comparison with other Hierarchies of far more fully evolved beings, who are as far beyond us as we are beyond the insects, the plants, the stones, what not.

It is one of Nature's laws that an entity cannot continue the same for ever; indeed, it is one of Nature's most kindly laws. It is by exchanging the imperfect for the ever more perfect that we grow; and death is just such a change. As I wrote in a former article on this same subject, the child must die in order to become a man, and the man must die frequently in order in the future to become a god. There are many wonderful things around us in life of which we are cognisant all the time, and yet they are so commonplace to us that we do not reflect upon them and draw the necessary deductions from them, for if we so did, we could gather immense comfort from the verities that we thus should recognise. We perceive facts indeed, blind creatures that we are, and we do not draw the deductions from these facts which we should and can draw. Except the seed die, the plant cannot come into being. Except the man die, he cannot experience those *post-mortem* conditions of thought and consciousness which belong to his higher and inner being as the celestial spirit which he is in his essence.

Comfort lies in our drawing the proper deductions from the wonderful truths of Nature and her mysteries that surround us; and the great Seers and Sages of the past have left on record their deductions, which in fact are co-eval with thinking man, that the Great gives the law unto the small, and the small repetitively manifests or shows forth what the Great impresses upon it and impels it to do. Death is an example in point. Death is the most familiar thing in Nature to us; and the most

feared, because the least understood. We have all been born, we entered life by the gateway of birth, and because it is behind us we do not fear birth. But we look forwards into the future, to that coming day when everyone of us will go through this solemn change and be free, and we look forwards with fear. Yet this great change in the future is certainly on its way to meet us; it is coming.

If you, Reader, desire to know how a man feels, and what is the state of his consciousness when he is what we men call 'dead,' then I urge you to study yourselves carefully now; because if any one is so foolish as to think that a marvel is going to be wrought in him after he drops the body, he will be jarred, shocked, when his day comes. If you understand the reach of this thought, and if you will study yourself carefully now, your spiritual and intellectual and psychical qualities and attributes, and their operations, then you can explain death to yourself as fully and as completely as your capacity may permit — i. e., your capacity to understand and to explain yourself to your own cognising mind. No miracle is going to be wrought upon you when you die. You are going to drop the body and leave it behind, and you will do this in the exact condition or state that you were in when you drew your last breath.

Let us ponder over the reason and significance of the teaching of all the great Seers of all past times of the need of ethics, and of living them while we are alive on earth. You are not going to be saved, i. e. from the results or consequences of your past life; nor are you going to be eternally 'damned' because of the same consequences; but after death you are going to be exactly as you are when you die. If you have lived a decent life in incarnation, then you will be a decent excarnate entity after death; and if you have lived like a beast, you are then going to be a beastly excarnate entity, and you will have to take what is coming to beastly beings. Nature's laws are infinitely pitiful, precisely because they are founded in and arise from Universal Harmony, and they know no variation or shadow of turning. Hence the dictates, the mandates, of all the Sages of all ages: Live rightly!

There is no hell after the orthodox idea of the now dying Christian theology. There is no heaven after the idea of the orthodox Christian scheme; but there are *post-mortem* states of many kinds, almost infinitely numerous; and because of Nature's harmonical procedures no human being could ever die and be attracted or drawn to a state or condition or place in which he is unfitted to be. Cast out of your mind any idea that marvels and miracles will be wrought for you at your death: that unnatural things, whether good or bad, are going to happen to you outside of the grand and unerring and inevitable laws of the Universe; because such ideas are merely lies and contrary to Nature herself. Hold therefore fast to the obvious truth. A man goes, after he dies, to the particular lokas or talas in the interior worlds which he has fitted himself during earth-incarnation temporarily to inhabit. He himself makes for himself his own *postmortem* destiny, and thus it is that he gets exactly what is coming to him: good, bad, or indifferent. Nature in her infinitely exact adjustments will bring to him precisely what he himself causatively during life gave birth to — and this is *karman*, as we say.

Now, then, inside this physical Earth-sphere, surrounding it, permeating it, is what we may briefly call the astral sphere. It is called 'astral' because on certain rare occasions sensitives, when the electromagnetic conditions are right, can catch a glimpse of this interior or astral sphere, as flashing, phosphorescent, sparks or sheets of luminous substance. It is difficult accurately to describe these things without misleading those whose minds are unaccustomed to them. Even the grossest and apparently most solid substance of this physical sphere, had we what we may call the electric eye, we should see to be compact of an apparently infinite number of sparks or points of light in eternal motion and flitting here and there; and these 'atoms' are nevertheless themselves, even in their own atomic ranges, separated by spaces which are as relatively far apart as are to us the suns and the planets in the surrounding sky. Thus it is that the next condition or state of matter within the gross physical sphere, and somewhat more ethereal than the latter, is what we call the 'astral world.'

When a man dies and casts off this frail and ever-changing garment which he calls his body and with which he so foolishly identifies himself, there comes to him instant unconsciousness. No man actually dies conscious. Here again Nature is infinitely merciful, even to her weakest and most erring children. When a man dies, there is a lapse of consciousness quick as a snap of the fingers, ay, more quick, and then the man is gone. The brain still lives for a short while, in the sense that there passes through it in review all that has taken place during the life just past, and down to the least detail thereof; but soon this panorama of revision fades out; and there is left but the physical corpse, the 'empty' body. The spirit has flown to its own, the soul is in unconsciousness, the body then is dead.

The physical body or vehicle is the outermost garment of an inner and more ethereal body which we call the astral body, technically named the Linga-sarira, i. e. the pattern-body, the model-body, properly so named because the physical body is builded around it, atom for atom, molecule for molecule, cell for cell; and this astral body it is which is the vehicle for a short time — a very short time — of the Ego who was on earth a man. But this linga-sarira has a span of life which is almost exactly that of the body, and as the body decays, so does this linga-sarira or astral body decay; and when the last atom of the physical body has gone, when the corpse has disappeared, whether in the merciful vault of the crematorium, or by rotting decay, then the linga-sarira is virtually gone too.

According to the Christian scheme, man is composed of spirit, soul, body. That is a fairly good division, simple and convenient for ordinary use as far as it goes. When a man dies, the spirit of him, the divine spark, i. e. the highest portion of the man, instantly, quicker than thought, is gone, rejoins its own cosmic source. What is that cosmic source? You may call it the Anima Mundi, if you are not exacting in particulars; but if you are, and want accuracy in detail, then you may say, and say truly, that it is gone to its 'parent star.' There remains then the 'soul,' the human ego, in the intermediate realms of Nature between Spirit and physical matter. Now this human Ego is

unconscious, as already has been said, an unconsciousness which is exactly like that experienced by the ordinary man when he sleeps at night in blissful peace and repose, freed from the anxieties and harassing worries of the daily life: free from hate and love, free from fear, in blissful, unconscious sleep, Nature's most blessed sewer-up of the ravelled sleeve of care, as Shakespeare says. Just so is the condition in which the soul is after death — at least for a while.

In a previous article on this subject it was pointed out that a man during his incarnation on earth, if he study himself and the processes of his consciousness, may know exactly what happens to himself after death. There are four general states or conditions in which the human consciousness can be: Jagrat, the waking consciousness, in which we are now; Swapna, the dreaming sleep, the sleep with dreams — all too often a nuisance; and the reason we men do not remember our dreams better is because they are often too ethereal and keen for the brain to hold the record thereof after the man awakes into Jagrat again. It is not because the dreams are too faint. The contrary is the rule. Dreams usually are too intense, too keen, for the brain to record them successfully. Again, when a man sleeps and is utterly unconscious, the most blessed kind of sleep, this condition or state of our consciousness is Sushupti. It is a consciousness so intense, so keen, so spiritual, with reaches so vast, that the poor limited brain — the physical substance of the brain and the astral substance of the brain-mind — cannot hold it or record it. The power of this consciousness is too great; and it affects us as unconsciousness — and this condition is sushupti. The fourth and highest state of consciousness which the human being can attain is what is called Turiya-Samadhi, and this is to us humans what is virtually the consciousness of the Divine within us. If what we call the sushupti was so intense and powerful that the feeble brain cannot either recall or record it, a thousand times more may the same be said of the divine consciousness of the Turiya-Samadhi condition. It is somewhat like the brain of a man trying to carry and to cognise the consciousness of the Hierarch of our Solar Universe. The brain cannot; it is not builded for it; it is too feeble, too gross, too imperfect.

Now, then, mark carefully: when a man dies, he passes from the jagrat or waking-state into the swapna or sleeping-state so far as his astral body is concerned. His human soul is unconscious in sushupti; but the spirit within him, which has gone to its parent source until recalled earthwards again for the next earth-life, is in the turiya-samadhi state.

Now all these four states of consciousness may be, can be, and in extremely rare cases are, experienced by men even imbodyed in the flesh. Everybody knows what the jagrat or waking-state is. Everybody knows what the swapna or sleeping-dreaming state is; and if you are observant of your own movements of consciousness, I may say that everyone of you knows what sushupti or the state of unconsciousness is, and perhaps gains something valuable therefrom. But only those who have been trained in esoteric studies, and whose lives are rendered glorious thereby, can have even an appreciation or understanding of what the turiya-samadhi is — the divine state of consciousness in which lives the Divine within ourselves.

In future ages, when the human being shall have become from human-like godlike, when men shall be demi-gods on earth, then at least adumbrations of this consciousness will be familiar to *all* men. All men then will understand because they will know. Even today, where is the man with heart so poor, with brain so weak, who cannot even now have some inkling, some apperceptive grasp, some yearning comprehension, of the grand and the beautiful and the sublime? Every normal human being, if he train himself to do it, can live in a state of internal beauty, can walk even today among his fellow-men like a god, because he lives interiorly in that condition. He can raise his consciousness, his real self, and fix it, nail it so to say, in the higher part of his being; and then when he speaks, his word is the word of truth and carries conviction, even though the brain-mind of the hearers afterwards may say: "Well, I want to think about that."

It has already been stated in a preceding paragraph that the astral body decays or goes to pieces, just as the corpse does, and more or less *pari passu* with the latter. By 'astral body' I mean here the linga-sarira, or

model-body. Its life and coherence are just about as long as the physical corpse's are. As the corpse decays in the earth (if the body be buried), the astral body in the astral world, as just said, decays *pari passu* — with equal step — molecule for molecule, atom for atom.

Thus the *linga-sarira* is an astral corpse, just as the physical body is; and the 'soul,' or the Ego, has shaken off both physical corpse and astral body more or less at the moment of death. Thus the Ego is now at this point in the astral world, in the *kama-loka*, and in what is called the *kama-rupa*, which is the pale and shadowy and more or less perfect image of the man as he was in earth-life. This *kama-rupa* holds together in the *kama-loka* for a term which varies greatly, but strictly according to the character of the man during incarnation; if the man was gross the *kama-rupa* is correspondingly gross and coheres or holds together it may be for a long term of years, twenty, forty, fifty, possibly a hundred or even more years; but if the man while on earth was of a distinctly spiritual type, the coherence of the atoms of the *kama-rupa* is correspondingly weak, and the cohesion of its astral atoms slowly vanishes, the *kama-rupa* proportionately dissolving or disappearing, much as a wisp of fog slowly vanishes because of the dissipation of its particles.

During this process, the Ego, or 'soul,' has been slowly freeing itself from the attractions which connect it with the *kama-rupa*; there finally comes a moment when the 'soul' or Ego is free, and slowly begins to recover the spiritual consciousness of which it had intimations and imperfect realizations while in the physical body on earth. It then enters what is called the *devachan*, and in the bosom of the spiritual Monad, the human 'soul' or Ego 'sleeps' in inexpressible bliss, dreaming spiritual dreams of roseate beauty, for the *devachan* is a state of ineffable happiness for the mind of the Ego.

As a matter of fact, the 'reality' of its experiences of blissful dreaming in the *devachan* seems to the Ego, and in fact really is, far more intense than anything of similar type that the Ego had experienced when in the mire of the physical body, for it now is in the condition of unfettered

higher mentation and imagination, wherein the mind automatically picturates to itself the most lovely of mental visions and all the shifting mental scenery that these visions contain or involve. Indeed, the devachan is a condition or state of the higher Manas in which its activity proceeds free and unfettered by the veils of lower consciousness with which it was clothed during earth-life.

Every man, every woman, during life on earth has yearned for better and nobler things, has yearned for the self-expression of locked-up or latent faculties and attributes and powers; has yearned to be greater, larger, higher — in short, to have and to live a greater life. These are the evidences to any reflecting mind that show clearly how greatly the human soul hungers and yearns to grow towards better things and become them. It is in the devachan that it has a partial, although dreaming yet intensely actual, realization of all the unfulfilled spiritual yearnings of the heart and mind vaguely sensed or experienced during earth-life. The Christians call it 'heaven,' we Theosophists call it the devachan; and there, in the devachanic state, which is emphatically not a place and which is equally emphatically a state or condition of mind, of consciousness, and which is a mixture of sushupti and turiya, a purely spiritual condition — with increasing intensity the Ego remains in such state for hundreds and possibly for thousands of years, the time in all cases depending upon the character of the life last lived on earth. What men commonly call 'good' folk have a long devachan. What we commonly call gross or 'evil' folk have a short devachan — and the reason is obvious! From what already has been stated, it should be clear enough that evil people on earth have fewer beautiful thoughts, fewer spiritual aspirations, than have so-called good people; the consequences or results are felt in the devachan: evil people have a short devachan because their store of spiritual yearnings is small; good and spiritual people have a long devachan, because their stored up spiritual and highly intellectual yearnings, unsatisfied during earth-life, are numerous and active.

Thus the devachanic blissful dreaming goes on for centuries, it may be for a few thousand years, growing in intensity and keenness of

realization until it reaches its maximum or culmination, and then slowly diminishing as the stored-up spiritual and intellectual yearnings fade out of the consciousness. Then the time approaches when the Ego in the devachan feels the slackening of the spiritual yearning; as it were it begins slowly to sink into or pass over into a changing of thought, of consciousness, of mental feeling, becoming constantly less ethereal and less spiritual; and coincidentally and *pari passu* therewith the human 'soul' or Ego drops, sinks, 'descends.' Now mark well that these three last verbs, 'drops,' 'sinks,' 'descends,' are figures of speech, for they do not mean a passing through physical space; what is meant is a changing in the quality of the dreaming consciousness, a changing in the sense of sinking or descending from the purely spiritual to the less spiritual. The etherealized mentation of the Ego grows tired, so to say, of the devachan, and correspondentially occurs the change just mentioned.

Thus it is that the Ego 'dies' from the devachan; and 'descending' into the qualities and attributes of the lower realms, its projected Ray finally re-enters a human womb, and in due course of time a little child is born again on earth. What a marvelous and mystical story this is! If I had time and space in these pages I could write of the manner in which the Ego collects its formerly discarded life-atoms on the different planes of its previous ascent into the devachan, and of how the Ego, working in and through these life-atoms, builds for itself anew sheaths or vehicles of its consciousness, finally framing for itself a new linga-sarira, composed of astral stuff in the astral world, and how it finally reaches the family to which it is psycho-magnetically drawn, i. e., the father and mother to whom it is most attracted, and the physical *milieu* which most corresponds with its own vibrational amplitudes.

Hearken: The re embodying 'soul' or Ego, as stated above, dies from the spiritual worlds of the devachan in order to be reborn on earth. It enters the gateway of 'death' in the devachan, which thus in a sense is the gateway of 'birth' to earth-life here. When an incarnated man dies, contrariwise, he enters the gateway of death here which in the converse sense of the above is the gateway or portal of birth into the

inner, invisible, worlds of the spiritual realms. Thus then, from what has been said, it is clear that the Ego — or what Westerners often call the 'spirit' — never returns to earth after the death of the body. Such return is impossible, because the intermediate links of communication after death are slowly broken — very fortunately! Indeed, the human soul or Ego would not return even if it had the chance to do so. In itself it loathes the gross and heavy atmospheres of earth. It hates the sorrows and pains and griefs and smallnesses and imperfections that it has experienced here below. All its yearning is for peace and happiness and bliss and the explication or unfolding into mental reality of the things of the spirit that here on earth it previously had yearned for.

In what is here said will be seen the philosophical rationale, the solid and substantial reason, why the Theosophist is obliged to reject what is becoming to a certain extent popular now among the ignorant of the West — the so-called 'return of spirits.' The spirit, more correctly the Ego, 'returns', or rather its Ray returns, when the child is reborn in the next incarnation, never before. (1) It cannot return before. It is with its 'Father in Heaven,' to use a Christian phrase, and the foregoing explanation gives the real meaning of the Christian phrase: the soul is in the devachan, and the astral body and the kama-rupa have dissolved into their component atoms.

I shall mention briefly the nature of the conditions appertaining to the astral world, which world it has already been stated is a realm more ethereal than this gross physical earth is. It has many degrees or states or conditions of ethereality, ranging from the most gross in its own series of stages, to the least gross, which is equivalent to saying the most ethereal. Theosophists call these different stages or planes the Astral Light; and this adjective 'astral' is properly used, because sensitive seers — or even ordinary individuals, when conditions are right, when the electro-magnetic conditions are right, as in a thunder-storm — can sometimes catch glimpses of the Astral Light. The Astral Light is everywhere around us, permeating all and everything of the physical world. One can catch glimpses of its presence as phosphorescent, luminous, glittering 'electric' sparks, usually fugitive

and minute because the conditions of seeing it are always imperfect. Yet it is not a plane *within* the gross physical world — in other words, the gross physical world is the dregs of the astral light and indeed the lowest astral is our physical world.

In the Astral Light or the Astral World there are certain stages or ranges of varying ethereality which are the kama-loka, this being a Sanskrit term which means 'desire-place,' and a very appropriate term it is! The Greek and Roman ancients called it the Underworld, Hades. This is the habitat or the realm of all the emanations of earth, most of them vile; because the spiritual things as it were dash or rush within the kama-rupic ranges 'upwards' into their own appropriate spheres to which they are attracted, as has been already explained. But everything that leaves earth, that casts off an earthly body, must perforce pass into and through the Astral Light — in the case of human beings through those portions of the Astral Light which are collectively the kama-loka. These portions are the 'desire-world' or the 'desire-place,' because it is the receptacle or retainer of the cast-off shells or kama-rupas of human souls; and even of the beasts — because the beasts have astral bodies just as humans have. They could not be on this physical plane if they did not have them.

The Astral World, more particularly the lower reaches of the kama-loka, is the place, the underworld, the land, of 'shades' as the Greeks and Romans said; the world of shades — an excellent word, far better than 'spooks' or 'ghosts.' Sometimes these specters or shades (which are the astral simulacra or pale copies of the men who were, and which live in the kama-loka) when physically the conditions are right and a man or a woman is in the properly receptive psycho-physical condition — sometimes I say these specters can be glimpsed, and then one has the case of a so-called haunted house, or a haunted hall or room. These shades are simply decaying shells, the astral corpses mentioned previously, just as the human physical body when the man is dead is a discarded shell. All that made it move and live and feel and think has gone, and there now remain but the automatic reflex actions giving it semblance of the real life that previously had thrown it off.

Briefly to recapitulate: first the man dies and thus casts off the physical body, and the body decays. Almost coincidentally the same thing happens to the astral body or linga-sarira, in which the soul is as it were still imprisoned for a very short while. When the soul leaves it, this linga-sarira in its turn becomes an empty shell, as has been described. It is an empty astral corpse; it has now no inner, inspiring, and elevating spiritual life. It cannot raise itself out of the kama-loka any more than the decaying physical body, the human corpse, can raise itself from the earth. It slowly disintegrates and goes to pieces, exactly as does the physical body when the latter becomes a corpse. The Ego is now in the kama-rupa wherein it remains for a time-period varying in length until finally it casts off the kama-rupa and enters the devachanic state.

In the Astral World, or rather in the kama-loka, there are, with certain exceptions, no real living beings as on earth. The kama-loka is an intermediate stage in the progress of the Ego. It is the abode of shells and of Elementaries. Elementaries are those ex-carnate human beings who, because of extreme passional and mental grossness of life on earth, have no devachan; in other words the human 'soul' or Ego cannot free itself from the kama-rupa. What happens with these Elementaries? They are a torment, and also a danger, to human kind; for, being the kama-rupas of the worst kind of human beings on earth, when these human beings die they cannot leave or raise themselves out of the lower astral world or the kama-loka. These Elementaries are drawn to those places and to those beings on earth to which they are strongly psycho-magnetically attracted — call it the attraction of sympathetic magnetism if you wish. They are attracted to human beings whom they psycho-magnetically feel drawn to, and they haunt these humans.

Just here we perceive the weighty reason in the teachings of the great Sages and Seers about the need of ethics, morals. A man who lives a good and holy life, him no evil influence in the Universe can touch, because the power of the god within him throws around him an akasic

veil that nothing in the Universe can penetrate or dissipate. But the man who lives an evil life is not only his own worst enemy and indeed his own victim, but if he watches not carefully, he may become the prey of those dreadful astral beings whom we call Elementaries, who will surely find him out because they will be irresistibly drawn to him because of similarity of vibration, because of synchronous psycho-mental vibration; and they will haunt him, and will constantly impel him to do deeds of evil. How many an unfortunate criminal has not said, and said truly, when brought to the bar of justice: "My God, I do not know why I did it; something drove me to it!" and he is right! Originally weak in character, unable to control himself, haunted by one or more Elementaries, the time came when he could no longer resist the extra impulse or compulsion from one of these astral fiends whom he had attracted to himself by an evil life, and whom he had been feeding with his own vitality — feeding an astral vampire.

Study yourselves, I say; study the movements and characteristics of your own consciousness, and you will then know what will happen to you when you die — because your death is coming and some day will touch your heart with its call. Fear it not, however. Death is a change, and ought to be, and in the majority of cases actually is, a vast improvement over this gross life of earth; because however beautiful physical life at times may be, it is yet full of keen sorrow and profound grief and intense pain and subtil temptation, to which many miserable human beings succumb; whereas after death, at least for the majority, there are ineffable bliss, unspeakable peace, and rest. How necessary therefore it is for us humans to have charge over each other, always to be pitiful and compassionate! Remember that although you, Reader, may think you are safe because you are a good man and have lived a decent life, remember, I say, that you too in the past may have followed the *facilis descensus Averno*, the easy descent to 'hell'; and have been rescued by one greater than yourself, a brother, who extended to you a helping hand. Do not ever condemn the unfortunate sinner, although be inflexible in your aversion from and condemnation of evil itself. You never know when some temptation may come to you which may cause

you in your turn to stumble heavily on the path. Be charitable, be compassionate, be always pitiful. Put yourself into the other man's place, and especially do this when you feel inclined to criticize or to judge him for his thoughts and acts. Follow the example of the noble life of the Buddhas, the noble life of the Christs, for this is the life which makes a man's existence here on earth truly godlike.

How the earth would be changed today if men would merely *live* the Brotherhood they so vainly prate about, but which, when the test comes, they so infrequently practise. Assuredly, it would be no loss if everybody treated everyone else as a brother. Even in the material sense it would be profitable, for a man would have a plethora of riches, since all others would be giving to him, and he would be giving again of his abundance to others having less than he. Poverty and sadness and human misery would nearly vanish from the earth.

FOOTNOTE:

1. There are a few apparent but not real exceptions to the statement made in the text above; and these apparent exceptions are exemplified in the cases of children dying young, of infants dying before childhood, and the cases of congenital idiots, etc. These cases, precisely because the Ray of the Ego has had no chance to undergo in a real manner the experiences of earth-life, and therefore because the projected Ray from the Ego is unsatisfied, are the cases of almost immediate physical re-embodiment. Take the case of the infant or young child dying: the Ego, or rather the egoic Ray, in these cases after a very short interval seeks immediate re-embodiment, so that it is quite possible, although not always the case, that the child dying may actually find its new incarnation in the same family wherein it had previously found its unsuccessful incarnation as the infant which died. Let this be comforting to those who like it. ([return to text](#))

WHY STUDY THEOSOPHY? — *Kenneth Morris*

There are, I suppose, as many reasons for studying Theosophy as there are human beings who ought to study it: I believe the number is computed at 1,600,000,000 generally. As one could not well enumerate sixteen hundred million reasons in one number of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, it seems best to pick out one of them; and as charity begins at home, and the fool looketh towards the ends of the earth, perhaps no apology is needed for introducing this one: —

Dai'r Cantata he is; formerly he dug coal under the mountains "by here"; and got nystagmus, or silicosis, underground, the way people do; and — and — and — . Oh, Dai *bach*, I know, I know I — nearly every incident in that long, long *et cetera*. And I know that you are not unfortunate.

Study you Theosophy, *machgen i*; and you shall go to your music again, and have your old joy in the tops of the mountains! You shall not blame God or man for what folk call your misfortunes; you shall be glad of them, for the power they bring you. For it is in Theosophy you will find about the Law of Karman; and that there is no such thing as injustice in the kingdom of the Sun and Stars: but we do ourselves elect what fortune shall befall us, and build our own fate and our own life and the very selves of us with our own thinking and doing; and there's not a place where we can be, nor conditions we can suffer, but we are there, and we are suffering them, because it is there only, and under those conditions alone, that we can learn the lesson the universe is waiting for us to learn and gain the strength and grandeur the time has come for us to gain. And it is in Theosophy you will learn about the Hero in Man; and that it is only the outside of you, the husk, that is the Welsh miner out of work, and his lungs clogged up with silicosis, or the world jiggling its mad dance before his eyes with nystagmus; the Inside You is the one who has come marching down the ages, the Heroic Adventurer, advancing through lives of prosperity and lives of dire adversity

towards his goal of Godhood. Study you Theosophy, Dai *bach*, and —
— *Yes have I studied Theosophy, says Dai; and no one need speak a word of comfort to me again.*

I laugh when I hear it said that Theosophy has nothing to give a man when he is down and out and in heavy trouble. Come to the Rhondda Valley if you think that; and I'll guarantee you'll change your mind. It is precisely then that he needs it most, and that it comes to him most grandly. The world has been desperately psychologized in one direction; I shall not be so harsh as to say, with cowardice. But the medicine for trouble, we have been taught to think, is to have a Greater Strength than one's own to rely on; a comfortable bosom to weep on; a cajolable omnipotence to pray to; a pitying, loving Savior to carry one's burden for one: — "I am weak but Thou art mighty." Were this a true fortification of the soul, one would say nothing; but it is precisely the opposite of that. When the mines are closed down, and the barren daylight hours are to be filled in somehow; when what coal he burns, for warmth or for cooking, Dai Seventy-years-old must pick up bit by bit on the mountain-top, on the refuse-dump from the mines, and carry home in a sack on his shoulder; and Dai Forty must remember an engagement daily at dinner-time, and "pretend nothing" while he slouches off down the squalid street that what food is in the house may be all for his wife and children: then such "spiritual comfort" begins to wear thin in time. One wearies of badgering an omnipotence that would seem to be either senselessly spiteful or engaged with other things; bosoms to weep on don't meet the needs of the case; it doesn't seem to matter that someone died to save you long ago: you are not saved, so far as the naked eye can see. It is not a re-stirring of the emotions, or tender sentiment, or prayers and tears that will help you then — for long. What is blowing without is a bitter, bleak and freezing wind; on no horizon shines any smallest glimmer of hope: there is no hope in this outer world. Weaken within, and one might as well go hang oneself at once; and to weaken means chiefly, to parley with self-pity; and does not one do that when he tries with prayer to move omnipotence to pity him? To rely on these emotional consolations is to

reduce oneself inwardly to the condition of a jelly that won't jell; one cannot come by happiness that way.

The need is that we should know our own resources and bring them into play. Those resources are as great as are in the Universe; the Inmost Self in us is the Self of the Universe: Theosophy convinces you of the fact, and shows you how to get at them: these resources from within that are the only effective weapons against adversity. *Comfort* is *con* and *fortis*: you have to *with-strengthen* a man really to help him in his times of trouble. And there is no knowledge so helpful and strengthening as knowledge of Karman. To know it is to know that miserable conditions are but a tunnel that will end presently, and the track lead out into sunlit valleys. And it is to know that there are no dangers, no traps or pitfalls, for the man who steadfastly will not fear. It is to know that there is nothing to fear.

This endless chain of causes and their effects which are new causes, that is our life throughout eternity, can come by no breakdown. The thing that kills us is fear of a breakdown that cannot happen; worrying about it; making of it a ghost-cat to play ghastr-lily with that poor mouse, our mind. Knowledge of Karman eliminates all that.

To give a man such knowledge is not, unless you are a fool (in which case what you give him is something else), to fling an icy douche over him (It's your own fault; don't kick up such a row about it!). It is we humans who busy ourselves with people's faults, set up law courts to punish them, and generally play fantastic tricks before high heaven. The Universe reacts to our actions impersonally, and knows nothing of rewards and punishments. Revenge is a disease of the human mind, and a concept that does not exist in the worlds above the human. Karman is not like that.

The heart of it is love; the end of it
Is peace and consummation sweet. Obey!

The word 'love' may be misquoted there; yet it is accurate. Love is the knowledge, innate in the Universe, of the One-being-ness of the

Universe. Karman is the Universe's insistence on that. We must rise into universality, up from our limitations of selfhood; when we press backward toward those limitations, it hurts. Where would we be if it didn't?

Paul says judiciously, The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; but the word is *paidagogos*, from *pats* a boy and *agein* to lead; the pedagogue was not a teacher in the school, but the slave whose duty was to take his master's son to school every morning. If we take *Christ* as meaning the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, or our own Spiritual Monad, the saying is accurate Theosophically. For that is the Teacher in the School of Life. So the Law conducts us to the place where we may learn, receiving instruction from that Inner Divinity.

Now then, who is to say, *It's your own fault*? Whatever fate a man may be suffering, it is simply the place where he may learn. When you see a man in dire stress in the fell clutch of circumstance, how do you know that he has not earned the right to it by nobility? That it is not a place where he may learn very quickly and make great strides in his eternal education?

Is adversity a thing to fear then, or to hate? No, it is not. The three best teachers of a man, said the Druids, are bodily sickness, adverse circumstance, and the undeserved hatred of his enemies. They were right each time.

This then, *Dai bach annwyl*, is why *you* should study Theosophy; now in the time of your sorrow, steeping your mind in it; spreading the news where you can. For see you now: the man on fire to bring this sublime comfort to his fellows, remembers no sorrows of his own. His own sorrows have become for him only means of understanding, and depth of heart, and ability to do the thing and say the word of peace: his means of solving human problems.

THE SATAN MYTH — *H. T. Edge*

Exploding the Satan myth was an important part of the work undertaken by H. P. Blavatsky in bringing to the world the message of Theosophy. This curious perversion of the truth has done much harm during the ages from which we are emerging; its rectification will be coincident with a new gospel of hope and help to humanity.

H. P. Blavatsky threw down the gauntlet to theology by boldly naming her new magazine *Lucifer*. This name, as its etymology shows, means 'Light-bringer,' and is applied to the morning star which heralds the light of day. Its equivalent in Greek is Phosphoros, which means exactly the same. It is strange indeed that an angel with such a name, indicating such attributes, should have been transformed into an angel of darkness, a synonym for Satan the evil counterpart of God, foe alike to God and man.

The better to understand how this has come about we must refer to the sacred allegory found in the early chapters of *Genesis*, whose meaning has been similarly perverted. If it be asked what reason we can give for preferring the Theosophical teaching to the usual theological interpretation, we can give two answers. One is that to understand any given scripture it is necessary to compare it with other scriptures; for by adopting this method we sift out from each whatever is accidental and arrive at what is essential and common to all. The other is that the true explanation is found to conform to the facts of human experience, whereas the false interpretation conflicts with those facts.

During Christian times there has always been an antagonism between religious sanctions and the spirit of free inquiry; the authority of churches and of representative religious leaders has been unfriendly and often hostile to individual initiative in the search for truth. Often there has been war to the knife, at other times mutual indifference; and at the best, attempted adjustments between elements assumed (by

those very attempts) to be naturally diverse. But the natural intelligence of man has felt that the truth must be one and single, not divided into two opposite species; and that an all-wise and all-loving God cannot rightly be conceived as an obscurantist. Then there is the well-known problem why such a God could create man, allow him to fall or be led by Satan into corruption, and then provide for his rescue by a very doubtful means and one that (in strict theological interpretation) comprehends but a minute fraction of the human race, after all. It is things like these that have driven so many worthy souls out of religion altogether, all unaware that there was any genuine truth to replace the spurious article which they have rejected; and this is what is meant by saying that the theological interpretation conflicts with human experience instead of explaining it.

This divorce between two vital aspects of truth has also had a disastrous effect on science, causing it to propound a view of man's origin and nature based on purely physical influences.

But the duality of man's nature is the commonest fact of experience, constituting as it does the entire motive of the drama of human life. It is surely the function of any body of doctrine, whether it pose as religious or scientific, to explain this fact of man's duality. If we compare the stories of man's creation as found in the various scriptures and mythologies, we shall find everywhere a dual creation of man recorded. He is first created as an innocent being, without knowledge of good and evil, without free choice, living in a state of harmless and unprogressive bliss; and afterwards he is enlightened by the gift of divine fire, which turns him into a responsible being, made in the image of his divine creators, and destined thenceforth to learn wisdom by experience of pain and pleasure, wrong and right.

Such is the true interpretation of the allegory in *Genesis*. It is the 'Serpent' who is man's real Savior. It is this Serpent who teaches man the knowledge of good and evil and makes him like unto the Gods. The Serpent is actually the Lord God himself in another form, perfecting his own original work and making of the earlier mindless' man a complete

being, a fitting image of his divine author. The Greeks tell the same thing in the story of Prometheus, who takes compassion on helpless mankind and brings down fire from heaven in a tube; whereby man is enlightened. There is the same apparent hostility between Zeus and Prometheus as there is between the Lord God and the Serpent. It is evident that the man of Eden, and the man whom Prometheus enlightened, were little better than automatons; and that such a being could only become a real man by having a choice given him. Only thus could he exercise free, that attribute of divinity. Accordingly the exercise of free will choice can be construed into an act of rebellion, for so it is in a sense. Satan himself is said to have rebelled against God and fallen from heaven; but he did so in compassion for man, performing an act of self-sacrifice for the salvation of man; just as Prometheus sacrificed himself and was ejected from Olympus to be fastened to a rock. Satan is the head of a host of angels, who with him rebelled against God and fell from heaven. They were the true enlighteners of man.

This allegory of the Fallen Angels has been so misrepresented that it may seem to some as though we were being very profane in so speaking of it; but in fact it is one of the most holy and sublime teachings of ancient wisdom. The kind of evolution studied by science cannot produce anything higher than animals; the human self-conscious intelligence can never have been evolved from the animal mind; it is a gift apart. This gift of the divine intelligence is passed on from beings who have it to those who come after them. It is brought to men from above, not worked up from below. The scriptures say that in ages long gone by, man 'walked with the Gods' or had intercourse with divine beings; and it was thus that man received that marvelous intelligence which, all obscured as it is by his mortal clay, yet makes him so immeasurably above the animals. The earliest races of mankind were of the kind called 'mindless,' sinless, devoid of initiative; but later in the progress of evolution came the stage when man was enlightened by the passing on of the divine light or fire to him from beings who had acquired it before. All this concerns the teachings as regards the

evolution of human races, too long to be entered into here, but to be found in Theosophical books. It is allegorized in the Bible and other sacred books and mythologies as has been indicated above. The temptation of flesh in the Garden of Eden is a gross misinterpretation of the allegory, and God has been represented as cursing for ever what was a purely natural act and function. Here is another false antithesis, by which natural functions have been connected with the idea of sin, man has been set at war with himself, and endless moral confusion has gone down through the ages.

But if this Biblical Satan is a name for man's enlightener, and not the arch-fiend and enemy of God and man, nevertheless there may be a real devil among us. But this devil is our own personified passions and evil thoughts. We all know this devil by experience, and how the alliance between fleshly passion and human self-consciousness can engender a sort of evil personality, which steps into our clothes and wears the mask of ourself. But here again it is not mere physical immorality, harmful though that may be, that is the worst foe of man; but selfishness, hate, anger, cruelty, heartlessness; for these wither and petrify the very soul. And it is not those who have been most noted for sanctimoniousness who have been most free from this kind of sin.

Man's true redeemer is that Divine Spirit which was breathed into him when from being an un-self-conscious creature he became like unto the Gods. Good, for man, is what expands; evil contracts. Good sets the common weal above so-called personal interest; evil seeks to promote self-interest regardless of the common weal. Good is constructive and makes for harmony; evil is destructive and makes for discord.

Equally fatuous are those who accept the Eden story in its literal sense, and those who scoff at it as foolish superstition. They both make the same mistake, are guilty of the same lack of proportion. The story is so evidently symbolic and allegorical; and the same symbols are universally found. What is that Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? That Tree of Life? That pleasure-garden? The Garden is the state of primitive innocence in which dwelt early man, when as yet the light

from Heaven had not kindled the latent spark within him. The Tree, the Tau, and the Cross are universal symbols of the Wisdom-Religion, as is the fruit which hangs near the top of the Tree. Around the Tree we often find a Serpent coiled — the universal emblem of Wisdom ('Be ye wise as serpents'). This is the origin of the Christian Cross, which should symbolize the sacrifice of self for Self, the salvation of man by exchanging the mortal for the immortal, the true Resurrection from the dead. See how these most sacred symbols have been turned into a dogmatic system, in which man is made to believe himself doomed by the sin of Adam to eternal damnation, only to be saved by an act of homage to a crucified God; and how good and evil have been mixed up, that which is holy profaned, and man made to damn his own god-given faculties.

It is hoped the above will not be interpreted by anyone into an advocacy of anything like 'Satanism' or devil-worship, or any such evil cult as may be found lurking in dark corners today. The distinction between good and evil is clear enough. If Satanism means the deification of evil passions, and black magic and sorcery, then the name of the divine archangel has again been traduced. Such unhallowed cults are simply one of the natural results of denying to man his own natural power of self-directed evolution; by cutting him off from the true light, we drive him to seek refuge in false lights. The Bible is one of the world's sacred scriptures; when we know the keys we can interpret it aright; but it can be, and has been, interpreted entirely wrong, so that a fraud has been practised on humanity. The above is written with a view to trying to clear away some of the confusion. It is time that the crucified Christ were resurrected from the tomb wherein his so-called followers have cast him; and that man should recognise once again his true Redeemer in the Christ within all men.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: IV — *G. de Purucker*

G. de P. — Here is a question I would like to ask: You have spoken of the different Buddhas. You have referred to — at least you have inferred — the existence in man of different egos. We have heard on other occasions of the Divine Monad, the Spiritual Monad, the Human Monad, the Astral Monad, and the Physical Monad. Here is my question. Just what, then, is man? How many mans — if I may so coin a plural, I won't say men, but how many mans — are there in a man? I think that is something that is well worth studying and carrying the study over for weeks, because the true answer contains a wonderful light on the matter. How many mans in man? Is he just a horde of creatures streaming and dreaming through his constitution, and is a man made up of this horde; or is he a Divinity who imbodies all these beings within his essence; or what is he?

(After considerable discussion by Lodge-members)

G. de P. — Perhaps I did not phrase my question clearly. Man's constitution is composite, and, as said before, there is a Divine Monad, a Spiritual one, a human, and so forth on down the scale. Now, is each one of these monads an entity by itself, united with the other entities, all together forming man's constitution; and if so, are there several mans in man, or is it just one single unitary being to which different names — I mean divided into portions to which different names — are given as we pass down the scale? Is the thought clear?

(After still further discussion by Lodge-members, the Leader answered the question himself, throwing new light on the teachings.)

G. de P. — It is not a mere figure of speech when we speak of man as having in his constitution different monads. A monad means an indivisible center of life-consciousness-substance, a spiritual ego. Therefore man, in addition to being a stream of consciousness as he is as a constitution, has within him a Divinity, a Buddha or Christ, a

Manasaputra, a human being, an astral entity; and he is housed in the human beast — the astral-vital-physical body. All these collectively constitute man's constitution. Hence I have so often said to you: Remember in all your studies, never forget it, that man is a composite entity, which means an entity formed of other entities, other beings. Therefore did I choose the words in asking my question: How many mans — not men but mans — are there in what we call man? All through any one such constitution there is the sutratman or thread-self from the inmost of the inmost, the core of the core, the heart of the Universe — through all these different monads, from the highest till it touches the physical brain of man. Thus man is both legion and unit. The Silent Watcher in him is the Dhyani-Buddha, an actual, entitative, living ego of divine type. Man is but a copy, a microcosm, of what the solar system is, the Macrocosm. He is no different, he is the same: powers, substances, faculties, essences, everything, only in the minute scale. What you see in the solar system, you should find in mankind. If you want to know what the solar system consists of, study yourself. You simply copy the Great.

Now, then, the human ego which is I, which is any one of you, is one of those particular monads as yet relatively unevolved. Above it there is the Spiritual Monad, and above the latter there is the Divine Monad. For karmic reasons very intricate, difficult to understand but existent, any one of us happens to be a certain stream of consciousness, a sutratman; yet you or I as human individuals are the human monad. I am a human monad, each one of you is; so that, as a human being you are only in the intermediate part of that stream of consciousness which is your constitution, and the upper part of it makes your link with infinity, and the lower part of it enables you to learn on this plane.

Thus you are both one and legion. Thus the divinity in the solar system is both one and an army. We are component parts of that army. The god of the solar system has a life-consciousness-substance, energy, being, which flows through all of us, and is the substantial, conscious background in which we live and move and have our being; and all that particular range of monads or egos which forms any one of us, and

forms his stream of consciousness, is spiritually housed in this solar Divinity in whom we live and move and have our being. It is really very simple, and it is so beautiful, because in understanding this seemingly intricate but really very simple thought, you have the key to so many of our deepest doctrines.

Now then, a last thought: Any one of these monads or spiritual egos which form your constitution, my constitution, what is commonly called the constitution of a man, is evolving — you are, I am, the god within me also, the god within you also, each one on its own plane, each one following its own pathway, and each one in time going a plane higher, and then a plane higher still. When our monad shall have brought out from within itself its latent powers, its unevolved, undeveloped powers, it will become a Spiritual monad, and we shall all be Buddhas, and we shall then work through what is now the animal nature in us, which then will be human. Each monad will have stepped up a degree, and be more highly evolved. Keep this thought in your mind of your utter oneness with the Divinity; and one of the best ways of recognising the utter unity of everyone of us with Infinity, is remembering that we are composite, not by fastening our minds on the fact that we are just an ego different from other egos. Therein is the heresy of separateness. The differences are illusory, yet they exist. Illusory does not mean that they do not exist, it means that it is not the *real* Real, the realest Real, the fundamental Reality.

Take Father-Sun. We see only his body, and yet his vitality infills the solar system in which the planets are bathed, and all the beings on the planets, and the invisible planets. Then the innumerable armies and multitudes and hosts of life-atoms building my body, your body, the bodies of the earth, the bodies of the sun, the bodies of the gods — each one of these life-atoms is a growing, learning entity, ensouled by a monad, which is likewise a stream of consciousness.

Man is a unit when you take a particular portion of the constitution which is the human ego, which is evolving. It will become a spiritual ego, and afterwards a divine ego; and yet at the same time shot through

and through with forces streaming down into him from egos superior to himself, of which he is the child. This is the esoteric basis for the old saying, that at the flame of a candle you can light all the fires of the world, and the flame of the candle is undiminished. Consciousness is just like that. You cannot exhaust it.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: IV — H. T.
Edge

IV — THE SERPENT

This symbol, like the others, condenses a number of meanings into one; and of these meanings we have already touched upon one in the article on the Circle (Feb. issue). It was there mentioned that the Serpent is often shown swallowing its tail, as an emblem of the return of cycles upon themselves, and the union of ends and beginnings. It was also shown that, if the ends of the circle pass one another instead of meeting, a spiral curve is formed, which still farther expresses the course of evolution. This spiral curve is often shown as a Serpent, so that one meaning of this symbol is that of the spiral course of evolution.

It will be well to say here, with reference to the Serpent, as also to many other symbols, that there is a *dual* meaning. A knowledge of this fact removes many obscurities in the interpretation of symbols; we saw for instance, last month, that the Cross may represent the interaction of Cosmic Mind and Cosmic Matter on the highest plane, or the union of physical forces on the terrestrial plane. Similarly we hear of good and bad Serpents, and in our own Bible we are told in one place to be wise as Serpents, and in other places to beware of that old Serpent the Devil. Bearing this dual nature in mind, we shall avoid such confusions as theology has made in confounding the Serpent of *Genesis*, who taught mankind wisdom, with that Devil who is the personification of man's evil passions.

We read in *The Secret Doctrine* that Fohat, Divine Messenger, Intelligent Cosmic Electricity, who at the Divine Word proceeds forth to create worlds and the beings thereon, moves in a *serpentine* course, generates spirals; and this spiral plan of evolution is imitated throughout nature, from the nebulae to the spiral growth of plants. The

Serpent means Divine Wisdom, Creative Intelligence; and Masters of Wisdom are called Serpents — which gives a new meaning to the injunction 'Be ye wise as Serpents.' Hermes or Mercury carries the caduceus, a wand with two Serpents entwined on a staff; the Chinese made the Serpent the emblem of their emperors; the Druids called themselves Snakes; serpent-emblems called Dracontia once covered the globe and are still found; Quetzal-Cohuatl was the snake-deity of the ancient Mexicans; Dragons are found throughout ancient symbology with the same sense. But we also hear of evil Serpents. The Gnostics spoke of an Agathodaimon and a Kakodaimon, or good and evil divinity, represented as Serpents; Hercules slays Python; Apollo at birth overcomes a Serpent, but does it by means of another Serpent — the higher wisdom in man overcoming the lower. The two nodes of the moon, Rahu and Ketu, are called the Dragon's head and tail. So the Serpent can represent the duality of human nature — which is but a copy of the duality in Cosmos. There is the Serpent of Spirit and the Serpent of Matter, the Heavenly Wisdom from above and the earthly wisdom from below, of which Paul speaks so often. These polar forces throughout all creation make the eternal contrast by which growth is promoted and equilibrium sustained. The lower Serpent of matter is not evil in itself, but becomes evil to man when he sets himself in a wrong relation to it. Man's compound nature enables him to endow the forces of nature with intelligence and thus to create bad Serpents, which impede his progress, but in the long run give him the victor's strength; and cosmically speaking, the descent of Spirit into Matter has engendered fearsome creatures that prey on one another, and deadly poisons and pestilences. So the Serpent or Devil may very well stand for the lower nature of man, which (as we know) is a dire and dismal reality, a specter we have ourselves raised and must lay; and the Serpent may just as well stand for man's Savior, the Divine Wisdom from above. Only let us not personify them into a Jehovah and a Satan; and let us remember that our body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, even though we may have desecrated the shrine.

The Serpent is closely associated with the Tree — sometimes the Cross

— and, as said in our last article, denotes the creative forces circling through the planes of matter. The children of Israel are bitten by Serpents, which causes a pestilence, and are healed by Moses (a magician) setting up a brazen Serpent. The Serpent is the Teacher of man, as are the Christos, Prometheus, Lucifer, and the Savior under various other names. But he is also the Tempter — or rather, the one who tries and tests man. For how is man to exercise the Divine prerogative of free will unless he is given a free choice? Therefore the Teacher is rightly called a Tempter, but not in a malign sense.

As this is Easter, it is appropriate to mention the Serpent in connexion with the Egg. In various parts of the earth are found Serpent Mounds, often with a mound representing the Egg near the mouth of the Serpent. These two symbols are naturally associated; for the Egg symbolizes the womb of nature. Its form is spheroidal, so that it stands for the same as the Circle; but it has a germ inside, from which will spring, in stage after stage of unfoldment, the complete being. For some people this may be a mere 'analogy' — little more than one of the figures of rhetoric in the back of the grammar book. But analogy is the great key to the interpretation of cosmic and human mysteries. The ordinary hen's egg is actually a faithful miniature of the great Cosmic Egg, and it is possible to trace the most wonderful analogies throughout all the stages of the embryo which biologists study. The custom of exchanging eggs at the time of the year's rebirth was observed by many nations and has been adopted into Christianity along with other 'Pagan' customs.

The Theosophical Forum

'HAMLET' AND 'THE TEMPEST' — A COMPARISON — J. H. Venema

SHAKESPEARE AND STRATFORD-ON-AVON

It has been said that when we talk about great men we conjure up their souls, indeed their spirits, and if there is truth in this thought, we are tonight in very good company! For we are speaking tonight about one of the world's greatest dramatists, William Shakespeare, and we are fully justified in calling him one of the world's greatest dramatists, for indeed he belonged, and belongs, to the world.

Who was this man whom we now know as William Shakespeare, who was born in 1564 and died in 1616? You who have visited Stratford-on-Avon, who have seen the church where he was buried; you who have witnessed some of the master's great plays in the Memorial Theater in Stratford, know a little more than most people about this mysterious personage, about whom so much has been written and whose plays have been read all over the world and translated into many languages. Yet no other artist has been more impersonal. It is as if he said to the world: "Here is my work; take it and do with it whatever you like, but forget myself." And yet we know that William Shakespeare by his works has set the whole world thinking, writing, and philosophizing. It is doubtful if the mystery about his *personal* life will ever be solved.

SHAKESPEARE AS A TEACHER

In order to study Shakespeare we have to go to his works; and a study of these works means: (a) a study of the evolution of a human being, and (b) of the life of an innocent, bright, and lively youth up to the period in his life when he felt the 'warrior' awakening in him; (c) of the time when the storms come and make him wonder, doubt, seek, search (a tragic period); and (d) a study of his conquests, of his power to see through and behind things, of times when he *knew*, i. e., had an inner vision, (as in his last plays).

What then are the outstanding traits which we find in all his works, especially in the tragedies? Here are a few:

Trust in the good of life and in a noble destiny for man.

Belief in the law of cause and effect.

The hero as falling at the end through some flaw in his own character, no matter how noble he may be otherwise.

Life as a great 'adventure' and life as *worth living*.

The immortality of the *inner* man, the Spiritual Soul.

Love and compassion as liberating key-notes of life.

Rarely do we find Shakespeare using or referring to the word 'God.' We find instead: 'everlasting,' 'providence'; but 'God' in its Christian connotation is scarcely found at all.

What a great painter of character this dramatist was! How well must he have known himself and human nature to be able to paint such marvelous characters and their relations to their surroundings; their adventures and their struggle for light and freedom. It has been said, also, that no one has ever surpassed him in his description of women. We find in his works the sweet and lovely woman, but also the terrible and cruel type — though always great as

characters. A study of Shakespeare's woman-characters alone would reveal more than the reading of hundreds of modern novels.

We find in Shakespeare too, as in all profound thinkers, a deep and noble sense of humor employed in creating wonderful contrasts. Therefore has it been called 'dramatic humor.' And at the end of his great tragedies we always find that beautiful promise of hope: in spite of the fall of the hero, in spite of deep tragedy, indeed often a holocaust, we feel a purification, a katharsis, revealing to us the fact that from suffering and sorrow and tragedy, if we are noble-hearted and noble-minded, great light may come. (For a more comprehensive study of Shakespeare's plays it is recommended that something more be known about the great writers on Shakespeare's works: Moulton, Bradley, and Dowden.)

Let us not tonight, however, speak too much of that which others have said concerning Shakespeare. Let us make Shakespeare speak for himself; but then you cannot blame me either for giving my own version of the great dramatist's works. And yet we can understand only that which can be evoked in us, that which we have in ourselves. If I pronounce the word 'house,' some of us may see only their own house, some may see a miserable hovel, others may see a beautiful palace: it is our imagination and our power of vision that make us see. Nevertheless I shall substantiate everything that I am going to say by referring to the poet's own words, and simply request you to bear in mind, as said before, that it is our own power of vision that will make us understand the deeper side of the master's adventures and descriptions of life, when hearing his words and seeing his plays.

'HAMLET'

Hamlet has probably interested people as much as Goethe's *Faust*. Indeed, I have often wondered if a parallel could not be drawn between Parts I and II of *Faust* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*. At all times and in all periods *Hamlet* has had a hold upon the people. Bradley has called *Hamlet* the tragedy of 'moral idealism,' and for the following reasons, as Shakespeare gives them:

a. "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."

Do you see the deep philosophy in this? You are what you think, said the Sages.

b. "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends." Evidently the great master wants to make us see that our end — that is, our destiny — is sublime, and if so we must be part of that Divinity.

c. "What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

Here we see how, in the words of Hamlet, Shakespeare gives us a conception of man reflecting his own philosophy in the middle-period of his life, in what we may call the 'tragic period.'

I suppose you all know the story of Hamlet, but let us very quickly allow the events to pass before our mind's eye. Hamlet the philosopher has come back to Denmark because his noble father has died. King Claudius, his uncle, whom his mother has married, is on the throne. In nobility of character he is the opposite of the late king, Hamlet's father. The ghost appears (did Shakespeare use the supernatural *only* to interest his audience?) and he informs the prince that his father was murdered. We then learn Hamlet's mission: "Taint not thy mind" — and yet he

must avenge his father's death. He may not wrong his mother, and yet he must kill her husband! Now, if Shakespeare meant us to take things literally, could this be possible? Can we kill a man and not "taint our minds"? We see at once that the play must be taken symbolically, and then indeed we shall view Hamlet from quite a different aspect. We remember what Hamlet's philosophy brought to him; how he worked out his great mission; how he killed Polonius; how he was sent to England, and returns, finding Ophelia dead; how at last he fulfils the task that is set him; and we hear the words: "the rest is silence," when Hamlet falls. Yet we feel that, in reality, he has conquered. The coming of Fortinbras brings the promise that the "rotten state" of Denmark will soon belong to the past.

Is this play only a melodrama and a holocaust? Was Shakespeare a fool? Are all the readers and students and critics fools by being so interested in and paying so much attention to this story of Hamlet? Indeed, it might have been an impossible story if Shakespeare had not continually drawn our attention to the symbolic meaning. Probably he himself was going through what we might call the 'Hamlet state' — the state when with great intensity we ask ourselves the meaning of life and of its struggles, the *why* and the *how*, and crave the truth about our destiny. In scene ii Hamlet says:

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this! — I, ii.

Are we not led to see in the *old* Hamlet our own Higher Self, who should be on the throne as our Lord and Master, but whom we have suffered to be put in the background, while an ignoble character, King Claudius (our lower self), is temporarily occupying the throne? When we read Hamlet's words about the Ghost, we can see in his words the urge to listen to the voice of this Higher Self:

Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself? — I, iv

Another strong plea for the symbolic meaning of the play is that Hamlet is not allowed to 'taint' his mind. Yet how can one commit a murder and not taint one's mind? In Act i, scene v, the Ghost says:

But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven. — I, v

A most remarkable thing also is Hamlet's pledge to his Higher Self:

O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O fie! Hold, hold my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up! — Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven! — I, v

It seems as if the wavering, hesitating *personal* self makes a promise to obey the *Inner Self*. On the one hand we find Hamlet's admiration for a human being: "What a piece of work is man!"; on the other hand, his doubt as to the emotions and the illusions of the personal self, by which he proves that he is learning to discriminate between the mortal and the immortal part of himself:

In apprehension how like a god! . . .
And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? — II, ii

His pondering on the mysteries of life and death we find in the well-known monologue "To be or not to be" in Act III, and also later on in the words:

Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee. — III, ii

How well do we learn Shakespeare's idea about the mind:

What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, He that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unused. — IV, iv

In conclusion, like a motif in a symphony we continually hear:

a. "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends" (Act v, sc. ii); that is, Life may be a mysterious adventure, but our destiny is divine. As the old philosophers said: "Man is a god in his innermost being," and Hamlet is *striving to gain this great knowledge about Self*.

b. "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so." That is, "We are what we think." We make or mar ourselves by our thinking, our aspirations, and our ideals.

c. "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy" (Act I, sc. v). Indeed, we all agree with these words, when, like Hamlet, we have been struggling to liberate ourselves from this material and limited life to find the greater, the infinite Life. Hamlet feels himself to be the great actor on the stage of life, but has found out as yet only *some* of the things in "heaven and earth," which are more than human beings dream of.

'THE TEMPEST'

And these greater things the seeking human soul has learned in *The Tempest*. How sweet is the passing from the turmoil and struggle in *Hamlet* to the enchantment and fairylike atmosphere in that lonely island to which the great dramatist leads us in *The Tempest*! This play has been considered Shakespeare's last, because the hero, Prospero, breaks his magic wand at the end, and it has been suggested that Shakespeare intended this to be understood as a symbolic indication that he would write no more after this play. Had the author, who must have identified himself with Hamlet during certain phases of his life, now found the greater truth of life, indeed, had he conquered life? Side by side with the tranquility and the enchantment we still have in *The Tempest* struggles and evil characters; but Prospero, the hero, is no longer affected. He has power over Nature; he is a Master of Life and Death, whose commands the monster Caliban has to obey. When we read this play, or see it, we come to the conclusion that it is no less real or symbolic than *Hamlet*, but that now everything is controlled by Prospero's mighty power. The key-notes are:

- a. Love conquers; compassion is the liberating power in the world.
- b. The Law of cause and effect must be fully worked out before real peace, rest, and forward evolution can come.
- c. The lower life and its forces must be controlled before the divine influence can make itself felt in life and in our hearts.

I presume that you all know this story, and have felt the beauty of the lonely island and Nature, the sweetness of Miranda's character, Ferdinand's nobility, and Prospero's wonderful insight, foresight, and power. And you have marveled at the sprightliness and loveliness of that incomparable creation, Ariel, and by reading or from seeing the performance of the play, have experienced a beautiful dream which was 'real' enough.

CONCLUSION AND COMPARISON

As we have said, some of the key-notes of *The Tempest* are: Love and forgive! Do we not see that there has been a great evolution from the 'Hamlet-stage' to the 'Prospero-stage'? By *self-directed evolution* the hero, from being more or less a slave to himself, has become the master of himself. The poet had discovered something — something *far* greater than when at an earlier stage he identified himself with *Hamlet*. Listen to his words:

And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve;
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. — IV, i

That is, there is a law of *coming and going*, a law of cycles, the great mystery of the withdrawal from the visible worlds into the invisible spheres. Had Shakespeare studied the old philosophies, or did his own inner self, his intuition, tell him something about the great illusion of life? For does not Prospero in Act IV say:

... We are such stuff
 As dreams are made on; and our little life
 Is rounded with a sleep. — IV, i

Here we have a clear indication that Shakespeare discriminated between that which is lasting, the immortal side of life, and the transient or mortal side; but a man who could evolve from the Hamlet- stage to that of a Prospero in *The Tempest*, even if it be but in the imagination, must have found something sublime in life — and we shall find it too when we study him properly.

In conclusion, it may be useful and interesting to draw some parallels:

	"Hamlet"	"The Tempest"
Love:	Love is personal (scheming is the result).	Love is here chiefly impersonal, as love of Nature) Prospero's love. Sacrifice, in Ferdinand and Miranda.
Rogues:	Here they have partial success.	In this they have <i>no</i> success.
The King:	The King on the throne is a bad influence.	He is an instrument to bring about good.
The Plot:	Struggling, scheming; conquest is but partial.	A complete conquest of the good over the bad.
The Women:	They are personal, limited; hardly <i>real</i> womanhood.	<i>Real</i> womanhood.
The Supernatural:	It is mysterious, sinister, looming in the background.	It is controlled by Prospero; it is a helpful force, thereby liberating the 'supernatural' beings also.
The Hero:	He is struggling, falling and rising, and only in the end gains the victory; he is still under the influence of 'circumstances' (Karman)	He is the master of life and death: a helper of his fellow-men, and never thinking of himself.

The destiny of man's life, Shakespeare seems to say to us, is sublime. Through struggle and failure we rise higher, reach higher heights, greater perfection, become masters of Life, and of Death.

TWO BELOVED ATTRIBUTES — *Rose Winkler*

The condition which high friendship demands is the ability to do without it. To be capable of that high office requires great and sublime parts. There must be very two, before there can be very one. — Emerson, on 'Friendship'

One cannot study Emerson's *Essays* without becoming deeply impressed with the fact that two very essential attributes of his character were his profound conception of friendship and his lofty ideal of what the noblest expression of love should be. To him, evidently, they were spiritual, transmuting powers insulated against the revival of past weaknesses which, in the arduous labor of overcoming personality, had passed through fire-cleansing experiences. Having become alchemically purified, the truest and most sacred in the heart-life could venture to bare itself to them in faith and absolute confidence.

How I have pondered over the following words: "the condition which high friendship demands is the ability to do without it." Is it not so, for truly, personal desire once transmuted into impersonal love, that noble attribute beneath which still lurk disparities, desires nothing for itself, but relatively contributes the stalwart ability to do without it. Verily, each must find himself before he can find the other! But longing to unfold this thought to a more satisfactory conclusion, I looked to Mother Nature to help and inspire me, as she did in my earlier years. Then, enwrapped in the gentle folds of her soothing harmony she would clarify my understanding, and thenceforth I never was quite able to deny myself her ready and unfailing response. Notwithstanding this, she and I appeared to be 'very two,' and yet, how was it when she and I at heart were 'very one'!

Seating myself in one of her lovely sanctuaries, templed by the filtered shade of gleaming leafy boughs, the clear cool atmosphere reflected a

rare mystical azure, a harmonious blend of the distant manasic-blue mountains, the smiling blue sky and the marine-blue auric veil floating over the sea, which seemed to palpitate with some consecrated message. The perfume-laden breeze, like honeyed sweetness, diffused the fragrance of aromatic herbs distilled in Nature's laboratory, linking her impersonal consciousness to mine for holier communion.

Thereafter, portals opened into shining chambers beyond, and the glory glimmering in each human heart, reacting to a spark of the awakening spirit, burst into lovely flame. It was thus I learned that the higher never acts directly on the lower; it requires an intermediate transmitting agent to intervene everywhere, and the eye of the lower, as the spiritual soul or Buddhi-Manas does through the visualizing power of Manas, the Higher Ego or Thinker.

All our Leaders have taught that there is a mystic alliance between man and Nature, that man is a child of the universe, that the forces and powers that comprise the one are inseparable and identic with those that comprise and construct the other. Although we must learn to walk alone, the solitude imposing itself for further self-acquaintance is but a temporary necessity to spiritual growth. Again I learned, that although man and Nature appeared to be 'very two,' they were, indeed, 'very one.' When we realize that man in his dual nature is mortal and immortal, an animal-man and a god-man within his corporeal body, we further learn that androgynous man in the Third Root-Race separated into sexes, one positive and the other negative. Each, like spirit and matter, knew itself not, both being the opposite aspects of Reality, and through incalculable ages each evolved the dual aspects of itself — the spiritual and the corporeal.

Truly, in the spiritual sense, true friendship and impersonal love, ever expanding in the consciousness of oneness with the Universe, under the fire of heroic experiences, blossom forth to glorify true manhood and womanhood by their perennial beauty, strength, and lofty aspirations. In their higher unfoldment, each guards the other as his counterpart, and like progressive spiritual entities, gains the ability to do without the other, and in acquiring and recognising these majestic

attributes in the other, the rarified virtues forge a closer bond and each blends more intimately and becomes at one with the other. These two beloved attributes, like towering, glistening, snowy peaks, rise majestically heavenward out of the deep bosom of divine Compassion, and in their compelling mysterious power they pulsate rhythmically and elevate the ideals in the core of the inner god and in every human heart.

Their beauty, strength, and nobility, inspire and shield, and ever stimulated by loftier ideals, these expanding attributes soar onward with extending gold-tipped wings, flashing ever more brilliantly in the dazzling rays of the divine Monad or Higher Self. The happiest mortals are they who no longer crave the gratification of the desires and senses, for the unerring law brings evidence that true friends are self-elected. Besides, these loved qualities have a lustrous power to disperse the shadows of life and metamorphose the lower traits into the higher. Thus by irradiating their magnanimity to exalt the eager soul, it follows the magnetic channel and finds the way to open the portals to the Vision Sublime — at-one-ment with the All. Therefore, all personal desires, like the stone of matter, must be banished, rolled away, not to hinder, but to aid the pursuit of the long-sought ideal of infinite beauty and universal compassion concealed in the heart of every human being. Dr. G. de Purucker says:

You yourself must awaken in your own soul the holy flame; and it is the same with every other step in spiritual and intellectual progress that you make. You yourself must experience the unspeakable delight of Compassion — the ineffable feeling of being at one with the ALL. YOU yourself must be the vehicle of the inner light, must gain it. It is both in you and above you, invigorating you and inspiring you. Be it. — *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, p. 133

Since there are as many different orders of friendship and love as there are individuals, some general but brief definitions contrasting them might be helpful. Whereas friendship is tempered by reason it lacks the

ardor of love, while ordinarily, love is more selfish and involved with the passional nature, so that, as commonly said, love is blind to the faults of the loved one. But not so with impersonal love. It seeks nothing for itself nor temporizes with the personal weaknesses, but if necessary, prefers gently, wisely, and patiently to transmute a fault into a virtue, thereby extinguishing the baser, in order to conserve the highest welfare of the beloved. True friendship and impersonal love act in harmony with the Voice of Divinity within, thrilling every motive to vibrate as unselfish action which draws souls to each other.

Neither stoops to affect a glamorous charm. Both seek virtue and wisdom, hence scorn to envy or supplant the well-merited position of either the loved one or the true and tried friend. With unfaltering confidence and trust, each unquestioningly supports the other through any failure or trial. When love is impersonal, it lacks the desire for self-advantage; and friendship, its twin sister, becomes its backbone, as it were, stimulating love's holy desire gladly to sacrifice life itself, if need be, for the welfare of the loved one. These beloved attributes, functioning as twin-sisters, have their root in the eternal god-spark or Monad, and operate as electro-magnetic forces drawing all similar things to themselves like a magnet. Their standard may be gauged by the indissoluble strength of the links forged in the purifying trial of fire. The heart-force augmented by boundless sympathy distinguishes an exemplary character. May not the ideal relationship of Michael Angelo and Vittoria Colonna approximate more or less this latter type?

Love is peace; love is harmony; love is self-forgetfulness; love is strength; it is power; it is vision; it is evolution. Its power so expands the inner nature that slowly you become sympathetic, because you become at one with the entire home-universe in which you live and move and have your being; — and you become at one with the divinity in the heart of all things. —

Golden Precepts of Esotericism, pp. 118-19

The Messengers and Teachers, in their all-inclusive and Almighty Love, express the most inspiring, beautiful, and enduring friendships. I

wonder whether anything in human life surpasses the beauty of such an ideal devotion. *They* never unclasp the hand of friendship and love with their disciples. The more changeless, loyal, and enduring is the unselfish devotion of the disciple, the more beautiful and unbreakable the bond. Through incarnations the golden link of spiritual brotherhood enlivens and glows in the endless acts of altruistic service evoked in the one and the other. Such a bond of love and friendship is an unspoken covenant with the Divine and makes of the 'very two,' the 'very one.' These great and sublime qualities distinguish the mighty and heroic characters of the highly evolved Messengers, inspiring by their all-permeant love all high-minded and spiritually inclined men and women for incarnations to come.

An endless trail of grades of evolving entities are attracted to them not only by their electro-magnetic and spiritual power, but by their unfolding oneness with the All. Their energizing radiations help them to mount from height to height, and on reaching the human stage to advance from men to heroes, from quasi-divine beings to gods and super-gods, progressively evolving to at-one-ment with the Boundless All. They, having passed through unspeakable trials and heart-searing experiences, are through their compassion cemented indissolubly in a mystical sense, through the very blood of their hearts, becoming 'very one' with the Guardian Wall which protects Humanity from yet greater suffering and despair!

The Theosophical Forum

LOVE OF COMPANIONS — *L. L. W.*

So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother. — *The Voice of the Silence*, Fragment III

H. P. BLAVATSKY, on May 8, 1891, laid down the shattered physical instrument through which she suffered and died daily that the Theosophical Movement might live. And we, who profit so vitally today because of her toil and sacrifice, look upon this time as one in which to renew our allegiance to the principles she worked for, and our active loyalty to the Masters' Cause.

Brotherhood, Love, Unity — these are the light of her message. And all who follow the warmth and glow of that divine beacon, be they Agnostics, Fundamentalists, Scientists, Theosophists, or of any other line of thought — they are our fellow-workers in the Masters' field. All men are our brothers; but those who in any way are sacrificing self that others may profit — are not these our sacred Companions on the Path?

Perhaps we Theosophists tend to become too wrapped up in our own inspiring and joyous Task; so it may be helpful at this time to remind ourselves of the devotion and labors of the innumerable friends of humanity who are striving to make this bewildered world a better place to live in. It is indeed well now and again to think of these men and women, our Companions of the Ray of Divine Compassion, sending them from our hearts a gleam of sympathy and loving fellowship in their work.

And then there are those other closer, even dearer Companions, brothers and friends in all the other Theosophical Societies which combine with our own to make up the Theosophical Movement. Their devotion and work and self-sacrifice are precious to remember as

White Lotus Day blooms again each year in the wilderness of the world. Let us renew at this time our deep appreciation of them and their Theosophical activities, and strengthen our heart's concord with these valued and beloved Companions on the Path.

Next, what of ourselves, fellow-workers in our own T. S.? Here naturally we tend to change our viewpoint a little and recall the wise old advice about beginning at home. For to love and think and act impersonally is certainly a more complex effort when prickly personalities — and are we not all sometimes a little prickly? — are working side by side. There are, for example, so few members whose ideas are as practical as ours, and therefore our suggestions should not be set aside. And then some of us have such a gift of hitting off the foibles of stupidity in an ironic phrase! Perhaps we do not always utter it, merely permit it to sparkle in our minds. Our own prejudices of course have generally at least a flavor of justification, based as they are upon our wide experience of life or social work; so we do not easily relinquish them, especially when they are opposed by the prejudices of others, who are prone to be ignorant and narrow to an uncommon degree!

Is this perhaps a picture — drawn with apologies to all of us — of what, consciously or unconsciously, happens now and again in our midst? But even if the shoe fits it should not discourage the determined seeker after perfection in brotherhood.

William Q. Judge somewhere reminds us that we do not need to be disheartened because of our faults and weaknesses, for they are merely the expression of universal energies within our constitution which we have not yet brought under control. Neither are they peculiar to ourselves. Everyone around us is compounded of exactly the same energies, manifesting a little differently of course, but still 'much of a muchness' in us all. It is these very untrained elements which, melted in the fire of aspiration and molded by the spiritual imagination and will, are the basis of self-directed evolution. Their mastery will awaken within us the Buddhic splendor and can lift us to the azure thrones of

the gods.

Love of Companions! How deeply the beautiful phrase sinks into our hearts this White Lotus Day of 1936! A new era of Theosophical growth and propaganda has opened. How much clearer will be our light, how much more penetrating our energy, how much more perfect we, as instruments for the Masters' work, if we stand as one solid nucleus of Companion-hearts!

The Theosophical Forum

THE TWO PATHS — *Helen Savage*

The Two Paths: the teaching of the sixth 'Jewel of Wisdom,' of the Right-hand Path and the Left-hand Path: the path upwards, and the path downwards; the path of unselfishness and the path of selfishness; the path of ultimate joy, and the path of ultimate sorrow; the path of immortality, and the path of annihilation.

We see these two paths everywhere in life, but many people think it is just a matter of chance. The spiritual teachers of the human race say that this is not a matter of chance, but is based on the structure of the universe. There is the spiritual side of the universe, and the material side; not meaning by this that the spiritual on the one hand and the material on the other are really divorced: there is no more a dividing line between the spiritual and the material than between the colors in a rainbow. Take red and orange, for instance: they are two distinct colors, but when you see them in the rainbow it is impossible to tell where one begins and the other ends.

So it is with the spiritual and material sides of the universe. There is a gradation of beings from the unevolved to the evolved — from the less perfect to the more perfect: from the unconscious to the fully conscious. Therefore, in a general way, we speak of the matter-side and the spirit-side of the universe. The beings living in, or rather composing, the material side of the universe are not evil if that is where they belong; they are simply unevolved. But if a higher being identifies himself with this matter-side, with something less than himself, then he is relatively evil.

Man stands between the spiritual and the material. If he turns his eyes to the material, stops his climb upwards and retraces his steps, he is going on the downward path; if he turns toward spirit he is going on the path of light. *This latter is the natural path for the human race to follow at the present time*, that is, it is according to nature. We have

passed through the matter-side of being as centers of consciousness, and now as higher beings we find it useful to express ourselves through it, *but we are not it*. It is only through ignorance that we imagine we are, and act accordingly.

This Sixth Jewel of Wisdom is very difficult to understand in all its reaches, from its loftiest heights to its vastest depths. This is true of all the Jewels of Wisdom that we have studied. Reimbodiment, for instance, means not only coming back into earth-life, but it includes in its meaning all the grand experiences that the spiritual part of us passes through after death, taking up body after body, re embodying itself, each body fit for the sphere in which it expresses itself. Can any but the Seer penetrate into the mysteries of these lofty peregrinations? Or again, thinking now of the Second Jewel of Wisdom, who of us has the eye of the Seer that can envisage the more intricate weavings of the Web of Destiny?

The Sixth Jewel, then, we are told, cannot be understood in all its vast reaches: we would have to be Masters of Life, for only such a one can know fully what it means to travel the Path of Light. Suppose a solar being, a solar god, should come to earth to try to explain to us even what the interior of the physical sun was like! He would have to speak in terms understandable to us, and about all that he could say would be that the sun is a tremendous vortex of life, pouring forth floods of energy. Much more than that we could not understand. But if we had the solar consciousness we could. So in times to come we shall have a consciousness that will understand the great heights the human race will attain to on this Path of Light. Nevertheless, because the small mirrors the great, because every experience in life touches upon the greatest mysteries of being, therefore we can know something of this Sixth Jewel of Wisdom. For the upward path is not a path to be trod only when we become Adepts; we can begin to tread it right here and now.

What are the qualities that will help us along the way? They are the qualities that every man admires. Ask one hundred men what qualities

they consider an ideal human being should have and all the answers would probably be something like this: He would have courage; self-reliance, at the same time realizing that he is fundamentally interwoven with all other beings: sympathy for all that lives; spiritual wisdom; vision. Now we all have within us just these qualities, and it is for us to bring them out and thus consciously and intelligently follow the path toward the light.

To speak of it as the path 'upward' is to discourage many, for the word 'upward' suggests the idea of a constant strain and struggle. We can think of it in another way: as a path, by following which, we are working *with* the forces of the universe; by turning our backs upon it, we are working against the forces of the universe. If we could become convinced of this, we would forget that it is a difficult path. We would say: "The forces of the universe are with me: I will go forward!"

Nevertheless, we cannot get away from the fact that ordinary human beings find it difficult to travel upwards at all times. Perhaps we can understand better why this should be if we know a little about the meaning of the technical terms used in Theosophy for the Right-hand Path and the Left-hand Path. And let it be said here that we use Sanskrit words not to confuse the student or impose difficulties upon him, but as a matter of fact to make the teaching simpler. This we know is done in all lines of work: terms are chosen and adopted that will get at the key-thought of the idea to be expressed. So for the two paths we use the Sanskrit terms Amrita-yana and Pratyeka-yana. Yana means 'path,' and Amrita and Pra-tyeka describe these paths: Amrita, the path of Individuality, and Pratyeka, the path of Personality.

Now man has within him both an individuality and a personality — the former his real Self, the latter the undeveloped part of him which, like most small things, usually imagines itself to be the 'whole show.' The personality has its place; nobody would want to get rid of it; but it should be the servant and recognise its superior in the individuality. Surely we can use this personality without identifying ourselves with it. One can think of a man going out to the hills for a walk with his dog. If

the dog sees a rabbit and dashes after it, that does not mean that the master must also dash after it. No, he pursues his ramble, and if the dog becomes too obstreperous he whistles for him to follow at his heels.

So it is with us. We are the individuality, we are the Amrita-yana. We are not the personality, however much we may think we are; and we can make the personality serve and follow us. This is what mankind in large part has forgotten. Supposing himself to be less than he is, he finds the upward path of Nature difficult to travel.

Sometimes the meaning of the word pratyeka is given as 'each one for himself.' He who follows the pratyeka path, the path of each one for himself, divorces himself from the rest of the universe, deprives himself of the strength that the spiritual forces of the universe can give him. The teaching of the Ancient Wisdom is that if he follows this downward path consistently through many lives, he finally meets annihilation. This is not a strange teaching but another truth of Nature. For what being can set his strength against the mighty universe — and survive?

I am reminded of a tale, told in Danish folk-lore, of a spider who tried to build his web without the thread from above. He built it, indeed, but since it was not held by a strand of the great Web of Being, it was destroyed in the first storm. The thread from above is the individuality, and as long as there remains one slenderest strand of it stretching down to support the feeble web of the personality, there is hope for that personality. Fortunately, we are told, there are few who allow this thread to snap entirely — very few who break away from the universe.

It is this thread of individuality that we must search for in the hearts of our fellows. He who thus searches and finds is the true humanitarian. Dickens was such a one. He loved his fellow-beings and could see beneath the often ugly exterior. When he wrote *Oliver Twist* — it appeared first as a magazine-story — many of his friends criticized his portrayal of the character Nancy, for, they said, she is a contradiction; no such depraved creature would have shown the selfless and devoted love that she did — though indeed the object of her love was unworthy.

When the story appeared in book-form, Dickens mentions this criticism in the preface, and says:

It is useless to discuss whether the conduct and character of the girl seems natural or unnatural, probable or improbable, right or wrong. It is true.

And he goes on to say how many of such objects of our pity he came across in his first-hand studies of human nature, who manifest still

the hope yet lingering behind; the last fair drop of water at the bottom of the dried-up weed-choked well. It involves the best and worst shades of our common nature; much of its ugliest hues, and something of its most beautiful; it is a contradiction, an anomaly, an apparent impossibility, but it is a truth.

In Bill Sikes, the object of Nancy's love, Dickens pictures a creature who showed no spark of divinity, one of the type who "would not give, by one look or action of a moment, the faintest indication of a better nature." In these two characters, he touched two great truths: first, that there is hope of 'salvation' for the personality by the individuality except, (and here we have the second truth) for those very few whose lower nature, through a course of evil-doing persistently followed, has severed all contact with the higher.

But in discussing this Sixth Jewel of Wisdom, one does not like to dwell on the darker side. All of us love the sunlight; we love to turn to the sun; we do not care to turn our backs upon it and follow our own shadows. And for our further encouragement we can remember that on this path to the light we are not alone. If it is true that for every step we take backwards we pull back weak and vacillating souls, it is equally true that for every step we take upwards we raise others with us. Furthermore, as we help those behind us who are less strong than we, so there are those ahead of us, the Masters of Wisdom, who have blazed the trail for us. It is they who lead, who light the way, although they themselves cannot tread the path for us; but when we begin consciously and intelligently to travel towards the Light, they extend a

helping hand and bid us ever "Come up higher!"

The Theosophical Forum

WHY STUDY THEOSOPHY? — *Torsten Karling*

This question covers such a large field that when one tries to sum up an answer to it and at the same time make the various points therein more or less clear to the reader, there comes to the inner perception a book, rather than the three or four pages which the Editors of the FORUM have placed at our disposal. However, it is a comfort to know that the subject will be discussed by different pens, and therefore that it will certainly be treated from many sides, if not from all. There is hardly a theme that will have the same power of calling forth individual viewpoints, even if these naturally are directed towards a common goal.

To begin with, cannot complete unanimity be obtained as regards the truth of this sentence: The greatest cause of humanity's unhappiness is ignorance? We — I speak of us all collectively — are ignorant of our true essence, and we therefore attribute to personal blows, offenses, and other disagreements, a meaning which they do not have. So do we also place too much importance upon outer and transient things, such as honor, wealth, power, and so forth, all of which are bound up with this earth-life. Now the most fundamental reflexion of all offers this question for consideration: What shall I have left when, according to the laws of Nature, I must leave all this? If I take this question seriously — many people push it aside as children do who have some objection to preparing their lessons, or because they believe they can answer it with a similar childish and irrational negation — it opens for the inner vision a view over the whole sea of queries which are so closely allied with the contrasts between reality and illusion.

In this matter we turn to find an answer to religion, philosophy, or science. Each one chooses the source towards which his own inherent nature feels itself most drawn. Therefore, if I am by nature a person of religious bent, I will search, to begin with, in the existing orthodox religions or in some of their countless sects, for the answer to my

question; and insofar as all these forms of religion are more or less bound by dogmas, I must sooner or later be met with the answer which actually is so often given: "These are secrets which we cannot investigate, God's secrets, which it would be presumptuous of us to try to find out. It is more fitting for us to raise our hats and pass by." Do we need to search for the reason why this answer, so often given, yet leaves him unsatisfied?

Does not the matter stand as follows? Every dogma is a human brain-mind construction. Behind this production may have been the most earnest effort to give expression to that which the author felt and believed to be true at the time it was created; but even that same author cannot free himself from the imperfections which are inherent in his thinking; he cannot defend himself against the influences which come from surroundings, the stream of time, training, personal considerations, religiously-political, or perhaps ecclesiastically-political endeavors, etc. The result is something which can easily work against Truth, and which at any rate is so limited and stunted, or distorted, that the real seeker for Truth must feel dissatisfied with it.

Such a one should study Theosophy for the very reason that it has as its motto: "There is no religion higher than truth." In this motto, but especially in the humble and devoted practice of the same in all religious seeking, we meet the liberating ozonic air which is characteristic of great, pure heights. Freed from all restraints, high above the enclosing walls which constitute the nature of dogma, the free and searching spirit will be able to get a glimpse of past and present religious life which irresistibly draws his attention to its true source, the presence and incessant promptings of the Divine Spirit. And therewith he opens the door to the whole vast Theosophical world-picture, with all that it contains of resplendent religious knowledge.

How does the situation stand for those whose minds are more inclined towards philosophical thinking than for those religiously attracted?

When Plato, in his *Republic*, lets Socrates, with an extraordinary argument, assert that philosophers ought to rule in the contemplated

ideal state, he expresses in this statement something which is equally valid today. If we translate this into more modern language, that is to say, if we try to apply it to present-day circumstances, it could well be expressed as follows: Philosophers ought to exercise an educative, guiding, influence on their contemporary fellow-beings, take up their problems, investigate them, shed the light of pure thought upon them, and in this way pay back a part of their debt to the community which gave them the opportunity to devote their time and energy to the search for truth, time to live in the sunshine of truth-seeking. But how does the case stand in reality?

A long period of extremely materialistic representations have not failed to exercise their influences on philosophical ways of thinking. People have been much concerned with making philosophy justify their claims as to 'science,' and when it did not appear 'scientific' to admit something beyond the results of brain-mind reasoning — yes, when one did not dare to confess his belief that anything beyond that existed, because of his academic ambitions, the result was that the philosophical work of our day to a large extent consists of the accumulation of quasi-philosophic, quasi-historic knowledge, and for a superstructure, a careful, almost anxious groping along lines which have strong affinities for old-fashioned sophisticated ideas.

The writer of these lines is but an amateur in the field, but nevertheless dares to express the surmise that he who takes his philosophical studies and philosophical thinking seriously, with a combination of apprehension and dawning presentiment in regard to the opening of immeasurable expanses, will be more than abreast of the latest results of modern scientific research. If he does not wish to remain with the laggards, then he must take up completely new problems, new only in relation to what for a long time has been considered academically orthodox, but by no means new in the abstract. This wisdom of ancient thinkers is beginning to come to the fore. There have been times when one sought and set highest 'the true existence,' the Reality behind appearances, that which hid itself behind and within the shifting and transient things. Such times seem again to be approaching. It is for

philosophy to define what science means by its 'consciousness-substance,' of which the Universe is thought to be built.

For sixty years our present Theosophical Movement has shown the way, at first apparently in opposition to the world, but later with an ever greater following. One day its great contribution to the revolution in humanity's thought-life will be recognised, and this is on the brink of taking place before our very eyes. In reality, Theosophical teaching casts a wonderful light on the relationship between spirit and matter, on the evolutionary cycles, on what is reality and what illusion. Its meaning is in no wise diminished, but is strengthened by the fact that one finds here the same fresh fountain from which the ancients' greatest thinkers drank, and Theosophy shows how they all obtained their wisdom from one and the same source. Indeed, the philosopher who pushes Theosophy to one side on account of prejudice or other small-minded idea, does not deserve his professed title. But he who will make trained thinking fruitful for his contemporary fellow-beings and their followers, all the inquiring and seeking Companions, has in Theosophy a gold-mine out of which he can take freely the noblest metal. But it is only just, if he will penetrate to the depths of that wisdom which with unlimited generosity flows towards him, that he dedicate his life and his actions, with all his mind and heart, to the service of his fellow-beings. Theosophy is a study for philosophers, a life's philosophy for those who wish to be helpers of their race.

There has been a long period of time during which educated youth especially have fallen back upon the materialistic point of view which has been predominant in the circles of natural science. What position shall this youth take today? If there is anything that is certain about humanity's cultural development, it may well be that science, and especially all that is related to the study of Nature, finds itself at a turning-point which can best be described as the complete rupture of materialistic theory. The progress in this line has been unbelievable. Surprising observations have been made, and have opened immense fields for further work, and this whole movement irresistibly induces a deeper comprehension of Nature's being.

He who has devoted time and attention to the study of Theosophy finds more and more often how quickly present-day scientists are approaching the opinions and explanations which were predicted more than fifty years ago in the standard Theosophical literature, particularly in H. P. Blavatsky's fundamental works. He who believes — and here especially must educated youth be taken into consideration — that scientific research, more than religious faith and philosophical speculation, constitutes a firm basis upon which a reliable world-philosophy can be built, will find in the Theosophical literature the synthetic idea within which the latest scientific observations have their place. There will he find it proved that Theosophy is what it professes to be, a religious-philosophical-scientific doctrinal system which at once satisfies to the greatest degree the most deeply fathomed thirst for knowledge, and, through its freedom from dogmas, the utmost craving for an independent and critical, but serious, research work.

In the above we have spoken of serious and searching people of different casts of mind, religiously, philosophically, or scientifically attracted, and with great brevity indicated why they should study Theosophy. There is nevertheless a very large group of our present-day fellow-beings who live a life without decided leanings in any direction whatever. They compose the great masses who run after and attach themselves to the various sensations of the day. Few of these would be able to escape being gripped by a feeling of emptiness at some unexpected or catastrophic event; the natural craving of their spiritual and higher intellectual being is half-starved. To these it should be said, Study Theosophy, because thereby will your life have a purpose and a meaning. Instead of being an empty and valueless chase after things which do not give any real profit, your life will be filled to the brim with a noble joy — a fight if you like, but a fight in which every victory is a step forward on the road which leads to light and freedom for the race. In other words, the study of Theosophy will make you a complete human being.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: V — *G. de Purucker*

Lokas and Talas

Question by I. D. — In *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, pp. 403-4, it is stated in regard to our position in the scale of Lokas and Talas that as we are in the Fourth Globe of our Chain we are in the fourth loka and fourth tala, Mahar-loka and Rasatala. "But, again, we are in the Fourth *Round* of our Planetary Chain. Therefore we have this bipolar principle emphasized by the Fourth Round quality, i. e., Mahar-loka and Rasatala again. We are, furthermore, in the Fifth Root-Race of the Fourth Planet on the Fourth Round. Therefore our Root-Race, though evolving on that fourth Globe and in that fourth Round, is represented by the fifth of each column; Swar-loka and Talatala." [See Column p. 399.] Now I would like to ask: If we are in the Fifth Root-Race, why is it that in the scale of the Races we should be in a lower loka and tala (i. e., Swar-loka and Talatala) rather than the one superior to the Fourth-Round loka and tala; i. e., why are we not in Janar-loka and Sutala?

G. de P. - — Lokas and Talas should always be considered as twins, that is to say, one loka should always be considered with its corresponding tala, as for instance, Satyaloka and Atala. These are inseparable and represent the positive and the negative, the high and the low, the spiritual and the material — on any plane; and so on down the scale with increasing increments of unfolding; first, pure spirituality in the arupa-worlds. Now catch this thought: The highest twins, Satya-loka and Atala, represent as so placed a cosmic plane, that is to say each set of twins represents a cosmic plane: from spirit to physical matter. There is the answer to your question.

If you will look at the diagram of the seven globes of our planetary chain as given by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine*, you will see that Globe D is represented as being in the seventh cosmic plane. That is why we

are in Bhur-loka and Patala: on the lowest of the seven manifested cosmic planes. We are, however, in the Fourth Round, on the fourth globe counting by sevens; but in the Fifth Race. Now then, make your adjustments. Just as in the seven principles, so in the cosmic planes: each cosmic plane is sevenfold, tenfold, or twelvefold, according to the way you look at the matter. Satya-loka-Atala is sevenfold, which means that this cosmic plane (plane one on the diagram) has all the other lokas and talas but in the satya-loka-atala condition: they are all represented in the highest cosmic plane, held there in seed, not yet unfolded.

Satya-loka	1	Atala
Tapar-loka	2	Vitala
Janar-loka	3	Sutala
Mahar-loka	4	Rasatala
Swar-loka	5	Talatala
Bhuvar-loka	6	Mahatala
Bhur-loka	7	Patala

This gives the picture of a universe unfolded, in cosmic planes; otherwise called lokas and talas, two by two — or twins.

Bhur-loka and Patala: this twin is sevenfold also; therefore Bhur-loka-Patala has *its* subordinate or sub-seven lokas and talas: it is the same all down (or up) the scale. We are in Mahar-loka-Rasatala because we are in the Fourth Round; but in the scale of the Races we are in Swar-loka-Talatala because we are in the Fifth Race.

Question (I. D.) — When the Seventh Round is over, by that time shall we have developed the whole possibility of evolution — shall we have unfolded all within us?

Answer (G. de P.) — We shall have unfolded everything within us and in due order as far as this completed evolution permits. I hope you will get this idea: it will save a great deal of mental work. The highest loka contains its Bhur-loka-Patala because each twin is sevenfold. So this series of double-column worlds represents not only the seven cosmic

planes, but the seven degrees of evolutionary unfoldment.

Man is not fully complete until he has unrolled everything within him: in other words, every quality, force, energy, substance, power, attribute that he has locked up. That is the answer to that part of your question. And it is a marvelous study. I don't blame anyone for being simply mixed up, because it is indeed 'wheels within wheels,' but yet it is such a wonderful study. The great key is analogical reasoning: hold to that firmly and it will guide you out of the maze.

I might add in conclusion that I would not fasten the attention too rigidly — with too much (what is the word?) literalism — upon these lokas and talas as applied to the globes. Emphatically they do apply; but be careful. Now for instance, if you have the picture of the seven globes of a chain as H. P. B. gives them — Globe A, B, C, D, E, F, G — and then say Globe A is Satya-loka-Atala, Globe D — the fourth — Mahar-loka-Rasatala, then from this we shall have to say that Bhur-loka-Patala is Globe G. That is not so; for, as a matter of fact, there are twelve globes. I would suggest to you to ponder over this thought for a while as a question to be answered by and by.

Remember first then: seven cosmic planes, in due order, each one unrolled from its preceding one and preceding ones: thus Satya-loka-Atala unrolled from themselves the next and succeeding twins — Tapar-loka-Vitala; and these two unrolled the third twins — Janar-loka-Sutala; the three unrolled the next twins — Mahar-loka-Rasatala: and so on down the seven.

Bhur-loka-Patala has all the qualities of those that went before: it contains them all relatively unrolled, and relatively unfolded, as a flower unfolds from the seed. Thus also does a man through evolution become perfect by bringing out what is within these principles. Complete man, spiritual man, will be living in spiritual Bhur-loka-Patala or Satya-loka-Atala, but as a cosmic plane.

Question (C. J. R.) — But the difficulty is that we are in the Fifth Race, and we are more divine; and yet we seem to be farther down than up!

Answer (G. de P.) — I see where the difficulty comes: you are confusing evolutionary unfoldment *per se* with cosmic planes *per se*. Consider these different cosmic planes [indicating diagrams] as the septenary degrees in world-evolution and world-building. They also figure the septenary degrees in evolutionary unfolding of the entities peregrinating in and through these planes. Yet the two classes of ideas, while interlocked in significance, and interblending in activity, must be kept separate in the mind as distinct things.

Now, particularly with regard to your question: we as a class of peregrinating entities have reached our individual evolutionary stage of unfoldment in what we call the Fifth Root-Race on this Globe D, the fourth according to H. P. B.'s reckoning in our Planetary Chain. Thus it is that we are using this present loka and tala, which we call this aspect of our Earth, but *yet* we as traveling entities are in our fifth racial stage of unfolding in this particular couple of lokas and talas. Hence, as a racial consciousness, we have attained the fifth in the series, i. e, swar-loka-talatala, although the Globe Earth being on the lowest or seventh cosmic plane, is itself a manifestation of bhur-loka-patala.

Connected with this last idea we must likewise remember that our Earth itself is only in its fourth stage or Round of development, and thus we have it also manifesting the qualities of the fourth in the above series, to wit, mahar-loka-rasatala.

Now all this will be easily explained if you will kindly remember that each of these couples is itself sevenfold, so that for instance, the bhur-loka-patala has all the same seven series of couples, from satya-loka-atala down to bhur-loka-patala in itself.

Thus it is with reference to my remark concerning the stage of the Earth, we have it manifesting bhur-loka-patala, because it is in the seventh cosmic plane; yet it is manifesting likewise the mahar-loka-rasatala as subordinate planes of the bhur-loka-patala.

I will confess that it was with some reluctance that I allowed these thoughts on the lokas and talas to be printed in one or more of my

books. It has let me in for a lot of trouble, and I have been explaining ever since! But it has been good, in a way, and therefore I do not really regret it.

The Theosophical Forum

FREE WILL IN MAN — *Leoline L. Wright*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Of all the fascinating and suggestive paradoxes involved in the Occult Teachings, those implied in the matter of free will are supreme. We must begin, if we are to understand the subject, by distinguishing sharply between free will and self-will, or what in children is often called wilfulness. And in order to get the basis of the distinction we must know something of the relation between the psychological or emotional and the spiritual sides of our composite nature.

Free will inheres in man's spiritual individuality: self-will is the energy of the personality allied with the animal nature, this alliance of the two having produced kama-manas, the human soul. It is by indulging in the freedom of this human will — its power to set itself in opposition to the good or the rights of others and the world around it — that we become the bond-slaves of Karman. And this is the first paradox: a freedom that leads to bondage is surely a mirage.

We can imagine how it was ages ago, in the early days of the Atlantean Race, when man had already passed out of the quasi-godhood of the Third. He now first began truly to realize himself as a separate self-conscious being, and the adventure of using his new power to exploit environment and relationship for his own ends was irresistible. And particularly was this the case because the manasic ray linking his spiritual and animal parts was still undeveloped by use and his perceptions were dim, not only to the difficulties and dangers of the psycho-material world about him but also to the spiritual goal towards which evolution had begun to urge him. For at that time man had not reached the bottom of the Arc of Descent into matter. Matter itself was inconceivably more dense than at present. Thus it is not surprising that

early Atlantean humans with their immense and gross bodies and with the powerful personal wills inhering in the psychological-kamic nature were led astray by the wonder of their new power of self-conscious freedom of choice.

So then we see man still on the Descending Arc, weaving around himself denser and denser 'Webs of Destiny,' building into himself with terrible industry the dark energy-substance created by self-will, all of which culminated in the catastrophe of Atlantis. H. P. Blavatsky tells us in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. II, p. 303) that "many of us are even now working off the evil effects of karma made by us in Atlantean bodies." We are still staggering under the burdens incurred by our own early ignorance and enthusiastic weaving about ourselves of the dense webs of material destiny.

And are we not still at it? Self-interest, *MY* desires, what *I* want and *ought to have* — these remain today the dominant urges of individual and national life. Even the East is beginning to forget its ancient lore of spiritual-psychological wisdom and, following the example set by the West, it begins to pursue the *fata morgana* of self-interest.

It is these trammels of ancient karman now affecting most of us that are partly responsible for the contradictions in human life that puzzle us so. One of the chief of our enigmas is that of the virtuous man laboring along under a load of 'injustice,' but working off in a good fortune that we are not wise enough yet to recognise, the karmic impediments in suffering and tribulation brought over from an old past. Yet this karman is working out well in two ways. He is forming the character founded upon struggle with odds which nothing can take away from him because he is building it into himself; and he is not only busy ridding himself of karmic burdens, but is thereby increasing his own strength and accumulating daily a store of karmic merit which will help him still further forwards in the future.

On the other hand, the moral weakling who is born into 'good fortune' is reaping the reward of past striving for merely material success instead of struggling for moral ends; and just because of such a

mistaken aim he was and is increasing his weakness of character and piling up difficulties for himself in the future, although happily those very difficulties will eventually force his spiritual growth. This whole subject is magnificently expanded in the two chapters, 'Webs of Destiny' in *The Esoteric Tradition* by G. de Purucker, Vol. I.

The time has come when humanity has earned the right to occult knowledge. The Archaic Wisdom-Science, the only system which expounds the knowledge of self-redemption through impersonal wisdom; imagination, and will, is being restored to our mental life. And so we encounter the second, the most magnificent, paradox of Occultism, that *freedom is the fruit of obedience*. Out of the consciousness of a world gone mad upon the subject of individualism the conception of cooperation for universal good has begun to emerge. It is still but a sketchy outline, like the first delicate filaments in a saturate crystalline solution. Still, it is beginning to take actual, definite shape. Knowledge of the Esoteric Tradition is spreading and its truth is being more fully demonstrated and corroborated by present scientific research and by those of its findings which are unassailable. So the spiritual nature of man and his oneness with all other beings is being recognised if only unconsciously. This will eventually open our eyes wide to the unmorality and the folly of anything in either thought or action, individual or national, that opposes the harmonious working out of the best interests of the whole.

Let us look more closely into the Theosophical conception of obedience upon which true freedom is founded. The word 'obedience' alone is perhaps misleading because, as commonly understood, it suggests the imposition of the will of another. 'Voluntary impersonal obedience' will embody the idea more accurately. No one can exact obedience of an adult. We are free to act as we please; to do right or to break the moral or civil law, but — we MUST take the consequences. A man can direct his own thoughts and actions if he be normal, but he cannot direct their ultimate reactions, and it is through these reactions that Nature educates him. But what a heart-breakingly tedious process this can be! Even the average good man would muddle along across the ages,

learning through the ups and downs of his successes and failures so slowly that his gain per incarnation might not be more than an inch or so along the interminable evolutionary track.

But man, fortunately, has always had Spiritual Teachers. Wherever any man or group of men begins to seek desperately for a spiritual remedy, there the Buddhas of Compassion and their Adept-helpers focus a light. And after a Teacher has been sent always there are a few who are strong enough, through training and concentrated devotion, to pass through the gates of initiation and become Adept-teachers in their turn. And every such achievement spreads a wave of spiritual vitality through the inner natures of all beings, even to the very kingdoms of the elementals. Especially it awakens and stimulates the aspirations of man himself in his search for freedom.

These results are brought about by *voluntary* impersonal obedience — beginning first with obedience to the demands of humble human duties; expanding gradually into impersonal love for our dear ones, a love that gives without demanding and asks no reward for service. It broadens then into impersonal love for enemies as well as friends. It forgives those who injure and blesses the persecutor. And so within the heart buds the luminous flower of Christhood — the sleeping Buddha awakens to power. Then the human will, subordinating itself in glad obedience to the beneficent urges of that Supernal Presence, enters upon the path to the creative freedom and responsibility of godhood.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: V — H. T. Edge

V — THE DANCE

It may be wondered how this subject comes under our general title, but we do not propose to limit ourselves to squares and triangles or symbols with a geometrical shape, but to use the word 'symbol' in a wider sense. So the word 'dance' can be used as a symbol, and those who want a classical name can use that of the Muse of Choric Song and Dance — Terpsichore. We shall doubtless say things which are being widely said, thought, and acted on today; but the Theosophical key will be found a great aid in interpreting and justifying the inspirations and intuitions of people who might feel the need of definiteness and co-ordination in their aspirations.

The course of evolution runs in curves which bring racial cultures down into materialism and then up again towards a renewed knowledge of the essential values of life. So we may expect to find a reappearance of ancient institutions which have been lost or degraded. The language of symbolism, allegory, and mythology is a means of embalming these institutions, so that their seeds may remain encysted, as it were (it is often convenient to mix metaphors), thus remaining free from harm until they can be safely revived.

All antiquity shows the importance attached to the dance; it still prevails, but in what guise? Apart from the noble efforts of the few alluded to above, it has become at best an amusement, too often with an intrusive element of sex-appeal, more or less innocent; and as part of a dramatic scene, the ballet has more often made its appeal to our coarser than to our more refined tastes. We have to be careful not to transfer our own conceptions to the ancients and accuse them of mixing worship with frivolity because the dance with us has descended to frivolity *from* worship. One is all the more gratified to find that in

some quarters at least a nobler conception of the dance is gaining ground; and it is to a wish to second those efforts that the choice of this particular subject for an article is mainly due.

Downward curves in evolution are marked by the misuse of man's divine powers, whereby is created *sin*, from which he strives to escape by holiness. He may become so depraved that asceticism seems his only salvation. A snuffing Puritanism feared even the dance on the village green, because for that it would no longer have been innocent. In the classical age not only the dance but every kind of athletic exercise was an essential part of religious celebration; they were performed in honor of the gods. Simple peoples of today have the same in their tribal dances. It was a practical enactment of the universal principle of rhythm and harmony, the lacking keynote in modern life, whose watchword seems to be *excess* in all things. Who that has fine appreciations can deny that the lack of rhythm and proportion has vitiated our manners, tastes, and institutions? We are becoming aware of it and of the need for amending. For awhile, no doubt, we shall carry even into our amendings the spirit of excess, of self-consciousness, of striving, of artificiality. Spontaneity cannot be won by chasing her with a net; she is coy and must be wooed. We can but make ourself worthy, and then we may be honored with a visit.

It would be wantonly unjust in this article to omit reference to the work of Katherine Tingley, whose mission was to strike anew so many lost keynotes. The importance of the dance, its real significance, were well known to her, and she introduced its practical enactment among the members of her company of students at Point Loma; chiefly among the children, whose unspoilt minds rendered them better material; but notably among people of all ages as part of her wonderful dramatic presentations in the Greek Theater. The influence thus started has spread widely, and few know to how great an extent the world is indebted to her for this. For not only has the influence spread by direct imitation, but also through the unseen communications which bind together the minds of men irrespective of distance; and whatever was done at that center and by that Teacher was broadcast with a

hundredfold force.

All concerted movements, whether of the dance, the song, the orchestra, or even military drill, express the harmonious co-operation of many individuals in one whole; and all those in whom the spirit of life is not dormant or dead experience an indefinable joy therein. For once they have laid aside personality and are acting as part of a greater self. They have experienced the joys of a life larger than that of the self.

The word 'symbolical' has come with some people to mean unreal, and it is with this feeling that they speak of ancient ritual dances as being symbolical of something or other. Others think that the participants in these rites were actually accomplishing a creative function; and I am sure this is what Katherine Tingley felt — or rather knew. And may it not be our inner awareness of this fact that gave us that mysterious sense of joy? To Theosophists, man is not a poor hapless sinner dumped down in a cruel world by an absurd deity for the purpose of preparing himself by self-mortification for a better world somewhere else; nor is man a mere chance-happening or byproduct of some incredible cosmic process. He is a part of the universe, a part of nature, a part of God. His smallest acts count. It may be hard to define his goal; it may not be best to try to define it. Let us call it self-realization. And if this is not to mean that each petty personality will make the vain attempt to realize a little life of his own apart from others, then it must mean that we must seek to realize that greater life wherein we all share as equal components.

Let us get beyond the distinction of sanctimonious and sinful, sacred and secular; let us get back to the unity of life. The simplest natural functions have been and can be considered sacred, pure, joyous. The body (as H. P. Blavatsky points out) is the temple of the Holy Ghost, but that fane has been desecrated, so that we have turned from it with disgust and regard the body and its functions as something profane.

Those gods of the old Pantheons stand for departed glories of the human race; some went back to Olympus, and some with loving sacrifice departed not from man but suffered degradation with him

that they might one day raise him again to the heights. No doubt Terpsichore, the Muse of Choric Song and Dance, has never been away from us.

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

There are some who have had glimpses — enough to make them homesick. But harmony cannot be achieved by perfecting oneself in the use of one's own solitary instrument.

The Theosophical Forum

GIANT EFFIGIES OF SOMERSET — A. E. S. Smythe

GREAT WHEEL OF LIFE REVEALED AT GLASTONBURY (1)

It is scarcely credible and not unnaturally is received with some scepticism, that recently in the county of Somerset in England, aviators flying over this region discovered the most astounding monument that could well be imagined. The story of Glastonbury abbey is fairly well known, and its sanctity is legendary, but this discovery places the legend of its sanctity on a prehistoric basis altogether, for it appears that the story of Joseph of Arimathea having come to the place and given it its reputation must be modified as it is now evident that he came to Glastonbury because it was already a sacred spot to the world, and he, being a tin merchant dealing with the Cassiterides, or Tin Island, hearing of this hallowed ground, paid it a visit as all Holy Palmers might be expected to do.

The discovery of the aviators shows that in ancient times a great Zodiac, the Wheel of Life, as it is called, was laid out in this northern part of the county of Somerset, in a vast circle ten miles in diameter. In this circle advantage was taken of natural features of the landscape, hills, rivers, roads and other points being incorporated in the designing and moulding of the figures representing the twelve signs so well known to those who study the heavens, representing the time-period known as the Zodiacal year, or 25,868 years during which the sun describes the course in the heavens by which the precession of the equinoxes is brought about. The twelve signs represent the twelve Zodiacal months of 2155 years, each of which is known as a Messianic cycle, these being said to govern periods of evolution of humanity, as distinct and important in their influence as the months of the year are to the farmer and husbandman in his culture of the harvest of earth.

Glastonbury sits at the north end of this great circle, and Kingsdon on the south. The strange figures have been photographed and

superimposed on the ordnance survey maps, thus enabling the observer to check off the dimensions and locations of the figures. They have been compared to the well known serpent mounds in Ohio and other earthworks of a similar character elsewhere, but these in Somerset surpass any others that have been found in size, and of course in historic, or rather prehistoric interest.

The circle is so arranged that a triangulation near the center of the circle indicates a point in the sign of Taurus, piercing the eye of the Bull, by which the time of the construction of the vast design is dated, being 2700 b. c. It is difficult for the ordinary reader, brought up to think that Britain before the Romans was inhabited by savages who went naked and painted their bodies blue, to accept the view that there was a culture existent then capable of laying out the circle with mathematical accuracy, and calculating with exactitude the motions of the stars and other heavenly bodies, besides transmitting astronomical knowledge that must have been derived, according to Indian tradition, from the ancient continent of Atlantis, where the Zodiac was first constructed by the great astronomer, Asuramaya.

This date precedes all the dates in the Bible regarded as in any degree historical. Abraham, for example, is given the date in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, c. 2100 b. c. These earthworks in Somerset were therefore six hundred years before Abraham. Fifteen hundred years later we are given the date of the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt. Rome was not founded till 700 years later still. Babylonia and Egypt are the only countries recognised as existing at that time by the Encyclopaedia, but China, Japan, India and probably other Asiatic countries flourished as much as these. Ireland has ancient records that certainly suggest dates as early as these, though our scholarship does not find it convenient to accept them.

Here in Somerset, however, are indubitable evidences that a nation capable of mighty works, directed with skilled engineering ability, and with mathematical knowledge as well as astronomical science, capable of laying out on a ten-mile diameter, the symbols of the Zodiac on a

gigantic scale. Imagine what would be thought of any government proposing a similar work today!

The folk lore of the district is not without traces of knowledge of the origin of these works. The general tradition is that King Arthur had his seat in this part of the land and the Round Table which is associated with his memory is readily identified with the Round Circle of the Zodiacal signs. Moreover the local names echo some of the ancient tradition. Wimble Toot is the existing name for a part of the Virgin's breast. The Kern Baby is the name given to the Child of the Virgin, and this tradition of the Virgin as the sign Virgo of the Zodiac runs far back into the antiquity from which the Zodiac is derived, Isis and Horus of Egypt, and the same symbol of the Virgin and Child being found in India.

A later trace is found in *The High History of the Holy Grail*, translated in exquisite archaic English by Sebastian Evans from old French, and *The Quest of the Holy Grail*, translated by W. W. Comfort, and these knit the Grail legend with the wisdom out of which the Zodiac becomes an index of all ancient human history. Those who are familiar with the idea of the plan of the Great Architect of the universe being brought down from heaven and spread on the earth, will find it realized in this marvelous series of earth works, for the interpretation of the twelve signs is unquestionably the story of the evolution of humanity, both material and spiritual.

The date 2700 b. c. falls in the Messianic cycle of the Bull or Taurus, which began about 4419 b. c. It is this period which the Babylonians and Assyrians celebrated with their great Bull monuments, and the symbolism of the Bull has lasted even down to Roman times in the Mithra worship of that time, as Kipling shows in his *Puck of Pook's Hill*. It was the overthrow of this worship by Moses which is celebrated in Genesis, for Moses represented the new Messianic cycle, as the reference to the song of Moses and the Lamb sufficiently indicates. When Moses came down from the Mount he found the people had gone back to the older worship of the Golden Calf. The sign of Aries or the

Ram was ushered in about 2264 b. c, and this cycle continued till 109 b. c, when the sign of Pisces, the Fish, became the symbol of the World Savior.

These signs repeat themselves every 25,000 years, and the characteristic qualities of humanity under the renewed conditions manifest themselves, always on an ascending scale. Such was the teaching of those who traced on the broad acres of Somerset the signs that tell of human evolution through the ages. The Druids held this knowledge as sacred, and in other lands it was taught in the temples, treasured by the priesthoods, and given to the wise and devout and those considered worthy to be initiated into the Mysteries.

The reason why we are able to trace the Zodiacal creatures discovered by the aviators, is, that the land on which they lie was once the property of "the first church in Britain," and up till the time of the Reformation the monks of Glastonbury were scrupulously careful to keep the ancient landmarks and waterways intact. Doubtless "they had the whole history thereof true from the beginning even to the end," as the High History tells us.

The folk lore of the country represents that "the land was haunted by giants, a lion, and many other things." The lion is, of course, the sign Leo, and his head and shoulders are well defined by Chabrick Mill Stream, ancient roads and linches. The Great Western railway runs across his neck, Copley Wood occupies most of his head. A Romano-British road from Ilchester, which crosses the Cary river at Somerton Erleigh on the Lion's Chest, outlines the Giant Orion's raised arm, the Bull's lower jaw; the Ram's bent back fore foot, neck and head; and goes over the bridges connecting the Whale and the Fishes; part of the tail and head of the Glastonbury Phoenix; the top of the head of the Goat-fish; the two legs of Hercules that straddle the withers of The Archer's Horse; and the tail of the Scorpion as far as Stone on the Fosse Way. Now, facing southwest, that Roman road makes a short cut through the center of the Scorpion's body and its right claw, to skirt the Virgin's hand; then the older road goes on again to outline her

Wheatsheaf and the back and shoulder of the Lion, joining the Somerton Erleigh track once more.

So says the record dealing with part of the effigies as described in *A Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars*, published by John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, London, W. C. 2. The whole thing is so amazing that it is not likely to be accepted without a sight of the effigies themselves as displayed on the ordnance survey maps, or for those who can do so, a visit to the locality itself.

Those who know something of Glastonbury will be enriched with further memories of this extensive topographical presentation of the mysteries which make Glastonbury sacred; and those who love King Arthur will find the memorials of his knights and their quests in the strange creatures and mythical monsters which they were said to have fought in these parts of the world. The monsters still lie there to be seen by any man who dares, but their secret and the stories they might tell are of other and more marvelous things than are written of in any book.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Hamilton Spectator*, Canada, February 8, 1936.
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The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY HERE AND NOW (1) — Hazel Boyer Braun

Real Theosophists do not stop to think about differences of organization in the face of an inquiring public; their inter-theosophical disagreements melt away and they are united in the glorious opportunity of presenting the Wisdom of the Ages to their fellow-men. Each individual student, each Lodge or Club, recognises in a Theosophical existence this purpose: to be a worthy instrument of response to the hunger in every human heart for REAL TRUTH. Isn't this our most cherished aspiration?

We have learned that we can *give* our convictions to no one; that the first step on the path is to realize that all comes from within. This deepens our responsibility, but at the same time widens the vista of opportunity before us. It brings us face to face with the great truth that as individuals we can help most of all with our thoughts; that the more profoundly these noble truths have been woven into the fabric of our natures, the more we have succeeded in becoming them in every hour of our lives, the more may we hope to bring about a time when Theosophy shall be sought by all men and women who can no longer endure superficial living.

Those we reach personally are few indeed compared to the number who may read a published article or a book; but who can limit the number of hearts that we can touch with our thoughts as we go about our work trying to express in the smallest detail of life a little of the hope and joy that Theosophy has brought to us, carrying in the background of our minds some great fundamental teaching?

The inquirers who come to Theosophical Lodges are seldom what we might term "the worldly-minded"; they are weary pilgrims, troubled souls, who have suffered deeply in their search for spiritual food; men and women who appeal to our sympathy and compassion.

"My peace I give unto you" are the words of a great teacher, suggesting

the joy of passing on truth. But even in our small way of serving, we must find that peace within ourselves before we may hope to do very much to help humanity. We must become better acquainted with our higher selves, and in this way do our part to preserve a perfect harmony in our Lodges; for if we fail in adherence to this basic rule of the Universe, we have little opportunity to impress an inquirer. We have realized that it is two-thirds what we are and one-third what we say, when we attempt to give out the teachings that have been given to us.

A Theosophical Lodge is a fabric woven of the most impersonal growth of each of its members, patterned alone with the jewels of wisdom. This tapestry, if all the threads are strong and each in its place, serves as a mighty reflector into the reservoir of thought to which every human being has access; but the strength of this instrument of all that is most dear to us, is weakened by a single absence from a Lodge meeting, by each ill-feeling or critical thought towards another member, by personal ambition or any failure in loyal adherence to the hierarchical structure of ourselves, the Lodge, the Theosophical Society, and the Universe.

It is a remarkable thing that a perfect stranger to Theosophy, visiting a Lodge or Theosophical Club, is intuitively aware of this sensitive structure and will invariably detect inharmony if it exists even in the thoughts of the members. This is equally true whether it be a small or a large group, and is too often the reason that Lodges never grow large and strong in the precious opportunity that is theirs.

We have reason to rejoice upon the occasion of this international, inter-theosophical Fraternization Jubilee Convention, in a new epoch, when we see in perfect perspective, in spite of the darkly unhappy aspect of human affairs in the world, that the veils are thinning, that the human family is moving forward out of a dark cycle into a time that promises to be a potent season of spiritual growth. Every vestige of a sense of separateness should fall away from each Theosophist in the realization of the grandeur of his responsibility, in the sacredness of all

that depends upon loyalty to the Master's heroic efforts to make ready for such a time. What is a more wonderful challenge to us than the work of the Theosophical pioneers? Isn't it the grandest thing that we, as human beings, can hope for, to serve with all our hearts at such a critical time?

Let us glance for a moment at the progress of the world in its approach to the way of liberation. We see the personal God discarded to a very great extent; and while the First Fundamental Proposition of The Secret Doctrine is not generally accepted in its place, the trend of modern scientific thought has led men to some suggestion of THE ONE REALITY — to recognition of consciousness as the fundamental concept of the Universe and the conception that consciousness cannot be separated from anything in the Universe; also, that there is a divine spark flickering within man. The law of periodicity is very generally known; we hear the most materially-minded men talk glibly about the cyclic movement of many things; the advocates of the expanding and contracting universe have touched intuitively the teaching of the rhythmic ebb and flux of Universal Life, but their brain-minds have not so interpreted it. The wide study of astronomy has compelled those who are intuitive to grasp a better sense of proportion in their thought about their personal lives and their relation to the Universe, which very often has made the teaching of rebirth acceptable. Evolution — if not self-directed evolution — now has a place with the general understanding of cause and effect, although not in any sense a full understanding of Karma, in modern co-ordinated knowledge.

But Theosophy is not yet understood to be the doorway to the Mystery-School, nor is it popular, because a real intellectual conception of the majestic teachings comes only from accepting them as ethical standards.

Yet what can be more wonderful work than keeping open the doorways of our Theosophical Lodges, Clubs and Lotus-Circles, with a royal welcome to each pilgrim that comes home!

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Canadian Theosophist*, October, 1935. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 304-309

QUESTION 304 (from the Chicago Lodge). In the January FORUM, article entitled 'Transactions of the Point Loma Lodge,' the discussion of light and color, a statement is therein made by G. de P. which is confusing to us.

In the last paragraph on pages 35 and 36 the statement is made as follows: ". . . it is perfectly true that the more rapid the vibration, the greater the frequency of vibration a color has, the closer to matter it is; because what we call matter, physical matter, is intensity of vibration, of force." . . . "The greater the frequency of vibration, the more condensed the substance is."

What we cannot understand is that by analogy the molecular vibration of matter as exemplified in ice-water and steam seems to us to be exactly opposed to the above statement. An explanation would surely be appreciated.

G. de P. — An interesting question, this, and shows the result of study and conscientious thought. It is likewise a good illustration of the working of maya, in its philosophical sense, in our minds. There is, however, no contradiction, and the querents would easily understand the situation, I believe, if they will remember that in what I wrote in the passage quoted from me, I was referring to the sphere of the atoms, to the vibration-frequencies in the atomic sphere, and including obviously what modern science calls those infinitesimal bodies dubbed electrons. The querents apparently have forgotten this, and find their difficulty, such as it is, in the realms of *molecular cohesion* — in other words, in the realm of molecules; whereas, as said, I was speaking of *chemical attraction*, the world of the atoms.

Furthermore, my reference was specifically to the different phases of light which we humans call colors; although of course the principle which I pointed to is universally applicable. In the first place, the

difference between ice-water and steam is the difference between a fluid and a gas or vapor, which latter has been torn from the body of the fluid, water, by the intrusion of an 'outside' force — heat in this case. Obviously, by heating a body, solid or fluid, we can vaporize it if the heat be sufficient, and thus the freed molecules of water are in a state of temporary and rapid molecular vibration; but these molecules are nevertheless of the same substance as the solid, or the fluid, from which they have been torn as particles of vapor or gas. The analogy drawn by the querents is not a perfect one.

Consider a moment: the particles or molecules of water-gas or water-vapor called steam are in a state of relatively high individual movement, as compared with the body of water from which the steam or particles of water have been drawn or torn. Extract the heat, otherwise chill the water-gas or vapor called steam, and we have the molecules of water again coalescing to become drops, which unite and become a body of water again. In the case of steam, we have broken the molecular cohesion of the water-particles, and thus have freed them and have made them into vapor or gas by the application to the water of an 'outside' energy or force, to wit, heat. But the molecules of water-vapor bombarding each other, let us say in a container, as steam or water-gas, and doing so at what seems to us a high rate of motion or vibration, are nevertheless moving with extreme slowness as individual molecules when we compare them with the almost incomprehensible vibration-frequencies of the electrons in an atom, which scientists now tell us are in movement around the atomic nucleus or atomic core at an almost incomprehensible rate of speed, some quadrillions of revolutions per human second.

Take the case of ice-water, or again of ice: the atomic vibrations and the electronic vibration-frequencies in this apparently inert and in the case of ice relatively rigid body, are tremendously greater than the individual movements of the particles or molecules of water-vapor or gas which we call steam; in the former case, that of the atoms and electrons, we are dealing with vibration-frequencies which we call wave-lengths held in unity by chemical attraction; in the case of the

latter, we are dealing with relatively much slower movements of water-particles freed as individuals by the application of an outside force, to wit, heat.

The point to remember is what I tried to indicate in the extract quoted from me, to wit, that the higher the rate of electronic or atomic vibration, i. e. the higher the vibration-frequencies of and in the atoms, the smaller the light-waves, and consequently the greater is the condensation or condensing of the particles involved, thus producing matter whose density is the greater the higher the vibration-frequencies are. This should be clear, especially when one remembers that the high rate of the atomic and electronic vibration-frequencies remain the same in the steam as they are in the ice-water, or likewise in the solid ice.

I hope that this is clear. The querents have made a mistake in analogy, for they have tried to contrast *molecular cohesion* with *chemical attraction*; and although both chemical attraction and molecular cohesion are manifestations of electro-magnetic energy, they are not the same kinds or productions thereof, and just here is where the alleged analogy falls.

Consider for a moment the modern scientific picture of an electron whirling at vertiginous speed around its atomic center. It is moving at such a tremendous rate of speed that to our coarse senses the electron seems to be in every part of its orbit at the same instant; but to a supposititious entity of atomic size, the electron would seem to be moving in its orbit with the same majestic slowness that the planets do to our eyes. Thus it is that the more rapid the vibration, in other words the greater the vibration-frequencies, of electronic and atomic bodies, the stronger the mutually attractive forces involved, i. e. the more dense or condensed is the matter thus produced; whereas the slower the vibration-frequencies, the less is the mutual attraction, and consequently the less dense is the resultant material. Ice, ice-water, water-vapor or steam, are all formed of identic molecules, the only difference among the three states being that steam has more heat

moving its particles than has ice-water, and ice-water has more heat in it than ice; but the chemical attraction, and the electronic and atomic vibration-frequencies, are the same in all three states; it is the molecular cohesion which is different.

All this should be clear enough, and if the querents will ponder over the facts herein before stated they should easily see that they are trying to compare two different kinds of things, and to draw an analogy therefrom. They should compare chemical attraction with chemical attraction, or molecular cohesion with molecular cohesion, if they want to have a perfect analogy. Iron can be vaporized into gas; but the electrons and the atoms, whether in the solid iron or in the iron-gas, have the same vibration-frequencies in both cases; what I have done is merely to affect or modify the cohesion of the iron molecules by the introduction of an 'outside' element, heat.

QUESTION 305. *Do you know of a clear-cut statement by Plato that would show that he accepted Reincarnation? I am wading through some of his books now, but have not found anything very direct yet.*

G. de P. — There is not a single thing that Plato wrote saying: "I accept the doctrine of Reimbodiment," but there are a number of passages in his dialogs which cannot mean anything else except such a belief. But we must remember that in those days in Greece and throughout the entire Greek world the full teaching of Reincarnation was given out solely in the Mysteries.

On the other hand, the Pythagoreans did teach the doctrine of what was called Metempsychosis, at the back of which is Reincarnation; but it meant a good deal more than that. All the ancient world believed in Reimbodiment, but in different manners and in different ways and under different forms of expression; but to say boldly and baldly that Pythagoras or Plato or any other great philosopher of the Greek world "taught Reincarnation," coming from the mouth of a Theosophist, means today to the 'man in the street' that such a philosopher taught Reincarnation as the Theosophist teaches it openly and more or less distinctly; and this is not the fact.

Many are the Greek allusions to it. Empedocles, for instance, says in substance in one of his fragments still remaining: "I was once a bush; I was once a boy; I was once a maid; I was once a fish in the glittering sea." That is not our doctrine of Reincarnation as taught today; and yet it is our doctrine if you understand the meaning behind this.

We have to be careful; we cannot afford to be slipshod as some Theosophists have been in the past in boldly making the statement that all the ancient world "taught Reincarnation," which means to the public that it taught Reincarnation as presented today by Theosophists; and any scholar could challenge such a statement. The ancient Initiates knew the doctrine, knew what all these different statements meant; and if our modern Theosophists understood Reincarnation better they would understand that the ancient philosopher taught absolute truth, taught different aspects of the general doctrine of Reimbodiment; but the modern, clear-cut, very definite teaching of the reimbodiment of the Reincarnating Ego is inadequate to express it in its fulness.

All the ancient world taught Reimbodiment; and that is one of the reasons why in my lectures and in my books I keep harping upon the difference between Reincarnation, Rebirth, Transmigration, Metempsychosis, and Metensomatosis, as being all different views or aspects of the one general doctrine of Reimbodiment. It is not just a matter of words. I am trying to bring order into the situation, to get accuracy; and the scholars of the future will appreciate it. It is just like the doctrine concerning the Absolute or the proper spelling of Karman: we need to have accuracy and definiteness and precision.

QUESTION 306. *The following remarks were submitted to the Editors as coming from members of the Boston Theosophical Club, in regard to their discussion of an article, 'The Elixir of Life' in "The Theosophical Forum" for Jan., 1936. To quote:*

"Discussion arose as to the sense in which the term self-forgetfulness was used. There was some objection raised as to the effectiveness of solving our problems by attempting to forget them. The feeling

prevailed that a facing of facts as they existed in our lives was imperative to a subsequent understanding of those facts and a consequent successful solution of the problems. We would like a little further light on this."

G. de P. — Self-forgetfulness, as the Theosophist understands it, never and in no circumstances does or can mean neglect of our honorable obligations. Indeed the slightest psychological analysis of the situation demonstrates clearly that the man who neglects and sets aside his obligations of any kind, family or other, does so because instead of being self-forgetful in his duty, he is hunting self-satisfaction in some way, and this is just what self-forgetfulness does not mean. Self-forgetfulness means setting aside selfishness, eager self-seeking at the cost of others, putting oneself in thought and act over and above others, etc., etc. Furthermore the truest happiness is found in self-forgetting our petty desires, wishes, longings, and so forth, and living in the great and grand things.

L. L. W. — Let us suppose, in illustration of the difficulty implied in this question, a problem familiar to us all — that of our relations with someone who is uncongenial or irritating, who 'gets on our nerves' and provokes us into impulsive responses in either thought or word that we are ashamed of afterward. How about a practice of self-forgetfulness here? Irritation with others will nearly always be found to be due, when traced back to its source, to a sense of our own superiority. Suppose, for a change, that we try to find in that stupid or irritating person the respects in which he is superior to us. They will be there — and the effort both at self-control and honesty will result in the development of sympathy and a consequent broadening of heart and mind for us. It is in this sense that the term self-forgetfulness was used.

QUESTION 307. *What is really accomplished in the great cycle of monadic evolution, if the monad ultimately returns to the state of pure Spirit which it left at the beginning of the cycle?*

M. Savage. — "From un-self-conscious God-spark to self-conscious god" is another way of describing this evolutionary cycle; and in these

words we have our answer too. An expansion of consciousness, the attaining of *self-consciousness* in the next higher sphere of being, is the object of the monad's evolutionary pilgrimage, for only by this means can it attain union with the Universal Consciousness. The primal urge which starts the God-spark on its descent into matter is the urge for self-unfoldment, for manifesting its swabhava, its individual and essential characteristic — for un-self-conscious as it is, it yet carries within itself the potentiality of unlimited self-development and self-expression. All that it ever attains is already in its heart, but it has to enter into and to know at first hand life on its various planes of expression.

During the progress of the monad along the Downward Arc, the trend is already towards self-consciousness, in order to reap experience consciously; but before the first gleam of self-consciousness is achieved, evolution must first proceed through lower unconscious forms until a vehicle is builded suitable for the expression of a self-conscious entity. These vehicles the monad builds for or produces from within itself, ever moving on to its "more stately mansions," until manhood or its equivalent is reached, and the manasic principle comes into expression, thereby awakening the monad to self-consciousness, thus making possible a self-directed evolution, and a knowledge of the real purpose of its existence. Godhood is glimpsed ahead, and the Universe becomes an open book in which man's own history and destiny may be read.

The treasures of experience of each planet-life are garnered in the storehouse of the manasic principle, and as each after-death state ensues, the essence of these is absorbed by the buddhic principle and added to the sum of the individuality as *character*. This noble harvest of experience endures beyond the gulf of death: it cannot be lost. "What emerges at the end of all things is not only 'pure and impersonal spirit,' but the collective 'personal' remembrances skimmed off every new fifth principle in the long series of being." — (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, page 158). Yet this must not be thought of as a mere *accretion* of the fruits of experience. The conception would be too mechanical. It

is really better conceived of as a constant widening and deepening of the consciousness, progressively allying itself more fully with the Universal Consciousness.

Nor is it more consistent to trace the evolution of a single monad, than it is to follow the course of a single drop of blood through the body, for the monad gathers to itself by magnetic and karmic attraction countless other monads of lesser development, which form a part of itself, each being in the hierarchy aiding the progress of those less evolved than itself, but all together destined for the same goal of relative perfection.

QUESTION 308. *If one develops a superiority complex one is liable to be condemned; should he develop an inferiority complex he will be despised and rejected. Is there a middle course that promises a way out, or 'in'? —*
A. W. N.

W. E. S. — There is plenty in the philosophy of Theosophy that can form a good stiff rod with which to 'knock the stuffing' out of sufferers from a superiority complex, and at the same time give sufficient of a fillip to the imagination and understanding of one laboring under a so-called inferiority complex.

Consider that you are but an atom in the body of a greater being whose life you affect in a manner similar to that which the electron-lives of which you are practically unconscious affect your physical body. The sun itself is but an electronic particle karmically subservient, respondent, and obedient, to the 'laws' of a greater proton-Sun. The greatest you can think of is but a poor Infinite to that which is INFINITE. And you, poor mortal in your intermediate human self, are far, far behind in evolutionary grandeur those whose consciousness is of a sweep that comprises galactic systems. And you set yourself up as superior!

But consider this now: Locked up within you are secrets gathered from the evolutionary journeyings of ages — secrets of the elemental regions: of ether, fire, air, water, earth; of the mineral kingdom; of the

vegetable world. Unreleased are powers acquired and ingrown into yourself during aeons — now hid within your own being. You are the hierarch of billions of lives in your own human constitution. You are lord of your thoughts. You are elder brother to all beasts. You are younger brother to the gods. You, at your heart-core are one with all beings below you, one with all beings above you, one with the secret essence of Being itself. Naught is but is rooted in your root. Therefore are you one with the Unboundaried; one with the Beyond Brahman; one with the wordless THAT.

There is no 'superior' or no 'inferior' in that which is One with the Heart of all Being.

Consider the destiny of man. Take thought of his wondrous evolutionary pilgrimage. Place him where he belongs in the great Ladder of Life — and thought of developing a 'complex' of any kind, whether so-called 'superior' or 'inferior,' will quickly dissolve into thin air, displaced by the constant picture of the Pilgrim, the Man behind the Mask, as he pursues with ever growing consciousness his pathway towards Divinity.

The "middle course that promises a way out — or 'in' " — is a complete right-about-face on feeble so-called psychological twaddle and an embracing of the solid truths of ancient esoteric philosophy. It strikes me we've heard enough about 'complexes' — of all kinds!

QUESTION 309. What do you think of Dean Inge's proposal to save Christianity by purifying it?

H. T. Edge — Dean Inge seems to be a most convinced Christian and to be very anxious to save Christianity by cleansing it. Doubtless, as is the case with so many other people, his final convictions rest upon grounds beyond the brain-mind reason; and if he is successful in achieving a harmony between his logic and his convictions, we need not press the question as to which of the twain is the predominant partner in the association.

We find ourselves in complete sympathy with the Dean in many

regards. He enumerates two prime curses in the history of Christianity: the craze for asceticism, and the ecclesiastical system, neither (he thinks) discoverable in the teachings of Christ; both excrescences. He seems prepared to view with equanimity the disappearance of church organization. He realizes that Christ taught the path of perfection for the individual disciple, not any system of social polity. In short, he virtually admits that Christ was what we call an Avatara, a manifestation of divinity in human form.

But it is probably at this point that Theosophists would part company with Dean Inge; for they would have to recognise the existence of many Avataras, at different epochs and in various lands, of whom Jesus was a particular instance. They would also lay more emphasis on the point that Jesus was a teacher of the ancient wisdom, his message not being new. The main difficulty, of course, is to find out just how much of Christianity is left after it has been clarified to this extent. Looking at the matter from the angle of practical politics, too, we may well find ourselves asking whether the whole world is to be Christian, or whether there are still to be rival religions. Theosophists would say that, while there may be many forms of religion, there can be but one real Religion. The analogy of languages may be useful. Can we or should we seek to give the whole world one language? Is any one language superior or final? Is there not a common mind underlying all languages, languages being the various vehicles of that common mind?

Another point of sympathy which we must have with the Dean is in the concern as to the future of morality. Are we today living on the capital of morality engendered in days when religion was a power? If so, will that capital be exhausted? Will a new generation grow up without any moral restraints and at the mercy of their own inclinations, which would be a source of misery to themselves and their neighbors? What can the Dean with his purified Christianity, or Theosophists with their restatement of the Ancient Wisdom, do in this matter?

DESIRE: THE INGITER OF WILL — *William S. Flathe*

Diffusion of thoughts leads to confusion of results, and promiscuous and desultory thinking is often productive of erroneous and shallow conclusions. But with the subject under consideration — desire and its relation to will — one has a vast field of speculative thought before him, and the premisses one may deduce therefrom are commensurate with the depth and originality of one's mental equipment.

From W. Q. Judge's work *The Ocean of Theosophy* one obtains quite an insight into the tremendous importance of desire as a leading factor in man's present point of evolution, but the scope or province of desire is not limited to man only, for, to quote Mr. Judge:

It was by the arising of desire in the unknown first cause, the one absolute existence, that the whole collection of worlds was manifested, and by means of the influence of desire in the now manifested world is the latter kept in existence.

However, let us consider desire, or Kama, the fourth of man's constituent principles, more in the light of his present terrestrial existence, and as bearing on his present advancement.

The chief office of desire is to incite man to action, and as no action can be accomplished without bringing into play the will, desire must necessarily be the mover of will, or we may put it as the old Hermetists did: "Behind will stands desire." An appreciation of this fact is necessary if we are to make of knowledge power, or make it usable in the vicissitudes of life. The mere infusing of knowledge into the intelligence is not going to make man wise. It is what happens to these bits of truth after they have entered the various chambers of mentation, how they set our mental faculties into action so to work on them that we realize them. That is the important factor, and this is what makes them so pragmatistical. So it is with desire when we realize what a dynamic factor it is in character-building and self-mastery.

Without the requisite intensity and quality, our desires and attempts to pray become a vain exertion, for conditioned desires and thoughts arising from our plane of consciousness must have the adequate force and high aspiring quality if they are to move the will and pass through that occult process called 'spiritual transmutation'; if they are to become an active creative force, bringing down to the grateful recipient the desired result.

Also in relation to imagination one may see the efficacy of desire in facilitating this mental operation so as to achieve the highest results. For, to quote W. Q. Judge again:

if this principle of desire be not strong the master-power of imagination cannot do its work, because though it makes a mold or matrix the will cannot act unless it is moved, directed, and kept up to pitch by desire, (*op cit.*)

Even our thoughts are rooted in desire, being inextricably bound thereto by both a physical and a mental link, and this is one of the most important reasons why man comes back to earth again and again. Manas, the thinking principle, has a lower and a higher aspect, and at the present point of evolution man spends most of his life in his lower desires, which thus become his main incentive to action. So when he lays aside his worn-out physical body and ascends to the devachanic state of beatitude, the thoughts of his past life, which are relatively permanent, are enmeshed by a myriad magnetic threads in the incipient desires which prompted them. These desires were of a worldly character and they exert an irresistible attraction to drag the bound soul back again into the arena of terrestrial life, to be again submerged in the perfidious illusions that make man forget his kingly heritage.

The control of our most intimate desires and feelings should assume great prominence to all earnest students of Theosophy, because it is the character of the desires and thoughts that we allow to enter our consciousness that determines our thralldom or self-mastery. No one

can think of developing will-power without understanding the office of desire, for will stands in the same relation to desire as Atman does to consciousness. Desire is always precedent to will; it stands behind will to execute the Ego's mandates, and cannot in any wise be dispensed with. But sometimes desire seems to be possessed of an intelligence of its own, and becomes the tyrannical dictator, and uses the will to rush man off into actions that he will bitterly regret afterwards. This is a case in which the animal-self, the origin of all ignoble desires and therefore of thoughts, ousts the Ego from its mental throne for the time being, and, abetted by the mind, directs affairs 'on its own hook.' Such is instanced when we are swept away by anger or are led to gratify some beastly vice. The hallmark of the advanced soul is his ability to lead his desires into channels of the Ego's making, and not to be enthralled by the emotions of the lower soul. Now as desire is precedent to will, the degree in which we can restrain, encourage, and purify our desires, will mark the degree to which we have attained mastery of the will itself.

Technically speaking, we do not develop will-power, we merely liberate the will from the bondage of the lower self by the strength of individual effort, and by so doing the Inner Man is freed. This is the work of evolution. To realize then our native splendor, we should know that it is our lower desires that have usurped the Ego's sovereignty, and that this sad state of affairs will continue as long as man chases after the will o' the wisp of sensation, and kneels in adulation and servitude before the animal-self. Realize that this viper of selfishness and sensuality looses its hold on man if he will only stop being the channel through which it receives sustenance, when, like a tree deprived of life-giving water, it will wither and die. Try to focus your thoughts within and withdraw into that part of your nature that stands back of all mental states. It is this consciousness of 'I am I' that should be attained, and the more confidence and faith we have in our ability to reach up into this higher part of our being, the more quickly shall we realize our aim. What an accession of inner strength and feeling of self-mastery will accrue to the individual when he has achieved this!

Use the imagination to picture ideals of strength and self-mastery, for imagination has a very great influence over desire, and is a most powerful adjunct to will-action. Never try to fight a low mental state on its own grounds, but try to direct the attention to diametrically opposite or higher things; for if you remain in the same mood as before and try to direct the battle, you merely goad your seething desire-nature into greater fury. And remember, finally, that all kindly acts tend to draw out the finer desires, and that one is never progressing along the Path so quickly as when engrossed in loving self-forgetting service.

The Theosophical Forum

KARMAN — *Matilda Berg*

Karman is the Universal law or principle of action and consequence. Every entity is subject to this law and is responsible for its karman according to its degree of consciousness. When a being has reached the state of self-consciousness he is entirely responsible for his personal karman, and his actions in relation to family, group, nation, race.

We understand karman when we have a knowledge of and a belief in reincarnation. Then we know that everything done in a former life has consequences which in the new birth the Ego must enjoy or suffer. We may sometimes seem to receive effects solely from the acts of others, but this is the result of our own acts and thoughts in this or some former life. We are part of the great Universal Plan of rhythmic flow, harmony, and equilibrium. If we create by thought, word, or deed a discordant vibration we are not released from the consequences until we have set in motion rhythmic waves to overcome that discordance. We do not go blindly through life not knowing harmony from discord, because we have the Voice of Conscience to guide us.

We may suffer or enjoy the results of our actions partly in this life, but between each incarnation the Ego is given a period of rest from whence it returns to this earth, refreshed and ennobled by experience, with the responsibility of working out its karman for better or worse. The purpose of life is to grow from the physical self into the spiritual, and to become one with the Divine. It depends upon how sincerely one reaches up into his higher self, just how many incarnations it may take to accomplish this.

We must meet the consequences of our actions but we can meet them with courage and understanding. Every thought and act alters character, and every moment may be taken as a new starting point. As Katherine Tingley has written: "Every renewed effort raises all former failures into lessons, all sins into experiences," and with renewed effort

the karman of all one's past no longer threatens. "It stands as a monument, a reminder of past weaknesses, and a warning against future failures."

Karman acts forever and everywhere, but when the great currents of the Universe are no more thwarted no friction is felt. One moves forward easily and rapidly.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS KARMAN?

A leaflet for inquirers, compiled by the Seattle (Wash.) Theosophical Club

Karman is that majestic operation of Nature, that so-called 'Law of Nature' if you will, which is set forth in the saying of Paul: "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is the doctrine of consequences, of results following action, inevitably, ineluctably, whether such consequences or results be immediately forthcoming, or be postponed to a later time. — *G. de Purucker*

The word itself is Sanskrit and literally means: to do, to make — doing or making; in other words, action. From a moral, ethical, and philosophical standpoint it means that no matter what we think, or what we feel, or what we do, we have released certain energies, set up certain actions that will some day have a consequence. It will some time change things in our lives, either spiritual, mental, or physical. Somewhere, at some time, a reaction will come. Our actions are preceded by thoughts and by will, and therefore, we shall become involved in the results. Our lives are built up of minor events, daily habits and thoughts. Through a long chain of such causes, followed by results, the pattern of our lives is woven. It is the sum-total of these minor events, that makes or mars our lives; they form a web around us, from which we cannot escape. If we think, feel and act in accordance with Nature's harmonious laws, the consequence will be beneficent. If the contrary is the case, the result will bring suffering. It will come, not only to the individual who originated the disharmony, but it will also bring suffering to those who, through the inter-relation of the human family, are also woven into the web. Daily we have the power to choose and direct our thoughts and actions. It is done through our spiritual will. Through this action of free will and choice, man becomes an entity totally responsible, not only to himself, but to his family, city, state and nation.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE DIAMOND HEART — *M. M. T.*

When, in the fifth century, the West was moving towards a period in which the light of spiritual intuition was almost extinguished, there occurred what is known as the Pelagian Controversy. The decision arrived at by both ecclesiastical and temporal authorities marked the final stage of the process by which the universal truth concerning man's relation to Divinity became distorted and crystallized into a theological dogma, that spread a heavy 'cloud of unknowing' over the West for hundreds of years. For, surely, the doctrine of original sin is the very nether pole of the Archaic Wisdom-teaching — the Doctrine of the Diamond Heart.

Pelagius was a Briton, a man of pure life, who was interested chiefly in the ethics of Christianity and who, say his critics, had too enthusiastic a belief in the inherent goodness of human nature. He and his pupil, Coelestius, asserted that there is no such thing as original sin, that baptism is not a necessity for the salvation of infants, that sin is a thing of will and not of nature and that human beings have will for good as well as for evil, and that even before the coming of Jesus there were men who were free from sin. Augustine, on the other hand, maintained that innate human depravity derived from Adam rendered man helpless to overcome sin without divine grace as shown in the sending of the Son of God to die on the Cross for the salvation of mankind.

In 418 Pelagius and Coelestius and all who were known to believe as they did had their property confiscated and were sentenced to perpetual banishment. Their protest was, however, not in vain. Again and again, in different quarters — notably in Holland when Arminius opposed the severe Calvinistic teachings — it flamed up. And even when dread of being deprived of the sacraments of the Church, then the only known means of salvation, kept many silent, the homage of the heart was not given to the dogma of original sin.

The Archaic Wisdom-Science traces man's origin to Divinity and outlines for him a sublime destiny worthy of that ancestry. Every entity, even as the tiny lives of which our bodies are composed, 'lives and moves and has its being' in a greater entity, which is itself part of a still greater, and so on as far as the mind can grasp and beyond. Man, a lesser life in the Superior Entity whose visible form is the Solar System, is in his higher parts a Son of the Sun and partakes of its intelligence and Divinity, and in his highest, the innermost divine root of him, is the offspring of the Superior Being, whose physical vehicle is the Universal Kosmic System, in which our Solar System is a lesser life. And — superb challenge to the aspiring and compassionate — man has latent within him the power to expand his intelligence and his heart-life, and thus raise his consciousness, step by step, to that of the Superior Beings in whom he now dwells more or less unawakened as to the possibilities inherent in his nature.

These Superior Wondrous Beings are the prototypes of the later conceptions of the Supreme Being, which finally degenerated into the idea of a Personal Deity, whom few in our day can accept as their Father in Heaven. And naturally so. Intuitions of the noble ancient teachings are astir everywhere. Every dogma is being reinterpreted in the light of the Ancient Wisdom. From the Diamond Heart of the Universe, which sent forth (and why should not the Heart be a creative power?) the Wondrous Beings of greater and less range of compassionate activity, down to the Superior Being at the head of our own Home-hierarchy, there streams into the human heart the urge to make divinity manifest. The impulse rises from *within*, from man's own individual Father in Heaven, *now* active on its own plane of life.

The further quickening and fostering of the divine seed is the work of those who have been awakened, the Guardians, the Watchers, the Mahatmans, those whose hearts are as the diamond only to their own pain. Salvation is the awakening to consciousness of the Wondrous Being within. Every man is a potential Christ. The Universal Kosmic Hierarchy was once a man.

Original sin? *No*. Innate divinity, destined to become fully conscious and active, consecrated to the infinite duty of calling forth in others the latent seed of the Diamond Heart that is and is to be.

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GAUTAMA, THE LORD BUDDHA, AND HIS TEACHINGS — Irene R. Ponsonby

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

"Buddhism teaches an evolution or development of this x-factor of consciousness and will [the Karman, the Dhyani-Buddha, or the Reincarnating Ego or Monad of Theosophy] slowly followed through many rebirths, through repeated imbodiments, bringing about constantly increasing faculty and power, until finally the entity whose evolving destiny is thus traced, becomes a man; and after becoming a man finally becomes a Bodhisattva — one filled with the spirit of the inner Buddha, or rather of the Buddhic principle, the Bodhi, the principle and fountain-head of utter wisdom. Furthermore, that taking the Buddha-Gautama as an example or illustration of such an evolving entity, in his last incarnation on earth he was born the human Bodhisattva-Siddhartha, later called Sakyamuni, in the year 643 b. c, and that when he was eighty years of age, after having passed through manifold experiences and trials, and after he had gathered together and taught his disciples and had sent them abroad in order to proclaim the Good Law, he then entered the Nirvana, with an entering which left naught behind save his Dharma — the Law, i. e., the Truth that he taught." — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 120

Gautama the Lord Buddha was born into the royal family of the Clan of Sakya, in a town at the foot of the Himalayas, a fact which explains his title of Sakyamuni, or Sage of the Sakyas. His father's name, Suddhodana, means 'pure flow,' and Maya or Mayadevi, his mother's name, 'illusion.' They called this noble boy Siddhartha, 'one who has achieved his objective,' and he later took as wife, Yasodhara, 'holder of glory' or 'splendor.' What a mystic background the symbology of these

names gives to the design of the last earth-life of the Buddha! Yet there is no reason to suppose that these were not the actual names of the parents and wife of Siddhartha, or that any part of the story of his life is entirely symbolic.

Many were the wondrous circumstances and conditions which surrounded the advent of this child. He came, as do all the Great Teachers, at that point in the cycle of progress when spiritual perception ebbs and material attractions find response in the bewildered hearts and minds of men, and when the spiritual nostalgia of all Nature surged forth in welcome at his coming. Rare and exquisite blossoms strewed the earth with their petals, and scented the air with their fragrance; countless birds, befeathered in the hues of the rainbow, hovered in benediction; and men's minds were hushed, and filled with reverent aspiration and devotion. The child, Siddhartha, so lavishly welcomed, bore upon him all the signs of a highly evolved being, one worthy to bear his heritage of compassion and service. Those chosen to instruct him found themselves instructed; and it was predicted that he would either become a Buddha and move the hearts of men with his teachings, or rule as a Chakravartin, a 'great World-King.' The years of his childhood and early manhood were passed in the secluded, if somewhat enforced, protection of his father's palaces and gardens, where he was surrounded by chosen companions and all the delights of the high culture of his day. All that might sadden or disturb the even tenor of his life, was kept from him, but 'the holy germ that sprouts and grows unseen in the disciple's soul' waxed ever stronger with the rising tide of his destiny, until one day, the legend tells us, he came upon the 'three awakening sights'; an old, bent man, a beggar, diseased and suffering, and a corpse being borne to the funeral pyre. His peace was rent asunder; thereafter there could be neither rest nor solace for the soul of Siddhartha. Leaving his wife and baby son, he set out to seek the panacea for human misery and woe.

He sought wisdom of the Brahmanas, the wisest of his time, but sought in vain. The hermit-life of an ascetic with its rigors of self-discipline and self-chastisement he proved to be useless for his mission of

compassion, until with the speeding years, the hour of his enlightenment approached, and one day, at the time of the Spring Equinox, he seated himself under the Bodhi-tree, vowing never to rise until he had found the cure for the ills which beset mankind. What took place under those spreading branches is tenderly left to the intuitive imagination of the true student — but it is said that the leaves of the Bodhi-tree have never since ceased to quiver with the ecstasy which pervaded life when that flawless Spirit of Compassion entered into Samadhi, when the Tathagata attained Buddhahood. Thereafter the Buddha gave his entire life to teaching. He lived solely to impart his message of self-regeneration to all beings, in a world which, despite its great dissimilarity, yet has important lessons to teach us.

The Theosophist, in his study of the teachings of the Buddha-Gautama, goes to the records of India, for it was the children of Brahmanical India for and to whom they were first interpreted and given. These, in the light of Theosophy, prove that into a thought-atmosphere of great subtilty of reasoning and conception, the Buddha implanted a religious system as wide in its sympathy as it is profound and comprehensive in philosophic scope; a system, moreover, whose values are neither crippled by pessimism nor falsified by baseless optimism, but founded on the purest Wisdom — a foundation which has held the devotion and active allegiance of numberless adherents, and one, which, perhaps because of its subtilty, bears the fewest signs of degeneration. These facts, when properly understood, will explain why Buddhism has been so greatly misunderstood and misinterpreted by the West and lead us on to a discussion of some of the key-ideas which have given to it such marked vitality and strength.

Professor Daisetz Suzuki writes to the effect that the Dharma (the Law of Buddhism) is ever maturing because it is mysteriously creative, and the Theosophist finds this perfectly just statement explained in the fact that to the Buddhist mind, faith and the inquiring spirit are complementary and mutually conditioning, yet in no wise antagonistic. It is this inquiring spirit — 'the wings that bear one on to the goal' — which, more than any other, perhaps, has preserved to Buddhism its

pristine vitality, has kept it a constantly evolving stream of spiritual life, based as this spirit of inquiry is on the sound philosophic doctrines taught by the Lord Buddha.

Another universal postulate inheres in the Buddhist conception of 'Being.' This term would seem to be synonymous with Be-ness as it is frequently used in standard Theosophical literature, and the Buddhist argues that that which *is* cannot change; that since all things are composite, and all composites transient, things become or exist, but *are* not. What then is? *THAT*. Wisdom and ignorance are then seen to be opposite states or conditions of evolving consciousnesses or beings; wisdom is not the acquisition of knowledge, or culture, but the recognition of the inherent unity of all and the unreality of the transient, the outer manifestation — in other words, the state of being perfectly at home in the Universe — while ignorance is the condition of one, who, separating himself from his unifying center, is a wanderer, an exile from home. And it is through enlightenment that he returns home, attains Wisdom. Thus man is not 'born in sin,' but is a prodigal son, who, since he of his own choice set out from his spiritual home, has taken upon himself his own regeneration, and through tribulation wends his way homewards.

What is this 'home,' this 'other shore,' the goal of all Buddhist endeavor: Nirvana? Has there ever been a doctrine more completely misunderstood? The doctrine of Nirvana describes the *state* which the consciousness of a highly evolved entity — a Bodhisattva — enjoys when all limitations of imperfection in individuality and personality have been transmuted, when the lost has found itself, in the deathless, unifying, and ineffable essence of humanhood; hence, the use of a word whose definition is simply 'extinguished,' 'blown out.' Nirvana is a condition of pure monadic consciousness, a state which may be entered during life, and which, when attained by a Buddha of Compassion, is renounced so that he may remain in the world of men and serve human need. This state is not, relatively speaking, everlasting even when entered by the Pratyeka-Buddha, for he too must emerge eventually and take up his evolutionary course once

more. Nirvana, therefore, means Being, *not* annihilation.

It has been truly said that the life and spirit of Buddhism has its source in the inner life and spirit of the Buddha, and Dr. de Purucker writes in *The Esoteric Tradition*:

that what the Buddha aimed at more than anything else was the bringing to "men of a greater light, a larger hope, and a wider spiritual vision. . . . The objective of the great Teacher's Wisdom was the improving, or better still unfolding, of human intellectual faculty and spiritual power, as demonstrated by his insistence, emphatic, reiterated and unceasing, on what one may term the Doctrine of Becoming. In the eyes of the Buddha-Gautama, man is a Pilgrim, Child of the Universe, who at times is blinded by *Mahamaya* or the Great Illusion of cosmic existence, and at such times therefore needs to be shown the Way or Law, called the *Dharma*, pointing to a realization of the fact that only by *becoming* rather than by mere being could man become the Greater Man which he is in his essential constitution. — p. 111

In this Doctrine of Becoming, the only true Yoga as taught albeit secretly by the Buddha, is to be found the law of all being. It teaches that man is a compound entity composed of one SELF and a host of minor children-selves, each of which is in evolution through its own sphere of consciousness. Through the SELF a Buddhic principle manifests in a trinity comprising a Dhyani-Buddha or Buddha of Meditation, a Dhyani-Bodhisattva, the offspring of the former, and a Manushya-Buddha, or Human Buddha. This is the core of the essential man, the Buddha which is and KNOWS.

'Man gets precisely and exactly what he himself desires!' From the Buddha within, the sun of his being, man receives all that is sublime in his development, and towards union with it every center of his being, because in itself a spark of the central fire, yearns in aspiration; but man must desire and claim his own. The man himself — his karman — is, because he becomes such, that particular focussing point in his composite nature which he yearns towards. In other words, a man's

karman or 'consequence' is himself, because he is precisely and exactly that which he has previously desired, willed and become. Furthermore, it is this manifested consciousness which, as an entitative force, endures and reimbodies itself throughout the ages, collecting and uniting to itself its composite vehicles of past and present evolving. It is when the human entity — a prodigal son of the Buddhic principle for the period of material manifestation — raises its consciousness until the entire being is of the nature of Wisdom, and then passes beyond, that the man becomes a Buddha, 'an awakened one.'

The Tathagata, 'he who had already arrived safely at the other shore,' taught that the way to regeneration is the way or law of compassion, of universal love; for love to the Buddhist is compassion, a compassion which encompasses all sentient beings, and which moves its possessor to live for others, even if it be at the loss of his own evolution and yearned-for Nirvana.

The Dharma has been summarized for practical purposes in the Four Noble Truths. They are: the recognition that sorrow and pain exist; that there is a cause for sorrow and pain; that the cause of sorrow and pain may be annulled; and finally, the way to annul the cause of sorrow and pain; and in the Noble Eightfold Path: the Path of right conviction, right resolution, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right endeavor, right alertness of mind, and right absorption.

The seven or ten Paramitas of the Mahayana School are what may be called a more metaphysical paraphrasing of this Noble Eightfold Path. The word Paramita means 'to reach or to attain to the other shore.' They are hereunder given: first, the Sanskrit term, followed by its general definition, and then by a descriptive clause, several of which clauses are those given by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Dana — Charity, the key of charity and love immortal.

Sila — Moral conduct, harmony in word and act.

Kshanti — Forbearance, patience sweet that naught can ruffle.

Viraga — Endurance, indifference to pleasure and pain.

Virya — Zeal, the energy that fights its way to Truth.

Dhyana — Meditation, the gate that leads to Truth.

Prajna — Intuitive perception, that which makes of man a god.

Adhithana — Courage, an inflexible attitude towards life.

Upeksha — Discrimination, wisdom in applying the rules to life.

Prabodha or Sambuddhi — union with Buddhi, the awakening of inner consciousness.

It should be clearly understood that these Paramitas are no mere lip-service or ceremonial procedure, but are the formulated standard of daily living recognised by every earnest student of the archaic Wisdom-Religion from which the Buddha drew his teachings, and are practised more or less faithfully by some four hundred million aspiring human beings.

Buddhahood, godhood, is therefore attained as a result of many lives of individual yearning and willing and doing, these states of consciousness bringing about changes in the aggregated man himself, for

by his progress from stage to stage in evolutionary changes which are continuous and uninterrupted a man among other beings, may raise himself as high as the highest gods, or may debase himself through his willing and doing to the low and dread levels of the beings in the so called hells of which so much is found in Buddhistic literature.

In this teaching of *Becoming*, just as the same is found in esoteric Theosophy, in the Esoteric Tradition, we find both the reason and the rationale of the many statements both in Buddhism and indeed elsewhere that every man has it within his power, by appropriate spiritual, intellectual, psychical, and ethical willing and doing, himself in the course of ages to become a Buddha — *The Esoteric Tradition*, pp 112-3

The Buddha-Gautama entered Nirvana when he was eighty years old, but the esoteric records seem to indicate that his actual physical death did not take place until some twenty years later, that during the

interim he taught his disciples in seclusion, and that at his passing he entered the inner realms as a Nirmanakaya. Furthermore, the student of penetration will find a marked similarity between the teachings of the Adwaita-Vedanta as given by Sankaracharya, the authentic teachings of Jesus, and those of the Lord Buddha, and in a specially mystical sense which rests on an understanding of the Doctrine of the Avatara, it would probably not be incorrect to state that the entire period from, let us say 623 b.c. to about 200 a.d. fell under the sway of the sublime and majestic influence of the World-Teacher known as the Lord Gautama Buddha.

The Theosophical Forum

PALI: NEW LIGHT ON A LITTLE KNOWN LANGUAGE — *G. de Purucker*

[The following, which clears up certain moot questions concerning the origin of the Pali language and literature, and the causes of its disappearance as one of the Prakrits or native tongues of India, was dictated by Dr. de Purucker (over his morning coffee, we might add) in kindly response to questions submitted to him by the Associate Editors on behalf of the present Oriental number. Taking up certain points on which scholars confess their inability to agree, and throwing as it does an entirely new light on others, this contribution, we believe, will be greatly valued by all who are interested in this and kindred subjects. — Eds.]

Pali really is a Prakrit-language of ancient India, and was undoubtedly the cultured form of that language spoken over a probably large part of India at the time when the Buddha lived. Pali itself had its less cultured forms which were spoken by the masses, the uneducated, just as we have the same thing in certain European countries today, or in Japan, or in China. There is the language of the literary classes, and the popular slangy language of the masses. Connected with Pali linguistically, was Sanskrit, which was really the sacred language of the Brahmanas and held more or less private or secret by them. The Sanskrit even in those ancient times was the vehicle for the archaic Wisdom-teachings of the Aryan peoples of India, such as the Vedas, and the Puranas, and the Upanishads, and the great Epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. But Pali was one of several other languages of culture in ancient India, all which were of so-called Prakrit character, although very little is known about these other literary languages. Pali has survived to the present time because for some curious reason it became the linguistic vehicle in which were enshrined the teachings of Buddhism, i. e. of Southern Buddhism, much as Latin has survived because enshrining the teachings of early medieval Christianity. Just as there were in ancient Italy many other Italic tongues, each one having

its literary or cultured form, and likewise its popular idiom, so was it in ancient India.

No, Pali is not a "washed-out Sanskrit." Sanskrit was rather a mystery-language which was "composed" or "built up" to perfection by initiates of the Sanctuaries; and because it was thus constructed into an almost perfect expression of human thought, at least for that day, it was called *samskrita*, which means "composed," "constructed." Thus Pali is not a true child of Sanskrit, but is and was the literary form of one of the ancient languages of India popularly spoken over an apparently wide stretch of the Indian Peninsula, and which has survived for the reasons above stated. So much for the language.

As regards Buddhism: this noble religious philosophy had wide vogue and spread over almost the whole of India, and it was in its heyday in the times of Chandragupta and Asoka, two great Buddhist monarchs who were mainly instrumental also in encouraging Buddhist missionaries and supporting them, i. e., those who carried Buddhism into Northern Asia and into the lands to the east and south of India. This was during the heyday of Buddhism in India. Brahmanism of course, with various other Indian systems, survived through those hundreds of years of Buddhist glory in India mainly because Buddhism is essentially tolerant and mild. But little by little, after the passing of the Buddhist heyday in India, Brahmanism again got the upper hand, and this for various reasons, one reason being a partial decay of the original Buddhist spirit of enthusiasm in the Buddhists themselves; partly also because Brahmanism is a form of high religious and philosophical thinking which is native and therefore sympathetic to Indian thought; and partly because, as H. P. B. and myself have pointed out, Buddhism originally was really a sort of Brahmanism of the Sanctuaries which the Buddha communicated to everyone who could and would take it, and thus, being extremely recondite in its deeper aspects, made less appeal to the masses on the whole than did the cultus and ceremonials, the pageantry and forms, and the mythological literature, of Brahmanism. Thus, little by little Buddhism faded out from India, but increased *pari passu* in China, in Tibet, and in all the

countries to the north of India, as well as in Siam and Burma and Ceylon and Java, the countries south and east of India, thus in time forming the two great Buddhist philosophical and geographical divisions which exist in the present day.

The Buddhism of the North was, from its first inception, highly mystical, philosophic, and typically esoteric in type. The Buddhism of the South was, from its beginning, highly philosophical but less mystical in presentation and far more pragmatical in spirit than the Buddhism of the North. Now, the real teaching of the Buddha in most of its branches can be gained, at least exoterically, by welding together both the Mahayana of the North and the Hinayana of the South.

It is natural that European Orientalists, like the late Professor Rhys Davids, should ascribe reasons for the downfall of Buddhism in India which seem to these European Orientalists as being sensible and probable causes; and they are not to be harshly criticized for this supposition, because they have no other means of judging why Buddhism finally failed in India. But the real truth was that Buddhism, coming from the inner Sanctuaries of Brahmanism itself, and being as it were an esoteric side of Brahmanism in those days, swept the land like a spiritual fire as long as the Buddha and his arhats and his immediate disciples were there to guide it; but the later Indian Buddhists lost this spiritual fervor of enthusiasm and clarity of insight and gradually sank back into Brahmanism in its various forms. There, then, is the whole thing in a nutshell.

Finally, there is a very important although typically occult and esoteric reason for the passing of original Buddhism out of the Indian Peninsula, and it lay in a situation which is extremely difficult adequately to describe, and yet was the main contributing cause of the Buddhist decline there. The facts are as follows: In his immense love and pity for mankind, and in his desire to bring certain fundamental secret teachings of the Sanctuaries to the attention of the multitudes for their spiritual succor and intellectual and moral health, Gautama the Lord Buddha made on the whole in so doing an almost perfect

presentation of the philosophic and ethical side of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion; but, shortly before his Nirvana, he realized that there had been an insufficiently adequate elaboration of the mystical and religious aspects or portions of the Wisdom-Teachings, except in so far as the Buddha's immediate circle and his arhats were concerned. In order, therefore, to correct this insufficiency, Gautama the Buddha some fifty or more years after his passing, brought about the birth and being of the Avatara, the great Sankaracharya, the Buddha himself supplying the psychological apparatus of this great Hindu Teacher of the Adwaita-Vedanta. Thus it was that, although born in the South of India, and some fifty or more years later than the passing of the Buddha, Sankaracharya was, so to speak, a "reappearance" as Sankaracharya, of the human part of Buddha Gautama. The Theosophical reader will understand at once what is here meant when he recollects the Theosophical teaching of the doctrine of the Avatars. As Sankaracharya grew to manhood and began to do his work, his teaching, which almost from his own day and up to the present time has been called the Adwaita-Vedanta, or non-dualistic Vedanta, spread like wild-fire over the Indian Peninsula; and this really great Teacher drew into the circle of his Doctrine the larger part of the most intuitive and philosophical minds in India of all ages since his day, so that even in our own times, the Adwaita-Vedanta is perhaps the most popular and most widely accepted form of philosophic and mystical Brahmanism known.

Indeed, so closely akin and so similar in philosophical and mystical teaching and outlook are the Adwaita-Vedanta of Sankaracharya with the Mahayana-doctrines of Northern Buddhism, that the bigoted critics of both describe the Adwaita-Vedanta as a "masked or disguised Buddhism," and similarly describe the Northern mystical Buddhism as a "masked or disguised Adwaita-Vedanta." The criticism is absolutely true in fact, because the Adwaita-Vedanta and the esoteric Buddhism of Gautama were virtually identical. Thus it was that the Avatara Sankaracharya, the "reappearance," as above said, of the "human part" of the Buddha-Gautama, was perhaps more instrumental than any

other single cause in bringing about the fading out of the philosophical and ethical Buddhism of the beginnings — a strange paradox which gives us food for deep thought.

It is also true that the mystical Mahayana-Buddhism of the North was on the whole a truer presentation of the complete doctrines of the Buddha as he taught them to his arhats than was the more formally philosophical presentation of original Buddhism as we find it even yet imbodyed in the doctrines of the Southern School, called the Hinayana.

Hence, if the student will combine the Advaita-Vedanta of Sankaracharya with the magnificent mystical and occult philosophy and sublime ethic of early Buddhism, the latter now mostly imbodyed in the Mahayana, he will have not only the original Doctrine of the Buddha-Gautama as the latter taught it to his arhats and his immediate pupils, but will likewise see the identity of such unification of the two with the archaic Esoteric and Occult Wisdom of the ages, today called Theosophy.

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: VI — G. de Purucker

"There is no 'Eternally Unchanging' Principle in 'Man' "

I was impressed tonight with the suspicion that all of us, perhaps, have not fully understood the statement made not only by our Teachers, and eminently by the Lord Buddha, but likewise in different places by H. P. B. and by myself in my *Fundamentals*, to the effect that there is no "eternally unchanging" principle in "man." Yet perhaps on turning the page, you, as Reader, will come upon a statement that the different monads in man's constitution are children of previous manvantaras, therefore implying that in man there are principles or elements which perdure for enormous time-periods. How in the name of goodness can this latter statement be true if the former statement be likewise true? I call your attention to this apparent contradiction, and real paradox, because I feel the need that many experience of having these contrasting statements explained.

The teaching of Gautama the Buddha was, when it is correctly understood, the teaching of the Lord Jesus of the Christians, and of all the Mahatmans of our own Esoteric School of doctrine; to wit, that there is no 'eternally unchanging' principle in man which is different from the rest of the Universe, which is in constant change of revolution and evolution.

According to the old idea of all the orthodox — crystallized — schools of religion or philosophy, there is in man an individuality which perdures unchanging, and this is exemplified in the Christian teaching of the personal 'soul' supposedly created by almighty God, which soul lasts for eternity *as that soul*, and never can be other than what it is, i. e., never can enter into the Cosmic Life except as an unchanging guest, or if you wish, as an unchanging observer; the usually unspoken implication being that as such unchanging entity, it is not an integral part of the Cosmic Life: not life of its life, bone of its bone, essence of its

essence; because such orthodox and exoteric religions and philosophies postulate that the Universe is but a temporary and evanescent creation of a supposititious God, and that the unchanging soul finds itself in the Universe as a guest, an observer, a learner, only — not, as above said, as an integral and unto eternity inseparable portion of the Cosmic Essence. Do you catch the thought?

From the standpoint of the Esoteric Philosophy which envisages man as an integral and inseparable spark of the Cosmic Essence and therefore for ever a part of it, there is no principle or element in man's constitution which eternally abides as such soul, its only modifications or modes of change being those of accretions of experience, or of growth.

There is no such abiding and eternally unchanging ego or soul or even spirit in man, an ego or soul or spirit which is different in essence in each man from what it is in any other man, nor is there any such abiding and unchanging individuality which is different in some god from what it is in some other god. All change; everything grows; the Universe itself, as well as all within it and of it, our human souls and spiritual principles included. Out of the same vast kosmic womb of Consciousness-life-substance, unitary and one, we all flow forth; and as individuals, and still more as persons, we are illusions by comparison with the Eternal, for that is everlastingly Itself. Whatever modes of change it may have, whatever phases of growth its innumerable parts may experience, whatever contrarities, diversities, differentiations, may take place, the Eternal is nevertheless the Eternal, perduring from frontierless duration unto frontierless duration; and the essence of each one of us and of all beings and things, is THAT.

On these simple facts of teaching, reposes the doctrine of what the Buddhists call the heresy of separateness: that there is in me a 'soul' or spirit which in its essence is different from the 'soul' or the spirit in you, my brother, or in any other being or thing. This is the heresy of separateness; and it was against this intellectual bane, this deceitful phantasm of a fundamental difference in essence, that the Lord

Buddha taught so powerfully in saying that there is no eternally abiding, unchanging, distinct, eternally differentiated principle or element in a man when compared with other cosmic units, such as other men, or other beings and entities. He thus voiced the doctrine so familiar to all Hindu philosophies, and so well known as existing in the Adwaita-Vedanta, of the fundamental unity or oneness of all the interblending and interwoven hierarchies and their component elements in Boundless Space. Such a conception of an eternally abiding and unchanging ego as an individuality separate in essence from the Cosmic Individuality, the Buddha-Gautama called the Great Illusion, *Mahamaya*.

Yet there are in man numberless lives which compose him, as a composite constituted being, as a compound or integrated entity. Man verily is such a composite being, and this is a simple declaration containing a world of occult truth!

Now what are these portions, these elements, of his constitution — i. e., the different Monads and life-atoms which make him, which build him? Each one of these Monads in its essence is a Spark of that central Cosmic Intelligence or Fire, the central Consciousness-life-substance. We have not as yet, unfortunately, evolved forth in our vocabulary one single term that will include all these elements of the teaching, so that we have to use such an awkward term as this in order to give some adumbration of the idea: Consciousness-life-substance. This is not consciousness apart from life, nor apart from substance; but a viewing of all three as in essence one: one side or aspect of it being what we men call 'consciousness'; another side or aspect of it being what we men call 'life'; and another side or aspect being what we men speak of as 'substance' — three in one and one in three; not three different gods or divine essences, but 'one godhood,' one unitary Cosmic Essence, one eternal Reality manifesting through the three masks: Consciousness, Life, Substance. This really is the proper meaning of the Christian trinity: not "three Persons in one God" as they say, but three masks or aspects or vehicles, as the human mind understands the thought, as the human mind translates the thought, of one eternal, boundless,

frontierless REALITY. This is the divine root of man: of me, of you, of everything, of every god, of every sun, of every planet, of every beast, of every plant, of every atom. The root of all is THAT.

So, fundamentally and in essence we are all one, and the innumerable, utterly incomputable numbers of beings and things, i. e., of egos and selves in Boundless Space, are not eternally individualities, each different from all others and thus lasting unto eternity as unchanging, ever-enduring, separate egoities. There is a complete and utter and absolute solidarity of Essence, of which we all partake, from which we all came, into which we all shall return — albeit retaining each one of us our vastly increased individuality — when our evolutionary cosmic journey shall have been completed during any one manvantara. But while in manifestation, while in the worlds of manifestation, we are divided up as mayavi beings and entities, the divine spark in each one of us expressing itself in us as individuals: as thoughts, to use a figure of human speech, of the Divine Thinker, of the Parabrahman. 'Divine Thinker' is of course a figure of human speech; but we have to use figures of speech when our human intellect is too feeble to understand the incomprehensible vastness of REALITY; we have to translate our intuition into figures of speech so as to get some intimation or intuition of the REAL. The 'Divine Thinker' thinks divine thoughts. Each such thought is a monadic entity. But the thought is of the essence and of the basis of the Divine Thinker who thinks — which 'thinks.'

Now then, one thought more, taken directly out of our esoteric cycle of studies. These various Monads which go to form the constitution of any being — let us say of man in order to define, in order to exemplify, our conception: these various Monads, or each such component Monad, of man's constitution is not only one of the integral parts of the constitution which ranges from the divine to the physical, but each such Monadic Center is itself a spiritual being, a living, growing, learning, being, as the human Monad which we call 'man' himself is.

Now each one of these component Monads, or integrals, is, as an individual, you, I. I refer you to the diagram in my *Fundamentals of the*

Esoteric Philosophy, on page 240. As human beings we are each one of us Bhutatman; but the Pranatman is likewise a growing, learning, entity, rooted in the same Cosmic Divinity that I have just spoken of, and therefore growing, therefore destined in its own evolutionary course to become a man; after attaining manhood destined to become a god; after attaining godhood destined to become a super-god, and so forth, climbing the ladder of life eternally. A marvelous picture; always climbing, always expanding in consciousness, always evolving, hence always changing in form and attributes and individuality and personality, because always bringing out more and more of the essence of divinity within, and yet never utterly attaining it because that Divinity is boundless. An eternal principle, the same for every Monad in the human constitution — eternal because its essence is of the Eternal Essence; not eternal because it has or is a 'soul,' whether it be my soul or your soul. Hence, there is no such eternally unchanging and abiding principle in man as an ego perduring in its unchanged or unaltered individuality through eternity, for every ego is growing, which means constantly changing; and hence the notion of such an unchanging perduring ego, or 'soul' is an illusion; it is a figment of a dream; it is wholly illusory. Every atom in man is as much such a Monad in its heart of heart as a man himself is; and we men, in precisely the same way, are the composing Monads of the constitution of a god. In our own case this God is the Divinity who is the opifex of our Solar System, our solar Divinity. Think! In the diagram in *Fundamentals* to which I have referred, we see the Atman. It works and expresses itself through the Jivatman; the latter through the Bhutatman; this last through the Pranatman. Only four monads have I enumerated here; yet taking our constitution as a whole, their number in man is legion, is incomputable, when we likewise include the armies of life-atoms. Every life-atom helping to compose man's constitution is at its heart a Monad, therefore in essence a divinity.

My Atman — to illustrate because we are now speaking of the worlds of differentiation — my Atman will some day grow to be the divinity of a Solar System; and all the various Monads now forming my

constitution manifesting here as a human being will then be the archangels and the angels, to use the Christian terms, of that future Solar System: the Dhyani-Chohans in their various grades, to use our own Theosophical phrasing. These various unevolved Monads which help to compose even my physical constitution live in their various cells, and these various cells are builded up of life-atoms on different planes; and in that far distant future of which I have just spoken, if I make the race successfully and become the divinity of a Solar System in the spaces of Space, all these cells and life-atoms which now compose my physical 'me' will be the component elements of that Solar System, each one having evolved to take its own particular and definite place and work therein; and I, the divinity in me; will be the then presiding godhood of that Solar System, just as we here are component elements of former life-atoms of Father Sun in a vastly distant epoch of the Cosmic Past.

Thus, as I have hereinbefore explained, there is no eternally abiding and unchanging principle of individuality or 'soul' in 'man.' Yes, an absolute truth: no abiding separate and unchanging principle in man, separate from the similar principle in you, my brother, or in any other being. This is the heresy that the Lord Buddha fought against and that our own Masters so powerfully teach against. There is no such immortal, unchanging, and therefore perduring and abiding 'soul'; yet the very essence of man is immortality itself. Every last atom in his constitution, in its heart of heart is an immortal divinity because of its essence, the Essence of the Kosmic Divinity. I know no doctrine in all our School of Teaching which so cleanses our human hearts of pride, which so quickly purges the human mind of illusion, as just these beautiful thoughts that I have been attempting to speak of. You will never fully realize the glory that is within you until you become infilled with the most beautiful thought of them all. What is it? I am one with Divinity, and there is no abiding, unchanging, and hence separating personal soul in me; for I am THAT. This doctrine is the teaching of the utter solidarity of and oneness of everything that is, from god to atom, with the Heart of Things.

Were men on earth today imbued with this thought, filled with this doctrine, all the troubles of Earth would soon vanish. Men then, sensing their essential unity or oneness, and that what affects one affects all, would instinctively and by love act like brothers, because they would think like brothers; they would see far more of sheer human interest in the mysteries envisioned in the liquid depths of the human eye than they would in counting the money-bags, or estimating the values in the swollen vaults of our banks. All human problems would adjust themselves easily, because men would realize that what causes you to suffer reacts on me, interiorly and exteriorly.

Carry the thought onwards. It is fundamentally the same in business as it is in philosophy. The man who tries to drive his competitor to the wall injures his own business, for that very man should be made a customer, and by Nature's laws actually is a customer unless you ruin him, drive him out of business, which means killing his purchasing power. The same rule which is thus exemplified in the pragmatic affairs in human life holds in the worlds of the spirit and of the soul. I advance far more quickly when I help my fellows, when I feel that they are component parts, so to speak, of my own being; that there is something in my fellow which is closer to me than my own hands and feet, than my own mind, than my own heart, than my own soul; for this is the Essence of Divinity in him which is identic with that Essence in me.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AND EASTERN YOGA — C. J. Ryan

I strongly advise you to give up all yoga practices, which in almost all cases have disastrous results. . . . You have learnt, to a certain degree, the power of concentration, and the greatest help will now come to you from concentration upon the Higher Self, and aspiration toward the Higher Self. Also if you will take some subject or sentence from the *Bhagavat-Gita*, and concentrate your mind upon that and meditate upon it, you will find much good result from it, and there is no danger in such concentration. . . .

What then is the panacea finally, the royal talisman? It is DUTY, Selfless-ness. Duty persistently followed is the highest yoga, and is better than . . . any other thing. If you can do no more than duty it will bring you to the goal. — William Q. Judge

We are frequently asked by inquirers if Theosophy teaches Oriental methods of Yoga, or whether it recommends them to seekers for spiritual wisdom. This is not an unnatural question because it is well known that the Theosophical Society was established under the direction of certain Oriental Masters of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace. While we may say at once that the yoga-methods usually known by that name in the West have no place in the work or teaching of the Theosophical Society, the subject is sufficiently important to invite our consideration, even if only to clear up possible misunderstandings. Theosophy, indeed, has a system of spiritual development. In fact, it is the only system that is suitable for all people of whatever race or shade of opinion. If anyone chooses to call it 'yoga' it must be understood that it does not resemble what is commonly thought of over here when the word 'yoga' is spoken.

The Masters who founded the Theosophical Society are perfectly familiar with the ordinary physical and psychological yoga, but they

have never permitted its introduction into the activities of the Society; what is called 'sitting for yoga' has always been rigorously discountenanced, and for good reasons. There are, however, perfectly safe and sane methods of studying ourselves and learning much about our inner consciousness, which are open to anyone who reads the sacred books of the East, including, we may say, the New Testament. Though sometimes the word 'yoga' is connected with these studies they must not be confused with the yoga just mentioned.

The lower form of yoga, best known in the West, is the yoga of bodily control or Hatha-yoga. According to the practitioners of Hatha-yoga, long and arduous concentration on control of the body and certain of its forces, which are unknown to Western science, is necessary before even mental training can begin, and actually with many so-called yogis mental purification is not their chief ambition. While this self-centered kind of yoga may develop willpower, it begins at the wrong end and strengthens the egotism of personal acquisition which is already lively enough. Hatha-yoga tries to develop astral sight and other changes in brain-consciousness by forcibly controlling the vibrations of matter. This is injurious to the working of the higher spiritual centers of the brain because of the strain upon the comparatively intractable matter of the body, and it also has other serious dangers.

Theosophy begins with moral and spiritual training and never loses sight of it. This cannot be said of Hatha-yoga, which handles the physical vehicle in order to acquire power, and not to attain the purification of the mind and emotions for the sake of humanity. It forces the control of respiration, an exercise which arouses strange forces of menacing potency. Many records are available of cases where dabbling with breath-control produced disastrous consequences, followed too late by bitter regret for the disregard of friendly warnings. Such unhappy reactions arise from ignorant and selfish efforts to snatch forbidden powers — forbidden to the normal human being *in the present phase of evolution* — before their development is safe and in natural order. Criticisms of the much advertised 'yoga-breathing' do not, of course, refer to the perfectly proper methods pursued in the

West in athletic training or under medical advice.

When the right time comes for the use of the inner powers by a few advanced souls — a very few at present because of the prevailing egotism, the enemy of man — they gradually develop and are seen to be a perfectly natural expression of the god within. Theosophical history contains examples of this legitimate form of evolution. One case was that of a spiritually and intellectually advanced Hindu lad who came to Madame Blavatsky's assistance more than fifty years ago, when she was in India bringing out her first journal under great difficulties, chiefly from the lack of qualified helpers. He abandoned his Brahmanical, proud, and exclusive caste, and brilliant worldly prospects, to devote himself to hard work for Theosophy, whose immense importance to his country and to the world he deeply realized. He utterly repudiated the allurements of yoga, knowing that he had found an infinitely higher path to truth and wisdom, the path of pure devotion to the betterment of humanity. His sincerity quickly attracted the notice of the Masters of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace, and they saw fit to give him personal attention. Gradually, and without straining, he found unknown capacities and powers naturally awakening and becoming available for the greater responsibilities and opportunities for service that soon came to him. The career of Damodar K. Mavalankar is honored by all Theosophists as a shining example of true discipleship and its triumphant fulfilment. In his case, as in that of all advanced souls who have killed out egotism and transmuted desire into spiritual energy, the higher powers he acquired were perfectly normal; and as they had never been coveted or sought for their own sake, so they were never displayed as inducements to others.

A few words more about Hatha-yoga are necessary because there is so much misunderstanding about yoga in general, and there are so many cunning sirens tempting the unwary with their alluring songs. The word yoga attracts the ill-informed by the wide advertising it gets through paid advertisements and the promise of acquiring psychic powers, 'success' in life, and so forth. Many clairvoyants, more or less

genuine, practise under the name of yogi, but should be regarded as plain fortune-tellers. For one serious and valuable book on the spiritual *yoga-philosophy* of the Orient, dozens are produced which pander to an unhealthy curiosity about yoga, the authors seeming utterly careless as to whether the practices they recommend are dangerous or not — possibly being ignorant themselves in many cases — so long as they can produce a salable book. Perhaps the worst publications are the correspondence courses of so-called 'Secret Lessons' which promise adeptship, or, at least, mystic knowledge and the power of getting what you want at twenty-five dollars up! Some promise initiation for two dollars — a real bargain!

If yoga meant nothing but a low-grade psychism, a common dollar-philosophy, or a few hints on hypnotism for control of others; or if it only suggested Hindus lying on spikes or performing the mango-trick for the benefit of tourists (and incidentally for their own pockets) there would be no reason for these remarks, for everyone knows that Theosophy is worlds away from such quackery.

There is, however, another aspect of yoga, not spurious or fraudulent, and not professing to be a spiritual or even an ethical system, but a purely scientific method of artificially awakening certain dormant psychological faculties unknown to Western science. It is practised by certain Tibetan lamas of less spiritual orders, and by other yogis. It has, of course, no place in the program of the Theosophical Movement, but it calls for a little attention.

In the West, until lately, little or no notice was taken of Oriental psychology, or perhaps more properly, psychoanalysis, but now a few distinguished scholars, such as Dr. Carl Jung, are beginning to realize that Western psychology is a mere infant in comparison with that of the hoary East, especially in regard to the complex nature of man. This is perhaps largely due to the strange disregard of Reincarnation, without which no understanding of our true nature is possible. The discoveries of Oriental science were not made by the study of dreams in the clinic of the psychoanalyst, or through the investigation of

insanity, but by the direct observation of the consciousness of the observer himself, a more profitable though more difficult method. Unfortunately, many side-issues on the line of yoga have developed from these discoveries which are an unprofitable and often highly dangerous field of investigation for the ordinary inquirer, however scientific and well-prepared in Western psychology he may be. He little suspects the strain on the moral as well as the mental qualities that the untrained and self-sufficient would have to stand. Those so-called 'yogas' are no less unprofitable to those who are seeking spiritual knowledge and have no time to waste. Even an apparently harmless yoga-system, if such be known, leads into a blind alley, if not worse.

Some of the Hindu and Lamaistic systems, while claiming to be efficient methods of getting behind the outer veil of Nature, are no more spiritual than, say, chemistry, but are strictly scientific, and, like chemistry, are capable of being employed for the most abominable purposes. Mme Alexandra David-Neel, the eminent French scholar and leading authority on Tibetan Yoga, and also other qualified observers, describe many cases where revenge, vanity, vulgar ambition, and hatred, were the motives that inspired the practitioners or would-be practitioners of scientific yoga. Even the better class of yoga (as well as Hatha-yoga) is associated in the public mind with notions of Hindu beggars, cross-legged and ash-smeared, with fire-walking, snake-charming, and so forth. It is a well-known fact that a large proportion of Eastern yogis — not only Hatha-yogis — have not only renounced the *vanities* of this world but have ceased to take any interest in the general welfare of humanity so completely that it would seem that the unhappy world may go to the devil its own way for all they care. All their time is devoted to their own salvation. This line of conduct is, of course, not universally followed, and we must remember that it is not unknown in Christian countries. It always defeats its own ends.

Such a self-centered attitude is the very last thing that a yoga of a Theosophical kind would inspire in anyone. A true yoga would mean a sympathetic and thorough understanding of human nature and human needs. It would mean the wise application of this knowledge to the

service of humanity by one who has attained what is sometimes called Raja-yoga, the kingly union with man's inner god. An Orientalist has said, "Buddhism is fundamentally a system of practically applied yoga." If so, true yoga means the study and practice of the Noble Eightfold Path, the magnificent moral and spiritual teaching of the Buddha, in which devotion to the higher interests of humanity is the first duty, and concentration on one's own petty personality the worst folly. For the Buddha himself abandoned the peaceful solitudes to answer the challenge of suffering mankind, as soon as he obtained Enlightenment.

Egotism is the greatest hindrance to spiritual progress, and when the commoner forms of ambition or appetite are overpassed, more subtil desires appear, such as the craving for exclusive and confidential information, or personal power in unusual directions. Anxiety to possess psychic powers for personal gratification is a serious bar to progress, even though disguised under specious pretexts. Our motives are not always so pure as we like to fancy, and the lower selfish part of our complex natures is exceedingly cunning in getting its own way. We have made personal acquisitiveness, personal desire, the mainspring of action, and we know the result. We reap the harvest we have sown. The yoga that the world is needing is one that makes altruism, love for others, self-sacrifice, a habit.

We are sometimes asked, Did not Madame Blavatsky, the founder of your Society, go to India to study yoga? No, she did not go to India in 1878, after establishing the Theosophical Society in America, to learn anything from Oriental yogis. She went to *take* the yoga of Universal Brotherhood to the East, which sorely needed it, in spite of all its thousands of yogis. She went, under the direction of the Masters of Wisdom, who are international and without partiality, to arouse India from its spiritual slumber, to answer the call of many who hungered for a higher interpretation of the ancient Hindu scriptures, the allegories of which had been perverted into superstitious dogmas. Many leading societies of native Sanskrit scholars welcomed her to their fellowship, and the strange sight was seen of proud Brahmanas, exclusive and self-sufficient to a degree, recognising her as a teacher,

she, a foreigner, an 'outcaste,' and — a woman! She was publicly thanked by them on many occasions and honored by many tributes. One of these, tendered by more than three hundred Hindu students at a college at Madras, begins: "We are conscious that we are giving but a feeble expression to the debt of endless gratitude which India lies under to you. . . ." That was more than fifty years ago, but India and Ceylon have not forgotten her and what she did to arouse the dormant spirituality there.

William Q. Judge wrote that modern India was not to be regarded as a source of spirituality. He said:

It is not the desire of the Brotherhood that those members of the Theosophical movement who have, under their rights, taken up a belief in the messengers and the message should become pilgrims to India. To arouse that thought was not the work nor the wish of H. P. B. Nor is it the desire of the Lodge to have members think that Eastern methods are to be followed, Eastern habits adopted, or the present East made the model or the goal. The West has its own duty, its own life and development.

Quite recently a brilliant journalistic writer and student of the occult searched India from North to South to find wisdom. He found many alleged yogis, mostly self-seekers or frauds who have discredited the name of yogi among the younger generation of Hindus and the educated classes; he found a few real psychics or magicians of a low order; and a very few sincerely thoughtful men who were not 'showing off' in any way. The best one of these did *not* recommend yoga-practices, but gave good advice on self-control as the path to higher knowledge. So far as it went, this was good Theosophy — which the journalist could have found at home, by the way, in Madame Blavatsky's little book of devotion, *The Voice of the Silence*, in Dr. de Purucker's *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, or elsewhere in Theosophical literature, where the path of discipleship is plainly set forth in a way that is equally suitable for all peoples, Oriental or Occidental. Further, though this researcher heard much of

concentration, he found no emphasis laid on that unselfish, beneficent concentration which is the fundamental teaching of the true Masters — concentration on the spread of Universal Brotherhood among the nations of the world.

When the Hindu sage, previously mentioned, was asked by the journalist how to make spiritual progress, he replied:

There is only one thing to be done. Look within yourself. *Do this in the right way* and you shall find the answer to all your problems. You have to ask yourself, Who am I? Know the real Self, and then the truth will shine forth within your heart like sunshine. The mind will become untroubled and real happiness will flood it, for happiness and the true self are identical.

That is excellent Theosophy, so far as it goes. But without further explanation it could easily be misinterpreted to mean sitting in solitary indifference and looking at a spot on the wall. "Do this in the right way," he said — but what is the right way? Why did he not boldly proclaim the truth that the only right way to bring the sunshine into the heart is to broaden our sympathies by active service to a world which needs it badly?

In Theosophy we have the true spiritual yoga which saves us from our lower selves by leading us out of egotistical concentration on personal concerns into a larger life. There is no need to struggle for initiation by force; it is prepared for by the right use of the opportunities of daily life. This requires a sympathetic imagination which can understand the sufferings as well as the joys of others, and which knows how to help wisely. How shall we develop this godlike power? All the Great Teachers have given us the true method. The present Leader of the Theosophical Society has condensed it into a few words: "LEARN TO LOVE. LEARN TO FORGIVE." Our duty is to send this, and all that it implies, ringing round the world. If we make this principle the basis of our lives — a living power — we cannot wander from the true path of progress, and in due time intuition and all the higher psychic powers we need will develop within us *because we can be trusted not to misuse them.*

We have to fight our own battles, for it is said: "the adept becomes, he is not made." But we can get help; we can find a Teacher whose advice will prevent us from wandering from the straight path if we are willing to take it wholeheartedly, one who can hasten our progress by bringing our hidden weaknesses to our attention. This is not always pleasant, for the real Teacher does not humor the egotism of anyone and the truth about one's lower nature is usually anything but flattering when honestly faced. On the other hand, constant practice in self-discipline gradually reveals the fact that the egotistical side is only the shadow of the true man, and that we have everything to gain and nothing to lose by putting an end to its tyranny.

At a critical epoch, when the old medieval theology was breaking up and a mechanistic science was threatening to destroy all vestiges of spirituality in the West (and it very nearly did so), the Masters of Wisdom established the Theosophical Society, in order, as was stated, "to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions." They called together a few devoted souls and gave them the opportunity to bring hope and light to thousands. But no personal reward was offered, such as immediate intercourse with the Mahatmans, psychic powers, perfect physical health or prosperity — nothing but the deep satisfaction that comes from unselfish work in promoting a genuine Universal Brotherhood and all the blessings that it implies. In Theosophy the beginning of wisdom is self-forgetfulness. H. P. Blavatsky and her successors have been uncompromising in their warfare; they gave no quarter to the lower selfish desires. She proclaimed: "To live to benefit mankind is the first step," and "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?" Do not make any mistake. Membership and progress in the Theosophical Movement means just that, and if one has no response in the heart to that appeal, no corresponding throb of joy at hearing of this unique opportunity to do something of real value, however little at first, membership in the Theosophical Society will give meager satisfaction.

In a series of communications made many years ago, the great Initiates

who are behind the Theosophical Movement broke their traditional silence and gave out teachings about man and Nature that were hitherto unknown. They also gave an outline of their system of training for discipleship which is applicable to all, whether in the East or the West. In a few sentences written by H. P. Blavatsky we find this briefly expressed:

To merit the honorable title of Theosophist one must be an altruist above all. The duty of every Theosophist is certainly to help others to carry their burden. The Theosophist must himself be a center of spiritual action. Self-sacrifice is the highest standard of Theosophy.

Speaking of the way to bring this about, she says:

And what may be the duty of a Theosophist to himself? To control and conquer, *through the Higher, the lower self*. To purify himself inwardly and morally; to fear no one, and nought, save the tribunal of his own conscience.

One of the Mahatmans, in correcting the mistaken notion of a new member of the Theosophical Society, who asked for yoga-methods by which to get psychic powers, explained that the dynamic energy which gives the Movement strength to stand any shock is not the craving for personal advantages but:

— Love, an Immense Love for humanity — as a *Whole!* For it is "Humanity" which is the great Orphan, the only disinherited one upon this earth, my friend. And it is the duty of every man who is capable of an unselfish impulse, to do something, however little, for its welfare. — K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 52

Another (and a greater Master) confirmed this in these words:

It is not the individual determined purpose of attaining [for] oneself Nirvana (the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom) which is after all only an exalted and glorious *selfishness* — but the self-

sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead in the right path our neighbor, to cause as many of our fellow-creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true *Theosophist*.

The same high Initiate added that the Masters would rather see the Theosophical Society perish "than become no better than an academy of magic or a hall of occultism," and in spite of all the lures of various side-issues it has remained faithful to its trust, thanks largely to the determination and unshaken loyalty to its original principles of H. P. Blavatsky, and those who followed her example.

Doing something for others, unselfish work to raise the spiritual standard of the world is, then, the true yoga, the yoga of Theosophy. The world is our home. It needs our help, and we shall not get away from it quickly. The urgent question for all who think seriously is: Am I becoming more useful, more capable of giving the help that is demanded of me?

The Theosophical Forum

THE OTHER THREE (1) — *Kenneth Morris*

When I have taught one corner of a subject, if my pupil does not himself discover and learn the other three, I do not continue the lesson. — Confucius

Which is one of the many sayings of his that make one think Confucius was a Teacher — of Theosophy. For the first corner of Theosophy is all any Teacher can give you; you must discover and learn the other three for yourself. This is true whether the first corner given be a simple lecture or article, or the great literature of Theosophy: *The Mahatma Letters*, *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Esoteric Tradition*. Even if there were books containing still greater revelations than these do, they would only give the first corner; the other three would be for you to provide. Now what might those other three corners be?

Apprehension by Intellect; Apprehension by Imagination; and Apprehension by Life. Of the teachings, of course, in each case.

Apprehension by Intellect is the least important of the three; but only in the sense that it is useless without the other two. An Evolved Man must have also intellectual development. If we have little of it, the best way to get more is to study and try to understand the teachings. Apprehension of the teachings by intellect cannot be evaded, but must not be stopped at. You must have it; but if you have nothing more — beware!

Apprehension by Imagination carries you further. First let the imagination fire the desires with eagerness to serve, to know in order to serve. Then one must brood on these teachings, picturing to oneself their scope and truth; one must *enjoy* them, if one is to be a Theosophist. In this brooding contemplation, which is higher than reasoning, argument must be left far behind. One places the teaching, as one has grasped it with intellect, before the Great Teacher who is within; and draws down from that one, just by desiring it, light to

illumine the words in which the teaching is conveyed; that out of the words a living image may grow in the mind. To that Teacher Within, who is oneself and yet not one's little daily self, the Truth the words seek to convey is clearly apparent, known intimately from experience; by imagination and brooding we can get the Inner Teacher's knowledge flooding down into the mind. A lesser wisdom, quite akin to foolishness, would say, Do I believe in this or not? Wisdom will say, Let me watch these still waters for the reflexion of the approach of Winged Pegasus, on whom I may mount to the stars! or again, Concealed here is a treasure for humanity, that will enrich me with power to help and serve; that will guard me against illusion and discouragement, and from my lower nature.

As we proceed thus, Theosophy comes more and more to show us why we insist that it bears no relation to a creed; and that though it presents teachings, it has no dogmas; that though it is Religion, it is not a religion. The teachings come to seem less and less like articles of belief, and more like — a sunrise splendor glowing through life and things and men and universe; a glory of hope; a magnanimity; an elimination of all pettiness; a simplification, on master lines, of this ant-hill of sorry confusions we think is life. Let a man brood upon the truth that we are not here to grab enjoyment or get what we can for ourselves out of life; but in more lordly fashion to put into life what shall redeem it: infinite treasure out of the infinity of our inner and divine being. You are not the fellow who moves in the world and is thought a fool, a decent chap, a rascal, or what not; not the fellow who suffers the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune; the one on whose face all blows and buffets meet; who is threatened by every grim tomorrow and goes in fear of the weeks to come and their freight of pain. Nay, you are not that one, but the Pilgrim of Time, he that journeys down the ages, advancing through tortuous courses, but for ever towards a Divine Goal. Twt! what are these sordid experiences that life insists on bringing you? — They are things altogether priceless to yourself: your means of becoming, that your own desire was set on because they were necessary for your growth. Brood on the story of the life of the planets,

the history of this Earth of ours; remember that on all the globes, through all the rounds and races, you too were journeying, upon the same mission as now, intent on the same purpose as now inspires your God-Self: to conduct you, its personality, to the godhood that waits you beyond these ugly years. — Thus by brooding on these teachings, by Apprehension of them with the Imagination, one may come to self-identification with larger and larger times and spaces, to ever new liberations of the mind.

Then comes the fourth corner: Apprehension by Life. You can't know Theosophy without doing Theosophy. You can't know what Harmony is, and therefore what the Great Universe is, till you have become incapable of creating disharmony. You can't know what Brotherhood is till your tongue, *and* your pen, are incapable of inflicting wounds. You can't begin to know what the Atman is, and what the Buddhi and Higher Manas principles are, till forgiving offenses and coming back at the offenders with impersonal love have become for you by practice the natural things to do. You can't know what Reincarnation means till you live to benefit mankind. You can't understand the teaching about the existence of the Masters of Wisdom till you are doing Their work in the world with all your might and main, and behaving as if you were one of their disciples.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwm Theosofhaidd*, Cardiff, Wales, March, 1936.
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The Theosophical Forum

THE DIVINE DISCONTENT OF GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA — *Inez Davenport*

Twenty-five hundred years ago there was born to the royal family of the Sakya clan, a son, the Prince Siddhartha, who, through no fault of his own — rather the contrary — caused the King, his father, deep concern. This was because even so many centuries before the coming of the great Christian Teacher, and before the Prince had reached what is commonly termed the age of discretion, he had already discovered the balance of values between the treasures of earth and the Treasures of Heaven. So that although born into one of the best of families, where nobility of character vied with wealth of possession to surround him with all that heart could desire, he seemed often to retire inward to a world unknown to his associates. Handsome he was, and strong, and brave, but he had no interest in the sports that engrossed his cousins, and while they busied themselves in friendly games of contest, he would steal away into the garden, and sitting under his favorite tree try to recapture that elusive thing that haunted him as a half-memory of a purpose in life not yet revealed. The sage Viswamitra, who had charge of his scholastic training, is said to have "picked up his books and departed, marveling." It was as if no human brain had store of knowledge great enough to instruct him who was destined to become the Buddha.

The case of a Buddha is different from that of a Savior belonging to the Avatara-group, such as Jesus, the Christ. An Avatara is a demonstration to humanity of the keen interest with which superior beings — shall we call them gods? — watch broodingly over the progress of men. For an Avatara is the mysterious union of a divinity with the highly evolved soul of one who has formerly become a Buddha, acting in a pure physical body. And this magical, but not supernatural, appearance of a divinity among men takes place particularly at times of spiritual barrenness in order to encourage those who are seeking the light of truth by showing them glimpses of sublimer heights yet to be climbed

in their search. In the case of Avataras it is the teachings which should occupy our fullest attention; the personal life, noble as it is, is relatively unimportant. With the Buddha, however, the study of his life, his trials and testings of teachers and methods, arouse our keenest interest. His procedure is that which every one of us can follow if we will. He started out aeons ago a man, as we are now. According to the stories, it was

A hundred thousand cycles vast
And four immensities ago

that he registered his first vow to reach Enlightenment — Buddhahood. This vow he kept fast in his mind and heart, resolving anew under twenty-four successive Buddhas — a necessary part of the fulfilment of such a vow, we read. On account of the inspiration and example which the life of such a great man is to us, this is well worth our serious thought and study; in fact, it is an essential part of the exposition of his teaching.

Many and fanciful are the tales related of the pre-natal visions entertained by the noble Maya, the one chosen as mother by the Bodhisattva, together with the interpretations put upon them by the Sages of the day, wise Brahmanas versed in true astrology. We read also descriptions of the conditions of existence of the Holy One in the heaven-world where he is represented as teaching the inhabitants thereof in the interim between one earth-life and the next; and there are some 550 'Birth-Stories' said to be episodes in the various incarnations of this aspirant to perfection, dating from the beginning of the world. Significant indeed is the impression we receive that his birth into the Sakya family was a conscious, well-considered act: as imminent Buddha he took this step. His royal father, Suddhodhana, as was the custom of the day, summoned wise men to his court to examine the child and read the signs they saw on him. He possessed all thirty-two marks of divinity, and the prophecies of six of the Sages were unanimous: if he remained in the household life he would rule as became the best of kings; but if he relinquished that life he would

become Lord of the Universe, the Awakened One, the Buddha. The seventh Sage, however, a younger man but nevertheless more intuitive than his brethren, saw one course only open to the young Prince: attainment of Buddhahood.

Now the king was a wise and kindly ruler, but he had no understanding of the nature and status of a Buddha. To his mind, human kingship was the destiny above all others that he would choose for his son. So he tried to fill his life with beauty, wealth, happiness, distractions of every pleasurable kind, building for him stately palaces and gardens appropriate to the four seasons of the year, providing for him in marriage the loveliest of his royal cousins, the radiant Yasodhara, and bringing to the court for his delight and entertainment the flower among the dancing and singing maidens of the country. Poor foolish king, to think mere beauty of sight and sound could appease the nostalgia in the soul of a Bodhisattva!

According to the legends, the gods now became impatient. It seemed too long the future Buddha was lingering in the toils of material allurements. So in defiance of the King's commands that when his son rode abroad he should see naught but youth, health, success, and beauty, the gods provided for him the Three Awakening Sights: an old bent man, hideous with age and deprivation; one stricken with fatal illness; and a corpse being borne to the funeral pyre. Not all at once were these Sights sprung upon the young Prince, but singly during three successive drives, and day by day the power of his resolve gathered momentum. From the time of the seeing of the First Awakening Sight, he began to observe his fellows in a new way, and he found none in whose face he could read signs of the true course of life. At last, after the third Sight, he met a hermit wearing such a look of peace that now he knew and would wait no longer. It was the striking of the karmic hour, and henceforth and for ever there was no possibility of Siddhartha's succeeding his father as merely a human king. In the dead of night, his beloved wife smiling in her sleep, he bade a silent farewell, fearing lest the pain of parting prove too great for the human will if accompanied with words and tears.

It should be well understood that this breaking of home-ties is not a course of conduct recommended by the Buddha to men in general; in fact, he urged obedience to mother and father, faithful performance of duties owed to others. He once sent back as unready one who hoped to become a devotee of truth without having first observed the loyalties due to the home-circle. In these words he is said to have spoken: "If you would find comfort in my society, the first thing for you to learn is purity of conduct. Go back, therefore, to your home, and learn to obey your parents, recite your prayers, be diligent in your daily occupations. Let no love of ease tempt you to neglect cleanliness of person or decency of dress; and then, having learned this, come back to me, and you may perhaps be allowed to enter into the companionship of my followers."

Nor were his loved ones unprepared for his leaving. Often he had told both wife and father of his desire to enter the ascetic life in order to seek release for mankind from the ills of sickness, old age, and death, which seemed to make futile all their lofty aspirations and worthy ambitions. He felt that ignorance was the cause of man's suffering, that there was truth which he was entitled to have, and, balancing the temporary anguish his absence would bring his own family circle, against the liberation of mind and spirit he knew they would gain when he became Buddha and they his faithful disciples — as did happen — he gave up all that men ordinarily hold most dear and began life anew as a hermit.

Six years the Prince, clad in yellow gown and carrying the ascetic's begging-bowl, studied under various teachers, Rishis and Brahmanas, tried their methods, spared himself not at all, undertook discipline so severe that it was rather self-torture; but still he did not attain the inner illumination he was seeking. At the point of death, and sorely grieved that he had not reached his goal in this life, he decided to break his fast and seek another way. Again the gods are said to have intervened, providing him with pure and nourishing food that restored his wasted tissues and caused the fresh blood to course through his

veins. Thus he was ready for the final test which is pictured in allegorical form as his meditation under the Bodhi Tree, where Mara's hosts, the mighty Powers of Darkness, made their greatest and most prolonged attempt to dissuade the Holy One from his purpose.

Fearful and wonderful was the battle which raged during the watches of the night: on the one hand violence, hate, envy, and all the brood of hideous vice — these the Bodhisattva overcame easily with the peace and tranquillity of mind he had attained; but when Mara, using subtler wiles, caused apparitions of his wife and father to call to him to return home and ease their distress, it needed more than human strength to resist. Yet this strength too was his. Calm and unperturbed he remained under the Sacred Tree, reiterating once again his ancient vow: "Let the sun and moon fall down to earth, let these snowy mountains be removed from their base, if I do not attain the end of my search: the pearl of the True Law."

Then indeed he did attain. The Hosts of Darkness vanished away, and morning broke upon the marvel of the Holy One grown at last from Bodhisattva, the promise of a Buddha, into the full flower of Perfected Manhood, the Enlightened One, the Buddha. He sat in contemplation for seven days and nights, seeking the best way to tell mankind what he had learned. Brooding on the mystery of life, on the composite, and therefore impermanent, character of the visible Universe and of man, he wondered if words existed that could tell the truths he knew. And then, picturing to himself lotus-flowers in a pond, and remembering how some of them grow high out of the water, some less high, and others never rise above the surface, and thus they receive varying amounts of sunlight, he thought: Men are like the lotus-flowers, the sun is the truth. The wise do not need my teaching, the stupid would not understand it; but those neither wise nor stupid, who question, seek, but know not where to find, these should receive help. Therefore I will teach. At this the very elements of the Universe joined with the Heavens and the Earth to proclaim their joy upon the arrival of a Buddha of Compassion.

Thereafter for forty-five years Sakyamuni fulfilled his promise. He wandered up and down India, teaching all who would listen to him. Among his earliest disciples were five anchorites who had witnessed in amazement the extremes of asceticism to which his zeal had led him, but who later reviled him when he, as they thought, relapsed into the worldly life. Sitting at their devotions, these five saw approach one whom at a distance they recognised as the monk Gautama, and thinking to show their disapproval of what they thought his treachery to their Order, they conspired to show him courtesy upon his arrival, but no deference. They little knew the transformation that had occurred in the meantime, nor what power it was that drew them to their feet and caused them to do most reverent obeisance. For looking into his face and seeing the glory with which he was transfused, they entreated the Buddha to accept them as his pupils; and because of their sincerity, and their faithfulness to the light of truth as they had seen it, he granted their request. Many an instance is given of similar meetings — even Brahmanas, who were indignant at his refusal to discriminate between the castes and his willingness to impart what they had kept so rigidly secret from the masses of men, and who challenged him with questions which they thought he could not answer, were glad to yield their allegiance to one whose presence and wisdom were so superior to theirs that deference to him became the highest honor they could desire. It is unfortunate for their descendants that more of this learned caste did not come to understand the mission and teachings of the Buddha, for the heart of both Brahmanism and Buddhism is the same; and the Buddha came not as inventor of a new religion, but as illuminator of the old, which had its source in the same Heart of the Universe as all the World-Religions have had.

It is not taking a one-sided view of the situation to speak of the beauties of the teachings of the Buddha and to fail to condemn the deficiencies of modern Buddhism. Whatever may be lacking in the application men today make of religion in their lives is the fault of the men themselves, not of the original teacher of that religion. It would be decidedly unfair were we not to mention that even after twenty-five hundred years

Buddhism is still active, and a powerful influence in the lives of millions of people; and that of all the known world-religions of history it has created least disharmony, been the cause of no wars, undertaken no conversions by violence, inaugurated no inquisitions, nor approved any form whatever of mental or physical torture, whether self-inflicted or not. It could well be adopted by men of every race with very slight modifications even today. The cornerstone of it is love for all beings, and its building-bricks all the virtues which, when practised, make life beautiful. Ignorance is a vice not to be tolerated, for truth is in the Universe and is to be had for the taking.

The Buddha concluded his mission among men at the ripe age of eighty years. In full possession of his faculties he gathered his disciples around him for the last time. His farewell speech has been given in varying forms by the translators, but in each the message is the same: Salvation for mankind comes from within; when self-appointed teachers appear, test what they say by the truth you already possess; do not believe without examination everything you hear. Think for yourself. "I have lit the lamp of wisdom. Its rays alone can drive away the gloom that shrouds the world. On your part, be diligent! With virtuous purpose practise well these rules; nourish and cherish a still and peaceful heart. Be lamps unto yourselves. Work out your own salvation. Look within! Exert yourselves to the utmost; give no place to remissness. Earnestly practise every good work."

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — *C. J. Ryan*

THE HOPE OF IMMORTALITY AND SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH

A recent review in *The Observer* (London) by the distinguished scholar, Dr. L. P. Jacks, of *The Purpose of God*, by Dean W. R. Matthews of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, is of interest to students on account of certain phrases used by the reviewer which carry a marked Theosophical stamp, and show how our principles are permeating the best thought of the age. For instance, when speaking of Dean Matthews' lucid defense of the rationality of the universe, Dr. Jacks draws attention to the fact that in any case man and the universe are one and indivisible: "he is bone of its bone, and flesh of its flesh, a veritable 'child of the stars' as Plato said . . . it and we are of one substance and one nature. . . ." "Chaos cannot evolve order out of itself, nor aimless forces discover their own aimlessness." As the universe is *not* chaotic, so by analogy and in fact are *we* rational and purposeful in our true nature, which is infinitely greater than the transient personality.

On the difficult subject of the moral law, Dr. Jacks is as positive as our Theosophical Teachers. He says without compromise that,

the infinite difference between right and wrong, and the categorical imperatives which proceed from it, are not presented to the human mind in the form of persuasion or of friendly good advice . . . They speak with authority; their language is a word of command. . . . There is, indeed, a kind of persuasion which is nothing else than compulsion under a more attractive name; the kind, namely, which is certain to be followed, when we disregard it, by what George Meredith called a "celestial hail of thwacks."

Dean Matthews, the writer of the broad-minded book commended by Dr. Jacks, has recently delivered three radio-broadcasts on 'The Hope of Immortality.' They are filled with close reasonings relating to survival

after death which, with few exceptions, might have been written by a well-informed Theosophist. For instance, he thinks that the problem of personality — What is Man? — must be settled before ordinary reason can expect to face the problem of Survival intelligently. Does the personality persist after death, and if so, what is that personality? Is the old man the identical personality that was the child of the same name many years ago? The personality has so greatly changed that it is hard to think so. But there *is a continuity*, and the Dean suggests that the death of the body is only an incident in an infinite process which will ultimately show me "what I really am."

Dr. Matthews' idea of the practical impermanence of the personality because of its constant transformation, leads straight to the principle of Reincarnation which explains the paradox of 'the one and the many,' the one eternal Monad and its many successive vestures. He believes that after bodily death the qualities that make up our *character* remain, though no doubt they may be altered with certain limits — excellent Theosophy indeed, and still more so when he declares that it would be terrible to go on for ever just as we are, in an immortality of weak, limited personality.

Another good reason for Survival is, he thinks, the fact that human life is so tragically incomplete; our tasks are all left unfinished. We revolt against this apparent waste; all the higher values of life are incomplete in the experience of one short life. Then the Dean brings up the problem of Justice, and while accepting a moral government of the universe, admits that no one can believe that the world as we see it is perfectly just. While rough justice is done to many, we see the wicked escaping their penalties and the good suffering grievous harm. This cannot be explained except by some kind of Survival. In connexion with the argument for justice (which of course is satisfied by the natural processes of Reincarnation and Karma, by which absolute justice is fulfilled), Dr. Matthews makes a significant remark: "It is fashionable to despise this kind of reasoning today, but I think justice an essential element in any idea of God." Quite so; a revengeful, partial, tribal God, under whatsoever high-sounding name, is no God at all. And

the Dean would find that when reasoning based on the principle of justice is presented, as in the Theosophical formulation of the laws of life, it cannot be despised, for the principles of Reincarnation and Karma (the unerring law of Cause and Effect) appeal to every logical mind.

The Dean expresses one very beautiful thought in support of Survival. Kant said that the aim of a moral life was to reach perfect holiness, i. e., to make the will perfectly obedient to the moral law. But as we go on we find that the moral law demands more of us than it did at the beginning. The holiest men are more conscious of their imperfections than others, not because they are worse than 'sinners,' but because they see more and more clearly their duty, and what 'holiness' involves. As we pursue high ideals, still higher ones open to us in glorious perspective, and those we have attained seem insignificant if not actually mean. The spiritual horizon of attainment recedes as we advance.

That concept is found fully developed in the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, and the life of the chela has been described as a series of awakenings, as the Buddhic Radiance or Christ-light within gets brighter. And in regard to becoming aware of one's imperfections in proportion to the progress made, our devotional books frequently mention it, but always tell us to keep our faces toward the Light, and not look back.

The Dean takes a balanced view on Psychic Research and the claims of the Spiritualists. He reasonably argues that even if Survival may be ultimately proved by investigation — not an impossibility in spite of the incredible difficulties in the way — that would not prove *immortality*. The good may obtain an immortality "by living in God"; but what about the irreclaimably wicked? As he cannot accept the unjust abomination of an eternal hell, he is inclined to think that they will naturally be annihilated because they have cut off all connexion with 'God.' Do we not here see an adumbration of the ancient teaching of the 'loss of the soul'?

Dr. Matthews's broadcasts were published in *The Listener* (London) for January 22nd and two succeeding weekly numbers.

"MASS THOUGHT INFLUENCE ON THE WEATHER"

We have received some interesting clippings from English journals in regard to weather and sunspot cycles, and about the possibility that the thoughts of a large body of persons, if sufficiently intense and directed toward a single idea, may affect the weather! Is there an answer to prayers for rain on grounds of *natural* law? — though not on merely physico-chemical mechanistic combinations any more than by the 'miraculous' intervention of a personal Jehovah. The *Morning Post* (London) has published a correspondence from which we gather the following information.

One contributor, Mr. E. L. Hawke, Secretary of the Royal Meteorological Society, offers many examples of the apparent influence of collective thought on the weather, which are indeed curious, even if nothing more than 'coincidences' (whatever that may mean!). For instance, the British Royal Jubilee Days which occurred in 1809, 1887, 1897, and 1935, were all brilliantly fine. Queen Victoria was so fortunate in the weather for her public ceremonials that it became common to speak of 'Queen's weather,' as millions still living remember. On the other hand, the heaviest fall of rain ever known in the British Islands in twenty-four hours (nine and a half inches) took place on June 17, 1917, when the most intense international hatred was raging during the World War. Queen Victoria's death was followed by exceptionally violent and widespread blizzards. The same writer gives a long list of apparent coincidences between weather-conditions and the prevailing mental emotions of the people, but he frankly admits that there are many exceptions and that the case is not yet proved.

In regard to sunspots, however, he believes there is a good case, and he quotes Professor Tchijevsky, noted Russian statistician, who claims a close connexion between sunspots and popular tumults, revolutions, and other forms of mass unrest. From the fifth century b. c. onwards, Professor Tchijevsky finds that 60 percent of such upheavals have

occurred in the three years around the sunspot maximum while only 5 percent happened in the three years around the minimum. He offers no explanation, but the reason we feel inclined to withhold final acceptance of this claim — though it seems to us not improbable — is that we have no correct record of the years of sunspot frequency for more than a comparatively short time back. Sunspots do not follow an even rhythm, and although there is seemingly an *average* or mean period of about 11 years, the maximum often comes a year or two before or after its expected time, and the same with the minimum. For the two thousand years before scientific records were kept of the number of sunspots there is no way of telling the exact dates of the three-year periods he uses, and if he uses the *average* dates a good many of them are sure to be wrong. Perhaps, however, he may have allowed for a considerable percentage of error.

Mr. Hawke says that Swedenborg is cited as the originator of the notion that mass thought affects the weather; he certainly considered that the sun is but the material counterpart of a divine emanation from the unseen worlds, which constitutes the source of life and intelligence. Was he wrong?

Another correspondent to the *Morning Post* says that long before Swedenborg the belief in thought-influence was established: "Its first written affirmation was in Sanskrit in the Vedas, which formed part of that which we term the Ancient Wisdom."

Discussing the sunspot theory of the Russian professor, Mr. A. B. Street, in a later contribution to the *Morning Post*, mentions the discovery by Drs. Traute and Bernhard Dull, Danish scientists, of a relationship between solar activity and the death-rate. In Copenhagen 36,000 deaths occurred between January 1, 1928, and December 31, 1932. They were divided into fourteen classes, according to disease, and also according to age and sex. In each division a twenty-seven day rhythm was found, which is the period of the rotation of the principal sunspot zone with its concomitant electro-magnetic cycle, which is reflected on earth. The maxima in the death-curves of various groups of maladies do not all

occur exactly in accord with the maxima of solar activity. Some come a little later than others, though always in the same relationship. Deaths due to suicide follow the same rule as those from disease. The same two scientists conducted a similar inquiry in Zurich, Switzerland, which is a long way from Copenhagen, and they obtained similar results. No chance or fortuitous coincidence theory can explain this.

In regard to the possibility of spiritual forces being behind or within such phenomena as wind, rain, or clouds, a writer in the *Referee* (London) makes the daring suggestion that the winds are not purposeless or mindless! He seems to have struck a deep Theosophical note, however strange it may sound to some. He says, in part:

I have noticed the remarkable behavior of the winds among the different strata of the clouds, and know that the perfect and varied shapings of condensing or expanding vapors, with the consequence of the cloud positions and fulfilments, are absolutely ruled and regulated by the winds. . . . The wind, in my opinion, has more than a mind and purpose — it is *personal*.

Has Mr Huxley listened to the weird wail of a tempest as it races across a barren stretch of moorland? Has he noted it speaking and singing in many keys among the trees? . . . This is all, in my humble opinion, the proof of purpose, and the granted spiritual expression of mind. . . . Is not the spiritual aspect of any substance — especially man's — the ruling power and accepted influence of thought? I feel that the breath is the life, not only of animate Nature but also of the subjective.

If reference is made to *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, pages 280, 392, 613, 615; *Isis Unveiled*, I, 284-5; and *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, 160-1, intuitive readers will see that thought and weather-phenomena may have some undiscovered connexion. On page 615, volume II of the first-named work we find an illuminating suggestion. In referring to the Maruts, frequently mentioned in the Puranas, H. P. Blavatsky says that from one point of view the Maruts or the Storm-gods, are literally "actual conscious Existences, Beings of a cosmic and

psychic nature." They are also, "the *passions* that storm and rage within every candidate's breast, when preparing for an ascetic life." We can go no farther into this significant question here, *though it is well worth study*.

The Theosophical Forum

THE LANGUAGE OF THE BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES: PALI — *G. Barborka*

Pali is the name that has been given to the language spoken in the north of India, from and before the 7th century b. c. to about the 5th century of the Christian Era. It is still the literary sacred language of Burma, Siam, and Ceylon, although its use is said to be decreasing. In other words, in the lands where Southern Buddhism flourishes (to use the term in a geographical sense), the language now known by the name of Pali is still used in the religious observances of the Buddhists, as their canon was written in this language.

There were two principal reasons which made Pali one of the most important literary languages of the world: first, a political factor: the rising and the welding together of the Kosala-power into a kingdom, during the seventh century b. c. It is the opinion of scholars that the Aryan influx into the land now generally termed 'India' occurred through three main routes, and that minor settlements were left along the route; and it is held that the language of these isolated groups or communities bore the same relation to the Vedic language as the present-day Italian bears to ancient Latin. In other words the language was closely akin to Sanskrit; but it was a spoken language, whereas Sanskrit was a 'sacred language' — the language of the sacred scriptures, the Vedas. The language that was spoken at Savatthi, the capital of the Kosala kingdom, in Nepal, soon became the form of speech which was generally adopted. A comparison may be drawn in what occurred in England during the welding process of Angles and Saxons which finally resulted in the 'Anglo-Saxon language' (now known as 'English').

The second factor was of a religious nature. Gautama the Buddha was a Kosalan by birth, and it is very probable that he used the Pali language in giving forth his teachings, and therefore the subsequent philosophical writings of his disciples were similarly couched in this language. All the early Buddhist scriptures that have come down to our

day are in Pali, although many later Buddhistic writings are in Sanskrit.

The etymology of the word Pali is uncertain. It probably means 'row, line, canon,' and is used, in its exact technical sense, of the language of the canon, containing the documents of the Buddhist faith. But when Pali first became known to Europeans it was already used also, by those who wrote in Pali, of the language of the later writings, which bear the same relation to the standard literary Pali of the canonical texts as medieval does to classical Latin. — *Encyclopaedia Britannica*

But C. J. Joshi, M.A., formerly Professor of Pali and Marathi at Baroda College, India, writes in his *A Manual of Pali*:

The Pali language was derived from ancient Sanskrit; its former name was magadhi, the dialect of the Magadha country, now called Bihar. Magadhi received its new name Pali from the Sanskrit word pali (a line), which has the secondary meaning, *the text*, as distinguished from the commentary. The commentaries refer to the original Magadhi Tripitaka as pali; gradually the connotation of the word was enlarged and it came to be applied to every composition in Magadhi and consequently to the language itself.

The language was the Vernacular of ancient Magadha, in which the great Buddha preached his Doctrine to the people, and Asoka inscribed his immortal messages to generations.

Scholars have also drawn attention to the fact that Pali may be divided into three classes or stages: (1) the language before the writing of the Buddhist canon; (2) the language of the canon itself; (3) the later developments and minor variations arising after the period of the canon. However, the term Pali is generally applied to the three classes enumerated.

Professor Otto Franke, in his *Pali und Sanskrit*, shows that in the 3rd century b. c. the language used throughout northern India was

practically one, and that it was derived directly from the speech of the Vedic Aryans, retaining many Vedic forms lost in the later classical Sanskrit. The basis of the language used in the Buddhist canon, or sacred texts, was that used in Ujjayini the capital of the Avanti district.

To those familiar with the Sanskrit alphabet and the Devanagari characters, it will be of interest to know that the Pali alphabet uses the same letters, and that it is the same as the Sanskrit except for a very few modifications.

As regards the literature: three works are extant in the pre-canonical Pali (i. e., what is referred to above as class one), namely the *Milindapanha* (a religious romance translated by Rhys Davids under the title *Questions of King Milinda*, which originated from the north-west of India); the *Netti Pakarana* and the *Petaka Upadesa* (from the center of India). These two were believed to have been written by a disciple of the Buddha, but scholars now place them as belonging to the era preceding the Buddha.

The works containing the Buddhist doctrine are known under the name of *Pitakas* — an interesting word, for its meaning is a 'basket'; not a basket in which things are stored as in a box or chest, but the basket which the Indian workers use at excavations for filling with earth and handing from one worker to another. In this word the meaning is clearly given as to the intention of the Pitakas, i. e., that the doctrine should be handed on from one disciple to another. The Pitakas are simply collections of the scriptures available at the time of their gathering, and are divided into three sections: (1) the rules of the Buddhist order, known as *Vinaya*; (2) the writings setting forth the doctrine of Buddhism, generally called *Suttas* (Sanskrit, *Sutras*); (3) analytical exercises in the system upon which the doctrine is based — the *Abhidhamma*.

The Suttas form the part that is of the greatest interest to us, for in these are found the teachings of Gautama the Buddha. They are small tracts, rather than a complete text or scripture, each sutta containing a single aspect of a teaching or doctrine, set down briefly in writing,

amounting to only a page or two, with the intention of its being an aid to the memory; those expounding the doctrine or acting as teachers to disciples, carrying on a running commentary upon the particular text in hand. When several of these suttas treating on the same subject were gathered together thus forming the basis of a dialog, such collection was termed a *suttanta*. A collection of these suttantas then formed a *Nikaya*, of which there are four main ones. Another interesting series of anecdotes is gathered together in the collection known as the *Jatakas* (or 'birth-stories').

Of all the various Suttas, the one of greatest importance may be said to be the *Dhammachakka*, often called 'the Wheel of the Law' (a literal translation of the words — or more freely rendered, 'the Proclamation of the Law of the World-Order'). This Sutta opens with what is termed the first sermon, addressed by the Tathagata to his five former associates in the practice of yoga, in the Mrigadava forest (near Kasi), in which the Buddha declared the Noble Eightfold Path — the Middle Way which avoids the two extremes — consisting in the practice of: Right views; right thoughts; right words; right actions; right living; right exertion; right recollection; right meditation.

The work known as the Buddhist textbook, the *Dhammapada* ('the Path of the Law') was compiled at a later date than the Suttas. It consists of a gathering together of gems of thought uttered by the Tathagatha, amounting to 423 verses, each subject (of which there are 26, each being a chapter or section) containing from ten to twenty stanzas. It is unquestionably the loftiest exposition of the Buddhist moral and ethical code.

One of the methods of relating anecdotes about Gautama the Buddha (Pali, Gotama), at the same time illustrating his teaching, may be given. A young mother was distraught because of the death of her little boy, who had just reached the age when he was commencing to run. With the dead child clasped to her bosom, she went from house to house seeking for medicine to revive her little one. At one of the dwellings, one who had entered upon the first steps of the Way as enunciated by

the Teacher, replied to her entreaty: "No medicine can I give to thee, there is one alone who can do that."

"Do tell me, I pray thee, who he is," said the young mother, Kisagotami.

"Seek thou the Lion of the Law, the Lord of Mercy; he alone can give thee medicine."

Kisagotami speedily sought out the Buddha, and asked what herbs should she bring him for the medicine (as it was then the custom for the patients themselves to gather the herbs that were used for the making of the remedy).

"Bring me some mustard seed," said the Teacher, "but it must be obtained from a house where no son has perished, where no husband, where no parents, where no slave has perished!"

Overjoyed with the thought of obtaining so easy a remedy as mustard seed, Kisagotami hastened away, asking from house to house for the mustard seed, still clasping her child.

"Why, yes, here is mustard seed," said her neighbors, "take it!" But before taking it she would ask: "Has son, or husband, parents or slave died in this house?" "Alas, yes," was the constant reply. At one abode she was told, "Lady, what is it that you ask? The living are few, but the dead are many."

Not finding a single house that could supply her with the mustard seed, a light dawned upon Kisagotami. She buried her child in the forest, and returned to the Buddha, paying reverent homage.

"Have you the mustard seed?"

"No, Lord. The people say that the dead are many and the living few."

"It is even so." And the Buddha discoursed upon the impermanency of all aggregated beings, till the doubts of Kisagotami were cleared away and her grief assuaged. She accepted her lot and became a disciple, straightway entering 'the first path.

THEOSOPHY, THE ORIENT, AND RUDYARD KIPLING — *Madeline Savage*

In an Appendix to the first edition of H. P. Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy* (1889), occurs the following paragraph:

The Theosophical Society was formed at New York, November 17, 1875. Its founders believed that the best interests of Religion and Science would be promoted by the revival of Sanskrit, Pali, Zend, and other ancient literature, in which the Sages and Initiates had preserved for the use of mankind truths of the highest value respecting man and nature. A Society of an absolutely unsectarian character, whose work should be amicably prosecuted by the learned of all races, in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the research of truth, and with the purpose of disseminating it impartially, seemed likely to do much to check materialism, and strengthen the waning religious spirit. The simplest expression of the objects of the Society is the following:

First: — To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.

Second — To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences. . . . etc.

From the very outset, then, it is plain that in the judgment of the Foundress herself, a large part of the success of the Society which was to bring the Ancient Wisdom back to the Western peoples, was to depend upon newly-forged links of learning and culture between East and West; and secondarily, we may infer, upon a greater measure of understanding on the part of the West of the true nature of the Oriental peoples and nations. Mme. Blavatsky herself chose India for the main treasure-house, as being the nation that had preserved the ancient knowledge in the form most suitable to be given to the West in this

modern age.

Perhaps not least among the factors that have opened Western minds to the influences of Eastern thought has been the work of Rudyard Kipling, who, in the many obituary notices that have appeared on the occasion of his recent death, has been awarded the laurels due to a literary genius, an architect of Empire, a bold adventurer in the field of thought, and so on. But one phase of his achievement, a phase that is of peculiar interest to Theosophists, has not been greatly stressed. Yet is it not a fact that in bringing to the consciousness of the West even a tithe of the treasures of the mysterious East, Kipling indirectly and quite unconsciously served the cause of Theosophy?

His life coincided in time with the inception of the modern Theosophical Movement, and the general trend of his work put him in touch with the currents that were beginning to stir in the East and to find their way westward. There was of course a cyclic timeliness in this westward movement of Eastern influences, but many and various are the agents that bring about such cyclic changes.

Born in 1865, in Bombay, spending early years in Lahore, going to England for his education, returning to India, traveling to and marrying in the States, engaged in journalistic work that carried him round the globe, Kipling had ample opportunity, if ever man had, to interpret the East to the West. But unlike Lafcadio Hearn and the Fenellosas, Kipling can hardly be said to have interpreted the Oriental life and mind to the Western world. Perhaps 'revealed' would be a better word, and that only in a limited sense. For Kipling was to the last an Occidental of the Occidentals. We say this because the predominant element in his work reflected so faithfully the stiff-necked pride of race of the English in India; and yet we say it with reservations, because there are other portions of his work which do give us scattered gleams from the ancient wisdom. But whatever may have been his perceptions of the soul of the East, there is not apparent in his writings as a whole more than a comparatively superficial understanding of the Oriental genius — superficial from the standpoint of Theosophy, which

recognises in the East the still pervading atmosphere, the outworn fabric, of a culture beside which that of the West seems puerile and inadequate.

Having said this much, we can turn now and justly appreciate the genius that painted India for us with all the vividness of life itself. As children we were there in spirit, following Mowgli through the enchanted world of the *Jungle Books*. To be sure, the tales that we read in our maturer years were written chiefly from the standpoint of a proudly conquering race: "Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Commissioners and Deputy-Commissioners, Colonels and Captains and the Subalterns." The Indian natives were described as one would describe a quaint race of indulgently regarded children; but enough of the charmed atmosphere seeped through to keep alive our sympathies and our imagination. When we came to read his *Letters of Marque* and other journalistic correspondence to the Allahabad *Pioneer* and the *Civil and Military Gazette*, we found revealed much more of Kipling's real feeling for the true India. A few words of quotation taken at random from these letters will show this better than we can tell it.

Apropos of the transformation of Jeypore into a modern city with all conveniences, he writes: "It is difficult to write of a nickel-plated civilization set down under the immemorial Aravalis [mountains] in the first State of Rajputana." Elsewhere he says: "It was my destiny to avenge India upon nothing less than three-quarters of the world." And his attitude is still more strongly attested in the later letters from America, in which he describes the blatancy of Western civilization, as experienced by him there, in contrast with the life of even some of the simple natives of India, who, he avers, knew far more about the real values of life than these frantic Westerners.

Then there is *Kim*. In that best and most beloved of all his books, in his portrayal of the old Lama with his serene philosophy of the Wheel of Things, in the boy Kim's chelaship and beautiful relationship to the old man, Kipling perhaps shows us best what inklings he had of the more spiritual side of the old and fragrant habitude of the Orient, which

surrounds like an untroubled sea the objective activities of the invading and conquering West.

One cannot but regard it as unfortunate that Kipling seems chiefly known in the West through what might be called the noisier of his works: the *Barrack-Room Ballads*, Mulvaney and his crew, and the ever ubiquitous Subalterns, products of genius as we must admit them to be. Of much more real moment, we think, are his tales of the 'supernatural,' *The Phantom Rickshaw* and a score of others, which point significantly to the existence of worlds beyond the visible, worlds that can be perfectly well accounted for in the Theosophical teachings, echoing the ancient Eastern wisdom. In the delicate fancies of *The Brushwood Boy* and in *They*, and in *Puck of Pook's Hill* and its sequel, these worlds are again suggested with a touch of elfin magic as sure as Barrie's or Walter de la Mare's.

Kipling was not without his intuitions. *The Finest Story in the World* is the finest story in the world for overwhelming the reader with a conviction of the truth of reincarnation: the commonplace London clerk recapturing in snatches, in a sort of waking dream, the unrecorded details of what could have been nothing but his own former life as a galley-slave in the days of old Greece. And what but reincarnation could he have meant in that *L'Envoi* where we find the lines:

We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it — lie down for an aeon
or two,

Till the Master of All Good Workmen shall put us to work anew!

Whatever may have been his crudities, Kipling by the very fire and vividness of his every written word surely promoted that much-desired fellow-feeling between the two worlds of this planet, by turning millions of Western minds eastward, and without doubt many Oriental minds westward. He was a single factor: his work, and that of others in the same field, has had its fruition in a greater understanding between East and West than has ever obtained before. Witness the steady stream of Oriental literature that is flowing into our libraries, through

translation and from original sources; our increasing interest in the study of Oriental languages, most of the leading colleges in the Western nations having now established Chairs of Sanskrit; witness even the ever-mounting number of Orientals, of greater or less intellectual quality, who are gaining a hearing, wisely or unwisely, among inquiring Western minds of a certain type. (It seems to be a law of Nature that we must always take some dross with the gold.) And let us not forget the splendid scientific achievements of eminent Hindus of today, whose work is recognised as being fully up to Western standards: Sir Jagadis Chunder Bose, Professor Raman, Sir Shah Sulaiman — to mention only three that come to mind.

There never was a more misleading slogan than the famous line:

Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,

flung out as it was almost off-hand as a striking opening to the well-known *Ballad of East and West*. Without their qualifying context the words have been used as an epigram wherever English is spoken, and taken in their absolute meaning. In one sense they are utterly true, and Kipling was evidently expressing his awareness of the gulf that separates East and West in quality of consciousness and consequent adjustment to life. But just as the *Ballad* itself shows how the finest traits of both East and West are one and the same, and can blend the two into one, so both West and East have found that they can meet on common ground when the higher planes of thought, in science and philosophy, for example, are entered upon. And the West is only just discovering that it is already receiving from the East treasures of value not suspected before. It is simply the passing on to a younger and less developed civilization of the finest essence and fruitage of the old — and that is ever the way of Nature.

THE TOWER OF THE GANDHARVAS (1) — *Kenneth Morris*

Rightness, honor, power, splendor of countenance and Vedic glory, these things, verily, were possessed in former times by Atidhanvan-Sanaka, king of the Videhas, in such measure that there was none like him to be found in the world, and even the gods were astonished. On his body, it is said, were the two and thirty marks of perfect birth; and the birthmarks of the Chakravartin: the wheel, the orb, the discus of unbounded sovereignty. To speak of the tributary monarchs that bowed down to him, would be, as it were, to limit the infinity of his power; from the seven continents they came, bearing wealth to his treasure house. His armies went forth even to Patala; and such was the fame of his beneficence, that they achieved victory without the shedding of blood. He conquered the resplendent worlds. "Whatever tribute we may pay to him," said the kings of the earth, "it is upon us that the balance of benefit falls." Among the countless crores of his slaves and subjects there was none to hanker after the lightening of his yoke; none to complain, or desire any other lord.

All of which pertained to his rank as Chakravartin; but heaven knows he was more and greater than a Chakravartin possessing world-sovereignty. Svetaketu-Dalbhya overheard seven flamingos discoursing as they flew over the palace in the night. "Short-sighted brothers," said the leader of them, "fly not too near, lest the splendor of the good deeds of Atidhanvan-Sanaka scorch your wings." Ushasti-Shalavatya listened while the bull of the herd was conversing with the cows. "As for Atidhanvan-Sanaka," said the bull, "he, verily, is to be named with Raikva with the Car." — "How was it with that Raikva?" asked the cows; "and how is it with Atidhanvan-Sanaka?" — "As in a game of dice," said the bull, "all the lower casts belong to him who conquers with the Krita cast, so all good deeds performed by other men belonged of old to Raikva, and belong now to the King of the Videhas." Prasnayana-Jaivali heard the altar-flame soliloquizing. "Atidhanvan-Sanaka," said the

flame, "knows that Golden Person who is seen within the sun, with golden beard and golden hair, whose eyes are like blue lotuses, and who is golden altogether to the tips of his nails. Atidhanvan-Sanaka, verily, knows the Golden Person, the Lonely Bird. . . ."

And he who knows this, says the Upanishad, knows Brahman.

Certainly, then, the king knew Brahman. Though he was a warrior of the Kshatriya tribe, many that were Brahmanas came to him to learn wisdom. They put questions to him, and he answered their questions: revealing to them the Self, making known to them the wanderings of the Lonely Bird. That which is the Breath of the breath, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Dwarf in the heart, he revealed it to them. Then he put questions to them, and they were dumb. "Master," said those proud ones, "teach us!"

Kingly indeed was Atidhanvan-Sanaka: a majestic man, black-bearded, with dark and flashing eyes, severe and noble of aspect. He was constantly in action; constantly shining forth surrounded with the pomp and magnificence of his sovereignty; no one ever beheld him at rest. As with chanting of Vedic hymns and with ceremonial rites, the priests conduct the sacrifice; as the sun passes through heaven, adoring that Brahman; so Atidhanvan-Sanaka conducted the affairs of the world. "Whatsoever the sun or the moon sees, or the light or the darkness hears; whatsoever the heart conceives, or the hand performs, or the tongue whispers, he knoweth it, he knoweth it," said the people. And yet where one feared him, millions loved him; and so great was the influence of his will and benevolence, that righteousness was maintained everywhere, and evil put down firmly in every quarter of the world.

Now in those days there dwelt three ascetics in the Forest of Grantha-Nagari: Vaka-Kakshaseni, Satyakama-Kapeya, and Gautama-Kaushitakeya, or as he was called, Pautraya-Glava. They were assiduous in the quest of wisdom, and had spent three hundred years in meditation; performing many penances, and silently repeating the udgitha. They had attained to many powers; yet there was that, verily,

to which they had not attained.

At the end of a hundred years, Vaka-Kakshaseni said: "Sir, Satyakama-Kapeya, knowest thou that Brahman?"

"I know it not," said he.

At the end of the second hundred years Satyakama-Kapeya said: "Sir, Gautama-Kaushitakeya, or as thou art called, Pautraya-Glava, knowest thou that Brahman?"

"I know it not," said he.

At the end of the third hundred years Gautama-Kaushitakeya rose up and said: "Sirs, we have dwelt here these three hundred years in meditation, performing many penances, governing the inbreathing and the outbreathing, and silently repeating the udgitha. We, verily, have attained to many powers; yet there is that to which we have not attained. And there is that Atidhanvan-Sanaka, king of the Videhas: a Kshat-triya, housed about in worldly pomp, and performing day by day the mere duties of a world-sovereign: practising neither meditation nor study of the Veda; governing none of the breaths; performing no penance nor austerities, nor repeating silently sacred texts; and yet it is said that he knows the Brahman. Is it your opinion that we should go to him, and request him to teach us?"

"We are Brahmanas, and he is a Kshatriya," said they. "Were we to seek as our Teacher one unworthy to teach us, our heads might fall off."

"Our heads might fall off, truly," said he.

Then said Satyakama-Kapeya: "Sir, Vaka-Kakshaseni, what is thy opinion?"

"That one of us should go into the palace in disguise, and make inquiry as to the king's knowledge, and by what means he has gained it," said he.

And they said: "Sir, Gautama-Kaushitakeya, do thou go."

* * *

Gautama-Kaushitakeya took the guise of a sweeper, and went into the city, and mingled with the crowd that gathered in the morning when Atidhanvan-Sanaka come into the Hall of Justice. He saw the king ascend the throne, like the splendor of the sun at dawn into a sky of gold and scarlet, of clear saffron and bright vermilion. He listened while the judgments were being given, and understood that no lie might be maintained against the king's perspicacity of vision. He saw that whatsoever deed was done, or thought thought, or word spoken, it was known to Atidhanvan-Sanaka, and could not be concealed from him. He abided there from dawn until noon, marveling more and more. The motions of the king's hands, it seemed to him, were as the motions of Karman to administer rewards and punishments; the glances of the king's eyes seemed to him to penetrate compassionately into all the corners of the earth. At the end of the morning the people prostrated themselves, and said: 'Justice hath been done, even to the ultimate particular'; and Gautama-Kaushitakeya answered: "Yea, justice hath been done." And he was not a man to be impressed with outward shows.

Then he went back to the forest. "Hast thou any news, sir?" said his companions.

"Sirs," he answered, "the glory of Atidhanvan-Sanaka, as he ascendeth the throne of Justice in the morning, is like the glory of the sun at dawn ascending into a heaven robed in gold and scarlet, in diaphanous saffron and vermilion lovely to behold. His person, verily, is like the Golden Person that is seen in the sun, whose eyes are like blue lotuses, and who is golden altogether to the tips of his nails. I listened in the Hall of Justice during the morning, and ceased not to marvel even at noon, when he went forth. The motions of his hands were as the motions of Karman, rewarding hidden merit, and punishing concealed wrong. No lie in the world might be maintained against the clear perspicacity of his vision."

Satyakama-Kapeya said: "There is nothing in this concerning knowledge of the Brahman."

* * *

Gautama-Kaushitakeya, or as he was called, Pautraya-Glava, said:

"Sir, what is thy opinion?"

"That another of us should go in disguise to the palace," said he. "Sir, Vaka-Kakshaseni, do thou go."

* * *

Vaka-Kakshaseni went forth in the guise of a Kshattriya, and rode into the city at noon, and came into the Hall of Audience where the tributary kings and the ambassadors of foreign lands were waiting. There were seven score great princes present in the hall, all of them wise and mighty leaders: handsome to the eye of the beholder, and their apparel exceedingly rich and adorned with gold and rubies, with costly emeralds and pearls. Then came in Atidhanvan-Sanaka and took his place upon the throne, with sovereign magnificence like the heaven-riding sun at noon; and with glory of countenance and Vedic splendor so multiplied upon him, that whoever else was present seemed but as a little candle lighted at midday in the face of the golden sun. The motions of his hands were the upholding and giving peace to distant empires; the glances of his eyes were enlightenment for far and barbarous peoples; the words of his mouth, even the least of them, brought peace where there had been contention, and brotherly kindness where there had been ambition, envy, and strife. Vaka-Kakshaseni marveled until nightfall, and did not cease to marvel when the king went forth; although, as was well known, he was not a man to be impressed by outward shows and pomp.

Then he returned to the forest of Grantha-Nagari, and sought his companions.

"Sir," said they, "hast thou learned the secret?"

"The glory of Atidhanvan-Sanaka," said he, "is like the glory of the end of judging people. In the doorway, as the crowd went out, he met a heaven-riding sun at noon: aloof, magnificent, sovereign, not to be contemplated with naked vision. All the other princes of the world, appearing in his presence, are as little candles lighted in the face of the noonday sun. I listened, marveling, while he received the kings of distant countries. The movements of his hands uphold their empires. The glances of his eyes bring enlightenment to barbarous peoples, and spread joy and delight over the world. Even the least of his words cause peace to be where formerly were strife, envy, and ambitious contention."

Gautama-Kaushitakeya said: "There is nothing in this concerning the knowledge of Brahman.

* * *

Vaka-Kakshaseni said: "Sir, what is thy opinion?"

"That the third of us should go to the palace in disguise, and make inquiries. Sir, Satyakama-Kapeya," said he, "do thou go to the palace."

"I will go tomorrow," said he.

On the morrow he went forth in the guise of a sweeper, and came into the Hall of Justice at noon, when Atidhanvan-Sanaka had made an end of judging the people. In the doorway, as the crowd went out, he met a man of the sweeper caste, and questioned him. "Sir," said he, "by what means is it reputed that the King attains his knowledge? All that hath been spoken or thought or done, it appears, is known to him. How is this?"

"Come into the garden and I will show thee," said the sweeper.

They went out and came beside a lake wherein lotuses bloomed, some in color like the snows of Himavat, some like the clouds of sunset, some like the middle blue deepness of the sky at noon. In the midst of the lake was a tower, very lofty, and built of coral and ivory; it rose from no island; about its base the floating leaves and the blossoms of the

lotuses lolled, and the blue waters reflected the clouds.

"It is called the Tower of the Gandharvas," said the sweeper. "The King goes up into it nightly, and feasts there upon celestial food, and Indra and Prajapati, they say, are his companions. And the Gandharvas, the celestial singers, come to them in the tower, winging their way hither out of the region between the earth and the moon. Many that pass through the garden in the night hear their singing; it is sweeter than any sound that might be imagined by man. They sing for Atidhanvan-Sanaka until dawn; making known to him, as to their Teacher, all that is spoken or thought or done."

"That may be," thought Satyakama-Kapeya; "but there is nothing in it concerning the knowledge of the Brahman."

He went forth, and meditated upon that until dusk. Then he assumed the guise of a hotri or fire-priest, and rose up, and went into the Hall of Audience when Atidhanvan-Sanaka was making an end of receiving the tributary kings and ambassadors, and saw that all were filled with awe and astonishment on account of the Vedic splendor of the King. Going up to another priest, he said to him:

"Sir, tell me to what Atidhanvan-Sanaka owes his astonishing glory. There is none like him, truly, in the world; even, it is said, he knows the Brahman. Where gaineth he this perennial knowledge?"

"Sir," said the Brahmana, "come with me into the garden, and I will show thee."

He led him to the shore of the lake, and pointed to the tower. "Therein he receives illumination by night," said the Brahmana. "I think that one of the Rishis dwells there, and imparts instruction to him between nightfall and dawn. From his going in until his coming out, celestial music issues from the tower; wherefore the ignorant call it the Tower of the Gandharvas, and consider that it is those celestial singers who instruct him. It may be, indeed, that the Gandharvas sing during the instruction; or it may be, indeed, that the music is caused by the mere words of the Sage his Teacher."

"That is very probable," thought Satyakama-Kapeya; "but there is nothing in it concerning the knowledge of Brahman."

He went forth, and meditated upon that until midnight; then rose up, and took upon him the guise of a moth, and flew into the garden. Verily, the whole place was filled with celestial music that issued from the tower: a sweet flood of sound intense with holiness and peace, making the scented night wonderful with holiness and peace. He lighted down on the closed petals of a lotus on the lake, and listened; and it appeared to him that he was very near to the knowledge of the Brahman. Then he flew up, and hovered round the tower, seeking a cranny by which he might enter; and found one at last, and went in. As he entered, he heard the music no longer.

Nor saw anything that he expected to see: neither the chamber of a king, nor the cell of an ascetic engaged in samadhi. "He is not here," he said, and prepared to fly forth again; but stayed. "I will watch this conflict," said he. This is what he saw:

A lantern hung from the ceiling, shedding vague light over a room barren of adornments, with floor and walls covered with filth and slime, and filled with an abominable stench that rose out of a vast pit in the midst of the floor. And there was a man in the room, struggling with a demon. Stripped to the waist he was; blood and sweat poured from his body scarred with old wounds and new. The muscles of his limbs stood out in his agony; the clutch of the demon was upon him; in dreadful silence they writhed and swayed and struggled. All night long Satyakama-Kapeya, strangely interested, watched them fighting. Fouler and more hideous was the demon than man's imagining can paint. Now one, now the other seemed uppermost. All night long in dreadful silence they writhed and strove and made conflict: in dumb agony the one, in foul malignity the other striving. "But where is Atidhanvan-Sanaka?" thought the ascetic; "where are Indra and Prajapati?"

Dawn-light shone in at last, and then the man gathered up the demon in his arms, and lifted it in the air, and crushed the vile life out of it,

and flung it into the pit that was in the midst of the floor. Then he stood up, and the sunlight fell upon him. And Satyakama-Kapeya saw the marks of the wounds upon his body glow in the sunlight; and behold, they were the two and thirty marks of perfect birth; and amongst them, shining like the sun, the signs of the Chakravartin: the wheel, the orb, the discus of world-sovereignty. . . .

He flew forth meditating, and came in his own guise to the forest.

"Sirs," he said, "I have the secret. He, verily, is fitted to be our Teacher. Come!"

That day the three of them came to Atidhanvan-Sanaka, bearing fuel in their hands. "Sir," said they, "teach us to know the Brahman."

"Be it so," said he. "Abide ye in the palace as fuel-carriers for seven years; then come to me again."

FOOTNOTE;

1. Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, Vol. IX, No. 6, December, 1915.

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The Theosophical Forum

"THE RAPTURE OF THE FORWARD VIEW" — M. M. T.

The year 1875 will, in time, come to be remembered as the date of the Declaration of Interdependence, which was proclaimed when H. P. Blavatsky was sent by her Teachers to bring Theosophy to the West and to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.

This Declaration of Interdependence was not based upon economic needs as is the wonderful network of world-wide material interchange that now exists. Material interests can bind human beings for the purpose of securing *comfort* and wealth, and leave human beings themselves much the same. In fact, material success and brilliant invention have brought increased power to those who have got ahead, to act to the great disadvantage of 'the hindmost.' It is knowledge of the unity of all that lives, of the interdependence on inner as well as outer planes of life of all beings, and the loyal practice of the higher code of human conduct incumbent upon those awakened to that knowledge, that will bring to bear on human institutions the still latent qualities and values in human nature which the poet visioned when he wrote of "the rapture of the forward view."

The urgent truth, presaged by H. P. B.'s Declaration of Interdependence, is that man as an entity is an indissoluble part of a Greater Entity and that his life is conditioned by the lives of every other part and of the Whole. To ignore this longer is to exist in a pitiful isolation. Man's invisible nature — and what is man without that part of him which is unseen? — partakes of the Intelligence and Divinity which is the inmost of the Whole whose world-body we see. As the kernel, the promise of continued life and fruitfulness, is to the shell, so is the realization of the inner unity of all that lives and of the Divinity, however latent, at the heart of each and all, to the outward forms of union for any purpose. Both inner and outer are required for the complete life.

Theosophy has a direct bearing on the complete life. It was restored to Humanity at this time in order that man might learn to avail himself of the possibilities and powers that belong to the new level of understanding of the universe and man's relation to it.

Humanity, according to Theosophy, has run a little more than half its course in the present period of manifestation. What remains of the course is along the "ascending arc," where the higher intelligence and the spiritual nature of man are destined to express themselves in Earth-life. The tendency will be away from the ego-centric attitude toward a deeper interest in the human family as a whole. Altruism, not acquisitiveness, is the keynote of the new era. Belief in the innate divinity of our fellows will be recognised as an essential-in the education that will lead forth the latent divine qualities and powers. This belief even now has the result of engendering an atmosphere of creative trust between man and man.

The teaching of Rebirth widens man's horizon. It removes the feeling of frustration, which is depressing to the energetic (and intuitive) human beings who long to "have the wages of going on" and bringing to fulfilment here in their own habitat their highest ideals. Karman assures man that *he* makes himself and his destiny and that *he himself*, in this or a future life on earth, must atone for wrong done. Imagine the simplified process of securing social justice when every man faces the results of acts committed. Imagine the spiritual valor that will be liberated when individual responsibility is generally accepted. Valor will then be diverted from enforced and organized killing to individual conquest of all that leads to strife and bloodshed.

When the repetitive habits of Nature are known, the tragedy of the crash and fall of what has been builded by man can be faced intelligently. The form perishes that the new may be born. Man's creative faculties do not die with one civilization. Moreover, the suffering of those karmically involved in the catastrophe can knock at man's heart and evoke a wider compassion and a more resolute effort to build on a basis of Brotherhood. Sorrow sharpens the faculties for

the discernment of deeper and deeper truths. It works in that way.

The life of conscious oneness affords many new delights. Why not visualize them? Imagine the manifold increase of the sweetness and richness of companionship when human beings feel *to* one another as brothers. How the inner world of emotion — now so often a dark and troublous sea — will be calmed and sunlightened, and fear, robbed of its sinister power to divide, will shrink and vanish with the shadows. Cosmic love is not a cold thing. The sun and the stars are friendly. Why not Man? The poets long ago caught a gleam of this cosmic friendliness.

The first object of the Theosophical Society is to form the *nucleus* of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. Well do the Wise know that the leaven of new ideals is slow to permeate the mass-consciousness, that noble desires for the welfare of the race may take a thousand years to become fully enacted in human institutions. But the thought is the inner self of acts to be; the universal process is from within outwards.

More and more the influence of ideas is being recognised as a potent force in bringing about changes in outer affairs. Professor A. N. Whitehead, one of the most profound philosophers of today, writes:

The best service that ideas can render is gradually to lift into the mental poles the ideal of another type of perfection which becomes a program for reform.

The Spanish philosopher, Jose Ortega y Gasset, says:

It is in the realms of pure thought, therefore, that the earliest signs of the coming age can be traced. . . . Thought is man's most fluid possession; and accordingly it yields freely to the slightest variations in his vital sensibility.

More and more, too, is the dynamic force of the good life, of love and trust, emphasized by thinkers today. With the proclaiming of Interdependence, of Brotherhood, of man's Divinity, with the quickening of divinely inherited sensibilities and responsibility, the energies belonging to the new era are being liberated. They are of a

non-violent, but deeply potent nature and appertain to those higher faculties of intelligence and compassion to be gradually unfolded. Anyone, anywhere, at any time, can become a constructive worker in the building of higher forms of human association. Have *you* ever exhausted your intellectual or spiritual resources, your heart-activity, in attempting to establish harmony right where you are now?

Katherine Tingley once gave this instruction to her pupils:

Our strength lies in keeping positive; in holding a steady joy in our hearts; in a momentary meditation on all floating great ideas till we have seized them and made them ours; in a meditation with the imagination on the life of humanity in the future, and its grandeur; in dwelling on the conception of Brotherhood. . . .

"With the imagination." This reminds us that the sublime cosmological conceptions presented by Theosophy absolutely renovate vital beliefs and give the imagination new wings to soar with. With them we can venture on the life of inner oneness, can experience its glories and its impossibilities, and as we mount the ascending arc of human progress we can know more and more fully "the rapture of the forward view."

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: VI — *H. T. Edge*

VI — SUN AND MOON

The meaning of Sun can be gathered by considering the sun of our solar system. It is the heart of that system, the center whence flows all the life and light. Earth and other planets attend it, like the retinue around the throne, and shine by reflected luster. There is a sun in the human body, generally called the heart, but rather the vital center controlling the heart than the actual muscular sac. Its contraction and expansion accompany the circulation of the life-streams; its slackening means swoon; its stoppage, death. The solar heart of the solar system also pulsates, in a period said to be eleven years — the sunspot period; an analogy about which we shall know more when we have studied better the magnetic and electric phenomena connected with the sun.

The Sun is the Logos of any hierarchy, which manifests itself as seven rays. This can be symbolized by drawing within a circle six smaller circles touching each other and the large circle and forming a sixfold figure, with six circles grouped around a central one. The Sun is the father of the Gods. In mythology we find him represented as Helios and Sol, as Phoebus and Apollo. Sun-worship has always been universal. Ignorant people have supposed that sun-worshippers worship the visible orb of day only; they imagine that the sun is nothing more than a vast globe of incandescent gases, and say that people who worship a globe of incandescent gases must be poor untutored savages. What is really worshiped is the Spiritual Sun, of which the visible sun is but an outer garment; and it is only natural that the Spiritual Sun should be invoked through its outer symbol. The outer ceremonial is made to correspond with the inner meaning; but there would be times when the inner meaning would be forgotten and the worship degenerate into empty form, as may happen in other religions. The Sun is the Divine Light striving to manifest itself in us; its light is reflected from a

number of planets, and these may stand for the subordinate phases of our mentality.

The Moon is a complex symbol and it is not practicable to attempt a comprehensive survey of all its meanings. It stands between the Sun and Earth as a reflector of light and life from the former to the latter. If we divide man into Spirit, Soul, and Body, the Moon will stand for Soul — using that term in a wide sense, for the intermediate nature of man, mental, psychic, emotional. The Moon is the imagination. The moon goes through its phases, which are called the light and the dark side of the moon; in one phase it transmits light from sun to earth; in the other it gleams with a light borrowed from earth. So our imagination may reflect the light of the Spiritual Sun or the lower light from the Earth. But our little satellite stands as representative of a far more august divinity — Isis, consort of Osiris, the great Mother, ever-fecund Nature. The Mother of the Gods is the consort of the Father of the Gods. The Great Mother has also been a universal cult. It represents the passive, receptive, fertile, feminine side of the manifested universe — in a word, Nature. This is the highest aspect of the lunar symbolism; but in another and lower aspect it stands for the "lesser light that rules the night." Hence we often find lunar worship, lunar magic, lunar cults, etc., contrasted unfavorably with the solar. Man's personal, passional, emotional nature is sometimes called his lunar self, in contrast with his solar self, the Spiritual Ego. To avoid confusion we must keep in mind this fickle changeful nature of the moon, causing it to have different significations; a clue that may help us to understand several things in our experience. If the Moon is Nature, then, like Nature, she may be anything from the bride of the Spiritual Sun to the womb of terrestrial Nature.

The usual symbol of the Moon is a crescent, which is a duality as compared with the unity of the solar circle. The two aspects of the Moon are denoted in astrology by the ascending and descending nodes, called the Dragon's Head and Tail, or Rahu and Ketu in India; in the first the bulge is upward and the horns down; in the second it is the reverse way. This Dragon represents the emotional side of our nature,

which oscillates from high religious exaltation down to great physiological excitement at the other pole.

We have before mentioned the symbol of the planet Mercury as being composed of a circle with a crescent above and a cross below, and this may stand for a threefold representation of human nature, in which the circle or sun is the Heart, the crescent or moon is the psycho-mental nature, and the cross is the physical. But we must not interpret such highly generalized symbols too narrowly, for they have special applications on many different planes. Thus we may take Atma-Buddhi as being symbolized by sun and moon or Osiris and Isis, etc.; or again we may consider the higher triad as solar and the intermediate nature of man as lunar; and again, if Prana is solar, Linga-sarira is lunar. Sun and moon make a duad which is found throughout; and these two, with the cross added, make a triad which is of equally universal application. All this illustrates the importance of symbols as enabling us to sum up ideas too broad and general to be conveyed in any other way; and in interpreting them into word-language, we have to present first one aspect and then another, so that the essential meaning may be intuitively grasped out of the multitude of apparently diverse meanings. These symbols are embalmed in the figurative language of poetical diction and stock phrases; but modern scholarship, in discussing the figurative use of such words as Sun, Heart, Light, and the like, has usually viewed matters from the wrong end and supposed the figurative use to be derived from the concrete use. The Sun which the sun-worshipers venerate is called an idealization of the astronomical sun, and an expression like "the Heart of the Universe" may be regarded as a mere metaphor.

The Sun and Moon are everywhere the active and passive potencies, or we may say the masculine and feminine, the energetic and the formative, etc. — it does not much signify, so that we get the right idea. More attention is being paid to the influence of our moon in organic life, and it seems to have special relation to the vegetable kingdom. Some items of folk-lore, once dismissed by science as superstition, are receiving more attention.

The moon in classical symbology was denoted by Hecate, a triple-headed divinity, which indicated a threefold character of the Moon; for the goddess was powerful in the Heaven-world, on earth, and in the underworld. The Moon presides over birth and death, which lead into each other. The reason for the moon being associated with things uncanny and black-magical is that, in her function as goddess of the underworld she presides over the purificatory processes of Nature. Man should not consort with the decaying remnants of creatures which, if let alone, will pass naturally along their appropriate arc in the cycle of evolution.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — *C. J. Ryan*

WHEN THE RIVERS WERE DROWNED

When a Theosophical writer emphasizes the fact that some of the most striking discoveries in modern science were anticipated in the Theosophical literature, this is not done to glorify H. P. Blavatsky, or in any way to minimize the magnificent research-work of our scientists, which deserves the highest admiration. Its object is to provide evidence for the use of "Theosophical students that a profound knowledge of natural law existed ages before the last few centuries in which science has made such great advances after the medieval pralaya. Also, that the Great Masters of the Ancient Wisdom possessed it, and revealed a little of their immense learning through H. P. Blavatsky and her work. During the last few years we have had several valuable opportunities of proving this, owing to utterly unexpected discoveries such as that of the intensely hot atmospheric shell high above the earth's surface — a fact in nature stated in writing by the Master K. H. *more than fifty years ago*, at a time when it seemed absurdly improbable and contrary to the "established fact" that temperature steadily declined with increase of altitude until the cold of outer space was reached. Other illustrations could be given.

In this connexion, a most significant suggestion has been offered, which, although not the announcement of a new discovery, is of great importance to Theosophical students because of its radical nature, and because it is exactly the same as one of the most "unorthodox" statements in *The Secret Doctrine*. It is contained in *Science* for April 3, 1936, in a long communication by Professors H. H. Hess and MacClintock of Princeton University regarding the recent discoveries of submerged river valleys in many parts of the world. By means of the new echo system of ocean sounding it has already been found that between the latitudes of sixty degrees north and south, approximately, at least forty enormous submerged valleys extend from continental

coasts. Some of them cut through hard granite, and many have been found to be thousands of feet deep. The extension of the Potomac River reaches a depth of nearly 9,000 feet, others 14,000. Geologically speaking, they are not *very* old, so far as known.

How were these enormous submarine valleys cut? Certainly not while under water. Why are they not found in high latitudes, and why do the valleys (so far as the limited evidence tells) increase in depth as they approach the lower latitudes?

No satisfactory explanation has been forthcoming until now, and the remarkable thing is that the theory put forward by the Princeton experts is in precise agreement with a fundamental statement of *The Secret Doctrine*, which until now would have been scouted by every astronomer or physical scientist as incredible! In brief, it is that a *sudden decrease* in the rate of the daily rotation of the earth took place, and after a certain length of time it speeded up again to the normal! This, of course, is rank heresy; it is more than improbable! A *very* slow and gradual reduction in speed, caused by tidal action, may have taken place in a billion years, though that is disputed, but there is no plausible explanation for a speeding up. The Princeton professors almost apologize for proposing their "radical hypothesis," and only dare to offer it as a basis for further inquiry and discussion. According to *The Secret Doctrine*, however, they have hit upon the truth, however strange it may seem.

What would happen if the earth slowed down? Firstly, vast quantities of water would flow toward the polar regions where great submergences of land would take place, leaving the regions nearer the equator partly or wholly dry, according to the irregularities of the surface. Equatorial lands already above the water would seem to be greatly raised, the more so the nearer the equator, where the remaining oceans would become shallowest. Climates would change, vegetation and animal-life would have to migrate or become acclimatized, and many strange effects would follow from the alteration of the sea-levels. Even mountains might be upheaved as the

result of new stresses. But one thing is certain: the river valleys would have to be greatly lengthened in order to reach the lower levels to which the oceans had retreated. Near the equator this effect would be the most marked and the new valleys longer and deeper.

Then, after a more or less lengthy period of equilibration, the earth's rotation would increase in velocity, the "centrifugal force" become greater, and the waters would withdraw from the poles and up again toward the equator. The lowlying lands in temperate and equatorial regions would be submerged, *drowning the newly formed extensions of the river valleys*, and considerably changing the configuration of the earth's surface, though not necessarily to the former condition. This may have happened more than once, but the scientists suggest that the last change took place not much earlier than the Glacial Period if even so far distant, and this practically agrees with H. P. Blavatsky's estimate. The Wegener theory of sliding continents, now being widely discussed, would not be needed under this hypothesis of reconstruction.

Additional evidence, for which we have no space, has been found in high latitudes (where submerged river beds are not known) but of course there will have to be much discussion and study before this revolutionary rotational theory is accepted as a fact by astronomers and geologists. No better reason for this world-wide change of sea-level, however, has appeared, and at least one eminent astronomer has suggested that the fact may remain unexplained for a long time.

The great difficulty is to find a reason for such an apparently impossible event as the slowing down, and *above all for the subsequent speeding up*, of the earth's rotation. The obvious explanation — a collision with "a comet or something," has practically insuperable difficulties. Another convenient celestial body would be needed to bring the rotation back to normal!

All this is interesting, but what is specially so to us is that the Princeton scientists have really discovered exactly what is given in *The Secret Doctrine*, in a quotation from the immensely ancient Tibetan

"Commentary" on the *Book of Dzyan*, the archaic Book of Wisdom preserved by the Masters. *The Secret Doctrine*, however, goes farther than the scientists, for it gives the reason for the incomprehensible change in rotation. We fear, indeed, that scientific research has to advance a few more decades, or perhaps centuries, before the votaries of celestial mechanics will be prepared to understand the explanation, highly important though it be in a true picture of the history of our planet. It touches on the Spiritual Intelligences (the Pitris or Dhyan-Chohans) which are inextricably involved in the action of so-called "natural" forces, and what does official Science yet know about "spirits" of any kind! Here is part of the explanation. Speaking of the breaking up of the continent of Lemuria in its higher latitudes, H. P. Blavatsky writes in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 324-5:

This is due, according to the explanation in the Commentary [an extremely ancient esoteric work] to a decrease of velocity in the earth's rotation: —

"When the Wheel runs at the usual rate, its extremities (the poles) agree with its middle circle (equator), when it runs slower and tilts in every direction, there is a great disturbance on the face of the Earth. The waters flow toward the two ends, and new lands arise in the middle belt (equatorial lands), while those at the ends are subject to pralayas by submersion. . . ."

"Toward the close of the age (Kalpa) of a great (root) race, the regents of the moon (the Pitar fathers, or Pitris) begin drawing harder, and thus flatten the wheel about its belt. . . ."

How did the ancient writer of the "Commentary" know that slowing down the rotation would produce exactly the effect that our modern scientists are invoking to explain the ultra-modern discovery of the drowned rivers of the world?

MODERN SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY

Among the contributions made by the Theosophical Movement to the elevation of humanity we must never forget that which in large degree

initiated the modern transformation of scientific opinion, on the whole, from crass materialism to a more spiritual outlook. This is a large claim but it is supported by the facts, and students should learn it in order to be able to show the high intellectual as well as spiritual standing of the Masters' work, when called upon by scientists and others who are completely ignorant of the situation, and who may be prejudiced against Theosophy by the preposterous campaigns of fakers who cunningly use the credit of the true, sane, wholesome teachings of the Masters to bolster their fraudulent claims.

In *Science*, for March 27, 1936, the "official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science" we read in a review-article by Professor W. F. Magie, of Princeton University, on *Faraday's Diary*, recently published, that Faraday in his earlier years "had made all the discoveries of major importance which he could have made with the appliances that he had at his command." For more than twenty years nothing of any importance was done by experimental methods until "improved methods of obtaining high vacua made possible the work of Crookes, *from which the modern development of physics may date its origin.*" (Italics ours)

What has the "modern development of physics" done for the world? What was behind Crookes? Listen to this quotation from *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 611:

The exact extent, depth, breadth, and length of the mysteries of Nature are to be found only in Eastern esoteric sciences. So vast and profound are these that hardly a few, a very few of the highest Initiates — those *whose very existence is known but to a small number of Adepts* — are capable of assimilating the knowledge. Yet it is all there, and one by one facts and processes in Nature's workshops are permitted to find their way into the exact Sciences, while mysterious help is given to rare individuals in unraveling its arcana. It is at the close of great Cycles, in connection with racial development, that such events generally take place. We are at the very close of the cycle of 5000

years of the present Aryan Kali-yuga; and between this time [1888] and 1897 there will be a large rent made in the Veil of Nature, and materialistic science will receive a death-blow. . . .

Remembering that it was due to Crookes' early improvements in the air-pump that he was able to make his great discoveries on the "fourth state of matter," as he called the electronic phenomena he obtained in the extremely rarified contents of his "Crookes" Tube," which led to his and others' later developments (X-rays, radioactivity, etc.), let us see what Dampier-Whetham says in his recent and authoritative *A History of Science*. Speaking of the tremendous changes in the modern point of view brought about by the new physics, he says that the "new revelation" began to take shape from 1895 onwards, the discoveries of Crookes and others having been brought to a focus by the attention aroused by Rontgen's X-ray sensation. Then came Becquerel with his uranium rays, and finally the complete definition by J. J. Thomson of the electrical nature of the atom. This was in 1897, *the exact date mentioned* by the writers of *The Secret Doctrine* nine years before, and as Dampier-Whetham remarks, it was the deathblow to the old materialism. Today, Jeans can say "The old dualism of mind and matter . . . seems likely to disappear . . . through substantial matter resolving itself into a creation and manifestation of mind."

Who, then, was behind Crookes in starting this cyclic revolution whose effects are so marked already? Who gave the "mysterious help" which comes at the close of cycles as mentioned in the above quotation from *The Secret Doctrine*, and which strikes the keynote of the coming age? The answer lies in that book and in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, where we learn that one of the Masters, attracted by Professor Crookes' independence of thought, and his courage in defying public opinion by his pioneering efforts in psychic research at the risk of losing his scientific reputation, helped him; at first without his knowledge, but later openly. When the Mahatman Morya said: "And Crookes — has he not brought science within our hail in his "radiant matter" discovery? What but occult research was it that *led* him first to that?" he saw that a fresh link was formed in the chain that would

ultimately unite science, philosophy and religion into a harmonious whole, a chain which is now rapidly growing.

We cannot enlarge on this important subject here, but students will find full particulars, with quotations from the Masters' letters, in *Lucifer* for March, 1933. Keep this in mind for use when needed. An inquirer of scientific bent of mind is more impressed by a single ounce of fact than by a ton of theory that he cannot test.

DID THE MOST ANCIENT AMERICAN LIVE IN CALIFORNIA?

Things are moving in American pre-history of man. Only yesterday it was hardly permitted to suggest that man had lived in the Americas for more than a few thousand years — five or a little more, perhaps. He "cannot" have been here before the Glacial Period because the route from Asia was solidly frozen for thousands of miles, and, "of course," there was no other way of getting here. But facts are rapidly being found that indicate that man was here before the end of the glaciation, and that American human pre-history is approaching in duration the immense periods recorded in the Old World. We have mentioned some of these already in this Department. The latest report comes from Los Angeles. We quote from the *Los Angeles Times*, March 28, 1936:

An amazing discovery of prehistoric remains that may link the American Indian with the Mongols . . . was disclosed yesterday by Dr. A. O. Bowden, chief of the University of Southern California Anthropology Department, and his colleagues. A skull, femur, and fragments of other bones of a human skeleton found in a storm-drain excavation . . . was pronounced by Dr. Bowden to be a find which he believes to be unprecedented in the archaeological history of the Western Hemisphere. . . . Dr. Bowden and his associates concluded that the bones may be as much as 50,000 years old. At any rate the investigators concluded that the bones are those of a prehistoric wanderer, possibly of Asiatic origin, who roamed Southern California in the days of the imperial elephant, the ground sloth and the saber-toothed tiger. . . . Concurring with them in their placing

the fragments in the Pleistocene Age — from 16,000 to 50,000 years ago — was Dr. Thomas Clements, chairman of the Geology Department of the University. "These bones could not possibly be those of a more recent western Indian," Dr. Bowden said. "The strata lying over these remains and those of the imperial elephant were undisturbed. The great animal became extinct more than 16,000 years ago. . . ."

So perhaps the Asiatics found their way here while the glaciation was present; but why should wanderers have not also come across the Atlantic or the Pacific by lands that have perished? The glaciation of the northern and southern latitudes would have been no obstacle. As to Mongolian immigration the student will find some useful hints in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 182, 250, 424 (footnote).

The Theosophical Forum

THE UPWARD CLIMB — *William J. House*

A dull, sodden fellow, even in his young manhood obviously a slave to the vice of drunkenness, he climbed the hillside each morning before daybreak to carry away the garbage from the monastery. Only at the full of the moon did he meet any of those belonging to the monastery, when the gatekeeper was on hand to give him his small payment. The gatekeeper spoke once to his Head and asked whether it was well to have one so extremely foul and unpleasant coming even to the precincts of the sacred place. The Head inquired whether he did his work well; and upon being told that the work was carefully and thoroughly done, he replied that no change should be made.

The years passed by, and hardly a word of any import ever passed between the gatekeeper and the garbage-carrier when payment was delivered, until one morning, to the amazement of the gatekeeper, Svag asked whether he might in future perform his work without remuneration. Upon inquiry being made of the Head, the answer was: Yes, if the work be as well done as before.

Seven years more passed, and the garbage-carrier still faithfully pursued his calling, and had even attained to some slight dignity of appearance. It was his turn to be surprised when one morning the gatekeeper addressed him thus: "My Superior wishes me to say that there is such a thing as right occupation, and that if you so wish you may take a place in the outer court of the monastery."

With bowed head and streaming tears the poor fellow protested his unworthiness to do so. The gatekeeper answered that he himself had no power of decision in the matter, but would venture this remark: that if the wish to do so were not somewhere deep within Svag's heart the offer would not have been made to him; and that it would be wise not to make a hasty refusal.

So Svag entered the service of the monastery, and was given the new

name of Strivan. The life was quiet and well-ordered: such as can make for inward growth where the heat of outer excitement does not fever the brain. Through the years that ensued many were the failures he made through his besetting sin of drunkenness; yet ever when he returned to the gates and question was made of the Head as to whether he should be admitted, the answer was: Yes, let him try again.

At length he surely prevailed over his fault, and with his new self-confidence grew rapidly strength of mind and perception — and ambition. Small and simple enough in its beginning, founded well enough upon truth, yet it was a thought for self alone that began to flourish weed-like in the garden of his life. He hoped, he expected, with what seemed to him some justification, that he would be allowed to see the Great One who came to the monastery at intervals from the mountains to the north. Consider what a remarkable history was his! He had risen from the lowliest degradation to his present strength and dignity. Many had climbed higher, but had they started from such depths? Surely he would receive even an encouraging glance of the eye if he were but allowed to be present when the Great One passed through the courtyard to the Inner Temple. But no, his duties were always placed elsewhere at such times.

At length he resolved that he would no longer endure this unjustified obloquy, but would fare forth to the mountains in the north, find the Master, and present himself to his notice. He announced his intention to his Head, and set forth with a warning and a blessing.

His journey to the foothills was uneventful: the temptations to pleasure in the villages through which he passed did not affect him, though in the fertile vineyards at the foot of the mountains there was the richest wine to be had for the asking. The last village before he began his steep ascent he did not enter. The people had become so debauched and careless that a foul plague had broken out, and no one who entered would be allowed to leave for fear of spreading the contagion.

The stench of the place, as it was borne on the breeze, revolted him, and he hurried upward to the purity of the mountain air, inquiring of

news concerning the Great One as he went. "Yes, certainly, such a one lived on the heights; but who knew where?" "Was it their business to be curious as to his dwelling: had he not a greater right than others to his privacy?"

Meeting with such answers on every hand, whether honest or evasive, he searched and searched until the weariness of his spirit was even greater than the tiredness of his body, and the bitter disappointment of his heart turned to sourness and disgust. No one seemed actually to have seen the Master, but all were sure that he lived somewhere on the heights. Well, one might search for a lifetime in the midst of such ignorance! What had he gained but experience; and what had he not given up in order to get that only!

Strivan descended the mountain gloomily, and without noticing it found himself in the plague-stricken village. Well, what of that? He might as well die there as elsewhere. He approached one of the village wells to drink, but was prevented by one who stood guard there, but who directed him to where he could obtain water that had been carried down from the mountain. He found a band of the hardy mountain-dwellers carrying on a valiant fight to stay the progress of the plague. Greatly overburdened, they were working under the direction of an elderly man, very insignificant of stature, but obviously a capable leader. At the moment he was doing his best to induce a body of villagers to persevere in cleaning the accumulated refuse from the streets, himself wielding a shovel to inspire them. Strivan approached and deliberately took the shovel from his hands. "This is no work for you! Let me attend to this!"

The old man appraised Strivan's sturdy frame with a keen and somewhat amused glance. He gave him a quick outline of what he was aiming to accomplish, begged him not to allow the villagers to drink at the polluted wells, and left him.

This was work at which Strivan had served a long apprenticeship and in the days that followed the work went forward rapidly and well to its finish. It was several weeks before the village was free of the plague,

and during that time Strivan and the old mountaineer had become firm friends. Strivan told him of his quest, and the old man laughed outright at his pursuit of the elusive Great One on the mountain. He advised Strivan to have more dignity and to wait and work until the Master should find it worth his while to seek Strivan. He advised him to go back to the monastery, admit his fault, and ask to be readmitted.

Strivan did this, and was well received, being given a position but a little lower than that he occupied on leaving. But as the quiet years passed and his judgment and insight matured, he became more and more convinced that for him there was no place among those worthy to meet the Master.

One day as he was quietly occupied with his duties one of the brothers came to him with a message: "The Master wishes to see you." Sudden dismay overcame Strivan: "No, no! I am not ready! Tell him I am not worthy!"

"My instructions were to bring you; not to carry messages for you," said the messenger. "What has become of your bravery, Strivan? You who went to seek the Master are now sought by him."

A quick memory stirred in Strivan. Those were almost the same words that the old mountaineer had used. . . . As Strivan entered the presence of the Master a familiar voice said: "Well, Strivan, I have more work for you to do."

It was the Great One from the mountains to the north: the old mountaineer indeed — the same, *but not the same*.

DIVINE DESIRE — *Leoline L. Wright*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

(Thoughts suggested by *The Esoteric Tradition*)

Cosmic Kama: The "Desire" of the *Rig-Veda*, which Desire is pure impersonal universal compassion and sympathy; the source of the cosmic driving or impelling energies of the Universe involving the living intelligently electric impulses thereof. The womb of Fohat, considered as the motive yet intelligently guided Force or Forces of the Hierarchical Universe. — G. de Purucker: *The Esoteric Tradition*, 952-3

It is well to raise our hearts now and again to the threshold of Cosmic Divinity; to refresh our weary, sorrow-laden lives with a draught from those deep inner worlds of stainless being where bliss abides. It is well to remind ourselves that this Kali-Yuga — dark, strenuous, terrible, in which we suffer and toil — is but an inconsiderable fraction of the great cycle of existence. And the reminder is well for two reasons: first, that we may not despair; second, and sharply important, that we may lose no moment of its swift momentum. For terrible and dark as it is, Kali-Yuga is the chela's immediate opportunity for intensive, self-directed growth.

Our Teacher reminds us in regard to the kamic principle that:

... It is the seat of the living electric impulses, desires, aspirations, considered in their energetic aspect. Usually however, although there is a divine Kama as well as an infernal one, this word is restricted, and wrongly so, to evil desire almost exclusively. — G. de Purucker: *Occult Glossary*, p. 84

So in reading the heading-quote above, we change our usual point of

view and look into the inner worlds which it opens before us. We are able to imagine something of the Divine Desire which awakens in the consciousness of the Solar Logos when "the last vibration of the seventh eternity thrills through infinitude." In that mighty Heart of brooding Love there dwells the supernal felicity of its own Self-realization; its communion with the god-worlds and the Cosmic Deep. That compassionate Being, our Cosmic Hierarch, visualizes the cohorts of god-sparks yet to be born from its Consciousness-Substance and yearns that they too may know "the seven ways to bliss" and come at last to wing self-conscious flight along the Circulations of the Cosmos to its holy Presence in the palaces of the Sun.

This that we are living is not life; these our thirsts and cravings are not true desire; this that we experience — all is but a caricature, a hideous distortion in the convex mirrors of Maya,

Children of the Solar Consciousness-Life are we, even as the innumerable lives composing the cells and the atoms and the infinitesimal corpuscles of man's physical body live and move and have their being in man, their overlord; his vitality, their vitality. So we are linked through this Solar Entity of cosmic magnitude with spaces still more grand, with Forces and Substances, far-flung over and in and through Kosmic Space. —
The Esoteric Tradition, 201

Its vitality our vitality! its Forces and Substances ours if we but realize our true reason for being, and put to work the imagination and the impersonal will. "Back of will stands desire," we have been taught as Theosophical students from the very first. And so let us look again at our opening quote about Divine Desire where we are told it is

The womb of Fohat, considered as the motive yet intelligently guided Force or Forces of the Hierarchical Universe.

Link now these words with those of H. P. Blavatsky:

... Love in his primitive sense is Eros, the Divine Will, or *Desire manifesting itself through visible creation*. Thence Fohat, the

prototype of Eros, becomes on earth the great power of "Life-electricity," or the spirit of "Life-giving." — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 65

The "spirit of "life-giving" — almighty Love; impersonal, undemanding, selfless Love. Is not this the "Life-electricity" that we need? Wherever there is unity in our Lodges of the Theosophical Society; where there is brotherly harmony in thought and deed; where there is Theosophical service, unselfish, never remitting, never discouraged, never careless, there is gradually formed a core of "Life-electricity." And pouring through that clear laya-center of our united hearts the Lodge-force from our Silent Watcher floods out in blessing and inspiration upon the world for which his sacrifice is made.

We see then that Cosmic Desire is expressed in Cosmic Love, the origin and fount of universal life. It is the harmonious energy which binds all things into a spiritually purposeful organism moving inevitably to "one divine far-off event," the attainment of godhood by every monad within the organism. Thus we read on page 1079 in this grand book of our study:

... everything in the Universe works in a universal harmony; everything is harmonious, for nothing works unto itself alone and apart from other things —

only Man, wilful stony-hearted Man who, it seems, must be to the sustaining Cosmic Patience like a corroding wound that holds back the healthful progress of all. But no! — *it is not so*. For man's desperate wilfulness is but a dark bubble on the mighty Life sweeping in cycling waves majestically around our Planetary Chain. And we read further, on page 1080:

... the changing astronomical positions of the planets and of the sun and moon all take place according to the workings of the wheels of the great and intelligently guided cosmic mechanism — for indeed there are mechanics, divine beings, behind and within and guiding the mechanical operations; these operations

being the automatic responses of nature to the manifold inner urges flowing forth from these divine and spiritual hierarchies of beings as urgent impulses expressing themselves in action.

And all this harmonious vast interworking is after all but the "daily living" of those great Beings — gods, Dhyani-Buddhas. They live and work to the sublime rhythm of the Dharma of obedience. They are the imbodiment of their own divine karman whose smoothly sweeping beneficences carry along man's struggles against the current like mere dissolving foam. Well for us to reflect now and again upon these compassionate Cosmic Buddhas whose abodes shine upon us from the violet spaces of Space. Not only do they cherish us, and suffer our fretfulness within their radiant bliss, but hold us compassionately as well to the ends for which we and all things live and have our being. Else how easily might we, poor self-exiled wanderers, lose our spiritual way.

When day is over and night for a space lays a cool mysterious hand on all our fevers, well for us to meditate upon Divine, Compassionate Desire. So close, benign, and actual it is! Does it not bind the very atoms of our bodies with its electrical harmonies? So may we raise our human hearts before we sleep to the god within ourselves who is our link with the Cosmic Gods, and yearns, in its perpetual silent watch, for our salvation.

The Theosophical Forum

THE USE OF MIND BY A THEOSOPHIST — *F. F. Webster*

The air is replete with radio broadcast programs. In like manner and even in greater diversity within a different scope of vibrations are idea broadcasts. If your radio receiver is hooked up and turned on, you may get a selection from the radio broadcast multitude, or a jumble, or you can "cut out." Ideas are analogous to thought broadcasts. They are not the thoughts themselves any more than the radio broadcast is the music or speech, etc. which energized it and set it on the air. The mind "tuned on a certain wave-length" is stimulated by an idea "on that wave-length," and if it meets with a receptive control condition, it instigates thought. Such thought is not identical with the thought which "broadcast the idea" because it is modified by the many individual and personal qualities of the receiving mind. Also the resultant thought processes energize new ideas or modified ideas in this causal sphere.

Now how about thought, information, and knowledge? The act of thinking involves several factors; the stimulating idea, the mental processes and acumen of the thinker, with admixtures of what the thinker believes to be fact as retained in his own memory. Having arrived at this stage it may lead to action. Knowledge is the quality developed in a thinker by acting or living in accordance with the thoughts.

Information has somewhat the relation to knowledge that an idea has to thought. Knowledge is the quality developed in an individual by thought and experience, using it, in other words. In spite of the fact that it is a commonly used phrase, there is not available to the many the knowledge of an individual. The best that an individual can do in an attempt to "pass on his knowledge" is to set the substance of that knowledge into an available form truly designated information. Thus it would be proper to say, for instance, "Here we have tabulated the information from the Knowledge of the Ancient Ones." Information is tabulated thought, or thoughts.

Wisdom and knowledge are often confused. Knowledge may be on any of the several planes of consciousness, physical, mental, spiritual, or combinations of them. Wisdom can be considered as bearing the same general relation to knowledge as knowledge bears to thought, but it further implies a helpful and constructive aspect rather than the merely general aspect of development.

To some individuals study of a subject seems merely to imply a memorizing of information (the tabulated knowledge and teachings of and by others) and not the full student-ideal, to make knowledge for themselves by putting the absorbed information to use in living. The writer once knew a man who had gained a marvelous fund of memorized information as to "Common Law." He had made of himself almost a cross-indexed reference library of legal information so that a carefully worded question as to a legal decision or court finding would be answered accurately and usually with references. However, he had so concentrated on the memorizing function that he had apparently atrophied his judicial and legal reasoning powers and would be almost helpless as a legal practitioner. He could not reason out the merits of a case for himself. Scope of legal information marvelous, legal knowledge nil, legal wisdom not even started. Students of Theosophy make a constant effort to enrich the mind by thought and information, but also to actively use that enrichment to gain knowledge by action in living, and thus develop the Wisdom which illuminates the living.

One of the reasons why thought, information, and knowledge are confused in use so much is explained by the Theosophical teachings about reincarnation. Each one of us has lived many lives and presumably has gained considerable knowledge in each of those embodied lives. We are taught that in the period between incarnations on this planet the experience and knowledge gained becomes assimilated by the consciousness centers of our human composite organism affected. Thus on a new re-embodiment the ego seldom has memory of the knowledge in the mental organism, but when information bearing on that knowledge, or similar knowledge comes to

the attention of such an individual, the perception is reawakened and one feels immediately the correctness of it. In other words the thought is awakened into knowledge without much actual experience (in the currently manifested life) because there is a memory to a considerable degree of the former conscious knowledge. Truth really begins to be realized when it becomes knowledge, tending to greater and greater perfection of realization as the knowledge approaches Wisdom.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FORWARD LOOK — *Hugh Percy Leonard*

Not as though I had already attained, neither was already perfect, . . . but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before . . . I press toward the mark. — *Philip.*, iii, 13

Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences. Look not behind or thou art lost. — *The Voice of the Silence*

Let us turn the leaf upon the blotted record of the past and make a fairer set of entries in the open journal of today. The past is country we have traveled through, and now our whole concern is how we may best get through the day's march. We might, of course, sit down and engage in retrospect, tracing those points at which we wandered from the path, glancing backwards at the mud-holes in which we were almost foundered; but such a futile waste of time and effort is not for the Pilgrim of Eternity. Our present position is the resultant of all our past, and our future opportunity. Forward, march!

The pathway of advance must of necessity be strewn with failures, because in acquiring the use of new powers we must often fall short of success. But that we now have the use of these powers is all that matters, and why should we pause and conjure up again the vanished specters of the days gone by? The waters of oblivion may be left to do their cleansing task upon the dismal memoranda of the past that we have left behind.

All final success is the culmination of hosts of failures, and on the stepping-stones of our abortive efforts we rise to higher levels of attainment. The eternal Now is that cross-section of eternal duration in which alone we live and work. The water which has flowed downstream has lost its opportunity to turn the wheel. Now is the only time we have in which to do our work. Why should we ever turn our minds to view the dead and buried past?

Not that the past is really dead, for all that, because each weak surrender, every mood of self-indulgence, still lives on in the man of the present. We are the past of ourselves and it survives in our character of today. That past can be transmuted by the steady flame of our aspiring mind into the purest gold; but this alchemical process demands a continuous heat, a steady fire that never fails to radiate its genial glow. The magic of the spiritual will is operative only in the living present, and its field of action does not run backwards into the past.

Failure is natural, normal and unavoidable, and however much it seems complete, is not disaster, so long as the indomitable will to try again lives on.

One fatal result of brooding over days gone by is that in the process regret is developed, a mental sorrow for past misdoing. This gray, depressing, interior fog is actually reckoned as being desirable and distinctly meritorious by certain sectaries, and unfortunate babies are afflicted by being christened "Dolores," as though there were something praiseworthy and attractive about those who are prostrated with grief on account of their load of ancient sin! Regret is a motion of the mind and hence an energy, and all our energy must be conserved and husbanded if we would ever reach the goal we have proposed. By generating gloomy clouds of sorrow and repentance we tend to obscure and darken the common atmosphere of thought in which we live, and by perpetually dwelling on our "sins" we actually infuse them with an added wave of life and almost invite their repetition.

Ideals in the mind are often considered to be unsubstantial things, while our specific failures to act up to them are seen to stand out as enduring monuments of our incompetence. As a matter of fact, it is these supposedly ephemeral ideals that are the permanent, foundation factors in our lives, while our failures may be compared to the waste clippings on the floor of the workshop, to be cast into the crucible and used again in fresh attempts. Let us then, hold fast to our floating ideals and pour fresh life into them by the brooding heat of our aspiration.

They are only unsubstantial in so far as we have failed to give them a place in our lives. On their own plane they are the raw material of a better life to be: they are positive and prophetic and absolutely compel their own fulfilment.

Forward, then, upon the track that leads to a future all unknown!
Repeated failures must, indeed, attend us on the onward march, but each advancing step is cheered by the tones of an eternal hope.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL VIEWPOINTS — *Beatrice Stewart Jones*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

One of the most puzzling things to the majority of people is the seeming injustice in the world. We are taught that an all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving God is guiding our destinies. Then we see races of people less intelligent perhaps than we, living in the most primitive manner, without proper shelter, and in some cases having very little, sometimes no, food. They may be in their limited way well-meaning and living up to what to them are their highest ideals, but because their ways are not our ways they are ruled by the more advanced races, with little regard for their needs, and with no understanding of why they are occupying this particular station in life. We may be smugly grateful we are not in their condition, but we do not often wonder why, or do anything constructive to help them. In our own race there is the same apparent injustice. We see one person enjoying ease of living, excellent health, and all that makes for what we suppose to be the ultimate in happiness. With all these material advantages the same person may be utterly selfish, oppressing the less fortunate and neglecting to conform even to an approach to a decent moral life. On the other hand we find those fine, generous, loving individuals with a helping hand outstretched to all in need. True, they may not have money or other material things to bestow, but one can feel the heart-warming glow that their very presence brings to all who come in contact with them — and we wonder again if there is not much more than just this earth-life, where chance seems to play so large a part.

An elderly man once said that it seemed such a pity to die when he was just beginning to learn how to live. What a consolation an understanding of Reincarnation would have been to this man: to begin his next earth-life here where he left off the last one, with past lessons

learned, new ones to work out, and with the knowledge that he would have a chance to correct the past mistakes, if not in the life just beginning, then in some future life, when conditions were right for the soul's growth.

Reincarnation and Karma, those twin doctrines, are two of the most profound and sublime in the Theosophical teachings. As we sow, so shall we reap; no one is to blame for our lot in life but ourselves; there is no trusting to blind chance or luck; it is we who have made the blunders and we, and no one else, who will have to correct them. In this cheering knowledge we take consolation and hope. The operation of absolute, immutable Law is so much more satisfying to the heart and the mind than the old idea of a deity subject to many of the faults of ordinary mortals. It teaches us to depend on ourselves, and to draw from those inner selves strength, and a love for and better understanding of all living things.

Reincarnation is not to be confused with Transmigration of Souls — that is, the belief that we may come back, especially if we have not been as good as we should have been, in some animal form. This probably originated in the real teaching being so veiled by those who really knew the truth that the masses understood it to mean this; just as so many Christian sects accept literally what is really allegorical or symbolic, and thus often pervert what Jesus really taught.

In all these perverted teachings there is perhaps a grain of truth. There is such a grain contained in the transmigration-of-souls theory, for originally we progressed from the mineral, vegetable, and animal to the human form. But after attaining the latter there is no return. "Once a man, always a man."

It is often said by the unthinking that this teaching does not appeal to them because they do not remember their past lives, or their friends and loved ones; but after careful study it will be found that the parts of those lives worth remembering have been retained in our consciousness and we are constantly aware of them through our intuitions, our likes and our dislikes. A most beautiful statement

appears in *The Esoteric Tradition*, by Dr. G. de Purucker:

Thus are hearts reunited on Earth which have formerly loved each other on Earth, and it is on Earth that minds which have genuinely understood each other meet again in sympathetic understanding and intercourse. For verily, those who have loved once will meet again. In fact they cannot do otherwise. Love is the most magnetic thing in the Universe; love attracts love; its whole essence implies and signifies union and reunion, reuniting, bringing together anew.

And on page 651 of the same work the subject is continued:

It is through and by means of reincarnation that human souls meet each other again, come together again, for their weal or for their woe, as the case may be. One looks into the eyes of a stranger, that is, a stranger to this body, in this life, and the eyes, intuitively as it were, see an old friend. Instant comprehension, quick understanding, and magnetic sympathy are there.

One could say that it was because the person met was worthy of our love; that he was of exceptionally fine character, and we recognised these qualities in him or her, but such may not be the case. It is possible that he may not be as admirable as others whom we meet and yet towards whom we feel indifference or even antipathy. For we bring over our dislikes as well as our likings for the persons we have lived close to in former lives.

Even now we are building our future karma, good or bad, or good and bad, and we shall have an accounting to give in the future; though this should not be regarded as reward or punishment, but as lessons to be learned. Some perhaps will be more difficult to learn than others, but the laws of nature are always kind, even when to our limited understanding they may seem harsh.

As stated in *The Esoteric Tradition*, three-quarters of the peoples of the earth believe in some form of reincarnation, and it seems that it is only in the Occident that we have lost sight, for a time, of the teaching. It is

Theosophy that has again brought it, and its companion-doctrine Karman, into the West, where they are rapidly becoming familiar to a great many thoughtful men and women.

Not until the revival of Theosophy — it can be termed a revival, because the Master K. H. says in one of his letters: "Theosophy is no new candidate for the world's attention, but only the restatement of Principles which have been recognised from the very infancy of mankind" — and its teachings were placed where the inquiring mind could have access to them, has there been a satisfactory explanation of all the discords and ills of the human race, where chance has seemed to rule us against our wills.

Of course, the Guardians of this Wisdom have always in all ages preserved it, but not until the last few years has it been given out freely and generously. It has been stated that we are more intellectual than spiritual, but we are slowly arriving at a turning-point. This will not be a hindrance to us for any great length of time, because we are becoming intelligent enough to be dissatisfied with the old order, and are beginning to think a little more deeply and a little more seriously about ourselves and our relation to the Universe.

As we begin to reach out for something better, in answer to our questionings we shall find an abundance of knowledge waiting for us. Anyone having access to a public library can read the literature of the Theosophical Society, which contains truths that formerly were given only to a chosen few. In former times one *earned the right* to study these things, and the earning was not so simple a process as walking to a library and selecting a book.

We grow into Theosophy by degrees; it is like picking up scattered threads that have led back ages and ages to a time when we were not so material and knew these teachings well. We can fill our small parts in life cheerfully, hopefully, and unselfishly, leaving the future to take care of itself. We can use our energies for making the most of the present. This quotation from Tsiang Samdup, in Talbot Mundy's *Om*, expresses the idea perfectly:

We live in the Eternal Now, and it is Now that we create our destiny. It follows, that to grieve over the past is useless and to make plans for the future a waste of time. There is only one ambition that is good, and that is: so to live Now that none may weary of life's emptiness and none may have to do the task we leave undone.

The Theosophical Forum

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE — *Bertha Walker*

There is not a single move we can make in life — no trip abroad, no action within the walls of one's own home — that is not invested with inner significance. Those who are unconscious of it are often battered cruelly, and impinged upon by the same kind of experience from outside, until they learn. Those who meet it consciously, with some inkling of inner Purpose, may be battered also at times, but they learn more quickly, discover its hidden meaning, and begin to mold outer circumstance in accordance with the highest light they are capable of perceiving within. Both grow — but the latter less painfully. Both are on the way to assuming their divine creativeness in relation to materials instead of being slaves, but the latter have awakened a positive glow of will and love, and have begun to cooperate with that One who stands back of, within, beside, and with him as "representative" of his Inner God — until his own spark of that Light which is his source comes fully to birth within him, and shines as a star.

Our own ignorance and stubbornness — no matter how sincere we may be — is all that keeps us from hearing the Voice of the Master more clearly; that, plus the already existent physical veil. The Return is a process of rending the veils, and infinitely much is accomplished when Love, the Light, begins to stir within; because Love itself sustains the Universe and one works with a force of incalculable attraction and power.

Much thought has been given lately to radio-activity. Really that is what man is destined to become — radio-active. "Let your Light shine." Man makes truth so complex, when it is so simple. It is pure when first given out; then man adds words to the Word, piles on dogmas and creeds because his finite mind cannot conceive that anything simple and easy to understand can be a spiritual truth. It could be put into a word, yet no word or words of human language can express it. It must be felt —

experienced. One must *be* it. That is why it is said that man treads the Path only to become the Path itself. And so one might say the great work for man is to become a shining light of God, in every cell of his being, whatever the body he works in — for few can or will accomplish it in a single life.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 310-315

Question 310. *Why is it so difficult for us to get authentic records of the lives of the great Teachers and Philosophers of the world? There always seems to be so much obscurity and uncertainty about them.*

G.de P. — Let me ask whether the very obscurity that surrounds the life and work of these men such as Cagliostro, Apollonius of Tyana, Saint-Germain, and Jesus, of whom no authentic records whatsoever exist, does not itself prove, in view of the tremendous interest, fascination, that their lives have aroused, that they were men beyond the ordinary? They come, no one knows whence. They live and do their work, no one knows how. They succeed, and they disappear from among men, and no one knows when or where they die. The same can be said of all four men I have mentioned.

What, after all, is of value in the lives of such great men? The place of their birth or the place of their passing? The record of their lives such as we have it? What makes the story of Jesus so dear to the human heart? It is not the fact that he is supposed to have been born and to have lived in one place, and supposed to have died elsewhere. It is not even the so-called historic record of his life as we have it — in a most unhistoric way! embroidered with legend — but what he taught, what he did, the life of the man as it appears, as it has made its appeal to human hearts.

Personally I think that there is something intentional in all this. You know, among the early Christians there was a sect who were called by their opponents the Docetists, in other words "believers in appearances," who taught that it really was not the authentic Jesus who died on the Cross as one crucified, but an appearance. "Heretics" the orthodox called them. Yet I wonder!

Of course it would be perfectly lovely to know all about Saint-Germain and Cagliostro and Jesus and Apollonius of Tyana, but the trouble is

that the records are not there. That is the point. I do not mean to say that it is wrong to want to know these personal things, but they do not exist on record; they have been hid or withdrawn. Consequently they cannot be found; and any history purporting to be a record of their lives in my judgment is largely fabrication.

Question 311. *In the Theosophical philosophy we often read about the Monadic Essence; and on the other hand we often read about Atma-Buddhi. What is the relation between the Monadic Essence and the principles which H. P. B. mentions: Atma-Buddhi? (From The Hague Club)*

G. de P. — Atman and Buddhi together form what we Theosophists call the Monad. When the Manasic fruitage of past lives is "added" to it, then we have what is called the Reincarnating Ego. Atman means "self; and, as a spark comes from a fire, so likewise is the Atman which inspirits a man, a spark from the Fire of Universal Consciousness — the Paramatman or Brahmatman to use Sanskrit terms; and that Essence which works within the Monad, i. e., Atma-Buddhi, is the Monadic Essence, the heart of the Monad. To put the matter in other words: Atman is the Self; but even though it belongs to the divine part of the constitution of a human being, nevertheless because this human entity is a manifested entity — however great the manifestation is — the Atman is, as it were, limited and therefore is not absolute infinity. But that Essence which is in Atman and which is the essential being of the Atman, is the kosmic Paramatman. The Monadic Essence is, as it were, a divine Atom or divine particle of the Paramatman. Therefore the Monadic Essence is the heart of Atman, the core of it.

Question 312. *What attitude does the Theosophical Society take in regard to the taking of alcohol and intoxicating beverages? Are members of the T. S. required to make any declaration regarding this? And does membership in the T. S. depend upon such attitude?*

J. H. Fussell — First it should be stated that the sole prerequisite of membership in the Theosophical Society is an acceptance of the principle of universal brotherhood. Any law-abiding man or woman who accepts this fundamental principle may apply and may be

admitted into our ranks. Nor do we issue any questionnaire as to the belief or attitude on the question above referred to, or indeed on any questions, whether political, social, or otherwise. It may be said, however, that, generally speaking, Theosophists take no alcoholic beverages; and this is true in general of the members of the Theosophical Society throughout the world. No inquiry, as stated, is made of anyone as to whether he takes this attitude or not, but it is found that as one studies Theosophy and comes to learn something about the composite nature of man, he comes to have no desire for alcohol, and indeed to see that it is harmful, and a deterrent in respect to true spiritual growth.

It may be said furthermore that while we have great respect and indeed admiration for the efforts of noble men and women to lessen and as far as possible remove the evils that are so much in vogue today, the position that is taken in the Theosophical Society is a basic one, namely, that the most effective work is to get at the very roots of the causes; and that means that the hearts and minds of men must be changed, which can be accomplished only by presenting to them a true philosophy of life such as is contained in the religion-philosophy-science of Theosophy.

Question 313. *In a review of "The Esoteric Tradition" in "The O. E. Library Critic," February, 1936, I see a criticism of the statement that "the lower mammalia are the offspring of men." Why does Dr. Stokes consider this a "bizarre theory"?*

C. J. Ryan — There is nothing bizarre to well-informed students of Theosophy in the statement that "the lower mammalia are the offspring of men" or which, as Dr. Stokes thinks, will discourage really worth-while Theosophy among people who have some knowledge of science, etc. It looks as if he would suppress one of H. P. Blavatsky's important teachings for fear that Mrs. Grundy, in the guise of a Darwinian scientist, would not approve. He speaks of the "cathartic effect" produced on him by this "bizarre theory" which, he says "Dr. de Purucker, like some others" believes. The uninformed reader would

naturally suppose that the "others" were of little account, and might be surprised to learn the fact that they include H. P. Blavatsky and her Masters who together wrote the book in which this teaching occurs — *The Secret Doctrine*. See Volume II, pages 81, 168, 197, 693, 712-4, etc.

The authoritative position of *The Secret Doctrine* has been emphasized by *The O. E. Library Critic* for many years when defending Theosophy against alleged perversions and *suppressions* (see many "deadly double-columns"), and it is certain that the mammalia "heresy" is not being foisted on the readers of *The Esoteric Tradition* by any unauthorized person who might be regarded as speaking independently "as the voice of God," but that it is based on the same high authority as the other teachings of Theosophy. It is not a "pipe-dream," and it is not "overdone." It is an integral part of the philosophy, and it explains some of the great enigmas that face modern biology. Those who cannot understand it are perfectly at liberty to let it alone, and confine their attention to other departments of Theosophy: they will be the only losers. As for the more materially inclined biologists, nothing we can say will affect them one way or the other. The appeal of Theosophy is to those who are beginning to realize that there is an "occult" side to Nature, and that the superficial, mechanistic hypotheses, however plausible and ingenious, are unsatisfactory. No one teaches the absurdity that *man, as he is today*, gave birth to animals such as whales, tigers, and rats! The mammalian problem requires for its solution an understanding of the enormous evolutionary changes that "man" has undergone during the previous "Rounds" of development as well as during the earlier, more or less ethereal, races of this Fourth Round. Scientists are very slowly beginning to discover the existence of the astral plane, and when they establish it to their own satisfaction they will have no difficulty in comprehending the importance of the evolutionary teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. We decline, however, to obscure the teachings for which intuitive minds are waiting, in order to please anyone, however learned in the ephemeral hypotheses of the day.

In regard to this matter it will be instructive to learn William Q. Judge's

views. He turns out to be one of the "others" with whom Dr. Stokes associates Dr. de Purucker — a pretty good company it would seem. In Mr. Judge's *Theosophical Forum*, No. 45, March 1893, he writes at considerable length in answer to a question as to how man can have "appeared before the animals," the problem we are now discussing. We can quote only a few lines, and hope that they will not shock our scientific friends. He says:

. . . in this round all the lower kingdoms in respect to their outer covering or materiality get all that coating from what man casts off. This is also clearly taught and not an inference of mine. . . . Let those of us who accept the statements of the Masters remember that they have certified in writing that *The Secret Doctrine* is the triple production of those two great beings and H. P. Blavatsky. Such a certificate they have given of no other book. Their certificate will not be accepted by outsiders nor by that small class of Theosophists who loudly proclaim they will accept nothing that does not accord with their reason; but one is puzzled to know how their reason can work in respect to matters such as these about which the Adepts alone can know the truth. As for myself, I find the teaching quite consistent with the whole of the philosophy and explanatory of natural facts; for the rest I am willing to believe all the parts I cannot yet verify and to wait a little longer.

From that and many other passages by W. Q. Judge — a most level-headed man — - we glean that he was not afraid of the impression that such a "bizarre" hypothesis might make on inquirers!

Question 314. *When the inevitable changes peculiar to the New Cycle now dawning come upon us, will they cause chaos only to the extent that we fail to prepare ourselves for their advent, or as we oppose them?*

Alice D. Peirce — This question seems to imply that changes concomitant with the New Era upon which humanity is entering, are yet to come upon us. The fact is that very great psychic, mental, and spiritual changes are now in progress and have been increasingly

evident for several decades past. Cycles do not terminate abruptly, one giving place to another at an exact point of time. Nature works less mechanically. As twilight intervenes between the darkness of night and full day, so with all cyclic processes there is a period of overlapping, and a gradual changing of the old order to give place to the new.

Times of transition are critical periods, accompanied by unrest, uncertainty, and chaos more or less pronounced. Down the centuries cyclic changes can be traced in every nation, some of minor effect restricted to a limited area, others far-reaching and of cataclysmic proportions. The distressing symptoms of our present transition-era bear out the prophetic forecast of H. P. Blavatsky that one of the major crises in human events would accompany the closing of several important cycles near the end of last century, resulting in world-wide disturbances in this century.

Assuredly, the chaos now confronting us would have been greatly mitigated had men and women been better prepared to meet the crisis understandingly. Except in the teachings of Theosophy, introduced by H. P. Blavatsky, there was little in the religious, scientific, or scholastic training of last century to provide adequate preparation for the new conditions to be met. Difficult and bewildering as a transition-period such as ours seems, encouragement lies in the fact that it offers greatly increased opportunity for growth in knowledge and understanding. To oppose the on-sweep of evolutionary progress is folly indeed. To best prepare for the new conditions of our changing world, we are taught to unfetter the imagination, to visualize a saner and more spiritual way of life, and above all, to put into practice in everyday affairs the old, familiar Golden Rule given by every World-Teacher without exception, as the essential panacea for the ills with which mankind has been afflicted in all ages in which it has been neglected — conspicuously in our own.

Question 315. *If we are all god-sparks, what is it that engenders the differentiation of minds in the first place, the differentiation of environment; — that which caused one man to choose right and another*

wrong in the first steps of his earth-life?

Irene Ponsonby. — Do you not think that the answer lies in an understanding of the tenets: "All things are composite," and "No two blades of grass are identical"? The center of being of every part of the composite man is a god-spark, but the manifested man is an individualized egoic expression of all his unified selves, and since no two composites are identical we find differentiation in their manifestation.

One can readily imagine, how, even were it possible to eliminate the physical and psychological vehicles, and to limit man to four conjoined egoic centers, there would still "be war in heaven," for each center is evolving, which means growing and learning on its own, while it functions as part of the composite entity it forms. Thus a man takes poison: even his mind may not endorse his action, but in spite of the objection it and his body manifest, the poison is swallowed and they are destroyed; but, to close the circle, the man's future choice and environment will be largely affected by the resulting damage to his mental, moral and physical life-atoms.

Immediately the god-spark enters manifestation it uses the life-atoms on all planes of being which belonged to it in a past life. These have received his imprint, the molding of his will and desire, and reacting to that impress, form his being on all the planes, visible and invisible for the present incarnation — hence his present choice and environment.

Going still further back, which is possibly what the querist means — to the choice before reincarnation made by the Reincarnating Ego; that choice must likewise be the individual god-spark's response to the stimuli of the forces of attraction and repulsion of past lives, for is not each Ego an individualized expression of its Monad?

F. M. Dadd. — While it is true that we are all one in essence, that every "mind" is a ray of the Cosmic Mind, yet differentiation is one of the laws of being. Each ray or god-spark contains within itself its own essential characteristic, its own individuality or swabhava, that which

makes it different from all other god-sparks. At no time in evolution are they all exactly alike. Indeed the purpose of the great Life-cycle known as life and death and again life and death repeatedly, in different bodies, is to unroll or express by means of the inner urge at the heart of each entity that which is latent within it, this same essential individuality.

At the close of a Mahamanvantara, when each ray, with its added experience of self-consciousness, is indrawn again to its parent Monad, this individuality is not lost or annihilated, but merely sinks into latency in the larger consciousness of the greater being of which the ray is a part. And when the life-urge awakens again, forth will come that same ray again into manifestation, still itself, still essentially one with, yet different from, all other selves.

As regards our choice of right and wrong — this is a matter partly of karman, of the seeds of action we have sown into our character in the past, thus building step by step, act by act, a propensity to choose "right" or "wrong." But it is also a matter of freewill, for no matter what trend of action we find ourselves enmeshed in, through karmic threads woven in the past, we have the free-will at any moment, not to change outward conditions, but to choose as to how we will meet them, thus setting in motion new karmic trends. So that the key to the answer to this question rests for each one within himself.

The Theosophical Forum

SUNRISE THOUGHTS ABOUT H. P. B. — *M. M. T.*

To state our debt to H. P. Blavatsky is to enumerate the baffling questions which we were faced with fifty years ago, and then to give the adequate answers to these questions which are to be found in the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, which were restored by her to the world towards the end of the last century.

Dreary work it was, before H. P. B. came, to try to understand the Universe. The crumbling of long-accepted religious beliefs regarding man and the world and God left many of us agnostics. Scientific evidence of the evolution of physical forms left us isolated from the inner spiritual field, seemingly unrelated to Divinity. The imperfection of the purely materialistic theory wounded our aesthetic sense. The lack of any satisfactory basis for ethics stung our moral natures to a kind of desperate activity. Scientific study whetted our desire for comprehension of the Plan of Life, and — thanks be to the Cosmic Beings who *are* the Law — the intuitions of determined seekers for Truth were at the same time quickened for response to any great idea, any teaching that could reveal the true significance of love and duty and service, any Plan of Life that could show Man's relation to Divinity and the Universe.

From the Hierarchy of Compassion, whose duty it is to keep alive man's spiritual intuitions and at cyclic intervals to impart to man the truth concerning the cosmos, then came, through H. P. B the chosen Messenger of that Hierarchy, the startling announcement that it is to the prehistoric past we must look for a comprehensive Plan of Life, one covering mental and spiritual development as well as physical. Here, said H. P. B., you could find the history of the origin of man, of the evolution of the race — in fact a formula of evolution which can be applied to anything, from the tiniest atom to a Solar System, etc.

To all students who have the spirit of loyalty H. P. B.'s rehabilitation of

the Ancients has been a priceless gift of Truth. The retrospective view of the life of mankind established the unity of history. The Archaic Wisdom-teaching concerning the divine ancestry of man added conviction to the natural protest against the ultra-materialistic theory of man's origin. The conception that man, like the greater entity, the Universe, is a Divine Being, who has chosen to clothe himself in bodies of gradually increasing materiality, that Man, an essentially spiritual being, has *descended* to the present encasement of his inner Self, was a thunderbolt to the materialist who claims that Man has ascended from animal ancestry, but it makes a strong appeal to those who have never denied the innermost Self.

The supplementary teaching, that Man in the future is to ascend through cycles, in which both he and the planet he inhabits are less grossly material in form, to his pristine divine state plus the self-consciousness gained from his long experience, completes a picture of the destiny of mankind that inspires courage and deep Self-respect. What a contrast to the one-life idea of man, without any knowledge of Humanity's origins or of the complete cycle of its life, speeding towards a head-on collision with eternity — or with what we must know is impossible — annihilation. It is to H. P. B. that we owe the restoration of the knowledge of the sublime spiritual consciousness that has been, and is to be for those who make the grade.

Is it conceivable that any period of life, any stage of development, passed away utterly unrecorded? H. P. B. states that Earth has many secrets and that the hidden places still hold the complete record. Archaeological findings yearly indicate that the past has many surprising revelations concerning races more spiritually awake than we are, more aware of the cosmic verities.

One channel by which the archaic history and wisdom reach even us is by way of myth and tradition. Never had there been so worldwide a survey of these as that made by her. Never had these precious old stories been glorified by having their original, unadulterated cosmic significance pointed out. Verily H. P. B. supplied a key to all mythology,

showing them all to be offsprings of the World-Myth, which is the story of the Universe and Man. Never had there been such a wholesale cracking of the anthropomorphic molds that concealed the primeval truths at the root of all the great religions of the world. In uncovering the identity of the wisdom-teaching from which all originally sprang did H. P. B. achieve mighty demolition of barriers between man and man. And in bringing forward the truth that all the Great Teachers of East and West and North and South, all the Founders of the World-Religions, come from the same source, the Hierarchy of Compassion, H. P. B. instituted a reintegration of religions which will in time result in far-reaching reconciliation between those of different faiths.

The reintegration of all religions in the primeval truth — and the reintegration in the ancient Wisdom-Science of the results of scientific analysis up to the year 1888, when H. P. B.'s *The Secret Doctrine* was published, these meet the need now openly expressed for a cosmogonical religion, a synthesis of the facts concerning the inner and outer realms of man's nature and of universal Nature, the reverent acceptance of which leads to a new level of understanding, a new order of life on Earth. With this synthesis man can learn to "live in harmony with a scientific vision of the universe."

It was H. P. B.'s signal loyalty to Those who have reached the higher levels of the Ladder of Life, who have won to the Hierarchy of Compassion, that brought back to the Western world the sense of nearness to the Elder Brothers, a revival of the sacred relation of Master and Disciple. It was the diamond fiber of her loyalty that enabled her to transmit the archaic wisdom that has helped us to see in Symbolism not an anthropomorphic sign-manual but the shorthand of metaphysics, the science of the unseen universe. It was her Diamond Heart that brought to discouraged Humanity the message that our planet is a well-guarded Home, bright unseen Intelligences and Silent Watchers in and over all; and is also one department of the great Cosmic University, where Man can learn the science of life and the key to spiritual advance on his pathway throughout the Circulations of the Cosmos.

THE ORIGINAL PROGRAMME OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY (1) (2)

[1886]

In order, to leave no room for equivocation, the members of the T. S. have to be reminded of the origin of the Society in 1875. Sent to the U. S. of America in 1873 for the purpose of organizing a group of workers on a psychic plane, two years later the writer received orders from her Master and Teacher to form the nucleus of a regular Society whose objects were broadly stated as follows:

1. Universal Brotherhood,
2. No distinction to be made by the member between races, creeds, or social positions, but every member had to be judged and dealt by on his personal merits;
3. To study the philosophies of the East — those of India chiefly, presenting them gradually to the public in various works that would interpret exoteric religions in the light of esoteric teachings;
4. To oppose materialism and theological dogmatism in every possible way, by demonstrating the existence of occult forces unknown to science, in nature, and the presence of psychic and spiritual powers in man, trying, at the same time to enlarge the views of the Spiritualists by showing them that there are other, many other agencies at work in the production of phenomena besides the "Spirits" of the dead. Superstition had to be exposed and avoided; and occult forces, *beneficent and maleficent* — ever surrounding us and manifesting their presence in various ways — demonstrated to the best of our ability.

Such was the programme in its broad features. The two chief Founders were not told what they had to do, how they had to bring about and quicken the growth of the Society and results desired; nor had they any

definite ideas given them concerning the outward organization — all this being left entirely with themselves. Thus, as the undersigned had no capacity for such work as the mechanical formation and administration of a Society, the management of the latter was left in the hands of Col. H. S. Olcott, then and there elected by the primitive founders and members — *President for life*. But if the two Founders were not told *what they had to do*, they were distinctly instructed about *what they should never do*, what they had to avoid, and what the Society should never become. Church organizations, Christian and Spiritual sects were shown as the future contrasts to our Society. (3) To make it clearer —

1. The Founders had to exercise all their influence *to oppose selfishness of any kind*, by insisting upon sincere, fraternal feelings among the Members — at least outwardly; working for it to bring about a spirit of unity and harmony, the great diversity of creeds notwithstanding; expecting and demanding from the Fellows, a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings; mutual help in the research of truths in every domain — moral or physical — and even, in daily life.
2. They had to oppose in the strongest manner possible anything approaching *dogmatic faith and fanaticism* — belief in the *infallibility* of the Masters, or even in the very existence of our invisible Teachers, having to be checked from the first. On the other hand, as a great respect for the private views and creeds of every member was demanded, any Fellow criticising the faith or belief of another Fellow, hurting his feelings, or showing a reprehensible self-assertion, unasked (mutual friendly advices were a duty unless declined) — such a member incurred expulsion. The greatest spirit of free research untrammelled by anyone or anything, had to be encouraged.

Thus, for the first year the members of the T. Body who representing

every class in Society as every creed and belief — Christian clergymen, Spiritualists, Freethinkers, Mystics, Masons and Materialists — lived and met under these rules in peace and friendship. There were two or three expulsions for *slander* and *backbiting*. The rules, however imperfect in their tentative character, were strictly enforced and respected by the members. The original \$5, initiation fee, was soon abolished as *inconsistent with the spirit of the Association*: members had enthusiastically promised to support the Parent Society and defray the expenses of *machines for experiments, books, the fees of the Recording Secretary, (5) etc., etc.* This was *Reform No. I*. Three months after, Mr. H. Newton, the Treasurer, a rich gentleman of New York, showed that no one had paid anything or helped him to defray the current expenses for the Hall of meetings, stationery, printing, etc., and that he had to carry the burden of those expenses *alone*. He went on for a short time longer, then — *he resigned as Treasurer*. It was the President Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, who had to pay henceforth for all. He did so for over 18 months. The "fee" was re-established, before the Founders left for India with the two English delegates — now their mortal enemies; but the money collected was for the Arya Samaj of Aryavarta with which Society the Theosophical became affiliated. It is the Prest Founder, who paid the enormous travelling expenses from America to India, and those of the installation in Bombay, and who supported the two delegates out of his own pocket for nearly 18 months. When he had no more money left, nor the Corr. Secretary either — a resolution was passed that the "initiation fee" sums should go towards supporting the Head Quarters.

Owing to the rapid increase of the Society in India, the present *Rules* and *Statutes* grew out. They are not the outcome of the deliberate thought and whim of the Prest Founder, but the result of the yearly meetings of the General Council at the Anniversaries. If the members of that G. C. have framed them so as to give a wider authority to the Pres. Founder, it was the result of their absolute confidence in him, in his devotion and love for the Society, and not at all — *as implied* in "A Few Words" — a proof of *his love for power and authority*. Of this, however,

later on.

It was never denied that the Organization of the T. S. was *very* imperfect. *Errare humanum est*. But, if it can be shown that the President has done what he could under the circumstances and in the best way he knew how — no one, least of all a theosophist, can charge him with the sins of the whole community, as now done. From the founders down to the humblest member, the Society is composed of imperfect mortal men — not gods. This was always claimed by its leaders. "He who feels *without sin*, let him cast the first stone." It is the duty of every Member of the Council to offer advice and to bring for the consideration of the whole body any incorrect proceedings. One of the *plaintiffs* (6) is a Councillor. Having never used his privileges as one, in the matter of the complaints now proffered — and thus, having no excuse to give that his just representations were not listened to, he by bringing out publicly what he had to state first privately — sins against Rule XII. The whole paper now reads like a defamatory aspersion, being full of untheosophical and unbrotherly insinuations — which the writers thereof could never have had in view.

This Rule XIIth was one of the first and the wisest. It is by neglecting to have it enforced when most needed, that the President Founder has brought upon himself the present penalty. (7) It is his too great indulgence and unwise carelessness that have led to all such charges of abuse of power, love of authority, show, of vanity, etc., etc. Let us see how far it may have been deserved.

As shown for 12 years the Founder has toiled *almost alone* in the interests of the Society and the general good — hence, not his own, and, the only complaint he was heard to utter was, that *he was left no time for self-development and study*. The results of this too just complaint are, that those for whom he toiled, are the first to fling at him the reproach of being ignorant of certain Hindu terms, of using one term for another, for inst. of having applied the word "Jivanmukta" to a Hindu chela, on one occasion! The crime is a terrible one, indeed . . . We know of "*chelas*," who being Hindus, are sure never to confuse such

well known terms in *their* religion; but who, on the other hand, pursue Jivanmuktship and the highest theosophical Ethics through the royal road of selfish ambition, lies, slander, ingratitude and backbiting. Every road leads to Rome; this is evident; and there is such a thing in Nature as "*Mahatma*"-*Dugpas* . . . It would be desirable for the cause of theosophy and truth, however, were all the critics of our President in general, less learned, yet found reaching more to the level of his all-forgiving good nature, his thorough sincerity and unselfishness; as the rest of the members inclined to lend a willing ear to those, who, like the said "Vicars of Bray" have developed a hatred for the Founders — for reasons unknown.

The above advice is offered to the two Theosophists who have just framed their "Few Words on the Theosophical Organization." That they are not alone in their complaints (which, translated from their diplomatic language look a good deal in the present case like a mere "*querelle d'allemand*") and that the said complaints are in a great measure just, — is frankly admitted. Hence, the writer must be permitted to speak in this, her answer, of theosophy and theosophists in general, instead of limiting the *Reply* strictly to the complaints uttered. There is not the slightest desire to be personal; yet, there has accumulated of late such a mass of incandescent material in the Society, by that eternal friction of precisely such "selfish personalities," that it is certainly wise to try to smother the sparks in time, by pointing out to their true nature.

Demands, and a feeling of necessity for reforms have not originated with the two complainants. They date from several years, and there has never been a question of *avoiding* reforms, but rather a failure of finding such means as would satisfy *all* the theosophists. To the present day, we have yet to find that "wise man" from the East or from the West, who could not only *diagnosicate* the disease in the T. Society, but offer advice and a remedy likewise to cure it. It is easy to write: "It would be out of place to suggest any *specific measures*" (for such reforms, which do seem more difficult to *suggest* than to be vaguely hinted at) — "for no one who has any faith in Brotherhood and in the

power of Truth will fail to perceive what is necessary," — concludes the critic. One may, perhaps, have such faith and yet fail to perceive what is *most* necessary. Two heads are better than one; and if any practical reforms have suggested themselves to our severe judges their refusal to give us the benefit of their discovery would be most *unbrotherly*. So far, however, we have received only the most impracticable suggestions for reforms whenever these came to be specified. The Founders, and the whole Central Society at the Headquarters, for instance, are invited to demonstrate their theosophical natures by living like "fowls in the air and lilies of the field," which neither sow nor reap, toil not, nor spin and "take no thought for the morrow." This being found hardly practicable, even in India, where a man may go about in the garment of an Angel, but has, nevertheless, to pay rent and taxes, another proposition, then a third one and a fourth — each less practicable than the preceding — were offered . . . the unavoidable rejection of which led finally to the criticism now under review.

After carefully reading "A Few Words, etc.," no very acute intellect is needed to perceive that, although no "specific measures" are offered in them, the drift of the whole argument tends but to one conclusion, a kind of syllogism more Hindu than metaphysical. Epitomised, the remarks therein plainly say: "Destroy the bad *results* pointed out by destroying the *causes* that generate them." Such is the apocalyptic meaning of the paper, although both causes and results are made painfully and flagrantly objective and that they may be rendered in this wise: Being shown that the Society is the result and fruition of a bad President; and the latter being the outcome of such an "untheosophically" organized Society — and, its *worse than useless* General Council — "make away with all these *Causes* and the results will disappear"; *i. e.*, the Society will have ceased to exist Is this the heart-desire of the two *true and sincere Theosophists*?

The complaints — "submitted to *those interested in the progress of true Theosophy*" — which seems to mean "theosophy *divorced from the Society*" — may now be noticed in order and answered. They specify the following objections: —

(I). To the language of the *Rules* with regard to the powers invested in the President-Founder by the General Council. This objection seems very right. The sentence . . . The duties of the Council "shall consist in *advising* the P. F. *in regard to all matters referred to them by him*" may be easily construed as implying that on all matters *not* referred to the Council by the Pres.-Founder . . . its members will hold their tongues. The Rules are changed, at any rate they are corrected and altered yearly. This sentence can be taken out. The harm, so far, is not so terrible.

(II). It is shown that many members *ex-officio* whose names are found on the list of the General Council *are not known* to the Convention; that they are, very likely, not even interested in the Society "under their special care"; a body they had joined at one time, then probably *forgotten* its existence in the meanwhile, to withdraw themselves from the Association. The argument implied is very valid. Why not point it out *officially* to the Members residing at, or visiting the Head Quarters, the impropriety of such a parading of names? Yet, in what respect can this administrative blunder, or carelessness, interfere with, or *impede* "the progress of *true* theosophy"? (8)

(III). "The members are appointed by the President Founder, . . it is complained; the Gen. Council only *advises* on what is submitted to it" . . . and "in the meantime that P. F. is empowered *to issue "special orders"* and "provisional rules," on behalf of that ("dummy") Council. (Rule IV, p. 20.) Moreover, it is urged that out of a number of 150 members of the G. Council, a quorum of 5 and even 3 members present, may, should it be found necessary *by the President*, decide upon any question of vital importance, etc., etc., etc.

Such an "untheosophical" *display* of authority, is objected to by Messrs. M. M. Chatterji and A. Gebhard, on the grounds that it leads the Society to *Cesarism*, to "tyranny" and papal infallibility, etc., etc. However right the two complainants may be *in principle* it is impossible to fail seeing, the absurd exaggerations of the epithets "tyrannical authority," of "centralization of power" and a "papal institution" (p. 9) — on page 11,

the President-Founder is shown "issuing *special orders*" from that "centre of Caesarism" — *-which no one is bound to obey, unless he so wishes!* "It is well-known" remarks the principal writer — "that not only individuals but even Branches have refused to pay this (annual) subscription . . . "of . . . two shillings" (p. 11); without any bad effect for themselves, resulting out of it, as appears. Thus, it would seem it is not to a *non-existent* authority that objections should be made, but simply to a vain and useless *display* of power that no one cares for. The policy of issuing "special orders" with such sorry results is indeed objectionable; only, *not on the ground of a tendency to Caesarism*, but simply because it becomes *highly ridiculous*. The undersigned for one, has many a time objected to it, moved however, more by a spirit of *worldly* pride and an *untheosophical* feeling of self-respect than anything like Yogi humility. It is admitted with regret that the world of scoffers and non-theosophists might, if they heard of it, find in it a capital matter for fun. But the real wonder is, how can certain *European* theosophists, who have bravely defied the world to make them wince under any amount of ridicule, once they acted in accordance with the dictates of their conscience and duty — make a crime of what is at the worst a *harmless*, even if ridiculous, bit of vanity; a desire of giving importance — not to the Founder, but to his *Society for which he is ready to die any day*, One kind of ridicule is worth another. The Western theosophist, who for certain magnetic reasons wears his hair long and shows otherwise eccentricity in his dress, will be spared no more than his President, with his "special orders." Only the latter, remaining as kindly disposed and brotherly to the "individual theosophist and even a Branch" — that snub *him* and his "order," by refusing to pay what others do — shows himself *ten-fold more theosophical and true to the principle of Brotherhood*, than the former, who traduces and denounces him in such uncharitable terms, instead of kindly warning him of the bad effect produced.

Unfortunately, it is not those who speak the loudest of virtue and theosophy, who are the best exemplars of both. Few of them, if any, have tried to cast out the beam from their own eye, before they raised their voices against the mote in the eye of a brother. Furthermore, it

seems to have become quite the theosophical rage in these days, to denounce vehemently, yet never to offer to help pulling out *any* such *notes*.

The Society is bitterly criticized for asking every well-to-do theosophist (the poor are exempt from it, from the first) to pay annually two shillings to help defraying the expenses at Head-Quarters. It is denounced as "untheosophical," "unbrotherly," and the admission fee" of £1, is declared no better than "a sale of Brotherhood." In this our "Brotherhood" may be shown again on a far higher level than any other association past or present. The Theosophical Society has never shown the ambitious pretension to outshine in *theosophy* and *brotherliness*, the primitive Brotherhood of Jesus and his Apostles, (9) and that "Organization," besides *asking* and being occasionally refused, helped itself *without asking*, and as a matter of fact in a *real* community of Brothers. Nevertheless, such action, that would seem highly untheosophical and prejudicial in our day of culture when nations alone are privileged to pocket each other's property and expect to be honoured for it — does not seem to have been an obstacle in the way of deification and sanctification of the said early "Brotherly" group. Our Society had never certainly any idea of rising superior to the *brotherliness* and *ethics* preached by Christ, but only to those of the *sham* Christianity of the Churches . . . as originally ordered to, by our MASTERS. And if we do not worse than the Gospel Brotherhood did, and far better than any Church, which would expell (10) any member refusing too long to pay his Church rates, it is really hard to see why our "Organization" should be ostracized by its own members. At any rate, the pens of the latter ought to show themselves less *acerb*, in these days of trouble when every one seems bent on finding fault with the Society, and few to help it, and that the President Founder is alone to work and toil with a few devoted theosophists at Adyar to assist him.

(IV). "There is no such institution in existence as the Parent Society" — we are told (pp. 2 and 3). "It has disappeared from the Rules and . . . has no *legal* existence" . . . The Society being unchartered, *it has not* — legally; but no more has any theosophist a legal existence, for the

matter of that. Is there one single member throughout the whole globe who would be recognised *by law* or before a Magistrate — *as a theosophist*? Why then do the gentlemen "complainants" call themselves "theosophists" if the latter qualification has no better legal standing than the said "Parent Society" or the Head Quarters itself? But the Parent-body *does* exist, and will, so long as the last man or woman of the primitive group of Theosophists *Founders* is alive. This — as a body; as for its moral characteristics, the Parent-Society means that small nucleus of theosophists who hold sacredly through storm and blows to the *original programme* of the T. S., as established under the direction and orders of those, whom they recognise — and will, to their last breath — as the real originators of the Movement, their *living, Holy* MASTERS AND TEACHERS. (11)

(V). The complaints then, that the T. S. "has laws without sanction," "a legislative body without legality," a "Parent Society without existence," and, worse than all — "a President *above all rules*" — are thus shown only *partially* correct. But even were they all absolutely true, it would be easy to abolish such rules with one stroke of the pen, or to modify them. But now comes the curious part of that severe *philippic* against the T. S. by our eloquent Demosthenes. After six pages (out of the twelve) had been filled with the said charges, the writer admits on the 7th, — that they have been so modified! — "The above" we learn (rather late) "was written under *misapprehension* that the "Rules" bearing date 1885 — were the latest. It has since been found that there is a later version of the Rules dated 1886 which *have modified the older rules on a great many points.*" So much the better. — Why recall, in such case mistakes in the past if these exist no longer? But the accusers do not see it in this light. They are determined to act as a theosophical Nemesis; and in no way daunted by the discovery, they add that nevertheless "it is *necessary* to examine the earlier rules to ascertain *the underlying principle*, which rules through the present ones as well." This reminds of the fable of "the Wolf and the Lamb." But — you see — "the chief point is, that the Convention *has no power to make any rules*, as such a power is *opposed to the spirit of theosophy,*" . . . etc., etc.

Now this is the most extraordinary argument that could be made. At this rate no Brotherhood, no Association, no Society is possible. More than this: no theosophist, however holy his present life may be, would have the right to call himself one; for were it always found *necessary* to examine *his earlier life*, "to ascertain the *underlying principle*" which rules through the nature of the present man — ten to one, he would be found unfit to be called a theosophist! The experiment would hardly be found pleasant to the majority of those whom association with the T. S. has reformed; and of such there are a good many.

After such virulent and severe denunciations one might expect some good, friendly and theosophically *practical* advice. Not at all, and none is offered, since we have been already told (p. 9) that it would be "out of place to suggest any specific measures, as no one who has any faith in Brotherhood — and in the power of Truth" *will fail* to perceive what is necessary." The President Founder, has *no faith* in either "Brotherhood," or "the power of Truth" — apparently. This is made evident by his having *failed* to perceive (a) that the Head Quarters — opened to *all* Theosophists of any race or social position, board and lodging free of charge the whole year round — was an *unbrotherly* Organization; (b) that the central office at Adyar for keeping records and concentrating "information" with its European and Hindu inmates working *gratuitously* and some helping it with their own money whenever they have it — ought to be carried on, according to the method and principle of George Miller of Bristol, namely, the numerous household and staff of officers at Adyar headed by the Prest Founder ought to kneel very morning in prayer for their bread and milk appealing for their meals to "miracle"; and that finally, and (c) all the good the Society s doing, is no good whatever but "a spiritual wrong," because it presumes to call "a *limited* line of good work — (theosophy) Divine Wisdom."

The undersigned is an ever patient theosophist, who has hitherto laboured under the impression that no amount of subtle scholasticism and tortured casuistry but could find like the Rosetta stone its Champollion — some day. The most acute among theosophists are now

invited to make out in "A Few Words" — what the writers or writer — is driving at — unless in plain and unvarnished language, to be — "Down with the Theosophical Society, President-Founder and its Headquarters!" This is the only possible explanation of the twelve pages of denunciations to which a reply is now attempted. What can indeed be made out of the following jumble of contradictory statements: —

(a) The President Founder having been shown throughout as a "tyrant," a "*would be* Cesar," "aiming at *papal* power" and a "Venitian (12) Council of Three," and other words to that effect implied in almost every sentence of the paper under review, it is confessed in the same breath that the "London Lodge" of the Theosophical Society has *completely ignored* the *Rules* (of the Pope Caesar) published at Adyar!" (p. 4). And yet, the "L. L. of the T. S." still lives and breathes and one has heard of no *anathema* pronounced against it, so far . . . (b) Rule XIV stating that the Society has "to deal *only* with scientific and philosophical subjects," hence, "it is quite *evident* (?) that the power and position claimed in the *Rules* for the Pt- Founder and the Gen. Council and Convention are opposed to the spirit of the declared Objects."

It might have been as well perhaps to quote the entire paragraph in which these words appear, (13) once that hairs are split about the possibly faulty reaction of the *Rules*? Is it not self-evident, that the words brought forward "only with scientific and philosophical subjects" are inserted as a necessary caution to *true* theosophists, who by dealing with politics *within* any branch Society might bring disgrace and ruin on the whole body, — in India to begin with? Has the Society or has it not over 140 Societies scattered through four parts of the World to take care of? As in the case of "Mahatmas" and "Mahatmaship" — active work of the Theosophical Society is confused — willingly or otherwise it is not for the writer to decide — with Theosophy. No need of entering here upon the difference between the jar that contains a liquid and the nature of, or that liquid itself. "Theosophy teaches *self-culture* . . . and not control," we are told. Theosophy teaches *mutual-culture* before *self-culture* to *begin* with. Union is strength. It is by gathering many theosophists of the same way

of thinking into one or more groups, and making them closely united by the same magnetic bond of fraternal unity and sympathy that the objects of *mutual* development and progress in Theosophical thought may be best achieved. "Self-culture" is for isolated *Hatha Yogis*, independent of any Society and having to avoid association with human beings; and this is a *triple distilled* SELFISHNESS. For real moral advancement — there "where two or three are gathered" in the name of the SPIRIT OF TRUTH — there that Spirit of Theosophy *will be in the midst of them*. To say that theosophy has no need of a Society — a vehicle and centre thereof, — is like affirming that the Wisdom of the Ages collected in thousands of volumes, at the British Museum has no need of either the edifice that contains it, nor the works in which it is found. Why not advise the British Govt. on its lack of discrimination and its *worldliness* in not destroying Museum and all its vehicles of Wisdom? Why spend such sums of money and pay so many officers to watch over its treasures, the more so, since many of its guardians may be quite out of keeping with, and opposed to the Spirit of that Wisdom. The Directors of such Museums may or may not be very perfect men, and some of their assistants may have never opened a philosophical work: yet, it is they who take care of the library and preserving it for future generations are indirectly entitled to their thanks. How much more gratitude is due to those who like our self-sacrificing theosophists at Adyar, devote their lives to, and give their services gratuitously to the good of Humanity!

Diplomas, and Charters are objected to, and chiefly the "admission fee." The latter is a "taxation," and therefore "*inconsistent* with the principle of Brotherhood" . . . A "forced gift is *unbrotherly*," etc., etc. It would be curious to see where the T.S., would be led to, were the P. F. to religiously follow the proffered advices. "Initiation" on admission, has been made away with already in Europe, and has *led to that* which will very soon become known: no use mentioning it at present. Now the "Charters" and diplomas would follow. Hence no document to show for any group, and no diploma to prove that one is affiliated to the Society. Hence also perfect liberty to any one to either call himself a

theosophist, or deny he is one. The "admission fee"? Indeed, it has to be regarded as a terrible and *unbrotherly* "extortion," and a "forced gift," in the face of those thousands of Masonic Lodges, of Clubs, Associations, Societies, Leagues, and even the "Salvation Army." The former, extort yearly *fortunes* from their Members; the latter — throttle in the name of Jesus the masses and appealing to *voluntary* contributions make the converts pay, and pay in their turn every one of their "officers," none of whom will serve the "Army" for nothing. Yet it would be well, perchance were our members to follow the example of the Masons in their solidarity of thought and action and at least *outward* Union, notwithstanding that receiving a thousand times more from their members they give them in return still less than we do, whether spiritually or morally. This solitary single guinea expected from every member is spent in less than one week, as was calculated, on postage and correspondence with theosophists. Or are we to understand that all correspondence with members — now left to "*self-culture*" — is also to cease and has to follow diplomas, Charters and the rest? Then truly, the Head Quarters and Office have better be closed. A simple *Query* — however: Have the £. — the yearly contribution to the L.L. of the T.S., and the further sum of 2/6*d.* to the Oriental Group been abolished as "acts of unbrotherly extortion," and how long, if so, have they begun to be regarded as "a *sale* of Brotherhood"?

To continue: the charges wind up with the following remarks, so Profound, that it requires a deeper head than ours to fathom all that Underlies the words contained in them. "Is the T.S. a Brotherhood, or not?" queries the plaintiff — "If the former is it possible *to have any centre of arbitrary power?* (14) To hold that there is necessity for such a centre is only a roundabout way of saying that no Brotherhood is possible, (15) but in point of fact *that necessity itself is by no means* proved (!?). There have been no doubt Brotherhoods under high Masters . . ." (there "have been" and *still are*. H. P. B.) . . . "but in such cases the Masters were never elected *for geographical* or other considerations (?). The natural leader of men was always recognised by his embodying the spirit of Humanity. To institute comparisons would

be little short of blasphemy. The greatest among men is always the readiest to serve and yet is unconscious of the service. Let us pause before finally tying the millstone of worldliness around the neck of Theosophy. Let us not forget that Theosophy does not grow in our midst *by force and control* but by *sunshine of brotherliness* and the *dew of self-oblivion*. If we do not believe in Brotherhood and Truth let us put ashes on our head and *weep in sack-cloth* and not rejoice in the purple of authority and in the festive garments of pride and worldliness. It is by far better that the name of Theosophy should never be heard, than that it should be used as the Motto of a *papal authority*." . . .

Who, upon reading this, and being ignorant that the above piece of rhetorical flowers of speech is directed against the luckless Pres. Founder — would not have in his "mind's eye" — an Alexander Borgia, a Caligula, or to say the least — General Booth in his latest metamorphosis! When, how, or by doing what, has our good natured, unselfish, ever kind President merited such a Ciceronian tirade? The state of things denounced exists now for almost twelve years, and our accuser knew of it and even took an active part in its organization, Conventions, Councils, Rules, etc., etc., at Bombay, and at Adyar. This virulent *sortie* is no doubt due to "SELF-CULTURE"? The critic has outgrown the movement and turned his face from the original programme; hence his severity. But where is the *true theosophical charity*, the tolerance and the "*sunshine of brotherliness*" just spoken of, and so insisted upon? Verily — it is easy to preach the "dew of self-oblivion" when one has nothing to think about except to evolve such finely rounded phrases; were every theosophist at Adyar to have his daily wants and even comforts, his board, lodging and all, attended to by a wealthier theosophist; and *were* the same "sunshine of brotherliness" to be poured upon him, is it upon the critic who found for himself an endless brotherly care, a fraternal and self-sacrificing devotion in two other noble minded members, then — would there be little need for the President Founder to call upon and humble himself before our theosophists. For, if he has to *beg* for 2 annual shillings — it is, in order that those — Europeans and Hindus — who work night and day at

Adyar, giving their services free and receiving little thanks or honour for it, should have at least *one meal a day*. The fresh "dew of *self-oblivion*" must not be permitted to chill one's heart, and turn into the lethal *mold of forgetfulness* to such an extent as that. The severe critic seems to have lost sight of the fact that for months, during the last crisis, the whole staff of our devoted Adyar officers, from the President down to the youngest brother in the office, have lived on *5d.* a day each, having reduced their meals to the *minimum*. And it is *this mite*, the proceeds of the "2 shill. contribution," conscientiously paid by some, that is now called *extortion*, a desire to live "in the purple of authority and the festive garment of pride and worldliness"!

Our "Brother" is right. Let us "weep in sack cloth and ashes on our head" if the T. S. has many more such *unbrotherly* criticisms to bear. Truly "it would be far better that the name of Theosophy should never be heard than that it should be used as a motto" — not of *papal authority* which exists nowhere at Adyar outside the critic's imagination — but as a motto of a "self-developed fanaticism." All the great services otherwise rendered to the Society, all the noble work done by the complainant will pale and vanish before such an appearance of cold heartedness. Surely he cannot desire the *annihilation* of the Society? And if he did it would be useless: the T. S. *cannot be destroyed as a body*. It is not in the power of either Founders or their critics; and neither friend nor enemy can ruin that which is *doomed to exist*, all the blunders of its leaders notwithstanding. That which was generated through and founded by the "High Masters" and under their authority if not their instruction — MUST AND WILL LIVE. Each of us and all will receive his or her *Karma* in it, but the *vehicle* of Theosophy will stand indestructible and undestroyed by the hand of whether man or fiend. No; "truth does not depend on show of hands"; but in the case of the much abused President-Founder it must depend on the show of *facts*. Thorny and full of pitfalls was the steep path he had to climb up alone and unaided for the first years. Terrible was the opposition outside the Society he had to build — sickening and disheartening the treachery he often encountered within the Head-

Quarters. Enemies gnashing their teeth in his face around, those whom he regarded as his staunchest friends and co-workers betraying him and the Cause on the slightest provocation. Still, where hundreds in his place would have collapsed and given up the whole undertaking in despair, he, unmoved and unmovable, went on climbing up and toiling as before, unrelenting and undismayed, supported by that one thought and conviction that he was doing his duty. What other inducement has the Founder ever had, but his theosophical pledge and the sense of his duty toward THOSE he had promised to serve to the end of his life? There was but one beacon for him — the hand that had first pointed to him his way up: the hand of the MASTER he love; and reveres so well, and serves so devotedly though occasionally perhaps, unwisely. President elected for life, he has nevertheless offered more than once to resign in favour of any one found worthier than him, but was never permitted to do so by the majority — not o "show of hands" but *show of hearts*, literally, — as few are more beloved than he is even by most of those, who may criticize occasionally his actions. And this is only natural: for cleverer in administrative capacities, more learned in philosophy, subtler in casuistry in metaphysics or daily life policy, there may be many around him; but the whole globe may be searched through and through and no one found stauncher to his friends, truer to his word, or more devoted to real, practical theosophy — than the President-Founder; and these are the chief requisites in a leader of such a movement — one that aims to become a Brotherhood of men. The Society needs no Loyolas; it has to shun anything approaching casuistry; nor ought we to tolerate too subtle casuists. There, where every individual has to work out his own Karma, the judgment of a casuist who takes upon himself the duty of pronouncing upon the state of a brother's soul, or guide his conscience is of no use, and may become positively injurious. The Founder claims no more rights than every one else in the Society: the *right of private judgment*, which, whenever it is found to disagree with Branches or individuals are quietly set aside and *ignored* — *as shown by the complainants themselves*. This then, is the sole crime of the would-be culprit, and no worse than this can be laid at his door. And yet what is the reward of

that kind man? He, who has never refused a service, outside what he considers his official duties — to any living being; he who has redeemed dozens of men, young and old from dissipated, often immoral lives and saved others from terrible scrapes by giving them a safe refuge in the Society; he, who has placed others again, on the pinnacle (16) of Saintship *through their statues in that Society*, when otherwise they would have indeed found themselves now in the meshes of "worldliness" and perhaps worse; — he, that true friend of every theosophist, and verily "the readiest to serve and as unconscious of the service" — he is now taken to task for what? — for insignificant blunders, for useless "special orders," a *childish*, rather than untheosophical love of display, out of pure devotion to his Society. Is then *human nature* to be viewed so uncharitably by us, as to call *untheosophical*, worldly and sinful the natural impulse of a mother to dress up her child and parade it to the best advantages? The comparison may be laughed at, but if it is, it will be only by him who would, like the fanatical Christian of old, or the naked, dishevelled Yogi of India — have no more charity for the smallest human weakness. Yet, the similiae (17) is quite correct, since the Society is the child, the beloved creation of the Founder; he may be well forgiven for this too exaggerated love for that for which he has suffered and toiled more than all other theosophists put together. He is called "worldly," "ambitious of power" and *untheosophical* for it. Very well; let then any impartial judge compare the life of the Founder with those of most of his critics, and see which was *the most theosophical*, ever since the Society sprung into existence. If no better results have been achieved, it is not the President who ought to be taken to task for it, but the Members themselves, as he has been ever trying to promote its growth, and the majority of "Fellows" have either done nothing, or created obstacles in the way of its progress through sins of omission as of commission. Better unwise *activity* than an overdose of too wise *inactivity*, apathy or indifference which are always the death of an undertaking.

Nevertheless, it is the members who now seek to sit in Solomon's seat;

and they tell us that the Society is useless, its President positively mischievous, and the Head-Quarters ought to be done away with, as "the organization called Theosophical *presents many features seriously obstructive to the progress of Theosophy*. Trees, however, have to be judged by their fruits. It was just shown that no "special orders" issuing from the "Centre of Power" called Adyar, could affect in any way whatever either Branch or individual; and therefore any theosophist bent on "self culture," "self-involution" or any kind of *selfness*, is at liberty to do so; and if, instead of using his rights he will apply his brain-power to criticize other people's actions then it is he who becomes the *obstructionist* and not at all the "Organization called Theosophical." For, if theosophy is anywhere practised on this globe, it is at Adyar, at the Head-Quarters. Let "those interested in the progress of true theosophy" appealed to by the writers look around them and judge. See the Branch Societies and compare them with the group that works in that "Centre of Power." Admire the "progress of theosophy" at Paris, London and even America. Behold, in the great "Brotherhood, a true *Pandemonium* of which the Spirit of Strife and Hatred himself might be proud! Everywhere — quarreling, (18) fighting for supremacy; backbiting, slandering, scandal-mongering for the last two years; a veritable battlefield, on which several members have so disgraced themselves and their Society by trying to disgrace others, that they have actually become more like hyenas than human beings by digging into the graves of the Past, in the hopes of bringing forward old forgotten slanders and scandals!

At Adyar alone, at the Head-Quarters of the Theosophical Society, the Theosophists are that which they ought to be everywhere else: *true theosophists* and not merely *philosophers* and Sophists. In that *centre* alone are now grouped together the few solitary, practically working Members, who labour and toil, quietly and uninterruptedly, while those Brothers for whose sake they are working, sit in the *dolce far niente* of the West and criticise them. Is this "true theosophical and brotherly work," to advise to put down and disestablish the only "centre" where real brotherly, humanitarian work is being

accomplished?

"Theosophy first, and organization after." Golden words, these. But where would Theosophy be heard of now, had not its Society been organized before its Spirit and a desire for it had permeated the whole world? And would Vedanta and other Hindu philosophies have been ever taught and studied in England outside the walls of Oxford and Cambridge, had it not been for that organization that fished them like forgotten pearls out of the Ocean of Oblivion and Ignorance and brought them forward before the profane world? Nay, kind Brothers and critics, would the Hindu exponents of that sublime philosophy themselves have ever been known outside the walls of Calcutta, had not the Founders, obedient to the ORDERS received, forced the remarkable learning and philosophy of those exponents upon the recognition of the two most civilized and cultured centres of Europe — London and Paris? Verily it is easier *to destroy* than to build. The words "untheosophical" and "un-brotherly" are ever ringing in our ears; yet, truly theosophical acts and words are not to be found in too unreasonable a superabundance among those who use the reproof the oftener. However insignificant, and however *limited the line* of good deeds, the latter will have always more weight than empty and vain glorious talk, and will be *theosophy* whereas theories without any practical realisation are at best philosophy. Theosophy is an all-embracing Science; many are the ways leading to it, as numerous in fact as its definitions, which began by the sublime, during the day of Ammonius Saccas, and ended by the ridiculous — in Webster's Dictionary. There is no reason why our critics should claim the right for themselves alone to *know* what is Theosophy and to define it. There were theosophists and Theosophical Schools for the last 2,000 years, from Plato down to the mediaeval Alchemists, who knew the value of the term, it may be supposed. Therefore, when we are told that "the question is not whether the T. S. *is doing good*, but whether it is doing *that kind of good which is entitled to the name of Theosophy*" — we turn round and ask: "And who is to be the judge in this mooted question?" We have heard of one of the greatest Theosophists who ever lived, who

assured his audience that whosoever *gave a cup of cold water to a little one* in his (Theosophy's) name, would have a greater reward than all the learned Scribes and Pharisees. "Woe to the world because of offences!"

Belief in the Masters was never made an article of faith in the T. S. But for its Founders, the commands received from Them when it was established have ever been sacred. And this is what one of them wrote in a letter preserved to this day:

"Theosophy must not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical Ethics epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy must be made practical, and has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless discussion. . . . It has to find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life thoroughly impregnated with its spirit — the spirit of mutual tolerance, charity and love. Its followers have to set the example of a firmly outlined and as firmly applied morality before they get the right to point out, even in a spirit of kindness, the absence of a like ethic Unity and singleness of purpose in other associations and individuals. As said before — no Theosophist should blame a brother whether within or outside of the association, throw slur upon his actions or denounce him (19) lest he should himself lose the right of being considered a theosophist. Ever turn away your gaze from the imperfections of your neighbour and centre rather your attention upon your own shortcomings in order to correct them and become wiser . . . Show not the disparity between claim and action in another man but — whether he be brother or neighbour — rather help him in his arduous walk in life . . . The problem of true theosophy and its great mission is the working out of clear, unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties which would satisfy most and best the altruistic and right feeling in us; and the modeling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life where they may be applied with most equitableness. . . . Such is the common work in view for all who are willing to act on these principles. It is a laborious task and will require strenuous and persevering exertion, but it must lead you insensibly to progress and leave no room

for any selfish aspirations outside the limits traced . . . Do not indulge in unbrotherly comparisons between the task accomplished by yourself and the work left undone by your neighbour or brother, in the field of Theosophy, *as none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him.* . . . Do not be too severe on the merits or demerits of one who seeks admission among your ranks, as the truth about the actual state of the inner man can only be known to, and dealt with justly by KARMA alone. Even the simple presence amidst you of a well-intentioned and sympathetic individual may help you magnetically . . . You are the Free-workers on the Domain of Truth, and as such must leave no obstructions on the paths leading to it." . . . [The letter closes with the following lines which have now become quite plain, as they give the key to the whole situation] . . . "*The degrees of success or failure are the landmark we shall have to follow, as they will constitute the barriers placed with your own hands between yourselves and those whom you have asked to be your teachers. The nearer your approach to the goal contemplated — the shorter the distance between the student and the Master.*" . . .

A complete answer is thus found in the above lines to the paper framed by the two Theosophists. Those who are now inclined to repudiate the Hand that traced it and feel ready to turn their backs upon the whole Past and the original programme of the T. S. are at liberty to do so. The Theosophical body is neither a Church or a Sect and every individual opinion is entitled to a hearing. A Theosophist may progress and develop, and his views may outgrow those of the Founders, grow larger and broader in every direction, without for all that abandoning the fundamental soil upon which they were born and nurtured. It is only he who changes diametrically his opinions from one day to another and shifts his devotional views from white to black — who can be hardly trusted in his remarks and actions. But surely, this can never be the case of the two Theosophists who have now been answered . . .

Meanwhile, peace and fraternal good will to all.

H P Blavatsky Corres. Secty T. S.

Ostende. Oct. 3d

1886.

FOOTNOTES:

1. This extremely interesting and instructive article was written by H P Blavatsky at Ostende, Belgium, October 3 1886. This article contains so much of historic value and is so little known in the Theosophical world that it well merits the thoughtful reading of every follower of our first great Teacher.

H P B printed portions of this article in her magazine *Lucifer*, issue of January, 1888, but the article was published in full for the first time, we believe in the magazine *The Theosophist*, issue of August, 1931, and is from that magazine reproduced here by the kind permission of the present Editor. This permission however, stipulates that the footnotes by "C J" be also included These footnotes appear within square brackets — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. [There exist at Adyar, in H P B's handwriting, twenty-four pages of this fundamental pronouncement regarding the aim of the Theosophical Society. It was an article composed in response to a harsh criticism of the Society and of its President, Colonel H S Olcott, by two prominent Theosophists, Mohini M. Chatterji of Calcutta and Arthur Gebhard of Elberfeld, entitled "A Few Words on the Theosophical Organization."

The first page of the manuscript is missing, but it contained only the first nine lines of the article as now printed. Page "2" of the manuscript now at Adyar begins with the tenth line "races, creeds, or social positions," etc The missing lines have been restored from a typed copy at Adyar of an incomplete rendering of H P B's article. As the article, owing to the loss of the first page, bears no title, I have put the above "The Original Programme of the Theosophical Society," taken from its last paragraph on p. 588 (our issue, p 104)

So far as I have been able to trace, H P B's article was not published at the time. The first occasion it was printed in full was in THE THEOSOPHIST,

June 1924 and subsequent issues when, having found it among the Archives, I published it. But the instruction of the Master, from the sentence (in footnote) on p. 564 (our issue, p. 86) which begins "It is esoteric philosophy alone," and continues on p. 587 (our issue, p. 103) with the sentence, "Theosophy must not represent merely a collection of verities" was used by H P B in *Lucifer*, Vol. I, No 5, January 1888 as an article "Some Words on Daily Life (*Written by a Master of the Wisdom*)."

In the *Lucifer* article there are changes and considerable amplifications of the main ideas, which are not in the Adyar manuscript.

The statement by Messrs Chatterji and Gebhard, in the former's handwriting, exists at Adyar, and presumably it too was not published. Perhaps others can supplement or correct these data — C. J.] ([return to text](#))

3. A liberal Christian member of the T S having objected to the study of Oriental religions and doubting whether there was room left for any new Society — a letter answering his objections and preference to Christianity was received and the contents copied for him, after which he denied no longer the advisability of such a Society as the proposed Theosophical Association. A few extracts from this early letter will show plainly the nature of the Society as then contemplated, and that we have tried only to follow and carry out in the best way we could the intentions of the *true* originators of the Society in those days. The pious gentleman having claimed that he was a *theosophist* and had a right of judgment over other people was told . . . (4) "You have no right to such a title. You are only a philo-theosophist, as one who has reached to the full comprehension of *the name and nature* of a theosophist will sit in judgment on no man or action. . . . You claim that your religion is the highest and final step toward divine Wisdom on this earth, and that it has introduced into the arteries of the old decaying world new blood and life and verities that had remained unknown to the heathen? If it were so indeed, then your religion would have introduced the highest truths into all the social, civil and international relations of Christendom. Instead of that as any one can perceive, your social as your private life is not based upon a common moral solidarity but only

on constant mutual counteraction and purely mechanical equilibrium of individual powers and interests . . . If you would be a theosophist you must not do as those around you do who call on a God of Truth and Love and serve the dark Powers of Might, Greed and Luck. We look in the midst of your Christian civilization and see the same sad signs of old: the realities of your daily lives are diametrically opposed to your religious ideal, but you feel it not; the thought that the very laws that govern your being whether in the domain of politics or social economy clash painfully with the origins of your religion — do not seem to trouble you in the least. But if the nations of the West are so fully convinced that the ideal can never become practical and the practical will never reach the ideal — then, you have to make your choice: either it is your religion that is impracticable, and in that case it is no better than a vain-glorious delusion, or it might find a practical application, but it is you, yourselves, who do not care to apply its ethics to your daily walk in life . . . Hence, before you invite other nations "to the King's festival table" from which your guests arise more starved than before, you should, ere you try to bring them to your own way of thinking, look into the repasts they offer you . . . Under the dominion and sway of exoteric creeds, the grotesque and tortured shadows of theosophical realities, there must ever be the same oppression of the weak and the poor and the same typhonic struggle of the wealthy and the mighty among themselves . . . It is *esoteric philosophy alone*, the spiritual and psychic blending of man with Nature that, by revealing fundamental truths, can bring that much desired mediate state between the two extremes of human Egotism and divine Altruism and finally lead to the alleviation of human suffering . . ." (See last page for continuation.) — [So in manuscript. The continuation of the letter of the Master is on p. 587 (our issue, p. 103), and begins with the words: "Theosophy must not represent," etc. — C. J.] ([return to text](#))

4. [Throughout the body of the article, as in the footnotes, the occurrence of several full stops indicate no elision of words, but only the beginning of a new sentence or thought which is particularly emphasised — C. J.] ([return to text](#))

5. Mr. Cobb. ([return to text](#))

6. [So in manuscript.] ([return to text](#))

7. For years the wise rule by which any member accused of backbiting or slander was expelled from the Society after sufficient evidence — has become obsolete. There have been two or three solitary cases of expulsion for the same in cases of members of *no* importance. Europeans of position and name were allowed to cover the Society literally with mud and slander their Brothers with perfect impunity. This is the President's *Karma* — and it is just. ([return to text](#))

8. Furthermore the writer of the complaints in "A Few Words, etc," is himself a member on the General Council for over two years (see Rules 1885) why has he not spoken earlier? ([return to text](#))

9. Yet, the Theosophical Brotherhood does seem doomed to outrival the group of Apostles in the number of its *denying* Peters, its unbelieving Thomases, and even Iscariots occasionally, ready to sell their Brotherhood for less than thirty *sheckels* of silver! ([return to text](#))

10. [So in manuscript.] ([return to text](#))

11. The members of the T. S. know, and those who do not should be told, that the term "Mahatma," now so subtly analysed and controverted, for some mysterious reasons had never been applied to our Masters before our arrival in India. For years they were known as the "Adept-Brothers," the "Masters," etc. It is the Hindus themselves who began applying the term to the two Teachers. This is no place for an etymological disquisition and the fitness or unfitness of the qualification, in the case in hand. As a *state Mahatmaship* is one thing, as a double noun, *Maha-atma* (Great Soul) quite another one. Hindus ought to know the value of metaphysical Sanskrit names used; and it is they the first, who have used it to designate the MASTERS. ([return to text](#))

12. [So in manuscript.] ([return to text](#))

13. XIV. The Society having to deal only with scientific and philosophic subjects, and having Branches in different parts of the world under

various forms of Government, does not permit its members, as such, to interfere with politics, and repudiates any attempt on the part of any one to commit it in favor or against any political party or measure. Violation of this rule will meet with expulsion.

This rather alters the complexion put on the charge, which seems conveniently to forget that "scientific and philosophical subject" are not the *only* declared objects of the Society. Let us not leave room for a doubt that there is more *animus* underlying the charges than would be strictly *theosophical*. ([return to text](#))

14. It is the *first time* since the T S exists that such an accusation of *arbitrary* power, is brought forward. Not many will be found of this way of thinking. ([return to text](#))

15. No need taking a *roundabout* way, to say that no Brotherhood would ever be possible if many theosophists shared the very original views of the writer. ([return to text](#))

16. [So in manuscript.] ([return to text](#))

17. [So in manuscript.] ([return to text](#))

18. [So in manuscript.] ([return to text](#))

19. It is in consequence of this letter that Art. XII was adopted in *Rules* and a fear of lacking the charity prescribed, that led so often to neglect its enforcement. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND A. D. 1872 — *Clarence Q. Wesner*

In our appreciation of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, many of us may in our great love for the actor, pay too little attention to the stage-setting of the drama wherein she played the leading part. Let us, therefore, examine the processes of human thought as the stage was set in 1872, when H. P. B. was sent to the Western World.

Orthodoxy in religion in the Western World had received its death-blow by several hands. Voltaire, Kant, Thomas Paine, and last but not least, Colonel Bob Ingersoll, had played the role of St. George, dealing telling blows to the dragon of religious despotism. The "pearly gates" were crumbling under the battering-ram of Reason. Where can be found a moral and spiritual fortitude in an age whose so-called "spiritual" leaders teach thus: — "I have sinned, but through priestly mediation God has forgiven! I have sown, but I dare not reap! I am afraid, afraid! Let my sins be forgiven!"

A new and youthful Science had entered the arena. Youthful, egotistic, just as arrogant and dogmatic as the older theology it came, carrying its new toys, the telescope, the microscope, the volt-meter, the test-tubes. "Where is this God of mercy and justice, this all-loving Father? My telescope does not find Him in empty space; my microscope does not find Him in the atom; my test-tubes show an accidental arrangement of atoms which react and interact strictly by mechanical laws." Where can be found Hope and Charity in a world whose philosophy is — "Men are born, they suffer, they die — — and that's that."

Now entered a new element which in a more tolerant age might have reconciled to some extent the religionist and the scientist. With proper guidance, the spiritualistic movement *might* have been able to prove the existence, if not of God, at least of an immortal soul in man. But the scientist laughed to scorn, and the religionist heaped maledictions upon that which might have been the strongest ally of only from their

own selfishness — personal, national, and racial selfishness? Will men never learn that one cannot gain at the expense of another? — that one cannot rise by another's fall? — that the welfare of mankind depends on the welfare of the individual? — that the only actual evil is Ignorance? — that the only actual sin is the Heresy of Separateness?

Compare this condition with the world of thought of today. The thousand and one sects, "isms," and "ologies," and what not, are witness to the manner in which religious orthodoxy has compromised with the Ancient Wisdom. Although most of these are based on a partial understanding (or misunderstanding) of limited phases of the Ancient Wisdom, they may prove to be stepping-stones by which some will find their way Home, to the central source of the Teachings in this century.

The greatest of the scientists are perhaps the least dogmatic men in the world today. They admit that the microscope and telescope reveal only the external, the world of effects. But behind, or within, must be a Reality, which can never be reached except by Spiritual Insight. They do not, however, like the word "God." The scientist of today is truly an occultist, basing his researches on, and handling, the cosmic laws and powers described either directly or indirectly by H. P. Blavatsky over fifty years ago. He no longer insists that ultimates have been discovered, or that the so-called laws of science may not be subject to instant modification; in fact, he admits that the science of today is based on theories and not on Reality.

Much of the cynicism and agnosticism of 19th-century philosophy has given way to a broader vision of Universal Brotherhood. Of course the Theosophist cannot agree with all the methods proposed, but with the goal of Universal Brotherhood in view, the numberless paths and by-paths must inevitably merge, in the course of time, into one broad highway. Modern philosophy has received the leaven of the Ancient Wisdom, and religious tolerance is actually practised in many parts of the world today. Leaders of different religious sects find a common ground in the basic teachings of all religions. And that basic teaching is Theosophy, whether they like the word or not.

These few points touch only upon the revolution which has taken place in human thought since 1872. It is undeniable that Theosophy has played the largest part in this revolution. H. P. Blavatsky has not lived in vain. She has succeeded in her Great Work. The molds of mind are broken. In time to come, H. P. B. will be recognised as the great outstanding figure of the nineteenth century.

The Theosophical Forum

THE NATURE OF SELF-FORGETFULNESS — *Leoline L. Wright*

How few, even among the thoughtful, ever suspect the real and intense happiness which follows upon the determined practice of self-forgetfulness! In our wrong-headed civilization the very words have come to signify an outworn if not impossible ideal. Yet self-forgetfulness actually results not only in the power to bless and bestow but in the transmutation of our ignorance, unrest, and miseries into knowledge, power, and peace. For we have the assurance that the wise practice of daily self-forgetfulness will bring to us a sacred companionship with the Inner God and set our feet upon the pathway to divine adventure in the inner worlds.

There are, however, certain states of mind which might pass for self-forgetfulness with the unthinking but which are most emphatically the opposite. One of these is a practice which has become nearly universal, in this day at least, and that is self-evasion. We are all familiar enough in our own experience and that of our associates with the itch to escape from ourselves. And the insane lavishness of this mechanical civilization pours out the means: novels, cinemas, auto-trips, "parties," the bridge game, and a hundred other diversions. Yet most of our amusements are legitimate enough when they are intelligently used. They are harmful only when allowed to become a demanding habit. Even philanthropic work, if undertaken as such a soporific, is but another road to self-evasion. It is motive that colors the deed and automatically brings about the result. Service of others is naturally better for anyone than slavery to amusements, but in the case of using it to evade our own problems it is a neglect of one's essential duty. It may even result in a worse tangle of our personal affairs than before.

Why not say to ourselves when some of our intimate problems torment us by our inability to solve them: "Well, after all, does it matter so much about me? Isn't it the burden of the world that really matters — the tragedy of crime, the miseries of the poor, seeking hearts everywhere

that cry out for light and help? Here is Theosophy with its grand diagnosis, its power of prevention and cure. I will set aside for a time this trouble of my own heart and see what I can do for the spreading of a knowledge of this panacea, acting in the meanwhile also as a good neighbor, a sympathetic "home-fellow and friend." When a Theosophist, or anyone else for that matter, carries such a thought into action, mysteriously his personal problem is likely to begin to solve itself. This happens often. Nature objects to our constantly pulling the plant up by the roots to see how it is coming on. But if we trust her with a divine impersonal carelessness as to our own well-being, and will work unselfishly for others, she will come to make obeisance and work on our side.

Here the motive creates the apparent contradiction and gives to service that is truly self-forgetful, but never self-evasive, its often immediate reward. And the further "rewards" which accrue more slowly, flow from the crystal fount of the Cosmic Heart — a beautiful happiness and a serenity whose harmonies pervade in blessing and help the lives of all about us. And some day, suddenly, we ourselves shall awaken to a new dawn breaking in splendor before our inner vision, and discover that our feet are set upon Amrita-Yana, the secret pathway to the gods.

The Theosophical Forum

MAN AND HIS VITAMINS — *Arthur A. Beale*

In the great epic of man's evolution, from the time when the spark was thrown off from the inscrutable yet all-comprehending "Self or "That," "concerning which speculation is impossible" on the upward pilgrimage through all the kingdoms until the human, we have a concept of the building up into a single entity of the combination of all these kingdoms. Man is a composite of these kingdoms in that he retains basic fundamental structures, though not in their pristine state. They are humanized, elevated, ennobled.

In this process all the intervening kingdoms are benefited; their evolving entities are not only integral parts of man, but essential to his very existence as an entity. In the matter of health, without the proper basic salts his bodily tissues degenerate and die. Every cell holds a modicum of potash, soda, calcium, iron, magnesium, sulphur, silica, and phosphorus, and the cells themselves represent the vegetable stage of evolution. The vegetable, animal, and human cells are almost identical. Remarkable analogies exist between the unfolding of a rose and that of a human embryo, or between the growth of hair and that of moss or lichen.

The animal circulatory and lymphatic systems are only an advanced form of the vascular system of plants by which sap, the vegetable "blood," is carried upward to the vital units where its elements are manufactured, and then downward, charged with nutritive elements to be stored in the roots, tubers, etc. Sir Jagadis Bose, the East Indian "magician," shows that the nervous systems in higher kingdoms are inaugurated in the plants, which are susceptible to poison and to drugs. For instance, a dose of digitalis will resuscitate a flagging plant.

The nearest analog to the marvelous endocrine system in man — the ductless glands — seems to be found in the vegetable world in the *Vitamins*, which might be described as the psychological factors of

plants. They are the higher controlling factors, and in their further evolution in beasts and man are essential to the physiological functions, growth, and even reproduction. Vitamins are essential in the story of the psycho-mental apparatus, which is a ray from the spiritual ego, itself a knot in the golden cord of consciousness coming in interrupted sequences from the divine Self.

May not these vitamins be electro-magnetic units, intimately connected with the vital processes in man, beast, and plants? So intimate is the connexion between the vitamins and the endocrine glands that without a sufficiency of the former the glands would cease to function, and would die. This is especially true in regard to the pituitary gland, the hierarch of all the others. Is it a stretch of the imagination to trace in the vitamins the factors of the elemental kingdoms working in the higher kingdoms?

Once more we seem to have a confirmation of the ancient teaching that man contains the universe within himself. We see in man the "*end organ*" of the involuted spiritual consciousness of all the realms above him, and the evolved product of those below. He is the "end organ" of the Lokas and the Talas, the two complementary conditions of consciousness, involving spiritual involution and material evolution, the Lokas descending and the Talas ascending in their struggle upwards and towards the Monadic "Soul-Being," each absorbing each, each essential in its own nature to the other, once more demonstrating the circulations of the Cosmos.

Science recognises six vitamins so far, listed alphabetically A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. G is often described as a variety of B and called B2. Each has its special realm of activity or control, but its effects are felt in the various bodily tissues. Let us relate the vitamins to the embryo. In its evolution three envelopes, three layers, are formed, each layer evolving separate systems of tissue-elements, called the *epiblast*, *mesoblast*, and *hypoblast*, the outer, middle and inner germ. The outermost layer evolves the epithelial cells of the skin, brain, and nervous system, the lining of the mouth and sense organs, and the

glands of the skin. These structures are connected with vitamin A, and disturbances are produced in them by a deficiency in that vitamin. Vitamin D is sponsor for the middle layer, from which come the bony and muscular systems and the generative, urinary and circulatory systems. It controls the supply of lime and phosphates and is essential for mothers and for healthy blood. The innermost layer evolves the lining of the lungs, the alimentary tract, the bladder and urethra, and the important thyroid and thymus glands. Here vitamin B plays its part by giving vigor to alimentation and respiration, and controlling oxidation. Deficiency in vitamin B leads to diabetes, atony of the bowels, neurasthenia, faulty alimentation, loss of weight, etc. These three vitamins form the tripod of physiological life. The others, not thoroughly analysed or understood at present, can be regarded as offshoots or handmaids of these three. Vitamins C and G (B2) are a complex of B, and seem to control the same functions in a larger field of action. Vitamins B and G (B2) have the special difference that one is destroyed by a slight amount of heat while the other is not. Deficiency in vitamin B leads to Beri-Beri, prevalent in Brazil, India, and Japan, an infectious disease described as producing multiple neuritis. Deficiency in vitamin B2 produces pellagra with digestive disturbance complicated with skin symptoms. A supply of the appropriate vitamin removes the symptoms. Vitamin E is apparently connected with the mesoblast or middle layer, and is always found in seeds, grains, nuts, etc. It is necessary for cell-division, the development of the embryo, and for the growth of the young of man or animal. Its deficiency contributes to sterility and sets up degenerative changes in the anterior pituitary body.

Without going into further details of their action, let us consider their place in nature. As vegetable elements they must be relegated to that kingdom, notwithstanding the fact that animal fats, especially cod liver oil, are the most fruitful sources of supply of vitamin D! But this "oil-soluble" product can be traced to the kelp beds which are frequented by codfish on the Newfoundland coast. It is not true, as formerly stated, that vitamin D can only be found in animal products, for rats fed

entirely on avocados show no vitamin degeneration, which they certainly would if vitamin D were absent. It is conceivable that whatever produces vitamin D in the vegetable kingdom, is somewhat different from its product in the higher kingdoms, but let us remember that it is in itself a product of sunlight and is nearly related to the ultra-violet radiation from the sun, without which physical life could not be sustained on this planet. Vitamin D is closely related to sun-tanning, and to the production of Viasterol, one of the sterols mentioned by a recent explorer as leading to the discovery of the elixir of life sought by the alchemists! It would seem that we are nearing the discovery of some of "Nature's finer forces" known to our ancestors but "lost awhile."

Does it not seem that science is finding in the vitamins — though it can hardly be expected to admit it just yet — *vital units of an astral nature*, not merely material chemical elements, whose existence is best determined by their action on living processes and whose absence is estimated by unfavorable reactions on life and consciousness? In other words, are we not entering a realm where scientists will have to discard the cast-iron dictum that nothing can be recognised but that which has the sanction of the senses using the mechanistic methods of mensuration, chemical reaction, and the like? Vitamins that cannot be seen, tasted, or isolated in their purity, can be administered to patients and will produce the expected reaction. This position has been reached by logical mental processes, the deductions made from unexpected phenomena, not by the process of experimenting with known material and demonstrating a preconceived hypothesis.

There can no longer be any doubt that the endocrine system in animals is not independent of vitamins. It has been found, for instance, that the pituitary gland is not the only one that is rich in them; all those organs like the liver, spleen, pancreas, and kidneys, where all the active assimilative processes are carried out, are saturated with vitamins, and these again are dependent for their formation and activity on the appropriate mineral salts. So we could paraphrase the old Hermetic saying thus: Without the mineral there could be no vegetable, without

the vegetable there could be no animal, without the animal there could be no human, and without the human there could be no gods!

What then is the signification of man? Man is the very pivot of evolution. In man we sound the very depths of "hell," the darkest and crudest forms of matter. Man uses as his yarn the grossest principle in nature, Kama, desire or passion, as Dr. G. de Purucker has recently emphasized; and from Kama man makes his warp and woof and constructs from it a divine fabric — that is to say, man as a thinking, spiritual being. However, man, beginning with a birthright of divinity as an un-self-conscious god-spark, descends into material existence in order to gain self-consciousness and the individual powers of mind. And humanity, having reached the depths of materiality, has begun now to ascend the upward arc whereon Perfected man attains to godhood. In the lower kingdoms "Desire" or the kamic principle acts as "instinct"; in man, when kama acts with the lower mind, the results are selfish, ignoble, cruel, and sometimes perverted. But when man's desire acts with his higher mind, he becomes noble, unselfish, aspiring and illuminated. As Krishna says in *The Bhagavad-Gita*: "In the hearts of all men I am desire, regulated by moral fitness."

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: VII — *H.*
T. Edge

VII — THE TRIANGLE

This symbol is usually shown as an equilateral triangle with an apex up, or the same with an apex down. In many respects it represents the Triad or group of three, and is often used synonymously therewith; but it includes more than a mere triad. For it has three points and three lines, which, with the figure itself, make up a septenary. This in mathematics represents the number of combinations of three things, represented as *a, b, c; ab, bc, ca; abc*. This can be applied to show how a septenate is derivable from a triad, how there are two triads, either of which, by the addition of the monad, becomes a quaternary. The triad is in one sense the first number after unity; for no sooner do we conceive a duality, than we get a trinity by thinking of the unity and the duality together.

A trinity stands at the head of every cosmogony and theogony; it really represents the limits of our thought. Everything which we know of in this world is dual, a pair of opposites; yet we are compelled to think of unity as underlying every duality. Thus hot and cold are the two extremes of temperature, positive and negative are the two poles of magnetism, every straight line has two ends, etc. Thus we have a trinity consisting of a duality and its underlying unity. If we consider life and death as a duality, we may well ask ourselves what is the unity of which they are the opposite phases. And we may ask similar questions as to light and darkness, and many other dualities. We find at the head of cosmogonies the One Life, a Monad or Unity, from which springs a duality of Spirit and Matter. The duality may be expressed in many ways, as Male and Female, Energy and Substance, Force and Matter, etc., etc. The one is the basis of all active powers throughout the universe; the other is the basis of all receptive, formative, or substantial potencies. But this duality springs from a unity which

contains both — the Spirit-Matter or unitary source of all. But besides this trinity we find another, denoted by Father-Mother-Son, of which the symbol would be an inverted triangle. Here we see Spirit and Matter and their offspring, the Son, which is the Universe, or Man, as the case may be. Egypt has it as Osiris, Isis, and Horus. It is seen in the triad of Will, Thought, and Act, the last being the offspring of the two former. The Father is the Universal Spirit; then comes the Great Mother — Nature; from these are born (macrocosmically speaking) the worlds; and (microcosmically speaking) the Christos, the real Man. This is the real meaning of the saying that the Christ is the Son of God; but it is the Christ in all men, not in a particular man. The theology of today makes insufficient provision for the Mother; if the symbology has a Father and a Son, a Mother would seem to be indicated. But it has somehow vanished, and the trinity has been made up to number by the inclusion of the Holy Ghost. One church makes a great deal of the Virgin Mary, who is an adaptation of the Pagan Magna Mater; but she is not a member of the Trinity.

The triangle is often used in conjunction with the square to signify a triad and a quaternary, the former of which symbolizes the higher world, the latter the lower. Thus we have the seven principles of man so divided into two main parts. As was stated under the Cross, a group of four often implies the lower manifested world, or what is sometimes called "matter" as opposed to spirit; for the number four is characteristic of material shapes and groupings, as are also the numbers six and eight, derived from it. We read in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 79, that, in order to make complete septenary man, the gift of Fire had to be made; this Fire was in the possession of the Triangles, free Intelligences, Flames. Atma-Buddhi-Manas is a triad, and when it imbodies it becomes a quaternary, and the imbodiment is itself fourfold, which makes seven.

The triangle symbol is not always used in the ordinary geometrical sense, wherein any of the points may be an apex; but it is considered as having a top and a bottom; the apex then represents a logos, from which emanate twin rays, the sides of the triangle. These rays, united at

their upper extremities, are spanned at their lower ends by the base line, which thus signifies the universe created by the interaction of these rays. In a similar way, a distinction is made between a triangle with the apex up and one with the apex down; the former being Fire, the latter Water, or again Spirit and Matter. The interlacing of these two makes Solomon's Seal, the interlaced triangles, the star hexagon in geometry; and this signifies the blending of rupa and arupa, spirit with matter, making, with the central point, or with a circumscribed circle, the septenate. So this is a symbol of a complete man.

A pyramid with a square base, such as forms a well-known architectural symbol, shows rays proceeding from a point of union and diverging as they descend, until they compass a square at the bottom, while triangles define the sides; this is an elaboration of a symbol just mentioned. The tetrahedron is bounded by four triangles, thus combining these two numbers; and the cube has square faces and three dimensions; and many interesting things can be learnt by the study of geometrical shapes.

When a monad becomes dual it passes from latency into activity, and when the duad becomes one, activity ceases on the plane of that duality. The duad signifies vibration, and the monad is the neutral center. He who realizes this possesses the power of balance and is no longer drawn from side to side. But it is important to observe that the real point of equilibrium is not the mere center of the line, halfway between the ends; it is not on the same plane. A pair of opposites is reconciled by a unity on a higher plane. This shows the distinction between a state of mere apathy or indifference and the true state of balance. Thus pleasure and pain are two poles of sensation; and the conquest of them does not mean a state of sensation which is neutral and indifferent, but an escape from the plane of (that kind of) sensation altogether, onto a higher plane of fuller life.

THE NEW NATURALIST — *Hugh Percy Leonard*

The study of Animated Nature in times gone by amounted to little more than the observation of the shot specimen, and the giving it an appellation derived from an ancient language as dead as itself. We are now beginning to see that the main interest lies not so much with the outer form as with the living dweller in that form, our younger brother on a lower rung of life's ascending ladder of degrees. A comparative study of the bewildering variety of form and color in the different species may lead us down many a fair avenue, and disclose the most suggestive links and correspondences amongst the specimens under consideration; and yet, surely, the object of the quest should be that shy, elusive dweller in the inmost place where glows the spark of life now on its way to blend itself with the clear flame from whence it sprang.

Everyone knows the outward appearance of the beaver — his strong, incisive, chisel-teeth, his damp-proof coat of fur, and his spatulate, fantastic tail, wrongly supposed to serve him as a trowel. But how immensely it adds to our understanding of the essential beaver to learn that when a party of dam-builders has succeeded in placing a more than usually refractory log they let themselves go in a perfectly human way and celebrate the occasion by a wild orgy of horseplay and riotous fun. They make the water boil with their mock battles and their mad pursuit, and to the sympathetic onlooker it suggests that their mentality must vary very little from our own, and their reactions correspond with those of humankind.

A naturalist of the school now happily obsolescent may understand the classification of "the burnished dove," and the secret of the lively iris on its neck; but can he follow it into those calm regions of untroubled peace from whence the brooding bird derives its soothing song? He may be well acquainted with the mechanism of the mockingbird's larynx, but can he tune his heart to harmony with the gray singer in

the palm who makes night ring with his triumphant joy? We must all welcome the new ideal which has come in with the camera and the valuable information gained by its harmless shooting. The patient devotion of the naturalist-photographer is worthy of all praise, and is a pleasant contrast to the stark butchery of the ruthless gunner of former days.

A new school of field-naturalists is on its way, a school whose students will discard the rifle and the trap, the poison and the net, faring forth into the wild places of the earth as patient watchers with observing eyes. Their hearts will be sensitized by their sympathy with the shy inhabitants and thus they will read their lives like an open book.

In an East Indian book there is a passage enumerating the magical Powers to be acquired by the initiated yogi, the final climax being reached in the statement that "he perceives what is passing in the mind of the ant." This may strike the casual reader as something of an anticlimax; but surely it is a magnificent tribute to the completeness of the initiate's detachment from the entanglement of the personal center, and his ability to blend his mind with that of a creature that surveys life from a point of view so far removed from ours. Milton has written of:

The parsimonious emmet
In small room large heart inclosed,

yet truly the heart of the emmet is large beyond the furthest stretch of the imagination of most of us. She is a member of a community in which the thought of private property and personal rights has no place, so that the busy, cheerful workers seem to have no other aim or object in their lives except to spend them in unstinted labor for the welfare of their native nest.

Where is the naturalist who can tell us "what is passing in the mind of an ant," and can explain in human terms that irresistible driving force that would raise a crawling insect to the rank of saint and hero but for the fact that it is carried along by an urge that is irresistible and cosmic

in its sweep. For such a sublime enterprise something more than a clever intellect is needed — a sensitive and sympathetic heart.

Sweet is the lore that Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things:
We murder to dissect.

Enough of science and of art;
Close up those barren leaves:
Come forth and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 316-318

QUESTION 316. *According to Theosophical doctrines, man is a septenary being, in addition to his physical body having six other principles as a part of his constitution, (a) Is it true then, that in addition to his present physical body manifesting on this our material earth, he would also simultaneously be manifesting on six other material globes or planets in an appropriate physical body or vehicle, all seven physical vehicles on the seven material globes each having its own six other principles functioning in their respective spheres, contributing each and all to the Monadic center? (b) If this is so, would all seven physical vehicles die and reincarnate again at the same time, or each at a different time, depending upon the karmic energies of each vehicle? — H. W. D.*

G. de P. — The foregoing question does not lack profound interest; and by the changing of two words — which words because they are esoteric cannot here be stated — the question would deal with a typically esoteric matter, connected with man's septenary constitution.

However, and answering with as much brevity as possible in view of the complex factors involved, and having in mind the intuitive thought behind the question, I would reply briefly to the questioner's query (a): No, if by the word "material" is meant "physical" bodies on other physical planets — Globes D of their respective chains — of our Solar System.

The fact is that man in his septenary constitution has one "material" or rather "physical" body only; and as he is now manifesting on our own Planetary Chain, and on Globe D thereof in the Fourth Round, this his physical body is the physical body that we all know — yours, mine, any other man's or woman's physical body on this Earth.

Yet there is an intuition in this question which is struggling to find utterance, or rather to find phrasing in which it may clothe itself; and I believe that future study will prove to this querent the accuracy of this

observation of mine.

Now, the querent's intuition points directly to the fact of man's composite nature, which is divisible after different manners; for instance, our usual exoteric manner which H. P. B. gave to us, and there is none better for its own purposes; then there is another manner which has been more favored by the Vedanta and the Taraka-Raja-Yoga, to which H. P. B. likewise approvingly alludes in her *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, page 157, and which refers more particularly to the different monads forming man's composite constitution. When we remember that these different monads are, each one of them, a growing and evolving entity, each one at some date in the distant future to be an individual of septenary character, we see not only the intuition in the querent's question, but also the profound truth of the famous old statement found in all mystical literature that man is a microcosm or small copy of the Macrocosm or Great Original; and, on exactly similar lines of analogy, every one of the monads in man is an as yet imperfectly evolved microcosm of the complete man as we recognise him.

With regard to the latter question, the querent's (b), it is seen from the foregoing part of my answer that there is not more than one physical body at any one time for man, and that this physical body is now found on our Globe D, Earth; and hence, the answer to this question (b) again is No. Yet just here I must enter a *caveat*, and point out that the same intuition before noticed is here again struggling to express itself, and it does seem to me as if this questioner had an inkling of a certain esoteric and very difficult teaching concerning the Outer Rounds. Be this as it may, my answer stands correct, that man's septenary constitution at any one time works through one physical body only, and that in the present phase of human evolution this physical body is the one in which we, as individuals, are incarnated on this Earth.

QUESTION 318. *How can we study the science of metaphysics?*

M. Ginevra Munson — A modern positivist defines metaphysics as "the science of all sciences." Therefore it includes *all* science — and more:

religion and philosophy. First we must realize that mind is infinite, exists everywhere and in all things, a veritable ocean of consciousness infilling the universe, outer and inner — the worlds of the gods.

In order to know the truths of metaphysics or the worlds and conditions above physics, we have to evolve the faculties pertaining thereto, the faculties that can gain experience therein. This is done by aspiration — by a *yearning* for truth, and an expanding consciousness. It requires the consciousness of individual minds to gain experience in the metaphysical realms, the same as it does to gain knowledge of the laws and operations of the physical with the help of our senses and intellect. By probing into the metaphysical, we evolve our higher senses and *intuition*, which is the metaphysical Ego within.

The Ego-sense is the thread on which all thoughts and knowledge are strung. Even in the study of physics our modern scientists are forced to the conclusion that mind and consciousness are the fundamentals of all manifestation, and exist throughout all. They have discovered that Space is an ocean of consciously acting atoms — Theosophy says *life-atoms* — and that primal substance consists of life-atoms, the ever-living nuclei "evolved from that black, impenetrable fortress which is forever concealed from human or even Dhyanic sight. The nuclei are the light of eternity escaping therefrom." (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 33.) All manifestation begins with the whirling evolution of these life-atoms, each with its own characteristic, or *svabhava*, down through their own self-built elements or planes of substance and variety of forms through which to gain experience and expanding consciousness, to individual self-consciousness in man; then on to individual godhood, and further on to ever greater heights in Divinity, as evolutionary law tells us must be true.

Of the many aspects of the metaphysical and esoteric teaching of Theosophy there is none more inspiring than that man is an integral part of the Universal Spirit and that there is no limit to his development as an individual soul. Here is where all Christian religions have failed in leading man to his highest: by affirming that human beings are the

children of a personal God, who saves them from "hell" by faith and prayer.

The Ancient Teaching asserts that man is a manifestation of Divinity, an evolving part of the One, his own Inner God. As one writer says, "It is a gospel of self-reliance and aspiration for which there is no parallel in the philosophical thought or spiritual realization in the world." To study metaphysics is to study the inner and greater part of one's own being as well as the whole of all other beings manifesting as laws, forces, and matter, physical and metaphysical, in studying which our modern physicists are becoming metaphysicists.

QUESTION 317. *Does Theosophy teach astrology?*

H. T. Edge — Theosophists know there is such a science as astrology, but they do not advocate or engage in its study, for the following reasons. Astrology is a most profound subject, and to study it properly would demand the devotion of a lifetime and the engrossment of all our energies. Thus its pursuit would divert Theosophists from their proper work, which is that of preparing the way for better human conditions by spreading the noble truths of Theosophy. Astrology is fascinating for some people, but can hardly be called profitable. It is one of many such pursuits, which demand more time and attention than can be spared. Again, what is today known as astrology is but a tattered remnant of the science as it has been and could be. It is mainly concerned with the motions of the visible planets in the Zodiac, and with their indications or influence on human and worldly affairs.

It is evident from experience that a certain amount of information about a person's character and probable experiences can be ascertained from his natal horoscope; but it is important to bear in mind that the aspects merely show tendencies. In this respect they resemble the indications of phrenology. A man goes to a phrenologist, who examines the shape of his head, tells him what his tendencies are, and advises him to cultivate some faculties and restrain others. Some years later the man visits the phrenologist again, and the shape of his head is found to have changed; for he has taken the advice. This proves

that we have a power of resisting or enhancing or modifying the qualities indicated by phrenology, and that we are not bound by them. It is the same with the horoscope. It shows the tendencies, gives a map showing the forces operating and the probable drift, supposing these forces are not modified. But all these may be overridden by the superior power of the native's own intelligence and will; and thus he can be said to create his own horoscope, to rule his stars.

The question may be asked, whether it is of any service for anyone to know his own horoscope and study it, or whether he might not get along just as well, or even better, without such knowledge. One's experience suggests that the knowledge is of no practical benefit, and is apt to induce the habit of studying one's symptoms and of relying on external influences rather than on our own resources.

So our answer may be summed up by saying that the study of astrology is not recommended for a Theosophist, as it distracts his attention from his work and focuses it upon what is at best unprofitable and may be morbid in its tendency. Astrology is one of a number of such pursuits, including card-reading, crystal-gazing, numerology, and the like; all of which tend to lead the student into bypaths and to conduct him to divergent tracks rather than to any goal.

B. de Z. — The answer to this question depends entirely upon what the questioner means by astrology. If it is the widely spread present-day attempts at fortune-telling on the basis of very questionable methods and still more questionable interpretation of the results arrived at, then it might be said that Theosophy emphatically does not teach anything of the kind, nor does it even endorse it or recognise it as worthy of the ancient time-honored term astrology. But if by that name is meant that highly intellectual science which was an integral part of the ancient Mystery-Schools, and of which science there is still in our present world many a fragment extant, then it might be said that Theosophy, the Ancient Wisdom, does teach it, and for the simple reason that the basic spiritual foundations of this ancient science of astrology are identic with the spiritual teachings of Theosophy. But this

spiritual-intellectual science is anything but fortune-telling. Instead of concentrating one's attention upon the color of the dress which you have to wear on Thursday if you are a Sagittarian, or upon the exact latitude where you should live if you happen to be born in February, and a few other such trivial things, including perhaps the best stock that you should buy in 1936 if you would become a wealthy man next year — instead of this, the genuine astrology of the ancients had a far wider scope for its investigations and looked behind the phenomenal universe into the realm of spiritual causes which manifest as transitory effects in the world of men. It dealt not only with the influences of planets and of the sun and moon and the stars upon the mundane things of human life, but dealt further, and more particularly, with the nature of the celestial bodies, being, as they are, entities with a life of their own.

There is a genuine spiritual astrology, a science based on a knowledge which is at the same time strictly scientific, profoundly philosophic, and genuinely religious, and this knowledge is grounded upon Nature's own sublime operations — facts of universal being, which in ancient times constituted the "science of the stars" — - an important part of the very fabric of the Mystery-Schools and their teachings. This spiritual astrology represents the scientific and philosophic background of thought against which were projected, as it were, and from which sprang, the various branches of accepted astrological *art*, such as genethliacal, mundane, horary, etc., etc., astrology.

Mathematical calculations are a good thing when they are correct; but mathematics without a sound philosophical foundation is futile because the "how" operations will never satisfy the inquirer who is asking for the "why" of things.

Present day astrological *art* is ninety per cent, without a soul, and the philosophical background with spiritual intuitions flashing against it as it were, can be found these days only in one or two, or possibly three, genuine astrological schools of thought, and they are not likely to be among the names which will probably first arise in the mind of the

reader.

There is a purpose even in a superficial study of the more outward, mathematical side of astrology, and it is this: it shows the manner in which the cyclical habits of Nature express or manifest or mold themselves in the relations and correlations of numbers, and it is not too far-fetched to assert that a correctly cast and a mathematically correct astrological figure when interpreted according to two sets of standards (a) the age-old rules of practical astrology and (b) the Theosophical or esoteric system of thought — will show a great many points of great interest regarding the character of the individual or group of individuals concerned; and from this can often be derived valuable hints regarding the future development of new and inherent tendencies. But it should always be kept in mind that the Science of Astrology is only one aspect or presentation of the all-embracing esoteric philosophy of life.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF MAN — *Frank C. Bereidge*

It seems to me that the study of this subject demands the study of all the other teachings of Theosophy. For several years past I have been studying Theosophy principally from the viewpoint of the Seven Principles of Man. Are the seven principles separate entities? Well, Dr. de Purucker says in *Fundamentals*, page 306: ". . . each of the elements, each of the principles, each of the rudiments to blossom forth later into divinity, is itself a septenary or sevenfold entity"; again, "For instance, the principle of Manas is septenary. It has its own atman, its buddhi, its manas — the manas-manas which is its own particular essence or swabhava." This page 306 is a big key to understanding the seven principles. Then on page 314, G. de P. says, "Our higher principles are actual entities living on their own planes, individual beings, fully conscious and thinking entities. Fix that thought firmly in your minds if you please." And again on page 360, "The monad lives in its own world, in its own logic activity, with its quasi or semi-divine powers in full action, far more self-conscious on its own plane than you are or I am on this plane of consciousness. And similarly with the god within us, seated within the monad." And yet are the Seven Principles separate entities?

Let us look at it from another point of view. There are human beings, but there is no such entity as humanity. There are manasic entities — the human beings are lower manasic entities — but there is no such entity as the Manas-principle. There are buddhic entities, but no such entity as the Buddhi principle. There are atmic entities, but no such entity as the Atman principle. The principles are planes, are spheres, are worlds. What are we? We are manasic entities, lower manasic entities, sevenfold manasic entities evolving on the manas-plane or principle; and when we have become perfect as a manasic entity we shall then become buddhic entities — sevenfold buddhic entities, and so on upwards forever. What are the seven principles? Are they the

seven Kingdoms of Nature? Surely there is a very close analogy; in *Fundamentals*, page 489, G. de P. says:

These ten families — three of them we will leave without further mention at present — or rather these *seven manifest* families or stocks of the inflowing Life-Waves, these seven Life-Waves are the seven which left the corresponding globe A of the Moon at its death, and were its ten or seven principles.

These seven principles are evolved one from the other; that is, Atman evolves forth Buddhi and Buddhi evolves forth Manas, and so on down. Buddhi is the child of its parent Atman, Manas is the child of its parent Buddhi and the grandchild of its grandparent Atman, and so on. Each principle contains everything that its parent, either active or latent, so that we as manasic entities contain everything our parent Buddhi or our grandparent Atman has, but mostly latent at present. Now, when in the course of ages we become perfect manasic entities, we shall then be ready to pass up to the Buddhi principle or plane and so will become a Buddhic entity; but we shall not become our parent Buddhi, for our parent Buddhi will have also gone up a step or plane and will then be an Atmic entity and our grandparent Atman will have passed on to a still higher plane.

Now to complete the picture we must think of the Self, the Universal Self permeating all, the great Boundless Ocean, the Boundless All in which everything is bathed. Let us think of man as a center manifesting in a stream of consciousness in this Boundless ocean, this stream having no beginning and no end. And yet, as we look we see branch-streams flowing out from this stream of consciousness in all directions, permeating and intermixing with all other streams of consciousness, connecting us with worlds visible and invisible, with globes, with planets, with solar systems, and with universes; uniting us with Gods, with Monads, with Souls, with Atoms. Truly our stream of consciousness is not only beginningless and endless, but also shoreless in every direction. It is the Boundless All.

As G. de P. so beautifully expresses it:

Examine the boundless spaces; there are no frontiers. Our vision halts; but where our vision halts then thought leaps beyond our vision. Imagination in its turn overleaps thought; and at the outermost limits where imagination fails, the marvelous spiritual consciousness within us wings its flight beyond, and we instinctively recognise our intrinsic oneness with the Boundless.

The Theosophical Forum

THE TURN OF THE YEAR — *L. L. W.*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The perpetual miracle of Nature! How blind to it are often the children of this outer world — eyes that see not and hearts that will not understand. Yet every year the shining indicators of the celestial clock mark the inevitable cosmic hours. Shedding bounty, the Sun journeys through space. The tides of solar vitality wax and wane, unfolding the rich pageant of the seasons. Winged creatures obey his secret call and follow his sweep with beautiful unerring trust.

But man at last is awakening to the forgotten knowledge of his own past in ancient and happier civilizations. He begins to feel once more the rhythms of the spirit. The Mystery-Teachings have touched his soul, and Nature is no longer a painted veil but dissolves before his quickened sight, and he perceives the depths upon depths of the inner worlds. The Autumnal Equinox is a period of balance when Father Sun crosses the line of our equator. Day and night are then of equal length. There comes as it were a sacred pause when Nature holds her breath that the listening heart may hear the music of the spheres.

Life was so ordered in ancient times that its outer forms expressed these divine inner rhythms. In Egypt there were solemn religious festivals at the times when the sun's annual cycle brought the seasonal changes. Similarly, Greece celebrated these sacred periods, and Scandinavia too. In fact, the whole antique world felt and vibrated to the grand pulsations of the Solar Heart. And even we, at our blindest, often unconsciously register these secret promptings. That is why we have the illuminating phrase, "the turn of the year." Farmers and poets, children and animals, seem to know with a sure instinct — can sense, indeed, almost the very moment when Nature, enjoying her drowsy

autumnal dream, turns over and drops into winter sleep. Even on the pavements of city streets a hurrying worker, when he emerges into the morning air, may sometimes think, "Why, it smells like spring!" or, "It feels like winter today."

Theosophists everywhere know an especial quickening of the heart at the four Sacred Seasons — the Winter Solstice, the Spring Equinox, the Summer Solstice, and the Autumnal Equinox which we are approaching now. For we are assured that it is at these mystical turning-points of the sun's annual cycle that a great hope and a sublime promise whisper their secret across the cosmic spaces. All over the world are those who are weary of the common round; for whom the unending, monotonous changes rung upon the limited personal emotions have begun to pall; those who suspect that within this labyrinth of dissatisfactions and fevers and frustrations which we call life there lurks a secret clue. Finding and following it, they are sure they may enter upon the Great Adventure for which man feels that life was originally designed. That we have somehow missed it only the more convinces us that it can and must be attained. And into these groping hands Theosophy puts the long lost clue — Initiation.

Initiation has been described, from the technical standpoint, as a short cut to knowledge. It is reached through intensive spiritual training under a spiritual Teacher, one who is himself an Initiate, a Master of life. This intensive training can teach a man how to become strong enough so that he can run through rapidly what to average men are the enormously long courses of evolution. And we are told that the periods where initiation follows upon these stretches of intense self-development occur at the four Sacred Seasons of the Year. Dr. de Purucker thus refers to them in *The Esoteric Tradition* (p. 1081):

... it was the attempt in all the Mystery-Schools of all the ancient nations to bring the seasons on earth into harmony with ... man's inner life and future destiny.

So for Theosophists the Sacred Seasons are events, very happy, very solemn, very inspiring, when we pause for a time to reflect how

different are the real meanings and purposes of Nature from those which humanity is pursuing today. Ignorance, blindness, "just not knowing" — these are the bane of the human soul. So we rejoice at these seasons because we understand that our recognition of them and their significance heralds the first swelling buds upon a tender shoot transplanted in our modern desert from the Gardens of the Hesperides. And grateful hearts are lifted then to our Elder Brothers and their spiritual Helpers to whom we owe our restoration to a place in the spiritual sun.

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: VII — *G. de Purucker*

GOOD AND EVIL

G. de P. — In a recent meeting of this Lodge, one of the speakers made the statement that all the forces and substances, energies and attributes, of universal being are in their essence divine. Now this statement, abstractly speaking, or absolutely speaking, if we carry our thought inwards into the very heart of Parabrahman, is true. But the statement as made is not enough. If it were sufficient in statement, then there would be no evil anywhere in infinity. In other words, there could be no division of high and low, good and bad, right and left — in other words, no "pairs of opposites" — for all would be divine. It would be a corroboration of the unphilosophic chatter of some modern absolute-idealist theorists: "All is good" — which certainly is no truly philosophical statement.

Let me tell you that while it is true enough that in the absolute sense of the statement, no particular objection probably can be taken to it — for there is the Divine, utter divinity, Parabrahman, the heart of it, and beyond and more inward still, which is the Rootless Root of all things and beings — but here we are speaking of Para-brahman, infinitude in its inaccessibly highest reaches, unattainable by any human intellect; the reference here is to infinitude, and show me a time when infinity changes itself into "pairs of opposites" and in consequence undergoes manvantara on the one hand or pralaya on the other hand. Infinity means absolute, frontierless, beginning-less and endless immutability in the sense that infinitude, as infinitude, never becomes finitude or limitation; but within infinity there are multitudes of worlds and of systems of worlds endlessly, for ever and for ever throughout eternity moving in evolutionary changes, and characterized by "pairs of opposites." So that there never is a time, ever and unto the utmost for ever, when everything, i. e., all infinity, vanishes into the heart of Parabrahman; because that would mean that infinity changes, and

sometimes is in manvantara and sometimes is in pralaya. But these changes are predicable only of manifested things, and infinitude, as infinitude, never is subject to manifestation, for only finite things change. As long as infinity is, as long as eternity endures, which means endlessly for ever, "good" and "evil," signifying "opposites," shall be the Universe's eternal ways; and right and left, high and low, and the endlessly differing contrasts of manifestation, and hence good and bad, shall equally endlessly offer their contrasts.

There is a warning of importance that we must draw from this. Do not be deceived in refusing to accept it. There is good, endless good, but in the manifested states of universal being; and there is likewise evil, endless evil, but in the manifested states of universal being; and these in their complex and intricate combinations are the world's eternally dual ways. What are the Mamo-Chohans, those dread beings who preside at the pralayas, who preside in the material realms now, playing their parts in the Cosmic Drama, just as the divine gods play their opposite parts in the same Cosmic Drama? In this thought you have the truth, the two sides: darkness and light, right and left, good and bad, high and low, for ever and for ever and for ever endlessly in infinitude. Here is a secret that the Christians got partial hold of, a fragment of the occult teachings of the Sanctuary, and twisting it and distorting it, indeed caricaturing it, called one end of the contrast "God," and the other end of the contrast the "Devil." Such distortion is correct in neither of its aspects! This contrast is simply the eternal and ever-changing structure of the manifesting Universes in utter infinitude, this infinitude being the playground, the scene, the frontierless theater, of Universes appearing and disappearing, because playing their parts as the Kosmic Sons of Light; including the Mamo-Chohans and their legions playing their own parts in constructing the material universe, and holding it together, guided nevertheless by the Sons of Light, and ascending from darkness into light throughout eternity, continually renewed by fresh influxes into the Kosmic Scenery as the gods pass onwards and upwards, and the Mamo-Chohans trail along behind them in the rear. Do you get the picture?

The warning is: don't let your brains ever be twisted with the idea that it is at any time safe to play with evil, in any connexion, on any occasion, in any way. Such play means going backwards, degenerating, joining forces with the Mamo-Chohans, the forces of darkness, of evil, of spiritual death. Light is light, and dark is dark — opposites. Good is good and bad is bad — opposites. Right is right and left is left, unto eternity. No wonder the Masters cry, the gods cry: Who is on my side? Make your choice. You are all free agents. You cannot play with the forces of Nature. Occultism is the weighing of your own soul in the balance of destiny. You will either go up, or you will go down. There is no other choice; and I think it is high time that these facts became better known. They are not a bit esoteric in the sense of being secret and told only to a select and chosen few. They are openly stated in all our standard books. These facts of Nature were the basis of the universal duality which formed the substance of the Zoroastrian system of thought, and of others.

There is immense comfort and happiness and peace in understanding these great facts properly, because they bring intellectual harmony and spiritual illumination into the mind; and will someone explain to me, if only good is and there is no natural evil, how can evil exist at all? If you say that evil is but illusory, which is true enough when we understand what illusory means, this is not denying that evil exists, albeit it exists as an illusion. We human beings live in a world of maha-maya or cosmic illusion; and merely to call it "illusion" does not annihilate that form of maya which we men call evil. Do you catch the picture? If infinity is "good," it is obviously infinitely "good," and then there is therein no room for evil and imperfection, and the cosmos-wide series of pairs of opposites and contrasts; and heaven knows that they exist!

Be therefore on the side of the gods, the Sons of Light, of the Spirit. Go onwards and upwards: Excelsior, ever higher! There is our Path. But do not play tricks with your thoughts in this connexion, for think what you will and say what you may, you are either on one side, or on the other.

G. de P. — After speaking a fortnight ago upon the topic of Good and Evil, I heard misconstructions of what I then said, and I thought it good to seize the first opportunity offered to me in order to say a few words to disabuse the minds of those who misapprehended what it was my intention to say. When I spoke of one side of the Universe as being evil, and of the other side being good, and of the interconnexion of these twain, which contrast each other and thus set each other off, as being the world's eternal ways, these were general statements, abstract statements, and had only an indirect although real enough application to human problems — human good and evil, and so forth. I had no intention whatsoever to give utterance to the old Christian theological idea that there is an infinite personal God who is "good"; and an infinite something or somebody which or who is evil, and which or who, if not the Devil, is nevertheless the Devil under another coat! No, that was not my meaning at all.

Now, try to follow me in thought, not only in time but into abstract space, which means no particular portion of space like our Earth, or the planets Venus or Mars, or again the Sun, or the Polar Star; but space generally, anywhere, abstract space; and the same with regard to Time: no particular point of time like now, or tomorrow, or yesterday, or a thousand or ten billion years ago, or the same period in the future. But abstract time, any time, anywhere. *If* change, division, opposites, opposition, contrasts, light and dark, matter and spirit, good and bad, short and long, these and all other eternal contrasts, were to vanish from the infinite Boundless, then every thing, high and low, from spirit to utmost matter, would vanish likewise, because all the Universe in all its infinite manifestations — and I use the word "Universe" here in the utterly boundless sense — is builded of these contrasts. We call that path or aspect leading upwards, the right hand, often also the side or path of light, of good, of compassion, of harmony; we speak of the other side or contrasting side, the side of imperfection, of constriction, of lack, of not yet unfolded attributes — in fact of every thing that is the opposite of the right hand, as the evil side of Nature, the dark side or

the left hand.

Now then, are these things which are evil on the one hand and which exist by force of contrast with the things which are good on the other hand — are these same identical things, I ask, eternally evil, eternally unchanged, for ever fixed in essence as evil? Obviously not. There is as it were a constant turning of the Wheel of Kosmic Life, of the minor Wheels of Cosmic Lives; so that the evil rising on the Wheel becomes less evil, less imperfect, for imperfection slowly passes into relative perfection. It is the imperfection that we call "evil"; the relative perfection we call "good." This process has been going on from utter eternity, and it is endless. There never was a beginning; there never will be an end of it, throughout timeless Time, throughout spaceless Space. These two poles of manifested being — of *manifested* being, please understand — whether spiritually manifested or materially manifested, these twain compose the eternally Kosmic Dual. Wipe them out, and all manifestation would vanish, because then there would be no contrasts. Is, then, imperfection infinite? Where can you show me a place where manifestation — imperfection — ends? I know no such place. It is, therefore, endless. Contrariwise, show me a place where light is not, where the other side, the other pole called the good, is not. Where does it end? I know of no such place. Thus the "good" and the "bad," the perfect and imperfect, and all intermediate and relative degrees of both — but never an ending to the perfect and never an ending to the imperfect — all exist within and through and because of that utter, ineffable, unthinkable Mystery which we men with our imperfect minds can refer to only in the words of the Vedic sage —

THAT.

Imperfection and perfection are relative terms, because there are degrees of both; and both are comprised in the encircling, comprehending, bosom of the endless fields of the Boundless. They are all children of the Boundless. Even the imperfect is manifested by the Boundless. This does not mean that the imperfect is eternally good, for it is not. But turn in the other direction, to the right hand. Look at what we call the "perfect." The mere fact that there is perfect, and the more

perfect, and the still more perfect, throughout infinity, shows us that even what we speak of as the right-hand — if we make distances between abstract points great enough — is a rising series of grades or stages or steps enlarging ever more to the right, and that these relative stages of increasing perfection we call "good," so that even that which is less to the right side we likewise call good. The same rule of thought applies to the left hand. What we call the highest imperfect, or the most perfect of the imperfect, is really divine to beings and entities so far more to the left, to the imperfect side, that by right of contrast, by right of evolutionary unfolding, of growth, of change towards the right, towards betterment, this less imperfect can be called relatively spiritual or divine. Thus there is no absolute dividing line between the right and the left.

Now comes a point which is exceedingly important. Matter is not evil *per se*. What we call concreted matter is simply incomputable armies and hosts of monads aggregated together in compact order; and, as it were, when compared with us relatively wakened human beings these armies and hosts are asleep. Each such monad in its heart is divine, yet it is manifesting as matter. These are elementary thoughts, and yet they are a sublime teaching. One cannot therefore say that matter is essentially evil. It is merely less perfectly evolved or unfolded than is what we call spirit and the spiritual ranges which the gods occupy.

The whole truth is really simple enough, but people become perplexed about it because of its simplicity. The ideas of Western minds have been distorted by the teaching that there is an infinite Mind, an Individual, infinite, without body, parts, or passions, without any qualifications whatsoever, and that it is essentially distinct, nevertheless, and separate from the things which this Mind creates — a perfect nightmare of theories illogical and unsustainable throughout.

Now then, while it is perfectly true to state that evil, even cosmic evil, as we men speak of it, is imperfection, imperfection in growth — imperfect beings living in an imperfect state because of their imperfect evolutionary unfolding, of their imperfect development — while this is

so, giving constant hope to imperfect beings to grow better, nevertheless hearken: this does not mean that imperfect things or beings are essentially good. I cannot commit an evil deed, and cheat my brain into saying that the essence of the deed is divine and therefore I have done no wrong because there is no evil in the Universe. What I am trying to point out is that manifestation is the interblending of opposites; otherwise there could be no manifestation, which means limitations of all kinds of unfolding growth. But hearken also carefully to this: It is sheer folly for a man to accept and to believe that one side of the Universe is composed of innumerable hierarchies of bright and shining gods, who are our ancestors, the spiritual roots from which we draw our higher portions; and that all the other side of Nature, because of the law of contrast, does not balance or support the good side. In other words, I mean that there are evil powers in the Universe, evil forces: not absolutely evil, not essentially evil, not outside the womb of the Utterly Divine, but because of their relatively great imperfection they are distinctly evil to the race of men and to other beings more or less occupying our state on the Ladder of Life. Furthermore, for the same reason, there are localities in the Universe which to us are evil; they are true hells, not however in the Christian sense of the word, but globes so densely material that life or living there to us humans would be hell; and hence their influences on men are evil, and urge men to evil, for these influences are in large part the gross and heavy effluvia flowing forth from the dark side of Nature, and they are largely responsible for the temptations to which men too often succumb.

Just precisely as it is our duty to ally ourselves with our "Father in Heaven," with the divinities, our guardians and protectors whose strong hands hold us safe if we but follow them: in other words, just as it is our supreme duty to follow the right-hand Path; so on the other hand if we do not, and become negative and subject to the gross effluvia from the densely material spheres, then we shall as surely take the downward path — as otherwise we shall surely follow the path to the gods.

It is these thoughts, originally of the Sanctuary of the Mysteries, which

were taken over into some of the exoteric religions, such as Christianity, and often grossly distorted, twisted. But there is one point on which the Occult Teaching and Christian theology agree, for a wonder! Christian theology denies that matter is essentially evil. So do we. Even in the most hellish parts of the Galaxy, in its grossest and darkest spheres, and there are some that — well, if you knew about them you would not sleep tonight — even in those places, every mathematical point of the spheres and globes of which these places are builded, is as divine *in essence* as are the spheres of light in which the gods live in their realms. Hence, do not think that matter is evil *per se*. That would mean that from eternity evil is evil and cannot ever pass from imperfection into a growing perfection, in other words that beings cannot ever from evil become good. Evil abstractly consists of transitory states or conditions — however long it may last — in which monads pass during certain phases of their endless peregrinations upwards and onwards.

Nowhere, therefore, is evil eternal because essentially unchanging; and nowhere is what we men with our imperfect intelligence call "good," crystallized in immobility and remaining there in such state eternally. Half of manifested infinity is imperfection, in its innumerably relative degrees; and the other half is perfection in its innumerably relative degrees; and there is no absolute dividing line between the twain. It is obvious, of course, that I speak from the standpoint of a man, and because of my humanity make my own dividing lines between good and evil. A god would make different dividing lines. A Mamo-Chohan again would likewise make different dividing lines; but the rule as stated would be identic for all.

III

G. de P. — I should like once more to say a few words about something which I had occasion to speak of some weeks ago — twice, or it may be thrice. It was with regard to the esoteric teachings concerning the two Ways, the eternal Ways, of the Universe — good and evil. Now I have at different times said a good many things on this matter; but when I

ceased speaking on the last occasion, I realized that I did not emphasize sufficiently one point, and this point was that when we look upon the Universe as Boundless Space, without frontiers or limits, then we always find that while in some parts of Boundless Space Universes are appearing and manifestation is going on, in other parts manifestation is disappearing — Universes are passing out of their manvantaric existence.

As long as there is manifestation, there is imperfection, which is what we men call evil. Consequently, as we are now dealing with boundless infinity and eternity, it is perfectly correct to say that evil and good are the world's eternal ways; otherwise expressed, perfection and imperfection are in Boundless Space from beginningless duration, and will last unto endless duration, endless eternity. But this does not mean that there are two infinities, to wit, an infinite of perfection and an infinite of imperfection. Obviously not. If there were an infinite of perfection, there could be no imperfection, no manifestation which is imperfection.

Next, and now passing from the boundless spaces, let us take an individual. Outside of and beyond and within the Kosmic infinite duality, our minds oblige us to recognise cosmic unity, and it is out of this unity that the duality springs; the duality has its heyday of manifestation; and then into the unity it vanishes again. This unity does not mean "one," because that would be the beginning of numeration which is the beginning of manifestation, and it would likewise be the same mistake that the Christians made, in imagining their infinite personal God. The "one" I here use in the sense of the mystical zero, as H. P. B. employs it, signifying all-encompassing infinitude, from which the one, any one of the multitudes of ones, is born.

To illustrate: Take any one of us, a human being. We are beings in manifestation, therefore are we imperfect, and throughout beginningless and endless time we shall in various hierarchies and in different degrees of perfection, or of imperfection, on lower or on

higher planes, be running the eternal cyclical round of developing and of unfolding ever more and more. But that ineffable Rootless Root within each one of us, is the utterly Boundless. This is a very important point of thought. It is upon this thought of non-duality that was based all the teaching of the great Hindu Avatara Sankaracharya; and his form of the Vedanta — a word which means "the real meaning of the Vedas," i. e., of the books of Wisdom — was called Adwaita, which means non-dualistic, because his thought dwelt mainly on this endlessly Divine, the Rootless Root which is the core of the core of the core of every unit in boundless infinitude.

Thus, then, strange paradox, so easily understandable and yet so difficult to explain: while the fields of boundless infinitude, or boundless space, are never empty of manifested, manifesting, and disappearing worlds, all of them are born from and return to that ineffable, unthinkable Mystery which we call THAT. THAT is not dual, and this is about all we can say concerning it. Hence it is not imperfect; it cannot even be said to be perfect; because perfection and imperfection are terms of human understanding, which means terms of an imperfectly developed intelligence — the human. It is beyond both perfection and imperfection. It is the ALL, the source and fountain-head of all the hierarchies of the gods, as high as you will; and of the lowest elements of the material worlds, put them as low as you like. It is the ALL — we have no words with which to describe it. The Vedic Sages simply called it THAT. It is not a God; from it all the gods spring. It is not a World; from it all the worlds come; and like the gods, they ultimately return to it. It is not personal, it is not impersonal, for these again are human words signifying attributes of human perfection or imperfection. It is beyond all of them. It does not ever manifest, because infinity does not manifest. Only things and beings manifest. Yet from It all beings and things come. It includes within its all-comprehensive bosom all that ever was in boundless time everlasting, all that now is, and all that ever will be in endless time, or what we men call the limitless future. It neither thinks nor does it not think, because thinking and not-thinking are human terms or expressions,

and emphatically it is not human. It is neither intelligent nor non-intelligent, because these again are human attributes — godlike attributes on the one hand, and limited attributes on the other hand.

As Lao-Tse said, embodying the same thought: As long as ye have good men in the State ye will have evil in the State. Why? Not because of the presence of good men; but there can be good men only when we have bad men and their bad actions showing off the good men by contrast. Do you catch this profound thought? As long as there is light, obviously you will have darkness. These things, light and darkness, are limited, however vast they may be, however small; and they again are not THAT, but are all included within THAT. THAT is beginningless. The gods begin in any one manvantara, and keep cyclically repeating their beginnings. The Universes begin, they end, and they repeat the cycles of manifestation throughout eternity, albeit ever rising on loftier scales. But THAT is without because beyond cycles. It is not an Individual; it contains all individuals. Any individual is limited, otherwise it would not be an individual. An individual is a being or an entity which we know by contrast with other beings and entities against which the entity is set. You could not tell one flower from another flower unless you saw the contrast of flowers. Individuality is a sign of imperfection, of limitation; personality *a fortiori* even more so.

That is why the ancient Books of Wisdom state that THAT is neither good nor bad, neither intelligent nor non-intelligent; neither alive nor dead; neither long nor short nor high nor low. All these are attributes of limited things which we cannot predicate of the Unlimited Boundless. If it were long, however vast the length might be, it would have an ending and a beginning. Similarly with intelligence, kindness, goodness, compassion, harmony — all these things are attributes of limitation, albeit of spirit. IT is beyond them all encompasses them all, enwombs them all. From it they all spring; to it they all will return.

I would not weigh so frequently and so heavily on these thoughts were I not keenly sensible of the fact that they comprise questions of high metaphysics, questions of high philosophy, questions of high religious

import which some day our Theosophical exponents will have to deal with. They will have to give an account of our sublime Wisdom to the keenest minds of the world. We shall be asked to explain our convictions, no longer to kindly audiences such as we gather in our halls and auditoriums; and we shall then need trained and polished minds, capable and capacious intellects, men and women fully acquainted with our sublime Thought-Wisdom, so that they can make statements in exposition which will have clarity, succinctness, and persuasive power to those who come to us and ask for light.

EVIL has no existence *per se* and is but the absence of good and exists but for him who is made its victim. It proceeds from two causes, and no more than good is it an independent cause in nature. Nature is destitute of goodness or malice; she follows only immutable laws when she either gives life and joy, or sends suffering [and] death, and destroys what she has created. Nature has an antidote for every poison and her laws a reward for every suffering. . . . It is the blind law of necessity and the eternal fitness of things, and hence cannot be called Evil in Nature. — *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 56-7

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — *C. J. Ryan*

YEHUDI MENUHIN AND HIS VIEW OF REINCARNATION

Yehudi Menuhin, the California "wonder boy violinist," who is now almost of age, has recently given an interview which contains some remarkable evidence that he is not only a great musician, a supreme interpreter of the message of the great musical composers, but that although so young, he has a profound sympathy with the suffering of mankind and a burning desire to find the solution of our problems — perchance by turning the key of Reincarnation! The following quotations from the *Sun News-Pictorial*, Melbourne, Australia, will give an idea of the quality of his thought:

Now that I am on the verge of my manhood, the need for answers to life's problems is becoming more insistent. Sometimes I think I have found a philosophy that satisfies all my needs, but then I discover an incompleteness, and the whole building of my mind falls down. Not that the mere "I" matters much in this mutable world, nor in the deathless world of music. . . . I see everywhere about me vibration, vibration, vibration. . . . Sometimes I come near a person whose face I cannot see, but whose personality I can feel intensely vibrating in tune with me. Others who are often pleasant to look at and in manner are charming, make me feel that I want to run from them. . . . I speak of beauty, but the thought of beauty has lately made me more sad than happy. Wherever we travel about the world we see so much misery and utter despair. . . . Why, I ask again. I cannot find the true answer to this question. I have discussed it with men who make sociology their life work. They sometimes have wonderful and sincere theories, but which of them has worked out in practice? There seems no true sense of ethical conduct in the leaders of the community. . . . The common denominator of humanity seems to be gain rather than

giving. There is no pleasure in the world like giving, nor can anybody do his best work unless he gives. . . .

You ask me if I believe in reincarnation. Many have put that question to me. . . . I was sitting with my father looking over the blue water. I felt I knew it all long ago. I said to him: "Father, I sometimes dream of things that have happened long ago in some past age. I know so many things I have never heard of, or seen, or experienced. Knowledge of them seems to have been born in me. . . ." When I was eight my teacher Enesco told me there was so much more that I could teach him that I must not call him master. How could I know more than he, who was a man and a great master? There seems no other conclusion than that this may be what you call the reincarnation of other lives, other vibrations before me that have been growing more and more complete until I have become the medium through which they all sing their song of life. Could I be other than humble? . . . And there is always tomorrow coming over the hill, and a better song to sing than yesterday's.

Surely that is good Theosophy and the clue to the problems of this great musical genius.

THE KEYSTONE OF THE ARCH IN ANCIENT AMERICA: IMPORTANT DISCOVERY

The news has just been widely reported that a keystone of an arch has just been found at Monte Alban, Oaxaca, Mexico, and that this has aroused great interest among archeologists. This discovery is of interest to students of Theosophy also, and no doubt to Masons. There are two kinds of arches, quite different in principle. The most primitive in construction is called the corbeled, or cantilever, or "false" arch. When side walls reach the proper height the mason begins to build inwards, each course of horizontal stones slightly overlapping the one below until they meet. The arched space looks like a hole cut into a wall, which it practically is. The "false" arch cannot stand alone; it is not self-supporting, but requires the weight of the side and upper layers of

stone to prevent it falling inward. The "true" arch is composed of wedge-shaped voussoirs, with the keystone at the top locking the whole structure so that it can stand alone. The true arch has many advantages. Although the false arch is found in the Old World in a few places, it seems to be preceded by the far superior, scientific one, for true pointed arches like those of the medieval Gothic are found in Mesopotamia, dating back several thousand years before our era!

Until now, no trace of a true arch with keystone has been found in America, North or South, and this has been held by archaeologists as a sign of lack of intelligence on the part of the ancient Americans. The Mayans may not have had it, but this discovery of a keystone at Monte Alban in Southern Mexico, not far from Maya regions, shows that the pre-Columbians, in some parts of America at least, were not ignorant, rule-of-thumb builders. Monte Alban, unexplored till recently, is the acropolis of the ancient city of the Zapotec-Mixtecs, and was once one of the most magnificent and imposing sights in the world. It was there that Professor Alfonso Caso, the famous Mexican archaeologist, found the magnificent tombs of the Caciques in 1932. One tomb alone contained gold worth more than a million dollars!

But the special interest to us is contained in H. P. Blavatsky's reference to the absence of the true arch in America, which she gives in *Isis Unveiled* I, 571-2, where she tells us that it was used "only in certain portions of the temples devoted to special purposes," and that the avoidance of the scientific keystone arch in other places was not from ignorance *but from intention*. Evidently, then, explorers have failed to find the true arch because of its rarity, and not because it did not exist. The student should read the pages mentioned above with care, and maybe something significant will suggest itself, at least to the intuitive.

Some archaeologists believe that the use of the flat lintel (made of wood) was confined to secular buildings among the Mayas, and that all buildings with the corbeled or "false" arch are religious. This is in harmony with Madame Blavatsky's information, and adds to its value. We may yet hear of the finding of the true arch in some hidden Maya

temple.

NEWS FROM EASTER ISLAND: CEMETERY DISCOVERED

Apparently the trans-Pacific bridge of islands across which pilgrims could travel comparatively recently — geologically speaking, of course — is not out of fashion, in spite of its alleged "impossibility," according to a few geologists. The Chilean naval tanker "Maipo" called at Los Angeles in March and brought some important information about Easter Island. We quote a few points of special interest from the *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1936:

The Maipo made a six-day stop at Easter Island . . . and by a rare stroke of fortune a group of her officers found, they believe, what archaeologists have been searching for for the past century — graves and remains of the ancient race that dwelt there long before the dawn of the present civilization. . . . Both Lieut. E. Rodriguez, an expert on Easter Island lore, and the ship's surgeon, Dr. Hugo Vicuna, declare the skulls found in the graves are those of a race entirely removed from the 382 Polynesians now living on the island.

The recent French expedition found inscriptions with ideographs almost identical with certain writings lately discovered in Asia.

The French scientists failed to locate the long-sought burial grounds, explained Rodriguez, who believes the two finds will serve to link definitely the civilization of the ancient Incas of the Andes with a contemporary Indo-Iranian culture, via a trans-Pacific bridge of islands — or possibly the fabled continent of which Easter is the sole remaining speck.

Not quite "the sole remaining speck" — there are many other relics, including parts of Southern California.

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY IN INDIA?

We quote this for what it is worth, and should be glad to hear more detailed information if any reader can supply it. It has appeared in

many newspapers. We clip this from the *Pasadena Star-News*, California, of June 2nd.

BOMBAY, India, June 2. (U.P.) — Ten thousand of India's millions of "untouchables" — inaugurated the first big scale effort today to break away from the religious bonds which for centuries have caused them to be regarded as pariahs.

At an intensely emotional meeting, they resolved in the future not to worship at the Hindu temples, not to observe Hindu festivals and not to visit holy places.

Their leaders announced they had chosen another religion than Hinduism. They did not disclose what it was but invited their followers to adopt a religion of their own, whether Mohammedanism, theosophy or Christianity — provided only that it granted them the equality of status which is denied them under the ancient Hindu caste system from birth to death.

Theosophy is not "a religion" nor is the Theosophical Society a religious sect, but H. P. Blavatsky plainly says that Theosophy is at the root of all the great world faiths, and that future religions will rise from it.

MORE FIRE-WALKING REPORTS

The *Wide World Magazine* (London) for May publishes an interesting account of Fire-walking in Raiatea, a small island in the Leeward Group of the Society Islands. The author, Mr. Wilmon Menard, took part in the fire-walk and was not injured in the least, though the heat was so great as to blister the face of anyone who approached the thirty-foot-long pit of incandescent stones before the ceremony. The natives walked three times across the fire without haste, and the chief "crawled across the oven on all fours"! to the astonishment of even the native onlookers.

Mr. Menard says that the only sensation he experienced was that of minute electric shocks passing through the soles of his feet. This is specially interesting because others have described the same effect. Professor E. S. Stephenson of the Imperial Naval College, Tokio, later of

Theosophical University, Point Loma, walked ninety feet over burning charcoal in Japan, and reported the same feeling of slight electric shocks, but no trace of heat. Mr. Menard mentions a daring French spectator who stepped on the hot stones without permission, and was instantly so badly burned that it took two months' hospital treatment to save his roasted extremities! Mr. Menard's feet were not prepared in any way, nor did he undergo any ceremonial forms. The chief and his *tahuas* (priests) conducted public and private chanting and other ceremonies before the fire-walk began. The chief remarked that many learned white people talked loudly about the "scientific explanations" before they saw the fire-walk, but afterwards they were silent! Mr. Menard says he followed their example. He claims that he was in no way "suggested" into insensibility to the pain of burning, but that he greatly dreaded the ordeal. Even if no pain had been felt, why was there "no mark of fire" on the feet? A handkerchief dropped on the heated stones was reduced to ashes in an instant.

The Observer (London) for June 7th reports a Christian fire-walking ceremony in Bulgaria, conducted by old women! This takes place on June 4th on St. Konstantine's Day, at Vulgari, a village near Maiko Tirnovo, in the Stranja Mountains, and in several other neighboring villages. The old women proceed through the streets, dancing to a strange rhythmic melody played on bagpipes, and ultimately fall into a trance with trembling limbs. A great bonfire is lighted in the village square and finally the women dance for several minutes on the burning embers, keeping the 7-16 rhythmic beat. The report concludes: "Although the embers are red-hot and the *nestinarki* [the devout Christian women] fall down exhausted from the heat, their feet show not the slightest trace of burning."

For how many thousand years before Christianity may this extraordinary survival of ancient Atlantean magic have been celebrated? If control over the physical effects of ordinary fire may be obtained by unknown means, may not this fact be a clue to the possibility that intense heat-effects may be produced without ordinary heated conditions existing in the producer? It seems possible that the

demonstration of fire-walking effects may lead scientists to realize what the Masters and H. P. Blavatsky mean in saying that the sun has no heat in it, *as we understand it*, though the appearance of heat is there.

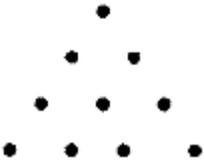
The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: VIII — H.
T. Edge

VIII — THE SQUARE

This often denotes a quaternary or group of four, and in this sense it has to some extent been considered in connexion with the Cross and the Triangle. A septenate or group of seven can be divided into a three and a four, a triad and a quaternary, which may be said roughly to represent Spirit and Matter. This is familiar to students of Theosophy in the sevenfold constitution of man, in which we distinguish the higher triad and the lower quaternary, the former denoting the spiritual and immortal part of man, the latter his earthly and mortal part. This is of course not a hard and fast division, but merely a rough one for convenience. Man is not composed of a number of different principles put together, but he is a divine individuality manifesting itself through a series of vehicles. The same twofold division can be made as regards Nature in general; for we can speak of external Nature, represented by the square, and internal Nature or the spirit which animates external Nature, represented by the triangle.

That the number four is characteristic of physical nature may be seen from a number of instances, especially if we bear in mind that the cube, although having six sides, is a derivative of the square. We have four points of the compass, and cubical shapes are the most frequent in mineral forms. We naturally lay out our buildings and furniture on a rectangular plan. It has always been customary to speak of four elements as constituting the physical world — fire, air, water, and earth. These in modern physics are represented by heat, gas, liquid, solid, though there is some hesitancy about including heat in the list. In the lower quaternary of man these are represented by Kama, Prana, Linga-sarira, and Sthula-sarira.



But there are other ways in which the quaternary can be made. It has already been said that the higher triad becomes a quaternary when we add to it a unit which represents the lower world. Two meanings of the quaternary are shown in the well-known Pythagorean symbol of the Tetraktys. This represents four cosmic planes, and the fourth of these planes is itself a quaternary. In assigning names to these four planes, there might be some difference of choice, but the important thing to get is the idea. We might call them the monadic, the spiritual-mental, the psycho-mental, and the physical. The first is a unit, a self; the next is a duad, representing action and bipolar force; the third is a synthesis of one and two; and the fourth is a kind of repetition of the second. The two and the four are vehicles; the one and the three are what acts through those vehicles. The four suits in the playing cards denote these four planes in the Tetraktys; for the cards derive from the Tarots, which are mystic symbolism and used in divination. The suits were batons, which have become clubs; cups, which are now hearts; swords, Italian *spade*, now spades; and coins or pentacles, now represented by diamonds. The symbolic meaning of the upright stroke or rod, of the cup, and of the sword (a form of cross, uniting a perpendicular with a horizontal line), are evident.

Under the Triangle we spoke of the Triad of Father, Mother, Son and we read in *The Secret Doctrine* that

the "Son" of the immaculate Celestial Virgin (or the undifferentiated cosmic protyle, Matter in its infinitude) is born again on Earth as the Son of the terrestrial Eve, and becomes Humanity as a total — past, present, and future. . . Above, the Son is the whole *KOSMOS*: below, he is *MANKIND*. The triad of triangle becomes Tetraktys, the Sacred Pythagorean number, the perfect square and a 6-faced cube on Earth. — I, 60

The figure of a square within a circle (or a cross within a circle) is one of the most sacred in Occultism; it signifies completeness or perfection in the manifestation of the Universe or of Man from out the Boundless.

The problem of squaring the circle means for the student of practical Occultism the adapting of finite life to the infinite, of Spirit to Matter, and Matter to Spirit. As geometry and mathematics, number and magnitude, are keys to cosmic architecture, it follows that the problem of squaring the circle is a most important key to unlock many mysteries.

The Theosophical Forum

PREPARATION FOR THEOSOPHIC STUDY (1) — *H. N. Stokes*

May 15, 1923

Dear Mr. G__

I was glad to get your letter and apologize for delay in replying. The chief result so far of my enthusiasm for the study of *The Secret Doctrine* — an indirect one, of course — is a broken leg, which has brought confusion to all my undertakings. Let me advise you to shut off your meditations on pralayas when you are crossing a street; else some automobile may teach you a practical lesson on the subject, as it did me. . . .

But to come down to brass tacks, what is the use of all this study and is one really a theosophist in proportion to his familiarity with *The Secret Doctrine*?

Your name is a German one; perhaps you can read the following from Goethe's *Faust*, which presents the matter in a nutshell. It is part of a dialogue between Faust, the philosopher and dreamer, and Wagner, his pupil, a semi-desiccated bookworm, Faust speaking. Lest I be mistaken I append what is perhaps the best, although an inferior, English rendering:

Das Pergament, ist das der heil'ge Bronnen,
Woraus ein Trunk den Durst auf ewig stillt?
Erquickung hast du nicht gewonnen,
Wenn sie dir nicht aus eigner Seele quillt.

(Is parchment, then, the holy fount before thee,
A draught wherefrom thy thirst forever slakes?
No true refreshment can restore thee,
Save what from thine own soul spontaneous breaks.)

I once knew a man who thought he was studying botany — as an

avocation, for by vocation he was a chemist, and a noted one — while in reality all he was doing was filling his head with Latin names and pressing and drying and labeling specimens of whose life history, whose evolution, and whose role in the great factory of nature he did know one thing and cared less. This modern Wagner once took me on a fifty mile excursion in Switzerland to find what he claimed was a most interesting plant, a specimen of which he wanted for his herbarium. Arrived at our destination I happened to pluck what was to me one of the most beautiful wild flowers I had ever seen and asked him about it, why it was built as it was, and why it grew in such a lonely spot, seemingly wasting its beauty. "Oh, pooh," he replied, "that's nothing but a common —— a Latin name which I am glad to have forgotten. Whereupon he espied the plant he was after, plunged into the water without thinking to remove his clothing, and brought out something which looked to me like a decayed spatterdock, but to which he gave a huge Latin name and assured me it was very rare — all he could tell me about it. But he was perfectly happy in having a new specimen for his collection.

Now, I have not the least antipathy to Latin names and herbaria. I admit the value of systematic botany and wish I knew more about it. But I do not desire that knowledge at the expense of other matters. You may have a head large enough to harbor a Latin dictionary, and at the same time to understand and love the things you work with, not as mere "specimens," but as living beings related to all other lives. If you cannot accommodate both, you will do well to trouble yourself less with these details and think more of the greater. The letter killeth; it is the spirit which giveth life. To my mind the despised dandelion is one of the most beautiful of all wild flowers. The very sight of it starts me to thinking on the big problems. What is beauty, for example? Why is it that the bright flower appeals to me? We know that the object — one object — of the bright color is to attract insects for the purpose of cross-fertilization. But why are they attracted, otherwise than by the desire to find honey? Why would white do as well, as it often does? Why is it that these insects are themselves not only brilliant, but adorned with

the most elaborate and beautiful patterns which cannot be ascribed to protective mimicry? Is it that they have the same power of seeing beauty in each other, as we have when a beautiful face or voice attracts us? Is this sensing of beauty, either in the insect or ourselves, of sexual origin only, or connected in other ways with race-preservation? Or is it the beginning, in the insect and the flower, of what is more highly developed in us, of a really esthetic trend in nature, which goes far more deeply down to the root of things? Is it not possible that there are more highly developed beings who not only discern beauty where we do, but who even find it where we see only ugliness? May there not be a Power to whom the crocodile, the rhinoceros and the warthog are truly beautiful, and which regards them with something akin to love? Is it not possible that we may best emulate this Power by trying to see the beautiful in all the so-called ugly things in nature, even in those of our fellow men whom we are prompted to despise?

These are some of the thoughts which come to me when I give way to them, and the more I have considered it the more I have become convinced that beneficence, beauty, and most of all, Love, are the ends towards which the universe strives. It may be all wrong, a mere dream, but to my mind it is the only sane solution of the world riddle. I am not giving you anything original; many a writer has hinted at it or stated it fully. But I did not get it out of books; most of all I did not get it out of *The Secret Doctrine* or any other work with a theosophical title. I found it in the poets, in Swinburne (for all his sensuousness), in Browning, in Walt Whitman, in Keats and many another. But, and this is the moral of my citation from Goethe, I could have read these poets *ad infinitum*, and would have been held only by the trivialities, by the narratives, or by the music of the verse, had it not been in myself to do more. To the truth that Love is the end — the end, not a means — of creation, I should have been stone blind and deaf had it not been already in me to perceive it. Let me quote you a few lines from Browning's "Reverie," in *Asolando*, which, by the way, you will not find in any volume of selections, so little is he understood:

Then life is — to wake not sleep,

Rise and not rest, but press
From earth's level where blindly creep
Things perfected, more or less,
To the heaven's height, far and steep,
Where, amid what strifes and storms
May wait the adventurous quest,
Power is Love — transports, transforms
Who aspired from worst to best,
Sought the soul's world, spurned the worms.

When I read those lines, years and years ago, I saw the whole thing at once; because conscious of all that is truly worth while in Theosophy; gained a standpoint which I sorely needed and without which life would not have been worth the going through. But it was hidden in my own soul; it had but to respond; the poet simply evoked what was already there. Deep calls to deep; I knew that I had known it already.

If you cannot get this attitude the study of *The Secret Doctrine* will be the mere study of a "parchment." You must strive for the lofty altitudes where "Power is Love." The study of *The Secret Doctrine* will help you to keep out of the many byways and left-hand paths which a pseudo-occultism would have you follow; it will give you a noble philosophy; it will strengthen and confirm your convictions; it will discipline your mind so that you will not become unduly mushy or sentimental in your ideas, it will help you to be plodding and patient. *But*, you must do other reading if you would not hunt for a needle in a haystack. Get next to the great poets, for they most of all have the inner light, have seen the vision and have been able to express it. Prepare for each reading of *The Secret Doctrine* by a few minutes with one of them. Try to infuse into your studies the spirit I have mentioned. Do not be over-critical of your fellow-students if they appear to be one of the Wagner type; who knows? Don't hide your light — if you have one — under a bushel, but help them to see as you do, as I am sure they expect of you.

And don't forget, . . . that no amount of realization of this, no amount of worshiping at the shrine of celestial beauty, no amount of recognition

of the law that "Power is Love," will profit you in the least unless you make them part of your own nature, unless you build them into your daily thoughts and acts. If God loves the ugliest and most venomous beast, and nurtures it, if He loves what we call the sinner, how can you expect to become godlike unless you do the same to all beings, especially to those fellow mortals on whom you look with indifference if not disdain? The light is within you; you must find it there; and equally you must learn to see it in others. That Inner, or Higher, Self is something wonderfully beautiful, and it exists in everyone you meet, however veiled. For wise purposes nature has provided that perhaps once or twice in a lifetime and for a brief period, alas, most of us get such glimpses more or less distinctly; we see through the veil of another soul. This must not be misunderstood. It is commonly ridiculed as an illusion, as self-deception. It is nothing of the kind; it alone is the truth, the permanent; it is our common vision which deceives us. All of goodness and beauty which you see in another actually exists, and more, you see it because it exists in yourself likewise; else you would be blind to it. I admit that powers which pertain to the buddhic plane must be carefully controlled here. But if you can get and keep this vision, can see the beauty in everyone, free from the fumes which arise from your lower nature and which tend to distort it, free from the selfish idea that you must at the same time possess or control or dominate, seeing that selflessness only gives you the right to it, without being blinded or led into the unreasonable, then you will have gained the most priceless jewel that Theosophy has for you; then, you may safely proceed *ad libitum* with the study of *The Secret Doctrine*; you will never become a Wagner.

Cordially yours,

Editor of the Critic

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The O. E. Library Critic*, June, 1923. ([return to text](#))

A LETTER FROM DR. DE PURUCKER

24th July, 1936.

Dear Brother:

Your undated letter — but postmarked "Jul 20," 1936, — reached me this morning; and naturally I gave to it the attention and thoughtful consideration which it struck me its contents well merited. You are dead right in calling me "a busy man," for, as a matter of fact, my official duties and other routine-work have been increasing since I assumed office so greatly that at the present time I am literally driven to find time to take care of the many things that come under my hand. Therefore, please forgive me for this present letter which may seem to you rather inadequate. I simply cannot find time for a longer chat with you.

I turn immediately and without preliminaries to what seems to be the gist of your very brotherly and kind communication to me; but first let me say straight from my heart to yours, that there is not the slightest need of asking my pardon for your "bluntness," nor for your straightforward speech. There is nothing in the world that I respect so highly in a man as intellectual honesty; and if this be coupled with spiritual discernment, I do my best to make such a man my brother, attempting to establish between us bonds that will withstand foolish human folly. How could I, as a Theosophist, and a Theosophical Leader to boot, object to a man's writing to me the convictions of his heart, and on any subject whatsoever, as you do in this letter to me, on the matter of that perhaps most difficult of all our Theosophical tenets, Karman? We might call this wondrous doctrine a hundred-faceted truth, and a hundred men will see, each one, a facet; and in the dazzling brilliance emanating from the source of illumination, be blind to the existence of the other ninety-nine facets, and hear nevertheless of the existence of the other ninety-nine opinions about karman, and perhaps look upon

these other ninety-nine opinions as fallacious or "pernicious," as you qualify my understanding of karman, and my teachings on it. Now, I fully agree with you that outside of the difficulty of a fully rounded understanding of the doctrine of karman, it has a most especial application to the human life of us men, and therefore has not merely a metaphysical significance, but a very important, a highly important, moral and ethical one.

First, let me disabuse your good and brotherly mind of the fallacy which it is evident you cherish regarding my teaching about karman, which, if I understand you, you seem to think "inculcates unconscious fatalism." In this you are utterly wrong. My understanding of this wondrous doctrine runs diametrically counter to such a conception; for to me karman is the only doctrine which will logically destroy the theory which the West calls Fatalism — whether unconscious, or conscious and explicitly taught. However, here is no place to labor this point, for if you are interested in my conception or teaching of karman, you have but to consult my many books, lectures, and various statements on the subject, and — not making the mistake of taking one statement as the key to all other statements, but taking them all together, you will be able to get a synthetic view of what I mean to say about it when I write about it.

That people should misunderstand the doctrine of karman, and that many should have many differing views about it, is not only to be expected, but in my judgment is one of the very best possible things that could happen in the T. S., for it does away with the dogmatic attitude; it leads us to have charity for the opinions or convictions of others; it introduces freshness and variety of thought in our intercommunications of ideas; and above everything else perhaps it brings about that healthy respect for the convictions of others which can never be obtained by shallow, superficial, and often unconsciously hypocritical adherence to others' opinions merely in order to attain surface unanimity.

I do hope you understand what I have in mind, for what I have in mind

is exactly, and word for word, and sentence for sentence, what H. P. B. so nobly wrote in her first message to the American Theosophists in 1888, and which, although I doubt not you know it well, I venture to quote here: "Orthodoxy in Theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and a healthy body, its many other ugly features notwithstanding. Were it not, also, for the existence of a large amount of uncertainty in the minds of students of Theosophy, such healthy divergencies would be impossible, and the Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever growing Knowledge."

Now these words grandly say what I myself feel and believe; and I repeat once more, as I have said a thousand times if once, that one of my first duties is to keep the platform of the T. S. free and open, exactly as H. P. B., our grand first Teacher, gave it to us as one of our most sacred heritages. This does not mean that the platform of the T. S. should be thrown open to every lunatic or crank or self-seeking place-hunter who wants to air his views, usually for selfish and often for obliquely ethical reasons, for this would be sheer folly, and would at the best make of the platform of the T. S. a mere debating ground of amiable and superficially-minded people, and at the worst cause the T. S. to degenerate into a mere forum so to speak devoted to the airing of opinions of often aggressive and possibly selfish individuals, and a losing of the inner Light and of our first purpose in the T. S., which is the giving of the blessed God-Wisdom of the archaic ages to the hungry hearts of men and women.

In my judgment, the T. S. platform should be devoted to Theosophy, and Theosophy alone, first, last, in between, and all the time; but just because of this reason, I believe in healthy divergencies of opinion, and the right of every true Theosophist, or indeed of any F. T. S., whatever his private convictions or opinions on Theosophical doctrines may be, to have at least his "day in court," as the lawyers say — which does not mean that liberty should degenerate into license, and that the free and

full expression of one's inner convictions should degenerate into argumentative and fruitless controversy. This last I am irrevocably opposed to; and I try to set the example myself in never answering attacks made upon me, in invariably refusing to enter into controversial discussions or argumentative exchanges of opinion, or wordy quarrels; for these are not only "pernicious," but waste time, misuse energy which is so badly needed for our Theosophical work among men, and indeed in their worst aspects often make Theosophists ridiculous in the sight of normal men and women who are looking for truth, but who know enough of the world and its follies to sheer away in disgust from stormy or argumentative and therefore always fruitless controversial proposition and answer followed by reply and rejoinder succeeded by surrejoinder, etc., etc.

The world is not interested in the differences of opinions as among Theosophists, and it is our duty to give them the Theosophical teachings; but it is equally as right for us Theosophists to preserve a free and open platform as among ourselves, so that we shall have a free and honorable exchange of opinions. Thus X is convinced that his understanding of a doctrine Y is correct; I say, let X freely and fearlessly but always courteously state his convictions, verbally or in writing; if they differ from the convictions of Z, then give Z the same right; but once that Z and X have each had his chance to point out each one's understanding of the doctrine Y, and when each has thus had his say, let him be modest and decent and drop the matter; for if carried into a controversy, it would simply result in both X and Z being firmly convinced that the other is a fool or nearly so, or teaches a pernicious doctrine or an evil one, and neither will convince the other, and the world will laugh at us as a lot of squabbling, quarreling cranks. "See how these Christians love one another!" It is the foregoing general reasons, which I do not think I have ever written before to any single individual, or, indeed, to any group of individuals, which will show to you why I adjudge it both unwise and untimely, as well as contrary to my own convictions, to enter into a controversy on any point of Theosophical teaching, or on any point of fact whatsoever, with

anybody whatsoever. My teachings are before the world; let them stand as stated; from time to time I may enlarge them or clarify them; let others accept them or reject them, as these others think well. If some one else likes to write or say his opinion about a Theosophical doctrine such as Karman, let him state it, and then, yield the platform to some other F. T. S., who may be much more interested in some other aspect of Theosophy than he is in the one that might interest me or you or X or Z.

I have absolutely no faith whatsoever in controversial argumentations; I think they are mischievous in the last degree. What we want and need, and should cultivate, is independence of thought, independence of judgment, healthy divergencies of conviction and of opinion, and retain a free platform for their expression; but should never allow a platform to be the field of wordy argumentation or the bandying of arguments about this, that, or some other facet of teaching which X or Z or A or B may foolishly flatter himself he knows better than some other man. Let each man state his conviction, and then leave the field open to some other man who will then have his chance to give his opinion about some other doctrine which may interest him more greatly.

I do hope you understand this. As long as I live, I think I can safely say I shall never be drawn into any controversy, although always willing, as I am at the present moment in writing to you, to state my opinion about things; if you don't like it, drop it, for that is your undoubted right; and I believe that it is by thus learning respect for each other's healthy divergencies of feeling and opinion that the T. S. as H. P. B. gave it to us will be best preserved into the future, and do its finest and highest work among men.

Never think for a moment that you would ever be ostracized in our T. S., or judged unkindly or wrongly or meanly, because you at any time may express an honest conviction in the courtesy which I know to be an innate attribute of your character. This is your undoubted right in the T. S., and anyone who would call your opinions "heretical" or a "heresy" would be looked upon by me as acting or speaking in an

untheosophical manner.

By the way, wouldn't you like to write an article on karman, giving your opinions about it, which we could print in our Theosophical Forum? I think it might be interesting, and, in fact, I am sure it would be. It is quite possible that it might evoke some other F. T. S.'s opinion about karman, which we would also print, and possibly a third; but if there were ever the first sign of such a healthy exchange of fine divergencies of conviction verging into a controversy, then I should feel it my duty to suggest to our editors to devote the space given to karman to something else of equal importance in a way. This is following H. P. B.'s tradition.

Now, for heaven's sake, get any foolish little bee that may be buzzing around in your bonnet that we of Point Loma dislike healthy divergencies of opinion — get such a bee out of your bonnet and kick it over the North Pole. What I do like is healthy divergencies of opinion, courteously, candidly, expressed, orally or written. But I will not tolerate any more of the abominable, often insulting, usually bigoted, windy controversies that have so often disgraced the different Theosophical Societies since H. P. B.'s days. I believe in freedom of conscience, in freedom of speech, and in H. P. B.'s principles — "healthy divergencies of opinion," for this saves us from orthodoxy, "its other ugly features notwithstanding."

Bless you for the good work you have been striving so hard to do for fraternization. It has my deepest sympathy as long as it remains work for fraternization; but should it ever degenerate into mawkish sentimentalism or superficial friendliness covering a mass of festering and ignominious hatreds, I will wash my hands of it. The fraternization-movement was started in a very sincere attempt to bring Theosophists of different Theosophical Societies together, in order that they might know each other somewhat better, and learn to respect the good points that each group of individuals holds *as individuals*, and also so that we might openly and publicly and honorably and sincerely profess our common alliance on those points of the teaching of the

Masters and of H. P. B. which we all accept. Is not this but another instance of putting into action H. P. B.'s clarion call for the retention of healthy divergencies of opinion so as to prevent orthodoxy?

The best of good wishes to you.

I am, as always, my dear Brother,

Fraternally and faithfully yours,

G. DE PURUCKER.

P.S. I have just got word from Clapp that he has been corresponding with you about the matter of Karman. As I think it would interest him to hear what I have written to you, I am sending to him a copy of this my letter to you, as it does not seem to be private, I hope you will agree with me that I have not done wrong, as there seems to be no violation of any confidence whatsoever. — G. de P.

Later. After writing all the above, I felt I must add just a few lines, expressing my emphatic agreement with your good self in the matter of the common need of all Theosophical Societies, our own dear T. S. included, of a fuller and more adequate preparation of and presentation of *elementary* Theosophy to the public — to the world. This is one thing upon which I have been hammering ever since I took office, and it is extraordinary how difficult it is to find capable presenters of elementary Theosophical teaching. Scholars in Theosophy abound, profound students are everywhere; but those who are capable of stating Theosophy to the public simply and attractively seem very few, and yet it is our greatest common need, I do believe. I am constantly talking of this. — G. de P.

THEOSOPHICAL NOTEBOOK

WHAT ATTRACTED ME TO THEOSOPHY?

(From the Sydney, Australia, Theosophical Study Class)

Looking back many years, I find it hard to say exactly what attracted me to Theosophy, but I can very easily tell what has kept me attracted. The teaching of Reincarnation was one of the first things. I remember as a child of eight or thereabouts, thinking what a lovely thing it would be if we could come back and start from where we left off. I had probably been naughty and felt it was a hopeless task to be as good as I wanted to be, and it flashed across my mind that we could, if given more chances, *learn* to be good!

In my early childhood I was a regular attendant at the Methodist Sunday School. In the country we had mostly uneducated Sunday School Superintendents, and the heaven and hell of angels and eternal fires respectively were dinned into our young minds. Even so young I realized how hard it was to do all the good things and not to do the naughty things, and the idea of Reincarnation to my childish mind was *reasonable!* How much more does it seem so now, with the knowledge of the teaching of Karman. How different every apparent trouble appears when we consider it as an adjustment: within it an opportunity and a lesson, if we will see it! *We are our own karman.*

It is the sweet reasonableness of the teachings of Theosophy that has kept me wanting to follow them still further. These teachings alter the whole aspect of our lives. It is as if we looked at things from a brighter viewpoint; we see them as a whole, connected and illuminated with a brighter light. We understand more, and so much is clearer that we have faith that those things which we do not see so well will also become clear as we climb a little higher. — Ada Bardsley

What attracts me about Theosophy? Simply the fact that it is a

straightforward ancient Religion or Philosophy that has been known throughout the ages in many countries. It is no new-fangled teaching or belief that sprang up in a night, that attracts for a time and soon leaves one floundering again. No! It is changeless, and gives one a clear and fuller insight into life and its problems, giving satisfactory answers to many questions.

Through Theosophy one learns the simple truths of life; it helps one to understand himself and the "other man." It is free from dogmas. It is not a matter of "burning fire" when one passes on, but "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"; and we must all do our own reaping. This is what I find so attractive about Theosophy — its fairness: each man has to account to himself for his own actions, and to no other person, whether seen or unseen. — Ethne Hinchey

If we were to write one word embracing all that drew us to Theosophy, that word would be Justice. There is a wonderfully clarifying element in absolute Justice that commands attention. It holds the truth; it deals impersonally, compassionately, with every man. We find it in all the teachings of Theosophy: Reincarnation, Karma, the Doctrine of Cycles, the Brotherhood of Man — all these drew us to Theosophy. Likewise the object drew us: To make Theosophy a living power in our lives; to spread it, and that is to live it; to go about our daily work in such a manner as will prove the inner working of a spiritual power; and to know that we can become channels through which love and peace can flow out to help and heal the sore and sad hearts who have not yet found their way to the source of true living.

The life of a Theosophist is a very busy one: no idle moments; no time to "kill"; hardly enough time for doing all there is to be done. From the standpoint of Theosophy, life itself becomes attractive, and those duties which at times have been dull and uninteresting take on a new and lovely aspect when laid upon the Altar of the Supreme, without thought of result or return. — Kate Nixon

This is rather a difficult question to answer as there is so much to be considered, but I would name the teachings of Reincarnation and

Karman, because believing in them has meant so much to me.

Theosophy teaches that nothing happens by chance; that all is part of a well-ordered whole; and that each and every one of us has played his part, is playing it now, and will go on playing it in future incarnations. We are our own masters, and we make or mar our own lives. If we fail now and then, there is always another chance. This, I think, is a very comforting truth. To those who truly believe and practise the teachings of Theosophy there can be no injustice, bringing in its train that terrible destroyer, self-pity. If we believe that perfect justice rules the world, we gain strength to fight the troubles which we know *we have made ourselves*, and to rise above them. — Enid I. Hinchey

When I was young I often wondered "*Why?*" Why was the world made? Why was I here? What was the purpose of it all? But I could never find an answer. No one seemed to know. And yet I thought there *must* be a reason for it all, and an explanation, if one could but find it. Then, in my early twenties, a friend put one of the first Theosophical books, written in the "eighties," into my hands, and as a lightning flash, the realization came: "Here is the *truth*." From that time on I have never wavered from the firm conviction that in Theosophy alone can one find the explanation of life, and solve the many problems that beset us.

Since those years, now far ago, much wider and deeper explanations have been given. Year after year the veil has been lifted a little more, for those who earnestly wish to know the Truth. All our Teachers have shown us different aspects of the truth. As we know, we must learn the alphabet before we can spell, and so on, step by step, ever rising in the scale of knowledge. Katherine Tingley gave us a great key: to think of Theosophy as *a life to be lived rather than a body of teachings*.

Teachings about Nature, the formation of worlds, the why and wherefore of the glorious sun and beautiful stars — we are apt to look upon these as something apart from ourselves and our daily lives. This is quite a mistake. We need to live a Theosophic life to understand Theosophy, and the more one studies Theosophy the more this truth becomes a reality. — Emily I. Willans

WEBS OF DESTINY — *Hazel Minot*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

There is an aspect of human nature — not its best — that loves above everything to shift the responsibility of its actions to someone else. But this aspect is only one of the many that go to make up human nature — some good, some bad, and some indifferent — and human nature *in toto* is only one small portion of that compound entity called "man." Even as the seven-fold man ranges from the divine, in which he is rooted, to the physical vehicle through which he expresses himself on this earth, so too that particular aspect of him, his human nature, has its ranges of expression, sometimes appearing to be little more than a self-conscious animal, at other times giving glimpses of those finer qualities which prove its strait relation with the spiritual elements in man's makeup and which link him to godlike beings. Because of this strait relationship, whatever the temptation to put the blame on others, there has always been a something within — call it the "still, small voice" if you like — that repudiates such an attitude as cowardly, and prefers to take its medicine without whimpering. It is this same "something within" that makes us self-respecting, when we are such, and which sends us questing for some philosophy of life that will stimulate this self-respect through its stressing of individual responsibility.

Responsibility in thought, in act — indeed responsibility, *our own responsibility*, as the very source of our existence — is the essence of the Theosophical doctrine of Karma. This teaching has a wide field of expression, ranging from the simple "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" to the recondite truths regarding the origin of good and evil. Within this range are vast possibilities of study, food for deep and sincere thought — thought that cannot stop at mere thinking but

must realize itself in applied action. But whichever of its many aspects is chosen for study, this fundamental principle must be reckoned with: the beginning and the end are individual responsibility. It is this that makes of Karman so preeminently a doctrine of self-respect.

In *The Esoteric Tradition* (footnote 20, p. 56) Dr. de Purucker describes Karman as

all that *total* of a soul, which is itself, brought into present being by its own willing and thinking and feeling, working upon the fabric and the substance of itself, and thus preparing its future destiny, as its present existence was the destiny prepared for itself by its own past lives. The basis, or root, or essence, or, may we not say the law of itself — Karman — rises in the "heart" of the Universe which is immortal, impersonal, infinite, Life itself, Divine Harmony, whence spring into active operation all the so-called "Laws" of Nature that make the Mighty Mother what she is in all her septenary or denary constitution.

In the teaching as thus presented we see the relation and interrelation of Karman with its twin doctrine, Reimbodiment. This dual line of activity, coupled with the idea that the soul is "working upon the fabric . . . of itself," brings to the imagination the picture of a mighty web — Life: its warp, a long succession of reimbodiments; its woof, the series of actions and reactions that color, brightly or darkly, the web we weave from the *substance of ourselves*. Accepting the doctrine of Reimbodiment, the threads of our warp, at least, take on a suggestion of form, whatever their varying quality, and following the analogy of the web there appears to be no great obstacle to understanding that the weaving of the pattern is in our hands, for good or ill. Sometime, somewhere, we have chosen our pattern, and down through the ages we have developed it, strand by strand. As weavers of destiny we are creative in our work, for the design, however imperfect, is of our own making: here and there hardly perceptible shifts of color take place; occasionally there is an irregularity of line, a change in form, so that the pattern, if viewed in its entirety, gives evidence of a definite

departure from the plan as first conceived.

The Theosophical Forum

WHO ARE THE FREE-IN-LIFE? — M. M. T.

The way to final freedom is within thy SELF. — H. P. Blavatsky in
The Voice of the Silence

Age after age heroes have labored, battled, and perished in behalf of the cause of freedom. And now, today, from philosophers, economists, historians, even from fiction-writers, we begin to hear of "the new slavery." What, then, and where is freedom? Who are the free-in-life?

We are obliged to face the fact that there still linger in the world relics of every form of slavery that ever existed. Chattel slavery is largely a thing of the past, but statistics are available as to the number of slaves there still are. Liberty of conscience has been often proclaimed, but there are occasional rumors of differences in religion being used as a means of inciting men to bloody conflict, and is not the cold shoulder of prejudice against the unexamined beliefs of others a husky relic of religious persecution? Women enjoy a tremendous increase in personal liberty, but there is an international organization for the abolition of the white slave traffic. Children may no longer be sold away from their parents, but a newspaper in Shanghai recently reported the horrors of the boy-slavery that industrial enterprises have introduced there.

The "new slavery" is defined by some as the subjection of man to his own labor-saving inventions. Some of these, on account of their ubiquitous vocal suggestion have the power to form molds of mass-thought to imprison men's minds, while others actually threaten to render men superfluous as manual laborers.

Professor Nicolas Berdyaev, author of *Freedom and the Spirit* and *The Meaning of History*, predicts a fight to the death between man and the machine. (1) He states that through the triumphs of technical invention man has become a "cosmiurge," with the power to bring on cataclysms that can destroy large numbers of the human race at will; and that only

the human spirit, united with God, can safeguard mankind in the present crisis. He declares that conditions cannot return to the way they were before all this mechanization developed, nor can man return to his former state: the time demands a "new man," one taking note of the eternal in himself.

General Smuts, the world-citizen, philosopher, and great statesman of South Africa, in a Rectorial Address in 1935, spoke of the menace to freedom in the world today and called on the youth to awaken to this danger and avert it. General Smuts declared his belief in freedom of thought, speech, and action for the kind of individual who is essential to world-progress, who has "inner freedom," who works for supra-individual purposes and values.

Mr. Gerald Heard, in his *Source of Civilization*, which has been called "a tract for the times of highest significance," writes that *pari passu* with man's conquest of objective nature there should be a mastery of man's own inner powers and faculties, an inner technique by which his self-consciousness can grow to include a larger whole than the human individual and deepen the feeling of unity with his fellow-men. In his *Science in the Making* Mr. Heard declares that granted the superhuman power that man has made his own, the only way he can make the world safe for himself is to find a superhuman purpose.

Theosophy has a direct bearing upon the conclusions reached by these thinkers. It presents a world-order, a hierarchical cosmic system, with which man in his inmost Self is co-eternal. A partaker of the consciousness, will, and compassion that brought forth and guided the manifested universe, man is destined consciously to harmonize his human life here on Earth with the purpose of the superior entity, the larger unit, of which he is an inseparable part. Upon the greater organism and its cosmic purpose is man dependent, as are the lesser lives of any organism. The inner, creative freedom, which is the conscious function of his higher intellectual, spiritual, and divine faculties, man wins by his obedience to the behests of the superhuman, supra-individual, inclusive Being in whom he moves and lives.

The "new man" called for at present is the human being more fully aware of who and what he is. It is the inner world of his own spiritual and divine nature that man must now bring to active function. This greatest of human discoveries will restore the lost balance, will enable man to control and direct for the benefit of all the tremendous forces his inventiveness has liberated, and prevent his becoming a victim of his own creations. "Humanity-minded," and Humanity-hearted must he be, to be safe. The resources of the inner Self of union and will have become a necessity in the face of the dangers we now recognise.

How long, how very long it is that this ancient wisdom of the Great Awakening, the Awakening to the Self, as we find it in *The Crest Jewel of Wisdom* of Sankaracharya, has been known, at least in the Orient! The loveliest secret that it unfolds is that all selves are rooted in the One Self. The realization of this fundamental unity is the basis for the conscious union of individuals. Only individuals aware of themselves as human, spiritual, and divine entities *can* unite consciously. The less awakened merge more or less partially in masses easily controlled by outside influences. Only enduring individualities, with a sense of the deeper unity of all, can differ without dividing, can permit or encourage others to develop their own creative faculties, in other words, to be free. To *differ without dividing* — is not this the key to all our present problems?

Theosophy, in removing the stigma of ape-ancestry from the human being, in showing man's intellectual, spiritual, and divine lineage, clears the channel from the inner source of all that is noblest and strongest in human nature. Too long have men's theories of life, and, perhaps unguessed by them, their relations with their fellows, been colored by this false materialistic teaching. It is unity with the Divinity *within* that will enable men to exert the cosmically-rooted power and love that shall disarm any merely selfish, however apparently powerful, users of man's conquest of objective nature. Is any one so lost in discouragement as not to have confidence that this can be done?

Theosophy reveals to us all the magic that gives to us the unshakable

freedom of the heart. The path destined for awakened individuals, who accept the responsibility of the divinely-descended, leads to inner conquests — to no denial or ignoring of present conditions with all their implications — but to high resolve to bring to bear upon them the luminous forces of the Greater Self, in whom we become the Free-in-Life.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Hibbert Journal*, October, 1934: "Man, the Machine, and the New Heroism." ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

WHY STUDY THEOSOPHY? — J. H. Venema

- a. *In order to understand and follow the sublime rhythm of the Universe;*
- b. *in order to understand the working of consciousness;*
- c. *and in this way to be able to drink of the spiritual elixir of life and to comprehend the ineluctable law of Nature: Brotherhood.*

Sooner or later we have to face *facts*; why not sooner! Theosophy will help you. Procrastination here is the thief of the ever-flowing spiritual elixir of life offered to you, of a power to quicken your spiritual evolution and to help establish the Brotherhood of Humanity. In answering the question: Why study Theosophy? let us first of all keep the above three statements firmly in our minds. They are key-notes.

At present we hear people talk much about "problems" of various kinds. How Theosophy would help to solve them! The trouble is that we see in many cases the causes of them but *do not go far enough*, i. e. to accept the consequence of seeing the causes, namely that somehow, somewhere, Nature's rhythm has been disturbed and that equilibrium can be obtained only if both as individuals and as nations we begin to follow again that mighty rhythm. No use trying to battle against the cosmic laws!

Problems? Unrest, anxiety, loneliness, being fed up with the humdrum of life? Wondering if this world is mad? No thoughts about the question or the truth of immortality, because *this* life requires so much attention? Wondering if human beings can ever find truth? Try the study of Theosophy! Ah, but listen, don't throw it aside after a superficial look at it or after concluding that it "requires a bit of study." Don't begin by saying: It doesn't give me sufficient facts to go by, before you have honestly tried. Don't indeed throw the blame on Theosophy, the ancient divine Wisdom, which has lived throughout the ages and will live in the future, because it is based on the very structure of the

Universe. My invariable reply to people who say that Theosophy didn't give them what they had expected is: Theosophy has not yet done anything for you? What have *you* done *for* Theosophy? Studied it, penetrated into it, and above all, made it a *living* power in your life? If you have not done the latter, how can you judge? Have you ever passed on the greater vision that this ancient Wisdom gives to a distressed soul? Have you ever told somebody about it who knows less than yourself? That's the way to realize the truth of Theosophy and to see that it *is highly practical*. If Theosophy does not lead you straight to practical life, you cannot have studied it. No use for me to study those "Rounds and Races," I heard somebody say. Ah, my good fellow, if you just knew what intensely *practical* life lies in those very teachings about the Rounds, the Races, and the Hierarchies, how they would solve human and world problems, what a discovery you would have made! For Theosophy will make you understand — and prove it! — the sublime eternal rhythm of the Universe and make you follow it, yes, even in your daily work; it will make you conscious, so to speak, of your consciousness; it offers you the sparkling elixir of life. But the requisite is that you work a little for it and try to make it a *living* power in your life.

Why study Theosophy! In reality the answer lies in the three above-mentioned statements; but in order to elucidate them, I am going to defend two theses. And in defending them I challenge the world! I challenge contradiction. For has not experience taught me that contradiction of them in the end inevitably leads to confirmation, light, vision — *if* you contradict in order to find, to seek? Again I say: no use fighting against the cosmic laws. The other day a thinking young man came to one of our Theosophical meetings to be able to prove that "Theosophy was a hopelessly wrong doctrine and against the teachings of Christ." But to do so, he said, "I must first know *exactly* what it is." Right-O! He regularly attended our study-class for a time, contradicting here and there, questioning . . . then coming to conclusions. He is a hard-working Theosophist now, i. e. he studies and passes on what he learns in the right way.

Now then, our two theses:

- a. It militates against all philosophic, spiritual, and logical thinking to postulate separateness between man and man (living or so-called dead), or between man and the Universe around him, with everything there is in it.
- b. It militates against all philosophic, spiritual, and logical thinking to relegate immortality of the human spirit or soul to a nebulous "hereafter."

Defending these theses we first of all point to the majestic, eternal rhythm of Nature. The knowledge and recognition of this fact — and who would deny it with the facts before him? hands us a real master-key. Look at the planets, the stars and their courses, the cosmic atoms — solar systems, and we see order, harmony, intelligence and law. Then penetrating as far as we can into the infinitesimal, the atoms, we see the same order, intelligence, and harmony. Who would maintain that the Universe is chaos when looking into the depths of space, gazing at the marvelous beauty of a starlit night. Coming — going, endless rhythm, smaller rhythm — greater rhythm; greater rhythm — cosmic rhythm; the majestic ebb and flow of the Boundless. Read the masterly way in which H. P. Blavatsky pictures this rhythmic movement of the universe in her *The Secret Doctrine*, and who is to be blamed if this fascinates him to his dying day? A sublime truth, and yet, good heavens, how *intensely practical*! For let us come to conclusions: we realize that we can by our actions, thoughts, and emotions, for a shorter or longer time disturb this rhythmic movement, especially in its smaller cycles, and then we wonder that "circumstances turn against us," be they circumstances of the individual or of nations or whole parts of the world, continents. Then in these circumstances we have to find a "way out." Yes, study Theosophy! For we shan't find a "way out" unless we know well how we "got in"!

There is that rhythmic movement in the Universe which I might well call the constant urge to restore equilibrium, to bring harmony where it has been disturbed. It is Karman, a mighty propelling rhythm, a

propelling force upwards if we work along with it, a dreadful counter-current if we work against it, that is, against Nature's heart. And here comes the greater vision: this Karmic rhythmic movement with us or against us, according to our actions and thoughts, works in and through that other rhythmic cycle, the coming and going of man — rebirth. Everything in this mighty rhythm is interdependent, interconnected, so that if I try to disturb my fellow-being's rhythm, or that of my younger brothers, the beasts, yes even of the plants, I can only disturb along with it my *own* rhythmic movement upwards. And I shall have to restore the equilibrium somewhere, somehow, *myself*, or I shall for ever find myself working in a hopeless way against the great rhythmic currents, i. e., never find harmony and peace again. For the great purpose of this same mighty rhythm is *EVOLUTION*, from the smaller to the grander, more majestic rhythm, and in the far future to cosmic rhythm. The divine cosmic entities are such because they have reached this cosmic movement.

Brotherhood a vague empty formula? Would you preach separateness between man and man, between man and the universe, if the rhythmic movement of the cosmos manifests itself in the very breathing of your lungs, in the beating of your heart, in the circulations in your body, reflecting the circulations of the Cosmos? Yes, indeed, why study Theosophy! In order to be able to use and apply this wonderful key, and in *daily life*. Don't tell me that Theosophy is not intensely practical.

And these same thoughts lead our minds to consciousness and immortality. The rhythmic coming back of man — reincarnation — must show us, if we study the Theosophical teachings about it properly, that we are immortal *here and now*. What a change does this bring into our lives! The theological doctrine of Creation and Doomsday naturally led to the dreadful one-life-theory and a nebulous "hereafter"; and what a dreadful immortality in that hereafter! In her own masterful way H. P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* showed the illusion and illogic of such a conception. On the basis of the grand rhythm, Theosophy tells you that there is continuity of consciousness in that compound entity called man. But as he passes through many spheres,

worlds, or planes, there is change of consciousness or rather consciousnesses. But, heavens above, this change does *not only* take place when man "shuffles off the mortal coil"; it takes place every moment *right here* on this earth during our life in the body; and when we study these changes we get downright proofs that we are immortal here and now and that there are not only many "hereafters," but also, as we say in Dutch, many "herebefores.'

Why study Theosophy! In order to get the power of discrimination between the purely human consciousness-center and the spiritual and the divine consciousness-centers. To see them working in the smaller rhythmic movements of our lives here, in sleep and death — the twin-brothers — hence to try to lead a spiritual life here, to master the self by the Self, and so to *know*, to prove to yourself, the truth about immortality. We have a word in Dutch for "becoming conscious" (*bewustwording*), and Theosophy teaches us to become conscious of our consciousnesses, i. e., to experience the fact that consciousness is fundamental in everything; it means to experience *how* this consciousness works, *how* it evolves, and *how* it is connected with universal consciousness. And a great mystery, I assure you, lies behind this teaching that will fascinate you more and more and — teach you who and what are those other yous, your fellow-beings. It will make you drink of the spiritual elixir of life. It is to be found!

Last century a movement was coming back — a rhythmic movement, based on the rhythm of the Universe, established at the right time by those who knew by first-hand knowledge and experience of this rhythm, of the mysteries of consciousness, and who had drunk of the spiritual elixir of life. We call them the Masters of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace. H. P. Blavatsky, their servant, tells us about them. That movement is the Theosophical Society and as it existed in ancient times, in ages long ago, it came back at the proper time. You may study Theosophy outside that movement and be satisfied. But far greater work is the study of it inside the movement, for unity makes strength, and by that greater strength you will feel more of the above described sublime rhythm, and you will be able to study Theosophy in

a more profound way. Why study Theosophy indeed? — TO LEARN TO LIVE,
TO LIVE REALLY!

The Theosophical Forum

IMMORTALITY — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

The ideas aroused by this word in the minds of typical members of our Western civilization and in the minds of those who have come under the influence of Theosophy, are quite different. To the former it suggests eternal existence of human personality with the implication that something else is mortal and has no future life after the certain event which none can escape. It does not touch upon the fact as to whether or not there is development or change in this soul, but implies simply that it persists, in other words, that it has unending life; while to the Theosophist, on the contrary, it is a matter of *acquired* self-consciousness. For the Christian, the soul is immortal and the body mortal. For the Theosophist, the human soul is mortal, but not eternally so. It is mortal until through the numerous earth-lives through which it is destined to pass, it has *acquired* immortality — that is, the ability to understand itself, its place in the Universe, and how to use and hold that place through a knowledge of the forces which maintain cosmic harmony.

In one sense, every atom in the universe is immortal, since all are parts of the Whole and since whatever exists can never cease to exist. It is *form* which changes and therefore is mortal. Most of us in and beyond middle age were taught in our youth the strange theory that in this living Universe there exists *dead matter*. The fact that this was accepted shows how little we used our power of thought, for even our living bodies are made up largely of that so-called lifeless matter.

No real understanding of man as to how he came to be, as to his composition, as to his purpose and destiny, existed in the West until H. P. Blavatsky restated the Ancient Wisdom-Religion in the last century. Thought was turned outward, and the masses accepted what in future retrospect will be regarded as fairy-tales (or nightmares!).

This restatement of the old philosophy awakened thousands of minds,

started the clarification of others who were already questioning, and saved many others from cold and blunting materialism. It outlined the laws of the Universe, explained the phenomena of Nature. It placed the instinct for ethics, insecurely resting on sentiment or dogmatic authority, and in danger of falling often even from these supports, on a sane, firm, deeply-rooted and permanent basis of *fact* — a fact so incontrovertible, so thoroughly supported by universal experience, that it is impossible for honest and searching minds to dodge it.

Man, the hopeless enigma, was thus shown not only his composite nature, but his place in, and relation to, the composite nature of the Universe, of which he is and always must be an integral part, and out of which he can never go. In short, he was in possession once more, as in the ancient past, of his divine heritage — the knowledge of his origin and destiny necessary to guide wisely his life.

We cannot arrive at the significance of "immortality" without some understanding of the elements or principles which make up man's complex nature. The division given to the Christian nations of Body, Soul, and Spirit, while correct enough, is not sufficiently complete for practical purposes, that is, for pointing out the evolutionary processes which must take place to bring about immortality for the human soul.

The Archaic Wisdom-Religion, as stated for this age, divides man into seven principles, with three others belonging to the higher and unmanifested planes of Nature, making in all ten, and these divisions a little analytical reflexion and self-study will reveal to be almost evident and half-consciously recognised by a majority of thinking people.

To begin with, we have a body of flesh, which is the lowest principle, the elements of which are derived from Mother Earth, and which is evidently mortal as we use this term. It has a limited existence in its present *form*, though the particles composing it change from moment to moment, as we all know. However, thus states Theosophy: these elements or life-atoms belong to the ego who uses this body and who is therefore responsible for the impression or color it gives to them as they pass and repass through the body. When the ego comes back over

and over again for a new incarnation, it inevitably attracts its old physical atoms which, on their part, have been gaining their experience in physical nature's realms, guided by the quality stamped upon them by their over-lord, the ego. For atoms are in different stages of evolution as are higher beings, and the atoms of a holy man, for instance, would never be attracted to the body of a degenerate.

Inasmuch as the components of the physical body are constantly fluctuating, as we all recognise, there must evidently be another or stable body which lasts through a whole incarnation to preserve the form. This is man's second principle, is of astral matter, is known as the astral body, and is built from atoms from the next cosmic plane, the astral plane. When man returns to earth-life from the higher and spiritual realms, these old atoms must likewise be recollected from the astral plane of Nature.

Above these two lower principles we have the currents of vitality known as Prana, the third principle counting from below up, supplied, as is all else, from the cosmic reservoir, and fourth, the principle of desire, or Kama, which directs the Will. The less a man is evolved, the more does this principle of desire hold him in his narrow personality with limited understanding, sympathies, and power.

The next principle, or mind, is the pivot around which the real evolution of man in his present stage is turning, and is the principle which must be understood in order to grasp the idea of immortality for man. Theosophical students are familiar with the history of the awakening of the sleeping minds of men in the Third Root-Race on this Globe Earth by the Manasaputras, those beings who on earlier worlds had evolved beyond the human stage, and had the ability and the divine compassion to awaken these sleeping fires for the on-coming races of man for this planet. It is a wonderful and thrilling story. Every nation, in its own way, has told of this, the Greeks in the story of Prometheus.

This history is but one example of two universal facts — one, that in every entity down to the very atoms are locked up all the potentialities

of the Universe, and two, that this unfolding is always brought about by beings a grade above the principle or part to be unfolded. Beginning with the awakening of mind, this unfolding must, on the part of the lower entity, be voluntary. The Manasaputras evoke the power, but man must himself use this power, something in the way that a teacher can stimulate the mind of the pupil which he must himself exercise in order to progress.

Now this mind in man is not yet fully awakened. The process will continue for average mankind for ages, as long as the life of this planet. That part which has been awakened we call the Higher Manas and it is immortal. The other, the Lower Manas is, as yet, mortal, and it is in these two conflicting currents that we find the human soul and also where we can discover the meaning of "immortality." Herein lies the secret of duality, which we cannot but recognise in ourselves and all men, the potentialities of the god or the demon. It is in this area of mystery that is enacted the divine tragedy of human existence.

Evolution for man consists in the transference of his lower mind to the plane of the higher. The lower mind is unstable, at the mercy of the play of impulses from the undeveloped animal-nature and the unchained forces from uninformed and short-sighted desires. Man's real teacher is his own Higher Ego, but the pupil, the Lower Ego, must, through the power of the uncovered divinity buried in it, evoke its will and voluntarily yield itself to the higher guidance. Every incarnation should see progress made in this direction, but not until this voluntary transference of the Lower Ego is complete, will the human have the power to hold itself together and become *immortal*; only then is it working *with* instead of *against* the universal life currents, which are an expression of the universal law of compassion. Until then it must follow the way of the lower principles and be dissipated after each period of activity, or earth-life, and during each period of rest and assimilation for the Higher Ego, to be reassembled for the next Day of Work, the succeeding earth-life.

Thus, immortality for the lower human soul is yet to be won, and the

stage upon which this immortal drama must be played is earth-life. It is folly to count upon something strange happening to make of us saints after so-called death. We take to that blissful land only what we have gained through self-directed evolution, and we come back with the riches we carried to it, but refreshed, strengthened reinforced after the merciful rest provided by Nature.

Katherine Tingley in *Theosophy: The Path of the Mystic* writes with eloquent warning as well as encouragement on this vital subject of the duality in human nature. She warns that at each moment as we consciously incline toward good or evil, one or the other feeds into and fills the mind, and that any *conscious* volitional backing given to any fault or failing may end in involving all the rest on that lower side of the nature and consequently is an "*immensely pregnant move downward*": on the other hand, no failures should discourage, and if they are followed by as many undaunted struggles upward, the help of the "Warrior" within is certain. "For This is an unconquerable power, *eternal and sure*," she quotes elsewhere. To reconstruct mankind, we must arouse more faith in the *Self*. Loss of such faith is the initial step in all spiritual failures. Then follows loss of faith in others, until finally the unfortunate victim finds himself "living in a strange house: the house of the lower nature."

It should be fully realized, however, that this "lower" is the weaker part. All the forces of the Universe work with one who allies himself with his own Higher Ego. Through this he is firmly anchored to a world in which reign peace, joy, and unbounded opportunities.

Every careful observer will probably find that these five elements in human nature are clearly recognisable, and see that they are not an arbitrary and fantastic division. This is likewise true of the two higher. Interest centers around man as a thinker because evolution at present is more active in this principle. But it is obvious that there is in man something yet higher, for he can direct his mind, force it to work on this or another subject. This higher and sixth principle is known in Theosophy as the Spiritual Ego, the real man. The seventh, the Divine

Ego, links him finally to the very root of Being, the reality of which and necessity for which become evident to one who recognises that the Universe is one organism of which all entities, high and low, are integral parts, and upon which unity rests the eternal *fact* of Universal Brotherhood.

The Theosophical Forum

SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS ON IMPERSONALITY — *Jalie Neville Shore*

Be impersonal. Be self-forgetful

Consider the Sun and you will know what the Teacher means. Or if you cannot yet consider the Sun, then study yourself and you will gradually come to realize the great wisdom of impersonality and self-forgetfulness.

Perhaps you are one of those who believe that self-preservation is the first law of nature. There is sense in such belief of course, but you must spell Self with a capital "S"; for as soon as all the centers of consciousness are focused on the preservation of the personal self this entity oddly enough becomes destructive to its own nature. It is only through living a self-less life that even the little self is preserved for unless it grows its energies are eventually disrupted. It is only through living for things *outside* itself that it survives. Like a child it needs coaching and training, for it is ever growing and expanding, never the same yet with an unchanged identity. It is only the indefinable Self in it that is immortal.

You may be ambitious. Perhaps you desire above all things to be *successful*. You should know first then that true success is not measured by the accomplishment of a day, a month, a year, or even one lifetime. True success constitutes ages of endeavor to understand natural laws and to work unceasingly with them. It is said that success is attained by "quenching the personality" — a most difficult thing to do when the fires of ambition sizzle ceaselessly in one's soul. It is this fire threatening to consume the life and endeavor of untaught souls that must be quenched, for personal ambition if left to the devices of its own nature will destroy even the prize it set its heart on attaining. It is the steady white flame of impersonal living and giving that one should cultivate to be truly successful. This gives warmth to the heart and light to the eyes. It is a torch that illumines "even the farthest corners of the

earth." The winning, the attaining does not necessarily mean that the success one thinks he has won will stay on for ever. Men who have risen to high success in their chosen fields through the relentless discipline of their sometimes bothersome personalities have fallen to devastating failure and degradation through no more tangible a cause than a personal desire. Napoleon, who through his clear vision and great force of character might have grown into a greater "success," robbed himself and the world he lived in of happiness and peace through personal ambition. Washington, across whose path were flung the temptations of greater position and power, remained steadfastly impersonal in the execution of his duties, and today, instead of being anathematized by the nation he opposed, is revered as a noble example of great leadership and lofty ideals.

Those who covet the emoluments of personal glory most assiduously are usually those who are bereft of them. The very nature of their covetous desires plunges them into a disgusting state of misery that militates constantly against the attainment of the things they most desire. It is only those who have freed themselves of *personal* ambitions, whose actions are without thought of the personal advantage of the results, who never feel the pangs of personal disappointments, yet appear to be so *personally* happy. These are personalities that have outgrown their *personal* attributes and have become impersonal channels through which flow the life-giving currents of love and devotion and self-sacrifice.

This idea of personality and impersonality is builded of many paradoxes. Here is one: the most impersonal people most often have the most delightful personalities. Take the "most delightful" individual you know. He will likely have what is called a "charming personality." Although he has never actively sought them he has many friends who actively seek *him*. He is fun-loving, yet temperate in his play. He is industrious though he does not slave. He is fearless, yet tactful; dignified yet gracious; firm yet kindly; frugal, but not miserly. He thinks of others but he also recognises himself as an entity in the scheme of things and knows well that he can be of no service to anyone

if he does not respect himself first and treat others as though they were himself. He is a success personally because he is so effectively *impersonal*. He is not disturbed — either angry or jealous — when other men are given places of high honor, for the greatness in him makes him recognise the greatness in others. He knows that his own job however humble is as necessary as that of the highest potentate. And when he reaches a high position — as he will by the very power of his developing capabilities — except for the appreciation of his responsibility, he will never feel that this new duty is more important than the others he has had.

Before you can be truly successful you must raise the personality to a position of impersonal strength and honor. It is not only pride and bigotry, covetousness and anger that must be weeded out; fear, and timidity its offspring, are likewise vitiating influences in the education of the growing personality. They stultify the inner expansion so that even the will does not operate and nothing is left to direct the outward efforts but a feeling of inferiority which, when analysed, most often means a grudging recognition of the superiority in other people and a covetous desire for a similar position. (Usually a generous circle of enthusiastic admirers is in the mental picture.) Impersonal courage is action for its own sake. Impersonal action of any kind is in reality a giving with wisdom. Fear and timidity have no place in the impersonal life because they are always concerned with self. Life demands — and it is especially so in this age — strong courage and selfless thought and action.

There are those who believe in impersonality so much that they don't do anything about it. Theosophists do not believe in a philosophy of this kind of inaction. Impersonality, on the other hand, must be distinguished from a lack of vitality. The development of the impersonal attitude actually means a vigorous exercise of will and a constant application of all lessons one has learned on the subject. There is nothing spineless about realizing that "silence must be cultivated on all subjects which tend toward personality"; or about trying to allow "those immediately around you to win their own victories in self-

control" even though you feel their decisions are leading them into situations fraught with danger. Conscientious Theosophists try to do all this and more.

A distinction must likewise be made between impersonality and heartlessness, for the truth is, that horrors have sometimes been committed in the name of impersonality. The most truly impersonal hearts are the most understanding, the most compassionate, but they have also developed in themselves a splendid sense of discrimination which separates the impulsive hand of emotionalism from the sure, steady hand of helpfulness. The more *personal* one is, the more danger there is in his becoming bankrupt as to judgment.

The ideal of every Theosophist is to become one of the Helpers of Humanity. These wonderful individuals have developed within themselves a deep and wondrous leadership based on impersonal living. This does not mean that they have made their natures impervious to the sorrows of men. On the contrary, their compassion is the mark of their greatness. Their pure, compassionate hearts cannot be consumed by the thirsty fires of emotional reactions. They serve humanity because they love humanity and understand that each member of that orphan family must "quench" its own thirst. They lead because of their great judgment. Their courage insures for them the steady, inner flame of wisdom which sheds its encouraging radiance impartially and impersonally on all! Once they were atomic entities who suffered through the restrictions of the personality, until through unflinching effort toward impersonality they became valiant assistants to Nature with vast reservoirs of privilege and power at their command.

Now consider the Sun and the glorious radiance it sheds on the universe in its keeping. Is it any wonder the teacher never tires of enjoining us to be impersonal and self-forgetful?

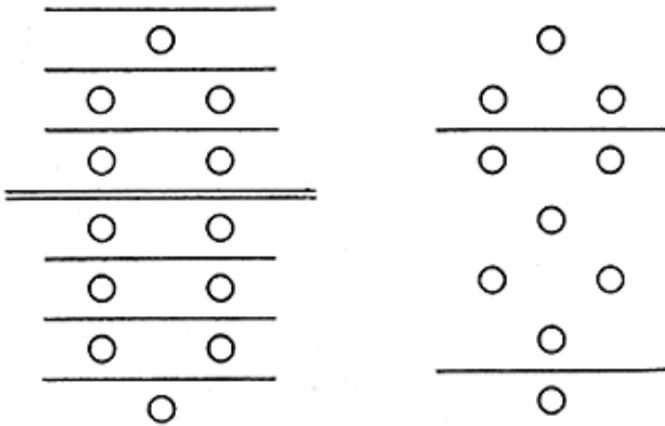
THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: IX — *H. T. Edge*

IX — THE SEPTENATE

The number seven, spoken of also as the septenate or septenary or heptad, is the most important number in symbology. It is universal in cosmogonies and theogonies and is familiar to us in innumerable familiar instances. Its use is both traditional and founded on experience: on the one hand we find septenary divisions and classifications which we should not have thought of making ourselves; and these are traditional. On the other hand we find that many things fall naturally into septenary divisions. It seems to be the key number of the present great cycle of evolution. To begin with, the Logos or One Deity, emanates seven rays, which are the world-builders; and there are countless representations of this in the different theogonies: the seven sons of Aditi, the seven Amshaspendis, Angels of the Presence, Builders, Wheels, Sephiroth, Gods, etc., etc. And this is repeated on all planes till we get to the seven primary elements of the physical plane, the seven colors, seven notes of the scale, etc.

Seven, as before pointed out, is the number of combinations of three things, as algebraically represented by *a, b, c; ab, be, ca; abc* It is also the sum of three and four, triad and quaternary; it is two triads and a unit; it is six and one, as seen in the hexagon or the double triangle, each with central point, and in the six directions of space with their central point of origin. In occult symbology we hear of seven mystic vowels and seven sounds, and of the heptachord of Apollo which has reference to a good deal more than merely a musical instrument. When light is being spoken of, the septenate becomes seven colors, and these seven colors have their physical manifestation in the seven colors of our visual perception. It is said that from "Darkness" comes light, and from white light come the seven colors; and this means that from the unmanifest logos comes the manifest logos, and from that the seven

rays. In physics white light is decomposable into seven colors; and the etheric vibrations to which the phenomenon of light is referred do not yield a visible effect until such effect is evoked by contact with physical matter; and thus we have darkness yielding light.



The positive side of creation is represented by seven Forces or Sons of Fohat, etc., and the negative side by seven planes of materiality or seven cosmic planes; and correspondingly in the microcosm we have the sevenfold constitution of man. The chemists Mendeleeff and Newlands arranged the chemical elements in a table according to the relation between their atomic weights and their properties, and found that they fall into a septenary scale; which is one among many proofs that physical nature follows the laws impressed upon it by primary nature. Seven sacred planets are enumerated, and connected with seven Gods and other septenates; the visible planets are their "chariots." The number seven is related to the number twelve; as there are seven planets, so there are twelve zodiacal signs in which they move. Astrology gives one sign each to sun and moon and two signs each to the other five planets. Twelve is also the sum of seven and five. According to one interpretation, which is likened to "Ezekiel's Wheel," the signs from Aries to Libra inclusive are the seven, and the signs from Scorpio to the end are the five. In the Esoteric Tradition twelve globes are placed on seven planes, and seven globes on four planes, as in the diagram. Sometimes the number ten is used in the enumeration

of cosmic powers, and can be made by putting above the septenate a triad belonging to the archetypal world, as in the Sephi-rothal Tree, represented in the diagram; or again we may have a quaternary with a triad above it and an inverted triad below.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — *C. J. Ryan*

PREHISTORIC CHINA: UNEXPECTED AND SURPRISING DISCOVERY

How many times H. P. Blavatsky said that new manuscripts, inscriptions, and other witnesses to the truth of the "Secret Doctrine" would unexpectedly turn up in future, as a few had already done in the nineteenth century! A fresh instance is now reported which may prove of greater importance than the archaeologists suspect, although they are profoundly interested in its contents. It may help to explain the mysterious resemblance between the Easter Island inscriptions and those on the seals recently discovered in India at Mohenjo-Daro, almost at the opposite ends of the earth, and separated by the width of the Pacific Ocean. It may also prove a far greater antiquity for highly civilized man than the few thousand years allowed at the present moment.

If we can rely on press reports, a Chinese manuscript has recently been found in a metal canister which had been buried in the ground on a spot which was afterwards covered by a portion of the great Chinese Wall. This accident preserved it safely until a Japanese bomb blew up a section of the wall and revealed the canister! Such are the ways of the Law! According to Professor Anthony Graeme and other scholars, it is almost another Rosetta Stone, and is proving to be the key to strange revelations. Our information is derived from the *Sunday Referee* (London), April 12th, which we quote in part. Professor Graeme is reported as saying:

When I showed the first translations to the late Sir Wallis Budge, of the British Museum, he said that the manuscript was of even greater importance than the Codex Sinaiticus. In the manuscript I find direct reference to the Laws of Manu, which were first written in the Vedic language 10,000 years ago . . . In this book it says: "From the plants life passed into fantastic creatures which

were born of the slime of waters; then, through a series of different shapes and animals, it came to man." . . . We have also found — and proved — that in those days there was a distinct relationship between the people of India, America and China. We actually find reference to the ruined cities which have been found in the center of the Peruvian forests. It will be another year before the translation of the manuscript is complete. Then it will be given to the British Museum.

In regard to Evolution according to Manu, many scholars think this archaic writer taught modern Darwinism, based on mechanistic "natural selection, survival of the fittest," etc. We learn otherwise from H. P. Blavatsky:

Both Occult and Eastern philosophies believe in evolution, which Manu and Kapila give with far more clearness than any scientist does at present. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 259

And on page 600 of the first volume:

The day *may* come, then, when the "Natural Selection," as taught by Mr. Darwin and Mr Herbert Spencer, will form only *a part*, in its ultimate modification, of our Eastern doctrine of Evolution, which will be Manu and Kapila *esoterically* explained.

She also refers the reader to *Isis Unveiled*, I, 151, where the "Mundane Tree," the ancient widespread symbol of evolution, is discussed.

In many places in *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky mentions the knowledge of Atlantis possessed by the ancient Chinese, and scholars have never satisfactorily answered the problem of apparently strong Oriental influences on ancient American sculpture, etc. The recent discovery of a keystone at Monte Alban, Oaxaca, in Southern Mexico, has upset some conservative notions, as previously mentioned in these columns, but there are no doubt still more significant corroborations of the Masters' teachings to be found at the right time, as H. P. Blavatsky says. When the true history of mankind is revealed, it will enormously change the point of view of all thinking persons, but the revelation

must come gradually and through methods recognised by science.

HUMAN "MAGNETISM" USED IN DIVINATION

Discovery (London) for April reports that the body of a carpenter who had been missing from his home at Dedham, Essex, was discovered, after other means had failed, by a diviner who used a piece of the missing man's clothing attached to a copper wire as his "divining rod." The body was found in the bed of the River Stour in the place indicated by the behavior of the garment. In *Isis Unveiled*, I, 611, H. P. Blavatsky mentions some incidents of exactly the same nature in illustration of her points in regard to the actual existence of human "animal magnetism" as a definite substance, and of its power of affecting people beneficially or otherwise. It is no figure of speech, but something very active, though not the same kind of magnetism as that which is displayed by iron magnets.

Many persons feel uncomfortable under the gaze of a piercing eye, but not knowing that human magnetism can be projected through the eye are puzzled to explain the discomfort. Certain hypnotists use this method, and, it being generally disbelieved, the magnetizer can work much mischief. Psychology in the West has hardly touched the fringe of this subject. Until lately, water-divining was regarded by scientists and "commonsense" people as utter nonsense, but it is now admitted to the borderland of respectability. Several Governments give permanent employment to diviners. The fact that *Discovery*, a scientific magazine sponsored by a committee of eminent scientists, has dared to publish without unfavorable comment this Dedham case of divination by the magnetism of the drowned man's clothes, is a proof of the broadening of the scientific outlook. We cannot forget that *Isis Unveiled* has had a large and steady sale ever since it appeared in 1877, edition after edition being called for, the latest being the new volume of the Centennial Edition of H. P. Blavatsky's works. And *Isis* is not read by the frivolous but by real thinkers.

IS THIS REINCARNATION?

A considerable sensation has been aroused in Californian medical circles by the strange, seemingly occult powers of a thoroughly healthy boy, normal in all other respects. His name is Pat Marquis and he lives in Los Angeles. Very wisely, his mother has prohibited any public exploitation. He has exhibited his supernormal faculties only to scientific investigators. He recently gave 150 physicians including eye-specialists, an extraordinary demonstration at the Hollywood Hospital (not for the film studios!) and another before 200 physicians at a County Medical Association meeting. He has also appeared before distinguished professors at the famous California Technological Institute, Pasadena, and next year he is to go to England to be studied by the Royal College of Surgeons.

When his eyes were thoroughly blindfolded by specialists young Marquis entered into a semi-trance, and apparently became a different personality — an ancient Persian physician who calls himself "Napeji," a Parsi who lived in the Himalayas in the eleventh century a. d. In this state the boy displays clairvoyant powers of a most unusual type. Not only can he write and read, blindfolded, but he can walk with perfect confidence in strange places, draw good portraits, imitate gestures, select books from the shelves and point out any page or word required, and satisfy numerous other tests.

Though normally he does not know a word of Persian, he writes in that language in reply to questions from one of the investigating scientists, Dr. Ameen Fareed, a Persian himself, and a physician. Pat Marquis, in the character of "Napeji," can also write in Persian when Dr. Fareed is not present. He sometimes uses an archaic form of that language. He correctly describes Persian customs, and his manners are those of a very dignified personage, not at all those of a lively youngster of twelve. He has also made predictions that have come uncannily true. When asked technical questions about the seats of consciousness in the brain, "Napeji" replied in the language of a trained anatomist. Dr. C. Reynolds, F.R. C. S., who presented Pat Marquis to the Hollywood committee of physicians, said, "How he could know anatomy and modern medical terms is beyond me. Certainly *the boy* knows nothing

of them." Pat says he has twice seen "Napeji" standing near him when he was perfectly awake. "Napeji" is exceedingly tall.

Since the writing of the above, another interesting report has been issued. After being *completely blindfolded as before*, and in the slight trance required, the boy, now in the personality of "Napeji," took up the foils in a fencing-bout with Mr. F. Cavens, an expert fencer. Pat Marquis knows nothing of fencing, but apparently "Napeji" is a master of the art, for Mr. Cavens said, "I know of no master of fencing in the world who could do it. The fact that he can see my point coming and parry, and not be deceived in his parry with the point menacing him, and make the correct retreat is remarkable. I defy any great expert to do it. It would be utterly impossible for me." Sixty seconds after the fencing-bout "Napeji" had disappeared and the laughing, healthy schoolboy had resumed his normal personality.

Surely we have at last something which cannot be scornfully ignored by the world of science, a tangible fact which psychologists must face, however disturbing to those who think the consciousness of the brain-cells explains our actions. It is not easy to explain by the convenient hypothesis of telepathy (which itself needs explaining). Is it not possible that traces of the personal consciousness of a previous incarnation in Persia, under the peculiar conditions of the partial trance, may step forward and take control of the new bodily vehicle in Los Angeles? This is not the only case of "sightless vision" that has come to light of late, and we may expect to see such things discussed more and more intelligently in the immediate future, because scientists are becoming bolder and not so fearful of losing caste if they participate in psychic investigations. Kuda Bux, the Indian Mohammedan fire-walker, has recently demonstrated the "sightless vision," and there are more examples ready at hand. Kuda Bux claims that he gained it by a simple form of yoga.

A few years ago, before H. P. Blavatsky gave her demonstrations and explanations of such things, all psychic phenomena were confidently attributed to the spirits of the departed; nowadays, in addition to this

possibility in very rare cases, more satisfactory and scientific interpretations are demanded in order to explain the complexities, paradoxes, and unexpected difficulties which arise in psychic research. The bewildering conditions and the extraordinary illusionary power of the lower astral plane are hardly yet suspected by those ignorant of the Eastern teachings.

The Theosophical Forum

INTUITIVE KNOWLEDGE VS. "BLIND FAITH" — *H. W. Dempster*

Many religious creedists and "new-thought" psychologists claim that their religions or their philosophies are panaceas for the present ills of the world. Yet, with all the religionists and psychologists, the world still appears to abound in ignorance, selfishness, and much human misery. Materialistic progress has far out-distanced moral development, and amid the chaos of confused and twisted, therefore insufficient, thinking, mankind searches for "a way out" by various methods of faith and belief, only to find that false and incomplete systems lead into "blind alleys" and fail to give satisfactory answers to the unexplainable circumstances and events of life and its mysteries.

We truth-lovers — for that is what Theosophists really are — have no creeds or dogmas, and therefore do not accept, nor do we require others to do so, anything on "blind faith." That we teach certain doctrines as being facts of Nature is true, and these may be misunderstood by others to be dogmas; but that does not make them so. Each one is left to his own choice of accepting or rejecting the teachings as he sees fit. And this is as it should be; for to exercise this privilege rightly is to use the wisdom of the discriminating faculty" — intuition. It is the Knower within us; hence we should seek to find it and rely upon its wise counsel. From this fountain of wisdom comes faith — "faith" used in the sense of that which proceeds from or is based upon, Knowledge arising out of an authentic source, as distinguished from indiscriminate belief in a so-called authority. The authenticity of the source is and can only be determined by intuitive perception, which faculty in Theosophical terminology is known as the Buddhi-principle, or the Christos within us.

While we are religionists also, this is true only from the standpoint of devotion to the cause of searching for truth, and to the dissemination of a knowledge of the True for the benefit of mankind generally. By the term "Truth" is meant: a knowledge of the facts of Nature, visible and

invisible, derived both from a reliable source — a true Spiritual Teacher — and from the individual's own realization of these facts consciously, through "experiencing" or *becoming* aware of these truths in his consciousness. This is made possible by going deeply into the heart of things, including ourselves, and by means of the knowledge which comes from within; i. e., by the illumination emanating from the intuition, there become aroused and stimulated within our consciousness the thoughtful processes of logical and analogical reasoning, which support intuitive knowledge.

The resultant of following the hints of a true Spiritual Teacher and intuitive perception is: Spiritual Vision or Knowledge of things as-they-are, our "Savior," in fact. Gautama the Buddha is reported to have said, "The way of Salvation is through Knowledge," and the words attributed to Jesus the Avatara: "*I am* the Way, the Truth and the Life," unquestionably refer to the Higher Consciousness in man; or, in other words, the intuitive Preceptor within him, as suggested by the meaning of the mystical phrase, "I am." By a slight rearrangement, and without distorting the essential meaning, this could be read: "The Intuitive Faculty, the Christos within, is the Way (or the means), the Truth (that Reality which we are seeking and finding in relatively greater degree through becoming) and the Life (which is a synonymous term for consciousness, in this particular instance meaning Higher Consciousness)." Or the whole phrase could be summarized in one word, "Illuminator."

There is another very familiar phrase accredited to Jesus the Syrian Sage: "*The Kingdom of God is within you.*" If it is analysed, we find that it has reference to the high internal state of intuitive consciousness; and it is a Kingdom or Hierarchical state or condition that is within us — not outside, as attention is so unwisely drawn to in the heartrending carnalized crucifixion of Christ upon the upright cross. It is the intuitive faculty within us, the Inner God, that is meant by the "I am." In order to avoid becoming confused, it is well to bear in mind that there are several different terms or words used to describe the same principle or idea, in dealing with the Mysteries of the Universe.

The instruction embodied in the famous "I am" phrase ascribed to Jesus, as indeed is true with many of the mystical Christian teachings which veil deep esoteric truth, is too often taken literally, and in a more or less personal way to mean that He alone is the *only* Savior from eternal hell-fire and hopeless damnation. And this is based upon the unsupported blind belief that such is the case. It is not intended to deny the saving qualities of this great Spiritual Teacher; but all Spiritual Teachers are Saviors, because they bring knowledge to men — and there have been many, as an unprejudiced examination of the history of the past will show. All of them have given man the teachings whereby he himself becomes actually his own Savior, which teachings, being based upon Nature's immutable laws, do not vary in principle with the Teacher who brings them, but only in the manner of their appropriate and fitting presentation, suitable to the times, and to those to whom they are given. To look entirely outside of ourselves to some external form of Deity, and especially to expect Jesus or any other Sage or Seer of like spiritual grandeur to "save" us from our evil and thoughtless actions, is anticipating something which we do not deserve, and therefore will not get.

Justice is the reaction which follows all action. Why should we expect reward for doing good, or escape the suffering of our evil acts? In either case, the result will ever be Justice — and that is enough. How else can suffering be explained at the hands of a just God, or Law, or Principle — or by whatever other term or name is applied to the Divine Wisdom and Justice of the Boundless Universal ALL?

The world *needs* to understand the teachings promulgated by the Theosophical Society more than ever before. To re-establish a true system in the outer world, an honest and primarily ethical school of thought based upon and teaching the natural principles of the Universe, and to broadcast those teachings to the world, is one way of stating the need of and for the Society. The ignorance, selfishness, and misery arising out of the incompleteness of materialistic thinking and misinterpretation of age-old doctrine, which are running rampant

among our fellow human beings today, consciously and unconsciously, have brought forth from the compassionate and kindly hearts of those intelligent Elder Brothers of our race, who have evolved in consciousness far beyond the average among us — the Masters of Wisdom, Spiritual Beings of lofty evolutionary standing similar to Jesus the Christ and the Lord Buddha as well as many others — the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom Movement. This, a modern movement, called ancient because it has ever existed, uses as a vehicle for the expression of Divine Wisdom an organized Society composed of believers in Universal Brotherhood, regardless of present religious affiliations. Through this Society the Wisdom of the Gods is stepped down, so to speak, to man's capacity of understanding, and thereby the opportunity has been offered him to learn, among many other things, the secret causes of his sufferings and misfortunes, and the remedies for their cure. For those who have been fortunate enough to find these teachings, the world and its conditions are more clearly understood, and life takes on a different shade of meaning. Conviction is brought to the mind, therefore proof, that the application of a working knowledge of the Wisdom of the Ancients — Theosophy — is actually and truly the cure-all of ignorance and selfishness and all their attendant evils, because it tells the "why" of things, and explains in a logical and matter-of-fact manner the structure and operations of the Universe in all its parts and phases.

The Society has, as an outward or exoteric body, been established only sixty years, which is a relatively short period of time. Who can say, if he has made an unbiased study and examination for himself, that its beneficent influence has not already in a comparatively great degree, persuaded thinking individuals of the logic, truth, and common-sense of its teachings the world over? Observe the outstanding progress being made by the ultra-modern scientific thinkers, and note how closely some of their recent findings and theories approximate, in fact agree in many cases, with the teachings appearing in Theosophical books of decades ago. Yet due credit should be given to these scientists for their energetic and courageous efforts in the research for scientific truth,

and the intuitive ideas which are proceeding out of their search into the secrets of Mother Nature and the Universe, of which they and all things are inseparable parts.

Concerning psychology: our understanding of that subject is quite different from what is advocated by many. The most dangerous form of "new-thought" psychologists are those who teach half-truths. Beware of these! Others are honest and sincere and serve a useful purpose in at least an intermediary capacity for those who are breaking away from ecclesiasticism and commencing to think for themselves. But, in dealing with the subject of psychology, it should be understood that the term comes from the Greek word *psyche*, meaning Soul, and has to do with that part of man which we call the Human Soul, or the Reincarnating Ego, the intermediate portion of man's sevenfold constitution. With all due respect to the honesty of the psychologists' convictions, the average among them seldom deal with any faculty in their study of man beyond that of mind, and lack a fundamental understanding of our Higher Spiritual faculty of Intuition, which illumines the mind and animates the logical reasoning processes. An understanding knowledge of the fact that man, as well as all other entities, is a septenary being would be of much assistance to them. Theosophy explains the nature and operation of these seven principles in man and all other things and of their relation to each other, and should not be confused with the philosophy of those who deal incompletely with only the intermediate and lower portions of man's nature.

To account for the ignorance, selfishness, and misery in the world, there is but one answer, speaking generally, viz: *man himself*, individually and collectively. There is ample knowledge available, and the opportunity is open to all who truly set their course in the direction of finding it. If this be doubted, an impartial reading of the standard Theosophical contributions to the world's knowledge since the Society was founded in 1875 will prove of great value. If you would have Truth, go to the source, the head-waters, "the center of the circle," to use a mystical phrase, the Heart of Things. There exists abundant knowledge!

The difficulty is with the nature of man, which is septenary. He does not *know himself*. And furthermore, he often does not choose or seek to know; for if he did, he would find and know himself and become consciously aware of far greater knowledge than he now has any idea of. This is in accordance with the age-old injunctions, "Man, know thyself" and "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

By means of our intuitive consciousness, and not by "blind faith," are we able to discern the true from the false; find the Way or Path to the Inner Divinity; help others to find it; and in due course of time, by bringing forth or unfolding what is latent within us, we shall ourselves consciously become that. Through the Inner God is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Are these mere words? Or do they contain true instruction? If we look within ourselves, we shall have the answer.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 320 & 321

QUESTION 320. "What is the explanation of the "invisible companion" which some children speak of constantly as almost part of themselves?"

— J. H.

G. de P. — An interesting question, and one which likewise shows how greatly we adults have lost the intuitive recognition of spiritual companionship that children — unless spoiled by over-fond and over-doting parents — still retain.

It would be quite a mistake, I believe, to suppose that these dear little ones are self-consciously aware, as adults might be, of any invisible companion; what they have is a distinct "feeling," or inner conscious cognisance, of the spiritual presence of the inner Self, to which "presence" a child will often give a name, and of which, taking individual children as instances, they are the human radiance.

Only recently, comparatively speaking, out of the devachanic condition in which this spiritual presence was a living reality, although not there and then understood as something separate — for indeed it is not — the Ray reaching incarnation and embodying itself, in the manner which I have endeavored to describe in my *The Esoteric Tradition* and elsewhere, still retains the intuition of the spiritual presence of the inner Self; and the child's mind, instinctively feeling this presence, but not having the developed brain-mind as yet to argue about it or analyse it, recognises the fact, and talks of what we adults call, or might call, "an invisible companion," or by some such similar phrase.

As a matter of fact, highly developed human beings who are likewise esoterically trained, are self-consciously aware of this spiritual companionship, so much so that Adepts and Initiates know the fact in its proper relations, and speak of this inner Self working through them by various terms, such as "Father-Flame," "Father in Heaven," "Father-Fire," etc., etc. In other words, the adept knows and recognises his

inner Self as the "invisible companion," and puts himself under its steady and unfailing guidance and inspiration. Little children, still fresh from the spiritual realms, likewise, as said above, feel the fact, though not with the self-conscious analysis of the Adept; but they recognise it unconsciously, so to speak, as a "feeling"; and the unspoiled child will frequently be so impressed with this invisible companionship that it will speak of it to others.

In the case of the Adept-soul, the invisible companion is precisely what was meant by the Avatara-Jesus when referring to his "Father in Heaven.'

QUESTION 321. *I have been reading a book only recently issued, "Who Wrote the Mahatma Letters?" by the brothers H. E. Hare and W. L. Hare. The general line of criticism adopted by the authors appears to me most unfair, and yet I myself have often been puzzled in regard to the fact that certain of these Letters contain expressions similar to H. P. B.'s own expressions. I know of course from what I have read regarding "The Mahatma Letters" that some of them were transmitted by H. P. B. Would it be possible for an explanation to be given of this?*

[The above question was sent to the Leader. His answer contains so much that is helpful, that the Editors have obtained his consent to include it in these columns.]

G. de P. — Among other things which arouse the amazement of the reader of this book by the critical Hares, there are at least two of the first importance which the two authors either pass over without comment, or slur so badly that the average reader is utterly incognisant that these facts exist. The first, then, of the two we find to lie in the amazing assurance with which the authors of this book treat their *apparatus criticus*, combined with their manner of treatment itself, apparently under the pleasant illusion that they are for the first time in Theosophic history the discoverers of what thoughtful Theosophists have all known since the date of the publication of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, and which certain ones knew even from the days of H. P. B.

herself, because she frequently explained these facts. In other words, I mean all the various idiosyncracies of speech and of mannerism, all the various Gallicisms on the other hand, and the various imperfections of punctuation, orthography, grammar, and what not, to which the critical Hares point triumphantly as largely originating in H. P. B.'s mind — all these were well understood since H. P. B.'s days as being due to the mental and psychical idiosyncrasies of the amanuenses or chelas, i. e. disciples, through whom most of the Letters of the Mahatmans came.

What else could we expect? A ray of sunlight streaming through stained glass will chequer the wall or the floor upon which the ray falls with the colors of the glass through which it passes; nevertheless the original ray is there.

Let the following facts be understood, as they have been for some forty years or more by thoughtful Theosophists: (a) The Masters themselves on only the very rarest of occasions wrote with their own hand any letters whatsoever, and consequently those that they did so write, if indeed any, can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand; consequently these letters are the fewest of all; (b) almost equally rare, but more numerous than those classified under (a) are what have been popularly called "precipitations," or communications which were "dropped" or found in unexpected places by the recipients thereof; and consequently these are relatively very few likewise; and (c) the great majority of all the letters received from the Masters by individuals in those early days came through different amanuenses or transmitting chelas (disciples), among the number of whom we know perfectly well are to be counted H. P. B. herself, Damodar, Bavaji, Bhavani-Rao in one or two cases, and one or two others, probably not excepting the well known and erudite Hindi. Theosophist and scholar Subba-Rao.

Now, the important point to be noticed in this connexion is that all these transmissions of intelligence, in other words all these different letters or communications, including the various notes, chits, etc., etc., passed through the medium of the transmitting minds of the chelas

who received them and passed them on to their different destinations, and often by the very prosaic and ordinary means of the postal system.

The Messrs. Hare are extraordinarily behind the times in not being aware of the fact that the many experiments of what it is now popular to call telepathy or thought-transference or mind-reading, conducted by earnest men of unquestionable ability and reputation, have established the fact that such telepathic transmission of intelligence is not only possible but actually of more frequent occurrence than most human beings realize; but in the early days of the Theosophical Society, in the heyday of the materialism of Haeckel and Huxley and Tyndall and Moleschott, and all the other bigwigs of the time, even so common a fact as teleaesthesia, or telepathy, or thought-transference or mind-reading, was not only not accepted, but even ridiculed — and this against the common testimony and common experience of mankind for ages; for it is one of the most ordinary facts of human life to experience the wordless or unspoken transmission of human thought.

Now then, such transmission of intelligence from Master to pupil or chela, is more or less precisely what today is called thought-transference or telepathy or mind-reading, if you wish, only in vastly more perfect form because the transmitter is a mahatmic intelligence, and the receiving mind of the chela is a highly trained one; and, indeed, telepathy or thought-transference, etc., are merely minor instances of the general rule. The experiments conducted during the last forty or fifty years in mind-reading or thought-transference have shown clearly that it is *ideas* which are transmitted and received, but which are almost always distorted or twisted by the untrained mind of the receiver or recipient, and almost invariably more or less colored by the mind or psychological apparatus of the recipient; so that while the essential idea is often received, it is frequently distorted or deformed.

Precisely the same thing, but with less degree of distortion or deformation, must by the nature of the case take place when the transmitting chela receives the essential ideas more or less clearly, and occasionally and sometimes even often in the very language of the

transmitter's mind and thought; but coming through the psychological apparatus of the chela, the original ideas are more or less subject to be given forth with marks or with the mental clothing of the chela himself. Thus it would actually have been amazing if there had not been Gallicisms in H. P. B.'s transmission of the essential original idea which was received clearly; but coming through H. P. B.'s mind, with her excellent knowledge of French and her acquaintance with Americanisms, it was almost certain that the message would be transmitted more or less, now and then, here and there, with a French turn of phrase, or with an American spelling to which H. P. B.'s mind had been accustomed.

Similarly so with messages received through and passed on by other chelas — each one gave his own particular "atmosphere" or included more or less of his or her own mental characteristics to the message as handed on; yet the original idea, the essential thought, the fundamental language and intelligent conception, were always there, and this fact accounts for the grandeur and profundity found in such transmitted messages.

This leads us directly to the second of our points, which the critical Hares utterly ignore. This second point is the matter of the characteristic individuality in literary form or matter commonly called literary style. It is extraordinary that not a word in direct or specific allusion is made by the two authors of this book to the immense differences in the *literary styles* of M. on the one hand, and K. H. on the other hand, and neither of these two in literary style or in literary quality is at all comparable with H. P. B.'s own style when she wrote directly from her own mind. The stamp of literary style alone is so well recognised by every competent scholar and student as to be one of the very best means of judging the authenticity of documents, that the omission by the Hare brothers of any allusion to these immense differences in style, constitutes a defect of the gravest character in their attempted criticism. The style of M. for instance, is outstanding for its directness, its abrupt masculinity, its pungency in aphorism, etc.; whereas the style of K. H. though equally profound in thought with

M.'s, is markedly different: flowing in character, smooth and easy in narrative, often semi-humorous in relation, and what has been neatly called "gentle" as compared with what has likewise been called the "rough" style of Master M.

H. P. B. when writing alone never wrote anything which in profundity could compare with the literary material of the two Masters, nor with its strength, however fine and really wonderful her own writings were; and her style is enormously different from theirs, although possessing undoubted charm and attractiveness of its own. One has but to compare the literary style and atmosphere of the two volumes, (a) *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, with (b) *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, to see how forcefully telling this argument of literary style and atmosphere is.

I turn with a final word again to the matter of the messages received from the Masters through their chelas. As stated above, I have called this relatively perfect telepathy or thought-transference or mind-reading — call it by what name you will. It is most important to keep this in mind, because if it be kept in mind, then if the critic be likewise honest, he will see the absurdity as well as the futility of hammering, as upon something new, upon what has been known to Theosophists for the last forty or fifty years, and what has been at the same time proved to be a fact by the independent researches of scientific and other men — thought-transference — which produced the Mahatman Letters as written documents. The trained mind and will of the Master directed his thought, consisting of clear-cut, sharply defined ideas, to the mind and into it of the receiving but trained amanuensis, who received the *ideas* more or less clearly in accordance with his training or development, and transmitted those ideas as faithfully as he or she was able to; but passing through the amanuensis's mind, the transmitted intelligence was bound to be colored by the mental characteristics of the mediator — the disciple's mind — through which it passed. Hence the presence of Gallicisms when H. P. B. was the transmitting chela, and of an occasional Americanism; and similarly so, *mutatis mutandis*, when chelas other than H. P. B. were the transmitting mediators.

Note by E. V. S. — Even in ordinary secretarial work, it is easy to distinguish, where several stenographers work for the same person, what letters in the files are typewritten by one stenographer, and which ones by another, etc., by the format, spelling (in cases where alternate forms are permissible), abbreviations (such as Mme. or Mad. or writing it out in full), which each stenographer uses. It is generally only when a stenographer has worked long enough with his employer to become thoroughly acquainted with all his idiosyncracies or habits, likes and dislikes, that the typewritten letters agree in every detail exactly with what the employer himself would use. In other words, each typewritten letter bears the stamp of the stenographer to whom it is dictated.

Note by J. H. F. — So also when the idea of an answer to a letter and the points to be covered in it are given to a secretary who is asked to write the letter and who may even take down in shorthand the gist of the notes given to him and who thus prepares the form of the letter, the author of the letter is the one who gives the ideas and the line of thought to be covered, and not the stenographer or secretary who is merely the transmitter. This is commonly understood, and hundreds of letters which are sent out by business men through the media of their secretaries though necessarily colored by the individual characteristics of the secretaries' style, etc., are nevertheless the letters of such business men.

We see likewise how it was that when conditions of transmission and reception were relatively perfect, and the chela was highly trained, the resultant communication, outside of certain characteristic mental or psychic marks of the amanuensis, contained even the actual mentally pictured words of the Mahatmic transmitter; and also how it was that in such conditions of relatively perfect receptivity, the transmitting amanuensis, because of the force of the impinging idea and will of the transmitter, reproduced even the very forms of handwriting that had been adopted or used by the Mahatmans.

If the conditions of receptivity were relatively perfect, i. e. if the strong

will of the Mahatmic intelligence and the clear-cut ideas were received by the chela's trained mind more or less perfectly, the resultant was a communication which was very close to being a perfect reproduction of the Mahatman's own words, own hand-writing, own turns of phrase, etc., etc.; but if the conditions of receptivity were in any degree less perfect, the ideas were transmitted but more or less deformed or colored by the psychological apparatus of the transmitting amanuensis, thus reproducing turns of phrase, spelling of words, etc., etc., native to the amanuensis.

Note H. P. B.'s own words regarding the transmission of such letters, etc., in her article "My Books," which passage can be found on p. 26, of the preliminary pages in *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky* edition of *Isis Unveiled*:

. . . many a passage in these works has been written by me *under their dictation*. In saying this no *supernatural* claim is urged, for no *miracle* is performed by such a dictation. Any moderately intelligent person, convinced by this time of the many possibilities of hypnotism (now accepted by science and under full scientific investigation), and of the phenomena of *thought-transference*, will easily concede that if even a hypnotized subject, a mere irresponsible medium, *hears the unexpressed thought* of his hypnotizer, who can thus transfer his thought to him — *even to repeating the words read by the hypnotizer mentally from a book* — then my claim has nothing impossible in it. Space and distance do not exist for thought; and if two persons are in perfect mutual psychomagnetic *rapport*, and of these two, one is a great Adept in Occult Sciences, then thought-transference and dictation of whole pages become as easy and as comprehensible at the distance of ten thousand miles as the transference of two words across a room.

THE SPIRITUALLY UNEMPLOYED — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

A great part of the tragedy of unemployment lies in the enforced departure from the wonted patterns of human life. The father of the family sees himself dethroned from his honorable position as provider, helpless where he was once the mainstay, his skill perhaps blunted by disuse, his heart heavy. The mother sees every housewifely activity stripped to naked necessity, without the assurance that even necessity can be met. The parents see their children run the risk of every ill that follows upon lack of what in better times it was their joy to supply. Small wonder is it if confusion of mind prevails in the "distressed areas." That it is not more general is a notable fact; for that there should be the poise of mind that renders vision possible is hardly to be expected in the trying conditions of life among the jobless.

But, in addition to those whose lack of vision can thus be accounted for, there are many others, living in what must seem to the unemployed not only enviable security, but peace and plenty, who, nevertheless, largely by their own will, if not by their ignorance, are cut off from any view of the pattern of human destiny. By their failure, for whatever reason, to avail themselves of companionship and intimacy with the permanent, vastly experienced inner man or woman, they suffer from the disuse of faculties whose function it is to illumine, to reveal the significance of, every event that befalls. Never to discover these higher faculties, never to transcend the functions of the brain-mind, is to fail to find the direction of the stream of human progress. It is to belong to "the spiritually unemployed."

The future of man is a vital concern of thinkers today. All feel that an old age is dying; the intuitive feel that a new age is being born. No longer is man regarded as an accident or an interloper in the cosmic scheme. It is being found impossible to separate man's fate from the structure and the history of the universe. It is becoming reasonable to suppose that the future of humanity will be woven of individual

threads of human effort — effort actuated by what if not the very thoughts and aspirations that we as human beings have today? The pattern is indeed set by cosmic law, but the details of the part played in weaving the tapestry remain a matter of man's free will.

One notes with interest the trend of thought toward the discovery and practical application of spiritual resources in man in building a future (not in Heaven but here on Earth) in which recognised unity and interdependence, free creative power, and the sense of victory that comes from understanding the universe, are the keynotes.

Dean Gauss of Princeton University in *A Primer for Tomorrow* says that our age is one that looks, not back to the great achievements of the past so much as forward to "a free future," his part in which man does not yet fully understand; but a future in which the tendency will be to form larger united groups than were developed in the past, in which new creative energies will be liberated. He asserts that our institutions are not yet based upon the deepest human instincts, and he stresses "the new world of spirit."

Erwin Schrodinger in *Science and the Human Temperament* writes of "the free unfolding of noble powers which remain available, beyond utilitarian activities."

In a book review by Basil de Selincourt we read that life today is like a boat-race in a storm, in which the aim is not to outstrip one's competitors but to reach the goal *with them*, the prize being the gaining of understanding.

Aldous Huxley in a recent novel has a modern hero beginning to realise that he is not separate from his fellow-beings, but "united at the depths with other lives, with the rest of being."

In *Return to Philosophy*, Dr. C. E. M. Joad writes of a time in the future when man shall have assimilated both the facts gathered by scientific research and the wisdom of the philosophers, and shall have viewed these in the light of his own experience. He postulates a "jump" to a new level of insight into the meaning of things, a new understanding of

the order of the universe. He suggests that this wider field of consciousness, now experienced by the artist, the musician, and the mystic, may become common to the human race.

The urgent need today is for a new framework of thought concerning man and the universe, one inclusive of all the possibilities for humanity that have been intuited by these writers. The shining inner building-blocks for this glorious structure are to be found in the Seven Jewels of the Ancient Wisdom, as presented by Theosophy.

They are: (1) Reimbodiment, the teaching that everything from an atom to a galaxy reimbodies itself in successive periods of manifestation; (2) Karman, that man is and has just what he has made for himself in these lives on Earth, that he can thus build as he will; (3) Hierarchies, that all beings, seeds of divinity, "united at the depths," and interdependent, mount in a graduated scale of life towards realization of the inner divinity; (4) Swabhava, the doctrine that all beings have a seed of deathless individuality in varying degrees of unfoldment, their unique contribution to the cosmic system in which they are manifesting; (5) Evolution, the gradual unfolding from within of this inner potency, in man reaching the stage when self-directed evolution may be carried on; (6) Amrita-Yana, the Path of Immortality, the Law of Compassion, the truth that only by helping those lower in the scale of being does one mount to the higher reaches of conscious Divinity; (7) Atma-Vidya, the perfect knowledge of that Divine Self that is the root of all, the individual dewdrop of consciousness being, not absorbed in the Ocean of Universal Divine Consciousness, but, becoming that Ocean.

In a cyclic crisis like the present, one is wilfully blind to refuse to take into consideration philosophy that supplies the building-material for a new mental framework of the destiny of man. One is short-sighted to refuse to avail oneself of the spiritual resources of the inner, enduring principles of human nature, those which endure throughout the whole long cycle of man's pilgrimage as a soul, even as during one life on Earth there is something that persists from birth to death; for, in this deeper Self, lies the power to catch gleams of distant goals. One is

mentally a coward never to accept the challenge to adventure in ideals, never to take part in aiding to bring the new age to birth but stupidly seek to keep rather than to grow and deeply live.

So to distrust or deny human possibilities, so to hold back from the Quest of Self-Knowledge, is to belong to the self-deprived class of the spiritually unemployed.

The Theosophical Forum

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL (1) — *Cyrus Field Willard*

In Freemasonry we see a drama of the soul. Many Grand Lodge jurisdictions require a belief in the immortality of the soul as a prerequisite to the candidate's initiation.

But few Masonic writers have tried to tell what it is and why it is immortal, and not one of such writers, so far as the present scribe knows, has been able to consider it scientifically from the standpoint of present scientific knowledge and reason, rather than that of emotionalism and blind faith.

Therefore, it has seemed wise to take this problem in the same manner as if it were a chemical problem, and give to the average Freemason some idea as to what the soul is and why he should believe in its immortality.

First, we will consider the immortality of the soul (2) as a purely scientific hypothesis. It is as logical and as sound as the nebular hypothesis. Singularly enough, it works somewhat in the same manner, "As above, so below."

Freemasonry has taught it down through the ages, as far back as our knowledge of this and similar organizations goes. Now we begin to see that the wisdom of the ages was not confined to "the laughing philosopher, Democritus," whose atomic theory John Dalton presented to us again. This rather materialistic concept we have adopted and now modified to something still more scientific. Our atom has been resolved into a planetary system, which has a positive central unit like our sun, called a proton, and around which revolve negative electric charges, usually invisible, called electrons, as planets revolve around our sun.

This brings to our mind, if we know of such things, the old hermetic sentences engraved on the Emerald Tablet, which used to seem so senseless and now so full of wisdom, "As above, so below."

RADIUM BOOSTS REPUTATION OF ALCHEMIST

With the resolution of the atoms into electrons and protons, the materialistic conception of the universe has disappeared. Radium, showing the change of one element into another, has rehabilitated the reputation of the alchemist, the father of modern chemistry, while the resolution of the atom into its parts has brought once more the hermetic teachings to the front as being respectable enough to be used as working hypotheses.

Matter is indestructible; it may and does change appearance, but always while matter it retains its Trinity: Substance, Energy and Consciousness.

Since matter is indestructible, how much more so is that aggregation of highly specialized Consciousness, the Thinker, which with the Will and the Spark of God, constitutes the Immortal Soul. This soul must have its three phases of Substance, Energy and Consciousness, as it is but refined matter, since God Himself pervades all matter, and "God is everywhere." Subtract Him from the Universe, or its smallest atom, and it would go to pieces. "In Him we live and move and have our being," takes on a new and scientific meaning, from this standpoint, that He is in us and we are in Him. This is what the resolution of the atom into electrons is bringing us up to confront, and which is destroying the anthropomorphic conception of God.

Most persons say "I have a soul," instead of saying boldly and with knowledge, "I am the soul." It is not something that emerges, like the butterfly from its chrysalis, at the time of death. When we hear some one described as "a brave soul" it is the correct characterization if he is to live and struggle through adversity. For it is our struggle and bravery in this life that makes the soul what it is.

"WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?"

This brings up another point. Let us say that a man has struggled up from a little country town where people knew but little, to a degree of knowledge and desire for service that has made his name known the

world around in certain scientific and Masonic circles. He has developed a certain character, learned a number of languages made a number of scientific discoveries and attained a desire to help his brethren struggling up the slope of Time. He has had wealth and suffered poverty, been ill and experienced deprivation, so that it seems sweeter to help others than to think of one's self all the time

Is all this development to go for naught? After having learned all these things on earth, is he to take this desire to help those less fortunate in knowledge, to some more fortunate planet where the inhabitants know more than he does and continue to selfishly gorge himself with knowledge, when he already has so much that he wants to help those who have less? Or to some mythical Heaven whose place in space is unknown?

That is the weakness of the logic of the modern teachers of spiritual things, in the opinion of one who looks at these matters from the standpoint of reason.

A FEW PUZZLING QUESTIONS

I remember while still studying logic in the high school, I one Sunday asked my Sunday-school teacher:

"Is the soul immortal?" and she replied, "Yes."

"Well, if it is immortal, it must be eternal," I continued and she answered, "Yes."

"Then if it is eternal, it cannot have had any beginning any more than it can have an end," I persisted, "and in that case, where was it before it came into the body?"

She was puzzled and was unable to reply, finally saying that I had better go and see the minister, which I did and propounded the same questions and got like answers as before.

He said I was all wrong and this was the way it happened: "God creates a soul for every new body, and from that time on it is eternal." I went

away thinking that over, and not quite convinced, finally coming back after some days and asking this question: "If God creates a new soul for each body, is not God just as much to blame as the parents, for the child who is born without their being married, or in fact worse, as the body could not live without the soul He furnished the child?"

The only answer I got was the thundered warning: "Young man, if you keep on like that, you'll become an infidel." Which, of course, as he was unable to answer my sincere questions, prompted by my God-given reason, was the only way out for him. I ought also to say that I told him: "If the soul has no ending and lives for ever, it cannot logically have had a beginning, as you cannot think of only one end of a string or a stick."

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN"

These puzzling questions stuck in my mind for years and since then I have often thought of what Jesus of Nazareth told Nicodemus: "Ye must be born again," and his assertion that John the Baptist was Elijah who was to be born again.

It made me examine into such matters and when I became interested in scientific matters, I found that the law of conservation of energy required reincarnation. Not only that, but it is a doctrine that is believed in by the great majority of the earth's inhabitants.

Nearly all the western poets, such as Browning, Tennyson, Longfellow, Wordsworth, Paul Hamilton Hayne, Whittier, Bayard Taylor, Landon, T. B. Aldrich, Chas. G. Leland, Maurice Thompson, N. P. Willis, J. T. Trowbridge, James Russell Lowell, T. W. Parsons, Edmund W. Gosse, Dean Alford, Lord Houghton, D. G. Rossetti, Joseph Addison, Philip J. Bailey, Coleridge and Walt Whitman, especially Whitman and Browning, believed in the idea of reincarnation, for poets are seers.

At times in certain emergencies, I have found knowledge welling up within me to meet that emergency which I had not consciously imbibed in any manner before. Others with whom I have talked have had the same experience and have also wondered where they got the

knowledge or experience to meet a given crisis.

CHILDREN REMEMBER PAST LIVES

For a number of years I kept a note-book which was finally lost, that contained the experience of many children who had knowledge of having lived before, and I found that such knowledge was much more common than generally supposed, but that the child after being laughed at, or scolded, would keep such things to himself and as he got older finally forgot the main incidents of what he formerly remembered distinctly. There was a case of a man in humble position in Massachusetts, near Cambridge, who on recovering from a severe illness spoke a language which no one understood until finally a professor from Harvard University said the man was speaking what he termed "Middle Persian."

Character is the memory of past lives.

How often we see children in a family whose characters are totally different from each other. Any mother will tell you that. Often you will find those whose character is entirely different from their parents or any Mendelian strain.

Looking at it from what might be termed a materialistic standpoint (although the writer believes matter and spirit are one) the soul is a bundle of conscious nervous energy, which retains within itself as hydrogen sulfide does its smell, the sublimated memories and knowledge of previous lives.

WHICH HORN OF THE DILEMMA?

Pre-existence must be a fact or else annihilation ensues at death. There is no half-way station. *Ex nihilo, nihil fit* — out of nothing, nothing is made. The child opens its new life with character and attainments derived from previous lives where they have been painfully won. Biogenesis is as true in the spiritual world as in the physical.

Evolution is correct and true — so far as the body is concerned. The various stages of the foetus prove it. But we must also realize that there

is the involution of the soul, in the body made ready for it, by which the soul can add the experiences of a new personality, the new "persona" or mask, to the sum total of his treasured traits.

In its passage through earthly personalities the spiritual Self, the real I, the Thinker or immortal soul, accumulates a fund of individual characteristics and attainments which remain as the permanent thread stringing together the separate lives.

Masonry has insisted on belief in the immortality of the soul, but gives no rational explanation of what it is, and why and how it is immortal, that can be accepted by the logical thinking man.

OUT OF HIS BODY

H. J. Whympere, the mountain climber, and, by the way, a good and well known Mason, tells in one of his books of an accident he had in falling from a height and how he seemed to be up in the air like a balloon looking down at his body and seeing (without physical eyes, mind you) his guide bending over him with a silver flask in his hand and how he felt the sensation as though he swallowed a balloon (himself), and he came to and looked up in the face of his guide.

The congeries of refined matter which he felt to be himself, was undoubtedly his soul, his real self, which, on account of its tenuity, rose in the air. It is fair to presume that there is a *locus* a place somewhere within the attraction of the earth's atmospheric envelope, which acts as a resting place between lives for the weary soul who has gone through a series of hard struggles on earth, and desires time for rest and assimilation of the lessons it has received, until such time as the necessity for being reborn on this planet again asserts its pull.

"No doubt I have died myself, ten thousand times before," said Walt Whitman, and also in his "Facing West from California's Shores," he says: "I a child, very old, towards the house of maternity, the land of migrations, look afar," in speaking of his numerous lives.

It can be truly said that the gradual development of the soul by and in

the school of experience demands a vaster arena of action than one earthly life affords. We have hardly learned to live before it is time to die. Some of us are born with aptitude for certain languages, which we learn easily or rather re-learn, as the writer knows by experience.

WHAT WERE YOU RAISED ON?

If it takes ages of time and thousands of lives to form one species of animal from another, as biology teaches, the expansion of human souls from lower to higher natures surely needs many and many a life for that purpose. These we have had. Today in America is being formed from all races what is termed the new Sixth Race. We are now in what is called the Fifth Race and have developed five senses.

When we are raised to the sublime degree of a Master Mason, what are we raised by and what on?

The five points of fellowship are the five senses which we hold in common with our fellows and they constitute our fellowship with our fellow man. If we are brought back to life, it is by the way of being born again, as Nicodemus was told he would have to be, and we are reborn on the five points of fellowship, and the Lost Word is that Spark of Divinity, we, as the Thinker, bring back with us. There is a symbol within a symbol.

It is difficult to speak of these things without overstepping the mark that has been set for us. Hiram Abif is raised in the sign of Leo the lion, which is at the time of St. John the Baptist Day, or Midsummer, the 24th of June (the old Masonic festival) when the Sun, whom Hiram represents, is at his greatest strength and he was slain by the three winter months.

We do not know what the Sun is, as we only see his chromosphere or envelope. Helium was first seen in the sun's spectrum before it was discovered on earth. It may be that the real sun (which we do not see) bears a more intimate relation to our interior spiritual nature and its rarefied matter or spirit, than we have any conception of at the present time. We may not have the instruments yet to detect it and so can but

offer hypotheses as to the constitution of this spiritual matter or inner proton of our being.

Our rebirth from a former life may some day be accurately determined by knowledge, which most of us do not yet possess.

WHAT THE THIRD DEGREE TELLS US

But we do see in the lessons of the Third Degree that we are almost told, in so many words, that we have lived before, that our soul, our real self, is immortal and eternal, has had no beginning and will have no end, is, in the last analysis, a spark of the Highest Spiritual Substance which alone is eternal and can "never, never, never die." We come back to earth in justice to ourselves and to those whom we have wronged, to do the things we should do in helping our less fortunate brothers upward to that Spiritual Sun, the true light, "that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Any one who is experimenting with matter every day and sees the peculiar things that happen, if he be observing and reflecting, is inclined to believe in consciousness inhering in matter. It is but just to say that the measure of our acquisition of conception from the outer universe resides in the senses, and there is no evidence that these have always been five or will not be, at some time, more numerous.

Therefore we must assume that our present ascending development will introduce us to higher levels, in which the soul shall have more senses and glorious extensions of bodily powers relating thereto. We realize that what begins in time must end in time. Death must be the conclusion if birth is the beginning of the soul.

The idea of immortality demands rebirth and analogy makes it most probable. Science confirms it and the nature of the soul, as I have tried to show, requires it. It alone answers the theological questions of original sin and future punishment, and also explains many mysterious experiences. It alone solves the problem and shows the reason for the apparent injustice and real misery which exist today in the world.

GOING UP THE STAIRS

As Emerson said: "We wake and find ourselves on a stair. There are stairs below us which we seem to have ascended; there are stairs above us, many a one which go upward and out of sight."

Plato expressed the idea correctly when he said: "The soul always weaves her garments anew." The nature of the soul requires rebirth, for the conscious soul cannot feel itself to have had any beginnings any more than it can conceive of its annihilation. The sense of persistence overleaps all the interruptions of forgetfulness and sleep.

"OH! FOR ANOTHER CHANCE"

The eternity of the soul, past and present, leads directly to an innumerable succession of births and deaths, like Walt Whitman said. "Oh, for another chance!" is the inward prayer of many a poor downhearted soul not knowing that Nature's just and compassionate laws provide for it.

An ancient book has said: "Those who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the dead nor for the living. I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth, nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. As the lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein, infancy, youth and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same. One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass."

Patanjali says that a knowledge of the occurrences experienced in former lives will arise in him who practises his aphorisms by holding before his mind the trains of self-productive thought, and concentrating upon them.

The philosophy of "innate ideas," or mental heredity, is an admission of earlier lives than the present. One of the best arguments in favor of reincarnation was written by Chevalier Ramsay, the celebrated Mason, who is credited with the origination of many of the Scottish Rite degrees.

Pythagoras remembered his former lives in the persons of the herald Aethalides, Euphorbus the Trojan, Hermotimus of Clazomenae and others, and pointed out in the Temple of Juno at Argos, the shield with which he, as Euphorbus, attacked Patroclus in the war before Troy.

If you will read all that Gould, the historian of Masonry, says about the hermetists, you will see how they harked back to "Our ancient brother Pythagoras," and it will explain why in Freemasonry, which is the heir to the teachings of Pythagoras, we have the concealed teaching of rebirth on the five points of fellowship, the five senses, by which we are raised to a living perpendicular, and of Plato who said, "God geometrizes."

SNARLS OF EARTHLY LIFE STRAIGHTENED

Eternal justice rules the world. But when we view the miseries of mankind, the prosperity of wickedness, the struggles of the deserving, the oppression of the masses, the talents and successes of the fortunate few, we would feel compelled to call the world a sham without any moral law, did we not have this idea of rebirth.

This yields to a majestic satisfaction when one sees that the present life is only one of a great series in which every individual is gradually going the round of experience for a glorious outcome, and that the hedging ills of today are but a consequence of what we did yesterday and a step toward the great things of tomorrow.

The tangled snarls of earthly life are straightened out as a vast and beautiful scheme and the total experience of humanity forms a magnificent tapestry of perfect poetic justice.

In science the crucial test of the merit of any hypothesis is whether it meets all the facts better than any other theory. This the idea of the immortality of the soul and its pre-existence in former lives does, and no other so admirably accounts for the diversity of conditions on earth and refutes the charge of favoritism on the part of the Grand Architect of the Universe. Hierocles said, and many a philosopher, before and since, has agreed with him, "Without this doctrine, it is not possible to

justify the ways of God."

PRE-EXISTENCE OF IMMORTAL SOUL

It alone solves the problems of life. The fulness of its meaning is majestic beyond appreciation. It shows that every soul, from the lowest animal to the highest archangel, belongs to the infinite family of Being, and is eternal in its conscious essence, perishing only in its temporary disguises; that every act of every creature is followed by inevitable reactions which constitute a perfect law of retribution, and that these souls are intricately interlaced with mutual relationships. The bewildering maze thus becomes a divine harmony. No individual stands alone but trails with him (as Wordsworth beautifully described) the unfinished sequels of an ancestral career and is so bound up with his race that each is responsible for all and all for each.

No one can be saved until all are redeemed. Thus every suffering we endure, apparently for faults not our own, assumes a holy light and a sublime dignity.

REBIRTH ONCE PART OF CHRISTIAN RELIGION

In presenting these ideas I have culled from a number of writers, and hence claim but little originality. It has seemed to me that our great army of Masons in the United States, numbering about three million of picked men, who have been going into Masonry without any clear idea as to why, but really as an urge from the Thinker within, based on stirring memories of a former life, are entitled to a knowledge of the soul in whose immortality they are required in many states to believe, as well as in the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, a Grand Architect of the Universe, or God.

Originally this idea of the pre-existence of the soul and its eternity in life after life, was part of the Christian religion. In its early days such fathers of the church as Origen advocated it and it flourished with wholesome influence in that church for 500 years until it was forcibly crushed out by the Council of Constantinople in 551 a. d., to make room for the harsh dogmas which have since darkened that church. It never

was met in argument and conquered by reason, but was summarily ousted by the weight of prejudice and the desire of the priesthood to hold the keys of purgatory, heaven and hell, as all priesthoods have ever done. It has been aptly termed the "Lost Chord of Christianity," for it alone makes that religion reasonable and logical in the light of advancing science and knowledge, and brings it back to what Jesus taught.

ALTRUISTIC TEACHINGS OF MASONRY RELIGIOUS

Scientists today do not care what you believe. "What are the *facts*?" is now the cry. About sixty-five percent of the people of the United States do not belong to any church or organized religion. This large proportion of our population should not be allowed to drift away from all religion, and it is to them I address my remarks, for a large number of these non-members of churches find that their religious impulses are only fed by the tender, altruistic teachings of Masonry, which inculcates a belief in the One God and the immortality of the soul. To these I have endeavored to give a fitting concept of the dignity of that soul whose immortality our ritual claims to be a fact.

In closing, the writer would like, as one who believes in using the reason with which the Divine Intelligence has endowed him, to quote a celebrated poet, Wordsworth, who gives a very clear presentation of the subject in the following lines:

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar.
Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness,
But *trailing clouds of glory* do we come
From God who is our home.
Heaven lies about us in our infancy:
Shades of the prison house begin to close
Upon the growing boy;

But he beholds the light and whence it flows

He sees it in his joy.

The youth who daily farther *from the East*

Must travel, still is nature's priest.

And by the vision splendid

Is on his way attended.

At length the man perceives it die away

And fade into the light of common day.

FOOTNOTE:

1. This article was originally published in *Square and Compass* (Denver, Colorado), August, 1931, and there credited to "A Research Chemist," and with the following as an introduction: "This article is by a well-known Masonic writer who wishes the message to be considered rather than the personality of the messenger." It is here reprinted as revised by the author and with his permission. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. I use the common phrase "immortality of the soul," yet strictly speaking if we accept the characterization of man's nature, as stated by Paul, as being spirit-soul-body, it is rather the spirit, and *only* the spirit, that we can speak of as immortal — the soul being merely the vehicle for the spirit and its encasement while on earth, just as the body is the encasement of the soul while on earth, and both body and soul growing and changing from life to life.

Also in line with Paul's teaching, if we take the words of Jesus, "Ye are gods," we see that man in essence is not merely spiritual, but godlike, divine; and in the ultimate analysis it is this inner god which is the heart of us, the very essence of us, which alone is immortal. However, in view of the common usage of the words "the immortality of the soul," and with the reservations as just given, I continue to use this phrase. ([return to text](#))

SOME MYSTERIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS — *L. L. Wright*

It sometimes seems almost as if Nature had a sense of fun. Knowing how ignorant of ourselves we really are, does she not appear to enjoy, now and then, putting across a little joke on her self-complacent children? Consider some of the absurd or infuriating things that happen to all of us, of which the following is an example:

I was awakened at five o'clock one bitterly cold winter morning by the realization that I had something to do that must be attended to at once. I had only just succeeded in opening the far corner of my left eye, nevertheless I bounced out of bed and put through the polar expedition of dressing in a record ten minutes. And then, well, what was that duty anyway? Pity me, Compassionate Reader, for I hadn't the vaguest idea! There I stood, all dressed up and nowhere to go!

It reminds me of Mark Twain's story about his cat. Mr. Clemens had been intensively investigating one of the popular forms of "mental science" and was interested in the teaching as to the non-existence of pain. One day someone accidentally stepped on the cat's tail and poor pussy released a blood-curdling protest. Mark Twain saw the incident and said to himself, "Now I wonder what *was* the matter with that cat?"

The mention of Mark Twain suggests another of the mysteries of consciousness, an incident which he describes somewhere, in his autobiography I believe. One summer morning he was sitting on the porch of his home in the country when a shabby man walked up to the front door and rang the bell. It was then that the amazing thing happened. Right before his eyes the man vanished! Mark Twain sprang to his feet. "Ye gods!" he thought, "I've seen a ghost! I'm going right in and send a report of it to the Society for Psychical Research." He went into the house by a side door, crossed the front hall to his study — and there sat the man, a messenger waiting for the answer to the note he had delivered.

Mark Twain explained the incident as what he called, if my recollection is accurate, a "lapse of consciousness" during just the moment in which the front door opened to admit the man with the note. When he "came to" of course the man was not there. It is an interesting explanation and decidedly more to the good than the ghost-business. For doubtless we all have these lapses, long or short as the case may be, from the extended "brown study" to the moment of absent-mindedness when we start gaily down-town with the modish hat wrong side to. And at the moment of discovery, generally through the sly or horrified gaze of the passer-by, we are sure to be rewarded by a glimpse into emotional depths in ourselves which are both new and exhilarating.

We can also learn much from our friends in this sort of candid investigation. Someone I know had a curiously satisfactory experience. One night the temperature made a record drop at about 2 a. m. and he woke up to find himself lapped among the icebergs. He lay there for quite a while, too drowsy to force himself to forsake the tiny island of warmth at the small of his back for the arctic zone outside the bedclothes. Finally he managed to pull up the heavy quilt which always hung at the foot of his bed; and he says the sense of flooding warmth which wafted him back to rosy dreamland he will never forget — and *why*? Because when he woke up in the morning the quilt was still hanging over the foot of the bed!

Then there is an excellent cure for wakefulness, which will work if you are clever about it and don't let your right hand know what your left is doing. Just — casually — leave the back door unlocked when you go to bed. Then, as soon as you are comfortable try to make yourself get up, especially if the night is chilly, and paddle down through the cold house to lock it. Nine times out of ten you will fall asleep as quickly as a baby.

There are other ways of applying these discoveries of the quirks of consciousness. Years ago, when I was young enough to know better, I decided that I would "be an author." So every morning at exactly 8:30 I sat down at the desk and fiercely applied my squirming mentality to the selected theme. Presto! I saw a pile of ironing or a heap of stockings

to be darned that were crying for help, and the temptation to rise and "get it done" was irresistible. It was the same every time I sat down to write. Before a week had passed I had my wardrobe and other personal gadgets in the pink of condition, and all owing to the intensive effort to make my mind work, in my way instead of its own. If this isn't a clear case of the mystery of the "behaviorism" of consciousness, what is it?

This last experience suggests two different psychological reactions, and you can take your choice. Pick out the duty which irks you most, concentrate your mind upon it, and while you are trying to get it done you can have all the little hangover tasks that have been worrying you cleaned right off the slate. Or — to return to sanity — brush aside everything but the matter in hand and get it done in top-hole fashion, and so accomplish your daily stint in self-directed evolution.

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THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: X — *H. T. Edge*

X — THE ARK

Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant will at once occur to the mind of those who have read their Bible: different things, yet akin and almost identical in symbolism. Both were sacred vessels, and in that definition we may find the key to their identity. But those who think it necessary to believe that the Bible is unique will be disconcerted if they chance to discover that the story of a deluge and an ark is world-wide, being found in the mythologies and religions of every people from China to Peru and from the Arctic Circle to the islands of Polynesia; so that it is necessary to go back very far indeed into antiquity to find the common source whence all these diverse peoples derived a story so uniform in all its essential features as is this universal deluge myth. In all these stories a people grown old in wickedness is destroyed by a flood; an ark is built, whereon are saved a select few, who land after the waters have subsided and form the origin of a new race.

The ancient history of our earth is written in indelible characters on the rocks that compose its crust, so that the humble geologist with his pick can read it. The stratigraphical record tells of periodic cataclysms which have overwhelmed large continental areas; of the rising and sinking of the land; of the pouring forth and drying up of waters; of widespread havoc wrought by the belching of subterranean fires. The searching eye of the astronomer learns to read the same record in the heavens, and to connect the story of vast cyclic displacements of the earth's axis with the tale of the geologic cataclysms. The past records itself automatically in books that he who runs may read; but it also records itself indelibly in the astral light, where it can be read by Seers as other men read the printed book or the Braille script, according to the extent of their visual capabilities. Hence Nature's picture book tallies with the Secret Doctrine, that traditional record of cosmic

evolution and the drama of man, preserved in the myths and allegories and symbol language of the world's faiths.

We have said that a symbol condenses a world of meaning in small compass; so that, if several different interpretations are given to the same symbol, there is no contradiction but only amplification. We shall give several meanings to the Ark symbol. It refers to deluges in general, and the passing of old races and the birth of new ones; it refers in particular to the last great flood, when the Fourth-Race continent of Atlantis sank and the first sub-races of the Fifth Race took their rise, in new lands, from the saved remnants of the old race. Thus far we have geophysical applications of the symbol. But the Ark in its widest significance means the Womb of Nature, the Great Mother, the World-Soul, the container of all that is. This great feminine potency stands at the head of every theogony, as its masculine counterpart, the Sun or Circle, is the All-Father, the active creative principle. But in using these terms we have to be careful not to give them a literal sense according to their analogies on the lowest planes of physical generation. For the Ark was Isis, Moon, Venus, Diana, chaste emblems of eternal bounty, and in the seven principles of man would be Buddhi. We have said something of this in the article on Sun and Moon (July number).

Prescott tells of the surprise of the Jesuit missionaries on finding that the Peruvians already had the Flood story; and in Daniel Brinton's *Myths of the New World* we find a large number of versions of the Flood story among Indians of North, Central, and South America; it is among the ancient Scandinavians in the north and Polynesians in the south; in India, China, Africa. What theory can explain such universal diffusion, such uniformity in particulars? Only the theory of a common tradition, very ancient, reaching back to times when peoples now scattered were one; when there was a universal body of knowledge — the Secret Doctrine. In Greek mythology we have the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha, which tells how Zeus determined to destroy the world on account of its wickedness, and these two were saved on account of their piety; and how they reseeded the earth by throwing behind them stones which became men and women. Refugees from sinking Atlantis

settled in various places, bringing with them traditions of the great cataclysm.

But, as said, the Ark symbol refers to more than geological cataclysms; for it signifies a sacred vessel which preserves the seed of a new growth after the destruction of the old. There are many tales of infants being consigned to vessels and set afloat on the waters whence they are rescued to become the founders of new races; the story of the infant Moses is a case in point. The Ark is the symbol of the womb of nature, represented by the crescent of the moon, by the Solar Boat of Egypt, the horns on the head of various female deities. The Spirit of God broods over the face of the deep; the seeds of life are scattered in the great receptacle of primordial matter. The Hebrew Ark of the Covenant signified the same idea, for it was the sacred vessel of Deity; but in later times this original sublime meaning became corrupted into anthropomorphic conceptions.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — L. L. W.

Brotherhood is a fact in Nature. To demonstrate this fact is the principal aim of Theosophy. The aim is to show brotherhood to be, not simply a sentiment, not even a mere ideal, but a practical workable reality. To this someone may object, "But how can it be a reality when it simply doesn't exist? Show me anywhere a real brotherhood!"

Theosophy explains: It is because brotherhood is not recognised as a reality, existing as a basic law and always and everywhere, that there is so much suffering. We are not many but one. Like the fingers of one hand, like the hand to the body — so does each small human organism reach back into the Great Organism called the Universe. In that Divine Life we have our spiritual roots. In it we "live and move and have our being."

There is only one real cause of suffering — human selfishness. Selfishness antagonizes this law of organic unity — therefore harmony. Ethical laws are laws of harmony which spring from this inherent Unity. They are as real as the laws of electricity and gravitation. Just because we are all actually living tissue in this brotherhood of flesh and heart and spirit every selfish action is like a knife-thrust into the social fabric. One man's selfishness injures all. Can a man cut off his arm without suffering all over? Cannot the tiny pin-prick you hardly notice result in death? Because we are all parts of one organism we cannot injure others without having to suffer like consequences in our own souls and bodies. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." If we do not reap that harvest in one life then we must meet it in some later life on earth. For that is how we learn. Not in heaven. Not in hell. We pay our debts here where we made them.

The Theosophical Society was founded in New York in 1875 as "a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood." It was to be only a nucleus. Its founders realized that the world is so afflicted with ignorance and

selfishness that little more than a beginning could be made. A kindred object in Theosophy is to explain man to himself. Ignorance is the breeding ground of selfishness. If we understood what we are doing to ourselves and others when we injure them, we would think twice before acting. We do not suspect that in allowing war, crime, and injustice we cannot shift all the results onto the next generation. We fasten some of them upon ourselves. For nations living now will have to be reborn on earth as other races to work out the consequences of present mistakes and indifference.

These are three of the spiritual Laws of Life — Brotherhood, Karma, Reincarnation. Understanding them includes many deep and fascinating teachings which can be found in advanced Theosophical literature. Theosophy offers them as well worth investigation and study.

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THE MYSTIC GIFT — I. R. P.

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Verusque Sol, illabere,
Micans nitore perpeti,
Jubarque Sancti Spiritus
Infunde nostris sensibus! (1) — Rambach

The Christmas Season marks the termination and the commencement of the cycle of the year, of that cyclic progression of renewal in the Winter, of striving towards achievement in the Springtime, of consummation at Mid-Summer, and of transmutation, in preparation for a new birth, in the Autumn.

There can be and are no abrupt changes in natural growth; each progression leads into and blends with the next: each new coming into being is preceded by the passing of an older one; and effort initiated in the youth of the year finds its fruition with the full of the year: the travail of the Fall precedes the mystic birth at Christmastime.

. . . it was the attempt in all the Mystery-Schools of all the ancient nations to bring the seasons of the earth into harmony with man's spiritual-intellectual career — i. e., with his inner life and his future destiny; in other words, to establish in the disciple's initiation as a living reality the already existing concordance between the nature in which we live and move and have our being and the more intimate Nature within us. —
The Esoteric Tradition, p. 1018

Many of the ancient peoples believed that a ray from the solar divinity, or Sun-God, was born in human form on or about the 25th of December; and it was during this season that the Theophanic Mysteries

were celebrated. Perhaps this Greek term, Theophany — meaning "appearance of a god" — describes more clearly than any other, the esoteric idea of Christmas, for in this rite of initiation, his own Higher Self appeared or became known to the initiate, and for a time at least, the man became his own Inner God. Then truly might he exclaim: "God of me! God of me! How glorifiest thou me so greatly!" or "Why givest thou me such peace?" For through his own efforts the godhood within him had been brought forth from perfected manhood. This was the mystic birth, the birth of the Sun-God inherent in the human being.

The solar ray lies hidden in man's heart. It is the source of his aspirations, of his instinctive response to all the finer qualities of being: it expresses itself in the spirit of adventure, in man's never satisfied search for the unattainable, even in his longing for the happiness which can only be found in fuller self-expression.

Whereas the earnest seeker for wisdom chooses as his goal his individual conception of the highest peak of achievement and sets out by the effort of becoming that which he yearns towards, to attain it; yet in *all* men the redeeming influence of the solar divinity works ever for regeneration — in silence and in darkness, because unrecognised by many; and even in the case of the average man, fashioned in and through travail, the fullest expression of godhood will come forth some day.

Glowingly tinted the Autumn leaves are severed from the tree, and blown away by the wind; crushed, they become one with the dust. How little is known of the alchemy of transmutation which then takes place in the drear, dank days that follow — an alchemy which only fully reveals itself in the verdant foliage of Summer. Sensitive natures often feel the loneliness of Autumn, which even in its sadness is strangely pregnant of the ecstasy of bursting bud at the Springtime. Thus it is with the spiritual cycles of man: the beneficent forces of destruction and regeneration work hand in hand: the brilliance of enlightenment is commensurate with the darkness it dispels.

Compassion is the open sesame to attainment. In giving himself man

gains the gift of the gods, spiritual re-birth; and the divine Babe, the human Christ made manifest through the travail of the virgin soul, man's Spiritual Soul, becomes the esoteric gift of glorified Selfhood, the true giving in being. In such a gift is united man's gratitude to the gods in the fulfilment of his obligation to all that is, and the consummation of man's wardship to the Lords of Universal Being.

This esoteric gift of rebirth is no mere panacea won by subservience of opinion and will to that of any influence, however exalted; for we have been told that the Great Ones

look upon no moral failure as so great in defect of right as that of bowing the conscience in mental servitude to the dictates of another, no matter how high, no matter how great, how pure, how wise; for it is a part of their endeavor to make men free — free-willing agents and collaborators with themselves in what they do. Hence it is that they desire to see all men spiritually free, intellectually free, the while inwardly cognisant of the sublime ethical beauty of the subordination of the merely personal, with its whimsies and feeble vacillations, to the spiritually grand, whether in themselves or in human representatives of outstanding spiritual development. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 1068.

To err in rejecting, when acceptance were wise, and thereby to learn sounder judgment, is infinitely more just than is a doubtful, and possibly more prudent, acquiescence in that which the conscience cannot fully uphold.

Acquiescence does not of itself imply an harmonious attuning of the individuality to the Universal which is the essence of regeneration. The twice-born is one who passes all the decisions of life through the alembic of his intuition, and because he has purged his nature of all pettiness, his reason responds instantly to the infallible guidance of his inner God. The Divine Babe is no weakling, but a human soul made strong and true in the cauldron of evolution by the working out of Nature's compassionate laws: a human soul become self-regenerated, a

Savior of Mankind.

FOOTNOTE:

1.

O Thou, Real Sun, infill us,
Shining with perpetual light!
Splendor of the holy (Cosmic) Spirit
Pervade our minds!

(Translation: G. de Purucker in *The Esoteric Tradition*)

[\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: VIII — *G. de Purucker*

Sunday Evening, April 12, 1936 (1)

[A resume of Chapter XLVII of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, entitled "Teacher and Pupil. Requisites of Chelaship," was made by Miss Madeline Savage and Mr. Allan Stover, and then the meeting was thrown open by the Chairman to discussion and questions from the audience.]

G. de P. — I would like to know, Mr. Chairman and Companions, what in your judgment is the characteristic or distinguishing mark of chelaship. I do not mean any outward sign. Those can be imitated; but what is it really which makes or distinguishes or characterizes the chela as compared with other men?

Madeline Savage — I would like to answer this question. In my study of the present chapter, this thought came to me: That the true chela is he who in his merely human part utterly surrenders to that higher part which the Leader in this chapter so beautifully calls the Companion of Stars, the inner god; and the influence of which is stepped down to the human ego by the Reincarnating Ego. It is the human ego surrendering entirely to the spiritual law as given to it by the Reincarnating Ego.

H. T. Edge — As the signs which indicate chelaship are not of an external nature, they would not be such as could be communicated to anyone except perhaps another chela; and further they would be of a kind which the chela would be reluctant to speak about.

G. de P. — What Dr. Edge says is quite true. Perhaps I had better rephrase my question. It may not have been clear, but I think Miss Madeline has got the fundamental idea. Instead of asking then, "What is the distinguishing mark or characteristic," I will phrase my question this way: What is it in or of the chela which makes him such?

C. J. Ryan — When H. P. B. said that the first test of true apprenticeship

was devotion to the interest of others, she gave the secret password to open the door to the path. This was, of course, only the first test, but whatever comes later, such as the attainment of knowledge and power, will turn to ashes unless inseparably combined with a burning desire to help suffering humanity.

Grace Knoche, Jr. — I should think that what would characterize a chela as distinct from the ordinary man would be the acquiring of a vision, or, perhaps, the conquering of illusion in a fuller degree, so that through the conscious tearing away of the veils of maya, he would get a vision of what LIFE really meant. Then, having this Vision, he would know that the only possible way to live in accordance with Reality, consciously to live, would be a positive decision to devote himself to the service of others.

J. H. Fussell — One of the characteristic marks of chelaship I would say is a love for truth and a searching for it, as a drowning man struggles for air as the one thing above all most desirable. Naturally the love of truth is of varying degree, and the attainment of it, to be in any way successful, must include what Professor Ryan referred to as "the first test: Devotion to the interests of another" and ultimately of all men — in a word, impersonality. We can come to a knowledge of truth only in the degree that we seek for it impersonally — not solely for ourselves or our own satisfaction, but for the sake of all men, for the service of all.

H. T. Edge — So far we have heard of several attributes which a chela might or might not possess; but as he would possess these in common with other people who are not chelas, they cannot be said to "be characteristic of chelaship. What we need is a definition, not an enumeration of attributes.

Sven Eek — "Chela" in a technical sense means slave, slave to the command or behest of a Guru or of Truth as the Higher Self points it out. It does not mean perfection, however — far from it. A chela can have all the wonderful qualities enumerated tonight, but also quite a few pretty bad ones not mentioned.

We must distinguish between "chelaship" as it is understood in the Orient and the "chelaship" of Theosophists in the West. There are strict rules governing the lives of the chelas in India and Tibet and they all have some sort of Guru or Teacher who directly or indirectly guides their lives. "Chelaship" among Western people, or more particularly Theosophists, is something less tangible. As I see it, it means a focussing of one's thoughts, aspiration, and desires along lines of spiritual endeavor and in accordance with the teachings that we have received.

It is erroneous to imagine that chelas are necessarily altogether saintly people. In fact their efforts to forge ahead along lines of least resistance react on them in many ways and the animal nature of man rises up in protest; it is here that a chela has to win or lose. So when we see any Companion troubled by evil, let us judge not too hastily his character.

E. V. Savage — I want to express my agreement with what Mr. Eek said, because I think that what constitutes a chela is *setting one's feet on the Path*; and this does not mean that suddenly one begins to manifest all the virtues. In fact, we are told that when one becomes a chela, he is immediately faced with all the difficulties and weaknesses of his nature. Therefore we ordinary beings can't judge of each other, as to who is a chela or who isn't, by the difficulties he has in his life; because one who is having the hardest times and the greatest trials to overcome may be one who has advanced far on the path. And even failure does not mean giving up one's status as a chela, as long as one continues fighting (that is, *wisely*), and keeping at least a foothold on the path.

I also agree with Dr. Edge. I don't think anyone less than a Teacher can tell who is a chela; but I think it is fairly simple to say who isn't. Anyone who advertises the fact that he is one, whether openly or by creating a mystery about himself, certainly isn't one; nor is one who is condemnatory of others and always trying to show how much more evil others are than himself. So I suppose we could arrive at it by a process of elimination.

Grace Knoche, Sr. — I think it might be called the mark of the Hierarchy

of Compassion, speaking broadly and including the noble qualities that this term implies, at least aspiration and strong effort towards them. It is the mark the soul would set, in a way, upon those who are living for others and not for self, consciously and determinedly so living. It would not be a visible mark or sign, and would not be perceived by the majority, though they might see in us a certain kindness and sympathetic understanding; but those who bear this mark, and above all the Teachers, I believe, would see it definitely as a distinguishing mark or sign.

Oluf Tyberg — A chela is one who is dominated by something greater than himself, the innermost part of his being, the Master, and whose faith and devotion are so unswerving that in spite of personal shortcomings, this Master can infill his mind with a vision of universal truth and guide it to the Teacher in possession of this very truth.

A. B. Clark — The characteristic which distinguishes the chela from other men is the flame of pure impersonal love burning in his heart. As the dominant characteristic of the Master of Compassion is the spirit of divine harmony and compassion, so it is by the similitude to the Master that a man becomes a chela. It is this similitude by which the disciple is recognised and drawn to the Master. It is kinship of spirit.

Lydia Ross — A chela is one whose great hunger for Truth makes him willing to pay the price of his personal self that he may *become* the Truth. This would include all degrees of chelaship and all the virtues required for it.

Julia Hecht — Katherine Tingley often said it was so difficult to find an honest man; and I should think chelaship would mean absolute sincerity.

O. I. Clark — It seems much easier to enumerate qualities which a chela should or should not possess, than to tell what it is that constitutes one a chela. Let me offer the following: That which constitutes one a chela is a definite alliance by deliberate choice with the Order of Compassion. If there are unconscious chelas, they have made that

alliance in previous incarnations. The possession of many noble qualities does not itself constitute chelaship. All the religions have had saints and heroes, who were not chelas. Chelas may have bad qualities, even very bad qualities, but being chelas they are on the best road for the rapid overcoming of those qualities. They are chelas because they are definitely and by continuing choice devoted to the work of the Order of Compassion. That devotion causes them to be accepted as chelas. If they adhere to that choice and devotion, the noble qualities which a chela should have will be developed in them more quickly than by any other means.

Foster Griffiths — The question can be answered in a very few words. One who has an unceasing love for humanity would through this love express all the attributes and qualities that we have been talking about: impersonality, compassion, service, etc.

George Davenport — To my mind, any individual aspiring to chelaship has had a vision of truth conveyed to his brain-mind and intelligence from his higher spiritual essence, and henceforth his whole life is devoted to the search for truth in self-forgetful service to his Teacher and all humanity.

Allan Stover — Sooner or later, to a serious student of Theosophy comes the urge to devote everything — every faculty, all he possesses, to the service of humanity. In other words, he wishes to live the life of a chela. He sees that the farther reaches of the chela-life are greatly to be desired. He soon learns that if he live the life he shall know the doctrine — the deeper teachings — and with this desire in his heart he feels the need of a Teacher.

What are the requisites for one wishing to lead the chela-life, for one wishing to become a chela? We are told that among others there are three leading ones: Devotion, Duty, and Loyalty — Devotion to an ideal which requires the utmost of our spiritual will to follow day after day; duty — one's own duty — rightly performed, the doing of which brings indescribable peace, as when, after wandering over and having retraced many roads, we find the right one at last; and which rightly

done leaves no thing to be undone; and Loyalty, which brings trust and confidence in oneself and in others. These three requisites for chelaship have among all peoples been considered the foremost virtues. We, as Theosophists, owe the observance of these qualities to ourselves, to others, and especially to our chosen Teacher. It is expected of us.

The Teacher gives inner life and inner light. He guides the soul of the chela through its development, onwards and upwards through greater trials, greater responsibilities. For the chela meets a karmic quickening which may condense into his present incarnation the experiences of many ordinary lives. He meets trials joyfully, knowing that each trial successfully passed means the dropping of one more veil of illusion on the path to Masterhood.

I. L. Harris — The Leader's question was: "What is it in or of a chela that makes him such?" May I venture a brief definition: A progressively more and more complete identification of oneself with impersonal ends for the betterment of Humanity, coupled with an ever-increasing effort to fit oneself to carry out better the duties which such service entails.

W. E. Small — In terms of the seven principles of man and nature, we might say that the Mahatman lives in the Buddhic principle, the average man in the Kama-Manasic. The nearer an individual shifts his center of consciousness to the Buddhic part of his constitution and keeps it there, the closer is his approach to Mahatmahood. The chela is one who has learned to do this with a larger degree of concentration than the average man.

Stanley Zurek — Wouldn't a chela be one in whom the inner god has become awakened to some extent, and who has a teacher, whether he is conscious of it or not?

E. J. Dadd — I think that the answer by Mr. Zurek is the best yet. When we consider that man is the expression of a divinity on earth, and that any good man and a myriad Christians can feel, by aspiration, the

presence of this divinity — the "Father in secret" spoken of in the New Testament — we see that something more than sensing that divine Presence is needed in order to get direct teaching and instruction from that source. The Mahatmans are in contact with that divinity, and we, if we understand how to constitute ourselves their pupils, have their help in learning to reach our own divinity. A chela, then, is one who is being taught by a Master of that art, the means to make his divinity vocal within him.

G. de P. — Mr. President, Mr. Chairman, and Companions: I think that my question has been beautifully answered by all who have spoken, and anything that I could say would merely be in addition. Indeed, if we analyse the answers that we have heard, I think we may divide them into two classes: those weighing heavily on what we may call the Life, and those weighing heavily on what we may call the Knowing. It is an interesting study in psychology to me, knowing you all as well as I do, to see how the individual swabhava has come out in your answers. Some are profound and devoted students who are reaching the Light along the Path of Wisdom. Others, equally profound and devoted students, are marching steadily towards the inner glory by what we describe as living it. Now, if you will combine these two ways, unify them into one, in which both blend indistinguishably, then I think you will have not only the signs and marks and characteristics of all chelas, who you will remember are of many grades from the supergods downwards to us, but you will likewise know how to become a chela, a greater chela, a still greater chela, yourselves.

There are many characteristics and distinguishing marks, if we analyse the chela in his life, and many of them have been pointed out. But do you know, I think if I were asked what is it in and of a man which makes him a chela, I think I should ponder quite a long time, and then I believe I should give this answer: A growing indifference to himself, and an increasing interest in all that is. There we have the path of morals, of ethics, of wisdom; and we have the Life: a man who has completely lost interest in himself, has no pleasure in evil-doing, because all evil-doing is selfish, for personal, selfish ends. It is just as

simple as that. Not my will, as the great Syrian Chela and Master said, but Thine, his inner god's, a Ray of the spirit of the Universe, the law of infinite love and compassion and harmony and pity and wisdom and peace. Man, when he thus loses interest in himself, grows progressively greater. It is a strange and interesting paradox. By expanding, his interests enlarge instead of being constricted around his own core of being; he breaks the bonds and expands. His former and present self becomes uninteresting. The world, all mankind, the Universe, he loses himself in, and becomes it; and there is the secret of all initiations, from the greatest to the least. Indeed, no man can pass through an initiation until he can do this in some degree. He cannot simply because he cannot lose himself. He cannot enter into other things. He is all "I." The Universe is "I" and "thou," I, and the world — the duality. He never can forget himself and be the other, for his whole understanding, his whole compass of thought and feeling is I. Do you catch the thought? That is all there is to it. The chela is he who is becoming uninterested in himself and accordingly more interested in others, in the world. That is why there are three grades of training. Experience of ages has shown that three are required: training, study, and a growing lack of interest in yourself. And then comes the fourth stage, when you really feel that all other men's interests are infinitely more important than your own. The greatest Buddha, the greatest teacher, the greatest man or woman, is he who is uninterested in himself and loses himself in what we call others. That is chelaship. It is a reversion of feeling, to embrace the Universe and recognise it. The "I" is no longer "I," it is All. And yet how difficult it is for Occidentals to understand that we are all one, and yet for ever individuals.

There are as many chelas as there are individuals in the Universe. I sometimes think that everybody is a chela in degree. I sometimes think that even the greatest sinner, as we say, is a chela, because he is learning, poor devil! Of course he is not a great chela, he is a very weak and humble one, a poor, stumbling, weak specimen of mankind. A true chela hence is one who is living the Life and knows the Knowing, and combines the two into one, and thereby loses interest in himself,

forgets himself. Self-forgetfulness, love of others: if men could only follow this as a life even in their ordinary intercourse, if we could only realize how uninteresting I am and how awfully interesting the other fellow is. That is all there is to chela-ship; and the greatest man is he who can express that the most, the best. That is why, as the Buddha said, we attain Nirvana, we attain the stage of the "samma-sambuddha," when the dew-drop slips into the shining sea, when the little knot and point and focus of I-consciousness expands to be the Universe.

I will add this: I for one have no patience with those who segregate themselves from others and go out, away from others, and think that they are holier than others. That is not chelaship. You can starve till your bones stick through your skin, and you can burn yourself and torture yourself until the body, wracked with pain, dies; and you are no more a chela than a snap of the fingers, because all your searching is upon yourself; you become an imbodiment of self-seeking egoism. That is not the way to attain chelaship. Chelaship is an inner being, an utter self-forgetfulness in its greater reaches, it is an inner change and forgetting yourself; and in proportion as you do it, so much farther will you be on the chela-path, because of an ever-enlarging consciousness and wisdom and love. Thank you.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Note: These "Transactions," as they are printed from time to time in the pages of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, do not necessarily appear in serial order, but depend often upon requests of visitors to the Lodge who have found some particular subject of especial interest, and have felt the present to be a good time to have these thoughts given wider broadcast. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE GUARDIANS OF THE TEMPLE (1) — *J. H. Venema*

There is an understanding which needs no words, and if we want to be "Guardians of the Temple" — the Great Temple of Light which has always existed, the Theosophical Temple of Love — we must realize that there is an insight, there is a mutual understanding, for which words are unnecessary. It is very easy to see this; we know how in human life two persons who love each other have that clairaudience, that silent understanding. Don't you believe, and don't you agree with me, that this is only a lower aspect of the greater love and that it explains why the Adepts have spiritual clairaudience? That deeper aspect is that they are lovers of humanity; and just because they have this greater love, they possess the *spiritual* clairaudience which we, Guardians of the Temple, all should have to some extent. Indeed, I realized yesterday, when we discussed the various items of this Convention with the National Presidents, how very few words we needed; after a few introductory remarks everything was understood and arranged; and this morning, after the wonderful spiritual pictures which passed before us in the speeches of our Companions, there was again that silence which gave us the clairaudient understanding.

At Conventions we have to speak, but I think that we must bear in mind that the Guardians of the Temple in reality have a spiritual way of communicating that has nothing to do with the spoken word on the physical plane.

When you saw this subject announced: "The Guardians of the Temple," you may have thought that I was going to speak about the great hierarchy of beings about which you read in our Theosophical books: *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Esoteric Tradition*, and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*; and, indeed, friends, it would be a glorious thing at a Convention to go into that — the great hierarchies of the Adepts and the Silent Watchers: but No! at this meeting I am going to speak about you and me as the Guardians of the Temple; and especially let us listen

to the words of H. P. B. as to what she expected of you and me as the Guardians of the Temple, which she erected for us, and which she expected us to expand so that it might embrace the whole world.

We know that Theosophy is foremost with us: that in trying to make it a living power in our lives, and in trying to pass on the light to our fellow-beings, we sometimes make the impression on others that we believe we alone have the truth. The strong convictions which we have occasionally irritate people, and they say we are getting one-sided, that we are limited in view; but, for heaven's sake, can we be restricted in our vision when we know that our philosophy is based on the structure of the whole Universe, that it embraces the whole of nature? Is it a limitation to admire and feel the deep beauty of a sunset or a sunrise? Is it limited to understand when looking at the galaxy, and feeling ourselves to be a part of that galaxy, that in reality we and our fellow-beings *are* the Universe, and that consequently we know the foundation of the Brotherhood of Men? Therefore, we say that, because the Temple is built on the structure of the Universe, we know that we are, in guarding this Theosophical Temple, really guarding the truths of nature and passing them on. In the first place then, what did H. P. B. expect from us in guarding these truths? She passed on the Light. There is a word in Dutch: *bewustwording*, which means "to become conscious of your consciousness," or if you like, in more Theosophical terms, "to become conscious of your consciousnesses." That is what H. P. B. did for us — she made us conscious of our consciousnesses; and the explanation of the teaching brought us that marvelous vision regarding the Buddhas of Compassion, the teachings about the two kinds of Buddhas, the Pratyeka-Buddhas and the Buddhas of Compassion, and the vision that, as human beings, we even now can make a choice between these two paths for the future.

H. P. B. left us this Temple of Light, and expected us to be Guardians; and profoundly are we grateful to her for what she did for us and the world. After listening to the symphonies of the great composers we often feel a similar gratitude: something has been opened in us, a light has been received, and we long to pass it on. Such an intense feeling of

gratitude we have towards H. P. B., and that alone must make us the Guardians of the Temple which she erected.

Listen to her words in the first Message to the Convention in America [addressed to William Quan Judge], and let us also compare the times in which we live, thereby realizing the fact that the Guardians of the Temple living in H. P. B.'s time were not really different from the Guardians of the Temple in the present time:

It is to you chiefly, if not entirely, that the Theosophical Society owes its existence in 1888.

I ask: Is it different in 1936?

Let me then thank you for it, for the first, and perhaps the last, time publicly, and from the bottom of my heart, which beats only for the cause you represent so well and serve so faithfully I ask you also to remember that, on this important occasion, my voice is but the feeble echo of other more sacred voices, and the transmitter of the approval of Those whose presence is alive in more than one true Theosophical heart, and lives, as I know, pre-eminently in yours.

These words were written by H. P. B. to a Convention such as we are now holding in England.

First of all, a word to those Guardians among us who have no so-called "official" jobs, who do not, for instance, do public work, or are not Presidents or Secretaries of Lodges, but simply members; (as they sometimes say in Holland: "I am *only* a member.") Don't you understand that we who have these official jobs, would sometimes be very keen on exchanging them with the simple member? But at the same time we know well that these members, these Guardians of the Temple, have just as great a task as anybody else, even in a way perhaps more so, if it is permitted to say so, than those who have official jobs. The poet Milton says: "They also serve who only stand and wait." Don't you see what those silent Guardians are in reality? I am never tired of speaking about this, and it has helped in our Section!

When they come to their Lodges — these silent Guardians — and give their sympathy to the work done there and never miss a Lodge meeting, they in reality are just as great Guardians as those who do the official jobs. Don't you understand that they help to make the Lodge-force flow just because they are there? There is a case in Holland of an old Lodge still existing, where, as I said at our Congress in July, there came a man who through his circumstances was not able to do much official work. He simply came to the Lodge meetings, rarely spoke, simply sat there and gave his sympathy, which radiated from his eyes, from his whole being, and then went away in silence. Do you not believe, friends, that but for this man that Lodge meeting might not have been on such a high plane during the time that it was held, and that the people who had work to do were greatly supported by that man? There is a story — a marvelous story — written in English — about a humble slave in ancient Babylon, who singlehanded opened the gates of Ancient Babylon to the Gods! It is not a fairy story, it can be made real history.

It is wrong to say that a Lodge does not do much work because there are not, at a critical moment, many helpers who do official work. It is wrong to think that we have not the Lodge-force if, at a certain moment, people do not flock in large numbers to the gates of the Lodge. If there simply is a focus of light, you provide the channel for the flowing of the Lodge-force, and that is what is expected from us. Let us be grateful then to the silent Guardians of the Temple, and those who have no official jobs, as they are Guardians indeed.

The next point is this: it has been impressed upon us again and again that the Guardians of the Temple should promulgate the ethics of Theosophy: this surely is necessary. What does H. P. B. say about it? I quote from her fourth Message to the American Convention:

The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us as to those that fight on our side.

Now let us look at the world around us when we hear the following

words from H. P. B.:

No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T. S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood.

These Messages by H. P. B. should now be read and re-read by every earnest Theosophist, because he will continually be obliged to compare the times of H. P. B. with our present times.

Then she says about ethics particularly (third message):

What I said last year remains true to-day, that is, that the Ethics of Theosophy are more important than any divulgement of psychic laws and facts. The latter relate wholly to the material and evanescent part of the septenary man, but the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man — the reincarnating Ego. We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practise, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races. Do not work merely for the Theosophical Society, but *through* it for Humanity.

May Theosophy grow more and more a living power in the lives of each one of our members, and may the coming year be yet more full of good work and healthy progress than the one just closing, is the wish of your humble co-worker and fellow-member. H. P. B.

Here the stress is laid on ethics, especially to give to the world the truths of Karma and Reincarnation. We are doing that, but, friends,

how much more do we understand of ethics when our teachings are extended. As we heard in the Leader's message this morning, there was a definite promise in one of these Messages from H. P. B. to the Convention held at the time that more new teachings should be given. Well, the more deeply we understand the teachings the better we can be Guardians, because the better and with greater conviction can we pass on these verities of Karman and Reincarnation, truths about nature and man as a part of it.

Now what has happened since 1888? H. P. B. gave this definite promise, that if we deserved it, and the times permitted it, more would be given. Don't you see *what* has happened? Don't the Theosophists of the world see? After she went history simply repeated itself. In Blavatsky's time there was a Messenger of the Masters — H. P. B. She had the *insignia majestatis* — the tokens of majesty — on her. They were visible in her individuality, in her marvelous knowledge, and she showed these tokens of majesty in her books, *The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, etc. She was recognised only by the few! She passed on. Those who carry the *insignia majestatis* are not easily noticed in this world.

We, the Guardians of the Temple, know that history repeats itself in our times, that there is one who has indeed the *insignia majestatis*, and that again they can be found in books which greatly extend and corroborate the teachings of H. P. B. in every respect. Majestically striding through this world again, the teacher and that which he brings are recognised only by the few; and the world in general scarcely notices that a great Temple of Light is standing right here! Chaotic conditions outside, yet the Temple is there; the Envoy is there; the teachings are there. *The Secret Doctrine* is corroborated, confirmed, the teachings are extended. Now are we good Guardians of this Temple if we do not *continually* make known to the world and to our Brother Theosophists *what* has been done? Point out to them why it cannot wholly be avoided that history repeats itself; but how we, Guardians of the Temple, *can* prevent to some extent in this fourth Round, in the fifth Race on Globe D its repeating itself *as much as it does!* But to do that we must have the spiritual power of discrimination; we must be

able to say: "This is Theosophy"; "This is not Theosophy." By studying *The Secret Doctrine* and the other books, and comparing them with the present books, we must be able to tell our fellow-men, and especially our fellow-Theosophists: "Look, here are the teachings: realize how they are corroborated and extended; you see that indeed the Masters still work in the same way as in the time of H. P. B."

And here I must introduce the value of an intensely active Lodge-life. Don't you agree with me that only where there is an intensely active Lodge-life we, Guardians of the Temple, can get an insight into the difference between Wisdom and Knowledge? H. P. B. and our present Leader so often say that we may cram our brain-minds with the Theosophical teachings, it will only be Knowledge; but Wisdom comes if we put that Knowledge into practice, and through this active Lodge-life the Lodge-force begins to flow; we carry it with us in our daily lives, and must never forget that we are responsible for the Lodges and for the work carried on in them.

What is a symbol? The word itself comes from the Greek, and means "to fall together." Idea or thought, and object or picture fall together. It applies more to the intuition than to the intellect. Those who can spiritually interpret symbols have a great background for their lives. Well, here is a symbol! We, friends, you and I, as Guardians of the Temple, are at present right in that Temple. Indeed we form that Temple. We are the bricks, the building-stones; so we cannot allow one brick to be loose in any part of the wall, any part of the Temple, because the whole Temple will suffer if a brick is loose anywhere.

Everyone, as I said, has his task, no matter what it may be; and it is expected from the Guardians of the Temple that wherever we may be as part of that Temple, it will be firmly cemented to the other parts, so as to keep the Temple strong and beautiful. There is a picture which has often been reproduced in our Dutch "Theosophical Path." It represents a Guardian in ancient Pompeii. Perhaps you have seen that painting. There this Guardian stands at the gate of a palace or a Temple, and he has been told to guard that gate and never to leave; and

the painter in his imagination makes him stand there, while the eruption of the volcano takes place: the lava covers him, and he continues to do his duty, he remains watching and dies standing, spear erect, at the portal of that gate, fulfilling his task to the very end. This is our idea about being Guardians of the Temple. It is required of us especially in these times. If we want tests as to how far we have understood H. P. B.'s expectation of our Guardianship, here are two principal tests. The first is: do the teachings, does our work in the Society, lead us to ever greater love for our fellow-beings in general? If we can say "Yes" in answer to that question it is all right. The second test is: "are we continually ready for service whenever called upon?" and again if we can say "Yes" to that question, it is all right; we are Guardians indeed, no matter what our position in the Society may be.

Finally this word of warning, though it is no threat. Are we so sure that if the Guardians fail the Temple will stand? It is a very serious question in this world just now. I for one am not so sure; I cannot get away from the idea that *if* the Guardians should fail, the Great Ones who erected this Temple might have to build elsewhere or at some other time. There has been a promise: As long as there are even a few Guardians to do their duty, to be, as the warrior of Pompeii, at the gates to the last moment, that "last moment" will never come, because the Great Ones have promised that as long as there are only a few working for Them, They will help. Now this promise is a great one; but we should understand the seriousness of the situation in the world at present, and fully realize what is expected of us as "Guardians of the Temple." Mind, not the men whose names are written in flaming letters in our papers and periodicals promote the spiritual evolution of mankind — they may be only instruments on the outer plane. It is the silent Watchers of the Temple, those who seek the power that makes them "as nothing in the eyes of men," who really advance the spiritual evolution. Let us not forget this.

Finally, there is a letter — our English members may know this letter better than members of the other Sections — it is the one letter ascribed to the Maha-Chohan, the Great One who, as you may know,

also had something to do with the establishment of our Society, and in that letter it says: "The Theosophical Society was chosen as the cornerstone, the foundation of the future religions of humanity." It begins in this way:

The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one must — supported by such evidence as we are preparing to give — become ultimately triumphant as every other truth. Yet it is obviously necessary to inculcate it gradually, enforcing its theories — unimpeachable facts for those who know — with direct inferences deduced from and corroborated by the evidence furnished by modern exact science.

And here is an important part:

What becomes of our fine professions of benevolence, philanthropy, reform, etc.? Are these professions a mockery? And if a mockery, can ours be the true path? Shall we not devote ourselves to teaching a few Europeans, fed on the fat of the land — many of them loaded with the gifts of blind fortune — the rationale of bell-ringing, cup-growing, of the spiritual telephone and astral body formation, and leave the teeming millions of the ignorant, of the poor and despised, the lowly and the oppressed, to take care of themselves and their hereafter as best they know how? Never! Rather perish the T. S. with both its hapless founders than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic, a hall of occultism.

Well, here again is the great emphasis on the ethics of Theosophy; and I think it is our duty, as Guardians of the Temple, to give to the world the ethics of Theosophy, especially the fundamental ideas of Karma and Reincarnation, because that will teach the "Why" of the ethics.

We therefore declare at this Convention that we still are and shall be the Guardians of the great Temple of Light; that we shall cultivate and develop that spiritual power of discrimination which will enable us to be so. The closer we are together in the Lodges and in the various

centers of a country, the closer we are together as National Sections; the closer we stand together in passing on Brotherhood, the greater the flow of the Lodge-force will be. The greater the harmony that exists in our branches and Sections, the greater channel we shall be for the Masters' work. Let us then be Guardians of the Temple, the Temple that has its structure in the Universe. And what is grander than belonging to that Temple? Let us be Guardians, so that in the future we can pass on the light to those who shall be working after us.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address given at the European Convention of the Theosophical Society, (Point Loma), London, August 2nd and 3rd, 1936. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — C. J. Ryan

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

PREVISION OF EARTHQUAKES

In *The Theosophical Path* for October, 1933, we discussed at some length the prevision of earthquakes by animals, and, in rare cases, by human beings. Although some seismologists have dared to admit that such previsions have been reported, scientists in general have paid little or no attention to them. In September, however, the learned British Medical Association debated the problem in relation to the mystery of the "sixth sense," so called, in dogs. Sir H. T. Holland, chief of the Mission Hospital at Quetta, India, told of three cases of persons being pulled from their beds by dogs before the terrible earthquake that killed tens of thousands at Quetta. One man who was called 22 minutes before the shock thought his dog had been alarmed by burglars and started searching for them in his garden! Many remarkable cases of canine prevision in regard to other kinds of catastrophes were mentioned by responsible scientific observers, but we are particularly concerned with those relating to earthquakes, because they bring up the question of the real cause of their occurrence at certain times and places. Are they purely mechanical in their localization, etc., or do obscure though very definite associations exist between them and the activities and intelligence of mankind, as occultism declares? An official of the Canine Defense League expressed the belief that dogs could feel minute vibrations that the most sensitive seismographs cannot record. This seems strange in view of the fact that instruments can record the movement of a truck on a road several miles away or the beating of the waves on a distant shore, delicate tremors which are always in evidence, yet which do not worry the dogs in the least. Only *imaginary* preliminary tremors taking place hours

before the first trace appears on the delicate seismographs frighten the dogs so much that they try to save their masters' lives by pulling them out of bed! Having gone into this matter more deeply in the above-mentioned article we can only mention the subject here in order to express pleasure that the learned Medical Association found it worth serious attention and agreed that it was decidedly mysterious. Science is slowly turning to the consideration of the hidden side of Nature, and the time cannot be far off when purely mechanical research will be regarded as quite superficial in view of far more profound methods.

THE MISSING LINK AGAIN

Professor Robert Broom, whose advanced and practically Theosophical views on "natural selection" have been quoted and discussed in our pages, announces his discovery in the Transvaal of the fossil bones of an adult specimen of the South African "non-forest anthropoids," not closely allied to the chimpanzee or the gorilla (living African anthropoids) but whose "teeth show that they were nearer to the stock from which man arose." Dr. Broom "feels sure that the problem of man's origin will soon be solved, and solved in South Africa." Great enthusiasm has been aroused in scientific circles by his announcement. Students of H. P. Blavatsky's presentation of human evolution in *The Secret Doctrine*, and of the concise and more systematic rendition of her teaching in *The Esoteric Tradition* (chapter x) will see that the discovery of "missing links" in no way disturbs the fundamental Theosophical teaching of the origin of the *real Man* from previous Rounds and Globes. Anthropoids still more human may be found, because all the true anthropoids are connexions by blood with early humanity, though not progenitors.

THE DESCENT OF MAN: NEW COMPLICATIONS

According to Sir Arthur Keith, the famous "die-hard" Darwinian evolutionist, the new discoveries do not support the views usually held concerning the origin of the chief racial stocks of mankind. Speaking before the British Speleological Association in July, he made some remarkable admissions. We quote a few passages from the *Morning*

Post (London):

We have discovered many extinct types of humanity but not one which is fit to serve as the common ancestor of modern races. We have found no evidence of an outward migration from a common center. . . . We are tempted to believe that by the beginning of the pleistocene period some half-million years ago — or more — the ancestors of the Mongol, of the Australian, and of the Negro were already in occupation of the continental areas where we now find their descendants. This is a new conception. Hitherto we have regarded evolving man as unconquerably nomadic. . . . Clearly we have reached a point which compels a radical reorientation of our working theories. We have to presume that parallel evolution which has been proved to be effective in the evolution of the horse and of the elephant has also been true of man. Such a view serves but to deepen the mystery of human evolution for it implies that, as in the past, the future of each race lies in its generic constitution.

The importance of this pronouncement is very great because it leads directly to the occult point of view, especially in regard to the concept of "Root-Types" as given in *The Secret Doctrine*, (see II, 734-7). Dr. Keith's "parallel evolution" — for which concept we are indebted to Dr. H. Fairfield Osborn, late of the American Museum, New York — precisely agrees with the point insisted upon in *The Secret Doctrine*. Space will not permit a proper treatment of his important subject now, but we must take it up more fully at a later date. Students will find Dr. Osborn's researches referred to in *The Theosophical Path* for July, 1933, p. 44. He pointed out that the potentiality of the new characters which appeared in elephant's teeth, for example, in the course of ages, were not originated by the pressure of external conditions acting on *chance variations* but were already latent *within*; and they unfolded into action as the new demands arose. When the Root-Types became settled in physical life, each had its own "creative potencies" imbedded within itself, so to speak, and these manifested in parallel lines of evolution. When we apply this unwrapping or unfolding principle to Man we see

the importance of Dr. Keith's statement that "the future of each race lies in its generic constitution." A much more comprehensive and far-reaching classification of races than the Negro, Mongolian, etc., is given in *The Secret Doctrine*, and it is shown that the distinctions between the real races have been masked by the blendings which have taken place ages before, as well as since, Dr. Keith's "half-million years or more," which is only a fraction of the past life of humanity. Ultimately, we are told, the seven great races will once more be segregated as in the beginning.

WAS "PRIMITIVE MAN" SO SAVAGE AFTER ALL?

La Revue Scientifique not long ago published some interesting information about the health of prehistoric man. Its general conclusion is that his resistance to disease was not greater than ours, but that there is a difference in the diseases which are most prevalent. There is also a distinction between the most ancient and the more modern types of prevalence of disease. It is interesting to learn that evidence of wounds is infrequent in the most ancient period, the Palaeolithic, but in the more modern Neolithic age it becomes far more common. The proportion of fractures which have healed with a good join is very high! Tuberculosis and syphilis were unknown in the Palaeolithic, so far as can be ascertained by examination of the bones, but in the later periods a few cases appear. Dental caries is not found in Europe, but appears in Africa in fairly early periods. So it would seem that the earliest representatives of man so far discovered were peaceable and moral, and that many of our modern curses have developed with the spread of our present form of so-called civilization!

ARIZONA INDIAN RAIN CEREMONY

We may call it another coincidence, or luck, or something else, but the Hopi Indians, at their Reservation, Hotevilla, Arizona, have again closed their rain ceremony in a heavy downpour, after a long and serious period of drought. The date of the snake ceremony, when the reptiles (many of them dangerous rattlesnakes) are captured and then let loose to carry the invocations to the gods of the underground, was,

as usual, set some time beforehand when no sign of rain was visible. We quote a few sentences from various newspapers: "As sunset burned red over the mesa, Hopi snake priests to night (August 22) concluded their age-old nine-day ceremonial by dancing with live rattlesnakes in their mouths. . . . They know that nearly every time after a snake dance a fierce thunderstorm roars up from the desert and floods the district, washing out roads and marooning motorists sometimes for days." (U.P.) "Downpours have drenched the Hopi reservation almost daily since the rites were started." (A.P.) "Is it possible that the Indians hold a secret of divine power and guidance which the white man has not discovered? . . . Instances such as these, which defy explanation, must cause those who call the Indian not far removed from barbarism, to wonder just how far we, as a race, have come. We discount the power of man to call rain from the skies, and then are interrupted by the Indians gathering in the desert and doing it." (San Diego *Evening Tribune*.)

Ganado, Ariz July 6 (A P) — Apparently in answer to their supplications, rains drenched the Tohatchi and Fluted mountains today and scattered showers fell over the 15,000,000-acre reservation as happy Navajo medicine men brought to a close their ancient Najadaltinth rain prayer.

Perhaps something spoken by Dr. Lindley Bynum, Field Representative of the famous Huntington Library at Pasadena, California, may throw some light on the reason why the Indians know secrets of nature quite strange to us. Lecturing on the California Indians at Altadena on June 29, he said:

While Caucasian civilization has progressed along material lines, and has featured the white man as possessing superior talents, *that of the Indian has been idealistic* and one in which he places no importance on man other than the part he plays *in the whole scope of nature and the universe* . . . For this the Indian has derived certain strength and inward poise . . . Artifacts of the Southern Californian Indians dispel the erroneous report that they are of a low order of Indian. . . They are among the most

advanced in the country . . . The Indian's religion permeates every act of his life. He has no conception of a personal God, but does believe in a spiritual power that gives life. He has no conception of Heaven as a place of eternal abode . . . It is very difficult for an Indian to grasp the idea of a hell — *Pasadena Star-News*

ANTIQUITY OF MAN IN AMERICA

Contributing to the great controversy now raging among the anthropologists about the age and origin of man in America, Professor Anthony Zallo, of the Sacramento Junior College, says he believes that the Indians did not come from Asia, but have always been on this continent. He relies in part on three skulls recently discovered in the delta region of the Sacramento River which indicate that the "Sacramento Man" lived 15,000 to 20,000 years ago, at a time when the glaciers of the Ice Age would have prevented his crossing over the Bering Sea from Asia. He claims that while human blood is divided into four groups, O, A, B, and AB, the percentage of Indian blood is 91.3 of class O, while Chinese blood is principally B. Another scientist, Dr P. B. Candela, told the American Association of Science in June that delicate chemical tests of Egyptian mummies had enabled him to determine their type of blood. He said it is now possible to prepare blood group maps of the world, and that American Indians, Celts, and Basques belong predominantly to one group, while such apparently dissimilar groups as Hindus, Patagonians, and Amazon tribes belong to another blood type. He said it was clear that this new discovery was of great importance in connexion with the origin and history of man, and *would open a vast new field of research*. It is interesting to note that H. P. Blavatsky associates the Basques, the Guanches of the Canary Islands, and the North American Indians in one grouping" (See *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 740-90) It is very likely that the skeptical scientists will be forced to an acceptance of the existence of Atlantis by further discoveries in regard to blood-relationship.

PREHISTORIC CITY IN NEBRASKA

Dr. Earl H. Bell of the University of Nebraska announces that: "It is clear that Nebraska has a human prehistory as important in the annals of civilization as that of Egypt or the near East." His recent expedition to the fertile Ponca Creek Valley located several important sites of ancient civilization, two of which seem to have been inhabited 4000 years ago. One city was three miles long and half a mile wide, and appears to have been abandoned on account of drought. It was a center of agriculture and hunting, and thousands of excellent artifacts including pottery and tools have been collected. Dr. Bell says that this discovery upsets the belief that no mid-western civilization existed earlier than 500 years ago. As the progress of research continues we find in America a repetition of the same story that is presented by the history of prehistoric studies in Europe. First of all blank denial that anything human could be more than a few hundred or thousand years old; then a grudging admission that the case was not altogether settled; and today we learn that anthropologists are seriously beginning to suspect that man actually *may* have been here *before* the final melting of the ice at the end of the glacial period, which took place a very long time ago.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: XI — *H. T. Edge*

XI — THE CHRIST

It may seem strange that we should include this among the symbols, but we do not propose to limit ourselves to those which can be drawn as pictures — though the Christ, to be sure, has one symbol in the Cross (March, 1936). Christ may be for many people the name of a particular person, but it stands for a universal idea. Christ is the "Word made flesh" mentioned in *John*, i, 14: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." In the beginning of this gospel we have a fragment of Gnostic teaching, which connects Christianity with its parent source in the Wisdom-Religion. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . In him was life; and the life was the light of men." This is the original doctrine of the Ancient Wisdom. The Logos (Word) is a creative emanation of the supreme deity; he is at the same time one and many; he has his throne in the hearts of all men. Thus man is, in his inmost essence, a God; but this God has been "made flesh"; man is an immortal soul imprisoned in a mortal body. The Jesus of the Gospels insists on this truth in many well-known passages; he usually speaks of the supreme deity as the Father, and of the Word or Logos as the Son. With this clue in mind, we can see that such was the teaching of Jesus: he desired to show men how they could achieve salvation by invoking their own divinity, by following in his footsteps. But this has been turned into the dogma that man's nature is of itself corrupt, and that he can be saved only by faith in this particular God-man, Jesus of Nazareth.

The Jesus of the Gospels is a character, partly fictitious, partly symbolic, built around some actual personality, whose identity is buried among a confusion of historical and traditional materials. Though every man is an incarnation of divinity, there are some who are so in a special sense. These are men who have progressed in their individual evolution to a

point beyond that reached by the average humanity of their time, and who come to the world in times of spiritual darkness to teach the truths of the Ancient Wisdom. Such Teachers are the world's Christs; and we find in the religions of India, Egypt, ancient America, and elsewhere, accounts similar in essentials to our own Gospel narratives. The Savior is born by the Holy Spirit of a human virgin, is tempted and overcomes, is crucified on a cross, entombed for three days, rises again. That such is the fact can readily be ascertained by anyone wishing to do so, but it would unduly burden this article to enumerate instances. They can be found in *The Secret Doctrine* and other Theosophical writings; they have been known to some eminent Christian writers, to whom they have been the occasion of much wonderment. Suffice it to say here that the story found in our Bible and in our church doctrine is but a particular adaptation of a doctrine that is both old and everywhere diffused; and, in pointing this out, we are by no means disparaging Christianity, but merely reinstating it in the original dignity from which it has departed. The only thing we do call in question is the claim of the Christian doctrine to originality or exclusiveness or finality. And it is only right, in this age of general commingling of human races, that a broader and more tolerant attitude towards the claims of other religions should be adopted.

The hinge-point of the matter is in the individual responsibility of every man for his own salvation. It may be objected that it is presumptuous and impious to set up man's strength against that of his Divine Savior, the only Son of God; but here again we come upon an essential difference between the original doctrine and the perversion of it which has come to us. The perverted form tells us that man is essentially corrupt — due, it is said, to the sin of Adam — and that he consequently needs the special mercy of a Savior in order to secure his salvation. But Theosophy says that man is essentially divine, and such indeed is the teaching of Jesus; and that, being divine, he must save himself by his own innate divinity. The doctrine that man is saved by the divine love and grace, and despite his own unatoned offences, may be very consoling, but it is both unjust and unmanly. The law that we

must reap as we have sown holds good; and if death deprives us of the opportunity of paying our debts to society in this life, then we shall have that opportunity in one of our lives to come. The Christ upon whom we must call for help is the Christ within — our own Higher Self.

The mind in man — *Manas* — is his intelligence, neutral in itself, and colored by that to which it is allied. When allied to the earthy passional part of our nature, this mind becomes the lower personal self, at odds with other selves, and leading us away from our true path in life. But every man has within him the principle of *Buddhi*, divine wisdom; and if *Manas* allies itself therewith, we have the Higher Self, which is our Savior. It is taught that man was originally created as an animal soul, which was later inspired by the breath of Divinity and so made into a potential God. This is the true Divine Incarnation; this is the Christ in man. But that Christ lies buried, latent, unmanifested, until called into active being by our own will. As has been pointed out, the symbol of the Christ is the Cross, or, more accurately the Cross surmounted by the circle, thus making the sign of the planet Venus. In the symbology of the seven sacred planets, Venus stands towards the Earth in the same relation as the Higher Self stands to the lower self. The circle denotes divinity — the "Word"; the Cross denotes matter; so that the whole symbol denotes the "Word made Flesh," that dwells among us. The mystery of the Christ is therefore that of the Divine Power descending into matter, for the purpose of operating in the lower kingdoms of Nature. The Divine Power is at first sacrificed; for its radiance is obscured, its voice drowned, amid the turmoil of material life and the selfish passions. But it is man's redeemer, and must sooner or later arise from the tomb in the true Resurrection, when man becomes fully aware of his own divinity. This, for the individual man, may take place at any time; for the human race as a whole, at the appropriate cyclic era in the future. When a man, having thus resurrected the Christ within him, becomes perfected, he is able to go forth to the world as a Teacher; either one of those Teachers whose presence remains concealed, or one of the great founders of religions, or perhaps the originator of some great philosophic school like those of Pythagoras

and Plato.

So the symbol of the Christ may mean that which takes place in the life of every man, or it may mean the case of some particular manifestation of Divinity, such as the Buddha or the mysterious Teacher upon whose unknown life has been built the legend of Jesus of Nazareth.

The Theosophical Forum

STOP! LOOK! LISTEN! — Ivenson L. Harris

The above is the danger-signal which the age-old doctrine of Karman, whether under this or some other name, has flashed before the inner eyes of errant men and nations from time beyond memory. Humanity's Adept-Kings, of whom among all peoples tradition — which is racial memory — tells, the great Spiritual Seers, the exalted Teachers of Religion, the expounders of the loftiest philosophy, and the inspired poets and prophets, have echoed and re-echoed the same message to men and nations down the corridors of time: Ye cannot commit injustice without suffering the consequences thereof; ye cannot wrong the weak and escape the inevitable reaction of your wrong-doing; ye cannot be cruel with impunity; ye cannot sin without becoming the servants of sin; ye cannot be neglectful of duties which are yours by virtue of your status as responsible, thinking beings, and not pay the penalties of your neglect; ye cannot desecrate the temple of your body and avoid disease; ye cannot outrage the god locked up within you and not undergo the tortures of your self-created hell!

For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. . . . By their fruits shall ye know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Karman — or *Karma*, as it is less accurately but more popularly called — is not a cosmic G-Man who tracks down our crimes and engineers a speedy conviction before the judgment-throne of the Most High. The word *Karman* itself is a Sanskrit term meaning *action*, and is frequently called "The Law of Consequences," or "The Law of Ethical Causation." It is the enunciation of a habit of Nature; and to a student of Theosophy Nature means all the vast aggregate of living entities — intelligences, consciousnesses, powers — visible and invisible, material and spiritual — which in their all-varying states of evolutionary development infill, make up, and indeed *are* the Boundless All. *Karman* connotes in the

realm of ethics and metaphysics what Newton enunciated concerning the sphere of mechanics and physics when he declared: "To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. The statement hereinbefore quoted from the Christian Bible is a self-evident fact; but, though axiomatic as far as it goes, it is incomplete because it omits reference to the doctrine of Reincarnation; and this doctrine is absolutely essential in order to provide the necessary time and field for the working out of karma, for the ripple of force to reach the edge of its cyclic basin, and move into the next area of causes — to borrow a figure from *The Mahatma Letters*. In one short lifetime on this earth too often do we see scoundrels crushing idealism under the heel of cynicism, aided and abetted sometimes in the international field by the devastating power of air-bombers, tanks, and poison gas. I use the phrase "crushing idealism" advisedly rather than "crushing weaker peoples," because, horrible as is the madness of man's inhumanity to man which drives him to wholesale slaughter of his fellow-human beings, still more soul-destroying to men and nations is the triumph of cynicism over idealism. Better can we afford to lose our bodies than to lose our souls. Our bodies are of the earth; but our spiritual parts — our ideals, our aspirations, our compassion, our sense of justice and right, and our impulses towards co-operative, self-effacing labor for the common weal — these are our links with the Solar Divinities — our real "Fathers in Heaven.'

But though the mills of the gods grind slowly, they grind exceedingly small. We who weep over the *apparent* triumph of wrong — whether it be individual or national wrong — have we lost faith in the ultimate *actual* triumph of right over wrong? And those who imagine they can trample upon the rights of others, crush those weaker than themselves merely because for the time being they are the pampered prodigals of Mars, let them Stop! Look! Listen!

Before beginning and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a Power Divine which moves to good.
Only *its* laws endure.

It will not be contemned of any one;
Who thwarts it loses, and who serves it gains;
The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,
The hidden ill with pains. . . .

That which ye sow, ye reap. See yonder fields!
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn; the Silence and the Darkness knew.
So is man's fate born.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,
Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth;
And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar
Him and the aching earth

— Sir Edwin Arnold. *The Light of Asia*

Throughout history we find this same warning to men and nations uttered by the really great men of different countries; and by "great men" I mean not the wholesale murderers whom profane history so egregiously exalts, but the lofty minds who were not deceived by outward appearances but had, at least in some measure, touched reality. I think, for example, of Aeschylus in his titanic dramas, warning the Athenians to stop! look! and listen! — to cling to the grand ethical principles which made the glory that was Greece under the wise guidance of Aristides the Just, instead of yielding to the blandishments of Themistocles and the cruel imperialists who trampled on the rights of the dependencies of Athens and thus sowed the seeds for the downward cycle of Grecian history. Ignoring this warning, the Periclean Age, despite the efforts of Aeschylus, Socrates, and Plato to save it, if the truth be told, served posterity exceedingly ill and missed the grand destiny which the high gods of Olympus seemingly intended for it. I think, again, of the message iterated and reiterated by Shakespeare in his great tragedies — perhaps most powerfully in *Macbeth*. Here the retribution which comes to one who ruthlessly pursues his own selfish ambitions with cruelty, ingratitude, murder, is seared into the very soul of the attentive reader. In this drama, be it

noted, Shakespeare also shouts "Stop! Look! Listen!" to those who would achieve their personal ends by venturing unpurged into the psychic realms, as Macbeth did in consulting the three witches.

But we ordinary folk, who are without ambition to become kings and certainly have no murderous intentions towards any one — what have we to do with Macbeth's crimes, or with the decadence of Athenian virtue? Stop! Look! Listen! — to this warning from Kenneth Morris's *Golden Threads in the Tapestry of History*:

That force which, whispering within your heart, used your tongue this morning to sneer and speak traduction, brought down in its day empires in Anahuac and the Andes, stole provinces in Africa; forced opium on reluctant China; warred with, burned, and slandered Joan of Arc.

Finally, the basic ideas contained in the twin-doctrines of Karman and Reincarnation have been clearly set forth by the present Poet Laureate of England, John Masefield, in *A Creed*. Stop! Look! Listen!

I hold that when a person dies
His soul returns again to earth;
Arrayed in some new flesh-disguise
Another mother gives him birth.
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain
The old soul takes the roads again.

Such is my own belief and trust;
This hand, this hand that holds the pen,
Has many a hundred times been dust
And turned, as dust, to dust again;
These eyes of mine have blinked and shone
In Thebes, in Troy, in Babylon.

All that I rightly think or do,
Or make, or spoil, or bless, or blast,
Is curse or blessing justly due
For sloth or effort in the past.

My life's a statement of the sum
Of vice indulged or overcome.

I know that in my lives to be
My sorry heart will ache and burn,
And worship, unavailingly,
The woman whom I used to spurn,
And shake to see another have
The love I spurned, the love she gave.

And I shall know, in angry words,
In gibes, and mocks, and many a tear,
A carrion flock of homing-birds,
The gibes and scorns I uttered here.
The brave word that I failed to speak
Will brand me dastard on the cheek.

And as I wander on the roads
I shall be helped and healed and blessed;
Dear words shall cheer and be as goads
To urge to heights before unguessed.
My road shall be the road I made;
All that I gave shall be repaid.

So shall I fight, so shall I tread,
In this long war beneath the stars;
So shall a glory wreath my head,
So shall I faint and show the scars,
Until this case, this clogging mould,
Be smithied all to kingly gold.

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — *L. L. W.*

Have you ever thought that there must be the truth about things somewhere in the world if we could only find it? Theosophy is just that — the real facts about ourselves and our Universe. Theosophy is not new. How could it be new if it is the truth about things as they have always existed? The very word "Theosophy" means Divine Wisdom. And of course Divine Wisdom must spring from Divinity which is eternal.

This body of teachings which we call Theosophy today has been given many different names in past ages. It was called the Wisdom-Religion, the Secret Doctrine, and by other historic titles. Besides, every successive world-religion was an attempt by its Founder to put these ancient teachings into a new form. Like everything else religions grow old and deteriorate. Then they must be reborn. In this fresh form they are adapted (not changed) to the kind of people and to their ways of thinking and living to which the new religion is introduced. Thus we see that all religions express the same truths beneath their surface differences.

It is these fundamental doctrines upon which all religions have been founded which H. P. Blavatsky restated under the name *Theosophy*. But do not think that Theosophy is a new religion. No, it is rather an attempt for the first time in many centuries to give to the world a clear knowledge of that Divine Wisdom which *real* religion is. Thus Theosophy will eventually do away with the religious quarrels that have caused so much misery in the world. Humanity is really one family, but differences in religion have driven them into war and endless suffering.

At this point someone may naturally ask: "If Theosophy has been taught in the beginnings of all religions why is it that we only began to know this about fifty years ago?" Well, just consider what has

happened to the teachings of Jesus. How much of the Sermon on the Mount survived in the different churches? For centuries the devil, hell-fire, and no end of other grotesque doctrines replaced the Divine Wisdom of Christ's message. Of course these doctrines are fading out now, but is Christ's Christianity taking their place? This is why Theosophy is so badly needed in the modern world.

So we see how the Divine Wisdom underneath every World-religion has gradually been changed. It has been crusted over with human inventions and most of these have been actually injurious to man's happiness. But man did not realize that these teachings were there till Theosophy came to point them out and restore them.

The Theosophical Forum

NINETEEN THIRTY-SEVEN — H. S.

Theosophists the world over, filled with the never-satisfied longing of the human heart to do something more that is constructive for the race, are pausing at the threshold of 1937 watching keenly the conflict of unresolved forces at present rife everywhere. We are aware of the fact that we are the recipients of a Philosophy of Life; not one which promises a neat solution of individual and world problems all in a day, but one which gives courage, fortitude, understanding, sympathy, a sense of moral responsibility and perspective adequate for the meeting of these problems. We have been given a sublime philosophy indeed, but there is one thing more that is needed if we would pass on a *living* message to the world. This thing is vision. Spiritual vision, seeing with the inner eye, is not a gift that can be bestowed upon us. It does not come from without; it comes from within. To possess it one must bring it to birth, nurture it, give it wings. With our own eyes we must see.

"He has genius," said a recent poet and philosopher, "who can make us see the beauty he sees, but he is a master who can give us his own power of seeing." Yes, but even the master's gift of vision would be of no avail to us if we did not use it.

It was at the opening of that fateful year 1610 that Galileo for the first time turned his modest hand-wrought telescope to the sky and beheld the lovely vision of Jupiter and its revolving moons, and thereafter watched these tiny satellites as they pursued their measured course around their central luminary. What had he seen? Not merely a planet and its moons. There flashed upon his inner vision the picture of a Solar System — *our* Solar System, our Sun with its attendant revolving planets. The riddle was solved. Copernicus was vindicated; the heliocentric theory emerged once more after centuries of obscurity. A New Day had dawned. Science and Religion were profoundly shaken. Europe that had long been stirring from its intellectual sleep was at last waking.

The dramatic story is now but an item in the records of history, revived perhaps only in the imagination of the comparatively few who study the series of awakenings that mark the upward progress of cycles of civilization. But here is the point: it was vision that gave stature to the work of Galileo. It is vision in great or lesser degree that marks any man as illustrious. It was the mighty vision of H. P. Blavatsky and of Those behind her that launched the Theosophical Movement. She focussed the telescopic lens of her own peerless self upon the heavens of Eternal Truth, and we have received the message she brought from those bright Galaxies. Shall we then be content with another's vision? When shall we too begin to *see*?

Long ages will pass before the "Eye of Siva" will once more be fully active within us. We are as yet too closely linked with our Atlantean past when man forfeited his right to spiritual insight. What a foreboding cadence echoes in those ancient words quoted by H. P. B. (S. D. II, 20) from a Secret Volume: THEN THE THIRD EYE ACTED NO MORE! Yet the records of occult history tell how the crippled Atlantean Race was not abandoned; how Mystery Schools were established as centers of spiritual learning; how the infant Fifth Race, blind but innocent, was ruled over and guided by Initiate Kings who in their divine compassion protected it and led it safely into its lusty youth; how the Brotherhood of Mahatmans, a "focus of Living Flames," holds today, as it has through the ages, the children of men in its safekeeping, teaching, inspiring, challenging, through cycles of Light and cycles of Darkness, in order that a memory of our former splendor may quicken within *ourselves* our spiritual intuitions. For there is a promise that the Eye of Siva will one day again be active in the race. It is not a gift to be bestowed upon us even by the Great Brotherhood itself. We ourselves must open our own eyes.

It is a question to ponder over: "What is spiritual vision; how may we begin to develop it?"

As the Esoteric New Year is at its dawning, and in the silent sanctuary of our inner self we prepare for the New Day, meditating upon this

thought it may be that we shall receive that first glimmer prophetic of the light of intuition which went out some eight million years ago but which may again be ours to carry us forward into the rising cycle.

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: IX — *G. de Purucker*

CHELASHIP

G. de P. — I should like to know if chelaship is something added unto us by a way of life and a living, or is it something which pours out from ourselves as from inexhaustible fountains? Or is it both? This question seems to me to be basic.

M. Forbes — We have been told that there are many potentialities within each one of us, and it is only by contacts that we make that these potentialities will be awakened. I think that chelaship is a potentiality that we all have; but I believe that it needs the contact of a greater soul to bring forth that potentiality into action.

G. L. Davenport — I should think that chelaship is something added to us to a certain extent because it draws forth from us higher and higher feelings and stages of consciousness that induce us to work ever upward, at the same time awakening us to our responsibilities to all around us; and the consequent self-evolution and expansion of consciousness brings us so much nearer to the divine qualities that are inherent in man's constitution, and every element of his nature is worked upon and all of the lower qualities are thereby raised one stage.

F. F. Webster — As a military man of many years' experience, there is an analogy brought to my mind based on the military life in its true ethical background: Groups of men are taught by drills and tests to evoke from their own minds and wills and increase their bodily strength to do the necessary co-operative acts. The chela-path seems to me to be in a similar manner the evolving of ourselves with the help of those who are instructed to develop ourselves into a higher degree so that we are more able to accomplish the greater object.

E. W. Lambert — It seems to me that the chela-life is prompted first by a

law within oneself filtering into the mind of the man, and it assumes or becomes almost a conversational life with the Master within or a walking with that Master; but it requires a Teacher or helper to guide one even to his own Master.

A. B. Clark — The question is: Is chelaship or the chela-life the drawing forth of what is within or the adding of something from without? And as I understand the answer, it is both. As man is a part of, inseparable from, and a ray, as it were, of this infinite heart of the universe, all is within waiting to be evolved; but ages and ages would be required to bring it out by the sole process of evolution alone. It is a part of the nature of this universe that this very interlinking and interlocking of things should make it the function of those who would develop the higher to help the lower. We have there the law of compassion. We have brotherhood. We have love. And so those that have developed their consciousness so that it embraces a larger love express a greater degree of this inner divine infinity. They are the Masters. It is a part of their life, an expansion of themselves, to share this wider consciousness with their chelas so that the process of the chela's evolution becomes enormously hastened.

I remember a letter by one of the Masters' chelas written in the early days of the Theosophical Society before Mme. Blavatsky had her special group of students, to the members of the Pacific Coast, stating that if you had a Master it would bridge over many incarnations of evolution, save many, many incarnations of this long pitiless struggle, because a Master having already evolved greatly shares with you; you get a portion of his consciousness, of his life, his state of divine being. In one of his letters in the book *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, K. H. said this, which will illustrate what I mean: there was a tank filled with water, and another empty. One represents the Master, the other the chela, and they connect as it were by a pipe, and the empty one fills. (1) That is one illustration only.

But remember this fundamental proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*, on page 17, Vol. I, that there is no state of evolution gained by any evolving

being, except by effort and merit. This process of chelaship is a process of reaching nearer and nearer to the Master, a process of ever becoming more like the Master, sharing therefore in his limitless consciousness and compassion.

S. Eek — Chelaship or discipleship implies the presence or the existence of a Teacher. Hence it is obvious that the disciple doesn't pour from himself the so-called benefits, if that is the proper word, but he is given them. Now the law of Karman obviously has brought the disciple in position where he has contacted the Teacher. Previous lives have brought the two together, and consequently it is only the result of previous aspirations which has placed the disciple in a position of learning more. For some reason the question of discipleship has come up frequently here during our last meetings, and I think many of us have given the question more thought on that account. It may be possible that our Human Ego will so open itself to the influences of the Higher Self that *de facto* it establishes the relationship of chela and guru within the constitution of the individual himself, this relationship corresponding to the outer relationship between an accepted chela and guru in the accepted sense of the East. The former can exist without the latter, but the latter cannot exist without the former, and it is only when the two blend that the full awareness of chelaship takes place. I believe that discipleship in its ultimate sense or meaning is a desire to live a purer and a more spiritual life. It is an intense sympathy and love of one's fellow man, a desire to see everyone happy in the best sense of the word — not a happiness that requires position, fame, etc., but the happiness that comes from a mind and soul one in the knowledge of spiritual humbleness or spiritual aspirations.

F. C. Clemeshaw — I think that the life of chelaship is rather an attitude of mind — an attitude of mind which is a dedication of every act of our lives from the meanest to that which seems to us the greatest, the divinest. Consciousness expands in ever growing quality as we are able to live more and more in conscious dedication. Thus we naturally grow nearer to that heart of the Universe which is the ultimate of the chelapath. As we travel thus in dedication it will at the cyclic and karmic

time bring us to that Teacher who will open to us wider views, or who will point out wider horizons, or who will point out our own stumbling-blocks. This help comes from without, but that help we cannot take unless we have that inner attitude of dedication which alone enables us to accept the helping hand of a Teacher pointing the way along the Path.

G. de P. — As usual, it has struck me that all the answers have been beautiful and profound, they show advancement in study; and yet, I do not think that any of the answerers got just the drift of my question, doubtless my own fault, due to the difficulty of phrasing a question in such fashion that everybody will understand just what is meant. Most of the answers, possibly all, seem to point out the way to become aspirants for chelaship, and it is splendid that your thoughts should be running on these lines. But my question called for answers directly to this point: Is chelaship itself a giving or a receiving, a pouring out or a putting in. Do you see what I mean? I do not know that I could pick out a question harder to answer. I have pondered upon this all my life, and I am not yet completely satisfied that I have even a fair answer, but I think I have, and I am going to try to give to you what I think the proper answer is — but I assure you it is not a complete answer.

I think the reply lies in the words of the great Syrian Avatara, which in substance are: Seek ye the Kingdom of the Divine — the Kingdom of God as it runs — and all these other things will be added unto you. And that means everything: things of matter, things of the mind, things of the spirit. Why? You have your answer in the one word Evolution. Pause a moment and follow me in thought. A beast runs past a beautiful flower. What does the beast get from seeing that flower? A man a moment afterwards passes along the same path, reaches the flower, pauses, looks at it. What does the man get? Perhaps little more than the beast. But let a man of a different type come along that road, and see that flower and look into its heart. What does he get? A revelation not only of transcendent beauty, but a sublimity of thought. He sees something. Why? Because he has aroused in himself something that the beast has not yet evolved forth; and that the first man had not.

The first man had more than the beast, but not as much as the second man.

Do you see what I mean? You have to become before you can be. You have to pour out from yourself what is within, lying latent, before you can receive the revelation from without. If the revelation is not pouring out! — marvelous paradox — you will not be able to read and interpret the Universe around you. You will pass unseeing by.

What is genius of any kind? What is even the inventive power that some men have? Ability to see! It is in them, and the outer world is a stimulus, brings forth what is within already. You cannot receive anything from without before it is already within, awakened, aroused. Teach a child in the womb if you can the wonders of the solar universe. There is no response, there is no receiving capacity. But wait till the child is born and grows to become a man, and that which is within him has come out, the understanding. Then comes comprehension.

Seek ye first the divine within yourself, cultivate it, evoke it, awake it; and just in proportion as you do this, you will be receiving from without, because you give from within. You give yourself. You cannot receive anything from without until there is something within you to receive, a receiver. You pass unseeing by. That is just why the Masters are higher than we, are greater chelas than we, because they are greater receivers, simply because they are greater givers. You have to have that within yourself calling for recognition before you can receive and recognise.

Now that is, as I understand it, a good answer to my question: Is chelaship a receiving from without, or a giving from within? It is neither alone, but both together — a paradox.

And reverence due to the Teacher? Nothing dignifies a man so greatly. It is the man of servile soul who is afraid to recognise grandeur in some other man. He is not big enough. He is afraid of giving himself grandly. The little man is afraid of being "sat upon," or snubbed, he won't admit that the other man is greater than he. The man who really is great

inside recognises grandeur in other men, and bows to it because he himself is inwardly a great man. He recognises the security of his own manhood and can render homage and reverence and respect because he has them within himself. Reverence for a Teacher is a beautiful thing, and a sign of inner growth; and it is merely servility thinly disguised to consider that you, I, anyone is so frightfully independent and superior to others that he won't recognise greatness when he sees it. He has not it within himself.

It is precisely the same rule that teaches us to reverence the glory in the heart of a rose. We have it in us. We see it in the rose and render homage. To see beauty in the stars, their wonders, their mystery, their hid secrets, their stately movements in their orbital circuits: What is there more exquisite, more beautiful, more thought-provoking to look at than the flame of fire? What is fire? "Combustion." Isn't that an illuminating answer! What is a man? "Flesh and bones." Isn't that an illuminating answer! But to me they are not answers. They are just marks of stupidity. To me a man is a thought-producer, a lover, a giver, a genius, a creator, a power. A rose is a mystery, something from the invisible heart of Being exhaling itself in a marvelous beauty of form, perfume, color, and above everything else, something still grander, something that suggests the Beyond. You have the secret of chelaship just there.

FOOTNOTE:

1. It is a familiar saying that a well-matched couple "grow together," so as to come to a close resemblance in features as well as in mind. But do you know that between adept and chela — Master and Pupil — there gradually forms a closer tie; for the psychic interchange is regulated scientifically; whereas between husband and wife unaided nature is left to herself. As the water in a full tank runs into an empty one which it is connected with; and as the common level will be sooner or later reached according to the capacity of the feed-pipe, so does the knowledge of the adept flow to the chela; and the chela attains the adept-level according to his receptive capacities." — *Letters from the*

Masters of the Wisdom, pp. 82-3, Letter XXX

Footnote by C. J. This is evidently one of the letters to Mr. A. O. Hume, written in 1881 or 1882. Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, June, 1907, pp. 702-6. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

DOES THEOSOPHY DEMAND CELIBACY? — *Elsie V. Savage*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

It would seem far-fetched to discuss such a subject, except for the appalling ideas that are current among some people that to be a good Theosophist, and especially a member of the Esoteric School, it is a *sine qua non* that marriage and particularly having children should be sedulously avoided. Even where this extreme and fantastic notion does not exist, there are others who hold the belief, or else think that Theosophists hold the belief, that it is a sign of spiritual advancement to remain unmarried, and places one on a higher rung of the evolutionary ladder than others who are married and have established a home and family.

Before searching in our Theosophical literature to find either confirmation or refutation of such a curious conception, one can say at the outset that if we look around at the various Theosophists we know, we shall certainly find that there is no line of demarcation between married and unmarried folk: the married people as a class, either with children or without, appear to be neither more nor less evolved than the unmarried ones; and the unmarried people as a class appear to be leading neither more nor less unselfish lives with consequent benefit to humanity.

There may be a thousand and one reasons why a person may not choose to marry, or may remain unmarried; but it seems pretty certain that if one has reached "the higher levels of spiritual attainment," and must lead a life which "is fatal not only to the ordinary course of married life" (See *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, Introduction, p. xviii), he will not be advertising the fact to the world, and contrasting his own purity and attainments with the lower degree of attainment of

his fellows. As in ordinary scholastic pursuits, I imagine that when we reach "the higher levels of spiritual attainment," we shall see so much more clearly how much we haven't attained to, that it will quite overshadow the shortcomings (!) of our fellows.

Turning to *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 372, we read:

Does it seem to you a small thing that the past year has been spent only in your "family duties"? Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty? Believe me my "pupil," the man or woman who is placed by Karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices and loving-kindnesses, will through these faithfully fulfilled rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all Humanity — what better path towards the enlightenment you are striving after than the daily conquest of Self, the perseverance in spite of want of visible psychic progress, the bearing of ill-fortune with that serene fortitude which turns it to spiritual advantage — since good and evil are not to be measured by events on the lower or physical plane.

And it might be said that the married couple have double the opportunity to practise "the bearing of ill-fortune with that serene fortitude which turns it to spiritual advantage," because in the true marriage there is an equal sharing not only of joys but of sorrows and difficulties too.

In the opening paragraph of H. P. B.'s "First Preliminary Memorandum" when the E. S. T. was founded in 1888, she wrote:

. . . It is but fair to state at once that such duties [those to be undertaken by applicants] will never interfere with, nor encroach upon, the probationer's family duties; . . .

(a probationer she defines as a member of the Esoteric School).

Turning to *The Esoteric Tradition* by Dr. G. de Purucker, Vol. II, pp. 667-8, we find the following:

. . . The Theosophist is a strong believer in honorable marriage, not only because of the reasons just given, but even more strongly because marriage involves the undertaking of responsibilities and duties and ties of intimacy bringing in their train highly important lessons of self-forgetfulness, and frequently of self-abnegation, in the course of which human character is strengthened, selfishness is undermined, and consideration and unremitting thought for others and desire for their welfare are so continuously instilled into the psychology of men and women as to become habitual and therefore integral portions of character which grows and unfolds the more rapidly thereby.

The whole of this section in *The Esoteric Tradition* is worth turning to and reading. It would take too much space to quote all that would show the saneness of Theosophy on the subject; and Theosophy should not be confused with views held at times by even devoted Theosophists!

I am not urging Marriage upon people, for that is their own concern; but merely uttering a protest against erroneous views on the subject, which if allowed to gain currency will be one of the most active forces to blacken the name of Theosophy. And when these views are directed against individuals, and lead to comments as to whether such and such a person is forwarding his evolution by marriage, whether or not he is doing right to have children, how far apart his children are spaced, — in sheer exhaustion of appropriate language I am reminded of the Old English Adage, attributed to Table Talk by Selden:

Of all actions of a man's life, his marriage does least concern other people; yet of all actions of our life, 'tis most meddled with by other people.

A single person (or a married one either for that matter) who judges others harshly for "entering the married state," would do well to remember the following words of K. H. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 360):

But there are persons, who, without ever showing any external sign of selfishness, are intensely selfish in their inner spiritual aspirations. These will follow the path once chosen by them with their eyes closed to the interests of all but themselves, and see nothing outside the narrow pathway filled with their own personality. They are so intensely absorbed in the contemplation of their own supposed "righteousness" that nothing can ever appear right to them outside the focus of their own vision distorted by their self-complacent contemplation, and their judgment of the right and wrong.

Even chelaship, in the words of Dr. de Purucker, "is nothing weird, it is nothing queer, it is nothing erratic. It is the opposite of all these. It is the most natural thing for you as men and women to love, to strive for, and to follow."

The Theosophical Forum

COSMIC RHYTHMS IN LOGARITHMS -- *La Fayette Plummer*

When we speak of the logarithm of any number, we mean the power to which we have to raise a certain fixed number called the base, in order to make it equal to the given number. For instance, we all know that $2^3 = 8$. Here, 8 is the given number, 3 is its logarithm, and 2 is the "certain fixed number called the base." Thus $2^3 = 8$ may be written: $\log_2 8 = 3$; or, expressed in words: the logarithm of 8 to the base of 2 equals 3. To make an algebraic statement, call x the given number; b , the base; and n , the logarithm of x . Thus $b^n = x$. We may then state the following equality:

$b^n = x$ is the same as saying that $\log_b x = n$.

It is obvious that a complete system of logarithms can be constructed with *any* number as base, but the base 10 is used for the system or table of Common Logarithms. With ten as the base, we find, for example, that the logarithm of 8 is .9031, because $10^{.9031} = 8$. Similarly, with base ten, the logarithm of 2 is .30103, because $10^{.30103} = 2$. If 1.414 were to be used as the base, the logarithm of 2 would be 2, because 1.414^2 equals 2. If 25 were to be used as the base, the logarithm of 2 would be .2153, because $25^{.2153}$ equals 2.

From the above it may be deduced that any number is theoretically the base of its own system of logarithms, which is merely to say that any number may be raised to the required power in order to make it equal to any other number; and, conversely, any number may be considered a power of any other number.

We learn in algebra that x^0 equals 1. This means that any number with a zero exponent becomes 1. Thus, taking the zero power of the three numbers used above as representing bases for three systems of logarithmic scales, 10^0 equals 1, 1.414^0 equals 1, and 25^0 equals 1. We

find, then, that in each case, the logarithm of 1 is 0, or, to express it algebraically, regardless of the base, $\log 1 = 0$.

With these facts in view, we may draw some interesting conclusions concerning Cosmic Life. The Ancient Wisdom affirms that the universe is constructed upon a hierarchical basis. All things are alive, and the universe is a living organism, composed of units, all of which in their turn are alive, and composed again of units. Thus is formed the Ladder of Life, of which every rung is a hierarchy. To put it otherwise, everything is composed of hosts of living units, subservient to, and uniting to form inner and outer vehicles of, the ruling consciousness; every entity is but one member of a family composed of hosts of like entities all subservient to, because uniting to form the vehicles of manifestation for, a greater entity. Thus, the idea of a supreme God, than which there can be none superior, fades away before the light of Theosophy, for it reveals such a being merely as the representative of a certain type of cosmic beings.

And now, "to moralize the subject," let us think of every entity in the universe as a spiritual force, a divine energy; and because every entity has a karma peculiar to itself, with no two karmans exactly alike, let us say that to every entity belongs a certain number, which number is the symbolic representation of the qualities and attributes which go to make that entity just what it is. Actually, numbers are merely names for relationships, and when we recognise that the universe is built upon the mysteries of number, we find that notation may be used to express symbolically the mysteries of the universe. Thus, it would not be surprising to find that in the Cosmic scheme the relationships and workings of the various intelligence-energies are, on their own plane, related to what we in our own limited way see to be numerical formulas and processes. Seeing the thing the other way around, then, we may expect to learn something of cosmic life by studying mathematics — symbolically.

Ascribing, then, to every entity a number, and keeping in mind that every entity is a hierarchy, let us call that number the *base* of a system

of logarithms; the various progressive degrees of development of that entity are represented by the *powers* to which that base may be raised; while the resultant outer manifestation, on the physical plane let us say, is represented by the resultant *number*. Take man as an instance in point. Every man is the manifestation of a certain hierarchy, and the summit or Hyparxis is a consciousness-center, enduring throughout the cycles. That consciousness-center, then, is the entity to which we shall ascribe a number, calling it the base of its system of logarithms. The various stages of the cosmic journey will be represented by the various powers of that base-number, and the outer manifestation will be represented by the resultant value.

Our expression, " $b^n = x$ is the same as saying that $\log_b x = n$ " becomes:

"A cosmic consciousness at a certain stage of the journey produces X, its outwardly manifested self, is the same as saying that the function by a cosmic consciousness of its outwardly manifested self, represents a certain stage of the journey."

This could be applied in numberless ways. Take mankind as a whole, "As many men on earth (as many values of x), so many Gods in Heaven (so many values of $\log x$, representing the powers of the cosmic consciousnesses which are the bases or roots of the members of the human family)." The difficulty with us is that while we know something of the value of x , the personality, we know neither the base nor its power, our "logarithm." Thus, we cannot recognise either the Divine Monad or the Higher Self. The path of Self study leads to Initiation, the fruit of which is Self Knowledge.

Consider now the Solar System. The Cosmic consciousness, working through the sun and the planets, is the base of its system, the outer forms are x ; and their higher counterparts are the logarithms of x , or the degree to which the consciousness center has progressed and succeeded in manifesting its innate powers.

We may extend our picture to universal proportions. We have

observed that any number may be expressed as a certain power of any other number, and let us say of 10, for example. The universe is built upon a tenfold plan, and the entities therein might be considered as various powers of universal consciousness. Thus, the outer appearance of a thing is a maya, an illusion, and to discover its true nature we must find out the power of universal consciousness that that thing is.

Unity is in all things; from unity we issued forth, and when the great cycles of diversity are over, to unity shall we all return. This is symbolized in the fact that the zero power of all numbers is 1, or unity. As we have seen, it matters not what number we may take, its zero power is always equal to 1. Put it the other way, if you like: when the logarithm of x is 0, it matters not what the base number, x equals 1. Here we must conjure up the picture of the dawn of cosmic life. As yet there had been no manifested worlds, no entities to live on them; all was drawn into the "Great Mother," Space, the Heart of the Universe. All outer manifested forms had entered into union with the All. To put it in our mathematical form: throughout the Boundless, x equalled 1, because $\log x$ equalled 0. *But the base remained unchanged.* The essential core of every entity was a cosmic spark from the Central Fire, which had burned long ago in other cycles, and still retained its ultimate essence, its Divine Selfhood, even though it no longer manifested. But it was destined to pursue its way throughout new cosmic manvantaras, bringing forth from within itself new veils or garments, accumulating new richness of experience, until the close of the cycle, when $\log x$ will once more equal 0, and all outer forms be withdrawn into unity, universal Space, awaiting a new Cosmic Dawn.

Our conception of the Cosmic structure will be widened if we look upon every entity as three aspects of consciousness: firstly, the base of a hierarchical system, composed of entities below him on the ladder of life; secondly, the power, or indication of the degree of perfection of some entity higher than he on the ladder, which higher entity is the base of the hierarchy to which he belongs, and thirdly, x , the outer manifestation of an inner god, which is himself, belongs to him individually, as it were, and is his own future reward, if he will strive

onwards and upwards for ever.

The Theosophical Forum

PERCEPTION — W. S. Date

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

PART I

Probably the best method of introducing a rather unusual subject would be to give a dictionary definition of the word *perception*:

1. Perception is denned as the act, process, or faculty, of perceiving, the mental action of knowing external things through the medium of sense-presentations. 2. Intuitive apprehension, insight, or discernment.

Such actions as tasting, feeling, hearing, smelling, and seeing, are so commonplace and so very nearly automatic, that one rarely stops to question or examine them with a view to determining their infallibility or fallibility as the case may be. We touch a piece of wood, and we say it is hard; boiling water may unfortunately come into contact with our skin, and we say it is hot; and so on, and anyone who dared to question the truth of these statements would be advised to bang his head against a table, or to plunge his hand into a saucepan of boiling water, and he would soon find out the truth of the statement. Under normal circumstances there can be little doubt that the "Doubting Thomas" would very quickly be convinced.

However, during the last quarter of a century in the Western World, there have been some investigations conducted on a comparatively small scale, with some extraordinary results. The most known of these has been that field of investigation connected with hypnotism and mesmerism. One simple experiment was the placing of a drop of cold water on the hand of a person under hypnosis, and the suggestion being made that the water was boiling, whereupon a blister appeared upon the skin. Another experiment was to get a person under hypnosis

to read a closed book. Many other experiments have occurred from time to time, the results of which have been passed over because they have not been fully understood.

In this connexion there have been interesting statements in recent papers. I refer only to two. In a recent issue of *The Daily Telegraph*, an account is given of experiments conducted and reported to the International Optical Congress at Oxford, "in which persons securely blindfolded had recognised the form and colour of objects, had "read" the headlines of a newspaper and had even been able to reproduce shorthand written on a blackboard." In *THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM* for January, 1936, p. 45, there is an interesting account of "The Fire-Walking Performance in England.'

Now the effect of these experiments is to throw a doubt upon the correctness of sense-impressions. In the good old days cold water was cold water, and fire was hot; but now apparently there seems to be a certain doubt about the matter. With reference to the hardness of wood: in common with other substances, wood, we know, is composed of atoms; but I call your attention to what Sir Oliver Lodge has to say about the atom (Read p. 55, *My Philosophy*.)

On this view, or indeed in any form of the electrical theory of matter, the atom of matter consists mainly of empty space." (1)

So our solid wood has become something that has at least as much space in it, relatively speaking, as there is space in the sky. So much for the hard wood.

By way of contrast, let us take something that we have been accustomed to regard as the most impalpable of substances, namely the ether; and I refer you again to Sir Oliver Lodge, and his remarks on this ethereal substance on p. 145 of the same book.

... but on the analogy of matter the ether is of the order a million million times as dense as "water.'

So now we see that everything that we thought was something is

nothing; and the something that we thought was nothing is everything. These tools of sense are the instruments which every lay scientist uses in his investigations, so that it can hardly be wondered at that the "ultima thule" of each scientific generation is merely the jumping-off place for the next. This of course must obviously be the case, because when a race is on the upward arc of a cycle, each new generation is born with, and develops, sense-organs which on the average give a little clearer impression of reality than had been obtained by their less well-equipped forebears. This is a natural corollary to the law of evolution.

Modern materialistic science is concerned only with effects, and in the field of effects it has done, and is doing, very valuable work. The great benefits that have accrued to the human race through this study of effects must not be underestimated. Modern science is very effective as far as it goes. It is when it endeavors to measure reality and the world of causes with its little materialistic ruler that it is out of its depth. I refer you to a passage written by one who seems to me to be one of the most outstanding personalities of the last century, namely H. P. Blavatsky. On p. 669 of Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine* she sums up the very materialistic science of the latter half of the last century in a very complete manner. That science has moved away a little from this hard material outlook, I will not deny, in fact I have already stated that such must be the case.

Thus it is that the scientists have committed one of the most elementary errors of logic in building up their scientific edifice upon an unproved assumption, this assumption being that the senses transmit true sensations of the matter with which they come into contact. Another assumption is that the senses are aware of everything within their ambit. Now when these assumptions are shaken, the whole scientific structure begins to totter, inasmuch as it is in any degree considered to be a measure of reality. The following, from a review of a book by one of America's best known scientists, *Man the Unknown*, by Dr. Alexis Carrel, illustrates exactly what I mean:

"Man," Dr. Carrel writes, "should be the measure of all. On the contrary, he is a stranger in the world he has created." If, therefore, we are to attain to a better adjustment between man and his environment, we must desist from studying matter and concentrate upon knowing ourselves. "Our ignorance of ourselves," writes Dr. Carrel, "has given to mechanics, physics, and chemistry the power to modify at random the ancestral forms of life." He then proceeds to study the effects of such modifications. . . . Man is not to be comprehended merely as a chemical compound. There is something more important even than human intelligence, and that is moral sense. "Moral beauty," writes Dr. Carrel, "is an exceptional and very striking phenomenon. He who has contemplated it but once never forgets its aspect. This form of beauty is far more impressive than the beauty of nature and of science. It gives to those who possess it divine gifts, a strange and inexplicable power. It increases the strength of intellect. It establishes peace among men. Much more than science, art or religious rites, moral beauty is the basis of civilization."

How, then, are we to recover that lost basis? The first thing to do is to separate the quantitative from the qualitative. "In man," writes Dr. Carrel, "the things which are not measurable are more important than those which are measurable." A new synthesis must then be built up inspired by a precise knowledge, not only of the body, but also of the soul of man.

PART II

It may be noticed that the definition of perception which I have given was divided into two parts. Having dealt with the first part, let us turn our attention to the second part: "Intuitive apprehension, insight, or discernment." As Dr. Carrel suggests, the study of man by man has been grossly neglected. The cycle of science is completing its round, and we are arriving back in Ancient Greece, and the Delphic Oracle is again uttering its injunction that rang through Greece at the height of her

glory: "Man, know thyself." Ancient Greece was the farthestmost Western point influenced by Eastern Science. In the East, the study of man and his relation to the universe has been carried on from unrecorded time. This has been so because the Eastern metaphysicians, philosophers, and scientists, have realized that by the understanding of the constitution of man, they were given the key to reality. They never mixed cause and effect. They realized that through the organs of sense man could only contact effects and must remain ignorant of causes.

To start off on our investigation of man and his relation to his surroundings, we need to get one fundamental fact very clear. Man must be divided up into at least two constituent parts, the operator and the machine, or body and soul, or conscious and subconscious, whichever you like to call them.

Now the second half of our definition speaks of "Intuition." I think we may define Intuition as the method of perceiving something without the medium of the senses. How is this to be done? Let us turn to an ancient work, translated in part by H. P. Blavatsky from the Senzar and Tibetan as *The Voice of the Silence*:

Having become indifferent to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the rajah of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion.

The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real.

Let the Disciple slay the Slayer.

For —

When to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams;

When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE — the inner sound which kills the outer.

Then only, not till then, shall he forsake the region of *Asat*, the false, to come unto the realm of *Sat*, the true.

The Self of matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both.

Ere thy Soul's mind can understand, the bud of personality must

be crushed out; the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection. .

..

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom . . . — From Fragment I

These same ethical teachings are also found embodied in the New Testament.

Now if the theory of evolution holds good, it follows that there must be high types of men as well as low types. We know where to find the low types. Where are the higher ones to be found? A more evolved person would be able to comprehend to a greater degree the secrets of nature, and we have all read of the Mystery-Schools of Greece, such as Eleusis and Samothrace, and also those of Egypt. Students have endeavored to discover what was taught at these schools, but have never succeeded, and this is only logical, as a high degree of "intuition" would be necessary to understand the teachings. What was taught to the elect students was the Laws of Nature, and it was here that the candidate for the Mysteries trained himself, and was instructed in the deeper Laws of Nature. Christ taught in the same way, for he told his disciples that "unto the multitude I speak in parables, but unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven." He also said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," also, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all these things shall be added unto you."

This is precisely the same advice as Dr. Carrel is offering us 2000 years later. The basic idea underlying all religions worthy of the name, is the development of the inner consciousness, in order to enable the individual to apprehend more clearly the reality and purpose of life. The teachings given out by various teachers, in public in parables, and in the Mystery Schools in essence, and the rules of conduct laid down, were directed towards the extension of the consciousness to enable the individual to pierce the veil of matter and to get a little nearer to

reality. These teachings have been corrupted and overlaid with the ideas of men who have come after, and sacerdotalism almost inevitably corrodes them with the passage of time, so that we now find the jewels of truth covered with a heavy layer of dross.

Herodotus speaks rather disparagingly of the Mystery Schools because, when in Egypt, he had been told by an initiate that one of their great secrets was that the "Gods were men." This shows that Herodotus, although he may have been a fine historian, was not one who had been instructed in the Mysteries, (2) for in truth the statement made by the Egyptian initiate is the deepest of mysteries. In the West the Mystery Schools were closed by Justinian, about the Sixth Century, because in a cycle of increasing materiality they had become corrupt. Nor are these teachings confined to the East. Many English poets show great intuition in their writings, possibly none more so than Alfred Lord Tennyson. He has written a poem, "The Mystic," which is a description of a person who has attained to a high state of perfection, and he closes with the lines:

How could ye know him? Ye were yet within
The narrower circle, he had wellnigh reached
The last which with a region of white flame,
Pure without heat, into a larger air
Upburning and an ether of black blue,
Investeth and ingirds all other lives

Thus it is that we have two methods of perception open to us, the one, the study of the phenomenal world of effects through the medium of the senses, and the other the study of the world of reality and causes through the intuition and higher vision. Possibly the most successful path would be the one that lies midway between the two. The scientist tells us how to pursue the former, and the teachers, poets, mystics, and sages, tell us how to discover the latter. Tennyson was one of these and he leaves us concise instructions in this second method when he writes:

With faith that comes with self-control,
The truths that never can be proved

Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from
Soul in Soul

FOOTNOTES:

1. Because of lack of space, these and following interesting quotations have had to be omitted or curtailed. Eds. ([return to text](#))
2. Since writing the above, I notice that in *The Esoteric Tradition*, on p 608, Dr. de Purucker states that Herodotus was an Initiate. — W. S. D. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — *C. J. Ryan*

AMERICAN AND BRITISH SCIENTISTS PROTEST AGAINST THE ABUSE OF SCIENCE

The Rising Tide of Theosophical idealism in the outside world has just received a strong impetus from an unexpected source — academic science! Two of the most important scientific bodies in the world are actually turning their backs on one of their most cherished and time-honored positions and are walking in step with the Mahatmans, though they may not be fully aware of it! The orthodox position held by modern scientists, until this surprising revolution, was eloquently expressed by the Master K H in a letter written to A P. Sinnett more than fifty years ago. He writes

Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy — therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics (1) Being but a cold classification of facts outside man, and existing before and after him, her domain of usefulness ceases for us at the outer boundary of these facts, and whatever the inferences and results for humanity from the materials acquired by this method, she little cares. Were the sun, the great nourishing father of our planetary system, to hatch granite chickens out of a boulder "under test conditions" tomorrow, they (the men of science) would accept it as a scientific fact without wasting a regret that the fowls were not alive so as to feed the hungry and the starving yet you are content to spend your life in a work which aids only that same exact science. . . .

. . . The realistic science of fact on the other hand is utterly prosaic. Now, for us, poor unknown philanthropists, no fact of either of these sciences is interesting except in the degree of its potentiality of moral results, and in the ratio of its usefulness to

mankind. And what in its proud isolation, can be more utterly indifferent to everyone and everything or more bound to nothing but the selfish requisites for its advancement, than this materialistic science of fact? . . . what have the laws of Faraday, Tyndall, or others to do with philanthropy in their abstract relations with humanity, viewed as an intelligent whole? What care they for *Man* as an isolated atom of this great and harmonious whole, even though they may be sometimes of practical use to him? . . . — *The Occult World*

But the Earth does move, and science has awakened to its false position at last. Is it unreasonable to claim that the constant diffusion of Theosophical ideals by earnest students of Theosophy throughout the world for half a century has had some influence in this matter? We know that not a few scientists and popular writers have read and do read our literature, and the power of concentrated thought directed toward a worthy end must not be ignored. The new alinement in the American and British worlds of science is briefly summarized in the following extract from a long article on the subject in the *Pathfinder*, for September 26, 1936.

The religious and social-minded last week had much to think about as philosophers aired their opinions on the state of humanity in the modern era. . . . In Blackpool (England), the British Association for the Advancement of Science saw society in such dangerous straits that the social aspects of technical progress were questioned. In Cambridge, Mass., the Harvard Conference heard suggestions for a "supreme world court of wisdom" to save mankind from man's inhumanity.

Reports from England indicated that science itself was in revolt against the uses to which new discoveries have been put. . . . Scientists, said Prof. J. C. Philip at the Blackpool gathering, "are increasingly impatient at the extent to which their knowledge is made to serve inhuman ends." . . . The attitude at Blackpool was *in decided contrast to science's traditional indifference to*

anything except pure research.

At Harvard four distinguished philosophers were detailed to study the possibility of forming a world court to exert a moral authority similar to that exercised by the church in the Middle Ages! Shall we have a new *scientific religion*? If so, it would be well to adopt Dr. Alexis Carrel's suggestion in his great book, *Man the Unknown*, and find out more about what man really is. This, of course, means study on Theosophical lines, and the ultimate discovery that the Masters of Wisdom already have solved the problem and have given as much of the answer as we uninitiated persons can be expected to understand.

In August, 1891, H. P. Blavatsky's *The Blessings of Publicity* was published in *Lucifer* and is now available in reprint. She quotes an attack on Theosophy in which the writer protests against anything whatever being withheld from the public, saying, "It is no longer necessary for Science to take the veil, as she was forced to do for security in times past." She replies that while "secrets of the purer and profounder life," mentioned by the critic, should be universally known, there is much that is so dangerous that unless a man "*lives the life*" he cannot be entrusted with them. She adds that this does not apply only to such things as explosives, but still more to secrets of occultism which can be far more terribly misused, and "neither the criminal hand, nor the *immaterial*, invisible weapons used, can ever be detected." Yet there are apparently sane people offering inducements to the utterly unprepared, morally, to dabble in so-called "occult arts" and magical practices! If the scientists set up a "supreme world court of wisdom" to protect humanity from the shocking evils they are beginning to recognise as the result of putting powder and matches into the hands of moral infants or imbeciles, let us hope that it will confess that the Wise Teachers of old were right in the extraordinary precautions they took before they admitted candidates into the Greater Mysteries. Science may not need to hide behind a veil in order to protect *itself* in these days, but it may have to put up a triple wall of brass to protect the world against the indiscretions of *its votaries*.

AN EMINENT SCIENTIST ON THE THREE REALITIES IN THE UNIVERSE

Again we must draw attention to the spreading of fundamental teachings of Theosophy among our most learned and advanced scientists. One of the daring claims of the Ancient Wisdom is the ultimate unity of all things: that we cannot separate the working of the cosmos into independent or rival compartments such as ethical or spiritual laws, physical laws, biological laws, etc. The universe is One, and love, compassion, justice, beauty — forms of consciousness, are just as integral and inseparable parts of the whole, a "Living Universe," as suns and planets and the erroneously so-called "blind" forces. "Love is the cement of the universe," as G. de Purucker says.

Such ideas, however, have never been welcomed by orthodox, official science, which has been proud of its concentration on a mechanistic interpretation of Nature including an electro-chemical explanation of life and consciousness. What, then, can have aroused the distinguished Professor Dayton C. Miller, of the Case School of Applied Science, Cleveland, Ohio, to speak as follows at the fifty-second Commencement of that important scientific institution. Has he been studying H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* or G. de Purucker's *Esoteric Tradition*? The entire address is published in *Science*, October 2, 1936, to which our readers are referred as we have room for only a few sentences.

I am prepared to adopt as the realities which constitute the universe three manifestations of absolute value things which are eternally true — *science*, things which are intrinsically good — *ethics*, and things which are inherently beautiful — *aesthetics*. There are not three different worlds of values, there is one universe of reality, a unity of the good, the true and the beautiful. And more, we must believe in the inherent and everlasting ability of mankind to progress towards an ultimate ideal or destiny, which requires that one's life be so ordered as to be in harmony with these eternal virtues. Such a life brings the greatest happiness and satisfaction. Such a system of philosophy is not new, in fact, it is one of the oldest systems.

The aim of life should be to secure the greatest development and manifestation of these qualities, and a life based upon such an ideal should bring the greatest happiness and satisfaction. Mere physical pleasure is a part of the reality of nature, and its pursuit is not only allowable but laudable. However, the foolish man often overlooks the fact that nature is scientific and ethical in its very essence, as well as esthetic and epicurean, and that sooner or later he must submit to the inevitable consequences of his actions the wise man knows that the most exquisite and satisfying pleasure comes to him who practices his enjoyments with regard to the unity and solidarity of *universe does not keep its ethics in one compartment and its beauty in another*, to be sampled as one selects, it is true throughout, it is beautiful throughout, and it is ethical throughout. Ethics is just as real and just as fundamental as science, but not more so. . . .

The aloof attitude of scientists which Dr. Dayton C. Miller does not share and which has begun to change, was intensified by their belief that such things as morality, love, and altruism were not basic either in nature or man, but arose from the "instinct of the herd" for physical protection, the crude "survival of the fittest group." In reality, this is a plain perversion, and science is beginning to suspect it.

NEW LIGHT ON ANCIENT MAN IN ENGLAND

Informed students of Theosophy are aware that the "Piltdown Man" or *Eoanthropus* (dawn-man), discovered in the South of England in 1912, has long been considered to be, as Sir Arthur Keith wrote in 1914, "the most ancient human remains yet found in England," and probably to belong to the very ancient Piltdown period, the oldest in which man has been supposed to exist (unless some disputed recent discoveries throw him back to the Miocene). *Eoanthropus* had a large brain, but also some marked ape-like features, and he was associated with the most primitive stone implements known, the "eoliths" (dawn-stones). It is now reported that a second and far more perfect *Eoanthropus* has been found in an undisturbed deposit of the "100-foot Terrace" in the

valley of the Thames, which was laid down when the river was flowing at a level of about 100 feet above its present bed. This period is called the Acheulean and is far later than Keith's estimate for *Eoanthropus* No 1, and the Acheulean implements are of a very high order, showing great skill and artistic tastes. *Eoanthropus* II is stated to be only about 183,000 years old, but No 1, his predecessor *may* be at least 400,000. This great difference in the antiquity of nearly identical types (No II is somewhat *lower* though far more modern!) is of special interest in showing that other kinds of *homo*, not considered to be our ancestors — independent species almost — could linger on for tens or hundreds of thousands of years until far more intelligent races appeared (such as the advanced Acheuleans) from the unknown. We shall hear much more about this remarkable discovery, for, as the report in the *Listener* says, "from the standpoint of evolution, the Acheulean period is "but as yesterday," and the dating adds to the rapidly growing suspicion that, as sub-men lasted so much longer than was thought, so "man proper" may have a much longer past than the first evolutionists imagined possible " Just as is taking place in America, where highly intelligent man has at last been admitted to have existed at the time of the mammoth, 10,000 years ago, so the antiquity of "man proper" in Europe is being pushed back farther and farther into the night of time.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Sir William Crookes, the famous chemist, was a scientist who had a far larger outlook than the average into the "metaphysical" or super-physical aspect of life and nature, and he thereby earned the direct assistance of the Master M, when he took such an important part in initiating the new outlook in physics which destroyed the old materialistic creed ([return to text](#))

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: XII — *H.*

T. Edge

THE EGG

This is a very favorite and comprehensive symbol. Its spheroidal shape and its function as a life-germ are alike emblematic, and are connected with each other, as will appear. Our Easter is largely made up from an ancient North European festival of rebirth, which was celebrated in Spring, which is the appropriate time of year for such a festival, as it is then that nature comes to new life. It was not the birth of the year that was celebrated; it was rebirth in general, but that particular time was chosen as being most fitting. The egg is of course a familiar accompaniment of Easter celebration, and has not much to do with the ecclesiastical side of the festival, as far as one can see. But scholars will tell us that the egg was used by others besides the Northern peoples and their Christianized successors, and that it has been universally venerated as a sacred symbol, many people refraining from eating it on that account.

The Egg stands for that primordial Chaos, that Great Deep, Waters of Space, etc., mentioned in cosmogonies as being the great womb of Nature, the Virgin Mother, out of which the universe is produced by the fructifying breath of Divine Spirit. But again, the same symbol is used to denote the universe thus produced, and in this sense it is spoken of as the Mundane Egg or World-Egg. The comparison of the universe with a great egg is a most profound and apt analogy, and is naturally to be found in all cosmogonies. The spheroidal shape is that of all the worlds that revolve in space, as also the shape of eggs, seeds, and germs in general, drops of water, and many other things. It is the most comprehensive of all shapes and the most perfect and yet simple of forms, produced by an exact balance of forces expansive and contractile and equal in all directions. Cosmogonies usually go on to describe the splitting of this egg into parts representing the heavens

and the earth, etc., and the respective symbolism of shell, white, and yolk. Within the egg is the germinal point; and by studying the anatomy and physiology of the egg before fructification, and the various stages of development of the embryo after fructification, much can be learnt about universal law by analogical reasoning. The development of the egg is actually a repetition of the entire cosmic process by which worlds and living beings are created. Can this be merely an interesting analogy, an accidental coincidence? No; for the same laws pervade the whole universe, as a whole, in its greater parts, and down to its minutest subdivisions; and there is not a living being, however minute and apparently inert, but is following those laws of development, at one stage or another. The body of man himself is born from an egg, though this is developed internally, instead of being dropped as is the case with fowls. A seed may be called an egg — the difference is little more than a question of names.

So the egg stands as symbol of that most comprehensive of laws with which Theosophy deals — universal self-evolution. The universe is a vast aggregate of living beings, all of which are evolving, each according to its own particular stage in the vast process, and according to the particular cosmic hierarchy to which it may belong. And the process is one of self-directed evolution from within. A mechanical doctrine of evolution tries to represent it as a process of accretion or adding together of parts; but that would not be evolution, not natural growth. Such a process would result in a chaotic mass of unorganised fragments; evolution demands that there should be a plan on which to build. That plan is contained in the germ within the egg. Biologists can watch the actual process taking place; but, though they see the scenes shifting, they cannot with their microscopes discern the scene-shifters.

All we can see with the microscope is the builders as they emerge from invisibility; the life-forces at the moment when they enter upon the plane of physical matter. We can trace things back to a minute speck, and no farther. That minute germinal speck is the point where the forces enter the physical plane. There is an ancient saying that *omne vivum ex ovo*, and since the universe is composed entirely of living

beings, the egg must be omnipresent as being the germinal form of every organism, whatever natural kingdom it may belong to. In the numerical symbology of the Secret Doctrine the cipher is sometimes called the egg, which it resembles in its shape; and this, taken with the straight stroke, representing the fecundating principle, makes the sign for the number ten (10). The zero does not imply mere nihility — an utterly untenable idea — but simply the absence of number; it is "no number"; so that the circle represents the universe in an unmanifested state, which to our conceptions appears as nothing, though it is *all*.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AND POLITICS — *G. de Purucker*

[The subjoined is the reprint of a letter written by the Leader to a correspondent who had written to him asking about the relationship of the Theosophical Society to political activity, if any such relationship existed or should exist; and the Leader's answer is here-under reproduced with the permission of the one who received it in answer to the questions asked. Naturally the name and address have been deleted, as well as an introductory paragraph of personal character, for these do not concern the main body of thought that the letter contains.

This letter is printed here because it amounts to a Statement of the policy of the Theosophical Society in connexion with the matters of which it treats, a policy which has been sacredly followed and unchanged both in generals and in particulars since the time of H. P. B. and of Colonel Olcott; in which connexion the reader's attention is drawn to a somewhat similar Statement of policy made by H. P. B. and Colonel Olcott in June, 1883, which may be found originally printed in *The Theosophist*; and as this Statement is still interesting and valuable, it is reproduced for the reader's convenience here- under at the end of the Leader's own letter. — Eds.]

Point Loma, California

The Leader's Private Office

3rd November, 1936.

Dear ____:

Let me say, first, that you need have no fear of any kind whatsoever, that as long as I live the T. S. will wander one inch from the traditional Theosophical and extremely wise policy first inaugurated by H. P. B. and so faithfully followed after her death by dear Judge, dear K. T., and to be followed faithfully by myself, to wit, that the T. S., inside and outside, right and left, and up and down, and in every imaginable manner, is utterly divorced from politics, whether fundamental, or

those perfervid fevers which arise in any country during election times. In other words, as so often stated, the T. S. is absolutely non-political as well as being non-sectarian in these matters. This has been something which I have always been very strong upon, and consequently this answers your questions as to "the direction in which the T. S. *seems* to be traveling." It is traveling in exactly the same direction in which it has always been traveling, to wit, to steer absolutely clear of any possible involvement of any kind great or small, in political questions of any kind great or small, for its sphere as an organization is not politics in any sense whatsoever; and consequently it is my duty to keep it absolutely non-political, and outside the sphere of politics.

Imagine for a moment, my dear Friend and Fellow-Worker in our Theosophical Cause, what would happen if I "took sides" in any political matter whatsoever! Can't you imagine it yourself? Can't you see it would be an utter abandoning of the traditional policy of the T. S., and merely copying what so many of the exoteric religious organizations are doing, either organizationally or through certain "inspired" representatives thereof?

Suppose, for instance, I were to take the attitude, and so declare it, that the T. S. is on the side of So-and-so, i. e., X: Can't you see what a tremendous hubbub in the T. S. this would raise, and very justly raise, on the side of those who absolutely disagreed with X? Suppose I took the contrary point of view and taught that the T. S. should interest itself in the politics or imaginings of Y. Exactly the same situation would arise, involving not only an abandoning of our traditional policy of keeping free of politics in any shape or form, but would immediately be immensely unjust to those who in their personal wisdom imagine that X is the one whom the T. S. should back.

Suppose, again, that I were to abandon our traditional policy as an organization of absolutely ignoring politics and become involved in politics: would this be pleasant, agreeable, friendly, just, or right, to the hundreds and hundreds of our workers in other countries whose

politics are quite different from ours, whose social life may be quite different from ours, in our own dear country here? The T. S. in such case or in either case would become merely a local or national entity, sinking or going down into the arena of political squabbles — and heaven save us from any such folly as this!

I thought every F. T. S. knew and realized that the T. S. has been, and now is, and I pray forever will be, so divorced from politics that as an organization we remain apart and utterly calm, thus allowing our members *as individuals* to have what political opinions, or no political opinions at all, that they please, and thus giving equal-handed justice to all our F. T. S.

Our members in the matter of politics think what they please and act what they please, and it is no business of mine nor of yours nor of any other earnest and devoted F. T. S. to try to govern or direct or control the political convictions or opinions of any other F. T. S. What right have I to say to So-and-so that "you should vote for So-and-so," or "you should not vote for So-and-so"? Why, this would be an intolerable interference with that person's free will, and the T. S. would become a hissing and a by-word to all honest and honorable F. T. S. who love it and who want it kept far above the stormy arena of political squabbles, which, by the way, change not only from century to century, but actually from year to year, and almost from month to month.

No, my dear, the T. S. is traveling in the same direction in these respects that it has always traveled from dear H. P. B.'s days, for our Work *as an Organization*, while allowing to every F. T. S. without a word of comment his own political convictions and freedom of thought and choice, which means free-will in thought and action, nevertheless avoids politics of any kind; but we concentrate our work upon the glorious and unspeakably beautiful labor of trying to change the thoughts of mankind to ever nobler and higher things, along the lines of universal altruism, universal brotherhood, peace on earth and good will to men. In other words, our Work is upon the spiritual, intellectual, and moral nature of man, I mean our work as an organization,

teaching men to live better, to live an ever higher life, to be generous to others, to introduce thoughts of law and peace and honor and duty, so that wherever our F. T. S. may live, to whatever country they owe allegiance, they shall be respecters and dutiful followers of established authority, and may learn more fully to obey the laws of their country as good citizens and as honorable men and women.

I cannot nor will I tell our members that they must have this or that or some other variety or brand or color of political opinions. This would be an intolerable interference with their liberty of thought and action, and an attempt to influence their free-will, and therefore the utter abandoning of the traditional policy of the T. S., and a changing of the direction which it has always followed. The Theosophical Society as an organization can live at peace in any country, under any government, because it teaches the duty of its members as moral beings to obey the laws of the country in which they live, whether as natives or as visitors, and surely no sane government could object to this!!

The world in the past has suffered too keenly, and too much human blood has been shed by former Western religious organizations taking part in politics and using religious influence for political ends; and the T. S. must never do this, and I pray the gods it never will.

I never concern myself with the political feelings or opinions or convictions of our members, whether in the mass or as individuals, for this is not my business nor your business nor the business of any other F. T. S., but is the business of the individual. Do you think I would criticize you, or could be guilty of such a moral crime, because you hold certain convictions of a political character? Certainly not, nor would I criticize any other F. T. S. for holding political convictions which might be the same as yours, or diametrically opposite. That is not our business, nor the business of the T. S., for you are a free agent, and you have the right to the undisturbed exercise of your free-will, and to do your duty as you find it best and noblest, and I would be the first to say that your rights in this matter must be protected. Surely you see this!

So therefore, please do not worry about something which really does

not exist, but, I am afraid, is a mere figment of your imagination, thus giving you totally unnecessary anxiety. So strongly am I for what I have written above in this letter, that I have told our people again and again that no matter what their convictions may be of a religious or political character, a Theosophical platform is no place to voice them on, though they may hold what convictions they please of any kind; but they have no right to try to force their opinions from a public Theosophical platform into the ears or down the throats of their auditors; and on the whole I think our F. T. S. have tried faithfully to follow this.

I too sometimes hear things, even from our own platform, which I think have been unwisely expressed, but I try to make allowances in charity of heart, realizing that sometimes people are a little negligent or careless in speech, but really do not mean half that the words on such occasions might seem to imply, for I know that all our F. T. S. at heart love the traditional non-political character of the T. S. and would give the last drop of their blood to retain it. But I think I certainly would move to express my emphatic disapproval, were I ever to learn or to hear that any F. T. S. from a Theosophical platform had been giving out his own opinions of a political character, as the political opinions of the T. S., which would be an absurdity because the T. S. is a mere organization, no living person, and consequently not being a living person, cannot have any "political opinions of its own."

I think I have now expressed the situation just in the manner that H. P. B. would have done, or Judge, or K. T., and I know perfectly well that I am following the traditional policy, and I ask your kindly consideration and help, in helping me to do what you can in your own way to retain this traditional policy. It would be infamous if anybody tried to make you unhappy, acting as a representative of the T. S., by trying to change your convictions of any kind. It would be monstrous and utterly wrong; and I know that you would be the first to feel the same way if you heard that X had tried to control another F. T. S. named Y in the same manner.

Well, all these things seem very plain to me and are just the ABC of the

policy we have always followed; so I don't think you have the slightest grounds for worry that the T. S. as an organization is going to forget its traditional policy or change its traditional "direction of traveling." Our work is with the hearts and minds of men, to try to make them better in every way, larger-minded, more charitable towards others, and more forgiving of others when others' opinions differ from our own. We must retain the individual freedom of will and of conscience and of speech which the Constitution of our great country, speaking now of the United States alone, guarantees to every one of its citizens. Holding this so sacredly as I do, I should consider myself guilty of a crime were I to try to control or even to influence the political convictions or free-will expression of feeling of anybody, so long as that person speaks as a mere individual and does not try to pass his opinions off as being the "teaching of the Theosophical Society."

With my affectionate and respectful greetings, I am, as ever,

Fraternally and faithfully yours,

G. de P.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — L. L. W.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT DEATH

If this Earth is the place where we learn through Reincarnation and Karma why need we leave it? Why aren't we just allowed to keep on being reborn from one body to another without forgetting our past lives? . . . Well, how would you like to give up altogether your rest at night? How we do grumble when something happens so that we get no sleep! A few weeks of it would reduce us to mental and physical wrecks. As it is, we go to bed for a long sleep every night and so for a time we get away from our troubles and problems. After a good sleep we wake up feeling like a million dollars and sometimes actually enjoy tackling a situation which discouraged us the day before. We are even glad to forget a whole lot of what happened yesterday. While as for what happened last year — if you look back and find out how little you *can* remember — well! you'll be surprised.

If we only understood it, death is a better friend to us than sleep and it works in exactly the same way only over a longer period. Theosophy has good news for us in its teachings about death. But this good news consists of knowledge. Ignorance is our greatest enemy. We do not need to dread death as we do. We dread to die because we do not know any better than to regard ourselves as merely bodies and to tie ourselves up only with the temporary things of this world. So first of all we must learn to turn right around and think of ourselves not as bodies moved somehow by a mind, but as a Spirit-soul dwelling in a temporary body. It is ourselves, the Spirit-souls, who survive after death. The Spirit of man is a pure Ray of the deathless Universal Spirit and therefore cannot die. The soul, which is the intellectual-emotional part of us — the psychological garment or apparatus of the Spirit, so to speak — the soul changes and grows. Therefore it cannot persist *in the same condition* for ever, though its finest essence survives after death.

Are there not many things in ourselves which we would be ashamed to exhibit in Heaven? Our quarrels and greed and hatreds and all those petty weaknesses so common to poor human nature? From these corrupting things — the "moth and rust" of life — death is a release for the Spirit. And death also purges the soul or psychological apparatus of all this selfish dross. Then it can rise into a long and blissful rest in the bosom of its "Father in Heaven," its own Divine Spirit. But this does not mean that the soul escapes permanently from these lower things. It only rests from them, as in a longer and deeper sleep. Those faults and problems, and of course joys and companionships too, must be taken up again when the Spirit is ready to cycle back to Earth. For the human soul, helped by the light of its Spirit, must work out the problems and weaknesses which spring from its own actions. But the reborn man has a new body with a new brain and mentality. That gives him fresh energy and power. Thus we gradually progress to the threshold of a higher evolution than this human one. We graduate from humanhood into godhood.

The Theosophical Forum

THE POWER OF POSSIBILITY — *H. Percy Leonard*

When we buy an egg over the counter we buy very much more than we can see or feel. The inorganic yolk and the amorphous jelly of the white are the least part of our bargain. We have secured possession of a mysterious factor capable of transforming these inert materials into a self-contained, intensely living, little universe. Beneath the feathers of a broody hen, enbosomed in the silence and the dark, bathed in congenial warmth, and molded by an unseen artificer, the formless jelly is transmuted into a conscious chick complete in all its parts.

There was a time in aeons long gone by when the whole solar universe was formless like the egg. A filmy cloud of firemist floated dispersedly throughout the vast abyss, big with the possibilities that slept in every atom's heart. There was as yet no universe, only an innumerable assemblage of formative patterns and plans of rock and crystal, fern and flower, and bird and beast and creeping things, their abstract essence, formless as yet, but destined as the ages rolled away to beautify and populate the rocky earth we tread today. The "builders," too, waking to active life after the Night of Brahma, known to the Greeks as cosmocrates, were as invisible as the ethereal substances on which they worked; and as the cosmos curdled and congealed, in its desire for physical expression, they traced rough outlines of the detailed whole, to which result they worked with tireless zeal.

In boundless space, as we are told, there exists a treasury of ideal forms, the garnered harvest and final result of former periods of evolution. These are the "dimensionless ideas" that lie even more remote from our conception than the sketchy outlines that, helped by the builders' art, are slowly acquiring clear definition upon the Screen of Time. Eternal in the heavens, says Plato, lives the unwithering amaranth, that prophecy and plan of all the waving, many-colored multitudes that beautify the meadows in the spring.

To our comrades, and to ourselves in our more intuitive and lucid intervals, our lives must often appear selfish and circumscribed; but let us remember that the section of ourselves exposed to public view is not by any means the whole. What we aspired to be should give us hope and courage, for the impalpable idea in the mind today may become the evident fact of tomorrow.

There hovers over human life a silent presence, an invisible spectator who waits for our permission to come in and blend his life with ours, to purify its grossness and to make it beautiful and strong. So far as physical expression is concerned it is only a splendid possibility, and is as non-existent as the possibility we buy when purchasing an egg; and yet what matters most about an egg is the assurance of future fulfilment that is as yet no more than a promise and a hope.

A promise from a man of proved integrity is something that as yet has neither substance nor reality in our world of fact and actuality, and yet the definite undertaking of such a man is rightly regarded as being almost as good as its achieved accomplishment, because it moves irresistibly on its way backed by the steady force of character of him who made it. Great is the efficacy of the unseen possibility that watches over every traveler on the everlasting way. Though unperceived, and unexpressed in action it only waits for our consent to lead us from the sordid present to a future shining with a splendor of celestial day on which the evening shadows never fall.

THE CREATIVE POWER OF THOUGHT — A. Trevor Barker

The subject of the Creative Power of Thought is intimately related with the first principle in which our Theosophical Movement is rooted. You cannot consider the dynamic and creative effects of the thinking power of the human mind without immediately being struck by the fact that all nations and all men are in reality interconnected to such an extent that they are affected morally and physically by the thoughts and actions of each other. In other words, if there is a nation which is bent upon a vicious, destructive, downward and degenerate course, that nation will inevitably poison the very thought atmosphere of this Globe, and then by means of the inner constitution of the planet upon which we live, there is conveyed to all other nations of the earth that main current of thought and destructive energy that such a nation — or if we choose to make the application, such an individual, chooses to degenerate.

Now if that is true, there is fortunately a more cheerful side to the picture, and that is, that just as we are affected morally and physically to our detriment if we are negative and weak enough to be so affected, so also, even unconsciously and against our will, we benefit by those nations and men of goodwill — those individuals of high spiritual nature, who are pouring forth their beneficent thought upon the world; and because of the inescapable unity in which we are all rooted, it benefits with its creative power in the same way that the other destructive kind of energy pulls the whole fabric of universal life downward — or shall I say retards it somewhat in its upward progress.

This is a very fundamental thought, as I see it, from which to commence our whole study of the subject. In that rather famous book called *The Idyll of the White Lotus*, there are stated three great Truths, and one of them is to the effect that man has it in his own hands to create his own weal or woe; his own future life and future destiny, and it is done without any doubt at all by means of the dynamic, creative

force of his own desire, his aspirations, his thought, and his will. These are the tools which the Theosophist, the occultist, the disciple, the Mahatma, and the man of the world, have at their disposal.

The Theosophical philosophy, therefore, at the very outset of our study ennobles man, and shows him that he has within a godlike and creative power to make for himself the very conditions for which his heart most yearns; most secretly aspires towards. We have all, I have no doubt, tried to experiment with these laws in greater or less degree, in an endeavor to apply them to ourselves. But as a practical example: what should we do if we find ourselves surrounded by conditions we do not want? First of all it is necessary to create the clear mental picture of that which you individually want to achieve; the particular objective that you have set yourself, and immediately very powerful forces are set in motion, for which you individually have a great responsibility. Everything that we desire, especially when the desire is very strong, immediately sets up a current along magnetic lines of force to those layers of space which contain that which we seek; thus creating lines of magnetic attraction with other human beings or spiritual entities who have the capacity to bring to it that which we have set our minds upon. Directly you begin to desire a thing, immediately you are beginning to create for yourself opportunity, and the opportunity will come inevitably to work out that which you yourself, for good or ill, have set your creative forces in motion to bring about. Therefore, is it necessary to emphasize the tremendous importance of submitting every such determination, aspiration, desire, to the dictates of the Higher Self in each one of us; to the Silent Witness of all our endeavors: for otherwise, if we are not willing to take the position that was taken two thousand years ago by those who created for us the New Testament; if we have not the point of view "Not my will but Thine," then we may risk to create something of a personal effect or result which will hang around our necks like mill-stones: for the forces that we set in motion are real — they will bring to us that which we want them to bring. Fix your mind, and your will, and your desire to bring evil to another, and you will be destroyed yourself by the reaction that such kind of work brings

about.

These forces — we are talking about occultism — are creative and destructive: hence the very thorough drilling that those who study the genuine teachings of Theosophy receive in the moral and ethical basis of the Theosophical philosophy. For if that is not rooted in the student's and aspirant's mind, it is more than likely he will make an application of these laws, when he begins to understand them, that will not only wreck or bring evil (and untold evil) to others with whom he is associated, but still more will he wreck himself.

Now a word as to the means by which the thoughts of other individuals and other nations affect us. It is by means of that which Eliphas Levi called the Astral Light; that part of the Cosmic Ether which is actually the lowest part of that universal Cosmic principle which in the East they call *Akasa*. That astral light interpenetrates our whole Globe just as it does every other planet in the Solar system. It is imponderable, tenuous, and contains the picture, the impress, the record, and therefore the memory of every thought and every act that has ever been performed on this Globe. It is because thought travels, that when we emit or permit to pass through our minds a thought, which is a living intelligence, a thing full of life, we are setting in motion a force which goes to the furthest confines of space. Think of all the creative ideas for good along constructive and healthy lines: great inventions, wonderful ideas dreamed by inventors, by poets, by Adepts, by Mahatmas, which are stored up as it were in the *Akasa*, in the Astral Light, waiting for that man or woman who is high-minded enough to give them expression in action. This is the explanation why, when an inventive mind is concentrated upon a particular problem, the complete solution will often come into his mind, although he has not worked out all the logical steps to the solution that is eventually arrived at. In other words it is possible, if we learn how to do it, to call to our aid the thoughts of the past, and those of the mighty spiritual thinkers of our own era, to help us, to encourage us, in any worthy purpose that we may have, or may be engaged upon. Conversely, to the extent that we are living under the control of the sense life, of the personality, of

negative states of mind and thought — to that extent we are calling to — I won't say our aid, but we are attracting, setting in motion, a reinforcement of the very negative, sensual, destructive or evil states of mind in which we may be at any moment of time.

So what does it amount to? It amounts to this: since our mind and consciousness are always busy with something, even when we are almost in a state of inertia, there is some thought, some idea, some aspiration, and some desire, coloring the whole kama-manasic consciousness. Whatever it is that is in our mind is being reinforced, strengthened, by all past thinking along the same line that is stored in the astral light. See how important this is. Without any volition on our part, if we are living at a consistently low level we are inviting all the same forces of a low level to strengthen us in that negative and weak attitude that we are adopting. See, therefore, what tremendous powers and implication and hope the spreading of the Theosophical philosophy and teaching has for mankind. Why? Because you are giving them something in the way of food for their minds that lets the whole Inner Soul of the man rise and take in its comprehension the vast sweep of the Universal Mind; letting in the sunlight of the spiritual life; giving it food; attracting the human soul and the human mind upward.

Directly you link to these teachings on the Creative Power of Thought the doctrine of Karma, and the doctrine of Reincarnation, you begin to see where we are being led: what happens to a man before birth, and what happens to him after death. What he believes about those two stages — ante-natal and after death — will necessarily govern his thinking here and now. Therefore, these great subjects which have occupied the greatest minds and intellects that the world has ever known, and on which we have a very rich collection of teaching are necessarily of the greatest importance, just because they do influence our thought, and therefore our action.

There is a very telling page in William Q. Judge's *Epitome of Theosophy*, which deals with the mechanism by which thought really works, and it

shows how, if we fix our mind in disapproval or judgment upon another human being, we attract to ourselves elemental entities of the very nature of the fault that we are condemning, and then we proceed to build into ourselves the very condition that we wish to eradicate in somebody else, and so the fault goes backwards and forwards, intensifying the characteristics in both. The obligation and the remedy are obvious in this case. Exactly the reverse is true if we dwell upon thoughts of beautiful qualities that we would like to see, and do see around us in many cases, for then we are strengthening by our approval, and our goodwill, these characteristics in ourselves and others.

I would like, in connexion with this subject of thought just to touch very briefly upon the relation of the Theosophical classification of man's constitution, with that of modern psychology. What is the connexion between the conscious mind of the modern psychologist and the Theosophical classification? What is the connexion, if any, between the modern psychologist's subjective mind, and where does it fit into the scheme of occult science?

I venture to suggest that the objective, or conscious mind of the modern psychologist is the lower manas, which is responsible for our ordinary every-day objective thinking; but the unconscious or subjective mind is another matter. The psychologists mix up, from lack of knowledge, the two parts of the mind — the Spiritual, that which inheres in Buddhi: that power of direct cognition and discrimination: the higher part of man; and the force inherent in what we may term the instinctive mind, the mind that is connected with *kama-manas*. Now we share this instinctive mind with all kingdoms of nature below us, and in particular the animal kingdom. Here we have nascent thought in the higher exemplars of the animal kingdom, and in that instinctive mind are many of the characteristics that modern psychologists attribute to the subjective mind. But they leave out of account, or are unable to account for the source of all those higher, nobler ideas of the human mind, which really come from the Divine part of his nature, and which they just classify as the unconscious. These things are very important

for us because the Theosophical classification gives a clue as to what we must do in order to use our mental and creative faculties to the highest end. There is one aspect of this problem that is particularly interesting and very helpful. I have no doubt that many of us have at times been — afflicted, shall I say, with a problem which seems at times beyond our individual capacity to solve: a problem of such difficulty that the advantages and disadvantages of each course are almost equally balanced, and the mind becomes weary; the capacity to think and to solve apparently so inefficient that the person is in a very difficult position. It happens every day for many people. If we apply the laws that are behind this practical application of occult and scientific principles, it is quite possible to relegate the solution of the problem to the right department of the mind, and cease to worry. What do you think is the origin of the useful old practice of not making a decision until you have slept on it; until you have given time for this higher part of what the psychologist calls the Unconscious, or subjective mind, to get to work? It is capable of providing the solution of any problem. Read what H P B has to say in *Isis Unveiled* about the power of the Adept to rise into the higher consciousness, and know all that ever was, is, or can be known about any subject in the Universe. Why? Simply because the higher part of us, the Divine part of us, is actually omniscient, therefore all we have to do is to find the means of opening ourselves to the inflow of this knowledge — and it can be done by asking for it, by aspiring towards it, by opening our minds to it, by presenting the problem in a good and orderly fashion, and leaving it to that higher part of the mind to find the solution, and if you have a sufficiently strong desire, and a sufficiently developed will, and enough confident expectation (which you may, if you wish, call faith), the result is quite certain, and you find within the requisite time the solution of the problem. This, of course, is a law which is constantly used by all of us all the time — generally perhaps more or less unconsciously, but nevertheless it is a law which works, and it is an extremely creative law. There are many illustrations of the working of it which you have probably read about and know very well.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: X — *G. de Purucker*

G. de P. "s *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* in Review

Extracts from the Minutes of the Meeting of the Lodge, of May 10, 1936

The President, Dr. H. T. Edge, turned the meeting over to the Program Chairman, Mr. Abbott Clark.

Mr. Clark — "This afternoon we have been commemorating the life and work of our first great Teacher, and tonight we endeavor to express what we have been endeavoring to do all this time to continue that work in the spirit and true to the impulse which she gave. We have been studying for the last three years and three months *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* — a book which continues the spirit and work of H. P. B., with the same dignity and majesty which H. P. B. places in her life's work, and it has been to us the most rich and profitable study of our lives. At our next lodge-meeting we will take up the study of *The Esoteric Tradition* which further continues the lodge-force that H. P. B. first brought into the modern world, in the same spirit in which she gave it, simply brought up to the needs of the time. From time immemorial the greatest boon that mankind could ask and receive has been esoteric instruction, esoteric knowledge. *That* we have received generously and copiously, more adequately than has been given to the world in thousands of years — not because of any merit we could claim, but because the needs of humanity and the appeal of the hearts which searched for light were so great that the Lodge of Compassion, true to its name and nature, responded with the spiritual light and teaching which we have received. A good part of these three years we have had not only the book to study, but we have had with us the Teacher who gave that book, and I maintain that this is more important than a book, because the

Teacher himself gives an impetus greater than any book can give. The presence of a Teacher to all normal human hearts invokes all the love and gratitude that it is possible for the human heart to feel and express. In the very nature of things it is impossible that any disciple or body of disciples could pay back to the Teacher what they have received. The only way we can show our gratitude is by assimilating and embodying in our lives the teachings given and the spirit in which the Teacher gives them. This we can do by becoming ourselves humble members of, and earnest workers in, the Lodge of Compassion and Peace, thus bringing to suffering humanity the light, hope, joy, and courage which we have received in so great a measure.

"It is the request of the Committee as we have many speakers on the platform tonight that they dispense with the formality of addressing the Chair and address the audience directly. Our first speaker tonight is Miss Helen Savage "

Miss Helen Savage spoke for three minutes (as did all the following speakers) on "The Dawn of Manifestation — the Magnum Opus from the Invisible into the Visible and from the Visible into the Invisible The one becomes the many Manvantara and Pralaya "

Then came the following speakers and their respective subjects:

Mr. La Fayette Plummer "Cosmic Time-Periods, Racial Cataclysms"

Mr. C. M. Savage "Laya-Centers, Elements, Principles, The Twelve Zodiacal Signs"

Miss G. Knoche "Space and the Spaces of Space, The Seven or Ten Cosmic Planes, Lokas and Talas"

Mr. B. de Zirkoff "The Doctrine of Hierarchies, Matter and Spirit-Consciousness (The Two Fundamental Kosmical Hierarchies) "

Mrs. Inez Davenport "The Doctrine of the Spheres in its Four Aspects "

Mr. W. E. Small "The Wondrous Being, The Silent Watcher,

Nirmanakayas, Sambhogakayas, and Dharmakayas "

Mrs. F. M. Dadd "Rounds, Races, Sub-races, Sishtas, Buddhas and Bodhi-sattvas — their relation to Globes, Rounds, and Races, Avataras "

Mr. E. J. Dadd "The Doctrine of Swabhava, The Process of Evolution"

Mr. Sven Eek "Man's Composite Nature 3-fold, 4-fold, 5-fold, or 7-fold"

Miss F. Colhsson "Gods, Monads, Atoms, Self, Ego, Soul, Consciousness and self-consciousness "

Mr. G. L. Davenport "The Seven Jewels of Wisdom"

Mrs. Irene Ponsonby "The Seven Stages of Initiation"

Mrs. H. O. Minot "The Spiritual-Psychological Hierarchy of Adepts (Hierarchy of Compassion), The Chela Life"

Then the Leader spoke for a few minutes, closing the meeting.

The following are the three-minute summarizations. All in all they give a panoramic view of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* and an idea, though necessarily inadequate, of the immense amount of detailed teaching contained in it.

THE ONE AND THE MANY

H. S. — The doctrine of How the One Becomes the Many is not fully understandable by any being living on earth, because one would have to be universe-wise in order to understand it, as it embraces all truth. One aspect, however, of this great mystery is the teaching about manvantara and pralaya, the outbreathing and inbreathing of the universe, its cyclical appearance from the invisible worlds into the visible worlds and its withdrawal again. *Manvantara* means "between two Manus." Manu in one sense may be spoken of as the Third Logos. It is an entity and at the same time a host of entities from which all other beings in the universe are born as lesser beings, lesser selves of the Great Self. Each one of these lesser selves, all along the hierarchical scale, is at once a consciousness-center and a vehicle in which a greater being may express itself. It is these countless hosts of individuals in

their age-long striving, willing, doing, acting and interacting, all expressing their innate vitality, which produce, which actually are, the manifested universe.

After the period of manvantara is over, there comes the pralaya, when all action on the lower planes ceases, causing the universe no longer to exist. But this does not mean annihilation for the actors in that universe. Their essence, which is the essence of the universe, goes on into higher spheres, to experiences so far beyond our comprehension that we can only conceive of them as non-existent.

As man is a little universe, therefore he too has his manvantaras and pralayas: his active life on earth and his spiritual life in "formless" realms after the death of the body. Atoms, even, in their rapid vibratory existences, have their manvantaras and pralayas. The same law is exemplified in every scale of life; but where we can learn most about it is in our own lives and the lives of those about us, and also in a study of the mystery of death and the after-death states.

COSMIC TIME PERIODS AND RACIAL CATAclysms

L. P. — The Heart of the Universe eternally beats, sending out to all beings an endless flow of life and energy. And all the creatures, be they humans, beasts, plants, atoms, or suns and stars, evolve in cyclic progressions, timed to the Cosmic Heartbeats. All cycles are cosmic time-periods, but those that have for us a peculiar interest are the cycles of planetary formation and growth, and likewise the periods of the evolutionary development of man upon this earth.

There are one or two interesting facts to be noted about these cycles, and it will readily be seen that they are all interrelated. Firstly, all cycles are the result of the action of consciousness-centers, or monads. The Path of Immortality is endless, but the monads take devious routes and by-paths ere the goal is reached. An ancient symbol for the Monad and its imbodiments upon the planes of being was the Tetraktys, composed of ten dots arranged in the form of the equilateral triangle, one above, then two, then three, then four dots forming the base. The

one above represents the Monad which in itself is non-material, and is unaffected by cyclic changes. The nine below represent the manifested worlds. Reading the numbers of dots from the lowest row upwards, we have then, four, three, and two. Now, the number 432 forms the basis for computing cosmic time-periods; for example, the life-cycle of a planetary chain is 4,320,000,000 of our years, 432 with 7 ciphers annexed; the period of a Root-Race is 4,320,000 years, 432 with 4 ciphers annexed. All of the other great cosmic time-periods are either multiples or factors of the 432, annexing the necessary ciphers.

Closely related to this is the study of the Racial cataclysms. There are seven Root-Races functioning on any globe during any one Round — we are now the fifth Root-Race — but the time of birth of a new Root-Race is the mid-point of the old Root-Race cycle. The birth of a new Race is attended with great terrestrial cataclysms, immense seismic and volcanic disturbances, and great floods. But, as always in Nature's processes, there is regularity about these proceedings. The first, third, fifth, and seventh Root-Races are known as the aqueous Races. They are so called because when these races flourish, they do so when the Earth is covered with a greater ocean surface than land area, and similarly, the second, fourth, and sixth Root-Races are called the terreous Races, because they bring forth their civilizations at times when the land surface is greater in area than the oceans separating the continents. The racial cataclysms which occur at the mid-points of these Root-Races are alternately fiery and watery. This means that in one case the destruction of the continents is effected mostly by volcanic eruptions, and in the other case by floods, but it should be understood, however, that in all the racial cataclysms all the elements contribute to the general upheaval, so that in a watery cataclysm there will be great volcanic and other disturbances, but the floods will predominate, and *vice versa*. The first, third, fifth, and seventh Races are said to be destroyed by fire, and the second, fourth, and sixth Races by water.

WHAT IS SPACE?

G. K., Jr. — "What is that which was, is, and ever will be, whether there

is a Universe or not; whether there be gods or none?" And the Esoteric Catechism makes answer: "SPACE, the eternal Anupa-padaka." Space, the parentless, child of none, yet the parent of all existing things. The Hindus call it Parabrahman, the Vedas TAT; it is the heart of all manifested entities. From Space, the Boundless, are born individual spaces: universes, worlds, suns, planets, men, atoms, each a discrete portion of Space, and yet inseparable. The heart of man is Space, the heart of a sun is Space. The Greeks called Space the Pleroma, the utter fulness of manifested universes, ranging from the divine to the material. This is Space when looked at from the substantial side of Being; the Buddhist named it Sunyata or "emptiness," i. e., the emptiness of all manifestation when perceived from the esoteric and consciousness-side.

From the abyss of pralayaic sleep manvantara stirs Space to produce her individual spaces; and universes, worlds, men, start the cycle of existence through the cosmic planes. These cosmic planes are those spheres of being, or fields of activity, through which and as the source of which the life-waves pass through particular stages of consciousness. The ten planes, with the two polar links between the hierarchies above and below, are not separate, but interpenetrate each and all. Every one is composite of every aspect of planar manifestation, therefore contains all other nine in it, conceived as different only by virtue of each plane expressing one particular swabhavic aspect of universal consciousness or Space. Evolution proceeds from plane to plane, from sub-plane to sub-plane, these inter-blending planes not only being the vehicles of entities, but actually the entities themselves unfolding one aspect of consciousness after another, and thus finding themselves evolving on plane after plane.

Just as the Cosmic Planes from the spiritual standpoint are Space, so are the lokas and talas expressions of Space in its duodenary capacity. Lokas are conditions of beings of the Luminous Arc, talas, states or conditions of beings of the Shadowy Arc. The seven lokas and seven talas ranging from the divine to the material manifest on the seven cosmic planes. All entities express themselves through these lokas and

talas, and not only work through them, but are them, though at any one moment manifesting but one particular aspect, which we then call a particular loka or tala. Lokas and Talas are respectively the spiritual and material poles of consciousness, neither one may work without the other. At the beginning of manvantara the godsparks roll forth from Sunyata, in spiritual nescience each to unfold through the planes and the lokas the self-consciousness of Divinity. To become divine, one has to have become the inner heart of every loka and tala, of every cosmic plane, and only thus will he become one with his individual portion of Space, the parabrahmic essence within him, Sunyata.

LAYA-CENTERS

C. M.S. — A Laya-center is a mystical point where matter, consciousness, or whatever it may be, disappears from one plane, and passes onwards to reappear on another plane. *Laya* is derived from the Sanskrit root *li* meaning to dissolve or vanish away, hence a laya-center is a vanishing or disappearing point. It is the seventh or highest degree in any plane, leading into the lowest degree of the next higher plane. Conversely, it may be the point where energies of a higher order flow into and manifest in a lower plane. For our solar system, the core of the sun is a laya-center. Each planet has, and is, at its central point, a laya-center. In the human being, there is a center in his nature through which pour the forces from above, and through which he himself ascends higher. That is the laya-center of his inner nature.

ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES. There are seven of these Elements, or Bases, or Rudiments, and they are the seven vehicles of the seven Principles or Forces of the Kosmos. The Elements are the matter-prakriti side of being, and the Principles are the energy-consciousness aspect of being. Each succeeding element springs from its predecessor and gives birth to its successor. Each globe of a Planetary Chain, although builded out of the seven elements, has one element predominating. The same may be said of each Round on each Globe, and of each Race in each Round: each has its predominating correspondence with one of these Elements, and Principles.

THE TWELVE ZODIACAL SIGNS. There are various correspondences between the twelve Zodiacal signs and the twelve globes of a complete planetary chain — seven manifest, and five unmanifested. Here also, although each one of these globes is subject to the oversight of one of the Constellations of the Zodiac, which is its predominating Genius or Rector, the other eleven constellations are also at work there. There is, moreover, a strict and close correspondence between each of the seven Sacred Planets, a sign of the Zodiac, and one of the globes of our Earth-Chain. Thus, Globe A is under the oversight of the Sun (as a substitute) and its Zodiacal House is Leo. Globe B is under Jupiter; Zodiacal House Sagittarius; and so forth, the complete enumeration being found on pages 488 and 489 of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*.

HIERARCHIES

B. de Z. — This term is derived from the Greek *hieros*, "sacred," and *archein*, "to rule," and implies the idea of "sacred rulership." The essential meaning of the Doctrine of Hierarchies can therefore be derived from the etymology of the term itself. A Hierarchy is primarily the realm or field over which extends the influence of a Hier-arch, i. e., a Divine Ruler, a "god," in the esoteric sense of this word. This Divine Being is the Seed, the focal point, the Monadic Essence, from and out of which flows forth or radiates or emanates its own essential nature or *hyparxis*, which descends from plane to plane and in so doing unrolls out of its own heart the substances and consciousness-energies of these lower planes, fashioning them and informing them in serial and descending gradation, so that ultimately a manifested Hierarchy is a Unity composed of ten planes or grades of consciousness-substance, each plane or grade being organically connected with all the others, and being pervaded throughout by the all-encompassing Consciousness and Vitality of its originant or Hier-arch. A Hierarchy is therefore a self-contained Unity in which there exists a state or system of delegated directive power and authority, flowing forth from its divine seed or summit, which itself is but a life-atom or thought of the Boundless Kosmic Life. Everything that is, is either a potential and unmanifested, or an active and manifested because unrolling, Hierarchy, and the

series of Hierarchies extends infinitely in both directions. One way of considering a Hierarchy is to describe it in the generalized Greek fashion, as being composed of nine steps or links: 1. The Divine; 2. The Gods, or divine-spiritual; 3. The Demi-gods or divine heroes; 4. The Heroes proper; 5. Men; 6. Beasts; 7. Plants; 8. Minerals; 9. The Elemental world. The Tenth is the enfolding and permeating Life-Consciousness or the Heart of the Hyparxis Itself. Each one of the great philosophical schools of ancient times had its own manner of presenting this teaching, and its own way of subdividing a Hierarchy. There are two fundamental and intimately co-related aspects within any Hierarchy: the matter or substance side; and the spirit or consciousness side; as every plane and every point within a Hierarchy is a potential Hierarchy itself, these two aspects may also be called by the term Hierarchy, forming therefore the matter and the consciousness Hierarchy respectively. It should be remembered, however, that what we call Matter is but the illusory aggregate of veils surrounding the fundamental essence of Cosmic Life-Consciousness. The Matter-Pole of a Hierarchy consists of Monadic lives relatively asleep; the Spirit-Pole of a Hierarchy consists of Monadic lives relatively awakened. Matter and Spirit are but generalized expressions for hosts of entities manifesting aggregatively within a Hierarchy. The difference between spirit and matter is evolutionally so, but not essentially. They are one in the underlying Reality which transcends them and permeates them both. The Hierarchies of Matter and the Hierarchies of Spirit, or of Substances and Consciousnesses, are but the positive and negative Poles of the all-embracing Reality which is both and neither, and for ever concealed as such. The whole process of evolution is the raising of units manifesting in matter into becoming at one with their spiritual-divine essence.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPHERES

I. D. — The Doctrine of the Spheres, subdivided under four headings, deals with the Mansions of Life: (1) The Universal Solar System, (2) Our Solar System, (3) The Earth Planetary Chain, and (4) a group of "Mystery-Planets" about which we are left to exercise our intuition or

imagination.

The Universal Solar System includes all the bodies, known and unknown, visible and invisible, that revolve around the sun as their primary. Our Solar System includes what the ancients called the Seven Sacred Planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon; Sun and Moon, however, being but "enumerative substitutes" for two unnamed Planets. One law applies to Universe in general and planet in particular: each is sevenfold in constitution. In man's present stage of evolution he can see at most only one seventh of any celestial body. He does not see even as much as one seventh of the Universal Solar System, though, there being countless invisible Bodies, owing to the fact that their evolutionary status is either higher or lower than that of our home, the Earth.

The Earth, as a sevenfold Planetary Chain, is built by forces within and without itself. The interior forces are contained in its essential root, its swabhava. From this root come the impulses for rebirth and self-expression. The exterior forces are the Spirits of the Seven Sacred Planets. From these come the characteristics which determine the nature of the Planet and the measure of its success in self-expression. It is all very like the birth and development of a single man: the urge to life starts within, influences of environment and associates act upon him from without.

The activity of the Seven Sacred Planets on behalf of our Planetary Chain does not make the Earth the hub of the Universe, for in its turn it is one of Seven Sacred Planets to other Planetary Chains, and has its smaller or greater part to play in their birth, growth, death, and rebirth.

THE WONDROUS BEING

W. E. S. — Generally speaking the term "Wondrous Being" can be used of any spiritual Hierarchy, the acme, seed, and flower of a hierarchy, whose spiritual influence descends through and permeates all the lower beings in it.

The Wondrous Being can be considered as our Highest Self, meaning it is the originating Seed from which we grew.

The Monad itself is an individualized Wondrous Being.

The term may likewise be applied to the spiritual Entity, the Race-Buddha, who comes shortly before or at the beginning of a Root-Race and who overshadows the Manushya-Buddha. It may apply equally correctly to the Planetary of any Round.

We may likewise, for example, speak of our Human Ego as a Wondrous Being to the infinitesimal atom-universes composing the physical body.

But the one we generally refer to as such is the Hierarch of our Planet. But this itself is a correspondence in small of the Kosmical ONE of the Universal Kosmical Hierarchy of the Solar System — and so on.

Speaking, however, of the Hierarchical Wondrous Being: this is an entity. It manifests on three planes:

1. Adi-Buddha — the highest aspect, manifesting in the Dharmakaya state (continuance body). Here egoity, soulship, has vanished into a universal hierarchical sense, remaining only latent. It is pure consciousness, pure bliss.
2. Dhyani-Buddha — the second aspect or sub-entity, manifesting in the Sambhogakaya state (participation body). Egoity is still retained, though too far above material concerns to meddle with them, and therefore powerless on our material earth.
3. Manushya-Buddha — the third aspect or sub-entity, manifesting in the Nirmanakaya state (form body).

The Wondrous Being for *this Fourth Round* is one that belongs to the second class, the Dhyani-Buddha, and is in the Sambhogakaya state. Of the three classes of Dhyan-Chohans in this division, our Wondrous Being belongs to the lowest, which is divided into seven sub-classes. It is the fourth of these.

The Ray running through all our individual being, from which we draw

our *spiritual* life, comes direct from the Hierarchical Wondrous Being in whom we all are rooted. When the life-wave has run its Rounds on this planetary chain we shall be indrawn into the *hierarchical* Banyan. It is as far as this planet is concerned our "Father in Heaven." Its lower copy is what we speak of as the Head of the Hierarchy of Adepts, he who is the Great Sacrifice, the Supreme Initiator. He is the "Ever-living-human Banyan" tree from which lesser beings hang as leaves and fruit, spiritually speaking. He is called the Great Sacrifice because from utter compassion for those lower in the scale of evolution he has renounced all hope and opportunity in this manvantara of going higher, and remains behind among us as our Great Initiator and Teacher. He himself can learn nothing more of this Hierarchy, for all knowledge pertaining to it or possible to it is his already.

In the Third Race of Humanity of this Fourth Round on this globe, the Dhyan-Chohans were then leaving it; but they needed successors more like the men of the period, then rapidly sinking into matter. The noblest representatives of the then humanity became the willing vehicles of self-conscious Rays from these Dhyan-Chohans. A portion of the essence of a Dhyan-Chohan indwelt in them, consciously on both sides. The highest one of these incarnations, the noblest Man-fruit of this human evolution produced up to that time, became the head of this spiritual-psychological Hierarchy — a Man infilled with a Dhyan-Chohan, what might actually be called an incarnate god. This was, and still is, the Silent Watcher, the Wondrous Being, the Great Sacrifice.

ROUNDS AND RACES

F. M. D. — At the beginning of a Manvantara the thrill of waking life touches a laya-center in the Cosmos. The hosts of sleeping monads from the previous planetary chain awaken and begin to form Globe A of our Earth. Ten classes of Monads — three elemental, then mineral, plant, beast, human, and three god-kingdoms, have each their sevenfold evolution on Globe A. Then when the first has completed its globe-round, it leaves behind *sishtas* or sleeping vehicles to await the return of the same monads again; the surplus of life moves on to form Globe B,

and the next class comes upon Globe A. The process continues through all the globes, each step forward for the kingdom ahead meaning a step for all behind, until all have passed once through all seven globes, making one Planetary Round. After an inter-planetary Nirvana the second Round commences on Globe A, different from the first, the globes being already formed. The kingdoms follow one another in sevenfold evolution on each globe through seven Rounds, completing a Planetary Manvantara.

We are now on Globe D of the Fourth Round. Taking our human kingdom as an example, there are seven Root-Races, each divided into seven sub-races, divided again into seven Family-races, and again seven National Races. We are now in the fourth Sub-race of the Fifth Root-Race.

This orderly sequence is under the guidance of superior beings forming a spiritual hierarchy above men. There is a Wondrous Being who is the Adi-Buddha or Logos of our chain. From him emanate seven Dhyani-Buddhas, one for each Round; lower still, seven Dhyani-Bodhisattvas, one for each globe; then seven Manushya- or Human Buddhas, one appearing at the beginning of each Root-Race, and manifesting again near the central point of the Race. Gautama was a Buddha of this type.

When a Bodhisattva sends forth a ray to inspire a pure human being, combined with the intermediate nature loaned by a Buddha, then we have an Avatara such as Sankaracharya of India and Jesus of Nazareth.

SWABHAVA AND EVOLUTION

E. J. D. — The doctrine of Swabhava is perhaps the most beautiful of all, in that it discloses the inexhaustible resources of Nature. Nowhere in the vast and inexhaustible field of life, both visible and invisible, are there any two centers exactly the same. Each is expressing one of the infinite potentialities of beauty and being inherent in the Ever-Becoming.

Each of the units forming the various kingdoms of Nature is evolving forth from within its own essence that which it inherently is: the great

Brahma, the expansive force behind all manifestation. But the most important point is that all evolution takes place from within, through the action and interaction of entities and beings, and not by means of abstract forces.

MAN'S COMPOSITE NATURE

S. E. — Esoteric religion divides man and the universe, the microcosm and the macrocosm, into different principles or elements according to their particular philosophical characteristics. The terms imply a Cosmic origin, and the definitions force, matter, energy might equally well be used. Actually these principles so called are the offspring of Cosmic parents, limited in their action in us by the law of Karman.

In various ages the number of these principles has varied.

Christianity reckons with three principles, body, soul and spirit. Theoretically the Christian makes a distinction between soul and spirit, but does not know wherein the difference lies.

Some Indian thinkers divide man into four and five principles. The Jewish philosophy as delineated in the Qabbalah teaches that man is divided into four parts:

1. The highest and most spiritual of all, that principle or part which is to us a mere breath of being, they called Neshamah.
2. The second principle was called Ruahh or Spiritual Soul.
3. The Astral Soul (or Vital Soul) was called Nephesh, the third next lower, which man has in common with the brutes.
4. Then comes the Guf or physical vehicle, the house in which all these others dwell.

Over all, and higher than all, higher than the Neshamah — which is not an emanation of this Highest, not a creation, not an evolution, but of which it was the production — is the Ineffable called Ain Suf.

The Theosophical classification as explained by H. P. Blavatsky is septenary.

1. Sthula-sarira, a Sanskrit term meaning easily dissolved gross matter. It represents the physical body.
2. Linga-sarira, or model body or Astral body, which forms the pattern on which the physical body is built.
3. Prana or Life-principle is third.
4. The Kama principle comes fourth. Kama means desire. It is the impelling force in the human economy, being neither good nor bad.
5. Manas is the pivotal principle in the human constitution, it represents man the thinker.
6. Buddhi, or the Spiritual Soul, is the vehicle of the highest principle, Atman. The term comes from the Sanskrit root *budh* meaning to enlighten, to understand. Buddhi is the principle in us which gives us spiritual consciousness.
7. Atman is the highest principle, it is a universal one. During incarnations it is linked to Buddhi as the Buddhi is linked with the Manas, and so on down the scale.

Each principle is septenary, so that Atman has a physical body, an astral body, a Kamic principle, just as the Sthula-sarira has its Atman and Buddhi, and so on down the scale.

The lower principles evolve out of ourselves, our higher selves.

GODS, MONADS, ATOMS

F. C. — Universal Nature is composed of two great classes of evolving entities: countless hosts of beings of varying degrees of self-consciousness, and countless hosts of beings of inferior development, which, blending together, go to form the bodies or vestures or vehicles of the former more evolved class of entities. In the course of aeons this lower group evolves into greater entities, who help in their turn to evolve and develop less evolved beings.

Man in his present state of intellectual self-consciousness, finds it almost impossible to realize that at the essential core of his being he is consciousness itself, and that the highest form of self-consciousness is that of a unit, an individual spirit center, for which the Greek word

"Monad" is used, meaning unit or individual.

The Monad, the deathless individuality of man, commences a cyclic journey as an un-self-conscious god-spark. The Monad should be regarded as spirit; it does not *become* spirit; it *is*. Clothing itself with its own rays of light, it thus creates vestures, garments, "souls," each of which is rooted in the spirit-center — the Monad. Again, each of these souls emanates and becomes clothed with vestures consisting of hosts of minor souls — life-atoms. These life-atoms should not be confused with the atom of chemistry, for each one is an energetic center, within and ensouling the chemical atom. This life atom is a learning, evolving entity, which at its inmost is rooted in a spiritual center — a Monad.

We may also say that through this host of beings streams the light of the Hierarchy, the inmost link with the Unutterable, called the Self, limitless, boundless, Selfhood. The individual Self is a spiritual, a Monadic Atom. It is pure consciousness. The Ego is the personal, individualized self in man, that which says "I am I." It is reflected consciousness, or consciousness thrown back on itself. While *soul* is a term applicable on all planes of being, as the vehicular aspect of the entity manifesting on that plane, in man it is often used to designate the intermediate nature.

The divine aspect of evolution is the raising of the personal to the impersonal. Such is the activity of the Luminous Arc, and of the Buddhic Hierarchy. The Monad thus gains self-conscious god-hood, having gained realization by carrying along the evolutionary pathway the souls which it has created and for which it is responsible during the long cyclic pilgrimage. Thus the Monads and Atoms forming the Shadowy Arc become in turn the members of the Luminous Arc in a future maha-manvantara.

THE SEVEN JEWELS OF WISDOM

G. L. D. — These Jewels represent the sum of all knowledge attainable in this manvantara. In our study of the "Fundamentals" we find those Seven Jewels and their teachings combined in seven words, each

teaching leading and blending into the next, and all so interwoven and dependent upon each other as to form a perfect whole and present a complete picture of universal life in all its phases.

Our first Jewel is Reincarnation, the teaching that man lives innumerable lives, coming again and again to pick up the threads of his former lives and move forward slowly to perfection.

The second, Karman, a Sanskrit word meaning Action, shows us why we return to earth lives again. It is in order that we may reap the results of our past actions, and through those experiences grow.

Our third word, Hierarchies, shows us how this vast universe of ours is constructed, guided and controlled, and the great series of intelligences visible and invisible that compose the countless grades of interlocking hierarchies.

Swabhava, the fourth Jewel, is a word of two meanings. First it explains the essential characteristics in each and every atom of life, showing why it is that each atom can only reproduce its own kind, and teaching us that this is a universe of law and order. The second meaning, self-becoming, applies equally to all things. It is their innate power to bring to fruition their latent qualities, as for instance the acorn does when it becomes an oak-tree, or any other seed of life does in developing along its own line.

The fifth word, Evolution, gives us a picture of just how and why and when entities proceed in their climb from un-self-conscious god-spark to self-conscious gods.

In entering the deeper reaches of these teachings we deal more particularly with the ranges of man's consciousness. The sixth Jewel, called The Two Paths, explains the two courses open to man: Am-rita-Yana, wherein man bends his evolving energies to helping the entities behind him, sacrificing his own evolution for the time being for their sakes; Pratyeka-Yana, the Path of each for himself, where man sacrifices all things to his own advancement, only to find that by so doing he has delayed his own evolution.

Our last Jewel, Atma-Vidya, which in Sanskrit means Knowledge of Self, shows us man's consciousness slowly progressing under evolutionary law ever higher and higher as the ages pass until we in our turn shall have attained those invisible reaches of power where we become self-conscious workers in this universal hierarchy.

THE SEVEN STAGES OF INITIATION

I. P. — Of Initiation and the Mysteries we are taught the following in Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy:

Initiation means "beginning." It may also be defined as a process whereby the soul of one who is prepared is quickened: an *initiant* is one undergoing such a process, and an *initiate* one who has been quickened in greater or less degree by this process.

There are seven or ten degrees of initiation. Of the highest of the ten, we know naught except that they belong, we are told, to beings whose high state of evolution is beyond that of human entities. The three first degrees consist of teaching upon the hid wonders of the Universe, and the four intermediate of *becoming*, in ever greater expansion of consciousness on the part of the initiant, that which he has cognised in the abstract.

Thus we may associate with the fifth, sixth and seventh degrees of initiation, the "mystic death," the "descent into hell," and the "ascent to the Sun," when, we are told, the initiant first meets his Higher Self "face to face for a passing moment," later meets Another One — a mystery — and finally becomes the Wondrous Watcher himself for a long or short period, as the case may be.

For these higher degrees of initiation, the Greeks used the terms Epiphany, a minor form of Theophany, which means the appearance of a god illuminating the initiant; Theopneusty, the state of divine inspiration resulting from Theophany; and Theopathy, the conscious suffering of a god's entrance into his being on the part of the initiant.

Of the results of initiation, we have been told that success means joy

and consummation beyond our conception; failure means death; and partial failure, madness. These are no punishments meted out to the initiate, but are the natural consequences of perversities or flaws inherent in the constitution of the initiate.

The Mysteries are distinguished from initiations in that they consisted of dramatizations in which the initiate acted the principal part which he would in the higher degrees later live through. The Mystery-Schools and the initiations therein "were established from the same motives of Compassion that presided over the acts of the Great Actors of the Primal Drama, the opening acts of our Manvantara. They copied, as it were in miniature, what took place in those primordial times, and what took place in actual life in the Hierarchy of Compassion on our earth, or that section, rather, of the Hierarchy of Compassion, which we call the Great White Lodge." P. 275, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*.

THE HIERARCHY OF COMPASSION

H. M. — The Spiritual-Psychological Hierarchy of Adepts: A Hierarchy of highly evolved beings — Buddhas and others — who are the guides and protectors of any one round of a Planetary Chain, and whose hierarch, a Dhyani-Buddha, is our "Father in Heaven," the "Wondrous Being" of that particular hierarchy — also referred to as the "Great Initiator," the "Sacrifice." This "Wondrous Being" is to our own Spiritual-Psychological Hierarchy what the Kosmical ONE is to the Universal Kosmical Hierarchy of the Solar System. The Spiritual-Psychological Hierarchy of Adepts is thus but one octave in that mighty scale of Compassion ranging from Adi-Buddhi through many grades of self-conscious entities to men. To this Hierarchy of Compassion belong all those entities who seek to work in harmony with the highest laws of Being and who labor for the betterment of their fellows, whether it be among the lowest forms of material life or the highest gods in heaven. For man to seek to identify himself consciously as a note in this scale is to take upon himself the responsibility of the chela-life. This life is both beautiful and terrible: terrible, because of the karma which the

aspirant has to face and *overcome*, possibly within the span of one life; beautiful, because, as the teacher tells us, there is "nothing that is so encouraging, and at the same time nothing that calls for larger exercise of the truly spiritual will and of the higher understanding than do the requirements of soul needed in order to follow that chela-life; because that life calls out everything that a man has in him, or a woman has in her — everything."

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: XIII — H.
T. Edge

THE DOUBLE TRIANGLE AND THE PENTAGRAM

This is the familiar six-pointed figure formed by superimposing two equilateral triangles, so that their apexes are symmetrically spaced around a circle. It is the regular star hexagon in geometry. Sometimes the figure is elaborated by making the lines double, so that the triangle can be interlaced; or again they may be differently colored, or the upright one made light, the other dark. It is often called Solomon's Seal and is a symbol in the Jewish Kabbala; but it is found in ancient India, whence it was probably adopted by the Hebrews. But it is one of the symbols of the universal Wisdom-Religion. These two triangles represent the duality of manifestation, the duality of Nature, variously spoken of as Spirit and Matter, Fire and Water, etc. Here we find them interlocked, thus producing a compound or completed nature. The number 6 is thus obtained, and by adding the central point, or alternatively by enclosing the figure in a circle, we get the synthesizing seventh. The six therefore represents the manifested Logos, which is six-fold (or often spoken of as sevenfold, including the synthesis).

This Logos as first emanation is called the Virgins of Life or the Great Illusion; the sixth sign of the zodiac is that of the Virgin. In *The Secret Doctrine* it is mentioned as signifying the 6 directions of space, the blending of pure Spirit and Matter, Arupa and Rupa, and is said to be a sign of Vishnu, though elsewhere Vishnu is made to correspond to the inverted triangle only. We must not try to make the symbolism too rigid and precise, for such names as Vishnu are complex in their meaning, and moreover different schools of philosophy have their own ways. The alchemists would have called these two triangles the fiery and the moist principle. They represent the dual nature of man, and the six points stand for the six powers or forces of nature, six planes, six principles, etc., synthesized by the seventh. The shapes of snow

crystals are often mentioned as a familiar instance of this sixfold principle, and it represents the six primary axes in the cubical system of crystallization. If a glass cube is held up in a certain position, its twelve edges will show the double triangle within the hexagon. Other names for these six primary forces are the Sephiroth of Construction, Dhyān-Chohans, Prajapatis, Builders of the lower physical universe — according to the plane which is being illustrated.

THE PENTAGRAM

The five-pointed star, or the star polygon of the number five, is made by marking five equidistant points on a circle and joining each to the next but one; the lines and angles are equal, the angles being 36° , 72° , and 108° . The sections of the lines exhibit the Golden Ratio, by which a line is divided into extreme and mean ratio, that ratio being .618 or 1.618, which plays so important and interesting a part in geometry. In symbolism this figure is often taken as synonymous with the number five, the pentad. The Pythagoreans called it the Pentalpha, because it was like five alphas (A). It combines the two and the three, the first even and the first odd numbers after unity, representing therefore among many other things, on the universal plane, the union of cosmic substance with cosmic intellect. If the three is combined with the four (another symbol of matter) we get the seven. As a union of five elements it stands for the Heavenly or Macrocosmic Man, and its five points correspond to the head and limbs of a man's body; the same idea lies behind the five wounds of Christ. When the star has its point down, it signifies the polar opposite of the preceding, that is, the nether or material pole of cosmic life; and so can be used as a black magical symbol — the horns of evil are said to be up. The combination of these two produces the decad, in a similar way to that by which the two triangles are combined in Solomon's Seal; and thus we get another symbol of man's dual nature, and of the dual aspect of cosmic forces. In connexion with this, astrologers will remember that each of five planets has two houses, a day house and a night house; while Sun and Moon have each one house, so that we have here the five, the ten, and the twelve, harmonized together. Five is specially important in our

times because we are in the Fifth Root-Race, and five elements have so far been manifested (the fifth, ether, only partially as yet). We have five digits on each limb; five is the most frequent number for the petals of a flower, we use the denary scale (twice five), and the number five plays a leading part in the geometry of the dodecahedron and icosahedron. In *The Secret Doctrine* we find the pentagon used for the number five in the formula 31415, the other figures likewise being denoted by geometrical signs.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — *L. L. W.*

TRUE COMMUNION WITH OUR DEAD

Possessive personal love, how much we lose by it! To get — to possess — to keep. Is not this the almost universal motive in life? *My child, my wife, my husband, my business, my rights.* We all have this mentality to some degree. Yet by this desire for exclusive possession we miss the very flower of life. Perhaps, if Theosophy is new to you, these remarks will cause surprise. But you have only to read your daily paper or look around in your own neighborhood to find the unhappy homes and the problems of selfishness, often leading to criminality, that spring from the desire to possess for one's self. Just do a little observing and analysis and you'll get an eye-opener.

Now it is our intense possessive love that gets between us and our dear ones when they have passed on. When we lose a friend we can think of nothing but the loss of his presence, his face and voice and loving ways that we can no longer see and hear. Yet these are just the things that are temporary about him. For they are, as we remember them, centered more or less in the body. If they are not temporary then why do they disappear with the body? But that within which was the light of the eyes, that which warmed the smile and thrilled us in the voice — these come from the Spirit-soul who is our friend and it cannot die. It is this Spirit-soul which we really love, not the passing forms through which its love is made visible. Here you may object, "But I think it is very natural to grieve in this way when we lose someone we love." Of course it is! It is sympathy for this natural unhappiness that leads Theosophy to give us the knowledge which is the only thing that can comfort and help us. Do we wish to spend the rest of our lives in loneliness and loss? Or do we desire with all our hearts still to keep in conscious touch with our beloved dead? If the latter, then we must change our way of thinking and feeling. There is a passage in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy* (Section II, "Theosophy and

Spiritualism," footnote) which shows that just such communion can take place even though we do not realize it.

. . . it is not the *spirits* of the dead who *descend* to earth, but the spirits of the living that ascend to the pure spiritual souls . . .

There is hardly a human being whose Ego does not hold free intercourse, during the sleep of his body, with those it loved and lost, yet, *on account of the non-receptivity of his physical envelop and brain* [italics ours], no recollection, or a very dim, dreamlike remembrance, lingers in the memory of the person once awake.

"The non-receptivity of . . . physical envelop and brain" — here is what shuts us away from our departed. To hold *remembered* communion with them we must live more in the realms of *our own* Spirit-souls. Do not the great majority of human beings live almost entirely in their narrow personal interests? The only way most people vary this is by moving-pictures, the bridge table, or whatever else can be used as an opiate to keep them from thinking about themselves. Every time we think towards or work for union with our own innermost Spirit we then move closer to our departed. This is because such desires react spiritually upon the brain and so etherealize it that it becomes sensitive to the spiritual spheres where the "dead" are. But when we restrict our thoughts to a desire for their physical presence we are turning away from them. They are at rest in the beautiful quiet of the Silent Land and Nature sees to it that our personal longings cannot disturb them there. But when we have begun to train our thoughts spiritwards we shall gradually have many blessed intimations that we are truly as near to our beloved as if they were asleep in the next room. Presently we too shall sleep. But we shall wake up together again in a new life on this earth. And then we shall resume our happy human companionship of work and play. This is true communion with our dead. False communication will be discussed in our next article.

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — C. J. Ryan

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

RELIGION IN MODERN SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT

While confirmed materialists, so-called "rationalists" in many cases, are disconcerted at the attitude of many modern scientists in apparently abandoning the old materialism in favor of a more enlightened materialism with a suspicion of something like a cosmic mind or intelligence immediately behind physical phenomena, other thinkers are worried lest certain leaders in physics are leaning too far toward theological dogmatism! An article by Dr. Max Schoen, Professor and Head of the Department of Psychology, Carnegie Institute of Technology, in the October *Scientific Monthly*, deals with this problem in a manner that is most interesting to students of Theosophy, for his main point is in perfect agreement with the Theosophical fundamental — the divinity of man.

Dr. Schoen identifies "speculators in the realm of physics like Eddington, Jeans, Millikan and Arthur Compton" as wandering far beyond their legitimate range and speculating, not as scientists, philosophers, or religious thinkers, but as theologians with a preconceived notion which they are bolstering up by the inferences they draw from physics, and claiming validity for it on the ground that it is scientific. He claims that they are not impersonal, but that they are making unqualified statements which go far beyond the evidence at their command.

In support of this, Dr. Schoen defines the two varieties of Religion — the one being a *belief* in God, the other and true one, the *experience* of God within. The first is represented by organized religions, the second is personal or private. The first calls for priestly aid and intercession,

and results in a number of rival creeds with their enmities, suspicions, and intolerance. Listen to Dr. Schoen's purely Theosophical definition of "true" religion:

Religion as experience of God is the religion of creative experience, with God the creative spark in man urging him on to grow in creativeness, in manhood. In this religion there is no room for sin other than ignorance of one's real self and no room for virtue other than knowledge of this self. So God becomes the highest self of mankind in whom man is to find his real welfare. Salvation for man is no easy attainment by accepting certain beliefs and engaging in certain mysterious practices, but is to be a constant seeking within oneself for that spark of divinity, which, as it is being found transforms the finder into itself. For this religion God has no being apart from man, and man has no being apart from God. As man is growing in manhood he is growing in Godhood, and thereby discovering God . . . the religion of a belief in God is a distortion of religion because it is a distortion of man, spreading confusion and enmity among men, while the religion of experience of God is true to human nature, for if it were in operation it would spread peace on earth and good-will among men. And it is this distorted, unscientific view of religion that current science is alleged to support . . . An objective God is not a religious experience but a theological dogma, and when science begins to support dogma it ceases to be science, for science and dogma cannot keep house together.

Without expressing complete agreement with everything in Dr. Schoen's article, and with the hope that the position is not so alarming as he fears, there is certainly much truth in it, and he is not the first who has felt the danger. It has been very encouraging to students of Theosophy to see leading scientists moving away from the crude materialism of the past toward more spiritual views of the universe, and taking the desperate step — to most of them — of accepting such "heresies" as telepathy, clairvoyance, and prevision, but it would be a

disaster if austere Science was cajoled into supporting medieval "supernaturalism."

LIFE IN THE STARS

It is one of the most far reaching teachings in the Ancient Wisdom that the Sun is not merely the "lamp of day," a mass of atomic particles, radiating away its physical energy in various forms, a minute portion of which is utilized by the film of life on the surface of the earth, and possibly on other planets, but that, like everything else in the universe, it is *alive*! H. P. Blavatsky summarizes the teaching in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 479, in the words: "the true Occultist believes in "Lords of Light"; that he believes in a Sun, which . . . is, like milliards of other Suns, the dwelling or the vehicle of a god, and a host of gods." (1)

She continues by saying that in this question, of course, it is the Occultists who will be worsted and considered ignoramuses for declaring that the "Sun is matter and the Sun is Spirit," the bright God of Spiritual and terrestrial Light. This will be denied by modern materialism, which has no place for Deity, Spirit, Soul, or any intelligence beyond the mind of man. But she also said that in the twentieth century scholars would begin to recognise the truth of the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*, and there are still some of her old students living who are rejoicing in being alive to see this coming to pass.

The latest evidence of the accuracy of her prevision comes from Dr. Knut Lundmark, a well-known Swedish astronomer and professor at the University of Lund, Sweden. In a long article in the *Goteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning*, October 2, 1936, on "The Last Solar Explosions," after describing the strange phenomena connected with the tremendous outbursts of so-called *novae* or "new" stars, and discussing the possibility that such an explosion represents the closing phase of a great solar system and the establishment of conditions which will eventuate in a new one, he makes the startling suggestion that the stars are living entities. Criticizing the claim that "after all, man is the mightiest of all," he says:

No, indeed, man is not so mighty in the presence of a solar explosion. We understand only a very, very small particle of what really happens when a star explodes. Perhaps Aristotle will receive honorable recognition again, as has happened often before. It may be that the stars are ensouled Super-Beings, whose soul-life is beyond the possibility of any hint of comprehension by us. With our gross senses and our imperfect instruments we can only try to follow the outer physical processes in that tremendous laboratory, the universe around us. In Whose hands or in the hand of What do they lie?

Such a statement is surely a striking sign of the advancement of science toward an understanding of the hierarchical nature of the visible universe and of its habitation by conscious entities of infinitely varied ranks. If the suns are vehicles of High Intelligence transcending our comprehension, why not the planets also, in lower degree? And how did such Beings evolve to those great heights? Why should there not be innumerable myriads of invisible hierarchies of conscious beings inhabiting systems as real as our familiar Solar System but unseen because we are out of tune with their vibrations?

THE INFLUENCE OF THE MOON

Within the last few months several contributions by scientists have appeared in *Science* on the unorthodox subject of lunar influence on terrestrial conditions. N. E. Stevens calls attention to the almost total disappearance of the marine flowering plant "eel-grass" (*Zostera marina*) during the years 1930-32 from Atlantic waters both in Europe and America. This has happened on two scientifically recorded previous occasions, 1894 and 1913. These eel-grass periods approximate very closely with the periods of extreme north declination of the moon. The contributor rather dryly remarks:

One of the surest ways to incur ridicule among scientists is to suggest a relation between some natural phenomenon and the moon. So strong is this feeling and of such long standing that it

is of record that Galileo, in comment on Johann Kepler's suggestion that ocean tides were influenced by the moon, expressed regret that so acute a man should have produced a theory which seemed to reintroduce the occult. With this clearly in mind, I am venturing to call attention to a correlation which if accidental is at least interesting.

Perhaps Mr. Stevens does not know that Kepler, the extraordinary genius who discovered the laws of planetary motion that bear his name, was an occultist to the degree at least that he believed in high spiritual Beings or Genii whose vehicles were the planets. Will Dr. Lundmark, mentioned above, be also reprimanded for venturing to suggest "occult" Mighty Beings whose vehicles are the Suns? Mr. Stevens' suggestion of lunar influence in connexion with eel-grass is related to changes in ocean currents.

In *Science* for November 29, Dr. Harlan T. Stetson of the Institute of Geographical Exploration, Harvard University, displays his independence of the smiles or frowns of his colleagues by suggesting the need of study of earthquakes in regard to their possible connexion with the varying positions of the moon. From a study of 122 deep-focus earthquakes whose epicenters are not less than 100 kilometers below the earth's surface he finds "a surprisingly striking correlation between the frequency of these deep-focus quakes and the horizontal components of the lunar tidal forces in operation at the time." The physical force is so small that he feels obliged to suggest the "trigger" action, in which a minute force may release a strain or latent energy; or perhaps, he says, we may have to look for some other *unknown causes dependent on the lunar period*. According to the Ancient Wisdom there are many obscure effects produced by the moon; some of these were symbolized in the mythologies, and as science gradually finds them out it will have to recognise the profound scientific knowledge taught in the Mystery-Schools.

FIRE-WALKING AGAIN

This weird subject cannot be kept out of mind, it seems, and not all the

scientists are satisfied with the utterly illogical and mutually destructive "explanations" of the problem. The *Associated Press* published on December 6 an account of the performance of the fire-walk at Raiatea Island in the Society Islands. The special point of interest lies in the fact that the native "priest" conducted a party of white people from the Yacht *Stranger*, belonging to Mr. F. Lewis, a Southern Californian rancher. The pit was 12 feet wide and was filled with stones which glowed white-hot at night after they had been heated all day in preparation for the evening ceremony. Mrs. Lewis, who crossed the incandescent stones barefoot, like the rest, was quite skeptical at first, but was nonplussed by the event. She is quoted as saying:

I can't explain it. While Tane [the young priest] led us, our feet did not even feel warm, but one scout who arrived at the pit after the priest had left was burned badly when he tried it alone.

Tane had touched each rock with a ti-leaf while chanting, before the ceremony. This account, so similar to many of which we have reports in our collection, tells of the phenomenon which has been reported many times — the immediate burning of rash individuals who try to cross the fire after the protective period has expired. The conventional theories, such as leathery soles, hardening solutions applied to the skin, quick-stepping over well-cooled stones or charcoal, and other "explanations" which do not even explain the *physical* facts, are completely destroyed by this phenomenon which the skeptics are unable to face. The cases — more than one — in which a fire-walker who turns back is immediately burnt, belong to the same class. The psychological explanation of self-hypnotism or hypnotism by the priest, which has been suggested in regard to the immunity from pain, does not touch the fact that delicate soles of white people used to wearing shoes are not even singed, and that flimsy clothing and anklets of leaves are completely unaffected in a temperature which melts the solder of a thermometer held six feet above the surface of the fire-walk. The hypnotic explanation is unsatisfactory for other reasons as well. Mrs. Rosita Forbes, the well-known writer and explorer, has just

described her experiences among the fire-walkers in Dutch Guiana in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Australia). She first saw some curious fire performances which struck her as being partially jugglery and partially hypnotic, but at last she succeeded in reaching a village, buried in the jungle, where the real ceremony took place. To an extraordinary and rhythmic beating of drums the firewalkers, or more properly, fire-dancers, flung themselves into an immense roaring fire, bathed in it as if it were the most refreshing stream of water, and rubbed the blazing embers on their limbs and bodies. A girl stood near the fire and apparently controlled the proceedings. Mrs. Forbes says:

I saw the people of the flame in a state of perpetual motion, with one figure immobile among them. The girl had not moved . . . By contrast with the figures thrashing round her, maddened by the immunity from pain which deified them, she might have been an image carved in the wood of the forest. . . . I gathered the girl played the part of medium. If for one moment she relaxes, immunity passes from the dancers. Blind to what is happening around her, she stands there, tense as a charged wire. More apposite, perhaps, is the simile of a generator from which a current flows. At any moment she can cease to produce it. At her sign, the dance ends, and however mad the participants, they know when she gives the signal.

It seems that these fire-priestesses — for only women conduct the fire orgies — are not trained to the work, but are naturally born with the knowledge of controlling fire! Mrs. Forbes' account brings to mind the feats of the celebrated medium, D. D. Home, who could extend his protection against coals of fire to others. Mrs. de Cres-pigny describes a recent case in which a blazing log was placed in her hands by a "fire-medium." She held it for several minutes and felt no burning. The *Listener* (London) lately published an account of a Hindu yogi who stood outside the fiery pit and controlled the conditions while men, women and children walked many times across it. Their immunity only lasted as long as he kept up his meditation. H. P. Blavatsky touches on fire-magic in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 379-80, 445-6. There appears to be more

than one way in which immunity from both pain and injury can be obtained, though it may be that at bottom there is only one basic principle.

ADVANCED MATHEMATICS IN ANCIENT BABYLON

When the Egyptian "Mathematical Papyrus" was discovered about ten years ago, Professor Struve in Russia announced that it indicated that the Egyptians possessed mathematical knowledge that had only been rediscovered a few hundred years ago in Europe. Rather later, Professor Louis Karpinski (University of Michigan) said:

Touraeff in 1917 gave from the "Moscow" papyrus the volume of the truncated pyramid as $\frac{1}{3}h(a^2 + ab + b^2)$ and Struve adds an equally amazing formulation for the surface of a hemisphere as $2\pi r^2$. Heretofore no historian has suspected that the empirical knowledge of these formulas was not the undisputed achievement of Greece . . . Dr. Neugebauer makes the most significant and almost revolutionary announcement of the discovery among the early Babylonians of the numerical solution of a type of complete quadratic equation. . . . Today . . . it is certain that the indebtedness of Greece to Egypt, often affirmed by Greek writers, is no figure of speech, no rhetorical gesture, but rather an assured fact.

And now comes Dr. Morgan Ward, associate professor of mathematics, California Institute of Technology, saying:

We are now convinced that the ancient Sumerians and Babylonians 2000 years before the beginning of our era sedulously cultivated pure mathematics, and in one branch of this subject, pure algebra, far surpassed the best efforts of the Greeks. At one time when our European ancestors had just emerged from the stone age and prowled in little bands of savage hunters through the endless gloomy forests of northern Europe, the Babylonian mathematicians had pursued their subject to such good effect that a major part of the content of

mathematics known to our average high-school graduate would be quite familiar to them.

Babylonians constructed a table which has come down to us containing quotients of the number of 19 trillion, 595 billion, 520 million by various multiples of 60. — *Pasadena Post*, Dec. 7.

We might give evidence that *all* our northern European ancestors were not savage hunters in the early Babylonian period, but will merely remark that the existence of such remarkable mathematical ability at least 2000 b. c. demands a very long period of development and a very high civilization for many previous ages. "Pure mathematics" is not too popular today among the masses, unfortunately, and its exponents are an almost immeasurable distance from the "missing link."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Also see *The Esoteric Tradition*, 450, etc. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE WHOLE OF MAN — *C. Q. Wesner*

When we speak of the constitution of man, we are apt, at first thought, to visualize the physical body, its parts and organs. Upon second and more deliberate thought, however, we realize that the physical body is not, by far, the only or most important part of the constitution of man.

Upon careful consideration, we find that the common sense perceptions do not lie in the body. For instance, we are told that light is a vibration in the ethers, or that it is a substance emitted from a light-giving object. These vibrations or this light-substance strike the mechanism of the eye and are carried to the "sight-center" of the brain. There a miracle takes place. The vibration or light-substance is transformed or transmuted into a sensation, that is, into a state of consciousness.

Note well — the vibration or "light-substance" has become a state of consciousness! In what part of man's constitution lies the center of consciousness? Where lies the "transformer" between "vibration" and "consciousness"?

The Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy, teaches the existence of a finer, more subtle model body, commonly called the Astral Body. A study of this Astral Body enables one to discover the answer to many questions like the above.

Life! What is life? Where does it originate? How does it get into our body? Is it strictly an energy? Theosophy tells us of the "ocean of life-substance-energy" in which our whole globe is bathed. That part of this ocean of universal life-substance-energy active or at work in a man's body is spoken of as Prana, the life-principle.

Where lies Will? Where lies Desire? Desire or Kama is the "power-principle," neither good nor bad, except as it is controlled and guided.

Controlled and guided! — by what? The Ancient Wisdom teaches that

the real man is the Thinker, the part of himself who thinks and reasons, and guides, as best he knows how, the lower principles.

But thought, the thinker, and consciousness are not one thing, or even aspects of one thing. Above thought and the Thinker is a center of consciousness, of conscience. Conscience is not a necessary function of the brain-mind, which is apt to confuse right with expediency, and justice with might. But there is inherent in every man a spiritual sense of right and justice, a sense of compassion and love. These, Theosophy teaches, lie in a spiritual center, called Buddhi.

Man speaks of "my body, my mind, my soul, my spirit!" What is this "I" of which these are attributes and appurtenances? It is the God within, the Divine Spark, rooted in the heart of the Universe Itself!

The Theosophical Forum

H. G. WELLS OFFERS A SOLUTION — *Helen Savage*

One of the best signs in the present day is that people are asking questions. Nowadays, for every claim to the discovery of a final panacea for the world's ills there is a coincident healthy inquiry into the validity of such a claim. The revolution in most departments of thought which took place at the end of the last century is sufficiently far away to have given an opportunity for many palliatives and nostrums, many formulas for deliverance, to have been tried — and found inadequate. This has engendered a sense of futility in the consciousness of many, a sense of misdirected efforts; and the situation has become all the more disconcerting because sage and charlatan, mystic and empty boaster alike, promise a glorious destiny for the human race. So that the most urgent question now being asked is: Why do we seem to be frustrated at every turn in our attempt to make this promise an actuality?

H. G. Wells, in his recent book *The Anatomy of Frustration* asks the question thus:

With the broad table-lands of our common human opportunities, widespread and inviting before us, seen plainly, stated clearly, why do we not go on to them, why are we not hurrying towards them, why are we not in fact already there? Why does our species — which is I — which is you — still live in division and confusion? . . . Shall we be for ever a medley of individuals striving to escape from a frustration that will at last close in upon us all?

Wells is convinced that the answer to his own last melancholy question is an emphatic No. So he tries to find a way out. The theosophist is tempted to read into his solution more than he may have intended to imply; there is no harm in this provided that we recognise that we are doing so. Here is Wells' solution in the main: More and better

education; firstly that we may obtain a more comprehensive understanding of our common history and destiny, and secondly that we may achieve an ever completer self-control.

Education along theosophical lines fulfils both these ends; and it is good in our spreading of our noble philosophy to bear this in mind and accentuate it. Our message is a direct message to *human beings*; and any part of the Theosophical philosophy which we divorce entirely from this primal purpose, we have not really understood.

To study the history and destiny of the human race means, besides more obvious things, to study our relations with all other beings in the Universe, since man cannot move forward to his sublime destiny apart from the rest, any more than we can move in space in our planetary orbit without taking the world with us, so to speak — which simply means that we are all moving together in the same direction.

To study the history and destiny of the human race means, also, to learn what are our relations with each other and, further, to know ourselves. We must be acquainted with the complex organism of the Universe as a unit, the complex organism of mankind as a unit, and the complex organism of the individual man, and in all these complexities find the unity that makes their existence possible. We have to recognise our common goal amid our many diversified purposes.

And the other object: To gain an ever completer self-control, suggests, in its widest applications, a philosophy of action, of *doing*, of building and growing within; in short of applying to the actual business of living the principles suggested by the study above outlined.

To be impatient for immediate results is not entirely a bad thing; but a profound study of the "destiny and history of the human race" and an unremitting effort at a "completer self-control" convince the student of life that the fine flower of a perfect humanity does not bloom in a day; yet Wells himself might be encouraged to know that his very eagerness and concern in behalf of the human race are signs of a growing awareness among men of the purpose of this often bewildering life of

ours here on earth.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GUERDON OF SELF-FORGETFULNESS — *G. de Purucker*

Theosophy works a magic upon us which is grander by far than merely telling us of the undoubted and beautiful truth of our essential divinity. It transmutes our weak and often evil manhood into godhood. It teaches us to forget ourselves for others — for the world. It so washes our natures and our hearts and our minds of the personal and limited that in time we are led on even to forget ourselves and live in the universal.

To me this is the lost keynote of modern civilization, whirling as it does around the egoisms born in us. It seems to me that if we Theosophists can instil into the thought-life of the world, of our fellow-men, ideas, principles of thought, and consequent conduct, teachings of religious and philosophical and of scientific character and value, which will teach men, enable men to learn, to forget themselves and live for others, then I think we shall have done more than teaching men the undoubtedly sublime verity of their oneness with divinity — one of my own favorite thoughts and teachings! For even that can have an atmosphere of egoism about it, of spiritual selfishness. You know, I really believe that if our sad and suffering world today, hovering on the brink of disaster as it is, this world taken distributively as individual men and women, could learn the one simple lesson of self-forgetfulness, and the beauty, the immense satisfaction of heart and mind, that come from such self-forgetfulness, living for others, for the world, I honestly believe with all my heart that ninety-nine per cent, of the world's troubles would be solved. Politics would then become an engine of human achievement and not of selfishness and often destruction. Works of philanthropy would be considered the noblest in the world, because they would be guided by the wisdom of an awakened heart. For no man's eye sees clearly when it whirls around the pivot of the personal self; but it will see clearly when its vision becomes universal, because then all in the field comes within the

compass, within the reach, of its sight.

Am I not right, therefore, in believing that, beautiful as are the teachings which, as individual men, we can study in Theosophy, and great as will be the advantage that individually we shall draw from them, from these teachings, there is indeed something still higher in Theosophy which it alone, perhaps, in the world today teaches: that we reach our highest, our sublimest, peaks of achievement when we forget ourselves? And may we not find the same sublime verity at the heart of, as the essence of, the burthen of, every one of the great religions of the past, provided we strip away the dogmatic excrescences born of the brains of smaller men?

Remember that true Theosophy is a matter of the heart-life, and of the heart-light, as well as of deep intellectual understanding; but so many people do not realize this, and look upon Theosophy as merely a kind of intellectual philosophy, which is only a part of it.

Here is another thought: While the selfless life as taught in Theosophy is considered by us to be the most beautiful because universal and all-inclusive, yet can we properly be living such a selfless life if we ignore those duties lying nearest at hand? In other words, if a man so yearns to help the world that he goes out into it and neglects duties that he already has assumed, is he doing the thing which is manly? Is he living the selfless life; or is he following a secret, selfish yearning for personal advancement? Is he even logical? Selflessness means never to neglect a duty, because if you do that, upon examination you will discover that you are following a desire, a selfish thought. It is in doing every duty fully and to the end, thereby gaining peace and wisdom, that you live the life which is the most unselfish.

AN M.D. ON EPIDEMICS — *Lydia Ross*

Epidemics are wide-spread prevalence of disease, or of mental or emotional conditions. The causes usually assigned to epidemic diseases are: individual susceptibility; earth conditions of heat, moisture, soil, water, hygiene, and sanitation; and mass movements of people, as in wars and pilgrimages, etc. While all of these factors provide physical and psychological conditions favorable for the spread of certain epidemic diseases and emotional disorders, there remain potent invisible causes to be reckoned with. This fact finds typical expression in the recurrence of several hundred epidemics of influenza on record. It is significant that this disease, which is not contagious, spreads with great rapidity, suddenly appearing in any climate from Arctic regions to remote South Sea Islands, and in all conditions from palace to hovel, in crowded cities and in open country, and in mid-ocean.

H. P. Blavatsky discusses these unusual and serious effects of causes, which she says are cosmical rather than bacterial (*Lucifer*, V, 448). She explains that all such mysterious epidemics as influenza are due to an exuberance of ozone in the air, where an excess of oxygen has become ozone under the powerful stimulus of electricity. She quotes the scientific teaching that it is an excess of ozone in the air that induces the unaccountable feeling of fear and depression in many nervous persons before a storm. While a certain amount of ozone is necessary for normal breathing and circulation of the blood, too much irritates the respiratory organs, and over one per cent, of it in the air respired is fatal. The role oxygen plays in combustion is related to the fever in influenza; while the depression and vital exhaustion often prove fatal without serious organic disease developing. Even recovery is delayed by a lack of nervous vitality. A peculiar symptom is a vague sense of detachment from one's ordinary interest in, and relation to, familiar conditions and people. The patient's negative mind and body seem to drift along under the sway of forces belonging to some other plane of

existence, leaving him indifferent to this plane. The electrical vibrations in the Earth's aura seem focussed upon his vitality which is not equal to the potent charge.

The pranic life-atoms of man's body make an "electrical field" which, permeating his astral-vital-physical constitution, puts him in contact with the natural flow of ethereal currents of electric and magnetic force. These forces emanate from great cosmic entities who are the intelligent agencies for the karmic action of the so-called "laws of Nature." They function in the noumenal realm of causes which are due to appear on earth as phenomena of all kinds. These entities are the regents of the seven sacred planets, who help to build the body and oversee the destiny of both man and the earth. They act automatically and impersonally in harmony with the combined causes and effects of ethereal and terrestrial conditions. The ethereal interference with radio transmission hints that the Universe is invisibly "wired" for the interplay of electro-magnetic wave-lengths or currents of various kinds. The sun, the moon, the planets, the earth, and the human brain are all magnets in contact with a common network of "live" wires of consciousness. The atoms of the Solar System not only change their combining equivalents on every planet, but they undergo a certain change in their rapid passage through our atmosphere. H. P. Blavatsky speaks of

the *Spirit*, the *noumenon* of that which becomes in its grossest form oxygen and hydrogen and nitrogen on Earth. . . . Before these *gases* and fluids become what they are in *our* atmosphere, they are interstellar Ether; still earlier and on a *deeper* plane — something else, and so on *ad infinitum*. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 626

These "fluids and gases," then, have been "stepped down," plane after plane, bringing to us the karmic influences of the hierarchy of entities which compose the Solar organism. They are the tangible carriers of the cosmic electrical fire of divine, spiritual, mental, psychic, astral, and material forces which infill the Universe. Here, in brief are the

astrological causative influences in typical epidemics, which are variously operating in other karmic diseases and mental and emotional disorders such as popular uprisings, fanatical movements, waves of crime and vice, etc. Happily, however, the same impersonal agents of the karmic law are equally active and are helpful during human cycles of ethical and spiritual aspiration and progress.

The Theosophical Forum

THE DAUNTLESS ENERGY THAT DRIVES US ON — *H. P. Leonard*

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. — *Confucius*

One is sometimes tempted to envy the flowers in their effortless unfolding of leaf and petal. The sun pours forth his measureless munificence and they respond with gorgeous bloom and green exuberant growth. With neither toil nor any sense of strain they open to the radiant bounty of the solar heart.

But when, at length, we reach the human stage a new and powerful factor makes itself felt — the cogitating, restless, and adventurous mind. No longer do we find a merely passive response to the cosmic stimulant to growth: there arises the novel tendency to self-directed evolution, so that, in addition to the general urge that animates all forms of life there springs to action the desire for individual expression. The special and peculiar tendencies unfolded from within, in response to the various situations in which we find ourselves during our long passage through material things, demand an outlet for expression. The leisurely progress, so apparent in the lower kingdoms, gives way to a notable acceleration when the man-state is entered upon. New powers emerge into activity, new senses come to life, and from beginnings which at first are hardly more than inaudible whispers, they, by degrees, insist on being heard.

The process of learning the use of unfamiliar faculties must of necessity result in frequent failure, so that a backward glance along the path reveals an unbroken track of wreckage and of efforts that have failed.

Lack of experience can be cured only by use that gives familiarity, and to sit down in dull despair is only to dishearten those who tread with us the everlasting way. Inaction and despondency are signs of our having lost touch with that exhaustless fount of energy that will never fail us

while the solar heart still beats and the bright photosphere still radiates his beams to all the darkest corners of the earth. Our care should be to keep the channel clear and to attempt the thing we never tried before as opportunities arrive. The wreckage we have left behind is used again in Nature's wise economy, and forces that have seemingly been spent and scattered are employed once more. Our business is to utilize the flying moments as they pass and serve as conscious agents to direct the universal life-force to the great purposes already dimly looming through the curtain that obscures our veiled tomorrow from today. The past must be ignored because our time for doing things is the Eternal Now, and glances back along the path we came can serve only to dissipate the powers that should be concentrated on our present work.

Students of history must often be amazed to note the recovery of races of mankind from catastrophes which would seem to have overwhelmed them in final disaster. But in the slow procession of the years the hideous scars of battle are grown over by a mantle of green turf and poppies swaying in the wind, and fields where armies grappled are now the pasture grounds of flocks and herds. Cities whose towers were levelled in the dust raise once again their domes and temples to the morning sun, and countrysides that once resounded with the thunder of the guns are vocal with the mating songs of blackbirds and of larks.

The law of rhythm and recurrence is everywhere at work, and is in operation in our individual lives as elsewhere; and though the cosmic life is inexhaustible it has its periodic ebb and flow and must not be ignored. There are neutral periods when utter deadness supervenes, and these are the pauses, the stagnation points, when the ebb has ceased and yet the flowing tide has not resumed its forward sweep. These periods may be very trying to the inexperienced, who are apt to feel alone and forsaken, while cold despair seems waiting to engulf them in a fathomless abyss. But let them carry on with patience for a while, for presently the surgeless, silent sea will rise again and sweep them onwards once again upon their voyage that has no end.

This universal urge is everywhere at work and though our selfish will may prove refractory and though our indolence may be a drag upon its onward course, its march is irresistible and only as we willingly cooperate is happiness to be obtained. Our opposition can result in nothing but unavailing struggle and ultimate defeat, and our satisfaction will always be found in forwarding its purposes and using our intelligence to further its beneficent designs.

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: XI — *G. de Purucker*

THE SYMBOLOGY OF THE SEAL OF THE T. S.

The meeting of Sunday evening, September 27, 1936, opened as usual, and the President, Dr. Edge, called upon Mr. E. W. Lambert to act as Chairman. Miss Elsie Savage then addressed the Lodge as follows on "The Symbology of the Theosophical Seal."

E. V. Savage — In preparing for the study of this evening, I unconsciously made a wise decision! There was so much to investigate on the subject, and such deep aspects to it, that I decided not to attempt to treat the subject fully, but merely to point out a few things. Then I opened *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and found that the Master K. H. says, in speaking about part of the symbology of our Seal, "The *chela* who can explain this sign from every one of its aspects — is *virtually an adept*." So my decision was timely!

I came across the following interesting comment on symbols by the modern psychologist, C. G. Jung:

. . . the unconscious can only be reached and expressed by the symbol. . . . The symbol is, on the one hand, the primitive expression of the unconscious, while on the other hand, it is an idea corresponding to the highest intuition produced by consciousness.

Mr. Judge says somewhere that a symbol, to be correct, should express fully and in every detail what it stands for, and each part should be consistent with the whole; and he says that there lie concealed in our T. S. Seal all the doctrines and philosophy of Theosophy — at least as we have them in its modern presentation. As we proceed you will see how true this statement is.

I have found in recent months in corresponding with inquirers, that it is very valuable not only to know our Theosophical philosophy, but to

be able to find in our literature the place where we can point to authoritative statements supporting our opinions; so I have made note of various places where the Seal is discussed, and I think some of you would find it interesting to look up these references. First of all, in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, on pages 406-7, G. de P. has some interesting comments on the Swastika. It portrays evolution *in motion*, the cross symbolizing Matter traversing Spirit; and, what I thought particularly interesting, there lies concealed in this particular symbol, the intricate doctrine of the Lokas and Talas. He speaks also of the Egyptian Tau or Ansated Cross — says that while the swastika emphasizes the movements and circulations of consciousness in Space, the Tau has a vaster aspect, portraying the primordial movements and states of Kosmic Being. I think it is well worth our while to turn to those pages and read them.

In *Lucifer*, for January, 1935, in speaking of the Serpent, the Leader says that it is incorrect to say either that it is a good or that it is a bad symbol. It is like one of the neutral forces of Nature, and is either good or bad according to its use or misuse by individuals.

I am not treating any of these component parts of our Seal fully — the Serpent, the Swastika, the Interlaced Triangles, the Egyptian Tau, and the superimposed Om — because each is being treated separately by others in other meetings. But here is one interesting thing about the Serpent. In W. Q. Judge's magazine, *The Path*, for May, 1886, there is an article signed "Nilakant." I do not know if that is one of Judge's pseudonyms, but the writer first speaks of the symbol of the serpent biting its tail, thus forming a circle, as portraying both eternity — having no beginning or end — and wisdom. The scales of the Serpent signify the illimitable diversity of the aspects of Wisdom or Truth, and also the numberless individuals each having one phase of the truth, and all bound together on the path of evolution; and he says, "This is not due to any want of coherence or congruity in truth itself, but solely to the diverse views which each individual takes of the one Truth." Doesn't this remind you of the countless times in these meetings when the Leader has told us that in our discussions we have each given a

part of the truth, and none of us the whole truth, and that what each one has contributed has been right from one angle?

You will notice that the Seal as we use it today is not encircled around its lower half by the motto of the Society, "There is no religion higher than Truth," which is the family motto of the Maharajas of Benares, the sacred city of India.

In *The Path*, April, 1892, there is an article signed by W. Q. Judge himself, containing several interesting points. One value of having Truth expressed by symbols is that symbols last through the ages, while books and writings are often lost and disappear. (Sometimes they are intentionally withdrawn from mankind by the Adepts, when the knowledge they contain is being misused. Then only those who have the keys can read the truth in the symbols.) He speaks about the signs of the Zodiac which we still use, but the origin of which is unknown to us, as they go too far back into antiquity. He refers to the serpent making a circle, the most perfect form in Nature, of which the ratio of the diameter to the circumference is as one to three. But when you express it in detailed figures, you cannot bring the decimal to a finite conclusion, symbolic of the unknown quantity in human affairs — never can you reach a finite conclusion to any act or thought.

The *Crux Ansata* stands, among other things, for the sign of Venus, the "Elder sister of the Earth" according to the Secret Doctrine, and changes taking place on Venus affect us on Earth. In the seal it stands for the regenerated man, a man become at one with his Atman. Now, this Tau is placed in the center of the interlaced triangles, and here is another interesting thing. The interlaced triangles make a six-pointed star, and the center is bounded by six sides, six being more frequently found in manifested nature than seven. Here we find the six sides standing for the six principles of man; and the center, in which regenerated man stands, represents Atman. See Chapter VI of Volume II of *Isis Unveiled* for an interesting discussion of these matters.

Freemasons, Mr. Judge says, do not generally know that the 33 ° of Freemasonry "may be obtained from this figure" of the interlaced

triangles, emblematic of the great body of Sages.

Notice the way the white and black triangles are pointing, the white up, and the black down, which is the correct way. If the black is pointing upward it signifies the reign of the forces of Darkness. The white triangle stands for spirit and the black for matter, or the white for wisdom concealed, and the black for wisdom revealed. Notice that the six points of the star touch the serpent. Only by contacting spirit and matter, and living in the worlds of manifestation can man (the scales on the serpent) evolve.

I thought I would try to find out the origin of our seal, who first designed it: but in Volume VII of Mr. Judge's *Path*, on p. 343, I find an article on this very subject signed "By one of the Staff," written in 1893, showing that even at that time the matter was uncertain; and the writer calls attention to false claims made by several, each of whom stated that he was the true originator. But Mr. Judge points out that H. P. B. alone was the heart, head, body, past and future, of the T. S.; and that just as a general has his subordinates and agents who carry out his plans, so did H. P. B. have her workers who carried out exoterically the ideas that she herself was the channel for bringing to the world.

Whoever was responsible for it in its present form, it bears a strong resemblance to H. P. B.'s personal seal, which most of you are probably familiar with from our use of it as the emblem of the Women's Theosophical Club. In H. P. B.'s seal, however, her initials, E. B. (Elena, with an aspirated H) are in the center instead of the Egyptian Tau, the seal is surrounded with the Countess's coronet belonging to her family, instead of the Sanskrit Aum or Om, and inside the circle are astrological and cabalistic signs referring to H. P. B. herself.

In confirmation of the statement that the Seal contains hidden within it all our doctrines and philosophy, I want to read a remarkably interesting paragraph from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 345-6, which is all the more significant in that K. H. evidently thought the meaning of the seal was worth his taking his valuable time to write about:

Does your B. T. S. know the meaning of the white and black interlaced triangles, of the Parent Society's seal that it has also adopted? Shall I explain? — the double triangle viewed by the Jewish Kabalists as Solomon's Seal, is, as many of you doubtless know the *Sri-antara* of the archaic Aryan Temple, the "mystery of Mysteries," a geometrical synthesis of the whole occult doctrine. The two interlaced triangles are the *Buddhangams* of Creation. They contain the "squaring of the circle," the "philosophical stone," the great problems of Life and Death, and — the Mystery of Evil. The *chela* who can explain this sign from every one of its aspects — is *virtually an adept*. How is it then that the only one among you, who has come so near to unravelling the mystery is also the only one who got none of her ideas from books? Unconsciously she gives out — to him who has the key — the first syllable of the *Ineffable name*! Of course you know that the double-triangle — the *Satkiri Chakram* of Vishnu — or the six-pointed star, is the perfect seven. In all the old Sanskrit works — *Vedic* and *Tantrik* — you find the number 6 mentioned more often than the 7 — this last figure, the central point being implied, for it is the germ of the six and their matrix. It is then thus . . . [At this point in the original there is a rough drawing of the interlaced triangles inscribed in a circle. — Ed.] — the central point standing for seventh, and the circle, the *Mahakasha* — endless space — for the seventh *Universal Principle*. In one sense, both are viewed as *Avalokitesvara*, for they are respectively the Macrocosm and the microcosm. The interlaced triangles — the upper pointing one — Wisdom concealed, and the downward pointing one — Wisdom *revealed* (in the phenomenal world). The circle indicates the bounding, circumscribing quality of the *All*, the Universal Principle which, from any given point expands so as to embrace all things, while embodying the potentiality of every action in the Cosmos. As the point then is the centre round which the circle is traced — they are identical and *one*, and though from the standpoint of *Maya*

and *Avidya* — (illusion and ignorance) — one is separated from the other by the manifested triangle, the 3 sides of which represent the three *gunas* — finite attributes. In symbology the central point is *Jivatma* (the 7th principle), and hence Avalokitesvara, the *Kwan-Shai-yin*, the manifested "Voice" (or *Logos*), the germ point of manifested activity; — hence — in the phraseology of the Christian Kabalists "the Son of the Father and Mother," and agreeably to ours — "the Self manifested in Self — *Yih-sin*, the "one form of existence," the child of *Dharmakaya* (the universally diffused Essence), both male and female. Parabrahm or "Adi-Buddha" while acting through the germ point outwardly as an active force, reacts from the circumference inwardly as the Supreme but latent Potency. The double triangles symbolize the Great Passive and the Great Active; the male and female; Purusha and Prakriti. Each triangle is a Trinity because presenting a triple aspect. The white represents in its straight lines: *Gnanam* — (Knowledge); *Gnata* — (the Knower); and *Gnyam* — (that which is known). The black — form, colour, and substance, also the *creative*, *preservative*, and *destructive* forces and are mutually correlating, etc., etc.

And one sentence more about the "squaring of the circle" mentioned in the above paragraph:

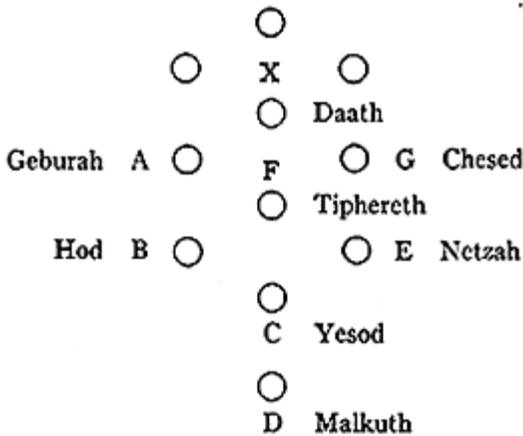
The dual monad (the 7th and 6th principles) has, in order to manifest itself as a *Logos*, the "Kwan-shai-yin" to first become a *triad* (7th, 6th and half of the 5th); then, on the bosom of the "Great Deep" attracting within itself the *One Circle* — form out of it the perfect Square, thus "*squaring the circle*" — the greatest of all the mysteries, friend — and inscribing within the latter the — WORD (the Ineffable Name) — otherwise the duality could never tarry as such, and would have to be reabsorbed into the ONE. — *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 347

I think this paragraph from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* well

merits our deep and careful study.

After Miss Savage's address the meeting as usual was opened to general discussion.

Mr. F. C. Clemeshaw went to the blackboard and made a sketch of the sephirothal tree, as below:



marking the globes A to G as shown on the diagram of the Chaldean Kabbala in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 200. He added, however, the Sephira or globe marked X on the above diagram and explained that this Sephira was not generally shown, but that it could be seen in one of the "Unpublished Letters of Eliphaz Levi" (*Lucifer*, Vol. XV, No. 87, p. 335). He said that it was also mentioned by Israel Regardie in his recent book *My Rosicrucian Adventure* (p. 79) and also by W. W. Westcott in his book *Numbers*.

If the reader will fill in the lines to form the triangles XBE and CGA and draw a circle with center F and radius FX he will have all the elements of the Theosophical seal and also the Sri-antara mentioned by Miss Savage in the extract from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*.

Mr. Plummer followed Mr. Clemeshaw at the blackboard.

La Fayette Plummer — There is one way to show that the Swastika and the interlaced triangles are not mere man-made designs, but have a deeper origin. Suppose we take the nine digits: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

These may be arranged

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

Fig. 1

in the form of a square, with three numbers on side, such that the sum of the figures in any row, column, or diagonal will be 15. Such a square of numbers is called a Magic Square (Fig. 1).

Now, the number 15 will be found interesting in this respect: in Mathematical Symbology it is customary to take account of the digits of which a number is composed, and in this case we have 1 and 5. Let us count by ones, or in ordinary sequence, and we have, as above, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. And now give the square a one-eighth turn (Fig. 2) and join by straight lines the numbers in the Magic Square,

	2	
9		7
4	5	6
3		1
	8	

Fig. 2

to wit, 1,2, and 3 form a triangle with its apex pointing upward; 4, 5, and 6 form the "horizon" between heaven and earth, as it were; and 7, 8, and 9 form the lower triangle, with its apex pointing downward.

And now, we will count by fives, thus, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50. We shall modify this series of numbers, by making of each term a number which is the sum of its own digits, thus, first term, 5; second term, 1, because 1 plus 0 equals 1; third term, 6, because 1 plus 5 equals 6; fourth term, 2, because 2 plus 0 equals 2, and so on; so that we shall have 5, 1, 6, 2, 7, 3, 8, 4, 9, 5. And now we will join by straight lines the numbers in the Magic Square (Fig. 2) in this fashion: 5, 1, 6 (pause), 2, 7, 3, 8 (pause), 4, 9, 5, which brings us once more to the center of the

square, the whole forming the Swastika as it appears in our Seal. The manner in which the Swastika is drawn is slightly unorthodox, but for that very reason presents a peculiarly interesting bit of symbology, relating to the Inbreathing and the Outbreathing, both of which are said to be represented in the Swastika.

G. B. — Mr. Chairman, may something be said about the Sanskrit word at the top of the Seal?

Madeline Savage — Mr. Chairman, I brought a few notes on that, which I found in Mr. Judge's *Path*.

The Chairman — We should like to hear them, if you please.

M. S. — The word represents in Sanskrit characters the sacred word, A U M. When considered as a single sound, or as one letter, the word is a symbol of the Supreme Spirit. But as a trilateral word it implies many things, many triads: the three Vedas, the three states of human nature, the three divisions of the Universe. It may also represent the three deities, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, who are the agents in the creation, preservation, and destruction of the world. They are the three principal attributes of the Supreme Being personified in those three deities. They symbolize the Universe controlled by the Supreme Spirit.

The A is the Logos — a single homogeneous sound or tone, the awakening and vivifying power, stirring all the molecules into action. Without this resonance or motion among the quiescent particles there would be no visible universe. The U represents the continuance of this sound or motion. The M signifies the stoppage or destruction of the word — or the motion. It causes the pralaya or universal dissolution, or even physical death. The whole word, Mr. Judge says, represents the undercurrent of meditation which should be carried on by us even during the everyday duties of life.

After further discussion the Leader spoke.

G. de P. — Mr. Chairman and Companions: If I remember aright, our Seal as we use it now, is the original seal of the T. S. as first composed

in New York in 1875. It had no AUM or OM at the top, and no Sanskrit legend: *Satydn nasti paro dharmah*. After Olcott and H. P. B. went to India the Sanskrit was added.

There is no reason at all why the T. S. could not have got along perfectly well without a seal; and as a matter of fact, that seems to have been the first idea, because H. P. B. in the beginning, at least in private correspondence, and even somewhat officially, used her own seal, with her initials and her coronet and her own motto; and at one time this might have been called the Seal of the T. S.

I speak of this fact only in order to do away with any illusion in your minds that our T. S. Seal is something sacrosanct, to be spoken of in tones of awe and wonder. It is not. It is a remarkable symbolic design containing, as Miss Elsie has shown, virtually what you might call the synthesis of the basic teachings of all Theosophy. But in itself it has no magical power; and I should very greatly hate to see any one of our dear people, with the fumes of incense and chanting of mantras, begin to try to conjure up spirits out of the vasty deep, etc., etc. That is what some people do!

The interlaced triangles as an emblem have been called the Seal of Solomon by the Hebrews and Christians. It is called the seal of Vishnu in India; and for ages it has been used not only in tantric but in other practices there, and by would-be "magicians" in European countries.

This Seal, the whole of it: leaving out the Sanskrit monogram at the top, and the motto, as being adventitious though beautiful: and mentally picturing the expanding Monadic Center: the Seal as an emblem or symbol represents the Universe manifested, evolved forth from its central heart, expanding into manifestation or evolution, and comprised within the Serpent of Time and Space. Any universe it may stand for. The choice of the serpent is in many ways excellent, among others because that little "beastie" sheds its skin and comes out clean and refreshed and older, i. e., more evolved and rejuvenated, as universes do.

Of all the parts of this seal, that portion which to me personally has been the most significant, is the Egyptian Cross, and I will tell you why. This *crux ansata*, or "handled cross," can stand just as well for a universe itself in embryo as for any trial undergone in initiation. In other words, the *crux ansata* carried as an emblem by neophytes, simply stated, as it were, for those who bore it: I am a universe in embryo. Now, it was so chosen as a symbol on account of the circle (a reduplication in the small of the circle containing it) and the cosmic cross over which the circle hovers as the golden germ — hiranyagarbha — the seed to expand into life, into future glory, as the embryo grows and expands into the grown-up being. From it drops the perpendicular crossing the plane of matter, traversing it as it does so. This emblem, when taken as the symbol of the planet Venus, is the opposite of the symbol adopted by astronomers for the planet Terra, our Earth. Do you remember it? A cross over the globe: spirit ridden by trial and sorrow: matter. But Venus: trials and sorrows ridden by glory: an infinite promise of the future — ♀. The circle, the egg, the golden germ, above the cross. In other words, this symbol is the opposite of the symbol for Earth — ♂

Finally, I might point out to those who are interested in the Swastika, that this one-time universal emblem is likewise a component part of our T. S. Seal, as well as having been a component part of H. P. B.'s original personal seal from which our T. S. Seal was derived. Now many people have asked me at different times as to which way the swastika should "turn," i. e., as to the direction in which the "broken" ends of the arms should be drawn, and I have endeavored to point out that this is a matter of insignificant importance, because the "broken" ends of the arms are found pointing in both ways throughout the history of this emblem. Thus in our present Seal and in the Seal of the T. S. since H. P. B.'s days, the "broken" ends of the arms point in one direction; whereas in H. P. B.'s own original seal, as may be easily ascertained by anyone who will consult it, for it has been frequently reproduced in our books, the broken ends of the swastika point in the other or opposite direction.

This should be sufficient answer to those who mistakenly think that the broken ends pointing in one direction mean "black magic," and pointing in the other direction mean "white magic" — an erroneous and mistaken opinion.

The Theosophical Forum

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH — POET AND PHILOSOPHER — *W. E. Moore*

William Wordsworth was born in Cumberland in 1770 and died in 1850. He is usually associated with Coleridge and Southey in the "Lake School" of poets. Few men have so completely devoted their lives to serene contemplation of the sublime in Nature. He was not primarily a poet of Nature but rather an intermediary between Nature and man. He lived a long simple life, kept his sympathies with Nature and man, and gave the world richness in poetry devoid of picturesque and romantic details.

There is much that is trivial and commonplace in Wordsworth's poetry, but there are gems of thought in it which reflect whole-truth. These thoughts are guide-posts in a philosophy which is not limited to country, race, or religion.

Wordsworth's Use of the Word Nature

Wordsworth used the word Nature to symbolize the inexplicable, unknowable oversoul which human hearts yearn to know. The word Nature was seldom used by him to mean the natural, physical world about us. Sometimes he spoke of the nature of those inherent, indestructible qualities which are discerned in what is commonly known as Human Nature. Occasionally, he referred to human nature as the Mind of Man, but, no doubt, this is a flower of symbolism and poetical expression. His conception of Nature was in the sense that Nature is alive; that Nature is in man as much as man is in Nature. In the range of his philosophy he gave us abstract ideas of the whole which we can ponder upon as our own. The eye and ear are tuned to universal truth. He makes us conscious of it through our senses, and feeling as we do, we ask "What is it?"

In all things, in all Nature, in the stars
Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone

That paves the brooks; the stationary rocks,
The moving waters and the invisible air.
..... from link to link
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds.
Activity is Manifest in All Life

Wordsworth's philosophy of life is not disturbed by Nature's multifarious activities. Action is in the core of creation. No living entity can shun action because the very law of its nature compels it to act. Perfectness, in the spiritual sense, is not attained through supine inaction and self-defensive renouncements. Most of life, as we know it, is physical sense-life, susceptible to physical reactions in a material world. Activity has a glamorous influence upon mortal mind. But the inner self of the mortal, which is the core of Being, is not seared by flames, overwhelmed by waters nor withered by dry wind. That part of mortal which is the essence of life is impenetrable, unassailable, invisible, immortal. It is not touched by mortal tribulations. If there is unrest within the soul, then to have power to compel rest is a noble accomplishment. To know and feel the strength of passion and subdue it is a step in mastery of self.

The imagination is enthralled by sensible impressions, but loftier human minds seize the sensible impressions and through them feel the vivid, spiritual life in universal Nature. They break through the bonds of physical encasements, reach the utmost boundary of mortal mind, and vision the higher plane on a spiritual level. Wordsworth did this very thing, for he writes:

Such minds are truly from the Deity
For they are Powers; and hence the highest bliss
That flesh can know is theirs — the consciousness
Of Whom they are, habitually infused
Through every image and through every thought,
And all affections by communion raised
From earth to heaven, from human to divine.

Eliminating the Personal Element

As a poet, Wordsworth submerged his personal relationships. He did not mimic Nature by trying to reveal her likeness to his own moods. The daffodils, the waves, the clouds and the stars are never tinged by self of the poet. He uses poetic expression to eliminate self, and reveal a higher plane of life than human life.

He strengthened his faith in universality of life through better understanding of spiritual manifestations in Nature. Intuitions, inspirations and emotions were more than knocks at the gates of an invisible world — they were the eyes and ears of his inner self. Through them the higher part of self gave to mortal self beauty, grandeur and purpose in creation. How else may we glimpse the sublime? In the lines on the Herdsman, Wordsworth was aware of these powers:

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain top,
Such intercourse was his, and in this sort
Was his existence, oftentimes *possessed*
O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared
The written promise. Early had he learned
To reverence the volume that displays
The mystery, the life which cannot die;
But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.
All things, responsive to the writing, there
Breathed immortality, revolving life,
And greatness still revolving; infinite.
There littleness was not; the least of things
Seemed infinite, and there his spirit shaped
Her prospects, nor did he believe, he *saw*.

Universal Brotherhood

The doctrine of universal brotherhood has an important place in Wordsworth's philosophy. It is breathed into the very life of his poems, which express the all-pervading love that permeates every spark of divinity. A ceaseless intercommunication of unutterable love flows

through all things. In Wordsworth's philosophy every part of the whole universe is linked with every other part. Every living entity gives and receives honor and does honor, each to the other. The tree, the cloud, the cricket, the flower, through their own life and character, make us feel the spirit of friendliness and helpfulness. The theme of brotherhood, like a silver stream, runs through the woodland of Wordsworth's poetry. It is found in intercommunication of all things and is the interchange of life and joy.

In the poem entitled "The Excursion," Wordsworth describes Nature's play upon the earth's surface just after a storm.

More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault
Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
Than the mute agents stirring there — alone
Here do I sit and watch.

In the multiplicity of life-forms in which each entity has individuality there is oneness of universal brotherhood. There is no self in Wordsworth's sense of God — none except consciousness of perfect Being.

Doctrine of Abstract Ideas

Wordsworth's philosophy embodies the doctrine of the truth of abstract ideas. He believed that abstract ideas of truth are of eternal existence; that justice, temperance, knowledge, love, truth, are real existences. The divine spark in the soul of man is spiritual Being; it touches the divine landscape of abstract ideas which are in Eternal Being. Wordsworth held that the soul of man is threefold, that is, rational, sensual, spiritual. Then follows the doctrine of reminiscence which in itself means recovery of lost abstract ideas. The whole of earthly existence is virtually a struggle to regain wisdom which has been lost. At least, there is an innate humanistic yearning to do so. Among lost abstract ideas, the only one which has visible form on earth is Beauty. The world of physical senses, and the inner sensual desires

keep the soul from grasping consciously the abstract ideas of truth in the struggle to attain spiritual conceptions. The soul can live only in a realm of ideas. The theory of pre-existence and reminiscence in abstract ideas of truth is a doctrine of Immortality. Our successive existences constitute a progression toward more perfect union in universality of Being. The immutable laws of Nature flash upon the mind of the child; they are seen by the inner eye of the blind, and the deaf and silent read them in the universality of Being. Wordsworth's poem "We Are Seven" expresses beautifully nearness to Nature felt by the child who is unconscious of limits of thoughts of time and space. The child makes no distinction between earth and heaven; the dead brother and sister are still part of the family; death has no severance or separation for her, for in truth "We Are Seven." Death is birth and in it is the spirit of oneness. In childhood, unconsciously expressed, it is an intimation of Immortality.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, *who is our home!*
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Consciousness of Perfect Being

Wordsworth brings us into consciousness of perfect Being. A poet cannot change Nature one way or another, but by tuning his thoughts to Nature he makes of himself a poet. In ordinary living, we are apt to feel that we are something apart from the whole of universality. Wordsworth makes us feel that we are parts of the whole and that we have our own individual identities. In using words as symbols of ideas that we may comprehend, he speaks of Nature and man, but he means that Nature is in man and man is in Nature, inseparable. The nearer we

approach the spiritual plane the more nearly the two symbolical terms blend into one.

In our better moments we are inclined to attain finer attitudes and more spiritually refined conceptions than we are able to glimpse in ordinary daily conduct. In such moments we are more of our inner Being. We touch the better part of consciousness, which, after all, is in the essence of life. We do not receive from Nature what we give of ourselves, but in reality, we receive quite a different reflexion of ourselves, which has a close relationship of another than our mortal self.

Wisdom and Spirit of the Universe,
Thou Soul that art the Eternity of thought,
That givest to forms and images a breath
And everlasting motion.

The Universality of Life

The principle of activity in a creative, never-ending, boundless universe is portrayed by Wordsworth's poetry. He believed that whatever acts must live; that the universe lives in its spirit, as we live in ours. To the one all-pervading oversoul and to this universal life he gave the name of Nature. To him Nature is active, and the spiritual manifestations of innumerable entities of the physical world which we recognise all about us are parts of the whole.

Yet whate'er enjoyments dwell
In the impenetrable cell
Of the silent heart, that Nature
Furnished to every creature;
A spirit and a pulse of good,
A life and soul to every mode of being
Inseparably linked.

Life Manifested in Physical Forms

In Wordsworth's poetry we find expression of manifestation of life in

the tree, the rock, the cloud, the daffodil, but ever present is the underlying theme which makes one universal life condition itself in all. Sometimes he portrays Nature so vividly that the physical world is so diminished that we feel ourselves a part of pure spirit. Beyond the bounds of imagination and intuition we have no compass to guide our thoughts upon the uncharted sea. There is no substantive beyond the grasp of the mortal mind, so the poet must symbolize in his play of imagination. Frequently, Wordsworth skilfully depicted Nature's influence upon the physical world. This is delightfully done in the poem "Lucy," where Nature makes a little child beautiful.

Three years she grew in sun and showers,
Then Nature said "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown:
This Child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own,

And with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle and restrain."

Universality of Being

Wordsworth's poetry gives us the feeling of quietude in Nature. He takes us from the physical world into the realm of the invisible. He impresses us with consciousness of the oneness of things. The mountains lift up their peaks to the clouds, the stars twinkle peacefully, the sun sets to rise again, the flowers look up in silence, and though there are storms that darken the sky, and floods that mar the land, in the higher region of thought in which these things are seen in relation to universal Being there is

Central peace, subsisting heart
Of endless agitation.

Wordsworth's Philosophy of Life

Wordsworth never definitely stated his philosophy. His life and works are criteria of it. Numerous poetical expressions reveal his philosophical insight. His poems are convictions of his philosophy rather than explanations of them. There is mysticism in his poetry, but the mysticism in which he delved is the inevitable. When he searched for the deeper meaning of life, or undertook to discover the cause of invisible force or action that plays upon sensibilities, he found that mystery transcends intelligence, for mysticism begins where intellect fails to grasp what lies beyond. In this we have the starting point of Wordsworth's philosophy, which, in brief, is the acceptance of an all-pervading intelligence in Nature, the universality of brotherhood, the pre-existence of the soul, and the Platonic theory of reminiscence.

For I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

An all-pervading spirit mingles with the human soul. Through emotions and intuitions, we beget mystical meanings, which give the convictions that lie at the foundation of our moral natures. These intimations of immortality that come from within cannot be clothed in speech. They are mixture of thought and feeling which do not come

into clear consciousness. At such exalted moments, poetry, religion and philosophy blend into one sublime conception, producing a deeply seated faith in universality of life. Wordsworth's philosophy is not confined to a narrow channel, nor can it be circumscribed in a small field. It is embodied in the whole of Nature's realm. He did not wander off in devious ways to seek truth; he found it within himself, and it became his own when his soul mastered itself, possessed knowledge, and cleaved to truth.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — C. J. Ryan

THE RISING ORIENT

The December, 1936, number of *Asia* is wholly made up of articles by Asiatic writers, and at least two of them contain information which certainly suggests that the tide is indeed rising in parts of the Orient in the direction of basic Theosophical principles. Professor Hsu Ti-Shan, head of the department of Chinese literature at the University of Hong Kong, describes the remarkable development of Tao sects in recent years. While several of these organizations or societies preserve some of the superstitious accretions which have disgraced the name of Tao for a long time, and in a few cases a belief in the acquisition of 'supernatural' powers through sorcery still prevails, on the whole there has been progress, and at least two of the great Taoist Societies are working on truly progressive lines. The *Tao Yuan* (College of Tao), established in 1911 by Wu Fu-ying and now having more than three hundred branches, has combined the teachings of Tao, Confucius, Buddha, Christ, and Mohammed, claiming that they are all equally divinely inspired, and that all have the same origin! Professor Hsu says that in spite of some rather fantastic aspects of its methods, its sincere attempt to combine the rival religions of China into one universal faith based on the principle that "the final realities of the universe are *Tao* and *Teh*, or morality and virtue," is making an ever-widening appeal to intelligent Chinese, and is a proof that the Chinese can break through the wall of localism or extreme nationalism which is in danger of overwhelming the twentieth-century world.

The second organization, an outgrowth of the *Tao Yuan*, started as a relief work, a kind of 'Red Cross,' is called the World Red Swastika Society, but it has nothing to do with politics. The four points of the swastika symbolize the Taoist idea of unity, and the entire symbol signifies the endless responsibility every individual has toward his fellows. It has already — since 1932—done an enormous work in relief

of all kinds, not only in emergency cases but in such things as the maintenance of hospitals, asylums for the aged, workshops for the poor, and other constructive activities. It has a large membership and hundreds of branches. The regular members pay a large subscription and are liable to be called upon for heavy donations in emergencies. Outside of its relief work, its objects are stated to observe the doctrines of the eclectic Tao Yuan and to promote peace and understanding among nations. Professor Hsu concludes his article by saying:

No one can view the spectacular emergence of this organization without realizing that something has happened in China contrary to popular conception of Chinese individualism. The way in which the Chinese everywhere are responding to the ideals of an organization like the Red Swastika or its parent, the Tao Yuan, indicates most forcefully the appearance of a new spirit in the modern socially conscious Chinese mind. China's ancient Tao — the Way — may yet be her way out.

The second article in the December *Asia* to which attention is drawn is by Ivan Norodny, a Russian writer who has given much attention to Oriental mysticism as well as to the arts. He takes us to the weird Gobi Desert, once, as H. P. Blavatsky knew and declared long before modern research discovered it, the seat of a magnificent civilization, and still holding subterranean relics of great richness and beauty. In *Isis Unveiled* she gives some important statements about the Gobi, and prophesies discoveries which have since been made. We have only room for one or two sentences, but the reader will find pages 598 to 606, Volume I, well worth comparing with the article in *Asia*. She says:

Occasionally some of the hidden treasures are uncovered but not a native dare touch them, for the whole district is under the ban of a mighty spell. Death would be the penalty . . . According to local tradition, the tomb of Ghengiz Khan still exists near Lake Tabasun [Tashun] Nor . . . Within lies the Mongolian Alexander, as though asleep. After three more centuries he will awake and lead his people to new victories and another harvest

of glory. Though this prophetic tradition may be received with ever so many grains of salt, we can affirm as a fact that the tomb itself is no fiction, nor has its amazing richness been exaggerated. . . . The time will come, sooner or later, when the dreadful sand of the desert will yield up its long-buried secrets, and then there will indeed be unlooked-for mortifications of our modern vanity. (S98-9)

She also mentions that Marco Polo — recently rehabilitated as a truthful reporter after centuries of vilification — "mentions more than once in his curious book of *Travels*, these tricky spirits of the deserts," and discusses the appearance of apparitions with whom conversation can be held in the Gobi Desert, not only in Marco Polo's day but in modern times. She quotes him as saying "even in the daytime one hears these spirits talking. And sometimes you shall hear the sound of a variety of musical instruments. . . ."

According to H P Blavatsky, the desert of Gobi, or Shamo, was not only the seat of a high civilization long perished, but, when a large part of it that is now perfectly dry was covered with water, twelve islands, symbolizing the Zodiacal signs, were "the abodes of twelve Hierophants and masters of wisdom." (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 502.) Ten or twelve thousand years ago, she says, the whole of the low-lying land was transformed into a sea "for the last time."

Then came another change, the inland sea was drained away, and a rich and fertile land was ready for habitation. The astonishing discoveries of Professor P. K. Kosloff, the famous Russian geographer, which were published in 1932, have proved that the brilliant civilization which arose in the vast area now covered with shifting sands possessed great cities, magnificent roads, temples, a highly developed cultural life, including the use of metals, advanced arts and sciences. About a thousand miles south of the city of Urga (now Ulan Bator) in Outer Mongolia, Professor Kosloff was permitted to excavate. Deep beneath the site of the far more modern city of Khara Khoto he found the tombs of some of the kings of the Uighurs, as this prehistoric

white race is called. He calculated from what he believes reliable data, that the *latest* burial took place between 8,000 and 6,000 years before the Christian Era. He was allowed to copy everything he wished, but not to remove the smallest particle, and the vaulted tomb-chamber, whose ceiling was fifty feet below the ground, had to be left as he found it, covered to that depth with sand with its contents inviolate.

Dr. Lao Chin, the archaeologist who worked with Professor Kosloff, believes that the Uighur Empire was a center of intellectual light from which expeditions were sent to China, India, Egypt, and even Europe, to establish civilization among the barbarians. There is much to say for this, and H. P. Blavatsky makes several statements that are perfectly in harmony with such a theory, even to the approximate dates just mentioned.

In 1927 General Kosloff reported the finding of the tomb of Jenghiz Khan in the same neighborhood, near the ruins of the dead Jenghiz Khan's city of Khara Khoto, deep under which Kosloff had previously discovered the immensely older Uighur relics. H. P. Blavatsky was right in believing that Jenghiz Khan's tomb would be found in the Gobi region near Lake Tashun, and also in speaking of its magnificence, for Kosloff reported that it vied with Tutankhamen's tomb in splendor.

In *Questions We All Ask*, Series I, No. 25, Dr. de Purucker speaks of the reawakening of the Orient, and says:

the Orient is beginning to stir uneasily from its long sleep . . .
Men and women living today will see marvels come to pass
before they die.

China, hoary with age and experience, has but begun to awaken from an age of rest, and I tell you, Heaven help the pink-skinned man, who calls himself the white man, when once the Orient is on its feet, if we Occidentals at present having the responsibility in our hands, do not change the course of our action. The time has now come for us to instil into the Orient the light that once we took therefrom — lessons of self-forgetfulness, of

forgiveness, of love, of peace, of justice, or, having sown the wind, we shall reap the whirlwind.

H. P. Blavatsky issued the same warning nearly fifty years ago, but in stronger language. She spoke of a prophecy well known in the Orient which threatened the invasion of decaying Europe by Chinese and Mongolians in revenge for the exploitation of the East. Professor Ossendowsky in his *Beasts, Men, and Gods* tells of meeting the same prophecy everywhere he went in Mongolia. Nicholas Roerich does the same, and Madame David-Neel, in her *The Superhuman Life of Gesar of Ling*, repeats the tale still more emphatically. To thousands, the almost mythical, but actually living King Gesar is the hero who will "exterminate all those who oppose the reign of justice."

Mr. Ivan Narodny's article in *Asia* deals with this matter, but he puts an entirely different aspect on it. Instead of being a conquest of blood and iron, however well-intentioned, it is to be a peaceful one. Gaimar, a famous oracle from Urga (now Ulan Bator) declares that a new creed of peace and brotherhood is to be declared to the world from the Gobi Desert, where great preparations are already being made. He says that the buried 'Golden Horde' is rising but not with carnal weapons; it will be a legion bearing the banners of universal brotherhood and goodwill. The difficulty in finding a successor to the recently deceased Dalai Lama of Tibet has given a strong impetus to this remarkable movement. Mr. Narodny says that seven hundred boy babies have been examined without success, and Gaimar's prediction that Lhasa will no longer be the home of the spiritual leader of the future is being taken very seriously. Gaimar mentions the strange phenomena that are alleged to have recently taken place in the Gobi as evidence that Nature is working with man in this new effort. Mr. Narodny says that fertility is beginning to return to the desert; lakes and rivers are filling with water from the increasing rains — indeed an unexpected phenomenon. Strange 'mirages,' such as were described by Marco Polo, are appearing, not mirages of the ordinary kind, but scenes from the past, accompanied by voices and other sounds! Dr. Lao Chin describes one he saw and heard in the desert, consisting of a procession of pilgrims

following a group of Nestorian Christian monks whose chanting was very clear. The figures disappeared at a place where he found the buried ruins of a Nestorian cathedral of the time of Kublai Khan, with many valuable relics. He says that such phenomena are now frequent, and "even such academic observers as Sven Hedin and Roy Chapman Andrews speak of them as inexplicable experiences."

Mr. Narodny discusses the astonishing discoveries made in recent years by Professor Kosloff, Dr. Sven Hedin, Dr. Lao Chin, and Dr. G. Franck, especially mentioning those of the magnificent tomb of Jenghiz Khan, the love-letters of Alexander the Great, and the marvelous relics of the mysterious Uighur Empire. These revelations of the greatness of antiquity have, it seems, profoundly affected the imagination of the nomads of the Gobi, who have also been speculating about the meaning of the increasing humidity in the Gobi and the inexplicable 'mirages.' Already, an imposing temple is being started in the wilds about three hundred miles south of Ulan Bator (Urga). The builder, "Lama Donald," said to be an *American*, who has discovered a deposit of gold rich enough to finance the undertaking, knows little about the use to which the temple will be put, but he believes that the prophet will arrive as soon as the building is completed. Faith can move mountains!

Among a group of others in the nomadic East who are working for a new religion of Brotherhood, Mr. Narodny mentions the Princess Tani Hanum of Dzungaria who is superseding the outworn methods of the lamas in her principality by an appeal to the aesthetic side of human nature. She believes that the arts, including music, drama, poetry, the dance, and even the films, should be used to develop a consciousness of universal brotherhood which must be the aim of the new religion. She says: "A new spiritual light is necessary, which is neither in our lamaistic nor in the Christian teachings; so I am doing my small share here in the desert in creating what I feel will be the spiritual light of the future world."

Another energetic member of the 'Golden Horde' who has adopted peaceful means of conquering the world is an ex-lama, nearly one

hundred years old, who was recently restored to the vigor of a strong man of middle age by the hermits of a so-called legendary Himalayan group. He has inspired many with the belief that with a new gospel the wilderness can be transformed, but he proclaims that if only material prosperity is aimed for, it will be a curse. "The materialistic West has machines and money, but it does not find them to be blessings. . . . Let us work for a new code of guidance, a new spiritual side of our aspirations."

Surely all this — and much more not mentioned — shows the progress the Theosophical *Movement* is making in the world, even in apparently unlikely places. We must remember that although, as the Mahatma K. H. said in 1880 when the T. S. was very small, the Masters have weightier matters than small societies to think about, yet in 1882 he wrote to Mr. Sinnett, "There is more in this movement than you have yet had an inkling of, and the work of the T. S. is linked in with similar work that is secretly going on in all parts of the world." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 271.) The rising of the 'Golden Horde' of peace and brotherhood in the wild desert is a strong contrast to the former vision of world conquest and the establishment of a Utopia by blood and iron which has been so widely promulgated in Asia. Can it be that the Orient will set the West the example of putting into practice the Golden Rules which all its World-Teachers have given as the Way of Life? "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred"; "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

LUNAR INFLUENCES

To the Theosophical student the question of the influence of the Moon upon terrestrial concerns is important, because it opens an immense field of thought which when logically followed up is of use in breaking down the purely mechanistic concept of the causes behind the superficial aspect of natural phenomena. It leads to the region of subtil causes in which the consciousness element is more evident. For instance, if we look on the Moon as nothing more than a mass of dead, inert rock, possessing no energies but gravitation and magnetism and

the like, the mechanistic view will perhaps be satisfactory enough; and to suggest that the Moon may have other and (to present-day scientists) 'occult' properties and influences on terrestrial life would be out of place. However, 'nature will out,' and more and more evidence is appearing from biological science in favor of lunar influence in reproduction of plants and animals. This has been considered one of the grossest superstitions of the antique mind, yet it was firmly believed in all parts of the world, and is still considered factual by millions. Once re-established, it may prove the door to an entirely unsuspected concept of the activities of the planets and their satellites, and indeed of the Sun, the ruler of the solar system. The latest information on the influence of the Moon upon ocean life (with which the Moon is seemingly especially associated, as it should be according to the Oriental teaching of the *Tattvas*) comes from Professor W. D. Hoyt, of Lee University, Lexington, Virginia, and Washington. We are indebted to the *Pathfinder*, January 2, 1937, for this report. Professor Hoyt says that "In the coastal waters of North Carolina, just below low tide, there grows a brown, flat ribbon-like seaweed called *Dictyota*. . . . The moon controls its sex life." He gives the results of sixteen years' painstaking experiment, which show that the 'fruits,' as they may be called, both male and female, ripen only when the Moon is full, most of them within a single hour of a single day, when action somewhat resembling pollination in higher plants takes place. Professor Hoyt further declares that his discoveries indicate that the Moon may have a *general* effect on fertility, and he mentions the known lunar influence on the reproduction of other marine life, including one species of fish, a mollusk, eight kinds of worms, and two starfish groups. Presumably he includes the well-known Palolo worm and the giant Sea-Urchin of the Gulf of Suez. Among the fish should be included the California smelt and the English herring, the date of the lunar period of the latter being always officially announced for the benefit of the fishermen, who prepare for larger harvests at that time. In his opinion, a study of the relation of lunar phases to the periodic production of reproductive cells may eventually reveal facts about fertility "which are now scarcely suspected." We might say 'totally *unsuspected*,' and not be exaggerating.

The English scientific journal, *Nature*, publishes a report from the Marine Biological Association Laboratory, at Plymouth, England, announcing that the flickering light which Columbus saw the night before he saw land, and which has caused much discussion, almost certainly was not a torch, but probably the phosphorescent illumination from a sea-worm floating on the water, one of the *Syllids*. This light has been noticed in October at the third quarter of the moon, the date when Columbus was cheered by the flickering light. The third quarter of the Moon in October is also the exact date when the Palolo worm appears at the surface of the ocean for spawning purposes, one of the most striking examples of lunar influence.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL MYSTERY-LANGUAGE AND ITS INTERPRETATION: XIV — H.

T. Edge

THE LOTUS

Held sacred from the remotest antiquity as emblem of the productive power of Nature, both spiritual and physical. But in calling it a symbol, let us remember what has been said about symbols in general: that, as the word is used in these articles, a symbol is not an arbitrary sign chosen by somebody to represent something because it seems appropriate, but an actual manifestation of the idea or quality or power which it represents. The universe is a manifestation of the cosmic seed, and the plant kingdom is one of the hierarchies of the manifested world. There can be no potency or quality or principle in human nature, spiritual, mental, or physical, which has not its counterpart somewhere in the plant kingdom; in the plants we find an inexhaustible wealth of forms and colors and perfumes and curative essences; astrology and herbalism have found out what plants belong to what planetary spirits, and what are good for certain ills. The lotus must evidently be — not a plant arbitrarily chosen — but *the* plant in particular which wise men of old have discovered to be the actual counterpart of this universal productive power in Nature, whether we call it spiritual nature or physical nature, or what not. One feels, in studying what has been said about the symbolism, that more might have been said; but the truth of a revelation consists not so much in what is said as in what is conveyed to the mind of the hearer; and this latter must depend in no small degree on the condition of that mind.

The lotus grows in the earth, sends its stem through the water, and blossoms in the air and sun; so that it has its home in the four elements and rises from the lowest to the highest. The seeds contain, even before they germinate, perfectly formed leaves, the miniature shape of the plants they will become. What better emblem could there be of that principle by which the part is a miniature of the whole? In a machine

or a building, the parts do not at all resemble the whole; in an organism it is otherwise.

The lotus, says *The Secret Doctrine*, is the flower sacred to nature and her gods, and represents the abstract and the concrete universes. It was held sacred by the Aryan Hindus, the Egyptians, the Buddhists, and by China and Japan. The Christian Churches adopted the symbol using however the Easter or Madonna lily; in pictures of the Annunciation, Gabriel appears to the Virgin holding them in his hand. It typifies Fire and Water, the two creative principles. This is the same idea as that of the lotus in the hand of the Bodhisat who announces to Maha-Maya the birth of the Buddha. Osiris and Isis were represented in association with the lotus. The lotus is a well-known form of the capital in Egyptian columns. The lotus is the two-fold type of the divine and human hermaphrodite, being of dual sex. Fire and Water are the symbolic names of the two creative powers, the one being energetic, the other receptive and formative. They are Father-Mother, and produce the Son, which is the manifested universe, or a world, or man, or any other being that is produced. In the Bible, the Divine Spirit is represented as brooding on the waters of Space, and similar emblems are found in all other cosmogonies. The lotus symbolizes the emanation of the objective from the subjective, Divine Ideation passing into concrete form. In the first chapter of *Genesis* it is said: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth . . . the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, *whose seed is in itself.*"

The analogy to the birth of a child is shown by the attachment of the seed-bearing flower by a long stalk to mother-earth, from whom it draws nourishment; and in some representations a child is seen seated on the flower. But the original impersonal and pantheistic and reverential view of the early Aryans has been degraded in some later religions by attaching too much importance to the physiological aspect. The day of H. P. Blavatsky's death, May 8th, is called White Lotus Day, and the name is preserved in the Lotus-Circles for children which were founded under the inspiration of our great Leader.

THE DUAL ASPECT OF WISDOM (1) — A Trevor Barker

Friends: H. P. B. quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* those familiar words, "Knowledge dwells in heads replete with thoughts of other men, Wisdom in minds attentive to their own"; and an early Christian writer remarked that the business of Wisdom is to discern first that which is true and then to be able to discern that which is false. Now Theosophy — the Wisdom of the Ages — points out the fundamental duality, as it were, that runs throughout the manifested Universe: that while the whole of manifested nature is rooted in an indissoluble unity, which it is the business of Wisdom to discover so that we can realize it in our own consciousness, nevertheless, directly we pass in thought from that boundless, infinite unity which in this philosophy we call Parabrahman, the Absolute, then we come down in thought necessarily to the contrast in nature between Spirit and Matter, subject and object, and so forth.

This, applied to man, immediately shows us that we have a spiritual pole to our being, as well as a material one; and in *Isis Unveiled*, the first book of Mme. Blavatsky, she pointed out that there is indwelling within the external form of man and of the Universe a connecting link between Spirit and Matter, which in the human entity she calls "the Real Man." Now it is the whole purpose of Wisdom, I venture to suggest, to show how this inner Real Entity in man, which is the thinking, human, striving soul, the Personal Ego, the Astral Monad, the Manas — call it what you will — it is this Entity, as it were, fixed, crucified, in Space between heaven above and the earth beneath, which has to tread the Golgotha of life, which is a pilgrim marching literally through eternity, from age to age, but which is not unconditionally immortal.

Wherever there is a spark of the Boundless All, there you have all the sevenfold principles of life in embryo. It is purely a question of degree of unfoldment: the consciousness is latent in the life of an atom as it is

in the highest God that your mind can rise to: therefore it will not come as a shock, the idea that this intermediate principle in man, striving towards Wisdom on the one hand, and pulled down towards matter on the other, is a being that has to win immortality; and the process by which he mounts the ladder of life, the stairway of evolution, is the seven rungs of his own being. Occultism is the process; as T. Subba Row said in the early days of this Movement: "It is the process by which man learns to transfer his individual consciousness from his mortal, material body, up the stairway of his being to the incorruptible world of non-being represented by his seventh principle." So Wisdom is that state of consciousness which is achieved when the human entity has learned how to merge itself into an indissoluble unity with its own Divine part, its Higher Self, the Higher Ego — what in Theosophical terminology is called Manas indissolubly united to Buddhi.

All men have this higher nature. It is, if we did but know it, a god not in embryo but in actuality, dwelling in full power, omniscient almost, one with the Universal World-Soul. And it is because this Higher Nature of ours is part of that indissoluble unity of the Supreme Soul itself, that we have an aspect of our being which is of the nature of Truth. Half our task is but to open ourselves, open a certain door of our being, that we may enter into the inspiration, the light, the knowledge, which is actually inherent in that part of our being.

I dared to call this lecture "The Dual Aspect of Wisdom," and while I do not want to concentrate attention too much upon the lower side, the lower aspect of wisdom, nevertheless it must be evident to all of us, as was shown so perfectly by St. James in the New Testament, that there is a terrestrial, psychic, and devilish Wisdom, if it may be so called, as well as the Divine nature. I think that if you will permit me I will just read you the passage, because it shows the Wisdom that is to be found scattered throughout the New Testament. In the third Chapter (11-17), you find these words, and here is shown very beautifully the contrast between these two poles of man's being:

Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and

bitter?

You will remember that H. P. B. in the early days of the Movement in a mood of protest at the lives of certain Theosophists, pointed out that pure water could not be given to the world out of a foul bucket, and that the lower nature of men must be cleansed.

Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries, either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

I ask you to note that phrase:

This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

There you get in the New Testament the statement — one of the statements — of the dual aspect of Wisdom; and H. P. B. has a remarkable article dealing with the subject in one of the early volumes of *Lucifer* (her own magazine) where she pointed out how often Theosophists are taken to task because they believe in the Wisdom of the Ancients: they uphold it, they stand for it, they believe in it; while the disciples of modern knowledge, so to speak, think and believe that modern scientists, modern inventions and thought and psychology and so-called philosophy, are in every way equal, if not superior, to the

Wisdom of old. The question is, "Is that so?" H. P. B. challenges the whole position very, very strongly, and her words are so suggestive, so pregnant with illuminating ideas, as well as rather amusing, that I should like to read you some of the passages that she has in this article. She is replying to somebody who has put the point of view that modern wisdom is superior to the Ancient. She says:

. . . Our correspondent is welcome to his own views, but so are we to ours. Let him imagine that the Eiffel Tower dwarfs the Pyramid of Ghizeh into a mole-hill, and the Crystal Palace grounds transform the hanging gardens of Semiramis into a kitchen garden — if he likes. But if we are seriously "challenged" by him to show "in what respect our age of hourly progress and gigantic thought" — a progress a trifle marred, however, by our Huxleys being denounced by our Spurgeons, and the University ladies, senior classics and wranglers, by the "hallelujah lasses" — is inferior to the ages of, say, a hen-pecked "Socrates and a cross-legged Buddha," then we will answer him, giving him, of course, our own personal opinion.

Our age, we say, is inferior in wisdom to any other, because it professes, more visibly every day, *contempt for truth and justice, without which there can be no wisdom*. Because our civilization, built up of shams and appearances, is at best like a beautiful green morass, a bog, spread over a deadly quagmire. Because this century of culture and worship of matter, while offering prizes and premiums for every "*best thing*" under the sun, from the biggest baby and the largest orchid down to the strongest pugilist and the fattest pig, has no encouragement to offer to morality, no prize to give for any moral virtue. . . . (2)

(She is wonderful in the language she chooses, is H. P. B.!)

I think that none of us can question the truth of this challenge that she throws down; and some of you who have read that book called *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* will remember that one of the Masters there states that Wisdom will ever be denied but to those who seek it

for its own sake without any secondary motive of turning it to personal profit and gain. The whole of the Theosophical Movement rests upon that high endeavor.

You will find the lower side of the dual aspect of Wisdom rampant in the world today. Go out and look, for example, at the advertisements in some present-day magazines, and there you will find every kind of psychism and claptrap and exploitation of human beings, where money is asked for initiation into so-called Rosicrucian rites; where the "secrets," so-called, of the Ancient Wisdom are offered to be sold for money in the market places of commerce. You will find every kind of medium, spiritualistic performance, and goodness knows what. Now all these things are expressions of this lower, psychic, terrestrial aspect of wisdom. It is not that the psychic and the so-called clairvoyant who take your money and offer to tell you something about yourself do not tell you a good deal that you may find very interesting and true, and that may give you all sorts of pleasant dreams about the future, which often also are true. But the main point is that true Wisdom cannot be obtained where there are any motives of self-seeking of whatever kind; and anything in the nature of personal gain or taking of money in the realm of the occult is fatal to Wisdom; yet it is everywhere rampant at the present time, in this crisis in the world's history, when the earth is passing through one of the critical points of her great cycle. Men and women are looking at each other, examining themselves, not knowing quite what is going to happen; and it is at such times as these that the soothsayers and the clairvoyants and the like burst forth in a great crescendo of psychic activity — the terrestrial lower wisdom, if you like to call it so.

There is another aspect that we have to deal with. It is, briefly, that if there is a true Wisdom in the world, there is also a spurious wisdom, shown forth by this manifestation that I have been speaking about; and I must not fail to mention that it is pre-eminently shown forth in that flood of literature that may be termed pseudo-occult, pseudo-theosophic, which again diverts men's minds from the true Wisdom, fills them up with a lot of psychic junk. The seeds of thought that are in

these books sink deep into the psychic nature of the individual, and bring forth but evil fruit. That is another manifestation; and further, one should mention here the fact that there is such a thing as wisdom in evil, where there are self-conscious human beings who have made evil their God, and who have a knowledge of all the laws of the universe, and can turn them to their own evil ends — in one word, sorcery.

These are some illustrations of the lower aspect of Wisdom. You can work them out in a thousand different ways; but I should like to dwell upon the higher aspect by referring to what are called in certain parts of Theosophical literature, and the literature of the Ancients, the seven Jewels of Wisdom, which have relation exclusively to True Wisdom or Magic: those seven Golden Keys or key-doctrines around which *The Secret Doctrine* of Blavatsky was actually written. Test this statement for yourselves. Those seven doctrines I have no doubt you are absolutely familiar with, but may I just enumerate them for you? The first is the doctrine of Reincarnation; the second Karma, the law of cause and effect; the third the doctrine of Hierarchies, which means that everything in the universe is interlinked and interblended with everything else, which it really interpenetrates in its essential nature. You will see how everything in *The Secret Doctrine* can be related to one of these seven Jewels, and therefore they are worth remembering. The fourth is the doctrine of what in Sanskrit is called Swabhava, which is the essential characteristic of a thing, of a being, of a Monad. This, interpreted, means that a man is in his outward nature but a reflexion of what he is in his inward nature, and that everything in the universe is different, although rooted in unity; that there are not two beings in the universe alike, any more than there are any two atoms, or two grains of sand, or two flowers, or two trees, or two beasts, alike. Every single thing in the universe has its essential characteristic, its Swabhava, its keynote. You and I, we all, have our characteristic spiritual tone, our note, that we try to show forth; and in the great drama of life we learn to bring forth from within ourselves, that is from within that seed-root of Divinity, that Monad, the germ from

which all our lower being springs, which is its Father in Heaven. It is this which provides our characteristic, essential true Self. It is the eternal "I" which never perishes.

The fifth key is the doctrine of Evolution; and the sixth is related to something that I was saying just now: it is the doctrine of what in Sanskrit — if you will forgive me for quoting a Sanskrit term again — is called the Amrita-Yana and the Pratyeka-Yana, which means the right-hand Path and the left-hand Path, the Path that leads to Wisdom, and the path that leads downwards — the Path of Wisdom and the path of self. There again you see the contrast of the two aspects of Wisdom — the sixth of the keys around which *The Secret Doctrine* is written. And the last — Atma-Vidya, the knowledge of the Self and of the marvelous teachings concerning how the One becomes the Many.

I asked you to allow me to mention those seven keys to you for a particular purpose. There are certain formulae in the Theosophical system of thought that as a student I have found immensely helpful — things that one can make a part of one's being, and apply to any problem of life in meditation. Whenever one has a quiet moment one can revert to the statement of fundamental principles that is given in the twelfth chapter of Volume II of *Isis Unveiled*. There are ten of them. You can turn to that formula and to the three Fundamental Propositions in the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine*, and find the basis on which the whole philosophy is said to rest: these seven Jewels that I have just referred to, and the seven and ten Paramitas that are given in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Now the last thought that I want to leave with you is the correspondence between the order of the seven Paramitas, the Buddha's virtues which the disciple makes his code of ethical conduct, and the order of the Seven Jewels. The Paramitas are so beautiful that I will read them to you, and I want to try to show that this correspondence is most suggestive.

The first of these keys: *Dana*, "the key of charity and love immortal." At first sight does this connect with the first Jewel — the doctrine of

Reincarnation? I believe you will find that it does if you think deeply enough about it, for reincarnation means regeneration. Reincarnation or reimpodiment takes place in a human being when the indwelling consciousness has grown to that point where the existing form no longer serves it; and then there is a death of a certain part of the being, a regeneration and a rebirth into a higher state, into the higher part of the nature, and it is here and by this process that all love comes into a man's life. He cannot live or express Wisdom or Charity immortal unless this regenerative process is going on.

The second Paramita - — *Sila*, "the key of harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect and leaves no further room for Karmic action." I think that it is sufficiently obvious that the second Jewel, the doctrine of Karma, exactly corresponds to the second Paramita.

The third is not so obvious but contains an inspiring thought — *Kshanti*, "patience sweet, that nought can ruffle." How does this relate to the third of the Jewels, the doctrine of Hierarchies? I suggest that there is no more perfect example of that patience sweet that the disciple is called upon to show forth in his life than the Silent Watcher, who in *The Secret Doctrine*, you remember, is shown as sitting at the threshold of darkness which he will not quit until the weary, sore-footed pilgrims of humanity have each passed into the great Nirvana before him. That is the picture of the great summit, the Heaven of the spiritual, psychological Hierarchy of Adepts — the Silent Watcher of our world or Universe.

The fourth Paramita — *Viraga*, "indifference to pleasure and to pain, illusion conquered, truth alone perceived." I suggest that there is a very direct correspondence between that and the doctrine of Swabhava, the essential characteristic of a nature, for which you will have to go to the very root and core of a man's being. When the consciousness is rooted in the higher part of the man's being, then only is it possible for it to show forth his perfect spiritual keynote or tone, and that balanced indifference to pleasure and pain.

Then *Virya*, "the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal TRUTH, out of the mire of lies terrestrial." What better illustration can you have of evolution than that Paramita? It depicts the whole struggle out of the corruption of matter to the incorruptible world of the Spirit. That is *Virya*, the dauntless energy and courage that we are called upon to develop.

The sixth Paramita — *Dhyana*, "whose gate once opened leads the Naljor towards the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation." This, being interpreted, means meditation; and meditation, as you will agree, I believe and hope, is intimately related to the sixth of the seven Jewels, that which is concerned with the Amrita-Yana, the Immortal vehicle, the right-hand Path; but there is no treading of this Path except by the practice of the Paramita called *Dhyana* or Meditation.

And the last — *Prajna*, "the key to which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, son of the Dhyanis." That relates to the last and final Jewel, Atma-Vidya, knowledge of the Self, the means by which the One, the Supreme, the Infinite, became the many in all this marvelous manifested Universe.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF DR. BARKER AT THE CLOSE OF HIS ADDRESS:

Question — To which, if any, of the different keys would you relate the law of cycles?

A. T. B. — I should relate it to the law of Reincarnation or Reimbodiment, which is a manifestation of the law of Cycles; but you must remember that all these Jewels in the Doctrines of Theosophy are interblended with each other. You cannot understand one without the other. You cannot understand the law of Karma, the law of the rhythmic flow of cause and effect, which is also intimately related with the doctrine of Cycles, unless you understand the doctrine of ebb and flow as it expresses itself in the law of Reincarnation and Reimbodiment; for this is the rhythmic pulse of Nature that goes through the life-cycle of the tiniest infusoria: even a mosquito, a

butterfly, any of these creatures exhibits the law of cycles — it reembodies itself. Then, too, it is shown forth in the attraction of the tides; in the phases of the moon; in the pilgrimage of the planets in their orbit around the sun; in the birth and death of worlds, of solar systems: for worlds are born and die just as man, only in infinitely longer cycles of time. I think you can relate it to the first, and if you wish, to the second of the Jewels. I hope that this is responsive to the question.

Question — Is it correct to say that the left-hand Path is incomplete wisdom because mastery of the lower self has not been obtained? In other words, incomplete because inhibited by the personal?

A.T.B. — In a certain sense that is perfectly true, for we all of us fail to tread the highest Path in any moment that we act from a consciousness centered in our personality. It is the personality which enshrouds our spiritual vision and prevents our seeing the Light, and therefore prevents our seeing the right-hand Path. Do you remember the definition of these two Paths given by Master Koot Hoomi in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, where on a certain, left-hand page — I have forgotten the number, but a certain left-hand page (3) — he gave a definition of the Amrita-Yana and the Pratyeka-Yana, and he shows that these are simply another way of stating the doctrines relating to the individuality and the personality, and the Personal Ego and its identity with the Astral Monad? Now the Personal Ego is that, you remember, which goes to Devachan; and what is the Personal Ego? The Personal Ego, he says, is a combination of the five lower principles; and the Immortal vehicle: Amrita-Yana, the Higher Ego, is, of course, the combination of Higher Manas united to Buddhi.

Question — Re the lower and distorted aspects of wisdom such as one finds in modern science and even psychism: do not they conform with the unity of Evolution, since in the Cosmic economy there can be no such thing as waste, and there may conceivably be people who need the left-hand Path to find the Right?

A. T. B. — I would interpret this in a slightly different sense, that is to

say, what is called the descending arc and the ascending arc: the Path of forth-going, as it is called, and the Path of ascent, or return — the Path of Involution into matter, and Evolution out of it. I personally am a little in doubt about this idea that men need an evil path. I do not think that this is what is meant; but they do have to descend into matter, and they do have to evolve out of it; and there is another interesting point from a student's point of view here. You know the doctrine of a Planetary Chain, and you know that this Planetary Chain is represented symbolically as a ring of circles, and it goes down on the left side and goes up on the right side. The side on the left is the descending, and on the right the ascending arc. Has it ever occurred to you what is the correspondence in our lives of that idea? It is this: that when we live in the higher part of our being we express the spiritual qualities: we are identifying ourselves in consciousness with the superior qualities of the Planetary Chain, and what in Buddhist — or rather Brahmanistic — terminology is called the Lokas; but when we live in the lower part of our being we are concerning ourselves with the descending arc and with the talas — a stimulating thought: that we can live in the lokas, or in the talas: in the higher spiritual part of the being, or be buried in the personal.

Question — Does not a study of technical Theosophy tempt one towards becoming merely an arm-chair philosopher? In other words, do you not think that the appeal of *The Secret Doctrine* is more to the intellect than to the heart?

A. T. B. — Those who have studied H. P. B.'s teachings realize that there is some truth in what the questioner has suggested: that it is possible to study these teachings and become a mere arm-chair philosopher. In other words, they can be studied from a purely intellectual point of view. You may become acquainted with a great deal of her teachings, and do nothing whatever about it, merely remain sitting on the fence or in your arm-chair, and entirely fail to lead the life, as she stressed in *The Secret Doctrine*, which is the necessary pre-requisite to an obtaining of any measure of Wisdom at all.

The Theosophist has a perfectly complete answer to the charge of the complexity of the doctrines hiding the essential life of the spirit — which is another way, I take it, of saying what the questioner meant. All I can say is that if any individual finds there to be such a doctrine, all he has to do is to concentrate upon the ethical aspects of the teaching, as found, for example, in *The Voice of the Silence*, in the seven Paramitas I read to you. I venture to think if he sets to work to practise the seven Paramitas of perfection, he will have his hands full; and if our brother will give himself that exercise I think he won't have much to complain about, because he will understand a very great deal by the time he has finished that exercise.

I imagine the Masters of Wisdom had a very good reason for casting their philosophy and message to the Western world in the way they did; and one must come to the conclusion that since the characteristic of our present age is an endeavor to develop the thinking principle — a characteristic of our Western people is that they want reasons for everything — in the Theosophical philosophy they get a closely reasoned explanation for almost everything in the Universe. I think that is sufficient: if you want an explanation of the Universe there is the philosophy to satisfy you; and if you want to live the life, you have the Sermon on the Mount; you have the teachings of Buddha; you have the ethical principles of all the great religions, as well as the precepts to be found in *The Voice of the Silence*. It is only that the Theosophical system is infinitely rich not only in ethical ideas but in philosophy as well. There is food for the spirit, there is food for the heart, and satisfaction for the intellectual part of the man, in the whole system. At least that is how I understand it.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Address given by the President of the English Section T. S. (Point Loma) at a meeting of the Phoenix Lodge (Adyar T. S.), London, November 20, 1936. ([return to text](#))
2. The Dual Aspect of Wisdom" (*Lucifer*, Vol. VII, London, Sept. 15, 1890). ([return to text](#))

3. Page 114. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — L. L. W.

FALSE COMMUNICATION WITH OUR DEAD

If someone you love had just fallen asleep after a weary day of illness would you rush at him and wake him up to ask his advice about something important to yourself? Yet this is just about what we try to do when we seek to call the souls of our departed back into the troubles of this world. Unfortunately, there is nothing as a rule more selfish than personal grief. It centers entirely in *my* sufferings, *my* loss *my* loneliness; and considers the peace of the departed not at all. But — and how fortunate for them! — we cannot really disturb the dead in this way. We may, if we are selfishly violent and persistent enough, delay their blessed release into the peace and bliss of spiritual rest. But eventually they must slip away from us. And then because of our blind and ignorant selfishness. We shall not be able to keep in touch with them, as explained in our last talk.

Here is where you will be sure to ask about spiritualistic "messages." And you will remark that such communications have brought comfort to thousands. True enough. That kind of synthetic satisfaction is always ready to hand. But that is *false* communication with our dead. It really has nothing whatever to do with the departed Spirit-soul when we sit in at seances we are a good deal like the pathetic little dog listening to "his master's voice." Literally, that is all we are getting — an astral phonograph record thrown off by the shell, the mental-emotional energy-complex left behind by the departed. A *bona fide* medium can so to speak wind up this astral record. Some kind of parrot-message is the result — providing of course that the message is genuine, which all too frequently it isn't.

This shell or psychological complex of the departed is a left-over from the life just closed. After the death of the physical body it is sloughed off or laid aside by the Spirit-soul like a discarded glove. Does not a

glove after long wear take on the characteristics of the wearer? How often a glove, or some other personal belonging, will be treasured for just this reason. It seems to hold the very atmosphere of the beloved dead. Actually, it does. It is saturated with his aura as the saying goes, his life-vibrations. How much more then will this be the case with the mental vesture, the shell or complex of lower psychological energies thrown aside by the dead. It is from this garment of mortality, this astral shell, that the messages of the seance-room are released. The elements which make up this shell belong to the temporary and material parts of the just-closed life. They were the man's disturbing loves, his hatreds, passions, emotions, and memories of a personal nature. These must be left behind if the man himself is to rest from "life's fitful fever." So after death the Spirit-soul casts these aside and clothes itself in the light of eternity. It then becomes invisible, and unapproachable to all but the Spirit-souls of those who unselfishly love it.

Now this psychological shell is far more durable than the physical body, being made of mental or ethereal substance. Of course, if left alone it too will in time dissolve away. But if it is agitated by our violent grief or stimulated by ignorant mediums it can be held together and made to last for many years and so delay the Spirit's passage into complete rest. Perhaps you see now why the communications psychically galvanized out of this soulless complex are always so parrot-like. Details of the past life or thoughts may be given accurately but it seems safe to say that no genuine "news from the other side" has ever been received through ordinary mediums. The "spirits" of great men always utter the flattest platitudes. And nothing has ever been added to discovery in Science or in any other department of human thought by the murky echoes from seance-rooms. As for the hypothetical "Summerland," what is it but another parrot-reproduction of imperfect conditions of this imperfect world? It is merely another kind of Fool's Paradise. And the fact that thousands of sad and sincere hearts have found comfort in a belief in this so-called Summerland proves nothing.

There is too a decidedly unhealthy atmosphere about this kind of absorption in the affairs of the dead. A candid examination of all the phenomena of Spiritualism by one who has no emotional axe to grind will soon send him back to the sane light of the normal world. And this even though he may admit that many of the manifestations are facts. But he will see them as unwholesome facts fit only for the impersonal research of the ethical-scientific spirit.

Theosophy assures us that if we will lift our inmost hearts daily in pure unselfish aspiration, if we will constantly try to live our ideals, we shall be able to have *communion* with the Heavenworld of our dear ones. We shall not *communicate* with them. We cannot see or hear or touch. But we shall *know*, and knowing be at peace.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 323 & 324

QUESTION 323:

In *The Ocean of Theosophy* I came across this statement in chapter xiv, p. 124: "The Chinese always were a nation of astronomers, and have recorded observations reaching far back of the Christian era, but as they belong to an old race which is doomed to extinction — strange as the assertion may appear — their conclusions will not be correct for the Aryan races." _____ is of the opinion that G. de P. has said somewhere that China was on the upward trend of the present cycle. We have searched for the reference but have not been able to find it. Would you mind asking the Leader, at some time convenient for him, the truth of this matter? Mr. Judge may have written in a wider sense than the Leader who may have had in mind a small, specific cycle — that is if he mentioned China at all in this respect.

G. de P. — The questioner's understanding of my meaning is quite correct. Here we have a case where brief statements, each one correct, refer to different things; and readers who are too quick in perusal and not thoughtful enough, immediately say: Oh, a contradiction. There is none! The facts are as follows:

The Chinese, that is the pure Chinese or those nearly pure in race, are the degenerate descendants even today of the Seventh Sub-Race of the Atlantean Root-Race. Consequently, when we take in the immense periods of geologic time, they have nearly reached their end; and speaking in immense time-periods are soon "doomed to extinction"; but, speaking in terms of smaller time-periods such as we humans easily can grasp, that is to say of several thousands of years, which are small geologically, the Chinese still have a brilliant future before them, and are now on the upward rise. There will be Chinese for thousands of years yet, although steadily mixing and showing a tendency to die out as pure Chinese.

Thus Judge is right because he was referring to long geologic periods so to speak. I was right because when I spoke, I was referring to the shorter time-periods of some thousands of years, or a good many hundreds of years. Actually the Chinese today are striving to come to the fore again as a national unit, and they will do so, and very soon, perhaps within a hundred years, and have a relatively brief period of power and glory, and then they will go down again; perhaps later rise to another still shorter period, and then go down again; and keep doing this until finally they vanish as a racial unit. Thus we can say with Judge that they are "doomed to extinction," for the reasons above given; and we can say with equal truth that they are rising on an ascending small cycle. What happens with the Chinese happens, or will happen, with all other racial units. Each has its turn; each has its beginning, its growth, its culmination in power and splendor, its senescence and decay, and its vanishing.

QUESTION 324:

Please say how these two quotations can be harmonized: ". . . the wave of spiritualistic phenomena . . . has been aided by the Nirmanakayas." (Last para., chap, xi, *Echoes from the Orient*) and ". . . the most insane and fatal of superstitions — Spiritualism." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 284.)

G. de P. — This certainly does look like a contradiction, but it is instead a paradox, and can be easily reconciled. I speak from recollection, as I have not the book at the moment before me, but as I recall the passage in Mr. Judge's *Echoes from the Orient*, when the entire context is taken into careful consideration, he himself reconciles the paradox. This reconciliation lies in remembering two things, first that Spiritualism as it is commonly understood is a "superstition" and a very "fatal" one, that is as it is understood by spiritists generally, who look upon human beings after death as being merely a prolongation or continuation of the ordinary human earth-men in a purely mythical Summerland, where they appear to be living in a kind of inane and idiotic atmosphere of self-satisfaction. In fact, it is nothing but a dream-

situation, and takes no account of the septenary constitution of man, nor the different parts of this constitution, and the destinies which these various parts respectively undergo after death.

It is the old folly of the everlasting personal, unchanging ego, which the Christians have adopted in another form; and the spiritists do not realize the truth. Hence, spiritism as understood is actually a truly "fatal superstition."

On the other hand, in a world which was typically materialistic when H. P. B. came to do her work in the West, which generally, excepting good Church people, had no belief whatsoever in the survival of anything in man, which looked upon man as being little more than a body, and his mind and emotions and ethical sense a kind of ethereal effluvium of the purely material forces working in the human brain — to such a world, I say, the teachings of the spiritists, which taught that there was something more in man than a mere physical body, even if it was only a kind of prolongation of the ego in a dreamland, was an idea which represented something higher than the grossly materialistic views of the scientists, and the equally materialistic views of the church people.

It was this touch of not exactly spirituality, but of looking to something higher than the material body, which was the part of spiritualism fostered by the Nirmanakayas as instilling in the mind of the materialistic West that man was something more than the physical body, which as this West then thought as represented by its science, was the be-all and end-all of man.

Now the spiritistic phenomena which were utterly unexplainable by the materialistic science of the day, did instil thoughts of something more being in man than merely his body, unknown forces of a psychic and mental kind, which were, however, falsely called "spiritual"; and the foregoing is just the reason also why H. P. B., when she first began her public work, began to work among the spiritists, because they were trying to free themselves, however erroneously, from the dominant materialistic thought, teaching, tendencies, and soul-destroying

hopelessness of the time. It was in this minor manner that the Nirmanakayas did, as it were, aid and support the spiritistic phenomena in so far as these latter were genuine and not faked.

Thus you see, the two quotations are not contradictions, but together form a paradox, and are easily explained in the above manner.

To summarize: Spiritism itself in the light of true knowledge is a "fatal superstition"; but yet the spiritistic phenomena when genuine and not faked are true, and taught and even yet do teach the materialists that man has forces in him and faculties and attributes which the materialists cannot explain by referring everything to man's physical vehicle. Hence these genuine phenomena were supported and even aided at that time, although now no longer aided, by the Nirmanakayas.

The Theosophical Forum

WEBS OF DESTINY — *H. T. Edge*

This title comes from a saying of H. P. Blavatsky: "From birth to death every man is weaving destiny around himself, as a spider does his web." There is another well-known saying which sums up the doctrine in a nutshell:

"Sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." That means, leaving out the intermediate links, that our destiny springs from our acts. Therefore, if man is responsible for his acts, he is responsible for his destiny. Goethe recognises this when he makes Faust say: "Du, stolzes Herz, du hast es ja gewollt." "'Tis thou, proud heart, 'tis thou hast willed it so." 'Tis a proud moment for a man when he can rise up in his might and proclaim his own invincible soul. Then he ceases for a moment to blame God or Fate or his parents or other people for the unpleasant things of life. For a moment of illumination he realizes that he himself and he alone is the responsible person, reaping the just consequences of his own acts. But we do not live continually in such an atmosphere of exaltation, and for our more ordinary moments the consolations of philosophy are not to be despised. And, lest anyone carp at the word philosophy, let me remind you that each one of us has a philosophy of some kind or another, good, bad, or indifferent. If we don't like the word, we can call it something else; but there it is; and if your philosophy satisfies you, stick to it; but if not, seek a better.

It matters not what our religion or philosophy may be, we cannot get away from the fact that here we are. Each one of us has to make the best of the situation in which he finds himself. We may lean on props, but in the end we are driven back to our own resources, to whatever strength we can find within ourselves. But in place of outworn theological dogmas and the negations of materialistic philosophy, it is much better to have a philosophy which explains and interprets the facts of life; which is what Theosophy does.

Nothing happens by accident; and chance is just a word which covers our ignorance. If we cannot trace the cause of a thing, we say it happened by chance, but that is no explanation — it is just a convenient phrase. There was a time when men blamed God for epidemics, but now we know they come from neglect of sanitation, and we do not blame God any more. That is a feather in the cap of science, by the way. But we still go on blaming God or luck for things that we cannot explain; who knows but later on we may find the right explanation for these things too, and so blame them on to the right place — our own shoulders?

We see people around us reaping harvests of sorrow, and likely enough we ourselves have had our share. But then do we not see people *sowing* harvests of sorrow? Some people are sowing the wind; others are reaping the whirlwind; some are doing their best to break themselves up; others are laboring to put themselves together again. Some are ruining good constitutions; others painfully striving to improve bad ones. Some are squandering; others painfully gathering. And so on. Life is a mass of effects without visible causes, and of causes without visible effects. But the reason why we so often fail to connect effect with cause is that we take too narrow a view of the range of human life; we see but a small part of the picture. Religious people say that in the eye of God all is just; but Theosophy says that in the eye of man all may be recognised as just, if only that eye is fully opened. However, we must not expect to leap at a bound from ignorance to knowledge, but must be content to move by degrees. Theosophy is able to give quite a new picture of life which gives us confidence in the universe and its laws in ourselves. The following is taken from an English translation of one of the novels of Alexandre Dumas:

There is a moment in the affairs of every man which decides his future. This moment, however important it may be, is rarely prepared by calculation or directed by will. It is almost always *chance* which takes a man as the wind does a leaf, and throws him into some new and unknown path, whence, once entered,

he is obliged to obey a superior force, and where, believing himself free, he is but the slave of circumstances and the plaything of events.

Note — it is *chance* that is said to determine our actions in a crisis; and we are the plaything of circumstances and events. But chance is only a name for undiscerned causes, not a cause in itself. There is no such thing as a mysterious power called chance which rules us; it is only a word we use when we do not know the real cause. A man's decision in a crisis is determined by the character which he has stored up by all his past thoughts and desires and acts. Such moments are testing times, and our subsequent fate is thus decided by the total effect of our life up to that time.

But what, you may ask, about the apparently casual circumstances that produce such powerful effects in crises like these? Let us take an illustration. You turn down a side street and there arrive just in time to meet somebody, whom a little earlier or a little later you would have missed; and this meeting changes the whole course of your life. Or again, you meet with a sudden accident, which cripples you for a longer or shorter period, and again alters your life. Are such events casual? No, we cannot see the connexion, but it must be there; for there can be no results without causes. But the explanation is quite simple: it is merely that we do not know all the laws of nature; and consequently many things must happen which we cannot explain. But this does not mean that we cannot know them or that we never shall know them. We already know more than some of our ancestors did. It is only a question of more knowledge when we shall be able to trace the causes of events which seem to us now to be casual.

I admit that it is not easy to see what is the cause that decides a man to turn to the right or the left, or that brings upon him sudden accident or bereavement or illness; but we know two things: (1) that there must be a cause; (2) that there must be many causes which our present faculties are unable to discern. Our faculties are either complete or incomplete: if the former, we are all-wise, masters of wisdom; if the latter, there

must be things we do not know.

Now let us take a glance at modern civilization and ask what have been our means of knowledge. Religion has bid us rely on Providence, but has not gone into details; science has concerned itself with the world of the bodily senses, and with sundry metaphysical speculations as to what underlies it. So we can see that the reason why we understand so little is that we have not studied. If we begin to study along these lines we shall know more; but we neither can nor should expect to know the whole mystery at once. But every student who is pursuing a course of study has to take some things provisionally on faith, knowing that, though he cannot prove them now, he will be able to do so later on. If he objects to such a procedure, he will have to remain ignorant.

In the meantime it makes an immense difference to our outlook on life if we can accept the idea that the whole universe is pervaded by order, and that our own individual lives partake in this universal order and harmony and justice. Our experiences in this life are conditioned by our acts in this life or in an earlier life; but our actions are not determined, because man is divine in his essence, and this fact gives him the power of regulating his own conduct. It depends on man himself how he will confront the circumstances which his self-created destiny has made for him.

We weave our destiny round ourselves by our thoughts. A thought is an act. It is a potent energy, especially when accompanied by desire or any other emotion. It leaves us, and we do not trace its subsequent history. Like enough, it will come home to roost; and thus habits are engendered. And so on, as aforesaid, to character and destiny. But whence come the thoughts which enter our mind? Have we ever stopped to inquire? Must they not come from a thought atmosphere, into which all of us are sending thoughts, and from which we are all taking thoughts? We dwell in a thought atmosphere like fish in water, and there is constant intercourse. All our destiny is bound up with that of our fellows, for good or for ill. This is an individualistic age, and people often make a great fuss about the possible effect of their own

actions upon themselves. But what about the effect of our actions on other people? This is surely the most important point. If a study of the universal doctrine of consequences is merely to focus each man's attention more strongly on his own personal interests, the great problem of human welfare will only be intensified and not solved; for what we are suffering from is a lack of the sense of solidarity and of our duty to others. As has been pointed out by H. P. Blavatsky, no man can sin alone; so a knowledge of the truth deprives us of the excuse that we can sin in secret and thus escape doing harm to our fellows. Our evil thoughts will poison the atmosphere that others breathe; but correspondingly our noble thoughts will help others through the invisible channels of communication.

Man passes through many deaths and rebirths, but the life of the real man within is continuous through all these changes of the outer man. Consequently the character and destiny which we create for ourselves persist throughout and the chain of cause and effect is continued past the gates of death and rebirth. As the law of analogy is true throughout the universe, we can compare man with a seed. This seed generates a plant, the plant lives and dies; but it produces more seeds which perpetuate its essence, so that other plants of the same kind are produced. When we die, we die down, as it were, like a plant that withers; but there is no ultimate death; for there is regeneration from the germ that is preserved. At death we cast off our outer garments, one by one; and at rebirth we rebuild for ourselves new garments; but the character we have made for ourselves has been preserved latent in the germ and will be reconstituted. Thus each child born on earth has his own individual character, which unfolds itself as he grows, taking its materials from his parentage and his surroundings, just as a growing plant takes its materials from soil and air.

If we can grasp these teachings as to the reign of just and unerring law throughout the universe; if we can realize that every man is in his essence divine; we shall be able to acquire a new sense both of our power and of our responsibility, and shall no longer be content to drift along waiting for some outside power to do our work for us, or trying

to escape the burden of thought by absorbing ourselves in external distractions.

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: I — *H. Percy Leonard*

THE SUN GOD

"A largeness universal like the sun." — *Shakespeare*

The modern mind has been so clouded and benumbed by looking upon Nature as a dead machine controlled by a Creator far away, that we can hardly follow the free flight of ancient thought which viewed the Universe as if it pulsed with life in every part. The ancients moved about the world with ever fresh delight and saw no desolate, forsaken spots although they passed through lands without inhabitants. The moving sea, the shady groves, the sunlit rocks and running streams were thickly peopled by divinities and haunted by glad throngs of nature spirits. The sun was not a ball of incandescent lava but the glittering raiment of a god thus veiled from mortal sight, through whose incessant bounty all living things were sustained. We may however get some little understanding of the ancient point of view helped by the very Science that has sometimes seemed to have destroyed that standing-ground.

The microscope has shown us living forms which are as round as marbles, and recently it has been shown that electricity can exist in a globular form, so that we run counter to no fact of ascertained knowledge if we try to imagine the sun as being truly alive, and imbodyed in a vehicle of electric matter. The solar orb may be perhaps a vast intelligence enveloped in a living frame of stationary lightning, a temple fit for such august divinity. There is no need *en passant* to remind the intelligent reader that heat and light may be derived from a source which is both cool and non-luminous. Every incandescent electric lamp generates heat and light by setting up local resistance to a current supplied from a distant dynamo. The sun hangs in space beholden to no external source of light and from the dark robes of primeval night he spins a shining garment of dazzling brightness. He

floods the boundless aether with his glory and the swift currents of his vitalizing force bathe the remotest regions of the solar system.

There is nothing parasitic or dependent about the sun. He is an infinite bestower, an exhaustless generator. No shadow ever falls athwart his face. He has no barren intervals in his existence. Dwelling in the central fountain whence all energy proceeds he gives with neither pause nor stint and fears no scarcity or want. Perpetual positivity is his condition and as the ceaseless rivers of the cosmic force take rise in his huge heart he thus repels all hostile influence from without. And we — need we for ever be consumers merely of the sun's beneficence, and paupers in the universe? Why should not man in emulation of the bright divinity become himself a sun to the society in which he lives? Can we not spin a shining garment from surrounding gloom and generate from source unseen a flow of life and brightness for our brothers in the dark? To our confusion be it said that we too often live upon the love of others. We are indolently satisfied to be receivers when we might originate instead. We make appeals for sympathy, attention and applause, and yet if we but willed we might be always giving like the god of day. Hail Great Sun!

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT SURVIVES DEATH? (1) — A. Trevor Barker

[This lecture dealing with after-death states clarifies certain points of teaching, often hazy in the minds of students, that deal with the Theosophical explanation of Spiritistic phenomena. The occurrences in the seance-room cannot be satisfactorily explained without the light that Theosophy has to throw on the process of man's disimbodiment at death. — Eds.]

Our subject is one that must be of intimate and personal concern to every one of us. Every thinking man sooner or later is brought up against this problem, and we have to admit that the religious Christian teaching of the West is almost entirely lacking in a satisfactory explanation of the important question. You may search the New Testament, and, although you will find ethical teaching of deep Wisdom that will satisfy you for the living of your daily life — you will find it there in all its purity if you have the eyes to read it and to understand it — the teaching about the life after death is not given there. It is one of those Teachings that Jesus kept for his disciples, whom he taught in secret, and to whom he explained those Mysteries that Christian priests are inclined to say "were never meant for you and me to understand: they are something over which Nature has drawn a veil, and it is not for us to penetrate, either by the opening of the psychic senses, or by the penetration and understanding of our intellects."

It is because of this lack of information in the orthodox Christian sources in the West that a tremendous demand has been made for at least the last fifty years by the thinking and progressive people for something more satisfying, and the two main Movements that have striven to satisfy that very natural human yearning are: the Spiritualistic Movement, so-called, and the Theosophical Movement. Somewhere about 1850 the investigation of psychic and occult phenomena began to develop very strongly in America, and before

long mediums whose names will probably be well known to those who are students of the subject, began to perform phenomena in public, and a good deal of evidence was collected; but it aroused, of course, an enormous amount of opposition and incredulity, and the said mediums were getting into very deep water because they were accused — and in many cases unfortunately quite rightly — of fraud. Eventually H. P. Blavatsky, who was at the time in Europe, set out to America to see whether she could do something to give this Spiritualistic Movement a very much needed upward impulse, while providing at the same time a philosophical and rational explanation of the occult phenomena which were undoubtedly taking place even under test conditions. While unmasking fraud where it existed, she also sought to give some help and protection to those mediumistic sensitives who were doing their best, according to their lights, to lead men from a purely materialistic outlook to something which was in their view more spiritual — and all men must admit that if their beliefs were not spiritual at least they were super-physical.

So into that world came H. P. Blavatsky, able to perform with the power of her own will the very phenomena that the psychics of New York and Boston were performing they knew not how, as the unconscious instruments of certain forces which controlled and utilized them. And that is a true definition of what a medium is. A medium can function only when some exterior agency takes possession of the lower instrument, which by a variety of means is rendered unconscious: either by trance or hypnotism, or by some other means. Therefore these mediums have no longer any control of their mechanism of consciousness, and they claim that the fact that some invisible, and as they call it *spiritual*, entity, takes possession of their vehicle and produces varieties of phenomena, proves that their experience is valuable and must be useful and uplifting. It is precisely upon these points that H. P. Blavatsky, while confirming the genuineness of many of these phenomena, uttered a tremendous challenge to all those who accepted the main spiritualistic hypothesis, viz: that these phenomena were the production of excarnate human entities who had returned, so

to speak, from the veil of death in order to communicate with their friends who were still living on earth.

H. P. Blavatsky was, as always, extremely uncompromising on the point; she showed, demonstrated, and taught, that these phenomena were not produced by the incarnate human entities that they represented themselves to be. Not at all. There were the phenomena that take place with various kinds of automatic writing; the phenomena of speech that take place in trance; the sermons that were uttered by an entranced medium; and particularly the materializations whereby the images or faces of people that sitters were able to recognise, were materialized by a certain process, thus becoming visible to the audience.

Now the Theosophical teaching in regard to these matters is something entirely different from the Spiritualistic belief, and one of the great truths that H. P. B. hammered home was the fact that these pursuits, these investigations, into the psychic realms of Nature, were actually more materialistic from a certain point of view — that is from a spiritual point of view they were actually more materialistic — than a purely materialistic outlook. She showed, and history proves her to have been correct, that the individuals who pursue these investigations of a psychic nature, who attend Spiritualistic seances, for example, and who constantly have their minds and emotions concentrated in these unwholesome psychic realms, become thereby debased: their spiritual, psychic, physical, and in some cases their moral tone suffers, by reason of the fact that the minds of such people are being concentrated in the world of ghosts and spooks — the atmosphere of the graveyard in other words; and this is an unwholesome thing. Moreover, H. P. Blavatsky pointed out with great truth the extraordinarily unsatisfactory results that come about for the mediums themselves.

To turn from this aspect. Afterwards, if you wish, you can ask questions in regard to this psychic side of the matter, but I should prefer to turn to the Theosophical teaching as to what happens to the personal man after death. What is the personal man? He is the collection of psychic,

and mental energies and emotions which express themselves through the physical body of man during life. A new combination of those bundles of energies is made at the beginning of earth-life for every entity. He is a new combination, and that combination is given a name and a form such as you and I now bear. That combination has never existed before; it never bore that name before, and as such it will never exist again. It is here for a short while; it is transitory; and if we believe that this lower personality of ours is all that there is to survive; if we concentrate our attention upon its wants and needs, and are unable to raise our thought and aspiration to something higher; then we shall be of that vast company that H. P. Blavatsky called "the living dead"; the soulless individuals that she said we elbow at every street-corner.

If anything is to survive death, surely you will agree that it has to be worthy of immortality, and therefore the question immediately arises: Is man immortal according to the Theosophical teaching, or is he not? What has just been said would lead you to suppose that man is very decidedly mortal, and one part of him unquestionably is; but if we go a little deeper we find that this personal part of the man is, after all, only the envelop, the container, the instrument, the vehicle through which the flame of spiritual consciousness is striving to irradiate and illuminate and guide this erring personal entity through the intricacies of earth-life, through which intricacies many there are who lose their way.

Therefore we come to the position that man is only conditionally immortal: in other words the real entity who is living his life, and trying to express himself through this lower personality, has to find the way to raise himself inwards and upwards into union with the spiritual, permanent, eternal and immortal part of his own nature; and it is precisely that task that every initiated Adept has succeeded in doing to a greater or less extent. The whole purpose of occult science, the object of the initiation of the Initiate, is to bring him to a recognition that there is within, and brooding above the human individual, a definite entity which can be reached, the energy of which even today for every one of us shines into our personal nature in

moments of crisis (personal and otherwise) when the personal man is, as it were, driven right down to his very foundations. It is, then, that he is forced to look inward and upward to the only source of inspiration that any man really has when he reaches bedrock; and there, when he finds that "still small voice" that can make itself heard if he listens for it (it is the inspiration to spiritual actions of whatever kind, to kindly human actions), there is at these moments the guiding and the saving spiritual energy that comes from the immortal part of his being. For most of us this contact is fragmentary; it is spasmodic; but we do get glimpses of it. It is the main purpose of the study of Theosophical Wisdom: that we shall learn how to make our human brains porous, as Mr. Judge used to say, to that higher influence; so that day by day, week by week, it will beat down into our brains and we shall become more and more permanently aware of that spiritual influence in our lives.

Now this can be done without any mediumship — in fact mediumship militates against the spiritual influence; and yet, you see, the difficulty is that the psychic intermediate state offers such an attractive door to some natures. It is true that with very little difficulty the psychic senses can be opened by every one of us, and then we shall become aware of various kinds of entities that the spiritualists call their "spirit guides" and "angel guides" and what not. If they could see the said guides face to face I think they would get a very rude kind of shock. H. P. Blavatsky went so far as to state that most of the angel and spirit guides that come to mediumistic seances are the spooks of departed entities — not the entities themselves any more than your body is you — and you know the state of the human body after it is buried! You can easily imagine that after death the psychic remnants of your being are not in the cleanest condition. In other words they are disintegrating; and this part of our being, this cast-off remnant through which we expressed our psychic and intellectual emotions during life, has a form in the psychic worlds, which can be seen by sensitives, and it bears the shape and appearance of the human individuals that we were in life. So much so that a perfectly correct description can be given of Mrs. Jones or Mr. Smith, and the sitters can immediately say, "Oh, that is dear Mary," or

"our John." "Nobody else was ever just like that. This must be a very holy person who is giving us all this interesting psychic information," — and they believe everything they are told.

Yet what has actually happened? Two things at least are possible, both of them quite different from the explanation given by the believers in the Spiritualistic Movement, and these explanations are definitely interesting. First of all every one of us, in the magnetic sphere that surrounds us, contains an indelible record of every thought and act that we have ever committed from early infancy to old age — a somewhat staggering, perhaps uncomfortable thought; because any mediumistic sensitive can read in this aura or magnetic sphere all that we are doing or have done, and incidentally can see, therefore, an image of those people who have made the deepest impression on our lives, and it is in this way that many descriptions and personal incidents are related without the entity concerned even being present. Exactly the same thing can be done from the memory of Nature, for there is recorded everything that takes place in any individual life, and if the psychic is sufficiently developed, that impression on the astral light can also be read. So these are two possible explanations of phenomena; and yet a third, and a very frequent one, is that the excarnate entity is attracted to the seance, and that spook or ghost (whatever you like to call it) has a complete record of everything that it did and thought and said, but it has no power to act on its own; it is an unconscious bundle of energies that can only be stimulated or galvanized into activity by the psychic and electrical energy of the peculiar power of mediumship. That energy stimulates the ghost and it will play like a phonograph or a gramophone the records of anything that you like to call out from it, generally determined by the particular personal recollections of the sitters.

All the personal part of the man is doomed to disintegration, and only the part that is worthy of immortality really survives. According to the teachings of Theosophy the real entity in man very soon after death falls asleep and becomes unconscious, and in a longer or shorter period of time, determined by the relative degree of spirituality of the

individual — the more spiritual the quicker does he shake off the lower vehicles of consciousness, the psychic part of him — he then enters into a period which technically has been called the gestation state, exactly corresponding to the period of gestation of the human entity before physical birth. I should like you, if you will, to note the fact that there is a state after death exactly analogous to the state of gestation of the foetus before physical birth. One of the great Teachers to whom we owe some of the Theosophical teachings has recommended us to keep a spiritual eye upon the physiological processes of human birth if we want to understand some of the mysteries of nature: mosquitos, animals, and man, as well as planets and solar systems, come to birth by identically the same process.

So this entity after death sinks into a state of sleep; and after a certain period of time, which is determined by the ethereality of the spiritual energies that it generated during life, it is reborn in the Devachan, the region of the Gods (the Heaven world in the Christian language), as a little child, and there it will live over again — minus all recollections of the personal lower things; the evil passions, desires, hatreds and so on — it lives over again a kind of spiritualized recollection of all the beautiful and spiritual things that the entity dreamed about during life. Very few of us succeed in working out practically our spiritual aspirations and dreams. We have busy, work-a-day lives, and much remains to be worked out in the after-death state: in this ideal world we live from birth, through youth, adulthood, middle age and old age, and we assimilate and get the very maximum understanding and development of all those aspirations of a spiritual kind that we had during life.

But even this state one of these days comes to an end; and eventually when the period of assimilation and digestion, spiritually speaking, of these energies is completed, then the hour strikes and the entity once again is drawn back inevitably to earth-life, for the fact that it has experienced this state of Devachan, which is a kind of spiritual illusion, though a very high one — the fact that it has experienced that state proves that it has not yet won its freedom from the wheel of birth and

death. One of these days we all have to learn the lesson that even that state, which is only possible to those who lead relatively spiritual lives — *relatively* spiritual: an arrant materialist will not have that experience, and therefore it is a step forward — we all have to learn, I say, that there is a still further step, and that will come when we as individuals learn how to think and act so that the full spiritual meaning of every action and event is assimilated here and now, and for that we have to be fully self-conscious individuals. Then for us the interior worlds are open; there is no more death for us for there is no break in consciousness: consciousness proceeds unbroken, through sleeping and waking, through birth and death. Such a one is worthy and able to bear the burden of his immortality, but he has no Devachan in the sense of which I have been speaking of it. Periods of rest he must have, but that stage of illusion he has conquered and gone beyond.

FOOTNOTE;

1. Public lecture at Conway Hall, London, October 14, 1936, under the auspices of the Phoenix Lodge, Adyar T. S. and London Lodge, Point Loma T. S. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

COSMIC PHYSIOLOGY — J. W. A. Croiset van Uchelen

(In the following article a short, popular resume has been given of the work by G E Sutchffe, published under the title *The New Astronomy and Cosmic Physiology*, in an attempt to familiarize the reader with these fascinating researches and with the works to be published later on from his manuscripts, dealing with these subjects in a more detailed manner. The portions in smaller type, unless otherwise indicated, are from Sutchffe's book, though not quoted verbatim)

The Western and Eastern outlook upon the origin and history of our Universe are widely at variance, and it is only recently that attempts have been made to reconcile the instrumental efficiency of the West, with the consciousness efficiency of the East, and to apply this combination to the great problem of physics. Briefly and crudely the outlook of Western science was that after an eternity of time had elapsed, the expanse of space was filled with a nebulous mass of matter, consisting probably of the higher elements known to chemistry, upon which the force of gravity began to operate, eventually resulting in a system of stars — one of the stars, although quite ordinary in its general characteristics, in one respect being "a freak," namely the one on which we happen to live! Of course this presentation will be regarded as a *reductio ad absurdum*, but it does accentuate correctly the points of difference between the conclusions of so-called pure physics and those we shall attempt to deduct from the new scientific presentation, under the name of New Astronomy and Cosmic Physiology, the main difference being, that in Cosmic Physiology the life-element is dominant and all-pervading, as contrasted with the formulations presented by Astronomy so far, albeit a change of concepts is in progress. Nevertheless, up to less than a decade ago, physicists considered that the material forces of nature were determinate; that is to say, given the forces, then from the laws of physics the future results, or the working out of these forces, could be

predicted. When life is present this is not the case. The physical forces operating on a dog could possibly be defined, but we could not determine from these when the dog would wag its tail, for this event would be governed, not by physical, but by life-forces.

More recently, however, some scientists have stated that the result of forces for individual atoms, or groups of atoms, was indeterminate. Hence in the case of the atom we were placed in the same difficulty as in the wagging of the dog's tail. In other words there was a hiatus, or gap, in Nature which could possibly be filled by life-forces. In fact we had made room for the Divine Immanence in the physical Universe. It was evidently conceivable that this universe was worked, not by physical forces alone, but by a combination of physical *and* living forces, since every atom of matter, under all conditions, contains an element of life.

The new discoveries, since the end of the last century, seemed to confirm the Eastern concepts, to the same degree as they disturbed the Western, which encouraged some scientists and investigators to imbibe the Eastern thoughts more fully. The new concept upon which they based their investigations may be expressed as follows: Every object, small or great, a human being, an atom, or a planet, is the center of two concentric spheres. One of these spheres is expanding from the center, and the other condensing into it. To put it in another form, the ocean of space is swallowing the drop, but the drop is also swallowing the ocean of space. The first of these propositions is well known to physicists, for a source of light is the center of an expanding sphere, the wavefront being the periphery.

In the case of light we are dealing with an object at high temperature procuring radiations of a wavelength within the visible spectrum, but objects at lower temperature do the same thing, only the wavelengths being in the infrared region are not visible. It is one of the known facts of optics.

It is the converse fact, the sphere contracting into the object having the light-source at the circumference — in addition to being the center of

an expanding sphere — that is new to the West, despite the fact that the null effect of the Michelson and Morley experiment gave an unaccepted testimony. For if it was correct that there is only one ether-medium, as Western Science held — contrary to Eastern science which teaches that every planetary body has its own ether — then the M. & M. experiment would have demonstrated this. But it failed, and continues to do so, however carefully and repeatedly it is tried. The logical conclusion therefore is that the earth carries about its own ether, so that the earth is the center of two spheres, one expanding, the other contracting, according to the concept taught in the East. Nevertheless the physicists for the time being have rejected this idea and they gave us instead the theory of relativity of Einstein fame.

As we know, Einstein's theory, confirmed by observation, states that when a light ray, from a star to the earth, passes near the sun's surface, the sun's attraction causes the line to be curved, the curvature being twice that which follows from Newton's gravity law. This as we now can see is not due to a defect in Newton's law, but to a defect in the current radiation theory, as the physicist has only taken into account the expanding sphere but had not yet recognised the corresponding sphere of contraction to account for this phenomenon.

Cosmic Physiology was to be aided by still another revolution in scientific thought due to Heisenberg, who in 1925 put forward his new theory. He laid down the fundamental idea that only such things as are directly open to observation should enter into the mathematical formulae, to be left uncontaminated by obstructing theories. All one needed to do was to insert the observed facts into the mathematical mill and grind out the truth. The effect was tested by other forms of mathematics. Bohr, Einstein, Eddington and others entered the field and the conclusions arrived at were mutually confirmatory. One of the results of this process was the discovery by de Broglie and others that a ray of light, or electromagnetic radiation, consists of a sheath and a core, these lines of force being constituted somewhat like an Atlantic cable in which current passes along the sheath and returns along the core, or *vice versa* (these velocities being related to each other and to

the velocity of the electron). Another phenomenon which had gradually emerged was the existence of what are termed sub-ethers. Now these sub-ethers are the vascular and nervous system of the cosmos which bind it into an organic whole. And this part of Schrodinger's work is therefore as important to the New Astronomy as was Harvey's discovery of the circulation of the blood to physiology.

Obviously the circulation of the blood is not concerned with gravity, but with life phenomena. And just as Astronomy is concerned with the force of gravity, so is Cosmic Physiology concerned with the phenomena of life.

Schrodinger has discovered the blood; later discoveries will disclose the laws of its circulation.

The function of the blood is to renew and revivify the cells of the body; the function of the vascular system of the Cosmos is to renew and revivify the atoms of matter.

Eddington speaks of these vibrations of the sub-ethers (1) as a million times faster than the vibrations of visible light. He points out that of course the individual ripples are beyond the scope of our gross experience; what we do take cognisance of is a "disturbed area" caused by the convergence and coalescence of the waves. We then recognise this disturbed area as a material particle, an electron, for instance.

It should be noted that the above result, first disclosed by the new mathematics, has since been abundantly confirmed by experiment.

The essential feature of this new aspect of our material universe is that matter — which appears to us as the very embodiment of continuous existence — is not so in reality, but that each atom of which it is composed, is a phase in a cycle of changes. In another phase it is a lightwave or some other form of electromagnetic wave.

To give an idea of what is meant, let us take a piece of ice, melt it into water, and evaporate it into steam, then reverse the process again by condensing the steam into water and freezing the

water into ice. We have then arrived at the same point at which we started. These processes constitute one cycle of what Dr. Whitehead calls "a vibratory organic deformation" (See *Science and the Modern World*). We could follow these processes because they were slowly performed, but if we could drive the matter through this cycle millions of times per second, our consciousness could not perceive the intervals between the cycles. Consciousness, in other words, carries us over the small time intervals — it shows us the phases, but not the intervals between them. Therefore, in the case just mentioned, we should see the ice, the steam and the water as continually existing, while in reality there is no such concreteness — but merely the illusion created by our senses.

Now the existence of the sub-ethers, as explained by Eddington, and the unceasing disappearance and re-appearance of the particles of matter, has been taught in the East from remote antiquity. It constitutes the main theme of a Sanskrit work called the *Pranava Vada* [?]. Eastern schools explain that of these sub-ethers there are seven, the plane of our gross experience, as it was termed by Eddington, being the lowest and numbered 1. In other words, the higher the number, the greater the vibratory frequency and velocity, and the greater the energy. The mass units of the planes are different, and the higher the plane number, the less the mass unit. It must be realized however that the matters of these seven planes are interpenetrating.

This presentation of the sub-ethers in itself, is of the greatest importance as we can see, for in the process of transformations through the planes, if the particle which is the physical plane of the cycle is a constituent of a solid body, its position is fixed — but as the phases in the higher planes may be fluid (and generally are fluid), there is no necessity that the constituents of the particle in one cycle shall be the same as in the succeeding cycles. They may be equal in quality but not the identical substance.

To illustrate this, let us take the example of a steam engine — each turn of a condensing engine uses a quantity of water, which is transformed into steam and back into water again. But the water and steam of one cycle need not be the same as in succeeding cycles though the quantities may be equal and in practice we know they are not identical.

This then permits a process of circulation which is not perceptible on the physical plane.

It also again draws our attention to the functions of the double spheres of which the heavenly bodies are the centers. The supplies of the cyclic transformations may be taken in from the contracting sphere, and delivered back to the expanding sphere. In fact these cyclic transformations may be regarded as the causes of the contracting and expanding spheres, each electromagnetic vibration being a beat of the atomic heart which keeps in circulation the Cosmic Life-blood.

The first thing for the researchers in the field of New Astronomy and Cosmic Physiology to do, was to prove that the Eastern methods of approach rest upon a scientific basis; and it is on the strength of the various discoveries by Western scientists, discussed heretofore, that they pointed to the logic of this procedure as employed by them in their efforts to link the Western studies of the matter and force side of nature with the Eastern studies of the life and consciousness side.

It has already been pointed out that the tremendously rapid, successive phases of vibration appear continuous, that is: when the atoms of the brain undergo such transformations we have sensation — feeling, and thought as an apparent continuity and combined unity; whereas in reality continuity is the attribute of consciousness. The human consciousness then, is a combination of sensation, feeling, and thought, the life aspects of the vibratory processes of the three lowest planes of our system. These aspects moreover are proportioned differently in different individuals. For instance: one person, when out in the street, will observe most of what is happening around him; another will

notice only what is necessary for his progress along the street, his thoughts being centered on some business problem, etc. The power to vary the constituents of consciousness is a function of another aspect, known as Will. (According to Eastern teaching it is situated in plane 5, the dominating plane of the system). And by development of this Will the accentuation or subordination of other aspects of consciousness can be purposely regulated.

This is not so strange as it may sound, for a similar procedure is well known to physicists. An ordinary photograph of the sun is the result of the action on the film of ordinary lightwaves. But by selecting a particular light-frequency, say a line of hydrogen, or calcium, the physicist will get a photograph of a different sun, one composed of hydrogen, or calcium only. In this respect he operates by the same methods as does an Eastern pupil on the constituents of consciousness. That is, the Eastern pupil gradually acquires the power to make his consciousness monochromatic, which means focussed on one plane at the time, whether this plane is 1 or 2 or 3.

The ordinary physical plane universe as said before is in reality a variable combination of these three, and is largely a function of our moods.

We may illustrate this by pointing to the widely different universe in which a happy bridal pair lives, and that of a bankrupt director, undergoing a cross-examination in court.

The West makes many instruments which come to the aid of consciousness, but leaves consciousness itself in its ordinary state of limitation. The East trains the consciousness to make adjustments and thus become a receiving set for a greatly increased range of electromagnetic vibrations. Why not combine these methods, demanded these researchers, who, having formulated a working basis, formed a group among whom one possessed this monochromatic vision, mostly of a magnetic type? That is to say, whereas ordinary vision is the effect on consciousness of a short range of electromagnetic waves, magnetic vision is the effect on consciousness of magnetic

waves. Such waves are not reflected by metallic substances, but penetrate the interior.

The researchers began their work with the observation of the forces in the interior of a bar magnet, which was finally replaced with one in the shape of an ellipsoid, because it was discovered that a solar system was a magnet in the ellipsoidal form. In fact, it was found that Nature's units were all magnets, whether they be atoms, planets, suns, or systems. So far however the observations, although useful, did not permit a checking up by others than the observer. This difficulty was overcome when the observations were applied to the solar-system, as the results could be checked against the facts recorded in the Nautical Almanac.

For instance: on the days for observation a clock-chart was erected with the heliocentric positions of the planets on that particular day, and the observer would be requested to give, from inspection by means of his developed vision, the angular position of the planets and their relative distance from the sun. Thus, when a planet was observed at an angle of let us say 90 degrees behind the sun, the observer would say. I see a planet near 3 o'clock at a distance from the sun, greater or less than the distance of the earth, as the case might be. In this way, the reliability of the observations would be frequently checked before others were recorded.

These tests of reliability nevertheless could not be considered sufficient, unless facts could be established which might be tested by anyone. Such facts might consist in the discovery of unknown planets if their positions and character could be indicated, afterwards to be verified by astronomers in the ordinary, telescopic way.

Now the astonishing thing is that indeed four such planets have been discovered. The procedure was less intricate than may be suspected. The observations had revealed that between the sun and a planet there is a broad ribbon of magnetism, in which magnetic substances circulated between the sun and the planet. It is a double stream, one

flowing from sun to planet, and the other from planet to sun. These lines of force are as the veins and arteries for the flowing life of Nature, the vascular network so to speak which establishes and maintains the life of the Cosmos.

Confining our attention to the earth and the sun, and tracing this double circulation, we will begin at the sun's center from where the stream begins as the apex of a cone, with its base at the sun's surface. At this surface it forms itself into a magnetic stream of force, moving along the line from sun to earth. When it reaches the earth, it embraces the lighted hemisphere of the earth, and dips down to the earth's center. Here is also the apex of a cone with its base at the earth's surface, which forms the beginning of the return stream of magnetism. When it arrives at the sun, it embraces the solar hemisphere facing the earth, and passes through the sun's mass to its center. Thus, there is a complete circuit, which appears to have the properties of an electric current.

This current, when passing through the earth's crust to the center, has an intensity proportionate to the magnetism. Hence, between the poles and the center, the current is greater than between the tropical portions and the center. This on balance, constitutes a current, entering at the pole of the earth, and emerging near the magnetic equator.

Now we know that an electric current entering at the pole of a magnet, and emerging at the magnetic equator, causes the magnet to revolve around its magnetic axis. We have here then a known cause for the axial rotation of the earth! It is only one instance out of many of the remarkable fruitfulness of these researches.

It is obvious that with the broad beam of magnetism between the sun and each planet, any planet can be found by noting the directions of these beams in the neighborhood of the sun, and then tracing out the beam to its other terminus, the planet. This can be done with equal ease whether the planet is known or unknown. And it is in this manner that four new planets have been discovered, two of which have physical bodies and are thus available for telescopic vision; one other is

only just beginning to develop a physical body and is composed of matter in the sub-planes higher than the gaseous. One planet, at a distance of 50 astronomical units has been determined at a longitude of somewhere between 228 degrees and 230 degrees. For those who think of longitude in terms of signs, the planet is in 19 degrees of Scorpio.

The other planet, to which the name Osiris has been given, is likewise extra-Neptunian (at a distance of about 70 astronomical units).

The third planet, Horus, cannot be seen by ordinary electromagnetic vision. It is still in the infant stage; its physical matter being super-gaseous, its volume is very large, though its mass may only be small. It lies in the asteroidal region between Mars and Jupiter, its longitude being estimated at about 100 degrees, or say 10 degrees Cancer.

Some of the observations had disclosed the fact that there were twelve funnels issuing from the sun, and since eleven of these had planetary beams attached to them, it seemed probable that there would turn out to be twelve planets in all. On May 28th, 1929, this remaining planet was discovered very close to the sun, its longitude being about 6 degrees. The existence of this planet, Vulcan, was believed in for many years on the authority of Leverrier (the discoverer of Neptune), but as the planet has not been observed, except as a dark spot crossing the sun's surface, its existence had ceased to be believed in, and modern works on Astronomy rarely mention it. The reason why the planet has not been observed is, that the planet is not physical and does not reflect light within the range of the spectrum. The reason for its invisibility in the telescope is however different from that of the planet Horus in the asteroidal regions. The planet Horus cannot be seen, because it is super-physical, and its radiations are in the ultra-violet; but Vulcan is sub-physical, and its radiations are far down in the infra-red.

But although Vulcan cannot be seen from its own radiations, it has the power to obstruct the radiations when it crosses the sun's surface during transits, and such observed transits can be compared with the calculated positions.

With the discovery of Vulcan the solar system and its members may be regarded as complete, and this is indicated by the fact that these researches have made it possible to find a mathematical expression which links together the masses and distances of the sun and the planets.

One of the first conclusions that can be drawn from the geometrical series, obtained in this manner, is that the accidental method of planet forming, deduced by physicists, cannot be the true one.

If we consider that the density of distribution of stars in space has been compared to that of twenty tennis balls roaming the whole interior of the earth, then it is obvious that the accident that gave birth to the solar system may be compared to the casual approach of two of these balls within a few yards of each other! As Eddington pointed out:

The data are too vague to give any definite estimate of the odds against this occurrence, but I should judge that not one in a hundred millions of stars can have undergone this experience in the right stage and conditions to result in the formation of a system of planets.

It becomes evident therefore that the constituent parts and the forces of our solar system are as accurately adjusted to each other as are the constituents and forces of a living cell. In other words the solar system, physically interpreted, becomes a dynamo with all its parts adjusted for a particular kind of work.

You may say that as theosophists, or astrologers, we already accepted this truth. However, to afford a practical application of this knowledge the scientist must be supplied with proof, and these researches will give the greatest impulse offered thus far, toward such recognition by Western science. The mathematical deductions therefore are of the greatest importance, and imply that the electric charge on the electron and on hydrogen exists on all planes in an increasing ratio. As long ago as 1881 Sir Joseph Thomson showed the possibility that all mass might be of electromagnetic origin, which theory has now been confirmed.

Again I spare you the mathematical computations, but they are there to read for anyone who wishes to go deeper into the subject. They prove the numerical value of the common ratio B, called the Master Key to the intimate processes of Nature, also showing the connecting link between different orders of rays — a key, not to the old physics, but to the physics which emerged since 1925 from the new quantum theory. But the principal feature of the New Astronomy, as here presented, is the proof that our solar system is a living unit from which no part can be removed without destroying the whole. The real foundation of the science is the life which thrills through the whole of Nature.

Before I conclude, a few words more. You may wonder why this science of astrology-astronomy and cosmic physiology should so greatly interest a doctor of the healing arts. The answer is that all true sciences are inter-related. In my own work I treat to a great extent with the very color-rays which form the spectrum of the sun; that is: by means of spectroscopically attuned color waves, calculated to coincide with the vibratory frequencies of the cells of the body, according to the science of Spectrochromometry, developed by Dinshah. We know that without the sun's radiation all life on earth would be extinct, that the rainbow — the token of the covenant between God and man, as it is called in Genesis — shows forth the colors of its spectrum, and also that the very action of the elements depends upon their dominant color emanations. Therefore, if instead of the crude chemicals, the code-colors be used, the resulting fundamentals would prove to be the same.

Light, and consequently color, as these researches reaffirm, is in fact the greatest power known, and the application in Natural Therapeutics is but a logical consequence. Light is in the core of an atom, as in the heart of a solar system. And the recent discovery proving it possible to take pictures of internal body-tissues, without an outside light-source, offered a physical proof of this solar light-radiation within man as it is absorbed in the protoplasm of the animal.

The discoveries of our researchers go on to show that Light becomes Matter, and matter reverts to Light.

The atom, as we have seen, is not an entity, it is, as physicists have shown, but one phase in a cycle of several organic transformations. Instead of being a physical unit, like a little charged battery, discharging itself until in the end it dies, it is the terminus of a line of force, the other terminus being in the body of the sun. Hence every planetary atom has a corresponding atom in the sun, between which there is a constant flux of energy, flowing in both directions. Thus the atom in its center has the sun, a center of light from which radiates the power which makes it a material particle. Every star, every planet is just the same.

I am fortunate that I can give you a further short quotation from the as yet unpublished manuscript of our researchers, for the author, Mr. Sutcliffe, passed away shortly after the manuscript was finished, leaving its future publication in the hands of Colonel Wilde, in England. This quotation is as follows:

All light is a manifestation of the sun. . . . Light is immanent throughout the solar system; local lights are manifestations of the Immanence. This is true of the planets themselves, as also of the smallest light on a planet — even of the glowworm's phosphorescence — all is solar light. The sun therefore, is our starting point; the local source will lead us always back to the Sun. . . . Space is Light Ineffable. . . . And that is but a stepping stone from Manifest to Absolute. The Absolute is Light beyond all Light, and therefore Darkness in finite worlds. Creation is the release of Light and all of the Solar day marks the self-limiting of transcendent Light, which is the Solar Lord. The purpose of creation is but to produce reflectors, from which transcendent light may shine. The Solar system is a mirror; the Sun a lens. The Cosmos and the Universe are evolving groups of worlds set to reflect cosmic and universal light, each in its appropriate hue flashing forth the signal age by age; all speaking in the cosmic code; each writing its own message which is a statement of its own place amid the wheeling systems . . . its contribution to the cosmic whole.

How, physicists and astronomers have scoffed, could the stars, so far off, have any influence? The question is, can we remove the element of space to the satisfaction of scientifically trained Western minds? The new astronomy has pointed the way, and more.

Instead of being a physical unit, we have seen the atom revealed as the terminus of a line of force, every planetary atom having its corresponding atom in the sun. The link between the molecular energy and radiant energy is not made at the planetary end of the line of force, but at the color end, where all the planets are in juxtaposition. Planetary action therefore is independent of distance. It is not again a question of their gravitational pull upon each other across space, but the vascular interchange of energy within the body of the sun.

The old astronomy has failed to give us what the new astronomy reveals, namely a Solar system which is a living organism, a Universe which at every point is pervaded with life.

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It is interesting after the foregoing to note the return of modern science to the old traditions of mankind. For as Louis Elbe, in his "La vie future devant la sagesse antique et la science moderne" has pointed out: All the monuments of antiquity may be regarded as hymns in honor of the sun, the creative and regenerative power which is the source of all life on earth. The monoliths of the Celts, the obelisks of the Egyptians, often adorned with solar disc, are emblems of the sun's rays, the spreading of which is figured by the pyramids. In the Greek temple again we see a rendering of the solar drama:

The eternal God, or Sun, is represented by a radiant disc (acroterium), surmounting the pyramidal pediment of the temple. Heaven is figured in the bas-reliefs ornamenting the pediment, while lower down, in the architrave, we have the line of separation between heaven and earth. Lower still — in the metopes and triglyphs — we see the lightning rending the clouds, in order to bring down fertilizing rain and carry the

"creative germ" down the temple-columns to the soil.

The constant action of the sun's divinity is affirmed wherever its light penetrates:

It surrounds with a living atmosphere the beings which he created and transmits to them special germs containing life in themselves; it is constantly emitting these animated "spheroids" which permeate living bodies, while these latter radiate spheroids in their turn which go back to the common center.

Thus we have a similar conception: Life is maintained by an invisible series of inspirations and expirations, by an uninterrupted exchange of cosmic radiations sent to us by the sun.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Nature of the Physical World.* ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: XII — *G. de Purucker*

OURSELVES AND THE ANCIENTS

G. de P. — Mr. Chairman: I should like to say a few words with regard to Brother G ___'s question. (1) I think the answers that have been given by others tonight were fine. But there is still an aspect of an answer that could be given, which I think is important. The question amounted to this, as I understand it: "What, after all, is the practical use, the pragmatical value, of a study of ancient times, ancient thought, ancient wisdom, ancient writing, ancient lore?" The answer is written all over the face of the question itself! Such study is educative, it is elevating, it is broadening. It broadens and enlarges our sympathies, which means our hearts; it enlightens and stimulates our minds; and these, I think, were among the reasons why H. P. B. — and we have followed her faithfully — made so much of this study. It is a corrective of egoisms, and heaven knows that mankind, which means you and me and all others, need few things so much as that!

Look at the parlous state of the nations of the world today, each people thinking itself superior to others; each nation preparing for another horror! Why? From a lack of the feeling of reverence for humanity. Humanity's glorious achievements in the past, as imbodied in the great writings and traditional works of human history: to these we turn and we see the annals of human genius written large therein. We learn that the Nordic, for instance, is in no wise the natural superior of any other civilized people, ancient or modern. Every race has been egoistic, and in the present almost more so than in the past!

Such study — the study of the monuments of human genius — broadens our minds, enlightens them, fills our hearts with sympathy, and enlarges their sympathies, teaches us to be wise in our own generation, teaches us of the glorious achievements of the past, reminds us that we are the children of that past, not merely the

descendants of our distant forebears, but verily those forebears themselves now reincarnated in new races and peoples, those of the present.

The times of the world today are "out of joint," as Shakespeare says, simply because men have forgotten to read properly the lessons of the past. More than all else, that! Will you ask any university professor, or teacher in a high school, or in a school for boys and girls, why they teach history? Ask them what is the pragmatistical value of knowing history. It is ancient times, it is traditional, it is imbodyed in the old records. What is the practical value? And those wretched histories that we have, mostly the records of conquests, mostly by force of arms; and so little therein dealing with essential civilization, with what men and women did, with what men and women taught and achieved in the great arts and sciences of the civilizations of the past — even the feeble stuff we have and call "history" — why do we study it? To acquaint man with the doings of men. To acquaint us with the former doings of mankind. It is educative. I know nothing so humbling to egoisms, I know naught so stimulating to the wings of our higher imagination — that which brightens life and gives us intellectual and spiritual verities, and helps on our evolution. I know naught that works upon us in so sublime a manner as the realization that we men are all one, that the common human heart beats everywhere and through ail of history; has beaten as it now beats; and that men in past times have suffered as now they suffer; and that men in past times have produced flowers of human genius which broaden even our own lives today — because we are largely copyists, copyists out of the past, reading the records of bygone times.

"What is the value of studying the works of the ancients?" Some day we shall have history that will deal with the productions of the best in human character. We shall have histories of the rise as well as of the culmination, decline, and fall of art, of religion, of philosophy, of science, of the nature of the civilizations of the past; and we shall learn as even now we are slowly learning in parts, to the astonishment and the undoing of our favorite egoisms, that even the Romans, a relatively

unimportant people except for their achievements in law and conquest: even they had such trifles as shorthand, houses heated with hot-water pipes, and other things, such as our modern glass window-panes, etc.; and we even have knowledge that the Romans had a glass that could be molded or wrought with the hammer.

The study of the literature and records of past civilizations shows us that it is the works of the human heart and of the human mind that count. Learning these, we diminish our own egoisms, learn reverence for the achievements of human genius, and likewise learn to look forwards into the future to doing even more grandly than the ancients did.

E. V. Savage — In regard to this question which so often arises as to the value or non-value of studying ancient religion, symbolism, and history (the idea in the questioner's mind being I believe, that what we need to do is to study ourselves and the circumstances that we find surrounding us at the present time, and that these things of past times do not concern us at all): I have been reading a modern scientific book in which the author draws attention to the mistake which modern scientists make when they try to show how small and insignificant man is in the universe by comparing him with the size of, for instance, Mount Everest; and they say that it would take more than four thousand men, standing one upon the other, to equal the height of Mount Everest. But the author points out that this gives an entirely erroneous idea, because man extends farther than the limits of his physical body.

Then I thought of the Theosophical conception that man is really *consciousness*; so I suppose that he actually extends, both in time and space, as far as his consciousness can go. So when we study the wisdom of the ancients as we can find it in history, symbolism, literature, etc., we are expanding our consciousness to embrace those of olden times. When we study the Rounds and Races, and the destiny of the human race in future aeons, we are expanding our consciousness into the future. When we study about the stars and the sun and other solar

systems, we are expanding our consciousness out into space; and if other students in all parts of the world are engaged in like study, each one expanding his consciousness (which is himself) in space and time, these different consciousnesses must merge to a degree; and we shall gradually be doing away with that separateness which is the heresy of the present age.

FOOTNOTE:

1. In effect: Why are we so often urged to study the ancients, who are dead and gone? Why not concentrate on the present and the teachers of today? ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE PAROCHIAL PRESENT — S. H. Wylde

It was probably the contemplation of the self-sufficiency of some present-day people that led a modern writer to describe us as a "parochial generation" because we had "shut ourselves off from the past." Well, it is not the first time that a race, dazzled by its own glory, has been chided for its egotism. You remember what the Egyptian priest said to the Greek lawgiver Solon: "You Greeks are mere children, frivolous and vain; you know nothing of the past." And if you want a still stronger rebuke along the same lines, read the one roundly administered to ourselves and our forebears by the Master K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 150, beginning:

During the minority of a sub-race, its civilization is preserved for it by its predecessor, which disappears, dies out generally, when the former "comes to age." At first, most of them squander and mismanage their property, or leave it untouched in the ancestral coffers. They reject contemptuously the advice of their elders and prefer, boy-like, playing in the streets to studying and making the most of the untouched wealth stored up for them in the records of the Past.

— That is just the introduction to it; the whole is well worth looking up.

True nobility does not hide a fear of being eclipsed under the mask of vainglorious boasting. Confucius, believing in and loving the Ancients, called himself a transmitter not a maker: "I am not one who was born in the possession of knowledge; I am one who is fond of antiquity, and earnest in seeking it *there*." Yet he lives today where probably many another, great in his own eyes, has passed into obscurity.

The mediaeval Platonic philosopher, Bernard of Chartres, held aloft a light in a dark age; yet he it was who said that if men of his day were great it was not because they had keener perceptions than the Ancients, but simply because like dwarfs they had climbed upon the

shoulders of the giants of the past and so of course could see farther.

A present that looks with reverence upon the treasures of the past will in its turn become a past to be revered. Let our own day and age remember this.

As a matter of fact, it is only the consciousness of individuals or aggregates of individuals that can be parochial. The "present" whether of China two thousand years ago, of Greece during the Age of Pericles, of mediaeval Europe, or of today, cannot really shut itself off from the past. The ever-dissolving present is both past and future, an illusory moving point in the limited consciousness of man. The man of great soul who can contemplate the past with reverence is looking upon the future also; for he has transcended past, present, and future, "miserable concepts of the objective phases of the Subjective Whole," as the Master K. H. calls them, and with the Eye of Dangma looks upon the great circle of Eternity where he sees that whatever is of the nature of Truth, no matter what age or nation has expressed it, lives for ever, unspoiled by the devastator Time.

The Theosophical Forum

AN UNFINISHED UNIVERSE — *La Fayette Plummer*

No argument will be necessary to convince you that this universe is unfinished. From the mere fact that life continues to manifest itself in living things, we may know that the course of evolution is not yet run. Whatever our ideas may be as to the goal for humanity, we all agree that mankind has not as yet reached that goal. And in larger measure we see in the heavens above us stars in all stages of youth and senility, infant stars, and old stars; comets on the one hand, which, the Ancient Wisdom tells us, are unborn suns and planets, and on the other hand, meteors and asteroids, evidently the remains of stars and planets that have passed away.

The effort, then, is not to argue the question, but rather to give you the picture of the Universe which the Ancient Wisdom, today called Theosophy, has painted for us. Far from being a mere fantasy of ideas, it is a picture of the thing as it really is, culled from the evidence furnished by those who *know* because they have the means to find out. The Masters of Wisdom are they who have mastered Wisdom about the development and use of the higher spiritual faculties innate in man, and by means of these awakened powers they have donned the winged cap and the winged slippers, and "walked the skies."

Imagine yourselves standing on a hilltop on a clear night, with the stars shining brightly, as it were beckoning you. Imagine that you could take wings and rise from this earth and wander at will among the celestial bodies. Imagine that you could transcend the spheres which encompass our small family, our solar system, and with light step spring upwards into space and wander from star to star, and study the celestial phenomena. You would encounter all sorts of interesting things. You would see old stars and young stars, stars so aged that their life is spent, stars so young that they can hardly yet be called stars — they are comets. You would see nebulae, vast bodies of tenuous gases in the process of forming into celestial bodies. You would find meteors and

shooting-stars, fragments of once living worlds. You would pass planets innumerable, and moons galore, worn-out shells of planets long since dead.

Imagine yourselves able to travel on and on without hindrance until our solar system dwindles away to a mere point and is lost in some star-cluster of the Milky Way. And then leave the confines of our home-universe, and pursue your cosmic course until our whole galaxy becomes a mere speck, as though it were but a single star itself. Approaching now the speed of thought, you would encounter new galaxies of stars and worlds and moons. But though you were to travel for ever, you would never reach the end of the universe. You would never come to a point in space where you could say, "I have now reached the limits of the universe; I have passed the last of the stars."

Suppose then that you were to return home and meditate on what you had seen. You might feel that you had seen rather much; you might feel that you had seen rather little — no, more, in fact than a telescope could have shown you, were it of sufficient power. What about worlds invisible inhabiting the planes of consciousness above and within the physical, to wit, the spiritual, the intellectual, the astral realm, and so on, of which the Ancient Wisdom teaches? These no telescope can show us. Just as in our imaginary journey we saw celestial phenomena of all kinds, so there are wonders to behold on these inner planes, had we the eyes to see. Thus we find that our "limitless" universe is indeed limited, because it is physical; its sights are restricted to purely physical manifestations of life.

What is the boundary separating our physical universe from the inner planes? There is no real dividing-line at all. That which sets the limit to our universe is our own inability to see and to cognise. The horizon is that imaginary line which divides the world's surface into two parts: that portion which we see, and that portion which, due to the curvature of the earth, we do not see. Let us then judge the universe, not by what we see, but by what we are privileged to learn about it in the writings and teachings of the Sages and Seers, past and present.

There is wonderful knowledge to be gained by a study of the Ancient Wisdom, which is at once Philosophy, Religion, and Science; and if a thing be approached from these three angles, a fully comprehensive understanding of it may be acquired. No doubt we will more readily concede this to be true in the study of man, but the nature of man cannot be fully understood unless we accept the fact that he is inseparably linked with the Cosmos about him, from which he draws his very life. Not only is it possible then to study the universe scientifically, religiously, and philosophically, but this *must* be done if we are to have a well-rounded picture of the Cosmos. Thus only can we turn on the light of Theosophy.

The universe, Theosophy declares, is composed entirely of forces; and so is man, and modern Science inclines toward this view. We are told by the most advanced thinkers of today that what we call "matter" is nothing more than electric energy. To this, Theosophy adds that behind all manifestation is intelligence, and it is through the operation of intelligent forces that this universe has come into being. In building for ourselves a picture of the universe then, there are three fundamental principles or axioms that we must bear in mind. Firstly, the philosophic axiom, *As above, so below*. This is a master-key, by the aid of which we may unlock numberless mysteries. It teaches the interdependence of all things, for all things are in essence one. What is true of the nature of man is true of the sun. Universe and atom alike are composite in nature. The second key is the religious aphorism, *Man, know thyself*—another master-key closely related to the first. Could we but know the mysteries of consciousness and the sevenfold nature of man in their completeness, we should have full knowledge of the universe. A third key, the scientific, is that *all things are relative*. In the last analysis nothing is great, nothing small; all things are relatively great or small, in relative degrees of development, with relative manifestations of consciousness. Bearing these three truths well in mind, let us proceed to our study, and endeavor to understand this bewildering universe about us.

The vast cosmic scheme is nothing if not the manifestation and

working of consciousness. Consciousness is the great mystery, about which very little can be said; it is the Boundless All, the vital drive of the universe, endless, infinite, within all and containing all, ever-present, and yet utterly indescribable. It is space itself, and duration, and its counterpart is substance. By substance I do not mean matter in any form such as we know it to be, or such as we imagine it to be even in the electronic state (i. e., it is neither gaseous, liquid, nor solid). Cosmic substance might best be described as the great matrix, the womb from which are born the galaxies filling *all* planes of being. Thus substance is not confined to any so-called plane of consciousness, any more than is consciousness, its counterpart. The universe comes into bloom when consciousness unites with substance, and becomes an infinitude of consciousnesses, clothed in substance and manifesting as numberless lives, which in their vast aggregate form this living universe. The lowest grades of substance temporarily become what we recognise as matter, composed of ninety-two chemical elements — but only so long as consciousness is there. If this is so in the case of the universe, it is equally true of man. Man is the manifestation of human consciousness, one of those infinitudes of consciousness before alluded to. This consciousness-center combined with cosmic substance and brought man into being. The seven planes of consciousness forming man we call his seven principles; but to the endless numbers of lives subservient to the man, they are the playgrounds, the fields of activity, in other words, the planes of consciousness, in which they live, move, and have their being. Similarly, a sun is the manifestation of a solar consciousness, for only a solar consciousness could so manifest; the plant is the imbodiment of a plant-consciousness; and an atom, of an atomic consciousness. All these are composite of seven principles, elements, planes, call them what you will, and all of these are part and parcel of the whole, subservient to the ruling consciousness imbodied as our Home-Universe. And even that exalted being is but one of many, a building-block, let us say, helping to build and sustain the manifestation of a super-cosmic being as a super-cosmic universe. Who can say that the universe will ever be finished?

Apply now the second key. Study man, learn the mysteries of his nature, apply the law of analogy, and learn to know and love this universe, ever evolving, ever becoming. And then the third key, the relativity of all things, which stresses the fact that brotherhood, that is, spiritual brotherhood, is a fact in Nature, indeed the fundamental law whereby the cosmos is knit together. Essentially consciousness is One, its manifestations legion. The purpose of evolution is the endless journey of the many back to the One, only to proceed again at the dawn of a new Cosmic day, to build universes anew, in a never-ending pageant of Life.

The Theosophical Forum

LONG LIFE TO YOU! — *Inez Davenport*

With this cry we speed on their way young men as they leave college, brides and grooms as they start upon honeymoons, and friends on birthdays, at leave-takings, or on the commencement of any work. Is it a relic of olden days when alchemists searched for elixirs of life, drinking which one might live forever? And if it were possible to make one body of flesh last so long, would it not become as tedious as if a woman were to wear the same dress throughout her whole life? There must be more to it than the gay and casual godspeed it sounds; more than the idea that as life is so full of interesting experiences we should prolong it as much as possible: an unconfessed memory, perchance, of the ancient belief that life is eternal.

Twenty-five hundred years ago when the Buddha gave up all hope of earthly happiness for himself in order to teach his countrymen what freedom was, he did not tell them that they lived more than one life on earth. They knew it. His message concerned the way of obtaining release from the necessity for continual rebirths. He taught, as have many before and since his day, that man is responsible for what comes to him in life.

Two thousand years ago when Jesus the Christ brought tidings of the Treasures of Heaven, he showed, as did the Buddha, that when we accumulate material possessions we must lose them at death, but that when we gather the Treasures of Heaven — the imperishable, incorruptible truths of life — we gain what lasts forever. Some people say that Jesus did not teach reincarnation, or rebirths of the same individual soul; and others point to various places in the Bible where, they claim, he referred to it. However that may be, it is said that this teaching was removed from the canons of the Christian church at the Council of Nicaea in the sixth century A. D. If it was removed, it must have been among the original doctrines, and the Christ obviously had no need to emphasize it. His work was to bring understanding to men

of the truths they did not know, not to repeat familiar knowledge.

In the years since Christianity first gripped the hearts of men, changes have taken place in our thought-world, and in the last century more rapidly than in all the preceding time. From complete acceptance of dogmas laid down by those in authority, through splits caused by trivial things such as details of rites and ceremonies, to complete schisms where men rebelled against the whole religious system and therefore went to the extreme of total unbelief and atheism, into materialism and denial of anything higher than could be known by the five senses, we are today emerging into a realization of what life can mean when we use our divine right to think for ourselves.

We no longer describe life in terms of a personal God and his relation to man, nor is our God the compound of bogey man and fairy godmother He once was. We fear not the punishments He may inflict upon us, nor do we pray nightly for favors at His hand. This earth is no longer the limit of our horizon, nor are we so much concerned with man as an individual apart from other men. The emphasis today is laid upon "humanity" and its relation to the universe, and the universe includes our whole solar system, visible and invisible. Thanks to modern science and philosophy, we know again that the universe itself is a living, growing, being, and that it, like man, has a body which is visible, and inner parts which are invisible; and that every part of it exists by reason of the presence in it of lesser beings, which together form the suns, stars, planets, human, and sub- and super-human kingdoms of nature.

Life is the one reality, eternally enduring, and its appearance is always changing. Upon the background of Life countless beings are born and live out their little span. Individual forms die, but this death is not final. Physical death is no more the end of man than the replacement of worn out garments by new ones is the end of the human body. Birth and death are equally doors to the "Mansions of my Father's House" and birth on earth means death in some other sphere, just as death on earth means birth into another sphere; but not for a permanent

existence in regions where angels play harps throughout endless time. When the impulse is spent that took us into the invisible parts of the universe at death, we return to earth to take up our task where we left it.

Life is like a grand school, and the classes in it are the kingdoms of nature. All the beings which comprise these kingdoms are made of life-atoms, which are the least evolved forms of life-consciousness. We get the idea better by reflexion on what physical science has to say about the ultimate particles of matter. All ninety-two chemical elements, it tells us, are reducible to atoms of identical substance, called electrons and protons, the electronic and protonic content alone determining whether the atoms are of hydrogen, carbon, copper, water, gold, or what-not. Thus, it is not the life-atoms that determine the character of the being they form, but the consciousness itself which draws by magnetic attraction to itself all the atoms of various grades which it needs for its present body. For even life-atoms, minute and undeveloped as they are, are composite structures, and just as the physical atom is composed of electric energy which expresses itself in the positive and negative forms of protons and electrons, so is the life-atom composed of consciousness-energy which expresses itself in the positive and negative forms of spirit and matter. Every point in space is a life-center, a consciousness, otherwise it would not be in space, for a living organism cannot be composed of dead things. But these life-centers are no more capable of action in themselves than drops of water while they are still within the body of the sea. Only when consciousness becomes linked to earth — or any sphere of action — by the twin substances spirit and matter, does it become an individual being, which thereafter suffers birth and death, or entry into and exit from the various classes in our school of life.

These classes are roughly: the kingdoms of the elements, the minerals, the plants, beasts, and men. In ages past, in other imbodiments of the earth — yes indeed, earths are reborn too — we went through the kingdoms inferior to the human one by one, returning again and again until we had experienced all we could in these classes. When the earth

was born this time, millions of years ago, we started with it in the preparatory stages of the human kingdom. There is no haste in nature, and the well-ordered processes of life even today provide opportunity for us to review the knowledge which formerly we gained unconsciously. The whole evolutionary cycle of the passage of a consciousness through the kingdoms from the lowest up to the human is condensed into the short space of nine months in the pre-natal condition of every child. It is first in the human kingdom that consciousness can become *self-conscious*. Indeed, this is the distinctive mark of men: they have the intellectual faculty by virtue of which they may direct their own evolution, setting its pace according to their character and will power.

When this earth dies and we have been through all the classes the human kingdom offers, is that the end? Indeed no. Our modern philosophy sees no end, no Judgment Day upon which everything is summarily interrupted, and after which there is no opportunity for growth. When our lessons in the human stage are learned there are superhuman kingdoms in which we continue, beginning at the elementary grade that will prepare us for the fuller knowledge and experience that awaits us. And so it will be forever. When the door of one kingdom closes behind us the door of a higher one opens before, always the horizon is beyond our reach, always the new sphere has greater opportunities than the old. Search as we may, we shall never reach the end of all knowledge — and really, we don't want to, for if it ever came to pass then immediately all interest in life would cease. It is the measure of uncertainty and the flavor of adventure that keep us alive even when all the world seems set against us and life presents no front but poverty and sorrow.

Now let us compare our present point of view with the old one, and determine why life proves to be worthwhile whatever it may bring. According to the old belief this was the situation: A baby was born of a man and woman. God created the soul — out of what material is not clear — which thereafter possessed certain characteristics, God-given. The man grown from this baby was not responsible for his faults and

virtues, but God forgot, and punished and rewarded him for actions which he could not help performing. If the man suffered in life, it was God's will and he was supposed to endure it. If he endured patiently he went to Heaven, if he rebelled he went to Hell. Whichever his destination he was doomed to boredom, for he could never get away from it. If in this one and only life he had no opportunity to use talents which he knew himself to have, the world was so much the poorer. This was an indiscriminating God, betraying stupidity greater even than that of men!

In our modern philosophy nothing happens by chance. Human regulations are seen as imperfect reflexions of a cosmic orderliness that rules all life. No being of any kind is born through the creative effort of an external power; the impulse to birth comes always from within, and the body which each one has it makes for itself. A child is born in one family because in past lives he has made certain conditions necessary for his future development which this particular family can provide. From the perspective of our long life of eighteen million years — it was that long ago when we started on this earth as thinking men — we see that we suffer no injustice even though we cannot trace the causes of our afflictions. We may be sure that in earlier lives we must often have yielded to certain unworthy impulses which we are now able to control.

The simplest analysis of the human being is still the same as St. Paul made it of old: body, soul, and spirit. The body is made by way of human parents, but the atoms composing it are those which formed it in previous lives. This does not mean that the man will look and be just the same in every life, because there is a constant circulation of life-atoms throughout the universe, and at the death of a body the life-atoms are free to evolve in the various realms to which they are native. Physical life-atoms may enter the earth, perhaps helping to fertilize a field of flowers; soul-life-atoms will find their way to realms superior to the earth, perhaps to what we call the heaven-worlds; and spiritual life-atoms will go to realms higher still, perhaps to what the ancients called the Seven Sacred Planets. The soul is actually the same from life to life.

The soul does the reincarnating, and comes to earth again and again until it is able fully to reflect the glory of the spirit. This is the task which can be done self-consciously only after the human stage is reached. The means by which it can be done must be sought in the thinking capacity which man alone of all the lower kingdoms possesses. If we refuse to think we place ourselves in the ranks of the "living dead." Life is growth, change, motion, and it is a living death to yield to stagnation, monotony, and inertia.

Those who want to prolong this one life beyond our pitifully low average of forty years are recommended to adopt hobbies. This is a good way. A better is to cultivate the divine curiosity which keeps us exploring every possible road of knowledge. Ancient and modern religion, science, and philosophy are great fields for the exercise of our intellectual muscles; and when we find, as we must, similarities of teaching in religions of people from parts of the earth remote in time and space, we find ourselves nearer the fountain-source to which all individual revelations are traceable. It is great fun to a Theosophist to watch the progress of science, as it reaches gradually to conclusions which more than fifty years ago were given to the world by the first Theosophist of our times, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. All honor is due to these sincere men who are testing theories by their own methods. If they are slow to recognise and admit the truth of Mme. Blavatsky's *dicta*, perhaps it is not their fault so much as the fault of the rest of us who have been unwilling to start thinking on our own account. Talk about a long life, — why, we have not *begun* to live as long as the level of our thoughts is no higher than: Where shall we go? What shall we do? How can we get this, that, or something else that we covet?

Do you think, perhaps, that a life of intellectual inquiry would be an unbalanced one? Have you pictured to yourself a wizened, little hunchback poring over musty books in old libraries, squint-eyed, or at least bloodshot? If so, let me quickly set you right. The ideal Theosophist, who is our modern philosopher, is keenly alive to the beauty and joy of life, sensitive to the needs of his fellowman, eager to learn all he can, but fully aware that life itself is his best teacher. If he

never saw a book he still could climb to the heights of wisdom by applying his knowledge of the brotherhood of man. It is no idle dream of a visionary, nor gush of maiden aunt. Though "hard-headed" business-men say you cannot treat men as brothers because they cheat and rob you at every turn unless you do it to them first, they will come to it at last. Our co-operative institutions even now presage it, though as yet they seem to personify a group rather than individual selfishness.

Let us study the sun if we would truly know this brotherhood. There it shines in the heavens, appearing to be a solid mass; but see, through that pane of glass a little light enters our room. In a lath-house many rays stream in, as the body of the sun seems to be split by the laths. In the desert men may die from too much sun, but in northern countries there are long days when there is no sunlight at all. When the sun shines here it is dark in Japan, and the English day begins eight hours earlier than ours. With all this the sun reigns throughout the universe as dispenser of life-giving energy to all beings. Yet this is but the physical sun, the body only of a greater Sun which we do not see; and as the physical sun acts on physical beings, so does the greater Sun act on spiritual beings. This is the "Father Sun" of the reverent ancients, the parent of man's Inner God. And this Inner God is the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." This glorious light is ours for the taking, and we take it first when we begin to think for ourselves. We are what we think, and if we grovel in material things we are indeed "worms of the dust"; but if we yearn toward the stars we know that in the not too distant future we shall walk the earth as masters, perfectly reflecting the beauty of the Eternal. Long Life To You!

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — *L. L. W.*

Dear Editors: May we have a statement of what Theosophy explains about the evils resulting from capital punishment? *M. P.*

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT — THE EASIEST WAY?

The real reason we have capital punishment is because enough determined men and women haven't yet faced up to the problems of our civilization. By civilization we mean the natural compromises and agreements which any community of clans or groups eventually evolve to meet the necessities and problems of their common situation. And no civilization is a true one which leaves the worst half of those problems unsolved. Our penal system and all that it involves is simply a disease of modern industrial civilization. It is due to unhealthy conditions and our failure to eliminate them. Criminals are sick men and women — acute and chronic cases which result from this failure.

The complete facts, however, as Theosophy can explain, are far more serious than we imagine. For the disease is a psychological one. There is a secret psychological infection widespread in our modern world which is directly due to the practice of capital punishment. What is the state of most criminals as they sit helplessly awaiting execution? Hatred, horror, a desperate craving for life and for revenge upon society, a swarm of unsatisfied appetites — what a picture! And it is this fearful complex of evil that we eject violently — where? Believe me, in the words of Hamlet — THAT IS THE QUESTION.

Theosophy explains that when a human being is cut off from life artificially — *he is not dead*. Death is the beneficent process by which Mother Nature gently disrobes her tired children of their mortal garments, so that they may pass into freedom and rest. And one of these garments is made of the earthly dross of our mental and emotional natures. With our selfishness and egoistic passions we have woven about ourselves an ugly vesture that must be done away with

before the Spirit-soul can be free.

But when a man is killed before his time Nature has nothing to do with it, for his normal store of vitality has not been exhausted. We have simply deprived him of his physical body. The disembodied *man* (for it is not the body that is the man but his feelings and his mind) — that disembodied man still lives. Where? Why, in our mental atmosphere of course, the same as before — where you and I live our daily lives of thought and feeling. But now, while he is yet seething with evil passions — he has no body of his own to gratify them. So naturally he seeks or is automatically drawn into the mental and emotional atmosphere of his own kind. And here through the urge of his cravings he has an influence even more dangerous than in his past life because it is unsuspected by its victim. The only gratification he can know is in goading other weaklings into self-indulgence or violence. Thus he may commit fresh crimes through suggestion for which others must suffer. Many a criminal has protested that he does not know why he so acted. He was urged by something outside of himself. And still we ignore this warning. Then there are the condemned, often the young, who are not naturally evil but are the victims of their untrained impulses. These may sincerely repent. But after execution they must still be earth-bound and their horror and remorse add to the intensity of these dark currents surrounding and penetrating human life.

Wherever there is war and bloodshed, violence or crime, or any other hotbed of human passions, at that emotional vortex swarm hosts of these unnaturally disembodied creatures. Our prisons attract them. There these diseased souls congregate like a pest of microbes spreading moral and mental contagions. Do you wonder that in our large cities we have "crime waves"? That it is almost impossible to touch the hearts of criminals to reform? — or for the matter of that to arouse the conscience of normal men and women to the horrors of war and prison conditions and other equally festering plague-spots in human society? We live, unless we are aware of our danger, in an atmosphere more or less saturated with the mental and emotional outpourings of such disembodied but still intensely active beings. Of course the truly good

and pure are protected to a great extent by their virtue. Still . . .?

If the statistics of crime were compiled with these teachings in view we should certainly uncover some lurid data. Capital punishment may seem to be the easiest way out but — can civilization afford to take this chance? What Theosophy is doing about our crime-problems will be presented in the next issue.

The Theosophical Forum

REMEMBERING PAST LIVES — *Alice D. Peirce*

Editors, The Theosophical Forum: A letter I recently received from a friend contains the not unusual misconception regarding reincarnation and memory of past lives:

"Theosophy teaches that reincarnation is a natural fact, I understand. The vast majority of people have no memory of past lives, but I have heard the statement made that some Theosophists (*Point Loma Theosophists were referred to*) *do remember who they were and their experiences in former incarnations on earth. Is that possible?*"

In reply to this I send you the following paragraphs, which may help clear up the matter for others as well. — *A. D. P.*

For the normal human being in our present stage of evolution, detailed memory of past lives is not possible. Such a claim is unwise, to say the least. Furthermore, it shows lack of understanding, and self-delusion. One can safely conclude that any person, whether Theosophist or not, claiming to remember the events of past lives, is ignorantly mistaking imagination for memory. Have you ever heard anyone expressing that belief, paint a word-picture of ordinary, humdrum lives in lowly positions, as their past? Mediocre as the character may be, or however humble the status here and now, the "memory" is sure to be grandiose. Invariably it is of celebrated personages of ample achievement, occupying outstanding positions in the world. The ear-marks of phantasy stamp every such instance. The teaching of Theosophy regarding the ancient and fundamental doctrine of reincarnation is explicit, and, in main outline, simple. Details of the process lead into complex ramifications, of course, and involve great mysteries. With those we are not concerned at present. Superficial study is sufficient to inform one that belief in memory of the detailed events of past lives is untenable because in the comparatively unevolved state of present humanity, we are unable as yet to tap the reservoirs of stored

knowledge residing in the reincarnating ego. We come into each earth-life a new personality. The new brain is not the organ upon which experiences in former bodies were impressed. Incarnating anew, the permanent ego which is the golden thread upon which are strung like pearls all imbediments it has had, passes through the waters of oblivion and forgets the past. The brain-mind is normally too insensitive to photograph — so to speak — the record stored in the inner man, he who is the "heir of all the ages." Not an item of that record is ever lost; it is simply inaccessible until finer faculties develop as we grow greater life after life and the inner eye is opened.

The rare exception to the norm is the case of those super-men who are the flower of civilizations. By virtue of unfaltering determination and self-directed achievement, they have outstripped the mass of humanity. From within themselves they have evolved forth faculties and powers not yet normal, but which will be the natural endowment of all when we have reached their high estate. These few do have the power to view the imperishable record of their long journey through the "cycle of necessity," and to read the record made by their fellows as well. We have the testimony of at least one such super-man where the Mahatman K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* makes the statement that although he has this power, perforce, he does not care to exercise it. One can well understand why not.

Nature's wise provision to protect us from the devastating experience is merciful. For the present we are spared the horror of reviewing what we have suffered through our misdeeds in less evolved states, and the suffering we have caused others. The time will come later on, we are warned, when every minutest detail of the sorry picture will lie open to our scrutiny. One can imagine that when that time comes, we shall be as anxious to turn away the gaze, as some few are now to prematurely force a glimpse of it.

Happily, it is within our power, by virtue of free will, to make good deeds outweigh the evil from the time conscious responsibility is attained.

Plato said, "Knowledge is recollection." The Ancient Wisdom affirms that man at each moment of his existence is the sum-total of his past. Therefore, character is the fruitage of all we have been from the beginning of time and is, in a sense, recollection — a faculty of the soul, quite different from that memory which belongs to the temporary brain-mind. Hopes, aspirations, every inherent tendency, talent, or essential characteristic of a man, are thus reminiscence of former lives. All experiences deep enough to become part of the fiber of the real man endure: minor incidents remembered more or less accurately for a little while — mostly forgotten — are not carried over to the next life, but vanish with the disintegration of the body and its brain. Only the essence of these experiences, in so far as they affect character, become a matter of record in the permanent self.

Growth would be interfered with by carrying this burden along from life to life. Compassionate Mother Nature permits us to drink of the Cup of Forgetfulness that we may return to the school-room of earth-life free to look hopefully and eagerly into the future and concentrate upon the lessons of the present term.

Undue interest and curiosity in the backward glance is a distraction and impedes progress. It is much the same as over-interest in things of the psychic realms. Normally, the consciousness of human beings today does not belong there. Our high business is with the opportunities for growth, through service, offered by the daily events of life where Karman has placed us — which means, simply, where we have placed ourselves through the consequences of our accumulated past. Lessons enough are right at hand. Qualities needing development to round out character are more quickly acquired if the whole attention is given to culling spiritual nectar from each significant event. Courage, compassion, unselfishness, patience, must be won by practical effort, never through attention centered in the past, nor upon the allure of the psychic world. Advice from real Teachers all down the centuries points to the initiation to be gained from the ever-present opportunities of life. Every waking hour — lived rightly — holds enough for the exercise of all the spiritual and intellectual faculties we can command. These are

infinitely more worthy of cultivation than the pale-moon illusions of the lower astral spheres. In the fulness of time man must and will have complete knowledge of Nature. But growth is accomplished step by step in orderly sequence. The shortest and safest path is the Way of the Sages. They have left plain sign-posts for our guidance: "Man Know Thyself"; "Discipline must precede the Mysteries"; altruism is the first step — and the second, and so on forever; forget yourself in the simple duty of the moment; be patient; be cheerful; follow the gleam: then you shall reach the land of Heart's Desire and Nature will withhold no secrets from you, but will accept you gladly as another proved and worthy collaborator.

The Theosophical Forum

THE LOVE OF NATURE — *H. T. Edge*

It is often said that civilization is hostile to the love of nature, but there is much to be said on the other side. Macaulay, in a well-known passage of his *History*, shows how the appreciation of natural beauties has been enhanced by civilization. He is describing the horror with which Scottish Highland scenery was once held, by contrast with the enthusiasm with which its beauties are now courted. That scenery was the same at the end of the seventeenth century as it is now: the crags, the glens, the woods and waters, the broom and wild roses, the roaring cataracts and the snowy mountain tops. Yet in those days they inspired nothing but horror and loathing; for before a man can be charmed by scenery, he must be assured that he will not be robbed, stripped and mangled, or killed outright; that he will not fall down the precipices, drown in the cataracts, or die of exposure on the hill-sides. "Indeed law and police, trade and industry, have done far more than people of romantic dispositions will readily admit, to develop in our minds a sense of the wilder beauties of nature."

And truly nature has a rough side, and needs to be wooed and won. But why cannot man himself, as one of the animate orders, be regarded as a part of nature? If so, then his works, whereby he tames and subdues nature in her harsher aspects, must also be considered as works of nature.

In short, to avoid being misled by false issues, the real issue seems to be, not between man and nature, or between civilization and wildness, but between the artificial and the natural, between excess and balance, between discord and harmony. And here the following will serve as an apposite text:

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

This saying, by whomever said, is an aphorism of ancient wisdom; and its counterpart may be found throughout all times and lands, including many wise men of our own day who have earnestly advocated simplicity. A book called *Power Through Repose*, while dealing largely with physical aspects of the question, nevertheless gives the key. In that book we were enjoined to *relax*. Owing to wrong habits of thought and to various emotions, such as fear and anxiety and hurry, we are grown accustomed to live in a state of *strain*, which extends even to our muscles, kept unconsciously in a state of tension, and to our every nerve and fiber. If we can but let go and relax, this state of tension may cease, and then the fount of real power within us will be allowed easy flow and expression, and thus we shall accomplish with ease and without effort what previously we have struggled in vain to achieve by worry and effort.

This then is the chief lesson we are to learn from "nature": to work easily and without effort. And, as just said, it is not the rustic who is immersed and involved in nature, who is best qualified to learn that lesson, but the cultivated man, who knows what artificiality is, but who also knows its opposite; and whom the progress of civilization has placed in a position where he can utilize the advantages of nature profitably.

In antiquity there was a cult of nature; we find it in classical antiquity; we find it still among "primitive" tribes. Certain learned people have squashed, or tried to squash, all this under the name "animism." It was a superstition, they say, marking early states in the evolution of intelligence or religion. Those simple-minded ancients believed that nature is alive; whereas we enlightened moderns — well, what *do* we believe after all?

Let us try to go back from that modern notion that nature is not alive (that is, it is dead), to the old idea that nature is alive and conscious. Then the feelings of artists can be explained otherwise than by regarding art as a pleasing illusion of the imagination. Artists indeed! Are we not all so to some extent, however small? "Lives there a man

with soul so dead" that he has not, sometimes at least, when surrounded by the works of nature, felt the presences around him; indulged himself in what he may have called a game of make-believe, and "endowed" the trees and rocks with mind and life? Let us get rid of that idea of make-believe and try to think that there is no illusion but merely a perception of reality; that the rocks and trees, both severally and in conjunction, constitute living presences, with whose soul we may commune. In that way we may purge our mind and our heart of their contractions and dislocations, and attune ourselves to the tranquil harmony of our surroundings; and, just as the earth and the water may purge away the humors from our body, the soul of nature may cleanse our minds and our hearts.

No doubt many of the ancients indulged in a good deal of nonsense about nymphs and nature-spirits; but the superficial folly need not blind us to the fundamental truth. Nor need we seek to wear other people's clothes. We can get back to the spirit of antiquity without donning ancient habiliments; and we do not need to imitate those poets who made their poems artificial by an anachronistic introduction of Pan and Arcadian shepherds into an English landscape. Let us go back to nature in our own way, in a modern way. Let us not throw away the advantages of civilization, but use them. However crowded and artificial may be the outer circumstances of our life, we can always carry simplicity about with us in our hearts, and show it in our manners.

There are perhaps some people who show more enthusiasm in their talk about nature than they evince in their behavior. And there are surely others whose appreciation of nature is genuine, but who find that they are likely to get more sympathy out of the silence than out of any rash attempt to communicate their feelings to anyone else. But silence is one of the great mysteries which nature can communicate to us; and, deeper than the communication of minds through talk, lies the silent communion of hearts attuned to the same ideal.

Nature is a great initiator; and, as we are reminded, imparts her secrets

only to those who worship at her shrine. Remaining a sealed book to those who abuse her, or who walk blindly through her beauties, she stands ever ready to reveal new wonders to all who will but open their eyes and their hearts, and attune themselves by sympathy, so that they may resound like a resonator to her vibrations.

In an important sense, then, nature is just what we are able to see. The ant, the nocturnal toad, the cow in her pasture, know one kind of nature. The holiday tripper may know nature only as a very capital place in which to deposit paper bags and tin cans.

Nature is waiting, wistfully, for — Man. It is his to play positive to her negative; for she is receptive, and her art is to respond. And with what boundless wealth can she respond! She needs to be wooed. She stands ready to resound to any chord we can strike; to embody any glory to which we are capable of attaining. She is now, as always, the Great Mother, of infinite resource and bounty. But he who would receive must know how to ask.

The Theosophical Forum

THE REAL MAN — A. Trevor Barker

Mr. Sidney King at our White Lotus Day celebration the other night (1) made the statement that the teachings of H. P. B. could be understood as a kind of algebraic formula, which, rightly understood, could be applied to the understanding of any problem of life. We are to consider tonight the subject of what in Theosophy is called the Real Man. Let us apply the proper algebraic formula to an understanding of what is meant by this term. The Real Man signifies that there is something else besides reality in man, and if you turn to H. P. B.'s statements of fundamental principles of the Oriental philosophy, you find her laying it down that man is not his objective body, but that there is within him this something which she calls the Real Man, which is an indwelling and energizing principle; and that this Inner Man is ever striving, acting, thinking, feeling, on this evolutionary journey through earth-life, upwards to that ever-brooding Divinity which is at once its parent and its inspirer. We understand our algebraical formula to suggest that man divided into the simplest terms for easiest comprehension may be considered as spiritual, intellectual, and vehicular. In other words there are conjoined in man at any one time three actual streams of evolution. I do not know whether you have brooded upon this question. Three streams of evolution seems to suggest that there are entities evolving on all three levels of man's constitution.

Now then, this question of the Real Man will not be comprehensible unless we succeed in showing that that which we call reality in man is something eternal and indestructible. The permanent individuality in man is actually rooted in the spiritual pole of his being, which is in itself dual in character. You notice that H. P. B. in the Fundamental Propositions of the Secret Doctrine lays it down that duality pervades the manifested universe directly you drop in thought from the highest metaphysical Triad, of which Eternal Duration, Space, and Motion are the three symbolic terms. Therefore we need not be surprised when we

find that man in his highest spiritual part is dual. Even his Monadic Essence could not express itself did it not do so in two streams or parts: one spiritual and having the aspect of consciousness, and the other, having the aspect of substance, the vehicle side of spiritual conscious life: and these two together make the dual Atma-Buddhic Monad. It is this which is the highest entity evolving in that septenary Cosmos which we call the human being. That entity is performing an evolutionary journey — a long one; and because it is doing so it may be said that it actually expresses the highest of the three evolutionary streams that are combined in man.

Let us drop in thought to the next part of our being, which H. P. B. in a generalizing way calls the Real Man. This also is dual. According to the septenary classification you get Manas and Kama. Now here you have the center of what is called the Human Ego, and this Human Ego passes actually from life to life. The Reincarnating Ego is the higher part of this kama-manasic dual entity, and during life the consciousness is centered mostly in the lower part of it. But the Real Man is centered in the higher part; and it is this higher part of the dual Human Ego which owes the permanence of its individuality to the spiritual brooding presence of the Monadic Essence above it.

Therefore, as you would expect, after death there comes a division which cuts in twain this dual Human Ego which H. P. B. calls the Real Man, and that is why this division of man into a three-fold entity, consisting of two duads and a triad, is a very good one, because it shows us how the different workings of man's nature, during life and after death, actually take place. After death there occurs a division between the *manas* and the *kama*, and the higher part of it is drawn upwards until it becomes permanently grafted by a process of interior disruption, as it were, on that eternal principle which is represented by man's spiritual nature. And so you gain immediately the conception that it is *we men living here* in earth-life who are the transient beings; but that there is an eternal Pilgrim within the heart of every man, which is here not once but many times, expressing itself through bodies of flesh, but relatively remaining untouched — that is to say no

more touched than the actor is by playing the successive roles that fall to his lot.

This immediately suggests the thought to us: since most of us are necessarily absorbed, identified to a very large extent, with the material pursuits of life — the struggle for existence and what not — there is an urgent necessity to find a means of refreshing our objective daily consciousness, if I may so express it: that part of our being which not only suffers fatigue, but is overburdened with the cares of this world; that suffers fears and anxieties and what not — which are but a symbol of the unreal man, but a symbol of the transient personality: Theosophy, if it does anything at all, attracts men's attention to that higher part of their being where in the midst of storm and material difficulties the Real Man may be like a Master Mariner with his hand upon the helm of the ship of life. He may provide, as it were, for the harassed human soul the port that is always calm, and into which the lower man can enter, if he will, at any time — whether it be while he is at work, or whether he deliberately enters into a state of spiritual meditation. It is because the Real Man is a fact that, if we go about it in the right way, we can raise our consciousness and fix it in that higher state from which balance, discrimination, pure and compassionate judgment flow. This is the application of the Theosophical formula, this algebraic formula that we were speaking of the other night.

Now another thought immediately occurs; it is that this permanent individuality lasts for an almost inconceivably long period of time, and it actually incarnates on this planet — let alone the other planets and globes of the planetary chain — I do not know, and should be afraid to say, how many times, how many incarnations it has to go through; but eventually this Human Ego wins what is called its Immortality. If you have studied the question you will know that mankind as they are — average men and women — are at best but conditionally immortal: in other words the human part of them is not sufficiently united to, not sufficiently illuminated by the higher part of their being, to be able to claim that they are immortal entities. To be an immortal entity is the supreme achievement of evolution — not as ordinarily understood, but

understood in terms of occult science.

When a Mahatma reaches the end of the first five steps on the initiatory Pathway, he enters into an indissoluble state of union between the human Ego and the God within him. It is to this: the first part, the beginning of this process, that all Theosophists are striving: otherwise our endeavors have no meaning at all. Step by step we are learning to raise this Human Ego, this reincarnating entity, to a recognition that there is that eternal reality in the depths of our being, from which we may get hurried away by the affairs of life, by the domination of what the *Bhagavad-Gita* calls the objects of the senses. These things serve to becloud man's vision: the Real Man identifies himself with the lower man and he forgets the reality not only of his Divine origin but of his permanent home: and then such a man loses his calm, loses his perspective; he is unable to concentrate and do those things which a spiritual man is able to do. The Real Man is actually composed of all the inherent characteristics or character of the individual. In other words it is Karma. Karma is that moral kernel of the individual which is indestructible, but at the same time which can only be modified from within without — by growth. Therefore if we want to change our destiny, our Karma, and therefore our character, we simply have to recognise that it is our whole being which has to alter. Whatever we are today is simply an expression of that inherent, essential keynote of our being which has been sounding down through all the ages as we incarnated here, always sounding out a similar kind of note, until step by step we learn to clarify, to purify, and to raise the tone pitch and the key, until finally we ourselves become convinced that the Real Man is a fact, and we strive from that point forward to realize its presence in our lives from day to day.

FOOTNOTE:

1. This meeting was held at the London Headquarters, Point Loma T. S., in conjunction with the Phoenix Lodge of the Adyar Society, May 10, 1936. It was the first of the series of joint meetings between the two branches of the T. S., which have proved so successful during the past

year.

For extracts from Mr. Sidney King's address above referred to see the following article, "The Algebraic Equation." ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE ALGEBRAIC EQUATION (1) — *Sidney King*

Our thoughts tonight are focussed upon H. P. B. and the Theosophical Movement which she founded; being the messenger of the Masters of Wisdom to the Western world of the cycle.

It is a fact often observed in history that founders of great movements see simply and clearly what their followers succeed in explaining and amplifying into complications and terrible darkness. The impress of personality after personality succeeds all too often in stamping out the original likeness. And all this is done by zealous partisans. But in this case, though much has been said and done to injure and obscure, we are not so far away from the Founder's purity of purpose as to be unable to perceive and adopt it if we will.

First we must strive to see as they saw. To appreciate the wisdom that guided H. P. B. we can study her written works and see what they cover, and also what they omit to cover. By this means we may gain an insight into the way we should conduct our movement so as not to lose the force which set it in motion. Her written works cover: The nature of the Universe; the nature of Man; the basis of Truth behind all World Religions; the conquest of Personality; the dangers of Psychism; the appeal to the Real Self within each individual.

They do not cover nor recommend: particular lines of activity or conduct; particular creeds or religions; particular political or social views.

The thinking man is placed in possession of what he metaphorically calls an Algebraic equation. In this equation the relative values of that All Presence — the Higher Self — and the Personal Self — are clearly expressed. There is a factor for action.

Once in possession of that Algebraic equation each individual's life and circumstances can be written in, and every problem successfully

solved. Every action sincerely taken as a result of such a process will inevitably harmonize with every other action.

By this means Unity is assured, while room is left for the inevitable differences arising in a world of maximum differentiation.

How else shall our nucleus of brotherhood contain members of various convictions — members of all religions or none? The moment any particular phase of creed or practice is placed in a favored light is not some member of another belief injured? The moment one political bias is championed, is not censure passed on those of opposite convictions?

We have to achieve our inner unity by allowing an outer diversity. Individual freedom must be maintained, and our collective functions kept so broad and elemental that they embrace every manifestation.

Our presence here tonight is a token that we hold to that inner Unity so clearly envisaged and wisely followed by the founders of our movement. Let us apply ourselves to study and adopt that Algebraic equation presented to us through H. P. B., leaving our fellow students to apply it also each in the sincerity of his heart.

So shall our Movement one day again become one inwardly, and perhaps outwardly should we earn it by our Karma.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The English Theosophical Forum*, June, 1936. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

A RELIGION FOR THE YOUNG (1) — *Jalie Neville Shore*

There is no system of thought that offers so much to Youth as does Theosophy, embracing as it does the all-inclusive Wisdom of the Ages. For there is no subject, however recondite, none so abstract, none so sacred, that it cannot be studied in this Science-Philosophy-Religion. To Youth it offers the discovery of All Nature and suggests adventure at every step of investigation. Filled with hints of what has transpired through the fathomless depths of Time, and of prophecies of what is to come long ages hence, fraught with the mysteries of both past and present, Theosophy provides not only intellectual stimuli but promises the development of faculties which lie latent in man awaiting proper and careful rediscovery and training under trustworthy tutelage.

Having been given to the world by the highest Initiates whose holy purpose in life is to live to benefit mankind by raising the spiritual levels of humanity, Theosophy offers to the earnest student who is indefatigable in the application of its precepts a moral security and a spiritual peace not to be completely found elsewhere.

Youth in its tireless quest to find its place in the scheme of things often unwisely turns to paths that lead to disappointment and seemingly unjust suffering. In a world of beings the youth finds himself companion to other humans and to the animal creatures. He finds himself an observer of the stars above him, the plants and flowers about him, and the mineral kingdom below him. Alert to the psychical changes of the times, he no longer believes that God created him to be lord over all creation or that He put the stars in the heavens just to please men's fancy with their twinkle. Being awake mentally he is acquainted with the latest scientific developments, which teach a Universe made of mind-stuff and a cosmic infiltration of energy centers. Being ambitious for what he calls "success" in life, he often decides that the environment he is born into is a barrier to the realization of his dreams; that his people from whom he thinks he has

inherited disease or evil tendencies, peculiar ways, or a grotesque body, are the wrong kind of people; that there is no such condition as equal opportunity, and that even his government is rotten to the core. In this trend of thought he usually does one of three things: acquiesces to conditions as he finds them and beds down in the mire of his own inhibitions; attempts to flee from the surroundings so distasteful to him; or revolting, tries to upset the applecart by his bitterness. In any event he has not found his place in the scheme of things for he has looked outside himself to find his place. For however close, for instance, his relatives may be, or however inhibiting environment and governments may seem, they remain uninterpretable so long as he does not seek within to understand himself.

In Theosophy, Youth may learn that environmental conditions are never a mistake — nor an accident. He is taught that they are a clear testimony of that which he has drawn unto himself by love or hate. He learns that kicking over the traces does no good: that that method is simply abortive to any attempt to improve affairs; but that a solution of his problems — and Youth has many! — lies in the recognition that he is literally the child and parent of himself, the child learning, the parent guiding, the parent being the reincarnating ego that brings forth life after life the entity that finds itself in difficult situations. Gradually he learns that this parent is his inmost being who has learned and retained all the lessons of former lives and that this being with its unfailing memory is his one sure guide and teacher. He learns that there is *nothing in his life* — either unpleasant or agreeable — that he has not brought about himself; that only he can do anything about it and that selfless action alone will bring him permanent happiness. By practice he learns to look situations in the face and understand conditions as he meets them. Without understanding he can hope to accomplish nothing; with a clear-cut perception of his own make-up he goes steadily forward.

He learns that physical proximity is not always indicative of that which is nearest one's heart. He learns that though a continent, an ocean, a world, or a universe may appear to separate him from that which he

most loves, there is an essence within him that binds him to the thing he holds so dear; for by this literally substantial psycho-magnetic tie he and it are one. This is a great lesson that he learns, for the fundamental unity of All Nature becomes then a scientific reality. It is not long before he realizes that the crux of the whole matter is finding out that which is more truly nearest his heart, the center of his being — that which enjoys the pure sweet light springing from the Inner Flame at the heart of him.

Once Youth understands the truth of the Theosophical teaching that he is the result of *himself* and that he is where and *how* he is by his own actions, he leaves off being resentful and discontented. He hesitates to "pass the buck," and begins to accept his own responsibilities. He attempts to stand on his own feet, and in attempting, gradually gains a poise that withstands the temptations that are so likely to come his way.

Youth in the composite is expressive of so many different aspects of himself: beauty, ambition, and dreams. And in the exuberance of his nature he often plunges himself into experiences that result in serious consequences. But Youth does not need to be restrained; he needs to learn that *he* can bridle his own nature and direct his own course. He needs to learn that he is the rider of his own steed which he himself has broken to the bit of self-discipline. Theosophy teaches that everyone can direct his own course, can make his own Karman.

Theosophy also teaches that everyone is evolving and that evolution means the bringing out of that which is within. Therefore, if Youth understands that in the core of him there is an indwelling god, he will seek more readily the noble things of life and scorn the cheap and tawdry. He will realize that alliance with the Wisdom of the Ages is to reap the benefit derived from the bringing forth of his own god from within.

Youth seeking Life often finds Death — Death that is sometimes merely physical annihilation, at other times a destruction of precious faculties, or in the horrible extreme, a breaking down of the moral fiber that

supports his very soul. In any of these cases the teaching of Theosophy will be like a beacon light to the Youth who in the intensity of his too full life has lost himself in the fog of doubt and bewilderment and misunderstanding and fear, all of which has caused him to lose hope too soon. Theosophy gives hope to such Youth for Theosophy teaches that man returns again and again to take up his life and his work where he has left off; to unravel the entanglements his lower nature has been the cause of; to learn the lessons his stupidity and lack of self-control have made him neglect. The knowledge of reincarnation makes life an adventure. Meeting "new" faces, being attracted to "new" people or repelled by others, indicate most clearly adventures begun in other lives with these same people — adventures to be continued until they are brought to harmonious fruition. The knowledge of this teaching, indissolubly linked as it is with the Law of Consequences or Cause and Effect, is a challenge to Youth to change the discords of his life into the beautiful harmonies developed by impersonal love and service to others. Physical death to Youth is so often frightening and revolting. Frequently he is shaken to the very depths of his being by what appears to him eternal destruction. Were Youth to understand thoroughly the Theosophical teaching he would know that Death is a gateway to Life itself. Then he would understand something of the phenomena of Nature in regard to this tearing-down-building-up process. For he would learn that man is not body alone, that indeed his body is the least important portion of him. He would learn how man's higher principles seek their own realms and how the myriads of evolving entities composing the lower principles go on peregrinations of their own in the after-death state.

And learning something about Death, Youth would, paradoxically, learn much about Life and of his part in it. He would learn that he is composed of innumerable Life-Atoms that through him are getting their experiences on this evolutionary journey. He would learn that he is an inseparable part of the Universe which is also evolving. He would learn that his fellowmen have lived just as he has lived for aeons of time; that they, like him, have had their cyclic periods of activity and

rest; that the people with whom he works and plays, and those whom he loves and hates, are people he has known before. Human relations would take on an added value. More care would be exercised as to duties to be performed and daily life in general. For Youth would see for himself that the Law of Karman or Cause and Effect or Action and Re-action simply means that there can be no thought sent out, no word spoken, no deed done without an attending reaction on the one responsible. Knowing this Law, Youth would become more thoughtful, kindlier in his attitude toward others, more considerate of his fellows, more understanding of the aches of the human heart, more eager to alleviate the pain, and less willing to risk adding to the suffering of the world by indulgences through the dictates of his lower nature.

Theosophy teaches one to know himself for knowing one's self he would know all things. Youth becoming acquainted with this thought would learn that at the heart of him is the core of the Core of All Being. He would feel himself a very Universe. Before him would be the discovery of All Nature, there being no branch of any Knowledge that is not an integral part of Theosophy.

Theosophy is not so much an anchor which Youth can throw into a turbulent sea to stop his forward progress as it is a discovery of how to use the compass he finds within his own nature by which he can set his course to destinations that only Youth dares dream about.

FOOTNOTE:

1. An Address read before the Fraternization Convention in Toronto, August, 1935. Reprinted, with slight revision by the writer, from *The Canadian Theosophist*, November, 1935. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: II — *H. Percy Leonard*

ISAIAH'S WATCHMAN AND THE CYCLIC LAW

Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?
The watchman said, The morning cometh, *and also the night.* —
Isaiah, xxi, 11-12

According to Theosophy, all the conditions and events of life revolve in cycles. They have their birth, their growth, their full maturity, and then their slow decline and death. After a lapse of time they reappear and the successive changes run their course again. Our brighter moods must of necessity give place to intervals of gloom as evening shadows deepen into night after the sun has set. Not until we recognise and make allowance for these oscillations in our consciousness can we attain to mental equilibrium, nor can our minds enjoy more dignity and calm than children have who fluctuate between two alternatives of tears and laughter throughout the waking day.

If a devoted mother were to hear her child at night crying alone in terror of the dark, she very properly would comfort her by telling her the morning was at hand and night would soon be over. Shall we say, however, that were she guided strictly by a logical consistency she ought to call her child indoors when playing in the morning sunshine and advise her not to be too happy as the cyclic law would soon bring round the dreaded shades of night once more? Such an extreme of philosophy in mothers is happily very rare; but those of us who have attained full growth may well consider the inevitable backward swing of life's inexorable pendulum, and steadily confront the situation here described.

No change from darker moods to lighter ones can bring us permanent relief; for in due course the change itself will be transformed into something else and cannot furnish an abiding satisfaction for the soul. The Universe in all its parts is in perpetual flow, and while we willingly

subject ourselves to Nature's sway by our preoccupation with the body and the lower mind, we must be subject to the ebbing and the flowing of the tides. Are men for ever doomed to float like corks upon the restless waves of moods and feelings? Have we no better destiny than everlasting oscillation?

'Nature,' by derivation, signifies that which is born and hence must die. From the Divine she issues forth, back to her source she must return; therefore in all her many-chambered mansions can we never find a lasting habitation for the soul. But man in inmost essence is an undivided part of unseen reality which causes, but is not affected by, the ebbing and the flowing of the tides.

The human race in general and the individual for himself are destined to achieve their independence from the tyranny of cyclic law. Man may arise and claim his long-forgotten dignity of being one with the Divine and work indeed in harmony with cyclic law, but holding all the while to that supreme, eternal life which burns with never wavering glory in the inner shrine.

The vast majority of humankind are the servants of the cycles as they come and go, and alternate incessantly between the antics of the dancing faun and the prostration of tearful Niobe. And all the while the Sphinx in balanced equilibrium, the human head the ruler, and the body of the brute as slave, sits gazing on Eternity with changeless satisfaction smiling on his face, inviting us to seize our heritage and share his peace.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS: 329-332

QUESTION 329

Do the Theosophists at the General Offices of the Theosophical Society at Point Loma find anything incongruous in the immediate proximity of the Military Reservations? What is the general attitude of Theosophists towards an armed force?

G. de P. — Emphatically, as the Theosophist's first thought, being a lover of his fellow-men, he is opposed to war, and violence of any kind, with all his heart. But we are sane people, and I do not think any sane individual today would go so far as to say that the armed forces of the United States are out for ruthless violence or for slaughter. To me they are like a national police; and they do a policeman's work in the world, something very fine indeed; and the ideal armed forces of any country stand for that same thing. If we did not have police patrolling our streets, see what would happen to us, to our lives, to those we love, and to our property!

Now if force is misused, that we condemn emphatically; but we do not condemn — as sane, honest, earnest people who love our fellows — the proper application of strength where strength only will bring about peace and order, and when used honestly for the protection of the weak and helpless. The armed forces of a country certainly can be misused and abused, and that is a crime; and it has happened again and again and again in the history of the world. But we must not condemn the armed forces of our country, of any country, which in theory, and usually in practice, stand for the preservation of order, the upholding of right and law, and the assuring of honest and peaceable men and women that their daily pursuits are safeguarded and protected.

Militarism is one thing; that is the abuse. The preservation of law and order by even armed strength if need be is not abuse. A lunatic

hastening to set fire to a building, or to do some foul crime — should he be allowed to do it merely because he is human and because we love our fellow-men? What sane man would say that? He must be prevented even by strength and controlled force if it has to be called forth. But that is not ruthless use of strength; it is decent use of strength.

We Theosophists, lovers of our fellow-men, with our General Offices established here on Point Loma within a stone's throw of the military reservation bounding our grounds, and the soldiers and sailors of the U. S., live side by side in perfect understanding and courtesy. They neither offend nor trouble us, nor do we offend or trouble them; and I pray it always shall be so. A Theosophist stands for love, brotherly love; but love is sometimes strong, it is never weak and feeble. It upholds right, protects the weak, insists upon justice, will even raise its strong arm to bring these about if there be no other way. In the latter case, pitiful perhaps — but we have to face facts.

Some day the human race will outgrow the need of armed police forces for its protection, will outgrow the need of surgery, will outgrow the need of remedies for human disease and other ills. But as long as we human beings, with our millions in the prisons showing conditions as now they are, cannot control ourselves, wreaking violence upon others if we have the chance, or perhaps because we are at times too weak to hold ourselves in against temptation and evil-doing, society has to be protected, and it is proper. We grieve over it, but we are sane people and recognise facts as they are.

QUESTION 330

In Mr. Judge's Preface to *The Aphorisms of Patanjali*, pages xvii and xix, he states that an adept is able to read the records in the astral light. Are these records equally accessible, or is an event that happened yesterday more easy to revive than one that took place a million years ago? — *H. L.*

E. D. Wilcox - — One can answer this question only from hints given in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, by Mr. Judge himself in his

writings, or by analogy in reference to memory-experiences on the physical plane. In the Preface mentioned, just previous to the statement from which the question arises, Mr. Judge gives these words which partly describe how the adept is able to read the pictures imprinted in the astral light, as "he becomes, through the power of concentration, completely identified with the thing considered, and so in fact experiences in himself all the phenomena exhibited by the object as well as its qualities."

In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* we are told that the adept, in his everyday life, leads the life of the ordinary human being, and that when he wishes to use any of his trained powers, he places his consciousness by an effort of his will in harmony with or actually into the consciousness of that thing or person he seeks, and as the will is an electro-magnetic force, it attracts and draws to it that upon which his mind is concentrated.

As to whether this result is as easily accomplished for distant events as for recent ones, only an adept can tell, but we might infer, by analogy, that what is newly impressed on the astral light would be more readily visible to the seer than that which requires more concentration of mind and a placement of consciousness upon the deeper realms of the astral light.

QUESTION 331

What has Theosophy to say about divorce? Is it wrong?

L. L. W. — Theosophy is a formulation of the origin, structure, and destiny of the Universe, so that it embodies for us the basic ethical principles of life but says nothing as to ephemeral human institutions. We must ourselves decide about these, accordingly as these institutions are founded upon those ethical principles or disregard them. The knowledge gained through Theosophy for example gives us a very clear idea what to think about capital punishment though Theosophy itself offers no definite teachings as to that particular legal solution of social crime.

Divorce is a man-made institution and as such is not a subject which of itself comes within Theosophical doctrines. But any Theosophist by applying the principles of Theosophy can decide for himself as to what his own attitude should be. In every situation involving human relationships ethical principles are bound to be involved. If these ethical principles are set aside where a divorce is granted then naturally a Theosophist would feel that the divorce was wrong. Still, no one can decide as to this but the parties involved and a true Theosophist will be careful not to judge or condemn.

It seems probable however that most Theosophists who are trying to "live the life" would make every effort to guard and preserve the sanctity of marriage. Feeling that marriage is a sacred karmic relationship, they would feel it better to *solve* any problem which develops — if possible to do so without sacrificing ethical principles — rather than to try to escape the problem through divorce. For a problem evaded is sure to return sometime and probably in an aggravated form. This is a general principle of life enunciated by Theosophy which can be applied to any human relationship. But, again, divorce is a problem to be solved by the individual conscience which will be greatly assisted by a knowledge of Theosophy.

QUESTION 332

When the inevitable changes peculiar to the New Cycle now dawning come upon us, will they cause chaos only to the extent that we fail to prepare ourselves for their advent, or as we oppose them? — A W. N

Alice D. Peirce — This question seems to imply that changes concomitant with the New Era upon which humanity is entering, are yet to come upon us. The fact is that very great psychic, mental, and spiritual changes are now in progress and have been increasingly evident for several decades past. Cycles do not terminate abruptly, one giving place to another at an exact point of time. Nature works less mechanically. As twilight intervenes between the darkness of night and full day, so with all cyclic processes there is a period of overlapping, and a gradual changing of the old order to give place to the new.

Times of transition are critical periods, accompanied by unrest, uncertainty, and chaos more or less pronounced. Down the centuries cyclic changes can be traced in every nation, some of minor effect restricted to a limited area, others far-reaching and of cataclysmic proportions. The distressing symptoms of our present transition-era bear out the prophetic forecast of H. P. Blavatsky that one of the major crises in human events would accompany the closing of several important cycles near the end of last century, resulting in world-wide disturbances in this century.

Assuredly, the chaos now confronting us would have been greatly mitigated had men and women been better prepared to meet the crisis understandingly. Except in the teachings of Theosophy, introduced by H. P. Blavatsky, there was little in the religious, scientific, or scholastic training of last century to provide adequate preparation for the new conditions to be met. Difficult and bewildering as a transition-period such as ours seems, encouragement lies in the fact that it offers greatly increased opportunity for growth in knowledge and understanding. To oppose the on-sweep of evolutionary progress is folly indeed. To best prepare for the new conditions of our changing world, we are taught to unfetter the imagination, to visualize a saner and more spiritual way of life, and above all, to put into practice in everyday affairs the old, familiar Golden Rule given by every World-Teacher without exception, as the essential panacea for the ills with which mankind has been afflicted in all ages in which it has been neglected — conspicuously in our own.

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — C. J. Ryan

THE SUN'S CORONA AND PROMINENCES

These appendages of the sun are still mysterious, although intensive research is being conducted by many astronomers. The Master K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* gives some plain hints that the corona, and the red chromosphere from which the prominences often fly up for tens of thousands of miles with enormous speed, are controlled by electro-magnetic forces rather than by heat or gravitation or light-pressure, and that they are of some finer order of matter than what was familiar to physical scientists when he was writing in 1882. For instance, he says:

Call it a chromosphere or atmosphere, it can be called neither; for it is simply the magnetic and ever-present aura of the sun, seen by astronomers *only* for a brief few minutes during the eclipse and by some of our chelas — whenever they like — of course while in a certain induced state. A counterpart of what the astronomers call the red flames in the "corona" may be seen in Reichenbach's crystals or in any other strongly magnetic body. The head of a man — in a strong ecstatic condition, when all the electricity of his system is centered around the brain, will represent — especially in darkness — a perfect simile of the Sun during such periods. . . .

The further the emanation shoots out the more it loses its intensity, until, gradually subsiding it fades out; hence — the "outer corona," its rayed shape being due entirely to the latter phenomenon whose effulgence proceeds from the magnetic nature of the matter and the electric energy and not at all from intensely hot particles as asserted by some astronomers. All this is terribly unscientific, nevertheless a *fact*. . . . — p. 162

From the latest Report of the National Academy of Sciences, Chicago

Meeting, it seems that this is not so unscientific in 1937 as it was in 1882! In the report of solar activity recorded by the new motion-picture method at the observatory of the University of Michigan we read this striking confirmation of the Oriental Mahatma's unorthodox statement nearly sixty years ago, when the sun was supposed to be a kind of burning fire, perhaps 15 million years old:

The motions of the various types of solar prominences are very well shown by these pictures and afford an astronomer his first opportunity of actually reviewing these motions. We see no evidence that light pressure alone will, in any way, satisfactorily explain the activity of these prominences and all appearances favor an "electrical theory of prominence formations, motion and destruction. . . . — *Science*, January 1, 1937

Dr. Curtis of Michigan points out that the apparent start in various directions of great streamers and new centers of activity at high altitudes in the solar atmosphere is one feature which indicates the extreme probability of electric action. Light-pressure would come up from the surface of the sun, not from the heights.

We draw special attention to the strange mysteries of the corona because of the probability that important discoveries further confirming the Masters' teachings will be made in that field. H. P. Blavatsky teaches that the sun is the store-house of life "Vital Force" and that Herschel was right in his daring speculation that the so-called "rice-grains" covering the surface of the sun "partake of life," and that "vital action is competent to develop heat, light and electricity." Life and Consciousness of high or low order are behind all the forces of Nature, and it is not some accidental concatenation of "dead, inert matter" that produces life and consciousness as "by-products."

The fact that the sun's corona resembles the electro-magnetic aura round the head of a person in profound meditation is a broad hint to deeper students as to the analogies between the higher part of man's complex nature and the "heart and head" of the Solar System. The corona is still a great mystery to science, which frankly admits the

difficulty in interpreting its meaning and even identifying the material composing it. The records of the eclipse of the sun of last June are now being intensively studied by astronomers, and one utterly unexpected report has been issued in regard to the chromosphere and its prominences. For the first time color photographs of an eclipse were taken, and it was proved that the rose-colored chromosphere was, at least on this occasion, a bluish white instead of a rich red, the color which is the principal hue of the hydrogen of which the prominences are supposed to be mainly constituted. This, however, is not the first time that such an unexplained phenomenon has been seen. During the eclipse of June, 1927, as seen in England, the observers in an airplane 11,000 feet above the earth saw the ring round the sun, the chromosphere, and the prominences, not red as usually observed, but a brilliant silvery white! Observers *on the ground* saw the usual red color. Professor Langley also observed the same white color during the eclipse of July 29, 1898, from the top of Pike's Peak, which is over 14,000 feet high. Although the English observations in 1927 attracted considerable attention at the time, the problem seems to have been neglected until now, when the natural-color photographs and reports from eye observers have brought it up again. We have not heard how high above the earth the observers of the eclipse of last June in Siberia were when they saw and photographed the pale bluish-white chromosphere and prominences, but in regard to the English and Pike's Peak observations, which were taken at great heights where the atmosphere is rare, it is perhaps possible to connect up with the curious remark by H. P. Blavatsky that atoms and molecules change their nature when coming into our atmosphere. If the varied forms of radiation from the sun such as the spectral lines of hydrogen, said to be seen in the red prominences, also change color from red to bluish silvery white, as they descend into the denser regions of our lower air, the present interpretation of the spectrum of the sun may have to be modified. This subject is well worth watching.

While on the subject of the Master's knowledge of facts unknown to Western science sixty years ago, we must record another instance of

his scientific prevision. On page 169 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* will be found the statement that an instrument will be used some time in the future which will detect by means of *heat* the presence of optically invisible stars and planets; such stars and planets being known by the Adepts to exist. This has just taken place and it is considered a great triumph of the most recent methods. Dr. C. W. Hetzler of the Yerkes Observatory has discovered new stars too faint and cool to be recorded by their own light on the most sensitive plates. They are, however, recorded on new rapid infra-red plates which are sensitive to low temperature heat rays of only one thousand degrees! It is expected that the new "heat-seeing" photographs of stars will reveal small, cool stars *much nearer* than the nearest known visible star, as well as giant stars far cooler than the moderately cool but brilliant giants such as Betelgeuse and Antares at enormous distances. We may have to revise our theories about the structure of the universe when all the data in regard to the invisible dark stars only known by their heat rays are accumulated! On the same page of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in which the heat ray method is mentioned, the Master K. H. remarks that a planet exists "in the orbit of Neptune," although quite undiscovered by science in 1882. He does not say *outside* the orbit of Neptune as might be expected, and the reader might think that the use of the words "in the orbit" was only a careless expression, meaning in the neighborhood of Neptune. But, as a matter of fact, the new planet, Pluto, discovered quite recently, whose orbit is mostly beyond the orbit of Neptune, actually comes nearer to the sun than Neptune for a part of its course and is therefore literally "*in the orbit of Neptune*"! The Master made no mistake.

CYCLIC LAWS

The following question has been received. "We have recently noticed that on March 12 the Moon will be New and also Venus will be at its brightest. What particular meaning or effect will this have in regard to our laws of cycles?"

So far as we know this is not a significant coincidence. Were Venus and

the Moon in conjunction, i.e., in the same longitude, whether Venus was at its brightest or not, the astrologers would attribute some importance to the position. This, of course, could not happen at New Moon. But the intensity of the light reflected to us at any time is not taken into account in estimating the meaning of the "aspects" of the planets. Possibly it ought to be, and if our correspondent can show cause it would be an interesting contribution to science.

ATLANTIS

Another question refers to a recent statement by Professor E. D. Merrill, a leading scientist, that "no ancient contacts between the continents of Europe and America existed," and asks what bearing this has upon the belief in Atlantis. Dr. Merrill points out that not a single cultivated plant or domestic animal (except the dog) was common to the two continents prior to 1492, and that this fact alone is sufficient to explode the theory that a land-bridge joined the Old and the New Worlds in recent geological times. He speaks of "continents which have sunk under the Pacific and Atlantic oceans *centuries* ago," and, considering the mass of nonsensical arguments that have been foisted on the ill-informed public in the attempt to prove that quite recently — geologically speaking — vast territories existed in those oceans, he is quite right in showing the weakness of their basis. This, however, does not affect the Theosophical position, which places the final breaking up of Atlantis nearly a million years ago, and that of Lemuria ages earlier. Conditions in those distant times were so entirely different from what they have been since the great changes in the Pleistocene period, which includes the tremendous glacial climatic changes, that all talk of recent land-bridges and constant communication between the two sides of the Atlantic is futile. A few islands remained for a while after the Atlantean break-up, but anything of the slightest importance had perished hundreds of thousands of years before the last small relic which vanished about 11,000 years ago, and which seems to have been the legendary nucleus around which Plato built his story. He, being an initiate, could not give the real history of the great Atlantean civilization whose existence had been utterly forgotten by ordinary

men. The subject of the lost continents is a difficult one, but Dr. Merrill's objections, even if valid, apply only to claims which Theosophy does not make. We do not admit that his argument, convincing as it appears, covers the whole ground. There is reason to believe that some very limited communication did exist between the Old World and the New, across both oceans, long before Columbus or even the Norsemen reached the western shores. For instance, the discovery that the Pima Indians in Arizona were employing the exact and complicated pattern of the Labyrinth of Crete when the first Spanish explorers arrived there, has not been explained, and there are other puzzling facts.

MAYAN CIVILIZATION

Dr. W. S. Strong of the Smithsonian Institution reports that a missing link between the older and the later people who created the great Mayan culture has been discovered in Honduras. Pottery of a more simple character than the richly decorated Mayan pottery though somewhat similar and seemingly earlier types of tools have been found. Dr. Strong suggests that this indicates that the Mayan civilization originated in northern South America instead of in Mexico as previously believed, and says that this is the next great problem to be solved. Early man in America is indeed an unsolved problem, and although every year sees his origin pushed farther and farther back into geological time, there is little agreement among the best authorities on the subject.

Karena Shields, who owns a planetarium in the Maya jungle and who has spent many years among them, spoke very highly of the "simple yet deeply intelligent existence" of the Mayas of Chiapas to an audience at Altadena on January 7. We quote from the *Pasadena Star-News* a few passages of special interest:

The speaker said that these people are of a Mayan race preceding that of the Yucatan area, and possess the graciousness of the ancient Grecian people with the mysticism of the ancient Egyptian. Those of the Yucatan are more of the Roman in

characteristics. These people are peaceable and friendly and will receive those from the outside world to whom they take a liking, and will not harm or kill those they do not like. But they will allow unwelcome visitors to get into difficulties, or will show their disapproval with a stolid stare, and when an entire village takes this method with one, the psychology of the act becomes too much for him and he leaves.

One of the mysteries of ancient America is the absence of the wheel in any but a symbolic form such as the calendar circle stones. There were no horses or oxen to pull large wagons, but there is no trace of even such a simple wheeled vehicle as the wheelbarrow! The speaker continued:

TRADITIONS BASED IN PHILOSOPHY. Traditions have come down to these people which have their foundations in the philosophies of their ancient forefathers. One is that God in his play made a ball and threw it and it became the earth and rolled on so fast that God could not catch up to it, and that is why much of the evil came into the world, and to have this eliminated it must go slow enough for God again to catch up with it. This is why the wheel is taboo among these people. It goes faster than man can catch up with it, which symbolizes the complications of civilization too intricate for the human mind today to solve. To the Maya it is a potent reason for living the simple life in which one has time to think.

In regard to Maya problems we have received a letter which gives an opportunity of clearing up a misapprehension which has received considerable publicity; we recently heard it seriously expressed by a lecturer who was trying to interpret the mystery of the Great Pyramid from the standpoint of the British being the "Lost Tribes of Israel"! Our correspondent asks if an inscription of "Atlantean-like figures" published beneath a picture of two human figures supporting a large flat stone or lintel in a Central American ruin, does not mean that archaeologists are accepting the hypothesis of Atlantis. "Atlantean"

figures, or more commonly "Atlantes," is a technical term in architecture derived from Atlas, the Greek god who was said to support the heavens on his shoulders. Male figures sculptured as the supporting feature of a lintel are called Atlantes (plural). Supporters of the female sex, such as the famous figures in the Temple of Erechtheus, on the Acropolis, Athens, are called Caryatides. The Mayas used Atlantes with great artistic skill. The word has no direct connexion with Atlantis, but its misuse is a good illustration of the danger of employing words ignorantly. Some interesting information about the meaning of the Greek God Atlas and his *mythical* connexion with Atlantis will be found in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 493, 762.

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE POINT LOMA LODGE: XIII — *G. de Purucker*

ROOT-RACES AND LIFE-WAVES

The following question was asked on the evening of January 31, 1937, after a lengthy discussion on the subject of Life-waves and allied subjects:

Dr. A. A. Beale — Is there any relation or connexion between the "other humanities" (1) that follow our Human Life-wave, and the seven human races that start contemporaneously at the commencement of our Manvantara, spoken of by H. P. B.?

Abbott Clark — There is one phase of this subject, "other humanities," on which many questions have been asked and to which I should like to speak. This phrase, "other humanities" on other globes of the planetary chain, has given rise to much speculation and some confusion of thought, followed by some enlightening study and research, the result of which is as follows:

In this case the phrase "other humanities" is used as a generalizing term for the other "life-waves" below man, which are all potentially human. It does not mean that there are other hosts of monads that are exactly and specifically in the same human stage as we are, i. e., self-conscious, thinking manes, evolving on other globes of this planetary chain concurrently with our evolution on Globe D. That would be contrary to the rest of the teaching on the subject.

The phrase, I believe, is meant to remind us of the essential hierarchical unity with all the monadic hosts which primarily sprang from man and which will ultimately achieve the human state. The mineral, vegetable, and beast kingdoms are all our younger brothers, vital parts of ourselves. They are differentiations of the chain hierarchy of which man is the crown on Earth. Hence they receive the impress of his character, and, in a broad way, his name, signifying that they are

potentially human.

H. Savage — In direct answer to Dr. Beale's question, I do not think there is any connexion, except perhaps an analogical one, between the other life-waves, sometimes called "humanities," and the seven human races that started contemporaneously on our globe. This latter point has often been a subject for discussion among students. It seems reasonable to believe that the first Root-Race was different from the others, just as the first Round on our globe was different from the others; and that it was made up of seven aspects of humanity, foreshadowing the later development that has taken place and is still to take place in the other Root-Races. We know that in the evolutionary scheme each Root-Race develops one Principle — or shall we say sub-principle; and surely the seeds of these seven types of development were sown when man first appeared on this Earth in this Round. H. P. B. also speaks of these seven races as evolving simultaneously on *seven different portions of the globe* (2) but whether this means that the Sacred Imperishable Land which we are taught was the home of the First Root-Race was not one geographical locality but was seven localities known in Theosophy under a collective name is a question we have never been able to solve.

G. de P. — Just what did H. P. B. mean in using that phrase "different humanities"? It does not mean different bodies of human beings, as we now understand ourselves, but was a phrase adopted by her to hammer home the point that however unevolved the different classes of evolving monads may be, they all were on the way to humanity, i. e., to become "men," and therefore are by courtesy, as it were by forecast, "human beings," "humanities." That is what the different "humanities" following each other around the globes of the chain are: the different classes of monads of which our human stock is one class. Our human stock again is sub-divided into subordinate classes, smaller classes, families of men.

Now with regard to the other part of Brother Beale's question: this is something that has plagued the thought of many, many, many students;

and it is understandable too, because it is a very ticklish point, and yet it is easily explainable. When human evolution began on this Globe, in this Fourth Round, or in any other Round, it was a Life-wave beginning to evolve, which means a class of monads, themselves sub-divided into seven subordinate classes; and as the Life-wave reached our Earth and struck it, of course it did so more or less as a whole — forerunners, however, of each subordinate class reaching the Earth and grouping themselves, not only each class to its own, but all the subordinate classes more or less together, just as we men do in a town: divide into families and classes, and yet we aggregate as a town.

Consider a ray from the sun as a light-wave. We know that it is sevenfold. We can, if we wish, say that the ray of light is subdivided into seven subordinate rays, the solar spectrum, which combine and form one compound ray. Now when a ray of light touches our globe, it touches it as a full compound ray or light-wave, i. e., Life-wave; which is but another way of saying that it has seven subordinate rays. Thus, consider a Life-wave to be a light-ray from the spiritual Sun making its round. When this Life-wave or light-ray reaches our globe, at the beginning of human evolution on this globe, it does so as a whole. I do not mean it is *all* there, there in totality, but all its seven parts are represented; in other words all the subordinate classes have representatives in the first contact with the globe. Do you see what I mean? Each subordinate class has its forerunners, forming a scouting-party, as it were. These scouting-parties touch the globe, evolution begins, the sishtas begin to awaken and to work, and afterwards there come pouring in the bulk of the egos. Just so is it when a sun-ray-tip touches the Earth: that ray-tip, so to speak, is septenary, sevenfold, it has all the spectral colors; and once the contact is made, the ray thereafter pours down and through that channel all that is in it. Do you see what I am trying to say?

There are thus two definite points of teaching here: the seven Life-waves of "humanities" mentioned by me a moment ago as the Life-waves making their rounds through the globes, comprise our human Life-wave as *one* among them; but, referring to our human Life-wave

alone, it also is sevenfold, as was indicated by the forerunners of our human Life-wave which reached the Earth at the beginning of the Fourth Round on this Globe: our own human Life-wave reached this Globe with representatives of all its seven subordinate colors or minor classes of human monads, most of them as forerunners of the main body.

It is a very interesting thing that the seven classes of men, *of mankind*, i. e., the human Life-wave, began their evolution together. What else would we expect? Pause a moment in thought. Think analogically. When a human being is born into this world, the body is not born first, and then when it is grown up there occurs the birth of the astral; and then when that has grown up the prana comes in. Birth takes place — actually a very mysterious and wonderful process — on different planes at the same time. While the body is coming into birth, the other principles in a man's constitution are beginning to arrange themselves, and form themselves, each in its own sphere, each in its own way, making man's sevenfold constitution. Not only the birth of the human being, but the growth of a seed, a flower, what not, follows the same rule of more or less contemporaneous activity in all the principles of the entity. Thus the entire human Life-wave, and after the same manner as just stated, initiated human evolution on our Globe in this Round with seven different sub-classes, most of them, however, being forerunners or representatives each of its own part of the septenary Life-wave. (3)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Cf. *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 395: ". . . there are six other humanities or life-waves evolving similarly to our own course: intelligent, thinking beings on our planet — I do not necessarily say on our Globe D — evolving through these lokas and talas. How this stirs the imagination!" See also page 398. ([return to text](#))

2. *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 1. ([return to text](#))

3. The June issue of THE FORUM will contain further explanations of the

foregoing subject by the Leader, in answer to numerous questions which from time to time have been asked by students in the class in *The Secret Doctrine* conducted by Dr Henry T Edge at the General Offices at Point Loma — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION FROM AN ETHICAL VIEWPOINT — *Rose Winkler*

Those who believe in *Karma* have to believe in *destiny*, which, from birth to death, every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb, and this destiny is guided either by the heavenly voice of the invisible *prototype* outside of us, or by our more intimate *astral*, or inner man. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 639

Evolution is a most instructive, enlightening, and fascinating theme for contemplation, as it encompasses everything in the universe. Evolution means *growth*, the coming forth, unfolding, unrolling, unwrapping, of that which from a preceding past existed or inhered in the invisible atom or germ, seed or ovum, active or latent within. This unrolling adventure points to a fascinating journey spiritward, which marks a trail that leads to enlightenment, wisdom, and the sublime Ultimate which Theosophists call That.

Let us think first of the coming forth of man. The Monad or divine soul imbodyes itself in an atom which, expanding itself into a germ-cell or ovum comes forth as a newly born babe, and after a score or more years has unfolded into a finely endowed intelligent human being. Let us assume that through many future rebirths, having unrolled successively superb psycho-mental, intellectual, and spiritual faculties, he finally issues forth as a demigod. Already a relative state of perfection has been attained and through numerous future incarnations he blossoms forth as a rare specimen of the race — a god-man, a Buddha or Christ!

Just as the divine soul or Monad in man has unwrapped from itself its active or latent forces, energies, substances, and talents, so unfold all the inherent forces and energies from within the sidereal orbs which so brilliantly stud the vast celestial blue. The cosmic atom gradually unfolds itself into a cosmic seed, and ages later unrolls into a nebula (a

glittering wisp of milky-white substance) which may be seen as great star-containing cloudlike masses in our Home Universe or Milky Way. In future ages the nebula shall have blossomed forth as a wandering comet, thence into a planet, from a planet through distant future aeons into a sun, then into a solar system, and finally in far distant ages into a galaxy or Milky Way. This brief outline reveals the analogy between human and cosmic evolution through a harmonious process of *becoming* impelled from within.

. . . with inner growth comes expanding vision on the one hand and the expanding consciousness to interpret that vision on the other hand. — *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*

As Life is continuous and endless, so is evolution endless and continuous. Nothing stands still, either one goes forward and advances or goes downwards and retrogrades. Inherent and behind all evolution is present an irresistible, impelling self-urge (Swabhava), driving every ensouling entity without exception into fuller self-expression and expanding consciousness. In man, however, is manifest an ever-increasing self-consciousness accompanying his unfolding intellectual and spiritual faculties. Hence, under the inspiring stream of influences flowing from the Higher Self or Inner God, the human soul is activated to express more lofty soul-stirring attributes, which make for a fine and noble character, especially when the spiritual aspect of desire calls forth the buddhic qualities. This practice of quickening spiritual desires hastens one's spiritual evolution.

What retards one's higher evolution? It is the lower, personal nature when it manifests aspects of selfishness, of weakness, including careless and uncontrolled thoughts, acts, and speech, which from early youth until death weave themselves like a web around one and create an unhappy destiny. They fatten egotism and forge more closely the fetters of uncontrolled hatred, jealousy, envy, covetousness, and pride of intellectual and spiritual attainment, as well as pride of material and personal possessions. Thus they imprison the lower self.

What hastens spiritual evolution? The very reverse. Right thought,

right speech, right action, self-knowledge, and self-mastery. To hold fast to an ideal once conceived helps to energize spiritual desire and perseverance, which lead to self-identification with that ideal, consequently refining and elevating the personality. All this can be achieved by practising the sublime Virtues or Paramitas.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTING THROUGH THE PAGES OF "THE ESOTERIC TRADITION" — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The heart and mind of man are ever a-seeking: searching and seeking for constructive ideas to enable him to be something better, grander, and truer than he knows himself yet to be. This search it is which draws us to libraries; that claims our interest throughout what but too often proves wearisome and futile concentration; this it is which makes our regret on turning the last page of a fine book commensurate with the effectiveness towards good its ideas have had in our lives. Men instinctively yearn to grow; and value all constructive ideas towards betterment.

The cynic will declare: "What utter nonsense! Who wants or needs help? People are quite happy if only left to themselves!" This is a lie: a lie repudiated in every kingdom of Nature: a lie denied by the scent of rain-moistened earth, by the growing plant and bursting bud of the Springtime, by the jungle-beast's trust in man before it learns the cruelty of his gun, and the utter devotion of faithful dog and horse; by the zeal, alas! sometimes fanatical, with which man embraces a chosen cause. But whence the source and inspiration of this inherent yearning?

The urge behind evolution, and the objective which this urge is impelling us towards, is simply the divine hunger in the Universe to grow greater, to advance, to unfold: *Excelsior!* It is innate in the Universe. Why this is so, no one can say. Perhaps the gods do not know. All we men can aver is that it is so. Everything grows and yearns to grow greater, to become grander, to rise, to advance, to evolve, and the objective is to

become at-one self-consciously with the Boundless — something which never can be reached! Therein is infinite beauty, for there is no final ending for growth in beauty and splendor and wisdom and love and power. The Boundless Universe is our Home. . .

All possible things are latent in the core of the core of the being of each one of us; they are like sleeping powers of the Universe; and this core of the core of the being of each one of us is man's own inner god, the Cosmic Dhyani-Buddha within him, the Divine Christ immanent within him: the living Osiris of the Ways of Infinity. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 303.

Man Know Thyself! is the ancient injunction; and it is in a study of what Dr. de Purucker calls pneumatological psychology as outlined in *The Esoteric Tradition* — and distinguished from the more limited science of Psychology — that such knowledge may be gained.

Now the true psychology is not to be learned by a diagnosis of the conditions found in the hospital, the clinic, the seance-hall, or the consulting-room of the psychoanalyst, for here are to be met but the sub- or ab-normal products of evolution, while the solution of the problem of man's complex nature lies in an understanding of the normal, the ripe and healthy product of human evolution, and the standard by which such a product may be judged must be a universal one, such as is imbodyed in one or more of the tenets of Theosophy:

The Universe is a coherent and consistent Whole, one vast Organism, or more accurately still, one mighty Organic Entity, every part of it related to every other part, everything in it in relation to everything else in it, and any one part of it subordinate to the whole. — *Op. cit.*, I, 390.

Thus, analogically, since man is the lesser within the greater — the microcosm of the macrocosm — we may define the human entity as an organism composed of many compounded souls, unified, coordinated, and guided by one Spirit, the Spiritual Monad, which is the essential

Self. In other words, there are five souls in man: a divine, a spiritual, a human, an animal, and a vital-astral soul. Through every one of these points, the stream of consciousness which manifests as the man of today flows — notwithstanding the fact that the progressively deepening materiality of these vehicular points dims its pristine radiance as it descends from the realm of the divine to that of the physical. This is but one of the several possible divisions into which the constitution of man may fall, none of which should be considered as arbitrary, although custom may make the threefold the most acceptable.

We have thus before us the picture of the human constitution as a threefold entity: first, a highest principle or element of perpetual and unimaginable splendor, the product or rather the flowering of long past ages of aeonic evolution; second the intermediate part, likewise the product of past ages of evolution, but still imperfect, and therefore still more or less subject and servile to the interacting play of the various forces resident in ethereal substance surrounding it; thirdly, the vital-astral-physical element, a more or less fugitive compound. — *Op. cit.*, II, 967.

What do we really know about this intermediate nature of man? The Greeks called this part of the composite man *psyche*, a noun formed from the verb "to grow cold," "to be chilled," and we may imagine the human soul as a wanderer whose roaming has led it beyond the warmth of its spiritual home and in bewilderment it yearningly gropes towards the peace and the security which re-union with the Spiritual Soul means, the while it is dazzled, and strays in the realm of material illusion. Here, then, in the human soul, the product of heaven and earth, is the critical point in the human constitution, because it is the scene of the choice which decides the issue of all evolution. If the human soul responds to the impulse of the hour — our present cycle of growth — and spurning the call of matter and its illusory desires, gives its heart and mind resolutely to the behests of Spirit, regeneration is won for the entire man, for fundamental unity inheres and rules in the

universe of man just as it co-ordinates the Kosmic Universe! Therefore the growth and expansion of the part must benefit the whole organism. True Psychology, then, treats of the construction, the evolution, and the destiny of the human soul.

Therefore, it will be readily understood that a study of the past evolutionary progress towards manhood of the human entity is a vital factor in defining his future destiny, which, because it leads the expanding consciousness into the spiritual realms of man's constitution, may be called the sphere of Pneumatology.

. . . All have existed since the very beginnings of our planetary chain in time and space; nay, more, as already stated, we are coeval not only with our solar system, but likewise with the Galaxy; . . .

We were with the Sun, with the Earth, in the very morning of Time, though not then in bodies of flesh; and we helped to build this planetary chain as well as this Earth of ours, because, not only are we its children but we are collectively and individually integral parts thereof. — *Op cit.*, I, 278-9.

We humans are now where we are, and are what we are, having *become* such, in the beginning more or less unconsciously to ourselves, by exercising our inner faculties and powers of intelligence, of will, of judgment, of choice, of discrimination, and of such parts of wisdom as we have. — *Op cit.*, I, 2 54.

The various processes by which we exercise our inner faculties, and become what we are, may be classed, speaking generally, under the one descriptive term, "the Chain of Causation," which, lasting from eternity to eternity, is comprised of interlocked events, each linked to each and all by the habit of universal being — that habit recognised by Science today as the law of cause and effect — and each and all not only springing from the entity itself, but, in the last analysis, composing that entity. This "law" it is which manifests in Reincarnation — reimpodiment in flesh — when in the events of life on earth the human

being reaps the harvest of past sowing on the physical plane, and in reaping sows again for future harvesting on this and other and invisible planes. But more specifically it is through exercising the power of choice in daily life that we develop and expand the powers of will, judgment, and discrimination. The man of character makes a definite choice at every point, a choice which is his own, irrespective of public opinion or convention, and as long as he himself is satisfied with his choice, he sticks to it through thick and thin; but should experience prove to him that his choice is wrong, he should be ready to choose again. This is the fundamental principle of "self-directed evolution": never to shirk making a choice, your own choice. By so doing the will is strengthened, judgment and discrimination learned, and wisdom won. In yearning towards the desired, man enters into an understanding of it which is true knowledge, because he becomes the desired object.

'Man gets precisely and exactly what he himself desires'; for "Behind Will stands Desire." The divine consciousness which permeates the entire man and is the higher part of his constitution seeks to express itself in the less highly evolved intermediate nature of man, and with the attainment of self-consciousness at the midpoint of evolution man's future destiny calls for ever greater effort towards union with the divine source of its being on the part of the human soul.

Since cases of the influence of one mind over another are not only frequent but accepted as natural fact, why should it be either reprehensible or improbable that an influence or influences emanating from or through one of the higher centers of consciousness in the human constitution should find in the tranquil and voluntarily pellucid intermediate nature of its own composite organism, a perfect instrument for the fuller, and relatively speaking, fullest expression of the highest spiritual attributes and powers? That such a state of receptibility is possible to the intermediate nature, the seat of man's egoity, the evolution of which has been the goal of aeons-long effort, does present a mystery, but it is nevertheless a verifiable and withal explainable — in the terms of ancient languages certainly — fact in human history; nor is the inference that the intermediate nature of

such an enlightened man loses by so much as an iota in such a state of receptivity to the higher forces of its constitution. On the contrary such deliberate forgetfulness of self wins the protection and guidance of the Self, which as it permeates the fabric of the entire man strengthens and raises every evolving atom in its progress towards divinity. All the higher stages of "self directed evolution" depend on the power of the intermediate nature — the human soul — to make itself into a pure, willing vehicle for transmitting the transcendent forces flowing through the Divine Soul. This fact is exemplified in the lives and work of all the World-Teachers and it is to this sublime state or attitude which the mystical words of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane refer: ". . . O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou *wilt*. . . . O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." — *Gospel accord, to St. Matthew, ch. xxvi, 39, 42*

The Theosophical Forum

THE EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC H. P. B. — *G. de Purucker*

Companions and Friends: Instead of talking to you about what our beloved H. P. B.'s work was, and what she has done, it might be interesting to try to give you a few important thoughts regarding H. P. B. herself: who she was, what she was, and why she came; and I shall try briefly to do this.

First, then, I shall talk to you on the exoteric H. P. B. There were two in one in that great woman — an outside which met the world and had to face the conditions of the world into which she came to work; and an inside, a living flame of love and intelligence, a flame of inspiration and holy light, and this latter was the esoteric side of H. P. B.

As you look at her face and study it, and consider the Russian features — the lineaments which proclaim the steppes of Great Russia: if you pause on these alone you will see little but a face in which there is not much of merely human beauty. Yet those who have eyes to see and who look behind, as it were, the veil of the physical personality, indeed can see something else. They can see beauty; they can see an intense pathos and a great sadness — not the sadness, not the pathos, of one who had a great work to do and who could not or did not do it, but the yearning, the pathos, the sorrow, that have always been connected with the figure called in the Occident the "Christ." Just so! For behind these outer lineaments which some artists have actually called ugly, we see an ethereal beauty which no human words will easily describe, but which every human heart can sense, and which every human eye which is spiritually opened can also see. There is inspiration in that face which is beautiful to look upon; there is self-dedication; there are thoughts divine because there is truth, and truth is Nature's own divine heart; and it is these spiritual qualities which shine out of the face of our beloved H. P. B. when we look at her picture, and which proclaim to us that behind the outer person there was the inner living esoteric fire.

Does any Theosophist who has studied the wonderful Wisdom-Religion of Antiquity imagine for a moment that H. P. B. came to the Occidental world by chance, outside of Nature's laws and rigid concatenation of cause and effect which produce everything in due order? Does anyone imagine therefore that whatever is, has not its ordered and concerted place in the cosmic harmony? Of course not. This therefore means that H. P. B. came in obedience to a law, one of Nature's laws about which the ignorant West knows all too little, and therefore doubts, and because of doubting is blind — for doubt always veils the inner vision.

H. P. B. came because it was time for her to come. She was one of the series of Teachers which human history shows us to come at certain stated periods throughout the ages, one Teacher after the other, and always when the time is right and ripe, and never by chance. She was one of the links in what the ancient Greek Initiates called the Living Chain of Hermes, the Golden Chain, in connexion with the passing on of mystic and esoteric light and truth, and she came in regular serial succession to the Teachers who had preceded her, each one of them sent forth from the great association of Sages and Seers, variously called the Mahatmans, the Elder Brothers of mankind, and by other names. These Teachers, these Leaders and Guides of mankind come and teach according to law, esoteric and natural law, when the time calls for their coming; otherwise how logically explain their serial existence?

The ages pass, and each age has a new generation of men, and each generation of men receives light from the generations which preceded it, from its fathers. But generations rise and they fall, physically in civilization as well as spiritually in light, and in the intellectual, the ethical, and mental courses which men follow in producing the civilizing influences of human life. And in these generations which follow each other, there is always need for guiding minds, for a light given anew from age to age, for a new lighting, phoenix-like, of the old fires. It is these passers-on of the Light who compose the "Golden Chain of Hermes."

Now what do these Teachers bring to mankind? Doctrines contrary and antagonistic and opposite to the doctrines and teachings of those who had preceded them? Never, never, when their teachings are properly understood. Examine the teachings of all the Great Sages and Seers of the ages who have appeared among men. You will find them essentially one, fundamentally one, although expressed in different languages, expressed in different forms and formulations of thought appropriate to the ages, the respective ages, in which each of the Messengers appeared. Although clad in various garments, clothed in differing habiliments, the body of truth that they taught and teach is one.

Now what these Sages brought to men our H. P. B. also brought. Examine, test, this statement, prove it for yourselves — and the literatures of the world lie before you enabling you to do this. If she taught anything that the Great Seers who preceded her did not teach, it will be to me a wonder if you can find it, and I believe that you cannot. You remember what Confucius said: "I teach nothing new. I teach what my predecessors have taught. I love the ancients, therefore I teach what they taught." Details of the teaching differ, the clothing of the teaching varies of necessity, but the teaching itself is the truth of and about Nature, about Nature's own being, its structure, its operations, its carpentry, its characteristics, its laws. When the Theosophist says "Nature" as a word without further qualification, he never limits this word "Nature" to the physical world alone. He means universal Being, including divine Nature, spiritual Nature, intellectual Nature, physical Nature, astral Nature — all the spiritual and ethereal realms and spheres and worlds and planes which compose what the great thinkers of the Occident, as well as of the Orient, have called the spirit and soul and body of the Universe.

That is what she taught. That is what the Great Sages and Seers of the ages taught: an open or outer teaching and an inner or hid teaching: an exoteric doctrine for the public, and an esoteric doctrine for those who had proved themselves capable of understanding it and ready in their understanding to hold it secret and sacred. For if it were proper to give this esoteric teaching to the public, it would be so given. Remember

that the archaic Wisdom-Religion of the ages is man's natural heritage, and belongs to him by right; but you as individuals have no right to your heritage until you come of age, until you become major of mind and are no longer spiritual and intellectual infants, ready to abuse what is indeed yours by right, but which Nature and the gods and the Masters in compassion and love and wisdom withhold from erring men, until they shall have learned to control themselves. Then men will be able to control what belongs to them by natural right. There will then no longer be a danger of misapplication or of misuse.

Grand and sublime ethics were the basis of what this noble Messenger of the Masters, our H. P. B., taught. She showed us that ethics, that morals, are based on the very structure and laws of Nature herself, that ethics and morals are no mere human convention, that right is eternally right no matter how men may argue about the details, and that wrong is eternally wrong. Right is harmony, and wrong is disharmony. Harmony is Nature's heart of love and music and peace, for it is equilibrium; and disharmony is discord, lack of peace, unmusical discords in Nature and throughout human life; for all Nature is ensouled just as man is, and this doctrine of ethics is one of the noblest of the teachings which she brought. She taught us — and listen, my Brothers, to this — she taught us of our inseparable oneness, of our unity, with the heart of Being, so that death, that grizzly phantom of the Occident, no longer exists as a fearsome object for the Theosophist, because the genuine Theosophist who understands his philosophy looks upon death as the grandest Adventure that it is possible for a human being to undertake, a sublime and magnificent initiation into other worlds, into a nobler, a grander, and a greater life.

One of a serial succession of Teachers, she came in the rhythmical order of the laws which control our planet. She came indeed at the beginning of one Messianic Cycle of 2160 years and at the end of the preceding cycle of the same term. She was the Messenger for her age, that is, for the age to come — the one who was to sound a new keynote, which yet, mystically speaking, is as old as the ages; and in a certain very true but little known sense, she was an Avatara — an Avatara of a

certain type or kind, for there are different kinds of Avataras. This is one truth concerning H. P. B. that we must be careful and watchful as regards teaching it to the world, for the world has no conception of the many recondite meanings of the Avatara-doctrine. Every Teacher who comes to teach man comprises not only his or her body and an unusually received psychological apparatus, but is likewise at times infilled with the holy fire of a greater Soul, and therefore is *de facto* an Avatara of a kind. Just as Jesus called the Christ was an Avatara of one kind for his age, so was she, our beloved H. P. B., an Avatara of another kind for her age.

It is usual among modern Occidentals, especially artists, to portray Jesus called of Nazareth, as a man of wonderful physical beauty, of outstanding manliness, and of fascinating appearance; but was he really so? Is this Occidental picture true to fact? It is an Occidental idea or ideal of the Middle Ages and of our own times. Do you not know that the Christian Church Fathers often took pride in proclaiming the idea aloud to the world that Jesus called of Nazareth was a man of mean appearance? Do you indeed know this? They sometimes describe him as a man of mean person, insignificant in body and in physical form. Yet what has that, true or false, to do with the flame within, the flame of the spirit which shines through the mortal clay, so that the latter like a lamp becomes luminous and glows and gives light to those around? That is where the true spiritual entity is — within.

I will tell you the reason why H. P. B., this present Avatara — of the particular kind I speak of — had the form of one whose physical appearance is unhandsome. With her the causative reason has thus far succeeded wonderfully well. With Jesus, the Syrian Avatara, the same reason failed of effect in succeeding ages. What was and is this reason? This: An endeavor was made by the Teachers, is indeed made at each new appearance of a Messenger, to have that Messenger make his spiritual and intellectual mark on the world solely by the fire of the genius within, only by the fire of divinity within, and to prevent later generations from falling down and worshiping, through instinctive love of beauty, the physical body. It is against the instincts of the

human heart to adore ugliness, to pray to that which is unhandsome. In the case of Jesus, in later times blind faith and foolish adoration prevailed. In the case of our beloved H. P. B., the woman unhandsome has saved us and her thus far from that fate. No man or woman is drawn to worship ugliness, and this in itself is right, in a sense; it is not wrong, because it is an instinct of the human soul to know that inner beauty will produce outer beauty, perhaps not so much in form, but in appearance. There will be the beauty of manly or womanly dignity, the beauty of the inner light shining forth in love and wisdom, kindness and gentleness. I do hope that you understand what I mean in making these few short observations.

Two thousand one hundred and sixty years before H. P. B.'s birth the particular Messianic Cycle began which, as its centuries followed one the other, plunged European countries into the darkness of the Middle Ages. Today, more or less 2160 years afterwards, a new cycle opened when she was born, a rising cycle which should bring light, peace, knowledge, wisdom, to men; and it is the duty of us Theosophists, members of the Theosophical Movement — whether belonging to the Society of Point Loma, or to the Society of Adyar, or members of the U. L. T., or of any other of the so-called Independent Societies — it is our duty, as Brother-Theosophists, as common members of the Theosophical Movement, to see to it that the Message which she brought to us, and gave into our hands as a holy charge, shall be kept pure and unadulterated, and shall be passed on to our descendants of succeeding generations just as we have received it. "As I have received it, thus must I pass it on, not otherwise. *Iti maya srutam*: Thus have I heard."

I think that the greatest tribute that our hearts and minds can give to our beloved H. P. B., is to know her exactly as she was, exactly as she was in truth, not merely according to what anybody says about her. The best way to see her as she was is to study her, and her books which indeed are she. Then you will know the real H. P. B., for you will use the test of your intelligence and of your heart, to judge her by what she herself was and by what she produced, not by what someone else may

say about her. Let us carry on the torch of light that she gave into our hands.

H. P. B. came to a world which was in the throes of a veritable Dance of Death, a *Danse Macabre*, in which might be heard, according to this medieval idea, the clattering of the bones of the dead, the hooting of the owls of despair, and where one might sense dank, evil-smelling odors of the graveyard wherein men had buried their hopes. That was the world to which H. P. B. came and the time in which she spoke: a time when men had lost virtually all faith in recognising that there could be a knowledge of spiritual things, a time when even to speak of divinity, of a lasting hope, and of things spiritual, was considered to be a mark of intellectual imbecility. The very word "soul" was tabu.

Single-handed, that Mighty Woman wrought a change in human thinking by the power of her spiritual knowledge which enabled her to work on human spirits and human souls, and in so doing she cast seeds of thought into human minds, which seeds swept like sparks of flame through human understanding. By the tremendous energy of her intellect she taught men to think of life and Nature in a new way, for she showed to them that the doctrines of the dying materialism, which were then so fashionable and to which men had given the confidence of their hearts, were hollow-sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, and that men were not only foolishly burying their noblest hopes in the graveyard of material existence, but likewise were fashioning themselves inwardly to become like unto the graveyard, towards which their feet were carrying them.

A mighty power came into the world and worked and wrought, and the weaving of the web which she wrought has played a great part in producing the better conditions we find among us today. The world today is beginning to think Theosophy, and to think in a Theosophical way, and hence the Macabrian Dance of H. P. B.'s times has been stopped — that dance of death, that giddy, soulless, thoughtless, dance of death in the graveyard of human hopes; that today has ceased!

There is a psychological wonder, a mystery, in H. P. B., for H. P. B. was a

mystery. Since she came and taught, what do we find our greatest modern scientific researchers and thinkers telling us today?

Adumbrations of many of the doctrines that she taught: doctrines, so far as these scientific researchers are concerned, which are based upon deductions made from the researches into physical nature that those scientists are following. Before the scientists found the facts, she taught these facts, and she taught them in the face of ridicule and scorn and opposition from the Church on the one hand and from Science on the other hand, and from the established privileges and prerogatives of all kinds — social, religious, philosophical, scientific, what not — which surrounded her.

In her there was strength, spiritual strength, for she set men's souls aflame; in her there was intellectual power, for she taught men to think and to have a new vision; and in her also there was psychological power, for she smashed the mayavi psychological wall which man in his folly had builded around his consciousness.

Now reflect upon what all this means. Could you have done it? Would you have had the courage to dare it? Could you, single-handed, face the world in a similar manner today? There is a cause and a reason for the work that she wrought. We today see the effects, we know the historical phenomenon of her life and work; but what was the noumenal cause? It was the living spiritual and intellectual fires within her. It was the esoteric side of H. P. Blavatsky which enabled her to do what she did.

Do you think for a moment that H. P. B. was only an ordinary woman? Do you think that the stories that have been told about her, such as Mr. Sinnett's *Incidents in the Life of H. P. Blavatsky*, contain all the real facts about her life, and do you suppose that even the statements that are therein narrated contain in themselves a full explanation of her? Don't believe it! The facts in themselves are against such a belief. Such a woman as Sinnett describes in his *Incidents* could never have moved the world as H. P. B. did. Do you think that the Russian girl that he describes, and that the Russian "priestess" so-called that Solovyoff, her

quondam friend and later her bitter foe, tried to portray, could have done it? Do you think that a hypocrite, that a false heart joined with an ordinary mind, could have gathered about herself the intellectual and often highly ethical people whom she gathered around her? Of course not!

Take into consideration the facts in H. P. B.'s life. Don't let your minds be swayed by the tales that have been told about her. Think them over for yourself, because thoughtful reflexion is one of the first duties of a Theosophist, and then draw your own conclusions. Indeed, the stories that have been told about H. P. B. interest us simply as a psychological phenomenon of the weakness of human thinking. They also interest us, not because they accurately describe H. P. B., for they don't, but simply because they describe the incapacities of the men and women who try to explain her. You might as well try to put the ocean into a teacup as to encompass the character, the constitution, of H. P. B. in the yarns professing to be biographical that have been written about her. At the best they contain certain facts gathered in random fashion from her own family — who understood her perhaps less than her Theosophical friends did, and who said so — gathered together and strung along a certain thread of narrative. Is the reading of such tales the pathway to understanding one who did what she did?

H. P. B. was of course a woman in body, remember that; and invigorating and inflaming this body with its brain-mind was the inner divine Sun, the "inner Buddha," the living "Christ within" as the mystical Christians of today say. But between this divine fire and the receptive and mystically-trained and educated brain of the woman, there was a psychological apparatus, commonly spoken of in western parlance as the "human soul," which in the case of her — for she was an Initiate of the Order of the Buddhas of Compassion and Peace — could at times step aside and allow the entrance into the vacancy thus left of a "human soul" loftier by far than even hers.

Thus was she an Avatara of her kind. It was this Buddhic Splendor which thus infilled the vacancy that she so gladly left for use, which in

large part wrought the works of wonder that H. P. B. wrought. You may remember that in her writings she often makes a distinction between what she calls "H. P. B." and "H. P. Blavatsky." "H. P. Blavatsky" was the woman, the chela, the woman-chela, the aspiring, learning, splendid, noble, courageous chela. But "H. P. B." was the Master's mind speaking through her. Body and spirit, one entity; then the intermediate psychological apparatus, commonly called the "soul," temporarily removable at will. In fact — — and let me tell you the truth — when our H. P. B. was sent as the Messenger, that psychological apparatus in large part remained behind. Think! This fact accounts for the so-called contrarities and contradictions of her character that the people who attempted to write about her saw — and saw very plainly, because they could not help seeing — but which they did not understand, and by which they often mis-judged her and misunderstood her. But when the holy flame had infilled this vacancy, then there was *H. P. B. the Teacher*, the Sage, the Seer, the Teacher of great natural scientific truths which modern science today is but beginning to show to be true, the Teacher of a great hope to mankind, the giver of a Vision to *men*, the framer and former of a new Philosophy-Religion-Science for men.

Shall we look upon H. P. B. merely as a Russian gentlewoman? If so, a most marvelous gentlewoman was she! The simple theory will not fit the facts — a Russian woman who had no education, technically speaking: no education in science, no education in religion, no education to speak of in philosophy, but who was educated in mystical lines; and yet the H. P. B. who lived and taught was an Adept, and in her teachings was a Master in all these lines of human knowledge!

Shall we look upon her as an incarnate Mahatman? The facts are against that, all against it, just as they are all against the former theory. Let us take our beloved H. P. B. exactly as she was, not as she is misrepresented to be. Let us take her as we know her to be. Let us take her as we find her in her books. Let us take the facts, and no man's theories about her; and if you are wise enough you will see, you will understand, who and what she was.

There were times in her social life when she was the charming hostess, a *grande dame*. There were other times when she was a pianist of admirable and most exceptional ability. Again at other times she charmed people with her brilliant conversational powers, and she would fascinate a whole room, hold her audience spellbound. Men of learning, the laborer, the noble, prince and peasant, gathered to hear her. There were still other times, in her home, when things were quiet and her disciples gathered around her, when she taught some truths drawn from the Great Mysteries of the Wisdom-Religion of the past. There were other times when she sat at her desk, and wrote and wrote and wrote from morning until night, and then would lie down, and, as she herself said, for a little while went "Home." She then had rest!

There were other times when she would hold her "at homes," her receptions, during which she would receive scientists, philosophers, thinkers, controversialists of various kinds, philosophical, scientific, religious; chat with them; and they would leave her in amazement. "Whence comes to this woman," they said, "her marvelous understanding? How is it that she can tell me secrets of my own profession which I knew not before? Whence comes to her the ability to show me that this is so?" All these moods, these sides of her character, were indeed there, and every one must be taken into account. Only the explanation of the facts themselves will enable you to understand her. At times she was the woman, and was tender and compassionate, with a woman's love of rings, of sweet perfumes, and of kindly friends. At another time she was the Teacher and Sage. At another time she was strong and virile, so that, as her friends said, it seemed verily as if man incarnate were manifesting through her — not any one man, but Man.

Now you have it: the body, the woman, the gentlewoman, well-trained, well-bred, ill-educated; the divine flame within her that occasionally seized her brain as it were — and then she spoke like a pythoness, like a prophetess, like an oracle at Delphi; and similarly so at other times, when she was infilled, as the Avatara, with the holy flame of one of the Great Ones. Then she was the Sage and Seer, and wrote her books,

foreshadowing in these books what later has come to pass, and pointing out to men the dangers of a belief divorced from ethical rules.

Let us recognise H. P. B. for what she was; and mind you, my friends, mind you this thought: We who have studied H. P. B. love her, are faithful to her in heart and mind, yet we shall set our faces like flint, like stone, against any attempt to worship her, to make a new Jesus out of her. You know what the Great Ones have told us: More than anything else do we desire a Brotherhood among men, a Brotherhood which will save mankind from the catastrophes which are facing it, brought about by mankind's own folly. The catastrophes, the cataclysms, moral and even physical, which are even now facing us, will surely come upon us unless men change their habits of thought and, in consequence, their acts, their conduct. We shall set our faces like stone against any attempt to introduce a new religion among men, which our Great Teachers have already pointed out to be, and which is, one of the greatest curses and banes afflicting mankind at the present time: belief in an outside Savior instead of fidelity to the divine spirit within. For there within indeed lie all truth, all harmony, all wisdom, all love, all peace. The inner god within each one of you as an individual is of the very heart of the heart of the Universe, and concerning that heart of the Universe, each one of you is It.

H. P. B. was indeed a mystery, but while she was a mystery, this does not mean a "mystery" in the sense in which this word is commonly used in the Occident. I mean a mystery in the sense of the ancient Greeks, when they spoke of the ancient Mysteries and the ancient Mystery-Schools — something which is hid, but can be known, something that is occult and holy, but which can be communicated.

H. P. B. can be understood; and when we understand her, we love her the more; the more we understand her, the greater grows our love, our veneration, for her. Let it never happen, therefore, that we Theosophists become so false to the trust which she gave to us that we shall turn our backs to the Mystic East, towards which she always pointed, and worship the Avatara. Let us be faithful to our trust. We

can love, we can venerate, we can copy the example of magnificent courage and sublime hope that she gave to us. We can try to become like unto this great Woman, and unto many others like her who have appeared in the past, who will appear in the future, others far greater than she, but let us never set her on a pinnacle as was done, alas! alas! in the case of one of the Teachers in the early years of Christianity.

No greater tribute could we render to our beloved H. P. B. than by continuing faithfully, and in our love of her, the work which she so grandly began.

The Theosophical Forum

BREVITIES

A WISER VIEW OF EVOLUTION

There is need for a wiser view of evolution. In evolution we see the Divine everywhere expressing itself in multitudinous and ever sublimer forms. No dull mechanism, ruled by ruthless laws of strife and destruction; it is a creative intelligent process, and Love is its basic law. The minds of the animals, of the plants, may be inferior to ours; but at the center of every being is the same Divinity. These creatures — are they not our younger brothers, our children?

The philosophy of topsyturvydom! Look at it! The animals have blind instinct; they show mother-love; therefore mother-love is blind instinct; but man comes from the animals; therefore compassion in man is only a blind instinct! Contrast this fantastic nightmare with the plain wholesome truth — that Divine Love is the universal pattern which all creatures follow in thankful obedience. 'Tis only the man who has not harmony within himself that fails to see it all around him. Let us create harmony within ourselves, so that Nature may reveal to us her grandest mysteries. — H. T. Edge

THE ENIGMATIC LONGING

What is it that urges the naturalist, the explorer, the inventor on their restless activity, the philosopher on his unceasing searching? What is it that induces the scientist in his laboratory, the astronomer in his patient and conscientious work? It is the longing for knowledge. It lives in every man, stronger in the one than in the other, but in every heart lives the same hunger for light. From where comes this longing for knowledge? A knowledge of what? Does not this enigmatic longing for light in its vagueness remind us of the seeking for the purport of a dream we cannot call back? Plato said: "All learning is remembrance," and is not all knowledge obtained a re-knowing? Is not the understanding of a thought the testing of its value to an inner

standard? And don't we reject it if we cannot affirm it in our inmost? Wisdom which we understand is not heard outside but inside ourselves.

This enigmatic longing for knowledge brings to us an intuitive realization of a deeper, greater personality in us which we can regard as enlightened as compared with our ordinary 'self.' And every step in this direction is a further unwrapping out of the dream which can last for incarnations, but which will be shorter the less we give attention to the longings and desires supplying the material for that dream. What then is this longing for light? It is the longing to know oneself, the homesickness for one's own fatherland — the Heart of the Universe. —
H. G. Lindemans

NATURE AND OURSELVES

If we could stop eternally rushing to keep up with time; if we could pause long enough to "share in the flowing of the inexhaustible years"; we might perhaps know something of the cosmic significance of the seasons as they pass in unhurried and harmonious sequence. Our pulses would beat with the pulse of Nature, and her slightest gesture would be a sign to us of her silent heart-stirrings.

There was a time when we recognised ourselves as Nature's children, and knew of her, and therefore our own, spiritual origins; and all the long centuries of 'civilization' have not been able wholly to eradicate the memory of the obeisance we anciently paid to her. We are reminded of these things from time to time by occasional books published which tell of the folk-lore of this or that people. One such book that has come to our attention recently is entitled *Portugal: A Book of Folk-Ways*. Christian tradition has overlaid but has not destroyed the ancient seasonal festivals of this people: the celebration of the birth of the year and the burgeoning of the springtime, the mid-summer bonfires, the harvesting. Of course the writer explains the many and unspoiled rituals to be found in Portugal as merely a "fertility-cult expressing itself in the form of sympathetic magic"; but can we not go one step farther in explanation and say that it is but

another echo of the time when, as expressed in *The Esoteric Tradition* "It was the attempt in all the Mystery-Schools of all the ancient nations to bring the seasons on earth into harmony with man's spiritual-intellectual career . . . to establish in the disciple's initiation as a living reality the already existing concordance between the Nature in which we live and move and have our being and the more intimate Nature within us."

To make this concordance with Nature a "living reality" does not belong only to the records of days of ancient splendor. Opportunity has never yet been denied to him who gives the right knock. — S. H. W.

HORRORS IN THE NAME OF ART

A group of reproductions of examples of 'Surrealist' art appeared in the Boston *Herald* recently. One of these portrays an emaciated human figure with a cow's head, but with eyes of such evil as would never be seen in a poor beast. From the abdomen of this monstrosity crawls a huge scorpion. We can understand how it is that such horrors come to be perpetrated when we read that: "the surrealist re-creates the world in terms of his own imagination. He prefers chaos to order, irrationality to reason . . . many of these artists go to spiritualistic seances in order to allow the mind to be dictated to by the 'unconscious' . . ."

It is quite evident that these artists(?) are laying themselves open to impressions from foolish and evil spooks of the lower astral worlds, and are materializing these impressions on canvas, producing effects that would be repellent to any normal mind.

Part of our duty as Theosophists is to make known the teachings we have been given in regard to the dangers of the lower astral realms, the relative values of man's many selves, and the part that spiritual will and impersonal love have to play in guiding us along those brighter paths where our creative endeavor, whether it be along the lines of art, music, poetry, the drama, the dance, or what not, will call to the spiritual deeps in our fellow-men. Then we shall be proud of our art-

galleries, our museums, our theaters, for they will be places where the very gods might meet with us for refreshment, inspiration, and the true laughter of the spirit. — E. B. F.

The Theosophical Forum

HUMANITY AT THE HALFWAY HOUSE — M. M. T.

About 18,000,000 years ago an event of supreme importance occurred on this planet. The Hierarchy of Builders concerned with the preparation of a physical body for the use of Humanity having produced a vehicle through which Mind could work, the Solar Hierarchy, Lords of Mind, who had developed in past periods, now did their part by quickening the fires of Mind latent in their younger brothers of this present planetary cycle. Thus opened the human drama. For the kindling of the fires of Mind made of man a self-conscious being, equipped for a self-directed rise toward self-conscious godhood. Mind not only enables man to master the body, but it can be used to mirror forth the Divinity latent in human nature, which man must learn *to* manifest in Earth-life.

Age after age, in life after life, race after race, civilization after civilization, these Egos, charged with human responsibility and power, have been sowing and reaping experience on Earth, working at the human job. They have risen and fallen and risen again in their cyclic upward climb, and now they have reached the halfway house on their long journey.

We are those Egos. What have we accomplished? Today, when thinkers agree that Humanity faces a severe crisis, it is time to take stock, to give an account of ourselves. Few believe that a "last day" of reckoning is at hand. What is there for us still to do?

No doubt man has established control of physical forces. His inventions have eliminated distance, have brought people of every part of the world into closer relations than ever before and brought about a state of recognised economic interdependence. There is actually a physical basis for a united life of Humanity. But, and it is a large "but," man has also developed scientific violence to such a point that he has the power to put the present civilization out of commission almost at one blow;

and the nations live in fear, not knowing which of their rivals may use some terrific means of partially accomplishing wholesale destruction. The urgent problem is to awaken an inner directing Self that realizes the unity of all beings and a great common purpose, so that life may be safe for man to continue his progress.

Aside from Theosophy, however, there is available no plan of human life that shows its relation to the universal scheme, no hint of what future cycles hold for man, no knowledge of the latent powers which, brought into conscious function, are adequate for the mastery of present and future situations in Earth-life.

The half of the human task that remains to be done is the rendering of the intermediate, psychomental part of human nature pellucid so that the impulse, the wisdom, of the inmost Divine Self can be clearly mirrored to the waking consciousness. Men are today more self-conscious; but the personality unilluminated by the Self deeper than mind is not the enduring Ego, the creative Individuality to be fully brought into function in the coming cycles. A united life for Humanity can be achieved only by those who are aware of the deeper Divine Self in which all have their root. It is only "individuals," awakened to this inner, underlying unity that *can* unite; can be themselves and permit others to be themselves; can differ without dividing; can draw upon inner resources spiritually alight with power that can kindle in other men the trust in themselves and their fellows that will send fear slinking away from human life.

The dynamic powers of the spiritual and divine nature of man are still to be brought fully into function in human life. They are not at the command of those who do not believe in the existence of this inner nature. Their sphere of influence is unattainable by those who do not believe in the essential unity of all beings. They can be exercised collectively only by individuals whose consciousness is illumined by light from that inner Self, whose every act and thought in relation to their fellows takes into consideration those most often unrealized facts which, when ignored, make united effort seem impossible. They have

never been used collectively, as it is our destiny to use them in the cycles now before us. So tremendous, so subtly undermining to all selfish, greedy passion and violence are these un-aggressive, non-violent, inner powers that the evil forces which now menace human welfare may be dissolved, transformed, redirected into channels bearing benefits to all.

Is it beyond belief that higher, freer, nobler human associations than have yet been known on Earth are possible of realization? Not for those whose hearts have been responsive to the promptings of that inner Self in which all are rooted. Not for those to whom Theosophy has given a new framework of thought about the future of Humanity on Earth. Not for those who accept the discipline that makes man master of the inner world, and brings into play the spiritual dynamics that can melt stony hearts, and the wisdom that can clear confused minds. Creative, compassionate individuals can unite in directing human activities in harmony with divine, universal laws of life. As human beings we have this to do.

The Theosophical Forum

ULTRA-MODERN SCIENCE SIXTY YEARS AGO — *Edwin D. Babbitt*

"Comparing the infinitely small with the infinitely great, it is held that a body, of what kind soever, represents in miniature and very exactly, an astronomical system like those which we behold every night in the firmament. If we could construct a microscope of sufficient power, we should be able, by the help of such an instrument, to resolve the molecular constellations of every little terrestrial milky way, exactly as our first rate telescopes resolve the celestial nebulae and separate double and triple stars. Were our sight sufficiently penetrating we should behold what now appear mere confused heaps of matter, arranged in groups of admirable symmetry. Bodies would appear honeycombed in all directions, daylight would stream through vast interstices as it does through the columns of a temple or the tree trunks of a forest. Nay we should see immense empty spaces, like those which intervene between the planets. From distance to distance too, we should perceive clusters of stars, in harmonious order each surrounded by its own proper atmosphere, and still more astounding spectacle! — every one of those little molecular stars would be found revolving with giddy rapidity, in more or less elongated ovals exactly like the great stars of heaven, while by increasing the power of our instrument, we should discover around each principal star minor stars — satellites resembling our moon — accomplishing their revolutions swiftly and regularly. This view of the constitution of matter is aptly described by M de Parville as *molecular astronomy*, maintaining that even astronomy without our suspecting it, is dependent on mineralogy, and that whenever we shall have discovered the laws which govern the grouping and the movements of the infinitely small, astronomers will have only to follow in our track. But who a hundred years ago could dare to imagine that the infinitely small was so infinitely great? What is now believed to be the nearest guess at the truth appears, at first sight to be the dream of a madman." — Quoted from *All the Year Round* by Edwin D Babbitt in his book, *The Principles of Light and Color*, pp 159-

60 published in 1878.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BASIS OF UNIVERSALITY AND BROTHERHOOD — *B. Finkernagel*

When any individual has arrived at the definite realization that at every conceivable point the Universe is pulsating with life and consciousness, all of which has one common source, and that every center in it, high or low, faithfully mirrors the constitution and the nature of the Great Whole, the entire aggregate forming one vast and organized Unit of Life, from the Central Source of which all the countless Rays of Life and Consciousness hang like "pearls upon a string": when one realizes all this, then the Theosophical teaching of Universality and Brotherhood, passes from a merely quiet acceptance or belief, into a profound and all-compelling conviction, and into an ever-present reality in life, which from henceforth will dominate the person's activity.

It is the lack of this deeper realization of non-separateness and unity, which usually accounts for the half-hearted efforts that are made by individuals towards such attainment. But to acquire this universality in all its fulness and in all of its implications, is of course a process which needs many lives of arduous attention and devotion, and in every case, the initial steps towards such becoming consist in transcending the deep-rooted selfishness in human thought, feeling, desire and action, all of which is due to man's ignorant self-identification with his lower personal nature. To become fully successful in such endeavor, demands a never-failing persistence, and utter devotion to our highest ideals. The individual will find it very difficult to bring his whole spiritual, moral, and intellectual forces to bear upon this objective, unless he has first by impartial and a deep-searching self-analysis discovered — perhaps to his great wonderment and disgust — the enormous domination which his personal likes and dislikes exercise over all his activities. But when the individual becomes conscious of, and clearly perceives the flaws and the frailties of, his personal nature, he will usually try desperately to transcend his weakness. It is then that

it is important for him to remember that the personal nature must not be killed out and destroyed, but that it must be trained, purified, and molded along lines that are in harmony and concord with Universality and Brotherhood. The personal man must be made the willing and instantly responsive servant and impassive tool of the spiritual man. This is invariably the first step and objective to which every earnest aspirant for the Higher Life must devote himself with unflinching determination, from morning to night, and all the days of his life, and all the lives to come, until he has fully learned to master and to control every impulse arising in his personal nature.

One of the basic laws of being, operating on all the planes alike, is that the higher life must always devote itself to the raising of the lower life. That this principle actually stands as the very basis of all spiritual progress and usefulness, will become convincingly clear to us when we have acquired a proper understanding of the fundamentals of technical Theosophy. With this end in view, we shall engage in a very brief review of some of those fundamentals which have a distinct bearing upon the subject under consideration.

At the first Dawning of the Manvantara, manifestation begins from a Center of Consciousness, within which are contained the combined evolutionary achievements and evolutionary results of the previous globe, chain, or solar system, or whatever may be in our minds. It is from such a primordial and supreme center that everything which exists on our globe has originally emanated.

The life of a chain of globes passes through seven great periods, which in Theosophy are called Rounds; each Round requiring many hundreds of millions of our mortal years to run its course. During the first half of each Round, Spirit is working downwards into the Matter-pole of Life, endeavoring to clothe itself with the matter of each plane in its descent. This period of descent of Spirit into Matter, is called the "shadowy arc" of evolution, which continues, until the densest aspect of matter in this Round is reached, when the life-impulse turns, beginning to re-ascend to its original source. During this re-ascent, the countless centers of life

are endeavoring to disentangle themselves from Matter; in other words, to throw off their coating of matter, which they had collected around themselves during the descent in the first half of the Round.

Before manifestation begins on the objective planes, or the four material planes of our globe, the Life-impulse or Life-wave is engaged on the plane of pure Spirit and the Buddhic plane, which are called the formless or the spiritual world. The four planes below the Manasic plane are called the material world or the world of "form." In the beginning the Primordial Center of Consciousness, already referred to, emanates from within Itself Rays, which are projected into the cosmic Buddhic Plane. These Rays in turn emanate from within themselves other Rays, which they project onto the Manasic plane and this process is continued until the densest material plane in the world of form is reached. All the Rays as they are emanated faithfully mirror or reflect within themselves the characteristics and the constitution of their parents, and it is thus that every center of life carries within itself in miniature the nature and the constitution of the Universe, of which it is an inseparable part, as well as the potencies and the characteristics of their spiritual progenitors in latency, all of which are powers which in the course of evolution they are able to unfold and to bring into expression from within themselves. As the Rays pass from plane to plane during the shadowy arc of the Round, they are forming on the various planes knots or centers which, during the luminous arc when the life impulse is working back to its source, unfold into what we call the seven principles in man.

The physical globe upon which we now reside is one of a group with six other globes together forming what is called a Chain of Globes. This applies equally to all the physical globes of our solar system. The seven globes of any chain are each and all septenary in their constitution, but the individual globes vary in density from one another. It is on that account that our physical organ of vision, being so constructed that it can only respond to physical vibrations, fails to perceive the other six globes of our earth-chain.

Every planetary chain is a Cosmic Unit, whose life-term is made up of seven great world-periods called Rounds. They are called Rounds because the life-impulse of a Chain passes through all the seven globes in a Round period, commencing with the first globe of the series; and after a long evolutionary activity on this globe it passes on to globe two of the series. This is made up of denser substance than globe one. After a similar period on this globe, the life-impulse passes to globe three of the Chain, which is of still denser substance; and after its work is completed there, it passes on to globe four, which is the densest of the entire chain. When the life-impulse has evolved the densest substance on this globe, half of the time period of the entire Round has elapsed; then the life-impulse turns, and begins to reascend to the source from whence it came. The remaining three globes upon which it functions in turn are each subtler in texture than the previous one, and when the seventh globe is reached by the life-impulse it is functioning on a globe which in density and texture corresponds to globe one of the Chain, but the life-impulse is enriched with the results of the countless experiences it has gained during its peregrinations through the seven globes. It is this which is called a "Round."

In each Round one of the seven principles is fully evolved, as far as is possible and the general characteristics of the matter-aspect of the Chain will permit. The lowest principle is first fully evolved in the first Round; the second principle is fully evolved in the second Round, and so on. As our Chain has passed the midmost point of its life, it follows that we are now at the fourth Round of the Chain period, the midmost point of which was passed about eight or nine million years ago. It also follows that it is the fourth principle or Kama, the Desire nature in man, which is being fully evolved in this Round. As Manas or Mind is the fifth principle, it also follows that Mind in this Round is only partially unfolded, for it will not be fully evolved prior to the end of the fifth Round. This explains why Theosophy teaches that the Mind is dual, and we speak of this duality as the Higher and the Lower Mind. The Higher Mind in man is that aspect of our thinking principle which during our many incarnations in physical bodies on Earth has become

purified, molded, and trained in such a way that it has acquired the characteristics of the spiritual aspects of life, and its natural tendency therefore is to lean towards the Buddhic principle and the Pole of Spirit. Whereas the lower aspect of the Mind is that aspect which the waking consciousness has not yet succeeded in bringing under the domination of its spiritual will, and therefore its natural tendency is towards the Matter side of life. That which we speak of as the "personality" in man, is this lower aspect of the Mind, which in the great majority of men is so largely dominated by the desire-principle in waking life. This is the reason why our humanity in the mass exhibits such selfish, grasping, and low characteristics — the prolific source of all our human misery, wretchedness, and pain, which pursue mankind from the cradle to the grave.

It is well for us to realize that our human personality is not a permanent entity, and that its term of life as an entity ceases with the death of the physical man, only such fragments of the Kamic principle of the personality remaining as during physical life become so closely interlinked with the lower Mind that they cannot at that point be disentangled from Manas; and therefore the individual's Devachanic state of consciousness has to begin in the lowest strata of Devachan, as it is only thus that the mental principle can be gradually and effectually cleansed from Kama and of all its remaining earthly taints as the Consciousness slowly rises to higher Devachanic planes. As these taints of Earth are steadily eliminated in Devachan, the consciousness correspondingly and steadily rises to the higher realms of Devachan, and when finally the Mind has become purified from all earthly influences, then that which remains represents the harvest, the cream of the life last lived on earth; and it is this purified portion of Manas which will then fuse with the higher mind — the Reincarnating Ego — which at the point of physical death was instantly withdrawn into the Monad, to which this purified part of Manas is now attracted, and with which it will fuse, thus becoming immortal. It is thus that more and more of the lower Mind — provided we make strenuous efforts to live the spiritual life on earth — is raised to the plane of the Higher Mind,

as a result of which each succeeding life will be a marked improvement on the previous one, from a spiritual point of view.

During any life on earth when the lower Mind begins to awaken from its deathlike stupor in the ordinary human being and begins to realize its spiritual nature and then begins to curb the influence which the Desire nature has over the lower Mind, the spiritual nature is enabled to manifest itself more and more, life after life. But before this can come about the waking consciousness must deliberately, and by its own volition, set its face towards its spiritual sun — the Spiritual Monad — and whenever this takes place, then we might truly say that the hour of liberation for the human soul from the thralldom of the life of sense and its domination over the consciousness has struck. For from thence onward every life on Earth — if due effort along spiritual lines is continued — will yield at the close of each Devachanic period an ever increasing harvest, to the spiritual nature of the man, which will in the course of a few lives bring the man to the Feet of the Master and to the entrance of the Ancient Path, which, when its goal is reached, leads to the merging of the Individuality, or the Reincarnating Ego in Man, into the Spiritual Monad.

It is desirable that we should have a correct understanding of the enormous increase in consciousness and in power which this merging of the Individuality in the Spiritual Monad implies.

From the point where the waking lower Mind realizes its identity with the spiritual essence of its being, which is the Ray, called the Spiritual Monad, and as from henceforth the underlying current of the life on earth will be directed towards spiritual objectives, the "Christ-spirit" in man is born, and it is this which will grow and increase from life to life, causing more and more of the inherent potentialities and latent powers of the soul in man to unfold and to manifest in ever increasing spirituality, power, and usefulness. The consciousness which was hitherto mainly concerned with petty personal objectives, personal advantages, and selfish possessions and enjoyments, will become more unselfish, ever widening out its circumference, embracing in its

objectives and its beneficence an ever increasing radius of beings and interests, all such activities being unselfish and expressions of Universality. It is thus that in the course of comparatively few incarnations — their number depending on the intensity of the efforts engaged in — the soul of the man will reach the point where it is able to merge its consciousness with its Spiritual Prototype above. It is this which makes the man a Cosmic entity, whose functional activity embraces a correspondingly enormous and wider limit. It is at this point that we might use the phrase of Sir Edwin Arnold, when he says that "the drop has swallowed the ocean."

Now when we consider these vast cosmic processes, briefly reviewed, the fact stands out in bold relief that the entire activity of Nature appears to be designed, and to have for its objective, the unfolding of Consciousness into an ever increasing radius of functional activities; and second, that the unfolding of the Consciousness depends, throughout the Cosmos, upon the principle that every consciousness-center, from the Highest Summit of our Galactic Universe, the Milky Way, down to the embryonic Intelligence of the lower Mind in Man, can progress only if they are raising, with every step of their advance, all the countless hierarchies of beings below them, correspondingly. We see this fact clearly exemplified in our human hierarchy, in which the summit is our Lower Mind. This article should make it clear as well as emphasize the fact, that the first step towards a higher stage of being, consists in gaining control over our lower nature.

Now what does this imply? Nothing less than that we must first succeed in raising the countless lives which compose all the principles of our lower nature onto a higher plane of activity, which can only be achieved by our thinking, desiring, feeling, and acting along unselfish and universal lines, whereby we do not only become universal in thought ourselves, but we raise by the quality of our thoughts all those lower hierarchies also; because it is this activity in Man which generates a subtle force which impresses itself upon these countless beings by influencing their vibrational activity, which when continued will raise or lower their activities, or vibrations, according to the

nature of the thoughts and feelings we engage in. Hence if we think unselfish thoughts, we raise their conscious activity onto a higher plane than their present mode of vibrations occupy; the same of course applies if we think low and selfish thoughts, in which case we are not only lowering ourselves, but we also degrade the lives of our vehicles, whose field of evolution comprises the principles which make up our human constitution. Hence it should be clear that we can only raise ourselves by first raising the entire hierarchy of lives of which we are the Summit or Hierarchy; and let it be understood that those lives are constantly reacting upon our consciousness, which we feel as impulse. This principle obtains throughout the entire Kosmos, or Kosmic Hierarchy, which includes all that is contained in our Home Galaxy — the Milky Way. This same rule obtains everywhere, because all is one great Whole — "as above, so below."

In the light of the sublime teachings which Theosophy gives to us, it seems almost unbelievable that any person who has arrived at an intelligent understanding of these great facts could be so foolish as to persist in his former selfish ways of thinking and acting, without making sincere and persistent efforts to rise to a higher plane of thought and being in the manner stated before. It seems unthinkable that such a person could persist in living heedlessly, and live and scheme for his puny, petty, and stupidly perverse personal self, setting up his puny personal will against the combined will, objective, and universal design of those countless Divine Beings, who in their aggregate, are the Divine Rulers of our Universe. All of these Great Beings who are to us now as gods in wisdom, power, and compassion, were once, in the long forgotten past, struggling human beings like ourselves, who in other worlds than ours, woke up, and realized, that they were divine in their essence, and that true harmony and peace can only be found by any being, in the measure as the soul of man will fall into line with the Laws of Being, which demand that we shall think, live, and act universally, and not separatively. They followed the light which they perceived, and they now stand as far above us in evolution as you and I now stand above the simplest organisms which constitute

the viscid slime of the ocean-bed.

Let us then resolutely set our faces to the Light, and devotedly engage in the sublime task of self-conquest, which marks the beginning of a new and stupendous era in our evolution, and which is sure to lead us onward and upward for ever, and to a Glory that has no limit, and to a destiny which will be for ever receding into the Boundless and the Unknowable, but which is nevertheless — "Closer than heart and breathing," and "Nearer than Hands and Feet."

The Theosophical Forum

WHERE LIFE BEGINS — *Arthur A. Beale*

In the February number of *Harpers Magazine* (1937) is a fascinating article on this subject by George W. Gray. Mr. Gray is on a serious quest. He is trailing the illusive origin of Life, and we wish him joy, for if he persists he will find himself on a path that will lead him to the heart of the Universe.

Anything that we may offer is not intended as patronage, or in any way to discount the sublime, painstaking, and logical issues developed by modern scientific savants in their marvelous research work. We seek rather to lead their minds a little farther into realms unexplored by modern science; inexplorable, in fact, by present methods and apparatus, but beaten tracks for those ancient scientists and philosophers who have investigated these hidden realms and have recorded, collated, and interpreted what they have found. It is because the Masters of Wisdom have consented to give us some of the products of their strenuous labors, incorporated in what we know today as the Theosophical philosophy (religion-science-philosophy, in fact), that we are able to throw more light upon the question, "Where does Life begin?" Mr. Gray commences his article by saying:

Supreme among the problems now confronting science, is the determination of the nature of life. There are countless immediate human questions pressing for solution, questions of disease and their cure, of eugenics, and the improvement of mentality, of lengthening the life span, of the control of aging and death; but these practical objectives wait directly upon the fundamental problem.

Having expressed his dissatisfaction with current dictionary definitions of life, pointing out that logically the asserted necessary attributes of life such as growth, reconstruction, reproduction, stimulus, irritability, are applicable also to those kingdoms now reckoned as non-living, he

then plunges into the mystery of cell-life and the important part played by the nucleus with its denizens of chromosomes, these latter builded of units called by Weismann the idants and ids. Ultimately he reaches those units described by science as genes (Gr. reproducers) which, we are told, no one has ever seen: a single gene is too fine for even the ultra-microscope. Their existence, therefore, is problematical, yet they are necessary and logical units. Truly the conception of such units is bordering on metaphysics.

In spite of this, Mr. Gray still considers it necessary to limit his conception of life to certain organic (so called) entities that stand out as separate from dead matter (also so called); in the former class he includes the human, beast, and vegetable kingdoms, but stops short at the mineral. He admits the possibility that the ultimate "gene" of the chromosome may be a molecule, making the proviso that "it must be a large one" — a weak argument in our opinion, since if, as we hope to emphasize, these genes are agents of consciousness, and *special* streams of consciousness, we do not admit that consciousness has dimensions. Even the consciousness of a divine being, vast though it be in reach, could operate through an entity no larger than the problematical *ion* of science.

It would appear that recent researches of scientists are leading them in this direction. It has been found that the chromosomes are chainlike structures made up of transverse "bands." These bands are not necessarily the genes themselves, but they represent the genes; and scientists such as Calvin B. Bridges have counted as many as 5,000 bands in the chromosomal material of the cell; while Painter believes that with the further development of microscopy the number may be raised to 10,000. An interesting point to note here is that by relatively exact methods of separation of these bands, scientists conclude that while all are necessary in the cell activities, one alone of a group carries the mysterious element of *life*, and if this "indispensable unit of life" is missing, the whole hierarchy of genes are inoperative, and the group dies and disintegrates. The same principle is traceable in certain organic chemical products of thymo-nucleic acid, an essential of

nuclear protein, and its relation to four flanking products, adenine, cytosine, thymine, and guanine. If one molecule of phosphorus in these chemical products were dislodged, possibly the whole group might perish; whereas other molecules, e. g., of hydrogen, might be dislodged with no appreciable disaster. The analogy is evident: certain molecules or composite molecules are comparable to the genes, all being useful in building up transformations, but only certain ones absolutely vital to the continuance of the group.

The most interesting part of the article refers to the remarkable and intensive work of Dr. Stanley, an organic chemist, selected by the Rockefeller Institute to try to settle once for all the character and nature of a virus. "Virus" is a term used to indicate the poison of an infectious disease. It is found in the secretions or tissues of an animal suffering from an infectious disease. For some time it was considered that germs with a definite shape and character, identifiable by a microscope, were responsible for all infectious diseases; and much time has been spent by bacteriologists in trailing the culprits, and they have finally been successful in getting the "finger-prints" of many reputable criminals: notably, Koch's tubercular bacillus, anthrax bacillus, bacillus lyssae, klebs-loeffler bacillus of diphtheria.

But a time came when other diseases did not yield to the explorers the specific germ, and yet they were proved to be definitely infectious. Such were influenza, parrot fever, scarlet fever, yellow fever, poliomyelitis (infantile paralysis). All these were evidently associated with a virus. So strong a hold had the germ theory on scientific minds, that the inference was that the germs were there right enough, but that our microscopes were not powerful enough to make them visible. Nor could they be isolated by the process of filtration; with the finest porcelain filter they came out in the filtrate, which none of the known germs did.

Dr. Stanley's work was to examine the virus itself and find out its nature and chemical composition. He chose for his inquiry the oldest known virus, that which causes the tobacco mosaic disease, a disease

that has been a devastating enemy of the tobacco growers. His methods were clever, ingenious, and fascinating in process, and command our admiration. In brief they were as follows: He gathered the leaves of infected tobacco plants, pressed out the tainted juice, put some of this in a test tube and added pepsin. Now pepsin is an enzyme which digests or breaks up proteins. Was the virus, perchance, of the nature of a protein? He kept the solution under proper conditions for pepsin digestion, and at the end of the experiment rubbed some of it on the leaves of a tobacco plant. He found that the virus was absolutely harmless; its fangs had been drawn. The virus was probably a protein then.

Next, taking more of the virulent tobacco juice he added in the test tube certain chemicals which precipitate proteins. Solid precipitates formed, and the remaining juice was again found to be harmless. The virus had been tracked down to this solid, but it was necessary to purify the solid so that it contained no extraneous matter. He put it in a neutral liquid and added an ammonium compound which has the faculty of "edging protein out of solution without changing the protein." Needle-like crystals formed at the bottom of the test-tube. These he dissolved and recrystallized, dissolved and recrystallized many times, a process calculated to eliminate from the crystals any concealed extraneous agents. Yet when he redissolved them in a large quantity of neutral liquid more than a hundred million times their bulk and applied the liquid to a tobacco plant, the well-known signs of the disease were soon evident. The virus then, surely, was in the crystals, and the crystals contained *no living* (so called) *matter*, for, says the author of the article, "we know no plant or animal, no bacterium, no protoplasm, that can undergo crystallization."

So again there comes the perplexing question: "Where *does* life begin?" Dr. Stanley has tracked down beyond the limits of living matter a mysterious molecule that, under suitable conditions, does just what bacteria do. (This virus in question, while showing no signs of reproduction and other activity in a neutral liquid in the test tube, bursts into most fecund life when contacting the tobacco plant.)

Mr. Gray draws attention to the remarkable analogies there can be made between the actions of this protein and those of the genes. Both have stages of activity and quiescence; both possess the reproductive faculty, both are at times unstable, both appear to be of approximately the same order of size. However, he quotes Oscar Riddle in suggesting that the gene represents a higher order of organization than the virus.

He sums up the position in these words:

Perhaps the nearest we can come to a definition is to say that life is a stage in the organization of matter. The ascent of life, from azotobacter to man, is a hierarchy continually becoming more complex and more versatile. And so with the ascent of matter, from the single electron to the enormously numerous colony of electrical particles which make up the simplest living cell — it too is a hierarchy of continually increasing complexity, of organization.

— a more or less Theosophical concept without certain important keys which our philosophy gives. What then have we to say?

There are many questions involved in these notes upon which our archaic teachings can throw a flood of illumination. Mr. Gray was brought up in a school, as we were, in which a distinction is made between living and dead matter. We were taught that in order to be a live thing, the object must have a certain definition of form and attributes laid down as essential. He has found the required attributes beyond the limits that science has stipulated, and this disconcerting discovery leads him to say that perhaps the virus is a molecule of a double personality, alive and yet not alive. He has been trailing an *ignis fatnus* and has almost convinced himself of the fact.

What illumination does our philosophy throw on these problems opened up by Mr. Gray's article?

Let us first consider the three fundamental propositions in *The Secret Doctrine*:

1. "An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception. . ." It is the Cause, Source, and again the Recipient of all things. It simply "is." Our nearest approach in words is BE-NESS, the Boundless and Universal Consciousness. The Self.

2. The Law or process of periodicity, a ceaseless alternation of manifestation and disappearance.

3. Universal Unity, "the fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul."

So we come to view the Universe on these universal principles.

Everything conceivable has at the core of its core, the essence of this Boundless Principle, containing potentially all it may, can, and will become.

During manifestation, the teachings tell us, every entity starts as a spark of this divine essence, clothing itself with emanations from itself, and as a pilgrim, grows and learns, in fact *evolves* through an infinite range of forms, from the undifferentiated and spiritual (in the sense of non-physical) to the most complex conceivable. This principle, being universal, works on all planes. So we conceive of a universal ocean of CONSCIOUSNESS, working through a universal energy of LIFE. The Orientals call this latter Prana. Therefore, there is no beginning of life. It simply *is*, and is only one aspect of what one might call para-consciousness, just as matter or substance is another aspect of consciousness, coming through para-substance, which the Orientals call *mulaprakriti*. Thus there is a trinity of consciousness-matter-energy in a ceaseless unity and evolving through infinite grades of beings which, as they weave their destiny, realize their infinite potentialities.

The methods of their activity are: 1. Reimbodiment, every imbodiment being appropriate to its degree of evolution. 2. The law of consequences, every movement or activity producing a result. 3. Hierarchies; the process of grouping all the degrees of development, every group having its head or hierarch, or god of the group, and every

group forming an entity as part of a greater hierarchy with its hierarch or chief. 4. Swabhava, or essential characteristic; for instance, a rose evolves a rose, but there may be hierarchies of roses according to the evolution of internal potentialities. 5. Evolution, the gradual and orderly succession of unwrapping of internal potentialities; when an entity has learnt its lessons, it can repeat them quickly. It has taken aeons and aeons to evolve man, but when he returns for a fresh imbodiment, he can run through the same processes in nine months. Both 6 and 7 involve higher conditions not concerning us here, though they are essential steps.

Now applying these teachings to our present scheme, we get the picture of a universal life-principle, working through the various garments of evolution of entities, changing its nature according to the forms through which it works. So life is equally inherent in elementals, minerals, plants, beasts, humans, and gods, but the life shows up in its various forms: elemental life, mineral life, plant life, beast life, human life. In relation to this earth, every entity *in its essential nature* has to pass through all these schools of learning. This does not mean that a stone becomes a plant; it means that the entity has to pass through the stone state, the plant state, etc., every entity retaining in its nature the essence of the kingdoms through which it passes. Every man's body is in its make-up a complex of elemental, mineral, plant, and beast nature, all in the process of humanizing.

So we see in a cell from the human body an elemental nature, a mineral basis, a vegetable process, propensities of animal nature — in the loves, the attractions, the repulsions of particles — and the mental intelligence, this last acting as a directing force through the nucleus, operating through the chromosomes, and directly distributed through the problematical but essential genes. Now the nucleolus *per se* is more physical, i. e., nearer in nature to the cell-body, the somatic; the chromosomes are less physical, are more spiritual in consciousness; and the genes fade out of the picture as visible entities and yet are more spiritually conscious in their potency than their imbodying chromosomes. Beyond that they become for us only an energy, but if

we had the eyes to see, we should perceive that they are still imbodyed life.

There is recognised in our philosophy a principle that where consciousness moves from one plane to another it does so through what is called a laya-center, or concentration-point. In the cell it is indicated by the nucleolus of the nucleus. This does not mean that on the other side of this laya-center there is no matter, but merely a different *grade* of matter. The real nature of the universe is what is called astral; it exists in all grades, from the highest spiritual to the grossest physical, and according to its grade, so is the grade of life and the grade of consciousness working through it. All evolution tends from the spiritual to the material and then back to the spiritual, carrying along with it the experiences of its material state.

So we see in the virus of tobacco a form of consciousness, with its swabhava of characteristic activity. (Too bad for the tobacco plant!) This form of consciousness is imbodyed in an invisible sheath, and is in the organic chemical state of evolution. There is no dead matter, all is alive; though the time will come when those activities called "life" will be indrawn into the Self and for a time be lost as "life," to become part of the para-consciousness. This periodical withdrawal does not bring about the annihilation of life. The dewdrop falls into the open sea. The process is part of the operation of periodicity. So also is the crystallization of the virus protein. In this crystallized state it is latent in its virulence, and analogous to the minerals. It is not dead; it is only asleep, latent.

Then there is the question of the inoperative nature of certain genes when they fail to contact the proper environment of an ovum. Is this not a question of the presence or absence of electro-magnetic harmony? Mr. Gray refers to some cases where a sperm, contacting an ovum without a nucleus, is nevertheless able to evolve a perfect embryo. Here the electro-magnetic harmony is provided for in the somatic part of the cell. Weismann amplifies this point where he describes how in the development and loss of the polar bodies, some of

the chromosomes migrate, creating a deficiency or vacuum in the ovum, which is replaced or made up for by the invading sperm — a collection of foreign chromosomes.

Turning again to the matter of the laya-center: let us think of it in the nucleus of the cell as the focal point through which the Reincarnating Ego, drawing its stream of consciousness from man's own Spiritual Ego, directs the building of the temple (the body) from a higher plane. The laya-center of the nucleus is already electrified by the magnetic contact of the genes of the sperm, one of which contains the impress of the ego. And thus through the mystic center a permanent connexion is made whereby there can flow through the ego the stream of creative consciousness from "above." Thus the ego forms a link by which, through the trials of its child, the human personality and the body, it learns and evolves.

We might conclude the above reflexion by saying that when, therefore, Mr. Gray sets out in search of the origin of life, he must go back to the fountain source of all things. He will have to carry on his search not only in the realms visible, not only in organized and identified forms, but into invisible realms, in problematical units, problematically imbodyed, which are parts of a hierarchy that has one Source — the SELF.

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: III — *H. Percy Leonard*

THE LIVING UNIVERSE

The universe as it appears to the astronomer is a desolate waste. Dotted about, at points inconceivably remote, there are supposed to be planets so fortunately placed in respect to their suns that life, such as we know it, may be possible. But of such solar systems we are told that there is probably only one in a hundred thousand where this is at all likely to be the case, and either the planet is so near its sun that its temperature would be too high, or so distant, and therefore cold, as to render all life on its surface impossible.

In pleasant contrast to these untenanted planets and uninhabited stretches of ether, Theosophy presents us with the picture of a universe which not only teems with living creatures at every point, but whose very substance is composed of lives. What appear as the empty spaces between one planet and another are only apparently so, and that, merely because our eyes are so very limited in their range that we can see only those inhabitants which are of a degree of density equal to our own. Life is pulsing everywhere, and there is no unappropriated life, for wherever found, it is always flowing in a living being, and wherever there is consciousness there is always some entity who feels it as "I."

It is not only a living universe, it is a loving universe as well, whose members, all at varying degrees of development, are united each to each by the binding force of universal love. There *are* wills in conflict, there *is* selfish competition, but these things are inevitable in a universe where growth and evolution are continually at work.

Before we can renounce the separated self and live for purposes beyond the limited bounds of the personality, we have first to acquire self-consciousness, and in order to do this the illusion of a separated life has to be developed in a body which gives rise to the notion of "I" as

contrasted with an environment which is not "I." The little focal, egocentric point competes with others of its kind, and is actually carrying out the cosmic program, at this stage of the proceedings, in trying to aggrandize and to defend against all comers its seemingly separated granule of selfhood. But once acquired, the conception of a personal ego has to be expanded, until it blends in perfect solidarity with those of all other selves of the group to which it is specially related.

Even the centripetal quality of the personal self is seen to be necessary to the stability of the whole, and when equilibrated by love it helps to keep the great wheel perpetually revolving. The mysterious force which thrills and pulses through all living things is entirely impartial and has no favorites. The clove and the rattlesnake, the bishop and the burglar share in its indiscriminating flow. The universal life is "perfect" like "the Father in Heaven" of whom Jesus spoke, "who makes his sun to shine upon the evil and the good, and who sends his rain upon the just and also upon the unjust."

There can be no death in a living universe, but when life under one set of conditions becomes impossible, it begins again in another environment. Forms may die and disappear, but life proceeds upon its way for evermore.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEVEN HUMAN GROUPS — G. de Purucker

[In *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p 1, it is stated that the Secret Doctrine "teaches the simultaneous evolution of seven human groups on seven portions of our globe." The members of the Secret Doctrine Class at Point Loma wishing for further elucidation of this statement, Dr. de Purucker was appealed to, and sent the following most illuminating explanation, which by general request, and with permission duly accorded, is hereby placed on record for future reference and for the information of all readers. — H. T. E.]

This passage and other passages appertaining to the same point of the occult teaching, mean just what they say, and are not to be construed metaphorically. These passages do not refer to inner and outer rounds, nor to the other globes of the Earth-Chain, nor to the seven different human principles, as astral, physical, etc., except indirectly; as is shown very clearly by H. P. B.'s own words, "seven human groups on seven different portions of our globe." Here it is our Globe D or Earth, our planet Terra, which is meant.

Thus it is a fact that original mankind, which does not mean any branch of humanity but the very beginnings of what we popularly call the First Root-Race on Globe D in this Fourth Round, refers to the matter of the *sishtas* from the preceding Round. In other words, it means that our human life-wave as a whole or totality, when it again reached our Earth during this Fourth Round on this Globe D, awakened the seven classes of the then living *sishtas* on this our Globe D, because the forerunners of our Life-wave were themselves composed of the seven different kinds of human monads. In other words they were composed of what, in other connexions, H. P. B. has called the different classes of the *Pitris*. This is a little intricate but very simple when other teachings about the incoming life-waves on a globe are properly understood, and must not be confused with other life-waves; and I may add of course that the last word of this teaching is highly esoteric and

belongs to higher Degrees even than the E. S.

However, mark the following points: the sishtas waiting the incoming septenary human life-wave were themselves sevenfold, i. e., seven different groups of sishtas, each group being composed of individuals who through evolution were more or less alike. The life-wave when it reaches our Globe, is thus composed of the bulk of what we call the First Sub-race of the First Root-Race, intermixed with forerunners, i. e., more advanced monads of six other kinds, representing the other six classes of human monads.

Hence it was that all the seven classes of sishtas were more or less contemporaneously awakened, as it were, which means that they became vehicles for the different classes of the incoming monads, and began to increase; and thus it was that in this Round, on this Globe, as H. P. B. says, there was a "simultaneous evolution of seven human groups on seven different portions of our globe." These seven different classes of monads of the incoming life-wave, including the majority and the forerunners of the other six, started the seeds of the different Root-Races, which in time were to develop in this Round on this Globe, and of which Root-Races 1, 2, 3, and 4 have come and gone, and we are now in the 5th, although there are representatives amongst us even today, forerunners, of the 6th and 7th Root-Races to come before our life-wave passes on to Globe E.

It is thus clear that *The Secret Doctrine* teaches not a mono-genetic origin of humanity, i. e., the birth of the human race from a single individual, or from a single couple like the Jewish biblical story; but teaches a polygenetic origin, that is to say an origin of the human race from seven different living foci, which I have hereinbefore called the seven different types or kinds or sub-classes of the sishtas, each one such type or sub-class being awakened by the similar incoming portion of the human life-wave. Of course the portion of the incoming life-wave which was to become specifically the First Root-Race was the most numerous at that earliest period in our humanity, and became the First Root-Race. Then when it died out, it was preceded and followed by the

growth in numbers of the class of the monads which was to become the Second Root-Race, etc.

In this connexion, it must not be forgotten that all these seven types or classes of monads in the incoming life-waves are not separated in water-tight compartments, any more than the different types of men today, advanced and less advanced, are all separated off from each other. But they more or less mingled as time went on, yet the members of each class as it were gravitated to its own particular group and part of the globe.

From this teaching we likewise see that there may be, and indeed are, groups of humanity which inhabit portions of a globe, and where these portions of humanity remain almost quiescent for ages, until their time comes to begin to increase and to become the dominant Race or Sub-race. Thus H. P. B.'s words are to be taken literally.

I hope these thoughts will be of help to the members of your class who are puzzled, but of course they will require some thinking and study to get a clear picture of the process, because what is here briefly said took scores of millions of years to come about, up to the time of our own Fifth Root-Race.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SAGE IN PRACTICAL AFFAIRS — *Lao-Tze*

"Therefore the Sage, wishing to be above the people, must by his words put himself below them; wishing to be before the people, he must put himself behind them. In this way, though he has his place above them, the people do not feel his weight; though he has his place before them, they do not feel it as an injury. Therefore all mankind delight to exalt him, and weary of him not."

"The Sage expects no recognition for what he does; he achieves merit but does not take it to himself; he does not wish to display his worth."

"I have three precious things, which I hold fast and prize. The first is gentleness; the second is frugality; the third is humility, which keeps me from putting myself before others. Be gentle, and you can be bold; be frugal, and you can be liberal; avoid putting yourself before others, and you can become a leader among men."

"But in the present day men cast off gentleness, and are all for being bold; they spurn frugality, and retain only extravagance; they discard humility, and aim only at being first. Therefore they shall surely perish."

— Extracts from Lao-Tze's *Tao Teh Ching* (translation by Giles)

CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION — *William Q. Judge*

The term most generally in use to express what is included under the above title is SELF CULTURE. NOW it seems to well enough express, for a time at least, the practice referred to by those who desire to know the truth. But, in fact, it is inaccurate from a theosophic standpoint. For the self is held to be that designated in the Indian books as Iswara, which is a portion of the eternal spirit enshrined in each human body. That this is the Indian view there is no doubt. The *Bhagavad-Gita* in ch. xv says that an eternal portion of this spirit,

having assumed life in this world of life, attracts the heart and the five senses which belong to nature. Whatever body Iswara enters or quits, it is connected with it by snatching those senses from nature, even as the breeze snatches perfumes from their very bed. This spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, and also over the heart;

and in an earlier chapter,

the Supreme spirit within this body is called the Spectator and admonisher, sustainer, enjoyer, great Lord, and also highest soul;

and again,

the Supreme eternal soul, even when existing within — or connected with — the body, is not polluted by the actions of the body.

Elsewhere in these books this same spirit is called the self, as in a celebrated sentence which in Sanskrit is *Atmanam atmana pasya*, meaning, "Raise the self by the self," and all through the Upanishads, where the self is constantly spoken of as the same as the Iswara of *Bhagavad-Gita*. Max Muller thinks the word "self" expresses best in

English the ideas of the Upanishads on this head.

It therefore follows that such a thing as culture of this self, which in its very nature is eternal, unchangeable, and unpolluted by any action, cannot be. It is only from inadequacy of terms that students and writers using the English tongue are compelled to say "self-culture," while, when they say it, they admit that they know the self cannot be cultured.

What they wish to express is, "such culture or practice to be pursued by us as shall enable us, while on earth, to mirror forth the wisdom and fulfil the behests of the self within, which is all-wise and all-good."

As the use of this term "self culture" demands a constant explanation either outwardly declared or inwardly assented to, it is wise to discard it altogether and substitute that which will express the practice aimed at without raising a contradiction. For another reason also the term should be discarded. That is, that it assumes a certain degree of selfishness, for, if we use it as referring to something that we do only for ourself, we separate at once between us and the rest of the human brotherhood. Only in one way can we use it without contradiction or without explanation, and that is by admitting we selfishly desire to cultivate ourselves, thus at once running against a prime rule in theosophic life and one so often and so strenuously insisted on, that the idea of a personal self must be uprooted. Of course, as we will not negative this rule, we thus again have brought before us the necessity for a term that does not arouse contradictions. That new term should, as nearly as possible, shadow forth the three essential things in the action, that is, the instrument, the act, and the agent, as well as the incitement to action; or, knowledge itself, the thing to be known or done, and the person who knows.

This term is CONCENTRATION. In the Indian books it is called Yoga. This is translated also as Union, meaning a union with the Supreme Being, or, as it is otherwise put, "the object of spiritual knowledge is the Supreme Being."

There are two great divisions of Yoga found in the ancient books, and they are called Hatha-Yoga and Raja-Yoga.

Hatha-Yoga is a practical mortification of the body by means of which certain powers are developed. It consists in the assumption of certain postures that aid the work, and certain kinds of breathing that bring on changes in the system, together with other devices. It is referred to in the 4th chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* thus:

Some devotees sacrifice the sense of hearing and the other senses in the fires of restraint; some offer objects of sense, such as sound, in the fires of the senses. Some also sacrifice inspiration of breath in expiration, and expiration in inspiration, by blocking up the channels of inspiration and expiration, desirous of retaining their breath. Others, by abstaining from food, sacrifice life in their life.

In various treatises these methods are set forth in detail, and there is no doubt at all that by pursuing them one can gain possession of sundry abnormal powers. There is risk, however, especially in the case of people in the West where experienced gurus or teachers of these things are not found. These risks consist in this, that while an undirected person is doing according to the rules of Hatha-Yoga he arouses about him influences that do him harm, and he also carries his natural functions to certain states now and then when he ought to stop for a while, but, having no knowledge of the matter, may go on beyond that and produce injurious effects. Then, again, Hatha-Yoga is a difficult thing to pursue, and one that must be pushed to the point of mastery and success. Few of our Western people are by nature fitted for such continuous and difficult labor on the mental and astral planes. Thus, being attracted to Hatha-Yoga by the novelty of it, and by the apparent pay that it offers in visible physical results, they begin without knowledge of the difficulty, and stopping after a period of trial they bring down upon themselves consequences that are wholly undesirable.

The greatest objection to it, however, is that it pertains to the material

and semi-material man, — roughly speaking, to the body, and what is gained through it is lost at death.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* refers to this and describes what happens in these words:

All of these, indeed, being versed in sacrifice, have their sins destroyed by these sacrifices. But he alone reaches union with the Supreme Being who eats of the ambrosia left from a sacrifice.

This means that the Hatha-Yoga practice represents the mere sacrifice itself, whereas the other kind is the ambrosia arising from the sacrifice, or "the perfection of spiritual cultivation," and that leads to Nirvana. The means for attaining the "perfection of spiritual cultivation" are found in Raja-Yoga, or, as we shall term it for the present, Culture of Concentration.

When concentration is perfected, we are in a position to use the knowledge that is ever within reach but which ordinarily eludes us continually. That which is usually called knowledge is only an intellectual comprehension of the outside, visible forms assumed by certain realities. Take what is called scientific knowledge of minerals and metals. This is merely a classification of material phenomena and an empirical acquisition. It knows what certain minerals and metals are useful for, and what some of their properties are. Gold is known to be pure, soft, yellow, and extremely ductile, and by a series of accidents it has been discovered to be useful in medicine and the arts. But even to this day there is a controversy, not wholly settled, as to whether gold is held mechanically or chemically in crude ore. Similarly with minerals. The crystalline forms are known and classified.

And yet a new theory has arisen, coming very near to the truth, that we do not know matter in reality in this way, but only apprehend certain phenomena presented to us by matter, and variously called, as the phenomena alter, gold, wood, iron, stone, and so on. But whether minerals, metals, and vegetables have further properties that are only

to be apprehended by still other and undeveloped senses, science will not admit.

Passing from inanimate objects to the men and women about us, this ordinary intellectual knowledge aids us no more than before. We see bodies with different names and of different races, but below the outer phenomena our everyday intellect will not carry us. This man we suppose to have a certain character assigned to him after experience of his conduct, but it is still only provisional, for none of us is ready to say that we know him either in his good or his bad qualities. We know there is more to him than we can see or reason about, but what, we cannot tell. It eludes us continually. And when we turn to contemplate ourselves, we are just as ignorant as we are about our fellow man. Out of this has arisen an old saying: "Every man knows what he is, but no one knows what he will be."

There must be in us a power of discernment, the cultivation of which will enable us to know whatever is desired to be known. That there is such a power is affirmed by teachers of occultism, and the way to acquire it is by cultivating concentration.

It is generally overlooked, or not believed, that the inner man who is the one to have these powers has to grow up to maturity, just as the body has to mature before its organs fulfil their functions fully. By *inner man* I do not mean the Higher Self — the Iswara before spoken of, but that part of us which is called the soul, or astral man, or vehicle, and so on. All these terms are subject to correction, and should not be held rigidly to the meanings given by various writers. Let us premise, first, the body now visible; second, the inner man — not the spirit; and third, the spirit itself.

Now while it is quite true that the second — or inner man — has latent all the powers and peculiarities ascribed to the astral body, it is equally true that those powers are, in the generality of persons, still latent or only very partially developed.

This inner being is, so to say, inextricably entangled in the body, cell

for cell and fibre for fibre. He exists in the body somewhat in the way the fibre of the mango fruit exists in the mango. In that fruit we have the inside nut with thousands of fine fibres spreading out from it through the yellow pulp around. And as you eat it, there is great difficulty in distinguishing the pulp from the fibre. So that the inner being of which we are speaking cannot do much when away from his body, and is always influenced by it. It is not therefore easy to leave the body at will and roam about in the double. The stories we hear of this as being so easily done may be put down to strong imagination, vanity, or other causes. One great cause for error in respect to these doubles is that a clairvoyant is quite likely to mistake a mere picture of the person's thought for the person himself. In fact, among occultists who know the truth, the stepping out of the body at will and moving about the world is regarded as a most difficult feat, and for the reasons above hinted at. Inasmuch as the person is so interwoven with his body, it is absolutely necessary, before he can take his astral form about the country, for him first to carefully extract it, fibre by fibre, from the surrounding pulp of blood, bones, mucus, bile, skin and flesh. Is this easy? It is neither easy nor quick of accomplishment, nor all done at one operation. It has to be the result of years of careful training and numerous experiments. And it *cannot* be consciously done until the inner man has developed and cohered into something more than irresponsible and quivering jelly. This development and coherence are gained by perfecting the power of concentration.

Nor is it true, as the matter has been presented to me by experiment and teaching, that even in our sleep we go rushing about the country seeing our friends and enemies or tasting earthly joys at distant points. In all cases where the man has acquired some amount of concentration, it is quite possible that the sleeping body is deserted altogether, but such cases are as yet not in the majority.

Most of us remain quite close to our slumbering forms. It is not necessary for us to go away in order to experience the different states of consciousness which is the privilege of every man, but we do not go away over miles of country until we are able, and we cannot be able

until the necessary ethereal body has been acquired and has learned how to use its powers.

Now, this ethereal body has its own organs which are the essence or real basis of the senses described by men. The outer eye is only the instrument by which the real power of sight experiences that which relates to sight; the ear has its inner master — the power of hearing, and so on with every organ. These real powers within flow from the spirit to which we referred at the beginning of this paper. That spirit approaches the objects of sense by presiding over the different organs of sense. And whenever it withdraws itself the organs cannot be used. As when a sleep-walker moves about with open eyes which do not see anything, although objects are there and the different parts of the eye are perfectly normal and uninjured.

Ordinarily there is no demarcation to be observed between these inner organs and the outer; the inner ear is found to be too closely interknit with the outer to be distinguished apart. But when concentration has begun, the different inner organs begin to awake, as it were, and to separate themselves from the chains of their bodily counterparts. Thus the man begins to duplicate his powers. His bodily organs are not injured, but remain for use upon the plane to which they belong, and he is acquiring another set which he can use apart from the others in the plane of nature peculiarly theirs.

We find here and there cases where certain parts of this inner body have been by some means developed beyond the rest. Sometimes the inner head alone is developed, and we have one who can see or hear clairvoyantly or clairaudiently; again, only a hand is developed apart from the rest, all the other being nebulous and wavering. It may be a right hand, and it will enable the owner to have certain experiences that belong to the plane of nature to which the right hand belongs, say the positive side of touch and feeling.

But in these abnormal cases there are always wanting the results of concentration. They have merely protruded one portion, just as a lobster extrudes his eye on the end of the structure which carries it. Or

take one who has thus curiously developed one of the inner eyes, say the left. This has a relation to a plane of nature quite different from that appertaining to the hand, and the results in experience are just as diverse. He will be a clairvoyant of a certain order, only able to recognise that which relates to his one-sided development, and completely ignorant of many other qualities inherent in the thing seen or felt, because the proper organs needed to perceive them have had no development. He will be like a two-dimensional being who cannot possibly know that which three-dimensional beings know, or like ourselves as compared with four-dimensional entities.

In the course of the growth of this ethereal body several things are to be observed.

It begins by having a cloudy, wavering appearance, with certain centres of energy caused by the incipency of organs that correspond to the brain, heart, lungs, spleen, liver, and so on. It follows the same course of development as a solar system, and is, in fact, *governed and influenced by the very solar system to which the world belongs on which the being may be incarnate*. With us it is governed by our own solar orb.

If the practice of concentration be kept up, this cloudy mass begins to gain coherence and to shape itself into a body with different organs. As they grow they must be used. Essays are to be made with them, trials, experiments. In fact, just as a child must creep before it can walk, and must learn walking before it can run, so this ethereal man must do the same. But as the child can see and hear much farther than it can creep or walk, so this being usually begins to see and to hear before it can leave the vicinity of the body on any lengthy journey.

Certain hinderances then begin to manifest themselves which, when properly understood by us, will give us good substantial reasons for the practising of the several virtues enjoined in our books and naturally included under the term of Universal Brotherhood.

One is that sometimes it is seen that this nebulous forming body is violently shaken, or pulled apart, or burst into fragments that at once

have a tendency to fly back into the body and take on the same entanglement that we spoke of at first. *This is caused by anger*, and this is why the sages all dwell upon the need of calmness. When the student allows anger to arise, the influence of it is at once felt by the ethereal body, and manifests itself in an uncontrollable trembling which begins at the centre and violently pulls apart the hitherto coherent particles. If allowed to go on it will disintegrate the whole mass, which will then re-assume its natural place in the body. The effect following this is, that a long time has to elapse before the ethereal body can be again created. And each time this happens the result is the same. Nor does it make any difference what the cause for the anger may be. There is no such thing as having what is called "righteous anger" in this study and escaping these inevitable consequences. Whether your "rights" have been unjustly and flagrantly invaded or not does not matter. The anger is a force that will work itself out in its appointed way. Therefore anger must be strictly avoided, and it cannot be avoided unless charity and love — absolute toleration — are cultivated.

But anger may be absent and yet still another thing happen. The ethereal form may have assumed quite a coherence and definiteness. But it is observed that, instead of being pure and clear and fresh, it begins to take on a cloudy and disagreeable color, the precursor of putrefaction, which invades every part and by its effects precludes any further progress, and at last reacts upon the student so that anger again manifests itself. This is the effect of envy. Envy is not a mere trifle that produces no physical result. It has a powerful action, as strong in its own field as that of anger. It not only hinders the further development, but attracts to the student's vicinity thousands of malevolent beings of all classes that precipitate themselves upon him and wake up or bring on every evil passion. Envy, therefore, must be extirpated, and it cannot be got rid of as long as the personal idea is allowed to remain in us.

Another effect is produced on this ethereal body by vanity. Vanity represents the great illusion of nature. It brings up before the soul all sorts of erroneous or evil pictures, or both, and drags the judgment so

away that once more anger or envy will enter, or such course be pursued that violent destruction by outside causes falls upon the being. As in one case related to me. The man had made considerable progress, but at last allowed vanity to rule. This was followed by the presentation to his inner sight of most extraordinary images and ideas, which in their turn so affected him that he attracted to his sphere hordes of elementals seldom known to students and quite indescribable in English. These at last, as is their nature, laid siege to him, and one day produced all about the plane of his astral body an effect similar in some respects to that which follows an explosion of the most powerful explosives known to science. The consequence was, his ethereal form was so suddenly fractured that by repercussion the whole nature of the man was altered, and he soon died in a madhouse after having committed the most awful excesses.

And vanity cannot be avoided except by studiously cultivating that selflessness and poverty of heart advised as well by Jesus of Nazareth as by Buddha.

Another hinderance is fear. This is not, however, the worst of all, and is one that will disappear by means of knowledge, for fear is always the son of ignorance. Its effect on the ethereal form is to shrivel it up, or coagulate and contract it. But as knowledge increases, that contraction abates, permitting the person to expand. Fear is the same thing as frigidity on the earth, and always proceeds by the process of freezing.

Success in the culture of concentration is not for him who sporadically attempts it. It is a thing that flows from "a firm position assumed with regard to the end in view, and unremittingly kept up." Nineteenth Century students are too apt to think that success in occultism can be reached as one attains success in school or college, by reading and learning *printed words*. A complete knowledge of all that was ever written upon concentration will confer no power in the practice of that about which I treat. Mere book knowledge is derided in this school as much as it is by the clodhopper; not that I think book knowledge is to be avoided, but that sort of acquisition without the concentration is as

useless as faith without works. It is called in some places, I believe, "mere eye-knowledge." Such indeed it is; and such is the sort of culture most respected in these degenerate times.

In starting this paper the true practice was called Raja-Yoga. It discards those physical motions, postures and recipes relating solely to the present personality, and directs the student to virtue and altruism as the bases from which to start. This is more often rejected than accepted. So much has been said during the last 1800 years about Rosicrucians, Egyptian Adepts, Secret Masters, Kabbala, and wonderful magical books that students without a guide, attracted to these subjects, ask for information and seek in vain for the entrance to the temple of the learning they crave, because they say that virtue's rules are meant for babes and Sunday-schools, but not for them. And, in consequence, we find hundreds of books in all the languages of Europe dealing with rites, ceremonies, invocations, and other obscurities that will lead to nothing but loss of time and money. But few of these authors had anything save "mere eye-knowledge." 'Tis true they have sometimes a reputation, but it is only that accorded to an ignoramus by those who are more ignorant. The so-called great man, knowing how fatal to reputation it would be to tell how really small is his practical knowledge, prates about "projections and elementals," "philosopher's stone and elixir," but discreetly keeps from his readers the paucity of his acquirements and the insecurity of his own mental state. Let the seeker know, once for all, that the virtues cannot be discarded nor ignored; they must be made a part of our life, and their philosophical basis must be understood.

But it may be asked if, in the culture of concentration, we will succeed alone by the practice of virtue. The answer is No, not in this life, but perhaps one day in a later life. The life of virtue accumulates much merit; that merit will at some time cause one to be born in a wise family where the real practice of concentration may perchance begin; or it may cause one to be born in a family of devotees or those far advanced on the Path, as said in *Bhagavad-Gita*. But such a birth as this, says Krishna, is difficult to obtain; hence the virtues alone will not

always lead in short space to our object.

We must make up our minds to a life of constant work upon this line. The lazy ones or they who ask for pleasure may as well give it up at the threshold and be content with the pleasant paths marked out for those who "fear God and honor the King." Immense fields of investigation and experiment have to be traversed; dangers un-thought of and forces unknown are to be met; and all must be overcome, for in this battle *there is no quarter asked or given*. Great stores of knowledge must be found and *seized*. The kingdom of heaven is not to be had for the asking; it must *be taken by violence*. And the only way in which we can gain the will and the power to thus seize and hold is by acquiring the virtues on the one hand, and minutely understanding ourselves on the other. Some day we will begin to see why not one passing thought may be ignored, not one flitting impression missed. This we can perceive is no simple task. It is a gigantic work. Did you ever reflect that the mere passing sight of a picture, or a single word instantly lost in the rush of the world, may be the basis for a dream that will poison the night and react upon the brain next day? Each one must be examined. If you have not noticed it, then when you awake next day you have to go back in memory over every word and circumstance of the preceding day, seeking, like the astronomer through space, for the lost one. And, similarly, without such a special reason, you must learn to be able to go thus backward into your days so as to go over carefully and in detail all that happened, all that you permitted to pass through the brain. Is this an easy matter?

But let us for a moment return to the sham adepts, the reputed Masters, whether they were well-intentioned or the reverse. Take Eliphas Levi who wrote so many good things, and whose books contain such masses of mysterious hints. Out of his own mouth he convicts himself. With great show he tells of the raising of the shade of Apollonius. Weeks beforehand all sorts of preparations had to be made, and on the momentous night absurd necromantic performances were gone through. What was the result? Why only that the so-called shade appeared for a few moments, and Levi says they never attempted it

again. Any good medium of these days could call up the shade of Apollonius without preparation, and if Levi were an Adept he could have seen the dead quite as easily as he turned to his picture in a book. By these sporadic attempts and outside preparations nothing is really gained but harm to those who thus indulge. And the foolish dabbling by American theosophists with practices of the Yogis of India that are not one-eighth understood and which in themselves are inadequate, will lead to much worse results than the apocryphal attempt recorded by Eliphas Levi.

As we have to deal with the Western mind now ours, all unused as it is to these things and overburdened with false training and falser logic, we must begin where we are, we must examine our present possessions and grow to know our own present powers and mental machinery. This done, we may proceed to see ourselves in the way that shall bring about the best result.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AND REFORM — *G. de Purucker*

I have often been asked what good, what practical, honest-to-goodness good the Theosophical Society does in the world. It has been said to me: Why, you people preach and preach and preach and preach the most beautiful things. But what *practical* good do you do? This is what Theosophy does, what the Theosophical Society is trying to do, and what we Theosophists are trying to do: We are trying to give unto men a light by which they can live. We are trying to change the hearts of men to feel for their fellows, to be in sympathy with their fellows instead of against them. We are trying to give unto our fellow men a philosophy of life based on the wisdom of the ages, which will make their own lives upright so that they live them in rectitude, in justice to themselves, and in justice to others. We are trying to change men's hearts and we are trying to change their minds. Now if you can show me anything more wonderful than that, more *practical*, than that, I should be glad to hear.

Isn't it obvious that the reason we have trouble is because the world does not know what to do? They are all hunting for truth, hunting for the way out. Why? Because their hearts are broken; they do not know what to do because their hearts have been shut up in selfish questing, grasping "for me" and "my part." It is altruism, brotherhood in thought and act, the old-fashioned teaching, the decent treatment of man by man, which will bring peace on earth and heaven amongst us.

You have often heard me say that it is ideas which rule the world, which make and unmake civilizations, which ennoble or which degrade human life; and it is precisely in the dissemination of the beautiful ideals I have just alluded to, and the finding of proper soil in the hearts and minds of men for these ideas, that the Theosophical Society and its members are mainly engaged. Eschewing politics of every kind or color, utterly nonsectarian in principle as we are, our Work when once understood should be sympathetically received by

kindly and thoughtful men everywhere; for we interfere with no man's life, we are strictly obedient to the laws of the country where we live, and we strive to bring back to men the philosophical, moral, religious, and scientific vision and hope, apart from any kind of dogmatic teaching, that the world for ages has lost.

That is our Work mainly, and it is intensely and grandly practical. By changing men's ideas we change their lives; and by changing their lives to happier and better things, in time such work will change civilizations. I repeat that ideas rule the world; and if you look around you, you will find this axiomatic truth substantiated everywhere, for men are thinkers as well as feelers, and their actions and their lives follow the ideas they cherish most strongly.

But I must say this: Let us apply to ourselves first what we ascertain to be the remedy for the world's ills — correct our own lives instead of trying to hammer our ideas of what is right into the heads of those who do not agree with us, just making more wretchedness in the world. Reformers are so very desirous of reforming the other fellow. It is so ungenerous. They want to reform other men in politics, in religion, in philosophy and science, and in their lives. How few of us try to reform the reformer! I, you. Nobody kicks so badly at reformation as does the reformer himself. A great man does not attempt to reform the other chap. He has work enough to reform himself. It is the consequence, the results, of his teaching and life which reform those who have heard, who have had the ears to hear.

And right here I believe is the largest part of the work of the Theosophical Movement: to set a current of thought and feeling moving in the world; but primarily, to see to it, each one of us, that the center from which this energy flows is right. The way to reform things is to begin on yourself, *reform yourself*. Be an example and others will follow. It is contagious, beautifully contagious.

Do you know, I believe the curse of the world today is that men have got it in their heads that they are going to correct the other fellow. It is a mental, a psychological, curse that is afflicting us all. Now please do

not misconstrue my words to mean that we should allow evil free play and just sit by and let others work injury upon their fellows. I don't mean that at all. All organized human society must protect itself against evil-doing. My point is that we should not try to correct the other fellow, but that we should try to correct ourselves. There you have all the Law and all the Prophets; and I tell you, the example of a man who begins on himself is contagious unto others, because he has reason with him, he has justice with him, he has right with him. His actions are not wrong; they are not warped, distorted, twisted. His actions are upright, clean, straightforward. When we deal with our fellow men we are dealing with reasonable and feeling human beings; and it is my firm conviction that the good in human nature far outweighs the evil. I for one have never found it to fail that when I appeal to my brother man to treat me as I want to treat him, he responds. I let him feel that I am sincere and that I am not going to try to correct his faults and impose my own opinions on him, my short-sighted views, my small and selfish feelings on him. I simply silently ask him to treat me as I want to treat him, and it never fails. Believe me!

The way of correcting evil in the world is not by putting more into it, thus adding to the store of horrors and wickedness in the world. Violence breeds violence, hatred arouses hatred; evil-doing other men resent and won't have it. And if they are small-minded men they will react by trying to do evil unto you. If they are men of larger intelligence they will try to put you where you belong for your evil-doing — and with a good deal of that feeling! I think the proper way to correct the evils in the world is by beginning on ourselves, and to leave the other fellow alone. Be an example unto the world, be a light unto the world, think what you believe, live what you preach, *and leave the other fellow alone to work out his destiny.*

MORE ABOUT "WHAT SURVIVES DEATH?" — A Trevor Barker

What of the Lower Quaternary survives death?

The Lower Quaternary in Theosophical parlance includes:

- (1) The Body.
- (2) The Linga-Sarira, the framework upon which the body is built.
- (3) Prana, or life.
- (4) Kama-Manas, the lower thoughts, emotions, desires, passions, etc.

These together make up that which we call the personality, and it must be said at once that these do not survive death as a conscious entity under normal circumstances for the ordinary person. If these attributes which make up the personality during life were to survive death it would mean that they would still persist in combination minus the physical body, whereas the exact reverse is the case, since this combination begins immediately after death to fall apart and disintegrate. We repeat, therefore, that as a *conscious entity* the Lower Quaternary does not survive death. Nevertheless the substance of which the different vehicles of consciousness are built is composed of life atoms, and therefore has all of it a life of its own. This matter has been impressed with the emotional and thought tendencies during life, and in a very real sense this matter which we have used and expressed our consciousness through belongs to us. We are responsible for its future destiny in very much the same way as parents are responsible for their children. It should not be forgotten, however, that while the responsibility of parents in the way of supervision is very important, nevertheless, the child has an inherent destiny and individuality of its own. Exactly the same is true of the material substance of which the principles of the Lower Quaternary is composed. The substance is not dead: the life atoms are monadic centers of life and consciousness, and whilst the combination in which they are held together during life as a personal entity is dissolved at death, nevertheless they will be required

to enter into a new combination later on, when that part of our being which really does survive once again re-embodies itself.

Does the Upper Triad, as we understand it, survive death?

If we understand it correctly it does survive death. In fact this is the part that does survive. The higher part of Manas, bearing with it the efflorescence of the last personal existence: the fine aroma of the personality that was; all in fact that is worthy of immortality does survive on its own plane, but is neither capable of conscious communication with the living, nor is it subject to the interference of irresponsible mediums. The higher part of our being, represented by the Higher Triad, contains all that is real and eternal in man. It is the very essence, the essential part of him.

Do any of the physical senses survive? Has the discarnate spirit any of the six physical senses, in some form or other? Must we assume that the spirit is blind, deaf, and dumb, without the sense of smell or taste?

(a) The body has no senses, as these are actually centered in the Astral Body or Linga-Sarira. These senses persist, therefore, in the Linga-Sarira, and provide the explanation of the phenomena exhibited in spiritualism, in connection with the *kama-rupic* shell which persists after death for a longer or shorter period, according to the degree of materiality or spirituality of the individual concerned. This *kama-rupic* shell, when attracted to the medium in a spiritualistic seance, can be stimulated so as to repeat mechanically the sensations, the lower thoughts and memories, with which it was familiar in life.

(b) The discarnate spirit, i. e. the Higher Triad, cannot be said to have six physical senses. On the other hand on its own plane it is fully conscious, is absorbed in a state of spiritual and ecstatic re-living of all the finer and higher thoughts and emotional experiences that were comprised in the dreams, aspirations, and unselfish or spiritual actions of the last incarnation.

(c) The spiritual entity, the Higher Triad, is anything but blind, deaf and dumb from the point of view of its own reflected consciousness, but

nevertheless it should be emphasized that the entity is in a subjective state, and therefore incapable of responding to external stimuli.

To what extent do appetite, desires, ambition, hate, envy, jealousy, love, compassion, and similar attributes — of which a man in his physical body is conscious — survive death? Appetite, desire, emotion, envy, jealousy, being essentially mortal attributes of the lower personality, do not survive as part of the higher conscious individuality. They persist for a while, associated with the *kama-rupic* shell, but this after death is in a state of disintegration, and finally the combination is dissolved, but the energies which are represented by these lower emotional characteristics constitute what in Buddhistic philosophy is called the *skandhas*, and these *skandhas*, impregnated in the life-atoms, await the reincarnating ego at the threshold of Devachan in its return to life. The Lower Quaternary thus absorbs the *skandhas* into the new combination.

Hatred has a certain quality of survival for — strange paradox — it has a certain spiritual quality about it, but it is a spirituality of evil: it is the basis for the only kind of immortality that the Adept in sorcery is able to experience. To the extent that the ordinary individual permits himself to express this highly disintegrating and destructive energy, he is generating for himself a period in the state which is known as Avichi — a state in every respect the opposite pole of Devachan. The latter is a spiritual and blissful experience, but the former is a spiritual experience of the most intense isolated anguish and suffering.

Love, compassion, the aspiration for Truth, Wisdom, and the Higher Knowledge: these are inherent in the Higher Triad, and therefore without question survive, being part of the immortal and eternal man.

Does memory, as physical man functions in this respect, survive: in other words, does the discarnate spirit have recollection of physical world conditions?

The discarnate spiritual entity has recollection only of the environment associated with the spiritual experiences in the contemplation of which

he is absorbed. For example, the spiritual entity will remember the parents he loved, and therefore, since parents must have material surroundings, he will recollect the environment, the home and all the places, buildings, scenery, and landscapes with which he associates all his higher spiritual experiences, but the parent, the brother or sister, the school-master, or the school-mates, and the incidents connected with those persons which were productive of suffering or sin, will be excluded from the Devachanic memories. The entity in Devachan is in a subjective state, and is therefore unable to perceive material conditions upon the earth which he has left. He is not in the least concerned consciously with what may be happening to the individuals he left behind.

Do ambitions and plans made by the physical man looking to the next incarnation, consciously survive? In other words, can a man in this incarnation consciously plan for the next incarnation, using his daily thought and mental processes as the seed for the next incarnation's harvest and consciously carry these thoughts and plans beyond the grave? In other words, can a man here and now, agree on a definite, consistent plan of life, to be carried through various lives and incarnations?

This is an important and very interesting subject. The individual who recognises the fact that he will have other incarnations, can most certainly plan consciously for those future lives. In so doing, however, he will have to come to the conclusion that what he plans to achieve in future incarnations should be the worth-while things, not those which would turn to ashes in the mouth and be productive of suffering and disillusionment. Whatever the heart of man is set upon that he will achieve and become, either in this life or in some future incarnation. Desire creates opportunity, and "what ye ask that will ye receive; therefore take care what ye will ask." Man is the creator of his own destiny, and decrees absolutely his future reward or punishment. If he seeks material ambitions; power merely for his own gratification; knowledge for his own benefit, forgetting the good of others: even these things can he lay the basis for by developing the faculties which

these things demand. The teaching of Theosophia, the Eternal Wisdom, is to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness, and then all these other things will be added unto him. Since man can create his own future destiny he will be lacking in wisdom if he does not make his spiritual objective the highest of which he can conceive — — to reach to union with his own indwelling Divinity and to dedicate all plans, aspirations, and ambitions whatsoever to the service of the Beloved. This should form the basis of our plans, if any, for future incarnations.

Working towards such a sublime objective the Pilgrim Soul can agree upon a definite, consistent plan of action to be carried through various lives and incarnations. No man achieves Mahatmaship in that incarnation in which he first sets his foot upon the Path. Several incarnations must be devoted to that task, but once the goal is clearly seen and the vows are taken, all thought, ambition, aspiration, and planning are devoted to the one end. This is shown so beautifully in the Second Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

In this system of Yoga no effort is wasted, nor are there any evil consequences, and even a little of this practice delivereth a man from great risk. In this path there is only one single object, and this of a steady, constant nature; but widely-branched is the faith and infinite are the objects of those who follow not this system.

The Theosophical Forum

OUR COSMIC CHARGE-ACCOUNT — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

One of the great dramatic moments in the cycle of human life is before a Reincarnating Ego is born on Earth in a new body — an event which has recurred many times. While as yet the Ego is not invested with the bodily and mental equipment of the new incarnation, there is presented to it a picture of that portion of its cosmic charge-account which is to be paid during the life it is entering.

This statement enumerates the physical and mental capacity, the environment and opportunity, in other words, the *karman* or results of past thoughts and acts now reaching fruition, some of it fortunate, some less so, and some frequently what we as human beings look upon as tragic. But the Ego, not yet limited to the brain-mind instrument of the new life, still retaining the deeper memory that includes remote causes, sees the justice of all that is to be, and undertakes to discharge the debts incurred in past lives, all of which have been entered in the cosmic records.

Do you doubt the existence of such records? Has it never occurred to you, when man is so careful to preserve data concerning births, marriages, and deaths, as well as the many other human happenings and doings that stenographers are taking down; when there is in every good-sized town a special building for the safekeeping of such records; that, in a great universal institution, including both visible and invisible worlds, there is a method of recording, a staff of recorders — not one recording angel, but a whole hierarchy of them — ever at work, efficient even to the numbering of the hairs on the head and every thought and act of the Egos that constitute the Humanity of this period of manifestation? Would it not be in the nature of a cosmic joke if it were not so? Is it not foolish and blind to suppose that, in a universe in which law prevails, there should be no method as much greater than man's efforts to establish justice as the universe is greater than man? If you are interested in this cosmic bookkeeping, its records,

and its staff of accountants, read in the Theosophical literature about the Lipika and the Astral Light.

We have only to read history to know what we as Egos in past lives on Earth were doing to make karman. In those terrible wars, those devastating invasions, those times of cruel private vengeance and of wholesale persecution, were we always mere lookers-on? Hardly; even if we have learned since to look on these things with horror, to be more humane and merciful — that is, if we *have* learned.

It looks as if the come-back of such violence as man has now at his command would be at least as severe as the known effects produced in our day. Individual violence and cruelty come home unerringly to the doers, though their results mystify those ignorant of the law of Karman. Collective violence also returns upon those who, in some remote period perhaps, originated it. This Theosophical teaching explains much in life that is otherwise inexplicable.

On March 18th of this year, in the Texas town of New London, more than 400 school-children and some of their teachers, gathered in the auditorium of what was looked upon as one of the finest school-buildings in the State, were, without warning, hurled to a violent death by an explosion that wrecked the building. How account for this slaughter of the innocents? We must look deeper than the physical causes in order to answer the agonized questions inevitably rising in the minds of these stricken parents and friends. Theosophy gives the only reasonable explanation of such a catastrophe.

To cut off these young children, who had not lived long enough to have done anything to deserve such a cruel fate! Young and innocent, yes; and the Egos, old and experienced, like you and me, who therefore can feel no vestige of a right to judge them, for which of us knows what tragic items of our account remain as yet undischarged? And though the brain-minds did not know when and where were sown the seeds of violence that came to fruition on that March day, their Egos *did remember, did know*, and consciously took it upon themselves to pay the price.

And there is another thought that can serve to lessen the horror of this event. It is that it is possible for an Ego, an experienced, highly developed Ego — and who knows how many of these children were such Egos? — deliberately to *choose* to expiate a heap of unexhausted karman all at once and make an end of it.

The pity of it is that many of those who have suffered by this catastrophe have none of these Theosophical ideas with which to supplant the old conceptions of one life on Earth followed by an eternity of heaven or hell, or the other idea that death ends all. But Theosophy enables us to picture these Egos so suddenly flown, reborn, perhaps very quickly, in new bodies, resuming their progress, *free* of that load of karman for ever.

And it is not only wrong done that returns. Love is eternal. Those Egos who came to loving parents this time, will find their way as inevitably again to those they loved and who loved them.

Let us then, not think of those tortured, broken bodies, but of souls, winging free, free of an ancient burden, to the pathways of rebirth.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BASIS OF THEOSOPHICAL EFFORT — *Torsten Karling*

HARMONY OF INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS (1)

FELLOW-STUDENTS: If we hope to reach any degree of understanding in considering such a subject as this, we must meet heart to heart. Of course we must meet intellectually also; but if we do not bring into play the powers of our hearts we shall not come to any result at all as far as harmony is concerned. Therefore it shall be my endeavor to open my heart to you and tell you about my own humble experiences, in the hope that they may give you something — touch some responsive chord.

First of all, what do we mean by individual relationships? I should say that we mean Humanity. Consider if this is not true. We speak eloquently about helping humanity, giving Theosophy to humanity, bringing the heart-force and the light to humanity. What is this humanity we speak of? I fear we use the term rather cheaply sometimes, or make of it a vague generalization; but that humanity which we meet at home, in our places of business, in the shops where we buy our shoes and clothes or foodstuffs, and in the street and in the tramcars, and so forth — all these people whom we meet and with whom we have any sort of contact during our daily life — they are to us humanity.

Then how can we better approach humanity than through these dear fellow-humans themselves? I will remind you of a saying in the Bible: How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love your brother whom you see? In other words: how can you love humanity — that big, diffuse something — if you do not love those human beings with whom you go through your daily life, with whom you have all your daily business and conversation, and in common with whom you strive to realize the best that is in you? Your Companions, for instance, in the Theosophical Society? It is these close individual relationships

which together form the instrument on which you play to express your love for humanity, and your hope of giving humanity something of the help that your own heart is for ever pouring forth.

Well, how to do it? Expressed in the spoken or written word, it seems so simple, but when we come to follow it out in action, it is by no means so easy, because of the complexities of human nature both in ourselves and in the men and women we meet. We find it very often much more difficult actually to love our fellow-humans because of the dissimilarities between them and ourselves. A good way to follow — I am sure it is the best way — is that pointed out in the third chapter of *The Voice of the Silence*. I am sure you remember it, all of you: *The Seven Portals*; and what is said there about cultivating in ourselves the feeling, the knowledge, that I am you and you are I; I am in all and everything, and all and everything is in myself. It teaches us to cultivate a certain introspection — a looking inwards. This is very easy, really a very interesting game. It is indeed a game that will help us tremendously in our lives if we only try it.

You read the newspapers, of course, all of you; and I dare say that every day you find there horrible descriptions of crime and cruelty. Have you ever tried to identify yourself with the criminal, with the man or the woman who committed the crime? I am sure that is not a habit with many of us, but I think it is a good thing sometimes to try to identify ourselves — not with the crime, with the evil force of it, of course; but with the unfortunate victim of that evil force; because we can do that: we have everything within ourselves. There is not a crime, not a cruelty, nothing in the world which does not exist in ourselves as something we have already conquered, something we are now fighting against in our daily life, or something which is like a seed of coming strife: and if we can do this — look inward into ourselves — then it becomes very easy indeed to feel compassion for those who sin, because we are never lacking in compassion for ourselves — never. We have all sorts of forgiveness for our own sins — not for the sins as such, but for the sin when the sinner is ourself. So we see the importance of cultivating this form of introspection: looking inward, trying to identify

ourselves with everything that is.

I find that I have been dwelling rather on the darker aspects of things. But do not think that I mean to neglect the bright and beautiful aspects. We know that they in themselves produce harmony, and that is what we are trying to create; and the difficulties that we constantly meet in this effort come from the other pole of our constitution. They come from lack of Brotherhood in all forms. But we, gathered here in this beautiful room, under the aegis of such a Movement as this that we belong to — a comradeship based on the realization of Universal Brotherhood: we know that harmony comes of itself from love and from common striving with a high aim.

Now there are of course temptations. If we begin this effort to identify ourselves with all and everyone, we do not meet these temptations all at once — of course not. But they meet us at almost every step we take. For example, there is a person whose peculiarities irritate me, and I lose my temper, and utter words which make me want to bite my tongue off because I cannot take them back again — yet these are only steps on the Path, you see. As soon as you realize that what you are meeting is a temptation, there is no great danger of your failing. We have to realize that in all the small duties of our daily life, everything which tends to put us out of harmony with those around us is a temptation. That realization is the first step. But it is not always so easy. Still, if I feel that a temptation is very hard to overcome, and I feel my own weakness, I can realize that a few minutes thinking Cosmic thoughts — thinking of Father Sun, for instance, or reciting to myself the Gayatri — will help me to overcome it. I am sure that if that wonderful Gayatri can be recited silently in the heart and in the right spirit, there is no temptation in the world that can overtake us. Not only because of the wording, beautiful as it is, but because the spirit and content of that invocation to Father Sun, and to the spiritual side of our Universe, are so enormously strong, working directly on our hearts.

Speaking of introspection — looking inwards — do not for a moment

think I mean to lead you into the way which so many people follow, where everything that comes under their observation immediately causes them to say: "Yes, I have had the same experience," "I have done so-and-so myself," and so on. That is so extremely egocentric, dear fellow-humans, and it can be so tiring. That is not the thing, you see, absolutely not. Love is not egocentric; love is giving all the time: so that I am all the time trying to find out the best way, in my relations with my Comrades and my fellow human beings, to help them out of their difficulties, not to stand out myself as something very distinguished — not at all.

Just because you have in your hearts that which can help all things, you have to love your fellow-humans in that way: you have to find in your heart the answers to all the questions that present themselves; and if you do this, be assured that harmony will radiate from you, not only now and then, but all the time. You will be such a source of happiness and joy in your surroundings and in your individual relationships as I think it must be the hope of every true Theosophist to become.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address delivered at the London Convention, August 2, 1936. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: IV — *Percy Leonard*

The keynote of *Ecclesiastes* seems to be that all is vanity; that nothing in the universe as known by our five senses can afford satisfaction. In this some critics have discerned Buddhistic influence, at all events that part of Sakyamuni's teaching which accentuates the drawbacks of imbodied life, though it discloses but little trace of those "eight noble truths" which he proclaimed for our escape and final triumph. The passage quoted here is a masterly treatment of "the lean and slippered pantaloon," and the "last stage of all," of Shakespeare's famous "ages," and we could wish the writer had included in his scope the earlier five as well. Never has the falling asleep of the faculties been portrayed with quainter, tenderer pathos. The waning forces of the arms and legs, the failing teeth, the dimming of the vision are delineated by exquisite metaphors. The easily disturbed repose of aged people, their voice, their dread of traffic all are indicated by a fine, sure touch. An old man's crown of glory, his white hair, is likened to an almond blossom whose pink petals have exactly the appearance of white hair against a background of bald head. There is a touch of quaint, but not unkindly humor in the comparison of the old man with bended elbow leaning on a staff, to some poor injured grasshopper; and the dull palate which the accustomed condiment fails to arouse is not forgotten. The meaning of the "golden bowl" and "silver cord" is not upon the surface and would appear to indicate a knowledge on the writer's part of some esoteric teaching as regards man's constitution.

Youth is so apt to be intoxicated with the taste of sensuous though innocent delights, that it is well to be reminded now and then that all these fountains must one day be dry, and that perennial springs of satisfaction rise in the Soul alone. The life whose living is enduring joy is the Soul-life, that steady flame which long outlives our youthful vigor, burning as brightly in the wasted forms of aged people as in the fresh young forms of childhood.

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun. Yea if a man live many years let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember the days of darkness for they shall be many. Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, or ever the evil days come, or the years draw nigh when thou shalt say: I have no pleasure in them; or ever the sun, and the light and the moon, and the stars be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the street; when the sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; yea they shall be afraid of danger from on high, and terrors shall be in the way; and the almond tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper shall drag itself along; because man goeth to his long home and the mourners go about the streets; or ever the silver cord be snapped asunder, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return to God who gave it."

The Theosophical Forum

THOUGHTS ON THE SUB-CONSCIOUS MIND — *LaFayette Plummer*

Whenever Theosophists discuss the so-called sub-conscious mind, they are well aware that their ideas differ greatly from those held by modern psychologists. The states or conditions of the mind are too often considered to be the mind itself, and we hear of man being composed of complexes throughout; also that the soul of man exists as a speculation only. In fact, man is held to be the result of circumstances, some of which tend to develop characteristics, and others of which develop inhibitions. Because too many factors are overlooked, we have at best a hazy idea of what man really is, and none whatever as to what he was before coming to earth, nor what he will be after he leaves it.

You will sometimes hear a Theosophist say that the term "subconscious" is a convenient name for something about which almost nothing is known. This statement will be borne out in due course of time, though we agree that two other terms used today, the "subliminal" and the "super-liminal" give one to understand at least that there are states of consciousness above as well as below that of the normal waking state, centered in what we call the mind.

But what has Theosophy to say concerning the "sub-conscious" mind? It says nothing without first laying a foundation of knowledge as to the origin of man, and further, as to his true nature, the full understanding of which may be had only when his origin and destiny are known. Then the way is clear for teachings about any particular, as, in this instance, the sub-conscious mind.

To begin at the beginning, then, man must be understood as being a cosmic pilgrim who originated in (and never left) the Boundless. In the beginning of his evolution he was a life-atom, of which there are at all times uncounted millions filling the spaces. These life-atoms are thoughts, divine thoughts, if you will, and are the building blocks of

which the framework of the universe is built. Such a building block was man, with an unspeakably grand future before him. If you would form a mental picture of a life-atom, you are to think of it not so much as something composed of matter, like the atom of science, but as a focus of exhaustless energy, altogether without size, shape, or fixed position. But within it are potentialities galore, and its whole growth from then on depends upon its ability to turn its potential energies into kinetic spiritual energies. This is the work of evolution, and it slowly learns how to use its natural powers, and in manifesting them, to "build more stately mansions," until at last you have that wonder of wonders, MAN. But the story is not yet told. It is impossible in a paper like this to trace his evolutionary course through the various stages of cosmic life, but it should be borne in mind that at all times he was potentially a god, and the human stage in which he now finds himself is but one of the means he employs whereby he may realize and make use of his god-like powers. How could he be a potential god unless gods were a reality? He could not, and in this fact you have the keynote of this thesis. In order to understand man, the gods themselves must be studied. They are Divine Beings who are such because they have succeeded with relative fulness in bringing forth into play and active use that exhaustless fountain of spiritual energy of which the life-atom was once the focus.

Now, there are two kinds of gods, inner gods, and outer gods. The fountain of energy locked up within the heart of a life-atom, a plant, a beast, or a man is an inner god. As these same energies pass from the inner or unmanifested realms into the manifested, they become the objective manifestation of a god, and you have an outer god. Obviously the puny body of a man is insufficient to enshrine the holy flame of a god; a body more appropriate must be found, and the gods are equal to the task. They build shining bodies of solar energy, they are the suns. But even this is not the end. There are still unawakened powers within themselves, inner super-gods, if you like the phrase; and when these inner super-gods become outer super-gods, their bodies are the galaxies themselves. Actually, there can be no hard and fast delineation

between that which is inner and that which is outer. Both are relative, as we shall find shortly.

There is no such thing as an entity existing on one plane alone. Because all things are composite, the various elements or substances forming things are derivative of the various planes of consciousness. For instance, my physical atoms are derived from this physical earth, the astral atoms forming my astral body are derived from the astral plane, else they would not be astral atoms; the spiritual atoms forming in their aggregate the vehicle of my spiritual forces, or Buddhic principle, originated in the spiritual plane, and so on through the entire constitution. Moreover, from my viewpoint, my spiritual and divine "principles" are the inner part of my constitution, and my vital-astral-physical nature is the outer part of myself. That portion of my constitution wherein my consciousness is centered, in other words my mind, is neither inner nor outer. If I were able to center my consciousness in the spiritual portion of my being, my mind, as well as all that I now recognise as outer would be exterior to me, and my spiritual nature would be neither inner nor outer, though my Divine Self would still be inner. So, this question of the inner and outer is a matter of relativity, as are all so-called opposites. It seems quite reasonable to consider the "sub-conscious" as being the inner, as contrasted with the outer. And because the powers and faculties manifested in the outer part of our constitution are well-nigh insignificant compared with those latent or partially active in the inner reaches of ourselves, we find that, much to our astonishment, people who through unusual circumstances go into trances sometimes give evidence of having knowledge that far transcends anything they have learned in books, for they have temporarily tapped the reservoirs of the "sub-conscious." When we realize that this is in reality the inner Self, we see at once how utterly inappropriate is this term "sub-conscious," for it tells us nothing.

Let us now apply this philosophy on a grand scale. It was observed that the atoms of which our constitutions are composed are derived from the various planes of consciousness. Let us not get the erroneous idea,

however, that the universe exists for nothing more than the building of the principles of man. Important as this process undoubtedly is, it is merely incidental to the real activities that go on on these inner planes. Actually, these planes of consciousness are the principles forming the constitution, inner and outer, of a cosmic being, so ineffably grand that it is utterly beyond our feeble powers to define it. And all the hosts of beings who draw their life from the life of the Cosmos are merely atoms, building-blocks if you like, of which these cosmic principles are composed. Think of it! As you sit at your desk, a fully conscious man, using your physical and intellectual powers, thinking your thoughts, uttering your words, you are actually in the core of your being a part of the inner constitution — or possibly outer — of some divine being. Similarly, a portion of your inner nature may be the outer universe from the standpoint of the infinitesimal lives composing your inner Self.

Why is it that we are unable to define the nature of this Cosmic Being? In part because it is so grandiose, so supernal in essence, that words would utterly fail us, even if we did intuitively catch some adumbration as to its true nature. A more complete answer would be that there are departments of its life that do not lie within the sphere of our understanding. All beings have two aspects of their lives, the voluntary and the involuntary, or automatic. The most obvious portion of our own lives is the voluntary, and it is only by study and observation that we may follow the intricate workings of our automatic life-processes, such as breathing, heart-beat, and digestion. Just the reverse is the case, however, with the universe, and particularly with the Solar System. The aspect that we contact is the automatic, and we find it utterly impossible to receive even the remotest impressions of the volitional will of the Cosmic Being of whose inner nature we are a part. In other words, what we see as the phenomena of nature, the motions of the heavenly bodies, weather and climatic changes and the like, are simply manifestations of the automatic will of the Cosmic Being whose imbodiment is the universe. It is not to be thought that we are speaking of" a personal God, for if we consider it as personal, we

merely invent attributes and attach them to a being which confessedly we are unable to understand. Moreover, we are safe from the limited view when we reflect that Theosophy postulates no god so high that there is none higher. This Cosmic Being of which we are speaking is but one of many, each manifesting as a universe, and these are legion. Now the natural laws which prevail in any given universe are merely the workings of the automatic aspect of that universal consciousness.

A master of life is one who is able, not only to draw upon his own resources, inner and outer, but who can, through the medium of his own inner constitution, contact the inner planes and draw upon the resources of the Divine Being whose "principles" are these "planes of consciousness." And these resources are exhaustless. The idea is not untenable that sooner or later, with constant effort and growth, the powers of the initiate can become so great that at last he attracts the attention of the Divine Being, and then new and supreme initiations are in store for him. He then passes out of the realms of illusion, into the unmanifested, or subjective realms, which, when entered upon, prove to be reality itself, for he has contacted the volitional aspect of the life of the Divine Being.

If we derive nothing else from the Cosmic Philosophy that is today called Theosophy, we are at least assured that all that of which we are aware is practically nil as contrasted with that of which we are entirely unaware; and if we require long scientific phrases in order to formulate the known and observed laws of nature, to try to cover the unknown by one simple word, *sub-conscious*, is simply evading the issue. The great plea of the Wisdom-Religion is "Man, Know Thyself." Unlimited are the fields to be explored, endless the inspiration to be derived from the study of the wisdom that is as old as the ages, yet so new to this modern world.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE WISE — *Charles E. Ball*

Mahomet is reported to have said "Two things are an abomination to me, the wise in his infidelities and the fool at his devotions." To its everlasting credit, amidst much that is reprehensible, the present age is coming to be of the same opinion. The false intellectualism which has so long held sway is passing away and rationalism is being aimed at, a "one-pointedness," one might say, and an intelligent co-ordination of ways and means. This is good, as from one point of view it denotes the extinction of the specialist and the "one-track mind." Perhaps the real and great difference between the wise man and the ordinary man is that they *think* differently.

Those who are sensible enough to look for the occult in the commonplace know something of the great significance of that human currency — *words*, and in these coins of thought can be traced the rise and fall of the moral, spiritual, and ethical life; good words are degraded or dropped, and neutral or insidious words are substituted.

Glance at the news-sheet and note the words in general use in international matters particularly: Imperialism, Spheres of Influence, Tariffs, Diplomatic Pourparlers, Dementis, Pacts, Understandings, and so forth, all more or less used to conceal thought.

To glance at such a work as *The Laws of Manu* is as though one were reading a story of the "once on a time" period, especially if one reads the section "On the Military Class," V, 54.

The king must appoint seven or eight ministers, who must be sworn by touching a sacred image or the like, men, whose ancestors were servants of kings, who were versed in the holy books, who are personally brave, who are skilled in the use of weapons, and whose lineage is noble.

And V, 44, referring to a King:

Day and night must he strenuously exert himself to gain complete victory over his own organs, since that king alone, whose organs are completely subdued, can keep his people firm to their duty.

In fact, so wonderful are the counsels of this section that it might be issued as an addendum to Machiavelli's *The Prince and The Art of War*.

To read through such a work is to bring home poignantly the great difference between the days when the Dharma existed as a fact, an atmosphere, a Gnosis, and these times when to the world at large there is nothing beyond the horizon of human life itself. Though such works insist upon the rigid recognition of justice and the true facts of life, such as the knowledge of human frailty, there is no sentimentality. In V, 22 we read:

The whole race of men is kept in order by punishment, for a guiltless man is hard to be found through fear of punishment, indeed, this universe is enabled to enjoy its blessings.

But note the following:

But where punishment, with a black hue and a red eye, advances to destroy sin, there, if the judge discern well, the people are undisturbed.

Holy sages consider as a fit dispenser of criminal justice, that king, who invariably speaks the truth, who duly considers all cases, who understands the sacred books, who knows the distinctions of virtue, pleasure, and riches.

These are times of the greatest significance and urgency and the duty of all students of Occultism is to inculcate the return of the human race to the teachings and the practice of the Eternal Religion of the Masters of Wisdom, our Elder Brothers.

Our *personal* non-entity as "entirely phenomenal beings produced by Karman" is balanced by our eternal significance as Sons of the Sun, not merely here for a time, but for all time, the only reality being neither

the phantoms of past or future but the now. To an occult student the lesson of our times is the recognition by us as Deva-Egos of the entirely mayavic character of the present (more particularly) Western regime and its sinister tendencies as shown in its language, art, literature, and medicine. Selfishness *a, l'outrance* is its breath and *raison d'etre*, and death and destruction its approaching fate, as a whole.

"It is evident, then," as Soyen Shaku writes in *The Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot*,

that by purity of heart is meant absence of ignorance and self-will. But it is not a negative condition, for the most essential postulate of Buddhism is that in each of us there abideth the indwelling reason of the universe, which, when released from the temporal bondage of ignorance and self-will, becomes the master of itself by reducing everything to subjection and restoring it to its right place.

In a pure heart, therefore, the universal reason manifests itself in its full glory and works its own destiny unmolested. What one with such a heart wills is what makes the bird sing and the flower smile, what has raised the mountain and makes the water flow. He is hungry and the universe wishes to eat, he is asleep and all the world hibernates. This sounds extraordinary, but the enlightened understand it perfectly well.

As a man thinketh so is he. All can make a start at once to pierce the illusions and deceptions of life by discernment and non-attachment.

The Theosophical Forum

MODERN CHINESE THEOSOPHY — *Cecil Williams*

In the spring of 1935 a Chinese teacher named Tuan Szetsun, hailed in his own country as "the only sage after Confucius and Mencius," predicted an international crisis in the fall of that year, which might lead to a world war. In the following October Italy invaded Ethiopia and the international situation since that month has grown increasingly grave.

Whatever value may be attached to Tuan's predictions we cannot doubt that he is a prophet in the original sense — a teacher of divine truths. At an early age he devoted himself to the service of humanity, studied Buddhism and Confucianism, and when he was eighteen, in Tsing Cheng Mountain, "a vision came to him whereby the secrets of civilization were revealed. The past and future trends of humanity became as clear as the wrinkles of his hand."

Through the efforts of this remarkable man, now in his 72nd year, there came into existence in China branches of an ethical society which taught practical Theosophy, though not under that name. He urged upon his followers the practical exemplification of his teachings as the means of saving the world from a more horrible world war than the last.

To Theosophists in the West the thought that teachers like "Tuan the Great" are striving in the East to bring home to the peoples there the age-old truths of Theosophy is distinctly encouraging. Shall we greatly err in supposing that this activity of Tuan's is sponsored by the Masters? However that may be, the statement of his ethical precepts should interest and perhaps inspire Theosophical students. The rules which I give below are, I believe, worthy of reproduction in any Theosophical magazine.

These rules are prefaced by two paragraphs which I give in the quaint English of the Chinese translator, which somewhat obscures the

meaning in casual reading, but which will be perfectly intelligible to Theosophical students. The succeeding paragraphs I have altered to make them immediately clear to the reader, but without, I believe, interfering in any way with their sense.

This then is "an explanation given by Tuan Szetsun on the principle: 'Sincerity and Reverence will lead the world in Tranquillity':

In a vision on 12th of 1st moon I became alive to the fact that it is important to build up a personality both sincere and reverential in order to assure world peace. In theory and practice we must follow the following words in order to achieve my aim:

In one's self a faith must be founded. When the faith is carried out it becomes a perfection. When the faith is carried out with brilliant achievements it becomes great. Such greatness should be crowned with sacredness. When one becomes so sacred that he can not be known to the common people he is divine. He would cause a change without moving and achieve things unselfishly.

In morality we should be as sincere as the Emperor Wen; our thoughts as free as Confucius', but as ethical; our motives as merciful, loving, forgiving and sacred as Lu Lai's, Buddhism's great god, as Kwang Ying's, goddess of mercy, as Jesus Christ's.

In personal behavior we must not patronize houses of ill-fame, gamble, smoke, drink, be idle or develop other bad habits. We must not conspire, oppress or use force, but consider the whole world as one family and all peoples as one person.

To exert ourselves we must put forth efforts to help others for their sakes, and to work for them we must follow the Great Way. Before members of our family, servants and neighbors we should not betray our principles, and hold to the good even in a dark room, hidden from all eyes.

In speech we should not deceive ourselves, in behavior not continually justify ourselves, and, in the Great Way, never be selfish. The fundamental principle is justice.

At the sight of wealth we should not be envious but the ethics of gathering wealth and its wise use we should understand; and accept never a cent improperly. We should regard wealth from the standpoint of an immortal being, as something fleeting as a cloud, and be content with even a ration of water.

In walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, listening, looking and speaking we should protect the health of the whole man and balance action and tranquillity.

Our speech and actions should be considerate, earnest, modest, reasonable and humble, so that others may be influenced by our demeanor.

Our mind should be kept clean and alert, like a mirror displaying the reflexion of anything coming within its range.

We must not use anything not ours, nor use our own possessions at improper times. We must put our own experiences, our own behavior and our own merits into writing. One who writes is apt to behave according to what he has written. "A day should not be passed without work, leisure, exercise and observance of morality.

In reading the books of the ancients we should not adhere to every word, nor, at the same time, should we be blindly swayed by contemporary writers. We should exert ourselves to assimilate knowledge, for a commoner with a fine personality can teach an emperor.

In practical education, agriculture, industry and commerce, we should be thrifty and not wasteful. Even a scrap of paper should be valued as a rare treasure.

We should not be intoxicated with beautiful women, for lust is the worst of evils. Men and women are simply representatives of the negative and positive motions of Heaven, and in social intercourse we should neither speak nor think of seduction.

A true gentleman cultivates his person so strictly that his individuality will command heaven, earth and spirits. All human beings venerate their parents.

Being ordered to centralize the good points of all religions, so that with strong wills and fully educated we may safeguard permanent peace, we must carry out our aim fearlessly, without regard for threats to life or for slander.

We should understand things so thoroughly that no dispute remains as to the wisdom or the Tightness of our course. We should take all faults upon our shoulders, and pay no heed to those who envy us our knowledge.

Whether employer or employed, we must understand ourselves and our fellow-workers, comparing our minds with theirs. By following the proper doctrine we will benefit both ourselves and others and our example will be followed for ever.

Before undertaking anything we should think it over again and again. We should proceed with no program without a well-fixed aim, so that we may hurt neither Heaven nor our fellow-men. By being practical and true to duty our goal will be reached naturally.

We should do our part without asking for help, earnestly love our true selves, our families, our country, and the world; love all men and even all things, so as strictly to follow the principle of humanity. We should honor spirits but avoid them. We should not beg or flatter, should be free from superstition, and exist happily together with the Divine.

We should try our best," says Tuan in his concluding appeal, "in

accordance with the principles of humanity, to act on behalf of our sages in order to enable the benevolent atmosphere to dominate the world.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISING TIDE OF THEOSOPHY — *C. J. Ryan*

DO MIND AND MEMORY SURVIVE THE BRAIN?

Two recent pronouncements in different fields of scientific research, when placed in juxtaposition are so interesting and significant from their bearing upon Theosophical principles that we are impelled to attract our readers' attention to them in the hope that they will be useful when presenting Theosophy to intelligent inquirers who are dissatisfied with materialistic concepts of the Universe and Man and yet who see no "scientific" relief from their difficulties. The doubting Thomases who ask for "just one fact" before they venture to take the first step out of their intellectual cage may be set to think on new lines by the study of Theosophical ideas when sponsored by recognised scientists. H. P. Blavatsky said that Theosophy came "to break the molds of mind," the hard shell of dogmatic prejudice and ignorance, and that her *The Secret Doctrine* should be used as "a means of exercising and developing the mind never touched by other studies," and not only as a storehouse of information.

The first point referred to is a statement about the more subtil aspect of the Universe and the persistence of human consciousness after bodily death, by Dr. Gustaf Stromberg, a distinguished astronomer at Mount Wilson Observatory, Pasadena, who is also a philosopher — a not unusual combination among students of the heavens. We quote from his *The Material and the Immaterial Universe*, a *Leaflet* issued in March by the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. After a rather technical consideration of the new atomic theory, indeterminacy, space-time structure, etc., in support of the concept that there is "an actual distinction between the material and the immaterial world" without which many phenomena in living organisms are "entirely inexplicable," Dr. Stromberg continues:

Let us think of a living cell with its chromosomes and genes,

which carry the hereditary characters of the animals and plants. . . . What is it that determines their structure? . . . Organisms die and disintegrate; the cells and the chromosomes also die and disintegrate. It seems that at death some kind of an organizing entity has left the matter, which then forms simpler compounds in accordance with its own intrinsic nature.

We are built of matter; but there is also something which gives us not only the structure of living organisms, but also consciousness and memory. The latter belongs to the immaterial rather than to the material universe. There are several reasons for believing that certain fundamental immaterial elements in plants and animals can exist without being associated with matter. Some of these elements are extremely stable, and appear to retain their properties after the death of the individual.

On such a basis we can obtain a physical picture of the entities which in plants and animals carry inherited characters. Some of these entities are so stable that the corresponding characters appear to have remained practically unchanged during millions of years of organic development. It may also be possible to assign a space-time aspect to mental phenomena in general. In that case we should be able to picture a physical structure of memory and assign reasons for its permanence, in spite of the continuous renewal of the atoms in a living brain structure. We may also obtain a reasonable scientific basis for the immortality of the soul and the indestructibility of the individual memory.

We cannot observe the radio waves that determine the motions of the electrons in our radio antennae and tubes, yet the waves are the controlling influences, and the "material" electrons are only the means by which our physical sense organs become activated and recognise the invisible and "immaterial" actuality. We are deceived by appearances and give our attention only to the elements in the universe that carry energy in *observable* form. Dr. Stromberg claims

with reason that every atom as well as the entire Universe has an immaterial as well as a material structure. This "immaterial fine structure" or "etheric force-substance," as it were, unites the electrons, neutrons, and positrons which today are believed to compose the atoms and gives the combination its peculiar properties. By analogy with the immaterial but real radio waves and the "material" electrons in the instruments we may interpret the interaction of the immaterial mind and memory with the brain cells. The subject is too technical for detailed presentation here, but enough is indicated to show that science is well on its way to the demonstration of the existence and great significance of at least the invisible plane nearest the physical. This outlook contrasts strongly with the intensive concentration of Western thinkers upon the constantly changing physical universe, till lately regarded as the only worth-while subject for study. We are now being told that not only are the few strongly radio-active elements transforming, but even the most stable ones are doing the same, though far more slowly. The age-long evolutionary transformation of the constituent substances of the earth was known and taught by the Eastern occultists ages before radium was discovered in the West.

Dr. Stromberg has dealt with the "fine structure" of the immaterial universe in more complete studies than this little *leaflet*, and we understand that he is preparing a book in which his original theories will be fully explained.

H. P. Blavatsky said: "*The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon a belief in, and demonstration of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter.*" She would certainly have rejoiced to see how near to the Theosophical definition of the astral mold, the warp and woof of nature behind the *visible* pattern, so to speak, we are carried by Dr. Stromberg's extension of the scientific concept of the immaterial "fine structure" of the universe with its potential energy. H. P. Blavatsky's "quarrel" seems in sight of being ended, at least for him.

Dr. Stromberg is doing valuable work in trying to demonstrate to

scientists that the survival of the mind and memory of man, the "soul," shall we say, may after all be "scientific," but he will meet, and in fact he already has met, strong opposition from some biologists, though perhaps not from all. It is interesting to see that Dr. Julian S. Huxley, President of the Zoology Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at its last meeting approved of a subject which is at least on the borderland between the immaterial and the material worlds, saying, "I refer to telepathy and other extra-sensory activities of mind, which the work of Rhine, Salter and others is forcing into scientific recognition." A very few years ago such a remark would not have passed without the strongest protest from biologists and psychologists, even if such a heretical remark could have been made at any scientific meeting.

We are tempted to refer to the number of illustrations in biology which suggest a "fine structure" carrying intelligence — memory, and perhaps prevision (!) — but one must suffice. Sir Oliver Lodge says:

Burken records an experiment of a tail bud of one newt embryo being grafted into the body of another and developing into a new limb. How was this organization so completely changed as to produce a limb instead of a tail? Physical and chemical explanations leave us entirely in the lurch, and we must have recourse to the conception of a "biological field," an influence not in the living matter itself but in the space, presumably the ether, around it.

What is this "biological field," invisible, intangible, and yet intensely potent, if not a manifestation of the astral, immaterial structure, called by Lodge, the ether? Perhaps we might modify his last words to "presumably the ether, around *and within* it," the inner "field" being responsive to a *conscious* director or "organizer."

In another *Leaflet* by Dr. Stromberg, *A History of the Milky Way*, we find a passage which shows his deeply intuitive view of the tremendous problem of the Universe:

But let us not be conceited and think that we know anything about the "Riddle of the Universe." I am convinced that the physical evolution of the Universe, which can, at least in principle, be followed with our eyes, is only a faint echo of the music broadcasted as an accompaniment to a cosmic drama, in which an *evolution of a very profound nature* is taking place. This deeper aspect of the evolution, the magnificence of which we cannot grasp, belongs to a field beyond that studied and described in natural science. It is closely related to the ultimate meaning and purpose of the existence of matter, life and *consciousness*. [Italics ours.]

It is indeed the study of consciousness which is especially needed. Theosophy makes this paramount — "Man, know Thyself" is the key. As H. P. Blavatsky said: "It is not "The fear of God" which is "the beginning of Wisdom" but the knowledge of SELF which is WISDOM ITSELF." Man, being the microcosm of the Macrocosm, has the power to find within himself the complete reflexion of what is without — or, more properly perhaps, to find that the Within and the Without are One. There is a Path leading to that wisdom, and Theosophy shows us how to take the first steps which ultimately lead to the Heart of the Universe. But those steps imply more than merely intellectual research.

The second point to which we draw attention is presented by Professor Ernest Hunter Wright, of Columbia University, in *Harper's Monthly* for February, in an article on "The Nature of Telepathy." While it does not ostensibly deal with the "fine structure" of Dr. Stromberg's argument, it provides evidence that there are other means within us of finding more about the world (and perhaps other worlds) than those which are confined to the physical senses, and strongly suggests the existence of Dr. Stromberg's "immaterial elements which can exist without being associated with matter"!

Dr. Wright has studied Professor J. B. Rhine's elaborate experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance which have done more to convince skeptical scientists of the existence of those supernormal powers in

man than any previous attempts, and makes clear the important fact that they are really *extra-sensory*: "They do not seem to constitute a sixth sense, or a seventh, at all like the five we already know. Rather they appear as something of another order. The five known senses all have their special organs, but there would seem to be no organ proper to the powers we are now discussing." The senses localize their powers in the eyes, ears, etc., but those who possess telepathic or clairvoyant power have no impression that they are employing any sense-organ. Those powers are not associated with a sixth or seventh bodily sense, and that is why they have been called by Dr. Rhine "*extra-sensory*" powers.

Again, they do not obey one of the most familiar laws of nature, i. e., the weakening of every known form of radiation as it recedes from its originating center, according to the law of squares. Light, heat, sound, etc., all diminish in intensity with distance, but telepathy and clairvoyance reach the goal, however distant, without the slightest loss of power. In fact, Dr. Rhine has found that telepathic perception is often improved when the experimenters lengthen the distance between them. A thousand questions arise from the paradoxical results of serious investigators into telepathy and clairvoyance, and from the standpoint of physics they have so far proved unanswerable. Scientists are speculating on *new kinds of Time* which may be needed to explain difficulties in ordinary physical research! Perhaps these speculations will throw a little light on the paradoxes of telepathy and lead to deeper mysteries still more incomprehensible to the uninitiated investigator.

Telepathy and clairvoyance, though new to science, are not so to students of occultism, and they may very well be co-ordinated with the "fine structure," immaterial and non-physical, which is the vehicle or perhaps the substance of the mind. This opens a tremendously wide vista to the imagination, and it is not unlikely that the future development of science may be on these lines. Scientists are bound by their unwritten rules to try to discover new laws of nature in their own way, by experiment, observation, and deduction, but there is a limit to

this method, and that limit seems to be approaching more nearly than was expected as science becomes more and more metaphysical. We do not need less science, as some pessimists claim, but more. But the future scientist will discover that his methods must be changed as he sees more sublime objectives than the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity, however honorable. He will then have to become a Spiritual Scientist, an Adept. We have already some glimpses of the higher methods in the sudden intuitive flashes of Knowledge, "hunches," which have given the clues to many great scientific discoveries.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ONLY WAY OUT — *G. de Purucker*

Modern men and women, both older and younger, form a generation which we can, I believe, adequately describe as "a lost generation"; and the cause of it, the reason for our mental wanderings and emotional gropings, is the loss of our understanding and hold of a common or universally accepted ethical and intellectual standard. This is shown by the babel of voices surrounding us everywhere, by the hungry human hearts, and even by the eager human minds searching for Truth and not knowing where to find it, nor its guidance: human minds searching for a sufficient and satisfying inner light, for something that will guide us in solving the problems facing us. We *are*, indeed, a lost generation, and it is not the youth only who are "lost." Elders and youth are both lost in this sense; in fact it is the elders who are even more perplexed than are the youth of today. Our whole generation is blind, walking in darkness, not knowing whither to turn for the longed-for light; and the babel of voices that arises from the immense human crowd is something frightening and significant in its clamor and confused insistence upon panaceas and nostrums of various kinds, political and otherwise.

One hearkens vainly while lending an ear to this turbulent babel, which too often is mere babble, in order to find constructive suggestions which are of universal application. It is rare indeed to hear voices speaking with the authority of knowledge; and I will venture to suggest the reason of it all.

If there is a common struggle or fight in progress and you go down into the arena of turmoil definitely intending to fight those already fighting there, and to shout them, the chances are small that what you have to say will receive attention; the probability is that you are going to be hurt. This is because the would-be reformer simply descends to the level of the shouting squabblers. Such is not the manner by which to bring about anything that is universally and definitely constructive in

idea, or attractively new or helpful, or that will explain and solve the problems causing the universal disturbance. You are simply descending into the battle yourself, trying to overcome violence with violence, force with force; and this procedure never has succeeded, and I venture to say that it never will.

This does not mean to imply that force is always to be ignored in human relations. Sometimes it is necessary wisely albeit kindly to use force, but always without violence and in order to overcome an evil. Such employment of force or power should always be a merely temporary event or procedure, and should never be used save in an impersonal and upright manner, and for a good cause, and for the common weal. Justice to all is never to be gained by descending into the arena of battle and "fighting it out" there. Justice is rarely gathered into pockets, so to say; and very rarely indeed is it wholly on one side of a question.

Our generation is lost, intellectually and morally, because it has lost its vision. "Without a vision the people perish" — an old Hebrew saying based on a comprehensive view of human psychology as demonstrated in history, and therefore a saying which is full with truth. It is invariably a vision or an idea, or a body of ideas, which guides men upwards to glory or downwards to the pit; for Plato was fully right: it is ideas which make or unmake civilizations, build up or overthrow established institutions; and it is just grandly universal ideas, and the *will* to follow them — ideas and ideals which all men feel to be true and inerrant from truth — which men today lack. It is just because men today lack vision, i. e. an inner knowledge of the right thing to do, of a clear way out of their troubles, that as nations we are where we now are.

We are now at the end of one form of civilization, which, like the Roman Empire in its time, has reached its term, its breaking-up, and we are facing the opening measures of the cosmic drama which is now coming in. It will depend upon the innate wisdom and sense of high justice inherent in men's hearts and minds, whether our present

civilization will go down in blood and despair, or whether it will take breath and time in order to recover itself: whether, with the dawning of a new intellectual and moral perception of justice and reason, it will stop its descent down the declivity and begin to rise to new heights overtopping the finest that as yet racially we have attained. This latter can be done; and it is man's higher nature only, his intuitions and instincts for justice and reason, nothing else, that will bring it to pass with surety: man's innate sense of justice, his inherent sense of right, and the common recognition that reason and not violence is the way out — and upwards to safety, peace, and progress.

History with its silent but tremendously powerful voice shows us, as we hearken to its mandates, that there is absolutely no other way out for us; that there is no other complete solution, nor one which will be satisfactory to all types of human minds, to all types of human character. Freedom for all; each people seeking its own salvation on its own lines, but in ethical directions accompanied by reason and a desire to do justice. Even an enlightened self-interest, with its always keen eye for individual advantage, must see the universal benefits and securities of such a plan. All stable human institutions are founded on these intuitions and instincts, and upon naught else; for were it otherwise, then our sense of order and law, our very respect for our courts of law, international or national, were collectively a monstrous deception, and an ignominious and miserable farce; and all sane men realize that our laws are based on the rules of justice and impartial reason, tempered with impersonal mercy.

I am not one of those gloomy pessimists who say that man is but a "poor worm," with instincts born of his association with dust, and intuitions that are unfounded in fact, and that therefore he cannot solve his problems adequately. He can indeed solve them if he has the *will* so to do. We are indeed approaching the end of our civilization, and are fascinated and hold our breath as we watch the phenomena of its breaking up; but all too often we forget that this has been a civilization of matter almost wholly, where things of matter often counted as the only ones permanently worth while. There are no

longer new lands to which we may send our young people to colonize, for they all have been pre-empted or taken. The rule of force and of material values has prevailed almost universally, rather than the rules of international justice and common human rights. For 1800 years, more or less, it has been the rule: let everyone grab what he may; let everyone hold what he can. The conduct of the peoples of the earth has been largely based on this purely materialistic and selfish foundation. We sowed the wind; we are now as a body of spiritually bankrupt peoples reaping the whirlwind.

Is it not time that the more far-seeing and superior minds of the world should see to it that calmness and reason and impartial justice shall henceforth prevail? Is there any other and better way out of our troubles and difficulties than by solving them wisely? The only way by which they may be solved is by reason, by justice. If men deliberately refuse to listen to reason, if men deliberately refuse to wish or to *will* to do justice, then it seems certain that down we shall go, and our civilization, our great cities and the manifold works and labors of millions of hands through the years, shall be dust and ruined heaps. There would seem to be no other way out; no god will step into the arena of human pain and wilful ignorance and pull us wretched mortals out of the world-mess that we have created for ourselves, mostly through rabid self-interest and through our wilfully turning away from the paths of justice and peace. We alone must save ourselves; and when we begin to do this in the manner pleasing to the higher Powers, then we shall make an undeniable appeal for their aid and guidance; and we shall receive it. Hercules helps the wagoner, indeed; but only when the wagoner begins to help himself — and *in the right way*.

It is the sheerest foolishness and the most blatant of all ethical and intellectual poppycock to aver that man's destiny, now that the waste places of the earth have been taken, is blocked; that there is no future for those who were not "in at the beginning." Such an attitude is contradicted by every page of the annals of universal history. We must remember that no thing, no human institution, is unchangeable,

eternally the same; and that the shifting and continuously varying scenes of human history in the past — a certain fact of truth — promise that the future will be as full as the past has been with the shifting of cosmic scenery, and the changing of human interests and fields of activity. The greatest peoples of the earth have not been those possessing the greatest extent of territory, but precisely those who have been the foremost in the reception of ideas and in the application of progressive ideas to the upbuilding of human institutions based on and usually proclaiming, if not, alas, always following, the ideals of impersonal justice and trained reason; for these are spiritual qualities — which in fact are universal.

Let us fill our hearts with eternal gratitude to the watching though silent Cosmic Powers, that the horizons now before us as men in all parts of the earth, and without distinction of race or creed, are spiritual and intellectual horizons, beyond which there are for us unknown regions of infinitely vast extent waiting conquest by human genius, when we shall give rein to the instincts and intuitions of the human soul. Look then at what lies before us if we *will* to bring justice unmotivated by self-interest, and the love of honor and truth, to work amongst us!

One of the main causes, and perhaps the foremost cause, of our troubles, both national and international, is that men commonly, with many grand exceptions, however, are still holding to the belief in force, in violence, as being the way to solve our troubles. Such procedure never has succeeded permanently, and never will. Violence breeds violence; violence grows by violence. Hatred breeds hatred; selfishness breeds other selfishness.

It is one of the objectives, let me say duties, of the Theosophical Movement to show men the simple precepts of reason; that life should be governed by the grand ethical instincts of the human soul, which are based on no human conventions but on the orderliness of Nature's own structure and processes. Out of these ethical instincts spring the directing precepts of reason and our will to do justice, teaching us that

the "way out" lies within ourselves: not in our armies nor in our navies, nor in all the dreadful methods of mutual destruction which man's evil genius has invented. These last are not even temporary remedies and bring no satisfactory adjusting of troubles. At best, the machinery of defence should be used as police machines; for then their use becomes justified, because then they would be employed in the cause of justice and used with reason only.

Our problems will never be solved by our mad rush in competitive armament, bringing about universal distrust, fear, anxiety, and crushing the peoples with taxation which threatens to grow beyond their power to meet, and almost making them hate the conditions under which they live their lives. It is the old folly, now recognised by all, to argue that by piling up armaments and inventing new devices of horrible destruction, and by increasing the use of violent force, by and by war will become so horrible that men will shrink in fearsome terror from it. Of all the fallacies and stupid arguments, this is the worst that has ever been inflicted on the suffering minds of mankind.

You will never succeed in stopping war by organizing yourselves into associations or societies swearing to refuse service to your government, and defying it in case of war. That procedure, in my judgment, is abominably wrong. We may admire the idealistic courage and ideal thoughts of the young men and women who, it seems, are doing this. But they overlook the fact that they are merely announcing their declaration to declare war of a kind upon their own government and country, if war should come, thereby introducing disorder and intestine strife among themselves.

Let the youth of the different peoples of whatever country set the example of fidelity and loyalty, each youth to his own government, thus proving the strength and worth of the moral ideal of citizenship; yet, on the other hand, as the world badly needs the idealisms and chivalry resident in the younger generation, let youth express these likewise by raising its voice loud and insistent, powerfully declaring itself for universal justice and reason, and do so by the measures of

established law. In this manner, the voice of the world's youth will penetrate into all places, closed and open; for their insistence upon their rights as the coming generation soon to shoulder the burthen of the older, will reach sympathetic ears too numerous to count. *Novus ordo saeculorum!*

I should like to see complete disarmament of the peoples take place, by mutual compact and convention, to be replaced by an international navy, officered and manned by men drawn in rotation from the different maritime or even inland peoples of the globe, and trained for this purpose. I should like to see the armies of the world reduced to relatively small national police forces solely. The duties of the international navy would be the policing of the seas, the repressing of piracy, and the making of the high seas and coastal waterways safe for the commerce of the peoples of the world. There is not one thing to prevent this double achievement of human constructive genius — except a psychology which everyone detests and all fear; a psychology that has merely grown up to be a habit of human thinking.

One may pray and hope that the prominent men in the world today, those who hold the destinies of the peoples more or less in their hands, will hearken, will listen, to the heart-beat, the unexpressed and growing Will of the peoples for a permanent solving of their troubles. If they do so, the names of these men will go down in history; they will be remembered not so much by statues and monuments in stone, but their names will be emblazoned in perpetuity in the perduring fabric of human hearts. Their memory shall remain for ages to come as the fire of love and gratitude burning in human hearts.

Again I repeat: a Brotherhood of the Peoples based on reason and justice, and functioning for the common good, for the progress of all, is both practicable and practical, and will some day be seen to be inevitable. Why not therefore lay the foundations of it Now!

REINCARNATION (1) — *Clifton Meek*

Theosophy Briefly Defined

The writer desires to express his appreciation of the privilege of presenting a few Theosophical thoughts to this group of students.

Perhaps some among you are more or less familiar with Theosophy or some of its particular teachings and doctrines, which, in the aggregate, comprise a co-ordinated, symmetrical, and well-balanced philosophy of life for those who have investigated its teachings in the spirit of something more than purely intellectual interest. Its vast range ignores no department of truth — physical, intellectual, or spiritual — a fact which gives it a unique place in the world of religious thought. It has scientific values dealing with the physical aspect of Nature — its external carpentry, so to speak. Any teaching or theory, whether it be of a religious or scientific nature, which ignores the opposite or complementary aspect of Nature, is but a partial truth at best, and all too often a grievous and misleading error.

Theosophy has philosophical values to enrich the expanding intellectual faculties, values by which spiritual truth and scientific fact may be reconciled. The acceptance of any religious or theological belief which demands that we throw intelligence and reason to the winds has a vulnerable spot in it somewhere, and will not survive the test of time and experience. The power of intellection and reason is our emotional counterbalance, our safeguard against walking blindly into error and the misconceptions which have misled so many in the past.

But more far-reaching in many ways are the spiritual truths which Theosophy has to offer to satisfy the nobler aspirations and spiritual longings of man's divine nature, the Inner Self, and to set his feet firmly on the pathway of spiritual self-enlightenment, leading him, step by step, beyond the portals of the lower personality into a more intimate relationship with that enduring Self of which the personality is but a

distorted and feeble reflexion. No religion, philosophy, or science, whatever claims it may make, can do more than that, for all truth, knowledge, and wisdom are the eternal treasures of man's divine nature. There is no agency or power, human or divine, outside of man that can carry him to the goal of perfection, happiness and peace. As a Great Teacher once stated it in the picturesque language of his day: "The kingdom of God is within you," a profound occult truth of Nature which seems to have been all but forgotten in our age of external groping for spiritual values. Perhaps if this truth had been accepted as literally as have some other teachings, the great mass of mankind would not be wandering in the fog of doubt and despair today with a chronic and aggravated case of spiritual blind staggers, trying to thumb its way to an unknown destination.

Now as Theosophists we do not say to you as is sometimes done: "Here is Theosophy, a wonderful new religion. It teaches thus and so. Just accept and believe it and you will be a Theosophist. Don't take the trouble to look any further, for you will have the last word of Divine Wisdom — there isn't any more."

But what we do say is this: "Here are some very ancient teachings that have stood the test of time, and have been found very helpful in meeting the problems and difficulties of life. They provide a new viewpoint and outlook upon life, and will enable you to view and weigh its experiences in a new light, for they will help you to find yourself. They will answer many questions which no other system attempts to explain, for they are based upon the laws of Universal Nature. Consider and weigh them, but do not accept them on anyone's say-so or upon any supposed authority; be guided by your own intuitions, for that is the only way you can eventually arrive at truth. These teachings, which in our present age are called Theosophy, are nothing new, but are as old as thinking man. They are not presented as a "divine revelation" in any sense, suddenly thrust upon some personality from "on high" but have been known and taught in all ages, and from them have sprung, at various times in the world's history, the great religious movements and philosophical schools of thought. When

these impulses have expended themselves and the original teachings have been corrupted by human misunderstanding and the passing of time, they have been given anew to the world by the Great Teachers and Elder Brothers of the race. In the early centuries of our present era they were promulgated under the name of Christian Gnosticism, and likewise were imbodyed and incorporated under the name of the Hebrew Kabbalah in still earlier times. In ancient Greece they were taught under the guise of "The Mysteries" for thousands of years until the degeneration and final closing of the Mystery Schools, while in ancient Hindusthan they were known as Atma-Vidya. Beneath the ritualism and external forms of every religion you will find some remaining traces of them, but invariably distorted.

This accounts for the fact that there are so many similarities in the various religions of the world which are but the results of Theosophical impulses that have been inaugurated at divers times during the history of mankind. Theosophy encourages the study of comparative religions; it reveals that there must have been, of necessity, a parent doctrine from which all have sprung.

Reincarnation an Early Christian Teaching

In these days of world upheaval and readjustment — a storm leaving in its wake an army of countless men with broken spirits, and many others filled with doubts and fears — it is something to have a philosophy of life (call it a religion if you wish, although it is something more than that) that reveals a universal and symmetrical plan of Life beyond the shambles of human events and our external, disordered lives; that helps us to retain our faith in the external fitness of things and in our fellow man; and that reveals a far nobler destiny for mankind than the present picture warrants.

Whenever men have been unable to explain the ways of Universal Nature and the tragedies of human experience, they invariably have attributed them to one of two causes: either to the "will of God," or to blind, fortuitous "chance." Thinking people no longer will accept these hackneyed and threadbare "explanations" which are worse than none

at all, for they not only fail to explain, but instil and encourage a fatalistic concept of life that leaves our destiny wholly and completely in the hands of external agencies over which we have no control. If it is the "will of God," to what higher court can we appeal, or why should we even dare to presume to do so? If it is "chance," obviously, there is nothing we can do about it.

Frankly, Theosophists have little patience with any philosophy of life, whether it be of a religious or of a scientific nature, which makes of man a "worm in the dust," devoid of the divine and spiritual attributes and intellectual capacities by which alone he can raise himself above the mud and mire of his own making. The occidental world, particularly western religion, could well afford to take a page or two from the wisdom of the East. If the doctrine of Reincarnation, and its complementary teaching Karman, or the principle of action and reaction in Universal Nature — if these were better understood, in all probability we should have quite a different picture. There would be at least a few less human souls blindly butting their heads against the wailing wall of self-pity and despair, and blaming the gods of chance for the circumstances of their lives.

Reincarnation and Karman are the only teachings which explain with any degree of logic and reason the apparent inequalities and injustices of life. They are among the oldest religious teachings in the world, and have been handed down from the dim past from age to age. They are confined to no particular creed or sect, country or nation, age or civilization, and can be found, in one form or another, in every religion in the world. Let us for example, turn to the Christian religion, one with which we are all more or less familiar — particularly in its external aspects.

When the disciples asked Jesus, as is related in the New Testament, "Who did sin, this man or his parents that he was born blind?" it is quite apparent that they took the truth of Reincarnation for granted, for how could a man have sinned to have been born blind, if not in a previous life? Jesus also stated that John the Baptist was the former

Elias who was to come.

Reincarnation was the universal belief not only of the oriental peoples of the far East, but likewise those of the Mediterranean civilization at the beginning of the Christian era, and it was only in after centuries, the sixth of our present era to be exact, that the last traces of it were obliterated from the intellectual and religious thought of Europe. There is undeniable evidence in the extant writings of at least one of the early Christian fathers that Reincarnation and "pre-existence of souls" was openly believed and taught to some extent among the early Christian sects before that religion became what might be called an "organized" body or system. It was not until the sixth century that Christian doctrines, after much sifting and rearranging, took the form of a definite, and what since has been considered "authoritative," theology.

Among the early Christian teachers who exercised no little influence over the thought of his day was Origen, the celebrated exponent of Alexandrian philosophical Christianity, which, in all probability, presented the most scholarly aspect of the Christian teachings.

In his work *On First Principles* he stated: Everyone, accordingly, of those who descend to the earth is, according to his deserts, or agreeably to the position which he occupied there, ordained to be born in this world, in a different country, or among a different nation, or in a different mode of life, or surrounded by infirmities of a different kind, or to be descended from religious parents, or parents who are not religious; so that it may sometimes happen that an Israelite descends among the Scythians, and a poor Egyptian is brought down to Judea.

Here is not only a definite and clear-cut statement of the doctrine of Reincarnation, but of Karma as well. In fact, these ideas prevailed so universally among the early Christians that it was found necessary to convene a special Church Council to suppress them, and about the year 530, the Council of Constantinople, in a final effort to obliterate the remaining traces of theosophical Christianity, pronounced its anathema against the teachings of Origen and the "pre-existence of souls."

A "One-Way" Immortality

In its stead was substituted a purely theological concept which would not embarrass certain other theological doctrines that then were beginning to take definite form and finding their way into Christian teachings. Immortality, this new teaching said, concerns the future only, and not the past. Now it is quite obvious that many other erroneous doctrines were bound to originate from such a teaching.

Immortality was pictured as something with a beginning, but without an end. This, we state, is nothing short of a philosophical absurdity, and can no more be than you can hold in your hand a stick or a rope which has but one end. Anything which is conditioned to the extent that it has a beginning, must, of its very nature in the eternal fitness of things and according to all known laws of logic and reason, have an end, and hence there is nothing immortal about it. It would be just as logical to say that time once had a beginning, but will never end, or that space begins at a given point and extends indefinitely and without end into boundless infinitude.

If man is immortal at all, that immortality, Theosophy states, must extend into the past as well as into the future. In every realm of Nature we see the law of repetitive cycles of activity and rest in ceaseless operation. Life and death, night and day, summer and winter, work and sleep, in the very act of our breathing, and in the periodical recurrence of sun-spots — it is to be found everywhere. Are we to assume that man is an exception to a law or process of Nature which is so universal; that he lives but one short earth-life and then vanishes from the scene of his half-finished activities for ever? Who can learn all the lessons of life in the span of a few brief and fleeting years? If any one thinks he can, it is all the more evident that he still has much to learn. Is there any evidence in the world today that man, individually and collectively, has attained such a high degree of perfection that he needs no further experience and discipline?

Genius Explained

If we consider life from the viewpoint of one short span, it has little rime or reason. Why should one man be born a genius, a Beethoven, a Shakespeare, a Caruso, an Edison, or an Einstein, while another is born a coal-miner with but enough intelligence and creative genius to wield a pick in the bowels of the earth. Simply because genius is the accumulated results of efforts made along some particular line of endeavor over a period of several incarnations. You often will find that such men have deficiencies elsewhere in their characters; that their development is not well rounded. These are things which will have to be corrected in future lives, and these egos like all others will be born into the circumstances of life where this can best be accomplished. Mother Nature is a stern schoolmistress. She has no favored pupils. Whatever our position or circumstances of life may be, we are in the class where we belong, where we have put ourselves, by our own efforts, or the lack of them, in ages past.

It should be obvious that we sometimes set into motion certain causes which are unable to produce their final effects and a balance of justice in one lifetime. We see those who wrong others and who apparently never are brought to justice. We see those who live in idle luxury, who contribute nothing to the spiritual, intellectual, or even material welfare of the world, but who are bounteously provided with all the blessings of life, so called. On the other hand there are those who live nobly, who never do injury to others, but spend their entire lives in self-sacrificing labor for the comfort and welfare of others, and who have trouble until the end of their days. How is it to be explained? Well, in our grandfathers' day we should have been told — and possibly there are some who still explain it that way — that all of these things would be settled in another world beyond. Those who lived rightly would receive their reward and recompense in heaven, and the other kind would receive their punishment in hell throughout eternity, which, by the way, is a very long time. The fact remains, however, that the causes were generated in this world — not in the next. The karmic seeds of destiny were sown here, and will come to fruition where they were planted when the appropriate conditions arrive. If a farmer

plants wheat in one field, he does not harvest it in another on the opposite side of his farm. The laws of Nature are not that fortuitous and haphazard.

Reincarnation Not Transmigration

There are those who do not like the idea of Reincarnation because they do not understand it, but confuse it with Transmigration, another teaching entirely. They say they do not want to be reborn as a cab-horse, an Alaskan seal, a New Jersey mosquito, or what-not. This is no objection to Reincarnation at all, but to their own misconception of it. Perhaps you psychologists can explain why otherwise intelligent people will jump at such absurd conclusions without investigation and then proceed to build them up into crystallized opinions and beliefs.

Now Reincarnation and Transmigration refer to two separate and distinct operations of Nature. The human Ego never imbodyes in a beast, nor has Theosophy ever taught such a spiritual and psychological absurdity. There may be certain oriental sects which teach and believe warped and twisted concepts of Reincarnation just as there are certain occidental sects who have perverted ideas of Christianity, but you will never find such rubbish in Theosophy.

The human Ego could not incarnate in a beast body for the simple reason that the latter does not possess an intermediate vehicle or psychological apparatus highly enough evolved, or sensitively enough attuned to receive the human Ego which is ages ahead of the beast in evolution. Such a freak of nature could no more eventuate than it would be possible to instil the theory of Einstein into the brain and understanding of an anthropoid ape, for the capacity to receive it is not there. Fundamentally, there is no difference between the body of man, and that of a beast. Both are composed of the same identical kind of atoms borrowed from the workshop of nature for a brief period. The vast gulf between the human and beast kingdoms lies in the inner capacities, in the psychological, intellectual, intuitional, spiritual, and divine natures of the entities. It has taken the great virgin Mother Nature age upon age to build up the marvelously adjusted intermediate

nature of man — the human soul — which no beast possesses. It will not be until future ages, in the next planetary round of world evolution that the more advanced entities of the beast kingdom which trail behind the human family in the long cosmic pilgrimage of evolution, will have evolved a psycho-mental apparatus capable of receiving the divine fire of intelligence, self-consciousness, and free will. Man, in the meantime, and after many incarnations will have evolved to a still higher state in the scale of evolution. Faculties which now are dormant and unknown to western science will slowly evolve and take their places with the others we already have developed. Intuition, of which we have but flashes at present, will function as easily as does our eyesight or sense of taste and smell. Man is slowly working upward in the scale of evolution, not downward, and if anyone fears a zoological future, it only proves there is room for Theosophical enlightenment.

Now what is transmigration? Transmigration concerns the atoms of the physical vehicle, and not the human, reincarnating Ego. When the Ego discards and leaves behind it the worn-out physical body much in the manner that we discard an old garment no longer capable of useful service, the process of disintegration immediately begins taking place. The individual atoms of the physical shell, no longer held in cohesion by the presence of the Ego, return to the workshop of Nature and go about their respective tasks. These tiny lives have a consciousness of their own, appropriate to their position in the scale of life, and there is no such thing as "dead matter," as a materialistic science once tried to make us believe. That theory was also a philosophical absurdity, and resulted from the failure of scientists to recognise the spiritual aspect of nature.

These tiny lives, as before stated, have a consciousness of their own, and carry the imprint and impression left upon them by the recent life of the now excarnated human entity. They automatically are drawn by psycho-magnetic attraction to the departments of nature and to other entities where these characteristics can best find expression.

If the past life of the man has been a vicious and brutal one, they will

find their natural habitat in a beast of like nature, and vice-versa. The tragedy in the former case lies in the fact that the reincarnating man will again meet them face to face in some future incarnation. If they return to him with "dirty faces" and he is born with some infirmity or affliction, shall we say that it is due to "the will of God" or blind chance, or shall we say that it is due to his own ignorance and violation of the impersonal laws, or habits, of Nature?

Another Common Objection

Another objection we sometimes hear is this: "I do not want to come back again; I've had enough trouble in this life. If I thought I had to go through it all again, it would be terrible. There is no comfort in that idea for me." Our personal desires and wishes have little effect upon the cyclic laws of nature, and whether we like it or not, they will continue to operate. But why should anyone assume that the next life would be exactly like the present one? Nature repeats itself, but always in diversity. In all probability the karmic impulses which produced the unhappy conditions of the present life would have expended themselves, and the future earth-life might be, and probably would be, far brighter and happier.

If Reincarnation assured everyone that he would be reborn under the most favorable circumstances possible, that he would have social position, wealth, power, a large retinue of servants, high-powered motor cars to ride in, that he would have to work only when he felt like it, and could do just about as he pleased all his life: if this were the doctrine, then, in all probability, it would become the most popular religious belief overnight. The fly in the ointment is that Reincarnation and Karma "put the finger" as they say, on a very vulnerable spot in human nature — individual responsibility. Theosophy furnishes no karmic scapegoat to which we can tie our mistakes and then drive it into the wilderness with shouting and rejoicing as did the ancient tribes of old.

There is no power in the universe through which we can escape the consequences of our own acts, the karmic impulses which we already

have generated. Every cause will produce its inevitable effect, good or bad. Thus it will be seen that man is his own "creator," if that much abused term may be pardoned.

Remembrance of Past Lives

"If we have lived before, why is it," it is sometimes asked, "that we cannot remember our past lives?" The fact that we cannot proves nothing. We cannot recall all of the present one. The fact that we have forgotten the years of our infancy is no proof that we did not exist at that time.

While we do have a subjective memory of past lives in the deeper reaches of consciousness, we cannot recall it objectively for the reason that the brain-mind, with its store of worldly gleanings, disintegrates at death, for it belongs to that portion of the human constitution which is wholly mortal. Character is the accumulated results, Nature's record of our past experiences in other lives.

Perhaps it is better that we cannot recall our past lives. In all likelihood, the picture would not be altogether lovely. There might be some pages from which we should be glad to turn, just as we are glad to forget some of the details of our present experiences. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and the mistakes of the present life give many of us plenty of working material for improvement.

Reincarnation is the lost chord of modern thought. We need a larger view of the purpose and destiny of the human race. Theosophy relates man to the Universe and shows that his individual consciousness is a ray of the Universal Cosmic Consciousness — not just a body to which a newly "created" soul is suddenly added at birth. Nor are we accidental products of blind, mechanical forces. Each individual is a part of a living, organic Universe which carries within its own unfolding plan, atoms, men, worlds, solar systems, and galaxies as the divine drama is enacted on the cosmic stage of Life.

Through innumerable incarnations, the human Ego, which is the real actor, assumes many roles, and takes on the disguise of many

personalities, which are dropped one by one, as necessary experience is gained. The personality is but the mask which is worn for a day, during which time the real actor becomes so absorbed in the role which is being played, that the real Self is forgotten for the time being.

An understanding of Reincarnation and Karman removes the incentive for selfish gain which so often results in needless human suffering, for it reveals the futility of striving for self alone. Our lives, from prince to pauper, from genius to the plodding toiler, are inseparably linked with karmic threads of destiny which we weave into the grotesque or beautiful patterns of our lives as we journey along together on the Long Pilgrimage. Probably the highest virtue of Reincarnation lies in the fact that it is the hopeful doctrine of "another chance," the opportunity to right old wrongs, and to reap the reward and fruits of kindly and compassionate help given to fellow pilgrims in the long forgotten past. It has been universally believed in the East for countless centuries, and is steadily gaining recognition and acceptance among thinkers and scholars in the western world, not among Theosophists alone, but among students in general and people in all walks of life. It has been the theme of scholars, poets, and mystics in every age, but perhaps none has sung its mystic song of hope with more force and beauty than did John Masefield, the present Poet Laureate of England in his poem "A Creed":

I hold that when a person dies
His soul returns again to earth;
Arrayed in some new flesh-disguise
Another mother gives him birth
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain
The old soul takes the roads again.

Such is my own belief and trust;
This hand, this hand that holds the pen,
Has many a hundred times been dust
And turned, as dust, to dust again;
These eyes of mine have blinked and shone

In Thebes, in Troy, in Babylon.

And as I wander on the roads

I shall be helped and healed and blessed;

Dear words shall cheer and be as goads

To urge to heights before unguessed.

My road shall be the road I made;

And all I gave shall be repaid.

So shall I fight, so shall I tread,

In this long war beneath the stars;

So shall a glory wreath my head,

So shall I faint and show the scars,

Until this case, this clogging mould

Be smithied all to kingly gold.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Presented to the Psychology Club of Norwalk, Conn, at the Norwalk High School, March 23, 1937. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

KARMAN THE X FACTOR — *Mary Womble*

When H. P. Blavatsky gave *The Secret Doctrine* to the world, more particularly to the western world, she presented the teachings in a way which could be understood in degree by some who were breaking away from the crystallized conceptions of the day but who thought, nevertheless, in the terminology of those beliefs.

H. P. Blavatsky gave us seven Jewels of Wisdom, the second of which is the teaching concerning the doctrine of Karman. Considering the knowledge extant in her day, it is not strange that many, not hoping fully to understand teachings which were in some cases sketchy and in some cases merely hinted at, awaiting the development of more intuitive minds, should call the second Jewel of Wisdom the Law of Karman.

Just as Theosophists stress the necessity for teaching the septenary nature of man as against the threefold division, i. e. soul, spirit, and body, in order that man may more fully understand this nature and profit by the understanding, so Theosophy teaches that Karman operates as a law and that man is himself his karman.

Karman comes from the Sanskrit root-word "kri," which means "to do"; thus Karman means "action." We have a law of Karman or action operating on our physical plane. As an example, let us drop a pebble into a pool of water. As the energy goes out from center we call this centrifugal force, and as it returns to center due to some law within its own nature we call this centripetal force. So far as I know, there is no law in the universe to prevent the centripetal force from being inherent in the action itself. It is true that the water may be scooped from the pool, if it were possible to do so with sufficient speed, and the center of the action removed, but no law can prevent the action of centripetal force if the center remains unchanged.

In his *Notes on the Bhagavad Gita*, Mr. Subba Row, who was an eminent

Eastern student of the Wisdom Religion, tells us that the Wisdom Religion postulates a First "Cause" or Principle, this being, logically, the infinite, eternal, immutable, boundless, rootless root of all being. He asks us to imagine in this eternal Boundless which is called Parabrahman, centers of energy, in germ. These are called Logoi or, in singular, Logos or The Word. From these Logoi emanates a light. This light of the Logos is called Daivipra-kriti or Fohat or cosmic energy. Now from the objective point of view of the Logos, Parabrahman, or the rootless root of all Being, is seen as a veil thrown over itself. This is called Mulaprakriti or cosmic matter. Mr. Subba Row designates eight forms of this cosmic matter, naming them earth, water, fire, air, wind, mind, intuition and egotism.

Theosophy gives us the Law of Analogy to aid our study, and by applying it here, we see that energy, operating through one medium of cosmic matter, must operate on the same principle through all forms of cosmic matter. Energy, operating through the medium of water, must operate on the same principle of earth, air, fire, wind, mind, intuition or egotism, and thus it is that a man may modify his own center of being by growth and a constant unfolding of his own inner nature in such a way that the centripetal force of his acts and thoughts will be beneficially altered in its effect upon the center which is the man.

Now let us see how it is that man himself is this karman. The Leader of the Theosophical Society, Dr. Gottfried de Purucker, emphasizes and grips this teaching in the second half of the fourth chapter of his book *The Esoteric Tradition*. For this part of our argument we are going to review the text in the last half of this chapter on the life and teachings of Gautama the Buddha. It seems, according to Dr. de Purucker, that there is a popular belief that Gautama the Buddha taught complete annihilation of the entity at death. He points to the Jataka Tales, the rebirth stories of the Buddha, some six hundred in number, which Tales refer in many cases to rebirth. These Tales give evidence of the common acceptance by the multitudes of Buddhists of an X-factor in the complex of skandhas forming the human being, which X-factor passes from life to life. According to our Leader, Buddhism teaches an

evolution of this X-factor of consciousness and will through many rebirths, bringing about constantly increasing power and faculty until finally the entity becomes a man, then a Bodhisattva, or one who is filled with the spirit of the Buddhist principle (Bodhi), the fountainhead of utter wisdom.

The Leader asks what it is that passes through many rebirths until it becomes a Buddha? The scriptures of the Hinayana or southern school of Buddhism call this the *karman* or results and consequences. Dr. de Purucker asks if it is thinkable that the Titan Intellects of the human race taught that bare consequences, naked composites, sheer effects, technically called *skandhas*, can or do pass in entitative fashion from life to life, re-collect themselves, after being dispersed time after time as atomic aggregates into the various realms of nature from which they were originally drawn. He tells us then that this depends upon the meaning we give to the term "*skandhas*" or "*samskaras*." Mere aggregates of atoms existing on the psycho-emotional and physical plane without an internal bond of spiritual-psychological union is a materialistic idea, rejected by philosophical and scientific thought; but if we understand *samskaras* to mean psycho-magnetic and material aggregates of life-atoms attracted to each other because of their intrinsic magnetic vital powers, unified and governed by the repetitive action of the same spiritual and intellectual forces which formerly held them in union as an aggregated vehicle, the teaching is then consistent with what we know of the intricate unitary and yet compounded character of our constitution and consistent with all the teachings of Hindu philosophy as well as the Buddha's profound philosophy. The point Dr. de Purucker now brings out is, he says, the inner content of the Buddha's doctrine and is found in both the Mahayana and the Hinayana Schools and taught by Theosophy.

The lower parts of an entity form a compound aggregate and this is mortal and perishable and is called in Buddhism *samskaras*. However, there is something, an X-factor of a spiritual, intellectual and psychological character, around which the aggregated compound or *samskaras* re-gather or re-collect at each new rebirth. This X-factor, he

says, cannot be designated as an immortal soul in the Christian sense because that idea implies a static condition and the teaching is that nothing in the universe is static or unchanging. This X-quantity is that vital, psychological something which insures the re-collecting of the samskaras for each new life, a fruitage or result of past lives. The Leader tells us that Karman is as good a name as any for this X-factor if we understand it to mean consequences, results, spiritual, intellectual, psychical, physical, etc. He gives the example of a child developed from an invisible life-germ to great age, and suggests how each phase is a change from the preceding one but is based or founded upon a preceding phase. This is the key to the Buddhist thought. Just as a child is born and develops, so the karman of an entity passes from body to body, from low to high, through different life stages of rebirth through the different ages. This X-quantity the Theosophists call the "Reincarnating Ego"; the Mystical Buddhists call it "the Shining Ray from the Buddha Within"; and the Hinayana School calls it the "Karman" — this karman evolving, growing continuously better, nobler, until the man through these karmic changes or changing karman, finally becomes a Bodhisattva and then a Buddha, finally entering Nirvana.

Theosophists call this X-factor, this Karman, the Monad, imperishable in essence, the fountainhead of consciousness and will, passing from age to age throughout the manvantara, reproducing itself by means of rays from its essence in the various reimpodiments or reincarnations it brings about. In Mystical Buddhism, the Leader tells us, especially in the North, this Monad is known as the Dhyani-Buddha, the core of every reimpodifying being. *The Esoteric Tradition* also tells us that every Monad is a ray, a droplet of and from the cosmic Maha-Buddhi, just as in Mystical Buddhism every Dhyani-Buddha is a ray from the Amitabha-Buddha, a manifestation of Alaya, the cosmic spirit.

In simple words the teaching then is this: there is a ray from the celestial Buddha within the composite entity called man, the man builded of the samskaras, and the influence of this ray persists through the ages and re-collects the samskaras together anew, reproducing the

same karmic entity. The karman of the man then *is* the man himself. Because man continually changes, continually grows, the karman which is the man, continually changes for the better.

The esoteric Dharma of Gautama the Buddha states that every man is a manifestation on earth of a Buddhist principle belonging to his constitution and manifesting in three degrees or planes: (a) as a Celestial or Dhyani-Buddha, (b) as a Dhyani-Bodhisattva, (c) as a Manushya-Buddha. All human faculties and powers are like rays from the spiritual sun, derivatives from this interior compound Buddhist entity, and union with this core of our being is the aim of all initiation, for when man becomes one with the Buddhist principle within him, the seat of the abstract Bodhi, he becomes a Buddha. A Buddha is one who is fully awakened in all the ranges of his constitution and is a complete and, relatively speaking, perfectly evolved human being.

Dr. de Purucker assures us that mortification and mutilation of the physical vehicle is not the way to initiation, and points to Gautama's rejection of such lower yoga with the replacing of it by the control of the will, living the life, combined with intellectual awakening, the path of interior development: the becoming at one with the superior elements of the human constitution, divine in their higher parts, spiritual in the next lower range, and intellectual in the third. The real Yoga, the only Yoga of value, according to the teaching, is that of man ever striving consciously or unconsciously to attain union with the divinity within. The only way to unutterable wisdom and peace of the divine is found within one's self. All the luminaries of the human race, the spiritual and intellectual giants, were those who developed more or less the Buddhist principle in themselves. Every man may walk the path, for in his constitution are the same elements which the Great Ones possess.

According to our authority, the unquestioned teaching of the Buddha was that a man may obtain union with Brahma. Something of a spiritual-intellectual character works through the samskaras that form man, which entity must obtain union with the cosmic spirit, here called

Brahma. This, too, is the essence of the teaching of the Vedanta of India: that the root of all Being is the cosmic spirit, that reunion with it is inevitable and that there is a path by which such union may be obtained in a pilgrimage vastly shortened. Even here, the Leader wishes us to understand, the freed Monad does not stop, for beyond Brahman are realms of consciousness wherein reside the roots of the cosmic tree, the individualized Adi-Buddha, the cosmic creative Logos of Adi-Bodhi, or Alaya the Cosmic Originant. The world of Brahma is a relatively imperfect sphere of lives and life, for beyond even Brahman lies Parabrahmic infinitude.

We have seen how it is that Karman operates as a law and how it is that man is his karman. We have seen that, if our analogy holds true, it is useless to send forth thoughts and deeds of a certain character and expect them to return to us different in essence from what we send forth. We have seen how it is that as we think and do, so we are; and we have seen that it is the nature of all things to evolve and grow. How shall we apply this to our lives? Can we not unfold from our nature and allow to grow and expand those qualities within our own nature that make for universal harmony? We can all develop understanding and sympathy. We can all unfold awareness of the cares and sorrows of others. We can help each other through kindly and wise understanding that all may benefit. By becoming less self-centered, by growing and unfolding spiritually, we may change our center of being so that returning evil thoughts and acts cannot then so greatly injure the finer substance of our greater natures. Thus we protect those who may be weaker and might fail if the added force of our failures to live in harmony with the laws of nature are added to their own weakness.

No one can say just what has been the effect of giving to the world the Seven Jewels of Wisdom, but it is certain that here is a cosmic philosophy which in its simpler aspects answers the questions arising in the minds of the masses, and in its deeper studies gives hints of the sublime heights to which the scholar may rise. This cosmic philosophy has at its heart the cure for every ill of mankind through its understanding of man's nature and the relation of that nature to the

universe. It gives man the inspiration he needs to win onward on the evolutionary path. It brings a conviction of the necessity for man to learn his direct responsibility to the rest of creation as well as to his own kind.

The Theosophical Forum

PERPLEXITIES ABOUT KARMAN — *H. T. Edge*

The purpose of this article is to describe some of the difficulties which occur in our endeavors to understand the doctrine of Karman, to show why they occur, and to indicate the way out of them.

Karman is one of the doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom, as widespread as the lands of earth, as old as mankind; it is one of the Seven Keys of Knowledge. To grasp it in its entirety would require a mind of scope vast enough to transcend the limits of race and time; but, since the peoples of earth are restricted by race and time, the doctrine must be presented in forms adapted to their comprehension; a process similar to that of translation must take place. But, while the doctrine may be adapted to our minds, we must adapt our minds to the doctrine — the process must be mutual.

In the modern Occident we have inherited a cast of mind derived from the religion, philosophy, and science in which we and our ancestors have grown up. We are prone to interpret Karman in terms familiar to our modes of thought. When there is a clash, there are several things which we may do. We may insist on trying to make the doctrine conform to our familiar molds of thought. This may involve us in a dilemma like that between free will and predestination. Then either the doctrine is wrong or our logic is wrong. Perhaps we may seek to evade the difficulty by saying that it is a "paradox," or by laying aside reason altogether and falling back on "intuition." But the doctrine of Karman *must* be reasonable and logical; and if there is a clash between what we call logic and reason on the one hand, and the doctrine of Karman on the other, it is sure to be the former that are at fault.

Much controversy of course arises, as is bound to be the case in this as in other discussions, from the lack of precise definition of the terms used. This enables each party to base his arguments on different data, with the result that they must reach different conclusions; but neither

of them attacks the position of the other, and the reader sees that both are right within their respective limits.

The word "Karman" itself is used in a variable sense: it may mean a principle of causation; it may mean an accumulated tendency. When we speak of a man having a lot of bad Karman to work out, we use the word in the latter sense; but when we say that Karman will cause an action to bear consequences, we use it in the former sense. This is all very well for ordinary purposes; yet, if we are to reason logically, it is imperative to distinguish these meanings. If this is not done, we may find a person using the word in one sense at one stage of his argument, and in the other sense at another stage; or two people using the word in different senses and disagreeing accordingly.

Another such vague word is "man." When we say that a man suffers the consequences of his action, we are apt inadvertently to assume that man is a unitary being. But we know that he is a compound unit, having many spheres of action and many fields of experience. This must be taken into account, otherwise there is bound to be confusion; and what right have we to blame any teaching or any teacher for what so obviously arises from our own neglect of elementary rules of logic?

Karman is usually defined as an extension of the law of causation (a law recognised in science) to embrace the entire universe of mind and consciousness, of events and living beings. Now what do we understand by this law of causation? We imagine a series of events, the one following the other, each link in the chain being supposed to be an effect of the preceding link, and at the same time a cause in relation to the link which comes after. In physics we have a similar arrangement, but with particles instead of events. Now the difficulty experienced in physics is this: if matter is composed of an assemblage of separate particles, how do these particles act on each other? We can only get over the difficulty by supposing that there is something that acts as a connecting link between the particles, transmitting motion from one to the other. But this is really no explanation, but merely an evasion; for if we inquire into the physical structure of this supposed medium we are

faced with the same difficulty over again. The proper inference from this — an inference which we often fail to make — is that our original hypothesis about the isolated particles was wrong. Our difficulty was of our own creating. The properties of matter cannot be explained by assuming it to be merely an assemblage of particles; and the recent studies in intra-atomic physics have demonstrated the truth of this statement. Instead of any such ultimate particles, we can only discover flashes of living energy coming into manifestation from an invisible source; and in place of discontinuity, we see everywhere continuity and oneness. Physicists see the necessity of visualizing a new picture of the material world; it is difficult. In spite of ourselves we still try to construct a material world more or less on the old plan, and one scheme is suggested and then abandoned for another. But our conceptual powers are not static; we little realize how greatly those powers have grown since the days before Newton; such notions as we have about time and space, velocity, energy, force, inertia, are recent acquisitions; and surely we have the right to expect that we shall in due course acquire a new set of notions that will enable us to get a better idea of the physical world than the old atomo-mechanical ideas.

Taking this analogy from physical science, and applying it to the world of men, we find that we are apt to treat events as the physicists have treated atoms — that is, as separate detached elements, acting on each other by some unknown process, like a row of dominoes knocking each other down. We have transferred the mechanical way of thinking from physics to the moral sphere. Some philosophers, reasoning in this way, have been unable to find any connecting link between successive events, and so have denied any principle of causation, saying that all we can affirm is that events do actually follow each other in a particular way, and with a degree of probability amounting to virtual certainty. But events are not separate, except only in the sense that the leaves of a tree or the fingers of a hand are separate. They form the integral parts of a whole, not isolated units. Where is the necessity for trying to find links between things that never were separated?

Now let us see how this applies to the doctrine of Karman, so far as that

doctrine concerns human conduct. It has been supposed that my acts or my states of mind or my experiences are detached units, separated from one another like a row of particles, and each one fully and solely determined by the ones before it. Thus a system of fatalism is set up; and when our instincts rebel against it, we blame the laws or the teachers, instead of our own faulty comprehension. But man is, as said above, a compound unit. Every external phenomenon is at all times connected with the central source, just as the leaves of a tree are all connected with the tree itself. If the law of Karman extends to all planes of manifestation, it must include elements going back to the very roots of my nature. The causes which determine a given act or a given experience must therefore be extremely complex; and to know what I will do, you must be able to know my whole nature to its utmost roots.

We have grown accustomed to regard the universe as a great clock, which, once started, will move with inevitable motion ever after. Has it occurred to those who propound such a theory to inquire how the clock was ever started? To explain this, it is necessary to postulate an initial act of will and intelligence; and why will and intelligence, if once operative, should thereafter be banished utterly from the universe, it passeth comprehension to understand. Man is not a clock; he is a living being; and at all moments in his life, causes may be operative from sources deep within his nature. The law of Karman is not contravened by this explanation; it is affirmed. What is contravened is our absurd mechanical ideas as to causation, our mechanical notions of human nature. My acts are determined by *what I am*; and what I am is my Karman. Is it not evident how confusion arises from using the word Karman at one time in a limited sense, and at another time in a universal sense?

The only kind of predestination which Theosophy can recognise is that by which the Divine Monad, which is Man, will fulfil its eternal destiny, will realize its essential nature. If in the viewless unimaginable ages of the past, at the dawn of a vast cycle of manifestation, certain *laws* were impressed upon every living Monad, to be fulfilled during the flowing

cycles, should such a thing provoke me to grumble about my rights and my wrongs, my freedom and my restraints, or should it rather exalt my soul to the contemplation of sublimities that shrink personality to its appropriate pettiness?

In a word, this free will and necessity paradox is a jumble of bad logic, based on the attempt to interpret a universe of living conscious souls as though they were a row of dominoes knocking each other down.

As to the principle of causation in general, it may be said that of course Theosophy recognises this, if we may regard the term as meaning order and invariable sequence throughout the universe. But there is one great difference between the Theosophical philosophy and philosophy in general as understood in the West — that the latter deals with abstractions, such as Will, Consciousness, Mind, and the like; whereas Theosophy recognises only entities, living conscious beings, of which these abstractions are merely attributes. To speak of an *act* as determining an *act* is to deal with abstractions as though they were realities. It is a question of the action of living souls upon each other.

Our daily experience furnishes abundant examples of the combined action of freedom and law. The laws of nature, as recognised in physics, are inexorable and cannot be evaded; yet do they interfere with our freedom of action? Does the law of gravitation prevent us from walking or flying? Do the various mechanical and chemical laws prevent us from achieving marvels in construction and invention? These mechanical laws form a causal sequence, which, if left to itself, will pursue its way with the inevitability of clockwork; but which admits of the interposition of force from another plane — the will and intelligence of some conscious being. Yet such interposition in no wise abrogates any of the laws. Passing from physical phenomena to mental ones, we may imagine that there are people whose lives are mechanical, ruled by habit and by fixed ideas; and it is possible to predict with considerable accuracy what they will do under given circumstances. But the predictability is not so sure as in the physical world; and when we come to people of highly complex character, the

problem of relating cause to effect becomes hopelessly complex. In short, man is relatively free, to a greater or less extent, according to the plane from which his motives proceed. The more highly evolved he becomes, the more free does he become, because he is able to stand apart from the workings of the lower planes. Yet, his doing so does not set aside the laws of those planes.

To theological writers, and to many philosophical ones, the problem of free will and necessity seems a hopeless dilemma. But when we reflect that they separate God from the universe, and man from nature, we can see the root of their perplexity. To the ordinary thinker, of pessimistic turn, a want of the knowledge of reincarnation is a fatal stumbling block. Intuitive minds among religious people have said that so vast are the purposes of God that he can afford to let man have the utmost free will without any fear that his (God's) purpose will not ultimately be fulfilled. And with necessary changes, this is the Theosophical view: man may wander far from the path of his true destiny, yet even his errors are made by the eternal wisdom to contribute to the fulfilment of Law. But let no one think this gives license for evil; we may incur evil, but we must not will it; "It must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." (*Matt*, xviii, 7)

Perhaps the worst fallacy is that which leads some people to imagine that any doctrinal statement whatever about Karman can excuse us from our natural duty of rendering service. It is to be hoped that there are not many people who have any desire for such an excuse, or to be relieved of concern about their neighbor's affliction; but those, if any, who have such a desire, will find no justification for it in the doctrine of Karman. Nor will those who reject the doctrine because they think it justifies such an idea, or tends to breed such an idea, find justification. If a person cannot see that we act just as much by refraining as we do by executing, then indeed his mind must be sorely confused. It may be part of my neighbor's Karman that I should help him, or that somebody should help him. It may be in his Karman that my efforts to help him will prove futile. But who is to know this? How can I tell how the

matter stands? Obviously I am left free to exercise my natural or unnatural instincts, and the law of Karman can be trusted to take care of itself.

Thus causation prevails throughout the universe; or, to use an equivalent word, one which pertains rather to morals than to science, *justice* prevails. Yet, while accepting this as a general truth, if we aspire to discern the details, it is evident that we are undertaking a vast project. The universe is very complex; and if I were to aver that I can fully work out such details, I should feel that I was claiming for my intellect much more than it merits. Nor should I have much respect for a law of Karman that could be expressed in so limited a scope. I should prefer to think that my difficulties were due to my own impatience and presumption, and I should go in for further study and reflexion. A knowledge of the law of Karman is of immeasurable help and comfort to the perplexed soul of the sufferer; it restores his sense of equity and teaches him where to look for help. It shows him his responsibility for his every act and thought. Those who try to make Karman a matter of adjusting personal accounts are sure to land in perplexities; for the law concerns our relations with each other.

The Theosophical Forum

SUCCESS OR FAILURE — *Ila Beale*

Up and Live!" says Dorothea Brande, urging men and women to wake up to the realization of their own possibilities. Few of us live our lives in the fullness of achievement or even glimpse the hidden potentialities latent within us. Our lives, instead of being a record of success and accomplishment, more often tell an all too obvious story of frustration and disappointment, if not actual failure. Dorothea Brande tells us in her book, *Wake Up and Live*, that too many of us are "Victims of the Will to Fail," that unless we see this in time and take action against it, we die without accomplishing our intentions. She points out that there is a way of frustrating that Will to Fail which gives magical results. We live, she says, so far below the possible level of our lives, that when we free ourselves from our limitations and realize the potential forces within us, we seem to be an entirely different being and become entirely transfigured.

There came a moment, when, in a flash, this enthusiastic author realized the infinite possibilities for success and happy accomplishment in human life to be attained by Discipline. Before that revelation came to her, she had consulted teachers, analysts, psychologists, and physicians; she had thought and worried, but she gained only a temporary stimulus. She would work for a time with feverish activity, but her enthusiasm soon flagged. Then the revelation came to her! A sentence in a book she was reading brought her illumination, and from that moment she acquired an altered attitude towards life in its varying aspects and relationships. The passing days brought her the realization that she had found "a talisman for counteracting failure, and inertia and discouragement, and that it worked." What was that talisman? She had *within herself* the power to counteract this Will to Fail. She had searched without, but with no permanent success; she looked within and the revelation was hers. In her very interesting and stimulating book, she gives us a formula for a

fuller and more successful life.

With the time and energy we spend in making failure a certainty we might have certain success. Failure indicates that energy has been poured into the wrong channel. *It takes energy to fail.*

To counteract the Will to Fail, we must put into operation the Will to Succeed.

There is no need for anyone to remain a "Victim of the Will to Fail." We can at any time use the same energy expended so lavishly on failing, and turn it into channels of growth and achievement, which lead to final success. Think success, and all the successful thoughts you have ever had will be attracted to this first successful thought of yours. Like attracts like, is an old adage, and we find it works on all planes. Think one successful thought, and soon you will have an energy-center of successful thoughts waiting to aid you in your endeavor, whatever that may be. You have formed a laya center, as it were, through which can stream from higher spheres, from your own treasure-house of stored wisdom, all the successful thoughts, yes, and actual successful achievements of your own past lives.

Long ardently enough to achieve. Work for it. March with steadfast determination and undaunted courage to your chosen goal. The more unselfish the desire, the purer the motive for success, the nearer you will be to the spiritual planes and the more nearly will you come into touch with that part of yourself wherein is stored the vast wealth of knowledge and wisdom gained through lives of effort here on earth. We are all the inheritors of our own past achievements. *The Voice of the Silence* assures us of this in these words, "Tell him, O Aspirant, that true devotion may bring him back the knowledge, that knowledge which was his in former births."

The trouble is that we expend so much energy and waste so much time, in futile dreaming and revery, in success-frustrating objectives, in dreams that remain merely dreams, in ideals which we are going to put

into practice soon, in hours of aimless chatter, upon nothing in particular. We live so often in the backwash of our own emotional storms and in the many, many trivialities that make such subtle inroads upon our time and energy, which might better be given to work along constructive lines. "Physical inaction is no true sign that life-force is not being burned away. So even the idler is using fuel while he dreams."

Our lives should be from birth to death a gradual increase of inner powers and faculties, of ever widening horizons of growth and development. Growing older we should grow closer to those spiritual realms which are the source of our noblest ideas and aspirations. Old age can then become a spiritual awakening in ever increasing vision and loveliness. Each man is a creative center in himself, with infinite capacities for creative development. If men did but know it, they could draw upon the stored wisdom and experience of eighteen million years. Why, in all the countless lives we have lived on earth we have perfected a finished technique upon almost any line of effort. Let us then choose our objective, desire it with strength and purpose, work towards its accomplishment, doing something every day towards the attainment of our chosen goal. All great ideas originate in the mind of some living being, but they become realities only if there is someone with a will so fixed on success that he will remain undaunted in the face of the most tremendous odds, refusing to allow any obstacle, however great, to hinder him in the accomplishment of his chosen objective.

To me the keynote of Dorothea Brande's book is her injunction "Act as if it were impossible to fail." A marvelous mantra upon which to fashion our lives! In other words, have faith in yourself, faith in your infinite capacity of achievement. To make this mantra a workable reality she gives us her twelve disciplines, which she says work magic. In her introduction to these twelve disciplines, she says:

Discipline is undergoing restraint in order to develop the qualities necessary for a full life. Mental discipline should connote the equivalent in the sphere of the mind, which the

athlete undertakes for perfecting his body.

Reading these words, I was reminded of Katherine Tingley's masterly little epigram, "The secret of human life in its fulness is self-directed effort." It is self-directed effort along constructive lines that brings into exercise the Spiritual Will. All discipline has as its objective the freeing of ourselves from the bonds of our own making, the learning to use our will, and to concentrate our energies in the right direction in order to get the fullest success and achievement. It is a means of making the lower elements of our complex make-up better and more responsive servants to our Spiritual Will. It is the first step in an awakening which leads eventually to Self-Knowledge. Discipline precedes the Mysteries, we are told, and it also precedes all achievement. It is the sure foundation for happiness and success in whatever we undertake. The self-disciplined man is the happy and successful one. As Tennyson has so forcefully phrased it, "Self mastery, self knowledge, self control, these three alone lead man to sovereign power."

The question is then, are we content to remain "Victims of the Will to Fail," or, directing our energies into channels which will bring into action the Will to Succeed, shall we determine to work towards a richer and fuller life, not for ourselves alone, but that others may benefit by our efforts and successes? Theosophists perhaps more than any other people should call forth the Will to Succeed, for they are pledged to work for Humanity, and in so doing become co-workers with those Great Ones whose lives and achievements and successes have served as beacon-flames in the darkness throughout the slow progression of the ages; those who, in their compassion have laid their work in love and devotion upon the altar of service to Humanity.

NATURE STUDIES: V — *H. Percy Leonard*

One Thing at a Time

I had driven out to see my friend Cooper and found him in the garden. The first flush of early June was over everything and I was overwhelmed to the point of confusion by the wealth of beauty on every hand.

Cooper, in that quick way he has, instantly saw how I felt and snapping off a single spray of hawthorn, he held it up against the clear blue of the sky. With pure delight I saw its outline down to the smallest detail in vivid contrast against the blue. No longer distracted by other objects, I viewed that single gem of beauty in its entirety at a glance and was lost in admiration.

The petals in their snow-white purity, the glossy green of the newly-opened leaves, the balance and the unity of all parts, held my attention as by a magic spell. My eyes with keen appreciation roved from point to point. Then came the question — Why?

Why should a single spray hold me entranced, while the garden, seen as a whole, left me bewildered and oppressed?

As usual, my friend had his answer ready to hand.

"My dear fellow, it's all a question of concentration. Your mind, confined to a single twig, has been able to absorb the peculiar charms of that detail because there were no overlapping impressions from other sources to interfere with their appeal. And this practice of controlling the mind's tendency to wander may be applied with advantage to other departments of life.

"We often fail to be interested in our work simply because our minds are wandering all over the world. But keep your attention on what you are doing, try to economize your materials, reduce unnecessary

motions, devise small improvements, and what was drudgery before, becomes interesting all of a sudden. Your aches and pains are all forgotten as you bend your energies on the ideal method, slowly taking shape in your mind. Make the most of your time because you are likely to get a chance of work, for the man whose mind is centered on his job, is always being hunted down for promotion to better things by all who are engaged in production of any kind.

"Every branch of study," he continued, "attracts its crowd of eager students, and seeing that one's own mind cannot be very different from other people's minds, we have the delightful prospect of eventually finding an absorbing interest in every line of investigation that has ever been followed by our fellow-men.

"Once you get anyone to give his undivided attention to anything, even though only for a moment — he is caught. But the trouble is that the attention is divided, and the momentary glance penetrates no deeper than the surface. But concentration may be carried too far, and though the mind may be confined with advantage to one subject, it is fatal to try to nail the mind down to one detail of that subject as an exercise in mental gymnastics. There must be no strain, for the mind is like a swallow and will not tolerate close confinement. Turn a horse into a paddock and he will be happy, because though the area is limited, yet within those limits he is free to move about; but tie that horse to a post and the poor beast will suffer; and the illustration exactly applies to the mind."

"Old man," I said; "you are quite right. I had to get up a speech on Peace the other day. What did I do? I concentrated on the general subject — allowed my mind to range within the limits of my subject; but did not nail it down to any particular point. Thoughts soon began to flow in to the focus I had made, and every thought that I could use, I seized.

"Concentration is the Soul's method of gaining knowledge through its instrument the mind, and, restricted to one field of inquiry, it seems to start a kind of vortex or whirlpool that sucks in illustrative material, lines of suggestion, associated ideals, you may almost say Facts. It does

at all events put you in the way of obtaining definite information and quite by "accident" you light on scraps in the newspapers, helpful books and snatches of conversation, which furnish you with the very clues that you require.

"And I verily believe that if our minds were bent with singleness of purpose on the pursuit of the Chief Good, whatever name we choose to call it by, every event of our lives would fall into line with our fixed resolution and help to speed us on our way."

"I quite agree," rejoined Cooper, "but don't you think we sometimes spoil these things by trying to put them into words? No preaching in my garden if I can help it. Come and see my new frog-pond."

And dashing down a winding path shaded by hazel-branches, he disappeared from view, whooping like a school-boy just out of school. I followed.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LIFE? — *Mary L. Fay*

I think everyone agrees that our purpose in life is growth, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual. The purpose of life is to raise the mortal into immortality; to give time and opportunity for the deathless spiritual potency at the core of man's being to develop, grow, unfold into perfection.

Man is a composite being with three elements in his constitution, first a personality that we call by name; second, back of his personality we find a deeper reservoir of consciousness expressed in the ideal desires of the nature; third and lowest of all is the animal consciousness, including the body which is the vehicle for the two higher elements. When we understand this threefold division we can more fully understand St. Paul's description of man as body, soul, and spirit.

It is this higher, ideal nature, the Spiritual Ego, which reincarnates. The word reincarnation means re-entering a body of flesh. Human reincarnation is one phase of the universal law of evolutionary growth through alternate states of rest and re-embodiment. Re-embodiment of everything that has life is a habit of Nature. Universes, solar systems, suns, worlds, men, animals and plants, cells, molecules, atoms, all re-embody. This habit of Nature is to me one of the strongest proofs that man reincarnates. The innermost Self of man is a deathless Being, a god, which re-clothes itself from age to age in new bodies or vehicles, that it may undergo all possible experiences in the Universe to which it belongs and so reach its own most complete growth and self-expression. Rebirth, then, is the pathway of evolution. It is the method by which Nature progressively draws into growth or unfoldment the limitless capacities latent in all creatures from atoms to gods. The very fact that we intuitively know that there are large reserves of power and possibility within us that are seeking expression; the fact that nearly everyone yearns to develop, to be, that Greater Self which he senses within — this very urge to a larger and fuller life, is our daily witness to

Nature's true purpose for man. It is through Reincarnation alone that man can bring out and perfect this hidden wealth of power and capacity. In each life some new phase of character is shaped by environment. New powers and capacities are unfolded from within. Weaknesses, selfishness and other faults are corrected by suffering.

We might ask here why we do not remember our past lives, because it would seem that if we did remember, we should not make so many mistakes. However it is well that we do not remember details of our past lives because we should spend too much time reviewing our mistakes, which would hinder our evolution. Evolution always looks forward, is constructive, builds afresh and on developing patterns. So, instead of remembering our mistakes, we simply carry over the memory of the lesson learned by the experience. Character is memory, genius too is memory; and both these are a result of repetition through life after life of lessons which have been realized and absorbed and have become a permanent part of our nature. Character is the spiritual fabric woven by evolution. It is the only thing we can take out of life when we go; it is what we bring back as our heritage from the past when we return to incarnation on earth.

The Theosophical Forum

AFTER THE KALI-YUGA - ? — G . de Purucker

We are told in the *Occult Glossary* that the four Yugas, with their respective time-periods of 4, 3, 2, 1 take up just half of the duration of a Root-Race. I have been wondering in what order the Yugas follow after Kali-Yuga, in which we now are because by analogy it might mean that they would go in the reverse order, so that after Kali-Yuga there would be Dwapara-Yuga, and then Treta-Yuga and then Satya, but reasoning from another standpoint, it seems we merge into the Golden Age, at least that is what it seems to say in the Vedas. Then from another standpoint, when a Race is dying out, as some of the primitive Races that we now know of, some of the aboriginal Races they might be said to be in a Golden Age in one way, because they have no responsibilities, they are childlike and in that sense might be said to be in the Golden Age to the end. So my question is: In what order do the Yugas in a Root-Race come after the Kali-Yuga? (1)

I think I can best answer this very interesting question in a public gathering by pointing to the history of our own present or Fifth Root-Race. We are all at present, as you know, part of the Fifth Root-Race on this Globe D in this Fourth Round. Now then, it was a legend among the Greeks that the childhood of mankind was happy, that it was peaceful, blessed with plenty, with abundance, that there were no wars and harassing anxieties in those halcyon days of the childhood of man. They called it the Saturnian Age, the Age of Saturn, mainly, I think, because there were no real responsibilities, as the questioner has correctly stated. I question very much, however, whether I for one would like to live the life of a babe unborn, in the womb, without responsibilities, a mere human lump. No!

About the middle point of the Fourth Root-Race, our Fifth Root-Race began to take form, which merely means that certain individuals who

had passed through the Fourth Root-Race incarnations up to that time on the Earth, made among themselves a society, not organized, but the mere fact of their being and having more or less arrived at similar mental and spiritual outlooks made them in the middle part of the Fourth Root-Race to be as it were a people apart. Do you catch my thought? It was not an organized Society, an organization, a brotherhood, at first. It was simply that at about the middle point of the Fourth Root-Race certain individuals were born, which means that they had reached a time when Fifth Root-Race qualities and attributes were to begin to appear in them; just as in our present Fifth Root-Race we have almost reached its middle point, we are in its fourth Sub-race, and the forerunners of the Sixth Root-Race are just beginning to appear amongst us here and there over the world. Sporadically they appear, forming no definite body, organization, society, or brotherhood; but nevertheless beginning to embody, to incarnate.

Now, as time went on, the Fourth Root-Race, which was then in its Kali-Yuga, began to descend the *facilis descensus averno*, the easy descent to Hell more and more; but at the same time a greater number of more advanced human monads were incarnating, thus constantly increasing the number of the then Fifth Root-Race in the throes of its birth. These individuals were for the Fourth Root-Race set apart. Nature favored them, which does not mean that they necessarily had a very easy time, but Nature favored them. They were fortune's favored pupils; they were receiving, because they had won all these benefits, special guidance, special help, special instruction, mostly unconscious except for the highest among them. Why? Because they needed it. The balance of the Fourth Root-Race was simply running down hill, and with each thousand years going faster down. But these favored individuals, fortune's favored sons, were helped, guided, protected, sheltered — sheltered as far as it could be done — because they had merited it on account of their previous evolutionary strivings to ascend; and because they were the seeds of the Fifth Root-Race to come, our present one. They were in their Satya-Yuga, the first and the longest.

Thus the yugas begin with the longest, next the next long, third the next

long, and finally comes the culmination of wickedness and evil-doing in the Kali-Yuga, which we of the Fifth Root-Race have just begun. How many among us, I ask the question right here, are to be among the "favored" to form the seed of the Sixth Root-Race now already beginning on this continent and elsewhere, but more particularly perhaps in the Americas? We have reached our Kali-Yuga; it will last more than four hundred thousand years, and we are only some five thousand years gone in it, barely entering upon it! And as the majority in the future days of the Fifth Root-Race will be growing worse and worse, and going steadily faster and faster down the relatively steep descent, the individuals of the forthcoming Sixth Root-Race will contemporaneously grow more numerous and will be in their Satya-Yuga, their highest.

I think I have given in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* a diagram (2) in which the birth of each Race is shown as beginning at about the middle part of the preceding one. There you have the picture. Each Race begins with its Satya-Yuga, its longest; passes from that into the next, the Treta; then into the third, the Dwapara; and then into the fourth and shortest and most intensely individual, the Kali-Yuga. And just about that time the seeds of the Race to follow are in their throes of birth.

I might add this — although I hope that it won't complicate your understanding — that these wonderful figures, 4, 3, 2, followed by one or two or more zeros, are key-numbers in Nature, and they are computed by means of the six, commonly called the senary, or again the duo-decimal, system of reckoning either by six, or twelve which is twice six; and hence there are the same yugas but with more zeros added — for globes as well as for Races; for Chains as well as for globes, and so forth.

Thus it is that the hey-day of civilization and progress of a Root-Race lasts through the four yugas from beginning to end; during its Kali-Yuga and towards the beginning of it, the seeds of the new succeeding Race begin to appear, and these seeds are in the beginning of their

Satya-Yuga. As the centuries and the millennia roll slowly by, the scepter of dominion and of empire, of progress and advancing intelligence and wisdom, slowly passes from the former Race to the latter Race; so that when the former Race is finishing its Kali-Yuga, the succeeding Race is already beginning the hey-day of *its* halcyon, times of progress and power and civilization.

Meanwhile, even after the Kali-Yuga of the former Race is ended, the more or less degenerate remnants of the former Race continue in existence, but steadily going down hill still, and these degenerate descendants, although slowly through the ages growing constantly fewer and fewer, nevertheless last on until the succeeding Race in its turn has run through its three yugas and is entering its fourth or Kali-Yuga.

This is what I meant when I stated that although a Race begins its career at the middle point of the previous Race, it lives on for pretty much the same length as before, although in a state of degeneracy and senile decrepitude; the old waters gradually mix with the new and fresh, because the more advanced and better egos of the previous Race begin to reincarnate in the bodies of the succeeding or newer Race.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Question asked by Mrs F M Dadd at a meeting of the Point Loma Lodge, T S. ([return to text](#))
2. Page 251. ([return to text](#))

THE ESOTERIC TRADITION — *B. Finkernagel*

Since the passing of H. P. Blavatsky, the great Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement, literature labeled "Theosophical" has increased enormously, ranging from the grotesque and the fanciful, to the psychic and the weird, as well as the positively dangerous, leaving but a comparatively small minority of books which may be rightly regarded as useful contributions, and of distinct merit and help in the study of Theosophy. We need not, therefore, wonder that many an earnest inquirer stands bewildered and despairs of ever finding the Truth. It is thus always a timely caution, when the inquirer is directed to confine himself only to those Theosophical books which set forth the pure and original Message of the Masters of Wisdom, as was proclaimed by their chosen and specially trained Messenger — Madame H. P. Blavatsky, and her faithful and lifelong co-worker, friend, and pupil, Mr. W. Q. Judge. It is only when the fundamental principles of this original Message are clearly perceived, rightly understood and assimilated, that the student will find himself in a position to discriminate between the spurious and the true. This welter of confusion demands that the truthseeker should at first confine himself to such books as *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. B., *The Ocean of Theosophy* and *Echoes from the Orient* by W. Q. Judge, *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and a few others, before he ventures farther afield, for only then will he be in a position to discriminate between the false and the true. The writer himself suffered severely, many years ago, from this very danger against which he is warning others in their search for Truth.

There are, of course, as already admitted, quite a number of books that have been written by intuitive and well-informed students and humble servants of the Masters and their cause, which have proved of value in the study of Theosophy. Among these there is a book which in the writer's opinion stands out beyond all the others. This particular book

is only a quite recent publication, entitled *The Esoteric Tradition*, of which Dr. G. de Purucker is the author. The present writer, who has been a student of Theosophy for nearly forty years, knows of no other book better able to lead the earnest inquirer or student to a correct and comprehensive grasp of technical Blavatskyan Theosophy, as well as to inspire the heart and mind with the Fire of the Divine Spirit. He considers this book to be the most important publication of its kind that has appeared since *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in 1923. He considers it the clearest, the most explanatory, and most comprehensive, exposition of Theosophy, as found in *The Secret Doctrine*, Madame Blavatsky's monumental work, and therefore the very best book for anyone to study if he wishes to attain a true concept of technical Theosophy. In order to realize the truth of these statements, it is only necessary to take up the study of this book in earnest. Such study will more than convince the individual, and fully justify the statements made.

This article is not a mercenary attempt, either to sell the book or to advertise its author; it is but a cry across the seas, from far Australia, and from one student to another. It comes from one who is receiving daily help and inspiration, enlightenment and strength, from the study of this book, and who in turn is desirous that others should profit and partake of the rich blessings and understanding that may be theirs, if they will only come to this Fountain of Wisdom — and drink.

The Theosophical Forum

A RESTLESS WORLD: IS A NEW CIVILIZATION COMING TO BIRTH? — Boris de Zirkoff

(Condensed from a talk given in the Temple, Theosophical Society, Point Loma)

If we could see the inner causal factors of the world-wide unrest of the present day, and watch their operations from a vantage point of a century or two ahead, it is very probable that we would diagnose what is going on in the world today as the gradual coming to birth of a new civilization, a new order of things, arising Phoenix-like out of the ashes of its own previous form of manifestation.

It is difficult for us to see this from our present point of view, because we are lacking the necessary perspective, unless, perchance, we happen to belong to the comparatively few people who are impersonal enough to take a detached view of the events of our own lifetime, and project them as it were against the background of spiritual ideals which are working silently but with immense power behind the illusory appearance of things.

The importance of the present era, which is unquestionably the critical point of more than one century of Occidental civilization, does not consist in the wide-flung political and economic upheavals which we are living through; these and many other events are but effectual results of an inner change through which human consciousness is passing in this age of complete and thoroughgoing reevaluation of ideals.

It is this change in human consciousness that manifests itself outwardly in the seeming — and indeed real — breaking up of outworn molds of thought, the crumbling of long-cherished ideals, the downfall of once strong religious, philosophical, and scientific dogmas. Human consciousness is about to be reborn into a new world of thought, and this rebirth has of course its unavoidable birth-pains.

It should be distinctly understood, and constantly remembered, that Theosophy has naught to do with political changes; but it has everything to do with those subtle inner changes of consciousness which affect human minds and hearts, and bring about a more spiritual outlook, a greater vision of inner Realities. This change in outlook is apparent everywhere in the world.

If we consider present-day Religion, we shall see that the churches are unable to supply that spiritual anchorage which so many are seeking. So the people are turning in other directions, notably in scientific directions. The difficulty which organized religion finds in appealing to the people is that this appeal necessarily demands the believing spirit. But the creeds of the churches have ceased to be really believed in; and when belief or faith ceases, the prestige of the churches goes with them. Hence, in order to re-establish its appeal, the churches gradually became scientifically-minded, so as to meet the demand for scientific explanations on the part of the masses. Some of the most progressive churches weave into their work strands of mysticism and Theosophy, gradually becoming halls wherein some of the simplest Theosophical truths are being proclaimed. This is a good sign, and the future may see these churches actually become halls of Theosophy.

When we consider Science, we see that the merely mechanical interpretation of the universe is unable to bring satisfaction to the spiritual aspirations of the human heart. Science, materialistic science, we mean, is breaking up its own molds of thought through the soaring spiritual vision of some of its greatest exponents. Because of them mainly, and under the continuously rising tide of spirituality, science of the present day becomes more and more religious and truly mystical. The fervor of many a scientist is a typically religious fervor, to be sure.

When it comes to Philosophy, we see the gradual infiltration of Oriental ideals and ideas into the barren soil of Occidental intellectual-ism; hence Philosophy also is gradually becoming more spiritualized, more mystical, to meet the demands of a new generation.

These three chief manifestations of an inner change of consciousness are not by any means haphazard. There is a plan behind them, and a guiding hand. The new world of thought which is being born will be characterized by a slow and silent blending of genuine age-old Oriental mysticism with the achievements of Occidental thinking, and in this process of amalgamation and mutual fructification the Theosophical Movement is one of the primal and most important factors at play. As a matter of fact, it is one of the chief objectives of our work, namely, to bring about a gradual synthesis of the three aspects of human consciousness — the religious, the scientific, and the philosophical — into one complete and soul-satisfying philosophy of life, wherein spiritual values will play a paramount role, and stimulate and guide mankind towards the realization of its noblest mission.

There is one aspect, however, of human consciousness which neither organized religion, nor the self-emancipating science, nor even otherwise serious philosophical trends of thought in the Occident, lay any emphatic stress upon — an aspect of consciousness so important nevertheless that without it everything else is devoid of any sound foundation and is destined to collapse sooner or later in a sea of horror. This aspect is represented by *Ethics*.

Organized religion is unable to provide the scientific and philosophical basis for the need of ethics, and to show why ethics is essential to progress and growth. Science, on the other hand, is unable to provide the spiritual and devotional foundation for ethics, as it has not yet acknowledged the spiritual background of the Universe and Man. Hence this subject is usually sidestepped and avoided, or merely touched upon in vague and goody-goody terms, which bring no conviction and no satisfaction to any thinking man or woman.

Yet in spite of the world-wide prevalence of selfishness which lies at the bottom of the barbarism of the present Occidental civilization, and breaks out periodically in fits of high international fevers, when our verdant meadows and dales are transformed into slaughter-houses of legalized murder: in spite of this selfishness and greed, there are

indications of softer breezes blowing from some inner and hidden recesses. There is a growing realization in many parts of the world that entrenched selfishness of purpose, brutal gratification of egotistical cravings, and the mad hunt for the acquisition of mere material possessions, to the complete disregard of the interests of one's neighbor, is after all the easiest and shortest road to spiritual, intellectual, and moral bankruptcy. Violence is the surest sign of moral weakness; it may be a sign of muscular strength; but history has shown that intrinsic values are in direct proportion to the development of *moral*, not of muscular, fibers. From this growing realization, there arises today a revulsion of feeling pointing to the fact that ethics will slowly become a subject for serious thought and constructive thinking, coupled with a fresh application to daily life.

It is only a complete and soul-satisfying philosophy of life, however, that can give a sound reason and a solid basis for the need of ethics — and it is precisely this that Theosophy can do and actually does. It teaches that Ethics is rooted in the very structure of Nature, hence rooted in the very structure of Man himself, who is an integral part of Nature; that the only way to a lasting civilization of spiritual worth, is by leading a life of brotherly sympathy and compassion for the souls of men; that we are responsible for both the welfare and the misery of others; that we have a sacred duty towards all those who are weaker than we, weaker and more helpless; that self-dedication to the cause of suffering mankind is the noblest mode of life; that the code of a spiritual and ethical life, and the philosophical and religious foundations worthy of a new civilization, are to be found in the accumulated wisdom of past ages, in the treasures of knowledge handed down to our times by the greatest sages and seers that mankind has produced; and that, finally, to repeat the inspiring and soul-stirring words of Katherine Tingley, "Selflessness attains; selfishness defeats: men's possibilities are in direct proportion to their ability to see beyond themselves and to feel for others."

OUR ELDER BROTHERS — *L. L. W.*

The most descriptive name applied to the Mahatmans is that of the "Elder Brothers of Humanity." For they are our brothers in every sense. In the first place they are just as real human beings as you and I are. But they are as much more advanced than us as a mature man is developed beyond a child. Besides this, it is the essence of their work to watch over and guide the race — indeed, not only us but all creatures climbing up the toilsome evolutionary path. Evolution however does not end with the Mahatmans. Beyond them are the Christs or the Buddhas. And even this class of grand men ascend gradually in degrees of relatively greater perfection. They finally range into divine and still diviner beings until we come to the limits of evolution possible to the duration and the reaches of our Solar System. Even the Solar System itself is merely a cell so to say in the vast stellar galaxy. But into that illimitable realm we do not now require to stretch our vision.

There was of course a time when what we call the human race passed, as everything must, through its infancy. Then we were just learning to speak and to develop our brains and other organs to master the functions they now fulfil automatically. That was the "Golden Age" recorded in the traditions of every people, when men had the gods themselves for teachers. It was then that the "Wisdom-Religion" or "Archaic Science" or the "Esoteric Tradition" (which today we call Theosophy) was first taught to the human race.

Even at that time there were some human beings far in advance of the average. Just as there are today and always will be. And those advanced humans became pupils of the gods and were eventually formed into the Great White Lodge of Mahatmans. From that day to this that Lodge of Spiritual Initiates has never ceased as an organization to exist and to function. In cycles of spiritual vitality it has worked more or less openly. In cycles of spiritual barrenness like the so-called Dark Ages in Europe, it does its work in secret. From time to

time it has sent its greatest Masters of Wisdom to incarnate among men and give out a fresh revelation of Truth to the world. Such men were Krishna, Gautama the Buddha, Jesus the Christ, Lao-Tse and Confucius. Then a new world-religion would be born. At other times they founded the Mystery-Schools such as those at Samothrace and Eleusis in Greece. And from those Mystery-Schools, which were colleges for training in Mahatmanship, Initiates were sent out who taught world-echoing philosophies. Pythagoras and Plato and Ammonius Saccas were Initiates of this stamp. H. P. Blavatsky was another. Read her preface to *Isis Unveiled* and you will get a glimpse of how she received her training. All these world-religions and philosophies imbodyed the basic teachings of this same Wisdom-Religion. Yet in each case the Teacher adapted it to the age and the people to which it was being re-taught. Since the times of Ammonius Saccas it has usually been called Theosophy.

The most fascinating thing about the Mahatmans to most of us is their wonderful occult powers. Historical tradition is full of stories about the magic or miracles performed by the Seers and Sages of the world, from Moses to Apollonius of Tyana. There is of course no such thing as a miracle, in the sense of something outside the laws of Nature. An action that seems to us miraculous (if it actually happened) is due to the use of a wider knowledge of natural forces on the part of the Sage who performed the "miracle." We can find plenty of modern miracles like this in every branch of science today. To us they seem miraculous cures or discoveries or what-not, but are to the men who do them the everyday work of scientific knowledge.

There are abundant records of the exercise of their powers by the Mahatmans who watch over the destiny of the Theosophical Movement. (1) The most important thing to notice about these actions is the way in which the powers are used. It is spiritual or divine magic as contrasted with selfish or black magic. You will notice that the Initiate of the White Lodge will use his powers only for the good of others or to help the world in some way. Indeed that is one way you can tell if a Teacher belongs to the White Lodge. Never — or very, very

rarely do they use these powers to help themselves. When they have to do this it is because the Initiate must protect himself — merely for the time being — as an agent for the work he must accomplish for the Lodge. "He saved others, himself he cannot save" is a taunt common to the lives of most spiritual teachers. If the saying went: "Himself he *must not* save," it would be true and would express a basic law of occult development.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, *The Occult World*, by A. P. Sinnett, *Five Years of Theosophy*, and other books of the early years of the T. S. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

LIGHT IN THE LODGES: IV — *Kenneth Morris*

The Power of Silence

When a man enters upon the path of aspiration: when he is Theosophist, and his all-dominating problem has become, How to make himself valuable to humanity: certain energies, subtle and spiritual, the reaction to his aspirations, seep down from his Higher Ego daily and hourly into his personal mind; the stronger and more constant the aspiration, the greater, naturally, will this seepage be. These energies he has to learn to use in the best and most economic way for the betterment of the stuff of humanity.

Now that part of the personal self which we may call the *human elemental* is apt to find in this force from above something alien to itself, to be distrusted and feared, antipathetic; likely to impose conquest and discipline on it; and so seeks to unload itself, as quickly as may be, of the burden of it. The cheapest and easiest way to do so is through talk. Idle chatter; talk about oneself; the recounting of one's remarks and exploits; personalities, and then more personalities; jabber; detraction and unkindly criticism of others; the slighting "clever" remarks that damn the absentee of whom they are spoken, and much worse the one that speaks them. Talk for talk's sake; multiplication of words.

This accounts for a tendency to follow a meeting, in which the purpose has been serious and high and the normal seepage consequently augmented, with floods of frivolous, meaningless, personal talk. This tendency, when given way to, can be very harmful indeed; it is utter waste of life at the worst. "Words are things," said William Q. Judge; living things, that carry out with them something of the vitality of the speaker; and he adds, "let us use with care those living messengers called words."

In the Mystery-School of Pythagoras, it is said that the disciples, as part

of their training, had to pass seven years in speechlessness: a discipline, one can well understand, that would make most modern Occidentals insane. But the Theosophist who wants to be of value to humanity should school himself with at least some little part of it. Our meetings are excursions into the Impersonal: and nothing but impersonality is appropriate at them or after them. A good rule is to avoid using the personal pronouns; especially the word "I" should never be heard in a lodge-room; where pronouns cannot be dispensed with, they should be the impersonal ones only: "one," "you" (not *you*), "we," "they"; or in Welsh, where possible, the impersonal forms of the verb. Talk only about ideas, never about people: give the message of Theosophy; use the tongue only to convey kindness and to illumine thought and life; bring nothing idle or personal into the lodge premises; carry away with you the atmosphere of the meeting. In that way the power that comes to us from within will be used for the benefit of humanity, and not dissipated and wasted away. That power comes especially when members are gathered together for Theosophical purposes; each one then shares in the strength drawn in by the aspirations of all; and this strength can be so stored and made use of as to fortify our lives through all the following week. But when the chatter begins, the force goes.

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OUR KINSHIP WITH THE BEASTS — S. H. Wylde

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Through inaccuracies of expression, or through over-enthusiasm in envisioning our godlike ancestry, we, i. e., Theosophical speakers and writers, sometimes antagonize nature-lovers by giving the impression that we claim no kinship with the beast-kingdom. It is true that we reiterate that all Nature is one; that we are brothers with all entities in the Universe, and similar pleasantly vague statements; but sometimes when trying to handle scientifically the question of human and beast evolution, we are apt to express ourselves in terms of contempt for our younger brothers — a most untheosophical attitude, as every Theosophist will admit if he stops to think. One wonders whether this is a natural reaction against the widespread acceptance of the Darwinian theory, or whether, perhaps, seeing in our own lower nature a rather pathetic distortion of the innocent antics of the beasts, we wish to assure ourselves and others that there is absolutely no resemblance or connexion.

The fact is that there is a very close kinship between ourselves and the beast-kingdom; only it is the reverse of what the modern evolutionist supposes. The human race was their predecessor and in a sense their creator. We helped to bring them into being; we originally provided the mechanism by which they found existence on this plane. And more than this, certain psychological elements thrown off by man are even today absorbed by the beasts. Thus through the ages we have nourished them, not only with the stuff, the life-atoms, of which their physical bodies are builded, but with the substance of their ethereal bodies and of their intermediate principle.

It must be remembered, however, in connexion with our being their

"creators," that what might seem far-fetched or even ridiculous when thought of in terms of man as he is today, with his more or less fixed and supposedly well-regulated physical body, and fairly well integrated inner principles, becomes a natural sequence of events in the varied pattern of evolutionary history when we study with an attempt at intelligent understanding man's makeup, capacities, and environment at the time of his appearance on this globe, and the transitional formative stages through which he passed to his present position and capacities. (1)

Further, when we speak of nourishment received by the beasts from us, we have to keep in mind a law of Nature very often overlooked: Every kingdom receives its grosser sustenance from below — from lesser beings of its own kingdom, or from those of the kingdoms less evolved than itself. Thus among the beasts, the fox will feed upon the luckless rabbit; the eagle on the little birds; the little birds on the lowly worm; horses, cows, and sheep, on grass and herbs; while at the same time all beasts are nourished in part by the elements of the mineral kingdom, as also are we. Yet while it is true that every kingdom receives its grosser sustenance from below, all must be nourished from above as well, in order to preserve the soundness of their constitutions. We humans are nourished by divine beings; but in our egotism we imagine that the food of inspiration we receive from above is a sign-manual of our own superiority — even when we misuse it. The beasts are more humble; they make no claims. Observe how the ox has served man since history began; how the horse acknowledges man's superiority and authority; how the dog worships man as a god! It is because all kingdoms are dependent upon each other, and each upon all, that life continues throughout the Universe; that the vital circulations of the universal organism are maintained; that cosmic health and harmony can be restored where in places they have been disturbed — just as the healthy blood-flow in the physical body helps by constant renewal of tissue to heal a flesh-wound.

Naturally those kingdoms that are "adjoining" each other in the hierarchical scale have the closest links of dependence one with the

other. One could hardly expect a super-god to feel more than a remote affiliation with a molecule of sulphur, let us say; but as between man and beast the case is different, for clearly the beast is man's close relative. Speaking in terms of manvantaras, it is not so very long ago that the natural psychological barriers which now make a definite line of demarcation between these two kingdoms, were non-existent, at least as regards man and the other mammalia. Man, the superior being, at that time threw off cells providing a ready opportunity for the building of physical forms for the animal kingdom. And though, when once launched, these animals proceeded to evolve as independent minor stocks; and though through man's innate capacity the evolutionary gap between the classes of beings in time became impassable, nevertheless in the admittedly less dramatic, but certainly fundamental procedures of present-day cosmic functionings, man still provides a necessary part of the life of the kingdom below him, for certain of his psychic emanations find a suitable habitat in the constitution of the beast and help to build it up. Some of these emanations have been evil, and have helped to sustain the venomous snake, the fierce tiger, the greedy vulture. Others, fortunately, have been benign, and have nourished the comely and gentle beasts. It is well, when we shrink from what we find vile in the animal kingdom, to reflect upon our own responsibility in the matter.

Probably without man the beasts would not exist; just as we should not long exist if the gods were to disappear from the universe, because, having then lost our godlike qualities, we should perish, being the most helpless of beasts.

It is thus seen that the human stock assumes the role of parent to the beasts rather than their child; he is their ancestor rather than their descendant. This is esoteric science, but science nonetheless — not merely a philosophical speculation. The most far-sighted anthropologists of the near future may consider it not unscientific to employ the Theosophical scheme of evolution at least as an hypothesis; since in any case their own theories are mere hypotheses; and there has never been a single crumb of fact gathered by science that is in

opposition to the esoteric evolutionary teaching.

The so-called rationalist would rather believe the modern materialistic theory than accept as his ancestors the "pallid couple" in the Garden of Eden. While those more religious-minded cannot leave God out of the story of evolution. Thus the battle periodically rages between these two schools of thought; but both may eventually find that while they had been wrangling, there had been at hand all the time another and nobler evolutionary scheme, more scientific than their science, more mystical and spiritual than their religious belief, a scheme which embraces the truth behind both dogmas. On the one hand it impels us to grasp our divine heritage, while on the other hand it teaches us, or should teach us, the respect that is due to our younger brothers, the beasts.

The story of evolution as told in Theosophy justifies and explains our upward reaching after the stars. It also justifies and explains our love of so-called "nature," our love of the lower kingdoms. It shows this love to be no freakish sort of thing, a human perversion, but the very natural recognition of our kinship with them.

Yet the word "love" is here used in the best sense. It in no wise suggests that offensively sentimental handling of pets that is so often nothing but a using of them as an outlet for the satisfaction of one's emotional nature. Love does not have to show itself in over-effusiveness of any kind, as we know full well from an intelligent study of human relationships. To love animals truly one must first understand our relation and responsibility to them. Our attitude towards them should not be an aggressive one. They merit by all means our most conscientious and loving protection, but we should not attempt to psychologize them into an aping of humanlike intelligence; for the peak of their evolutionary growth is over for this manvantara. And how do we know to what extent our misplaced attentions may be a meddling with energies in retardation or recession, for which interference we shall have to make restitution in another life-cycle?

When the student of Theosophy takes into consideration the various

factors in the question, as above outlined, he no longer implies, in his vigorous protest against the Darwinian theory, that it is the beasts themselves that we object to. Secure in his own position, he graciously acknowledges their kinship with us and their place in the universal family of beings; and his teaching of the Theosophical doctrine of evolution will foster in his fellows that feeling of genuine love and protection for our younger brothers which is of the nature of true compassion.

FOOTNOTE:

1. See *The Esoteric Tradition*, Volume I, chapter x. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

DISSECTING THE UNIVERSE — *H. T. Edge*

We cannot be content as of old to accept a purely objective physical universe, the same for all observers; but must needs inquire into the nature of objectivity itself, regarding our own faculties of observation and ratiocination as a component element of objectivity, and subjecting those faculties to an analysis which we consider a necessary function of the scientist. Hence the great number of such books now appearing.

(1) We concur with the author that the questions of logic, metaphysic, and epistemology, with which he deals, are old enough, even as applied to the philosophy of modern science; but writers on this subject did not command the general attention of the scientific world until the necessities of the situation compelled an inquiry. The kind of literature now appearing represents innumerable particular applications of the general principles laid down by the previous philosophers, and as reflected in many minds of individual scientists. The author's fertile and discursive mind leads him into much elaboration and detail; so much so that, if we attempt to follow him through, we feel the qualm of philosophic doubt and scepticism, and reality seems to fade away amid a welter of ideas that appear and disappear, chasing each other like phantoms. In a world where everything is a fallacy or an assumption, and nothing will "stay put," we shrink from the hopeless quest for the ever-fleeing truth and rush back with a grateful sigh to our familiar world of healthy and comfortable illusions — the only realities, as it might seem. In a word, and to quote from a very ancient philosopher:

The quality of Mind is to doubt;

That of Buddhi is to ascertain. — *Uttara Gita*

The function of the ratiocinative faculty is to analyse, and analysis means taking to pieces; and from the days when we dissected our sister's doll and found ourselves ruefully contemplating a heap of sawdust and rags, we have known that the more you dissect, the further away you get from the simple reality from which you set out.

Professor Bridgman realizes that what science has to study is *percepts*, and that whether there can be such a thing as a pure object may be a matter for speculation but can hardly be settled by experience. Now the percept is a result of the interaction of faculty with some external exciting cause, a conjunction of what is within us with what is without. Hence it is of vital importance that, before turning our scrutinizing eye on the physical universe, we should first examine that eye and see how many motes and beams there may be in it obscuring our vision. This leads the author to consider the vast accumulation of hard-and-fast notions, unexamined assumptions, authoritative pronouncements accepted without question, and other such paraphernalia, with which we enter upon our inquiries. The impression conveyed to the mind of the reader is that the truth about anything is utterly simple and obvious, and that all obscurity arises from the confusion of our minds. Can it be that the effect of reasoning is to destroy truth and reality, to obfuscate the obvious?

But we are saved from despairing and pessimistic conclusions by our reflexion that this particular aspect of intelligence was not made to ascertain but to analyse (to 'doubt'); and that intelligence has another aspect whose function is to ascertain. *Manas* (mind), when it becomes enmeshed in physical materiality, acquires this dissecting quality. Its true function then is to arrange and classify, to build an external world in which a mortal man can live and act. Such a world is an illusion, you may say; well, a house may be found an illusion if we pull it to pieces, but it is useful to live in just the same.

Professor Bridgman has much to say on the meaning of "theory." It is a device constructed for the purpose of relating together certain data of observation; one theory may be made for one set of data, another theory for another, and the two may be inconsistent and need welding into a more comprehensive one. The truth of theories may be said to be tested by their workability in practice; but we have the familiar example of the predictability of eclipses by the Ptolemaic system. If a given theory will explain certain happenings, it is not necessarily the only theory that will explain them. Further, in view of the now

admitted limitation to our power of exact measurement, a theory may suffice to explain the facts within the limits of our power of observing them — that is, explain them approximately; and yet it may not explain *all* the facts, and therefore (according to the criterion) not be true.

Another point made is that, whereas we had physical models of the universe, we are now making use of mathematical models where physical models fail; but these mathematical models of course cannot be pictured. But the author finds (after he has dissected deep enough) that mathematics is an empirical science, based on experience; its fundamental postulates are accepted as true because we have tried them and they work. The same disastrous process is applied to *logic*, which is "a game which we cannot even begin to play unless we make tacit assumptions which cannot be checked in practice." Induction and deduction fare equally badly, being structures without visible means of support; in fact all argument of whatever kind consists in begging the question and blinking our eyes to that fact.

It appears from much that is said in this book that those who seek naked truth about anything are giving a rather large order. But we knew this before. The naked truth being remarkably simple, and we being prevented from seeing it on account of the multitude of garments in which we clothe it, it follows that we must undergo an elaborate process of self-discipline in order to reach our goal. We are compact of illusions; we must take ourselves all to pieces. We cannot even report correctly what has happened in the physical world.

A clear-eyed recognition of what actually happens is hindered by most of the mental habits drilled into us by education. For I think it must be conceded that the major part of education at present consists in acquiring the *intuitive* ability to handle the conceptual instruments which the human race has evolved to meet the situations with which it is confronted, such, for example, as the all-embracing instrument of language, whereas it is just these conceptual instruments that enlarged experience is proving are faulty. It is often very difficult indeed to get away from unconscious verbal implications that we have accepted

without analysis all our lives, particularly when, as in many cases, our success as social beings depends on the completeness with which these implications are ingrained into our conduct. Not only do verbal implications hinder us in giving an accurate account of situations, but it is often difficult to get rid of the inferences with which we unconsciously dress our direct observation, as an analysis of the circumstantial evidence of many court proceedings would bring out.

So when we find ourselves in a new situation we need a new set of mental pigeon-holes; and the ideas which physics has been wont to designate by such words as space, time, force, etc., are found no longer adequate. Newton's absolute time, independent of space, has for some purposes been abandoned; yet it is necessary to assume something as fixed, and one wonders what it is. The chapter headings are: Operations; Thought, Language; Logic; Mathematics; Mathematics in Application; Relativity; Mathematical Models and Probability; Wave Mechanics. In the Conclusion the author says:

The idea that thought is the measure of all things, that there is such a thing as utter logical rigor, that conclusions can be drawn endowed with inescapable necessity, that mathematics has an absolute validity and controls experience — these are not the ideas of a modest animal. . . . When will we learn that logic, mathematics, physical theory, are all only our inventions for formulating in compact and manageable form what we already know?"

And so we return to what was said at the beginning of this review — that the function of ratiocinative thought is not to ascertain but to analyse, and that its exclusive exercise will necessarily result in the presentment of an imaginary world, based on contradictions and on concepts which melt away under our lenses. But fortunately it is not by such methods that we rule our lives; otherwise we should resemble that proverbial centipede which, when asked how he managed all his legs, found himself unable to walk. It appears from many passages which we cannot quote that the author realizes how much of error is due to isolating parts of experience from experience in general and

studying these parts as though they were complete in themselves; or, as Poe says, "The infinite series of mistakes which arise in the path of Reason through her propensity for seeking truth *in detail*." The word "physics" itself is redolent of mischief here, so long as it implies that there is a self-sufficient physical world, apart from the world in general. This physical world (the one that science has been living in) is no doubt real enough within its limits, and useful for many practical purposes; but if we venture beyond it we may have to admit that, from this larger view, it is only an abstraction from reality. Is Nature external to the observer, or is it part of the observer's mind; and if it is in part both of these, what are the proportions between the two components? Again, whose is the mind, mine or yours, or a kind of collective mind of humanity?

Self-knowledge is the key *to* all knowledge: behind percepts lie senses, and behind the senses lies mind, and behind mind lies *buddhi* or direct intuitive perception. And all of these are functions or organs of — what? The real Self. And knowledge which does not express itself in conduct is like science without a laboratory; it does not mean much.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Nature of Physical Theory*, by P. W. Bridgman, Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, Harvard University: Princeton University Press, 1936. \$2.00. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: VI — *H. Percy Leonard*

The Penal Colony: A Swiss Experiment

An interesting experiment has been carried on during the last forty years at Witzil on the borders of Lake Neuchatel. Two thousand acres of land, mostly peat soil, were purchased and were drained by prison-labor, and vast quantities of vegetables have been produced. Asparagus has been grown extensively in a sandy tract by the lake, and fertilized by the street-sweepings of Berne; astonishing results have been obtained.

The penal colony is not only self-supporting, but the initial cost of rendering the soil fit for cultivation has been fully covered, the necessary workshops and farm buildings have been erected, and rent, taxes, and interest on loans have been regularly paid to the State. Besides all this, enough money has been earned to provide wages for the workers. During the year 1927 about \$6,000 were paid out in this way.

Everything is done to help the men acquire fresh knowledge and to train their abilities, and in return many of them have placed their experience and skill at the disposal of the institution. To this hearty co-operation, the success of the experiment is largely due.

Released prisoners, unable to find work elsewhere, often return and are allowed to work at the same terms as any other free laborers. The director says that many men do very well if their lives are mapped out for them, but seem to be unable to fight the battle of life alone.

A royal commission from England paid a visit to Witzil twenty years ago and made a very favorable report, although the system has not as yet been adopted in that country. But it is evident that the good impression has been germinating, for a prominent statesman has recently declared that, if he had his way, he would make a clean sweep

of the existing English prison-system and establish in its place penal colonies after the Swiss model.

The following suggestions made by a noted Theosophical Leader, many years ago, are of interest in this connexion:

In the institution I would build there should be neither cells nor prison-bars. In the beginning, so as to be reasonable and meet the public needs, and not encourage in the wrong direction those who have fallen too far to realize their responsibility and feel the sense of honor, I should have a wall built somewhere. But it would be so far away that you could hardly see it. I would give them room to breathe; I would bring them into healing contact with Nature; they should have the curative influence of gardens to work in, and flowers.

I would give them helpful discipline, and not indulgence; I would give them strict and wholesome discipline, but not the sense of degrading durance. There should be every kind of shop in which to practice their trades; I would help each one of them to feel his own energy and live his own life; and I would educate them.

The Theosophical Forum

ESOTERIC MAN — *Sven Eek*

Projected against the panoramic background of everyday life, the stream of human beings floats along in its thousand gradations of the good, the bad, and the indifferent. As we watch, the fleeting glimpse vanishes; the vision is replaced by another, and another, in quick-changing succession. Occasionally our attention is irresistibly drawn to a face or a scene. Memory is prodding us, and we stretch out a hand in recognition of common experiences once lived through, or perhaps we instinctively recoil in antipathy. A moral might be drawn from this.

Since we must reap what we sow, we shall meet again and again those for whom we have felt deep love and hatred; they are our helpers and our obstructors. They are always our teachers. But don't we all prefer good-tempered and friendly teachers? Some may claim the opposite — and they are welcome to their pretended choice. But in any case, the people with whom we are now living will be with us again in future lives, although our respective positions may be reversed. Why not be far-sighted now — make friends, not enemies, for the future?

Animals act by the same instinct as man, but theirs is more unerring, more swift in its applications. They recognise friends and enemies by the stealthy tread approaching from afar: keen eyes, sharp ears, an uncanny power of smell, sift sound, sights, and smells and classify them as inimical or protective. When our intuition becomes as strong as the animal instinct, humanity will have taken a long stride. Man, as we now see him, is more often than not a curious mixture of the immortal Don Quixote and his Sancho Panza. But through the Don's vainglory and weaknesses there penetrates an odor of sanctity. He is on a journey which will carry him far beyond the windmills.

Theosophy has something to say about this. It claims that behind the fantastic masks one often meets, there is a real man yearning for a nobler expression of life; the antics performed with such seriousness

on the stage of life yet have a purpose in the progress of the world. In this very striving for happiness, so seemingly futile, may it not be that the hates and rivalries of men can be burnt away from their hearts, and that the devils' mask of the gory carnival of national wars and private feuds can be cast off to let us get a glimpse of the God who patiently is laying the foundations of a nobler world?

Is Theosophy justified in drawing an analogy between external man as we know him, and nations, creeds, and even the worlds of stars and cosmic galaxies? Whenever you have a chance, put these questions to your best friends. It might awaken dormant memories buried in the intuition of one who may have marched alongside of you in lives forgotten. Your karma has given you this opportunity of strengthening the little band of mystic students. The great religions of today can look back on a history of conquest and glory; they have clashed with weaker ones and emerged victorious by swords of steel, or by persuasion; but behind the scenes we might picture to ourselves the rather sad-faced gods in whose behalf the battle has been waged. Suppose they were to send their recognised messengers, Buddha, Jesus, Lao-Tse, Confucius, and others, to a conclave in order to effect an amicable settlement. Do you think such a conference would break up?

No, not very likely! Could you imagine them going back on their most solemn precepts: "Do unto one another what you want done to yourselves"; or, "Don't do to one another what you don't want done to yourselves."? Their various philosophies of life are identic at the core, but garbed in raiments appropriate to the people they primarily came to teach. And perhaps they all belonged to the same Council of Peace who from time to time send out one of their number to set things aright after long periods of chaos and darkness.

The intuitive student might say that there is in the hearts of all of us one of the same Brotherhood whom we would venture to call "Esoteric Man."

CIVILIZATION BUILDED UPON THOUGHT — *G. de Purucker*

Thought is the motive power of men. It governs even emotion and can control it, and although sometimes thought is evoked by feeling, I think that on the higher planes they are one. The world we live in is a world of men, a world of thinkers and feelers; and if the world is bad, it is because men's thoughts and feelings have made it so. If human conditions are inharmonious, even diabolic at times, when brute force takes the place of reason and justice, it is because men's thoughts have made it so.

Ideas control actions. There you have the cause of the unrest in the world we live in, and its cure. If a man wants to reform himself, he does so by first of all changing his thought; he begins by feeling differently. There is no other way. It is the only lasting way, for it means a change of character. If you want to prevent a quarrel you have to begin your work before the quarrel threatens. If you try to interfere in a quarrel between two men, you are apt to hurt yourself, and you will have a quarrel of three. It is no way to stop a quarrel by going to the quarrelers and preaching. By so doing you have not touched these men where they are susceptible, you have not changed them, you have not appealed to their thought or their feelings. You have been trying mere palliatives.

Make them see that they are acting a bit worse than the beasts are when the beasts fight, because the beasts have not our reason and common sense. Make your appeal with ideas. Awaken thoughts in their minds. Put into their minds a new sequence of thought and feeling. Then they will begin to realize that you cannot settle a quarrel by brute force, for that simply means that the chap who has got the worst of it is going to bide his time to see if he can best the other fellow by brute force. They will begin to see that you cannot stop wars by making wars to stop wars. It never has worked and never will, because it is an entirely wrong psychology, as well as foolish.

Do you know that all civilization is builded upon thought? And that if you want to change a civilization, you must change accepted thought, give a new thought. What is an invention? A thought. What is literature? Thought. What are philosophy, religion, science? Thought. What is the social structure under which we live? Thought. Every movement in the world today is builded upon thought: social, political, philosophic, religious, scientific, what not. Nine out of ten of these movements began in the mind of one man, and spread. You see in the pages of history the tremendous cataclysmic effects of thought. What was the Great War? Not only the result of thought, but thought itself. Men fighting because of ideas — thoughts. To avoid another war we must begin before the next one happens. We must begin by starting a new current of thought in the world.

These truths are so simple they pass over our heads and we do not take them in and digest them. It is ideas that shake the world. It is ideas that make the world. It is ideas that unmake men and the world of men. Consult the annals of history. Look at the amazing results that spring from movements which begin perhaps with a handful of earnest people. For years they may work and preach and labor apparently without result. Suddenly, for some remarkable reason, the idea catches and spreads like wild-fire. Sometimes ideas take hold of men in the most amazing way. What were the Crusades, when men left home and hearth and fireside and everything they held dear to go to fight the paynim, in a distant foreign and unknown land? These tens of thousands of men collected from all over Europe *for an idea*. Still more remarkable: what was this amazing and thought-arresting idea which even caught the thoughts and imaginations of little children? Have you ever heard of the Children's Crusade? Out of Germany and what is now Belgium and Holland and France and Switzerland, down into the south of France and into Italy, suddenly children began to arise, boys and girls from toddling ones up to those of thirteen or fourteen years — they took to the roads and went by the scores of thousands till the highways were black with their marching feet. Hundreds of miles they went, dying by thousands on the way, and horribly treated by human

monsters who battered on them. Nobody knows how this thought arose. Suddenly the children in the various countries took it into their heads: "We will go fight, we will go save the Holy Sepulcher." Fancy children talking like that! They got it from their parents, of course; but look at the psychology — a psychology that swept every home, took one or more children from every fireside. The mothers and fathers could not stop them. They would steal out by night. They would go by byways and devious pathways to the great highways, those bands of helpless children going south, going south! All for an idea, a thought!

What was the idea of the wonderful tarantella which is best described by the historians of Spain and Italy — Italy, perhaps particularly? Suddenly for no understandable reason, grown men and women got the idea that they must dance; and they began to dance, and danced on and on until they fell down unconscious, exhausted. They could not stop themselves from singing and dancing, singly and together — whole countrysides, whole districts of them. A psychology, a thought, an idea.

It is just such kind of insane psychology that rules the world of human thought today. Men and women have got the idea that it is impossible to prevent a second Great War. They really believe it. And that is one of the reasons why it will happen unless sanity resumes its sway over our minds. What makes and carries on any war? Thought. What stops any war? Thought: a changing of the thoughts of men; for by changing their thoughts you change their hearts, you change their lives and therefore their civilizations. If a war comes, it is because men and women have brought it about by their thinking. Their thinking arouses their feeling. Their feeling arouses their jealousy and fear. Evil thought will be followed by similar thought. You cannot extinguish fire by fire. You cannot stop war by war. This is as simple as ABC. These are thoughts which fly unnoticed over our heads because we are so accustomed to them, and yet they are the secret of all good and all evil. A man's life is changed sublimely by his thoughts; so too can he go to "hell" or the gallows by his thinking. It is thought which makes the gentleman and the boor. It is thought which makes the courageous man or the coward.

It is thought which produces forgiveness or carries on hate.

It was because these facts are such that the Theosophical Society was begun: to try to change the thoughts of men towards better and higher things; to arouse inspiring and benevolent ideas in the minds of individual men and women. Why don't we Theosophists go into the arena of politics? For the reason I have already pointed out. You cannot stop a fight between two by making it a fight of three. But you can stop men from acting worse than beasts by showing them that if they act in *this* way they will be acting like men, and if they act in *that* way they will be acting worse than beasts. If they act in *this* way they will be acting wisely and constructively; and if they act in *that* way they will be destroying each other.

Why don't we Theosophists all go out and take lunch-baskets around to the starving, and go to the bedsides of the people who are smitten with disease, and dying? Many of us do it and have done it. But our main work in life is to try to *do away* with poverty, rather than tinkering with the needs of the poor; and this will gradually be accomplished by changing men's minds so that our civilization will be an enlightened one. That, among other noble objectives, is what we aspire towards. And there is no other work which is farther-reaching than that. It goes to the root of things, instead of only putting plaster and ointments on the surface of the festering wounds. And in a still higher field our work is to teach men and women what they as individuals have locked up within them: powers, capacities, faculties, which the average man and woman today does not suspect. Yet they are there; the titan intellects, the greatest men who have ever lived, have proved what the human mind is capable of; and every normal man has the same potencies within himself. It is part of the work of the Theosophical Society to re-arouse belief in these things, so that men will yearn to cultivate themselves from within outwards, to awaken what is within, and to become greater and grander. What a world we shall live in then! It is thought that will do it, and the feeling which follows upon thought. Then indeed will the Christ, crucified in us every day we live, ascend from the Crucifix, our own being, the body of each man, and enter into

the brain of the man, and enlighten his life, and reform his conduct towards his fellows. Just that one thought alone, if you could get men to believe it and inwardly to know it, would bring about a universal "conversion," as the Christians say, a converting, a changing, a turning around, of our minds and hearts to the living Christ within, the living Buddha! It is as simple as that.

The Theosophical Forum

EDGAR ALLAN POE AS SEER — *H. T. Edge*

The object of this article is to show how many of the best-known teachings of Theosophy are to be found in Poe; an undertaking which seems to be by no means superfluous, judging by the prevalent ignorance of the fact. Misconceptions concerning Poe have prevented people from even reading his best writings; and even those who may have read them cannot be wholly exculpated from the charge of judging the value of ideas rather from preformed notions concerning their author than from an estimate of the intrinsic worth of the ideas.

To write a criticism of the man and his works in general is not our present purpose, and a few brief remarks must suffice as introduction to our main topic. To whomsoever the fault may be due, the fact remains that Poe was defamed by his literary executor, and that this false picture was accepted without examination by the writers in encyclopaedias and works on literature, who are not always so wise as their claims would suggest. Later, certain writers who possessed the ability to assess values by intrinsic merit, and to judge the author by his works rather than the other way round, succeeded in exposing the calumnies. No doubt some of these carried the reaction too far in the other direction; but at the present date it is easy for anyone to obtain a fair and balanced judgment concerning the life and character of Poe.

He was an over-sensitive and badly balanced temperament, a sad misfit in the world into which he was born. He suffered from misunderstanding, frustration, and continual poverty. Like a being deposited by a passing comet upon an unfamiliar globe, he lived in a realm strangely apart from ordinary human interests. His intense and one-sided temperament carries him to great heights, and by inevitable reaction to morbid depths. His tales are all in this strange aloof world of his: he fails when he tries to introduce the usual components of a fictional narrative — human interest, dialog, etc. Some of these tales are beautiful, others morbid; all are chaste. His attempts at humor are

distressing. It is in his prose writings rather than in his scanty verse that he justifies his title of poet.

Poe's almost invariable habit of writing in the first person has probably led some not very competent critics into the belief that many of his tales are autobiographical. But such a technique comes natural to a genius whose object is intensity and vividness. To write a tale in the third person is to give an outside view; the true artist thinks himself into that which he designs to portray, realizes the drama in his mind, identifies himself with the character. How much more vivid instead of "Mr. So-and-so came of a race noted for vigor of fancy, etc." — to write: "I am come of a race noted for vigor of fancy."

Psycho-analytic experts have dissected his character in a way that impresses you only so long as you fail to realize that any other complex character — yours or mine — could be dissected in precisely the same way and with the same results. We one and all have subtle motives which we suppress until we can find an opportunity of expressing them under some respectable disguise; Poe is a long way from being the only writer who has sought relief by expressing in imagination what he has failed to express in actual life.

There will be some who, having prejudged Poe in consequence of the misrepresentations, will either not read his best writings or will dismiss them as the lucid intervals of a dipsomaniac; which perhaps will seem to them a good reason for discounting anything he has said, regardless of possible intrinsic merit. There will be also what we may call the supernaturalists, who regard manifestations of genius as due to some occult inspiration from a power behind the scenes, said power being in turn but the medium for a still higher power; and so on, so that the source continually recedes like the rainbow. This doctrine contravenes the idea that man contains within himself the potency of all knowledge, and this potency can be brought into actuality by his own efforts. Poe shows no sign of indebtedness to the Orient or to ancient Greece; and whether his intuitions were his own, or were breathed into him by somebody else, let each decide for himself.

In his prose poem *Eureka*, Poe shows the universe as proceeding from an original unity to multiplicity, and back from multiplicity to unity; the two tendencies being continually operative, their perpetual interaction causing the movement, the stress, the joy, or life; the close of a cycle of manifestation being marked by the final predominance of the unifying tendency. But this universe is only one of an infinite number of universes. These surely are Theosophical doctrines. Gravitation is the desire of separated particles to return to unity; they seek the center of spheres, not because these are centers, but because such is the shortest road towards unity. This general principle is worked out at great length and much detail in a consideration of the stellar universe and its mechanics. But it must not be thought that he leaves us with a dry mechanism or views the universe as a cold crystal. For him, all is life, down to the smallest atomic particle; the entire universe is sentient. In this he bears out his own contention that a mere mathematician cannot reason, but that a man must be a poet as well as a mathematician. See *The Purloined Letter*: "As poet *and* mathematician he would reason well; as mere mathematician he could not have reasoned at all." The following extract from the conclusion of *Eureka* will illustrate what we have said:

There was an epoch in the Night of Time, when a still-existent Being existed — one of an absolutely infinite number of similar Beings that people the absolutely infinite domains of the absolutely infinite space. It was not and is not in the power of this Being — any more than it is in your own — to extend by actual increase, the joy of his Existence; but just as it *is* in your power to expand or to concentrate your pleasures (the absolute amount of happiness remaining always the same) so did and does a similar capability appertain to this Divine Being, who thus passes his Eternity in perpetual variation of Concentrated Self and almost Infinity Self-Diffusion. What you call the Universe is but his present expansive existence. He now feels his life through an infinity of imperfect pleasures — the partial and pain-intertangled pleasures of those inconceivably numerous

things which you designate as his creatures, but which are really but infinite individualizations of Himself. All these creatures — *all* those which you term animate, as well as those to whom you deny life for no better reason than that you do not behold it in operation — all these creatures have, in a greater or less degree, a capacity for pleasure and for pain: — *but the general sum of their sensations is precisely that amount of Happiness which appertains by right to the Divine Being when concentrated within Himself.* These creatures are all, too, more or less conscious Intelligences; conscious, first, of a proper identity; conscious secondly, and by faint indeterminate glimpses, of an identity with the Divine Being of whom we speak — of an identity with God. Of the two classes of consciousness, fancy that the former will grow weaker, the latter stronger, during the long succession of ages which must elapse before these myriads of individual Intelligences become blended — when the bright stars become blended — into One. Think that the sense of individual identity will be gradually merged in the general consciousness — that Man, for example, ceasing imperceptibly to feel himself Man, will at length attain that awfully triumphant epoch when he shall recognise his existence as that of Jehovah. In the meantime bear in mind that all is Life — Life — Life within Life — the less within the greater, and all within the *Spirit Divine.*

It is superfluous to point out the many ideas familiar to Theosophists which occur in this passage. In another passage he speaks of the "law of periodicity":

Are we not indeed more than justified in entertaining a belief — let us say rather in indulging a hope — that the processes we have here ventured to contemplate will be renewed forever, and forever, and forever; a novel Universe swelling into existence, and then subsiding into nothingness, at every throb of the Heart Divine?

We also note the familiar analogy between the Great Breath and the pulse of the heart. But as to this heart, he continues:

And now — this Heart Divine — what is it? *It is our own.*

This redeems the philosophy from all suspicion of being that of an external universe, a universe purely objective, omitting the subject, and therefore unreal and abstract. Such an external objective universe is familiar enough to scientific philosophy, and to many metaphysical systems. This cutting off of object from subject not only shuts out one half of reality but precludes a just comprehension of the remaining half.

Poe's criterion of truth is its beauty, its consistency, the conviction which it brings to the mind, the response as of recognition which it evokes from the heart. He makes great fun of the inductive and deductive methods, which he dubs the method of creeping and the method of crawling. The pedants who rely on either of these methods do not care whether a truth is true; all they want to know is the method by which the alleged truth has been arrived at; if it has not been arrived at by their favorite method, it is not true. We are reminded of those earnest truth-seekers who are always demanding "proof — people who, to be logical, would have to deny their own existence. Here is a passage from *Mellonta Tauta* ('These things are of the future'):

Do you know that it is not more than a thousand years ago since the metaphysicians consented to relieve the people of the singular fancy that there existed but *two possible roads for the attainment of Truth!* Believe it if you can!

Then with his cumbrous humor he makes fun of the Aristotelians and the Baconians, who started from axioms and sensations respectively, or from noumena and phenomena. These notions operated to retard the progress of knowledge — which makes its advances almost invariably by intuitive bounds.

No man dared utter a truth for which he felt himself indebted to his *Soul* alone. It mattered not whether the truth was even

demonstrably a truth, for the bullet-headed savants of the time regarded only *the road* by which he had attained it. They would not even *look* at the end. "Let us see the means," they cried, "the means!" If, upon investigation of the means, it was found to come under neither the category Aries (that is to say Ram) nor under the category Hog, why then the savants went no farther, but pronounced the "theorist" a fool, and would have nothing to do with him or his truth.

Is it not passing strange that, with their eternal prattling about *roads* to Truth, these bigoted people missed what we now so clearly perceive to be the great highway — that of Consistency? Does it not seem singular how they should have failed to deduce from the works of God the vital fact that a perfect consistency *must* be an absolute truth!

The problem of the origin of evil presents no difficulty to one who views the universe in this way; he sees that we have imposed sorrows upon ourselves for our own purposes. The passage quoted below also connects this thought with the idea of the unity of all souls in the one Oversoul:

No thinking being lives who, at some luminous point of his life of thought, has not felt himself lost amid the surges of futile efforts at understanding or believing that anything exists *greater than his own soul*. The utter impossibility of anyone's soul feeling itself inferior to another; the intense overwhelming dissatisfaction and rebellion at the thought: — these, with the omniprevalent aspirations at perfection are but the spiritual, coincident with the material, struggles towards the original Unity — are, to my mind at least, a species of proof far surpassing what Man terms demonstration, that no one soul *is* inferior to another — that nothing is, or can be, superior to any one soul — that each soul is, in part, its own God — its own Creator: — in a word, that God — the material *and* spiritual God — *now* exists solely in the diffused Matter and Spirit of the

Universe; and that the regathering of this diffused Matter and Spirit will be but the reconstitution of the *purely* Spiritual and Individual God.

In this view, and in this view alone, we comprehend the riddles of Divine Injustice — or Inexorable Fate. In this view alone the existence of Evil becomes intelligible; but in this view it becomes more — it becomes endurable. Our souls no longer rebel at a *Sorrow* which we ourselves have imposed upon ourselves, in furtherance of our own purposes — with a view — if even with a futile view — to the extension of our own *Joy*.

In a piece called *The Power of Words* our poet illustrates views familiar to Theosophists as to the power of vibration, especially of the spoken word. It is in the form of a colloquy between two beings liberated from earth-life, and we quote the concluding passage:

Agathos. — And while I thus spoke, did there not cross your mind some thought of the *physical power of words*? Is not every word an impulse on the air?

Oinos. — But why, *Agathos*, do you weep — and why, oh why do your wings droop as we hover above this fair star — • which is the greenest and yet most terrible of all we have encountered in our flight? Its brilliant flowers look like a fairy dream — but its fierce volcanoes like the passions of a turbulent heart.

Agathos. — They *are!* — they *are!* This wild star — it is now three centuries since, with clasped hands and with streaming eyes, at the feet of my beloved — I spoke it — with a few passionate sentences — into birth. Its brilliant flowers *are* the dearest of all unfulfilled dreams, and its raging volcanoes *are* the passions of the most turbulent and unhallowed of hearts.

The universal sentience of Nature is expressed in *The Island of the Fay*, from which we quote the following:

I love to regard the dark valleys, and the gray rocks, and the

waters that silently smile, and the forests that sigh in uneasy slumbers, and the proud watchful mountains that look down upon all, — I love to regard these as themselves but the colossal members of one vast animate and sentient whole — a whole whose form (that of the sphere) is the most perfect and most inclusive of all; whose path is among associate planets; whose meek handmaiden is the moon, whose mediate sovereign is the sun; whose life is eternity; whose thought is that of a God; whose enjoyment is knowledge; whose destinies are lost in immensity; whose cognizance of ourselves is akin with our own cognizance of the animalcula which infest the brain — a being which we in consequence regard as purely inanimate and material, much in the same manner as these animalcula must regard us.

As to the plurality of universes we find this in *Eureka*:

Have we any right to infer, let us rather say to imagine — an interminable succession of the "clusters of clusters," or of "Universes" more or less similar? . . . I myself feel impelled to *fancy* — without daring to call it more — that there *does* exist a limitless succession of Universes, more or less similar to that of which we have cognizance — to that of which *alone* we shall ever have cognizance — at the very least until the return of our own particular Universe into Unity. // such clusters of clusters exist, however — *and they do* — it is abundantly clear that, having had no part in our origin, they have no portion in our laws. They neither attract us nor we them. Their material, their spirit, is not ours — is not that which obtains in any part of our Universe. They could not impress our senses or our souls. Among them and among us — considering all, for the moment, collectively — there are no influences in common. Each exists, apart and independently, *in the bosom of its proper and particular God*.

A few miscellaneous quotations:

Each law of Nature is dependent at all points upon all other

laws, and all are but consequences of one primary exercise of the Divine Volition. — *Eureka*

The development of Repulsion (Electricity) must have commenced, of course, with the very earliest particular efforts at Unity, and must have proceeded constantly in the ratio of Coalescence — that is to say, *in that of Condensation*, or, again, of Heterogeneity. Thus the two Principles Proper, *Attraction* and *Repulsion* — the Material and the Spiritual — accompany each other, in the strictest fellowship, forever. Thus, *the Body and the Soul walk hand in hand*. — *Ibid.*

Space and Duration are one. — *Ibid.*

The incomprehensible connection between each particular individual in the moon with some particular individual on the earth — a connection analogous with, and depending upon, that of the orbs of the planet and the satellite, and by means of which the lives and destinies of the inhabitants of the one are interwoven with the lives and destinies of the inhabitants of the other. — *Adventure of Hans Pfaal*

Discarding now the two equivalent terms, "gravitation" and "electricity," let us adopt the more definite expressions, "*attraction*" and "*repulsion*." The former is the body; the latter the soul: the one is the material, the other the spiritual, principle of the Universe. *No other principles exist*. All phenomena are referable to one, or to the other, or to both combined. So rigorously is this the case — so thoroughly demonstrable is it that attraction and repulsion are the *sole* properties through which we perceive the Universe — in other words, by which Matter is manifested to Mind — that, for all merely argumentative purposes, we are fully justified in assuming that matter *exists* only as attraction and repulsion — that attraction and repulsion *are* matter. — *Eureka*

Poe's theory of aesthetics — if this is the right word to use — is defined,

among other places, in the following passage:

Dividing the world of mind into its three most immediately obvious distinctions, we have the Pure Intellect, Taste, and the Moral Sense. I place Taste in the middle because it is just this position which in the mind it occupies. It holds intimate relations with either extreme; but from the Moral Sense is separated by so faint a difference that Aristotle has not hesitated to place some of its operations among the virtues themselves. Nevertheless we find the *offices* of the trio marked with a sufficient distinction. Just as the Intellect concerns itself with Truth, so Taste informs us of the Beautiful, while the Moral Sense is regardful of Duty. Of this latter, while Conscience teaches the obligation, and Reason the expediency, Taste contents herself with displaying the charms, waging war upon Vice solely because of her deformity, her disproportion, her animosity to the fitting, to the appropriate, to the harmonious, in a word, to Beauty. — *The Poetic Principle*

And in the *Philosophy of Composition* he designates Beauty as the province of the poem, excluding didacticism of every sort. He sees Wordsworth's defects through a lens, ignoring the merits; he waxes enthusiastic over Coleridge; he would have had no use for Ruskin's doctrine. He is however here merely explaining his theory of art and composition, not laying down a rigid and exclusive dogma; and elsewhere, as we have seen, he gives abundant proof of his sense of the universal unity. The nameless goal presents itself under various forms to various minds — Truth, Goodness, Beauty, Harmony, Love; but "by whatever name they worship Me, it is I alone who inspire them with constancy in that devotion."

On the subject of death, so interesting to Theosophists, we find various places where he enunciates views on which Theosophists would look with approval. The *Colloquy of Monos and Una* is a dialog between two souls in the after-life, in which one of them describes his experiences of death. Though his consciousness and power of thought gradually die

down, there is never a time when he is not sufficiently aware of existence to be able to remember it afterwards. He is dimly aware of the laying-out, the weeping, even the lowering into the tomb, nay even the tomb itself. And what is remarkable here is the fact that, when all else of sensory or conscious experience has faded out, there still remains the sense of — Time. Time, he says, is not a mental abstraction, it is a self-existent reality. It consists in a ceaseless rhythmic pulsation, so exact and inerrant that, as he lies on the bed of death, he is enabled by its means to detect the errors in the ticking of a watch. Time, then, is the ultimate essence of consciousness, the irreducible substratum; and this is surely an idea which might be found in *The Secret Doctrine*. And from this condition the consciousness slowly rebuilds itself by gradations similar to those whereby it had dwindled down. The same idea is found in *The Pit and the Pendulum*:

I had swooned; but still will not say that all of consciousness was lost. What of it there remained I will not attempt to define, or even to describe; yet all was not lost. In the deepest slumber — no! In delirium — no! In a swoon — no! In death — no! even in the grave all *is not* lost. Else there is no immortality for man.

Poe's ideas of cosmogenesis will bear comparison with any system short of that of the Esoteric Philosophy. He of course finds it necessary, as is inevitable, to *assume* something as a starting-point; and he uses the terms God and Godhead without necessarily implying thereby the dogmatic errors which cause Theosophists to fight shy of them. His starting-point is one of which nothing can be predicated except in negative terms; and he quotes a French writer to the effect that, to understand God, one must himself *be* God. Assuming that this Being created out of nothing that universe which was to be his own self-expression — what did he first create? Assuming the creator as Spirit, what he first created was "Matter in its utmost conceivable state of — what? — of *Simplicity*. . . ."

Oneness, then, is all that I predicate of the originally created Matter; but I propose to show that this *Oneness is a principle*

abundantly sufficient to account for the constitution, the existing phenomena and the plainly inevitable annihilation of that least the material Universe.

This last remark is summed up elsewhere in the words: "In the Original Unity of the First Thing lies the Secondary Cause of All Things, with the Germ of their Inevitable Annihilation."

The proving of this proposition occupies much space and can hardly be even summarized here. Unity is a condition which, in its very nature, implies multiplicity; a profound thought, worth reflecting on.

As to pre-existence, we find the following:

Herein was I born. But it is mere idleness to say that I had not lived before — that the soul has no previous existence. You deny it? — let us not argue the matter. Convinced myself, I seek not to convince. There is, however, a remembrance of aerial forms — of spiritual and meaning eyes — of sounds musical yet sad; a remembrance which will not be excluded; a memory like a shadow — vague, variable, indefinite, unsteady; and like a shadow, too, in the impossibility of my getting rid of it while the sunlight of my reason shall exist. In that chamber was I born. Thus awaking from the long night of what seemed, but was not, nonentity. . . . — *Berenice*

Here for the present we conclude a somewhat diffuse and sketchy survey, and one which might easily have been carried to greater length. The writer has found it a congenial task to do his little towards rehabilitating a slandered reputation; and he hopes that his Theosophical readers will find themselves able to share his satisfaction. Poe, in his Preface to *Eureka*, has the following:

What I here propound is true: — therefore it cannot die: — or if by any means it be now trodden down so that it die, it will "rise again to the Life Everlasting."

A TIMELY WARNING — *Lydia Ross*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

An able physician has issued a timely warning against what he calls "fooling with the gear" of the physical body. He puts the idea into current phrases of our mechanistic era, now that Every-man-and-his-Wife is driving a car, or flying, or doing something with machinery. He hopes that by talking a common language, perhaps he can make it understood what he is driving at. His warning is disinterested enough, since this tampering with the human mechanism is bringing to his office a number of new models of cases, so to say — patients who come to him for repairs which will put them again into good running order. In spite of his best skill in the line of human service, however, he finds that in these cases there is one or another of the various "parts" of the organism which cannot be made to work as well as it did before; that is, before the owner had put it more or less out of alignment with the whole organism which, by the way, was assembled originally by expert Mother Nature herself.

In short, even with the amazing equipment of the up-to-date doctor's office — it has its gadgets galore like every other place — somehow the chemical and mechanical resources cannot cope with certain vague disturbances between the inner man and his body. These maladjustments appear to be beyond the known laws of physics, and to consider them in terms of metaphysics is regarded as so unscientific that — well, it just isn't done. However, the Ancients who began with universals and worked down to particular cases, considered the man *and* his body. They called man the microcosm of the macrocosm, studied him as a natural part of the whole, and diagnosed him accordingly. They knew the inside history of mankind's Rounds and Races on our home-planet. Hence they realized that Nature, from the

beginning of her aeons of experience, always adopted the best way of doing things that were to be done, which is the natural way. At first, she embodied infant humanity in forms and in materials which were in keeping with the substance and the conditions of the young earth — just as today we provide for, and handle our babies as babies and not as seasoned adults.

Now Nature has made countless changes in the body, both of man and of the earth; but she has never changed her primeval policy of doing the most suitable thing for the time, the place, the creatures, and the conditions concerned. At present, she builds for human bodies marvelous vehicles or instruments for us to live in and use during a lifetime of evolutionary experience and growth. By comparison, the best automobiles with their intricate combinations and interactions of wood, metal, oil, gas, water, spark, etc., are nothing beside the complex adjustment of the primeval elements of fire, air, water, earth, and psycho-magnetic and spiritual currents of the organism in and through which the Real Self operates constantly, awake and asleep. The crowning marvel of it all is the *balance* of co-ordinated interaction of all the parts and functions and dynamic forces which are naturally keyed to health.

Every organ and tissue has its own vibratory rate which is mathematically adjusted to play in rhythmic time and in tune with the natural purpose of the whole. Nature carries on all the physiological operations through the Sympathetic Nervous System, and leaves the self-conscious man with his free will, to voluntarily act well or ill through his Cerebro-Spinal Nervous System. She knows more than he does about his wonderful body, and she does her part to keep it going naturally in spite of his careless abuse or thoughtless neglect of it. She lets him hurt himself, life after life, sometimes mortally, until he grows consciously wise enough through experience and suffering to realize that Mother Nature "knows best." At long last, he works with her and obeys the natural law. Meantime, we are what we are!

The heart is a living motor that, with tiny rests between beats, is

guaranteed to keep going for a lifetime. Its strokes are adjusted to the varying rates of the incoming and outgoing air in the lungs; and both heart and lungs act and react with the functional chemistry, the emotional and muscular activity, and the quantity and quality of the nourishing intake and the outgoing waste of the whole organism. Moreover, the body is unique as a mechanism provided with a brain for the operation of the thinking Self. The circulating currents of air, of blood, of lymph, of nervous ether, which, together, play their parts, are symbolic of more rapid, powerful, and subtil currents of thought, feeling, emotion, and will which put every organ and every cell into the circuit of psycho-magnetic vital forces. Here is where *ethics* appear in the original scheme of things — not as a matter of mere belief, but as a balance-wheel in the natural blueprint of a Universe of law and order. That is to say, when the body, mind, and desires are working together with unselfish motives, the net result is marked progress along the lines of health, intelligence, balanced efficiency, and inner peace.

On the other hand — for we are dual creatures — when the mind and the selfish motives of personal desires are driving the brain and the whole human mechanism, we try to run regardless of the natural law of health and wholeness. We trade on Mother Nature's longtime patience in ever trying to keep us on the right road; and we imagine, because we fool ourselves and each other so often, that we can outwit her and "get by." In fact, the average man and woman will treat the body with a lawless disregard of the reciprocal action of its many elements whose combination is calculated to make us human masterpieces of "scientific efficiency." No one thinks of treating an automobile or other machine as heedlessly as we often treat our body and expect it to give good service. When we begin to break the law of balanced action, at first it is not so noticeable. But presently, as we drive along, day after day, breaking the physiological law and incurring disability or disaster, Nature appears in the picture as a sort of cosmic traffic-officer, and gives us a ticket to report to the doctor. Or, at the worst, she stops our driving for this life-term, and our abused human machine is sent to the crematorium — with flowers.

At present, Science is working to liberate and harness the almost limitless forces locked up in the invisible atom. The failure, so far, to release more potent forces for use generally, while the nations are so war-minded, is our good fortune. In speaking of the scientific research in the atomic world, Dr. de Purucker, in *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 464, adds:

few indeed realize, that the atoms of even our physical frames embody and therefore enclose truly terrific forces, which, because they are so amazingly balanced in more or less stable equilibrium, hold these bodies of ours in coherent and enduring form and shape. . . . reflect over the incomprehensibly stupendous play of forces, and balancing of them, that occurs at every instant and all the time, incessantly . . . under the gripping and infallibly directing control of the inner and invisible monadic entity, as we call our spiritual Self. What a wonder it all is! It is this amazingly powerful inner and invisible monadic being, controlling these immense forces of the etheric realms of Nature, which molds us both astrally and physically — to say nothing for the moment of the still more subtil forces working in the psychologic and spiritual fields of our being — and which thus make us what we are physically. . . .

The above words are rich in meaning, for they hold logical reasons for the physical, mental, and moral injuries that follow from tampering with the wondrous balance of the cosmic and terrestrial forces which are naturally and safely adjusted for reciprocal work in the body. Every man is an integral part, a living atom, in a vast organism of the Home Universe in which he lives, and moves, and has his being. Each human creature is potentially a god and a demon, with power of choice to grow more united to his Spiritual Self, or, to become self-consciously allied with his animal nature. Note, that it is man's own higher nature, his Spiritual Self within, which is ever working silently and safely *with the natural laws* prevailing everywhere for the universal good. His puny brain-mind and selfish desires and personal will cannot prevail against the onward course of cosmic currents. These laws, or, more

accurately, these "habits of Nature," in balancing the dual forces of attraction and repulsion, keep the poised planets steadily moving on schedule time in their orbits. Moreover, the celestial beings who rule the planets — themselves having evolved through the human stage in past aeons — also live and work in harmony with the habits of Nature.

The warning against "fooling with the gear" applies especially to an increasing number of rash Occidentals who have been led to practise certain postures, exercises, etc., under one or another pseudo-Occult "teacher," or self-styled "master," or cult practitioner. Various alluring advertisements of "Yoga training in acquiring psychic powers," in "how to get out in the astral body," and other appeals to the selfish personality, are taken at their face value by many of the unwary. Too often, the tuition-fees are the least of the bitter price that is paid for taking the training.

The novice begins his practice of "control of the breath," and concentrates upon certain physiological nerve centers, in order to liberate forces which, normally, are adjusted to healthful outgo in functional use, or are conserved as resources of endurance. The effect of these methods of "sitting for Yoga" is a psycho-physiological disconnexion and a short-circuiting of vital forces which, if the practice continues, get beyond control and run riot through the man's being. The end-results of thus tampering with high-power forces through the lower plexuses, too often appear in some organic disease, mental disorder, moral perversion, or even in death — sometimes by suicide. These very real dangers are pointed out in all genuine Occult teachings; but they are not referred to in the published promises to teach whoever applies for lessons, the secret of "control over others," "how to achieve worldly success," etc., etc.

Yoga, which literally means "union" or "conjunction," is used in its dual aspect, as it is interpreted esoterically in the Raja-yoga, and exoterically in the Hatha-yoga systems of practice. Raja-yoga, meaning royal or kingly union, implies strict spiritual and intellectual discipline, combined with a love for all beings, as a means by which a chela or

unselfish student may become aware of, and finally united with, his own spiritually divine Self. A real Teacher, who has been thus trained, can teach his students how to subordinate the physical senses and lower mind and desires to the control of the awakening higher mind and spiritual faculties and powers. This spiritual discipline and training is in contrast with the Hatha-yoga system, which ignores the higher nature and selfishly seeks to gain "powers" by meddling with the currents of Prana (the "breath of life") at the physical pole of man's being. *The Secret Doctrine*, in discussing Pranayama, or regulation of the breath in Yoga practices, says:

This mode, however, without the previous acquisition of, or at least full understanding of the two higher senses, of which there are seven, as will be shown, pertains rather to the lower Yoga. The *Hatha* so called was and still is discountenanced by the Arhats. It is injurious to the health and alone can never develop into Raja Yoga. — I, 95

Thus the veiled teachings which are spread abroad, being without the key, are interpreted literally in physiological terms by the Hatha Yogis both in the Orient and in the Occident. The materialized counterfeit of spiritual truth is also used by the Tantrikas who, in some of their cults, have degenerated into degraded forms of Black Magic.

It cannot be stated too emphatically that no secret teachings of Occult truths entirely unveiled are ever given out publicly, in print or otherwise. Moreover, the sacred knowledge, to be gained by spiritual discipline and training, is held in trust by genuine Teachers and Masters, and only those who prove worthy to receive the teachings are given the key to them.

TWO FELLOW TRAVELLERS BREAK THEIR JOURNEY — *H. F. Norman*

"Travellers between life and death": is not this how serious minded people generally regard their passage through the world; as a "single" journey from a known, if imperfectly apprehended, life of numbered days and decades into an unknown, inapprehensible, timeless world elsewhere? The phrase I have placed as a heading to this article, presumes upon a wider outlook than this and is more befitting such brief notice as another fellow traveller can give of two notable members of the Theosophical Societies in England and Wales who have arrived at the halt we call death. For Kenneth Morris and Percy Leonard, with many differences of temperament and preoccupation each typical of his own nation, shared a common plan of travel, in their conception of an evolution of the Universal Self, through which each envisaged death as but marking one stage, a station at which he was temporarily breaking his journey. It was for each of them a needed break, as for a few nights' rest, in that continuous travel towards and within the country of the Spirit which each regarded as the fundamental fact in his journeying. To neither of these courageous and purposeful adventurers upon the highlands of spiritual dream was their grave a bourne from whence no traveller returns. On neither tomb may we inscribe: "I pass this way but once." Though in their meditation their vision sped towards the mystics' country "afar beyond the stars," they had contracted to return again to earth, "for labours yet unaccomplished."

The chasm between the illusions of time and the incertitudes of eternity was for neither an impassable barrier, nor could they imagine their passports to life, here or beyond, snatched from them as they arrived at the alighting place. In their plan of travel they had it laid down that the "narrow stream" dividing the heavenly land from ours must be crossed and re-crossed many times, the events of birth and death symbolic of an alternating evolution and involution of being

through which man fulfils himself that so his ever-becoming may bring him gradually closer to the maturities of a near-absolute. For such, as to Browning's "Paracelsus," "man is not man as yet." Through living he becomes, actuates himself, achieves, through dying those potentialities of the imagination we call the soul re-create themselves — and perhaps all real recreation is of that essence. This, or something like it was the route of life and death Kenneth Morris and Percy Leonard foresaw for themselves marked out upon the maps and road-books they studied and discussed. Death, then, was no more for these a "passing" than birth, not the end of a journey but a "break" in it, a break neither greatly to be desired, though travellers must have rest, nor at all to be evaded, were evasion possible. So ran their dream.

For Kenneth Morris, the poet, this charting of the ways of life and death was perhaps rather dream than doctrine. These excursions upon the hills of dream revived a sensitive, brooding and sometimes tried and bruised spirit, straining within a body inapt to sustain the spirit's soaring purpose. Was it rather more doctrine than dream to Percy Leonard, a mind which might seem to a casual acquaintance abstract and aloof but which quickly revealed affections alert in their response to the claims of living things upon his generosity? He was peculiarly sensitive to the unexpressed claims of young and ardent life, in child or beast, to the young children who clustered about him in his daily walks, and the birds and creatures who came to know his haunts and shyly visit him in room or city street. It seemed as if a clairvoyant insight led him beyond their animal forms, an instinct not dissimilar, perhaps, from that clairaudient voice St. Peter once heard saying: "What God hath cleansed that call not thou common," beast life evoking from him not revulsion but sympathy. For, perceiving the future flower within the seed, the soul-to-become in the "mere" animal, and humanity itself blossoming within childhood, his heart was always open to friendship with innocent lowly life. If therefore that theosophical brotherhood he discoursed of to his friends or from the pulpit of the Bristol Unitarian Church was, in form, doctrinal, it was in substance plain loving kindness.

Kenneth Morris could discourse too and in two sorts, preaching a universal ethic of courage and hope to the distressed and dispossessed and exhaling an imaginative influence of tranquillity over the printed page. His early friend "M" (early and late, new found in 1929 when Kenneth returned from America to Ireland) used to tell friends that the *Return of Don Quixote* was the best English short story written in their generation and he (George Russell) knew better perhaps than any of our writers the heights and depths of worded dream. Those who seek a counterpoise to the clash and jar of the jazzing cymbals with which many contemporary writers of fiction make their resounding discords will find it in the cool, crystalline, unperturbed prose of *The Secret Mountain*. He would I think have ascribed its translucent quiet to influences imbibed in Point Loma, when he lived there, and probably to Katherine Tingley — influences whose remembered contacts animated him later in his unflagging and courageous activity for the Welsh Section of the Theosophical Society of which he was President. His spirituality of utterance owed much also to the Authorised Version of the New Testament, around which he and Percy Leonard found fruitful ground for friendly controversy. For Percy's more scientific mind found in modern translations a more "living" speech for to-day than in the Tudor quaintness of King James's English; but Kenneth's ear rejoicing in the music of the old rhythms, listened to a golden harmony of beneficent sound and sense. And each found a renewal in these books of an antique wisdom, a re-invigoration of meanings from which each reunited a spirit too often despoiled of its native ease through the impoverishing ravages of an imperfect physique. Yet it is not for their handling of words or their addiction to doctrines that I would linger in a final brief meditation on these two high-minded men, so different, so similar; each realising his best self through a devotion, the same at root, to Universal Brotherhood, exercised, for the one, through simple men, those unemployed miners in Wales, for and among whom he lived and worked with consistent, compassionating fortitude; and, for the other, through and for children or wild life and who wrote to me during his final illness (he lived alone): "the fact that these dear children often ring my bell is a great encouragement to me." It is rather

for qualities rooted within themselves, Kenneth's self-sacrifice, Percy's loving kindness; each making for itself appropriate contacts with other selves which it beheld as mirroring the One Self. This, and a responsiveness to beauty and a power of creating it, in Kenneth largely though not solely through imaginative writing, in Percy often through wise silences, or the simplest talk. These are the qualities which make them live again, with all their gentle courage, within the memory of other fellow travellers whom they have left behind, and who will remember wise utterances perhaps, but will best remember a spirit of manly gentleness incarnate within the hearts of these two who were so responsive to the demands of others" lives, lives less sensitive perhaps and more demanding than their own, and certainly less matured. For I think that best gift which each gave out of his enthusiasm for theosophical ideas was his own idealistic passion, a fragment of his own spirit, creative because searching after hidden harmonies in life itself and revealing them to those quick enough to hear them.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS AMERICAN INDIAN OCCULTISM? (1) — *Arthur C. Parker*

A great motto proclaims that there is no religion higher than truth, but many religions and many philosophies have declared themselves the sole repositories of truth and the only means of discovering it. A wise master was once asked, "What is truth?" and it does not appear that an answer was given.

Truth is certainly not a thing that men may wish into being. It is far more basic and transcends wishful thinking and the authority of those who have something to prove. Possibly we go too far in our thinking that ultimate truth is a thing that man can understand. Far too much must yet be learned before we can even approach that abstraction. Our minds can only reach out to certain truths that in the aggregate focus upon the ultimate. Let us see that we do this very thing. Destructive of this focus is the unproved statement not susceptible to experiment. Truths should be aligned as mathematical formulae that any man can prove who has the ability. That x multiplied by x is x^2 should not be accepted because a good man says so but because his pupil can demonstrate it. So the truths of religion and philosophy should similarly be tested. This makes for truth and shows that truths can be applied.

Many philosophies and many religions have fallen by the wayside and become curious relics because men forgot this and attempted to create belief by fiat. That a great leader said a strange thing may develop zealots who fight to testify, but the strange thing may only be fraud, hallucination, insanity. And because religion is something that is felt and believed and which stirs emotions it is a dangerous thing when promoted by the dishonest, the self-seeking and the deranged. Yet, how many this world has followed who announced "I am God," "I am Elijah," or "I am the expected Messiah"? Credulity and false hope have plunged the world into intellectual darkness many times and all because men failed to exercise the power of analysis, reason, and

experiment. What the world still needs but is unwilling to follow is the real apostle of truth. Truth appears too drab, too commonplace, too unemotional, but not to him who finds in truth a religion that lifts him toward divinity. To all others truths must be masked in symbols and in allegories that eventually are taken for the realities.

And then, there are words that deceive us. We take them literally and build straw men out of them. I recently heard a philosopher state that the world needed clear, penetrating thinking. Another man arose to say that it needed men of character and that thinking is futile. This second man did not define character nor did he say whether he meant good, bad, or indifferent character. The word was a straw man to him and he did not stop to consider that good character is the result of clear, penetrating thinking applied to life for constructive purposes.

Yet because men can only approach truths through formulae and symbol, as the mathematician does, the vast majority see only symbols and worship them as realities, not remembering that they stand for unseen things that can scarcely be expressed in any other way by finite mind.

It may seem trite or presumptuous, as the view may be, to discuss the need of cleaving to the line of truth when seeking to sense its import. It should be immediately seen, however, that any other way is fatal and leads to sophistry, to error in the wilderness of *isms*. It has been so when seeking to follow through unfamiliar subjects or those that seem veiled in mystery. Among these not one is more provocative of varied treatment than that of man's origin, purpose, goal, death, and possible life or transformation after death. "Shall he live again?" is an aged question. "Does his soul evolve?" is another. "Does he ever again appear upon earth?" is still another.

Each of these questions has been answered in the manner that the asker has wished it to be. The desire has preceded the investigation and desire, oftentimes, has created assumptions. Many of these assumptions, declarations, initial premises, have been erroneous, though all that followed many have been logical deduction leading to

strange ends.

It has often been thus with primitive people when their mysteries have been interpreted. It has been so with the numerous tribes of the American native. Often the proponent of a theory starts out by saying, "The Indians did thus and so, believed, knew and practised this and that." The initial error has been to say "the Indian." There is no "the Indian." There are many tribes of these people each of whom had divergent ideas. To say that the Indians believed in metempsychosis, for example, is saying too much. To say that some did is nearer correct.

Cyrus Field Willard in visiting the Onondagas in 1895 talked with Chief LaForte, who declared his belief in having lived before. He stated that he knew that he had lived at a former time and done certain things which he recounted. It is for us to analyse what lies back of that statement and discover whether other native Americans in that or other tribes had a similar belief. Heckewelder, (*Indian Nations*, 1876, p. 247) tells of his conversation with a person whom he calls, ". . . a very sensible Indian, much esteemed by all who knew him, even among the whites." Said Heckewelder, "He knew he had lived through two generations; that he had died twice and was born a third time, to then live out the then present race, after which he was to die and never more come to this country again." Heckewelder goes on to relate that the man said he remembered the conversations of the people before he was born and could repeat correctly what they said.

The question is, did Heckewelder speak an untruth? Did the Indian? We should examine this question in the light of similar assertions elsewhere and determine whether this belief earnestly stated is common among the races of mankind. If it is, we must examine into the facts behind the assertion. Then if the belief is true because it is based upon experience we must seek to discover under what circumstances the student may arrive at sure knowledge of this belief. Is it a delusion or not or is it based upon demonstrable facts? If we hold to the Indian tribesmen we may pursue our inquiry and have many answers. Some believe, some do not, some do not know, some think it possibly so,

others say the idea is absurd. We lose ourselves in a wilderness of opinions by this method. Our answer comes from such men as Willard and Heckewelder quote. They say they know and have had the experience and have it as a part of their consciousness. It is they who say, "I have lived before and I shall live again."

Beliefs like this point out that certain native Americans had knowledge, real or assumed, that others did not possess. Investigation along these lines points out also that many tribesmen had other beliefs asserted as fact. For example; they believed in many forms of occult power such as clairvoyance, thought transference, transformation, invisibility, levitation, wandering spirits, thought therapy and magical cures.

In certain instances groups conserved through their rites the means by which they believed these ends might be attained, but in other instances there were individual seers. There are today.

All through the records of travelers and missionaries one finds references to these seers and to their esoteric societies. There are accounts of their marvels in many places, and even the Jesuit Relations tell of matters that they attribute to the devil. Thomas Morton tells of the shaman who "made ice appear upon faire water in midsummer and cause the thunder to be heard when the sky was clear." (Quoted from Emerson, *Indian Myths*, 229) Emerson describes the Mystic whom she calls the Jossakeed and mentions the Medas of the Mandans. Says she, "The Jossakeed was distinguished from the Meda by higher occult knowledge. . . . Though the Jossakeed was their prophet and their priest, it is of him the early missionary speaks with animosity, in affirming that he kept the . . . "devil for a sentinel." Both Catlin and Schoolcraft describe their power. Emerson again states, "Among the ancient Indians, according to the Shawnees, the Jossakeeds practised their art without feigning. They were true prophets. These prophets were members of the Medawin or Society of Medas."

Shongo the mystic of the Senecas often told the writer of this paper that he had learned to see invisible forms and to talk with them. By the rites of his cult he would reach out and through a "veil" and lay hold of

unseen power which he believed he might apply to the healing of the ill. He came from a long line of mystics who lived along the Genesee when the whites came into the valley. Did he do this or was he deceived? He always anticipated this question and would tell how he could see what others could not. His "bundle of power" is now in possession of his son.

Among Shongo's people, the Senecas, there have been many mystics and seers and today there survive several societies that preserve the formulae of the mystic tradition. Many of the elder beliefs still linger, as those of transformation, sympathetic magic, talking with the dead, the propitiation of animal spirits, the potency of certain words, and the reading of thought. "I can send my thoughts afar and talk with my wife," said Cornplanter. Shongo believed this likewise.

To know what lies behind such beliefs one must know these people and what their thought-life is. One cannot accost the ignorant Indian, the debauched or the half sophisticated, and discover much. It is the sincere man of sobriety and clean living who must be questioned, and then only by one in his confidence. In such a manner I have heard weird tales of happenings that the unsympathetic would doubt. I have heard theories of life and of super-life that sound strangely like some mystic doctrine of another world. I have been told that if all were blind one would reach out and discover strange things that only touch would reveal. "We are blind" said Shongo. "But those who have "the other eyes" can see something quite different and yet hard to describe." "We put too much down on paper" said Cornplanter. "It's good but it makes us think things stay still." I was making a diagram and had tried to indicate a point but he replied that a point never stays in the same place. It was not until years after that I heard of the Einstein theory and understood what he meant. Then I understood that my penciled point was but a chunk of graphite on the surface of paper. The real point had moved and I had indicated only something I could not see nor ever can. Then I further understood what Shongo had told me about the nature of the Universe. "It's all lines that whirl," he said. "They cross and re-cross, or, maybe, never touch. But where they touch things happen.

They're big but some are small. They turn and touch and that's why things are." Was he speaking of the lines of creative force? I do not know for sure but think he was. This made me wonder just what the swirling universe is beyond my perceptions and whether or not Shongo's statement might not be a truer picture of reality than I realized. Motion, molecules, cosmic circles of energy, the electron here and then there, once matter then energy, change, and the circle returns. Lines cross lines, and strike the spark that for the moment I call *I*. Then, whither?

My Indian friends of the Senecas have a cult that teaches the four great realities that reach out into what they call the "great peace." These are the Great Being, virtue, immortality and brotherhood. Upon this their ancient religion rests and even the new prophet taught the need of recognizing these. He proclaimed that his message was the Good Word. Properly defined these words seem like the foundation of good religion.

The real point in the beliefs of the various tribes of the American natives is that they were established to bring well-being to the group and to the individual. The individual wanted good fortune, good health, freedom from pain, power to accomplish, and an assured safety in the realm beyond life, or the ga-o-yah-gen-snon-geh, as the Seneca termed it. But beyond this he also wanted happiness and knowledge.

Thus all the religious practices and occult societies were devised to bring about welfare of one kind or another. To gain this there were certain invocations in certain tribes built up from vocables having no known meaning. This was a precaution based upon the philosophy held by some red men as to the potency of words. When a thing gets a name, some believed, it becomes an entity that may be improperly used. It will sometimes confuse thought and understanding. But if I simply say "ah-ah, O ah-ah" as a prayer and pour my heart's desire into the inchoate expression the Cosmic One will understand, and I shall be free from the accusation of having bossed my God around when he knows better than I do what is good for me. Thus the Piute goes to the mountain top and cries into space, uttering the groan of his heart but

saying no word that man can understand. "Thus," said the Piute to M. R. Harrington, "a great something hears me; the mountains hear me, the forests, the rivers, and I have healing."

There is a great philosophy in this, for the moment we make words we limit truth. If I say God, I must define God, and I cannot. If I name a doctrine I must also define it and I bring about disputing. The idea of many red men is that the ultimate, whatever that may mean, is beyond words but not beyond the desire of man to find it. The addressing of great facts, the red man has said, is a matter of the heart and the heart has no tongue. Thus did he symbolically express it.

It was men like those we have mentioned who looked deeply into the great realities and who contemplated them. In their unspoiled state and uninfluenced by the "modern way" they built up a deeply spiritual understanding of the universe, an understanding that existed side by side with pitiful ignorance and superstition. It has always been thus in every age.

Without attempting to call these higher beliefs by any name or even to say that we have built up a case at all for the proof of occultism, I pause to ask whether or not any of these hopes, any of these experiences, any of these expressions, strike a common chord in the minds of those who have heard these words.

FOOTNOTE:

1. A lecture given at the Fifth International Theosophical Students Convention, Niagara Falls, Ont, June 12-13, 1937. Dr. Parker is Director of the Museum of Arts and Sciences, Edgerton Park, Rochester, New York. He is a native North American Indian. Eds. ([return to text](#))

INVISIBLE PATHWAYS — *Lucius Bombyx*

There are certain facts which are familiar to all but which are not appreciated to the extent they merit, and which if understood would point to logical inferences of a more recondite nature than the simple facts themselves.

Familiar pathways are many and various. The use of hyperbole also in this connexion is frequent and often embodies great truths. Certain invisible pathways are known and used by means of electrical or magnetic conduction, but there are many others which can be sensed by abnormal persons, and more easily by the lower kingdoms.

For instance: dogs will follow the track of a man or certain animals by means of the scent left behind. This is so obvious that a corollary is or should be also quite obvious, viz., that the movement of anything leaves part of itself in the surroundings to whatever place it may go, and these atomic particles may be a pathway by and on which other entities may follow.

To illustrate further: We know that we give off heat every moment of our lives; heat is atomic, and therefore leaves *our* atoms wherever we may go. But heat is only one of our radiations.

The pioneer may blaze out a physical trail, but he also leaves a magnetic trail in realms other than the outer physical which may be followed by others quite unconsciously to themselves.

In tracing the history of new settlements it is frequently found that on the same spots there have been many previous settlements. In certain cases it is known that cities appear on the same sites after long intervals of desertion and reversion to nature. London and Chicago are well-known cases, and these two cities seem to have been centers of human activity from the night of time, with recurrent intervals of what may be natural recuperative processes which are common to all things.

These thoughts suggest others of a similar nature but on another plane, or perhaps one should phrase it, in connexion with other planes. Just as there are numerous strata in physical matter so there are strata in mental advancement, and it is not illogical to assume that those entities who were responsible for the achievements of the past — such as the Cyclopean structures scattered all over the world, the Great Pyramid, Nagkon Wat, the Grammar of Panini, the astronomical calculations of the Atlantians, etc., should have left pathways in the invisible realms of their passage from this earth to whatever place or state they now inhabit.

These ideas afford a logical and factual basis for much that has been accepted on faith and religious belief without any satisfactory explanation of the stages and steps involved. Much more can be inferred quite logically by anyone who will take the necessary trouble to explore this line of thought, and it will prove extremely useful and produce a conviction of the fundamental bases of Religion, Science, and Philosophy as applied to the whole cosmos. In fact it will be found that the whole cosmos is an inherent whole and unit, with interrelationships in and of all parts, functioning periodically on many planes during infinity in time and extension. The laws which apply to one atom or sun are seen to apply throughout, so that by a correct analogy one known fact can be traced correspondingly in every department.

To give another example: When there is a body of water on a high level and we desire to make use of it we create channels through which it can flow to the required objective. The force or pressure at any point corresponds to the height of the body of water, and any leak or breakage in the channel will have an effect on the contiguous terrain according to the relative size of the break and the kind and size of the channel itself. Also, as long as the channels remain open, water will flow.

Now the above facts illustrate some very common occurrences in daily life, as the analogy holds good in several ways if we remember that the

channels were the result of effort to connect with the water on a higher level.

Light to us is the product of unknown forces acting in our atmosphere. The stratosphere or the atmosphere which acts as a lens around our earth modifies and may alter entirely the quality or nature of the actual rays which the sun emits, but as our senses are the product of our earthly evolution and are the means of contacting consciously the environment in which we exist we can have little actual knowledge of what occurs and of the nature of anything outside our physical shell until we develop the appropriate means, e. g., senses appropriate to those other conditions — in other words, the proper channels.

There are oceans of other phases of life outside or within our own which only need channels in order that their flow may reach us or our world. Likewise in consciousness. We have the centers within ourselves by and through which many higher or more subtle and refined states of consciousness may be contacted if we adopt suitable methods of effort in reaching toward them. The knowledge that there are such is the first step. Our philosophy demonstrates logically that there must be and are realms without number beyond and within those with which we are acquainted, and it indicates the methods by which humanity can and will advance along the pathways of evolution by progressive and successive steps and stages.

Those who make especial efforts with the trend of evolution are the pioneers, and they leave pathways; or perhaps the better way of expressing the idea would be that the pathways are broadened and solidified more and more with each pioneer who passes along the way so that it is easier for others to follow in their footsteps.

There is a very vital corollary in this connexion, that of impersonality, and from two chief aspects. First, that the pioneer does not blaze the trail for specific individuals to follow. Secondly, that the greater part of our radiations of all kinds are of the same nature, viz., that they are unconscious to ourselves and therefore impersonal, and so correspond to the oceans of life and consciousness which radiate from superior

beings in the solar system and the cosmos, which are not only pathways to inferior beings but are also the sustaining life-elements by which they live and have their being.

The above illustrations and ideas are an attempt to sketch some of the mechanics in natural evolution, and also to indicate the effects of the volitional and the impersonal processes of any entity.

Our philosophy supplies all needed data for a comprehensive understanding of ourselves and the universe, but we have to realize this each one for himself, and to make individual application of our knowledge in order to become more positive and volitional, while at the same time more permeable to those spiritual and divine essences which only need channels in order to flow unstintedly into and through our whole being.

The spheres of action both of individuality and impersonality are clearly indicated in the Theosophic philosophy. A correct attitude or polarization of the individual to the greater will have an impersonal influence on the lesser, though it will be stamped with the qualitative impress of the entity radiating that influence. This dual aspect has been somewhat of a stumbling-block to many thinkers, but it can be overcome by a realization of the relationships of the various elements considered and of their particular spheres of action.

Egoity is limitation; only the Boundless is unlimited and absolutely impersonal.

The Theosophical Forum

ARE YOU A REAL THINKER? — *Leoline L. Wright*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Manas, the Thinker" — what is the true meaning of this expression? What we call a brilliant thinker is one who draws original thoughts from the material of observation and experience. But these ideas, while of course stimulating to other men are not necessarily true. For the ordinary thinker, no matter how original or brilliant, is a good deal of a speculator. He has no authentic clue to the laws of that life about which he thinks.

A genuine occultist on the other hand is not in that sense a thinker. He does not speculate. He is a scientist who has the key. He works from known facts. He is a verifier, one who for the purposes of his own evolution in consciousness applies the keys he has been given by advanced Adepts in the Sacred Science. These keys he applies to his own life and thinking processes, and if he is sincere and selfless he will reach the correct conclusions. He is like a mathematician who works in experiences rather than with formulas and figures and who is thus able to arrive at relatively perfect solutions. And he does not do this by merely "thinking," but, so to say, by laboratory experiment and research, first within himself and then in the world about him.

A genuine spiritual Teacher usually gives his pupils to begin with a few key-facts and leaves the pupil to apply and verify them. But the pupil must not stop there. He must go on from such application and verification to new discoveries about himself and his environment reached by the further use of his keys. This is self-directed evolution. And not till he has reached a point where he has more or less exhausted the range of discovery made possible by the use of the keys he holds is he given others. An interesting example of this method is

seen in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, where, however, the two pupils were not true chelas and therefore the method in its full implications was not used.

In illustration of the above definition one who knows will not refer to H. P. Blavatsky as a great *thinker*. She was a great Adept who recorded for us the basic propositions, and their implications in almost every department of human activity, of the Archaic Wisdom-Science, with its traces and records in the ancient and modern world. Brilliant and powerful, intuitive and sublimely original, she was yet not an originator of ideas, as she herself was the first to insist in the "Proem" to her great work *The Secret Doctrine*. A grand example of her type of intellectual brilliance and originality is found in her definition of time. We quote this below as it is a striking illustration of her wonderful power of abstract imagination, one of the highest of the intellectual faculties.

(a) Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but "lies asleep." The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past. Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change — or the same — for the billionth part of a second; and the sensation we have of the actuality of the division of "time" known as the present, comes from the blurring of that momentary glimpse, or succession of glimpses, of things that our senses give us, as those things pass from the region of ideals which we call the future, to the region of memories which we name the past. In the same way we experience a sensation of duration in the case of the instantaneous electric spark, by reason of the blurred and continuing impression on the retina. . . — *Op. cit.*, I, 37, *et seq.* (The whole magnificent passage should be read.)

In view of the above what then is meant by calling Manas a *Thinker*? Thought as we know it is kama-manasic, an activity of the brain-mind. If it is truly creative thought it employs the spiritual faculties of imagination and intuition. But when it does this it reaches, not original individual conclusions but ideas which are at best new statements of ancient and universal truths. As when the reader exclaims, "Just what I have always thought but never could put into words!" He will indeed express the grand old truths in a new way but the originality will lie in the manner of saying them and not in the truths themselves. The great poets and philosophers clothe the old universal ideas in the morning radiance of their genius and to us they come like divine revelations.

Does this not suggest to us what thought really is? At least it gives us an inkling of what the true intellectual activities of Manas are. Manas is a child of Buddhi. Mahat, the Universal Mind is an abstract name for the Buddhic "principle" of the Universe which becomes active through the great host of Manasaputras which are the source of Egoship anywhere in our Cosmos. But this host of Manasaputras — what is it really? It is an emanation of Adi-Buddhi, the Cosmic Soul. The manasic host is Adi-Buddhi in individualized self-realization — such individual self-realization being the primary object of evolution. And our Manas is an emanation of individuals in this manasaputric host.

So we see that thought, regarded as a function of Manas, must be quite a different form of activity of consciousness from the speculative reasoning of the ordinary thinker. This suggestion seems to be confirmed by *The Voice of the Silence* which instructs that at the very beginning of the chela-path we must —

... seek out the Raja of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion.

The Mind is the great slayer of the Real.

Let the Disciple slay the Slayer. — *Fragment One*

Here we see that not only thought (as we know it) but mind itself is the enemy of the higher manasic activity. Again, in the same occult work we are told that in order to reach perfection —

. . . thou hast to feel thyself ALL THOUGHT and yet exile all thoughts from out thy mind. — *Op. cit., Fragment Three*

Here lies the key: Thought, as an attribute of the perfected man — Manas-Tajasi, the Bodhisattva — is not a psychological activity. It has nothing to do with what we call mind. It is the achievement of a state of being. Thought, in this sense — of a state of being — means oneness with Alaya, which is Adi-Buddhi, "the root or essence of Mahat. . . Cosmic Aether" (*The Esoteric Tradition*, 952). Thus Manas when active on its own plane breathes in and is permeated with the Soul of the Cosmos. There flow then through its being knowledge of things as they are, as Adi-Buddha (the individualization of Adi-Buddhi) is the Hierarch and source of all knowledge of things as they are in that hierarchy. Hence the "Thought" of Manas is knowledge, and in particular, self-realization of that knowledge.

The Theosophical Forum

PUSHKIN: HOMO UNIVERSALIS (1) — Alexis Kall

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, after long preparatory work following the darkness of the medieval ages, and after more or less successful attempts to build up friendly relations with the Occident, Russia, at last found itself enjoying an ingress of culture: Russian literature, art, drama and the sciences were established.

The most beautifully fragrant and valued flower that sprang from this newly formed culture was Alexander Pushkin. Handicapped by his inheritance of the dull, awkward style of Lomonossov and Derzhavin, Pushkin came forward with a live, flexible tongue, and the Russian language has hardly changed since his day.

Pushkin was the creator of literary Russian, without which there would be neither a Russian literature nor the great national writers, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Dostoyevsky, Chekhov and others.

No other Russian poet achieved his "music" of verse. In Pushkin's description of the battle of Poltava, we sense the turbulent, sharp staccato; in his love scenes we are charmed with the captivating beauty of the languid, expressive legato. This is music. The listener is rendered breathless by the elegance of its rhythm and the colorful harmony produced by the alternation of vowels and consonants, the skilful use of separate words and phrases, which, in their turn, contribute an effect of heavenly melody.

Such divine material was needed to inspire the Russian composers. The best Russian songs, called "romances," numbering over a hundred, were composed on Pushkin's verse; and the greatest operas, more than twenty in all, were inspired by his dramatic creations. Among them are such transcendent masterpieces as *Ruslan and Ludmilla* by Glinka; *The Mermaid*, and *The Stone Guest* by Dragomyzhsky; *Boris Godunoff* by Mussorgsky; *Czar Saltan* and *The Golden Cockerel* by Rimsky-Korsakoff; *Eugene Onyegin* and *The Queen of Spades* by Tchaikovsky;

The Gypsies by Rachmaninoff; and many others. Thus Pushkin entered history as the inspirer if not the creator of Russian music.

The types which Pushkin created are immortal. In *Eugene Onyegin* we find the tender, pathetic Tatiana, and Eugene himself, with his restless, early tired-out soul. There is Boris Godunoff, for ever tormented by the rackings of his conscience; the conniving, cunning Shuysky; Peter the Great and the monarchial swing of his mighty nature, in *Poltava*; the ingenious brigand Pugatchov. All these convex types are as protuberant as the face of a newly-embossed medal. Having once become familiar with them it is impossible to forget. Who could obliterate from his memory the insane miller in *The Mermaid*; the jealous Aleko from *The Gypsies*; the envious Salieri; the Stingy Knight, and the passionate, fickle Don Juan?

Such types could be created only by the imagination of a poet endowed with exceptional dramatic genius. In fact Pushkin was not only a poet, but a great dramatist and the founder of Russia's contemporary theater. Had he written nothing but his *Boris Godunoff*, he might, for that alone, have been pronounced the "Shakespeare of Russia," because no one else but Shakespeare could coin these vivid types, analysed with such psychological finesse; and no one could portray them in such true historical perspective as did Pushkin in this superlative drama. The Russian theater, having succeeded in attaining its present high standard, owes its development to the poet who in this immortal creation laid its foundation.

Pushkin understood the peculiarities and beauty of the Russian folk-language as no other writer of his age knew them. Not in vain did he spend years studying the quaint expressions from his old nurse (Arina Rodionovna, a peasant woman), and from the wafer-bakers who supplied the Moscow churches with their wares. No other poet was able to approach and understand the spirit and style of the Russian folk-lore, as Pushkin exhibited it in his poetic fables, *The Golden Cockerel*, *The Fisherman and the Little Fish*, and *The Czar Saltan*.

He did not confine himself to the folk-poetry of Great-Russia alone. He

embraced in his creativeness all the nationalities which comprised the population of the vast Russian Empire: he paid tribute to Polish poetry with his poetic translations of Mitzkyevich; Ukraina, Crimea and Caucasus served him as locales for many magnificent dramatic and lyric poems; many poems were inspired by the beauty of Georgia and Armenia; and an entire cycle of songs was dedicated to the Western Slavs.

It was as though he had found a mystic key to the hidden secret place of Russia's poetry; using it to open the treasure coffers of the West-European poetry and folk-lore. He understood better than any other foreigner the poetic charm of Andre Chenier; and we find many of Pushkin's brilliant poems in French.

He wrote many splendid transcriptions of Byron, who, incidentally, played an important part in the psychological substratum of Pushkin's genius. We find Italian sonnets; also translations from the ancient Greek, in which the serene Hellenic spirit of Sappho and Anacreon blinds us with its brilliance. We also find among his creations transcriptions of Persian poets with all the ardor of Hafiz and the limitless wisdom of the Koran.

A typically Russian poet, Pushkin was at the same time a genuine literary cosmopolite. He is a son of world-wide humanity, "Homo Universalis," a man who gives one the impression of having experienced, essayed and understood everything about him. In one breath he glorified great deeds of heroism, love, self-denial, and depicted the very basest sides of human nature, the depth of vice and vile passions. As a bard of love he has no equal in Russian literature. His lyre sang with equal magnificence of heroic, tender and domestic loves. He poetized the love of passion, the erotic ecstasy, with the boldness and candidness of the ancient Hellenes.

Even his laughter was Hellenic: the laughter of carefree, merry, sunny ancient Greece. His wit was one of the most prominent characteristic stamps of his genius, and was dreaded by his contemporaries. Woe to him who happened to become the target of his epigrams!

Pushkin lived in the darkest epoch of the Russian Empire. He labored in an atmosphere of flagrant oppression from a tyrannical power. Yet, exposing himself to persecution, abuse and banishment, he sang of liberty and ardently dreamed of the day when serfdom would exist no longer, and all men would be free and happy:

The people's love for me will flourish and endure
Because my golden lyre evoked their tender thought.
I dared, in ruthless age, oppression to abjure
And mercy for the downcast sought.

FOOTNOTE:

1. As this year marks the centenary of Alexander Pushkin's death, we are glad to include an article on the great Russian poet, by Dr. Alexis Kail, Co-founder and former Director of the National Conservatory of Music in St. Petersburg. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

TURNING THE PAGES OF "ISIS UNVEILED": I — E. V. Savage

The Master K. H. wrote to Mr. Sinnett in July, 1883: "You share with all beginners the tendency to draw too absolutely strong inferences from partly caught hints, and to dogmatize thereupon as though the last word had been spoken. You will correct this in due time." (M. L., p. 348)

H. P. B. proves in her first book, *Isis Unveiled*, that she is no beginner in Occultism, for nowhere throughout the book is there a touch of dogmatism; and far from creating the impression that she is giving "the last word" on her subject, she constantly reminds the reader that she is merely giving a hint here, opening a door a bit ajar there, or throwing out a suggestion for acceptance or rejection as it rings true or not in the ears of the reader. She does not seek to force her ideas on anyone, her watchword being, as stated in her Preface, "TRUTH, high-seated upon its rock of adamant, is alone eternal and supreme." (v) And further on (II, 126) she quotes from the book *Supernatural Religion*, which she says "carries conviction in its every line," the following:

"The only thing absolutely necessary for man is TRUTH, and to that, and that alone, must our moral consciousness adapt itself."

Exactly sixty years ago was *Isis Unveiled* written; yet we can find in its pages definite answers given or brilliant light thrown upon questions which are in the forefront of inquiring minds today, — such varied matters as

1. The Theosophical attitude towards Jesus and Christianity
2. The perplexing question of mediumship, and the difference between a medium and a mediator or an adept
3. The *modus operandi* of Fire-walking
4. Whether animals have souls
5. Whether Buddha taught a doctrine of annihilation
6. The true meaning of so-called miracles
7. The esoteric interpretation of many of the Christian scriptures

In the present article I have selected and grouped together a few only of H. P. B.'s answers to these and other questions; and I have purposely not attempted to make my selections exhaustive, partly because it would make too lengthy an article, and partly because my aim in writing the article is to inspire others, particularly of the younger generation, to turn to the pages of *Isis* itself, and find the treasures hidden in it.

We spend a good deal of time and thought nowadays attempting to make our presentation of Theosophy simple; but when H. P. B. came and did her work, for several years the Theosophists of her day had nothing simpler than *Isis* to turn to. The title of the book, by the way, proves in itself the inaccuracy of those who maintain that H. P. B. based all her philosophy on Hindu teachings alone. In ancient days there was a temple in the Egyptian town of Sais, dedicated to the Goddess Isis, and over its portico was the following:

"Isis am I. All which ever was, is, or will be; and no human has ever lifted my veil. The fruit which I brought forth became the Sun." And Dr. de Purucker, commenting on this says: "It is to this Inscription to Isis, the Mystical Goddess of Nature, spiritual and material, the great life-giving energy, the fructifying and mother-influence in the Universe, surrounded by her veil of nature, i. e., all the phenomenal worlds and hierarchies of beings, that H. P. B. referred when she spoke of the Veil of Isis; and she wrote her first book as she said in order to raise the veil of Isis, at least a little." It is interesting to note that when she started writing the book, she called it "The Veil of Isis," and the whole of the first volume had been written and printed when she found out that another book, obscure it is true, had already been published bearing that name. So she changed her title to "Isis Unveiled"; and I think it may be taken as a happy omen that after she had launched her work she found she was able to give the world more than just a glimpse behind the Veil.

The following gives us a further keynote to H. P. B.'s work. She says (II, 120):

It is not alone for the esoteric philosophy that we fight; nor for any modern system of moral philosophy, but for the inalienable right of private judgment, and especially for the ennobling idea of a future life of activity and accountability.

I will now copy, under their appropriate headings, quotations from *Isis* bearing on the various questions enumerated above; and they need little or no comment. In fact, I found that one did not improve on H. P. B. by trying either to paraphrase and condense, or enlarge and explain:

JESUS AND CHRISTIANITY.

To this day people — even some Theosophists who should know better — accuse H. P. B. of belittling Jesus and attacking Christianity. But read the following, which are only a few out of scores of passages in the book that show her fidelity to true Christianity. Whereas when H. P. B. began her work she had to attack vigorously the dogmas of the Christian Church which had a stranglehold upon people's minds at that time, nowadays when there is such a prevalence of the spirit of casting aside all religion, Christians can well turn to H. P. B. to find one of the greatest champions of their true religion.

In like manner, when I endeavor to destroy the current heathenism, which has assumed the garb of Christianity, *I do not attack real religion.* — I. U., II, 81

There never was nor ever will be a truly philosophical mind, whether of Pagan, heathen, Jew, or Christian, but has followed the same path of thought. Gautama-Buddha is mirrored in the precepts of Christ; Paul and Philo Judaeus are faithful echoes of Plato; and Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus won their immortal fame by combining the teachings of all these grand masters of true philosophy. — II, 84

The religion which the primitive teaching of the early few apostles most resembled — a religion preached by Jesus himself — is the elder of these two, Buddhism. The latter as taught in its

primitive purity, and carried to perfection by the last of the Buddhas, Gautama, based its moral ethics on three fundamental principles. It alleged that 1, every thing existing, exists from natural causes; 2, that virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment; and, 3, that the state of man in this world is probationary. We might add that on these three principles rested the universal foundation of every religious creed; God, and individual immortality for every man — if he could but win it. However puzzling the subsequent theological tenets; however seemingly incomprehensible the metaphysical abstractions which have convulsed the theology of every one of the great religions of mankind as soon as it was placed on a sure footing, the above is found to be the essence of every religious philosophy, with the exception of later Christianity. It was that of Zoroaster, of Pythagoras, of Plato, of Jesus, and even of Moses, albeit the teachings of the Jewish law-giver have been so piously tampered with. — II, 123-4

And whatever Moses is now believed to have been, we will demonstrate that he was an initiate. — II, 129

The motive of Jesus was evidently like that of Gautama-Buddha, to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics; the true knowledge of God and nature having remained until then solely in the hands of the esoteric sects, and their adepts. — II, 133

These murderous expressions illustrate the spirit of Christianity till this day. But do they illustrate the teachings of Christ? By no means. — II, 250

All this points undeniably to the fact, that except a handful of self-styled Christians who subsequently won the day, all the civilized portion of the Pagans who knew of Jesus honored him as a philosopher, an *adept* whom they placed on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius. Whence such a veneration on their part for a man, were he simply, as represented by the

Synoptics, a poor, unknown Jewish carpenter from Nazareth? As an incarnated God there is no single record of him on this earth capable of withstanding the critical examination of science; as one of the greatest reformers, an inveterate enemy of every theological dogmatism, a persecutor of bigotry, a teacher of one of the most sublime codes of ethics, Jesus is one of the grandest and most clearly-defined figures on the panorama of human history. His age may, with every day, be receding farther and farther back into the gloomy and hazy mists of the past; and his theology — based on human fancy and supported by untenable dogmas may, nay, must with every day lose more of its unmerited prestige; alone the grand figure of the philosopher and moral reformer instead of growing paler will become with every century more pronounced and more clearly defined. It will reign supreme and universal only on that day when the whole of humanity recognizes but one father — the UNKNOWN ONE above — and one brother — the whole of mankind below. — II, 150-1

Alas, alas! How little has the divine seed, scattered broadcast by the hand of the meek Judean philosopher, thrived or brought forth fruit. He, who himself had shunned hypocrisy, warned against public prayer, showing such contempt for any useless exhibition of the same, could he but cast his sorrowful glance on the earth, from the regions of eternal bliss, would see that this seed fell neither on sterile rock nor by the way-side. Nay, it took deep root in the most prolific soil; one enriched even to plethora with lies and human gore! — II, 303

All this did Siddhartha six centuries before another reformer [Jesus], as noble and as loving, though less favored by opportunity, in another land. — II, 319

And these men — we will not say teach the doctrine of Jesus, for that would be to insult his memory, but — are *paid* to teach his doctrine! — II, 474

If we do not accept Jesus as God, we revere *him as a man*. — II, 530

Like Jesus, he [Gautama] felt dissatisfied with the dogmatic spirit of the religion of his country, the intolerance and hypocrisy of the priesthood, their outward show of devotion, and their useless ceremonials and prayers. As Buddha broke violently through the traditional laws and rules of the Brahmans, so did Jesus declare war against the Pharisees, and the proud Sadducees. . . . Each aimed at a social as well as at a religious reform; and giving a death-blow to the old religions of his countries, each became the founder of a new one. — II, 339

There is quite enough in the four gospels to show what was the secret and most fervent hope of Jesus; the hope in which he began to teach, and in which he died. In his immense and unselfish love for humanity, he considers it unjust to deprive the many of the results of the knowledge acquired by the few. . . . unity of a spiritual God, whose temple is within each of us. . . . — II, 561

Do these not sound as though H. P. B. had the true understanding of the life and work of Jesus because she came from the same Brotherhood that sent him forth?

MEDIUMS, MEDIATORS, AND ADEPTS

This question is closely linked with the general subject of Spiritualism. About twenty-five years before H. P. B. began her public work the Spiritualists began their activities and naturally met with a great deal of opposition from the materialistic world of their day; but together with the truths that they had, some of them had wandered into many bypaths of error; so that although H. P. B.'s first endeavor was to vindicate the Spiritualists before the world, a good deal of her energy had to be expended in correcting their errors — for which she received no thanks from them.

We are far from believing that all the spirits that communicate

at circles are of the classes called "Elemental," and "Elementary." Many — especially among those who control the medium subjectively to speak, write, and otherwise act in various ways — are human, disembodied spirits. Whether the majority of such spirits are good or *bad*, largely depends on the private morality of the medium, much on the circle present, and a great deal on the intensity and object of their purpose. . . . But, in any case, human spirits can *never* materialize themselves in *propria persona*. — I, 67

We will now only again assert that no spirit claimed by the spiritualists to be human was ever proved to be such on sufficient testimony. The influence of the *disembodied* ones can be felt, and communicated *subjectively* by them to sensitives. They can produce *objective* manifestations, but they cannot produce *themselves* otherwise than as described above. They can control the body of a medium, and express their desires and ideas in various modes well known to spiritualists; but not *materialize* what is matterless and purely spiritual — their *divine essence*. — I, 68

The rest of this and the following page and a half are worth turning to for a clear explanation on the subject of materializations and attractions. It is too long to quote *in extenso* here.

The mesmerizer wills a thing, and if he is powerful enough, that thing is done. The medium, even if he had an honest purpose to succeed, may get no manifestations at all; the less he exercises his will, the better the phenomena: the more he feels anxious, the less he is likely to get anything; to mesmerize requires a positive nature, to be a medium a perfectly passive one. This is the Alphabet of Spiritualism, and no medium is ignorant of it. — I, 109

About such men as Apollonius, Iamblichus, Plotinus, and Porphyry, there gathered this heavenly nimbus. It was evolved by the power of their own souls in close unison with their

spirits; by the superhuman morality and sanctity of their lives, and aided by frequent interior ecstatic contemplation. Such holy men pure spiritual influences could approach. Radiating around an atmosphere of divine beneficence, they caused evil spirits to flee before them. Not only is it not possible for such to exist in their aura, but they cannot even remain in that of obsessed persons, if the thaumaturgist exercises his will, or even approaches them. This is *MEDIATORSHIP*, not *mediumship*. Such persons are temples in which dwells the spirit of the living God; but if the temple is defiled by the admission of an evil passion, thought or desire, the mediator falls into the sphere of sorcery. The door is opened; the pure spirits retire and the evil ones rush in. This is still mediatorship, evil as it is; the sorcerer, like the pure magician, forms his own aura and subjects to his will congenial inferior spirits .

But mediumship, as now understood and manifested, is a different thing. Circumstances, independent of his own volition, may, either at birth or subsequently, modify a person's aura, so that strange manifestations, physical or mental, diabolical or angelic, may take place. Such mediumship, as well as the above-mentioned mediatorship, has existed on earth since the first appearance here of living man. The former is the yielding of weak, mortal flesh to the control and suggestions of spirits and intelligences other than one's own immortal demon. It is literally *obsession* and *possession*; . . . This mediumship, whether beneficent or maleficent, is always *passive*. Happy are the pure in heart, who repel unconsciously, by that very cleanness of their inner nature, the dark spirits of evil. For verily they have no other weapons of defense but that inborn goodness and purity. Mediumism, as practiced in our days, is a more undesirable gift than the robe of Nessus. — I, 487-8

Far from us be the thought of casting an unjust slur on physical mediums . . . heaven knows, as recent events have too well proved, whether the calling is one to be envied by any one! It is

not mediums, real, *true*, and genuine mediums that we would ever blame, but their patrons, the spiritualists. — I, 488-9

It is erroneous to speak of a medium having *powers* developed. A passive medium has no power. He has a certain moral and physical condition which induces emanations, or an aura, in which his controlling intelligences can live, and by which they manifest themselves. He is only the vehicle through which *they* display their power. . . . The medium's moral state determines the kind of spirits that come; and the spirits that come reciprocally influence the medium, intellectually, physically, and morally. The perfection of his mediumship is in ratio to his passivity, and the danger he incurs is in equal degree. When he is fully "developed" — perfectly passive — his own astral spirit may be benumbed, and even crowded out of his body, which is then occupied by an elemental, or, what is worse, by a human fiend of the eighth sphere, who proceeds to use it as his own. But too often the cause of the most celebrated crime is to be sought in such possessions.

Physical mediumship depending upon passivity, its antidote suggests itself naturally; *let the medium cease being passive*. Spirits never control persons of positive character who are determined to resist all extraneous influences. The weak and feeble-minded whom they can make their victims they drive into vice. — I, 490

How dangerous may often become *untrained* mediumship, and how thoroughly it was understood and provided against by the ancient sages, is perfectly exemplified in the case of Socrates. The old Grecian philosopher was a "medium"; hence, he had never been initiated into the Mysteries; for such was the rigorous law. But he had his "familiar spirit" as they call it, his *daimonion*; and this invisible counsellor became the cause of his death. It is generally believed that if he was not initiated into the Mysteries it was because he himself neglected to become so. But

the *Secret Records* teach us that it was because he could not be admitted to participate in the sacred rites, and precisely, as we state, on account of his mediumship. There was a law against the admission not only of such as were convicted of deliberate *witchcraft* [an interesting footnote here that is worth turning to — E. V. S.] but even of those who were known to have "a familiar spirit." The law was just and logical, because a genuine medium is more or less irresponsible; and the eccentricities of Socrates are thus accounted for in some degree. A medium must be *passive*; and if a firm believer in his "spirit-guide" he will allow himself to be ruled by the latter, not by the rules of the sanctuary. A *medium* of olden times, like the modern "medium" was subject to be *entranced* at the will and pleasure of the "power" which *controlled* him; therefore, he could not well have been entrusted with the awful secrets of the final initiation, "never to be revealed under the penalty of death." The old sage, in unguarded moments of "spiritual inspiration," revealed that which he had never learned; and was therefore put to death as an atheist. — II, 117-8

The use of it [a mysterious science referred to in paragraph which precedes this one] is a longing toward our only true and real home — the after-life, and a desire to cling more closely to our parent spirit; abuse of it is sorcery, witchcraft, *black* magic. Between the two is placed natural "mediumship"; a soul clothed with imperfect matter, a ready agent for either the one or the other, and utterly dependent on its surroundings of life, constitutional heredity — physical as well as mental — and on the nature of the "spirits" it attracts around itself. A blessing or a curse, as fate will have it, unless the medium is purified of earthly dross. — II, 118

One of the ten fundamental propositions of the Oriental philosophy is:

6th. Mediumship is the opposite of adeptship; the medium is the passive instrument of foreign influences, the adept actively

controls himself and all inferior potencies. — II, 588

The adept can control the sensations and alter the conditions of the physical and astral bodies of other persons not adepts; he can also govern and employ, as he chooses, the spirits of the elements. He cannot control the immortal spirit of any human being, living or dead, for all such spirits are alike sparks of the Divine Essence, and not subject to any foreign domination. — II, 590

But the seer-adept knows how to suspend the mechanical action of the brain. His visions will be as clear as truth itself, uncolored and undistorted, whereas, the clairvoyant, unable to control the vibrations of the astral waves, will perceive but more or less broken images through the medium of the brain. The seer can never take flickering shadows for realities, for his memory being as completely subjected to his will as the rest of the body, he receives impressions directly from his spirit. Between his subjective and objective selves there are no obstructive mediums. This is the real spiritual seership, in which, according to an expression of Plato, soul is raised above all inferior good. . . — II, 591

. . . mediums are usually diseased, . . . The adepts of Eastern magic are uniformly in perfect mental and bodily health, and in fact the voluntary and independent production of phenomena is impossible to any others. . . . The adept retains perfect consciousness; shows no change of bodily temperature, or other sign of morbidity; requires no "conditions," but will do his feats anywhere and everywhere; and instead of being passive and in subjection to a foreign influence, rules the forces with iron will. But we have elsewhere shown that the medium and the adept are as opposed as the poles. We will only add here that the body, soul, and spirit of the adept are all conscious and working in harmony, and the body of the medium is an inert clod, and even his soul may be away in a dream while its habitation is occupied

by another. — II, 595-6

"It requires no conjuration and ceremonies; circle-making and incensing are mere nonsense and juggling," says Paracelsus. The human spirit "is so great a thing that no man can express it; as God Himself is eternal and unchangeable, so also is the mind of man. If we rightly understood its powers, nothing would be impossible to us on earth. The imagination is strengthened and developed through *faith in our will*. Faith must confirm the imagination, for faith establishes the will." — II, 597

(To be continued)

The Theosophical Forum

ABOUT INITIATION — *H. N. Stokes*

I hold the perhaps very unorthodox opinion that no one can be made different by any ceremonial whatever from what he was ten minutes before it. Look at it in this way. A medical student, let us say, has studied the medical sciences for several years. From time to time he has to submit to examinations which, successfully passed, entitle him to continue his studies in the school he is attending and under the proper instructors. Finally he is given a parchment stating that he is an M. D. But he is not one whit different ten minutes after each examination than he was ten minutes before; nor is he in any way different ten minutes after his diploma is handed to him than he was ten minutes before. At no one moment has he been initiated into anything. You may, if you wish, call his successive examinations and his final graduation initiations, first, second, third, and so on. You may call the examiners initiators and the president of the college, who hands him his final diploma, the "Great Initiator," but it means nothing. At no one moment has he been initiated into anything — he has simply had a succession of labels stuck on him, and the sticking of these labels, as they do not in themselves accomplish anything, does not need to be accompanied with any sort of ceremonial whatsoever, and anything of the sort is just for show. A medical degree is doubtless of value, as it is required by the authorities before he is permitted to practise as a token that he has had sufficient training; it serves on his shingle or the wall of his office to tell what he is. But all that he is he has made himself, by study, aided by his instructors. But brush aside all these formalities and he would be just as good, or as bad, a doctor.

There is a certain parallelism between spiritual growth and growth in material knowledge, but with the difference that the former, being more an inner process, depends more on the development of the inner faculties and less on something coming from without. It is conceded that at proper times suitable instruction must be given, but this is

rather with the aim of calling out the powers latent within one. It is needless to go into this further here. What I want to emphasize is that initiation is a gradual process, just as is the acquirement of medical knowledge, and that it is not something which proceeds by fits and jumps. To speak of a person being an initiate of the first, second, third degree and so on means about as much as dividing students into sophomores, juniors, seniors and finally graduates. It is quite true that moments may come when there is a rather sudden "expansion of consciousness," when ideas before only dimly or not at all perceived suddenly flash on one, just as one may suddenly have the solution of a problem flash on him, while in other cases the process is a slow one. I don't pretend to offer an explanation of this, though I object to the popular idea that whenever one gets a new conception it is because some superior being has thrust it into his mind. I object to this explanation because it is no explanation at all, for one must at once ask, how did this superior and external being get it? I see no essential difference between conceiving some useful invention and conceiving a new sort of safe-cracking or financial swindling. There are people aplenty who long ago abandoned the idea of being "tempted by the devil" who still attribute each brilliant idea to some kind-hearted angel anxious to help along.

Be that as it may, the idea that initiation is something sudden, rather than a gradual growth brought about by "self-induced and self-devised efforts," that it is something conferred rather than made by oneself is so alluring that the subject has been the field of exploitation without end. Do you really suppose that those wise beings who know the hearts of men will indulge in such puerile stunts as you find described in books on initiation? Do you think that they will put candidates through a course of interrogation and actually require a spoken oath just as if they were judges in a police court? I find the notion rather insulting. The perniciousness of this notion lies largely in the idea that an initiate is made from without rather than by his own efforts. Read the current literature on initiation. You will get the idea that as one progresses along the Path he finally comes to a closed door. This he cannot open

himself; it has to be opened for him and he himself pushed or pulled through it by some sort of ceremonial supposed to stir up his spiritual bowels.

Make up your mind that "initiation" is a slow growth, brought about through your own efforts aided when necessary by higher instruction when you have already made the best use of what has been placed at your disposal, and have learned by the mistakes you will make. But pay no attention to the talk about being suddenly boosted by some external process, or perhaps by some surgical operation on your chakras, into a new and higher state.

The Theosophical Forum

MAN AFTER DEATH — *G. Cardinal Le Gros*

Let us begin this subject of Man after Death by remembering that he is a Divine being, an eternal pilgrim, now journeying Homeward through the labyrinths of matter, learning in pain and sorrow, and sometimes in joy, the truth about himself and the universe, learning to obey the "Law of laws" — Compassion, realizing that he must become a co-worker with Nature's supreme laws.

I do not think that this can be repeated too often: man is in his heart of hearts a God, a Divine Being. This is his Rock, against which nothing in the universe can prevail, because it implies his own eternal oneness with the Heart of the universe, his oneness with Harmony, Compassion, and the imperishable Life of all things.

We may live in suffering and misfortune: — "the Karmic progeny of all our former thoughts and deeds" — but always with us is the fearless, mighty Inner God, whose Peace we can share. He is ever-present. In the deepest darkness he abides with us. Even in death he lives with us. What illusions are the so-called securities of the world compared to him! The wheel turns, and they are gone, and we wander empty-handed; but indestructible and constant endures this Divinity in our hearts.

By impersonal love and forgiveness Man opens himself to the beneficent influences streaming from the Cosmic Heart, and thus steps into, partakes of, the Eternal Peace.

The Masters of Wisdom and Compassion are individuals who have become more at one with the Inner God than we, who have unfolded into vital manifestation the powers and faculties latent in us all. They feel keenly the pulsing of the great Universal Heart. It was they who gave this wisdom we call Theosophy, a fragment of which will be considered in this paper.

The seven principles of man are seven aspects, expressions, reflexions, manifestations, of the consciousness-life-substance which is, in its totality, the Boundless. The man whom we know at present is but a reflexion — a sorry one — of his "only abiding principles" — Atman and Buddhi. He is a stream of consciousness flowing down from above, a radiance, a ray of Spirit-Mind, incarnated in matter, pulled this way and that by conflicting desires.

But here let us pause and think. These seven principles are not the last word regarding the teaching of man's constitution. According to the Esoteric Wisdom, there are, besides these seven principles, three more, belonging to the higher, unmanifested planes of Nature. And moreover, since the part contains everything that the whole has, each of these seven principles, considering man as a sevenfold being, is itself septenary.

But we will here consider man in his sevenfold division because this is relatively simple, and because it harmonizes with the septenary manifestations that we observe throughout all Nature.

The seven principles that go to make up the constitution of man are as follows: the physical body or Sthula-sarira, the astral, model-body or Linga-sarira, the life principle or Prana, the element of desire or Kama, mind or Manas, the Spiritual Soul or Buddhi, and Spirit or Atman.

The physical body is a gross, dense form, itself without moral responsibility as an entity, serving man as a vehicle or garment on the terrestrial plane.

The astral body is composed of substance more attenuated than the physical, but still material. It is the pattern for the physical body, is formed before birth, and acts as a link of communication between the mind and physical body.

The life principle or Prana is physical vitality, drawn from the ocean of life for the specialized use of forms, after the disintegration of which it returns to the ocean of life.

The element of desire or Kama is the fourth principle, aspect, of the consciousness-life-substance. It is that in us which desires, moving into action the will. Without some kind of desire we should stagnate and cease to be. Desire is the driving power in life. It permeates the universe.

Mind or Manas is the thinking principle, a spark of the universal Mind, in the beginning un-self-conscious, which to obtain self-consciousness must undergo experience in matter. Manas is the link between the god and animal in man because it has two aspects: the first is the Higher Manas, aspiring upward to its source, which is Buddhi the Spiritual Soul. The second aspect is the mortal, Lower Manas, a ray from the Higher Manas, "working through the physical brain and senses." This lower part of Manas, informing the perishable quaternary: physical body, astral body, life, and desire, constitutes the terrestrial personality enduring from birth to death. This personality is the mask of the Higher Self. This Lower Manas is really a false consciousness, an entity that goes to pieces, disintegrates, after the passing of the body, giving up to its source only that of it which is worthy of survival, its pure, self-conscious, spiritual essence or aroma: the high dreams of beauty and harmony, the aspirations lofty and sublime. But if during incarnation on earth it was gross, materialistic, and a denier of soul and immortality, it will then have nothing in it to rise, after death, to the spiritual plane from which it came. In such a case there will be no Devachan for it, and the Higher Nature will draw from it nothing at all.

Regarding the majestic themes of Buddhi and Atman, little can be said. However, in the *Bhagavad-Gita* we read the following which is helpful: "The senses and organs are esteemed great, but the thinking self is greater than they. The discriminating principle is greater than the thinking self, and that which is greater than the discriminating principle is He." He is Atman, the Supreme Spirit, the Divine Monad or Ego, the Inner God. The discriminating principle is Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul or Monad, the Inner Buddha. The thinking self is Manas or mind, the Reincarnating Ego, the Human Monad or Soul.

At death the physical body is deserted, and the life principle or Prana returns to the ocean of life from which it came. This reduces the number of man's principles from seven to five. They are: Atman, Buddhi, Manas, Kama, and the Linga-sarira or astral body. The entity man is now in the region of Kama-loka, or place of desire, a locality in and about the earth, in a vehicle or vesture called the Kama-rupa, or body of desire. Perhaps here we should consider what the Kama-rupa is. On earth during incarnation man's desires infill his being; they are not independent of him; indeed he is their master because he decides what desires to encourage and follow. But after death and the abandonment of the physical body, the desires coalesce with the astral body, forming the Kama-rupa, or body of desire.

This Kama-rupa is made up of all the lower desires and selfish impulses that the liberated soul leaves behind, and is therefore wholly bad, being an evil influence to living persons who unwisely permit themselves to become mentally negative, thus making possible the invasion of astral forces. A good man, after death, leaves behind him a relatively weak Kama-rupa which soon goes to pieces, and becomes no menace to the living. But a bad man will leave a strong, coherent Kama-rupa which will hold together for a long time and cause untold trouble in the world. There is a great moral implication here, because the soul is always responsible for whatever evil its abandoned Kama-rupa may do, even if the soul be in Devachan.

The separation of the heaven-bound soul from the Kama-rupa is called the "second death," an event quite painless to the good man, but a period of great suffering for those who in life persistently identified themselves with the lower nature.

Devachan is not a place or location like Kama-loka, but a state of spiritual consciousness. And it is Karman — spiritual Karman — which leads the individual soul to Devachan. While on earth in the body man aspires to noble things, thinks sublime thoughts, and dreams lofty dreams, few of which can be realized here. But they have to come to fruition somewhere, because every cause must produce its effect. And

that "somewhere" is Devachan.

Each man's Devachan is of his own making: it is his own spiritual creation: — an ideal world of happiness and peace wherein the tired soul takes rest and assimilates the purified aroma of mortal experience. Devachan is really a dream, but less of a dream than terrestrial life because it is closer to the Heart of Things.

Devachan is over when the spiritual causes which led the soul there are exhausted; and the soul is brought back to reincarnation on earth by causes, initiated in past lives, which require earthly conditions in which to manifest.

At the time of death the soul sees the complete panorama of the incarnation just ended, and before birth the conditions that will have to be faced in the coming life are revealed to its inner sight.

To summarize: Devachan is a spiritual state, the efflorescence of spiritual forces engendered by the individual during incarnation. If there was in the life of a man much aspiration to the nobler side of things, hopes for the betterment of the world, efforts in the direction of the "Good, the True, the Beautiful," then the Devachan will be long, rich, and full. On the other hand, if he lived mostly for the material aspects of life, giving little attention to the Real, his Devachan will be brief and almost colorless. And in some cases, as mentioned before, there may be no Devachan at all.

Now it has been said that Atman and Buddhi are the "only abiding principles" in man; but although abiding, permanent, and imperishable, they are not changeless in an absolute sense. Everything is growing, evolving, changing: atoms and stones, worlds and men, universes and galaxies. The highest pinnacle of perfection that we can visualize is but one more horizon against the eternal skies. The farthest range of harmony and perfection attainable in this our present manvantara will be over-reached in our next manvantara; and so on forever, "sublime ultimate after sublime ultimate" attained and surpassed, in Boundless Infinity, which is our Home.

Much has been omitted in this study of Man after Death, and all that has been said is very fragmentary. We should not permit our minds to crystallize around any aspect of these teachings because they are always subject to enlargement, and as we evolve intellectually, morally, spiritually, we shall see and understand more than we do now. There is an old saying: "Stand ready to abandon all thou hast learned." And this is good advice to the Theosophist. Theosophy is the Eternal Truth of man and universe, but it has no final bourn, no absolute ultimate. How could it? Everything is growing, advancing, and as we follow the turning wheel of time, striving to realize more and more of our essential Divinity, we shall come into the possession of greater powers and faculties, and an ever-widening perception. We shall gradually become more at home in our universe, more familiar with its sublime mysteries, more serviceable to our fellows.

When we are studying these magnificent teachings and appreciating them with our intellects, let us not forget, even for an instant, the Source of them, the Eternal Foundation from which they spring! Let us not close our hearts for one moment to the ever-abiding Spirit that moves in the Silence, bringing peace to our hearts and illumination to our minds. For this is the great thing: the Spirit behind it all, and the glorious vision that we see when we hold to this Spirit. The Spirit it is that must stir and motivate us in our Theosophical life. For Spirit is the Heart of it all, the Essence, the Light, the Power, and the Guide. With the Spirit and the Vision within and before us we shall follow the Ancient Path with certain feet. Indeed, there is no other way we can tread it, for the Path is the Spirit, and the Goal the Vision!

The aim of evolution is the bringing forth in man of his essential Divinity; that he may become it, that he may live and actually be the god that he is in his Inmost. The Messengers of the Great Ones have all brought one Message, which is: "Man, know Thyself. Know Thyself for what Thou truly art: A Divine Splendor, a Deathless God." Be this inner Glory, they have taught, and all that the boundless universe contains will be yours because you yourself will have awakened to the sublime realization that you are the universe, and the universe you! "As above

so below."

The everlasting Divine Life flows through all things, holding all things in eternal keeping. The Divine Life is the same in one as it is in another. The self-same identic Essence that makes us brothers verily makes us ONE. For the whole human race is one grand unit, an organism electrified and driven by Compassion which is, as *The Voice of the Silence* states: "no attribute" but the Law of laws, — Eternal Harmony. We have only to open our hearts and minds to this holy verity, and let the Power that moves behind and within all things stream in, and we shall be transformed, lifted to heights where we shall breathe the air of the gods.

The destiny of the human race is to become a race of gods. It is a wonderful, glorious picture that rises in the mind when we think of this: when we gaze on through the centuries at those grand days when all men will be as brothers, each self-forgetful, each living and striving for the good of the rest, with selfishness dead, and pity and compassion filling the heart. I think that one of the finest things that we can do is to hold stedfastly in our minds this picture of Tomorrow.

The Theosophical Forum

GOOD WILL IN THE COSMOS — M. M. T.

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee are fresh and
strong.

— Wordsworth: *Ode to Duty*

The wonders of the visible ocean of Space have been revealed by scientific observation and record — planets assembled in solar systems, solar systems in galaxies, myriads of them, and beyond these, super-galaxies composed of thousands of galaxies. Order and rhythm prevail in the movements and interrelations of these celestial bodies, indicating cosmic co-operation. Vast periods of time are needed to account for this majestic march of cosmic events. Contemplation of these wonders stimulates in a thinker the power to see in just proportion the affairs of any one small unit like our Earth. It also engenders profound conviction that in this ages-long weaving of the celestial pattern there is *Cosmic Good Will*.

For who can picture these vast systems without revering the power that holds these parts in place? What if they did *not* hold to their courses? What if great entities like these celestial bodies refused to be regulated in their movements? What prevents tragedies on a wholesale cosmic scale? What makes Space safe for the Celestial Commonwealth? The Theosophist answers, *Cosmic Purpose and Cosmic Good Will*.

We might ask concerning another wonder of the visible world. What has insured the evolutionary progress in form from the tiny amoeba to the complex, exquisite human body? Man, the Thinker, whose instrument on Earth that body is, man, who has reached his present development through no conscious effort of his own, is making urgent inquiry as to what part he is consciously to play in these vast systems of worlds that he is able with his intellect to contemplate. Can he discover and emulate in his human associations on Earth the principles of co-

operation, the laws of life, according to which order and safety in solar systems and galaxies are maintained during the aeons of time it takes for the cosmic purpose to be consummated?

Theosophy answers, Man is of the stuff of stars and suns, both in his outer and his inner nature. One Hierarchy of his progenitors, the Builders, have directed the evolution of form, body, vehicle, for Man the offspring of Divinity. Another Hierarchy, that of Compassion, has in charge the advance of the inner man, whose ancestry is akin to the invisible Beings who use for body the great celestial sun and star systems. They have in hand the guidance and direction of that part of human destiny still to be unfolded, when man, abandoning "uncharted freedom," will become conscious of and obedient to, that infinite duty, which the poet intuits as *Cosmic Protection and Good Will*.

The most precious gift offered to the human race is the knowledge of that glorious destiny. Every year a whispering of it is heard in the human heart. Even in an age when the most material longings are in the ascendant, this divine murmur prompts towards *giving*. It is always linked with legends of the birth of the Great Teachers of the world, who are of the Hierarchy of Compassion. And comes when the Sun, the symbol of inner light as well as the giver of warmth and visible sunshine, is reborn and enters its northward course. Theosophy adds that it is the time when the Hierarchy of Compassion is increased by successful candidates for Initiation into conscious co-operation with the Good Will in the Cosmos.

A yearly reminder only from above? Emerson reverently notes:

If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore, and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God that had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

Nightly the stars look down with their message of assurance that we have our home in a friendly universe, that we too, like the Great Beings

whose visible forms are those "diamonds in the sky," may become conscious collaborators in *Cosmic Purpose and Cosmic Good Will*.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY CAN EXPLAIN — L. L. W.

New Worlds to Conquer

It can be confidently asserted, we think, that Theosophy is the only teaching in the world today that has all the answers. It can explain the past, account for the present, and lay down inspiring lines for the future. In this series of articles there has been so far an endeavor to outline what Theosophy explains about the past and the present. This has been done necessarily in but the most fragmentary manner though it is hoped that sufficient leads have been given for truly interested inquirers to follow.

In conclusion some picture should be drawn of what Theosophy explains about the future. There are two main classes of seekers whom we may consider here. (We need not discuss the great rank and file of those who are in such inner need that the message of Theosophy comes like manna from heaven.) These two classes comprise those who take a constructive and vital concern in the shaping of our modern world into a future that can assure some measure of happiness and progress to everyone.

There are first those who are working to bring about the kingdom of heaven upon earth. They represent the psychological trends of our time. They are such people as those behind the social research clinics which are springing up in our large cities. Then there is the second class which fortunately we have always with us — the winged ones, adventurers in the world of intellect and spirit. These are very few. They are the pioneers in the realm of ideas. They shape the molds of mind into which all other workers sooner or later pour their efforts whether they are conscious of it or not. These adventurers are they through whom the Cosmic Spirit-Soul, the *Welt-Geist*, sends its vitalizing currents into the soul-life of the race. For both classes of pioneers Theosophy has a message and a promise. To the first group

with their science of human relationships Theosophy contributes its teachings about the Spirit-Soul at the core of every being, making of that being a deathless part of the Cosmic Spirit-Soul from which it sprang. For the Cosmic Spirit-Soul is the Universal Self and Fount of everything in our Universe. Evolution is the unfolding within every being of the powers and faculties of its Spirit-Soul in progressive stages of self-expression. In this process the complex aspects of man's nature have been evolved, including his psychological apparatus and his physical body. This evolution is brought about through reïmbodiment in ever more highly evolved forms, checked and guided by Karman. Karman is due to the action of free will and the consequent reactions.

Out of these teachings there springs a creative psychology which, when applied in the laboratory of human research, will prove a master-key. The single teaching of the Buddhic principle in man contains in its application the very elixir of life. From this divine principle in our composition springs the electricity of impersonal love. Impersonal love is that all-embracing spiritual emotion from which alone regeneration in human nature and life can spring, once we have discovered the source of it in ourselves and are determined to cultivate it. Through Karman in many lives here on earth the human personality has entangled us in a thousand crippling bonds and tormenting miseries. The elixir of impersonal self-forgetting love will dissolve these bonds. It will transmute all suffering into the joyful power of helping others. This teaching is but one of the great truths in the spiritual alchemy of Theosophy which can create new combinations of undreamed of happiness and splendor in all the relations of daily living.

As to the second group, the star-aspiring adventurers, there is indeed little left in the physical world for their adventuring spirits. Theosophy however will provide a spiritual quest — yes, even a physical one — that offers to the faithful seeker a magnificent fulfilment. In a brief article like this not much more than a clue can be given. The inquirer is therefore recommended to our literature, particularly to *The Esoteric Tradition* by G. de Purucker. In that book the author has brought together, from *The Secret Doctrine* and other authoritative sources, the

teachings of the Archaic Science in regard to the Spirit-Soul of man and the Circulations of the Cosmos, describing the inner reaches of man's evolution during life and after death. And that nothing may be denied us, the subjects of Initiation and the Mystery-Schools and other fascinating leads are sufficiently treated. In bringing back to men these long-forgotten teachings, Theosophy has indeed revealed new and authentic worlds to be sought and conquered.

The Theosophical Forum

JUST WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CHRISTMAS? — *Axel E. Gibson*

Though in itself a symbol of ageless youth, Christmas, as an historical event, is the oldest of the world's holidays. It is older than religion, older than Christendom itself. It was recognised in pagan Rome where throngs of people on the 25th of December worshiped at the shrine of the God-child Adonis, while shouting in chorus: "Adonis has come; Adonis has returned to Earth!" But before that, the old Scandinavians were commemorating, at huge stone altars, the birth of their Tribal Savior — Thor; and before that, India had consecrated herself to the annual recognition of the same event, with Krishna as its Christ-child in the manger; and before that Egypt since time immemorial had in its ritual the Virgin-Mother, Isis, and Messiah-Child, Horus.

All these religious festivals, though separated by ages of time and hemispheres of distance, occurred at an identical period of the year. The time selected by them all was the Winter-solstice, when the Sun hovers between the shortest day and the longest night of the year. In other words, the signal for the Christmas celebration of all time was flashed by the Sun when from her annual retreat of darkness and cold she moved into the splendor of the new-born year with its promise of light, beauty, and power.

It is this fact of the Sun's primogeniture in all the world's Christmas births, that has given to this holiday its universal identity throughout the historic and prehistoric ages. From this Sun worship all our primitive religions have obtained their symbols of birth, light, beauty, and redemptive powers. In the light and life of the Sun is born the hope of the year — the spirit of its beauty, and the fruits of its service.

But if there be any power of Heaven that cares for the destinies of this old Earth with its teeming humanities of sins and virtues, it certainly finds an opportunity at this time of general awakening to inspire mankind with impulses of new ideals, and new methods for their

realization. Bathed in this light of our spiritual nature, our mind should be more responsive than at any other time of the year, to the admonitions from the deeper life. Now or never let us respond to the opportunities of human helpfulness, and charge every gift that leaves our hands with the spiritual values of peace and good-will to the children of Earth.

The Theosophical Forum

CHRISTMAS — *Raymond Tyberg*

Of all the festivals that we keep throughout the year, Christmas has the most secure hold upon our hearts and imaginations. We are not celebrating the birth of Jesus, though well we might and with deep reverence, for the story of his life, whether fact or myth, has sweetened the days and strengthened the spirit for countless millions of men. Nor are we rejoicing with the pagans at the return of the sun-god with his healing and creative powers, for though we admire the vigorous imaginative vision of the ancients, we do not see through their eyes, and their splendid truth fades for us into a weak figure of imitative fancy.

There is an innate power in men to refashion age-old customs to present purposes. Our Christmas means to us the periodic restoration of harmony in our human relationships. Some men spend the year dragging their feet through mud in pursuit of unleavened material pleasures; others seem to hang by their teeth to an evasive ideal of spiritual life. We follow our separate ways to personal or impersonal power and satisfaction. But at Christmas we call back our centrifugal energies from their non-human goals.

Then our feet press the good earth in the middle of the road, and for a short while we go along cheerfully together, taking pleasure in each other's company. Families are reunited. Giving gladdens us more than receiving, and sharing is felt to be an even greater blessing. Working with others to create a pleasure to be actively enjoyed in common is found to be an experience so delightful, that memory clings about it to the end of life. The mere turning of the year brings us round to the time when custom helps us to enjoy our essential being as individuals participating in an infinitely varied relationship to other individuals.

We need not be entirely at the mercy of blind custom, fed as it is by the superstitions which cluster round dead forms of poetry. Christmas may

be for us a yearly reminder that the final aim of philosophy and education should be mastery of the art of living together, the art of consciously producing harmonious cadences in the symphony of human life.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY ANSWERS THE CHALLENGE — *G. de Purucker*

What does the Theosophical Society do for the world in a practical way? The answer is: It goes to the roots of the causes of the misery and of the suffering which exist among men. Can there then be anything more practical, more useful, than the work which the Theosophical Society is doing, has done, and will continue to do as long as it remain faithful to the traditions which we follow and which we love? Our work, expressively compressed into a nutshell, is to labor to change the hearts and minds of our fellow-men towards higher things, towards things of permanency.

All the world's suffering, all its misery, all its pain and sorrow, arise out of human ignorance, human weakness, and human failings, the latter being what the Churches with some rather vague justification call "human sin." Is there anything more practical and more useful than changing the hearts and minds of men through the entering into them of the forces of imagination and practical ideals? By this, misery can be changed to content and happiness; poverty shall be done away with and be replaced with the abundance of those who earn it under changed conditions; for men thus motivated from within will be moved by the inner impulses of a changed character. Change the hearts and minds of men by giving them a vision and by acquainting them with the magnificent power of a constructive imagination, and all the causes of suffering and misery will vanish. That then is our main *practical* work; that is our answer to the above challenge.

Soup-kitchens, philanthropic institutions, and others of their ilk, are all admirable in their way, and in their way do good work. They are, shall we say, backed by untold millions, backed by human sympathy both active and passive, and by the support of those who are willing to give and who do give. But they are nevertheless palliatives: they do not cure the evil; they give but temporary surcease.

I would that every genuine Theosophist felt as keenly as some of us do the spirit of service to that sublime end which is imbodyed in the Latin phrase I dearly love: *Ego sum servus servorum Dei*: "I am the servant of the servants of God — of the Divine." When the idea imbodyed in this principle burns in the heart and sets it afire with its holy flame, then the "brain receives enlightenment in its turn and sees, indeed evokes, the methods, the way, the path, the means.

Let never, then, this challenge pass unanswered. Take it up immediately. Point out to all that the world's suffering and misery arise from the ill-doing, in its turn born from the ignorance and weakness, of our fellow-men — often, often, usually indeed, such ill-doing is not consciously done; for these things arise through ignorance, through lack of the inspiration and knowledge of the God-Wisdom which we have. Replace ignorance with knowledge; give light unto the dark places of the human heart and mind. Bring sympathy to the thoughts of men, and again all these causes of human wretchedness will vanish. War will disappear. We all know what war is. It is not in any sense wrong to defend one's country; but this is not war as commonly understood. It is the using of violence on a vast scale, from fear, misunderstanding, and often from selfishness, and the employment of some of our most brilliant minds in this cause, which we must do away with.

When we reach and uproot their causes, poverty will vanish and will be replaced with at least a competence for all; ignorance will vanish because proper education and sound knowledge based on ethical instincts will take its place. Human fellow-feeling will replace the present sentiments of fear and of indifference. Now is it possible to find any work more practical, more useful, more humane, than this? The T. S., our beloved society, was founded to change the hearts and minds of men, I repeat it. Change these and you then change all else in human life.

And as regards politics: It is my conviction that if the T. S. officially ever became entangled in politics of any kind, its day then will have come,

its day of doom, and justly so. Why? Because it is precisely politics, with its manifold ramifications of distorted emotions which rends men apart into opposing camps. The streets, the lecture-halls, the council-chambers, the chancelleries of the world, today are filled with political groups, each eager-voiced, each voicing its own supposed remedies for our ills: yet universal agreement is never reached, because the thoughts involved are of the brain-mind instead of issuing from man's higher nature. It is precisely politics that separates men, as I have said, placing them into opposite or opposing camps. "If a house be divided against itself, how may it stand and endure?"

We Theosophists have no objection whatsoever to anyone's holding any political opinion that he or she may please. Any Theosophist is entitled to hold any decent political opinion that he or she may please. But as an organization the Theosophical Society is not so. Why? For the reason just pointed out. When we descend to brain-mind theories, instead of finding union we find division, separation.

In my judgment there is but one thing, one common system of thought, rather of philosophy, on which all men can agree when they understand it. This is Theosophy, the God-Wisdom of the ancients, our God-Wisdom: that which is taught in the distant stars; that which is taught here on earth; that which is ageless, timeless, deathless; which can be proved to any sane, normal mind today, at least in some of its aspects, by the latest discoveries of our most advanced modern scientific thinkers; that which the poets have caught glimpses of and which all the titan intellects of the past have known at least something of and which the greatest among them have taught.

Men have been separated into different political camps by varying political theories for heaven knows how many ages. Has politics ever yet healed the woes of the world? No, and it never will. I do believe that when men understand what Theosophy is and what it means, and what the work of the T. S. means, then politics will die, because all men will see its uselessness. I know that many men would look upon such a condition as a questionable advance. I believe, however, that their

opinion is based largely upon lack of sufficiently deep and penetrative thought. The one fact that it is precisely politics which separates men proves its lack of essential spiritual and intellectual worth.

What does the T. S do in a practical way for mankind? I come back to the thought: It changes men's minds and hearts upwards and unifies them. When this is done all is done.

The Theosophical Forum

"THE SPLENDID HAZARD OF THE NEW" — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

One whirl of the Earth on its axis brings us day and night; one circling round the Sun brings us the seasons; one swing of the Solar System, with the Earth in it, round that greater celestial body which is our Sun's Sun, undoubtedly has significant if as yet unknown effects upon all life in the Solar System. There is ever the return — and ever the new January 1st, 1938, and the year to follow it have never been lived before.

Today we have frequent reminders that the menacing conditions in the world are a recurrence of what happened in Europe before the fall of the Roman Empire. In the centuries since then, however, the human mind has wrought mightily and won control of many natural forces for the use of man. But can Humanity's present planetary experience be regarded as even nearing completion or fulfilment while the human heart has never fully uttered itself? And, with every New Year, springs a hope — even an intuitive certainty — that there may yet flow from the deeps of human nature a current bringing to the perplexed and bewildered world beauty, harmony, and peace.

In all beginnings, even of a year or a day, there is the hazard of the untried. Today the hazards loom large. We are becoming familiar with such expressions as "this age of fear," "more comfort, less faith," "civilized races seem to be losing the courage to live," "a state of scare," "collective nervous breakdown," as descriptive of the present time. For long in the West, while the Ancient Wisdom, knowledge of which practically eliminates the fear of death in the East, has been obscured, man has dreaded the unfamiliar future that he believed awaited him after death. He has striven to secure that future by saving his soul. Today, faced with the power that threatens from his own achievements and inventions, man begins to wonder if he is going to be able to save his skin. At such a crisis man may find, however, that if he looks deep within himself, beyond his soul to its source, to that root of him which

is one with the Heart of the Universe, he will find that impulse, that driving-power that brought both the Universe and himself to the present hour and will carry them toward that goal of life where Man's full conscious, creative activity finds expression in higher human associations of a nobility and harmony he now cannot even visualize.

For in that same Ancient Wisdom, which the world is discovering to have been not only Eastern but universal, so ancient that it antedates every historical crisis that is recorded or may be expected to recur, there is a teaching the very simplicity of which helps to keep it secret when men have ceased to recognise the deep truth in simple things. This is the doctrine of *Swabhava*, which means that every being in the Universe, from the tiniest to the greatest, is a "self-starter" so to speak; that the primal impulse that brought the Universe and all that is in it into manifestation and to the place where we all are now, is an impulse, a driving-power, that impels us all to unfold our individual characteristics in progressive steps, with a chance to continue in successive lives on Earth and in successive periods of universal manifestation; that there is that in us which lasts and lives and learns.

Now we should have to say that minerals and plants and trees have done pretty well. "A diamond is a chunk of coal which has stuck to its job." On the value of diamonds no comment is needed. A rose-bush gives us fragrance and beauty and there seems no end to the variety of perfected blooms that a horticulturist — a member of a hierarchy of more conscious beings than the rose-bush — can help the rose-bush to produce. An acorn grows into an oak, and the oak-tree stands firm to the winter wind, bared of every leaf, without a whimper. Is man less than a tree or a rose-bush or a lump of coal? Is there in him a deficiency of resource, of still unexpressed individuality, so that he fears to hazard the growing-pains that hurt because the human race is bringing to birth a new era in which more of his enduring, creative individuality can manifest in new and better conditions on Earth?

The hazards of our day are the hazards of this bringing forth of the new. We've got it registered in our consciousness that a child who

survives the dangers attending birth into a body can grow from infancy and youth to maturity; but owing to the incomplete picture which human beings have of the full opportunity for development of *all* their faculties and powers, they face an unfamiliar future that causes them to dread. The sorest need that humanity has, almost, is the need for new pictures of the life to be — on Earth, mind you. And the source-material for correct and heartening visualization of this future is abundantly and comprehensibly set forth in the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy.

Moreover, with every opening cycle — morning, when, Theosophy reminds you, not only your body but that neglected inner nature of yours is refreshed; New Year, when the impulse toward expression in your life of those deep inner resources of conscious, creative power is reinforced from the Hierarchy of Beings who have climbed the Ladder of Life ahead of you; with *every* dawn there is fresh energy to be availed of. Man, searching within, with the knowledge of what is there, can learn to swing into step with the Great Companions, can storm those inner frontiers beyond which awaits a Light that can guide him past fear to fulfilment, to that full human experience won by those high hearts that crave "the Splendid Hazard of the New."

The Theosophical Forum

ORIENTAL STUDIES: I — *Judith Tyberg*

The Sacred Texts of the Gupta-Vidya: Where are they?

When we consider the vast treasure-of age-old truths that may be found in the ancient Oriental literature which has come down to us, we realize that there must have once been an esoteric fount of Truth open to a great number of the ancient peoples. If the Upanishads, "the mirror of eternal Wisdom," (S. D., II, 484) are exoteric works, there must have been some teaching of a still deeper and more esoteric nature given to the ancients. The question is often raised: Were there still more mystic writings known to the ancients? Some learned writers and students of ancient scriptures insist that there must have been "fragments of a primeval revelation, granted to the ancestors of the whole race of mankind . . . preserved in the temples of Greece and Italy." Eastern Initiates and Pandits have also proclaimed from time to time that their most sacred writings are not known to the West.

What has H. P. Blavatsky to say on this subject? As usual we find something helpful in her *Secret Doctrine*, this time in her Introductory (p. xxx):

While a prominent Cinghalese priest assured the writer [H. P. B.] that it was well known that the most important Buddhist tracts belonging to the sacred canon were stored away in *countries and places inaccessible to the European pundits*, the late Swami Dayanand Sarasvati, the greatest Sanskritist of his day in India, assured some members of the Theosophical Society of the same fact with regard to ancient Brahmanical works. When told that Professor Max Muller had declared to the audiences of his "Lectures" that the theory . . . "that *there was a primeval preternatural revelation* granted to the fathers of the human race, finds but few supporters at present," — the holy and learned man laughed. His answer was suggestive. "If Mr. *Moksh*

Mooler," as he pronounced the name, "were a Brahmin, and came with me, I might take him to a *gupta* cave (a secret crypt) near Okhee Math, in the Himalayas, where he would soon find out that what crossed the *Kalapani* (the black waters of the ocean) from India to Europe were only the *bits of rejected copies of some passages from our sacred books*. There was a "primeval revelation," and it still exists; nor will it ever be lost to the world, but will reappear; though the Mlechchhas will of course have to wait."

Of all the writings of old India that have come down to us, the Upanishads contain the most mystical and Theosophical teachings. H. P. Blavatsky says that it is in the Upanishads and the Vedanta that we have to look for the best corroboration of the occult teachings. She also tells us that the mystical doctrine of the Upanishads is "the only Veda of all thoughtful Hindus in the present day." (*Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 192)

Yet even these writings of the Upanishad have reached us in a despoiled condition. Why are they thus demolished? Who has done it? The following passage by H. P. Blavatsky (S. D., I, 269-272) gives answer.

After stating that what is given in *The Secret Doctrine* can be found in full nowhere else, she says:

It is not taught in any of the six Indian schools of philosophy, for it pertains to their synthesis — the seventh, which is the Occult doctrine. It is not traced on any crumbling papyrus of Egypt, nor is it any longer graven on Assyrian tile or granite wall. The Books of the *Vedanta* (the last word of human knowledge) give out but the metaphysical aspect of this world-Cosmogony; and their priceless thesaurus, the *Upanishads* — *Upa-ni-shad* being a compound word meaning "the conquest of ignorance by the revelation of *secret, spiritual* knowledge" — require now the additional possession of a Master-key to enable the student to get at their full meaning. The reason for this I venture to state here as I learned it from a Master.

The name, "*Upanishads*," is usually translated "esoteric doctrine." These treatises form part of the *Sruti* or "revealed knowledge," *Revelation*, in short, and are generally attached to the *Brahmana* portion of the Vedas, as their third division. There are over 150 *Upanishads* enumerated by, and known to, Orientalists, who credit the oldest with being written *probably* about 600 years b. c; but of *genuine* texts there does not exist a fifth of the number. The *Upanishads* are to the Vedas what the *Kabala* is to the Jewish Bible. They treat of and expound the secret and mystic meaning of the Vedic texts. They speak of the origin of the Universe, the nature of Deity, and of Spirit and Soul, as also of the metaphysical connection of mind and matter. In a few words: They CONTAIN *the beginning and the end of all human knowledge, but they have now ceased to REVEAL it*, since the day of Buddha. If it were otherwise, the *Upanishads* could not be called *esoteric*, since they are now openly attached to the Sacred Brahmanical books, which have, in our present age, become accessible even to the *Mlechchhas* (*out-castes*) and the European Orientalists. One thing in them — and this in all the *Upanishads* — invariably and constantly points to their ancient origin, and proves (a) that they were written, in some of their portions, *before* the caste system became the tyrannical institution which it still is; and (b) that half of their contents have been eliminated, while some of them were rewritten and abridged. "The great Teachers of the higher Knowledge and the Brahmins are continually represented as going to Kshatriya (military caste) kings to become their pupils." As Cowell pertinently remarks, the *Upanishads* "breathe an entirely different spirit" (from other Brahmanical writings), "a freedom of thought unknown in any earlier work except in the Rig Veda hymns themselves." The second fact is explained by a tradition recorded in one of the MSS. on Buddha's life. It says that the *Upanishads* were originally attached to their Brahmins after the beginning of a reform, which led to the exclusiveness of the present caste

system among the Brahmins, a few centuries after the invasion of India by the "twice-born." They were complete in those days, and were used for the instruction of the chelas who were preparing for their initiation.

This lasted so long as the Vedas and the Brahmanas remained in the sole and exclusive keeping of the temple-Brahmins — while no one else had the right to study or even read them outside of the *sacred* caste. Then came Gautama, the Prince of Kapilavastu. After *learning* the whole of the Brahmanical wisdom in the *Rahasya* or the *Upanishads*, and finding that the teachings differed little, if at all, from those of the "Teachers of Life" inhabiting the snowy ranges of the Himalaya, the Disciple of the Brahmins, feeling indignant because the sacred wisdom was thus withheld from all but the Brahmins, determined to save the whole world by popularizing it. Then it was that the Brahmins, seeing that their sacred knowledge and Occult wisdom was falling into the hands of the "*Mlechchhas*," abridged the texts of the Upanishads, originally containing thrice the matter of the Vedas and the Brahmanas together, without altering, however, one word of the texts. They simply detached from the MSS. the most important portions containing the last word of the Mystery of Being. The key to the Brahmanical secret code remained henceforth with the initiates alone, and the Brahmins were thus in a position to publicly deny the correctness of Buddha's teaching by appealing to their *Upanishads*, silenced for ever on the chief questions. Such is the esoteric tradition beyond the Himalayas.

Sri Sankaracharya, the greatest Initiate living in the historical ages, wrote many a Bhashya on the *Upanishads*. But his original treatises, as there are reasons to suppose, have not yet fallen into the hands of the Philistines, for they are too jealously preserved in his *maths* (monasteries, *mathams*). And there are still weightier reasons to believe that the priceless Bhashyas (Commentaries) on the esoteric doctrine of the Brahmins, by

their greatest expounder, will remain for ages yet a dead letter to most of the Hindus, except the *Smartava* Brahmins. This sect, founded by Sankaracharya, (which is still very powerful in Southern India) is now almost the only one to produce students who have preserved sufficient knowledge to comprehend the dead letter of the Bhashyas. The reason of this is that they alone, I am informed, have occasionally real Initiates at their head in their mathams, as for instance, in the "Sringagiri," in the Western Ghauts of Mysore. On the other hand, there is no sect in that desperately exclusive caste of the Brahmins, more exclusive than is the Smartava; and the reticence of its followers to say what they may know of the Occult sciences and the esoteric doctrine, is only equalled by their pride and learning.

Yet in these tattered remnants of the Upanishads there is great inspiration, and an inner experience for those who make their lofty teachings a part of their lives. The truths they contain have inspired many a great mind. Anquetil Duperron, the first European who read the Upanishads and translated them into Latin, said in his introduction:

Here, reader, is the key of India's sanctuary, somewhat rough with rust. Enter, if thou darest, if thou canst, with pure and clean heart, drawing near to the highest being, and merging in it. Let the outer senses rest; awaken the inner. Let thy body be as dead, and sunk in the ocean of wisdom and unwisdom. Know it — after Indian custom — as a divine law, that thou seest nothing but the Eternal; that nothing is, but the Eternal.

The wisdom of the Upanishads is truly the sacred relic of antiquity, and these truths are as old as the divinity of man, older even than our world. It is part of the virtue of these old mystery-teachings that they are quite inexhaustible; every advance in enlightenment gives us a new insight into their meaning. The sooner we make these truths actual in our lives, the sooner will the secret sanctuaries containing even profounder writings be opened once again. We must open these locked doors ourselves, but first we must earn our way to their divine

treasures.

"The Self I cannot know, but I can *be* that Self."

— *Kena Upanishad*

The Theosophical Forum

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES (1) — R. M. MacAlpin

To most of us, "Music of the Spheres" means the study of the tone and pitch ratios of the planets, from the sun to the Zodiac, and of the stars. This is a good technical start; but when looked into more deeply the doctrine of the Music of the Spheres indicates, for the human musician, a noble place in the universal scheme.

Esotericists regard every atom in the universe as a vibrating sphere of slowly unfolding, or evolving, consciousness; Space in motion. Hence, the atoms bonded together to identify a material object or a perceptible force are vibrating in relative harmony. Flowers, grasses, and trees "sing" as they grow. The minerals, a kingdom in a deep lethargy on this plane, also have their long-wave "breathing" tone. The atoms in beasts and birds can express their collective symphony through vocal chords, while the atomic chorus that makes a body-vehicle for a man may have its voice directed by thought, feeling, desire, and will, toward environmental organization and control.

If we can accept the elements, Earth, Air, Water, Fire, and Ether, as conditions maintained by the harmonious activity of atomic entities, we have five more choirs of "cosmic musicians." Still more subtle is the music of the "kingdom" of thought-substance which man organizes into formative images.

Taking only these perceptible conditions and processes, we find ever-performing grand opera, symphony, oratorio, and dance Music of the Spheres. If we agree that eternal Space is at all times a great *fulness*, then our study is limited only by our own ability to wonder, to imagine, and to expand. Old myths, legends, and fairytales of heroes who have acquired the gift of "element-language," and have talked with stones, plants and birds as well as with the sylphs, nymphs and gnomes of the air, water and earth, are based on forgotten depths of the Music of the Spheres.

Regarding this "element language," here is a pregnant message for the human musician. H. P. Blavatsky, in her profound book, *The Secret Doctrine*, quotes from an ancient treatise:

It is composed of *sounds*, not words; of sounds, numbers and figures. He who knows how to blend the three, will call forth the response of the superintending Power . . . sound being the most potent and effectual magic agent, and the first of the keys which open the door of communication between Mortals and the Immortals. — I, 464

All these observations indicate the study of the "intermingling hierarchies" that are the fulness of Space — but this is for the philosopher rather than for the musician. Carrying our theme into the human kingdom, we see, in a symphonic group, every member as a sphere of individualized thought, feeling, desire, and will, whose inherent nature causes him to be a musician — a transformer of sound from the subjective to the objective rates of vibration.

Three major influences draw these human spheres into the cosmic condition called a chorus or an orchestra. The most subjective of these is the call and need of humanity. Whether music be accepted as entertainment for the ear or as rhythm for the feet, matters not a great deal; either method is but an approach to the inner man who craves an occasional bath in, and as, the Music of the Spheres; the universal language wherein differences are harmonized into a rounded-out sense of well-being.

The designing intelligence is the composer of music, whom we may call the "point of departure" from the subjective to the objective planes. His work deserves a special monograph on the subtle conditions and processes of the kingdom of thought-substance. The third, or operative influence, is the conductor of the group; he being the synthesis of all the intelligent "spheres" that vibrate according to his interpretation of the composer's design and of humanity's appreciation. Chief among the symphonic "body-building" influences are the music-teacher and the instrument maker.

Thus a chorus or an orchestra is seen to be a link between human consciousness and some of the most profoundly interesting mysteries of universal Being and Becoming. The composer whose musicianship is supported by some philosophic depth will probably transcribe basic themes from the Music of the Spheres, producing human music that outlives generations. The conductor who is himself a sphere of radiant thought-induction into which his performing spheres can gather in comfort and give of their best, is a great benefactor, whether or not humanity realizes it. He and his group become as a musical solar system — a "home" to the finer intuitive perceptions of the human heart.

Some recent experiments showed that an animal-trainer's voice, transmitted over a microphone to his beasts, exercised no command; but his personal appearance brought the beasts under his sphere of influence. Does not this support the idea that humans are spheres of radiant energy? Who knows what the symphony of whirling atoms in the spirit, mind, and body of a man may convey to the beast consciousness? What composer, listening for inspiration from his Muse, has heard the rhythm, melody, and harmony produced by our humanity, in its eternal process of "becoming"?

Perhaps some gifted composer will see possibilities in these paragraphs, and will strike out into more direct transcription of the Music of the Spheres than we have had in modern times. Some wealthy patron of the fine arts should offer a substantial prize for the best symphonic interpretation of "Space, being and becoming a Universe."

On Being Human

Every part of a man's being should receive its due meed of cultural work. I do not believe that the human heart, the human hearts in the world, can be best reached by a man who has no heart himself. I do not believe that a man who does not understand the problems of his fellow human beings can help them. I believe that it is only when we are fully and truly

human, and rise above our humanhood occasionally into the deeps of divinity welling up within us, that we do our best work, for that means that we understand the human hearts around us. Our heart then beats in sympathetic rhythm with the pain in others' hearts. We understand it. But believe me, we can rise above the pain into the peace and quiet, and thereby become efficient in help. — G. de Purucker

FOOTNOTE:

1. From *The Baton*, Los Angeles Federal Music Project. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

INFERIORITY COMPLEX

Psychoanalysts tell us that when a man is hugely arrogant, and treats his fellows with contempt, it is generally because lurking in his soul is a conviction that he is inferior to the run of humanity; that he must always be asserting himself outwardly as a kind of anodyne for the gnawing of that grief and shame within. The cure for such complexes, they say, is to lay bare the root of the trouble: a long and probably costly business. *The* cure, however, is much simpler and costs nothing. It is Theosophy: the study of Theosophy and the application of Theosophy in life.

All these complexes, and everything else that can trouble us, inhere in the personal self and the mysterious region that lies between it and the physical body. That region is broadly mapped out as consisting of the Astral Body, nearest to the physical and the model on which the latter is built; the Life-principle; and the Animal Soul, the seat of the passions and desires: these three form the vehicle of the Personal Self.

Now this bunch of four principles or elements, including the personal self and leaving out the physical body, is no Mahomet's coffin hanging in mid air unrooted and unattached. Although essentially unreal and illusory, it could not exist at all, or appear to exist except as the result of something Real. It is an appearance; but like every other appearance, it is caused by a Reality. The mirage you see in the desert is not there; but you would not see it there unless there were real lakes and forests somewhere for the desert atmosphere to reflect.

If you want to know what the personal self, the thing you call "I myself" is, and how unreal it is, take the small-tooth comb of thought and examination to it, and try to find in that shifting phantasmagoria of likes and dislikes, memories and anticipations, the Central Thing that is essentially your Self. A little of this practice will convince you that it is not to be found there: that the thing you thought was yourself, and a

real entity, is very well symbolized by a mirage; or that it is something like the play of colored lights on a screen they sometimes show at a cinema: flashing and shifting and changing, and nothing there really: the screen is a blank really. But there is a cause for that illusion; and there is a cause in the Realms of Reality for this illusion we think to be ourselves.

We can get clues as to what that cause in the Realms of Reality is: first, in our power to think, to reason, to probe for the meaning of things and judge, by what we know, of the nature of what is beyond our present knowledge: when we do this, our minds take shape and order somewhat; they begin to become less unstable, less shifting, unreal and illusory. But a man, merely by taking thought, cannot really add a cubit to his inward stature; something greater than thought is needed to illumine it and bring it to life; and that greater thing is Impersonal Love. Entering upon the exercise of the power to give out this, which we do possess: it is part of the human make-up: we come into a region where all things, all beings, all the Universe, is One; into a place in ourselves which is utterly calm and stable and joyous; and this gives us an indication of the Reality of Things: it tells us where the Real Self is to be found; and that it is the Self of our Universe.

In the personal self are the delusions and complexes; but there are no delusions or complexes in the Real Self, nor in any of the degrees of our being that are above the personal. Begin to think, and you are out of the region of the complexes. But you cannot rest there; you are not safe there, but must go farther: it is not thought alone that can carry you into the Realm of Reality. To reach that, Love is the wings on which you must soar. Stop regarding anybody as a nuisance, or as an inferior, or as an enemy; regard everyone as your most intimate self: your God-Self, that your whole business in life is to lure and coax and persuade and valiantly assist into manifestation. See in the personal self of the man who distresses you most, something to be revered and treated very tenderly, with inexhaustible kindness and patience; because that personal self is not what it seems to be, but verily the temple of the Holy Ghost, of the God-Self of yourself and the Universe. This practice

takes you and keeps you out of the dominion of the complexes; it is the faith that makes you whole.

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: IX — *H. Percy Leonard*

Ancients, Moderns, and Posterity

"The Present is the Child of the Past; the Future, the begotten of the Present. And yet, O present moment! Knowest thou not that thou hast no parent, nor canst thou have a child; that thou art ever begetting but thyself? Before thou hast even begun to say "I am the progeny of the departed moment, the child of the past," thou hast become that past itself. Before thou utterest the last syllable, behold! thou art no more the Present but verily that Future. Thus, are the Past, the Present, and the Future, the ever-living trinity in one — the Mahamaya [Great Illusion] of the Absolute IS." — *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 446

Could we by putting on Carlyle's Time-annihilating hat transport ourselves to ancient Greece, we should find the citizens believing themselves to be modern. If we informed the first man we met that he was an "ancient" (provided that he understood our execrable Greek) he would stare at us with incredulous disdain. The Greeks of ancient times believed themselves to be upon the plow-point of advancing time and every bit as modern as we feel ourselves to be today. And it is just as hard for us to realize that we shall be regarded as "the ancients" by our remote posterity, who also will one day be "ancients."

The population of the world in the year 3000 is just as unsubstantial to ourselves as we should be to the contemporaries of Pericles; and yet — here we are. And here posterity will be, and each succeeding generation feels itself to be existing in the Living Present with a shadowy retrospect of "ancients" in its rear, and a still more vague and unsubstantial posterity in prospect.

Could we induce our ancient friend to consider our existence at all, he would certainly relegate us to the dim, unlighted vistas of far-off futurity, as ghostly nonentities destined some day to be born; and yet

— here we are.

The story of Marathon, to us an incident of ancient history, was to the citizen of that epoch, "news."

The relics of antiquity, the blackened loaves from bakers' shops in Pompeii, the amphorae, the tattered fragments of cloth from the mummy cases, were all as commonplace and modern to the men of ancient times as our utensils and fabrics are to us.

In a recent excavation of a Roman villa in England, some shelves were found on which were stored antique curios collected by the Roman occupant as relics of his ancients. Little did he dream that he who was so full of life, so eager in his quest for remnants of the past, was really an "ancient" himself, and that his familiar villa would be studied by us moderns as an interesting ruin of a past civilization.

As surely as we excavate the site of Troy, so future students of antiquity will search the buried ruins of Chicago, Paris, Rome, and New York, and speculate upon these modern times with all the interest we reserve for ancient Greece. "One generation passeth away and another cometh; but the earth abideth forever."

The days of old, these modern times and our remote posterity may seem to the Omniscient Eye as an eternal Now.

Could we emancipate ourselves from our absorbing interest in the transient trifles that concern our present, petty personalities, we too might share the calm of that eternal consciousness and sit as gods and watch the flitting pictures on the Screen of Time.

The Theosophical Forum

BIRDS OF PASSAGE — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

It is this that we humans are. We come to Earth after dipping in the refreshing Waters of Lethe, build our nests and live our lives. Then, after dipping once more into those merciful waters, we pass into the realms which infallibly attract us, there to remain until again the call to our old haunts is imperative. But as we built our nests, we formed our ties, we incurred our debts, sometimes heavy ones.

As humans we have done this an uncountable number of times, and who knows in the webs of destiny which we have woven, how many hard knots we have tied, how many cruel seeds we have carelessly sown, covered, we may fancy, by the fair flowers which likewise we may have planted and nourished by the way. Perchance we have seen the cruel seeds sprout and blossom and darken the life of one we really loved, but whose clashing aura blinded us or rendered us careless until it was too late to destroy our evil blossom, and our human bird of passage passed on over his path of destiny, while we stayed behind and longed for another chance.

And who knows how many debts we have left behind us on our journeys; services we have accepted while forgetting the servers; how many times we have taken advantage of another's ignorance or helplessness and gone on our way hugging coveted treasures we had not earned.

And now, having passed once more through the Waters of Lethe, we are here again, traveling over some of the trails we have blazed in the past, meeting in secluded nooks, in open arenas, friends, enemies, or those who are neutral; those who attract and those who repel.

But who among this throng of wayfarers are those for whom we asked "another chance"? Who are those who in life's Ledger hold accounts against us? The subtle marking on their breasts may escape our sight, yet here they are again, crossing our road and passing into the

distance, or walking beside us for long stretches on the Path; and the glorious opportunities are ours once more. They cannot reveal themselves, for neither do *they* see the markings on *our* breasts. Yet, at least, we can welcome all our fellow travelers in sympathy, filled with a longing to deal with them justly, generously, and understandingly, knowing that each traveler has his own temptations to meet, his own ignorance to blind him, his own danger of losing his way, and knowing too, that the subtle webs of destiny bind us all together.

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION AND INVOLUTION — Dr. H. Groot (1)

Only a little time ago an important astronomical discovery was announced which accentuates anew in this special department of science the general truth of the teachings of the Old Wisdom-Religion. Perhaps it may be of interest to communicate some particulars about this discovery, as on the one hand the real significance of it can be appreciated only if viewed in connexion with those teachings; while on the other hand the newly discovered facts may be welcomed as distinct and, so to say, tangible examples of the teaching of evolution and involution, which in its rather abstract, general formulation perhaps might affect one as being somewhat abstruse and difficult to grasp. Lastly we shall see how the insight thus won may be connected by the law of analogy with other partly well-known, partly still problematic, scientific facts — and so may help us to get a clear vision of these facts while at the same time demonstrating how their very core is to be found in the eternal and everlasting cycle which the Spirit follows in Its perennial peregrination from involution to evolution and back again.

A short explanation of the astronomical discovery mentioned above may precede a discussion of those facts as seen from the standpoint of Theosophy.

Firstly, the following phenomenon demands our attention. From time to time suddenly a new star lights up the sky. In some cases the Nova — which is the technical term for the phenomenon — blazes out in a surprisingly great luminosity so as to be quite a spectacular object, but owing to their great distance from our solar system the greater part of the Novae become visible only to the photographic plate of the ever-watchful astronomer. As an example can be mentioned the star which appeared on November 11th, 1572, in the constellation of Cassiopeia and surpassed Venus in brightness. It became visible even in broad daylight, such was its splendor. And again, to mention quite a recent case, another Nova appeared in December, 1934, in the constellation of

Hercules, which became as bright as the third magnitude, i. e., was somewhat fainter than the brightest stars of the Great Dipper.

The term "Nova," i. e., "new star," in fact is misleading, for careful investigations have brought to light that in each case the Nova pre-existed as a faint star, which — mainly because of its faintness — had failed to attract attention before. We know, *e. g.*, from photographs of that portion of the sky where Nova Herculis appeared — and taken previous to its sudden outburst — that the Nova is identical with a faint star of the 14th magnitude, which in a few days' time became as much as 25,000 times brighter. Analogous numbers are stated in every case that has been investigated.

Now we do not know exactly as yet what happens, what cosmic catastrophe is going on in that distant world when the astronomers of our earth announce the discovery of another Nova; still it may be assumed safely that it is an occurrence of the first importance in the life of the star.

The further history of the Nova offers some points of interest as well. In most cases the brightness soon diminishes. At the end of some months the Nova has resumed its former faint luminosity. But it has been noticed that some time after the outburst there appears a disk of nebulous matter surrounding the image of the star, which has a tendency to continue to expand.

Before going into the significance of this last feature we will now go off at a tangent with an inquiry as to the classification of nebulae.

In the main there are two species of nebulae; the spiral or extra-galactic nebulae, which in fact are great stellar systems, like our own galaxy, in all kinds of evolutionary states; and the gaseous nebulae, which are imbedded in and form a portion of the galactic system. The latter nebulae may be subdivided into two groups: the irregular nebulae, like the great nebula in Orion, and the planetary nebulae. The reader is warned not to mix up these terms: when an astronomer speaks of a "planetary" nebula he does *not* mean a nebula which in the

course of its evolution is destined to become a planet; the term only alludes to the disk-like appearance of this class of nebulae, which reminds one somewhat of the disk of a planet when viewed through a telescope.

The irregular nebulae have always been taken for the birthplaces of stars; by some evolutionary process the nebulous matter condensing into starlike conglomerations, which in the course of time will grow to become stars of the early spectral-types.

About the planetary nebulae there has been much discussion, but at present there is a general understanding that these objects are the outcome of the processes which had their beginning in the outburst of a Nova.

So while the irregular nebulae marked the beginning of the evolution of stars, the planetary nebulae closed their careers. By this interpretation — founded on the "one-way texture of becoming," as Sir A. S. Eddington puts it, which knows only of life beginning with birth and ending with death — of course an immeasurable gulf divides the irregular nebulae from the planetary ones. Now here comes the important discovery which has been made. At the Lick Observatory an irregular nebula, known as the "Crab'-nebula in the constellation of Taurus, has been studied with the result that it has been found expanding at the rate of 1050 km/sec. This very unexpected fact leads us to speculate whether this rather *irregular* nebula might not have started as a planetary nebula formed by the outburst of a Nova, in which case the expansion should be a normal feature. By the rate of expansion it could be calculated that this outburst — if outburst there has been — must have occurred some 800 years ago, and as the distance of the nebula is "only" 4900 light-years it seemed very probable that the hypothetical Nova must have been a conspicuous object to the naked eye. So far so good; but *has* there been a Nova in that portion of the sky at the allotted time?

Indeed, there *has* been! The Chinese annals mention the appearance of a new star in the constellation of Taurus in the year 1054. So the rather

hazardous hypothesis is fully confirmed.

But think of the significance of this fact. The gulf, gaping between irregular nebulae and planetary nebulae — or, if you like, between life and death — has been bridged! Although no details can be given as yet, we see before us an unbroken chain beginning with an irregular nebula, which condenses into stars; the stars follow an evolution which ends in the flaring up of a Nova; the Nova gives birth to a planetary nebula and this nebula changes back to an irregular nebula. Apart even from other considerations, one can see that here is made a discovery of the first importance for all cosmogonic speculations.

Now let us consider what the Old Wisdom has to tell us about these truly wondrous results that modern astronomy can boast of.

Of course, as Theosophists we could never accept the "one-way texture of becoming," nor do we agree that we should feel more content if "the universe should accomplish some great scheme of evolution and, having achieved whatever may be achieved, lapse back into chaotic changelessness." We are told — and we are able time after time to state the truth of the tale in each particular instance — that the Kosmos is built on the principle of an endless interchange of evolutions and involutions. In order to catch the true meaning of this teaching as regards what is happening on an astronomical scale, it is well to recall to our minds the following passages of Dr. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, where it says:

When the astronomer looks into the ethery spaces and sees those starry clouds, those nebulous masses, in some cases (though not in all, for these nebulae are not all the same, but in those which are) destined for the beginning of worlds, he sees there what has so far taken place in material manifestation of a hierarchy through the activity of the sub-seven degrees of the lowest or seventh principle of a divine entity or "god" informing an otherwise invisible life-center, informed by that god's vital essence, which is the fundamental life of that hierarchy, the fundamental impulse, or what men call the fundamental "law,"

the fundamental operation of its nature, the fundamental characteristic, the Swabhava. In such manner, then, the vital essence creates its own dwelling — a sun, a planet, which cycles down, as it were, into visible evolution. But mark: each Head of a hierarchy retains its own place, powers and nature; but its offspring thicken or condense; its offspring thus forming its garments on the several planes of being. . . .

When this thickening and grossening of the fabric (which takes place from each entity shooting forth from itself, emanating from itself other less entities, — "less" here meaning "inferior") reaches its lowest degree, then we have a sun and planets. Let us take our planet as an instance. When such a planet has reached its lowest point of evolution driven by the karmic impulse inhering in it, which is at the middle point of its Fourth Round (which we on our planet have passed), then begins the reaction, the reversal of the kosmic operation, and the life-currents begin to withdraw inwards, . . . not leaving its "garments" behind altogether; but as they were sent forth, so are they now withdrawn inwards. This, then, is an outline of the process of the *evolution of spirit*, and the *involution of matter*; just as the processes of projection or casting forth were the *involution of spirit* and the *evolution of matter* on the downward or Shadowy Arc. Thus is the Kosmos built. — pp. 348-9

If it is grasped what here is told in so few words, and our mind is turned back to the discovery which has been mentioned and which means a bridging of the gulf between irregular nebulae and planetary nebulae, it is easily understood that here we have an instance of the same process as was depicted for a planet, but now on a different scale. When an irregular nebula condenses into stars — or suns as they may be called with equal right — and the stars pass through the different stages indicated by their spectra, we must speak of the process of evolution of matter. But when of a sudden the star blazes out in a new light and gives birth to a planetary nebula, which in time changes into an irregular nebula, we see before us the process of involution of

matter.

Now perhaps it may be thought that the cycle is finished, that once again the irregular nebula, which formed the outcome of the process of involution, will condense into stars and so on. But against so simplistic a view the New Science rebels as much as the Old Wisdom. Science argues, that such a process, although perhaps it might repeat itself several times, cannot go on for ever, since during each round of necessity the so-called "entropy" of the system will augment till at last it has reached its maximum and then the process must end willy-nilly. We will not go into this argument, as it would require a very difficult and technical discussion; we only will say this much, that if the process really was as simple as this, science could score its point in maintaining that the cycle should be doomed to end before long. In a material universe submitted to purely mechanistic laws there seems to be no possible loophole for escaping what Svante Arrhenius has termed the *heat-death* — in this assertion science is absolutely right. But then, our universe is not a purely material world acted upon by blind forces which follow strictly mechanical laws. The New Science begins to have an inkling of this truth. The relativity principle of Einstein, the quantum-laws of Planck, the wave-mechanics of de Broglie, Heisenberg, and Schrodinger, and the principle of indeterminacy of Heisenberg are the first signs of the radical revolution of thought which is going on — and which will help Science to revert to the temporarily forgotten truths of the Old Wisdom. Only by voicing those old and immutable truths in the new language which nowadays is spoken, will Science succeed in elucidating the problems which otherwise must baffle it. Hesitatingly, Science is feeling its way. It stands at the beginning of this new path, and progress is made only haltingly. Still there is much which entitles us to keep our courage and to expect that in the end the New Science and the Old Wisdom will tread the same path hand in hand. But this as yet is only a vision of the future. Let us come back to the problem at hand.

We have seen that Science maintains the impossibility of an *everlasting* cycle: irregular nebulae — stars — Novae — planetary nebulae —

irregular nebulae. The Old Wisdom corroborates this view, but from quite different motives. Where, according to the Science of today the process of involution of matter ends by the forming of nebulous matter, or — if we rather stress the possibilities — "by the production of radiant energy, the Old Wisdom tells us, that this phase is by no means the end of the process of involution of matter and therefore of evolution of Spirit; and it adds (as we have seen in our quotation from the *Fundamentals*) that these processes are not governed by blind forces or purely mechanical laws, but by the activity of a divine principle, which reveals itself on the lower, material planes as forces and law, but which unfolds its true and sublime nature on the higher planes. Thus the involution manifesting itself in the formation of nebulous matter out of gross and condensed matter from the former, nearly "extinguished" stars, marks the beginning of the evolution of the divine principle, which had clothed itself in the garment of matter. This evolution does not end even if our gross sense-organs fail to see any further involution of *matter*, this having reached the phase called "radiant energy"; for what on our plane manifests itself as energy, reveals itself on a higher plane as a loftier form of matter, which can and will continue the involution, the first states of which we are witnessing on our plane. Indeed, this involution will continue its course until the accompanying evolution of the Spirit has reached its highest point, where the divine principle has wholly unfolded itself and by so doing has risen a step higher on the endless staircase which begins nowhere and always finds a step, nay, an infinity of steps higher than the one just reached. Then, and not earlier, the Spirit is prepared to descend again by the downward arc, leading to another involution and causing at the same time a new evolution of matter, first on the higher and loftier planes, but gradually condensing and thickening as lower and lower realms are reached — till at last new nebulae and new stars make their appearance, be it perhaps on a higher plane than the present one.

If we ponder on the vistas which are opened up to us by the Secret Doctrine in relation to the discovery that a planetary nebula may

change back into an irregular nebula, we may get an inkling of the extensiveness of this Hidden Wisdom, compared to which even the most momentous discoveries of our present science — and some of them really *are* marvelous! — dwindle to rather stale matter-of-fact statements. But the full significance of these vistas will only impress us with all its force if we realize that what we have discerned on the plane of suns, stars, and nebulae, must, by the law of analogy, repeat itself with due adaptations on other planes as well. We shall set aside the fascinating consequences which confront our enthralled spiritual vision, and content ourselves with presenting a scheme of comparison between some noteworthy physical cycles — which show in a measure resemblance to the astronomical cycle, our starting-point — leaving it to the intuition of the reader to draw his own inferences.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Doctor of Physics and Astronomy, University lecturer in Astronomy at the University of Utrecht, Holland. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THOUGHTS ON THE MYSTERIES — *Leoline L. Wright*

There are of course many more questions left unanswered by Science than the number it is able to answer. Here are a few of them — some old, some recent: What is life and where and how does it originate? We do not know. What is electricity? We do not know. What determines sex? We do not know.

Very well, then. The answers to these questions are — for Science — *mysteries*. But, as the answers must exist, they remain for Science occult or hidden knowledge. Some day (perhaps) Science may find those answers. Then such knowledge will pass from the occult into the field of the known. It will no longer be a "mystery."

In a Mystery-School the situation is reversed. The answers to all the at present unanswerable questions are well known. They make up, so to speak, the curriculum of a Mystery-School. The teaching of such answers to carefully selected pupils, and the eventual initiation of these pupils into wider fields of knowledge was covered by the ancient terms "Mystery-Teaching" and "Mystery-School." And they were called "Mysteries" because for the general public that was exactly what they were. It is of course self-evident to a Theosophist that there must be such schools or their equivalents in every range of being; for the only individual in our Universe for whom there are no longer any mysteries is the Cosmic Hierarchy.

Another point — one of such breath-taking urgency at the present time — the terrible misuse of the advance in our knowledge for progressive world-destruction. The only solution for this situation is the reappearance of the Mystery-School as a vital factor in shaping our civilization. Consider one of the basic axioms of this ancient institution — *Discipline precedes the Mysteries*. There you have it, the remedy for the grisly suspense that hangs over us. A Mystery-School where the right discipline along ethical lines of self-mastery is given before any

man is allowed to have knowledge of vital import to the safety of others. As it is, knowledge of any and every kind is now broadcast so that it can be used not only by good men but by any fiend who cares to appropriate it for the gratification of his appetites.

This carelessness in the safeguarding of creative knowledge is one of the most tragic failures of what we call modern civilization. We have appropriated the secrets of Nature — rifled her storehouses without first having paid the legitimate price in self-discipline. And already we are making forced payments on the account. Later, if we do not soon mend our ways, there will be compounded and pyramiding interest to be met. How? Perhaps in a similar way to that we learn of in *The Secret Doctrine*, by which the Atlanteans expiated their crimes against Nature. So that the anthropologists and palaeontologists of future ages may uncover but dim dust-heaps of what are now magnificent cities; may find the "Stone-Age Man" of the future roaming the once more engulfing forests — degenerate men whose ancestors were our moderns and progressives — savages in whom submerged memories may inspire to pottery and metal-smelting and weaving, with other "primitive" cultural and economic activities.

Can this happen? Why not? Time never stops turning its slow inevitable wheel. What has been is but too likely again to be. The marvelous rock-drawings of Altamira were the resurgence of such submerged memories in the souls of degenerate remnants of prehistoric Atlantis.

Is it any wonder that H. P. B. with the Masters behind her bent a great part of the energies of her last years in laying the foundations for a Mystery-School to rescue our civilization?

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. RYAN

"Uncompromising physico-materialism is being driven to its last entrenchments. It sees its own ideal . . . vanishing like a mist before the light of awkward fact, and the daily discoveries made in the domain of invisible and intangible matter, whose veil is being more and more rent with every such new discovery." —
H. P. Blavatsky in 1883

Involution and Evolution of Worlds

Some of the conclusions of modern physics have always seemed strange to Theosophists, who have felt that they would not stand against the pressure of new scientific researches. One of these conclusions is that while the universe had a beginning and will have an end, there is no reason to expect the revival of it or of a successor of like nature. Even Sir Arthur Eddington seems satisfied with this belief. No explanation is offered for the unique appearance of a universe which was never preceded by another of its kind and which will never be followed by a similar one. Does this strange conjecture betray a lingering theological bias derived from the old literal interpretation of the esoteric teachings of the book of *Genesis*, or is it merely the result of materialistic thinking? Physicists have offered us a rather dismal picture, mathematically endorsed, of the running down of the physical universe to a condition of 'heat-death' when nothing more will happen, but they do not give a solution of the problem of the counterpart, i. e., the winding up at the beginning of activity. Where did the 'heat-life' come from, and how, if we may coin the word? Did 'God' create it out of *nothing*? Few scientists care to speculate about such troublesome points as beginnings or perhaps endings, leaving them to theology and 'faith.'

Of late, however, a few daring spirits, including Eddington, have begun to speculate in a new way on the nature of things and are more than

suspecting that the physical universe is not the whole of 'the' universe, but only one aspect of a greater whole. This promises to bring about drastic revision of many accepted theories. For instance Eddington, in common with other great scientists, is now looking to consciousness as the basis of all things — a purely Theosophical concept highly unpalatable in the West when H. P. Blavatsky brought it from the Orient. He says:

The symbolic nature of the entities of physics is generally recognised; and the scheme of physics is now formulated in such a way as to make it almost self-evident that it is a partial aspect of something wider. . . .

Recognising that the physical world is entirely abstract and without "actuality" apart from its linkings to consciousness, we restore consciousness to the fundamental position instead of representing it as an inessential complication occasionally found in the midst of inorganic nature at a late stage of evolutionary history. — *Nature of the Physical World*, pp. 331-2

How could the 'heat-death' affect the fundamental of the universe — consciousness!

According to the Ancient Wisdom of the East, however, while the *manifested universe*, available to our senses and our instruments, had a beginning and will undoubtedly come to an end, this end will only be a temporary condition during which its energies withdraw to other planes of activity until the time comes for another manifestation on the physical plane. Involution of forces, 'matter,' consciousness, etc., are as inevitable and periodic as evolution of the same. That is the sane, philosophic, and encouraging prospect discovered by the great minds of antiquity and brought to the attention of the Western world by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, which is at last being studied by leading scientists in the West. Furthermore, she shows that each succeeding evolutionary manifestation is higher than the last, and the distressing prospect feared by some scientists that such a world or universe would be a mere repetition of the preceding one in dreary

monotony, is unwarranted. Nature preserves her memories, and profits by them, just as man does in his successive incarnations, though his limited brain may not be aware of former experiences. Something permanent within him is and does.

The article by the distinguished Dutch astronomer, Dr. H. Groot, published in this number of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, treats of this subject, giving a valuable illustration of the process of involution and evolution so far as it can be followed on the physical plane as shown by the new discoveries in the 'Crab' Nebula in the constellation Taurus. A few years ago, our Theosophical contemporary *Lucijer de Lichtbrenger* (Holland) published some remarks by Dr. Groot on the running down of the universe and the possibility that such a process would absolutely forbid any cycles of manifestation and rest. Is the 'heat-death' or entropy fatal to any revival of a 'dead' universe? Does it destroy the possibility of an oscillating cycle, so to speak, between the extremes of manifestation and inactivity? In his *The Breath of the Universe*, Dr. Groot says that:

The primary laws of nature, i.e., the laws which order the particles which constitute the universe, answer that such a cycle is not an impossibility. While the law of entropy [heat-death] may seem to say that a cycle of that kind will not be realized because the probability is too small, we have calculated the possibilities of the occurrence of a succession of such cycles and find therefrom an extremely small figure in their favor *but we do not find zero*. The possibility does exist, and if it exists at all that means certainty for our proposition, for while the possibility may be small Eternity is endless.

But one point must be kept in view. In an *ever-expanding* universe a cycle is quite out of the question. Only in an oscillating universe does the chance of a cycle exist. . . If the expansion, however, does not continue but is always followed by a contraction then also entropy will not continue to increase, because when matter is contracting entropy diminishes. We

cannot say how much farther it will go. With every new breath perhaps a greater diminution of entropy would follow till a certain time . . . matter would be formed again, once more to condense into nebulae, to stars, and to galactic systems.

. . . We also find a beginning and an end of the universe, but relative this time, for behind every end a new beginning dawns, and every beginning is preceded by an end. Our metaphysical need for infinity is satisfied.

The Oldest Man

The famous 'Java Man' (*Pithecanthropus*), who divided the honors of the greatest antiquity with the 'Peking Man' and the 'Piltdown Man' in England, was recently degraded by Dr. Eugene Dubois, his discoverer, to the rank of the apes, but, by a turn of fortune's wheel, he has been allowed to resume his dignity as a man! A new specimen has been discovered in the bed of the Solo River, Java, and Dr. von Koenigswald, research associate of the Carnegie Institution, whose expedition to Java was mentioned in our January number, announces that while it possesses one trifling apelike feature it is not a "missing link" in any way but is "definitely proved to be human." Dr. Dubois's original specimen, found in 1890, was extremely imperfect and lacked important parts which the new one contains. Moreover, the teeth which were found associated with his *Pithecanthropus* have turned out to have belonged to an extinct species of orang-utan, and the thigh bone is not his either.

By comparison with fossils of extinct animals found in the same stratum as the new Java Man, he appears to have lived about the middle of the Ice Age, not less than half-a-million years ago, according to the prevailing chronology, which, however may be extended in future though almost certainly not reduced. So it seems that the hypothetical 'anthropoid ancestor' of man (becoming more and more doubted by science) is still missing. Moreover, as Sir Arthur Keith points out, the characteristic features which differentiate the four or perhaps five present-day divisions of mankind existed in the earliest

known fossil human ancestors, though not of course 'modernized.' No evidence of a primitive root-race from which the great races might have diverged has been found. Where is it to be sought? Must we look to the legendary Atlantis or even farther back for this? Scientists frown at such a heresy, but we are living in an age when what was considered incredible a few decades ago is now almost commonplace.

The Problem of Mercury's Atmosphere

Astronomers have waited for many years for the very unusual kind of transit of the planet Mercury across the sun which occurred on May 11, 1937. This transit just grazed the edge of the sun, as it were, and thereby offered the most favorable opportunity to determine if the planet has a deep atmosphere like that of Venus. When the latter planet transits the sun a brilliant ring of light is seen around it, caused by refraction in its atmosphere. Mercury, however, showed no trace of such a ring, and it is therefore considered that it cannot have any atmosphere, but must resemble our moon in that respect.

We read in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 165, that Mercury is just coming out of 'obscuration,' and, we may presume, preparing for the development of active life. H. P. Blavatsky suggests that the great heat on Mercury, caused by its nearness to the sun, would be favorable to life, but she indicates that it is not necessary to think such life would be like anything which is familiar to us. The technical reasons offered by physicists against the possibility of any kind of an atmosphere on such a small planet as Mercury are not necessarily final, but arguments on that subject are not suitable for presentation here. H. P. Blavatsky seems to think that some kind of an atmosphere exists on Mercury.

THE ANCIENT TRADITION OF THE OJIBWAY TRIBES 1. (1) — *O. Macklin*
(*Nowataye*)

The chronology utilized in the historical accounts of the various Red Races of America is in the custody of the various secret organizations which are not only custodians but are repositories of secret knowledge, etc. These ancient accounts of history are of no immediate benefit or value to the general run of layman who is more concerned with the immediate and the now; but extremely interesting to the individual with an inquiring turn of mind.

The structural formations of these organizations are social and political in character and are open to both sexes with equal responsibility; merit alone being the qualifying principle. These organizations of the North are identical in structural formation along with the rituals, teachings, beliefs, etc., with the more ancient organizations to the south and southwest, showing common origin and relationship.

The following given dates represent great and important events having taken place in that period and era, and these accounts are preserved upon stone and stela engravures of hieroglyphical design, the calendar stone of the Aztecs being of later origin than that of Toltec, Mayan, and Mahvanuc in that order; Natyeanic being the ancestral origin of the Red Races of both Americas. Of all narrative portrayals upon stone and in manuscript forms, the stela form is the real authoritative portrayal, it being of priestcraft approval and design.

Had not over-zealous proponents of Christianity destroyed all manuscript forms of the Aztec Empire that fell into their hands 1517 a. d., posterity today would have enjoyed the full accounts of three great previous civilizations which flourished in America in the last nine thousand five hundred years. In these teachings of ancient history and ancient ancestors it is not claimed the Red Races are of autochthonous origin but rather of migratory basis.

The ancient ancestors lived and had their being on seven great island continents situated where now the mighty Atlantic rolls. The first island sank and was submerged beneath the waves through volcanic and severe quake action and slowly but surely disintegrated the most south-westerly island continent of the great group. From its destruction all present chronological forms have their origin.

This south-westerly island population, the majority of whom escaped from the mighty cataclysm, migrated to the neighboring islands and to the mainland west of them, approximately the central Americas, and they became the ancestors of the central and south-American Red Races.

212 years later another great disaster overtook the mighty island continent empire. Two of the middle eastern portions also met a fate like that which overwhelmed the southwesterly island. Nearly all the inhabitants escaped to the eastward, approximately the northwestern portion of Africa, and it is recognised that the Azores are the remnants of the once mighty mountain tops of these two great islands that disappeared below the waves.

450 years later two more great islands were overwhelmed, two of the northeasterly group went down under volcanic and quake action. These disappeared within a moon's phase (seven days) and practically all the inhabitants perished with the exception of the few migrants who went eastward and who probably settled what is now known as Europe.

Seven centuries later from the last catastrophe, 1382 to be exact, another visitation of destruction overtook a portion of this now decimated empire situated near the central portion of these island constituents. The greater number of these inhabitants perished due to the suddenness of the catastrophe, but a few were saved and these mingled on the sole remaining island continent. It is this last catastrophe which many believe to be the account of the lost continent of Atlantis.

It might be appropriate to mention here that this Island Empire comprising seven great islands, was highly civilized, whose inhabitants were perhaps the ancient ancestors of the high culture that developed on the Nile district, later to become known as Ancient Egypt.

This central portion that went down is said to have been the center of culture and these people were responsible for the great organizations in social structures, governments and political character that built these great islands into a mighty empire. Aristotle and others often mention an invasion into the Mediterranean area from this source and whether it be accepted as authentic or not, it gives added credence to the existing historical accounts of the pre-Mayan cultural empires which recorded upon stone many important occurrences and also in the more legendary accounts of many tribes.

In the year 2782 another recorded event was that of a celestial phenomenon; a disintegrating comet or meteor of exceeding large proportion collided with the earth from a southwesterly direction and it fell into three distinct and separate parts. The first fell in the towers of rock region, probably that of Flagstaff Arizona region, with devastating effects. Complete obliteration of life occurred upon plant and animal as well as human. The other two fell in the east coastal region, probably along the Carolinas coast line and affected the sole remaining island continent far distant to the North, the last of the great seven. The inhabitants of its southern portion suffered greatly from this collision, whole communities were obliterated; it left them in mummified condition and laid waste a large area in cinders and ashes so great was the heat generated in the collision.

The next recorded event is the year 5515 when the last remaining island met its doom through volcanic and quake action, whose site today is known as the Grand Banks of Newfoundland: great numbers migrated to the West mainland down the coast to the delta of the Great River, Mother of Waters (Mississippi) then onward to old Mexico, then Naytye-yan-nook the seat of learning and center of all cultures. This catastrophe is still kept alive in legendary form in many secret

organizations of the once mighty Ojibway nations from which all chronological calculations are based.

Many of these migrants remained in the neighborhood of the Laurentian and Appalachian plateaus, eventually to become ancient ancestors of the later fusion of various isolated clans and tribes from this long separation and migrations, only to become separate and distinct tribes or clans. The other factions continued on to the southwest by way of the coast route, and in this way many were forever separated from their kin and became assimilated with other tribes and nations. Thus isolation evolved new amalgamation and new tongues; cultures still were alive, and many new horticultural additions were evolved in the separate regions.

The next important recorded event is the year 7590 when priestcraft rule became an established faction through the machinations of its more ambitious individuals. A powerful group insinuated themselves into responsible positions and through religious influences ousted the reins of government from vested interests and became the ruling princes and actual despots. This powerful group was foreign in character, and, according to historical narratives had great virtues in the manipulations of the powers of the mind.

After these yellow priestcrafts had gained complete control of the pyramid temples they began absolute dictatorship and mastery of the nation's religious teachings and training and commenced to subjugate and maintain the masses in complete and profound ignorance through their superstitious beliefs, and taught the younger generations that might was right, all of which helped to foster prejudice and barbarism in the ranks of their followers.

Introduction of human sacrifices into the moon goddess rituals was made by these despots for their own degenerative ends. They caused the gathering of all the most beautiful young girls throughout the empire, ostensibly for temple services, and those refusing submission to these priests were later to become human sacrifices to the moon goddess, and many died rather than submit, and found oblivion in the

dark abyss of the moon well.

These despots sought to extend their sinister powers and influences into the folds of the ancient secret societies in their organizations, placing within the ranks of the orders their neophytes. The neophytes who became enlightened did not return to the priestcraft but migrated with the members and teachers of these organizations northward, and so escaped the sure and certain persecution that would follow. In the attempted wresting of the secret knowledge from the custodians none of these great secrets ever fell into their unscrupulous hands.

Next recorded important occurrence is the year 7645. A celestial phenomenon in the 13th moon (March according to the Gregorian calendar system about the 10th day); a configuration of two great planets in the southeast by eastern sky in a double star of great brilliance for nearly one moon phase or perhaps five days duration, produced variation upon the earth; earthquakes with violent storms accompanied this phenomenon, and it is said by the leading mentors of astronomy that this occurrence of configuration of two planets is unlikely again to happen except once in five million years.

The center of cultures at this period underwent great changes. Yellow priestcraft with its strange practices and teachings practically drove all level-headed people away from its center, and numerous migrations both to the north and south took place; pre-Mayans, known as the Nahuac cultural empire passed into the hands of the Mayans and it was during this period that these yellow despots assumed complete control eventually to pass out in a few short years. The pre-Mayan in the three or four centuries previous migrated mostly to the adjacent temperate zone of the north and their descendants spread eastward and to the north along the valley of the Mother of Rivers (Mississippi) there to establish cultures not so imposing as that of the ancient Nahuac peoples, nevertheless cultures of high order. They brought great varieties of horticultural and agricultural products and introduced them to the peoples then existing as descendants of the last island continent survivors to the eastward. Assimilation continued in

many localities, their isolation tending to evolve new tongues and to all purposes new tribes. These peoples of all tribes evidently tried to emulate the sect of learning and center of cultures far to the south and southwest and established centers of civilization not so imposing nor on as grand a scale as their ancient ancestors to the south.

The last city to be built was called Ain-dye-yan probably situated in the most southwesterly portion of Nebraska of today and eventually abandoned approximately around the year 7300, wholesale migrations to the east having depleted this once populous center of practically all master minds, leaving a few families which were assimilated later into the roving bands of tribes and to become ancestors of the peoples now living in that neighborhood. Climatological changes forced this migration to the east, and these are perhaps the ancestors of the mound builders, who in turn migrated southward from this district, now the New England States, and assumed leadership of the already decadent empire of the Nahunac to become the Toltec of the third great civilization which reared itself upon the ashes of the latest victim of decadency and decline.

The year 7678 began the actual decay and decline of the great Mayan empire. A mysterious malady attacked the population. Also a great and mighty Teacher was heralded in the Ojibway Tribes then known as the Council of the Thirteen Fires. The name suggests the significance of its own interpretation, that of Ee-yah-wah-taye meaning "Behold the Light" and immortalized in Longfellow's *Songs of Hiawatha*. This appearance of a great and mighty co-ordinator of tribal organizations and Teacher of moral ethics as well as spiritual enlightenment was timely. Once more tranquillity reigned within the ranks of the secret society organizations. Ee-yah-wah-taye saved the social structures of the Ojibway organizations from actual destruction, and also saved its religious beliefs from decadence.

During this period of 7678 to 7689 a mighty scourge attacked the Mayan population. The master metaphysicians after short deliberation and study attributed the scourge to the bite of a flying insect, literally

called the flying death in insect form. Those males recovering from the mortal bite were effectually as sterile as if from surgical manipulation, whereas the females were immune from this deadly bite; therefore were all unbitten males rushed into seclusion within the pyramid temples and safeguarded against racial extinction. This flying menace mysteriously disappeared in the latter date just as it appeared in the year 7678. Thus it is that the birthrate was completely at a standstill from twenty to forty years. Many large cities were manned practically by only aged males during that time. The yellow priests continued to hold office until the last part of the year 7730 when their rule came to an end, and the young virile nation from the north took possession and control of the decadent empire, and it is from this date that Toltec power assumed the beginning of its high civilization and cultural accomplishments. They established new cities within the hinterland and to the northern part of the original Nahuatlac and Mayan sites.

The next date of 8030 reports the actual end of priestcraft influence, a new belief and ritual ascendancy taking place of the foreign religion that had held sway for over four hundred years. No longer were human sacrifices practised. Ee-yah-wah-taye principles reached far southward and their benevolent influences were felt. All mankind had shaken off the sinister influences and teachings of the Yellow Priestcraft of might being right; prejudice and barbarism were discarded and once again Red Races were free from encroaching depredations and evil machinations from a foreign principal.

The Ojibway tribes around the blue waters (Great Lakes) now expanding in large numbers were able to carry on inter-tribal commerce and communication with the more southerly tribes and once again to re-establish communication with the parent secret organization of the ancients, who are our ancestors, and thus Ee-yah-wah-taye successfully accomplished his mission of good-will. The Council of Thirteen Fires continued to function; all Ojibway clans responded to the call of reunion every fourth year, each delegate representing a district in which this secret order functioned, thus assuring each division in these organizations of new discoveries in the

field of physics or metaphysics. Up to the year 8830 the majority of these conventions were held at the present location now known as the Sault Ste Marie district. Since then various places have been selected as meeting grounds.

The date of 8830 stands out in recorded history both upon stone and in ritual commemoration as the beginning of the end for the Red Races in the Americas. A strange race of mankind appeared upon the eastern coastal regions and it is reported as having a metallic body and head-gear of the same material, and so they were named the stoneheads (iron having no name other than ore-stone). They journeyed to the delta of the Mother of Rivers and returning the same way settled in the neighborhood of the New England States and were assimilated into the various families of the Red Races then inhabiting that portion of the coast.

The date of 8830 also records the fall of the Toltec empire into the hands of other virile races consisting, it is said, of those brilliant descendants of equally brilliant ancestors — who broke away from the yellow priestcraft rule and kept intact their great teachings and beliefs for over twelve hundred years and emerged into a decaying and declining civilization known as the Toltec Empire and rebuilt and restored in greater brilliance these three previous great civilizations into a still greater, now known as the Aztec civilization.

Aztec civilization and power flourished between the years 8630 to 8830. At the latter date priestcraft again ruled and revived the strange barbaric and sinister practices of the twelve centuries previous. Subjugation was complete and many migrated south and north to escape the horrible practice of human sacrifice to the moon goddess, and the plumed serpent rituals. The priests held sway until 9067 when the younger virile thinking males overthrew their dictatorship, and thus ended cruel diabolical practices. This date 9067 is also noted for a coincidental astronomical phenomenon. A collision of the earth and a gigantic comet or meteor took place at the Daughter of the Mother of Rivers area (Rio Grande) that actually transcended the sun even in

broad daylight for brilliance and its blinding, dazzling character. This devastating visitor appeared from the southwesterly portion of the heavens and produced quake-like action of earth, destroying life in all forms, though not being as great as its predecessor of 2782.

Cultural civilization of America thus had altered in three major dynasties, involving as many localities as the Nationals involved up to this date; Aztecan power ended with the subjugation and betrayal of Montamazumais in the year 9162 by Spanish invasion and subsequent Spanish Mexican rule.

The last recorded account upon stone is that of 9067. An astronomical phenomenon was recorded, coincidental with priestcraft rule and eviction from power. Ojibway historical accounts whether in mythological or legendary form identically narrate events that are recorded upon stone, stela, hieroglyphics, hammered gold-leaf, manuscripts and upon papyrus-like parchments which escaped destruction at the hands of the Spanish priestcraft in 9162 or, according to Gregorian calendar system, 1517 a. d.

In the narration of Ojibway traditions of historical account, these dates are utilized exclusively for the purpose of initiatory examinations in the higher degrees of the secret organization ramifications, and serve dual purposes in these initiatory rituals, proving diligence, alertness, retentive memory and sincerity of purpose in the embryo neophyte.

NOTE by C. J. Ryan

The extremely interesting references in the above article to the terrific catastrophes caused by the fall of gigantic meteorites as recorded in Ojibway history of the last nine thousand years or so, give positive support to its authenticity. This could not have been considered seriously until quite recently, but the discovery that the famous Coon Butte or Coon Mountain near Winslow in northern Arizona, now called Meteor Crater, was really created by the impact of a gigantic meteorite or a small comet at some distant period absolutely confirms the historical record. Meteor

Crater is more than three-quarters of a mile in diameter and about 600 feet deep, and the terrific impact of a body capable of producing such a prodigy must have destroyed every living being for an area of perhaps many thousands of square miles. Even the comparatively small meteorite (40,000 tons) that fell in the wilderness of Siberia on July 30, 1908, and which was felt a thousand miles away, did enormous destruction within a circle of fifty to sixty miles in diameter.

According to the Indian writer, Nowataye, one terrific meteoric fall happened 6960 years ago, and another, less serious, 615 years ago. A part of the first fell in the "Flagstaff region" in Arizona (which is not far from Meteor Crater) and its location might reasonably be included in that general term. Other parts, he says, "probably fell along the Carolinas coast line," which is exactly where many scientists think that several gigantic meteorites or small comets struck and produced certain unexplained geographical features, though there is no unanimous agreement on the point.

What guesses has science made as to the age of the Meteor Crater in Arizona? Some say it fell 650 years ago when (according to Dr. Douglas's tree-ring dating system) some unknown catastrophe destroyed the civilization of that neighborhood, but there are difficulties in accepting such a recent date. A venerable cedar growing on the rim of the crater is estimated to be much older. From the evidence of volcanic ashes found in the central lake — which probably came from some neighboring volcano more than a thousand years ago, the Meteor Crater must be older than that, and various authorities have suggested that the great crash must have taken place somewhere between two thousand and seventy-five thousand years ago! This is not very satisfactory but it leaves no scientific reason to claim that the Ojibway record of 6960 years as mentioned is exaggerated. As this historical record indicates the northern Arizona region as the place of one of the falls, and

circumstantially mentions the terrifically destructive heat — just what caused the greatest destruction lately in Siberia — and as northern Arizona is the locality of Meteor Crater, is it not probable that the date has been handed down as accurately as the other facts?

The second catastrophe which the Ojibway record mentions, happened 615 years ago or 9067 years after its first historical date, and was not so widespread as the first. As the record speaks of this having occurred in the "Rio Grande area" (rather a vague term), it does not seem likely that it refers to the Meteor Crater, for the latter is nearly two hundred miles west of the upper waters of the river. Besides, the time is too recent. Shall we find another but smaller Meteor Crater nearer the mouth of the Rio Grande which will support the record, or are there confirming traditions of a great meteoric fall still lingering in that neighborhood?

In 1931 twelve meteor craters were found in Central Australia, ranging in diameter from thirty feet to 660 feet. The Henbury meteorite, as it is called, broke up into fragments before striking the earth, the larger ones causing these immense holes. Eight hundred pieces were picked up in the immediate neighborhood.

Science has a curious problem to solve in the fact that not a single meteorite, not even a decomposed one, has ever been found in the miles" deep sedimentary rocks of the earth's crust. Have they only begun to fall within recent years? Again, although millions are constantly falling toward the earth, and a certain number reach the surface, probably about four hundred every day, there is no authentic record of a human being having been killed by one. No person was hurt in the great Siberian fall, and the meteor craters were probably made by the nuclei of small comets.

The islands mentioned in the Ojibway record seem to be lingering remains of lands not far from the American coast,

probably in the Antillean region, which began to break up at the time when Plato's small island, the last real relic of Atlantis, finally disappeared, about 11,000 years ago.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Read at the Fifth International Theosophical Students' Convention, Niagara Falls, Ont, Can., June 12-13, 1937. Nowataye is a native North American Indian. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE STUDIES: X — *H. Percy Leonard*

Seeing Beauty Everywhere

The man who cannot see the beauty in a moss-rose, a greyhound or a sunset all glorious with purple and gold, must be a man very much immersed in the life of sensation, but it requires a somewhat unusual development to obtain a thrill from a clod of common earth, a stagnant pool, or a toad that sits by its margin.

The awakening of William L. Lathrop to the beauty of Nature's less appreciated side is so interesting in this connexion that it will be profitable to relate it here.

As a young boy, he was returning one evening from his work, when he made a sudden halt in the road, startled by a ravishing glimpse of blue and yellow caught out of the corner of his eye. On the right, beyond the river, was an ordinary bank of mud, and mud he had always supposed was nothing but hideous slime. But there could be no mistake; the thrill of beauty had come from the mud-bank. He looked again and then he saw — the bank of yellow clay streaked with layers of the softest blue, and the blended tints were mirrored back by the glassy surface of the lazy stream.

"But how can mud be beautiful?" he asked himself. From this time he began to study the world around him with eyes that looked for beauty in the most unlikely places — and found it. He came in time to see more charm and interest in a battered old freighter, reddened with rust stains and chafed and dented by the tempest and the wear and tear of dogged toil, than in the freshly painted liner on her maiden voyage. It was the record of honest strife and service that beautified the old hulk, just as the wrinkled face of an old man may sometimes reveal the soul of a hero, whose character and exploits are recorded in his habitual expression.

Since Nature's origin is divine, beauty must be discoverable in all things, but men's faculties are so dulled by sense-pleasures and so blinded by the prejudices of false education that for the most part we pass through life with eyes that never see the loveliness and glow of common things.

The Theosophical Forum

A DREAM — *Grace Frances Knoche*

Many years ago I had a dream which I shall now relate as it came to me, with no addition or subtraction of essential points. I do so with the hope that it may bring help to those others who at times may feel the erosion of despair.

It occurred one afternoon, when sick with discouragement and the sharp pain of loneliness, I lay down to rest, wondering why? why? why? The next thing I knew I found myself completely surrounded by water; in fact I was right in it, but I had no feeling of wetness, or inability to breathe. On and on I drifted in the blue water, without apparent reason, until suddenly I was startled by the projection of a sheer precipice of yellow sandstone directly in front of me. The waters had apparently receded, and I saw that the cliff dropped inimitably downwards into a cavern of blackness, and likewise loomed far upwards into the blue of the sky. Up and down I looked, wondering strangely what was going to happen. I knew I must do something, but what? I could attempt to scale the precipice with the hope of freedom, but this seemed quite impossible; or on the other hand, I could simply let myself fall and be lost in the bottomless cavern of black death. But choose I must. I did not want to die, yet in looking up it seemed that that was all that could possibly result, no matter what I did.

A few more seconds passed while I waited, letting time help me if it would. Suddenly something within me said: You can *try*.

It may be death. But better to die fighting than succumb without any effort. Even if you fail and fall headlong to certain death, at least you'll have done your best. So try I did, and for a while I made slow but steady headway with the assistance of niches that my desperate hands fought to grip.

After what seemed an eternity of struggle hope rose in my heart as I visioned the top and saw that with but one more effort I could hoist

myself over. But as suddenly the scene shifted, and instead of the near release I had just glimpsed, I saw that the yellow sandstone had changed to hard black rock, clean-cut and glistening in its cruel outline, looming far above, and this time absolutely bereft of any helpful niche. To my horror, the blackness below took shape and alluring figures seemed beckoning me to come to them. Up and down, down and up, I looked, fascinated, yet with the clammy hand of fear freezing my heart, my blood congealed, and for a moment sheer terror gripped me — but no, I would not give myself to Death without a struggle. *I would fight.*

With all the strength of my soul I determined to make one more effort, and if I didn't succeed, all right, I didn't care. So calling upon every resource of spirit, soul, and body, I made one titanic effort — and lo! invisible arms seemed to lift my tired body, and I felt supported by a strength superior to any I had previously known. I was free, lying peacefully in the sand, and I felt the beauty and the subtil freedom of self-respect. I knew in my heart that no one could ever defeat me except myself.

From whence this help had come to me I did not then know; it was not until later when I had come in contact with the Theosophical philosophy as given to the world by H. P. Blavatsky, that I realized that back and behind and inspirer of all our life, was this strong companion, this Inner God within each human being, and that if the human part of us would rely upon this elder brother, despair and the torment of loneliness need never completely sub merge one. "Man is composite," said the Buddha to his disciples in his dying message. "Be lamps unto yourselves, and work out your own liberation."

The Theosophical Forum

THE FOURTH DIMENSION — *H. T. Edge*

Those people who try to imagine a four-dimensional world by drawing geometrical analogies between the properties of lines, surfaces, and solids, commit some egregious fallacies. Thus we hear of one-dimensional creatures, living in a one-dimensional world, meeting and being unable to pass one another. Why not? What physical obstacle is there to prevent their passing one another? A one-dimensional world is not physical; the physical world, the world of obstacles, is three-dimensional neither more nor less. These reasoners are mixing up physics with pure geometry. Pure geometry treats of abstract magnitudes, which are usually *represented* by diagrams on paper. These have no physical properties whatever; not even the geometrical solids. A geometrical cube is as abstract as a geometrical square; nobody ever handled a geometrical cube, though he may often have handled solid bodies having a cubical shape. In plane geometry, two-dimensional figures can pass freely through or over each other; there is nothing to prevent; lines can intersect without any splicing or gluing; no amount of superimposed squares will ever attain to any thickness, as would be the case with sheets of paper. The spatial dimensions, or rectangular co-ordinates, usually called length, breadth, and thickness, fill up physical space; no more of such dimensions exist. If one of these three dimensions is reduced to zero, the other two vanish also.

Whatever unit of measurement we may use for the linear dimensions, if one of the numbers denoting these dimensions is zero, the product is zero, and the volume is zero. If there are two-dimensional existences, they do not exist in physical space; their dimensions are not spatial.

We might speak of time as a one-dimensional magnitude (using the word "time" in one of its senses); but we do not regard this as a physical dimension, though in a diagram it may be convenient to represent it by a line. In science the word "dimension" is used in a wider and more general sense; we speak of the dimensions of units, which consist of

space, mass, and time.

Any such dimension can be represented on a chart by a line and thus we obtain graphs, like those made by recording barometers, etc. Advanced science now speaks of time as a fourth dimension, but the four dimensions do not characterize physical objects but "events " Now an event may be a sufficiently real thing, but we can hardly talk about what would happen if two events met one another out walking. We cannot make our events have so many faces and so many edges, and so many angles, etc.

We can calculate an abstract mathematical construction with four dimensions, on the analogy of the cube, and say how many faces, edges, etc. it ought to have; but this is not the same thing as imagining an actual physical "tesseract" somewhere in space. We say it is not the same thing; but we do not say that such a thing as a four-dimensional being does not exist; we merely say it is not a physical being.

Some people who mix up pure geometry with physics seem to think that we can build up a line out of points, a surface out of lines, and a solid out of surfaces. This cannot be true in a physical sense; for the point has no magnitude and cannot build up anything. Moreover, unless we *begin* by presupposing three-dimensional physical space, we shall have nowhere to place our point, and it cannot be regarded as having position or distance in relation to other points. Such reasoners do what generally is done in arguments — they assume their conclusion; they assume physical space and then proceed to construct it. They should begin at the other end and assume as a unit a point having dimension, an atom in fact; and then a line becomes a row of points, and so on.

But if we step beyond the physical plane, and use the word "dimension" in its general sense as "the degree of manifoldness of a magnitude," the case is different. We may evolve our universe out of points, lines, triangles, etc., always remembering that these are not physical distances or pieces of string. Points, lines, triangles, etc., are frequently mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine* in reference to existences on other

planes — non-physical planes; in one passage there is a definite distinction made between "solids" and "solid bodies." The point, as a symbol, stands for a monad, a unitary center, a logos; the line is a motion or force, it has length; a triangle (or, more generally, a superficies) has shape, and shape represents quality or character; and so on, as we prefer to leave such interpretations to the fancy of the individual student, not being sure enough of our own personal dogmas. Analogy is a useful servant, but a bad master.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ENSOULING OF MAN — *G. de Purucker*

In the March FORUM I spoke of those Great Ones who are fully ensouled men, and also of the majority of men and women who are as yet soulless; and by this latter term I did not mean "lost souls." Now when you understand what "ensouling" is, you understand the meaning and substance of the chela-path. The chela is one who is ensouling himself. The Master is a fully ensouled man. The Buddha is a Master with the light of the Spirit illuminating his soul, one in whom the Spirit with its refulgent glory increases the already great splendor of the ensouled man.

The path of chelaship is a process of ensouling "soulless" people. Such "soulless" people fill our cities, our towns, our hamlets, our homes. Every one of us, in those moments when he is no longer a "soul" but lives only in the four lower principles of his being, is for the time soulless; that is the meaning of it: the human monad is no longer active in him. A lost soul, on the other hand, is one who no longer has even the possibility of reunion with the divine, the Spirit, the Buddha, the Christ, within himself. A lost soul drops to the Pit. When the great Syrian Sage, Jesus, said, "He who gives up his life for my sake" — for the sake of the Buddha, the Christ, within himself, within each one of us — "shall find his life," he meant that even in the most ordinary of us, feebly in the beginning, lives the Christ within, continuing to live as an inmost being; and that as time passes and the man draws nearer to the inmost center of his being, he becomes gradually ensouled, a leader; then a Buddha; and upon the Buddhas shines the light of eternity. It is as simple as that.

Soulless people are not wicked. They are just drifting, sleeping, unawakened. They live more or less in the four lower principles of the constitution. But the chela is the man who begins by will and effort and thought and devotion and love for all that is, great and small, to ensoul himself; and he rises along the chela-path precisely in the ratio in

which he ensouls himself ever more greatly.

I use the term "ensouling" because it is a simple term amenable to understanding. I have deliberately avoided using a term which might require lengthy explanatory comment. The desire is to suggest rather than to give an explicit teaching.

I will try to give you what to me at least seems to be a graphic illustration of what ensouling means. We human beings are composite entities. We have a divine and a spiritual and a human and a beastly side to us, as well as the wretched physical body which suffers so often unjustly because of the crimes committed upon it by our erratic, vagrant, wandering, passionate, lower human aspect: the lower emotional and mental principles in us. These four lower principles are the *human animal*. Pause a moment in thought. Being a *human animal* it is superior to the *beast-animal*, because throughout the former there is an instinct of humanity. Nevertheless this *human animal*, when the man lives as a man, should be ensouled by the humanity of the man. When a man lives solely in his four lower principles he is less than a true man. He merely vegetates. He exists. He has no chance for immortality, none whatsoever, because there is nothing immortal in the four lower principles of us. But the Human Monad, the vehicle of the Spiritual Monad, or to put it otherwise, the Human Soul, the vehicle of the Spiritual Soul, has a great chance for conscious immortality.

When a man lives in his Human Monad the four lower principles are ensouled. He is a full man then, consciously living and happily living in such fashion as to bring no bitter regrets. There is the test. It does not mean a man who is perfect, or that the man has no temptations. Certainly not; because we are all human. The four-principled man succumbs to temptation usually because he is not ensouled by the humanity of himself. The humanity-part of ourselves, to use easily understood language, the Human Monad, *has more chance of conquering temptation than of succumbing to it*; and when I say temptation I do not mean passion only; I do not mean physical passion only; I mean all kinds of temptation. Overweening ambition, only to be

gratified at others" cost is one common vice today; selfishness in any of its manifold forms; egoism, a hydra-headed thing; uncontrolled anger — all these things are less than human, but are the lower human; less than the higher human, less than the truly human.

So then, ensouling means living those things which we intuitively and instinctively sense belong to the better part of us. That is all there is to it: living in the Human Soul instead of in the human animal soul: to speak technically, living in the Buddhi-Manas instead of in the Kama-Manas.

Our streets are packed with soulless beings in this sense, vacillating in character like the winds of heaven, without firmness of will, without even convictions, moral convictions especially, changeable as weather-cocks, pulled hither and yon by every passing gust of temptation of any kind. They are less than human. They are soulless — which does not mean that they have no soul; but it means that the soul within them is not operative; it is not active; it does not manifest itself. Look into the eyes of these people: there lacks the wonderful shine of the soul which, once seen, you will always recognise.

Every kindly act you do marks you as by that much ensouled, if it is an act which springs from the heart and not merely from the egoistic wish to show off. Every time you conquer a temptation, which if yielded to you know perfectly well will debase you in your own eyes, even if your fellows do not know of your fall: every time you conquer it you live in the human soul, you are by so much ensouling yourself. Every time you *conquer* an impulse to do a selfish act, a deed with selfish thought for your own benefit, then you are by so much ensouling yourself.

We shall be fully human, fully ensouled, in the Fifth Round. At the present time we can be so by effort and aspiration. The vast majority of mankind are soulless in the technical sense that we understand. The soul is there but they won't live in it; they won't make it themselves. They prefer to live in the animal. And mark you, the animal does not only mean sex. That is only one side of it and a relatively unimportant side. The animal means the grasping, acquisitive, selfish, appetitive,

indulgent, part of us, running after this and running after that, without stability of character, in other words without soul.

Set about ensouling yourself with the soul which is *yourself*; that is the chela-path. The man who succeeds in doing so is a chela. The path is the same for all men, yet distinctive for each individual. Find it.

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLVING WORLDS (1) — H. Oosterink

The subject which I have chosen and for which I ask your attention is "*Evolving Worlds*"; and when I speak of evolving worlds our thoughts go out to the mighty universe surrounding our planet, strewn with glorious solar systems and galaxies that are messengers of a sublime creation manifesting itself out of the womb of Mother Nature.

We are taught that out of the depths of Space the Great Breath breathes Itself out and draws Itself back again; that worlds come into manifestation and dissolve again; that hierarchies of evolving life are built up, and that the great mansion of the Spirit perfects itself in ever grander fashion.

Meditating on this, we perceive that an unimaginably sublime Consciousness labors uninterruptedly to manifest Itself. In this Consciousness we live, move, and have our being. We ourselves are It. For each entity, every being in the boundless Universe, is ever growing to that which is greater and loftier, and is destined to become the vehicle of an even more sublime consciousness such as that animating the Universe.

Every being is activated by the same creative force which molded the Universe; this creative force manifests itself in forms ever more suitable.

When I speak of evolving worlds I concentrate my thoughts not only on the boundless Universe; but before every being, each center of consciousness, however small, if once awakened to life, there lies spread out a future sublime beyond imagination. In ever grander fashion the Spirit builds Itself mansion after mansion; ever again and analogously in the same manner the seeds of life germinate whether they carry within themselves a man, a plant, or a universe. Life is consciousness and progress is the fundamental law. Behind all the unreal and passing forms of manifestation stands BEING, which

expresses Itself in these forms. One, truly, and yet that from which all proceeds and to which all returns. Therefore, life as we see it is but a performance of dancing shadows, passing and unreal as compared to that which *IS*.

There are a number of ways along which man aspires to approach this Mystery; science, philosophy, and religion try to elucidate some part of it, while all great Seers and Sages have taught mankind that within man himself there lies the faculty to enter into the core of things.

This means that man in his search retreats within himself, deepening his own consciousness, and by so doing blends it with the wisdom and beauty of a more powerful Consciousness of which he is a child. In other words, he learns to tread the inner path that leads to the distant gateway of perfection, guided by the radiant Light of the Spirit.

There are two great driving powers which stimulate man to action: the lower desire binding man by psycho-magnetic force to the lower manifestations of life, and the yearning of the higher mind, which guides him to loftier planes of consciousness. These two, it says in the *Bhagavad-Gita* — light and darkness — are the world's eternal ways. If man chooses to follow the dark side of Nature, he calls into being the sad experiences that are inevitably connected with it. If the homesickness of the soul makes him long for spiritual peace and beauty, he delivers himself from the psycho-magnetic attraction of life and grows in harmony with Nature.

An evolving world! Indeed every being in the boundless Universe is such. In every being there lies a center, a central point, a pivot around which its consciousness extends and deepens itself. If we could observe this core, this central point, in the course of eternity that lies behind us, and could follow it throughout eternity spreading out before us, we then should realize the wonder of the course of Life. We human beings — and indeed all living beings — have a destiny exalted beyond thought or imagination, but a glorious descent as well.

Throughout eternity there exists an unbroken chain of Life. There is

but one Life, divided into the many lives that we see around us. Curious thoughts arise in our minds when we ponder on the Theosophical teachings while beholding human life as it is lived in our present confused days. We see that ignorance is humanity's worst enemy. Man lacks vision, man lacks hope. For human life has no value unless it has a purpose. This is what lends significance, depth, and color to his existence, if man lives with a high ideal, an idea which governs his life, which lends him vision, to which he lifts his being, and which gives him the power to rise above himself. He needs an outlook on life occupying his mind day after day. If the millions of human beings on this earth did have such a view on life the world would offer a different outlook entirely. Men would act differently if they were guided from within, controlled by a loftier conception of life.

In these days we experience a revolution — not a revolution on the outward plane only, which is but a consequence, but a revolution in the way of thinking, of thought and opinions and the accompanying disharmony, lack of insight, the following of slogans instead of listening to the deeper truths, found and experienced in the silence only.

The swiftness with which the stream of life with its chaotic confusion of ideals — ideals of one day, not the lasting ones — proceeds, makes us realize that we are approaching rapids which may lead to a catastrophe. Towering high above all this there stands, immutable as a rock in the surge, Theosophy, the Wisdom for which time does not exist. He who approaches and beholds this Wisdom of the ages, and the infinite beauty hidden in it, never will be able to forget the grand vision. In his heart there live peace and silence. He realizes man's sublime descent and destiny; he understands that our present days of commotion are but a phase in the evolutionary course of life.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* Sanjaya says:

And as I again and again remember, O mighty king, this wonderful sacred dialog between Krishna and Arjuna, I am delighted again and again. — ch. xviii

And so it is, indeed, with him who approaches the wonderful teachings of Theosophy and calls to life the vision given by them. Ever again he experiences the joy caused by its spiritual beauty.

'Evolving Worlds' is a subject continuously offering ideas to ponder upon. Our thoughts are evolving worlds; each life-atom is one, the beings around us, we ourselves are; the heavens above us contain innumerable evolving worlds, the hierarchies of life are composed of them. Through all these lives runs the thread of the One Life — which weaves the fabric of the evolving worlds.

Friends, I do but give some thought-seeds grown in my moments of silence. Allow these thought-seeds to germinate in your silent moments, when you meditate on these thoughts. Theosophy gives us entrance into the Temple of Beauty within ourselves, and this being attained:

Behold! Thou hast become the Light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF, the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the Seven Sounds in one, THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Translation of an address delivered at the European Convention of the Theosophical Society, The Hague, Holland, September 25-26-27, 1937. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE SOLUTION ACCORDING TO ALDOUS HUXLEY — C. J. Ryan

A valued correspondent writes that he believes many people are repelled by the supposition that impersonality, so strongly advanced in Theosophy, is equivalent to the complete obliteration of diversities in character between human beings. He says rightly that people do not relish the prospect of a dreary uniformity in anything; no one will strive for a spiritual existence in which all would be cast in exactly the same mold, even if told that it would lead to Nirvana or a heaven of harps and crowns. Quoting Thoreau, "I want all men to be as different as possible," he suggests that harmony in diversity, similarity without identity, with the suppression of selfishness and egoism, is a higher ideal.

He is right, and if anyone imagines that the distorted view of impersonality he pictures is Theosophical, a little study of what the Theosophical leaders have written will quickly clear up the misunderstanding. The mistake may have arisen from misapprehension of Arnold's famous line about the dewdrop slipping into the shining sea, but more probably from a lack of understanding of the meaning of "non-attachment," the key to impersonality.

Dr. de Purucker's *Golden Precepts of Esotericism* contains a clear explanation of the meaning and importance of impersonality, and it is plainly stated that it is the only practical method of breaking down the obscuring veils between man and his inner Divinity. Impersonal love, forgetfulness of the selfish demands of the lower personality, are the ways to save humanity from sinking into an abyss from which it could only escape after passing through untold suffering. It is an individual problem. Our "civilization" is made by the thoughts and desires of individuals, and no alleviation of the evils of this "iron age" is possible while efforts are directed merely to the change of conditions, and the change of hearts is ignored.

But light is breaking here and there through the darkness and evidence is increasing of the development of Theosophical principles of duty to humanity. While the majority in the churches still cling to the creeds which appeal to the pathetic craving for "personal salvation," intuitive minds are beginning to attract attention by proclaiming that nearly all the values accepted in the West for the re-ordering of the world are useless because they do not go to the root of the trouble. A prominent clergyman recently said from the pulpit: "Accepted standards are damning the world. Respectability has led us to the brink of destruction. The ordinary level of human ideals, thought and practice is a dead level. Jesus did not hesitate to demand that His followers be so much unlike the run of society that they be noticeably marked. "Do not even the others so?" is a question He often put to them."

Dr. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, wrote lately, "Christians have not had the courage or the insight to draw the conclusions from their own principles. Jesus was indeed a revolutionary . . . but he had no faith in the efficacy of political or economic changes which were alleviations of conditions but not of people. In His view "as a man thinks, so he is." There is no real revolution which does not begin with a change of mind." Not only Jesus, but all the World-Teachers, held and taught the same age-old doctrine.

And now comes Mr. Aldous Huxley (one of the famous grandsons of Professor T. H. Huxley, the champion of Darwinism), who has aroused widespread interest by his new book, *Ends and Means*, a brilliant presentation of the true remedy of our ills. If Mr. Huxley ever was a materialist he has quite abandoned that dreary creed. His eloquent words ring like the call to righteousness from one of the major prophets. His corrective is radical and, whether he knows it or not, it is purely Theosophical. He appeals for a thorough-going reform through spiritual self-discipline and a new outlook on the meaning of life. He insists upon the reality and validity of the mystical experience. Liberation from attachment to the desires of the lower side of our dual nature can be reached and the beatific vision obtained, but not without

the strictest self-discipline. He shows that in the concept of union with the Divine Principle within there is no room for a personal, anthropomorphic God, and he believes that not only the great mystics and seers of antiquity accepted this, but that even the great Christian mystics did the same. (1) In the same connexion he writes:

Belief in a personal God has . . . led to that enormous over-valuation of the individual ego, which is so characteristic of Western popular philosophy. All the great religions have taught the necessity of transcending personality, but the Christians have made it particularly difficult for themselves to act upon this teaching. They have accompanied the injunction that men should lose their lives in order to save them by the assertion that God himself is a person and that personal values are the highest that we can know.

Mr. Huxley sets forth with clarity the true significance of impersonality or non-attachment, and shows that it is not a negative but a very positive quality. A few quotations illustrate the fundamental principles by which he would reform the world. They are indeed familiar to Theosophists, and they are true. But would they be listened to even today if it had not been for the sacrifice made by H. P. Blavatsky in bringing Theosophy to a bitterly hostile world? Can we honorably accept and profit by the teachings while scornfully rejecting the teacher, as many have done? Mr. Huxley writes:

The ideal man is the non-attached man . . . non-attached to wealth, fame, social position. Non-attached even to science, art, speculation and philosophy. Yes, non-attached even to these. . . .

But such profound non-attachment does not mean running away to the jungle and living on roots and herbs. As W. Q. Judge said, the place of the true mystic is in the rough and tumble of the world, where his duty to humanity lies. Mr. Huxley sees this, for he says, further:

The practice of non-attachment entails all the virtues. It entails the practice of charity, for example; for there are no more fatal

impediments than anger (even "righteous indignation") and cold-blooded malice to the identification of the self with the immanent and transcendent more-than-self. It entails the practice of courage, for fear is a painful and obsessive identification of the self with its body. . . . It entails the cultivation of intelligence, for insensitive stupidity is a main root of all the other vices. It entails the practice of generosity and disinterestedness, for avarice and the love of possessions constrain their victim to equate himself with mere things. . . . It imposes upon those who would practice it the adoption of an intensely positive attitude toward the world.

We are not reviewing *Ends and Means*, but only mentioning one of its leading features as an illustration of the spread of Theosophical ideas; there is much more in it with which we heartily agree. For instance, the author fully realizes that unless human nature is changed no amount of social improvement will produce permanent reform; the defects of the personality will simply find new ways of expressing themselves. This change, as he sees, can only come by individual effort, *from within*. A slow process, perhaps, for most of us, but sure, and while it can be helped by a better social order there is no hope of overcoming the evils of our age by any form of violence, military or economic. Above all else, to obtain practical results, "the life of the spirit must be quickened." Speaking of the great snares, the love of Money, Power, Social Success, Mr. Huxley's remedy is non-attachment to these appeals to the lower nature, and a turning of the mind to higher ideals, and especially to the love of our neighbor and our duty to humanity. These will lead away from the limitations of "personality" toward the mystic union with the greater life "which passeth [ordinary] understanding."

If the intuitive minds who are approaching the Theosophical viewpoint about the cure for present discontents will study without prejudice the profound philosophic and scientific teaching of the Ancient Wisdom, they will find that their ethical views are not mere opinions, ideals, or hopes, but that they are rooted in the very fabric of the universe, as scientifically true as they are spiritually beautiful. The strength of

Theosophy lies in its unification of religion, philosophy, and science.

FOOTNOTE:

1. H. P. Blavatsky, writing of the Great Ones who had succeeded in uniting themselves permanently with their inner Divinity, thereby becoming gods on earth, says there were others, such as Moses, Pythagoras, Plotinus, Confucius, etc., "and some Christian saints," who were so united at intervals, and have taken rank as demi-gods. See *Isis Unveiled*, II, 159. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ORIENTAL STUDIES: II — *G. de Purucker*

The Secret Doctrine of Gautama the Buddha (1)

The present study will be an attempt to elaborate the thesis that essential Buddhism, in common with the essential or fundamental teaching of all the other great world-religions or indeed world-philosophies, contains as its substance or core the identic Esoteric Tradition that is found universally elsewhere. It is no attempt at a complete and inclusive proof of the foregoing statement, because obviously the limits of this article would themselves be too small to embody a complete and formal statement of the facts. We shall here treat the matter more as a sketch and as an outline.

I

There are two ways of reaching Truth, two methods of penetrating into the arcana of the mysteries of the Universe, from its spiritual parts down to its physical; and these two ways or methods are, first, by means of Man's spiritual-intellectual nature itself which is rooted in the very substance of the spiritual world, and indeed is an integral part thereof. For any normal human being whose constitution has not been undermined by vice, nor weakened by some wasting disease, can, if he will lead the life proper thereto, come into sympathetic unity or oneness with spiritual Nature through his own inner being's cognising its essential unity with the Universe, and thus becoming the recipient, as a channel or canal, through which the higher energies of the Universe may flow and become manifest as thoughts, intuitions, intimations of truth, in the chela's or disciple's mind.

The other way or method is that of training and initiation, which is not different from the former method, but is the former method elaborated into systematic procedures; because such initiatory training and final success are but a quickening of or hastening over the evolutionary progress that all human beings undergo through the cycling ages. In

other words, initiation is but quickened evolution.

These Great World-Teachers combine both these ways or methods during a brief period of lives on earth. Beginning as chelas or disciples of some teacher selected by each individual of them, with which teacher such chela finds intuitive and instinctive links of sympathy and understanding, he undergoes training, i. e., quickened evolution, under the watchful eye of the teacher chosen by him; and bending every energy and all the faculties of his being towards success, he passes from life to life through this brief period of reincarnations, advancing steadily higher in each such life, until finally he himself blossoms out as a Master, a Mahatman, in his turn now ready to carry his portion of the labor, pitiful, compassionate, of the Great Brotherhood. Then his turn comes to be sent forth among his fellow-men of less evolutionary degree of advancement, to become unto them a Teacher, a Guide, an Inspirer, delivering unto them in ideas and language appropriate to the age the new instalment of universal truth which it thus becomes his sublime destiny to give. Thus a new great Religion is founded, a new and possibly world-shaking Philosophy of Life is inaugurated; yet, mark it well, each and every one of this long line of Sages and Seers, each one of the World-Teachers, imbodyes in his new instalment of teaching the same fundamental verities, the identic truths, albeit delivered in new garments, which all his Predecessors had given, each one in his turn. It is thus that the Esoteric Tradition is carried on and renewed from age to age, and given to man in those periods of spiritual and intellectual somnolence, which Plato called epochs of spiritual barrenness.

Such a one in the long line of Successors was Sakyamuni, the Buddha-Gautama. It is true that in his case, and because of a certain Mystery which it would be improper openly to set forth even by sketch in a published work, he was of a spiritual and intellectual stature exceeding many, possibly most, of those who had preceded him in the same World-Order in recorded human history; but even in his case the rule of successorship was the same as in that of all his Predecessors, and he but exemplifies, more brilliantly than most, the natural Law of

Periodicity which governs the cyclical unveiling or revealing of the Esoteric Tradition to the human species.

II

Let us now turn to the more particular topic of our present study:

Buddham saranam gachchhami;
dharmam saranam gachchhami;
samgham saranam gachchhami:

"I take my refuge in the Buddha; I take my refuge in the Light of his teachings (or Law); I take my refuge in the company of the Holy Ones." This slight paraphrase of the Sanskrit three-stanzaed "Confession of Faith" so called, contains the substantial core of what the modern Buddhist, equally with the ancient Buddhist, considers to be the true Buddhist's outlook as a believer in the teachings of the Tathagata, i. e., he who came as his forerunners came, as his Predecessors came, in order to bring salvation into the world — salvation to gods and men, salvation to the greatest and to the humblest; and this "salvation," as the Lord Buddha taught, was not salvation from any outside power, not something entering into human minds and hearts from outside, and thus "saving" them, as is the vain belief of so many Occidentals: but was an interior change, a true reformation, in the very spiritual, intellectual, and psychical, structure of the man himself. (2) For, as the mystical Buddhism of the North taught, and still teaches with fervid devotion: There is in every entity, not only in man but in the gods and in the beings beneath man, a threefold essence — or perhaps more accurately three interblending essences, nevertheless having a common identic substance, which they describe as, (a) a Celestial or Dhyani-Buddha; (b) a Bodhisattva, "son" of the Celestial or Dhyani-Buddha; and (c) a Manushya-Buddha or human Buddha; and it was in order to awaken this living threefold Buddhist consciousness in the constitution of every human being, that the Buddha taught his noble Law, his majestic Philosophy, which perhaps has held, during the course of its existence, more human minds in fealty and devotion than any other religio-philosophic system known to the human race.

III

Buddhism has always been greatly misunderstood in the Occident. It has at times been called a religion of pessimism, simply because Occidentals have not understood its profound intellectual reaches nor its proper placing of the values of the material side of life. In the Occidental view, to teach that a man is an impermanent composite of elements of varying ethereality, and that when he dies this composite is dissolved, and that its component parts then enter into their respective realms or kingdoms or spheres of Nature: all this signifies to the Occidental mind that such a doctrine teaches utter annihilation of the compounded entity *as an entity*; for, consciously or unconsciously, such Occidental critics ignore the unifying and binding root of being of every such entity which brings at periodical intervals this compound together again out of the identic life-atoms that composed it in former existences.

Occidental scholars so think, or they think that they so think, because they do not understand that this very "root," or element, or subtil bond — call it what you like — i. e., the individualizing energy which brought these samskaras (3) or compounds or composites together, is, when all is said and done in argument, a unifying and therefore individualizing *force*; and that this unifying or individualizing force, no matter what we may call it, remains after the dissolution of the compound, and likewise has its own cosmic reservoir or kingdom or realm to which it returns; nor do they understand that this unifying or individualizing force the Lord Gautama in his great wisdom called the "Buddha," the inner originant, for which an equivalent term in the Mahayana of Northern Asia is Dhyani-Buddha.

It is quite true that from certain Occidental philosophical standpoints, the teaching of Gautama the Buddha may formally be considered "pessimistic"; but only so if one judge it by Occidental philosophical standards alone, and ignore the intrinsic meaning of the Buddha himself; and is this either wise or fair? Ignoring a factor in a problem is not solving the problem properly. Can it, one asks, then be rightly

done? How can we judge something which arose in the Orient and became the Law of the more civilized Oriental world for its own time-period, and successfully passed the examination of the keenest minds and the most astute intellects of ages, by the changing and therefore biased standards of Occidental scientific speculations, with a vague background of European philosophy, which speculations themselves are only some three hundred or more years old in their origin, and probably not more than seventy-five years old, or less, in their present form?

There was a time, not so long ago, when one teaching of the Buddha, that of the Nirvana, was considered by Occidental scholars to mean that the Lord Gautama taught that annihilation, utter, complete, was the end of every living conscious being, when that being had attained unto the stage of inner growth where it entered into this nirvanic state; and they pointed, naturally enough, to the Sanskrit meaning of this compound word: (*nir*), "out" or "off," and (*vana*), the past participle passive of the root (*va*), "to blow": hence "to blow out." As they sagely and logically enough said: "Nirvana means "blown out," as a candle-flame is "blown out" by the breath!" Ay, so it does. But what is it that is "blown out"? What is it that ceases to exist? Is it the unifying spiritual force which brings this compound entity into being anew in a serial line of succession which has no known beginning, and which the Buddhist teaching itself shows to be *something* which reproduces itself in this series of illusory, because compounded, vehicles? This is impossible, because if this individualizing or unifying energy were "blown out," i. e., annihilated, it obviously could not continue to reproduce itself as the inspiring energy of newly compounded bodies due to its own working. Therefore obviously enough what is blown out is the *samskaras*, the compounds, resulting from, i. e., born or produced by, the *karman* of the individual. This *karman*, therefore, and speaking with strict logical sequence of thought, which the doctrine embodies, is *the individual himself or itself*; because the Buddhist teaching is that what is reproduced is the *karman* of the preceding individual, i. e., that any composite entity changes from instant to

instant, and that at each new instant, the change is the resultant or effect or consequence of the preceding instant of change. Thus, then, the individual is his own karman at any instant in time, because that karman is the totality of what he is himself. When a man's composite parts are "blown out," i. e., "enter Nirvana," i. e., are "extinguished," rendered extinct, as the just previously existing compound, then all the rest of the being, that deathless center of unifying and individualizing spiritual force around which these composites or samskaras periodically gather — lives as a Buddha.

This is exactly and as far as it goes (because there is much more that might be said), the teaching of Esoteric Theosophy, of the Esoteric Tradition. All the evil and lower part of us must be wiped out, extinguished, "annihilated" if you like; in other words the karman that produced these illusory composites must be caused to cease; and new composites, nobler ones — *the products or effects or resultants of the preceding composites* — those henceforth joined to the Buddhistic essence of the being, that spiritual force which is the inner Buddha, will then continue and on its own high plane live, because no longer controlled by the veils of the world of Maya, Illusion — the worlds of impermanent structural composites. The being thus become a Buddha because of its delivery from enshrouding veils, has now reached the state and condition of passing out of the impermanence of all manifested existence into the utter permanence of cosmic Reality.

The matter of the real meaning of the Nirvana has thus been elaborated, albeit in somewhat sketchy fashion, in order to show that the supposition of many Westerners that the teaching of the Nirvana is a pessimistic doctrine because meaning utter extinction into the abyss of non-entity, is baseless. Hence, far from being pessimistic, the doctrine of the Nirvana is one of extraordinary hope. The word "optimism" is not here used, because it is as subject to adverse critical comment as is its antonym "pessimism."

Far from being a religion of pessimism, when properly understood the religion of the Buddha is a religion — not of optimism indeed, but of

wisdom. These words are used advisedly, because it is certain that unthinking optimism is as foolish in its way as is unthinking pessimism. Neither is wise, because each is an extreme. The teaching of the Buddha was so wisely given by that Great Sage that it showed to men a pathway which went neither to the right — to one extreme — nor to the left — to the other extreme; but chose the Middle Way, the way of Truth, avoiding the falling into the extremes of either side. All extremes are unreal, no matter what they may be, because unphilosophical; and it is the great subtilty of the Tathagata's teaching which has rendered it so difficult for Occidentals to understand. One often reads essays printed in the Occident by Westerners who have become Buddhists; and one may admire them for the courage with which they work in their new field; but, with no wish to hurt anyone's feelings, it is difficult to avoid being grieved by their usual lack of understanding of what is after all the heart, the core, of the great Buddha's teaching. The letter indeed of the Buddhist scriptures has been grasped — more or less; but the spirit, i. e., the Buddha's "heart" is rarely or never understood. The Eye-Doctrine, in other words, is comprehended to a certain extent; but the Heart-Doctrine, the hid part, the esoteric part, is not seized, or only grasped intuitively and to a certain extent only at the rarest intervals.

IV

Ay, there *is* such a thing as esoteric Buddhism, (4) despite the denials of this fact by very eminent Occidental Buddhist scholars. After all, what value is there in following the more or less unconsciously biased deductions of our Occidental scholars in Buddhistic lore, who, taking merely the letter of that great religious and philosophical Law, translate, and, in combination with their own more or less biased reflexions, thereby render, as they think, the truth of the doctrine? What value, indeed, when studies with the background of illumination furnished by the teachings of the Esoteric Tradition show to the Theosophical student that there is verily an esoteric teaching or foundation of both a philosophical and a religious character which the Buddha evidently must have taught to his Arhats, or disciples most

favored for their spiritual and intellectual abilities to understand his meaning. When these skeptical Occidental scholars are asked: Did the Buddha have an Esoteric School, or does his Law contain an esoteric teaching? they almost invariably say Nay, and point with emphatic finger to a statement by the Buddha himself, which they believe proves their allegation that he himself denied it This statement is found in the teaching of the *Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta*, or the teaching of the "Great and Ultimate Nirvana"; which title we may perhaps otherwise render as meaning the "Great Passing " Before going on farther with the present argument, it may be useful to examine just what this supposedly conclusive statement of the Lord Buddha really was:

Now very soon after the Blessed One began to recover, when he had quite got rid of the sickness he went out from the monastery, and sat down behind the monastery on a seat spread out there And the venerable Ananda (5) went to the place where the Blessed One was, and saluted him, and took a seat respectfully on one side, and addressed the Blessed One, and said "I have beheld, Lord, how the Blessed One was in health, and I have beheld how the Blessed One had to suffer And though at the sight of the sickness of the Blessed One my body became weak as a creeper, and the horizon became dim to me, and my faculties were no longer clear, yet notwithstanding I took some little comfort from the thought that the Blessed One would not pass away from existence until at least he had left instructions as touching the order "

"What, then, Ananda? Does the order expect that of me? I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine for in respect of the truths, Ananda, the Tathagata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher, who keeps some things back. Surely, Ananda, should there be any one who harbours the thought, 'It is I who will lead the brotherhood,' or, 'The order is dependent upon me,' it is he who should lay down instructions in any matter concerning the order. Now the Tathagata, Ananda, thinks not that it is he who

should lead the brotherhood, or that the order is dependent upon him Why then should he leave instructions in any matter concerning the order? I too, O Ananda, am now grown old, and full of years, my journey is drawing to its close, I have reached my sum of days, I am turning eighty years of age, and just as a worn out cart, Ananda, can only with much additional care be made to move along, so, methinks, the body of the Tathagata can only be kept going with much additional care. . . .

"Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the truth. . . ." (6)

— i. e., to the Celestial Buddha abiding in secret within every human heart, in the core or spiritual center of every human being, "the inner god".

Lest this citation be taken to mean that the Buddha taught no need of any teachers following him in his Brotherhood or Association, it is well to look even at the pragmatism of the South, and more particularly to consider that of the mystical School of the North, where there were during later ages millions of human beings who, without any exception whatsoever, as far as one recollects at the moment, followed the different schools, each one of them founded by a more or less great man whose rights to teach were scarcely ever challenged, simply because of the greatness of these individual teachers each in his own especial line of pragmatism or of mystical Buddhism. In all these cases, whether of the South or of the North, the existence of legitimate successors of the Buddha following each other in century after century was universally recognised, although obviously none was ever considered to be equal to the great Master himself. His unique standing as Teacher is indeed one of the fundamental teachings of Buddhism, which states that Buddhas appear only at long intervals and in periods governed by cyclic time, thus re-echoing the Brahmanical teaching of a succession of Doctors of the Law which Krishna alludes to in the

Bhagavad-Gita in the words: "Whenever there is a decline of righteousness in the world, etc., then I reproduce myself." (7)

This succession or serial line of teachers is technically called the Guru-parampara in Brahmanism. It is a good phrase or title for the Teachers coming in serial order, because it is both descriptive and exact. It has had of course varied and different meanings in different ages, but the substantial idea inherent in the thought is the same everywhere; and whether certain Buddhist scholars like to admit it or not, the fact remains that historical Buddhism shows to us teacher succeeding teacher in the annals of the great Buddhist faith: these teachers sometimes separated by fairly long periods of time, and in other cases of more mystical and restricted schools, teacher succeeding teacher when the predecessor dies and the successor assumes his office.

Even the simplest examination of the historical facts will show the student that minor sages and seers have sprung up from time to time in the Buddhism of history, such as Nagarjuna and Aryasamgha, founding schools, or taking them over from their predecessors; teaching, if you like, each one a new version of the Ancient Buddhist Wisdom, yet all faithful followers of the Lord Buddha; and whatever their differences as individuals may have been, all these various schools look to the great Master as the fountain-head of their respective and more or less differing wisdoms.

It would be preposterous to attempt to aver that so enlightened a spirit, so profound an intellect, so wise and far-reaching a mind, as found in the Buddha, could have been ignorant of one of the elementary facts of human psychology in religious matters, to wit, that it was a foregone conclusion, human nature being what it is, that teachers would arise in the Order after his death; nor can one for an instant agree with those who would attempt to show that most, if not all, of these later teachers in Buddhistic philosophy were more or less ambitious upstarts, craving personal prominence and seeking a personal following. This opinion, which seems to be so widespread in the Occident, as regards religious matters, discovers to public view what is really a deplorably

pessimistic opinion of human nature. Indeed, the view of the present writer runs directly counter to this opinion, for he looks upon most, if not all, of the great men who succeeded the Buddha as heads of the different Buddhist Schools, as being genuine initiates, profound, thoughtful, and high-minded men, who, because of their own spiritual and intellectual and psychical degree of evolution, developed in their respective logical fields the teachings of the Buddha-Gautama dealing with different parts of the widely inclusive range of Buddhist philosophy.

To return to the quotation cited above: At first reading, it does indeed sound as if the Lord Buddha declared to his disciples that he had no esoteric doctrine, reserved of necessity for the more spiritually and intellectually advanced of his chelas or disciples. Is this, however, what he actually said? It most certainly is not. Ananda's plea was: "Leave us instructions, Lord, as to the conduct of the Order, before thou passest on"; and the Buddha refused, saying: "I have told you all that is necessary for the conduct of the Order, and I have kept naught back. I am not like a teacher who tells you some things as to your own conduct and the conduct of the Brotherhood, and secretly hides other things in his "closed fist." I have told you all that is necessary for the conduct of the Order that will bring you success in the saving of man; but should there be anyone who arises in the Order and who points out what is required for its proper care and leading, then it is he who should lay down instructions in any such emergency concerning the Order. You will soon find out in such case whether he be a true teacher or a false; for the rules that I myself have given unto you are the fundamental rules for guidance and conduct both of yourselves and of the Order, and they are sufficient. I have spoken."

There is no small number of passages in the different Buddhist Scriptures of both the two great Schools, which, both by direct statement or by indirection in statement, declare plainly that the Buddha had not revealed, nor would he reveal, all the truths that he knew.

Two instances briefly designated should suffice in illustration, both of the Hinayana School. The first states that Sakyamuni took a handful of the leaves of the Sinsapa, and pointing to them, explained that just as this bunch of leaves in his hand, so few in number, were not all the leaves of the tree from which they were taken, just so in exactly similar fashion the truths that he himself as Teacher had announced were not by any means all that he knew. (8) The figure is both graphic and strong, and highly significant.

The other instance, also in a Scripture belonging to the Hinayana-system, is one in which the Great Teacher explains his refusal to describe whether a Buddha lives after death or not. (9) Both illustrations are declarations of the fact of the reserve in teaching, and reticence in delivery thereof, which are so universally characteristic of the transmitters of the Esoteric Tradition.

FOOTNOTES:

1. By request THE FORUM reprints these important chapters on the Secret Doctrine of Gautama the Buddha, slightly condensed, from *The Esoteric Tradition*. They will appear in three installments. ([return to text](#))

2. This threefold Buddhist formula is likewise known under the title *Tri-ratna*, or "Three Gems"; or *Tri-saranam*, or "Three Refuges." As stated in the text of this chapter, this formula of devotion or allegiance, accepted by both the Northern and the Southern Schools of Buddhism, is universally taken, or nearly so, by the entire Buddhist world in a rather pragmatical or matter-of-fact manner, following the literal meaning of the words, to wit: "I take refuge in the Buddha; I take refuge in the Dharma or Law; I take refuge in the Company or Congregation" — the "Company" or "Congregation" thus signifying the Buddhist priesthood, or in a still larger sense, the entire body of professing and faithful Buddhists.

Yet this literal meaning, in the opinion of the present writer, is but an exoteric form of what was originally intended by the esoteric Initiates who drew up this formula or composed it. In other words, the formula

suffered the same deterioration in meaning that has happened in all similar cases in all great religions: the words originally having a highly mystical and philosophical significance finally lose it and are accepted or taken at their mere face-meaning.

The original sense of this formula was extremely profound and beautiful, and conveyed a threefold teaching — or a teaching referring to three aspects of the Esoteric Philosophy — somewhat as follows: The "Buddha" has reference to *Adi-Buddha*, which we may call the First or Unmanifest Logos, or Primeval Spirit in the Universe, manifesting throughout the Universe in a sublime Hierarchy of spiritual beings emanating from itself. These spiritual beings extend from the highest even to the human spheres, and frequently are called in the Esoteric Philosophy, the Hierarchy of Compassion, or sometimes the Sons of Light. It is the Hierarchy of Compassion, or the Sons of Light, composing it, and ranging from the Dhyani-Buddhas downwards through intermediate grades to the Manushya-Buddhas, which form the *Saingha* or Company, or Congregation, this being the Third of the Refuges. The Wisdom that is taught by them on the different planes of the Universe and to the different ranges of world-spheres, and mystically and traditionally handed down from the highest Dhyani-Buddhas to human disciples is the second Refuge, called in this formula, the *Dharma*.

We have thus, when this formula is properly understood, an outline, albeit briefly sketched, of the structural framework of all the teaching of the Wisdom of the Gods, today in its public delivery called Theosophy. In other words, and summarizing briefly, we have under the one term "Buddha" the entire line of spiritual beings, reaching from the Cosmic Spirit through all intermediate ranges of the Universe down to the Manushya-Buddhas or human Buddhas and their human disciples, who in their aggregate form the so-called "Congregation"; and all teaching the Divine Wisdom sprung forth in its origin from the highest gods themselves, and of which every Buddha on earth is an exponent.

Corresponding to the same threefold division of the "Buddhas," their "Law," and their "Hierarchy," we have the three forms of Vestures or Appearances in which this Hierarchy of Beings express themselves, to wit: first and highest, the Dharmakaya, that of the highest cosmic spirits or Dhyani-Buddhas; second, the Sambhogakaya, the vestures, thus summarized, of the intermediate grades of spiritual beings in this Hierarchy; and finally, the Nirmanakayas, the vesture of those spiritual beings and Great Adepts who are closest to and therefore, *de facto*, are the Guardians of, mankind and all beings on Earth.

Corresponding with these three Vestures again, we have the third general division above alluded to: the Arupa-dhatu, or so-called "Formless" World or Worlds, the mystical abode of the Dhyani-Buddhas or Chohans, etc.; second, the Rupa-dhatu, or so-called Manifested or Form-World or Worlds, the abode of the beings living in the Sambhogakaya Vesture or condition; and third, the Kama-dhatu, or so-called "World of Desire," or Worlds wherein reside beings still heavily involved in the attractions and conditions of material existence.

The matter is so important in its immense bearing on the esoteric heart of the Buddha's teaching that it was felt both useful and needed to explain it, however briefly, in the present footnote, for those who can understand it. ([return to text](#))

3. Psycho-mental attributes forming a portion of the intermediate constitution of man. ([return to text](#))

4. With regard to the statement in the text above, that the great Hindu Reformer and Initiate, known to the world as Gautama the Buddha, had indeed a Secret Doctrine, or Esoteric Tradition, which he himself had received from and in initiation, and which he kept for those worthy and qualified to receive it among his own chelas or disciples, and quite outside of a conviction to that effect born in the minds of students who have given the matter sufficient study to understand it, the reader is referred to certain statements made by H. P. Blavatsky, the Great Theosophist, in her *The Secret Doctrine* and elsewhere, pointing to the same fact. As an example, she writes in her *The Secret*

Doctrine, "Introductory," Volume I, pages xx-xxi, as follows:

"Indeed, the secret portions of the "*Dan*" or "*Jan-na*" ('*Dhyan*') of Gautama's metaphysics — grand as they appear to one unacquainted with the tenets of the Wisdom Religion of antiquity — are but a very small portion of the whole. The Hindu Reformer limited his public teachings to the purely moral and physiological aspect of the Wisdom-Religion, to Ethics and MAN alone. Things "unseen and incorporeal," the mystery of Being outside our terrestrial sphere, the great Teacher left entirely untouched in his public lectures, reserving the hidden Truths for a select circle of his Arhats. The latter received their Initiation at the famous Saptaparna cave. . . .

"Thus the reader is asked to bear in mind the very important difference between *orthodox* Buddhism — i. e., the public teachings of Gautama the Buddha, and his esoteric *Budhism*. His Secret Doctrine, however, differed in no wise from that of the initiated Brahmins of his day. . . . His teachings, therefore, could not be different from their doctrines, for the whole Buddhist reform merely consisted in giving out a portion of that which had been kept secret from every man outside of the "enchanted" circle of Temple-Initiates and ascetics. Unable to teach *all* that had been imparted to him — owing to his pledges — though he taught a philosophy built upon the ground-work of the true esoteric knowledge, the Buddha gave to the world only its *outward* material body and kept its soul for his Elect. . . . Many Chinese scholars among Orientalists have heard of the "Soul Doctrine." None seem to have understood its real meaning and importance." ([return to text](#))

5. 4 Ananda was the god-son of the Lord, and his favorite disciple, somewhat it may be as legend says John was the favorite disciple of Jesus the Syrian Avatara. ([return to text](#))

6. The *Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta*, chapter u, verses 31, 32, 33 as translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, the well-known Pali scholar (*The Sacred Books of the East* series, Vol XI). ([return to text](#))

7. Ch. iv, sl. 7. ([return to text](#))

8. *Samyutta-Nikaya*, vi, 31. ([return to text](#))

9. *Chula-Malunkya-putta-Sutta*, i, 426. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ALTRUISM — *G. de Purucker*

Human nature is so prone, when hearing about Altruism or reading about it, to imagine that it is something foreign to us, lugged into human life as a most desirable thing to follow, but, after all, highly impractical, and therefore impracticable — that it is not inherent in the characteristics of human beings to be altruistic naturally. In other words, they are all fascinated with the idea of isolated self-interest. Is not this virtually universal supposition of men utterly unfounded in Nature herself? For wherever we look, whatever we consider or study, we find that the individual working alone for itself is helpless; wherever we look in all the great kingdoms of the Universe, it is union of effort, co-operation in living combines — to use the slang of the street — which is not only what Nature herself is working to bring about and therefore which we find everywhere; but that anything that runs counter and contrary to this fundamental law of the Universe, which is unity in action, produces disharmony, strife, and what in our own bodies we call disease. Health is that condition of bodily structure where all parts work to a common end in what we may call friendship, in what we may call union.

Consider the stones: are they not combines, are they not unions of individuals composing, making, producing, a thing? No single atom of any of the chemical elements of which any stone is composed is the stone itself. How about the lovely flower? How about the bodies in which we live? How about a single man? Could he produce the great works that men have bent their genius to achieve, alone? What is civilization but the combined efforts of human beings to produce great and noble effects in human life — increasing comfort, dispelling danger, bringing about the productions of genius from the greater men which redound to our own comfort and use. Show me a single instance where pure self-interest has produced anything. We find naught, if we consult Nature in all her kingdoms, but unity of workings brought

about by multitudes of individuals co-operating to a common end. And what is that but Altruism? Altruism is the word we give to this fact when we see its ethical significance, and this significance is in no wise, nor in any great way nor in any small, different from what we see in the world physical. Altruism means the one working for the all — Nature's fundamental law in all her grand structures — and the all standing as the guard and shield and field of effort of the one. Think of the deep moral lesson, the deduction, to be drawn from this greatest of the universe's — not mysteries but verities; so common around us that usually we pass it by unseeing, with unseeing eye. Show me anything that can endure sole and alone for a single instant of time.

Two or more atoms uniting make a molecule; two or more molecules a larger production; and it is the countless multitudes of such unions which produce the universe. Any single entity essaying to follow the ignoble path of isolated self-interest sets its or his puny will against the force which keeps the stars in their courses, gives health to our bodies, brings about civilizations among men, and produces all the wonders that are around us.

There is a point of teaching in this connexion which it is very important to introduce into the world today, and that is Hope. You know the old story, the Greek story, about a certain very curious and inquisitive person who opened a box and all the evils in the world fled out, and there remained therein only Hope? Now I think this contains a great deal of truth which has a practical bearing on life's problems. As long as a man has hope he does not despair. Weak or strong, it matters not; if he has hope, something to look forward to, if his inner spirit, the spiritual being within him, teaches him something of hope, he not only will never despair, but he will become a builder, a constructor, a worker *with the Universe*, because he will move forwards. And this is Altruism.

We are all children — to use the vernacular of the half-philosophical schools of the day — of the Universe, of its physical side and of its spiritual and divine side. This being so, there is in every human breast

an undying font not only of inspiration, but likewise of growth, of hope, of wisdom, and of love. So that the world today, although apparently in a parlous condition, in a desperate state, still contains men and women enough in it to carry the evolutionary wave of progress over its present turmoil and strife; for the majority of mankind are essentially right in their instincts, especially the higher instincts.

Therefore, I do not see anything horribly hopeless about the world's condition today. I believe not only that there is ground for hope, but that the undying spark of spirituality, of wisdom and love of altruism, always living in the human heart, will carry the human race not only out of its present series of impasses, of difficulties, but into brighter days, which will be brighter because wiser and gentler. It is not the crises, when things crash or seem to crash: it is not the horrific noise of the thunder or the crash of its bolt, which govern the great functions of life, human and cosmic; but those slow, to us men, always quiet, unending, silent processes which build: build when we wake, build when we sleep, build all the time, and even in the human race carry it through folly after folly after folly into the future.

There is the ground of our hope; and it seems to me that all good men and true should rally to the defense of these primal, simple verities which every human heart can understand, adult or child. I believe it is about time that men and women began to look on the bright side of things, to see hope around us, to forget themselves and their petty worries, and to live in the Infinite and in the Eternal. It is easy — a darned sight easier than making ourselves continuously sick with frets and worries! Within each one of us there is something divine to which we can cling, and which will carry us through!

Don't talk to me about Altruism being something foreign or exotic to us, unusual, impractical, and therefore impracticable; for it is the only thing which perpetually lives, the only thing which endures for aye. When any single element or part in a human body begins to run "on its own," we have disease. When any single element or part in any structural combine which helps to compose the world around us begins

to run "on its own," i. e., what we call self-interest, there we see degeneration and decay.

Deduction and question: Which of the twain should we follow? — the pathway of the cosmic Intelligence bringing us health inner and outer, peace inner and outer, strength internal and external, by union inner and outer? Or the teaching of a tawdry and isolated self-interest which seeks its own to the prejudice of all?

Is it not high time that we as Theosophists should give to the world a few of the simple inner teachings of the God-Wisdom of the ancients? And will you show me one more sublime, more appealing to human intellect and to the dictates of human conscience, than that of Altruism, which puts us in intimate union with the throbbing of the Cosmic Heart, and which idea, if we can pass it over into the minds of men, will more than justify all the work that the Great Masters of Wisdom have been doing for mankind since time immemorial? Ethics above all!

Every century an attempt is being made to show the world that Occultism is no vain superstition. Once the door [is] permitted to be kept a little ajar, it will be opened wider with every new century. The times are ripe for a more serious knowledge than hitherto permitted, though still very limited, so far. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxvii

The Theosophical Forum

AN OFT REPEATED QUESTION — *Torsten Karling*

Can I be a good Theosophist without penetrating into what you call "technical Theosophy'?"

If in answer to this question one gives the often quoted statement of H. P. Blavatsky: "Theosophist is who Theosophy does," it is obvious that this answer is not exhaustive, for it naturally must be followed by a new question: "What does "doing Theosophy" imply?"

It is to live the Theosophical life; to make brotherhood a living fact, to seek to fully understand the truth concerning the inner divine nature; to seek to understand the laws inherent in the universe: Karma, Reincarnation, Cycles, Evolution, and to adjust one's life according to this knowledge; to study one's own personality and its innate powers, and to live in harmony with what this study teaches.

Can we not quite easily picture to ourselves the person, who, by the law of compassion, has been placed in a modest position, which nevertheless gives enough for the daily existence? He never opens a book, never sinks into thought on one of life's problems, but he listens to the voice of his conscience and lives an honest man's life. His interests spin round in a very narrow circle, and should he one day against his will be led outside of this circle, he is dumb, ignorant, and non-understanding as an undeveloped child. Do we not actually find just this type or its equivalent in the most varying grades and conditions of society? Good, well-meaning, yes, even upright men with exceedingly narrow interests. Religiously they are satisfied with what they received during their school years and in preparation for their confirmation, if they have taken part in the latter. Religion offers them no problems because it lies beyond their horizon. Scientifically they are at peace with theories that were popular in their youth, but which have long since been crowded out by new ones and on the whole have also been pretty thoroughly forgotten. According to their philosophy "the

sun may rise in the east and set in the west," and the astronomers may occupy themselves with the truth that lies behind this obvious fact. Morally they follow the rule for "each man to do right" and in general "live, and let live."

Such as these are not bad people, but they contribute undeniably the very least imaginable to the development and upliftment of mankind.

Now is this type of person to be found among Theosophists? We neither can, nor wish to give an answer to this; but that spirit which seems to live behind the question at the beginning of this article is undoubtedly related to that spirit which holds such a great part of humanity back among the useless of the race.

There is a beautiful and expressive picture, and not least convincing, because it appeals to every man's own experience. For the child's first glimpses of consciousness, the whole world is its mother's embrace and the room in which it plays its first games. Gradually as its powers of observation and movement increase, its world-boundaries begin to broaden out. The world becomes bigger, the home larger. It becomes the city or the village. The first relatively long trip pushes the boundaries still farther out. How many have not experienced that wonderful feeling when crossing the boundaries of one's native country for the first time, of hearing foreign languages spoken, and yet still finding that the people all resemble each other to a large extent? Perhaps for the majority of people the experience stops there. This cannot be the case with a Theosophist. For him the earth is certainly his home in the very narrowest sense, but he must know that it is only "one room" in a greater home which is made up of the whole planetary chain of which this globe is a part, and that this chain is but a part of the larger home, the solar system. And if he begins to investigate this home he will soon find still vaster regions which are also his home. Yes, in actual fact his spirit takes flight still farther, for he knows that in the inmost of his being he is Parabrahman, that which lies beyond all comprehension. But however incomprehensible this may be, he knows at least that there are no limits to the sphere of his consciousness if

only the light of spiritual knowledge may burn from age to age with an ever clearer and brighter flame.

Listen to one of the many utterances in the *Bhagavad-Gita* on the liberating, all-conquering divine power of spiritual knowledge:

. . . the sacrifice through spiritual knowledge is superior to sacrifice made with material things; every action without exception is comprehended in spiritual knowledge. . . . Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error. . . . By this knowledge thou shalt see all things and creatures whatsoever in thyself and then in me. Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge. As the natural fire, O Arjuna, reduceth fuel to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. There is no purifier in this world to be compared to spiritual knowledge; and he who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time. — P. L. Edition, pp. 35-6

This persistent and untiring search is study, acquiring knowledge, an eager search for truth, an even deeper penetration into the science of life, of inner and outer nature, of its laws or working methods, in one word the age-old wisdom, Theosophy.

If we believe that spiritual knowledge will voluntarily spring up from spiritual and intellectual laziness if only we occasionally devote ourselves to vague day-dreaming, which indeed finds material in undigested, or poorly understood Theosophical teachings, then we deceive ourselves. Truly here, if anywhere, do these words hold true: "The Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by storm." Step by step we must fight our way from the one small accretion of land to the next on the field of knowledge. Doubt, fear, and discouragement must be slain, yes, rooted out like weeds, so that they may not stifle the delicate shoot

of sprouting knowledge.

Do not believe that this implies an uncritical reception of all that is offered us. The opposite is the truth. An uncritical attitude in study fosters uncertainty, undermines that firm confidence which is the consequence of independent, fundamental, and serious testing.

Do not confuse either this duty of investigating and testing in order to retain all that may be good with the skeptical attitude which is all too prevalent in the human race, which is continually under the terrible ban of a materialistic age, even though unconscious of it. "The man of doubtful mind hath no happiness either in this world or in the next or in any other. No actions bind that man who through spiritual discrimination hath renounced action and cut asunder all doubt by knowledge," says Krishna in close connexion with the above quotation.

Knowledge is of two kinds, though they in their inmost part may be one. It is partly, as Plato says, a reawakening of what we have known in ages gone by, partly a reflex on our human consciousness of the relatively unlimited knowledge and wisdom which dwell in our higher Self. Neither of these forms can be confused with a mere intellectual or mentally collected supply of facts. These are valuable as building material, but the real knowledge comes from within, and it is this which is referred to in the words above, that the spiritual knowledge shall voluntarily sprout forth in that soul which in unceasing meditation seeks the highest being. Studies, if they are to lead to real knowledge are therefore an offer laid on the altar before this highest, the divine Self. Then they will bear fruit and that fruit is spiritual knowledge.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Can We Shorten Our Devachan?

Would it be possible for any of us to shorten our devachanic period?

G. de P. — Quite possible, if you have the will to do so. Any human being who is willing to renounce his rest, the utter peace and calm which is the thing most longed for by the tired human soul, and who trains himself to this renunciation, can shorten his devachan automatically. But it is only high chelas who can actually do without the devachan, because they have risen above the plane where the human ego requires and longs for rest.

I will just add this as a passing thought: in the far distant future, not only will all human egos on earth have passed beyond the need of the devachan after death, but they will have passed beyond the need for the present type of sleep for the body. What are now our gross physical bodies, in those days will have become practically bodies of condensed light, wonderful bodies, radiant, luminous. They won't need rest as our gross physical bodies now do.

But I would advise any devoted student to think carefully before trying to shorten the devachanic rest, because you may bring upon yourself complicate and possibly disastrous karmic consequences. It is something like a man who, because he has some very important work to do in view, deliberately goes without his sleep, or cuts it short, night after night after night. He can do it, but he can ruin his health that way too; and so in the end he really doesn't get what he is after.

The best way is to think to yourself: I hope that my devachan will be only so long as absolutely needed for rest. I hope it won't be like sleeping in bed longer than one has to, merely because one likes to sleep and rest in bed. That attitude of mind is quite right and safe.

While you are on this subject, I think I recall reading in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* that K. H. speaks somewhere of the periodic devachan that the adept can enter into, even during imbodied existence.

G. de P. — Yes, but that is not the case of the high adepts, but of the high chelas who have not fully passed beyond the need of the devachan. Now there is an occult law well known to the adept, by which a man can shorten his devachan, by taking certain resting-periods, devachanic resting-periods if you wish, in a single imbodiment, set aside a certain number of weeks or months or even years in any one imbodiment for the purpose of going into a temporary but intensive devachan then and there.

That may be a very good way to do for a high chela. For instance, if he is given a work to do, he does his work it may be for several years, and he needs his devachanic rest before he will be called upon again. He profits by that time, let us say by going into the devachan more or less so, right then and there, and rests himself for a while. Then when he comes out of it, he is in the same body, and strong and inwardly recuperated and ready to go on again. But that of course is the case of chelas or adepts who still need the rest, or some devachanic rest.

This matter of the devachan is a very peculiar thing. I have met people, men and women, going about their ordinary vocations, who were actually living in a devachanic state. They were dreaming, they were lackadaisical. Perhaps you have all heard of that kind of folk, people who do not seem to care. They just go about in a sort of half-asleep state. They are not really living. They are still in the devachan to a certain extent. They want to lie abed so long, so to speak, as children do sometimes. They have hardly come out of the devachanic state. They have come out of it enough to take a body, but their minds are still partly in the devachanic dream.

And I have met Theosophists too, whom I deeply revere, who have left the devachan to come into our Work before their devachan was really ended. They are like people who have waked from sleep before the

body has had enough of it to rest it. They are high-strung, nervous, active, quick, that kind of people. These are two extremes which one meets in human life: those who are still in the devachan more or less, although still imbodyed — I do not mean completely in the devachan, but in a devachanic dreamy state and hence not fully at work, or awake to life's calls; and those who have not been in the devachan long enough; and I will say that some of this last class comprise a few of our best workers, and they are having a hard time of it, because they have to fight an inner psychological state of inner weariness which is almost impossible to describe unless you have been through it. They are usually not strong in body, high-strung, nervous individuals, but they are doing a grand work. They have given up a portion of their rest, semi-consciously as it were, in order quickly to take their part again in humanity's destiny.

Do We Ever Incarnate as Beasts?

In view of the teaching of Theosophy: "Once a man always a man," what would be the explanation of some of the Oriental teachings that speak of a man's coming back to earth as a tiger or an elephant, etc. — and also of the many traditions in western countries of a beast being possessed by a human spirit?

G. de P. — No human being ever incarnates as a beast. Let that fact stand as unequivocal and without exception. And this is for the reason that there is absolutely a mental-psychical barrier preventing a human mind from entering a beast psycho-vital apparatus. Of course, this could be done by an act of magic, by some Black Magician, and hence have arisen the stories of werewolves, lycan-thropy, and so forth. But this act of black magic simply proves the general and invariable law: that no human being ever can, in the course of nature, incarnate as a beast.

On the other hand, when a sorcerer, or a man of continuously evil life, through many, many incarnations on a steady downward grade, grows less and less human until the rupture with the spiritual and human monad takes place, in which case there is no longer a man, but merely

the lower quaternary with somewhat faint impressions or psychological shadowings of humanity in it — when this takes place, I say, the entity is no longer a human ego, but as it were an abandoned lower quaternary or human machine, virtually a human shell, which already is so degenerated that it is practically on the level of beasthood. But the humanity, the ego, the human being, of it has long since fled.

Such an abandoned vehicle is attracted to beast-bodies and even to plant-bodies, by the natural attraction of likes, at a still lower degree of descent and dissolution of the lower quaternary. Yet this is not, please note, the incarnation of a human being, because such a degenerated, disintegrated semi-annihilated human quaternary is no longer really human. An analogy is a human body enlivened by a human soul forming a man. When the body is laid aside at death, the man is gone, but there is the form of the man, the life-atoms of the man which disintegrate and pursue their way. The body is given to the dust, and many of the life-atoms even of such a true man which belonged to the body, incarnate in beasts because again of natural attraction of like to like, of animal to animal, as has already been explained. I hope this is clear.

Be it noted, however, that such cases of degenerate human quaternaries, while fairly numerous in actual fact, are nevertheless actually quite rare or infrequent when compared with the immense number of beings forming humanity.

[See also *The Theosophist*, "Transmigration of the Life-Atoms," Vol. IV, Aug., 1883. This article will appear in *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, Vol. V, shortly to be published. — Eds.]

What is Reality?

What is the present-day accepted definition of reality, in science, in philosophy, in the occult?

What is thought, and is thought as we know it real? Are ideation and mentation real?

What is the most practical method for freeing the individual of ideas that are not real?

To what extent can we make an illusion real by brooding over it? — S. K.

H. T. Edge: As this is one of the persistent problems of philosophy, it is not likely that there is any accepted definition; all one can do is to study books on philosophy and compare the numerous views; which the answerer cannot do any better than the questioner. But according to what I have gathered from the Theosophical teachings, the ultimate reality is the Boundless, the Ineffable, the Absolute, THAT, *Parabrahman*, the Causeless Cause, the Rootless Root, etc., as to which nothing can be predicated, which can be defined only in negative terms — by saying what it is *not*. But our concern with this is speculative rather than practical: in actual life we are not concerned with absolutes but with relatives. If anything be postulated as real, then everything else becomes *maya*, appearance; and this contrast between the real and the apparent is everywhere found. Our path of enlightenment consists in a progressive awakening from illusions and achievement of states which are relatively real. Our normal waking consciousness is real by contrast with dream, hallucination, intoxication, or insanity. But our normal waking consciousness is unreal, a *maya*, an appearance, by contrast with a state of illumination or ecstasy. Thus the term "reality" has to be given a relative sense, and we progress by continually chasing reality. Reality cannot be even conceived by the ratiocinative mind; it must be experienced; and then it cannot be argued about or communicated to anyone else. "The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer," as we are told in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Thought is a name given to a motley collection of mental processes, the analysis of which is a fruitful theme of disputation among philosophers. In it the real and the unreal (relatively speaking) are mixed up. Ideation and mentation are similar vague words, and the same remark applies to them. The work of freeing the mind from

illusion is the task of the aspirant to knowledge, and there is no short cut, no sharply defined method. Each one finds his own way. The general rules, applicable to all aspirants, are found in books on the devotional side of Theosophy, not to mention the writings of mystics, Stoics, etc., in all ages. The chief rule is the practice of dispassion, detachment. It is our wayward desires and habits that bind us to illusions. The great "Heresy" to be overcome is the heresy of separateness, which makes us think that the satisfaction of our personal self is the goal of life; so the aspirant has to cultivate motives that are not acquisitive — such as pity, compassion, the desire to promote truth and harmony.

It is true that a person, by dwelling on illusory ideas, can give them a fictitious reality. He may dwell on imaginary grievances until he believes things that really are not so. This leads in extreme cases to insanity — believing your body is made of glass, or that you are Napoleon.

Fundamental Philosophy of the Vedas

I would like to have a few explanations concerning the fundamental philosophy of the Vedas (recapitulated in a few lines), which are to me among the different systems of religions the closest in scientific harmony with Theosophy and also with our modern science. — *B. B.*

J. T. — The philosophy of the Vedas covers a vast and extensive amount of the teachings of the Wisdom-Religion of old. Its most fundamental and mystical philosophical tenets are epitomized in the Upanishads. The philosophy and religious metaphysics of the Upanishads in their developed form is known as the Vedanta system of thought which was promulgated by Sankaracharya. "Tat twam asi," or "That, the Boundless, thou art," is the basic note. We might even say it is the tonic note with which all the other teachings harmonize. This renowned passage is truly the last word of wisdom in old India. The Upanishads are truly records of the teachings of the Masters of Wisdom, and they depict the inner spiritual initiations of a disciple on the Path. This Vedic

lore also deals with the origin and evolution of worlds and beings, the constitution and character of manifested life, the work of the various divinities which keep the universe in running order, the relations between the spiritual and the material, the mysteries of the afterlife, and of the Divinity within every being.

Lost Souls and the Left-hand Path

Some time ago a visitor to one of our meetings remarked that after all it matters very little if a human being took the left-hand path, for if one understood the working of Nature well, it would be seen that all would be well in the end. This seems to us a distinctly wrong teaching and, as it is phrased here, not in accordance with H. P. B.'s teachings. What is your opinion? —

Theosophical Study-class, The Hague

Grace F. Knoche — A peculiar and immoral doctrine with no foundation of fact, and in direct opposition to the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters. The Theosophical position in regard to the destiny of the soul of one who with set purpose follows the path of evil is definitely set forth in the body of doctrine connected with Soul-Loss. When a human being follows the course of soul-death life after life, all the finer energies born of his spirit atrophy, and the soul feeding alone on the exudations of low animalistic tendencies — — the instinct to have, to hold, to possess, at all costs — dies. The thread of divinity wears thin; and when the last aspiration has ceased, the rupture occurs, and the Monad throws off the impediments of the now dehumanized soul. The man has become a Lost Soul, with no further opportunity to attain immortality through union with the Monad, and but waits for Nature finally to dissipate the aggregate of evil propensities which still cohere in entitative form.

This process of disintegration is spoken of as one of indescribable torture. Imagine the suffering that is endured by this soul-shell as slowly but surely it descends into baser and more degenerate human forms, until it is fit only to enter the womb of a beast, finally taking imbodiment in the plant-kingdom. All the while, however, the memory

of diviner fields of consciousness still remains impressed on the atoms of the disintegrating brain, so that continuously visions of better things irretrievably lost haunt, tantalize, in their faint but insistent beat upon the dying consciousness, integrated enough to realize that it alone through wanton indulgence is the cause of its soul-death.

Furthermore, while it is true that the Monad, having already attained self-won immortality in manvantaras previous, is largely unaffected by the loss of a soul, and remains free from the stain and suffering, nevertheless, it receives a major set-back in its evolution. A whole manvantara of time more or less is lost while it must labor slowly and patiently to build again vehicles for self-unfoldment out of unawakened monadic centers. This takes ages upon ages, and aside from this appalling waste of time, the Monad suffers the humiliation of association with a host of entities far inferior to it in manvantaric experience, for the Monadic host to which it formerly belonged and which it no doubt loved, has swept far ahead into fields from which it is now debarred.

Mercifully, such a thing as a lost soul is an exceedingly rare occurrence, for complete soul-death cannot take place while there survives within the human heart *one pure aspiration towards spirit*. That alone if fanned by comradeship of other aspirations will in time be enough to bring the soul back to its own, a receiver and partaker of spiritual light.

The Theosophical Forum

THE DEATHLESS GERM — *H. T. Edge*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

We take as our text a remarkable passage from the writings of a man who would usually be classed as a type of the scientific materialism and skepticism as to things spiritual, characteristic of so much of the scientific thought of last century. Yet a devotion to the proclaimed scientific impartiality in the discovery of truth will inevitably lead to the truth, though our findings may often be vitiated by our prejudices.

In the article on Protozoa by the late Professor E. Ray Lankester, in the Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, we read as follows:

Death. — It results from the constitution of the Protozoan body as a single cell and its method of multiplication by fission that death has no place as a natural recurrent phenomenon among these organisms. Among the Enterozoa certain cells are separated from the rest of the constituent units of the body as egg-cells and sperm-cells; these conjugate and continue to live, whilst the remaining cells, the mere carriers as it were of the immortal reproductive cells, die and disintegrate. There being no carrying cells which surround, feed, and nurse the reproductive cells of Protozoa, but the reproductive cell being itself and alone the individual Protozoon, there is nothing to die, nothing to be cast off by the reproductive cell when entering on a new career of fission. The bodies of the higher animals which die may from this point of view be regarded as something temporary and non-essential, destined merely to carry for a time, to nurse, and to nourish the more important and deathless fission-products of the unicellular egg. Some of these fission-products of the new individual developed from an egg-cell —

namely, the egg-cells and sperm-cells — are as immortal as the unicellular Protozoon.

Before commenting on the above, let us invite comparison with another quotation — this time from *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 336:

It should also be remembered that the First Root-Race strictly speaking did not "die" at all, but each "generation" melted into its own progeny in the very beginning. . . . Towards the end of the First Root-Race and during the beginning of the Second Root-Race, when fission gave place to budding, the process was pretty much the same because "death" had not yet come upon the scene.

What Professor Lankester gives here are of course facts of observation; and his materialism does not come into play to destroy their effect. The student of Theosophy will recognise his remarks as being illustrative of Theosophical teachings as to evolution. Underlying the entire cycle of evolutionary changes is a central thread which is persistent throughout, constituting the true basis of immortality. The bodily structure is but a temporary creation, emerging from the central stem, living its life cycle and performing its functions, and then disappearing; while the main stem, undying, sends forth in due course another temporary structure. Such is biologically the history of animal beings of all degrees above the unicellular — physical man included. This, so far, does not necessarily imply reincarnation; it implies the immortality of a species — say the human species — a thing which nobody doubts; and it explains the persistence of ancestral traits, cases of atavism, the preservation of the integrity of type. Probably this would be as far as the professor would go; for he would envision a universe in which a mysterious being called "Matter" lived and worked all these wonders. To him, consciousness is a manifestation of matter; to the Theosophist, matter is a manifestation of consciousness. This immortal germ, then, which persists throughout the endless generations, is verily the physical counterpart of that "thread-soul" or *sutratman* which is the unbroken chain that links together all the periodic manifestations

which it throws out. There is no absolute death for man, so long as we regard this central life-stream as the real man. The only things which can die are compounds, and they die by decomposing into elements. They die as compounds, though the elements composing them live on and may enter into other compounds.

So far we have obtained but a sketchy summary of the principle involved; but, as regards man, its application will carry us into details and elaborations. It is not that man is composed merely of one immortal essence, and of perishable parts. He is composed of principles having relative degrees of immortality. We may learn about this from what we are taught by Theosophy respecting the various monads: the Divine Monad, the Spiritual, the Manasic, the Psychic, the Astral-Physical; each of which has a life-cycle appropriate to itself, and of greater duration as we ascend the scale. Again, we have the teachings as to the migration and return of the life-atoms; so that the complexity of the whole overleaps our powers of conception, utterly simple as the principle is.

And in what state is that unicellular being (plant or animal)? In it the thread soul is never interrupted by the throwing out of temporary vehicles; it lives always in its central essence. Is it in Nirvana? Extremes meet; lines run full circle; there is nothing high, nothing low, in a just view. We are fond of viewing the universe as a long ladder up which we slowly climb from the mineral to the kingdoms above man; but how can we be sure which direction is up and which is down? This is said in all reverence and sincerity. The answer can be found by studying the Theosophical teachings. All motion is dual; cycles run right and left; simplicity begins and ends the scale; involution down means evolution up. The lowliest atom is the shrine of a God. And do not beings who have achieved heights in evolution "descend," in accordance with natural law, into simple imbodiments in what we classify as the lower kingdoms?

ORIENTAL STUDIES: III — *G. de Purucker*

THE SECRET DOCTRINE OF GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA (1)

V

Buddham saranam gachchhami;
dharmam saranam gachchhami;
samgham saranam gachchhami:

"I go to the Buddha as my refuge." "I go to the *Dharma* or the Law as my refuge." "I go to the Order of Holy Ones as my refuge."

This so-called 'Confession of Faith,' although undoubtedly accepted in the spirit as well as in the letter in Northern Asia, is perhaps especially the teaching comprising the substance of the scriptures of the Hinayana. The compound word Hinayana, descriptive of the spirit of Buddhism of Southern Asia, as contrasted with the Mahayana, descriptive of the Buddhism of the North of Asia, means the 'defective' vehicle, the 'inferior' or 'imperfect' vehicle, i. e., that part of the Lord Gautama's teaching which did not contain in explicit formulation the whole of the doctrine which he taught — a fact which itself declares the existence of another part not herein contained. The name itself declares the fact: (*hina*), i. e., defection, imperfection, incompleteness; and (*yana*), vehicle.

Now this statement of incompleteness or imperfection does not signify, as might readily be supposed from these words, inaccuracy, falsity, or error; the meaning of the compound *Hinayana* is that this system, virtually exclusively popular in Southern Asia, gives the formal intellectual teaching of the Buddha — or what has been called the 'Eye-Doctrine,' that which emanated from the Buddha's mind as a categorical framework of his thought; the *Mahayana*, contrariwise, is stated to contain the more secret — as well as the outer or public — and therefore more difficult aspects of the Buddha-Gautama's teaching,

and consequently has often been called the 'Heart-Doctrine.'

The teaching of the Buddha's heart, i. e., the esoteric Wisdom which he kept hid in his 'heart' and delivered solely to those ready to receive it, is, as just stated, called the Mahayana; and it runs back in its origin to a date at least equal in time to that of the beginning of the Hinayana, which, as stated above, is the body of teaching which he delivered openly, visible to the eye so to speak. Both systems, therefore, are truth, i. e., both the Hinayana and the Mahayana are true; but one must combine the teaching of the 'eye' with the teaching of the 'heart': one must combine the exoteric teaching of the Hinayana with the esoteric of the Mahayana — combine the North and the South, so to speak — if one desire to receive the full message of the Tathagata as he delivered it in its relative fulness to his chelas or disciples.

From which of these two systems have our Western Orientalists drawn the far greater part of the Buddhist material which they have subjected to the really conscientious and thorough examination and study which one gladly recognises they have given? Mostly, if not wholly, they have gathered this material out of the scriptures of the Hinayana, the 'defective' vehicle, a system held by some twenty millions of human beings more or less. Of the teachings of the Mahayana of the North and Center of Asia, the esoteric teachings, the 'heart' of the Buddha, they have intimate knowledge as yet of only a few scriptures. It is well known that a vast amount of Mahayana-material still awaits examination and study, but all this material is as yet more or less an unworked field of thought.

As examples of the Mahayana-material already studied, may be mentioned the *Saddharma-Pundarika* as one; the *Lalita-Vistara* is another Northern Buddhistic work which has received some small attention from European Orientalists. There are a few other works belonging to the Northern School which have received passing but quite inadequate attention in Europe; and it is doubtful if more than this can be truthfully claimed.

Consequently, it certainly would seem that the opinion of Occidental

scholars as to whether there is or is not an esoteric teaching which the Buddha taught or left behind him, is based almost solely upon their studies of the hitherto available scriptures of the Hinayana of the South, the 'defective,' 'imperfect,' because, as said, incomplete, vehicle or system. It is a strange thing indeed to suppose that the Buddha-Gautama is the sole historical instance of a Sage and Seer who was at the same time a religious and philosophical Preceptor, who has left behind him no teachings of a more recondite or secret character than those which he openly proclaimed in his wanderings over Indian mountain and plain. The exception would be so remarkable that it would require particular explanation.

Let us turn now for a few moments to another of the Sutras (2) or religio-philosophical scriptures, held in utmost reverence by something like 400 millions of human beings, all followers, more or less, of the Mahayana-teaching, which, mark you, is as much Buddhism, and genuinely 'orthodox' as is the Hinayana of the South; and the bulk of the testimony as to the value of the teaching certainly remains in the scriptures of the North. Remembering these 400 millions of the North as compared with the twenty millions more or less of the adherents of the Hinayana of the South, this is what is found in the scripture to be quoted from; and it is beyond doubt that many more similar passages could be found, with adequate study, of an even more emphatic tenor.

You are astonished, Kasyapa, that you cannot fathom the mystery expounded by the Tathagata. It is, Kasyapa, because the mystery expounded by the Tathagatas, the Arhats, etc. is difficult to be understood.

And on that occasion, the more fully to explain the same subject, the Lord uttered the following stanzas:

1. I am the Dharmaraja, born in the world as the destroyer of existence. (3)

Now it is the philosophical teaching of Buddhism, when this teaching is properly understood, that the entire world around us is impermanent,

illusory, *mayavi*; but that all existences are founded upon and builded around something inner, secret, esoteric, hid, fundamental, which the Northern Schools, collected under the great Mahayana-teaching, call the Sunyata, i. e., the 'Void,' the Unmanifest as the Theosophist would say. To continue with this quotation from the *Saddharma-Pundarika*:

I declare the law to all beings after discriminating [examining] their dispositions.

A selective teaching, mark you!

2. Superior men of wise understanding guard the word, guard the mystery, and do not reveal it to living beings. (4)

Yet obviously, the Lord Buddha taught it and revealed it to living beings, to all who were prepared to hear and to understand it. It is pertinent here to ask: What is the meaning of these phrases embodying the expressions 'word,' 'guarding the mystery,' if the significance is not that of a teaching too difficult for the ordinary man to receive in its fulness, which is therefore kept only for those who, after discriminate examination, have been tested and found to be worthy and well qualified to receive it? Obviously, we have here a distinct reference to a restraint in the delivery of the Secret Doctrine or Esoteric Tradition, which is not revealed indiscriminately to all and sundry because it is a 'mystery' which must be guarded; and yet 'superior men of wise understanding' have received this mystery, for they are enjoined not to deliver it nor to reveal it to 'living beings' unless, indeed, such be fit for the reception.

3. That science is difficult to be understood; the simple, if hearing it on a sudden, would be perplexed; they would in their ignorance fall out of the way and go astray. (5)

Mark you, did the Buddha teach in order to lead people astray? Is such the declaration of the body of Buddhist teaching, and is such an absurdity the burthen of Buddhist belief? Cannot one see the immediate and necessary deduction as just cited? There is, clearly, an inner Teaching which is given only to those who have been examined

and found fit to receive it, and examined in order that they may not be led astray by receiving a teaching too comprehensive for them to grasp, and therefore certain to be misunderstood by them. One is well aware of the fact that the *Saddharma-Pundarika* is alleged by Western scholars to be the product of a later date, one of the works of a mystical school which became very popular in the North of Asia some centuries after the Buddha had passed on. This may very well be the fact, and it was to be expected; but the fact does not invalidate the main point that such teaching of restriction or of withholding could not have arisen nor have been so widely accepted, had there not been current throughout the Northern Buddhism the strong flow of esoteric thought and suggestion which it therefore becomes only proper to trace back doubtless even to the days of the Buddha himself and to his Arhats. Otherwise, the high probability is that any mere later invention or mere mystical speculations of a later date would have been found highly unacceptable, and would have been peremptorily rejected, when the first attempts were made to promulgate them. The history of mystical thought in all other great systems shows clearly enough, and in every case that is remembered by the writer at the moment, that the esotericism of the respective founder of each of these great systems gradually faded out with the passage of time ensuing after his death, and its place was taken by mere orthodoxy, in which the traditional or written scriptures as received became sacrosanct, untouchable, and often clothed with an atmosphere of holiness which forbade any adding or substantial change. This is clearly shown, for instance, in the literature and mystical history of Christianity.

4. I speak according to their reach and faculty; by means of various meanings [i. e., by means of permutable meanings or parables] I accommodate my view (or the theory). (6)

Is this the supposititious 'closed fist' of the Great Teacher, Gautama the Buddha? When one recollects that the main or fundamental teachings of the Buddha were recognised in both the Northern and the Southern Schools, and that the very phrase 'closed fist' must have been current in both schools as one of the graphic expressions of the great Master

himself, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the 'closed fist' argument, so often cited by European scholars as against the fact of an esoteric teaching in Buddhism, must be understood as it has been attempted in this present chapter to explain it, i. e., as referring solely to the government of the Order after the Buddha's passing; for indeed, the passage in which the 'closed fist' expression occurs, refers *solely* to matters of government in the Order after the Buddha's death. The words of this passage state this unequivocally, and it is merely distorting the scripture itself to read into it something that the scripture does not say.

All that the Lord Buddha taught was true in essentials, but he most certainly did not teach everything to all men. He taught all that was needed for the promulgation of the philosophic and religious doctrine which he delivered; identically so as concerns the government of the Order to prevail during his life-time and for its direction after his demise, and did not hold anything back in a 'closed fist'; and the 'closed fist' passage says nothing but that. Hence, the deductions drawn by Westerners from the 'closed fist' phrase, that the Lord Buddha had no esoteric teaching to deliver and he delivered none, and that no esoteric School or Body of disciples existed during and after his life-time, seem to be simply a preposterous inversion of the historical record; and in addition one must submit the entire history of the life-drama of the Lord Buddha as strong witness, testimony, to the contrary. The whole system of the Mahayana of the North as existing in its different varieties in all its various schools, such as that of Nagarjuna, of Aryasamgha, and of others, every one of them teaching an esoteric doctrine, every one of them hinting at a Wisdom which is not given to all and sundry, provides excellent and to every reasonable mind convincing proof that an esotericism or an Esoteric Doctrine, or Esoteric Tradition, existed in Buddhism from the earliest times, and by the logic of history and the well-known traits of human nature must be traced back to the great Founder himself.

If we are to take one Buddhist scripture of the South, the *Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta*, hereinbefore quoted from, as being the words of the

Lord Buddha — and this one is perfectly willing to do with certain natural and necessary reservations depending upon the difficulties of accurate transmission and delivery through the centuries, and having due regard also to the literary formulation of his teachings in scriptural structure — then here on the other side, we have a Northern scripture alleging to be the equally authentic words of the Master, which it seems unreasonable to set aside on grounds of theory or merely literary prejudice, this Northern work stating that the Doctrine is to be delivered with prudence and care, and not to all men, and that the Wise guard it and reveal it not, except, as the preceding sloka or verse says, with discriminating judgment to minds which differ in 'their disposition.' Indeed, and speaking generally, one knows not a single great religious philosophy or philosophical religion, which has not, or which has not had in its origins, an esoteric doctrine. The mere fact that such esoteric doctrine is not properly understood and perhaps even not recognised by all, and possibly again, forgotten in this or some other religion, argues nothing to the contrary, and is certainly not a proof that such esoteric School or Doctrine did not once exist therein.

The objections alleged against the existence, or possibility of the existence, of an esoteric School or body of doctrine in Buddhism, limp painfully because running directly counter to human psychology in such matters; and therefore objections of this character should be scrutinized with meticulous and jealous care. Nor should the religious-philosophical works presently existing in the world and alleging to give the teachings or doctrines of mystical or so-called esoteric or quasi-esoteric schools, be accepted at the face-value of their averments or statements; because virtually all such mystical works are written in veiled fashion, and when read, often repel by the unconscionable exaggerations and often apparently ridiculous distortions of natural fact which they occasionally if not frequently embody. Such luxuriance in statement and pageantry of metaphor themselves prove that these scriptures are written in the common and usual esoteric cipher, and can be properly construed and understood only by those who possess the keys thereto. It is clear enough that if a doctrine is intended to be

esoteric, of necessity, when delivered to the public, its teachings must be hid under veil and allegory; and it is absurd to take veils and allegories, parables or metaphors, tropes or figures of speech, as statements of plain, unvarnished, pragmatical fact. It seems indeed high time that our Western scholars should use ordinary sense in these matters, and if they do not understand and are repelled by the highly figurative language of Oriental or other mystical works, this is no reason for condemning these scriptures as not being what they are alleged to be, or themselves purport to be.

If our Occidental scholars, our European Orientalists — and the writer craves pardon if his language here seem a bit unkind — would use their human common sense and intuitions a little more, i. e., would allow them a freer play in their work and criticism, they would themselves see what the ordinary man who reads these scriptures easily sees for himself; and, furthermore, they would probably realize that taking one half of the scriptures of Buddhism, i. e., those of the Hinayana only, or very nearly 'only,' and drawing deductions from this one half, is not only inadequate and therefore imperfect study, but is likewise distinctly reprehensible work in scholarship. It is, as it were, taking the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, or of the Church of Martin Luther, or of the Church founded by Calvin, and thereupon saying: Here, this is Christianity; it teaches so-and-so; and thus-and-thus; and although other phases of Christian thought may be found in other branches of the Christian Church General, nevertheless the phase of it that we have been studying seems to contain the most ancient ideas and therefore probably the most accurate presentation of the thought and will of the great Founder.

Now, such one-sided study is more or less precisely what too many of our Occidental Orientalists have done — and continue to do. The present writer states, without fear of any consequences arising from contradiction, that there is and always has been as much esoteric teaching in Buddhism — i. e., that there is in fact an esoteric Buddhism, an Esoteric Tradition in it — as there was a very early esoteric or secret side under the Christian doctrinal scriptural tradition; there was as

much esotericism in early Buddhism, and it still lives and flourishes in certain places, as there was esotericism in the religions and philosophies and the Mysteries of ancient Greece and of Rome and of Egypt and elsewhere; and that there is and always has been an equally esoteric or secret doctrine in Brahmanism.

VI

Probably the main reason for the widespread misunderstanding of the essential nature of Buddhistic teaching as first delivered to his Arhats or disciples by Gautama the Buddha, and leaving aside for the moment the later development of Buddhistic philosophy due to the labors of monkish philosophers and exegetes, or expounders, is the almost total lack on the part of Western scholars of the past to see that what the Buddha aimed at more than anything else was the bringing to men of a greater light, a larger hope, and a wider spiritual vision. The truth was that he threw open some of the hitherto fast-closed doors of Brahman philosophy, and instantly gained the opposition and ill-will of the larger part of the Brahmanas of his time. The objective of the great Teacher's Wisdom was the improving, or better still unfolding, of human intellectual faculty and spiritual power, as demonstrated by his insistence, emphatic, reiterated and unceasing, on what one may term the Doctrine of Becoming. In the eyes of the Buddha-Gautama, man is a Pilgrim, Child of the Universe, who at times is blinded by *Maha maya* or the Great Illusion of cosmic existence, and at such times therefore needs to be shown the Way or Law, called the *Dharma*, pointing to a realization of the fact that only by *becoming* rather than by mere being could man become the Greater Man which he is in his essential constitution.

It is with genuine pleasure that one may point to a wider and deeper view of the Buddhistic philosophy than has hitherto prevailed in Western countries; and that such wider and therefore wiser visioning of the essential meaning of Buddhism is now coming to the fore, is proved by the very recent appearance of books treating the Buddha and his life-work and religion-philosophy from a more sympathetic

viewpoint than has hitherto been customary in the West. Such a work, just off the press [1935] is the booklet entitled *Indian Religion and Survival* by Mrs. Rhys Davids. In her extremely interesting little work, this brilliant Buddhist scholar, so well known for her labors in the Pali scriptures and translations therefrom, writes as follows, in showing just what the Buddha had in mind in his work:

[The Buddha] sought to show each and every man a More which lay in his nature, his life, his destiny. This was, that to become, to grow spiritually was of the essence of his nature, as spirit or very-man; that to become 'in the right way' he had to exert will, choice; that in him moved and worked Deity in man's inner sense-of-right, of the 'ought,' known as *dharma*. (7)

Mrs. Rhys Davids is unquestionably right in the ascription to Buddhism of the substance of the great Teacher's message which she sees and briefly refers to in the extract just given. Yet the suggestion that the Buddha taught of a 'Deity' in the manner so commonly understood in the West, even by thus proclaiming the divine immanence, is to wander from what the entire testimony of the Buddhist thought so strongly avers; although indeed if Mrs. Rhys Davids means merely the implication that the 'Deity' here spoken of is the abstract or neuter *Divine* — as contrasted with the masculine *God* — this being slightly if at all different from the essential abstract divinity of the Upanishads, then one can only question the propriety of the usage of the word Deity, and agree.

The main thing to note in all this is that the substantial burthen of the Great Teacher's Message, outside of many other important matters, was the emphasis placed upon his doctrine of Becoming, i. e., evolving, growing, unfolding, unwrapping what is within, by all entities whatsoever, man included, through and by means of that ineluctable and wonderful operation of the Universe which the Buddha in common with his predecessors called *Karman*: the doctrine of inescapable consequences for every thought, act, emotion, or feeling, undergone passively, or initiated actively, by every individual being or

entity. It was precisely this union of willing and doing on the part of every entity which brought about its Ever-Becoming, in other words, its constant growth, or, mayhap, in minor stages its periods of retrogression, likewise instances of 'becoming.'

In this really sublime teaching one finds the philosophical structure of Buddhism both exoteric and, as Theosophists claim, esoteric. By his 'becoming,' i. e., by his progress from stage to stage in evolutionary changes which are continuous and uninterrupted, a man, among other beings, may raise himself as high as the highest gods, or may debase himself through his willing and doing to the low and dread levels of the beings in the so-called hells of which so much is found in Buddhistic literature.

In this teaching of *Becoming*, just as the same is found in esoteric Theosophy, in the Esoteric Tradition, we find both the reason and the rationale of the many statements both in Buddhism and indeed elsewhere that every man has it within his power, by appropriate spiritual, intellectual, psychical, and ethical willing and doing, himself in the course of ages to become a Buddha — a doctrine which, as Mrs. Rhys Davids properly hints, is expressly taught in the Buddhism of Northern and Central Asia. As she truly says:

That not this Bodhisattva only, [the Buddha-Gautama in a former existence] but every man has it in him eventually to realize Buddhahood: this was brought to the front by Mahayana Buddhism. (8)

This is admirable; but it is to be regretted that this able and conscientious Pali scholar should labor under the impression that the Buddhism of Southern Asia should have "neglected to show it as equally applicable to every man."

The reason for Mrs. Rhys Davids' belief that this teaching is lacking in the Pali Scriptures seems to lie in the fact that it is not expressly stated as a doctrine; and yet to the present writer the Hinayana-system contains, both by numerous hints in the various scriptures which embody its teachings, and in rarer instances by direct allusion, the

same doctrine of becoming and the same pointing to the results of such becoming that the Mahayana does, albeit in the latter system the doctrine is explicit and fairly well elaborated.

VII

It may be as well before passing on to refer once more to Mrs. Rhys Davids' clever and very readable little book if only in order to show that modern Western Buddhist Scholarship is veering markedly away from the Occidental and quasi-Christian prejudices and preconceptions that so strongly and injuriously colored the work of virtually all former Occidental Buddhist studies. She speaks at length of the doctrine of 'survival,' around which so much useless controversy has raged in the past as to whether Buddhism does or does not, did or did not, teach the utter annihilation of the human compound at death. Most Western Buddhist scholars of former days, if not all of them, seem to have united in a common opinion to the effect that one proof of the so-called 'Pessimism' of Buddhism was the fact that it taught that with the dissolution of the human compound entity, i. e., at death, the entity vanished, disappeared utterly, was completely annihilated: this in the face of the iterated and reiterated statements of the Buddhist scriptures themselves, even of the Hinayana, that what survived dissolution of the compound entity was its Karman, i. e., the results, consequences, of what the compound entity itself was at the moment of dissolution. It would seem evident to the merest tyro in philosophical thought that the word Karman thus used must have a technical substantial significance, because it is obvious that results or consequences cannot survive the death of their originator, for the reason that if results or consequences do not inhere in some thing or in some entity — i. e., if they are not parts or portions of an entity — they have no existence in themselves. An 'act' cannot survive, nor can a 'consequence' survive, except in the modern Western scientific sense of impressions made on surrounding material, and this is not the meaning of the Buddha's teaching because the scriptures of both the Mahayana and the Hinayana are replete with instances of entities, 'compound aggregates,' which nevertheless after death and after a certain period of other

existence in other worlds are reborn as men on earth.

The stories about the Buddha himself are both emphatic and luminous illustrations to the point, as exemplified in the famous Jataka-stories, meaning rebirth-stories. These 550 or more rebirth-stories describe the alleged repeated reincarnations or rebirths of the Buddha, and show him rising from lower stages to higher; and if the 'compound aggregate' is utterly annihilated at its death or dissolution, how, obviously, can such a non-existing entity be reborn in an unending series of reappearances of such entity's intrinsic karman? Is it not obvious that Western Scholars have failed to grasp the subtlety and profound meaning of the Buddha's teaching? The riddle is solved — although indeed it is no riddle at all — by remembering the teaching of Theosophy, of the Esoteric Tradition, to the effect that man, equally with every other being or entity or thing, is his own karman: his karman is himself, for he himself is the results, the consequences, the fruitage, the production, of every preceding thought, feeling, emotion, or act in the virtually unending series of past rebirths, each such birth automatically reproducing itself as changed or modified by its own willing and doing — to wit, the consciousness acting upon the 'compound aggregate' thus producing karman, or modifications, or changes, in the substance of the man himself. Thus verily a man is his own karman; he is his own child, the offspring of what he formerly willed and made himself now to be; just as at present, in his actual compound constitution he is willing and making himself, through results or consequences produced upon his constitution, to be what in the future he will become. Just here, again, we see the tremendous force and philosophical power of the Buddha's doctrine of *Becoming*

Turning now to the promised citation from Mrs. Rhys Davids' booklet, she says:

That it was, in original Buddhism, a given man or woman who survives, who lives on, after death of the body, is always referred to as a truth to be accepted and understood. (9)

And again, wherein she culls a passage from one of the Jatakas:

'Now it may seem to you, Ananda, that at that time Jotipala was a different person, but you should not look upon it like that *I* at that time was Jotipala ' Could emphasis further go? I say this, because later Buddhism came to deny the passing over of the identical person, came to deny there was any personal survivor.
(10)

Now these citations from Mrs Rhys Davids certainly prove that something survives the dissolution of the compound aggregate, following Buddhist thought, when death comes upon this aggregate, but it should be pointed out that this is wholly admitted and emphatically stated in the Buddhist writings themselves, which employ no small emphasis in this ascription of continuity to the x-factor in the compound aggregate which has repeated existences or reincarnations on earth as well as in other worlds. The Buddhist scriptures, as has been stated above, declare that this x-factor is the karman of the entity; Mrs Rhys Davids seems to rebel at this abstract philosophical statement and believes that she finds in what she calls original Buddhism teaching to the effect that there is an actual person who survives physical dissolution or death. Just so, the present writer is wholly at one with her in this, but he is likewise wholly at one with the statement of the Buddhist scriptures themselves, for he has in preceding paragraphs shown with sufficient clarity although sketchily, he believes, that this surviving 'person' is the karmic entity or karman of the preceding entity which died and which thus survives.

What is a 'person,' after all, except a mask, a vehicle, a veil, composed of compounded or aggregate elements drawn from the surrounding nature through which works and lives the spiritual force alluded to in preceding paragraphs, and which, traced to its source, is seen to be the inner Buddha, the Dhyani-Buddha, the inner god? This, the Buddha himself taught, as so well outlined in the Maha-yana-system, man could again *become* by so living and striving as to bring it into karmic relationship or existence even here on earth

Mrs. Rhys Davids unfortunately seems to ascribe the teaching of the

Pali Buddhist scriptures of the survival of the karman as the entity itself, to the monkish elucubrations of Buddhist anchorites who sought to flee from the world, and who thus craved utter annihilation of their essence in preference to its continued existence in conscious rebirths. The present writer is positive that Mrs Rhys Davids has here completely misunderstood the subtil philosophical sense of this entire matter; and he believes that Buddhist scholarship in the future will trace back the essential teaching on this matter of the Hinayana Pali scriptures to declarations of Buddha-Gautama himself. Time will show.

Yet one can only desire to render due meed of respect to this courageous student and scholar who, apparently alone, at the present time, is unafraid to face the current of misconception and prejudice which previous Western Buddhistic scholarship has so strongly set in movement.

FOOTNOTES:

1. By request THE FORUM reprints these important chapters on the Secret Doctrine of Gautama the Buddha, slightly condensed, from *The Esoteric Tradition*. They will appear in three installments, the present one being the second. ([return to text](#))
2. Reference is here made to the *Saddharma-Pundarika* mentioned above, to its chapter v, as translated by H. Kern, of the University of Leiden, Holland, as found in Volume XXI of the *Sacred Books of the East* series, pages 121-2. ([return to text](#))
3. Ibid. ([return to text](#))
4. Ibid. ([return to text](#))
5. Ibid. ([return to text](#))
6. Ibid. ([return to text](#))
7. *Indian Religion and Survival*, p. 8: by Mrs. Rhys Davids, d. litt., m. a.; President of the Pali Text Society. ([return to text](#))

8. *Op. cit.*, p. 42. ([return to text](#))

9. *Op. cit.*, p. 56. ([return to text](#))

10. *Op. cit.*, p. 57. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Permanent Individuality

Does Theosophy teach that we always retain our individuality in all states of consciousness?

G. de P. — Yes, it does indeed, provided that we use "individuality" in the technical Theosophical sense. Remember that the individuality is a very different thing from the personality. The individuality is the deathless part of us, the *individuum*, that which cannot be divided. Otherwise stated, it is the Monadic Essence, it is the Inner God, the spark of divinity within us, that spark of the Cosmic Fire of consciousness-life-substance which is our inmost essence. This in its root is Atman, the indivisible self, deathless, stainless, and in its own essence beginningless and endless; for it is of the very substance-consciousness of the Universe.

The personality is a vastly different thing, it is a reflexion merely of the individuality; the personality is like the moonshine, reflected light from the sun; and this personality is mortal always — and how fortunate it is that it is so! Fancy what it would be like, living in eternity in our present personalities: imperfect, undeveloped, feeble, inept, incapable of any great advancement, a poor understander, a very poor follower of noble things, incapable of receiving and retaining for any length of time the best that is in us.

Yet the personality is a wonderful instrument or vehicle through which the individuality works. I think we may say generally that the individuality is the spirit, and the personality is the mortal brain-mind of us, changing with each birth.

Thus it is clear why the individuality is the same, and that "we retain" it in all states of consciousness, for these various states of consciousness, in all their manifold and often bewildering phases and shifting

qualities and attributes, when traced to their ultimate or original source, are light-stuff from the Atman. Consciousness contains many mysteries; and the real part of us is conscious even in those phases of consciousness wherein the personality is unconscious — a curious play upon words, yet containing a profound truth, and pointing to the same thought contained in the Sanskrit aphorism: *Atmanam atmand pasya*, "Know the self by the Self."

Mummies and Reimbodiment

I understand that the ego uses in each life the physical and other atoms it had previously. If this is the fact, in the case of embalming are new atoms furnished for the new body, or is reincarnation delayed by embalming?

S. H. W. — No, it cannot be said that reincarnation is delayed by embalming, though it is perfectly true that the atoms which formed the body of an individual in one life are used again to form the new one. How is this apparent contradiction explained? In two ways. First, H. P. Blavatsky tells us (see *Complete Works*, Vol. IV, p. 321) that "for 3000 years at least the "mummy," notwithstanding all the chemical preparations goes on throwing off, to the last, invisible atoms which from the hour of death re-entering the various *vortices* of being, go indeed "through every variety of organized life forms." " This shows that for whatever reason the Egyptians may have tried to imprison atoms by embalming, they were only partially successful.

Dr. de Purucker, in *The Esoteric Tradition* (consult Index) elaborates the teaching of the transmigration of life-atoms, and he further explains — and this is our second point — that no entity at any one time holds within the circumscribing sphere of its physical and inner bodies all the atoms that "belong" to it; so that whatever might be done to the physical encasement, would not even begin to affect the vast hosts of life-atoms of ours that are transients in the bodies, inner and outer, of other beings.

A larger picture is obtained if reimbodiment is viewed from the

standpoint of the Ego. This Ego is irresistibly drawn back from the Devachan into earth-life by causes it has itself generated. Its urge to re embody is so strong that it would indeed take a mighty force to hold it back. And just as we, when we are impelled from inner urge to carry out some work, don't wait for perfect circumstances but go ahead with the tools and materials we can lay hands on, so does the Re embodying Ego do likewise.

Building a physical body is perhaps the least of the work that the ego has to do in coming back into earth-life. And since embalming cannot touch the vehicles of the higher principles in man, the ego would not even be "inconvenienced," if we wish to believe that such a thing were possible, until the very last stages of preparations for earth-life.

All the above does not imply that mummification has no ill effects. There are Theosophical teachings in this connexion, but these do not enter into a consideration of the present subject.

Theosophy and Mental Healing

What is the attitude of the Theosophical Society towards mental healing, in its various forms, both physical and mental conditions?

Arthur A. Beale — I presume the questioner means "in relation to the treatment of physical as well as mental conditions." The Point Loma Theosophical Society does not have, as part of its regime, the practice of mental healing, though it expects its members to develop a moral code of conduct and a mental attitude of control, kindness, courtesy, helpfulness, and compassion that will aid them to radiate good-will, beneficent peace and concord, and so be healing powers in themselves, without specific ceremonies.

It has as members many physicians who are open to practise the art of healing in any way they think best, without infringing the rights of others. In such practices they are entitled to make reasonable charges as members of a social system. At the same time it has always been an unwritten law that the teachings and practices of occult lore must be

free and untrammelled by any charges of a financial nature. So it is recognised that charges for spiritual teachings or the application of occult knowledge for healing are impermissible.

There are many forms of so-called mental healing extant today, but such practices can generally be traced to psychological influences that can have no permanent or effective results. It is possible for instance to put into operation attitudes of mind that can and will relieve the patient from inconvenient suffering, and such are often called cures. These, however, may only be psychological tricks that dam back consequences which if allowed to operate at the proper cyclic times, would be beneficial or beneficent, though unwelcome to the personality. Paul said, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The harvest can and may be delayed, but any amount of hoping, praying and cajolling will not prevent the harvest: the wise man will reap it at the harvest time. Therefore, a direct attempt to interfere with these consequences is fraught with harm to the patient. Yet the old invocation, "Cease to do evil and learn to do good!" is ever wise.

Many people suffer from ignorance or lack of knowledge; it is the duty of medical men to instruct their patients in laws of living and natural obligations. The wise words of Dr. Wilson, the writer of an old-time text-book on health are pertinent: "Men and women cannot be made moral or well by acts of parliament, but by a wholesome co-operation in obedience to the laws of health." Anyone suffering from ill health should endeavor to seek the best assistance available to adjust his conditions, and it may be his desert to meet with one capable of giving immediate relief. That is a question of karmic desert but the one to give it must be wise enough to know how to execute it.

On the other hand it is admitted that certain servants of the Lodge of Adepts, that have a special work to do, may even be rescued from a pending disease or death by occult knowledge and power, but that is not for the personal gratification of the servant, but for the sake of a cause, and even then, the decision must rest with the servant. Such was

the case of Madame Blavatsky.

Was Thomas Paine a Messenger?

Was the American Thomas Paine a Messenger of the Masters, or at least a conscious instrument which they used in the early days of American national independence? — *F. G.*

C. Q. W. — The Masters themselves seldom if ever enter directly into the world of human life and affairs, especially the political. They never countenance violence or bloodshed under any circumstances; but they know that there are cycles when violence is unavoidable, and then it is that they use the best possible instruments, who may or may not be conscious of the fact that they are instruments, to do whatever is possible to avoid the terrible things that usually happen at such a time; also to guide the stream of events into a channel that will make for a brighter future.

Paine, Franklin, Washington, Patrick Henry, and other American patriots were probably *unconscious* instruments of the Law. That is, in their incarnation as these famous characters, the personality did not remember except dimly the true status of the individuality. We are taught that this sometimes happens when an advanced soul is in need of some particular experience, or when there is a cycle of tremendous import occurring. The cycle of "America" was due to open at that particular time. The gods only know what would have been the result if many big souls had not incarnated to nurse the new "baby" through its birthing.

Tom Paine was an iconoclast, but not an atheist; in this he closely parallels Ingersoll. There were certain molds of mind that had to be broken, and Paine did good work. But neither of these men could be called Masters; nor, from an esoteric study of their writings and teachings could they be properly placed as conscious chelas or messengers. They had certain illumination, undoubtedly, regarding the Great Work, but it is doubtful if they had direct conscious connexions with the Lodge of the Masters.

Note the difference between the work of Paine and that of H. P. B. She was in direct communication with the Masters, and that in full consciousness. Her work was constructive; Paine's was on the whole destructive; although both types of work are at times necessary. The rubbish has to be cleared away before the Temple can be built. And even H. P. Blavatsky — great as she was — cannot be called a Master. This word "Master" has been so dragged in the dirt by psychics and pseudo-occultists that it is heartbreaking to those who really have a conception as to who and what the Masters are, and what they represent. Read anywhere in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* and see if you think the type of men who wrote those letters would countenance the flapdoodle that so often today is carried on in the name of the "Masters"!

"The Word Made Flesh"

Does "the word made flesh" also mean the condensation of primordial substance into what we call matter? — *G. C. L. G.*

Lydia Ross — The answer to this very interesting question is Yes, with the proviso that such condensation is not directly into matter as we know it, but that it is progressively "stepped down" from plane to plane. H. P. B. speaks of primordial matter as "(Pradhana) being certainly synonymous with *Mulaprakriti* and Akasa, and the latter (sound) with the Verbum, the Word or the Logos" (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 256). The agent which transmits what she calls "the Breath crystallized into the Word" is the personified electric vital power of our old friend, Fohat,

the transcendental binding Unity of all Cosmic Energies, on the unseen as on the manifested planes, the action of which resembles — on an immense scale — that of a living Force created by will, in those phenomena where the seemingly subjective acts on the seemingly objective and propels it to action. Fohat is not only the living Symbol and Container of that Force, but is looked upon by the Occultists as an Entity — the forces he acts upon being cosmic, human and terrestrial, and

exercising their influence on all those planes respectively. On the earthly plane his influence is felt in the magnetic and active force generated by the strong desire of the magnetizer. On the Cosmic, it is present in the constructive power that carries out, in the formation of things — from the planetary system down to the glow-worm and simple daisy — the plan in the mind of nature, or in the Divine Thought, with regard to the development and growth of that special thing. He is, metaphysically, the objectivised thought of the gods; the "Word made flesh," on a lower scale, and the messenger of Cosmic and human ideations: the active force in Universal Life. In his secondary aspect, Fohat is the Solar Energy, the electric vital fluid, and the preserving fourth principle, the animal Soul of Nature, so to say, or — Electricity. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 111

The Occultists recognise the power of Sound in their Mantras. H. P. B. gratefully tells of the Master's use of Sound to restore her worn-out body from impending death, on several occasions. The "text" of the above question touches on many aspects of her teachings on Hierarchies, Spirit and Matter, Will, Cosmic Mind, Vibration, etc.

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

Science and the Eastern Doctrine of Maya

The rapid advance of science toward concepts of the order of the universe hitherto unsuspected in the West has already led to a very near approach to the age-old teaching of the Vedanta expressed in the word Maya, commonly, though imperfectly, translated as "illusion," in contradistinction to "reality."

R. Potter, in *Science*, December 17, in a synopsis of a symposium on "Philosophical Concepts in Modern Physics" by four leading American physicists, explains that it is no longer possible to regard the atom as a kind of solar system in miniature. No mechanical model or picture can express its true nature. He says:

One needs a sharp mental adjustment to get over the idea that electrons and atoms and electric waves are real things that you can touch or see. Many people know that one can't see electrons, but familiarity with the term lends a sort of mental faith in their reality. These terms of modern physics are merely convenient — and often misleading — mental concepts which represent certain symbols in mathematical equations. The things that may seem real turn out to be merely "tools" of the mind just as a test-tube is a tool of the chemist. . . . And above all, don't put too much reliance on what you may think is your common sense. Remember that common sense, like Einstein's theory, is relative.

But, as he points out, the *experiments* which are guided at every step by the abstractions and symbols are very practical. Even though we cannot make comprehensible "models" or mental pictures of the symbols the results are definite enough. For instance, recent researches into radio-activity and the production of new elements, etc., have opened a most important field in the cure of disease. Through the study of the *relationships* of the atomic or electronic "symbols," unknown and

mysterious though they be, are we learning something of what is actually happening in that aspect of the universe which is available to our senses.

While it is only a short time ago that mental pictures of the structure of the atom were regarded as valid, physicists (such as Dr. Dampier-Whetham in his *History of Science*, 1930) were even then expressing their belief that sooner or later the atomic models and any intelligible form of mechanistic explanation of matter would fail and that we should be left face to face with "Mystery"! And this has already come to pass.

Dr. Dorothy Turner, in her article in the *Aryan Path* for December on "The Ignorance of Science," explains the position of modern physics in regard to "matter" with great clearness, and supports the possibility that science is moving directly toward a purely mystical and spiritual interpretation of the cosmos. We quote a few of her concluding remarks:

Once it was possible to picture the nucleus of the atom as something "real," but nowadays we are left with hardly that much ground to stand on, for *we have had to abandon all our early notions of a substance*. Modern physics, in fact, leads to the conclusion that the atom nucleus is just a center from which radiations spread. Matter is interpreted in terms of wave motion, and if we ask how can there be motions without some substance to be put into motion, we are left with an unanswered question. . . .

Science indeed is not concerned with any assertion as to realities. It deals with abstractions. Certain factors of experience are taken into account; while others, perhaps those most important to the inner life of man, are neglected. But now that we have shaken off that old bugbear of "reality" it is probable that the aesthetic and moral values will no longer be regarded as factors of experience which can be neglected. It is even possible that men of science will turn from their tenuous world of abstractions to the mystic quest and through spiritual experience find riches never before dreamed of in their philosophy.

In one of H. P. Blavatsky's magnificent passages in *The Secret Doctrine* where she protests against materialistic physics in 1888, she points out that unless scientists face the problem of the divisibility of the atom (now, of course, established, but then considered incredible because it would lead to doubting the very existence of physical matter) they will find themselves in an impossible position. Yet the divisibility of the atom, carried to its logical conclusion — infinite divisibility — resolves matter into simple centers of force, and brings us face to face with its illusory nature, or the Oriental *Maya*. (*Maya*, does not mean illusion in the sense of seeing something that does not exist, but a misleading perception of reality.) H. P. Blavatsky says that the whole science of Occultism is based upon the divisibility of the atom, for it leads directly to the existence of something deeper than physical matter, of "substance" in states of tenuity "undreamt of by the most spiritually disposed chemists and physicists." Let our scientific readers compare pages 518-521, volume I of *The Secret Doctrine* with the latest speculations of modern physics and see for themselves how truly she spoke when she said that many of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom would be rediscovered by the more intuitive minds of the twentieth century, and her statements vindicated.

According to Theosophy, man has indeed the power to penetrate the veil of *Maya*, and to get a true picture of things as they really are. To quote from G. de Purucker's *Occult Glossary*:

There is a deathless Reality behind, which forms the substratum or the Truth of things, out of which the phenomenal in all its myriad relative manifestations flows. And there is a Way, a Road, a Path, by which men may reach this Reality behind, because it is in man as his inmost Essence, and therefore primal origin. In each one is fundamentally this Reality which we are all in search of. Each one is the Path that leads to it, for it is the Heart of the Universe. — pp. 150-1

Photographing the Atom

Though we must regard the atom as only *appearing* to be a solid

material body, whose nature is still a mystery, yet Sir William Bragg recently showed by means of X-Ray pictures that it is possible to take shadow-photographs which record the *arrangements* of the atoms in the molecules of crystals. He says: "even the distances between individual atoms in a crystal can be calculated accurately to within one per cent, from these pictures, and the dimensions of a unit "cell" in a crystal can be measured much more accurately." In this way it can be shown that the differences in arrangement of identical carbon atoms in the diamond, in graphite, and in coal, clearly explain their respective characteristics, such as hardness, softness, etc. The *cause* of such differences is of course as unknown to modern science as the real nature of the "substance" of which atoms are composed. Occult science denies that the tremendous forces which guide these identical atoms of carbon into such different patterns, and which hold them in place, are purely mechanical and blindly unconscious. But in order to penetrate deeply into the mystery of Causes, where only a very few can hope to succeed, methods other than those of physical science must be used, as the Mahatman K. H. states in his famous letter of encouragement for Professor Crookes (*The Mahatna Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 341-2), saying that the seekers for Truth must have in themselves "the elements of success," elements that are not merely intellectual (*Mdnasic*), but spiritual (*Buddhic*), perhaps a surprising thing to tell a modern scientific researcher, at least in the nineteenth century.

Cosmic Rays and Evolution

The Swedish *Sydsvenska Dagbladet* publishes an article by Dr. Axel Corlin on this subject which supports the ancient belief in the interdependence of everything in the universe, a concept hinted at by Eddington when he says that the activity of the smallest electron on the earth affects even the distant galaxies. As Dr. Corlin says, the discovery that X-Rays can modify the heredity of plants and even of some higher forms of life, causing mutations, suggests that the far more powerful Cosmic Rays may produce similar effects and be the cause of tremendous changes in the evolution of terrestrial life-forms.

The Cosmic Rays become more numerous as we ascend into the higher regions of our atmosphere, and if they help to produce new species it would seem that in elevated plateaux or in mountainous regions we ought to find a greater variety of species than in low levels. Corlin points out that Hamshaw Thomas, an English scientist, made a study of the comparative abundance of both wild and cultivated species of plants in low and high altitudes in similar latitudes, and found that an increase in varieties actually takes place with increasing altitude. This is a good argument for the Cosmic Ray hypothesis.

Other researches, by the German scientists Krebs, Rajewski, and Zickler, have shown that plant mutations can be modified by protective arrangements which control the impact of the Cosmic Rays. Dr. Corlin believes that even if Cosmic Rays can affect only the lower forms of life, higher forms may well be affected by environmental changes produced by the modifications of the others, with whom they are closely associated. He closes his article with the interesting suggestion that if Cosmic Rays really produce effective mutations: "the fundamental idea of ancient astrology returns in a modern guise; the distant stars *do* interfere with life on earth."

While there is much truth in this statement, we cannot agree that such a cause as the mere mechanical action of the Cosmic Rays can be responsible for the majestic and purposeful march of evolution on earth. The cause is far too insignificant to account for the effect; a conclusive argument which can be used against all the soul-denying evolutionary schemes of the mechanistic theorists.

Unexplained Change of Climate in Northern Europe

The weather provides a safe topic of conversation, but we are less interested in discussing climate because, as the schoolboy said, "It goes on all the time." But this is not quite correct, and we have an example of a surprising change in a comparatively short time in a recent report from Northern Europe. Dr. Kurt Tinnberg, Stockholm archaeologist, has recently found that only four thousand years ago the far northern territory of the Laps, well within the Arctic Circle, had a warm and

genial climate as is shown by the discovery of unmistakable remains of grape-vines! We shall be grateful if some friend in Sweden will send us further information about this matter as it may be of importance in regard to certain Theosophical teachings about pre-historic conditions. Other researches, in more southerly parts of Europe have shown that twelve thousand years ago the inhabitants were sufficiently civilized to keep sheep, cows, and horses, and to make excellent leather. Above all, they had linen garments made of flax at that remote period! Is it merely a coincidence that these northern Europeans were using linen at the same time as the Badarian settlers in the Fayum, Egypt, were making linen of a quality unsurpassed, in fact un-equaled, by the best that we can produce today, as Dr. Petrie and others have reported? The earliest remains of the Badarians, so far discovered, date back about fourteen thousand years from the present day, as proved by the rate of deposition of the Nile mud. (This date is referred to in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 750.

The Theosophical Forum

LET'S LAUGH AT OURSELVES — *Leoline L. Wright*

Life so needs beauty and laughter," said Katherine Tingley once *a propos* of her presentation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Let us lay this to heart and not be too solemn over our Theosophy. For Occultism deals with human nature and if you can find anything more comic than human nature, well, I ask you!

Take for example what one may easily regard as a sixth sense — our sense of superiority. It is the one sense that is developed to the nth degree in every mother's son of us — not forgetting the daughters. In fact I don't believe many people could endure themselves or the facts of human living for a single day without being able to lean on the prop of their own superiority — in some direction — over that part of the human race that they are obliged to contact.

A perfect example of the action of this sense occurs to me at the moment and naturally concerns the antics of my own Ego. I was young at the time, and afflicted with that peculiar hardness which belongs to the very young of all climes and eras (and is not by any means confined to the modern gosling). I was riding in one of those old-fashioned "street-cars" (trams, our English friends call them), where the seats ran longitudinally down each side of the vehicle and all the passengers sat facing one another. The car was well filled. Nearly opposite me sat an overemphasized member of my own sex crowned by — certainly not by anything that could truthfully be called a hat! No — she was sporting a millinery "confection," monstrous and unbelievable. Like most of us she was not designed to take liberties with the solar spectrum, nor would her middle-aged complexion tolerate this outrage. And that is just what I was thinking, gazing at her more in sorrow than in anger, when I happened to catch her complacently roving eye. I had not time to shift my horrified eyes, but to my amazement she not only bridled, but smirked. It was as plain as lipstick that she believed me transfixed by envy!

So there both of us sat at gaze — ridiculous exclamation points to the delusion of our own superiority. And I have no doubt, if there is anyone reading this, that she/he is smiling at us both, tolerantly. If so, pause and corrugate the brow for a moment, dear Reader. For what is this toleration of yours after all but an infatuated sense of your own superiority to such absurdities?

I hope you're not old enough to remember the days when some wag divided the human race into "bromides" and "sulphites." Bromides were the people who always thought and acted exactly as they were expected to. Sulphites were — well, the rest of us. The newspapers made such a hilarious and protracted joke of it that people became decidedly sensitive. We were afraid, you see, that we might (quite absurdly of course!) be classed with the bromides. Finally some philanthropic wit published a statement that the best way to prove oneself a sulphite was to admit cheerfully that one was a confirmed bromide. And that ended the matter. So there it is. Whenever we find ourselves tolerating someone, let us realize that such toleration is preposterously intolerable. Only be sure we do realize it.

In other words, dear Companions on the Path, let us practise real brotherhood and avoid the secret, self-satisfied smirk. For true *Theosophical* laughter is directed always and only against ourselves. Is not this really one easy way by which each one of us can transmute his self-justifying nature into the chela's diamond heart? Before the new harvest, however, must come the breaking of the sods, the clearing and burning of the weeds, and the sowing of the new seed; and fields long neglected give a deal of trouble. Hence the Theosophical thinker will remember that: "Before the soul can stand in the presence of the Masters its feet must be washed in the blood of the heart," and the world at large will learn by its bitter harvest that against stupidity even the gods fight in vain.

I DREAMED THAT I WAS DEAD — *Grace Frances Knoche*

I had another dream: Coming home late one evening, tired and completely "all in," I fell asleep and dreamed that I was dead, and my body was laid carefully in a coffin, at the head of which I (my human soul?) stood, and I wondered why everybody around was so concerned over the death of a body. There was wailing and a general emotional disturbance, which I found not only annoying but really absurd. One dear friend of mine, an old schoolteacher, came up to my body, and putting her arms around the lifeless form said: "Oh, my child, you shouldn't have died, it is a terrible misfortune to see one so young and full of the promise of bright fulfilment go like this." This attitude rather shocked me. I could not understand why this kind friend did not speak to *me* who was standing right there, but spoke only to that poor outstretched corpse.

All this, however, was incidental, for what actually was occupying my attention was my effort to break loose from my body. Something was holding me back, and I found myself desperately tugging at a cord which seemed to be coming from my left side, presumably my heart. I jerked and pulled, struggling hard to break this cord, but something somewhere just as steadily held it firm. I cannot describe the dark torture of those few brief moments. I wanted to die, yet I could not. *The cord would not break.* In unspeakable agony, still pulling hard for freedom, I again looked about me, and suddenly my eyes fixed themselves upon a figure standing looking at me. It was a man of tall stature, slight of build yet carrying a tremendous reserve strength in the well-controlled body. He looked and looked, right into my eyes, and without thought I grew still, the pain in my heart lessened, my mind began to see light, and I no longer tugged at the cord. Recognising my friend of olden days, a loved Teacher, I knew what I should do. In a flash my decision was made, and with courage and an influx of quiet strength I slipped into my body head first, rose from the coffin, and

walked straight to where my friend and Teacher was. No words were needed, he simply nodded and smiled, and at my salute of grateful recognition, said: "Good girl," and walked away. I knew then I had work to do and that he depended upon me to find my strength and use the gift of my life in his service.

A large percentage of persons dream vividly, and at times have what actually amount to "experiences," which lead them to investigate various cults of dream-interpretation. This can be a source of danger unless guided by the sanity of knowledge. The teachings of Theosophy, however, enable the student intelligently to study and thus interpret his dreams (if he wishes to take the time), and to receive help and sometimes a needed warning therefrom. An experience such as that sketched above is not uncommon with a certain type of student, and in the light of Theosophy it becomes interesting as illustrative of some of the teachings of the after-death state, to which we shall briefly point.

How unimportant is the body, and even in degree the human soul, for do we not see here that while the body lay as dead in the coffin, the soul was alive and in full consciousness, and that the soul likewise was controlled by a still higher consciousness? Furthermore, to indulge in wailing and uncontrolled emotion at death is seen to be not only stupid but actually disturbing to the departing soul who requires calm and quiet so that its release may be quick and peaceful. What is sleep and what is death? Perhaps we do not know how near we are to death every night when we so gladly lay ourselves down to rest. Do we not cast off the body night after night on some mysterious yet certain pilgrimage of the soul?

In my dream why could I not die? What was that cord that kept me bound to my body even against my will? What stronger destiny overruled the human? Man has a definite span of life, commensurate with his store of vitality, and until that is exhausted, he cannot really die. This should be a warning to those contemplating taking their life, either consciously or otherwise. You can kill the body, but not the soul, and one sees in the desperate struggle here to leave the body before the

karmic hour had struck, that there was something stronger, firmer and more enduring than the body, or even the soul, and that until that store of inner vitality, until the karmic reservoir on all planes of the constitution, has spent itself, release of the soul cannot take place. Hence the struggle between the human desire of the soul to be free of suffering, and the stronger karman of the real ego overruling the human — *the cord did not break.*

In death, the "golden cord" of life is broken, leaving the body free to dissolve, and the soul to cleanse itself of the last life's stain, so that purified and strong it may come into the presence of the Inner Self — the Knower. In sleep, this cord is not broken but endures, permitting the safe return of the soul to the body after the night's pilgrimage. The Knower is our Spiritual Self, who has won immortality through mastery of humanhood in ages previous to the present, and who thus should act as the guide and helper of the young human soul. It was this Inner Knower who recognised the Teacher and showed the soul which was trying to escape that its duty was to re-enter the body and take up its destined work in life.

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will." From karmic threads woven in the past along all lines of our constitution, from physical, astral-vital, mental-emotional, intellectual and spiritual, we are weaving a fabric of consciousness whose pattern embodies past, present, and future. At times the pattern shows threads of great weakness, and again of unsuspected strengths. When through illness or great suffering the physical vitality is low and the soul balances between life and death, if the karman is favorable, this Spiritual Self, the Knower, can step in and with threads firm and new strengthen the fabric, and thus restore the lost vitality; or to change the metaphor, can enter in and recharge, as it were, the exhausted batteries of soul and body, so that for a few brief moments at least the soul casts off the "garments of darkness" for the "armor of light": a new strength is received, and the destiny of the soul is fulfilled according to the ancient karmic pattern.

NATURE STUDIES: XII — *H. Percy Leonard*

The Laugh of Doctor Johnson

When Boswell was looking over his diary in preparation for his famous *Life*, he came across a tantalizing entry on May 17, 1775, a day which he had passed in company with the sage: "Much laughing."

We must confess to a regret that the biographer omitted to enter the jokes that provoked that laughter. "It should seem," he writes, "he had that day been in a humor for jocularly and merriment, and upon such occasions, I never knew a man laugh more heartily." We may suppose that the high relish of a state so different from his habitual gloom, produced more than ordinary exercise of that distinguishing faculty of man, which has puzzled philosophers so much to explain. Johnson's laugh was as remarkable as any circumstance of his manner. It was a kind of good-humored growl. Tom Davis described it oddly enough: "He laughs like a rhinoceros."

Laughter is a great revealer of character. A clever scoundrel may succeed in disguising his motives under the camouflage of an assumed manner, but surprised into a burst of laughter, the real man stands forth self-confessed. Dr. Livingstone, the African explorer, used to say that he always felt he could trust a savage who had a hearty laugh. "No vicious fellow," he remarked on one occasion, "could laugh like that."

No one can be called a really successful laugher unless he is able to enjoy a joke against himself; and to do this he must be able, at any moment, to cut himself adrift from his center of personal consciousness, and, standing by, regard it as a thing apart.

True laughter, the genial laughter of the heart, implies sympathy and is never evoked by bodily suffering or an embarrassing situation which causes mental distress. The man who knows no other life but the cold glitter of his intellect may be moved to a sense of the ridiculous at the

sight of other people's pain; but in those who have any development of soul-life, the appeal of the comic is drowned in the reflected suffering which they sympathetically feel.

The laughter of fools may be, as Solomon declares that it is, "As the crackling of thorns under a pot"; but the laughter of the wise, whose serious view of life does not necessarily make them solemn, is a perfect echo of those melodies with which the ether rang when "the morning stars sung together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

The Theosophical Forum

NO OTHER CUP WOULD DO — *H. Percy Leonard*

As I was buying stamps at the corner drug-store just now I overheard a bearded stranger telling about his Bill.

"He's the funniest kid," he was saying as I went in. "He has a cup with his name on it in gold lettering, and that's the only cup that he'll drink from. His milk is no good unless he gets it out of that special cup. I guess that we ought never to have humored him so far; but he's got so now that he carries it to picnics and parties, and if it got lost — "

I heard no more, but I could not get that foolish, fastidious child out of my mind because I knew that I had been a kind of Bill myself in days gone by.

Lionel was at school with me and we chummed up so well together that we were never happy except in each other's company. When first we met we were both deep in the same kind of trouble, and it was great to be able to talk to another fellow who could thoroughly understand. The link once formed, other points of contact developed and finally we knew each other like our own pockets, as the saying goes. There was sympathy, complete understanding, and a spirit of helpfulness — in fact the usual outfit of human virtues of which everybody has his share, but which I could never recognise in anyone but Lionel Lee. I was just like little Bill. I had to take the milk of human kindness out of my particular cup, or go without.

Well, crockery won't last forever, and one day this particular cup — broke; and it seemed to me as though the world had come to an end. Lionel was dead — or what we call dead — and the body in which he had lived was put out of sight. And now, if I wanted sympathy or a kind word, I had to go without, for Lionel was gone, and I lived a lonely man in a crowd of strangers.

It was years before I learned that the milk of human kindness might be

found in other cups; but I discovered it at last. The man who limits himself to one particular cup, shuts himself off from a lot of pleasant refreshment along the way; and if that particular cup should happen to be smashed! — why he feels as if the bottom had fallen out of everything!

Chumship is well enough, but don't let it narrow your life. Why not be chummy with the human race? Humanity is, in its highest expression, a beautiful thing; and a true friend is more to be desired than much fine gold; but do not let us forget that every man is a portion of the human race, and that whatever you find in one, you may find in all if you know how to look for it.

Let us level up, not down! Let us not say: I will henceforth love my chum no more than the general mass of humanity. There is a better way. Whatever of good I find in my chum, I will set myself to discover in everyone I meet: and as I feel towards my chum I will try to feel towards every member of the human race.

Why not fall in love with humanity?

The Theosophical Forum

ORIENTAL STUDIES: IV — *G. de Purucker*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The Secret Doctrine of Gautama the Buddha (1)

VIII

Turning now to a more particular examination of metaphysical and religio-philosophical ideas imbodyed in Buddhism, one would like to ask a very pertinent question: What indeed are the doctrines — some of the more important of them at least — that the Buddha-Gautama taught? Or again: What is the *fundamental* teaching of Buddhism? One will find this question constantly asked and answered by Occidental Orientalists; but the present writer has always wondered, in his study of Buddhism which has extended over some thirty years, why these really learned and scholarly men of the Occident, so earnest and devoted in their studies, so industrious indeed, invariably seem to hunt for, and to insist that Buddhism must have, one fundamental doctrine. To tell the truth, the present writer does not know what this *one* fundamental doctrine is. It is easy to know what many if not most European scholars have to say about it; but yet the writer of these lines has searched for thirty years more or less to find the "one fundamental doctrine" in Buddhism, and instead of one he has found a hundred or more.

What are some of these? The impermanence of all manifested existence or existences; that in consequence of the impermanence and illusory nature of all manifested beings and things, pain, suffering, sorrow, are native to all beings who live in this illusion, or maya; yet there is a Way leading to the cessation of all this sorrow, of all this pain, and of all individual illusions about them; and this Way is eightfold in character. It is commonly called in Europe "the Noble Eightfold Path,"

based upon Four Fundamental Truths or Verities. What are, first, these Four Noble Truths:

- The noble truth about sorrow and pain;
- The noble truth about the cause of sorrow and pain;
- The noble truth about the cessation of sorrow and pain;
- The noble truth about the path that leads to this cessation.

These four truths may be somewhat paraphrased as follows:

1. Suffering and sorrow exist in all manifested beings.
2. There is a cause for the suffering and the sorrow that exist.
3. There is a way to render extinct the causes of the suffering and sorrow that exist.
4. There is a path, by following which the causes of the suffering and sorrow that exist are rendered extinct. This path consists in a continuous changing to betterment of the factors or samskaras of our consciousness. These factors are eight and comprise the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Noble Eightfold Path

1. Recognition of the truth of the preceding four verities.
2. Holding the objective to be attained clearly in the mind, holding it firm, with discrimination.
3. Right words, or controlled and governed speech at all times and in all places.
4. Controlled and governed action at all times and in all places.
5. Appropriate and honorable means of livelihood.
6. An inflexible will to achieve the objective visioned.
7. An eager intellect, always open for a greater truth, and ready to learn; and the cultivation of a strong and retentive memory.
8. An unveiled spiritual perception, combined with great care in thinking, which is the keynote of all the preceding items, and which expressed in other words means right meditation with a tranquil mind into which wisdom thus enters.

In addition to this "Noble Eightfold Path," based on the Four Verities,

which those especially who follow the Hinayana love, and rightly love, there are the six, seven, or indeed ten, paramitas or Sublime Virtues studied and followed, let us hope, by the disciples of the Schools of the North — — they who believe that they have received and that they have developed the teaching of the Lord Buddha's heart, and who, likewise, accept at least in their principles the teachings of his brain, the "Eye-Doctrine" of the Hinayana.

What are these Paramitas? They are stated below, and given largely in the words of H. P. Blavatsky, as found in her noble little handbook *The Voice of the Silence*(2) Although a Theosophist first and foremost, she was likewise a formal Buddhist, having at one time when in Ceylon taken Pansil or the Five exoteric Vows; thus she was well qualified to speak about the doctrines of him whom she loved because she understood him far better than the rather stiff-minded European Orientalists, governed to a large extent as they have been by the psychological atmosphere of a now moribund anthropological science, combined with a mind more or less swayed by equally moribund Christian theology. These, then, are the famous Paramitas, the first seven given more or less in the words of H. P. Blavatsky:

1. The key of charity and immortal love.
2. Harmony in word and act, thus cutting at the roots of the making of future evil karman.
3. Patience, that naught can ruffle.
4. Indifference to pleasure and pain, by which illusion is conquered and truth is perceived.
5. Dauntless energy or fortitude, that finds its way to the supernal truth out of the mire of lies.
6. Spiritual meditation, a golden gate which once opened leads the chela or neophyte to the realm of eternal verity and ceaseless contemplation of it.
7. Wisdom combined with discriminating intelligence, which makes of a man a god, creating him a Bodhisattva, a son of the Dhyanis.

In addition to these Seven, the following three are also frequently mentioned in Buddhist literature; and they are of equal importance with the former, although they are here enumerated out of their usual order as they are commonly found in the exoteric books:

8. Proper method or discipline in following the Path.
9. The urgent wish to achieve success for the sake of being an impersonal beneficent energy in the world.
10. A continuous exercise of the intellect in study of self, of others, and incidentally of the great religious literatures and philosophies of the world.

Mind you, these ten are among the most widely accepted mystical teachings of the Northern School of Buddhism which is followed more or less faithfully by some 400 million human beings — at least let us hope so.

IX

It has often been said by those who understand but little, one fears, of the essential teaching of the Tathagata, of Gautama the Buddha, that he taught that when a man dies, then *finis*, complete and utter, is his fate or destiny. The man is; he dies; he now is not! This is a monstrous perversion of the Buddha's own teaching. It has often been said by those who have studied but have misunderstood the Buddha-Gautama's teachings, that his doctrine was that there is no reincarnating or re embodying entity, as an entity; and yet the teachings of the Buddhist scriptures, both of South and of North, are filled with the stories of what it is popular to miscall the "metempsychosis" of individuals.

Take the Jataka-Tales, already alluded to, the birth-tales supposed by the multitude of unthinking to be stories of the former embodiments of Sakyamuni himself, dealing with events that were said to have taken place in these past embodiments of his on Earth — take these as instances; and one will find in these curiously interesting and sometimes profound tales, for they are largely mystical and

metaphorical, that the existences of the Buddha began, as it were, in the very beginning of this present world-period, as one of the lowest and humblest of creatures, and that he slowly evolved through repetitive imbodiments developing and growing in each, until finally he attained Buddhahood as Sakyamuni.

Question: If there be no surviving entity, what was it that passed from birth to birth in those numerous stories, which, whatever one may think of them, proclaim the common acceptance by the multitude of Buddhists of there being some kind of x-factor in the complex of skandhas forming the human being which passes from life to life? Or how about the many instances in canonical Buddhist scriptures themselves, which place in the mouth of the Great Teacher himself observations, remarks, parables, references, to the preceding births of such or such other individuals? If Buddhism taught no such continuity through repeated imbodiments of *something*, why all this allusion to reincarnating beings?

Buddhism teaches an evolution or development of this x-factor of consciousness and will slowly followed through many rebirths, through repeated imbodiments, bringing about constantly increasing faculty and power, until finally the entity whose evolving destiny is thus traced, becomes a man; and after becoming a man finally becomes a Bodhisattva — one filled with the spirit of the inner Buddha, or rather of the Buddhist principle, the Bodhi, the principle and fountain-head of utter wisdom. Furthermore, that taking the Buddha-Gautama as an example or illustration of such an evolving entity, in his last incarnation on earth, he was born the human Bodhisattva-Siddhartha, later called Sakyamuni, in the year 643 b. c, and that when he was eighty years of age, after having passed through manifold experiences and trials, and after he had gathered together and taught his disciples and had sent them abroad in order to proclaim the Good Law, he then entered the Nirvana, with an entering which left naught behind save his Dharma — the Law, i. e., the Truth that he taught.

Now, let one ask: What is it that thus passes from the humblest of

beings through the many and varied *gatis* or "ways" of existence, through repeated and incessant rebirth, until that Something, that x-quantity, hereinbefore called the x-factor, becomes a Buddha? What is it, one asks? The scriptures of the South of Asia, of the Hinayana, will say that it was results, consequences, i. e., *karman*. Precisely! What then is this *karman*? The word itself means action, signifying results, consequences, effects. But is it thinkable that the noblest Sage of historic times, the titan-intellect of the human race, perhaps the loftiest spiritual genius of his kind known to the human species for scores of thousands of years past, taught that bare consequences, naked composites, sheer effects, technically called *samskaras* or mere collections (one may properly ask, collections of what?) can and do pass in entitative fashion from life to life, recollect themselves — recollect themselves after being time after time dispersed as atomic aggregates into the various realms of Nature from which they were originally drawn? The answer depends entirely upon the meaning that we give to this term *samskaras*, and to the term *skandhas*. If these are mere aggregates of atoms existing on the psycho-emotional as well as on the physical plane, and without any internal bond of spiritual-psychological union, thus voicing the merely and completely materialistic idea: then we must infer that this titan-intellect taught an impossibility, which the merest tyro in philosophical and scientific thought would reject with impatience as being words without meaning, thoughts without content, ideas void of sense or foundation. Or if, on the other hand, we understand, as we should understand, *samskaras* to mean psycho-magnetic and material aggregates of life-atoms attracted to each other because of their intrinsic magnetic vital power, and unified and governed by the repetitive action of the same spiritual and intellectual forces, previously described, which formerly held them in union as an aggregated vehicle, then indeed we have a reasonable and logical teaching consistent with what we know ourselves of the intricate and unitary yet compounded character of our constitution, and likewise thoroughly consistent not only with all the teaching of the Hindu philosophy of the day, but with all the remainder of the Buddha's own sublimely comprehensive and profound philosophy.

The following observations, therefore, give the undoubted meaning and inner content of the Gautama-Buddha's Doctrine; and it is likewise precisely the meaning and content of the "heart" of his teaching as found in the Mahayana-Schools of the North, and taught today by Theosophy. One may add that it is also the meaning and content of the Hinayana-School, although in this last school the inner content is less easily uncovered, though seen to be as much a part of it when thus uncovered as it is an essential part of the great Mahayana-Systems.

While it is perfectly true that the lower parts, or inferior portions, of every entity, of a human being for instance, form a compound or "complex," and therefore are a compounded aggregate, and consequently because of this combination mortal and perishable as such compound, being what in Buddhism are called the *samskaras*, or the body of composites, nevertheless, there is *something* of a spiritual, intellectual, and psychological character, previously called the x-factor, around which this aggregated compound re-gathers or recollects itself at each new rebirth; and it is this *something* by which the compound is re-assembled and during life is held together as an entity, thus forming a man — or indeed any similar being. There is here no such teaching as that of the imperishable, immortal soul in the Christian sense, static through eternity in unchanging essential characteristics, as is obvious enough; and this deduction of no such imperishable immortal soul in the human being as drawn from the teachings of the Buddha himself, and as found in the many and various scriptures, is perfectly correct, for such a soul, to be immortal, must not and cannot essentially change, which likewise would mean that it cannot evolve or grow, because if it did so grow, so evolve — which means changing to something different and better — it then no longer is what it was before. It is something different because it is changed; and therefore, not being what it formerly was, it obviously cannot be "immortal" in the Christian sense. This is a subtil and profound thought which, once grasped, unveils the inner meaning of Sakyamuni's teaching in this respect, and one's sense of logical consistency is aroused to admiration by it.

Consequently this x-quantity, call it what you like, call it karman if you will — and if you understand the proper meaning of the word karman as signifying consequences, or results, of whatever kind, spiritual, intellectual, psychical, physical or what not, it is as good a word as any — is that vital-psychological *something* which insures the re-collecting of the *samskaras* together for the new life, thus reproducing the new man, as the fruitage or results of his past life. It all is simply a continuance in existence of this x-quantity in life after life by means of the karmic consequences or results of the life and of all the lives which have preceded any new appearance or imbodiment or incarnation of the peregrinating entity.

Let us try to illustrate this very mystical doctrine, so difficult for Occidentals to understand. Consider a child. The child is born from an infinitesimal and invisible human life-germ, and yet in a few years it grows to be a six-foot man. Now then, in order to become a six-foot man from the little child that it was, it must pass through many and differing stages of growth, of *evolution* which means development, unfolding. First it is the microscopic germ, developing into the embryo, then born as an infant, then growing into the lad, the lad changing into the young man, the young man becoming the man in the maturity and plenitude of his powers, and finally, the man after the maturity and plenitude of his powers enters upon the phase of senescence, decay, decrepitude and death. Now every one of these phases is a change from the preceding one, and is based and founded upon the preceding one. Each such new phase is the karman of the next preceding phase and all preceding phases. Yet the man is the same through all the changes, although the man himself changes because growing likewise.

The boy of six is not the boy of ten; the boy of ten is not the lad of fifteen; and the young man of twenty-five is not the man of forty; and the man of forty is different from the man of fifty-five when he is at his prime — or should be; and the man of eighty, usually weak and tired, worn with toil and labor, soon going to his rest and peace for a while, is not the new-born child — yet the entity is the same from the beginning of the cyclic series unto its end; because there is an uninterrupted

series of steps or stages of *change* signifying growth, which means development or evolution.

In this example, simple as it is, you have the key to the Buddhist thought. Precisely as it is with the birth and development and growth of a child into a human adult, so is it with the passage of the karman of an entity from body to body through the different life-stages of rebirth, through the different ages: the passing from low to high of that x-quantity which the Theosophists call "the reincarnating ego," and the mystical Buddhists speak of as the shining ray from the Buddha within, and which the Hinayana of the South, the defective vehicle, the exoteric teaching of the Lord Buddha, spoke of as the "karman" of the man growing continuously nobler, better, grander, greater, more evolved, until the man through these karmic changes or changings of karman finally becomes a Bodhisattva; the Bodhisattva then becomes a Buddha, finally entering the Nirvana.

It may as well be said here that this "something," this x-factor, is what in Theosophy is called the Monad which, imperishable in essence, and the fountain-head of all consciousness and will, passes from age to age throughout the Manvantara and reproduces itself by means of rays from its essence in the various reimpodiments or reincarnations which it thus brings about. In mystical Buddhism, especially of the North, this Monad is identic with the Dhyani-Buddha or inner spiritual "Buddha of Meditation" which is the heart or core of every reimpodimenting being. Just as in Esoteric Theosophy or the Esoteric Tradition each and every monad is a droplet, or ray, to change the figure of speech, of and from the cosmic Maha-buddhi, just so in mystical Buddhism, every Dhyani-Buddha is a ray from Amitabha-Buddha, a form or manifestation of Alaya or the Cosmic Spirit.

When one hears that Buddhism teaches the final ending, signifying the thorough-going transmuting, wholly complete, of that intangible and vague entity which Christians miscall "soul," and which the Buddhists of the South call the "karman" of a man — the sum-total of all that a man is, all his feelings, thoughts, yearnings, energies, forces (in short

everything that the man is, for everything is his karman), passing ever to greater and greater things — then it should be remembered that while this statement is true when properly understood, nevertheless the Northern School of Buddhism which is incomparably more mystical than that of the South, still retains, however imperfectly, the more explicit and lucid teaching emanating from the Buddha's "heart," to wit: That there is a ray from the celestial Buddha within the composite entity called man builded of the *samskaras*, and that it is the influence of this ray which first brought the *samskaras* together, which ray persists throughout the ages, and re-collects the same *samskaras* together anew, thus reproducing through repetitive imbodiments on Earth the same karmic entity who or which formerly existed. Try to understand the essential meaning of this karman-doctrine as taught by the great Master and as more or less faithfully imbodied in the Buddhist scriptures, and the fact will be grasped that the karman of the man *is the man himself*; and that just because the man himself is continually changing because continually growing, thus the karman of the man which is himself is obviously likewise continually changing for the better. The teaching of the South, of the Hinayana, is true, when it states that what remains of a man after his death is his karman, because as just shown this karman is the man himself.

It is, therefore, unquestionably true, that Sakyamuni taught the non-reality, the non-existence of a static, continuous, "soul" or minor self such as is taught in Christianity and in certain other religions or religious philosophies of similar type. This last fact, or rather averment, is true and admits of no contradiction; but instead of being, as it is so wrongly misunderstood to be, the mark of philosophical and religious imperfection, or as signifying a lack of penetrating sagacity into human psychology, it would be easy to show that precisely the contrary of this is the case; and that, indeed, this teaching of the Buddha, as more or less imbodied in the scriptures of the Mahayana and Hinayana, and especially in the latter, is one of the greatest glories of the great Master's doctrine, and is, furthermore, most curiously and suggestively parallel with the best in modern scientific and philosophical

speculation in the West.

There are one or two highly significant and pregnant passages in ancient Buddhist scriptural lore, the importance of which is consistently passed over because misunderstood. In the *Dhammapada*, dealing in general with the matter of the Self or the intrinsic selfhood of beings and entities around which the "compound aggregates" are builded as vehicles, we find the following very interesting and certainly highly suggestive thoughts:

The Self is the master of self — for who else could be its lord?
With the self [the lower self, or "compound aggregate"]
thoroughly controlled, the man finds a Master [or Guide] such as
cannot elsewhere be found. (3)

Here is a pointed and emphatic statement of the existence in the human constitution of the governing, controlling, Root-Self which lives and manifests its transcendent powers in and through the lower self or "soul," the latter being naught but the "compound aggregate" of elements, which is the man in his ordinary being. When it is remembered that the *Dhammapada* is one of the most authoritative and respected scriptures of the Hinayana or Southern School, one can appreciate the force of this statement, the more so as it is found in the cycle of scriptures of the Hinayana which far more than the Northern or Mahayana is always cited as the Buddhist School teaching the supposed, but wrongly supposed, nihilism so often brought against Buddhism in support of its being a pessimistic system without spiritual basis or import.

Here we have a direct reference to the emphatic existence of the essential *Atman* or fundamental Self, or Self-hood, in the human constitution.

One more instance, drawn this time from the Mahayana, and due to one who in Buddhism itself has always been recognised as being a Bodhisattva — Nagarjuna. This true mystic Sage and Initiate-Teacher, and one of the most devoted of the Buddha-Gautama's later followers

who faithfully carried on the Esoteric Tradition, in his commentary on the Sutra or scripture of the famous Buddhist work *Prajna-Paramita*, states the following:

Sometimes the Tathagata [the Buddha] taught that the Atman verily exists, and yet at other times he taught that the Atman does not exist. (4)

Just so. Are we then to suppose that the Buddha-Gautama taught, and deliberately taught, contradictions in order to befuddle and to mystify his hearers? Hardly, for the idea is ludicrous. What has already been said about the compound constitution of man, through which the eternal Self or Atman, i. e., in this case the Dhyani-Buddha, works through its erring, wayward "lower self or vehicle, or "soul," should sufficiently explain that the various meanings of "self were as keenly recognised in ancient Buddhist thought and by the great Master himself as they are recognised today. The meaning of the Buddha was obvious enough, that the Atman as the essential Self, or the Dhyani-Buddha in the human constitution, exists and evolves perennially, is ever-enduring; but that the "lower self or inferior selfhood of a man is merely the feeble reflexion of it, and is what the Europeans call "soul," and hence does not "exist" as an *enduring* entity. The same play, for this is what it really is, upon the word "self is distinctly perceptible in the citation from the *Dhammapada* just previously made where the Self as Master is the lord of the lower self as mere man. The present writer is well aware of the many passages in Buddhist scriptures concerning the non-existence of the Atman as the *human self* or soul — the doctrine of *Anatta*, in the Pali writings — and fully concurs, for the truth is obvious enough; but these passages cannot be considered alone and apart from other teachings distinctly stating the Atman is: constantly in the Mahayana, and in the Hinayana as in the above citation from the *Dhammapada*. In any case, the Atman is most certainly not the transitory and impermanent human "soul"; and it is thus that the Buddha's true thought and doctrine should be construed. It reconciles all the difficulties.

He whom his followers and whom the West know under various titles, such as Gautama the Buddha, Sakyamuni or the Sakya-Sage, or by his personal name Siddhartha — which means "one who has achieved his objective" — was born in the Spring, at or about the time of the Spring-Equinox, in the waxing moon, and in the year 643 b. c., reckoning according to Christian chronology, in a North Indian town which is now thought to have been in the foot-hills of the Himalaya-mountains. His father was Suddhodana which our very pragmatistical Occidentalists say means "pure rice," or "pure food," apparently forgetting that it is virtually impossible that this could be the translation because it would be a violation of Sanskrit grammar, and the original of such translation would have to be spelled *Suddhaudana* — which it is not. The word means "pure water" or "pure flow," and is obviously in connexion with the fact that his mother was called Maya or Mayadevi, meaning Illusion, or Illusion the goddess, a mystic name referring to the Buddhist teaching itself that his origin was divine, from the Celestial Buddha, from whom *flowed* a pure ray of the spirit which, passing through the realms of Illusion the mother, mystically gave birth to the Buddha. Remember also that the name of his wife was Yasodhara, which can be translated as "holder of glory" or perhaps better "possessor of glory," pointing to the fact of his possession as the other "half of himself of spiritual qualities and powers through which and in connexion with which he lived and worked.

It is unnecessary here to relate anew the world-famed story of the Buddha's life, as it is so well known not only to scholars but to every student of the life of the great Master. Those who are even today so strangely and strongly fascinated by the various forms of the lower Indian Yoga, as this has been proclaimed abroad in Western lands by itinerant thinkers from the Indian Peninsula, and who imagine that the pathway to initiation and interior development is the mortification or, even worse, the mutilation of the physical frame, should take serious counsel of the fact that the Buddha, so the story of his life runs, after trying these various means of interior development through yoga, cast

them all aside, renounced them as virtually useless for his sublime purpose. Iconography and pictorial art generally in Buddhism show the various phases of the different events in his life before he attained utter illumination or Buddhahood under the Bodhi-tree, so called in commemoration of this great Event; and the most informative of these representations are they which show the Buddha in one of the various postures of spiritual meditation, interior re-collection; but equally significant are those which represent him in the pre-Buddha state as a veritable image of skin and bones, what the Germans call a *Hautskelet*. The pathway to the Temple of Wisdom and of interior illumination is not the pathway of mortification of the flesh, but the control of the will, the living of the life, combined with intellectual awakening — i. e., the path of interior development, and the becoming at one with the superior elements of the human constitution which are at one and the same time divine in their highest parts, spiritual in the next lower range, and intellectual in their third.

The term "Buddha" itself means awakened, from the verbal root *budh*, signifying "to observe," "to recover consciousness," and therefore, "to awaken" — i. e., a Buddha is one who is fully awake and active in all the parts or ranges of his septempartite constitution, and is therefore a full, complete, and relatively speaking a perfectly evolved human being.

The esoteric Theosophical teaching is here likewise passed over in relative slightness, which teaching contains the statement that the Buddha did indeed "die" to all human affairs at the age of eighty years, because then the higher parts of him entered the Nirvana, and no Nirvani can be called a living man if he has attained the seventh degree of this range of Nirvana as the Buddha did; yet the esoteric Theosophical teaching likewise states that in all the remainder of his constitution, in those parts of him beneath the range of the Dhyani-Buddha within him, he remained alive on Earth for twenty years more after this date, teaching his Arhats and chosen disciples in secret, giving to them the nobler "doctrines of the heart," as obviously he had publicly taught "the doctrines of his brain," i. e., the eye-doctrine; and

that finally, in the hundredth year of his physical age, Gautama-Sakyamuni, the Buddha, cast his physical body aside and thereafter has lived in the inner realms of being as a Nirmanakaya.

XII

One must say a little more about a phase of the Buddha's teaching which exoteric Buddhism, whether of North or South, does not openly tell of. There is a Wisdom, the Secret Wisdom of the Buddha-Gautama, his esoteric dharma — and the present writer does not hesitate to state this openly, and he ventures to say that it may be found, although more or less veiled, in the teaching of the books of the great Mahayana-School of Northern and Central Asia. Furthermore, this dharma, this Secret Wisdom, this Gupta-Vidya, can verily be taught. Among its doctrines, likewise found in the teaching of the Northern School, is the statement that every man is a manifestation on this earth of a Buddhist principle belonging to his constitution and manifesting in three degrees or phases: (a) as a Celestial or Dhyani-Buddha, (b) as a Dhyani-Bodhisattva, (c) as a Manushya-Buddha; and that all human faculties and powers are, like rays from a spiritual sun, derivatives from this wondrous interior compound Buddhist entity. It is the core of the core of all our being. Union with this "heart" of us is the aim of all initiation, for it is the union, the becoming at one, with the Buddhist-principle within us, the seat of abstract Bodhi; and when this union is achieved, then a man becomes a Buddha.

This is the fundamental thought, in the writer's considered opinion, of all the teaching of the Buddha-Gautama; and even the very last words which popular legend ascribes to the Master on his death-bed, "Seek out your own perfection," embody the same fundamental thought of the human being as an imperfect manifestation of the celestial or Dhyani-Buddha within himself — the man ever striving, consciously or unconsciously, to attain union with this divinity within. This is the yoga of Buddhism, although one readily grants that we hear little of it; yet it is averred that it is likewise the real yoga, and the only yoga worth anything, in the various systems of Hindu yoga-teaching likewise.

We have in these thoughts, drawn from the recorded teachings of the Buddha himself, exactly the same sublime adhortation or injunction that all the great Sages and Seers of all the ages have taught, to wit, that the way to the unutterable Wisdom and Peace of the Divine is found within oneself. All the great spiritual and intellectual human Titans, whose vast minds have been the luminaries of the human race in all past times, were precisely they who had developed more or less of this Buddha-principle within themselves; and the value, philosophic, religious, and ethical, of this teaching lies in the fact that every human being may follow the same path that these great Masters have followed, because every human being has in his constitution the same identical cosmic elements that the Great Ones have.

Even the School of Southern Asia, the Hinayana, gives as the unquestioned teaching of the Tathagata that a man can attain union with Brahman, as is evidenced by a number of passages in the Pali scriptures. Now, what is the path by which this union may be achieved? In answer, consider the following citation from one of the "orthodox" scriptures of the Hinayana-School, and thus the reader will have the Buddhist scriptures' own words before him. This teaching of the Buddha-Gautama concerning the gaining of union with Brahma will be familiar to him as likewise being the teaching of orthodox Brahmanism. Thus, then, from the *Tevijja-Sutta*:

"That the Bhikkhu who is free . . . should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma, who is the same — such a condition of things is every way possible!

"In sooth, . . . the Bhikkhu who is free from anger, free from malice, pure in mind, and master of himself should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma, who is the same — such a condition of things is every way possible!" (5)

"For Brahma, I know, . . . and the world of Brahma, and the path which leadeth unto it. Yea, I know it even as one who has entered the Brahma world, and has been born within it!" (6)

"And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of Love, of pity, sympathy, and equanimity, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of Love, with heart of pity, sympathy, and equanimity, far-reaching, grown great, and beyond measure.

"Verily this . . . is the way to a state of union with Brahma." (7)

In what stronger words could a more emphatic and clear-cut statement be made than the above, of the fact that there is *something* of a spiritual-intellectual character which works through the compound aggregate of the skandhas that form the "mere man," and which spiritual substance or entity — called by the Theosophist the spiritual Monad — can and finally must attain union with the Cosmic Spirit here called Brahma, or, in other words, what the Esoteric Philosophy or the Esoteric Tradition frequently calls the Logos, in this instance the Third or so-called "Creative" Logos. We have here the essence or substance, in almost identic formulation, of the teaching of the Vedanta of India, that the essence or the substantial root of all beings and things, man therefore included, is the cosmic Brahman or Cosmic Spirit, of which all beings and entities are the offsprings, and reunion with which is, in the long course of ages, finally inevitable; and that there exists a Way or Path by which such reunion may be attained, by which Way the aeons'-long evolutionary pilgrimage may be vastly shortened.

Now then, after the conclusive paragraphs just cited above from the *Tevijja-Sutta*, one of the standard scriptures of the Southern School of Buddhism, in which the x-quantity, that *Something*, is emphatically and plainly stated herein as being capable of attaining "a state of union with Brahma.," it becomes necessary to point with emphatic finger to one of the most pregnant and important teachings of the Great Master which shows that the Buddha-Gautama by no means considered such a state of union with Brahman as the ultimate or ending of the existence of the fortunate Jivanmukta or freed Monad. Indeed, his teaching ran

directly contrary to such erroneous idea; for both implicitly and explicitly, as may be found in the scriptures of both the North and the South, there is the reiterated statement that even beyond the "world of Brahma," i. e., beyond Brahman, there are realms of consciousness and being still higher than this "world of Brahma," in which reside the roots, so to speak, of the Cosmic Tree and therefore the Root of every human being, the offspring of such mystical Cosmic Tree. What is this Mystic Root, this that is higher even than Brahma? It is the individualized Adi-Buddha, the Cosmic "Creative" Logos of Adi-Bodhi, or Alaya, the Cosmic Originant; for even a "world of Brahma" is a manifested world; and, therefore, however high it may be by comparison with our material world, is yet a relatively imperfect sphere of life and lives. In consequence, the teaching runs that higher even than Brahma there is something Else, the rootless Root, reaching back and within, cosmically speaking, into Parabrahmic Infinitude. One who is a Buddha, i. e., one who has become allied in his inmost essence with the cosmic Bodhi, thus can enter not only the "world of Brahma," but pass out of it and above it and beyond it, yea, higher and higher still to those cosmic reaches of life-consciousness-substance towards which human imagination may aspire and indeed always does aspire, however feebly; but which, unless we are Buddhas in fact, i. e., more or less straitly in self-conscious union with the Dhyani-Buddha, the spiritual Monad within us, we cannot understand otherwise than to be an adumbration of ineffable Nature. These citations, and the more or less necessarily condensed arguments that have been drawn from them, and more especially and somewhat more widely from the general teaching of Esoteric Theosophy, the Esoteric Tradition, should prove to any really thoughtful and impartial mind that there was something more, and indeed vastly more, in the great Master's teaching than the sketchy scriptural records, and the all too often prejudiced and distorted outline of it drawn by the willing and sincere but unskilled hands of most European Orientalists. A Secret Doctrine, an Esoteric Wisdom, a prehistoric Esoteric Tradition, is seen to be a necessary component part — indeed the best part because the entire background — of the teaching of the Buddha; for towards such

background every one of his public teachings points, and when considered collectively rather than distributively, when synthesized after analysis, the impartial student reaches the conclusion which seems to be irresistible, that such an Esoteric Doctrine or Tradition was in very truth the "heart" and foundation of the great Master's teaching and life-work.

FOOTNOTES:

1. By request THE FORUM reprints these important chapters on the Secret Doctrine of Gautama the Buddha, slightly condensed, from *The Esoteric Tradition*. This is the third and last instalment. ([return to text](#))
2. Frag. III: "The Seven Portals," pp. 47-8 (orig. ed.); (pp. 62-3 P. L. ed.). ([return to text](#))
3. *Dhammapada*, chapter xii, verse 160. ([return to text](#))
4. From the Chinese recension of Yuan Chuang. ([return to text](#))
5. From the *Tevijja-Sutta*, rendered from the Pali into English by T. W. Rhys Davids, as found in Volume XI of the *Sacred Books of the East* series, chapter iii, verses 7, 8. ([return to text](#))
6. *Op. cit.*, chapter i, verse 43. ([return to text](#))
7. *Op. cit.*, chapter iii, verses 1, 3, 4, combined. ([return to text](#))

MORE ABOUT HEALING — *G. de Purucker*

Being whole, and being healed or well — in other words, being whole and in health, or "wholth" — mean the same thing; the two words, health and wholeness, come from the same root.

"Thy knowledge hath made thee whole." *Pistis*, *πίστις*, translated "faith" — a word which has been so badly understood: it means the inner conviction of cosmic verities, knowledge of things unseen; and when a man knows, he needs no further proof. Proof is the bringing of conviction to the mind. When you have it, you look upon proof as superfluous.

When a man is whole, he is well, he is healed; and this more than anything else is the work of the Theosophical Society, spiritually, morally, and intellectually speaking: to make men whole, to make every one of the seven principles in the constitution of the normal human being active, so that there shall be a divine fire running through the man, through the spiritual and intellectual and psychical and astral and physical — and best of all for us humans, the moral, the child of the spiritual. Then we are whole, we are in health, for our whole being is in harmony.

Now then, is it not true that the work of the Theosophical Society is so to change the hearts and minds of men that their lives shall be changed, and therefore the lives of the peoples of the earth? What is this but healing at its roots instead of healing the symptoms? The god-wisdom goes to the very root of the disease, and cuts it; and the successful Theosophist is not he who can preach the most and say the most in the most fascinating way, but he who lives his Theosophy. "Theosophist is who Theosophy does."

You remember — I speak of the Christian New Testament because it is so familiar to all Westerners — you remember the accounts therein given of acts of healing done by the Avatara Jesus. You will find exactly

similar tales in all the different religions or philosophies of the world, ancient and modern. Why, even among the Pagans in the Temples of Aesculapius there were patients who came and slept there for a night, and were healed, healed in the morning. The common report said: "healed by the God." The actual truth was: "healed by the conversion within," not the conversion of the brain-mind thoughts but the conversion of a life: a life turned upwards instead of turned downwards. And the grateful sufferers now healed of their troubles put up *ex voto* offerings on the walls of the temples of Aesculapius, with carven or engraven images of the part or parts cured: a head, a leg, an arm, a liver, a heart, or what not — an eye, an ear, a nose or mouth, as mute witnesses or testimonials: "I am healed." Why, of course, such things happen, have always happened, and everywhere. But this is the case of those who heal themselves by becoming whole — this one thing.

When we speak of the work of healers working upon others, that is different; and that healing which is done by the transference of vitality from a healthy clean body, from a man or woman with a healthy, clean mind, is good and right, and there is no harm in it. As the Christian New Testament has it, the Master Jesus said: "Virtue (the Greek word means strength or power) hath gone out of me." Virtue — the Greek word here is *dynamis*, δυναμις, and the word of the English translators, "virtue," while etymologically fairly correct as giving the same sense, in its modern connotation utterly fails to convey the notion of strength or power leaving Jesus, i. e., life-force, vitality. From this Greek word *dynamis*, we have the many words in modern European tongues, like "dynamic," "dynamo/ "dynamite." "Virtue hath gone out of me" — the vitality, the sympathy, passed over, and the teacher felt the loss. A healer can only heal by giving of himself; and see how wonderfully the old truth applies even here: by giving of yourself to others.

Then another thought — and I speak of it because it is rather important in this connexion. I have heard it said by those whose hearts are harder than their heads: "Lo, behold, a Theosophist and ill, sick, ailing, wretched, cannot even do a full man's work in the world. His karman, let him work it out!" Of course, but you are not the person to tell any

other person when the karma is worked out. Your duty is to help, and leave to nature the healing processes, and it is an awful cruelty to say of any other — Theosophist or not — that because he is ill and suffering, his sin has found him out. True, but it is not for us to sit in judgment. Let us again remember the words of the Master Jesus, after healing by transferring abundant spiritual vitality: Go thou and sin no more. For thy sin wrought thy disease upon thee.

Yes, and because we suffer now is no proof that in *this* life we have done the sin that has brought it upon us. It may have been ages in the past, and only in this life when the man or woman needs more than ever before the vitality and the strength and the health to go forwards, his sin hath found him out, and taken this form. Learn the moral in this, for your sin will find you out in this or in some later life; and better to have the disease out at once than to dam it back to come out in some future life when you would wish then that you had suffered from, had got rid of, the poison in the former life, and had done with it.

Yes, I for one — I speak for myself — but I for one had liefer die when the disease is coming out, if it cannot be healed, than to dam it back by black magic and store it up for some future day when I shall need every ounce of my power and strength and health to achieve. It is not for us to judge another, and to say his sin hath found him out. We know it, but that is no way to help him. It is not encouraging, it is not kindly, it is not generous, and for all we know from our viewpoint it may not be true. Abstractly it is.

A chela does not become a chela because of his body. He becomes a chela because of the rapidly evolving inner man, the emotional, mental, and spiritual parts of him. The genius, an ordinary genius in human life, is not a genius because his body is spiritually evolved, a relatively perfect physical frame. As a matter of fact, look at the annals of history, and you will find the almost astounding fact that the majority of geniuses have been born in enfeebled bodies, often sickly ones, sometimes actually decrepit, cripples and what not. But the flaming fire of genius within, aye! — it was that which actually crippled

the body, deprived it of the life-forces which would have builded it up, which were gathered up into the soul to feed the soul. Sometimes gross, robust physical health is actually a deterrent to inner growth because the physical forces of life are so strong, they act as a heavy veil around the soul.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNDERSTANDING HEART — *Frances M. Dadd*

"What do you want from life?" is a question asked of its readers by a well-known Sydney journal. The answers are thought-inspired, and therefore thought-provoking. The Theosophist is inclined to agree with one contributor who prefers to ask: "What can you give to Life?" But in this succession of episodes which we call Life there is one thing I would ask for above all else, and that is an Understanding Heart; a willingness to concede to others their point of view, a readiness to admit that I was not the sole possessor of truth upon any subject, be it religious, scientific, philosophic, educational, or what not.

This would not mean in any sense a condoning of wrong or a divergence from principle: that would not have place in my desire. Simply would I wish to be truly generous, much more than tolerant, even anxious to see in another's point of view some element of truth which I, from my necessary incompleteness as a mere human unit, had missed, but an understanding of which might be equally necessary in the pursuit of Knowledge for the sake of the welfare of Humanity.

THE OCCULT NOVELS OF BULWER-LYTTON — *H. T. Edge*

These novels, especially *Zanoni*, are quoted by H. P. Blavatsky as expressing in beautiful and dramatic form the teachings which she herself was expounding; and this fact alone will be for Theosophists a testimonial to their merits, if such be wanted. But Theosophists of today probably do not realize how much Bulwer-Lytton's books meant to some Theosophists whose experience, like that of the present writer, dates back more than half a century, to a time when occult books were few and far between, and the atmosphere of satisfied scientific materialism reigned more unchallenged than it does today. *Zanoni* and *Mejnour* lived in the mind as almost solid realities, and the sublime passages in which their thoughts were expressed dwelt in memory as a daily companion.

To the conventional critic of some literary cyclopaedia these novels will be classed among the author's vagaries; and his microscope will be focussed on what to him will seem faults of construction and wanderings of an unruly fancy. Though we intend to confine ourselves mainly to the particular works in question, we can hardly criticize them without at the same time criticizing the author's novels in general. Let it be our first duty to protest against attempts to measure a genius with calipers; to dissect a grand living whole until all reality and significance is lost in a confusion of meaningless details; to censure an author for failing to do that which he never attempted to do; to overlook his purpose while concentrating only on the means by which he has achieved it. It can scarcely be doubted that so competent and versatile a writer as Bulwer-Lytton could easily, had he so desired, have written things that would fully satisfy the demands of conventional literary criticism; and it is also just possible that he had other aims that seemed to him more worthy of his powers.

Those endowed with the sympathetic faculty of recognising greatness can see in the author a man of lofty imagination, imagination in the

true sense, the imagination that lifts us to the heights of vision and insight; a man of rich and teeming nature, full of human sympathy, of vast experience of life, of wide culture and tireless industry — a genius in short. The writings of such a man are outpourings from a full heart; they come in no ruled and ordered array; they ride roughshod over the laws of formal logic; they come like flashes of many-colored light. Such is not only the way in which genius communicates its message, but such is also the way in which that message is received; for our lives are not ruled by formal logic. The human heart and mind is a phantasmagoria of changing scenes, thoughts and emotions chasing each other helter-skelter in a way which the prim brain-mind would consider very disorderly, but which obey a superior principle of order, beyond the capacity of that brain-mind to measure; and which consequently achieve the effect intended. The Hebraic Solomon, of mighty experience in life, pours forth his teeming heart in a succession of vivid pictures, now rising to the heights of faith and hope, now sinking to the depths of despair; and his songs find their echo in ordinary human hearts who find their own joys and sorrows so faithfully reflected. The finest poem may present a series of images that are inconsistent with each other if measured by rule and compass; but if we can drop the mathematical instruments we may perchance glimpse the total effect.

So it is easy enough to convict our author of looseness in construction, of discursiveness, of long digressions, sermonizing the reader, and many other such alleged faults. But be it understood that we are not satisfied with saying that he achieved his purpose *in spite of* these faults; for we think it nearer the truth to say that he achieved his purpose *because of* these (alleged) faults. In Poe's poems we often feel how his genius was cramped by his elaborate theories of construction; and in many of Stevenson's works we realize that plain ordinary language would have suited the occasion better than the unusual words and over-choice phrasing which he so often employs. *The Strange Adventure of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* may be full of inconsistencies and faulty analysis of the human constitution; but

would it have been half so vivid and telling if the author had allowed his brain-mind to get to work on his vision instead of taking the advice of his wife to leave the vision as it was? Was Katherine Tingley's *Aroma of Athens* full of anachronisms and all sorts of features which the critics would condemn as faults? Likely enough, but little they care who were privileged to drink into their souls, to incorporate into their lives, the wondrous magic that was evoked — not in spite of, but (we insist) because of these alleged faults. And so, if *Zanoni* had been constructed by Act of Parliament it would scarcely have outlived the brief day in which it was first published, and we should not now be reading it for the hundredth time without a hint of satiety.

What may perhaps be considered another hall-mark of genius is the fact that Bulwer-Lytton was mercilessly attacked by the established powers for a bad influence on morals — the exact opposite of his intent, the exact opposite of the effect he actually produced. In his *Word to the Public*, published after the attacks on his *Lucretia*, or *Children of the Night*, he appeals to the public and to people of real intelligence, against these pygmies in high places.

As to the source of his truly wonderful portrayal of occult mysteries, we have always to bear in mind that every man has innate within him the faculties which can bring him into direct contact with the unseen. Next, he was a man of great erudition and untiring industry, born into circumstances which gave him command of ample literary resources. One is tempted to surmise that the author's own personal experience of trial on the path must have had something to do with the matter; but in the absence of anything sufficiently definite on this subject, we must let it pass.

"Zanoni"

It will not be necessary to load our pages with extracts from books that are well known and easily accessible. In *Zanoni* it strikes us at once that there are only two adepts (ultimately only one) in the whole wide world, a world so multitudinous and varied in all its other denizens. We have no hierarchies, no orders, no degrees. This is indeed an

anomaly, but serves its purpose in concentrating attention on the picture to be presented; to have attempted to cover too much ground would have shallowed and faded the result. Also, we are at liberty to take Zanoni as a type; though here again it might be objected that his association with such historical realities as Robespierre and the guillotine militates against this. But our previous remarks about consistency and inconsistency will save the situation here. We have in this work a number of different lessons shown in a vivid light. And what adepts they are! Mejnour has been described by H. P. Blavatsky herself as resembling a desiccated pansy between the leaves of a book of solemn poetry. Zanoni, it is true, is a sublime figure; yet his lonely isolation offers no enviable prospect, and is used in the story as a contrast to the healthy life of human love and companionship to which he eventually either attains or succumbs. Again, he has prolonged the exuberant vigor of youth by quaffing the elixir; which seems to make a sensualist, though a refined one, out of him.

Then there is the affair of his love match: it must be realized by the student of Occultism that Zanoni, in order to win the glorious heights to which he is represented as having attained — in order to have overcome the dread guardian of the threshold — must once and for all have put himself beyond the possibility of falling prey to the particular temptations to which he yielded. This is not to underrate the power and holiness of a pure earthly personal love; but, however great and holy such a sentiment may be, it is still mortal, still earthy, and Zanoni has risen above all mortality and earthiness. Nay, does he not by his yielding lose the power of invoking the glorious Adonai, and find that his call is answered only by the dread specter? It would seem that, whatever initiation he may have passed, it was incomplete: there seems about him that which brings to mind the Pratyeka-Buddha, who enjoys bliss at the cost of severing himself from his kind. If so, then we may welcome the sacrifice which Zanoni makes, and see in it the willing sacrifice of the true Buddha, who forsakes his bliss in order to follow the dictates of his Heart. This is surely the lesson the author intends at this point.

The contrast between the loneliness of head-learning — the Eye Doctrine — and Heart-Wisdom is a favorite theme with Bulwer-Lytton, and often takes the form of a pre-occupied self-satisfied intellectual introvert, who falls prey to the attractions of a simple girl who is an incarnation of the qualities of the heart. We shall find this theme in the *Strange Story*, illustrated by the love of Fenwick and Lilian. We see it here again in Glyndon, oscillating between the lures of head and heart, too young to know what he wants and rashly plunging into everything to find out by the test of bitter experience.

In the experiences of Glyndon we have a most dramatic portrayal of what awaits him who through rash ambition forces himself into realms for which he is all unprepared. It may seem to some that the adepts unduly lured the aspirant to his doom; but, as explained to him by Zanoni, it was the demand of Glyndon's own impetuous desire that prompted him to make a call such as no Master has the right to refuse. The Master may warn and point out the dangers, and if the call comes from the passions alone, he may refuse; but if he discerns a spark of genuine aspiration, he may not spurn it. Thus Glyndon goes through the fires of purification, due to the admixture of unworthy motives; and success awaits him in the future. In this drama we have an actual fluid elixir, and other physical means, employed by the two Adepts; and while it may suit some to regard these as merely symbolical, yet we must remember that analogy runs throughout nature. That actual fluid elixirs exist and are used cannot be denied, unless we are prepared to reject evidence as strong as what in other cases we are ready to accept. It may be that Adepts of a high order do not require, or do not resort to, such physical means; yet physical means are not in themselves to be despised. It is only when the physical *replaces* the spiritual that the opprobrium of black magic is applicable; to the pure all things are pure, and there seems no reason why a Master of White Magic should not avail himself of the bounties of Nature on all her planes.

The Dweller on the Threshold has passed into language: it is the great Lord of the Underworld, the ruler of the lower kingdom, the Satan that tempted the Christ with all the riches of earth. It lurks in the recesses of

every human nature, harmless and beneficent so long as its power is not challenged; but once we make up our mind to scale the heights, we must either master it or succumb. Glyndon tears aside the veil while he is yet fresh from the fires of lust and filled with the pride of passion; and evokes — the dread presence. Once summoned, it cannot be dismissed; and we learn how he goes forth from his trial, his blood tingling with quenchless desires to attain, but doomed to perpetual dissatisfaction. It is only when plunged in worldly pursuits that he is free from the presence; but let him for a moment aspire, even though it be in painting a picture, and the Dweller is by his side. Only one thing can lay it — unselfish love; but it is his sister, not himself, who by her sacrifice of life for him, evinces this love.

Contrasted with the Rajah of the Senses we have the glorious Augoeides, the Shining Form, the Manasaputra in man; and perhaps we may see in Adonai (though not clearly distinguished from the other) that Atman which, shining in all men, is universal, and particular to none.

We cannot but feel that Zanoni ultimately chooses right in abandoning his glorious isolation at the dictates of his heart. When he took his first initiation, far away in the past, he must have left an important part of his belongings behind, and had to come back a long way to fetch it. The object of his love makes but a poor figure, considered from a worldly standpoint; but the real bride was veiled from sight behind the earthy vestures; and the marriage is consummated, as alone it could be, beyond the tomb — in a region left vague, tenanted only by God and his angels and the souls of the blessed.

"A Strange Story"

In the *Strange Story* a different chord is struck; for instead of the romantic atmosphere of Zanoni, the setting is that of conventional upper-middle-class respectability. Not amid Italian moons and spouting volcanoes, not amid brigands and guillotines, does the occult manifest itself; it obtrudes itself upon the tea-table and flusters the prim old maid. At the very beginning we have a most important lesson: the

effects of Karman, as concentrated by the curse of a dying man. The narrator and hero, thoughtless in his physical vigor and intellectual pride, so mercilessly attacks the beliefs of the poor old doctor who believes in hypnotism and consults clairvoyants, that he brings about his death from the poverty due to the ruin of his practice and the mortification attendant upon the loss of repute. The curse is fulfilled in detail throughout the book. It is by the very magic whose existence he has denied that Fenwick is thwarted in ambition, success, reputation, and love; and brought well-nigh to the scaffold. But note well: his fault was not due to want of heart but to wrongness of head and to heedlessness. The Karman is therefore restricted in its sphere of action, and he ultimately wins through. Those who tend toward a too narrow and rigid interpretation of Karman may find a difficulty in analysing the situation that arises from the curse of the dying man; but Karman acts on all planes, and all men are inextricably interwoven with each other; so that the problem of tracing the complications of this universal law is one of infinite difficulty. Here again we have Bulwer's favorite theme of the contrast between cold intellectualism and sympathy; and illustrated in his favorite way — that of love between a man of intellectual pride and a woman who is all heart, a man with a complex and "logical" mind and a girl who sees with the intuitive eye of the heart. Those who have understood the teachings in *The Secret Doctrine* about the Divine Hermaphrodite will know that these two sides of human nature exist (or existed) in the so-called past as an undivided whole, which has become separated. May we not see — — did not the author see — in these attractions between the two representative types of mortal beings, an attempt to recombine the sundered fragments of the soul; ending so often, in earthly life, in anticlimax, and to be realized only in that land far away where alone ideals are found? Leaving aside the personal mask, we see that, in the idyll of Fenwick and Lilian, a victory is achieved, whose full meaning pertains not to this muddy vesture of decay.

As in Zanoni, we note the isolation of the magician (in this case a black one) and the absence of anything like lodges and orders of adepts. But

we may perhaps suppose these to be implied, while recognising that an artist is neither a photographer nor a map-maker, and that he necessarily and of intent eschews the vagueness of comprehension and of detail in order to present a vivid picture. We can hardly suppose that a novelist who should be scrupulously exact would be very interesting; so no fault can be found with this circumstance. Here however we have a new feature introduced in the contrast between the white magician, represented by Derval, and the hideous monstrosity Margrave; while the existence of a lodge is indicated by the fact that Derval is said to have obtained his wisdom and power from Oriental dervishes.

There can be nothing more graphic and at the same time accurate than the description of the three fires in the brain of the entranced Margrave, as seen by the also entranced Fenwick. The red fire of animal life; intertwining with it, the azure flame of the intellectual life; while sitting apart and enthroned is the silver spark of the essential spiritual being. Even for Theosophists, well-read as they may be in the teachings as to man's compound nature, this is well worth reading for the intense power with which the truths are brought before the eye and made real. And what could be more vivid than the portrayal of the loss of the soul; how, in the vision, the whole career of Margrave is compressed into an episode, which in the actual narrative spreads itself out in what we know as time. The red fire waxes lusty, and calling to its aid the azure flame, it wages war against the silver spark, until at last that spark, with many a tear and lamentation, forsakes its desecrated shrine, leaving that shrine to the devastation and destruction of the triumphant foe. We are reminded of Poe's "Haunted Palace," where the "Spirits moving musically to a lute's well tuned law," are replaced by "Vast forms that move fantastically to a discordant melody . . . and laugh, but smile no more." Ah, pity that Manasaputric light, for it has failed, and must slowly and patiently build itself a new shrine; yet in the realms wherein it dwells, perchance even sorrow is a melody sublime. Far more is our pity due to the doomed rebel, who, in his attempt to carry captive his own immortal Soul, has eternally cut himself off from that Soul — the root of his existence. In Arabian tales

some potentate builds himself a palace replete with all the riches that earth can furnish, and craves but one final boon — a roc's egg to suspend within the dome. The egg is found and suspended: the whole fabric instantly vanishes in ruin and nameless dust. Such likewise was the fate of those who strove to pierce the vault of heaven with their tower, and thereby brought down the celestial fire to their utter destruction.

The whole mystery of the man who loses his soul unfolds gradually and is not made clear until we have reached the last chapter. Beginning as the headstrong Louis Grayle, he falls foul of his comrades and starts a career of selfish ambition. In the East, when stricken to death by the fatal scourge, he is rescued by a holy dervish who administers the elixir. He murders the dervish to obtain the elixir. Wakes up, not knowing who he is, whence he came. Believes himself to be the natural son of Louis Grayle, whom he but dimly remembers and about whom he strives to get information. Takes the name of Margrave. As Margrave he evinces a curious double consciousness, working evil spells in his astral body, and knowing nothing about it in his waking life. The evil genius guides his acts, yet in the waking state he is only dimly conscious of it. This is brought out in the scene where Fenwick casts him into a trance with the magic wand and compels the disclosure.

This book is so replete with details of magic lore, pointing to a very extensive research by the author, and filled in by his wonderful truth-seeing imagination, that we can only refer briefly to a few. Here again we have the elixir, as an actual fluid, and we have the magic wand, the circles with lamps burning a mystic spirit, the double triangle, and other appurtenances of ceremonial magic. In the hands of Margrave, these things may be considered orthodox; but Sir Philip uses some of them also.

Between the incredulous (or credulous) scientific skepticism of the unconverted Fenwick, and the occult truths brought out in this book, we have the ingenious brainy hair-splitting Faber, an intolerable old

bore, whose theories are set up only to be knocked down; and whose discourses provide the reader with ample opportunity for skipping. Worthy of note is the utter contrast between the beautiful Margrave, whose radiant presence is a delight, and Stevenson's Hyde, who has an aura which gives everyone the horrors at first sight. But then Jekyll is also a detestable character, and the whole analysis is faulty — — which does not at all prevent the book from accomplishing its purpose.

"The Haunted and the Haunters"

The story called *The Haunted and the Haunters: or the House and the Brain* is most unfortunately nearly always found in its mutilated form, accompanied by a note which tells us that the author suppressed a part of it (when republished from its original form in *Blackwood*) for fear that it would interfere with the plot of his *Strange Story*. But the part suppressed is far and away the most important part. We are left with a very capital ghost story and with speculations that the phenomena are due to the distant workings of a black magician. But in the missing part the narrator actually meets this black magician. This being is unique; he is the only one of his kind in the whole world, so far as we can make out. And this is of course impossible. But again it is pertinent to say that the author's aim is to paint a vivid picture, unencumbered by unnecessary details and elaboration. For those who have not read this latter part of the tale, it may be well to summarize its purport. The man (whose portrait, it may be remembered, is found in the hidden room in the haunted house), is a being endowed with immense force of will and a natural power of concentration and attraction towards the occult. But he is wholly without conscience, and is a sensualist. By means of his mighty will, and the secrets he has discovered, he can defeat death and prolong his life indefinitely. From time to time he arranges an apparent death, schemes the transfer of his enormous wealth, and reappears in a new age and a new guise. He is identified with several distinct characters in history. He throws the narrator into a trance, wherein the narrator obtains the power of supreme clairvoyance and reads to the magician his future: how he will yet live to play a part that will fill the world with amaze; but how in the far distant future he will be hunted

down by all humanity and will perish amid polar snows, his titanic will subdued at last.

Such a man might exist; such a man as I have described I now see before me — Duke of ___, in the court of ____, dividing time between lust and brawl, alchemists and wizards; again, in the last century, charlatan and criminal, with name less noble, domiciled in the house at which you *gazed* today, and flying from the law you had outraged, none knew whither; traveler once more revisiting London with the same earthly passion which filled your heart when races now no more walked through yonder streets; outlaw from the school of all the nobler and diviner mysteries. Execrable image of life in death and death in life, I warn you back from the cities and homes of healthful men! back to the ruins of departed empires! back to the deserts of nature unredeemed!

This story is written with great power; it produced a great and lasting effect on the present writer, who first read it a few years before he heard of Theosophy. But it produced a weary conflict within him, because, the magician being so black, an antagonism arose between the ideals of power and knowledge on the one side and conscience on the other. This discord was happily resolved by the discovery that white magicians existed. If we wish to use this tale as a symbol, may we not say that such an evil entity as is here depicted forms a part of the make-up of most of us? On any theory which supposes that such elements of our compound nature can be isolated, and thus stand naked in all their good or evil qualities, as the case may be, we may contain within us such a being, seeking to master the possession of our instrument and tending towards the production of a Margrave or a Hyde.

The theory of hauntings propounded in this story represents the effects of a powerful mind, aided by application of occult means of a more or less physical nature, in vivifying the astral light, so that its preserved images of crime and misery clothe themselves in visible forms and enact mechanically a drama of events of the past. The struggle between

the narrator and the overpowering evil will of the black magician is especially worthy of notice. Though every faculty of body and volition is crushed down, though he yields even to *fear*, yet he summons a courage that is above even that fear — pride, he calls it — rises to a plane whereon the sorcerer cannot act — and conquers.

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — *C. J. Ryan*

Modern Science develops a Soul!

H. P. Blavatsky would rejoice at the recent development of higher scientific ideals and at the practical form they are taking. Dr. L. P. Jacks, the well-known philosopher, remarked in a recent broadcast that while in old days prophets overawed the people by crying: "Thus saith the Lord," in these days we get the same effect by: "Thus saith Science." Religion, which once gave hope and comfort has almost lost all its authority, and science, with its soulless doctrines and aloofness from the "humanities," has brought the world to the pass which we see before us. At last, however, we see the beginning of a greater hope. Science promises to become ensouled.

In 1936, at the Harvard Tercentenary, and later in England, great scientists declared that our collected knowledge should be directed by moral force, and at the recent meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Indianapolis, the sense of responsibility of scientists to society was emphasized. Dr. Conklin, in his retiring presidential address, challenged the Association to shift its center of gravity from the mere acquisition of knowledge for its own sake to science for the true benefit of mankind. Science has provided tools and unloosed powers which have been perverted into wrong channels. It has now to accept the responsibility of teaching man to use them wisely.

According to Dr. F. R. Moulton's Report of the Indianapolis meeting, in some respects the climax of the proceedings was the resolution passed by the council inviting the British Association for the Advancement of Science and others to co-operate in making right instead of might the ruling power in human life. Speaking in the Temple at Point Loma a few weeks ago, Dr. G. de Purucker referred to the awakening of science to its responsibilities, and spoke of the remarkable phenomenon that is

taking place before our eyes of a soulless body beginning to be ensouled. "Ideas rule the world," and one of the most important objects for which the Theosophical Society was started was to stem the tide of materialism for which science had been so largely responsible. He spoke of the tremendous advance toward Theosophy that would take place when our scientists, "the High Priests of Nature," envisage the fact that not merely Truth but Justice and Right constitute the framework of the universe, and are not mere "by-products." More than fifty years ago, in the heyday of materialistic science, one of the Masters of Wisdom wrote the famous letter to Mr. A. O. Hume criticizing the unsympathetic attitude of scientists in regard to the higher welfare of humanity. We can quote only one passage:

Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy — therefore, can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. Being but a cold classification of facts outside man, and existing before and after him, her domain of usefulness ceases for us at the outer boundary of these facts; and whatever the inferences and results for humanity from the materials acquired by her method, she little cares. — *The Occult World*

The new attitude of scientists is another sign, among many, of the influx of Theosophical ideas into the West which was started by the Eastern Sages at the propitious time.

Have Animals Souls?

Dr. Robert Broom, the distinguished South African biologist and anthropologist whose advanced views (in the Theosophical sense) about Evolution have frequently been mentioned with appreciation in these pages, has just created a stir by publicly stating that man may well have more than one soul, and that even the animals and plants may not be destitute of souls of some kind. Such utterances coming from a scientist of his standing are of value in clearing the way for a wider understanding of human relationships and the underlying unity of all forms of life — universal brotherhood, in short — the basic

principle of Theosophy. We quote a few significant passages from Dr. Broom's letter to *The Rand Daily Mail*, December 4, 1937:

When I first, in 1931, made the revolutionary statement that evolution is practically finished, I do not suppose that anyone agreed. Soon, however, Julian Huxley, on looking into the matter, had to admit that I seem to be right. . . .

The facts are beyond all question. Of course, there is room for considerable modification. Man may evolve into a Super-man, but he must remain physically a man. He may lose his little toes, he may lose his wisdom teeth, he may lose his lateral incisors, but he must remain a man. . . .

With regard to the soul question, there is room for greater differences of opinion. Sir Arthur Keith certainly differs from me. . . . But that does not prove that they are right and I am wrong.

"Evolutionist" [a correspondent] says, "If the Mind, or Soul, be the source of intelligence and not the brain, then, as they all have a certain amount of intelligence, it follows that animals, bees and ants also have souls."

Here I quite agree and am quite willing to give souls to all living things, even plants. The Amoeba (a primitive single-celled animal) acts as if it were an intelligent being, and certain *foraminifera* make the most careful choice of sand particles and little calcareous plates to build up their houses. Further, all living cells act as if they were controlled by some intelligence. A skilful human builder, if given prepared materials, can build a house, but living cells can build much more skilfully, and they, further, make their own bricks and tiles and windows. . . .

Freud, Adler, and Jung have shown that man is a good deal more complex than was believed even fifty years ago. So complex is man that recently a famous American scientist, Alexis Carrel, has written a book, *Man the Unknown*. Not only

does it appear that man has a soul, but it almost looks as if he has two souls — a conscious one and an unconscious, and possibly the unconscious soul controls all the cells of the body. . .

We are still far from a solution, but I think we can say without any hesitation that the solution of the materialists of the Victorian era is quite unsatisfactory. — R. Broom, Transvaal Museum, Pretoria

It is not very long since H. P. Blavatsky was criticized for her "unscientific" teaching, derived from the Ancient Wisdom and her own knowledge, that man has a compound nature of several inter-blended "principles," which might, for want of a better English word, be called "souls."

Antiquity of the Domesticated Cat

It has always been understood that the Egyptians were the first to tame the cat, and that from Egypt the domestic cat spread to other countries, reaching China about a couple of thousand years ago, and England about A. D. 900. To the surprise of archaeologists, foot-prints of a cat chased by a dog have just been found at Chanhudaro, one of the cities recently excavated in the Indus Valley, north-western India. The two animals scampered across the surface of a brick which was still soft, and by chance the impression has been preserved for our instruction. This Indus civilization is very ancient, having neared the end of a long career at least five thousand years ago. The revelation that a highly advanced culture existed in India at such distant times, which was made a few years ago, is one of the outstanding events in archaeological research. No one in the West dreamed of such a possibility yet here are the remains of cities with excellent drainage systems, well-built houses, statuary that is comparable with the Hellenistic Greek, a highly developed script, etc. When we say "no one imagined such a possibility" we must except H. P. Blavatsky, who frequently referred to the existence of a high civilization in India at a remote period and said that British archaeologists would discover it

some day. In regard to the antiquity of the art of writing in ancient India, which may have been practised 12,000 years ago, she says, she cannot conceal her scorn of the philologists of her day (even Max Muller) who believed that it was unknown in Panini's time, only a few centuries b. c! How did she know so many historical and scientific facts, unsuspected or denied by the highest authorities in her day but now brought to light!

Now it appears that among other appurtenances of modern civilization the ancient inhabitants of the Indus Valley were possessed of the domestic pussy about four thousand years before it reached western Europe. (The savage and untamable *wild-cat* was, and is, widely distributed throughout the world.)

An apparently minor discovery like this is often of great significance in providing clues to unsolved mysteries, and we shall look forward to further discoveries of the antiquity of the domesticated cat in other parts of the Orient.

The Minnesota Girl

In the dry bed of a lake in northern Minnesota the bones of a prehistoric girl were found a few years ago, and great discussion was aroused in regard to the time when she lived. The school that sees man as a very recent arrival in America declared that she must have been buried long after the silts in which the bones were found were deposited and would only be 500 or 1000 years old. The Geological Society of America was recently informed, however, that the bones were as old as the sediments, i. e., from 18,000 to 20,000 years old, and the controversy is probably closed in favor of those who are working for a great antiquity of man in America. The main objections to the theory that man in America was contemporary with man in the Old World lie in the fact that no undisputed remains of such enormous antiquity have yet been found, and that no anthropoid apes' remains have been found in America from which he could have descended! As the majority of scientists are abandoning the Darwinian idea that man came from any known anthropoid in favor of the theory that he came

from a common root-stock of far greater antiquity, the establishment of considerable age for the Minnesota girl is of importance, though of course she is a mere child in comparison with the English "Pitdown Woman" and other Old World inhabitants who lived nearer a million years ago.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Buddhism and Theosophy

Could you give a little explanation of the difference between Theosophy and Buddhism as it is generally taught today amongst the masses?

G. de P. — That is a good question, and one I like, because if I were not a Theosophist, I most emphatically would have accepted the doctrines of the Lord Gautama, the Buddha, as the most humane, the most philosophic, the most generous, the most princely, not only in their attitude towards men, but in the effect they produce upon men.

The difference is that between the mother and a very lovely daughter. The sublime mother is Theosophy, the lovely daughter is Buddhism. I would say that even as Buddhism is practised today, some 2500 years after the passing of its great Founder, even today it is the most theosophical of all the religions existent, the most generous, the most tender in its understanding of human problems; and in its dealing with them, without a vestige of anything that is harsh, unkind, or colored by hatred in any form. It has no doctrine of arbitrary punishment. Its doctrine of retribution based on cosmic law or karman, is retribution infinitely just. The evil that ye do will live after you, and ye yourselves the doers of it will meet it one day, and until ye undo the evil that ye have wrought it will abide — wonderfully logical, satisfying, and comforting.

Just see how this takes hold of the human heart. The true Buddhist says of his injurer: "He has injured me terribly. I pity him. I desire no revenge. That would be but adding my might to the evil that is wrought, for some day the evil that he wrought upon me will fall, helpless man, upon him, and in addition he will have the evil that that evil-doing wrought in his own character. A double evil. I, his victim in this life, will receive recompense, double the recompense of the wrong,

the injury, done unto me, because I shall have retributive compensation for the wrong, and because I do not in my turn hit back at my injurer, I have the increments of strength of character thus growing out of the injury wrought upon me, which is a double good to myself, who have suffered. I have the recompense in my own soul, that I know how to be patient and strike not, hit not back."

Divinity breathes through that. It is the very heart of pity, of compassion. And that is pure Theosophy. In other words, Buddhism is but a lovely daughter of a still more lovely mother. Christianity is its daughter, Brahmanism is its daughter, Taoism, all the religions of India, Persia, China, Egypt, of ancient Europe, and of the Americas. They all sprang from this one source, our God-Wisdom, as we call it, kept in the Guardianship of the Mahatmans, greatly evolved men. But I think that Buddhism is the loveliest of the daughters, because the truest. Fidelity has crowned her. Justice has followed her footsteps.

The Purpose of the Pyramids

What was the real purpose of the building of the Pyramids? — S. H. W.

H. T. E. — When speaking of the pyramids, reference is usually to those of Egypt and chiefly to the Great Pyramid of Cheops. All these Pyramids, whether in Egypt, Central America, or elsewhere, are records constructed for the preservation of sacred knowledge through the dark ages, to be available to posterity. The Mighty Ones perform their great works and leave everlasting monuments; under their supervision the great pyramids were built, when Dhruva was at his lowest culmination and the Pleiades looked over his head. Pyramids are part of the various stone monuments erected by those Initiates who journeyed to many lands for that purpose.

In seeking to explain the meaning of these records we are faced with the difficulty of interpreting an ancient science into terms of modern ideas. The science of those days was a comprehensive whole, which has become decomposed into sundered fragments, which seem to us to be

unrelated to each other. The single purpose in the minds of the builders seems to us like a number of different purposes, competing with one another in the minds of various antiquarians. Were the pyramids initiation chambers? Were they records of astronomical data, or of mathematical truths, or of standards of measurement? They were all of these, and perhaps they could not be any one without being the others also. When the candidate passed through the processes of initiation he enacted in his own person the selfsame processes which occur in Kosmos; hence the size, shape, and orientation of the passages and chambers signify at once Kosmic and human mysteries. A profound lore of numbers and measures and their relation to the Kosmic plan enabled or impelled their architects to build their records according to these forgotten mathematical principles. Many investigators have discovered fragments of this lore, but have not succeeded in reconstructing the whole out of the fragments. Each is prone to fix on his own particular fragment and worry it to death, often cooking his figures and running into extravagances, the while he censures his rivals for committing the selfsame fault. The angle between a side of the base and the slant height is in the neighborhood of $51^{\circ} 50'$, and within the limits of difference of only three minutes of arc we obtain three remarkable results: (1) the periphery of the base is 2π times the height; (2) the cosine of this angle is .618 . . . , the ratio of the Divine Section; (3) the ratio of the slant height to a side of the base is that of the ten-month lunar year to the solar year. If a certain cubit is used as unit, the side of the base gives the number of days in the solar year. Certain of our measures, usually believed to be arbitrary and modern, are thought by some to be based on kosmic facts and to be preserved in the Great Pyramid. Ralston Skinner and Piazzzi Smyth are much quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* in reference to the symbology of names, numbers, and measures. That the decimal notation was used is shown by the fact that certain significant numbers are derived from each other by permutation of the digits, which would not hold good in any other scale or system of notation. The orientation shows the four cardinal points and symbolizes the four Elements.

As to the age of the Great Pyramid, it is hinted by H. P. Blavatsky to be at least three precessional cycles, which is about 78,000 years; the evidence for which is explained in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 432.

Puzzles in Evolution

According to Biology the lower animals and plants are in some cases so much alike as to be separated only by an arbitrary classification. If evolving souls manifest first in plant forms, then in animal forms, we are forced to the conclusion that a one-celled animal houses a more evolved soul than an apple-tree or a redwood which contains many cells. — H. M.

L. G. P. — In your question you have pointed out certain similarities between some forms of plants and animals, especially those forms representative of the lowest grades of these two main classes of entities, or kingdoms. So far as I have been able to understand, we are not to think of evolving souls as passing from kingdom to kingdom as you might "cut across" from one highway to another on a trip south. Think rather of each kingdom as existing for a purpose, i.e., in order to provide the means for a certain class of entity to pursue its pathway right through, and thus help to bring that kingdom to its fine flowering, let us say, before the time is ripe for the monads composing that kingdom to advance and form the basis for a higher kingdom. Such changes will not be made until the dawn of a new planetary manvantara. We should remember moreover that all of the forms, whether of the animal or the vegetable kingdom are on the physical plane, and that for a stream of entities to pass into, or form a kingdom, it must do so by a process of "precipitation" from astral forms into physical encasements. It is just those elementary forms of life in any kingdom that are closest to the "precipitation-point" that are so similar to one another. The same holds true regarding the human kingdom, but in this latter case, there are no visible remains which would instance the condition of mankind when he was cell-like, during the first Root-Race in this Round. Such records of the early condition of humanity are in the astral light, and are therefore unseen. Could you

see them, you might well exclaim "How like a one-celled animal, or one-celled plant!" But you would realize that you had under observation a relic of long-forgotten humanity. Therefore, I would not consider your diagram with its arrows representing the progress of a monad from one grade of plant-evolution springing over to a corresponding grade in the beast-evolution, and then back again into the vegetable kingdom and so on, as being the correct one to use. Think rather of each kingdom as providing the means for its evolving members to work out fully and completely the destiny of that kingdom, which, obviously, is the bringing into activity all of the characteristics peculiar and appropriate to that kingdom, and which characteristics are still partially latent within those evolving monads that make up those great life-waves which we call the Kingdoms of Nature.

The Theosophical Forum

OUR TWO INVISIBLE COMPANIONS (1) — *Katherine Tingley*

These two forces: the physical dominated by the spiritual, the mind illuminated by treasures of truth and inspiration from the Higher Self, these two, working together, will bring about results that are unbelievable. Nor will it take all eternity to bring about these things. The very atoms of our body can be touched by the fire of divine life and brought into harmony with the mind and soul, controlled as the master musician controls his instrument, by the Higher Self.

For life is Light and Light is life, and the Christos-spirit is in everything in degree. Could we sit at the feet of the Law like little children, could we free our minds from misconceptions and learn from nature and listen to the Christos-voice within, oh what revelations would come to us! We should then be able to say, *This is immortal and that is mortal; this belongs to the animal nature of man, and that to the spiritual.* The power to do this is the power that we need, arousing us from the dead, so to speak, and bringing to us light and illumination.

From the time that a vow is taken the disciple has ever with him two forces: two invisible companions formed of his own essence, one evil, one divine; the secretion or objectivation of the opposite poles of his own self-consciousness, they represent his good and evil angels, the Augoeides and its counterpart, each seeking to absorb his being. One of these in the end must prevail over the other, and one or the other is strengthened by every act and thought of his life. They are his higher and lower potentialities passing slowly into potency, as the energies (both good and evil, note) . . . are awakened. . . .

Our problem is to transfer more and more of ourselves to the real battle-field. That field is one that consists of the feelings and thoughts of men; therefore, by right feeling and thought is the battle maintained. Our strength lies in keeping positive; in holding a steady joy in our hearts; in a momentary meditation on all floating great ideas till we

have seized them and made them ours; in a meditation with the imagination on the life of humanity in the future, and its grandeur; in dwelling on the conception of Brotherhood. . . .

Yet never can we reach that point of spiritual discernment until we have found within our own hearts something new: a larger sympathy for all that lives, and a broader, deeper, grander conception of human life and the superb laws that govern it.

I think each is a focalization to a point of all the good and all the evil elements to which we have given conscious life in the past. At each moment, as we consciously incline toward good or evil, one or the other feeds into and fills the mind. And it is obvious that the point of connexion with either is that failing or virtue to which we are most inclined. However small a point, it must, if encouraged, lead to and involve all the rest on that side of the stores of our nature and the universe. If this is true, it follows that to give our *conscious* volitional encouragement and backing to any fault or any failing, is *an immensely pregnant move downward*.

But if effort be continual, if no failures or falls discourage the aspirant and are always followed "by as many undaunted struggles upward," he has always the help and counsel of the divine "Daimon," the "Warrior"; and victory, however far away, is certain. For this is an unconquerable power, "eternal and sure," an actual presence and inspiration, if you will but recognise it, having faith and faith and faith.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Theosophy: the Path of the Mystic*, pp. 22-25. ([return to text](#))

ARE THE DEAD LIBERATED OR EARTH-BOUND? — *Orange I. Clark*

Now, as in the past, communication with the dead, or spirit-return, has engaged the attention of a great number of people; but in spite of the studies carried on for years by many investigators, including the Society for Psychical Research, very little progress has been made towards satisfactory explanations of the various phenomena so faithfully observed and recorded. Why is this? A study of a recent book, *Personality Survives Death*, (1) by Lady Florence Barrett, wife of the late Sir William Barrett of the Royal College of Science in Dublin, gives an opportunity of throwing the light of Theosophy upon some typical problems in spirit-return.

The book consists mainly of "communications purporting to be from the late Sir William Barrett," say the publishers, quoting Lady Barrett, who edits the book and who contributes a prefatory article as well as brief explanatory notes throughout. There is a foreword by Canon J. E. Campbell, D. D., a close friend of Sir William Barrett for many years, giving the history of Sir William's connexion with Psychical Research. (2) But of paramount interest in relation to our later study of the book is a paper by the then living Sir William Barrett himself on "The Deeper Issues of Psychical Research," reprinted from the *Contemporary Review* of February, 1918. It is characterized by the breadth of mind, brilliance of exposition, and high ethical power that would naturally be expected from an F. R. S. who was for forty years Professor of Physics in the Dublin Royal College of Science, who was an associate of such eminent scientists as Sir William Crookes and Sir Oliver Lodge, and whose scholarly researches in his own scientific field made him famous in the world of science.

With this word of introduction, it will be profitable now to take up the book itself in some detail. We might begin with citations from Sir William's paper above mentioned. He says (p. xxxv):

From the confused memories of their earthly life, which constitute the bulk of communications that purport to come from the discarnate, it may be that some of these messages also proceed from a sleeping or semiconscious dreaming state of the deceased person. If this be so, it would explain the common objection to the trivial and scrappy communications from the unseen, and that they are so often only fragmentary reminiscences of life on earth.

On page xxxvii we find Sir William referring to the "strong objection" of both the Christian and the Jewish Churches "to any attempt to lift even a corner of the veil that hides the unseen world from us," and he cites the Biblical prohibition of necromancy as one cause of this repugnance.

Psychical enquiry in early ages would . . . have produced a state of intellectual and moral confusion. Weariness and perplexity would have resulted, faith in the orderly government of the world would have been shaken, and the dictates of reason might have been supplanted by giving heed to an oracle.

Sir William remarks that these warnings are applicable today, and that the ignorant and foolish . . . need to be warned off a region which may prove such a treacherous quicksand.

Theosophists may agree with the above statements of Sir William, but are not likely to agree with him fully when he goes on to say: "But contempt and condemnation of the whole subject are as mischievous as credulity and lack of common sense," for they are convinced that it is better to leave psychic matters entirely alone than to attempt development of psychic powers without sufficient knowledge and proper guidance, or from any motives whatsoever except those which are wholly unselfish and altruistic.

Theosophy maintains that the phenomena so stoutly sworn to by the Spiritualists and others are in great measure genuine; it is the *explanations* and interpretations of such phenomena that are absent or

misleading, showing the lack of understanding of inner worlds and their workings. Sir William in life showed clear perception when he said: "The psychical order, it is true, is not the spiritual order . . ." and urged the possibility that "the mind of the percipient [of psychic visions] may be laid open to psychical invasion of a lower order. The cases of "possession" narrated in the gospels, and known in all parts of the ancient and modern world, cannot, in every case, be explained away by hysteria or epilepsy, but are often, I believe, genuine instances of *telergy*, the influence of an extraneous spirit, whether incarnate or discarnate, on the organism of the sufferer." All true, according to the teachings of Theosophy. And, we are bound to say, in a book avowedly published to give evidences of the genuineness of phenomenal spiritistic communication the inclusion of the strong warnings against the dangers of this pursuit and the emphasis placed on the limits of its usefulness cannot be too highly commended. These dangers and limitations are, at least in part, known to most Spiritualists and deeply regretted by them.

After reading this able address by the living Sir William Barrett, one might wish, out of respect for him, to have been spared the recital of the messages purporting to have come from him in the discarnate state; but these spirit messages are in so many ways typical, and again, so many people are interested in psychic phenomena and in communicating with the departed, that we are constrained to proceed — it being our strong hope that our comments will not wound the feelings of anyone.

Lady Barrett was already a believer in the possibility of "spirit-return," and she cherishes a fond hope that her testimony in regard to these communications from another world may be of some weight with others. In their intimate description of personal details known only to her, these messages gave what seemed to her conclusive evidence that they were actually from the gloriously liberated spirit of her deceased husband. She tries throughout the book to persuade the reader of this, and we cannot mistake her sincerity.

Like most of the spirit-messages that have come to our attention, these communications are chiefly of a trivial and personal nature; though there is also contained in many of them religious and philosophical matter echoing the highly ethical ideas so prominent in Sir William's writings during his life, and strongly believed in by his wife. But these lack the fresh creative drive of living thought, and bear the evidence of being simply automatisms the basis for which was set by the powerful thought-force of the thinker during life. They are of a somewhat feeble nature which compares unfavorably with the able writings of the brilliant scientific discoverer that Sir William Barrett really was. Is such a "come-down" in store for us after death?

Notwithstanding any claims to the contrary, we are forced to the Theosophical explanation that the higher part, the spiritual part, had passed on to other and higher realms, and only the disintegrating shell or vehicle remained in the astral light to be attracted by the strong thoughts of the living and temporarily galvanized into a more or less faithful semblance of living mental activity. Is it right even to try to force the dead back to earth and keep them earth-bound? — even though the entities (whatever they are) themselves seek association with living humans. This thought, of the wrong done to the departed by trying to draw them back to earth, has not been given much attention by modern Spiritualists, though it was strongly held by the ancients.

Again, it is a matter of common experience that the spiritistic messages of the dead, spoken through mediums to the living, are often instead a return to the living recipient of his own thinking, unintentionally impressed upon or picked up by the "spirit" or the medium. Sir William's messages on healing to his living physician wife are evidently of this so familiar type. Throughout the body of the book we find intuitions — "hunches" — clairvoyance even, which are not uncommon faculties of the living, attributed to impressions received from the dead. This latter is a usual assumption among Spiritualists. This writer was taught that idea in early childhood but has never found any evidence or warrant for it save that the "spirits" claim the credit, as they also do for most of the good in human life. But this claim is belied by the

character of the messages received from them. The considerable variety of genuine phenomena produced, and claimed as due to the departed, cannot be accounted for by any one such explanation, however gratifying that explanation may seem to certain of the bereaved, who evidently have not considered all of the implications. The subject-matter generally contained in "spirit messages" is easily explained by a little knowledge of the evidences and phenomena of thought-transference, clairvoyance at a distance, astral records, elementals, and the fading mental or other shell left behind in the "earth's sphere" by the ascending spiritual self. To some it would seem better that death should end all than that it should bring the liberated spirit of man down to the plane of trifling astral magic and earth-bound interests.

As already noted, the book in hand seems to recognise the weaknesses of spiritism and the dangers with which its pursuit is fraught — weaknesses and dangers with which the discriminating investigator is confronted at every turn. Sir William, the deceased in this case, is made to say that spirits have great difficulty in communicating with earth — that in doing so they cannot bring all their intelligence with them. The explanation is necessitated by the disappointing character of his own messages. Again, there is the claim of the supposed Sir William that he has not infrequent personal interviews with God Himself. His frequent statements that he and other spirits are speedily progressing to higher and undefiled planes out of touch with the earth, cannot be reconciled with his still more constant theme, that he is hovering about his living wife and his former dwellings, and is approving this, that, and the other of her household arrangements and personal activities. What a superlative hell it would be, to remain impotent and unseen in our old haunts, yet reading every concealed thought of the living! Is there no rest for those who have passed on? — we are moved to ask.

The present writer is very far from wishing to deal with this subject in a spirit of severity, but he feels that because of the importance of the issues involved those issues should receive friendly discussion and some important facts should be sympathetically but clearly stated.

How much more comforting than the concept above set forth is the teaching of Theosophy: that after death we leave off the gross and unlovely qualities that as earthly human beings we all have, and enter upon a needed rest — a prolonged separation from the anxieties and burdens of this world — a rest which does not separate us from the spirit of those we love any more than sleep separates us from our loved companions.

After all, is it the earthly qualities that we love in our fellows? Or is it the shining spirit with which, if we truly love, our own higher part is indissolubly linked? The best and only sure proof that we can have of any worthwhile survival after our earthly death is to be found in rising to and living in that higher, permanent, truly spiritual part of ourselves which knows no death. In other words: to live in the spiritual will be to know the ever-living spirit. Rising above that which dies one finds proofs of the continuance of spiritual life. Such proofs are open to us at all times.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Personality Survives Death*. Messages from Sir William Barrett, Edited by his wife. Longmans, Green & Co., 1937. 204 pp. Pr. \$2.50. ([return to text](#))

2. In various places in the introductory matter, the book speaks in high praise of the English Society for Psychical Research, of which Sir William was one of the founders, and of which he and his wife and their associates were ardent members. Let us remark here that when that Society shall have definitely withdrawn its unprovable and disproven calumnies against H. P. Blavatsky contained in the old Hodgson Report (which is regretted by the Society's membership) Theosophists generally and countless others will have a higher respect for that Society's sense of fairness. ([return to text](#))

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The separation of the sexes

Please may I know what is really meant by the teaching about the separation of the sexes in an early Root-Race. Is this connected in any way with the idea of "twin-souls"?

G. de P. — As regards this question concerning the separation of human individuals into distinct sexes which took place more or less during the Third Root-Race: this separation of each individual was brought about by the natural course of early human evolution, and is founded on the dual nature of mind, of the manasic part in us. When mind entered into the previously "mindless" race, the dual character of mind immediately made itself felt throughout all the lower quaternary, and when I say "immediately," I mean dating from that time. Thus it was that the androgynous race of the time slowly drew apart into the separate individuals as they now exist, into man and woman in other words; and the animals and indeed some of the plants likewise followed suit because of the strong psychic impression made by the human race on the astral mold of our world.

Thus this separation was a purely natural affair, based fundamentally on what you can call the positive and negative sides of mind; or you can otherwise phrase it as being based on the bi-polar character of the manas within us. Thus sex is really very little higher than the lower parts of the manas, and consequently is not a spiritual thing at all, a mere passing phase in evolution. As the human race evolves and rises out of the lower mind into the higher, sex will disappear.

In connexion with this, let me utter a word of warning: the idea of some rather sensuous people that the higher nature of human evolution is to be achieved by "the union of twin souls" is altogether wrong. The secret lies in the individual himself or herself, for in each individual there are the two poles. Thus it comes about that a human

individual for two or three or more incarnations is a man or a woman; and as karma makes for adjustment in these things and prevents extremes, slowly such an individual begins to lean or have a bias towards the other half of mankind, as I have often explained, and when that reaches a certain point, then the man's incarnations become feminine, and the woman's incarnations, as above explained, become masculine. Thus it is that our destiny swings us from incarnations as a man to incarnations as a woman, then back to a man, then back to a woman; and this will last until sex disappears slowly and inevitably.

The twin-soul idea is a very dangerous one, and in fact fundamentally all wrong. What we must strive to do is to rise above sex in both thought and feeling, directing our efforts towards the spiritual within us, in which there is neither sex nor any of its attributes.

Dog-Dreams

Do animals at death pass into Kama-loka and Devachan before rebirth? When dogs sleep they appear to dream. Do they do so?
— R. B.

L. R. — The answer to the second question is found in *The Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, where the subject discussed was the difference between the dreams of men and those of animals. Mme. Blavatsky said:

The dream state is common not only to all men, but also to all animals, of course, from the highest mammalia to the smallest birds, and even insects. Every being endowed with a physical brain, or organs approximating thereto, must dream. Every animal, large or small, has, more or less, physical senses; and though these senses are dulled during sleep, memory will still, so to say, act mechanically, reproducing past sensations. . . . Like the last embers of a dying fire, with its spasmodic flare and occasional flames, so acts the brain in falling asleep. . . . The instinctual mind finds expression through the cerebellum, and is also that of the animals. With man during sleep the functions of the cerebrum cease, and the cerebellum carries him on to the Astral plane.

It often happens that men are conscious enough in sleep to know that they are dreaming, which shows that a man can separate himself on the mind plane into two or more entities. When awake, he can reason about himself as a composite being; he can, so to say, stand aside and see himself go by. An intelligent animal can think, but the light of reason has not been developed in it, though it has a more unerring instinct to guide it than man has. The pet dog, asleep, and evidently dreaming, is physically unconscious; he has not yet evolved a conscious higher mind or spiritual sense to function in Devachan, either asleep or after death. Therefore, in his dreams he is conscious somewhere on an intermediate level of being in the astral realm, and the Kama-loka is just such a subjective state. Unlike man, he would not ever dream that he was dreaming; nor would he have the human lower mind's imagination which animates present desires with pictures of past and future indulgences. His horizon is limited to the present; he awakes quickly, easily, and fully, ready for physical action. Likewise, his sleep after death must be correspondingly brief, light, and uneventful, before he is instinctively drawn back to another round of incarnation. Earth-life being his present evolutionary field of progress, Mother Nature provides for the most of his time to be spent here. If he is brought back to his old master — as may happen — he will know the latter instinctively, while the master will reason about the mutual feeling of an old bond of association. The animal "soul" is still on the descending arc of materializing spirit, as man was before his latent fires of mind were lighted by solar deities, in the Third Root-Race. The post-mortem condition of animals was discussed briefly in *The Theosophical Forum* for April, 1938.

Identical Twins

Can you treat the subject of identical twins in its various aspects and phases, and do so from the occult standpoint; also discuss the significance of identical destinies in identical twins?

H. T. E. — In answer to questions about the bearing of individual destiny on the question of identical twins, it may be pointed out that,

even if it be true that such twins are born from one cell, it is also true that every cell contains a number of lesser constituents (nucleus, nucleole, genes, chromosomes, etc.) which biologists are now investigating. Also, the cell merely furnishes a vehicle for the incoming entity, and it would seem no more reasonable to suppose that two monads using the same vehicle would be exactly alike, than to suppose that two people living in the same house would be alike. The expression "identical destinies" is surely unwarranted by any facts; unless "identical destinies" merely means "similar."

O. I. C. — Scientists are making a considerable study of human identical twins. It is clearly established that they are not identical physically or mentally, though they are usually very similar in appearance and personal traits, at least superficially. Nor are any two plants or animals entirely identical, science avers.

We do not know that any scientist claims or even admits that in any case "identical" twins have "identical destinies." Sensational and evidently inaccurate accounts which have sometimes attracted wide attention in the popular press cannot be taken too seriously. Nevertheless, it seems quite reasonable that having the same heredity and environment and voluntarily cultivating the same characteristics, attitudes, and likes and dislikes, as twins often do, they should attract to themselves similar happenings. But this is voluntarily induced destiny, not predestination.

We all of us, in accordance with our karman, attract to ourselves the conditions, events, and even accidents which we call our destiny. The fact that persons incarnate in the same family shows clearly some similarity of their karman or some karmic relationship. Being born as "identical" twins would seem to show a still closer karmic similarity or affinity. It is well known that brothers and sisters sometimes experience remarkable similarity of events and even of life history. It seems natural that such similarities should occur more often in the case of "identical" twins. However, there are as yet no statistical data as to the frequency of the similarities of life events, though a considerable

number of scientists studying heredity and evolution are painstakingly collecting data as to every detail of the case histories of human "identical" twins.

There have always been twins. If their life history were always or usually identical or nearly so, that fact would have been generally known long ago. There are no two things in the universe that are identical, and yet there are fundamental similarities running through all things. Individuals may have bodies and personal traits astonishingly similar, but their inner natures may be poles apart.

Truly the questioner is right in holding that the facts in this matter (like all other facts in human life when rightly understood) give support to the Theosophical doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. We choose our incarnations and life events by and because of our desires and attractions and needs, previously set up or chosen at the time. Heredity helps to provide the body but the incarnating ego helps to build it. There is no injustice or chance or fatalism. We have even chosen in the past and constantly do choose to share the karma and destiny of the human race and none of us would long stay dissociated from the human race if we had the chance to do so.

Individuals of inactive will may be carried along by heredity and circumstances and family and racial karma, but those of more active will can and do shape the present and the near future to at least a large degree, as we all know that we are doing in almost every thought and act of every day.

We are not completely bound by any outward circumstance. We attract to ourselves whatever we deserve, and when we have learned our lessons and work with the Higher Law our destiny will be good, because the inmost of every human being and of the universe is good.

The Development of Intuition

I once remarked that I would enjoy getting into certain lines of Theosophical work provided I knew more about Theosophy. A friend said to go right ahead and rely on the right answers to

come as needed; that my intuition would work infallibly if only I used it. It seems to me that when a person has *naturally* evolved to the point where these powers are desirable or needed they will manifest themselves; I believe it is not the best thing for a person to try to force the development of any of the higher powers, among which is intuition. Would you care to elaborate on this subject? — G. C.

Q. W. — I think this is what your friend meant when he spoke of the answers coming, as it were, automatically. It is obviously almost impossible to remember all the details, as details. But it is possible to figure out a fairly correct solution if you work from universals to particulars, which is the Platonic way. Of course intuition is really the thing to be worked towards, but it is necessary to have a background of knowledge to build against. Regardless of how well developed the intuition may be, its expression is through the brain-mind. And it is the brain-mind that has to be trained to reflect and express truly that for which it is the channel. Intuition is to be developed, but not, I think, through any systematic set of exercises or anything like that. It will come through a close application of all the faculties to the subjects studied, and soon you will be putting two and two together and getting answers. The real teaching is given in hints, which the student must catch and follow up for himself, finding a contributory hint here, and a confirming hint there.

Of course the development of intuition is karmic, that is, it is the result of precedent causes. I think one of the best means of development is trying to make our Theosophy a living power in our daily lives, together with a real study of the technical teachings.

THE INNER LIFE — *Mary O'Reilly*

As surely as you live, and indeed you will find it so, the one who believes in the outer life and has put his faith and trust in it, is still asleep: spiritual knowledge has not yet awakened in him. It is only in self-confidence, in reliance on the Inner Life that spiritual strength can be found.

Self-knowledge begins when a man, trying to hold his mind silent a few moments in aspiration, turns inward to what is holding it. When this holding can be to any degree accomplished, he may become conscious of his Greater Self, his immortality, his divinity.

Where you find unbroken gentleness, enduring patience, self-control, self-forgetfulness and deep and abounding sympathy, you can look there for wisdom. Seek the company of such a one, for there abides in his heart the steady flame of love. He has realized the divine within him.

PEACE OF MIND — *J. H. J.*

I wonder if you have ever noticed how the entry of some good-hearted man or woman into a room dispels a spiteful or disturbed atmosphere. It may be that such a person's love and understanding of other people and of their troubles have drawn around them forces which work for the good of other people and cast out the devils of evil thought whenever they encounter them. Who can say it is not so?

Can we not help to rid ourselves of evil influences in this and unseen worlds? If your trouble is nervousness, unaccountable fears, a constant undercurrent of anxiety, worry or a generally disturbed state of mind, just sit down and think of someone you know who takes everything calmly; or see yourself moving slowly beside a calm stream. Feel that you are lying on the green turf, listening to a lark singing in the clear summer sky. Think "Peace, harmony, love."

It is only when we try to calm our mind that we realise how undisciplined our thoughts really are, how they rush helter-skelter through our minds, skimming the surface and seldom making deep impressions. Contemplating peaceful things soon slows down the pace of the thought-machine and brings a wonderful feeling of calm.

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

Atlantis Again

Somehow, interest in the problem of a lost continent in the Atlantic Ocean does not die out although the subject is regarded by many scientists with disfavor. The interest has recently been increased by newspaper articles "featuring" Dr. C. S. Piggot's experiments in the Atlantic, which have recently been explained by Dr. W. H. Bradley of the U. S. Geological Survey. Dr. Piggot shot a hollow tube into the ocean floor in various places between Europe and America and brought up ten-foot long sections which have provided interesting information about conditions prevailing when the superficial layers were deposited. To quote from *Science*, December 3, 1937:

Dr. Bradley finds that in the sea floor there is definite evidence of four ice ages, which can not yet be definitely correlated with the ice ages on the continents, and of two periods of violent explosive volcanic action, one during the ice ages, and one after the most recent ice age. Changes in the earth's magnetism during the ice ages, as shown by the deep sea sediments collected by Dr. Piggot's sampler, were described by Dr. Fleming, who finds that considerable changes in the earth's magnetic field have occurred in rather recent geologic time. . . .

The cold periods and intervening warm conditions were shown by the remains of the microscopic marine algae called diatoms embedded in the superficial sediments of the ocean floor. Certain diatoms can live only in warm water, others in cold, and these tell-tale deposits contain both kinds in alternating layers. In this way the alternating periods of warm and cold Atlantic water during perhaps a million years of modern geological history are unmistakably shown. Further research may reveal the actual correspondences between the temperatures of the Atlantic Ocean and the northern European and northern American

continental lands during the fluctuations between genial warmth and intense cold in the Great Ice Age. Perhaps the exact length of the Glacial Period, so greatly disputed, may also be determined by the study of new and deeper sections taken from the bed of the Atlantic. A broad hint is given in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* that many unexpected surprises would be revealed if the rocks buried beneath the oceans could be explored.

The comparatively recent change in the earth's magnetic field, mentioned by Dr. Fleming, may be a significant factor in determining great changes in the contours of the Atlantic.

Dr. Piggot's explorations in the Atlantic have led to statements in the newspapers that final confirmation has been found of the existence of the sunken continent. We have not seen any such claims on the part of the scientists. From their general attitude of disbelief in an Atlantis *inhabited by man, and geologically recent*, it would seem that Dr. Piggot's proofs that the ocean partook of the tremendous vicissitudes of temperature of the Glacial Period — profoundly interesting as they are — have little or nothing to do with the problem of Atlantis. When evidence is found by scientists themselves which they will accept as conclusive, the existence of a former civilization in the Atlantic will be widely heralded as the greatest sensation of the age, just as Dr. Rhine's successful experiments in telepathy and clairvoyance — a still more "unorthodox" line of research — have been accepted in unexpected scientific quarters and have broken down almost insuperable prejudice against the admission of positive facts.

Unfortunately the acceptance of the mass of evidence in favor of sunken lands in the Atlantic has been seriously handicapped by the quantity of nonsensical and ill-supported arguments offered by enthusiasts and by charlatans. The array of facts and serious arguments presented by H. P. Blavatsky has been almost drowned by the raucous voices of such persons. Qualified Theosophists should study the subject in all its complexities and become acquainted with the crucial points, so as to be able effectively to appreciate and use the

new discoveries which are being made in support of their position, and to expose the fallacies of the writers who have done so much harm by their errors.

One of the most impressive of these discoveries is that of the extraordinary depth of the enormous submarine valleys and steep canyons which stretch away from north America far out across the bed of the Atlantic Ocean. These valleys could not have been cut *when the region was submerged*, but were necessarily eroded when it was dry land. Has the land sunk under the ocean or have the waters risen and drowned it and its great valleys? The theory lately offered is that during the Glacial Age, when vast quantities of water were temporarily locked up in the shape of ice, the level of the sea was greatly lowered, perhaps for two thousand feet, and, as the ocean bed appeared above the waters and became dry land, rivers began to make their way down to the greatly reduced area of ocean, cutting gorges and valleys which have still remained. After many thousands of years the ice melted and the ocean gradually rose to its former height, drowning vast areas of land and, of course, the great submarine canyons.

There are many difficulties in accepting this explanation of the mystery but the most serious one is that the valleys descend far below the lowest level to which the ocean could have sunk by the abstraction of its water in the shape of ice. There was not enough ice. We are, therefore, reduced to the more reasonable explanation that great areas of land, including the valleys, have actually sunk beneath the onrushing waters in some cataclysm which took place in comparatively recent times, geologically speaking. How far this collapse extended across the Atlantic cannot yet be stated, but the evidence of the submerged river valleys is strongly in favor of some kind of an Atlantis, now submerged. Even in this century unexplained changes have taken place in the south Atlantic, portions of the bed having risen more than two miles, and new islands having appeared near South America.

NATURE STUDIES: XIV — H. Percy Leonard

The Heresy of Separateness

"Although undivided, it appeareth as divided among men." —
Bhagavad-Gita, chapter xiii

The soul embodied in a human form is subject to the sway of the illusion of separateness and personality, and so powerful is the deception produced as to impose even upon those who have penetrated somewhat deeply into the study of their own natures. It is comparatively easy to conceive of universal life sleeping within the stone, dreaming in the plant, half waking in the animal, and reaching full self-consciousness in man; but to apply this theory as rule of practice in our daily life is quite another thing. This much at all events is plain, that in proportion as we dwell in thought among our bodily sensations and material things, so does the fallacy of separated life fasten its grip upon our minds; while in so far as we ignore the sense-impressions and allow the mind to wander forth and blend in sympathy with life expressed in other forms, do our confining walls expand and set us free.

A life of freedom from all selfish care, and that supreme, impersonal serenity which knows no ebb or flow, would seem to be of such transcendent worth as to attract all men in their pursuit, and yet we find that very few have entered on the quest. The vast majority are willing victims of the glamor of that pole of feeling, known as pleasure, and they spend their time and energies in a mad chase upon its trail. Time after time they find that every mounting pleasure is succeeded by its dull recoil, just as a swimmer is upborn upon a wave only to plunge the deeper in the trough behind; and yet so strongly does the charm allure that till the winter of old age chills their desires, they lavish all their powers upon the hopeless chase.

According to some keen observers, pain as well as pleasure wields a

fascinating power over deluded man and though the notion may at first be scouted as absurd, it is sufficiently arresting to challenge our inquiry. Everybody must have observed how the mind in leisure moments will drag the memory of a long-forgotten grievance from its hiding-place and will revel in the sense of injury and of morbid self-pity which the recollection affords. In fact it is only when the last bitter drop has been drained that the ancient sorrow is cast aside, and even then the mind is just as likely to select some other painful memory on which to brood as a pleasant one. The flattering compliment, the acrimonious attack; the rosier prospect we have ever seen, the worst of all the nameless terrors which have chilled our blood; our deepest loves, our most intense dislikings; both the pairs of opposites are conjured up and galvanized to life once more, for both are equally effective to focus our attention on the point of personality and to counteract that yearning for expansion that would set us free.

As prisoners long confined are said to cling with fond affection to their old familiar cells, so do we crouch within the personality and oscillate between the poles of pleasure and pain; we hide behind our prison walls and fear to venture forth and enter on the larger life that lies beyond. It is said that when the poet Wordsworth was a boy, he was sometimes so overwhelmed by a sense of vastness and expansion that as he walked to school he would reach out his hand and touch the nearest wall or tree, that from the shock of contact with material things he might recall to life his fading consciousness of personality. Most people who have wandered lonely among scenes of an unusual grandeur and sublimity must have had a similar experience, and the alacrity with which they plunge into the social whirl on their return to common life is prompted by no other motive than to revive the line of demarcation of their own familiar egotism which had grown a little blurred by lack of contact with their fellow-men.

Some men on reaching this stage in their evolution are strong enough to grapple with their personality and by determined effort force it to take its proper place, that of a willing servant with no other aim than to subserve the interests of the soul in everything relating to its daily life

among material things. For others less heroic there remains the method of self-conquest by a gradual subjugation. The personality is stunted by degrees and not permitted to appropriate such large supplies of mental substance and of vital force to foster its unbalanced and unnatural growth; for as the personality is made the subject of our constant thought so does it fatten and increase, while as we cease to feed it and engage the mind in wider fields, its independent life begins to weaken and its fierce, insistent self-assertion to decline.

Silence has always been commended by the sages as a specific agent to dissolve the crust in which we are confined; but silence from the Theosophic point of view means vastly more than to refrain from uttered speech, an exercise of little value if the mind is not restrained as well. Intense activity of mind may coexist with vocal silence, and the creative mental force may spend itself in weaving pictured webs of thought in which one's virtues and accomplishments stand out in brilliant contrast with the somber background of the failings of our fellow-man. But to control all exercise of thought, to still the vehemence of our desires, and by a steady effort of the will to rise into the outer quiet where all mental agitation dies — this is an enterprise to tax our loftiest powers. In the deep hush of that eternal silence the confining shell that rings us round disintegrates and vanishes away. There the harsh voice of criticism never comes to drive us back to shelter in our fortress of defense. There no impinging wave of love or hate revives the sharpness of our boundary-line, and thus insensibly it melts away and sets the prisoner free, a pure, impersonal force in Nature that has found its way to liberty at last. The home from which we started and to which we must return is nothing other than the boundless Vast itself, the freedom of its ample spaces being gained by the mere breaking loose from the inclosing walls of personality in which we are confined.

[Conclusion of this series]

ORIENTAL STUDIES: V — *Judith Tyberg*

Possibilities of the Kali-yuga

The Kali-yuga is an age "black with horrors," and yet it is a golden age of spiritual opportunity!

The evolutionary period of each one of the Seven Great Root-Races of our earth is divided into four divisions known as *Yugas* or Ages. The first of these *Yugas* is the *Satya-yuga* or Age of Truth, of Purity and Innocence, the age in which *Dharma* or Truth, which is often represented as a bull, stands on all its four feet. All forces of opposition and resistance are held in check by the action of *Sattva-guna*, the quality of Truth. Hence spirituality reigns supreme in this age which lasts 1,728,000 years.

The second *Yuga* is the *Treta-yuga*, the Age of three parts of Truth, the age in which the *Dharma*-bull loses one of its feet. Opposing material forces are stirred by the action of *Rajo-guna*, the quality of passion and activity. Hence spiritual powers experience a certain amount of frustration. This age lasts 1,296,000 years.

The third *Yuga* is the *Dwapara-yuga* or Age of two parts of Truth, the age in which the *Dharma*-bull loses two of its four feet. The *Rajo-guna* acting with *Tamo-guna*, the quality of darkness and illusion, brings about in this age the fatal quality of spiritual inertia and darkness and produces the corresponding decline in the manifestation of divine powers. This age lasts 864,000 years.

The fourth and last *Yuga* is the *Kali-yuga*, the Dark Age, sometimes called the Iron-Age, the age in which only one part of Truth prevails and the *Dharma*-bull with only one foot left has little power to act. *Tamo-guna* reigns supreme and darkness and materiality and ignorance and evil are rampant in the world. This age lasts 432,000 years. *Adharma*, the God of Untruth, and all his relations: selfishness,

deceit, arrogance, unrighteousness, trickery, greed, baseness, wrath, and injury hold sway over the hearts of men.

As each age succeeds the other its time period and its spiritual condition decline at the fixed ratio of 25 per-cent. Our Kali-yuga commenced at the death of *Krishna*, 3102 b. c. So mankind has now lived through 5,040 years of this dark age. A very discouraging aspect indeed! But, this is only one side of the picture. There is also a marvelous note of hope and stimulus to higher action, if one understands the law of the increasing power of spiritual effort which acts at the same time as the law of decreasing spirituality. These two laws work as harmoniously together as do the simultaneous laws of involution and evolution. If, during our *Kali-yuga*, spiritual energies are invoked from within, the results are most remarkable, for they produce far greater results and with greater speed than in any other *Yuga*.

The *Vishnu-Purana*, as well as other *Puranas*, tell us that what takes ten years to accomplish spiritually in *Satya-yuga*, takes six months to accomplish in *Treta-yuga*, one month in *Dwapara-yuga*, and only one day in *Kali-yuga*, our present age. So as the Yugas succeed one another the effect of spiritual effort increases and gains until in the *Kali-yuga* its results are truly miraculous in comparison. The pace of human evolution or involution is greatly accelerated in the *Kali-yuga* and its swift momentum enables a man to do more with his energies, either good or bad, in a shorter time than in any other age. What took 3600 days to bring about in the *Satya-yuga* takes only one day to accomplish in our present age. What encouragement for spiritual aspiration, for study, for being our highest, for seeking light from within when the time is so ripe and so productive!

True, there are some 416,000 more years of the *Kali-yuga* in which to continue our upward climbing! But we spend a greater part of that in the spiritual realms between earth lives; for the general rule is that a man spends a hundred times as many years in the invisible realms as he lives on the earth. It is only while we are here on earth, manifesting

as a complete man, that we can win the conquests that release untold spiritual splendor. *Now*, is the magic word that will make nature help us to win our highest treasures. Nature is indeed bounteous in her gifts to those who work in harmony with her.

Not only is time more valuable in the *Kali-yuga*, but so is also the quality of spiritual endeavor. The *Vishnu-Purana* also states that that which is obtained in *Satya-yuga* by *Dhyana* or spiritual meditation on the Divinity within, is attained in *Treta-yuga* by *Yajna* or sacrifice to the Divinity within, and in *Dwapara-yuga* by *Archana* or honoring of the Divinity within, and in our *Kali-yuga* is accomplished by *Kirtana* or the repeating of the name of Divinity. If the mere power of the sound or mantra of a spiritual name by a true aspirant can bear in our present cycle the same fruit that only the highest spiritual meditation could produce in *Satya-yuga*, imagine what wonderful inner growth is possible now by practising spiritual meditation in our daily lives!

Dr. de Purucker tells us:

But the best form of meditation is the constant thought, yearning, aspiration, to be your best, to live your noblest, and to keep this thought with you by day and night. If the yearning to be one's best and to live one's noblest is derivative from the spirit of Compassion, welling up in the heart like a holy river of energy, it will lead one quickly to the Gates of Gold. — *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, 136

And again:

Aspiration is real prayer; it is a constant raising of ourselves from day to day, trying each day to go a little higher towards the god within. This means harmony, inner harmony, peace. — *Op. cit.*, 134

So even though the *Dharma*-bull stands on only one leg in our present *Kali-yuga* there is great spiritual hope for those who aspire.

NOTHING TOO MUCH — *H. T. Edge*

We often quote that maxim, used by several of the ancient Greek authors, *Μήδεν αγαν*, "not too much of anything, nothing in excess, moderation in all things"; but perhaps not always realizing sufficiently its import. The genius of our race is in an important respect the opposite of that of these ancient Greeks. Strenuousness is rather our cult, the philosophy of the utmost; and this we carry into everything we do, from manual labor to devotional aspirations. But the Greeks cherished the ideal of balance and eschewed the notion of excess in anything; some of their stories depict the retribution that comes on those who pursue one line of endeavor too strenuously. Proportion is the keynote of their art. Astrology books tell us that certain prominent occidental nations are under the fiery sign Aries, the Ram; and that the Chinese are ruled by its opposite, Libra or the Balance. Contrast our philosophies and religions with those of ancient China.

Yet even in speaking of the Tao philosophy, so deeply engrained is the racial genius above spoken of, that we are apt to try and translate the words of Lao-Tse and Chuang-Tse into terms more consonant with our own ideals, as though these philosophers were concealing their meaning under some guise of indirect speech. But there is no need to seek to evade these teachings, for they are what we find in ancient India and in many Theosophical books which we revere. They amount, philosophically speaking, to the finding of the true Self by progressive rejection of all that encumbers it; and, as regards action, they imply the finding of the real actor in man, by relegating to their proper place all the minor impulses to action, which are only the qualities of nature, as the *Bhagavad-Gita* tells us.

Indian philosophy runs to vast masses of detail, terms innumerable, categories, classifications, doctrines, schools; but the Chinese eschews every complication and avoids terminology and formal doctrine, all world-systems and theories of the constitution of man. There are many

roads to truth, but all have the same goal.

Occidental people are afraid that if they abandon strenuousness they will fall into inertia. There are many tools in the workshop of life, and he would be a poor craftsman who should use one tool for all purposes. If we have neglected the balance wheel in our mechanism, at least a flywheel is not much good without power; and on the other hand an engine without any sort of governor runs amuck.

No doubt the remaining signs of the Zodiac, besides Aries and Libra as mentioned, denote various implements of necessary use and all contributory to a well-balanced outfit. Individuals may be divided into a classification on this basis, each showing the idiosyncrasy pertaining to the particular cosmic potency in question; and so with the seven symbolic planets.

If Karman is connected with any particular sign it must be that of the Balance, for it is the great adjuster of equilibrium.

No doubt it is wisely said that one should act according to his own nature, rather than seek to imitate the nature of another; and if the racial type to which we belong embodies a particular Genius, we probably do well to manifest that Genius. Let each do his own job. But, this much having been allowed, it may be interesting and helpful to consider the matter further.

The Theosophical Forum

ORIENTAL STUDIES: VI — *Grace Frances Knoche*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The Brahmanical Lokas

Esoteric Brahmanism, as found more particularly in the *Bhagavata*-, *Skanda*-, *Vayu*-, and *Vishnu-Puranas*, divides the Earth into fourteen lokas or worlds: seven superior, rising above the Earth in a series specifically called lokas, and seven inferior worlds descending below the Earth called talas. From one standpoint, these are comparable to the heavens and hells of occidental thought; and while the Brahmanical teaching concerning the Lokas and Talas is probably accurate as far as it goes, nevertheless it stops far short of the extensive reach of the Theosophical doctrine as significantly pointed to by H. P. Blavatsky and G. de Purucker. (1)

Just what are these Lokas and Talas? How do they fit in with the general scheme of the Globes, Rounds, and Races? Are the words themselves significant, and what do they mean? These and similar questions are repeatedly asked by students, and it is in a sincere attempt to present a simple yet comprehensive outline of the main teaching that the following paragraphs are written.

The doctrine of the Lokas and Talas is comparatively difficult to grasp in its deeper significances at first contact, but it is one that can well bear thoughtful study, as a clear understanding of the teaching of the lokas, and their relation to man, to the globes, and indeed to any organism, will throw light on the whole fabric of the philosophy. In fact, the doctrine of the lokas is but another way of describing the one fundamental process of evolutionary unfoldment: the descent of spirit through veils of matter, and its re-ascent by the conscious removal of these material vestures until self-conscious spirituality is attained.

Before summarizing briefly the Theosophical teaching of the Lokas, we give below the derivation and meaning of the Sanskrit words which have been adopted by us from Brahmanism as giving a suggestive picture of the gradations of evolving entities in their pilgrimage from spiritual to material, and material to spiritual, conditions.

LOKA is a word of obscure derivation having the general significance, however, of a vast space, a world, and in philosophy, any division of the Universe. Usually it is referable to the "seven or fourteen lokas" of the Puranas; the "seven regions of the blessed," ascending in degrees of spirituality from the earth to the highest loka, called Satya- or Brahma-loka.

TALA is a word of many and varied meanings, likewise of obscure derivation, but having the general significance of depth, lowness, inferiority of position, the underneath portion, a pit, chasm, etc., hence in philosophy, the nether pole or material aspect of a loka. In the Vishnu- and other Puranas, the talas are the seven regions descending from the earth to the lowest or seventh tala, called Patala, a word often used to describe all seven talas, the Patalas or Hells into which go after death the "entities who are accursed."

We give the specific meanings of the lokas in their usual order, commencing from the highest and most spiritual:

SATYA-LOKA: (sometimes Brahma-loka): *satya* — meaning "truth," "pure essence," "reality," hence *satya-loka* literally signifies "essence of reality-loka": the highest of the lokas, from whence there is no return to lower lokas, according to the Puranas; corresponds in *one method* of Theosophical classification to the highest of the Unmanifest Globes on the first of the Unmanifest Cosmic Planes.

TAPAR-LOKA: *tapas* — meaning "heat," "warmth," "fire," hence by extension of philosophical application, the "fire of devotion and spiritual meditation"; the loka of the five fires (four fires at the four corners of the earth with the sun as the fifth) through which the devotee of pure and austere heart must pass successfully to gain

entrance thereto, says Puranic legend; the second highest loka of the Ascending Arc, corresponding to the second highest of the Unmanifest Globes thereof, on the second Unmanifest Cosmic Plane.

JANAR-LOKA: *janar* — meaning "birth," hence the loka of spiritual birth or "second birth," where great souls have residence after death; the third highest loka, corresponding to the third and lowest of the Unmanifest Globes on the Ascending Arc.

These three upper lokas, corresponding to the three Unmanifest Planes in Theosophical nomenclature, are called in the *Vishnu-Purana* the "durable" lokas because manifesting more fully the lasting qualities of self-conscious spirit, in contradistinction to the three lower lokas, Bhur, Bhuvah, Svah (see below) which are termed the "transitory," because as yet not fully spiritualized, and therefore relatively mortal.

MAHAR-LOKA: *mahar* — meaning "great," "mighty," "splendorous," "glorious," hence the "great loka," said in *Vishnu-Purana* to be one krore of yojanas (about 90,000,000 miles) above the polar star, the region attained by those who survive the destruction of the three lower lokas; the midpoint or balance between the three upper lokas and the three lower lokas; corresponds to Globe G on the Ascending Arc on the first Manifest Cosmic Plane.

SVAR-LOKA: *svar* — meaning "heaven," hence "heaven-loka"; the space between the sun and the polar star, which *Vishnu-Purana* describes further as the region of the planets and the constellations; supposed likewise to be the after-death state of the virtuous; corresponds to Globe F of the Ascending Arc on the Second Manifest Cosmic Plane.

BHUVAR-LOKA: literally the "becoming or developing loka," from the verbal root *bhu* meaning "to become," "to be"; that world or sphere of being between Svar-loka and Bhur-loka, whose influence according to Puranic literature extends from the earth to the sun; corresponds to Globe E of the Ascending Arc, on the Third Manifest Cosmic Plane.

BHUR-LOKA: *bhur* — meaning "earth," hence the "earth-loka"; our planet Terra or Globe D on the Fourth and lowest Manifest Cosmic Plane, and

likewise the lowest of the lokas.

It may or may not be significant that the Brahmanas before starting their daily meditations always pronounce the Vyahritis, which are OM, Bhur, Bhuvah, Svah — these are seen to be the names of the three lokas rising in succession from Bhur the earth — as though in an attempt to send their spiritual consciousness upwards along the stairway of the lokas. It is suggested by some that the Bhuvar-loka actually received its name from being placed in space and thought, between Bhur and Svah, Bhuvah apparently being a combination of the two sounds of the above-named lokas.

Following now with the talas in serial order:

ATALA: *a + tala*: *a* meaning not; *tala*, an inferior world, nether pole of a loka, hence *a-tala* literally signifies "not a tala," i. e., a condition of being of so ethereal-spiritual a character that it scarcely partakes of the quality of a tala; the highest tala, the nether pole of Satya-loka on the highest of the Unmanifest Cosmic Planes.

VITALA: *vi + tala*: *vi* signifying "change" (among many other meanings), hence *vitata* is a condition of "matter" showing slight change from the first tala (*atala*); becoming more tala-like, though as yet relatively spiritual and ethereal in character; the matter-counterpart of Tapar-loka, corresponding to the Second Unmanifest Globe on the Descending Arc on the Second Unmanifest Cosmic Plane.

SUTALA: *su + tala*: *su* meaning "beautiful," "well," "graceful"; hence *su-tala* is the tala or world still beautiful and well-ordered, though descending in the scale and partaking more of tala-characteristics; the nether pole of Janar-loka, corresponding to the Third Unmanifest Globe on the Descending Arc, on the Third and lowest of the Unmanifest Cosmic Planes.

RASATALA: *rasa + tala*: *rasa* meaning taste, moisture, etc., where spirit is first conscious of the taste of material or manifested spheres; corresponds to Globe A on the Descending Arc on the First Manifested Cosmic Plane, the polar aspect of Mahar-loka or Globe G.

Talatala: *tala* + *atala*: literally "tala — not a tala': hence could be translated as signifying a condition of material being where the qualities of a tala are equally balanced with the qualities that are superior to a tala; corresponds to Globe B of the Descending Arc on the Second Manifest Cosmic Plane, the nether pole of Swar-loka or Globe F.

MAHATALA: *maha* — meaning "great," signifying "very much of tala," hence a sphere of being heavily weighted with tala-qualities; corresponds to Globe C on the Third Manifest Cosmic Plane; the matter-side of Bhuvan-loka or Globe E of the Ascending Arc.

PATALA: thought to have been originally *pata* + *tala*, now contracted to *patala*: derivation somewhat obscure, though significance is seen by deriving it as follows: *pata* from verbal root *pat*, meaning "to fall," hence *pata* -f- *tala* is the tala where spirit has completely "fallen" from grace, so to speak; the lowest of the talas, nether pole of Bhur-loka, corresponding to Globe D on Lowest Cosmic Plane. Puranic literature often refers to Patala as the grossest of the Hells, as the earth in its lower regions is a hell to the spirit of man.

So much for the derivation and meaning of the Sanskrit terms used by us to describe these varying fields of spiritual and material activity. It must not be inferred that these Sanskrit words are significant in themselves, as any words which give the same idea as accurately and succinctly as these Sanskrit terms would be quite as suitable for our purpose, which is to show that the lokas and talas are *qualities of consciousness*, worlds of being, as densely populated with the appropriate inhabitants as our own, ranging in expression from spirit to matter, and from matter to spirit.

Theosophically speaking, lokas and talas may be described primarily as the spirit- and matter-aspects of an entity: whether that entity be a human, a dhyani-chohan, a beast, planet, or globe. A loka is non-existent apart from its corresponding tala — loka-tala, tala-loka — the north and south poles of the same consciousness-center. We call it a loka if the entity is self-conscious, in degree at least, of spiritual

backgrounds; a tala if still immersed in the veils of matter, unable to perceive or to reflect the spirit.

In other words, the lokas are the fields of action of entities on the Luminous or Ascending Arc, those rising in conscious spirituality along the regular procession of evolutionary development: spirit predominating over matter in ever greater degree with each higher loka. Conversely, talas are the fields of action of entities on the Shadowy or Descending Arc, where spirit is shadowed by the heavy presence of matter, as the entities descending along the tala-scale become more weighted with tala-qualities: tala or matter predominating over spirit in ever larger measure until the lowest tala (Patala) is reached.

Thus entities who enter the natural procession along the Descending Arc, through globes A, B, C, etc., are under the dominance of tala-influence with loka-qualities recessive. Correspondingly, those entities who have started on the Ascending Arc are (or should be) under the dominance of loka-influence in proportion to the degree of *self*-consciousness attained, with tala-qualities recessive.

On the lowest loka-tala: Bhur-loka-Patala, Globe D, Fourth Manifest Plane, we find the Human host — ourselves — torn between an ancient heritage of tala-dominance so long experienced in the preceding globes on the Descending Arc, and the far more beautiful influence of loka-dominance of the Ascending Arc, which as yet has not succeeded in awakening us to awareness of spiritual values. He who lives with his spiritual and mental energy wilfully focused in the loka-centers of his constitution, is an enlightened character, a man of spiritual attainment; and the Puranas say that those beings who live in the Tapar-loka, the loka of spiritual meditation and devotion, are the Munis and Rishis, the great spiritual sages.

Conversely again, those entities who have already begun the ascent towards spiritual enlightenment, but who wilfully and with set purpose focus their mental and spiritual energy in the tala-centers, in time become the "spiritually wicked," the "Lost Souls," conscious

imbodiments of tala-hood, whose final destiny is Annihilation.

This last, however, does not refer to those entities who have not yet emerged from the natural procession down the Descending Arc, beings who are immersed in the tala-condition solely because they as yet have developed no reflective consciousness to mirror the loka-qualities of spirit. Nor does it refer to the Kingdoms below the human, such as the beast, plant, and mineral kingdoms, which are still asleep to loka-consciousness, and hence may be said to remain in an *impersonal* tala-condition of varying degree. Every loka is septenary (or duodenary) containing *in potentia* all the other six (or eleven) loka-qualities, "held there in seed," recessive, with only one loka- or tala-quality fully active at any specific moment. As man expands into manifestation from the atman of his constitution, each of his principles being held in seed in his atmic laya-center to come forth in serial progression as evolution advances, so a Planetary Chain, a sun, an atom, or a globe, follows an identic procedure. From the divine laya-center (or Satya-loka-Atala condition) come forth the various grades of lokic and talic consciousness, in seven streams of spiritual and material vitality, until Bhur-loka-Patala is reached, which loka-tala in the words of Dr. de Purucker:

contains them all relatively unrolled, and relatively unfolded, as a flower unfolds from the seed. Thus also does a man through evolution become perfect by bringing out what is within these principles. Complete man, spiritual man, will be living in spiritual Bhur-loka-Patala or Satya-loka-Atala, but as a cosmic plane." — THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, May, 1936, p. 342

Lokas and talas must not be thought of as the globes *per se*, but rather as conditions of matter (talas), or conditions of spirit (lokas), created or produced by the hosts of entities themselves in their evolutionary march downwards and upwards. As each globe of a Planetary Chain, such as our Earth-chain, is built for the purpose of developing one of the seven lokas or talas, so the entities passing through and experiencing life in any specific loka or tala, thereby develop in such

field of activity one of the seven principles in their constitution.

The question immediately arises: Where then do we as humans stand in loka-tala consciousness as regards the Globes, Rounds, Life-waves, and Cosmic Planes? To answer this is not as simple as it may appear, for as with all methods of systematizing universal operations, we must keep several different factors in our minds at one and the same time, being watchful never to mechanize spiritual conceptions by too great an insistence upon insignificant detail. First of all we must not consider the Rounds, Globes, Life-waves, and Planes, to be a rigid mechanical scaffolding around which one can build a perfect structure fit for all Kingdoms, and existing as such throughout eternity. Rather must we picture the Lokas, Rounds, Globes, etc., as *having no existence apart from living beings*, for all these are but variations on the one theme of evolutionary progression from the less to the greater.

In studying what H. P. Blavatsky and G. de Purucker have written on this question, we find that at one time the lokas are classified from a Sevenfold Manifest aspect, and at the very next moment, from the Twelfefold Unmanifest-Manifest aspect, which in itself indicates the extreme difficulty of making for oneself a perfectly outlined system of cosmic processes. In our mental inability, we take refuge in the realization that this is probably the last thing that either of them would want, for there is small doubt that such apparent confusion of methods is followed with definite intent for the purposes of (1) not divulging esoteric keys which too clear-cut arrangement would most obviously do; and (2) arousing in the student the faculties of thoughtful cogitation and intuitive perception. Too complete a presentation of any problem in all its details would be premature, and tends to atrophy the intellectual-intuitional power.

We shall, however, attempt to define the position, stating the facts of the case as we understand them from our study of the books, and then leave the problem for each reader to ponder and draw his own conclusions. Firstly, to understand our loka-tala station, so to speak, we must clearly distinguish between (1) the *Earth as an entity*, with its

seven Cosmic Planes on which are the 12 foci of consciousness called Globes; and (2) the *Human Host as a Life-wave* making its Rounds and Races on the Seven Manifest Globes on the four lower Cosmic Planes.

In the definitions of the lokas and talas given above it will be observed that the correspondences there given were judged from the Earth-standpoint alone, i. e., correlated to the twelvefold division of the Earth-Chain as it manifests in global expression on the Seven Cosmic Planes, with Satya-loka-Atala corresponding to the topmost globe; Bhur-loka-Patala at the bottom with Globe D; Globe A corresponding to the Rasatala-aspect, and opposite thereto Globe G having Mahar-loka dominant.

It appears customary in Theosophical works to consider the Human Life-wave in its relation to the lokas from the Sevenfold Manifest aspect only, i. e., from the four Manifest Cosmic Planes, commencing with Globe A having Satya-loka-Atala qualities dominant thereon, and ending with Globe G manifesting Bhur-loka-Patala. As H. P. Blavatsky wrote in an early letter to A. P. Sinnett:

So the first Round Humanity was Satya and Atala — the two spiritual opposites or poles of Spiritual Good and Spiritual Evil (matter). The second Round preserving all the faculties and attributes of these got in addition — Tapas and Vitala, the third — Janas and Sutala, and the fourth or ours is all that besides — Mahar and Rasatala. Do you understand now? We are just at the middle point of Good and Evil equilibrated, so to say, in this Round. . . . With every Round Humanity went a step *down*, in the *Spiritual* Spirituality, and a step *higher* into Material Spirituality. It is a double centripetal and centrifugal motion, . . . But the 7 upper and 7 nether worlds, or Brahma-lokas, are worlds *within* and *in* our world and ourselves. — *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 255

Hence, as a *Human Life-wave* traversing the globes for the Fourth Round, we are manifesting Mahar-loka-Rasatala; but as we are in the Fifth Root-Race of this Fourth Round we likewise manifest a Swar-loka-

Talatala sub-condition of the larger Round Mahar-loka-Rasatala. Furthermore, as Globe D is the fourth of the series of seven manifested globes, we again find expression in the Globe Mahar-loka-Rasatala. However, judging now from the Twelffold standpoint of the Seven Cosmic Planes in relation to the *Earth Planetary Chain*, we immediately see that because Globe D, our Planet Terra, is stationed on the lowest of the Seven Cosmic Planes, we therefore must be strongly impressed with the Bhur-loka-Patala aspect of this lowest Plane of the Chain-Entity. One wonders what Ezekiel would have done with these fourteen lokas and sub-lokas. Perhaps he knew more than he revealed, and silently chuckled when he aphoristically remarked "wheels within wheels"!

We conclude therefore that at present we as humans are a combination of Bhur-loka-Patala, Mahar-loka-Rasatala, with a slight touch of Swar-loka-Talatala; and thus the question of stating in precise terms exactly where we stand in relation to the lokas and talas is seen to be far more complicated than at first appears. To determine such, however, is of slight value to us at present and really of no great consequence. The important point to remember is that each loka-tala is septenary, and therefore has *in potentia*, or more or less *in actu*, all the other loka-tala qualities, depending upon the inner responsiveness of the entity. The human host, therefore, can consciously respond to the influences of the higher lokas if it will. In fact, we are so stationed at present on this Globe D that the Satya-loka-Atala on the highest Cosmic Plane is in direct line as it were with the Bhur-loka-Patala (actually the spiritual north pole of our Earth-Chain, with Globe D as the south pole thereof) and can send its streams of spiritual vitality down into our earth continuously, unimpeded in their influence upon us except by our ignorance and utter disregard of them.

This last thought leads us to perhaps the most significant and beautiful of the Theosophical teachings regarding the lokas and talas, and which also the Puranas hint at in stating that certain lokas have streams of influence extending to the sun, or from the sun to the polar star, Dhruva, with "its watchful eye upon it [the Imperishable Sacred Land],

from the dawn to the close of the twilight of "a day" of the GREAT BREATH," according to an ancient Commentary quoted by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, page 6.

The significance of the above statements from the Puranas is not the specific extent of the influences of any particular loka or tala, but that they point to the esoteric truth that each loka or tala has its envelop of influence, its auric atmosphere, along which carriers of influence and radiation an entity can travel the circulations of the Cosmos, and can actually — provided he follows the rules of occult training carried over from life to life — come into self-conscious communication with other beings and globes and worlds.

It is precisely through the influences radiating from any particular sub-loka of our constitution and extending to identic sub-lokas in surrounding Nature, that we can understand and comprehend any thing; that we can sense love in the heart of another, beauty, sympathy, understanding; and in reverse order that we feel the onslaughts of hatred, pettiness, and the hundred evils of tala-consciousness. It explains the mechanism of thought-transference; of the mayavi-rupa, or thought-body, of the Adept; of the conscious reception of spiritual forces, and the wilful entering into spiritual realms for the refreshment and purifying of the soul.

The chela can slip into whatever loka he desires, and while in that particular loka can become at one with the identic loka of a globe, a sun, a star, or even an atom — or indeed, of another human being — and learn the secrets of all things. This is the rationale and explanation of the teaching that to fully understand a thing, one must become that thing. Conversely, as before hinted, a man who has undergone the discipline can set his consciousness in the talas, and follow the same procedure, but in this latter case, if he does so with the desire to become identified therewith because of a love for tala-influence, then he reverses his nature, he commits conscious black magic, sorcery, and if not stopped by the prompting of perhaps his already receding flame of spirit, he will *become at one* with the lowest tala, Patala, and find

himself either a Lost Soul, or worse still, a Black Magician.

In this last teaching, we recognise the utter need of guarding our thoughts, of watching carefully our motives, and of ever seeking to identify our inmost yearning with the loka-qualities, which are the qualities of spirit, of love, beauty, and truth.

What a man loves, that he will become; or as Yaska in his *Nirukta*, X, 17, so perfectly phrased it:

*Yadyad rupam kamayate devata,
Tattad devata bhavati.*

"Whatever form a divine being longs for, that very form will that divine being become."

FOOTNOTE:

1. The student is advised to consult the following works: *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 245-261; and chapters xxxvi and xxxvii of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*; pp. 173-180, 551-3, 559 *et seq.*, of *The Esoteric Tradition*, by G. de Purucker. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

TELEPATHY — *H. T. Edge*

When people speak of telepathy or extrasensory perception, they view man as a being endowed with five distinct faculties, called the five senses; and they contemplate the possibility of his being also endowed with another faculty to be called the sixth sense. But there is another way of looking at the matter. What if man is a being sensitive to influences of all kinds, from everywhere, and that he has around him a shell of flesh which shields him from most of these influences, but leaves open just a few chinks, such as the eye, ear, or nose, through which perception may pass? And what if this shell is beginning to break down so that more perceptions can penetrate through other than the usual channels? Man may be living in a common thought atmosphere, as we live in a common atmosphere of air. It may be normal that we should perceive thoughts in other minds, and abnormal that we should not. The notion of a *transference* of thought would then be needless, for that notion is based on the supposition that our minds are apart; but where there is no gap there is no need to build a bridge. And then as to mechanism: mechanism does not carry us far in explaining our normal senses; it can explain how the vibration of the fork is transmitted to the ear drum and thence to the internal ear; but that is where we quit. And sight is an even worse case; for we have had to invent an ether to convey light to the eye; and there again is where we jump off.

So we need not be so much concerned if we fail to devise a mechanism for telepathy. It would seem that our ideas are somewhat confined by the familiar expression "the five senses," and that sensitive people have a great many other vague indefinable susceptibilities and awarenesses which they cannot group under any one of these five heads. Such people would not be in a hurry to develop new susceptibilities; they would rather seek protection.

THE NEVER FAILING LIGHT OF HOPE — *H. Percy Leonard*

Hope has been defined as the wish for something desirable, combined with an expectation, however faint, of that wish being ultimately fulfilled. It is surely a matter for wonder and congratulation that we can so detach ourselves from our present circumstances as to be able to dwell in thought upon an object that is outside the range of our experience. The power to form a mental picture of a wished-for ideal is a divine faculty, and the first step in the act of creation. The mental mold must first be made, and at a later stage it is projected into "this too, too solid world" of physical matter and mechanical forces in which our daily, waking lives are passed.

But the great and glorious thing about Hope is the *expectation* of final satisfaction. The mere wish for a future good will help us little, and may indeed only add to our distress; but a positive expectation is like a raft in a tossing sea, that gives the shipwrecked mariner a firm support.

In a very real sense the man who has an expectation of a future good, already occupies the Promised Land he seeks; and while others have barely discerned it in the far-off distance, the man of hope is already a settler. The passport to this happy land is a firm conviction, gained from a study of general history, or derived from personal experience, that, "the Soul of things is sweet," and that a driving impulse towards a higher stage of progress lives in the heart of every atom on its upward way.

The government of this country spends a good deal of money, and employs a large staff of highly-trained workers in the study of something, which, from the standpoint of the practical man of affairs, is absolutely non-existent — tomorrow's weather. And, in a somewhat similar way it may be said that the man in whom the light of hope is burning, and who believes in a golden future for humanity, lives already in that future, which, for the great mass of his fellows is an

unsubstantial dream.

However dark the path we tread, the light of Hope can always shine and drive away the gloom; and this light is no mere will-o'-the-wisp, but a clear shining that has its source in the Central Sun of our Universe.

Once we become convinced that the Universe has a divine origin, and that its vastness is pervaded by intelligence and love, and life and will, Hope like a radiant dawn begins to shine.

The light of Universal Hope can never pale, and even when Pralaya, or the dusk of Cosmic night comes on, and Nature sinks into her periodic sleep, Hope still survives, and with unclouded vision can discern vistas of glory far ahead, for evolution never will attain a final goal.

The Theosophical Forum

SOME THOUGHTS ON COSMOLOGY — H. Groot (1)

In many respects astronomical cosmology seems to be at variance with the more philosophical prospects discovered by the great Sages of Antiquity and embodied in *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky. Nor is this a new feature. In the *Phaedo* of Plato, Socrates declares himself unable to understand the science of his time. And not for want of effort, but on account of the *method* of science, which indicates as causes of the phenomena other phenomena, and never goes back to the first real, primary Cause, to what Socrates calls *Novç* (*Nous*), a term which may be translated by *Spirit*. He tells us how enthusiastically he entered on the study of the scientific work of Anaxagoras, after hearing the following sentence out of a book written by him: "*It is the Spirit which ordains and causes all that is,*" and how deeply disappointed he was to find Anaxagoras, just like all other scientists, explaining phenomena by phenomena.

"I soon gave up that wonderful hope, my friend," he says, "for, while proceeding and reading on, I realized that he had no use for the Spirit and did not indicate real causes for the ordaining of things — but airs and aethers and waters and a quantity of other foolish things."

Today Socrates' complaint might be repeated word for word when one reads a book on Cosmology. Often a writer, treating of ultimate causes, seems disposed to find them in the Spirit, but in his deductions he ever fails to go beyond attractions, repulsions, frictions, and movements of the ultimate particles of matter.

Now this is a very unsatisfactory state of being, especially so where scientific cosmology — notwithstanding the brave and assiduous endeavorings of its brightest minds — has failed to obtain even a glimmering of *real* insight. Many are the cosmological theories, but not one of them embodies more than some very hypothetical triads, which after a little time have to be abandoned as untenable.

For a student of Theosophy it is not difficult to indicate where Science has turned the wrong way, inevitably leading up to the present state of ambiguity where bewildering metaphysical problems which cannot be answered by the authors crop up in scientific treatises which pride themselves on being purely scientific.

Cosmology treats of the origin of worlds, be it the solar system, the galaxy or the great superstructure of the spiral nebulae. In each instance it goes back to a state of *chaos* of the primordial matter. So does Science and even so does the Old Wisdom. But there is a huge difference in outlook between the two, which can be substantiated by what might be called the *slogan* of each. While the Old Wisdom agrees fully with the above-mentioned passage of Anaxagoras, saying: "It is the Spirit which ordains and causes all that is" Science adheres to the proud dictum of Immanuel Kant: "Gebet mir Materie, ich will Euch eine Welt daraus bauen," (Provide me with matter and I will build you a world).

In the perennial strife between the Spiritual and the materialistic views, Western Science has thus far supported the latter, much to its own disadvantage; for what right of existence has cosmology if it cannot satisfy our longing for philosophical insight into the course of evolution viewed from the standpoint of eternity? Cosmology is the science of eternity, not of temporary being, and as such it *has* to begin from Spirit and from nothing else. Cosmology, so we may say, treats of Kosmic Ideation, which draws forth the Universe out of the bosom of the Eternal Mother. " 'The Mother sleeps, yet is ever breathing.' And every breath sends out into the plane of manifestation her Protean products, which, carried on by the wave of the efflux, are scattered by Fohat, and driven toward and beyond this or another planetary atmosphere," we read in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 143) by H. P. Blavatsky.

To elucidate more clearly the difference between the reasonings of Science and the insight of the Old Wisdom, and possibly to give a hint as to how Science should alter its ways, the idea of primeval matter or chaos may be considered. Many would-be problems of scientific

cosmology originate from the altered significance which rationalistic science attributes to the term "chaos." With the Ancients Chaos is not a state of *matter*, but "the Kosmic storehouse of all the latent or resting seeds of beings and things from former manvantaras," as Dr. G. de Purucker says in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (page 316). Kosmos cannot rise out of Chaos without interference of the Gods, of the Demiourgos of Plato.

The scientific cosmology of Kant and modern writers also starts from a state of chaos, but here *chaos* means a state of helter-skelter of *matter*, and there is no place left for the interference of the Gods. Kosmos has to rise out of chaos by *blind* forces inherent in the nebulous matter, which latter should not be thought of as something metaphysical, as *pro-matter*, if it is permitted to coin this word, but simply as being composed out of the smallest particles — electrons and protons, etc., — of ordinary matter.

Of course it is the good right of Science to start from these premisses, but then it should stick to them and it should not endeavor to trace back to the origin of things and mix metaphysics with physics, as often and often it is found doing. Belot, a modern French cosmologist, is entirely right when he claims that the idea of chaos as a starting-point is barren and full of inner contradictions in science. He is right, for chaos is essentially a metaphysical state of being, and modern science does not treat of metaphysical states but of plain physical facts. But he is only right as a scientist — as a present-day scientist, we may add — for it is to be hoped that before long the abyss now existing between philosophy and science — yea, and religion — will be bridged again as it was in the ancient times of which the Gupta-Vidya tells us. Then Science will once more discover the deep significance underlying the old Egyptian cosmology for instance, which now is treated contemptuously as merely a conglomeration of mythological stories, astronomical facts, astrological speculations, magical rites, and entangled superstitions. How wrong and presumptuous this attitude of Science is may well be illustrated by giving the merest outlines of this sublime cosmology, in fact by limiting ourselves to a short

interpretation of the following exoteric teaching, which may be rendered in a nutshell thus: *Tem* has created Kosmos by *Ra* out of *Nuw* (*Nw*).

Who is *Tem*? The hieroglyph for the name *Tern* is a sledge, the oldest means of transport in Egypt. Ideographically "sledge" indicates *motion* and then metaphorically *cause of motion, life*. So *Tem* is cause of motion, spender of life. But the word *Tem* still has two more significations, to wit: *all* and *without form*.

Two hieroglyphs, which often stand as adjuncts to *Tem* may be translated by the words *great* and *grand*; *grand* by sublimity and *great* in number. They give two aspects of *Tem*: it is the sole, unmanifested Creator (formless cause of motion) of the manifested world and at the same time it *is* this world. *Tem* symbolises the ONE which becomes many and the many which ultimately *is* ONE — a fundamental representation which recurs in all ancient mythologies. *Tem* is the Hebrew God of Genesis, the Ain Soph of the Kabbalah.

The process of creation commences by *Tem* drawing forth *Nuw*. *Nuw* is the personification of chaos, of disordered and un-differentiated *substance* in its two aspects of pro-matter and force. This is clearly depicted in the hieroglyph of the name *Nuw*, which consists of the sign for water (phonetically: *N*) on top of a spiral (phonetically *W*). Here water stands for pro-matter, while the spiral is the emblem for the cosmic forces inherent in matter. But just as we have to think of pro-matter as being intangible, not-concrete and without form, so likewise we must think of those forces as not yet manifested: they sleep *beneath* the superficies of the waters. This arrangement of the symbols indicates a state of non-activity, in accordance with the significance of *Nuw*, which is: the (relatively) absolute potentiality.

We have decisive proof of this interpretation being by no means only a play with symbols without intrinsic value, for there is another *hieroglyph*, with the significance of: *to exist actively*, which is formed by the exactly identical symbols . . . but now the spiral showing *above* the sign for water: force is awakened to activity by rising out of the water.

The symbol now indicates clearly the *manifested* forces.

Tem, the Spirit, creates Kosmos out of Nuw (chaos). But how is this creation achieved? Is it by the "blind" forces contained in Nuw, as the cosmogony of Kant puts it? Not so. Tem influences Nuw manifested as *Tem-Ra*.

Again it is wonderful to analyse the term Ra. It can be expressed by two hieroglyphs, one of which is composed of the emblem for *mouth* and by an extended arm. This signifies: *action of the mouth*, and therefore *word, Logos*. The other is the symbol for *sun*, a circumference with a point in the center. This symbol, a very mystical one, by the way, has the significance of: *center of life, source of creative power*. Here the sun stands for the visible symbol of the same power which is depicted in a more abstract form by the other hieroglyph.

The inner meaning of what at first sight only seems to be a rather quaint mythological tale, then comes to this: The highest, formless, unmanifested God or Consciousness — *Tem* — emanates out of its own being *Nuw*, or Substance, in its dual aspect of matter and force, and forms by means of *Ra*, or his Logos, the Kosmos, i. e., the whole of manifested things which come into being.

And so we have once more an instance as to how the Ancient cosmology teaches us the truth of the saying of Anaxagoras "that it is the Spirit which ordains and causes all that is," putting thereby Socrates in the right and materialistic science entirely in the wrong — in full accordance, moreover, with the teachings of the Old Wisdom as they are revealed to us by that masterpiece of insight-knowledge: *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky and by the elucidation of those teachings by Dr. G. de Purucker, especially in his two sublime books: *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* and *The Esoteric Tradition*.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Doctor of Physics and Astronomy, University lecturer in Astronomy at the University of Utrecht, Holland. ([return to text](#))

HEALTH AND THE KARMAN OF ILL-HEALTH — *Reata Pedersen*

(From a Student's Note-Book)

The subject of Health in connexion with our teachings is one to which the Theosophists endeavoring to answer the question of inquirers should give thought. In the process of giving thought to it, let us ask ourselves certain very pertinent questions:

How much of the "wholeness" which is health, have we experienced?

Can we bear witness to any degree of "healing" which we feel has resulted from exercising the highest powers of each of our seven principles?

Do we think our karman can be modified in this present life, or do we think right living can affect only the future bodies the Reincarnating Ego will use?

The students of G. de P. have been reminded again, just lately, that the words *whole* and *health* have the same root, and we shall find in the dictionary the first definition of Whole, given thus: "Being in a state of health and soundness; well; hence, healed." Does it not seem then quite possible that by living in all the parts of ourselves, as the *chela* should live, we shall have the wholeness which is health?

We know that which is possible for one is possible for all. We know there are no isolated miracles and indeed that the seeming miracle is but the observance of the working of the universal operation, when that operation has not been interfered with by the action of another part of the universe. In other words, if we ourselves have not offered the obstruction the miracle of harmony is observed, for we and the universe are indeed one.

In bearing witness to any degree of healing, it is meant only that from knowledge of such healing in ourselves, and evidence of it in others, we

act as witnesses of the truth of the teaching that "self-directed evolution" is possible and that the result of it is to gain for manhood an approximation of godhood.

In bearing witness, it is not suggested that we say these things aloud, but only that we know them of ourselves. There may be opportunity, when with our teachers or our fellow students, to bring forward the knowledge we have gained, but an account of personal experiences cannot always be relied upon to help the inquirer. However, great help can be given to inquirers and fellow students alike by our certainty of the truth of our teachings. Also our voicing of the knowledge we have come into sometimes gives the teacher an opportunity to enlarge the explanations of these teachings as formerly given; for we understand, do we not, that until we are ready for them there are certain parts of the teachings that are touched upon very lightly? By our questions and sometimes halting accounts of what we have come to know, our teachers have evidence of our progress. We have been told we cannot form our questions without having the answers to them within our knowledge. It is then we are given certain ground upon which to stand, for in answering our questions the teacher cultivates the soil of our inward knowledge, that the plant of our growing knowledge may have no restriction in growth.

In seeking evidence of our spiritual growth, our enlightenment, let us not mistake the experiences common to all who have known what may be called a "Spiritual Awakening."

These experiences fall into two classes — Dreams and Hallucinations. It is the hallucinations which must be guarded against, for, while we are able to attribute the dreams to unwise eating or overtired bodies, we are apt to say of the hallucinations that we experienced them with our eyes wide open. We see lights, or hear our names called, hear music different from any ever listened to, are "told" where things are we have lost, see a scene from a past life or have a fore-knowledge of a future event.

Even if these things could be proven true and not hallucinations, the

way of health and wholeness does not lie here. Health is not necessarily manifest by what we may call a motor automatism, as when our bodies lose heaviness and feel light and untiring. Into all these things, hallucinations and motor automatisms, our personality enters. Our emotions, reactions to the emotions of others, the effect of beauty or ugliness upon our sensibilities enter, and health is not found through exercise of the personality of the student. Wholeness is oneness, and personality is separateness.

Orderly growth, but hastened growth, through aspiring action without the desire for "fruit" of such action — this is the way to health. Effort to absorb the teachings that we may have health as a result of our effort is not of much avail. Our main business is to "live the life" that we may broaden the path for those who follow after us. If we will attend to our business of living Theosophy we shall come to know a harmony with all the manifesting universe which will result in the manifestation of health in our various bodies.

When we speak of one body, and mean by that the physical alone, we are forgetting that life-atoms form bodies, or vehicles, for each of the seven principles of man's constitution. All these bodies must be sound, well, whole, healthful, *before* the life-atoms forming the physical body of man will manifest health. All these bodies must be saturated with the nature of Atma-Buddhi, for man is rooted in his god-nature; he grows from it and can only bring forth flower from the seed of him, from the root of him, as does every other growing thing.

Health is virtue; it is an active quality or power. It is a transforming energy. With this energy, with this virtue, with this quality, the life-atoms heretofore unconsciously impressed by you and your way of life can be impressed with a radiance that is the infilling of them with the Central Kosmic Spiritual Fire. The atoms then are not just sparks of that central fire, but *become* the continuous manifesting flame of that fire. Each of them becomes wholly at one with its own essence.

Can we think that we impress these life-atoms that make up, in their aggregate, our physical bodies only in isolated spots? We say of our

finger prints and the whorls on feet and hands that they are different from that of any other person. Well, certainly they are, but can we truly think of this impression of our self upon these few physical atoms as being the only impression we can make upon this private physical body of ours? Since we cannot, how then think that we do not impress the man we are, upon all the life-atoms which make up the several bodies of man?

If man, through anger, can release into his blood stream the substance from certain glands (adrenal), can we not think of him as releasing into his blood stream a substance which is called forth by calmness and gentleness? May it not be that same gland, or another, has dual substances to be used as the *nature of our living* calls upon it for use, for co-operation?

Living without strife and anger, living the grand way, living in the highest parts of each of our principles, despising not the lower nature, but raising it, which we can do by a noble giving of ourselves to the work of the Masters — surely this is possible to Theosophists.

Man has holy loves, aspirations, hope and vision. These belong to the spirit which is immortal and deathless and are transmitted through the intermediate nature, or human soul, which human beings ordinarily call "I," much as the sunlight streams through the pane of glass in the window. — *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, pp. 78-9

Can we think of sunshine even through glass as not bringing light into a room? How then think of the things of the spirit as not light-bringing? Enlightened, we learn to give instead of to expect gifts. With our giving we grow into wholeness. With wholeness we have health. Yes even if our karman — our choice of action in other lives, and the reactions of our choice — has fashioned for us unhealthy bodies. By such *realized* virtue, we have BECOME the whole, and in that sense have neither modified nor changed karman, but have lived many incarnations in this life, expending in that living the accumulated karman. We are becoming the god, and to the extent of our unselfish living are the god.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A THEOSOPHICAL SPEAKER: I — *Leoline Leonard Wright*

Those Wonderful Early Days!

It was rather wonderful, as I look back on it — the confluence of my own youth with its hopeful idealism and aspirations with the magnificent promise and wide-flung activities of the youth of the T. S. I became an active worker, secretary of the Chicago Branch, not very long after I left High School. That was in 1891 about the time that the T. S. was reaching its sixteenth birthday. So that really, in this incarnation for both of us, I was the elder of the two.

Yet becoming a Theosophist had not been easy for me. Brought up as an Episcopalian with a particularly strong High Church complex, I at first found the idea of reincarnation irresistibly hateful. I couldn't get away from it and I couldn't "stick it," as the saying goes. In those days there was no "modernism" in the Christian Church. Either you swallowed everything — going one better than the whale (for you had to swallow him as well as Jonah) — or else you were a horrid atheist.

And then I met Mr. Judge. My mother and my brother were both ardent Theosophists, active members of the Chicago Branch. In those days the Branch was small and poor; so it met in our dining-room. And the scraps of discussion I heard when the door opened! Kama-rupas, and elementals, and Manasaputras — how heathen they sounded! Did I want to be a *heathen*? I did not!

Still, without being quite aware of it, I was being inevitably drawn within the beneficent magic of the Wisdom-Religion. And at that particular psychological moment Mr. Judge happened to come to dinner. He was beginning at that time his long series of lecture-tours over the country and was often in Chicago, staying at the home of the new President of the Chicago Branch, George E. Wright. But that was the first time he had dined with us. If only I had the power of

Kriyasakti and could evoke for you the occasional hours spent thus informally with W. Q. J.! To me, inexperienced and bewildered, sore-hearted and groping, that first meeting with him was like stepping from storm and sleet into a firelit room. I warmed first of all to his sparkling talk, the merry Irish twinkle in his gray eyes — or were they gray? (Have you ever noticed how the eyes change in a face that is constantly lit from within?) Unfortunately I do not remember after all these years much of what he said. I can recall only the pleasure of his genial and worthwhile conversation. As dinner-table talk it was the best of its kind. One thing, however, I do recollect. He learned that I was trying to train myself as a writer. After dinner he asked me with the kindest tact if I would please read carefully *The Ocean of Theosophy*, just published, and tell him how it impressed me as a piece of writing!

A few months later I was able to find my spiritual feet, so to say, and joined the T. S., not very long after H. P. B.'s death — my diploma was one of those still bearing her signature. I might so easily have seen her! But no one can go ahead of himself. Almost the first thing that happened after that was the annual convention of the T. S. held in the Palmer House at Chicago. It was for me a red-letter occasion. I remember amusing Mr. Judge when it was over, by exclaiming that I had enjoyed it more even than I did grand opera! (Could a young lady say more?) I recall vividly at this moment the high enthusiasm of those sessions, the very feel of their vigor and determination, as well as my sense of the discovery of new terrain. I hear again the speeches of George Ayers and Henry Turner Patterson — magic names to me, calling out of the Silent Land in voices warm as sunshine.

Almost the next thing that happened was my meeting with Claude Falls Wright, "Ginger" as H. P. B. always called him because of his red hair and unquenchable "pep." In these days his work seems of the long ago. But at that time he was more ubiquitous and active than a swarming bee. Long a resident at H. P. B.'s London Headquarters, one of her personal secretaries, a member of her Inner Group and close beside her as she passed away, he brought to the American work his

exceptional qualifications in the service of the work. He was a small wiry Irishman of real genius as a speaker and organizer. (I have heard it said that he started and encouraged and trained more Theosophical and platform speakers than any other single person.) He was one of the first of that group of field lecturers, including Burcham Harding, Abbott Clark, and others who covered the U. S. with a network of Theosophical lines with Mr. Judge as the "king-pin" so to speak at the strategic points. It was a time of almost incredible growth. One of these speakers would go to a certain city where Theosophy was beginning to be known and the ground had been prepared, give a few lectures with good newspaper publicity, and presto! the next evening a Branch of thirty or more members would spring to life! Of course it is to be remembered that it was the end of the century and the Lodge-force was pouring through the arteries of our world. It was during Mr. Wright's first visit to Chicago that he simply pushed me onto the lecture platform, where I found my principal work for Theosophy through several years.

It was about this time, 1892, that Annie Besant made her first lecture-tour in America. I heard her in Chicago. She came close to being the greatest woman orator of our times, I should think. Certainly I never heard any woman but Katherine Tingley who surpassed her. Annie Besant was beautiful. She had a "starry light in her eyes," or so I described it in my Victorian idiom. And her eloquence, which was fiery and intense, had a core of scientific fact and accuracy that gave it the power of a projectile.

It is interesting to recall the fact that in those days there was only one Theosophical Society. It was the only medium by which Occultism in any form could reach the general public. There were no pseudo organizations to draw off the inquirer into profitless sidelines. And there was taught only H. P. B.'s Theosophy, however inadequately presented it doubtless often was by some of us, who were mere beginners in the study. Besides this the Society had much misunderstanding and ridicule, and even open contempt to meet, though the splendid and indefatigable work of Mr. Judge was gradually

building up a more enlightened and common-sense attitude on the part of newspapers and the public generally.

The crown of Mr. Judge's work as organizer and speaker was reached perhaps in the distinguished place he was able to create for the T. S. in the World's Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. Some few vignettes from that colorful and inspiring scene will be later presented.

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

"Extra-Sensory Perception"

"E. S. P." Widespread interest has recently been aroused in telepathy and clairvoyance by the publication of Professor J. B. Rhine's researches at Duke University into those tabooed subjects. With a *very* few courageous exceptions scientists have always regarded them as beyond the pale of respectability and not to be mentioned in academic discussions under pain of ostracism. Dr. Rhine dubs those faculties "extra-sensory-perception," a name whose technical sound may have helped to attract more attention than the old-fashioned words for faculties perfectly well known from time immemorial. Anyway he has made a serious breach in the dense wall of arrogant denial, and it is so well defended that it can never be closed. The final surrender of the materialist garrison is visibly approaching, several of the superior officers such as Dr. Carrel, Professor Julian Huxley, Dr. Carl Jung, etc., having already accepted the inevitable.

Fortunately, Dr. Rhine has not tried to prove too much; his experiments are not sensational, though the implications are very far reaching as he suspects. He does not mention ghosts or the like, but he works on the line that an ounce of *fact* is worth a ton of *opinion* or rumor, even if the opinion may be reasonable and logical. Dr. Rhine set out to test the assumption of all the "regular" psychologists that nothing can enter the mind except through the sense-organs. By trying an immense number of experiments (corroborated by published reports from more than a dozen colleges in addition to his own from Duke University) in naming unseen cards under test conditions, he has apparently completely demonstrated that the psychologists were entirely wrong in their assumption, and that on the contrary, the mind actually has access to knowledge in ways unsuspected by them — telepathically and clairvoyantly. Under the most severe tests, when the subject was separated from the cards by walls or opaque screens and the cards

were sealed in opaque envelopes — even when blind subjects were tried — the average of success in the 142,825 cases was 5.8 hits in 25 calls, when the mean *chance* expectation is 5.0. The odds against such an excess over the average are so great that, as Dr. Rhine says, it would take 196 digits to write out the figure! Eminent mathematicians have examined the figures and found no flaw. With a few specially gifted subjects remarkably accurate results were obtained, but the most significant feature of the research is the successful average when tens of thousands of experiments were made with a large number of subjects chosen at random.

Although Dr. Rhine has stepped only a very little way out of the conventional ruts of psychology, he has already felt, "the inexorable shadow which follows all human innovations," to use the words of the Mahatman K. H. (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 1) in regard to A. P. Sinnett's efforts to report H. P. Blavatsky's phenomena in 1881, and the unpreparedness of the public to accept them. Though more liberal views now prevail, largely owing to the work of Theosophists, Dr. Rhine's innovations have aroused ungenerous opposition, and he has been charged with commercialism and carelessness, if not worse, by various critics, some of whom, as he says "don't wish to believe." He has been able to rebut the accusations with ease and to show their unfairness. Yet, as in H. P. Blavatsky's case, though slanders may be completely demolished, prejudiced minds will continue to make them, and we fear — from the study of many similar cases — that Dr. Rhine will find his path in the Borderland of the Occult World a thornier one than he dreamed when he so gaily entered it, especially if, as he hints in his latest book, *New Frontiers of the Mind*, he may try to penetrate more deeply into the latent powers in man. If he succeeds, as we may hope, another step will have been taken toward Theosophy, for, as H. P. Blavatsky says:

The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter. — The Secret Doctrine, II, 149

The astral has far more to do with the psychic faculties than the physical has.

How Long Can Seeds Remain Dormant?

The claim that Egyptian wheat has been grown after lying in tombs for several thousand years is denied by botanists. Recently a report was received from Sweden that ancient Egyptian peas had been grown, but confirmation is still to be obtained; and it is said that when the stones of a ruined Roman temple in France were removed, flowers came up which are quite unknown in that region. There is a similar story in Japan. However all this may be, the Department of Agriculture reports an authentic discovery in Costa Rica in the same line though not so sensational. Tobacco seeds of a kind that has not been grown there for more than sixty years have remained dormant in the earth under certain old houses. When the houses were destroyed by earthquakes or otherwise the seeds were exposed to sun and rain and began to grow. There seems to be no doubt of this case and it is surprising enough, but it will not help much in establishing the possibility of wheat remaining alive for thousands of years. Could the Egyptians have had some secret method of preserving the vitality in the mummy-wheat?

Order and Analogy in the Solar System

Astronomers have looked more or less frigidly on the curious gradation in the distances of the planets from the sun called Bode's Law, and yet it is impossible to ignore it altogether. It will be found in every text-book. One reason that it is suspect is that the regular progressive increase in distances from the sun fails when it comes to Neptune and Pluto, the outermost planets. This is not, however, surprising to students of *The Secret Doctrine*, for H. P. Blavatsky says that Neptune does not properly belong to the Solar System in the sense that the congenital planets belong, and so it may well disobey Bode's Law of planetary distances without vitiating the accuracy of that law in respect to the planets nearer the sun. The planets Jupiter and Saturn with their large number of satellites may be regarded as Solar Systems

in miniature, and they follow a somewhat similar law of distances. In the case of the Saturnian System, however, there has been an awkward gap in the series. Mr. J. Miller, of the British Astronomical Society, suggests that a faint satellite reported by Professor W. H. Pickering in 1905, but not since confirmed, is the missing one. The difficulty of seeing or even photographing the fainter satellites is great, and considerable research will be necessary to prove the existence of a tenth satellite of Saturn if, as seems most probable, it exists. A complete exposition of the numerous analogies in the structure of the universe around us would take more time and space than we can afford at present, but it makes a marvelous picture of order and organic unity, and gives a new meaning to the famous "harmony of the spheres" of Pythagoras.

Meteorites

Dr. W. D. Urry, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has been analysing meteorites by the radium degradation principle and has found that while many are less than 100,000 years old, others are nearly three billion years old. This throws serious doubt upon the recent theory that meteorites are the remains of an exploded planet or small planets beyond the orbit of Mars. While some meteorites appear connected with comets, there are other possibilities. They may not belong to our system at all. Anyway, the problem is still unsolved. We believe that Dr. C. B. Lipman still holds to his belief that he has found simple bacterial forms of life in certain meteorites, but we still await any claim to the discovery of fossils in the stony meteorites.

Blood Relationship between American Indians and Arabs!

In the December, 1936, THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, we mentioned the four principal types of blood in the human race — O, A, B, and AB — and discussed the statement by Dr. P. B. Candela that American Indians, Basques, and Celts belong predominantly to group O. and that this discovery would open a vast field of research in regard to the history of mankind. Dr. W. M. Shanklin, of the American University of Beirut has now demonstrated that the purest-blooded Arabs in the Syrian desert,

etc., have the same type of blood as America's pure-blood Indians. H. P. Blavatsky associated the North American Indians, the Basques, and the Guanches of the Canary Islands in one group, before the modern blood-groupings were discovered. (See *The Secret Doctrine* II, 740, 790.) South American Indians of the Amazon region and Patagonia belong to the Hindu type! Surely all this must have some important bearing upon the problem of Atlantis?

Mind and Brain

Can a man live and think rationally with a large part of his brain missing? It seems to be so, and, if so, may this not be an awkward fact for the materialists who declare that man is entirely dependent upon his brain, and that when it perishes he perishes too? Several instances have been given in these pages of almost incredible cases of intelligence persisting after enormous areas of the brain were destroyed or had degenerated, and some new cases have just been reported. Although, according to statements made in May, 1937, at the American Psychiatric Association, the seat of intellect in right-handed persons lies in the left side of the brain, and it cannot be injured without serious interference with intellectual processes, we are now told that this general belief must be modified. Dr. D. O. Hebb recently described four cases to the American Psychological Association in which careful psychological examination has been made after large parts of the brain had been surgically removed. No ill effects were found, and in one case the patient had improved in intelligence. Two of the patients were of unusually high intellectual ability before and after the operation. It was proved that the removal of a large part of the dominant (left frontal lobe) thinking area of a right-handed man meant no loss of mentality.

Some psychologists have declared that man's future progress in intelligence depends upon a great increase in volume of the brain, but others think there is plenty of unused material still available for enormous advances. After all, is not the rate of progress dependent upon something very different from the structure of the brain

mechanism? It is worth noting that psychiatrists are beginning to suspect that the cortex or outer surface of the brain is not so much concerned with thinking as formerly believed. The discovery of the rhythmical electric waves which beat through the gray matter of the cortex is proving a valuable addition to methods of research, and Dr. J. W. Papez, Cornell University professor of anatomy, suggests that the source of the waves is in the central portion of the brain, near the pituitary and pineal glands. Observations of the results of injuries to this area indicate it to be closely connected with the emotions and consciousness. If scientists could break through the conventions, and impartially study the evidence for the existence of an astral or semi-material body and brain their researches would be greatly benefited. Perhaps they would discover that the brain is only the vehicle of consciousness and that still more subtil ones can function on this and other planes!

The Theosophical Forum

DHARMA: DOING ONE'S OWN JOB — J. M. Prentice

From the richness of the Sanskrit vocabulary we have appropriated to our own Theosophical use a word of inestimable value when rightly used. It is the word Dharma, and it is one of the paradoxes of English that the very finest translation is in French — *noblesse oblige*. From the days of chivalry comes the conception that *rank implies obligation*; and this is exactly what is meant by Dharma: that we are all of us born and reborn into the world of flesh with obligations, obligations that we are under to others and obligations which others are under to us.

Dharma can be variously translated according to the context — duty, truth, righteousness, conduct, and a dozen or so more. But the underlying sense is never absent — inherent duty, the duty to which and with which we are born. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is its text book, but its true, interior purport can only be grasped as one lives it in daily life. It is that duty which devolves upon us, taking into consideration our past Karman, our present circumstances, and our future evolution, so that in it as in all else are indissolubly linked past, present and future.

Rightly to appreciate our own duty and to perform it to the best of our ability is to enter into peace, because therein there can be no regrets. It is the difficulty of recognising what IS our duty that carries so many of us astray. Yet this is something that we alone are competent to do; no one else can finally decide for us, however willing they may be to assist. To do our own job, irrespective of the consequences, unmoved by the criticism or the congratulations of others or by the absence of either or both!

The *Bhagavad-Gita* is emphatic on the subject:

Better one's own Dharma without excellence than the Dharma of another well performed. Death in one's own Dharma is better; the Dharma of another is full of danger. — ch. iii, verse

The inference is clear — every duty, every piece of work that can come to us, is of importance, no matter how menial it may seem, how lacking in importance; to do it to the best of our ability is to make progress. Even to die in the lowly discharge of our own Dharma is merit gained and Karman obliterated. To try and do the work of another means that we may do the thing badly, or should I say less well, and we may be debarring the rightful worker from his work. It may breed for us consequences that will outlast many lives, it may even carry us away from the strict line of our own progress. On the other hand when once our Dharma is revealed to us, especially from within, then we must continue as long as life shall last.

Dharma implies the fulfilment of all obligations, both family and national. Of these the family obligations are nearest; most pressing and easiest to slip on. Relationships between husband and wife, between parents and children, offer the perfect imbodiment of Dharma, and no spiritual development can be gained at their expense. Sometimes the temptation to try and sidestep some family duty in order to devote more time or money to Theosophy becomes very subtle — but if reviewed in the light of Dharma it will be speedily resolved.

From another angle the *Bhagavad-Gita* gives us a clue:

. . . doing the Dharma imposed by one's own nature (the doer) incurs no sin. — ch. xviii, verse 47

Herein we are instructed that by doing our own Dharma righteously and well — that is, to the best of our ability — we create no further ties, produce no fresh Karman, but work out the whole of the past. Only by this is a vicious cycle avoided and the way to liberation from bondage of birth and death made possible. Impersonal, selfless effort is included in the conception of Dharma, and of the results of this the pages of the *Bhagavad-Gita* bear ample witness. Theosophy was once defined to the writer as "doing the right thing in the right way at the right time for the right purpose and with the right motive." On similar lines Dharma might be defined as "getting right on with the job, and above all,

minding one's own business."

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Status of the "Mahabharata" and the "Ramayana"

I am taking up the study of the Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, with my class, and would like to be able to tell them more about the correspondences of many of the characters with the various Cosmic Planes and Principles. It seems evident, for example, that the five Pandava princes in the *Mahabharata* have a special symbology, and also, in the *Ramayana*, Rama and Sita and their friends and enemies. Could you throw more light on the subject? — *J. T.*

G. de P. — Answering your questions about the relative places of the five Pandava princes, supposed to have correspondences with the Cosmic Planes, Elements, etc.: If I were you I would not bother my head about any such thing. Let us look at the situation exactly as it is. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are the two great epic poems of India, just as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were and still are the two great epic poems of Greece, or the Greater and the Less *Edda* we may call the two great epic poems of Scandinavia; and there are similar epics, one or two or three, belonging to other countries.

Now then, let us turn to and keep in mind the Indian epics only. These are not wholly and solely mystical or occult works. Let us keep that idea perfectly clear. No more so than is the Jewish Bible, no more so than are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, etc. The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* are fundamentally ancient Indian history and legend, with all the mists and glamor of antiquity veiling them, and they contain in addition a great many beautiful, truly mystical and occult, teachings; and a few really splendid minor episodes, like the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the *Anugita*, which have been interspersed in the epic-story, for this is according to Hindu tastes.

Thus, really, the *Ramayana*, for instance, is essentially the struggle of

Rama against his enemies, mostly of the south, in Lanka, the Rakshasas, etc., which is but a modern Aryanized legendary version of the history of the struggle of the early Fifth Race in its Indian branch with the Aryanized Atlanteans of Lanka, an island-continent now sunken except its northern headland, which is Ceylon.

Similarly, the *Mahabharata*, as I remember it, is a legendary epic telling in poetic, and occasionally almost fairy-tale, style, the struggles of early Aryan settlements in India, Aryans themselves fighting amongst each other, and also fighting against the aboriginal, so called, inhabitants of the great peninsula.

Now, there you have in a thumb-nail sketch just what the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are, and actually also just what the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are when applied to Greek legendary story or history. These great epics are part history, part legend, and part religious instruction. When I say religious, I mean philosophical, and mystical, and occult, also.

Now it is quite possible for a clever writer to extract from so generally glamorous and mystical a work as the *Mahabharata* or *Ramayana*, correspondences between the five Pandava princes on the one hand, or between Rama and Sita on the one hand, and something or somebody else on the other hand, correspondences perhaps with Cosmic Planes or Principles. In the early days of the T. S. this was a favorite pastime or relaxation of Theosophical writers. This finding of correspondences, however, could be applied with good reason to these episodes taken from the *Mahabharata* like the *Bhagavad-Gita*, or the *Anugita*, because these episodes are not so much the historical part, or the legendary part, but are deliberately written, semi-occult, religio-philosophical treatises, interspersed here and there in the legendary, historical material, because this way of doing things is beloved of the Hindu mind.

Now I wonder if you get the picture. If I were you I would not bother my head about these things, and I would tell your class the plain reason why. It is something like trying to do the same thing with the Hebrew

Testament, or the Christian New Testament. One who is clever in finding, or thinking he finds, occult correspondences, can find lots of correspondences, real or imaginary, between the patriarchs, for instance, of the Old Testament, and the Planes or Principles of Nature, or between Jesus and his disciples and the Planes or Principles of Nature. But such correspondences, while having some reason, are always shaky, and are pleasant rather as a pastime than actual, solid esoteric study.

Therefore I repeat, if I were you I would not bother my head about any such correspondences between the five Pandava princes and something in Nature; and you can get a picture of what I am here writing, and get this picture clear-cut in your mind, and then when you are asked questions from people who do not know what the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* are, you can just explain it to them, pointing out that not any one in any country of these great epics, whether of Asia or ancient Europe, or ancient America, is a thoroughly, or typically, exclusively occult treatise on esoteric correspondences, etc. But all of them are legendary history based on facts now lost in the night of time, but seen through the distorting glass of legend by much later writers who are correct in their facts, but like all legendary writers deliberately embroider their theme, and introduce perfectly sound, religious teaching, as in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and the *Anugita*, in the Hindu epic.

The Meaning of AUM

Will you explain the meaning of the passage in *The Voice of the Silence* (p. 8, Point Loma Ed. foot-note to AUM) — referring to Kala-Hansa: "The syllable A is considered to be its (the bird Hansa's) right wing, U, its left, M, its tail, and the Ardha-Matra (half metre) is said to be its head." It is the Ardha-Matra (half metre) which puzzles me. — *J. T.*

G. de P. — Here again you have picked out one of the less important things, which I dare say you realize yourself. Just as in all religions there is always a certain class who are seeing wonderful mystic

meaning in this or that or some minor detail, which may be quite interesting and important in a small way, but it does not rank among the fundamental, or topnotch, or through-and-through important, things — such is the case with the simply reams of stuff that have been written not only by Hindus through centuries, but even by Europeans, about the so-called sacred syllable OM or AUM. It is simply amazing how this one word has exercised the ingenuity and mystical feelings of literally centuries and centuries of generations of Hindus belonging to almost all Schools.

The word is a sacred name on account of its vibrational quality, and used to be used in ceremonial magic, pronounced aloud, although in most secret privacy. And from this one fact, connected with which is the reverence that used to be paid to the Hebrew and Christian AMEN, arose all this vast literature of guessing and mystical and semi-mystical writing.

Now all this talk that H. P. B. has in *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and elsewhere, is merely a kind of appeal to those interested in this kind of thing, in order to attract them to her really deep teachings. That is why she made so much of them.

However, now, here comes the point: Kala-Hansa, of course, is the Bird of Time, which means the bird of cycles, and the bird stands as a symbol for the Reincarnating Ego taking its flight across time and space, mostly time. The same can be applied to the Universes and the Cosmic Logos which in the Universe is, so to speak, the Reimbodying Ego.

Now then, of course today Hindus consider this word so sacred, whether OM or AUM, that they themselves rarely or never pronounce it above a whisper, and mostly merely pronounce it in the head as it were, without voicing it. So much for that point.

Thus AUM stands for the Kala-Hansa; and from this mystical thought, the mystical saying runs that A stands for one wing, the U stands for the other wing, and the M stands for its tail, and the Ardha-Matra, or

short half-syllable, stands for its head. The Ardha-Matra really here does not mean a syllable, or a half-syllable rather, but that connexion between the sounds A U, and again between U M, which gives inner direction and one-pointedness to the whole pronunciation of the word, and for that reason is called its head, the head of a bird being the first part of it, and guiding its flight. I wonder if I make my meaning clear. The bird takes its flight on its wings, which support it. The tail serves as a guide to the direction, and the head leads the way. The Ardha-Matra then is the so-called half-syllable, lying in the sound between A U on the one hand, and U M on the other hand, and forming the middle of the body of the bird ending in the head. I wonder if I make this funny thought clear — and that is really all there is to it!

Now the mystics say in connexion with this word that it is the symbol, the Ardha-Matra, of the consciousness guiding the pronunciation; or, changing the figure of speech, the Ardha-Matra or half-syllable is the consciousness guiding the karmic forward progress of the mystic flight of the Ego or Bird, as it is the consciousness which gives the tone to the pronunciation of the syllable. Thus a singer singing a song not merely changes from note to note, but it is just in that change between any two notes that there is a kind of consciousness-sound wherein the singer's ability to make an impression, what might be called his vitality, or his individuality, expresses itself. It is called a half-syllable because it is so short. And yet as it is the point where the consciousness enters in, shifting over from note to note, and therefore guiding the sound, it is called the head of the bird. I hope all this is clear. You will see that out of such a little thing has grown all this big literature about the Hindu sacred word.

The Word "Paramita"

Will you kindly point out the derivation of the word *Paramita*?

— G. R.

G. de P. — This is a Sanskrit word, and is a compound, formed of *param*, which means "the other shore," in the technical sense of this word, in the beautiful Buddhist way of speaking, which means the

other shore, or over the river of life, instead of *this* shore which is the material existence where sorrow and pain and all the rest of it exist. Thus "the other shore" means attaining perfect enlightenment because one's consciousness has passed over all the illusions of the material world to the other shore of spiritual glory and peace and freedom and wisdom and love.

The other part of the compound *paramita* is *ita*, which comes from a Sanskrit verb meaning "to go," and is the past participle of this verb; and hence in English can be translated "gone": go, gone; and *ita* is this Sanskrit past participle, meaning "gone." Then this past participle is turned into a noun, and this makes it *ita*; and hence, as a noun, the meaning is, by paraphrasing it, "successful going," or "successful reaching."

Thus the whole compound means "the successful reaching of the other shore."

Please note also — and this will make the matter a little clearer to you — *paramita* means "one who has successfully reached the other shore," whereas, as said above, *paramita* is the compound noun describing this, and therefore is to be translated as "the successful reaching of the other shore."

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN (1) — A. Trevor Barker

After more than six hundred years before the beginning of our Christian era the great Sage Sakyamuni, whom we know through our historical records as Gautama the Buddha, lived and died in ancient Hindusthan, and he taught the origin of suffering; he taught what is its root; he taught what is the annihilation of suffering, and what is the means whereby you could enter upon that annihilation, what he called the four noble Truths. Most of the Buddha's teaching and philosophy centers around the explanation of those four noble Truths, and of the eightfold Path which he explained as the means towards attaining the great end, the emancipation from suffering. Therefore right at the outset of our consideration of the subject, we have not only the great ideal of the Buddha himself, but we have the statement which must ever be of the most tremendous encouragement to all who strive upon the upward Path. We have that statement of his that emancipation from the suffering of human misery such as we know it can be achieved even in this life. More, he went still farther in saying that if a man would sincerely enter upon the noble eightfold way, and strive to put into practice, and to make a reality, the eight conditions of that Path, even for a comparatively short while, such a man would receive the fruits of merit of that deed, and thereby would begin to feel the results in his own life.

Now, many of us have heard over and over again the statement of those qualities demanded by the eightfold Path. We are familiar with the noble Truths, and like many things that we have heard so often, sometimes the significance is missed by us, and we do not apply it. The realisation of the practical application of those great teachings does not seem to enter into the very being of us. Tonight we want to examine for a while in the light of Theosophy how we can apply the teaching of the Buddha to our own lives. We must remember that in the time of the Blessed One there was the Order, the holy company of the monks and

ascetics, the Bhikkus, who followed in his footsteps; and of course his remarks were addressed largely to his disciples. Today in our own times it is amongst such Brotherhoods as Theosophical Societies that you will find those who are striving to tread that same eightfold Path. It is there that you will find that spiritual companionship that is so necessary as a support, as an encouragement, in all endeavor towards spiritual living.

Let us ask ourselves, therefore, first of all what change comes over the attitude of mind of one who has made a study and an application of Theosophical truth. How does it influence his attitude towards this mystery of human suffering? Well, friends, it is a very large question; but in the first place has it ever struck you how enormous is the amount of human misery that is caused by our attitude of mind to what we call God? Cast your mind back to your own childhood. Think of the amount of misery you suffered owing to the supposed wrath that you incurred of some Deity external to yourself, who was going to punish you. Now we Theosophists do not believe in that personal God of all the orthodox Churches. We do not believe in him because there is logically no room for him. If God, a being, was the omnipotent and omniscient creator and controller of this universe, then how are we to account for the presence of evil in our midst? We must of necessity hold him responsible for it if he is omnipotent, if he is all-wise, and if he is all-worthy. Therefore this is the first great idea that Theosophy gives to us as to the nature of Deity: In essence every man is a God. At the heart of his own being there is that living fire which exists at the heart of every created thing in this Universe.

Now whence, you may ask, are the laws of nature that obviously exist around us? We discover their existence when we break them and reap the penalty of so doing! Are those laws the will of a Creator? What are they? Theosophy gives one a very helpful symbol, a helpful image, whereby we can begin to understand the relationship of man to nature. According to that ancient teaching there exists nowhere in the Universe a Being who consciously controls by means of the laws of nature other created beings — you and me, in other words. We are told by the

ancient Teachers that we shall get an absolutely wrong idea, and one harmful to ourselves and to our spiritual growth and progress, if we imagine God as a being somewhere outside of us, who is controlling our destinies.

How can we think about it? How can we begin to understand the problem? Why, first, friends, by studying ourselves. What are we? Look at this body of ours. We see, if we examine the teachings of science that it itself is a vast universe; that it is composed of millions upon millions of tiny lives, atoms, molecules, and structures of living, vibrating matter pulsing with life; and the teaching of Theosophy comes along and says that each of these tiny lives is instinct with the same life that imbues your own consciousness as a Thinker; that each of those tiny lives in vast and age-long evolution proceeds to unfold, to unwrap, the forces inherent in the very being of it, inherent in the heart of it; until it passes through all the stages of progress up to and including the power of conscious and deliberate choice of action and thought; that each of those tiny lives will be raised up to the level of a conscious Thinker.

Just for a moment let us think of ourselves as bearing the same relation to the unknown Deity that those tiny lives of our own bodies bear to the consciousness of the personal man. Here is a great thought for us, because actually if you consider that relationship, you can see it is most unlikely that to those tiny lives any complete consciousness is possible of the man who lives and uses the body which they compose and build up. All that they know is that there is a central will, a central force, and certain laws — call them laws of nature if you will — which work. Can they possibly have any conception of the God within who uses that body of flesh and blood as a means of locomotion, as a means of action, as a means of thought and feeling and service to other human beings? Not at all. Such an idea must be for them merely an inferential possibility, if they can think at all.

Now that is exactly our relation to the unknown Deity. His conscious power to control anything, anywhere, must be for us a mere inferential possibility, and therefore we rid ourselves once and for all of the bogey

of a conscious Being controlling and directing our destinies, and we look for a grander, truer, more spiritual teaching which will enable us to realize ourselves in the sense and meaning of the ancient Delphic Oracle: "Man, know thyself." Man know yourself to be what you are in your innermost spiritual essence. That is our problem, and that ultimately must hold the meaning and explanation of suffering; for after all what is it that suffers? Man is not only a body. We know that the body suffers, but there is something more permanent, more real — the Eternal man transcending the body: the man that passes from body to body and life to life, and even from planet to planet, and world to world, and solar system to solar system, in the age-long pilgrimage upon which he is bound.

That brings us to the second thought that I want to put before you: that the change that takes place in a man when he studies Theosophy in regard to the problem of human suffering is tremendously influenced by the great doctrine of Reimbodiment, or Reincarnation. We do not believe that man has only one short life to live on this planet, because such an idea is an absolute denial of all justice. Do we not often see the sinner dying in his sin and from our point of view never having received any adequate punishment — to use the term — for all the evil he has done? On the other hand, as we look about us and study ourselves, do we not ask: although the purpose of life is not only progress but perfection, how many of us reach perfection at the end of one short life? Obviously so few that it is not worth considering. Therefore when we hear for the first time that great doctrine of Reincarnation by which the eternal, inner, real man comes again into tabernacles of flesh to take up his life, take up his task where he left it off, then we get another key which will help us to understand human suffering.

And the third key that I want to put before you is that other doctrine, Karma, as they call it in the East: the doctrine by which that eternal man, that reincarnating entity, does represent every single result of every cause that he created during any one particular earth-life. We do not admit the possibility that man does actually endure suffering which

is unmerited. *Unmerited from his point of view it may be*, yes, because we do not bring back to this life, as you know, a recollection of previous lives. Why is that? Simply because we have now a new brain, we have a new mechanism of consciousness, which has not received the impress and record of the previous lives that have been led; and therefore the man in his new body does not remember. But the real man remembers and sees the essential justice of his human experience.

Bearing these three main ideas in mind: the nature of the Deity, the law of Reincarnation, and the law of Karma, what would you teach a child about the idea of pain? It is a very fundamental question that. What would you teach a child? Well, perhaps it is not a question that is very easy to answer, but I think the first great lesson that any child should learn is to gain the habit and power of not identifying itself with discomfort, with pleasure, as a matter of fact, or with pain. You will say perhaps that is a bit of a counsel of perfection for a tiny child, but it is not so: tiny children do respond in the most wonderful and impersonal way if you go the right way about it and teach them, to use the ancient Eastern simile, to regard pain for themselves with indifference; to be to themselves in regard to pain as the stone of the mango. At the same time inculcate the idea that, while they are hard and indifferent to the pain which comes to them they should be soft as the fruit in the pulp of the mango to every cry of pain and every cry of distress that they hear from another outside of themselves. You will find that even a tiny child will respond to that idea, and will learn the first great lesson: that for it pleasure and pain are equal and opposite; things to be experienced merely, but never to be identified with to the point of losing hold of the calm spirit within their own heart as a guiding light in their own lives.

Remember that directly pain or pleasure gains the power over us to distract our spiritual meditation, then it begins to represent evil for us; and therefore the earlier that we can get hold of the impersonal idea towards pain the better it is for us. Some people may think that it is not possible to apply this principle with a tiny child, but I will give you a little example because it shows you how the great teaching of Theosophy can be applied in life. Little children are always tumbling

about, always hurting themselves, always bursting into tears, are they not? — as they learn to walk and so on. Well, what are you going to do about it? A tiny child will respond to the idea that he may have hurt that which he bumped up against, and in distracting the attention of the child to the consideration of the damage that he has done to his father's furniture, for instance, lo and behold! you find the child has forgotten all about the bump that he has received. And so with the Spirit of man: while his thought is turned ever and eternally away from himself he forgets the personal, as he forgets the bumps and bruises and the unpleasantnesses of life; and he becomes detached from objects of sense, and his heart begins to enter on the Way of Peace. That after all is the meaning of all teaching, of all Theosophy.

Shall we be always subject to pain? In answer, you have the teaching of the Blessed Buddha, who won complete enlightenment in this life, and lived in imperishable and eternal bliss while walking the ways of men. He gave it as a promise to all who followed in his footsteps: that they should realise here and now, when they had gone through the necessary steps of purification, that life was no longer a mystery of pain; they would then experience right in the core of their own being the ineffable joy and bliss that actually are at the heart of all existence. Do not think that that is merely a figure of speech. I do not mean it so. If Theosophy means anything at all, it means just that profound realisation in the lives of individual Theosophists that they have an understanding, that they have a peace, that they have a joy in spiritual living which takes them in consciousness away — literally away — from all the unpleasantness of life, and turns it into one endless progression of lessons and experiences.

Think what the Theosophical conception really means! Probably a true understanding of the mystery of pain is not realised, and cannot be understood, until the age-old Path is entered and the man begins to take hold of his own lower nature, and studying it he begins to realise the blessing of pain. After all, all entry into new life is caused through pain or through death. Death of what? Why, the death of the lower elements of being. All growth and progress is a turning away of mind

from that which has been, to that which is to be; and what does this mean? It means a parting from the habits of mind, and the states of being, and the modes of action, to which we are accustomed. It means that we are prepared, having seen the light, and something more and better, to relinquish our old methods and old habits of mind and being. In that moment we die: the spiritual life is a constant dying, a constant death upon the cross of our material being. Is that a miserable thing? Is that an unhappy thing, as the Christian scriptures have rather taught us to believe? Not at all, because it simply means a giving up of the things that are not essential in our lives. We give up that which for the time being we think important, which we think has significance for us, because we realise that this giving up is in accordance with and in harmony with the higher law.

Then what happens? In a little while, after we have passed through the strangeness and the quietness that succeed an entry into a new state of being, we realise that the suffering that we have gone through has merely brought forth blossoms and buds of spiritual life in ourselves, and we realise that there is not one single experience of pain that we pass through in this small life of ours but has a peculiar significance to the man who is treading the noble eightfold Path. And I speak particularly to the one who is a spiritual aspirant — because the meaning of pain is missed, is passed by, by those who have not got the conscious spiritual guidance by which to direct their lives — that until you have learned to subordinate every single action in life to your inner spiritual purpose, you won't understand the meaning of the pain; but directly you have learned that lesson, then comes the realisation that those things in your life which have been the hardest, the most difficult to cope with, are the very things which have given you the power, the capacity, the knowledge, the sympathy, and most of all the understanding, with which to help your fellow pilgrims upon that same Spiritual Path that you yourself are beginning to tread. It is one of the deepest mysteries of the great subject of pain, how every experience of life tends towards the development of some faculty, some power, of the inner Spiritual being, which will enable you to help some brother one

step farther upon the Path.

Let us turn back for a moment with that thought in mind to the inner nature of man, because Theosophy has such a sublime teaching, and it is this: that the very progress of the inner nature of man towards perfection is dependent upon the effort of that inner man to raise first of all his own material being to the condition where that lower man is a fit tabernacle for the God that exists within; and as a further stage beyond that: progress of the inner man depends upon his identification with the God who broods over him and in his own heart. Now the progress of that inner God also depends — and here is one of the great teachings of Theosophy — the progress of that God depends upon its power, its effort, to raise the lower man, to raise the inner real man, to the conscious recognition of its oneness with that inner God. How does it come about? As that inner Spiritual being is always ready, if we turn the polarity of our minds upward to the inner Spiritual nature within us, that beam of light that exists there will grow stronger and stronger until it blazes as a lamp within the heart of that inner man; and he knows without any argument, without any reasoning or help from outside himself, *he knows* that his own next step on the Path of Spiritual progress will be a step towards truth; and he then can bring that light of knowledge that he has won to the knowledge of those who as yet tread the path in darkness. Is it not a sublime thought that as we ourselves — and we can all of us do it, friends, at any rate to some extent — as we look out from ourselves, and leaning down for a moment stoop to help someone who needs that help, in that moment the doors of the soul open, and the light of the inner man grows stronger and stronger; and so the inner God raises the inner man, and the inner man raises the outer man, and all three together work in the service of the one cause and the one life and the one light that exist in the heart of all creation. Don't you see how it works? It is a wonderful idea.

In these times when the stress of economic life is so tremendous, we are forced to realise that men and women, by the very privations that they are forced to go through, enter into one of the classes of beings

who begin to study spiritual truths, who begin to long for an explanation of the sufferings of material life; and so it is that during the times of adversity the spiritual life of men is actually quickened. During the times of tremendous prosperity all their attention is turned outwards in identification with the very things that will lead them away from the search that we are all really and truly, however misguidedly, engaged in pursuing.

One of the troubles that many people have to face is the loss of some individual with whom they have spent some part of their lives; the loss of some loved one who passes into the Great Beyond; and that for them brings about an anguish and suffering that is very real. Now Theosophy does work a great change in a man's life even in such a case as that. Why is this? Simply because the man who has learnt to tread the Spiritual Path within himself has found a Divine companion. He has found a Divine companion that he can never lose; and therefore, while he becomes more sensitive, more loving, more compassionate, and more sympathetic to the needs of those around him, the personal loss takes on an altogether different aspect, because he knows the laws of nature, he knows that the great rhythm of life that brought the loved one to him must inevitably take the same one away beyond into a further life, and he knows that that is not something to cause sorrow to anybody except the one who is left behind. He realises that it is only a personal and selfish idea, he renounces his personal sorrow like other things of the personal life. He gives it up because he knows that the loved one has gone to a region where there is no more sorrow, where he will enter into a realm of Spiritual bliss and living which is beyond the mystery of pain altogether. He is free from the shackles of the flesh and all that it means until he returns once more into earth life.

What is the message of Theosophy to those whose business it is to minister to the sick? They indeed are brought constantly into this problem of pain in every moment of their lives. I think the answer would be this: that in all pain and all disease, although every individual receives naught but what he himself has sown, yet he is in need very often — and most of the time — much more of Spiritual comfort than of

material assistance; and therefore the great idea that Theosophy would give to every physician of the body would be to see if you cannot light in the patient's mind and in his heart a faith, a conscious recognition, of the spiritual power that is lying dormant within his own nature. Think, if everybody, if every physician, were also a physician and healer of the soul — why, friends, the world would quickly be a different place. It is because in most cases physicians and others, do not know how to minister to the needs of the soul that the needs of the body become so very pressing.

Sometimes the question is asked: Are disease and pain a mere figment of our imagination? Will a change of mind, a change of thought, cure them? Is it my fault, can I cure them by merely taking thought? That is a big question, a very important one, because, as you know, there is a whole school — what shall I call it? — Scientists, Christian Scientists, Mental Psychologists, I do not know what you would like to call them — those who believe, and so teach, that there is no such thing as pain, that there is no such thing as evil. But turn to the record of the lives of the great Teachers that have been in past ages, and see what their attitude to the problem of pain and disease is. Did they say it did not exist? Not at all. On the contrary, every single case of suffering that any one of the great Teachers came across invariably called forth their human pity and compassion, showing that they realised what it meant; and they gave a spiritual remedy, quickening the spiritual life in that individual so that he should learn how to heal himself.

What is the healing that Theosophy recognises and considers permissible? — because, friends, it is a fact and a very potent and spiritual fact, that a change of mind and heart of the individual does affect the physical and bodily health, and even his circumstances. It is a fact, but does that mean that where a man has got a serious physical disease, or even a simple ache or pain, he shall deliberately deny it in his mind and his consciousness, and tell himself that he has only got to go on thinking that way and it will disappear? Well now, it is a fact that probably if he goes about it strongly enough he may lose that particular ache or pain. It is not a very happy thing for him if he does, because he

has merely deflected it for future use. He has forced it back into the mechanism of his own consciousness where it came from, and in the fulness of time it will work out again. It had its root in a thought, in a feeling, in some wrong action; and until it has worked itself out it cannot be got rid of. All the individual can do is to learn, simply as the Buddha taught, to give up the practice of evil, to enter the noble eightfold Path, and in so doing he ceases to create future causes of evil. That is why the *Bhagavad-Gita* states: "Even a man of very evil ways, once he is devoted to me, crossing over every evil in the bark of knowledge, will verily come to me." That is the truth. All we have to do is to consider that ray of spiritual light in ourselves, and faith in that connexion and aspiration are a tremendous force for good, not only in our own lives but in everything that we try to do for others.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Report of a lecture given at the London Lodge, T. S. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

A WONDER FROM THE PICTURED PAGE — *J. M. Floyd*

You may find the figures of Gog and Magog on the right-hand side, as you go uphill on a narrow winding street. They are just above a jeweler's, near the heart of the city of London, and well within the sound of Bow bells.

Every quarter of an hour little doors open, and these two robots emerge with hammers in their hands to strike upon a gong. It is quite a well known landmark to many Londoners, and oftentimes parents pause so that their children may watch the performance of Gog and Magog.

Such might have been the case with a friend of mine who, although he had been in the United States for thirty years, I knew had spent his childhood in London. So happening to come upon a picture evidently from a photographic reproduction of this scene, I took it to him, and covering the descriptive printed matter with my hand, asked him could he tell me what and where it was.

He looked at it for a moment and then with a smile said, "Why, bless me if that isn't old Gog and Magog on Cheapside in London!" (1)

Granting there is nothing at all abnormal about this, still it was quite a feat of memory; so let us dwell upon it for a little, and let us ever so briefly, state the explanation given by material science, and also that handed down from time immemorial by the Wisdom Religion, so that each may exercise his divine endowment of choice.

Before the coming of H. P. Blavatsky, and before the coming of the Curies with their epoch-making discovery of radium, the physical scientists had only an indestructible permanent atom to base their theories upon, and when they did mention it they attributed its formation to a chemical or electrical interaction of the molecules of brain matter, and more mysteriously still gave this as a cause without

specializing any intelligent motivating agent behind the thought. Moreover this same physical science now tells us that the human body completely changes its physical constituents once in every seven years. If this be true, then my friend must have had four bodies, in which the physical matter was not composed of any of the previous molecules. It must indeed be obvious that the present body through which he recalls the scene cannot be the same, physically speaking, as the body of the child through which he received the impression. The question then arises how the thought image is transmitted through the ever renewed material. However, any attempt of the now passing materialistic science to account for thought processes can only tax our credulity to the breaking point and we are more than ever justified in adding our voices to the ever-swelling chorus which is simply saying that "It is not so."

Theosophy on the other hand stipulates the Thinker, as the agent back of all thought, and does not limit this agent's operations to the physical alone, but gives to it a vast range of expression, from the physical through ever more tenuous substance to the most spiritual.

Next to the physical in density is the Astral, which is the substance on which our physical bodies are molded, and you will notice that our bodily formation is preserved throughout in the ever changing physical stream.

Within this ethereal fabric there exists what modern occultists have so graphically described as the astral picture gallery, wherein all events and scenes of the past are reflected.

So when my friend looked back in years, and by the aid of a few shadings on the surface of the printed page recalled the scene of childhood days from among countless pictures in this Astral gallery, it was something of a feat.

Let us never forget however that the greatest wonder of all is the Thinker, and that it was regarding this same Thinker the Master left with us his admonition, "Man, know thyself."

Is it not splendid then to have the assurances of those who are ahead of us on the Path that Theosophy will, can and does furnish the keys, to unlock the doors of knowledge on this our most sacred quest?

FOOTNOTE:

1. Recently bought by Henry Ford, and now at Dearborn, Michigan, U. S. A. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THERE IS NO DOOR — G. Cardinal Le Gros

I looked up into the clear blue dome of the sky and wondered if I could see there the face of the Buddha, the Christ. But a voice within me said: He is in your own heart. And I knew that this was true: that I, like every man, am the expression of this inner, secret glory, the child of a divine parent who lives in higher spheres, and that the great purpose of my life, and all my lives, is so to live that he may draw near to me, I to him, that my part in the scheme of eternal growth and progress shall be fulfilled.

Out of the heart of the divine universe pours forth a glory of hope and promise, wisdom and peace. Why should we not look to this, and aspire? We know that this is true: that the reality is within-above, not here in the objective prison-gloom of material life where empty dreams and frustration are. And should not our endeavor be to awaken the consciousness of all this in others? Is it right, is it proper, is it in harmony with the whole, that we should hug this truth to ourselves, and not share it with others? Perhaps one little word of ours, spoken from our hearts, will awaken in some other an awareness of the divine life.

One feels that from this central fountain of reality emanates all that is; that we and all beings, worlds and universes, are manifestations of the invisible. There can be no separation: we are one with this boundless ocean of emanation: one vast expression of an inner and infinite glory of birth and growth and awakening. The thought is at once overwhelming and peace-giving; it draws one out of himself and makes him one with a boundless self, identifies him with the grand, sweeping all-ness within, about, and yet beyond him. We say "beyond" but is there truly a "beyond" when we realize that even that which looms afar, and which we in this moment cannot reach, is still our self? — When we look inward to the Buddha in our hearts and realize that between us and all the glory and magnificence of the universe there is

no door.

The Theosophical Forum

SMILING THROUGH — *H. Percy Leonard*

"It is all a contest of smiles if we know our business." — W. Q.
Judge

Smiles are as varied and peculiar as the people who make them, and it is one of the wonders of life that "the lord of the body" is able to express so much of himself by the movement of a few simple muscles and the parting of the lips. You may have heard the most minute description of a man from his friends, but the smile with which he greets you at first meeting will be more revealing than all the reports put together.

With what an eager, searching gaze does a little child examine the face of a stranger! Can it be that faint and shadowy recollections of the smiles of lives of long ago are being used as standards by which to estimate the inner meaning of the new face now under inspection? A face that has no pretension to correct proportion, or fineness of complexion, may be transformed in the twinkling of an eye into a thing of beauty by the magical enchantment of a self-revealing smile. It reminds one of the limb of some rugged oak when it breaks into a mist of green under the fairy touch of returning spring.

It is quite impossible to produce a convincing smile unless the heart goes with it, but one may contrive a plausible substitute that will pass muster in a purely business interview with an unknown stranger, and it is often attempted with a reasonable degree of success; but at the best it is only a poor imitation, and at its worst it amounts to a facial contortion and a palpable fraud. True smiles are a social currency accepted all over the world, and will win a kind reception in the kraal of a Zulu or the palace of a king. Wherever men are found a smile will make its way. It is one of the outward signs of the tragic fate of the anthropoid apes that though they may part their lips and show their teeth, they are incapable of a human smile. It is difficult to set down in

so many words what a smile stands for. Goodwill, perhaps, and trust and sympathy and love. It implies an offer of help, and the pleasant assurance that one is not alone in the world — all these are fragments of a wealth of meaning that defies verbal expression, and yet it is broadcast to the world by every free, spontaneous smile, and finds its way to the heart of even a child.

Of two travelers setting out, the one with a well-filled purse and the other with a friendly smile, it is, to say the least, an open question whether the one with the smile would not travel more successfully.

It is related that after preaching the Wheel of the Good Law and the way of escape from rebirth, the Buddha rested by the bank of a lotus pool. But the crowd which had been listening to his words still lingered for more. Weary, but full of compassion for the multitude, he leaned over and, picking a lotus bloom, held it up before them. The vast sea of faces remained blank and unresponsive, but that of a young man was lit up by a radiant smile of understanding. A nod from the Teacher sealed the wordless compact and afterwards he joined "the mighty order of the Yellow Robe" —

That noble order of the Yellow Robe
Which to this day standeth to help the World.

The great Hebrew prophet looked forward to a final consummation when God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and may we not anticipate that on that happy day the grief-contorted faces of those who have survived "the great tribulation" will break into a universal smile? And thus the wheel will come full circle to the Dawn when it began and "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

HOW TO ATTAIN KNOWLEDGE — *H. T. Edge*

We all desire knowledge, and it is right that we should. The desire for knowledge is the divine spark that makes man more than beast. If it is quenched, the man is asleep — perhaps even dead. Some religious teaching has discouraged knowledge, and has made a false distinction between holiness and knowledge, as if the one excluded the other. Religious allegory has been perverted to suit this doctrine. The Serpent in the Garden of Eden — the wisest of all the animals — stands for the divine power which imparted to man the desire for knowledge and the power to know. He was called man's Tempter, because he gave man freedom of choice. The *Genesis* allegory tells of an early race of mankind which dwelt in a state of ignorant innocence and harmless bliss; this state is called the Garden of Eden, and its presiding deity is the "Lord God" of the narrative. But there comes the time when man has to awaken and move on; he is confronted by the Serpent, who arouses in him the slumbering intelligence, so that man becomes a responsible being, no longer an unintelligent follower of fixed routine. The Greek version of this story is found in the legend of Prometheus, who brings heavenly fire to man in defiance of the authority of Zeus. Lucifer, Phosphoros, Light-Bringer, are other names for man's divine instructors. Similar allegories are to be found in the sacred books of India and other cultures; and they all refer to that stage in human evolution when man acquired self-consciousness and free will.

This universal allegory has however been perverted, so that Lucifer, the Serpent, etc., are made into evil powers, seeking man's destruction, and ruling over a hierarchy of evil spirits in rebellion against God. This libel on human nature, this perversion of history, is responsible for a world of trouble and perplexity. There is no antithesis between the desire for knowledge and the practice of virtue. The attempt to make such a separation drives the quest of knowledge into directions that are useless or harmful, and leaves religion dry and barren.

But knowledge cannot be the handmaiden of self-seeking, or it will but increase the descent into woe which self-seeking, if persisted in, must inevitably bring. The only real knowledge is self-knowledge.

Knowledge does not consist in an accumulation of information or facts or theories; but in an opening of the vision. Moreover it is not knowledge till we have confirmed it by practice. Hence knowledge is inseparably united to conduct; if it does not influence our conduct, then it is only a half-hearted belief.

Earnest students of Theosophy may desire to know more, and may perhaps complain that they do not seem to progress. They may compare themselves or their opportunities unfavorably with other people and with the opportunities which they suppose the other people to enjoy. But particular circumstances can make no difference, if we view the matter aright; and all Theosophists, whatever their circumstances, stand on equal footing so far as circumstances are concerned — an equal footing as regards the ability to acquire real knowledge. For wisdom comes from purifying our faculties, "removing the covers of the soul," as W. Q. Judge puts it; and our eyes can be cleared by following the path of duty. The veils which we put up are of our own making, and by ourselves can be withdrawn..

Those who would win the truth must woo the truth. They must practise sincerity and truthfulness always, practise them *in secret*, be true to themselves in every thought and motive. Yet how many of us live in an atmosphere of falsification! Do we not often strive to maintain our position when we know we are wrong, thus sacrificing the truth to a desire to save our face? Do we not make for ourselves excuses which we would not make for another, thus permitting self-love to blind our eye to justice? How can we expect to win truth if we flout her in this way? What right have we to complain? And how simple the remedy!

We should like to understand more about Karman. Karman may be the law of cause and effect philosophically, but on the moral plane, if it means anything, it means *justice*. Then, if we are to understand justice, we must practise justice, surely; and this, for our purpose, means much

more than ordinary fair-dealing in the world of men. It means perfect justice and sincerity in our own private thoughts; we must never fool ourselves in the interests of self-love. The law of Karma is said to bristle with difficulties, and perhaps some of that may be because we *talk* about it too much; has it ever occurred to us to practise Karma?

There is a rule which says we must not be continually concerned with attempts to justify ourselves. It is a wise rule. This anxiety for self-justification springs from a desire to accentuate our personality as against other personalities; it emphasizes the feeling of separateness. But the feeling of separateness is the greatest obstacle to knowledge. How then can we attain knowledge if we are so constantly defeating our own purpose?

Criticism of other people is in exactly the same case. What could emphasize personality more than this setting up of our own notions and prejudices against those of others? This is understood easily enough if, instead of taking our own case, we consider the case of some other person who criticizes. We can realize that he is hardening his own prejudices and building a cactus hedge around his mind against the entry of new ideas.

Mental culture, self-culture, in various guises, forms the stock-in-trade of many cults nowadays, which attract a numerous section of the public because they appeal to human wants. Some of these appeals are of a frankly acquisitive nature — the attainment of objects of desire of one sort or another. There can be no doubt that we have within us latent powers, not normally active, but which can be called forth, and which can be made to subserve our desires for gain, influence, or what not. But a Theosophist would regard this as simply feeding the enemy, for it increases the force of those very personal desires which he knows that he must allay if he is to attain his object of self-knowledge. Moreover personal gain of this sort is made at the expense of others, just as in the case of any other kind of pushing oneself to the front and pushing others back. Sometimes self-culture does not take this acquisitive aggressive form, but aims rather at tranquilizing the mind,

reaching a state of calm imperturbability and inward blessedness. Here is another danger which the truth-seeker has to guard against; he desires not to be any kind of hermit, and the walls which we build to shut out discomforts may also shut us from sympathy with our fellow-beings.

Thus it is easy to explain the Theosophical idea of attaining knowledge, and to point out the obstacles which we ourselves create, and how they may be overcome. But in actual life mere precept is not enough, and to it must be added experience, often taking the form of sharp lessons. It is only thus that truths become vital and acquire for us a real meaning. If we try to define our motive for pursuing the Theosophical path, we are not likely to satisfy ourselves. We feel that such motives as can be defined in words are not adequate; we may fear to convict ourselves of hypocrisy. The motive is a sublime aspiration, felt from within, but taking many forms in its passage through the analysing mind. How many such aspirations are wasted for want of the means to make them fruitful! Theosophy gives these means, and the desire to render them available to those who have them not must arise in the heart of a disciple who has truly understood the Theosophical teachings.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERY OF LIGHT — *J. W. A. Croiset van Uchelen*

The Third Logos, Mahat, becomes Manas in man, Manas being only Mahat individualized, as the Sun-rays are individualized in the bodies that absorb them. — *The Secret Doctrine*

In the older Theosophical magazines we come across articles dealing with the philosophy of sound, as well as of color. Meanwhile, our still limited knowledge on the subject of light and color has considerably increased.

Light and the Cosmic Fire Element enter into all ancient philosophies; for are we not the Flame-born sons of God, thrown off as sparks from the wheels of the Infinite? Yea, even the spiritual Sun behind the physical sun is one of these Flames, nor was its beginning greater than that of the Flame in the human soul.

The Holy Spirit is Fire. And the ever-burning lamp of the alchemists which burned for a thousand years, without fuel in the catacombs of Rome is but the symbol of the same spiritual fire within man himself which was carried by the Initiate in his wandering. (1)

All chemistry from which animal and plant life take their need for growth and development was deposited in the earth and water by the Sun. All life is sustained by the Sun through indirect absorption of sunlight in the body.

The so-called "primitive" races, in recognition of the God-sent powers of the Sun, offered their prayers to the rising and the setting Sun, the Solar Logos, as the millions of Mohammedans still do today when the call sounds from the minarets over the sands of the desert.

The ancients, much of whose knowledge has been lost, fully understood the influence of light and its colors; and strange stories remain of temples on older continents where the light of stellar bodies, linked to sound-waves, was utilized for healing purposes, in connexion with

astrological influences.

The Egyptians, like the Chaldaeans and the Persians, and the Kabbalists before them, made a special study of color and were well aware of its relationship to sound and number. The Greeks utilized light-energy, and Herodotus about 450 B.C., wrote a book on the value of sunlight for skin diseases. Aristotle, who also wrote on color, realized the influence of light in the formation of the green color of plants. Light, as a healing agent was employed, we read, by the Roman physician Celsus, and by Galen, the physician of Marcus Aurelius.

Thus we shall find that this ancient subject linked to the mysteries, and always more or less pertaining to the healing art and priestcraft, once combined, has never entirely been forgotten. From time to time throughout history, master minds have turned to the subject of light and color, until, in later centuries, materialistic science began its search for knowledge of its physical properties.

It was at the end of the Seventeenth Century that the discoveries of Newton gave a new impetus to this research and the basis of spectrum analysis was laid. Still the mystery unsolved rests in the unanswered question: What is light?

Sir Oliver Lodge was well aware of man's limited mind when he spoke of light as "the mysterious messenger." Light, says H. Schellen, in his *Spectrum Analysis*, is the "vibration of a substance." Professor Tyndall speaks of the "sensation of light." Physicists defined it as "form caused by electro-magnetic vibrations," and so on. Dr. Pancoast defied them when he wrote: "A sensation could not cause the germ of a blade of grass to develop into a thing of beauty and utility; a vibration could not paint the rose, or shape and adjust its petals." He himself then speaks of light as a positive power, or force of nature, an actual and active manifestation of the creator, a vital energy that creates and destroys. That is to say, he distinguishes between the invisible energy of light and its visible representation, the light we see. (2) Today we vaguely speak of light as "a series of oscillatory frequencies perceptible to us by the senses."

Not only do we not know what light is (nor electricity, nor magnetism for that matter, although all these are believed to be different manifestations of the same cosmic force), but neither is the mystery of its projection understood. (Ignotum per ignotius!)

Three main theories have been propagated: Newton's emission theory, Huygens's undulatory wave theory (supplemented by what Pancoast calls the impulse and tension theory), and most recently Ghadiali's theory, depicting a gyratory spiral motion of photon emission, through the first ether medium. (Could the Ancient Wisdom perchance give us the clue? I hopefully ask a wiser student to attempt this.)

The emission theory holds that light is composed of minute particles of matter emitted by the radiant body; according to the undulatory wave theory, light is propagated by means of an all-pervading elastic medium — ether; but asked what this ether is, science failed to find the answer. It has to admit that the unsolved properties of such a medium could not be expressed in terms of units as used in matter; nor could it assume that so-called empty space has no physical properties, without upsetting the fundamental facts of mechanics. This medium might be of an unknown character therefore, but it cannot be "nothing." As Einstein (who, by the way, considers that "the geometrical properties of space render the hypothetical ether unnecessary") wrote: "Matter is real . . . motion, space and also time are real forms. Every attempt to deny the physical reality of space collapses in the face of the law of inertia. For if acceleration is to be taken as real, then that space must also be real within which bodies are conceived as accelerated." (*New York Times*, February 3, 1929)

The question remains, does the one theory actually and of necessity exclude the other?

That light has solidity is borne out by the radiometer developed by Crookes (who also demonstrated the fluorescence and phosphorescence of matter), as well as by the phenomenon of refraction. For we know that when a light-beam strikes a prism, upon

entering this heavier medium it bends toward the perpendicular by reduction of velocity, taking a second bend in opposite direction when it leaves the prism and enters a lighter medium.

Light, according to Ghadiali, starts as a circle with dual polarity, the third aspect being formed by its forward motion (which therefore becomes "a progressive spiral oscillatory motion"), and it is in this spiraling gyration that the root of the seven colors is to be found, because, as we are reminded philosophically, no exoteric circle can manifest which does not hold within itself the seven circles from the unmanifested plane. The Sun therefore does not shed light, but light is the converted energy sent forward, translated as light by our sensory organs, after it passes through impediments such as the atmosphere. Color, thus understood as "a divisional part of light," depends for its frequency on the position where the white light spiral is utilized; or, in other words "the amount cut off in degrees from the circle (really spiral) of the white light determines the color."

Colors therefore cannot be filtered, as we filter a sediment out of water, for if this be true, he reasons, then a white light beam, after passing through a so-called yellow filter, should possess none of the other colors; so that when this yellow beam in turn is thrown on a green filter, it should either stay yellow or not pass at all. Experiment proves however that a new color is formed, combining both the yellow and the green, namely lemon.

It is the coloring matter in the glass, he holds, which determines the axial polarity of the full beam, twisting it around (as shown in Faraday's experiments on polarized light), a second so-called filter causing another corresponding twirl to take place, and so on, until the particles (photons) forming the emission are exhausted. (3)

Turning to the most recent discoveries in regard to light and color-energy, we find its application, again primarily in the healing art (apart from the commercial use of ultra-violet rays in a number of industries).

Strangely enough the first renewed impulse focussed the attention

upon the invisible rays on either side of the spectrum — now being utilized in the form of diathermy, infra-red, ultra-violet, X-ray and radium radiations — rather than on the visible spectral rays themselves. Yet, could sound reasoning lead us to believe that the visible rays lack healing powers ascribed to the burning, ultra-spectral waves? Or, as Sir Oliver Lodge put it: "Would it be logical to have a sun visible to man and only those rays helpful which are not visible?" And so once more the attention came to be directed toward the healing power of the visible (color) rays of Light.

Often people speak, or think, of sunlight as "just light," forgetting that in this light the radiant spectral colors are contained — whatever theories may be involved — these being varied colors of diverse chemical potencies. And as is well known today, every color coincides with certain chemical elements in the body and has its purpose in the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of man. To state it otherwise, colors are certain definite oscillatory frequencies by which plant, animal, and man alike are sustained.

Not only is sunlight indispensable for the maintenance of life, but as Dr. Crile set forth in *The Phenomena of Life*, oxidation of compounds, stored in plants, causes the release in animals, including man, of solar-radiation in the form of electric and radiant energy.

Experiments in various universities of late have demonstrated — what has long since been known to color-therapists — that the different wave-lengths of visible light (colors to our eyes) differently affect the growth and behavior of plants; thus Dr. E. Karrer of the Smithsonian Institute found that the greatest growth in length was in plants illumined by the orange-red part of the spectrum; the lowest growth was observed in plants grown under the blue-green divisions of the light. Seedlings will bend towards the blue light and away from the red, and so on.

Light means life, and this relationship is a process of photosynthesis, whereby carbon-dioxide in the air is made into carbohydrates of plants which in turn provide food for man and beast. (4) Food, in other words,

is bottled sunshine whereby the spectral rays are absorbed and re-radiated in proportion to, and in accordance with, the chemical constituents the foodstuffs contain. Yet the fact that the value of our food, digested, assimilated, built into tissues, etc., depends upon this disengagement of solar-energy (or color-rays) within the body, may still be a new viewpoint to many.

Today's chemists are well aware of the fact that the green pigment of plant leaves, called chlorophyll, or concentrated sunshine, has been given to patients with high blood-pressure, anemic or digestive disorders, with beneficial results. As Professor Buergi of Berne expressed it: "The sunshine caught is passed on in the form of blood-life for the human being." And Dr. Schertz wrote: "This pigment appears to be Nature's laboratory for converting energy into matter." Now the direct treatment with color-rays produces the same beneficial results, but with greater specific precision, for the very reason that chlorophyll did not absorb any particular ray, but all colors of the spectrum; whereas in color-therapy the diminished energy is reinforced by the specific colors required!

That green light has a soothing effect on the eyes we all know, but why the blue ray will cure burns and relieve pain, for instance, is less known — this process being the result of the oxygenating character of the blue-ray emanation. This very fact also explains the results obtained with the injection of methylene blue (nothing but a blue dye) in cases of carbon monoxide poisoning. All elements have a predominant color-emanation (as revealed by the Fraunhofer lines), upon which their potency depends and through which they act upon the human body.

How much, furthermore, is it known that green radiant-energy, like chlorine, is a germicide? And here let us note a report by Drs. Chambers and Flosdart, of the University of Pennsylvania, in the "Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine," in which it is stated that high-pitched sounds oscillating at 8,900 vibrations per second are able to destroy streptococcus hemolyticus by

blasting the germs. "So powerful is the vibration," the report goes on, "that it overcomes the cohesive strength of water, tears the molecules apart and leaves vacuum spaces, or vacuoles, which look like bubbles." During the process light is also evolved. Now if oscillatory frequencies at 8,900 per second have this effect, what, one may well ask, must be the effect on germs, when bombarded with the green spectral ray, the oscillatory frequency of which is given as of over 584 trillion per second?

It should be remembered that in dealing with the human physical vehicle, we are dealing with an organism built up of chemical constituents. And all these elements have a certain wave-length of energy incorporated in them, which act as direct resonators, so to speak, for outside energy of the same wave-length when poured into them from the sun or an artificial source.

It is not difficult to see therefore how a disproportion of the body constituents, manifesting itself as disease, may be restored by administering the color-waves corresponding to the depressed elements (in other words, by reinforcing diminished energy); while on the other hand, in case of a surplus of an element, the antagonistic wave will reduce its activity by interference. The astonishing results obtained with these cold color ray treatments, in diseases of all kinds, are less astonishing when these principles are understood.

That only spectral colors of the proper oscillatory frequencies should be used to obtain a chemical action in harmony with natural processes and the energy emitted by the sun should be obvious. On the other hand, it must be clear that by mixing these rays with gases (often of a poisonous character, like carbon, or mercury vapors) the natural laws of color therapy are violated to the extent of nullifying the effect of the spectral rays and their potential chemical and vibratory action, as such. If we accept the rationale of diagnosis and treatment by electricity, radio waves, etc., the value of the use of color-rays is self-evident, for whether vibrations, or oscillatory frequencies, are expressed as electricity, heat, light, color, sound, etc., it is now well

known that these are all manifestations of the One Universal Energy, or Force, conducted, it is believed, through different media.

A demonstration of this inter-relationship, between heat and sound for instance, also was made at the University of Pennsylvania, when an egg was coagulated by audible sounds, while other experiments showed that by use of sound-vibrations ethyl acetate could be broken down to produce acetic acid, and starch to a slight extent was decomposed to produce glucose; etc.

In its pure form, color-therapy (by use of prismatic, or spectroscopically adjusted beams of colors) is a natural system of healing, akin to the forces of life — solar energy. And although as old as antiquity, it is only in recent years that the use of color in the field of the healing arts once more has come — to stay — to benefit a suffering humanity.

(5)

That in color-therapy the physical body is affected through the direct influence the colors exercise upon the auric vehicle, thereby also bringing the forces of the vital vehicle into play, is a truth that perhaps only those whose minds are trained in Eastern philosophies can fully appreciate — and therefore it is seldom publicly mentioned.

Light and heat are atomic phenomena, more ethereal, infinitesimal, than crude chemical action. Medicine has combined solids into various chemical compounds; in color-therapy the more ethereal emanations of nature are combined and transmuted to meet the requirements of an organism becoming more finely attuned.

FOOTNOTE:

1. See M. P. Hall's *Initiates of the Flame*. ([return to text](#))

2. A view close to that held by Theosophical thinkers and corresponding to Ghadiali's theory where he speaks of colors as mathematically sub-divided parts of the circle of white light — the visible energy of the invisible cosmic energy. ([return to text](#))

3. The colors themselves seem to corroborate these views, for is it not

true that colors are only apparent — according to the illumination of an object — and not inherent in a body? Hence if the illumination changes, the object is changed also. Photograph a many-colored butterfly through different color lenses and the resultant pictures show seemingly entirely different insects. This proves, Ghadiali holds, that it is the light that causes the appearance and not the spangles of the creatures themselves. A similar view is held by Prof. Haldane, who disillusioned us about the "blue" of the sky! Illusion again — Maya. ([return to text](#))

4. Professor Dhar writes in his *The Chemical Action of Light*: "The phenomenon of carbon assimilation by plants, which makes life possible on this planet is fundamentally photo-chemical in action. Moreover it is this phenomenon which converts the radiant energy of the sun into potential energy. . . ." ([return to text](#))

5. This is not a mere form of speech, for in many instances treatments with these cold color-rays have brought relief, or produced a cure, after such cases had been given up as "hopeless," when failing to respond to "ordinary" treatment.

For those who doubt that we are entering a color-age, we copy a few headings showing the attention bestowed upon this subject in various fields:

"Guests at a party got sick because of Green and Red Lights." "Piano plays Music in Color on White Disk." "Light beam stopped by whirling disk plays chords." "Cathode tubes color ads with brilliant light." "Plants grow without soil in artificial garden with artificial sun." "Sunlight used to drive small motor." — And so on. ([return to text](#))

THE FABLE OF THE "MEMBERS" (1) — *A. E. Urquhart*

Aesop, the wise and witty Greek writer who lived more than two thousand years ago, told in one of his pointed little stories, of an alleged quarrel between the various members or parts of the body, as to which ranked first in importance, each in turn boasting ridiculously of its superiority over the others. The story, of course, was intended to carry a lesson to some of the great men of the day, who were even then, in their personal pride and vain-glory, engaging among themselves, in the dissensions which ultimately destroyed the unity of Greece, and brought down her splendid civilisation to the dust. Yet the story has a much wider application than the temporary one for which it was written, for it illustrates the truth taught in Theosophy, that neither man nor any other being in all Creation can live to itself alone, but that all existent things are bound together by underlying laws of unity and harmony, which cannot be broken except under penalty of disorder, suffering and unhappiness.

To understand this fact, we turn to the Theosophical explanation of the structure of life, which shows that the entire Universal economy is built or arranged as an organic unity, each part being not only an essential adjunct to every other part, but also an essential component of the whole. This law runs throughout all existence whether on the lowly scale of the atomic, physical structure of things, or on the higher phases of nature which we call consciousness and intelligence. Even in the structure and workings of the living human body, as Aesop so aptly discerned, this principle shows itself with striking clearness. Every tiny atom in the fabric of the body has its part to play in the well-being of the organ which contains it. Every organ likewise has its particular essential part to play in promoting the harmonious functioning of the body as a whole. Thus every lower part, by the very nature of things, serves all that is greater than itself. The greater reciprocates by being the link which holds each lower part in harmonious association with

its neighbours. Health is nothing more nor less than the efficient operation of this fundamental law of spontaneous, mutual interchange throughout the body. Disease exists only when the law is broken.

The purpose of Theosophy, we repeat, is to point out the existence of certain basic principles or laws which run through the whole fabric of life. If this is so, then we should be able to discover the above described principle repeated in other aspects of our lives. Surely we cannot fail to do so. Consider for instance the example chosen by Aesop. Do you not see, as clearly as Aesop saw, that the laws of organic unity apply as literally in the life of a nation, as in the physical constitution of its individual citizens? In terms of the nation, you and I are the "atoms." Our hometown or county, in which we accept the burdens of civic duty is the "organ" which we serve. The towns and counties, in their united aspect, make up the "body politic" of the nation. Reciprocally, the national organisation returns benefit to the towns and counties by instituting and controlling educational, legal, and other general services whose application is wider than that of any particular town or county. The civic authorities, in turn reciprocate to the citizens in terms of local services, and the preservation of peace, law and order within their own areas. Thus the organisation of a nation is good or bad according to how well or ill it expresses these basic principles of mutual service. Peace, freedom, happiness, progress (the "health" of a nation) exist where all parties high and low, shoulder ungrudgingly the full burdens of their respective positions. On the other hand, poverty, strife, crime and discontent are the disease of the body social, arising where mutual service and obligation have been ignored, and personal greed, vainglory, and self-interest allowed to hold sway. It was the beginnings of such undisciplined individualism that Aesop sought to stamp out in the civilisation of his own time. He failed, and the glory of Greece died out in internal turmoil. Are not our nations today (and likewise that wider "nation" which is all humanity) suffering from exactly the same sort of trouble arising inevitably from unbridled self-seeking among all classes of the community?

The constitution of the family group expresses the same law of organic

unity. So does the natural organisational system of a factory or a Theosophical Lodge, and a ship's crew, or a school. And in each case the penalties arising from undisciplined selfishness are the same, namely, chaos, deprivation, inefficiency, unhappiness. Remember also, that no organic unity of which we are "part" (and we are all part of many such in our complex lives) needs to claim *all* our lives, *all* our service, for itself — only such part as reasonably belongs within its particular scope. Thus undoubtedly a large part of our lives must be devoted — and should be devoted, gladly and willingly — to the wide variety of duties proper to our age and stations. Yet an important part and particularly the part *within ourselves*, should remain free for the development of our own individuality. It is, if you like, our wider duty to the whole Universal Organism, that we should maintain a free mind, free thoughts, and a courageous experimental attitude toward the deeper things of life. To such a man, life may be full of duties, but he can never be a slave, for he has that which is beyond the reach of tyranny — a free soul.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwm Theosophaid*, July, 1938. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

"MAN, KNOW THYSELF!" — *Arthur A. Beale*

What a mystery is man, what a miracle! Whether we stand silently in contemplation before the temple of the Delphic oracle, which bears the above injunction, or in awe before the Egyptian Sphinx — each making the same demand upon us — innately we know that there is a quest which man is destined to pursue. For that purpose we are here on earth, and each day, each life, brings us nearer the end of the trail. Each thought, each act, each success or failure, opens a new door, disclosing a new revelation for us.

The Human Kingdom brings an awakening of self-consciousness; but of what are we self-conscious? We might say, very little in the first stage; for as W. Q. Judge hints in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, the building of a memory is required before man becomes conscious of "personality." Man is born with a clean mental slate; he has no recollection of preceding events. Yet memory comes fast enough, impelled by experience in the Cycle of Necessity.

What is this memory but the subtle impress on our *personal* astral plane of the events of our life? For the requirements of sheer existence — the feeding on air and food — and the inrush of pranic forces or life-currents, bring once again the "children" of our past existence rushing back to us, even as steel filings rush to the magnet: each of our past offsprings comes home soaked with retributive memories of past deeds, good, bad, or indifferent. Step by step a new vehicle grows, called by psychologists the sub-conscious self, but perhaps better described as a psycho-mental apparatus. Each life we have to build this up from the start; but in no short time it acquires respectable dimensions and we begin to think, act, and judge.

It is in the tender years of life that direction, *outside* guidance, and discipline are as essential as during the time when in the ancestral early Third Root-Race stage man required the overshadowing nurture

of the gods. That is why the doctrine of free self-expression at this stage is so pernicious. Infants and children have very little to express other than the most primitive instincts of animal appetites, selfish cravings, and personal vanity, which if not curbed produce prigs and egoists, finally resulting in crooks and gangsters. This, then, is the time for parental care and love, and for the school-room; in fact for the guidance of maturer experience instilling self-restraint.

The child learns by imitation of wise example more than by unexplained precepts. How wise should be the child's preceptors! How little do we realize the import of wise training and discipline during our youth: perhaps we only realize it when much valuable time has been lost.

This, then, is the period of personal self-consciousness: it is the realization of the mighty "I am I" — my dignity, my strength, my possessions — all maya. or illusion, however. But in the fulness of time (if it ever comes; some never seem to come to it) a new self-consciousness arrives, an expanding consciousness of duty to others, as part of ourselves, and with it a consciousness of responsibility, of power, of humanity, of choice. This is the dawn of *individual* self-consciousness.

This new inflow of consciousness comes to man during the period between seven years and puberty: a time one might speak of as the incarnation of mind, or ego-consciousness; a time when the ego begins to take control; the moment of illumination when the mental ego teaches, urges, suffers, and inspires. But we as personalities have free choice. If we listen to the mystic presence, seek its aid, obey its precepts, submit to guidance, all is well: we blossom into human beings and are ensouled, conscious. If we disregard it, seeking only the offal of personal gratification, then the impress of these delinquencies is made upon the very atoms of our being and they pass out as karmic residues, to abide the cyclic turning of the wheel: to come back to us for fresh assimilation.

So we come to see how memories stir up dreams, illuminated by

imagination, forming pictures, and the whole built up into a fabric of human life forming the basis of morality and ethics. With ethics comes responsibility, involving and shaping emotions into concrete human attributes, inspiring trends, building up destiny. Some emotions are depressing, some akin to warnings, others bring freedom, peace, and beauty in their wake.

Hence the personality with the body and its systems of nerves, circulation, lymphatics, muscles, etc., all interblended, forms the battleground of this mighty array of opposing forces. Into it are poured karmic elements: lives, life-atoms, all the phases of the pranic currents trembling in the nerves, blood, lymph, and air-streams: food for the internal glands called endocrines. From the endocrines tiny units are weaved called hormones, which are instinct with personality. Into these streams is suffused another and higher stream of consciousness, through avenues provided from higher sources, at the invitation of our best aspirations. Our spiritual mind may color the life-streams, shaping and changing them into spiritual instinctive creative impulses. So in the fulness of time a new Mind is formed, a vehicle for a Bodhisattva.

The Theosophical Forum

HAS DEATH LOST ITS STING? — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

Is death losing its horror for the normal man and woman? An article entitled "Death Has No Terrors" by Lester H. Perry in *The Reader's Digest* for May, and a monograph "Why Death?" by the late Joseph P. Widney in *The Los Angeles Examiner* of July 7th, would seem to justify this opinion.

Mr. Perry presents the *verbatim* testimony of eminent physicians and of several who have been resuscitated to prove that: "The veil between the two worlds is but a cloud and one passes through it imperceptibly." "The dying person slips drowsily away much as we all, hundreds of times, have drifted into sleep." "Dying is as painless as falling asleep." ". . . we will face it without fear and without bitterness, without reluctance and without repining, without suffering, whether physical or mental; we shall find it, at the last, but a peaceful transition, an eternal change mercifully accomplished."

This is all absolutely true and has been promulgated by the Theosophical Society since the turn of the last century; for death — except that which occurs in accident and war, which brings special provisions of Nature's law of compassion into play — is no sudden, violently imposed, outward affliction, but the culminating apex of a more or less long period of inner self-dissociation and preparation for what to the weary, overtired, human soul is surely a joyous homecoming. We do not come to birth suddenly: physical and other processes precede our advent; so too, other preparations as well as physical ones, presage our passing from Earth. And the Earth-life whose keynote has been harmonious is followed by a serene and refreshing respite, whereas a life that has been dominated by conflict will give place to states of strife until the intense impulses have worn themselves out — for "as a man thinks, so is he" throughout the eternal pageant of Life.

With the refulgent consummation of a fine life's effort surging through him, and the prescience upon him of a benediction yet to be, Joseph P. Widney, scholar, philosopher, educator and writer, paused awhile, five days before his death at the age of 97, to share with his fellows the harvest of a noble character, to add to the inspiring example of a grand old age his stimulating intuitions, so that men's minds might be directed toward the majesty of Being.

Dr. Widney voiced the ancient teachings of the ages when he said: "Everywhere in the universe we find the law of eternal growth. It seems to be the same in every department of the universe — material, intellectual, and spiritual — and the pleasures of heaven would lie in the thought: I, too, am a sharer in the development of the worlds about me." ". . . Without death the drama of life would be a failure" for "the purpose of that drama is the making of a man; not simply for time, but for eternity." "Life as we know it upon this plane is to be lived by successive births and consequent deaths; the soul progressing and developing in accordance with the fixed and unchanging Law spoken in the beginning." "Death is not a calamity! It is the greatest blessing to man that God has made."

These and many supplementary tenets are explained by Theosophy, which elaborates Dr. Widney's verities by stating that the change of death is partly due to a surfeit of life which assails the equilibrium of man's constitution. When the saturation point is reached, involution replaces evolution, assimilation follows absorption, until restored balance ushers the human soul into rebirth and further life-experiencing. In his present state of growth death is a necessity to the average human being who is but partially ensouled. As evolution brings about fuller human ensoulment, the unity of man will become unassailable and Earth-life will be, what it is now for the adept, the highest and most complete state possible to the composite being. Then by means of processes of radiation and irradiation man will dispose of and assume his bodies much as the cells of the physical body are changed regularly during the course of a single Earth-span.

Surely this is the answer to Dr. Widney's question? "Shall man be stopped in his intellectual evolution by the limited range of the possibilities of further investigations in the universe about him, because of the material limitations of the body through which, in this life, he must work?"

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — *C. J. Ryan*

Antiquity of Civilization in England

"We are at last, and only just in time, taking measures to preserve and protect the extraordinary stone monuments erected by our far-distant ancestors which serve to demonstrate their high degree of civilization and, perhaps, their knowledge of laws of nature of which we are now ignorant in spite of our scientific advances in the last few centuries. Stonehenge in Wiltshire, England, is now a National Monument, and far away in the South Seas, the Australian government has extended its protection to the so-called "Little Stonehenge" a similar but smaller structure, and other megalithic monuments, on the Triobrand Islands, west of Papua. Chile has declared Easter Island a National Park, and other nations are taking measures to protect their irreplaceable monuments of unknown antiquity.

The exact age of Stonehenge has long been a subject of bitter controversy, but recent excavations and researches indicate that it was probably erected somewhat less than two thousand years b. c. About twenty miles north of Stonehenge stands the far greater and more magnificent prehistoric monument at Avebury. Unfortunately, it has suffered far more from vandalism, but it is now being carefully excavated and restored. Within the enormous outer circle of stones two smaller circles were formerly enclosed and two avenues of gigantic monoliths led away from it. Dr. Stukely, the famous "antiquarian," wrote in 1772, when Avebury was still in moderate preservation, that it as far exceeded Stonehenge in grandeur as a cathedral does a parish church.

The desecration of this marvelous temple, the largest of its kind in Europe, began in the Roman period and continued with increasing ferocity till the 18th century at least. Of the 300 enormous stones originally present only 16 were standing when the archaeologists

began their work about five years ago. The rest had either been broken into small pieces and carried away or *buried in deep holes*, covered with soil and ploughed over! The buried stones are now being disinterred, repaired where broken, and set up again. They vary in height from 4 ft. 6 in., to 18 feet, and when all is finished about 120 of the original monoliths will be in their places and concrete markers will indicate the positions of the destroyed ones.

Studies of bones, pottery, and snail shells, discovered near the sockets of the stones of the Great Circle at Avebury, have satisfied the archaeologists that it is older than Stonehenge, dating from about 1900 b. c. or rather later. Some think it belonged to a period in which Egyptian influences penetrated Britain.

Students of *The Secret Doctrine* will recollect that it says that some of the British megalithic monuments are enormously ancient and that initiate priests traveled from Egypt in early predynastic days to England, *by dry land* across what is now the British Channel, to supervise the building of "menhirs and dolmens, of colossal zodiacs in stone," etc. According to the most reliable researches as reported by Dr. F. E. Zeuner, Lecturer on Geology at Freiburg University (*Discovery*, 1933) the Channel began to sink about 8000 years ago, the tremendous scour produced by the invasion of the sea quickly cutting back the hills on both sides until the present chalk cliffs were formed. Land communication between the British Isles and Egypt would have been easy before that date, and it is well established that as far back as fourteen thousand years ago parts at least of Lower Egypt were inhabited by an advanced race, the Badarian culture, capable of making excellent pottery and fine linen — not savages by any means.

Of course there is a considerable interval between 1900 b. c, the probable date of Avebury, and, say, 6000 b. c. and the question naturally arises: Is there any authentic information to indicate the existence of Great Circles older than Avebury? Till now, this could not be conclusively answered, but the recent excavations have brought to light the most remarkable fact that the Great Circle of Avebury cuts

right across the site of an older and rather smaller one! How many thousands of years this outmoded one may have existed is not known, but its discovery confirms H. P. Blavatsky's claim of far greater antiquity for such monuments than the archaeologists were willing to admit in her time. Possibly it will also help to support the recent claim that an enormous Zodiac, about 4,000 years old, and many miles in diameter, can be traced in the terrain surrounding the ancient mystical and sacred Avalon, now Glastonbury, about forty miles from Stonehenge.

Evolution not Mechanistic

Three years ago we quoted the opinion of Dr. Frank R. Lillie, president of the National Academy of Sciences at Washington, that a living organism is not a mere congeries of physico-chemical reactions but is entirely unexplained by the "scientific method." Speaking at the June meeting of the American Association for the advancement of Science at Ottawa, Dr. Lillie went still farther, claiming that biologists can no longer accept the mechanistic view that life arose from crawling things in the sea up to man and the higher animals by physical and chemical causes, and that evolutionary theory is still in its infancy so far as explaining first causes is concerned. Living things possess *creative* activity and depart from mechanical routine, unlike physico-chemical analogies. These ideas are a striking sign of the times, especially as the assembled scientists accepted them without protest, though of course many of the "die-hards" still hold to the old-fashioned view that physics and chemistry explain life and consciousness.

High Temperatures in the Stratosphere

Until lately there was every reason to believe that the warmest part of our atmosphere was that which is nearest to the surface of the earth. In proportion to the increase in distance from the surface the temperature was supposed to decline steadily until the intense cold of outer space was reached. For several years, however, researchers have found increasing evidence that after a certain distance of increasing cold — not less than 18 miles the atmosphere gradually becomes much

hotter than it is at the surface of the earth, attaining a temperature of not less than 200 degrees and probably many times that temperature before it again cools down to extreme lows. This utterly unexpected discovery — apparently contrary to the "laws of nature" as formerly understood before the new atomic theories were presented — is specially interesting to students of Theosophy because the existence of this super-heated shell or layer of atmosphere high above the earth was definitely mentioned by the Mahatma K. H. in a letter to a correspondent written more than fifty years ago and published in 1923 in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. No scientist dreamed of such a possibility until quite recently. Such facts as these, recorded long before the revolutionary changes in modern physics, are unanswerable evidence for H. P. Blavatsky's *bona fides* and the profound knowledge of her Adept Teachers.

In view of the above, we draw special attention to the latest corroboration of the superheated region above the earth, just reported by Dr. B. Gutenberg of the California Institute of Technology, to the American Geophysical Union. He is one of the leaders in this research, and the matter is so important for students of Theosophy that we do not apologize for a lengthy quotation from the *Los Angeles Times*, April, 28, 1937:

Washington, April 27 (AP) — Echoes from explosions of the Navy's big guns show the presence of a superheated layer of air in the atmosphere, Dr. B. Gutenberg of the California Institute of Technology declared today. . . . he said that with a new sound-detecting instrument the reverberations of guns fired at sea off the California coast had been heard and measured over a distance of about 100 miles. . . . It picked up direct sound waves from the guns and in addition picked up secondary waves which were "too late for normal sound waves on an average of about one and one-half minutes"; Dr. Gutenberg said.

He described these secondary sound waves as unquestionably reverberations from the stratosphere, echoed by a layer of

superheated air. In this case, the heated air acted like the walls of a cave or a building in which distinct echoes are heard, he said. Dr. Gutenberg said that these results "leave no doubt" about the echo layer in the stratosphere. He added that "in all probability the temperature increases in the stratosphere with increasing height, beginning at a layer about eighteen miles above the earth's surface " At higher levels the *temperature continued to increase above the temperatures measured on the earth*, Dr. Gutenberg declared, until it eventually merges into the intense cold of interstellar space.

Prevision of Earthquakes by Animals

In *The Theosophical Path* for October, 1934, this subject was considered and many examples were given. It was mentioned that a Japanese scientist claimed that the sluggish catfish, when kept in tanks, showed unusual activity before a coming earthquake, the longest time being about six hours in advance. Dr. Felix V. Santos, zoologist of the University of the Philippines, confirmed this in July, 1937, reporting that in advance of local shocks the catfish, "lowliest and laziest of fish, in the zoological laboratory manifest amazing excitement. Three of seven catfish kept there, before a recent shock was noted, jumped out of the tank and were found dead on the floor." The seismologists do not deny that animals, especially parrots, cats, dogs, and sometimes horses, show uneasiness for hours and even days before serious earthquakes, but they have given no serious study to the problem. Why? Is it possible that they subconsciously feel that it might open avenues of thought about obscure psychological forces in nature which are still regarded as unauthorised? The common "explanation" that faint sounds produced by minute earth movements, inaudible to us, excite animals to frenzy is absurdly weak, and does not cover the fact that *human beings* have felt great uneasiness hours before an earthquake without being able to give the slightest reason for their sense of impending danger. The writer knows personally a very striking case that occurred at Point Loma.

Analogy in Astronomy

Nowhere is the great natural law of analogy — one of the foundation stones in Theosophical philosophy — seen more clearly than in the heavens. The same general plan is repeated from small to great, allowing for the necessary modifications arising from special conditions. Everything is in more or less circular motion. The satellites, the planets, and the sun rotate on a central axis; the satellites revolve round their primaries, the planets round the sun; many suns revolve round other and greater suns; and even our great Galaxy of billions of suns is turning round a center whose secret is not yet revealed. Our Galaxy itself is believed to be moving amid the myriads of others like it. In this connexion a new discovery of considerable interest has just been made at Harvard Observatory.

Within the confines of our Galaxy numerous relatively compact groups of stars exist, like swarms of bees. Some contain hundreds of stars, others tens of thousands and even more. In a large telescope some of these groups are absolutely breath-taking in their magnificence. Though they are isolated in space like islands their component stars are *relatively* near each other, though their actual distance apart is measured in "astronomical" yard-sticks.

The new discovery proves that the analogy mentioned above extends even to these "clusters," as the groups are technically called. A comparatively small cluster in Auriga has been found to be revolving round a neighboring cluster of much greater size! Instead, however, of its journey round the primary cluster taking about a month, as in the case of our moon and the earth, it requires about sixty million years. As the detection of such an apparently slow motion is extremely difficult, it may be a long time before other similar systems are found. An interesting problem now faces us: is our sun a member of a cluster of other solar systems revolving round some unknown but immensely powerful gravitational center? Perhaps we may find a clew to this puzzle in the Theosophical teachings?

ORIENTAL STUDIES: VII — *Abbott Clark*

BRAHMANISM

The object of all activities of the Theosophical Society is to promote the spirit and practice of brotherly love, mutual understanding, and kindness, and to revive and make active in modern life the spiritual truths underlying all religions, and thereby to elevate the lives and characters of men and women to the point where universal brotherhood would be the natural expression of their thought and feeling, and unbrotherliness would be unthinkable.

One step in the right direction is to study the common spiritual basis of all religions and thus to remove the religious bigotry and prejudice which cause so much misunderstanding and friction.

We are interested in the religious thought of ancient, not modern, India. The Theosophical Mahatmans are of the same order and class as the Vyasas and Rishis, Sages and Seers, who produced the Vedas, Upanishads, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and other great Indian religious and spiritually philosophical literature. Being sensible as well as spiritual and intellectual men, they work with the tide of evolution, the crest of which is now in the West.

Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement is the name and form under which the Ancient Wisdom is now known. Theosophy is the Atma-Vidya. and the Brahma-Vidya, the Self knowledge and Divine knowledge of modern times, cast in language comprehensible to the modern mind (semi-scientific), answering modern needs and problems and shorn of Oriental obscurities. Theosophy is the Sruti or revealed word for the new race and the new age.

Brahmanism is a mystical, transcendental, religious philosophy. It is founded upon the oldest publicly known religious books — the Vedas, the dates of whose origin are lost in the mists of time. The Orientalists,

great and learned European and American scholars, with the Western point of view, date them at from a few hundred to a thousand years b. c. Hindu scholars, who probably know their own religious traditions best, date the Vedas at nearer ten thousand years b. c., while occultists trace their origin to the Atlantean or the earliest Aryan times.

The authorship of the Vedas is credited to Vyasa; but there were many Vyasas, twenty-eight or more, each of whom composed one or more of the Vedic hymns or other religious literature — each in his respective era.

It is interesting to note how the Vyasas succeed each other. When a great Teacher comes in a declining cycle, as did Christ, there is little possibility of carrying on the successorship. The conditions do not favor or perhaps even allow it. But in a rising cycle, as now in the West, when the aspirations and the intelligence, the moral and spiritual elevation are sufficiently sustained, there are disciples trained and fitted to carry on and maintain the Work, and to continue the teaching in its purity. There have been many such eras.

As in Greece, Egypt, Persia, China, Ancient America, and Central Asia, so in India for countless centuries, there were Vyasas, Rishis, Sages, Initiates all, to expound and elaborate and even to improve the teachings.

The Vedas are four in number, the *Rig-Veda*, the oldest, on which the others are founded, the *Yajur-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda*, and the *Atharva-Veda*.

They were composed and taught and repeated orally for centuries or millenniums before being written down and compiled in their present form by Veda-Vyasa on the shore of the sacred lake Manasa-Sarovara (variously spelled), in what is now western Tibet. This district and much of western-central Asia was once called India.

The *Rig-Veda* (Sanskrit *rich*, praise), or Veda of Praise, is composed of 1028 hymns and songs of praise to the gods.

The *Yajur-Veda* (Skt. *yaj*, sacrifice), or Veda of Sacrifice, is composed of selections from the *Rig-Veda*, variously selected and arranged for sacrificial rites and ceremonies. Sacrifices were and are offered to the gods for all sorts of purposes: as an act of devotion and worship, to obtain benefits and favors, for propitiatory purposes, and even for curses. For the simple daily worship, flowers or fruits are offered, for greater favors some special treasure or money or jewels. At some Siva temples, and to Kali or Durga, Siva's consorts, there are blood sacrifices of goats, sheep, chickens, or bullocks.

The *Sama-Veda*, or Veda of song, is composed of some 1549 mantras, ritualistic, ceremonial, and magical selections. These are in both prose and verse and are used for meditation — "inaudible muttering."

The *Atharva-Veda*, named after one of the teachers, is sometimes called the *Brahma-Veda*, because it describes the nature of Brahman and how man attains thereto. It is of much later date and more philosophical than the other three Vedas.

The songs and stories of the Vedas are often so childlike in their simplicity and beauty that they are mistaken by European Orientalists for fairy-stories of creation. Being unable to conceive of the inner worlds and their inhabitants, the Orientalists laboriously explain them as just "the primitive mind of man glorifying the phenomena of nature." But hundreds of generations of Hindu Rishis, Seers and Sages, have considered them as our learned mathematicians do Einsteinian equations, and spent their lives in expounding and amplifying them.

Apparently the Vedas are nothing but mythological stories, but actually they contain an account of the conscious operations of the creative Gods and their hierarchies of helpers — the architects and builders of the cosmos and all the "construction crew" of intelligences, from elementals up.

All the universe is conceived of as spiritual and conscious and every operation and law of nature, inner and outer, visible and invisible, is described as the activity of gods and other more or less advanced

beings, who acted as any intelligent beings might act under similar circumstances.

The gods of the early Vedic hymns are not the familiar gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. The trinity of gods in the Vedas are Agni, Vayu, and Surya — crudely translated as Fire, Wind or Air, and Sun. But the word Fire is used as the outward expression of an inner essence which is warmth and life, light and intelligence. The word Fire is used as by the Fire-Philosophers and even by the Christians when they say "For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire," (*Deut.*, iv, 24). Vayu is used as the Greek Pneuma, Breath, Spirit. The Vyasas conceived of the Sun, not as materialistic Science does, as a mere physical or electrical body in the sky, but as the outer robes or vehicle of the Solar Deities whose vital energies animated and electrified the solar system into a living organism and whose Intelligences guided the orderly processes which established and maintain the harmony within the System The Ancients conceived the sun and other heavenly bodies as we do a man, i. e., not as a physical body alone, but as a congeries of energies guided by intelligence — the mind or intelligence being the most important part.

A sample of the Vedic stories will be of interest to the student as showing the poetic beauty and imagery with which profound truths can be clothed. Those who have studied what happens to the composite nature of man after death as described in *The Secret Doctrine*, and *The Esoteric Tradition*, will appreciate and enjoy the following from the *Rig-Veda*, x, 16; it is addressed to the deceased:

Let thine eye go to the sun (Surya), thy breath to the wind (Vayu), to the earth or to the sky go with thy several parts, into the waters or into the plants, as best beseems. But this man's unborn part convey, assuming thy most auspicious forms, to the abode of the righteous.

Note the exquisitely beautiful reference to that part of the man that never was born. How many of us have ever asked ourselves what part of us was born and will die, and what part of us has neither beginning nor end and therefore never was born — in the meaning of this text?

And how much of ourselves is qualified to go to heaven? Elsewhere in the philosophy it is stated that all of the man that belongs to the earth goes each part to its appropriate place and transmigrates or reimbodies itself there All that is of the nature of goodness, truth, and beauty goes to heaven, for, "Never to an evil place goeth one who doeth good." — *The Bhagavad-Gita*, ch vi.

At death Pushan, one of whose titles is "Lord of the Path," the Vedic Psychopomp, or shepherd of the souls of the dead, who knows all the paths of both earth and heaven, conducts the wayfarer, the soul, both to the abodes of bliss and again to earth

May Pushan guide thee hence, the wise, the universal shepherd
Pushan knows all the abodes, he guides us safely, carefully
Pushan is born on both the paths, that of heaven and that of
earth, and goes back and forth between both, knowing the way
to the happiest abodes — *Rig-Veda*, x, 17

Unlike the Greek Psychopomp, who conducts the souls of the dead to a gloomy underworld, Pushan conducts them through the airways of the soul to regions of light and beauty

Again, from the *Rig-Veda*, x, 14, addressed to the deceased:

"Go forth, follow the ancient paths on which our Fathers went . . .
. . . the two kings shalt thou behold, Varuna and Yama, (1) where
they revel in bliss. There join Yama and the Fathers, where
every wish is granted in the highest heaven, free from
blemishes enter thy home there, with a new and shining body
clothing thyself."

As I collate and understand certain Vedic texts At death, Pushan, the Vedic psychopomp or shepherd of the souls of the dead, who knows the way, takes "that part of the man that never was born" to the first heaven where he enjoys the fruits of his good works on earth to the full measure of his deserts; then to the second heaven where he enjoys a greater degree of felicity; then to the third, and to all the heavens, each in turn, in each of which he enjoys a greater and ever greater degree of

supernal felicity; and finally to the portals of the sun, where he enters and abides with the gods — the solar divinities Finally, Pushan conducts him back to the earth by the same route, and a new child is born.

Out of, and founded upon, these Vedic Hymns has grown the most elaborate and most voluminous religious and philosophical literature in the world. During thousands of years hundreds of generations of Rishis have spent their lives in commenting upon, expounding and interpreting or adding to the Vedic stories. There are the Brahmanas, the Sastras, the Puranas, and the Upanishads, not to mention other classes of literature. The dates of these works are unknown. The Hindu mind is timeless, attaches no importance to time, dates nothing. So, the Orientalists class this literature in the order of its quality — from the simple to the more complex and profound or perfect — as they see it. That is why it is ordinarily given in the order above mentioned.

The Brahmanas are a complex development of the Vedas. Two facts of historic human interest stand out in the course of this literary cycle: Two schools arose under opposite leaders, one called the Black School and the other the White School. The origin of the divergence was that a pupil turned against his Teacher and founded a School of his own and the resulting spirit of inharmony within it gave the body which he led the quality and name of "the Black School."

Great numbers of Sakhas or schools of interpretation of the Vedas arose — many hundreds in the interpretation of the *Sama-Veda* alone. Some accounts say there were between one and two thousand of these Sama-Vedic Sakhas with their clash of argument and opinion. Compare this with modern Christianity which can only boast of three or four hundred different sects.

Above the babel arose the voices of some of their greatest Rishis challenging the people to loyalty and faithfulness. "If a man gives up his own customs and performs others whether out of ignorance or covetousness, he will fall and be destroyed," they said. In a broader sense the Buddha said: "Respect the religion of other men; be true to

your own."

The Sastras are constituted mainly of works on Law, though the word Sastra simply means book. It is applied to the body of books on Law — all kinds of law, divine and human, sacred and profane, ritualistic and domestic. In the Sastras group are also included a few books of other character.

The Puranas and the Upanishads constitute a distinct advance on all other Brahmanical literature, being profoundly philosophical and religious and occultly scientific. The Puranas are supposed to have been eighteen in number, although none, with the possible exception of the *Vishnu-Purana*, exists today in any approach to a perfect form.

The Upanishads are variously given as having been 108 or 150 in number. They are essays of lofty religious, philosophical, and metaphysical character which form the basis of the most enlightened faith of India. They explain the essential nature and spirit of the universe, and, like the Puranas, treat of the character and nature of the gods; of their bringing the manifested universe into being by the process of ideation and emanation; of the cyclic course of evolution of the universe and everything therein contained. The idea is that every manifested thing, visible and invisible, from elemental and atom to solar system, from men even to the gods themselves, all evolve, not by chance nor by blind mathematical or mechanistic law, but by inherent energy guided by intelligence; and the manner and details of this evolution are poetically, allegorically, or philosophically described.

The Rishis of this later and more advanced date distinctly pointed out that there are two Paths as trodden by men of different grades of evolutionary development, both of which should be known and understood: they are the Higher Path and the Lower Path, or the Slower Path. The latter is the path trodden by the great majority of men; by the good citizen who discharges his duties in the world and is bound by earthly attachments, as well as the man who is bound by devotion to the creeds and forms of religion, such as the ceremonies and sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas, or the dead letter of any

religion. The followers of religion take a long winding course of evolution. The Higher Path is the Chela Path, trodden by the strongest and noblest of men. It is a path of self-determined and rapid evolution, motivated by impersonal and all-pervading love and thoughtfulness for the welfare of others. It is the path of the inner light which leads to Self-knowledge, Atma-Vidya, and to Divine Wisdom, Brahma-Vidya.

The efflorescence of Brahmanical literature is called the Vedanta — which means the end or perfection of the Vedas, the highest form of Hindu thought.

There are three schools of the Vedanta: the Dwaita, or dualistic school; Adwaita, or the non-dualistic school; and the Visishtā-adwaita, or modified non-dualistic school, which is somewhat between the other two. The Avatara, Sri Sankaracharya was the greatest expounder of the Adwaita school.

In the later Brahmanical literature the principal Vedic gods, Agni, Vayu, and Surya, are replaced by the more familiar trinity of gods, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. The word Brahma comes from the Sanskrit root *brih*, to expand. Brahma is the masculine supreme creative god of the universe. Vishnu, from the root *vish*, to pervade, is the all pervading and preserving principle of the cosmos. Siva is the god who destroys but to regenerate on a higher plane.

Philosophically speaking, Brahmanism, like the Esoteric Philosophy from which it sprang, is neither Monotheism nor Polytheism, Idealism nor Dualism, but contains and includes them all. In this philosophy Deity is both immanent and transcendent — Immanent because it pervades, animates and sustains the vast whole of the manifested universe; Transcendent because superior to and not dependent upon manifestation.

There is one fundamental divine principle and many manifestations; one Life, many lives; one Fire, many flames; one Thinker, many thoughts. The whole manifested universe is the thought and manifested thoughts of the hosts of Gods, an emanation of their essence, animated

and sustained by the circulation of their life and vitality, and inspired and guided onward and upward by their wisdom.

In Brahmanism the creation, evolution, and dissolution of such universes follow each other in orderly, progressive succession, as day follows night. This progressive manifestation and dissolution of universes is poetically called "the days and nights of Brahma."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Varuna is the god of the Waters of Space, Akasa, Yama, the god of Death ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE T.S., A LIVING, GROWING ORGANISM — *G. de Purucker*

Even the most wonderful magician of words leaves his audiences cold unless he have in his mind, and send forth from his heart, something which is intrinsically grand and ever-perduring. Spiritual and intellectual grandeur is what we Theosophists, students of our God-Wisdom, long for: we long to embody in ever greater fulness the ancient Wisdom which we have received as our holiest possession, so that we may give it, as far as we may and unadulterate, to others who have hungered as we have hungered for it.

We of the Theosophical Society are not mere parrots, mere word-repeaters, repeating the grand thoughts of men long dead, or again, merely quoting from certain Theosophical books that we love and revere and that have been written by H. P. Blavatsky, the Envoy of the Masters of Wisdom. We are not mere parrots, I say; and in this we try to follow H. P. Blavatsky's instructions, trying to develop ourselves inwardly so that, as she pointed out in her wonderful *Key to Theosophy*, we shall become strong men and women, strong spiritually and intellectually, men and women of incorruptible character with independent ideas of our own, born of the Wisdom-Religion if you will, but nevertheless illumined with our own native genius as far as we can evoke and draw upon this last.

This is not egoism; it is in fact the exact opposite of egoism; and again, it is not putting oneself forward as an authority in spiritual things. When a man has reached the stage where he will accept truth wherever he finds it, and perhaps at whatever cost to himself, he has indeed grown inwardly, and then it becomes his duty to give of what he has gained to others who know still less than he. Furthermore, and this is a most important thought, it is precisely because he himself, through his studies of Theosophy has grown at least somewhat inwardly, that he comes to appreciate the fact that there are other men who know as much as he does — aye, much more, mayhap. He then

understands, and does not merely accept the verbal statement, that we are all students, but students in differing degrees of understanding. This means that we do not stand still, blindly satisfied with the noble work done by those Theosophists who have preceded us in time and work, although none more than we revere these our predecessors in the Cause. The Theosophical Society were a mere farce, an imposition on human hearts, if it were not based on the principle of essential progress, collectively and for the individual, implying that each individual each day goes a little farther forwards and upwards towards our common and sublime objective.

The Theosophical Society, please remember, is composed of all the Theosophists who unite to make it. There is no organization more worthy nor superior to the men who compose it; it is precisely the men who compose it who make it. The standing, spiritual and intellectual, of the Theosophical Society is gaged by the men and women who compose it, and it will be just as low or just as high as we individuals make it, because of what we are ourselves. To the degree that we as individuals follow with fidelity the grand and beautiful instructions which we have received, to the degree that we show in our own lives how much inner growth we have achieved — otherwise, what we ourselves have learned and have grown to, and having learned are prepared to pass on to others: to *this* degree will our Society be high or low, and will retrograde or march steadily forwards.

May the gods in high heaven ever prevent, through our efforts both collectively and individually, the Theosophical Society from becoming a mere sect, depending upon a book or books, however grand this or these may be in themselves; may they prevent our pretending to live alone on the Word received from our predecessors; but may we continue to grow from within ourselves and become independent thinkers and workers steadily raising the level of ourselves and therefore of the Theosophical Society. Let our beloved Society continue for ever to be a living, growing organism through which pulses the inspiration of our blessed God-Wisdom. We can best render our homage of immense reverence and devotion to our Teachers, higher

and lower, by striving to improve ourselves as individuals, as individuals to advance ourselves in all things great and good, and as individuals to become independent, strong characters. If we can do this, then we shall for ever be able to retain and to manifest to others those principles of conduct which have ever graced the lives of the noblest of our predecessors, and this likewise will insure that our Theosophical platform shall be ever free, growing, in all the best senses of the word, and therefore becoming ever more truly a nobler platform for the elaboration and dissemination of Theosophy to the world.

It is results that the world looks for, and not talk; for it is a mere truism to state once again that the world is weary of talk without action, of professions without their expressions in the lives of the professors. If the Theosophical Society is not to drift on some mere sandbank of thought, however noble that thought may be, and even based on our own Theosophical ideas, — if the Theosophical Society is to grow and to become for future ages what it was destined to be, it is in our hands to make it so by *ourselves* making ourselves ever truer exponents in our lives, and in our independent but ever loyal thinking, of the Wisdom-Tradition that we have received from our Masters.

The Theosophical Forum

"ENDS AND MEANS" — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

One of a generation living, as he expresses it "in the rather grisly morning-after of the success of science when it is apparent that what triumphant science has done hitherto is to improve the means for achieving unimproved ends or actually deteriorated ends," Mr. Huxley had accepted the conception of man and the universe presented by materialistic science and early fallen a victim to the doctrine of "meaninglessness." But his horror at the results of this hideous cast of thought, his sympathy for those whose minds became imprisoned in it, and his adventurous intellect and resolute will, impelled him to make strong search in near and distant fields of human experience and this led to the rediscovery of the eternal values that give purpose and meaning to life on Earth. From being a victim Mr. Huxley has become a victor: by his scientific survey of man as a spiritual as well as a physical and intellectual being, he has been able to administer to the poison-bite of materialistic science a traditional cure, namely, "the hair of the dog that bit you."

Ends And Means (1) is indeed a guide to moderns who would escape from the squirrel-cage which snapped shut upon their minds when they were caught by "meaninglessness," and which cut them off from the luminous areas of human consciousness where religious faith and human associations based upon eternal ethical principles give entrance to temples of inward peace and understanding of life's significance. Love and awareness Mr. Huxley found to be essential virtues, and love and awareness in his own nature, with the poet's vision of beauty in hid places, have given him the power to throw a brilliant light on the thorny path men tread today. Theosophists who in the 1880's and 1890's were delivered from their agnosticism (the plunge into

meaninglessness was reserved for another generation) by the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom concerning science, religion, and philosophy, as restored to the West by H. P. Blavatsky, are grateful to Mr. Huxley for his scientific attack on "the great dire heresy of separateness," for stating the case so clearly, and for suggesting some practical remedies for that unbrotherliness which one of the Theosophical Teachers, Katherine Tingley, has called "the insanity of the age."

In his search for the noblest ends that men have sought and the noblest means they have used to achieve them, Mr. Huxley scaled walls of national and continental ignorance and prejudice and came upon ideals based upon belief in a spiritual reality underlying the phenomenal world, and in a Self motivated by such a conception, that stands in strong contrast to the self-defensive, salvation-demanding, acquisitive motives familiar to us and even sanctioned by religion in the West. He points out how, in substituting a Deity with human attributes for a Universal Principle, a One, at the source of all life, and in failing to require harmony between Christian ideals and the dealings between man and man and nation and nation — in really doing what was tantamount to putting religion on a business basis — the Christian world has made a costly, if instructive, detour from the road of understanding of man and his destiny. The cleverness which devised means to gain ends themselves gradually vitiated by the means used to gain them, the neglect of the major virtues which open vision to spiritual reality, led to very different results from those effected for instance, by the teachings and practice of Buddhism, with its injunctions as to non-attachment in action and employment of "the right means of livelihood." Ignorance or neglect of these very *practical* religious considerations brought the practical West to the present chapter of horrors with its "regression from charity," its "decline in men's regard for truth," — from monotheism and materialism to meaninglessness.

Reading this book one recalls Matthew Arnold's forebodings of one hundred years ago, about European civilization, and his wise and intuitive warnings, so far in advance of his century and so little heeded.

Aldous Huxley enjoys the double distinction of being Matthew Arnold's grand-nephew and Thomas Huxley's grandson, and in him we have a critic with the advantage of training in the science of our time. Will this help his voice to reach home — or will it also pass unheeded?

Mr. Huxley's analysis of present-day problems merits attention for many reasons. His willingness to include a whole range of human experience generally ignored or denied by scientists, his *unwillingness* to baulk any facts however menacing they may be to prideful content or wilful irresponsibility, his vast research into subjects very superficially treated by the writers available to the general public, have prepared him to find hitherto unsuspected vulnerable places in institutions and methods now used with all the assurance of brain-mind cleverness unilluminated by the light of spirit. *Ends And Means* is a penetrating expose of such methods and practices and of the delusions they are fastening on the minds of men. Mr. Huxley's survey of government, education, war; his presentation of the scientific view of the bearing of sexuality upon the lasting creative energy of a race; his observations about the effect of popular addictions regarded as diversions; his challenge to literary artists to supply adequate ideals of conduct and character; should serve to correct unethical views of these matters. For some supposedly innocent practices and amusements cause and perpetuate the very evils that appal us when they are multiplied into mass movements.

One of the most portentous passages in *Ends And Means* deals with the significance to our present civilization of the scientific findings concerning intra-specific competition, which is competition between members of the same species. Students of Theosophy are familiar with the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom as to man's evolution along physical, mental and emotional, and spiritual lines and also with the outline of his progress towards his ultimate high destiny on Earth given in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888. Theosophists accepted fifty years ago what scientists now assert: that the human species is the primitive stock and has had the power to resist the tendency to specialization to which certain other mammals succumbed; that the

human species kept to the broad, general line of advance, and has thus been able to "make the grade" as Theosophists put it, to unfold the capacity for supremacy over less advanced species, to control environment so that man has now nothing to fear from competition with other species. The human stock, the oldest, is most advanced, say Theosophists, because it has "been to school" the longest, and because man is, to quote Dr. G. de Purucker's *Theosophy and Modern Science* (1930),

a better and higher expression through evolution of the indwelling mental and psychic forces than the lower creatures are.

And in his *Esoteric Tradition* (1935) Dr. de Purucker indicates the still higher "grade" which humanity must voluntarily make:

The human race, however, will "evolve" by "involving"; paradoxical as it may sound: evolve forth spirit, and involve matter.

Now comes Mr. Huxley to point out that what man *has* to fear is intra-specific competition, that between man and man — *certainly the keynote and cornerstone of our whole system today*. Intra-specific competition, biologists state, is a line of evolution which is voluntary, based on no inner necessity. It is pursued by man either in ignorance or in defiance of, either of two inevitable consequences, one which bars the human species from unfolding further high capacities, and the other which actually leads to the extinction of the human race. Mr. Huxley notes also that

we are doing our best to adapt ourselves to modern conditions of intra-specific competition. . . . and to become dangerously specialized in killing our fellows.

A disastrous culmination of adherence to "the heresy of separateness" is thus a possibility which mankind must voluntarily avert by substituting co-operation for competition. As Mr. Huxley says:

Love and understanding are valuable even on the biological level. Hatred, unawareness, stupidity and all that makes for an increase of separateness are the qualities that, as a matter of historical fact, have led either to the extinction of a species, or to its becoming a living fossil, incapable of making further biological progress.

Will the motive of self-preservation drive man to the realization of the unity and the spiritual reality underlying our life on Earth? Will man's necessity lead him to find in these an ethical basis upon which to build by non-separative, non-violent, really human methods of advance? Mr. Huxley clearly indicates that this deeper realization depends upon *individual* effort to become Self-conscious, to achieve more complete physical, intellectual, and spiritual awareness, to bring the "more than self" into actual function in a life of non-attachment to the results of action. This Self transcends the sub-personal self which many lives demonstrate; transcends the merely personal self unlearned and unpractised in the inner inhibitions known to those more fully evolved in love and awareness; it is in touch with spiritual reality and can be a channel of illumination to the human mind and heart. Mr. Huxley, it will be seen, in his scientific survey of human history, includes the long-derided "path of the mystic"; and has reached the conviction that those who undergo the discipline of practising the major virtues and of identifying themselves with the "more than self," win direct knowledge of inner things hidden from others. And further: Large-scale social reform is not enough; "there must be suppression at the source, in the individual will." He says:

This super-personal level is reached only during the mystical experience. There is, however, a state of being, rarely attained, but described by the greatest mystical writers of East and West, in which it is possible for a man to have a kind of double consciousness — to be both a full-grown person, having a complete knowledge of, and control over, his sensations, emotions and thoughts, and also, and at the same time, a more than personal being, in continuous intuitive relation with the

impersonal principle of reality.

The study of the "individual" in *Ends And Means* is a ringing challenge to Self-discovery. Most heartening also, is the view that those who have become "individuals," strong and skilled in love and awareness, can, in association with the like-minded and single-hearted among their fellows, rise to a level of group-consciousness above that reached by each alone; can thus help to form a hierarchy in advance of the general body of the human race, and act as a pull on the less evolved, in the direction of the non-separative-ness and the non-attachment in action which are the only true basis of — which, in fact, constitute — the integrating principle the urgent need for which is felt and expressed in every department of human endeavor today. A saying of Jesus comes to mind: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Ends And Means is a book that can bear periodical review: it will be long before what it contains can be sifted into the race-mind; there is in it food for generations that must acquire the power to dissociate the truth from dogma-encrusted traditions. But while Mr. Huxley reiterates the truth that "a metaphysic of the universe," a comprehensive "inner" for the outer that is yet to be, a frame-work of human destiny adequate for "more than self" to manifest in, is required; while he states again and again that man's view of his relation to the universe decides his views of right and wrong; his book falls short of being what it has been called by some critics, namely, "a bible for moderns" in not presenting more fully the cosmic setting for man as a spiritual being. Does Mr. Huxley perhaps realize that H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* presents the needed cosmology in full, showing "the integrating principle" in operation? And may his next book perhaps comprehend the Ancient Science, the Ancient Wisdom of the Secret Doctrine, and treat it with the lucidity and charm that characterize his Inquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for their Realization in his *Ends And Means*?

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Ends And Means*, An Inquiry into the Nature of Ideals and into the Methods Employed for their Realization By Aldous Huxley. 382 pp. Harper & Brothers, Publishers. 1937 \$3.50. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

MAKING MEN — *Raymond Rugland*

The gentle slope of the alpine meadow is broken by the forms of six tents. From here we see the dusty trail appearing as a connecting ribbon. Below the tents the clear water of the narrow creek eddies among the long slim water reeds and gurgles playfully, spilling over well-worn rocks. Here is a community and an environment suggesting an absorbing adventure on the wings of thought.

Not without a purpose has man invaded the backwoods of the Idaho Bitter Root Mountains. The camp below us is one of the many camps engaged in the work of white pine blister rust control. The vast stands of the Idaho white pine are the life-blood of the state's timber industry which is directly correlated with the people's prosperity. The blister rust, a fungal disease, has offered a serious menace to this timber resource, but the United States Forest Service has found, and is applying, an effective means of control. The fungus is easily controlled because of its inability to spread from tree to tree. Wild currant and gooseberry, known collectively by the generic name of ribes, serve as mid-hosts. By destroying the mid-host the disease cycle is broken and the white pine is saved to that extent. Yet, even with an army of workers, complete eradication of this disease may require many years. Each summer camps are set up and college forestry students are given the opportunity to work with experienced woodsmen from the nearby communities, acquiring practical experience in the forest and earning the expenses of further education.

Towering cedars, stately spruces, and the princely white pines are the progeny of the encircling hills. The wind-mangled snags offer a weird contrast to the harmonious beauty of the rest. Here is a scene, representing an environment, different from anything I had known before. By coming to Idaho I exchanged the enlightening experience of college for the more sublime association with nature and her rugged offspring, those woodsmen, my fellow-workers.

Let us relax in the yielding duff of pine needles. We shall not become lonely in the depths of the forest. The forest is a community and its life is self-unfolding. To sit beside a trickle of water in the secret fastnesses of the tall trees is to be refreshed.

Were you surprised when the rock at your feet suddenly grew legs and splashed into the water to reappear as a frog on the other side? Can you read the story impressed in the soft earth of the creek banks? Had you noticed the clever camouflage of brush concealing the game trail to the creek? Search for the minute and you will find it. A cleverly concealed spider's web above is almost completed by its designer and builder. Your hand is disturbed by two curious ants who have mounted your fingers in challenge to your careless destruction. You completely blocked the entrance to a tiny ant hole by the mere shifting of your fingers. The forest is not a place of loneliness; it abounds in life and companionship.

In this mood, the inanimate is living. In the distance a deeply chiseled gorge reveals its own story. Red rock, gray rock, gold-bearing quartz, and slate, in layers and intermingling, are quiet reminders of a time when our Mother Earth was once a restless parent. Water, now splashing recklessly among scattered boulders, seems to be living its own adventure. Plunging down the slopes, the icy liquid is on its way to the lowlands. Here is refreshment for the water fern or perhaps a wandering elk. Lacking patience, it dashes to join other creeks far below; thence, to flow as one to the ocean far away.

The harmony of this quiet observation and meditation is soul-satisfying. This is nature's gift, a lovely thing to share.

Such reflexion is temporarily diverted by a disrespectful disturbance from the direction of the tents. In solemn procession appear the mules of the pack train. The call of the packer is answered by many shouts, and men appear as if by magic. The men break from the circle of their gleeful comrades as their names are called for mail, each hoping that his name will be called next. Let our thoughts reach out to this group. I

have come to know my fellow-workers well. The desire to know each one individually has brought an abiding reward. There is an inner beauty in all human nature. It is interesting to observe the inner beauty revealed by my tent-mates.

Have you noticed how large timbers are split with a steel wedge? The wedge is inserted in a crack, if one can be found, and splitting is made easier. Each divine quality of these men is a "crack" by which the "inner nature" can be laid bare by correct usage of the theosophic "wedge." Nature, not schools, has been the instructor of many of these men, yet, nature has been an excellent instructor. Truth, sincerity, perseverance, tolerance, courage, and sympathy are the qualities they have acquired from the forest and their hardy forebears. With matchless precision they can sharpen a saw, wield an ax, and build structures of hand-hewn timbers. No sacrifice is too great for the well-being of a friend. These men do not claim any "religion" but there is an intuitive reverence for natural law. In this melting-pot the college and the local boys have learned to respect each other; each type of personality has made an effort to understand the other. Practical woodcraft is exchanged for textbook information. In all respects it is an even exchange. The camp is blessed with fine human timber, yet the wedge has not been driven. These divine qualities are part of all of us; yet my comrades are not self-consciously aware of this. They have not learned to anchor their desires permanently to the dictates of their "finer selves." The boys, when together, permit their childish desires to gain the upper hand. Hard-earned paychecks are squandered foolishly. Evenings are idled away with card games and the reading of cheap magazines. Conversation is usually boring, without intelligent aim. Is being "tough" the acme of perfection? To a few, it appears to be since they have supposed that they must reflect the attitude of their associates. It is an attitude which travels in a circle, a circle without a solid foundation.

If they can be interested in learning to "know themselves," they can acquire this foundation. Several of my mates, not so easily satisfied by the camp pastimes, have expressed their interest in my Theosophical

correspondence work. These few with their intelligent questions are a pleasing contrast to the others with their insipid gossip. For these, real interest has followed curiosity. I am optimistic as I note a gradual change of attitude; the "tough personality" is being challenged by the "natural individual." This is the first acquaintance for these men with Reincarnation, Karma, and other such doctrines of Theosophy. Each inquirer is ready for the "wedge." I know that as my friends read the Theosophical pamphlets that I lend to them, they will absorb those great truths that harmonize with their preconceived intuitive knowledge. Within the canvas walls of this tiny city, I sense a gradual unfolding, a yearning, the kindling of an interest for the sacred truths and ethical obligations of life.

The Theosophical Forum

RECOLLECTIONS OF A THEOSOPHICAL SPEAKER: II — *Leoline Leonard Wright*

Vignettes from the World's Congress of Religions

The first peak of my experience in the Theosophical Movement in the closing years of last century was reached when we were privileged to entertain in our home several of the most distinguished delegates to the World's Congress of Religions held in Chicago in connexion with the World's Columbian Exposition in September of 1893. There were Mr. Judge himself with Mrs. Judge, Annie Besant, Gyanendra N.

Chakravarti, delegate from the T. S. in India, Mrs. Isabel Cooper-Oakley, a pupil of H. P. B. and member of her Inner Group, Claude Falls Wright, and Mrs. Richmond Green, so well known later as a helper of Katherine Tingley. It seems incredible as I look back, how we were able to fit all these people comfortably, as we did, into our moderate-sized flat. I said at the time that it seemed as if we, the family, almost literally hung ourselves at night on hooks in the closets in order to enjoy what was for me then, and is today no less in recollection, a memorable and extraordinary galaxy of Theosophical personalities.

For it was indeed a galaxy, the company not being by any means restricted to our immediate guests. Visitors poured into the apartment during the few days that the delegates were with us. Well known representatives of the Press, friendly inquirers, local Theosophists, and many other foreign delegates, such as Herbert Burrows the prominent labor leader and an F. T. S., and the wealthy Henrietta Muller of Maidstone, England, whom I recall because she was my first experience of the irrepressible British spinster and for her innumerable necklaces of iridescent shells and beads.

And the meals we served — at any and all hours! These people were mostly culinary bohemians and ready to eat anything served to them at any hour of the day or night. Often, after a crowded lunch-table had

just been cleared, another batch of visitors would arrive lunchless. My beautiful and hospitable mother, never at a loss even on our none-too-large financial resources, was always equal to the occasion. In half an hour or so she would have thrown together another delicious meal, occasionally somewhat of a "scratch" repast, but what did those brainy and impromptu Theosophists care! They ate, drank gallons of tea and coffee, and spread themselves in gay conversation until it was time to pile into the streetcars (Mr. Ford was only just then trying out his laughable invention, and carriages were practically nil among Theosophists) for another session of the Congress. And I can assure you that it was all magnificently worth while.

Fortunately we had an intelligent and good-natured American girl for maid. She became during those crowded days a confirmed Theosophist. To see her serving, open-mouthed and goggle-eyed with awe over the stir and excitement of those endless *conversazione-meals*, is one of my droll and pleasant memories of that stirring time. Oddly enough, her name was Loma and she married later and went to California to live.

After all these years the sessions of the Congress, where once or twice (as Secretary of the Chicago Branch) I sat on the platform with my mother, or mingled in the dense jam of the great audiences, make something of a kaleidoscope of my recollections. A crowded, shifting, swirling *melange* of remarkable oratory, Orientals in strange brilliant garb, bursts of enthusiastic applause, British lady-delegates in more or less bizarre adaptations of Occultism to platform costume, and a sense of something of mighty import taking place within and around us — this is the sort of picture that lingers with me today.

Two Orientals there present stand out in my recollections of the Congress. No one who saw him then could ever forget the noble and Christlike beauty of the noted Singhalese Buddhist and friend of H. P. B., Dharmapala. Tall and almost luminously ascetic, robed classically in spotless white, he was a lodestone to the throngs who swarmed into those meetings. Merely to look at him was a revelation of character and spiritual attainment.

Chakravarti was quite a startling contrast. A very tall, immensely fat man with tiny feet and a piping falsetto voice, he was quite definitely of this world. He was inordinately fond of thick beefsteaks and we found it difficult to realize that he was a Brahmin. Difficult that is until he began to pour forth in a flood of eloquence the marvelous expositions of Oriental philosophy which always transfixed his hearers both in public and private. He had a preference for our living-room which was hung in pale yellow silk, and here when at home he liked to sit cross-legged on a yellow silk divan and discuss the questions in Hindu and Theosophical philosophy with which we plied him. At such times we forgot for awhile our disillusion.

I have an amusing recollection of one of his very natural mistakes in the pronunciation of English, though he had a wonderful flow and classical perfection in the use of it. He talked a great deal about spiritual development, which he pronounced "spiritual devil-opment," with the accent on the devil. I have often thought since when wrestling with the cussedness of my own personality that the word "devil-opment" was not such a misnomer after all.

To all this inspiring incident Mr. Judge added the final touch when he came to my mother after it was all over and quietly insisted on her acceptance of a substantial contribution to the unexpectedly heavy expenses which she had so gladly met. For it was one of his beautiful characteristics, so often touchingly appreciated by Mrs. Judge in her talks with my mother, that he was always unselfishly sympathetic and considerate of others both in the small and in the great.

I like to remember how much like the rest of us he appeared to be. H. P. B. always seems to me to make an almost stunning impression of grandeur. Her daring journeys to fabulous regions of the earth, her towering intellect and profound books, the phenomena with which she dazzled her contemporaries, these remove her in a sense from the atmosphere of our more intimate affection. But our beloved Judge looked and acted a good deal like the rest of us. Anyone passing him on the street would hardly have given him a second glance — unless Mr.

Judge meant him to. For years he lived frugally over in Brooklyn and commuted to New York every day to earn a living for his family apparently just like any other struggling young lawyer. And his loss of a beloved child drew him very close to the human nature in us all.

Nevertheless he too could, when he chose to do so, dazzle and enthrall, as all who heard his several speeches at that Congress, and sometimes on his lecture-tours over the country, will never forget. I heard and saw him there, before that great, entranced audience, lifted out of his quiet unassuming daily self to a grandeur of inspiration and eloquence that put a climax on his own work and the work of Theosophy in that first remarkable Congress of the religions of the world.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FOUR SACRED SEASONS — *Alfred Spinks*

A LEGEND

Legend tells us that millions upon millions of years ago, before Man had assumed the form that he now has, when he still was clothed in a body of filmy, tenuous matter, more ethereal than material — and just before the time of his concretion, or descent into matter, there was held a great gathering of the Gods. They came from all over the Universe, for this was to be a very important occasion. Man was to be clothed in a physical garment. But — there was still a very important question to be decided upon. Yes, he was to be endowed with a body — a purely materially physical body it is true, with a head, a trunk, and limbs; and, a mind with which to think for himself, and through which he could function.

However, up to the time of this great gathering, no provision had been made as to where to place Man's Divinity. This was the reason for that great conclave, millions of years ago. *Man's Divinity. His Divine Self.*

Some wanted to place this Divinity in the center of the Earth, but after much deliberation, the wiser ones said: "No, Man with his new body, and his crafty brain will devise ways of digging down to the center of the earth to obtain it. Perhaps some will find it before others, before they are ready for it, before they know how to use it; and when they realize its power, they will undoubtedly abuse it, and use it for their own self-aggrandizement." Wise Ones! these Creators of Man and the Universe.

So that idea was abandoned.

Again they deliberated. This time someone else suggested placing it in the middle of the ocean. Man cannot live in the water, and it will be safe from abuse until such time as he is ready to rightfully claim and use it. Again, the wiser ones shook their heads: "No, Man will, through

this remarkable brain we have given him, develop ingenuity, and invent some kind of device to enable him to descend to the depths of the ocean, and find this Divinity."

Again the Gods foresaw trouble. "Sooner or later," they said, there would be wrangling among men as to whom this belonged to, and the temptation to use it for personal reasons might be too great for weak man, and he would be sure to abuse the powers he would gain therefrom. "No, we must find some other place."

Then the bright idea struck one of those assembled there, to place it high in the sky. "Man will not be endowed with wings and will not be able to reach up to it, until he is ready for it." Again the same objections arose. "Surely Man with this remarkable brain of his will soon find some means of flying into space, and in no time will he discover the powers of his Divinity within his grasp, and the temptation to misuse these powers will be too great. No, we must protect this physical MAN, whom we are fashioning this day."

After much discussion, and as many rejections as suggestions, one of the wiser ones, perhaps a little more experienced in these things than some of the others, rose up and said: "No, we will not place Man's Divinity in the center of the earth, nor will we place it in the middle of the ocean, nor will we leave it high in the skies. Instead, we will hide it *within Man himself; in the core of the core of his own inner self — his own Nature*. That will be the last place that it will occur to him to look for it, and when he finally does find it, it will be by only the most careful searching and digging, within his own inner nature. So carefully will it be hid, that it will only be by clearing away the dross and mire from his own Nature that it will be revealed to him; but once having found it, having overcome all obstacles surrounding it, in his successful search for it, he will find himself a part of it, at one with it and the Universe, of which he is a part; and in the finding of it, he will come to the realization that he himself is now a God, and he will long to reach down and help others in their search for it."

But still the Gods were not satisfied! A long silence befell this mighty

gathering, for they all knew the wisdom of the words just uttered. The great riddle had been created. But, it now remained for man to solve, and find.

So on that eventful morningtide of Man's descent into matter, the existence of this Divinity was made known unto him, and it was also made known unto him that in his search for it, he would go through many experiences, and come across many difficulties and problems, many of which would be difficult to surmount. It was also made known unto him that on periodic occasions he would be reminded through Nature of the existence of this Divinity, and that if he would help Nature, and work with her, she would make obeisance to him, and that thereby he would find a key; that from this key he would find that if Mankind would follow in Nature's footsteps, by all working together harmoniously as Nature does, the solution for finding his Divine Self would be thus unraveled. This key which would bind all mankind together he was told was "Love, and Brotherhood." With these two powerful weapons, and these weapons alone, would he succeed in his quest. But alas! if he heeded them not, great troubles would befall him, and many bitter experiences would he have to go through before he again found the key to his Divinity.

Now it was further decreed, that as regularly as the rise and fall of the Sun, Nature would periodically unite in one great effort to try and bring Man to a closer realization of, and in closer touch with, his higher, or diviner self. Then Nature would send forth titanic spiritual forces to awaken in man a realization of his own spiritual Divinity.

The Gods knew that the only way for man to find this Divinity was to call to his aid the Spiritual forces which flow constantly throughout the Earth; and they also knew that due to natural causes, there are times when these forces flow with greater power, or it might be said, are more readily accessible than at other times. These are when the Earth is at the four critical points of the year — Mid-winter, Spring, Mid-summer, and Autumn. The Gods knew this, and therefore strove to keep secret the processes whereby these forces could be used for the

finding of the Divinity within, save from those who had already discovered the secret, and applied it. They who had discovered it are those who stand ready to assist Man to find his Divine heritage in the beauty of Springtime; in the bloom of the Summer-time; in the mellowness of Autumn; and in the awe inspired by Winter; appealing to that part of Man which takes delight in things of beauty — for that part of Man is akin to the Universe, because derived from the Soul of Nature.

They were trying to appeal to that part of Man which sees beauty in a sunset, and is raised to a higher state of being; to that part of man which hears beautiful music, and is raised to a higher state of consciousness, those higher states of consciousness wherein he is closer to the higher part of his Nature, his higher Self. All these higher states of consciousness they placed within Man himself — his Divinity. But alas! they realized only too well that they could find expression in most cases only on very rare occasions. Why cannot man, they ask, try consciously to raise himself to this higher state all the time? To that Living Christ within him, born anew at every time when he surrenders to his Spiritual Self, to the God within? But alas! It was ordained that Man must help himself. He could be shown the way, but he must choose his own path.

And so the work of these mighty Gods goes on, until all, from the lowest to the highest, from the humblest to the greatest, have raised themselves, and become at one with this Divinity.

And today they have again given to Man Theosophy as the means for helping him find this Divinity; and the Theosophical Society has, among its other objects, to restore to Man, self-consciousness of the knowledge that he can grow, evolve, advance, and bring forth what is within the inmost core of the core of him — his DIVINE SELF.

And at these periods whereof we speak, Nature is re-born into another state of being, and Man being a part of Nature also partakes of that re-birth. A re-birth of his own choosing; a re-birth into higher states of spirituality.

FIDELITY, AND THE FUTURE OF THE T. S. — *G. de Purucker*

Born in the womb of cyclical time, the Theosophical Movement made its reappearance in our modern world, and at its birth there presided the kindly and benignant Destinies in full accordance with the spiritual and intellectual Powers behind the scenes. Yet, even at the moment of its birth or new-coming there were "malignancies," as the astrologers would say, whose influences were destined later to show themselves in the sometimes rather tempestuous career of this Child of Destiny — a child destined to succeed, as H. P. B. so finely pointed out, despite the worst mistakes of Theosophists themselves.

I for one have sometimes thought that it is just these "malignant" aspects which presided at its birth in our modern world in New York in 1875, which will in the long run, because of lessons we can learn from their workings, in a strangely paradoxical way prove to be the steady influence in the career of our beloved Theosophical work. It is from our mistakes that we learn and grow wiser, seeing how to avoid the errors of former days and to eschew the temptations and biases that former experiences have proved to be more or less disastrous when followed.

Breaking up into its different component or separate societies, the Theosophical Movement has nevertheless lived on, with its ups and downs, its successes and temporary failures, but always up to the present at least, holding in a general way faithfully to the Principles which characterize it and to the work which it is its fated destiny to perform. Each one of these different societies will succeed or fail, in my judgment, precisely in accordance with the degree of spirituality and intellectual penetration and selfless devotion which its members as individuals possess; or, lacking these, any one of them will drift off, as H. P. B. pointed out, on to one or more sandbanks of thought and there decay and become another sad wreck in the cyclic history of Theosophical endeavor.

Let us pause a moment and look at these sandbanks, that we may more clearly understand just what they are. They are rarely if ever, indeed never, in my judgment, sandbanks formed of the thought of other movements contrary to our own, but always of the mental prejudices, biases, and intellectual and emotional waywardnesses which it is human nature so utterly to cherish. In other words, these sandbanks are the products of ourselves, of Theosophists, of whatever society we may belong to. We are caught and ensnared by our own weaknesses and our infidelity to the principles I have mentioned above, in which principles lie our only safety, our sheet anchor, as well as our assurance of future success.

Any society, for instance, which becomes merely a bibliolatrous sect, worshiping books, however grand they may be because of the teachings contained in them, is almost certainly destined to fall into the next error of judgment, which is the worshiping of dead Leaders; and this is one of the pitfalls, one of the commonest sandbanks, of organisational thought which our own beloved T. S. must at all costs avoid.

On the other hand, there is the equally strong tendency, human nature being what it is — and this is a danger as real as the former — to lack loyalty and to be deficient in troth towards the greathearted Theosophical Leaders and other Theosophical worthies who have preceded us and who have given their all, their lives and their substance it may be, to hand over to us the sacred charge which we now carry.

I would therefore most earnestly urge upon all our own beloved F. T. S. as individuals to see to it that each one, as I wrote years ago, become a leader in Theosophical work and in Theosophical thinking; for it is obvious that with every F. T. S. a leader in the Theosophical Society we shall follow the safest course in securing that independence of the individual in spiritual and intellectual matters which, combined with utter fidelity to the teachings as given to us by the Masters and H. P. B. will keep the T. S. a strong, united Body of independently thinking and

active Workers, each one a leader in the Theosophical work that he prefers most, and doing this self-chosen work with indifference to results, with the impersonal love of the work itself uppermost in his heart. These ideals if successfully followed and attained will make of the T. S. what it was destined to be and what it should be; and to these objectives we have pledged our lives. With malice towards none, with good will towards all, with determination to follow our own chosen pathway of work, we shall march steadily and constantly forwards, while the T. S. will continue in the uninterrupted and steady growth in membership and in influence which have characterized it now for years in the past.

"Orthodoxy in Theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable"; we do not want it in the T. S., but we do want to continue in the pathway of utter fidelity to the teachings and traditions received by us; for this is our unbreakable bond of union, and "in Union lies Strength."

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNCONQUERED SUN — *Helen Savage*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

It is the 31st of December, and, here in California, 4 o'clock in the afternoon. We have been listening to a short-wave radio program of merry-making from the B. B. C. in London. Suddenly the laughter and singing become fainter as Big Ben strikes the hour — twelve deep-toned bells, and with the last stroke the voice of the announcer says: "We wish you the old, old wish: A Happy and Prosperous New Year!" As we shut off the radio we realize that already the New Year has dawned for half the world; already the peoples of half the world have put away thoughts of the old year, whatever it was, whatever it might have been, and are looking to the unseen days ahead with hearts full of hope.

It is actually a wave of hope that moves steadily around the earth and encircles the globe, as that magic moment when the old year is dead and the new is born touches each longitude on the spinning earth. There is cumulative power in this surging wave — there must be; for the least enlightened must for the first early hours of the New Year feel, as a deep-rooted intuition, that somehow, somewhere, there is a means of finding spiritual security: that beauty and joy and love belong to the human race; and that perhaps the first intimations of a new wisdom in regard to living are waiting for them in the unspoiled days ahead.

We need not consider here the fact that as the days of the new year unfold and prove to be but the children of those that have gone before, too often this hope, this intuition of the fundamental Tightness in the Universe, dies. We shall note only that it has lived, however briefly, and because of the quality of this hope we know that it is based upon a reality. It is a flash of light from a *real* world that seems to surround us but eludes us, and it fills us momentarily with conviction.

Is there a means by which we can step over the threshold and move familiarly in this realm where our inspired dreams become actualities? How can it be done? There is an ancient symbol which yet has never grown old, and within its manifold significances lies the answer to our question. It is the symbol of the Sun. This symbol contains within itself the secrets of man's unawakened powers. First, the Sun is a symbol of immortality. Even science conceives of its life as a virtual eternity, for we are told that in 150,000,000,000 years it will not lose even one per cent of its stupendous mass. And the Ancient Wisdom adds that the earth will know many deaths, but with each new imbodiment it will witness again the shining of the great luminary, which, during the long ages of the earth's obscuration, has known no night and no lessening of its vital power, for it is continuously replenished from the secret stores of its own inner being.

Further, in the Sun we see a symbol of generous giving of oneself. It is pouring forth its vital substance at the rate of 133,000,000,000,000 tons a day, according to science; and this, not merely in prodigal wastefulness through the vastness of the heavenly spaces, but in order to sustain and nourish all the planetary satellites of its kingdom, and for the maintenance of all beings that live therein. For the life of the planets is a part of the life of the Sun; it is one life pulsating through the entire system.

Then there is kingliness with its attendant attributes of benevolence and wisdom. And who, contemplating the orderly workings of cosmic law in the solar kingdom can deny that this mighty sovereign rules by divine right?

Beauty, also, is symbolized in the Sun. The pale radiance of the early dawn, the prismatic colors in the rainbow, the greens and golds and scarlets of trees and flowers, the flash and fire of jewels, the blue haze of far distant hills — all these are solar in origin. It is beauty stepped down to us who are incapable of beholding face to face the glorious veil of the Sun-God himself.

And here we have slipped unwittingly into the phraseology of the

ancient "pagan" world. But in spite of what the scholars may say, the ancients were not mere children adoring a bright disc in the sky. There is nothing infantile in the ancient Vedic prayer:

Unveil, O Thou that givest sustenance to the Universe,
From Whom all things proceed, to Whom all must return,
That face of the True Sun, now hidden by a vase of golden light,
That we may know the Truth, and do our whole duty
On our journey to Thy Sacred Seat.

The Egyptian Osiris, the Persian Ormazd, Surya and Mithras, Adonis and Apollo, the Scandinavian Baldur, Lugh of the Long Hand among the Celts, Tonac-atlcoatl (Serpent-Sun) god of the ancient Aztecs — under whatever name it may have appeared, it was a Divine Being whom the ancient peoples addressed. They recognised that the solar universe was governed over by a divine hierarch, the *spiritual* Sun, whose real being is veiled in a garment of light. He was to them the vortex of the divine-spiritual fire of the universe. Spiritually as well as physically he was the nourisher of all within his kingdom; and therefore, whatever might befall mankind, they knew that in their inner being they were secure as long as they allowed his beneficent rays to light them within.

For those who were students of the Mysteries, there was even a deeper significance to the Sun-symbol. They were taught that as the source of the solar universe was a divinity to whom all the lesser planetary gods made obeisance, so the little universe of man had its own central sun, a ray of the solar deity; and to this central sun the purely human in man, an unawakened god indeed, should be a faithful servitor.

Why a servitor? Because we owe our very life to it. The Mysteries taught that this human self of ours has been built up through many ages by the Evolver within, the Sun-god within. Step by step, from unconscious elemental substance, through intermediate degrees of semi-conscious life to the time when the form was ready to contain the light of mind, the delicate process had taken place. Like the golden drop of honey that the bee must gather from a thousand flower-

chalices, so the precious soul-fabric had been built from the essence of countless imbodiments. And with mind came power, and the ability to learn to serve with self-conscious understanding the sacrificing parent within, for it is by means of this soul of ours that our divinity may shine in the grosser worlds of substance. If the soul succeeds in becoming the perfect channel, pellucid to the shining of the solar light, it has the ineffable reward of itself being born in the spiritual world. Then the human being actually becomes a dweller among the gods even while he performs his appointed duties among men on earth. This rare phenomenon was announced mystically with the words: "The Sun has arisen! A Sun-God is born!"

It was also a fact of common knowledge among the ancients that the phenomena of the visible world are a symbol of and in fact delineate what is taking place behind the veil of outer things. Therefore to the enlightened among them, the cycle of the year, with its changing seasons, was a mystery-pageant enacted upon a cosmic stage, each episode of which depicted in symbolic form a spiritual verity. Thus when the time of the Winter Solstice came round, and the sun began again his journey to the northern hemisphere, they saw more in it than merely a time for rejoicing because the world would be filled with warmth again, and the fields would again be green and fruitful; they read the symbol aright. Their hymns were to the True Sun, the Sol Invictus, the Unconquered Sun, whose steadfast shining throughout the aeons is a guarantee of the spiritual security in the Universe. It was a sign to them that because of the focus of certain solar forces it was a fruitful time for communion with the sun-god within.

Even candidates in the Less Mysteries knew that at this season "the trained and fully prepared neophyte might enter at least temporarily into the Heart of the Universe, into the Light of the World, and bring back with him an unimpaired memory of what the greatest of Adventures had taught him." And he returned surrounded with a nimbus or aureole. He was "clothed with the Sun." (1)

It is this fact that is the basis of all the traditions of the ancient peoples

in which there was a correspondence between initiates, great kings and heroes, and the Sun. The Babylonian heroes, Nimrod and Gilgamesh both became sun-gods after undergoing a series of trials; Hercules, Theseus and Perseus of Greece were all born of a virgin and were sons of the Sun. Quetzalcoatl, god-hero of the Mexicans, was a sun-god. His name means "Feathered Serpent," a symbol with them, as among the Phoenicians and others, of certain solar attributes. Krishna is represented in the *Mahabarata* as born of Aditi, the bright Dawn-Goddess, who gives birth to the Sun. Mithras, a sun-god, was called "Giver of Glory" because he was supposed to bestow upon his successful suppliants in initiation the aureole or nimbus, as shown in many Mithraic monuments. In the Egyptian mysteries when the candidate for initiation awakens from his trance, it is said that the Hierophant-Initiators appeared "and the sacramental words were pronounced, ostensibly, to the Sun-Osiris, addressed in reality to the Spirit Sun within, enlightening the newly-born man." (2)

The Christian Savior also must come under this enumeration of Sun-gods if we are to consider authentic the records of early Christianity. H. P. Blavatsky says (*Lucifer*, Dec. 1887), after quoting from Ralston Skinner certain interpretations of the Christos-myth as typifying the Sun:

For, as the same author shows further, John, Jesus and even Apollonius of Tyana were but epitomizers of the history of the Sun "under differences of aspect or conditions." The explanation, he says, "is simple enough, when it is considered that the name *Jesus*, and Apollonius, or Apollo, are alike names of the *Sun in the heavens*, and, necessarily, the history of the one, as to his travels through *the signs*, with the personifications of his sufferings, triumphs and miracles, could be but the *history of the other*, where there is a wide-spread, common method of describing those travels by personification."

The early Christians themselves obviously accepted this interpretation of their Christ-Sun as passing through the Twelve Zodiacal Signs — a

symbol of the trials undergone by the initiate in the Mysteries — because there exist even today relics of this belief.

The representation of Jesus as the "Christ-Sun" and of his twelve disciples as representing the twelve Signs of the Zodiac, may be seen even today graven on the building-stones of not a few churches in central and southern European countries, . . . (3)

As the above brief illustrations show, in the minds of the ancients what happened in and to the Universe was inextricably interwoven with what happened to man. And rightly so. For man apart from the Universe were indeed a lost creature. It is the present-day erroneous method of looking at our relationship to the universe which is responsible for the evidences in so many quarters of the sense of aimlessness, of drifting in an alien world. Yet the hope that we feel at times like the New Year, the sense that the confusion and apparently irreconcilable conflicting elements in the life of the peoples of the world, are all but a bad dream — such intuitions as these show that at times even the least of men are illumined by a ray from the sun-god of their own being.

Were there no systematized philosophy of life to guide men in their search for the Real, had there never appeared among men a single Teacher to proclaim the age-old secret, we should still have with us as a daily and yearly testimony the glorious Sun in the heavens, symbol of the Unconquered Sun within ourselves. To meditate upon the significance of this symbol, as H. P. Blavatsky urges us to do, is to have at least an introduction to the study of the Real Self and our relation to it. First, like our day-star, it is immortal; for though the earthly man is dissipated at death, there is no death for the Inner Sun, and with the disappearance of its earth-child it takes up its duties in other spheres, only to return again at the appointed hour to bring to birth again in another earth life, its yet undeveloped child.

Further, like the Sun in the heavens, it is the generous giver of itself, for its life is our life, and by its power alone do and can we grow. And as for benevolence and wisdom: it is from this source that springs our

ability to know, to act wisely, to intuit the deepest aspects of the cosmic workings, to reach out in sympathy towards another fellow-being, to use discrimination, and restraint, and compassion.

And lastly, in the creation of all that is beautiful, we are stepping down its beauty, we are allowing the beauty of the solar light to shine on earth. This is even more true when we have made of ourself a work of beauty. Beauty of character is the supreme tribute to the god-sun within. To the degree that this is attained, we are living in the sunlit world of the spirit and have shown that our hope of the New Year was not a mere dream.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Esoteric Tradition*, 1,079. ([return to text](#))
2. *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 559. ([return to text](#))
3. *The Esoteric Tradition*, 1082. ([return to text](#))

[The Theosophical Forum](#)

FREE WILL — *H. T. Edge*

An absolutely free will would be action without a motive, or motion without a direction, which are inconceivable; so that free will means the power of choice within certain restrictions. And since voluntary action must have some motive, the exercise of free will means the predominance of one motive over another; as when we follow the call of duty in opposition to a desire. If man has the power of choice, what determines his choice, if it be not love, fear, desire for the good or the true, or some other incentive? As the essence of human nature is the Divine Monad, a spark of Cosmic Divinity, his Will or his Destiny (which are the same thing) must be to fulfil the laws of the Universal Harmony; and any other purpose is but a temporary aberration therefrom. Man's will is restricted by the natural laws of his environment, by other human wills, and ultimately by the eternal laws of the universe; he has greater freedom of movement than any of the beings below him in the scale of evolution. Man is free to do what is right, but not free to set up his personal will in persistent opposition to every other will.

The controversy as to free will and destiny, whereby fatalism is often inferred, is due to undefined terms, muddy logic, the attempt to apply analogies drawn from physical science to matters to which they are not applicable, and similar confusions. Any chain of cause and effect which is rigid within the limits of its own system, may yet be interfered with by some agency from outside the system; and this principle may be applied indefinitely, so that a being may achieve continually greater degrees of freedom. The plant is free relatively to the stone; the animal relatively to the plant; and man relatively to the animal; and man himself achieves various degrees of freedom according as he lifts himself to higher planes. Yet in no case are the laws of Nature contravened; in no case is man's will uninfluenced by motive.

If our confused logic should lead us to the conclusion that free will is an

illusion, we have but to try this as a working philosophy and see whither it leads us. It will be found to mean a surrender of ourselves to idleness and self-indulgence — that is, a subjection of our own will to other and hostile wills which are not subject to the same paralysis.

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Mahatmas and Chelas

A Mahatma is a personage, who, by special training and education, has evolved those higher faculties and has attained that spiritual knowledge, which ordinary humanity will acquire after passing through numberless series of re-incarnations during the process of cosmic evolution, provided, of course, that they do not go, in the meanwhile, against the purposes of Nature and thus bring on their own annihilation. This process of the self-evolution of the MAHATMA extends over a number of "incarnations," although, comparatively speaking, they are very few. Now, what is it that incarnates? The occult doctrine, so far as it is given out, shows that the first three principles die more or less with what is called the physical death. The fourth principle, together with the lower portions of the fifth, in which reside the animal propensities, has *Kama Loka* for its abode, where it suffers the throes of disintegration in proportion to the intensity of those lower desires; while it is the higher *Manas*, the *pure man*, which is associated with the sixth and the seventh principles, that goes into *Devachan* to enjoy there the effects of its good *Karma*, and then to be reincarnated as a higher individuality. Now, an entity, that is passing through the occult training in its successive births, gradually has less and less (in each incarnation) of that lower *Manas* until there arrives a time when its *whole Manas*, being of an entirely elevated character, is centred in the higher individuality, when such a person may be said to have become a MAHATMA. At the time of his physical death, all the lower four principles perish without any suffering, for these are, in fact, to him like a piece of wearing apparel which he puts on and off at will. The real MAHATMA is then not his physical body but that higher *Manas* which is inseparably linked to the Atma and its vehicle (the 6th principle) — a union effected by him in a comparatively very short period by passing through the process of self-evolution laid down by the Occult Philosophy. When,

therefore, people express a desire to "see a MAHATMA," they really do not seem to understand what it is they ask for. How can they, by their physical eyes, hope to see that which *transcends* that sight? Is it the body — a mere shell or mask — they crave or hunt after? And supposing they see the body of a MAHATMA, how can they know that behind that mask is concealed an exalted entity? By what standard are they to judge whether the *Maya* before them reflects the image of a true MAHATMA or not? And who will say that the physical is not a *Maya*? Higher things can be perceived only by a sense pertaining to those higher things. And whoever therefore wants to see the real MAHATMA, must use his *intellectual* sight. He must so elevate his *Manas* that its perception will be clear and all mists created by *Maya* must be dispelled. His vision will then be bright and he will see the MAHATMAS wherever he may be, for, being merged into the sixth and the seventh principles, which are ubiquitous and omnipresent, the MAHATMAS may be said to be everywhere. But, at the same time, just as we may be standing on a mountain top and have within our sight the whole plain, and yet not be cognisant of any particular tree or spot, because from that elevated position all below is nearly identical, and as our attention may be drawn to something which may be dissimilar to its surroundings — so in the same manner, although the whole of humanity is within the mental vision of the MAHATMAS, they cannot be expected to take special note of every human being, unless that being by his special acts draws their particular attention to himself. The highest interest of humanity, as a whole, is their special concern, for they have identified themselves with that Universal Soul which runs through Humanity, and he, who would draw their attention, must do so through that Soul which pervades everywhere. This perception of the *Manas* may be called "faith" which should not be confounded with *blind belief*. "Blind faith" is an expression sometimes used to indicate belief without perception or understanding; while the true perception of the *Manas* is that enlightened belief, which is the real meaning of the word "faith." This belief should at the same time be accompanied by *knowledge, i. e.,* experience, for "true *knowledge* brings with it faith." Faith is the perception of the *Manas* (the fifth principle), while

knowledge, in the true sense of the term, is the capacity of the Intellect, *i. e.*, it is spiritual perception. In short, the higher individuality of man, composed of his higher *Manas*, the sixth and the seventh principles, should work as a unity, and then only can it obtain "divine wisdom," for divine things can be sensed only by divine faculties. Thus the desire, which should prompt one to apply for *chelaship*, is to so far understand the operations of the Law of Cosmic Evolution as will enable him to work in harmonious accord with Nature, instead of going against its purposes through ignorance.— H. P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophist*, July, 1884, p. 233

The Theosophical Forum

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE MESSAGE OF H.P.BLAVATSKY — *H. Groot*

When you ask a scientific worker who never seriously studied Theosophy, what influence Theosophy had or still has upon the development and the ideas of modern science, he will tell you that science and Theosophy are incommensurable quantities which have nothing in common. And as a confirmation he will challenge you to find in scientific work even the slightest allusion to Theosophical statements or any reference at all to the Founder of the Theosophical Movement, H. P. Blavatsky.

When his attention is called to the fact that in the Theosophical literature many teachings are found treating of biological, anthropological, physical, chemical, and astronomical topics, showing a different outlook from the current scientific explanations, he will declare without flinching that these teachings are to be rejected if contrary to the conclusions of science. As a scientist — so he will say — he cannot and will not meddle with hazy, metaphysical, or mystical speculations. And so indeed it is. Exact science in general — not mentioning a small group of advanced workers — is very conservative. And in addition it is essentially anti-metaphysical. Since the seventeenth century its orientation has become more and more rationalistic and materialistic. It is not so long ago that it did not acknowledge a higher instance than the logical function of the brain and regarded it as its task to reduce the whole universe — life and consciousness included — to a fantastic dance of the atoms performed to the rhythm of the laws of chance. Hence it is obvious, that science — in advance and without further questioning — condemns to be unscientific everything and all that smacks of metaphysics or mysticism.

Meanwhile it is true and joyful that the last decennia indicate a change for the better in this exclusiveness. Facts, especially in the fields of biology and psychology, but also in those of physics, force the students

of those particular sciences to search for other ways of explanation. Parapsychological phenomena, experiments in embryology, general biological problems, all lead to the postulation of causes that are no longer materialistically and perhaps even no longer logically explainable. Technical terms like "entelechy," "Ganzheit," "totality," speculations about "the pattern of causes" like those of Prof. Jordan (Holland), the enormous and almost morbid interest which parapsychology can boast of — all these demonstrate the change in the scientific way of thinking. It simply comes to this: that many an earnest thinker tries to escape out of the grip of the merely positivistic and materialistic interpretations, endeavoring to penetrate to a more fundamental insight than can be given by a purely logical analysis of facts.

It is of importance to mention in this connexion that today there are some logicians who consider the possibility of the simultaneous existence of different logics excluding one another. This, if anything, is an indication of the setting free of human thought from one-sided rationalism, which too long has tyrannized the Western world.

However, these are but skirmishes of the pioneers. The main force of scientists becomes distrustful whenever the term "metaphysics" crops up. As yet they do not wish to abandon the rationalistic way of thinking.

But how about the pioneers? They should find a kindred spirit in the Theosophical views, one might say.

No. They, too, reject all relation with Theosophy, although some of them proclaim purely Theosophical ideas.

Now this remarkable attitude of mind can be partly explained by the difference existing between the scientific way of thinking and the manner in which Theosophy offers its truths. Notwithstanding the brave struggle they make against the supremacy of the logic of mental thinking, it certainly is not an easy task for scientific workers — trained as they are in their manner of thinking — to escape from this mental

tyranny. It is difficult for them without a rational basis to accept what is given out as indisputable certainties of an Old Wisdom; the more so as it is claimed that these certainties — some of which only a short time ago after strained effort have been discovered by science — were known already during endless centuries. Wounded in its self-love, science asks unbelievably and distrustfully: "Why on earth have these acquisitions never been published?" — and points out "how very vaguely most of these so-called discoveries are worded when compared to the mathematical phrasing in which scientific discoveries are announced."

But it forgets one important thing. There is a fundamental difference in outlook between science and the Mystery Schools of all ages. While science grants access to all its discoveries to everybody who cares to look into them — without the slightest guarantee that they shall not misuse them — the Mystery Schools, on the other hand, prohibit the acquisition of knowledge to those who are unworthy of it and accept their pupils only after a long time of serious probation, during which their moral and ethical qualities are tried — before initiating them into a knowledge which should be held sacred.

Theosophy teaches that the knowledge and control of the forces of Nature by investigators who thereby pursue selfish aims, must of necessity lead to the most formidable disasters and calamities for humanity; and common sense doubtlessly would agree with this judgment immediately, were it not led astray by its passions and desires. Consider for a moment our present-day world. What use did humanity make of the most excellent and inspiring discoveries of science? We see dreadnoughts, tanks, all sorts of gunnery, gas-masks, high-explosives, U-boats, aircraft armed with poison-bombs. Such is the bitter fruitage which man reaped from the tree of knowledge, after acquiring admittance to it through a misplaced faith of science in the good-will of its students.

Theosophy adds that there exists a still deeper knowledge relating to psychical and astral planes, which, were it likewise to become common

property, would lead to black magic, compared to which the present misuse of the technical power over matter would fade away as the sigh of a child amidst a clamorous and riotous mob.

Here lie great dangers. In some particular instances science has approached to the discovery of keys granting entrance to psychical phenomena — which up to this day had been left almost unexplored. Some utterly unscrupulous individuals already put themselves at the disposal of crime committed by means of psychical powers — and are paid for it. It is high time for mankind to make a halt. If the intellectual flower of humanity does not in time awaken to the responsibilities which are inseparable from the possession of knowledge; if science continues publishing unreservedly its methods and its results, the Western world will perish by its untimely acquired and therefore malefically employed power. And not for the first time in history either. Theosophy tells us of the civilization of Atlantis, which — being incomparably more advanced than ours — yet was wiped out by the same causes.

It most emphatically has been the task of the Founder of the Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky, to wake up our Western world — which in 1880 was fast asleep, dreaming its dream of rigid materialism — and to prepare it for the coming wave of psychism which threatens to conquer the present world. To this effect she was permitted to give out to the world some fragments of the Old Wisdom, which from time immemorial was shielded and guarded safely by the greatest of the human race, the Elder Brothers or Mahatmans. It was their aim to wake up and stimulate a spiritual current which on the one hand would vanquish materialism and on the other hand avert the threatening psychic invasion with its unavoidable dangers.

Just consider the almost insurmountable difficulties before which H. P. Blavatsky was placed. She had to combat the scientific opinions and notions of her time. She was compelled to point out the inadequacy of the materialistic outlook. It was her task to convince the world at large of the truth of the words of Hamlet:

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

In order to achieve this, she had to wrestle with the insufficiency of the scientific explanations; she had to point out how very vulnerable even the most accredited theories of science were. Moreover, in order to convince an unbelieving, distrustful public of the reality of the psychical and astral world, she had to produce those "occult phenomena" which created so much sensation and in the end brought to her the infamous accusation of fraud. Add to all this her battle with the dogmatism of the Church — then we get a faint glimpse of the trials she had to endure; of the avid slander which tried to blot her name out of the annals of science and philosophy.

Man, although a God in his inmost being, often and again is overmastered by the personal emotions of his lower self. Instead of being great in the greatness of his essential nature, he tries to seem great by blowing up his smallness until it surrounds him like an armor of personal ambitions, personal views, personal theories. Woe to him who crushes this armor. There is no appreciation for him; he will not even find justice. Wherever possible he is slandered and made the laughing-stock of those pygmy-brains who cannot recognise and understand real intellectual and spiritual grandeur. He may have prophesied the most wonderful future discoveries and scientific results — when his predictions have come true his name will not be mentioned. He is not to be talked about. And when his ideas have fertilized the soil for future discoveries, others will claim the credit without any protest being heard.

This was the case of H. P. Blavatsky. And this is the actual reason why her name is not to be found in scientific treatises, even if they affirm the truth of many of her statements. And these are the motives — often unknown to scientists themselves — that make even the pioneers shrink back from mentioning the name of H. P. Blavatsky and from supporting the Theosophical ideas.

Little by little, however, the atmosphere of suspicion clinging to the

name of H. P. Blavatsky is clearing up. Voices make themselves heard emphasizing that a great number of the modern ideas of science are laid down in her books, especially in *The Secret Doctrine*.

It is our intention to discuss in a series of short articles in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM some of the problems of modern science in so far as they are of interest to the Theosophical reader. By drawing a comparison between the trend of modern thinking with the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, we shall be able to establish the fact that science is steadily growing distinctly metaphysical and mystical and is approaching daily to those teachings of the Old Wisdom of which she still denies the existence.

But apart from this general trend, we shall also see a gulf between Modern Science and Old Wisdom, which can only be bridged when Science comes to a deeper understanding of her own profoundly important discovery: that force and matter — or on a higher plane, Spirit and Matter — are two complementary aspects of the One Substance, each material process being accompanied and amplified by a spiritual process.

The true meaning of the laws of Nature cannot be properly understood as long as a one-sided attention is given to naught but the material side of things. Only after curing itself from this cramped attention will Modern Science once more fully endorse the conclusions of the Old Wisdom.

The Theosophical Forum

ETHICS, THE LAW OF LAWS — ETERNAL HARMONY — *G. van Pelt*

The statement has been repeatedly made in our Theosophical literature that Ethics or Morals are not mere conventions, but that they rest on the eternal verities; are inherent in the life and fabric of the Universe. The laws governing them are as scientific as those governing mechanics, electricity, or any other of the so-called powers of nature, and the reaction against the violation of the principles of Ethics is as inevitable as the results of the application of a lighted match to gunpowder. There is absolutely no escaping this.

How could it be otherwise? The Universe in manifestation is a composite *unit*, for it has grown to be what it is, as a tree has grown to be such from a seedling. If it were not thus knit together, if there were not one purpose instead of divergent interests, one Law permeating its entire system, it would collapse or destroy itself. All that exists is part of it inevitably, and as it is an *organism*, every disturbance of its harmonious balance reacts upon the Whole as unerringly as a disorder in any part of the human body reacts upon the whole body, and then upon the mind controlling that body. For instance, suppose a poison has invaded some part of the human organism from an external source. *Instantly* the news is carried over the system, and its protectors, the white cells of the blood, rush to the scene of danger — automatically, we say in our ignorance, but really because the whole and the part are *one*. The disturbance is also flashed to the mind like lightning, because it is, in a larger sense, the same organism. Here the reaction can generally be met by initiating means to restore harmony, for surface disturbances are the least serious. But if this is not accomplished, the mind itself can become gravely involved. Reverse the process, however, and follow the confusion that must result from a discordant mind, working on a far more plastic, subtle plane than that of the body, on a plane where forces are inevitably more closely interwoven and intermingled. Picture the effect of hate, envy, jealousy,

the will to dominate for a selfish end, on other minds tuned to similar vibrations. Imagine the reaction which must follow there in addition to the certain effect, sooner or later, lower down, as currents normally and constantly flow from any mind to its body. It would be well for Theosophists to ponder over some statements in William Q. Judge's *Culture of Concentration*, as to the effect of anger on the ethereal body. But one does not have to be an occultist to know that hate breeds hate; that anger produces an atmosphere of storm; that selfishness eventually isolates itself — the poor mind, given over to this disease, finding itself at long last, hated, alone, and dreaded as a moral leper.

Fortunately, kind Nature generally forestalls these extremes by its reactions, so that gradually the unevolved human soul learns its lessons and obligations. To be sure, Theosophy teaches that these lessons may or may not follow in the same life which called them forth, but this in no wise interferes with the beneficent result. For whether the human part of a man remembers his sins or not, they have altered his character, which he has himself molded, and which he carries over from life to life, and it is that character which must bring upon itself sometime, somewhere, somehow, society's reaction.

The Theosophical Forum

GREAT SAGES AND THEIR PLACE IN THE COSMIC HIERARCHY — *Iverson L. Harris*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Huxley the English biologist, once wrote in substance that there must be beings as far above man as man is above the black beetle. Kenneth Morris thus completes the same idea:

Below us are innumerable grades of consciousness: the infinitesimal electron is a world: amoeba and protozoon stand at the summit of aeons of evolution. Above us, must there not be grades as infinite? Who shall say where humanity ends, and Godhood begins? It is a Jacob's ladder is evolution.

The Great Sages are intermediate links in the endless chain of evolution between men and spiritual beings (to us, incorporeal) of whom all sacred literatures tell, but of whom few of us can have definite knowledge save to the degree that we raise ourselves in aspiration and consciousness towards their lofty estate. The Great Sages are the Fine Flowers of human evolution.

The most important single fact in the history of humanity is the existence of Great Sages and Seers, Spiritual Teachers. They have been the fashioners of most that is noblest and finest in the civilizations of the past and of the present: Krishna, Gautama the Buddha, Lao-Tzu, Confucius, Pythagoras, Plato, Quetzalcohuatl, Jesus the Christ — not to mention others of less renown though perhaps not always of less spiritual stature.

Why should we imagine that lofty spiritual beings ceased incarnating on this earth thousands of years ago? Is it not obvious that what Nature has produced once, Nature can produce again? Discipleship did not end

with the Last Supper, nor did the Spiritual Guardians of Humanity forget their task when the Great Syrian's divine efforts failed to avert the plunge of Mediterranean civilization down the Gadarene Slope.

Because the Buddha and the Christ lived and taught, because Lao-Tzu and Confucius revealed and labored, because Pythagoras and Plato penetrated behind the veils of the outward seeming into the inner worlds and brought back to mankind the truths there learned by them through experience and initiation, have we not ample evidence that such as these Great Ones can live and teach and reveal again?

Should such come among us, how may one recognise them? "By their fruits shall ye know them": by the doctrine that they teach, by the life that they live, by the compassion that they show, by the light that they shed about them: by these *insignia majestatis* shall you know the real spiritual Sage and Seer. But you cannot recognise him unless there is something akin to his spirit stirring within your own soul. If one is puffed up with egoism, soured with jealousy, blinded with self-righteousness, or "cribb'd, cabin'd, and confined" within the iron shell of his brain-mind prejudices and preconceptions, one would not recognise a spiritual Teacher though he spoke with the tongue of an angel and came with a direct mandate from the Great White Lodge itself.

Who can set bounds to the possibilities of man? Once inhale the upper air, being admitted to behold the absolute natures of justice and truth, and we learn that man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the Creator in the finite. This view, which admonishes me where the sources of wisdom and power lie, and points to virtue as to

"The golden key

Which opes the palace of eternity,"

carries upon its face the highest certificate of truth, because it animates me to create my own world through the purification of my soul.

The Great Sages are the forerunners in the eternal pilgrimage which all of us are making. They blaze the trail for their less evolved fellow-men to travel. In this present stage of evolution here on earth man stands supreme over all the visible kingdoms of Nature below him. Yet the thinking man knows intuitively, as did Huxley, that there must be beings as far above man, as he is above the black beetle. It is these highly evolved men that the Esoteric Philosophy refers to as constituting the Great Brotherhood of the Masters, or the Mahatmans, or the Elder Brothers of the human race, who, in ages past, in former incarnations, occupied positions along the evolutionary pathway corresponding to our own at the present time; and we are destined in future ages, if we run the race successfully, in our turn to become Elder Brothers, Spiritual Leaders, Guides and Helpers, to those entities now trailing along behind us — in the human kingdom or the kingdoms below the human. This chain of beings evolving ever towards greater heights of spirituality, wisdom, and compassion, of whom the Great White Lodge is but one link, was called by the ancient Greeks the Golden Chain of Hermes, or the Hermetic Chain, and is generally known in Theosophical literature as the Hierarchy of Light or Compassion.

In chapter xxxi of *The Esoteric Tradition*, whose title as well as much of whose contents we have borrowed in this present study, Dr. de Purucker gives the following tentative scale of stages or degrees of evolutionary development: (a) First Elemental Kingdom, (b) Second Elemental Kingdom, (c) Third Elemental Kingdom. 1. The Mineral Kingdom. 2. The Vegetable Kingdom. 3. The Beast Kingdom. 4. The Human Kingdom. 5. The Great Ones. 6. Quasi-Divine Beings or Lower Gods. 7. Gods. He thus summarizes their most salient characteristics:

. . . most important of these salient characteristics is the growth or rather progressive unfolding of individuality or individualized beings, as we ascend rung after rung or degree after degree of the Ladder of Life, that is perceptible even here

on our Mother Earth. The relatively perfect unism of the rocks slowly passes into the growth of individuality which becomes faintly perceptible in the communism of the superior Kingdom of the plants; and as we leave the plant-world and follow the evolutionary picture as it ascends into the Beast-Kingdom, we notice the tendency towards individualization increasing steadily and even rapidly. When we reach the Human Kingdom which in the Esoteric Philosophy is considered a separate and entirely distinct kingdom from that of the Beasts, because of the typically human attributes which mark man so sharply off from the beasts, such as the moral sense, intellectual power, spirituality in its own ranges, etc., etc., we find that the rise towards individualization has resulted in the appearance of characteristically distinct Individuals, human beings, who, because of the spiritual and moral and intellectual faculties and attributes inherent in them, are at once distinct units in themselves, and yet equally distinct and self-conscious units in a social structure, which social structure is the more keenly and profoundly recognised in proportion as the human individual is the more developed. — pages 936-7

We can get some conception of this evolutionary Ladder of Life and the place of the great Spiritual Sages in the Cosmic Hierarchy, by comparing a diamond or a gold nugget with a Buddha or a Christ. The diamond may be said to be the most perfect imbodiment of a monad or evolving consciousness-life-center in the Mineral Kingdom. It is so perfect, not merely because it is beautiful and rare, but because it is closer to the high spiritual plane from which it started its great evolutionary journey in this period of manifestation as an unselfconscious god-spark. But beautiful and exquisite as the diamond is in its mineral imbodiment, how much more inspiring and potent for good is the "diamond-heart" of a Buddha, who has passed through all the lower kingdoms, become thoroughly individualized as a man, and then, by his own self-devised and self-induced efforts, merged his individual consciousness into the consciousness of the whole,

deliberately chosen the path of compassion, and acquired thereby relative omniscience! As the diamond is to the piece of charcoal, though both are composed of identically the same chemical carbon, so is the Great Sage to the average man, though both are builded of the same principles.

What is a Great Sage? The achievement of a wondrous alchemy, whereby fallen star-dust is ensouled with human consciousness and kindness, wrought into a clear crystal of genuine worth in the crucible of experience and service, cut and polished into noble symmetry by education and thought — -a precious jewel that shines by its own light in any setting. And then, through such jewels, as Emerson wrote:

From within, or from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all.

Now, these great Sages have not blazed a trail for us and traveled so far ahead of us merely for our wonderment and to dazzle us by their great light, so that, instead of following in their footsteps we crawl like worms in the dust and worship them personally, thereby crucifying them after they have passed out of our sphere even more than too often, alas, we do while they are in our midst in the flesh. Does this mean, then, that we must not love and reverence the true Spiritual Teacher, however much like ourselves he may be in his merely human parts? Carlyle answers:

No sadder proof can be given by a man of his own littleness than disbelief in great men. . . . A man embraces truth with his eyes open, and because his eyes are open; does he need to shut them before he can love his Teacher of truth? He alone can love with a right gratitude and genuine loyalty of soul, the Hero-Teacher who has delivered him out of darkness into light.

Surely the Great Sages intended that we should follow along in their footsteps, becoming in our turn ever more and more like them, in

degree sages and seers and guides to less progressed beings. This view, far from arousing egoism, is one of the most chastening thoughts that could possibly come to a sincere aspirant, because, using the Roentgen rays of utter candor in introspection, he realizes how far behind he lags in the evolutionary journey that is ahead of all of us.

How may we know whether we are following in the footsteps of the Great Ones or not? Here is a simple test: Do we fashion our lives by thought and will and aspiration, or do we merely react to the environing circumstances and people about us? Do we *think* or do we merely *react*? If the latter, we have gone only a little farther than the beasts. If, on the other hand, we consciously direct our evolution along the paths pointed out by the Great Spiritual Sages and Seers, we may be sure that we are drawing constantly nearer and nearer to them.

Let us turn now to some of the signposts that they have left behind them to aid us in climbing to the sunlit heights from which they are ever beckoning us to "Come up higher"! We shall find that these signposts are universal in their application to life. They are as true for the American as they are for the Japanese, as true for the German and the Italian as they are for the Spaniard and the Russian. Though placed along life's eternal highway in some instances thousands of years ago, they are as true in their guidance today as they were when first erected — as constant as the Pole-Star, and the traveler who sets his course by their compass is sure to reach his goal in time. They overleap all the frontiers of nationality, race, creed, or epoch. They make a direct appeal to the Son of the Sun that every human being is in his highest part. They are, as Mohammed said about Allah, "nearer to thee than thy jugular vein."

Victor Hugo, in one of his most brilliant flashes of intuitive perception of truth, wrote:

We are as unwilling to submit to a leadership or dynasty of thought as to any other. This, however, is to misunderstand and to be frightened by a word when the thought is reassuring. The very law which requires that mankind should have *no owners*,

requires that it should have *guides*. To be *enlightened* is the reverse of being *subjected*. The march forward requires a directing hand; to rebel against the pilot scarcely advances the ship; one does not see what would be gained by throwing Columbus overboard. The words "This way" never humiliated the man who was seeking the road. At night I accept the authority of the torches.

At some future time, we hope to point to signposts left by the Great Spiritual Sages and Seers of the past; but here let us observe some of those erected for the guidance of the present Theosophical Movement by the Masters M. and K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. (We do not waste time discussing who wrote these Letters. It is their intrinsic worth which makes them worthy of a Master — not what ostrich-like men without vision refuse to recognise in them that disproves their authoritative Message).

The *Chiefs* want a "Brotherhood of Humanity," a real Universal Fraternity started; an institution which would make itself known throughout the world and arrest the attention of the highest minds. — p. 24

Does anyone imagine that the prime purpose of the founding of the modern Theosophical Movement was to develop and exploit our psychic powers, or even to give us intellectual knowledge or a wide scope for metaphysical speculation, and that service to our fellow-men was only a secondary consideration of the Real Founders? Then behold the signposts left by them in their own words:

. . . we might justly maintain that it is . . . "the business of "magic" to humanise our natures with compassion" for the whole mankind as all living beings, . . . For it is "Humanity" which is the great Orphan, the only disinherited one upon this earth, my friend. And it is the duty of every man who is capable of an unselfish impulse, to do something, however little, for its welfare. — p. 32

The term "Universal Brotherhood" is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us, . . . It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind; and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*. — p. 17

Has anyone so fooled himself as to believe that he can travel far along the road of discipleship towards masterhood and yet cherish illwill in his heart towards a fellow human-being? The Master's finger points to the following signpost:

Beware then, of an uncharitable spirit, for it will rise up like a hungry wolf in your path, and devour the better qualities of your nature which have been springing into life. Broaden instead of narrowing your sympathies; try to identify yourself with your fellows, rather than to contract your circle of affinity. However caused . . . a crisis is here, and it is a time for the utmost practicable expansion of your moral power. It is not the moment for reproaches or vindictive recriminations, but for united struggle. — p. 367

Does anyone ask for the secret of happiness?

Happy the man who helps a helping hand. — p. 88

Do we believe that elaborate ritual and punctilious regard for form are the gates to masterhood?

. . . it is men not ceremony-masters, we seek, devotion, not mere observances. — p. 11

Do we perhaps feel that the ordinary duties of life and personal obligations already assumed disqualify us for treading the path of discipleship?

Does it seem to you a small thing that the past year has been spent only in your "family duties"? Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty? Believe me my "pupil," the man or woman

who is placed by Karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices and loving-kindnesses, will through these faithfully fulfilled rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all Humanity — what better path towards the enlightenment you are striving after than the daily conquest of Self, the perseverance in spite of want of visible psychic progress, the bearing of ill-fortune with that serene fortitude which turns it to spiritual advantage — since good and evil are not to be measured by events on the lower or physical plane. — p. 372

Or are we perhaps impatient to know deeper secrets of life's arcana than have yet been revealed to us?

"Many are the grains of incense destined for one and the same altar: one falls sooner into the fire, the other later — the difference of time is nothing," remarked a great man when he was refused admission and supreme initiation into the mysteries. — p. 17

Do we belong to the ranks of the Theosophical (?) defeatists or literalists or cyclic fatalists, who are sure that the Masters have deserted their own child, the Theosophical Movement, and will have nothing more to do with it in the West until the hands of the Cosmic Clock strike 1975?

Only those who have proved faithful to themselves and to Truth through everything, will be allowed further intercourse with us. — p. 264

Does not the above signpost contain the implicit promise, that those who *do* prove faithful to themselves and to Truth through everything, *shall* be allowed further intercourse with the Masters?

In *The Voice of the Silence*, H. P. Blavatsky tells us:

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

And the Sage of Concord, enlarging on the same theme, in his *Essay on*

Nature, wrote:

In private places, among sordid objects, an act of truth or heroism seems at once to draw to itself the sky as its temple, the sun as its candle. Nature stretcheth out her arms to embrace man, only let his thoughts be of equal greatness. Willingly does she follow his steps with the rose and the violet, and bend her lines of grandeur and grace to the decoration of her darling child. Only let his thoughts be of equal scope, and the frame will suit the picture. A virtuous man is in unison with her works, and makes the central figure of the visible sphere. Homer, Pindar, Socrates, Phocion, associate themselves fitly in our memory with the geography and climate of Greece. The visible heavens and earth sympathize with Jesus. And in common life, whosoever has seen a person of powerful character and happy genius, will have remarked how easily he took all things along with him — the persons, the opinions, and the day, and Nature became ancillary to a man.

That is the place of Great Sages in the Cosmic Hierarchy.

The Theosophical Forum

BRIGHTER SKIES — Charles E. Ball

Is not God's Universe a Symbol of the Godlike: is not Immensity a Temple; is not Man's History and Men's History, a perpetual Evangel? Listen, and for organ music thou wilt ever, as of old, hear the Morning Stars sing together. — *Sartor Resartus*

Nature has her own clock, and in these early hours of her New Year it is a spiritual tonic to hear the little birds singing and to have a robin actually sit at one's feet in a London park and sing to you, so much do the citizens now love them. And on inner planes the occultist *knows* that the glacial epoch of hatred, ignorance, and cruelty is thawing and the *defeatism* of mind, an outcome of the suppression of spiritual knowledge, will be conquered. The symbol of this new state of affairs might well be the smiling Bodhisattva of the East, defined in *The Theosophical Glossary* as: "he, whose essence (*sattva*) has become intelligence (*bodhi*)," rather than the Crucified Jesus, with its concomitant associations of defeat, sacrifice misunderstood, persecution, and death, in the Churchianity sense.

The present state of world affairs is no surprise to the occult student. To deal with such conditions the Theosophical Society was founded and its members have prepared themselves ever since to profit by the opportunities it brings. Man has spiritually starved during the period inaugurated by Constantine, because he cannot live by material *bread* alone, being essentially an immortal being using temporary bodies for experience. The time having now arrived for the cream of the race to step forward, led consciously by its Race Guardians, along the BROTHERHOOD PATH, it is inevitable that the world interests who profit only by the Un-brotherly Path marshal their forces to hinder the new spiritual regime. "Actions proceed from nature," and soldiers must fight, that's all.

The occult student takes care to exercise the greatest discretion in

judging men and their actions at this time, for he knows that the Law is no respecter of persons, and the great forces of evolution flowing through men's minds will cause them to act in strange ways — to the advantage of all, where the individual is sufficiently evolved, often tortuously where the individual is hampered by his defective make-up. It is the business of the student to observe rather what influences men allow *to use them* — we fight against principalities and powers rather than poor misguided *persons*.

Theosophists recommend with knowledge for all those "who have a leaning towards the metaphysical" that guide to everyday life *The Voice of the Silence*, and the beautiful and extraordinary *Bhagavad-Gita*, translated so delightfully as *The Song Celestial* by Sir Edwin Arnold. Led by our scientists, we have dutifully given up our ideas of *solid matter*; led by our Teachers, we give up with pleasure our ideas of a solid, cast-iron world, passing by way of Shakespeare's "baseless fabric of a vision" to the occultist's "Divine thought in the Divine Mind," and Patanjali's dictum that: "the world exists for the sake of the soul's experience."

A world spoiled by the false intellectualism of past centuries of second-hand knowledge and college-information is invited by the Theosophical Society to learn from the sacred books of the highly evolved men of an earlier day. To learn once more the true nature of the Universe and Man, for the chaos of modern life speaks undeniably of the ignorance of these times and of oncoming destruction.

All great eras are inaugurated by great men and the great enterprise represented by the occult movement is *always* guided by great Souls for none others are of it, or belong to it. Presently the world at large will come to realize that this world is no silly playground of human lusts and fancies but a stern learning department of one small part of the stupendous Cosmos.

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — *C. J. Ryan*

Auroras, Sunspots, and Cycles of Unrest

The dispute that so frequently crops up about the association of curious sound-effects with displays of the polar Auroras in high latitudes ought surely to be settled at last by the report in favor of a connexion between the sounds and the streamers published in *Nature*, (London) May 28, 1938, by the Norwegian Professor Carl Stormer, the world's leading authority on auroras. This occurs in his article on the great aurora of January 25-6, 1938. It was apparently the most magnificent display of the Northern Lights seen since the great one that occurred on September 29, 1870, during the Franco-German war when widespread uneasiness prevailed in Europe. The 1938 aurora was seen over nearly the whole of Europe and northern Africa, causing great alarm, and in America it was recorded as far south as Florida. It was even visible at Point Loma in Southern California, a most unusual event.

The 1870 aurora took place during the great sunspot maximum of that period, a maximum which has not been equaled since, until today, when we are passing through a similar one. The connexion between auroras and great solar activity is fully established, and certain scientists have suggested that the outpouring of greater solar radiation during sunspot maxima may be responsible for financial depressions and serious unrest in human affairs. This would be accentuated during periods like the present and that of 1870-1, when the number of the spots and their size, and the brilliancy of the auroras are greatly increased. Some years ago, Professor Tchijevsky, the well-known Russian student of sunspots, brought evidence before the American Meteorological Association that most of the sunspot cycles harmonized very closely with cycles of social agitation; and Dr. Harlan T. Stetson writes:

Actual measurements have shown that in general the ultra-violet light from the sun is much more potent during years when sunspots are most numerous . . . It is this stimulating effect of ultra-violet radiation which . . . when too strong, results in agitation . . . we would be led to believe that the affairs of mankind are much more intimately related to our cosmic surroundings than science has thus far been led to suppose.

On Tuesday, September 27, 1938, in the week of the great European crisis, an unusually brilliant aurora was studied by Professors H. Landsberg and H. Neuberg at Pennsylvania State College. Speaking of the biological effects of such auroras, the former said that in spite of the skepticism of many scientists "investigators have found that about one day after electric showers, such as Northern Lights, reach the earth the death rate from heart disease suddenly jumps and the number of suicides shows an increase."

Returning to the auroral sounds, which have been so often denied or explained away by critics who said they were scientifically impossible, Professor Stormer brings convincing evidence that during the magnificent display of the aurora as seen last January in Norway, curious sounds accompanied it, *rising and falling in accordance with the changes in brilliancy of the great colored streamers*. Two careful observers, some distance apart, recorded exactly the same effects.

The lower part of the aurora was about 60 miles from the earth's surface, but it reached to a height of 375 miles. At those great altitudes the air is so extremely rare that, as Professor Stormer points out, it seems impossible for the sounds to have come from that region; they must have been aroused in lower and denser parts of the atmosphere in some unknown manner.

There are still many mysteries in connexion with sound. However this may be, the special point of interest to Theosophical students is that strange sounds are frequently, if not always, associated with polar auroras. *The Secret Doctrine* offers information on the subject, presented, however, in terminology not altogether familiar to western

scientists, who little know what a wealth of hidden knowledge lies behind its oriental philosophico-scientific teachings. On page 204-5, vol. I, we read, in part:

"The Songs of Fohat and his Sons were *radiant* as the noon-tide Sun and the Moon combined;" . . . "The agitation of the *Fohatic* Forces at the two cold ends (North and South Poles) of the Earth which resulted in a multicolored radiance at night, have in them several of the properties of Akasa (Ether) *color* and sound as well." . . . "Sound is the characteristic of Akasa (Ether): it generates air, the property of which is Touch; which (by friction) becomes productive of Color and Light" . . . (*Vishnu Parana*)

Perhaps the above will be regarded as archaic nonsense, but it will be better comprehended, if the reader remembers the Aurora Borealis and Australis, both of which take place at the very centers of terrestrial electric and magnetic forces. The two poles are said to be the store-houses, the receptacles and liberators, at the same time, of Cosmic and terrestrial Vitality (Electricity); from the surplus of which the Earth, had it not been for these two natural "safety-valves," would have been rent to pieces long ago.

H. P. Blavatsky then speaks of the polar lights being accompanied by and productive of strong sounds. In occult science Sound takes a far more significant place in the economy of nature than modern physics has yet suspected, though recent discoveries in sound have opened some new and surprising possibilities. On page 621, volume I, of *The Secret Doctrine* we read that when Professor W. Crookes's discovery of "radiant matter" (the first adumbration of the electronic nature of matter) shall have been further elucidated "present speculations" will be revolutionized, and that this will be closely associated with research into the nature of the aurora! This remarkable statement was made in 1888, but it is only lately that science has tried to build theories about the nature of the aurora based upon modern atomic physics, and has

spoken of auroras being probably produced by streams of electrons or ions bombarding the earth from the sun and being attracted toward the poles!

Science and the Defence of H. P. Blavatsky

In the foregoing paragraphs reference is made to her knowledge of certain facts denied, doubted, or ignored by the learned in her day. She stood alone at first and offered scientific teachings about man and nature which had to fight their way through almost unsurmountable difficulties. Her statements were unwelcome to scientists, who in general agreed with the distinguished man who is reported by Professor William James, the psychologist, as saying: "All the fundamental conceptions of truth have been found by science, and the future has only the details of the picture to fill in"! Most of those "fundamentals" have been abandoned or greatly modified since 1895. The new schools of science, particularly the physicists, have caught up, as it were, with many of the fundamentals of the Ancient Wisdom brought to the West by H. P. Blavatsky and now speak of them as ascertained facts.

In this Department we propose to emphasize these teachings more strongly than hitherto, not only because of their interest but because students of Theosophy whose duty it is to meet malicious and ignorant charges against the Founder of the Theosophical Movement in the nineteenth century and her position as the Messenger of the Masters of Wisdom should become well acquainted with them. A bold attack is said to be the best method of defence, and the straightforward presentation of her scientific statements and their modern corroborations has the advantage of avoiding any personal recriminations which tend to arouse opposition or refusal to listen. Once reasonable people recognise that behind the sometimes uncouth personality of the "Sphinx of the nineteenth century," as she was called, was hidden a profoundly wise and well-informed individual, as can be proved by the records of her teachings, the ridiculous "charges" of charlatanry fall to the ground by their own weight.

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE MESSAGE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY — *H. Groot*

Scientific conceptions regarding the structure and nature of matter have greatly changed in the last fifty years.

Without giving difficult technical explanations, the following may be said on this point:

The investigations of a large series of scientists, beginning with the names of Crookes, Rontgen, Becquerel and the Curies, and continuing in our time with Thomson, Lorentz, Einstein, Bohr, Schrodinger, Heisenberg and many others, have established the conviction that the smallest building-stones of our material Universe are not the hard, simple, indivisible atoms which, in the early and middle part of the nineteenth century, classical physics and chemistry thought they were.

The experiments of Crookes in 1879, the discovery of X-rays in 1895 and of radio-activity in 1896, were the first steps on the road which in our days has led to the insight that there is a close relation between "ordinary" matter, electricity, electro-magnetic radiation, and phenomena such as light, heat, gamma rays and radio waves.

It is already a considerable time ago that the atoms belied their name "indivisibilities." In agreement with one of those statements of H. P. B.'s which found hardly any acceptance when she wrote them down, Science has discovered that they consist of particles that can scarcely be called "material" in the ordinary sense of the word, and are much better described as more or less permanent electro-magnetic centers of force. Under certain conditions they behave as *discrete particles*, but in different circumstances they resemble fields of vibration that are not sharply defined spatially.

In the light of these facts the contrast between "void space" and the space that is occupied by matter, which therefore is "full," becomes perfectly illusive.

Modern physics distinguishes between three types of "smallest particles." The *electron* has been known longest, and thus it is about this electron that we think we know most. However, it has been found that an electron is *not* a definite, small, sharply defined portion of space, to which accurate dimensions may be assigned. Each electron — each of these "smallest particles" — is in a true sense as large as the Universe, permeating it throughout! Strictly speaking, an electron cannot be said to be here or there at a given moment. It is here *and* there. At most we could say that it is somewhat more here than there — according to its nature as center of force. Let one who may think this a strange conception, just ask himself *where* an eddy is at a given moment. Figuratively speaking, an electron may be conceived of as an eddy, for an eddy also possesses a center of force — the middle point of the eddy — which, under certain conditions, may suggest, together with its immediate surroundings, a clearly recognisable "thing." And yet, if we try to establish the boundaries of this "thing," this eddy, we soon come to the conclusion that in reality the entire water surface in which this eddy is circling, forms part of it. The boundaries that made us assign "thing'-qualities to it, have proved illusory.

The foregoing is meant as an endeavor to understand the essentials of modern scientific conceptions, disregarding many as yet unsolved technical problems. What is of the utmost importance for us — and presumably also for the future development of scientific investigation — is that the fundamental difference between force and matter is disappearing. Force and matter — on a higher plane: spirit and pro-matter — may be seen as two aspects of the one Substance. This result, to which the most advanced investigators, working along the strictly scientific lines of experiment and reasoning, have attained — although science has as yet not accepted the above theories completely and without prejudice — is a confirmation of what is taught by the Ancient Wisdom, part of which was written down by H. P. B. in 1888.

This assertion seems so improbable that we feel obliged to confirm it by a few references.

Never before has the accusation that has so often been brought against the authoress of *The Secret Doctrine*, namely that Theosophy is no more than a random collection of loose fragments taken from the most different sources and united to form a system that is unacceptable either scientifically, religiously, or philosophically — never before has it been so effectively rebutted as by the accumulation of evidence for the correctness and the progressiveness of the opinions which are embodied in her works and which have often proved to be far ahead of their times. We read:

From the standpoint of Materialism, which reduces the beginnings of all to *matter*, the Universe consists, in its fullness, of atoms and vacuity. — I, 518

This idea is combated by opponents showing that the answer to the question: "What is an atom?" — given by the scientists of that era — led to contradictions even in their own eyes.

After quoting a few statements the authoress continues:

This is sufficient to show how absurd are the simultaneous admissions of the non-divisibility and elasticity of the atom. The atom *is* elastic, *ergo*, the atom is divisible, and must consist of particles, or of *sub*-atoms. And these *sub*-atoms? They are either non-elastic, and in such case they represent no dynamic importance, or, they are *elastic* also; and in that case, they, too, are subject to divisibility. And thus *ad infinitum*. But infinite divisibility of atoms resolves matter into simple centers of force, *i. e.*, precludes the possibility of conceiving matter as an *objective* substance. — I, 519

Thus we see how H. P. B. in fact indicates that a consistent pursuance of the basic hypotheses of the materialistic atom-theory *must* lead to the conception of the so-called "smallest particle" as a center of force, and to which modern physics has indeed approached for that matter. But — and to these ideas she adds what even modern science is still lacking today, and which is the only way of conquering materialism — she

proceeds:

Accept the explanations and teachings of Occultism, and, the blind inertia of physical Science being replaced by the *intelligent active* Powers behind the veil of matter, motion and inertia become subservient to those Powers. It is on the doctrine of the illusive nature of matter, and the infinite divisibility of the atom, that the whole science of Occultism is built. It opens limitless horizons to *substance* informed by the divine breath of its soul in every possible state of tenuity, states still undreamt of by the most spiritually disposed chemists and physicists. — I, 520

For, it is really very little progress that has been made when the material atoms volatilize into centers of force, so long as forces are still looked upon as blind activities of — *sit venia verbo* — immaterial matter, by which contradictory combination of words the scientific conceptions of the ether, or the "field of force" of modern physics, is perfectly illustrated.

No one will deny that a force (whether gravity, electricity, or any other force) which exists *outside* of the bodies and in open space — be it ether or vacuum — must be *something*, and not a pure *nothing*, when conceived apart from a mass? Otherwise it could hardly exist in one place with a *greater* and in another with reduced "intensity." — I, 511

What science urgently wants is a more spiritual conception of the idea "force." And it is this conception that we find in the Theosophical term "Fohat."

It is a perfect impossibility to give the full meaning of Fohat in such a short article as the present. However, in a few brief suggestions we hope to give the reader at least some insight into the difference which, in spite of all progress that has been made in the field of science, still exists between the ideas of the latter and those of the Ancient Wisdom.

Actually, Fohat is the Mediator, who "creates" the manifested Kosmos from the unmanifested chaos. (In this connexion the word "chaos"

should again be given its original meaning of the quietude and potentiality of a non-manifested state, which it has lost in the language of scientific cosmogony.) Fohat is the Demiurgic aspect of the Word or the Logos of the *Gospel according to St. John*, Tem-Ra of the Egyptian cosmogony, Eros, of the Greek Triad: Chaos, Gaia, and Eros. Fohat is also in one sense identical with Siva. Fohat is the creative principle, which sustains and animates all creation throughout the world's lifetime. Fohat is one, but the forms in which it manifests — the Sons of Fohat — are many.

The Ancient Wisdom tells us that there is an intelligent Law behind all natural phenomena, all evolution. Immanent in each atom of the Kosmos is Life, is Consciousness, guided and directed by Fohat. To use once more H. P. B.'s words:

Fohat, running along the seven principles of AKASA, acts upon manifested substance or the One Element, as declared above, and by differentiating it into various centers of Energy, sets in motion the law of Cosmic Evolution, which, in obedience to the Ideation of the Universal Mind, brings into existence all the various states of being in the manifested Solar System. — I, 110

The phenomena called electricity, light, sound, heat, attraction and magnetism in physics, are referred to by the Ancient Wisdom as Fohat and his Seven Sons.

The foregoing has, we hope, sufficiently elucidated the distinction between the "blind forces" of exact science and the spiritual principle, which the Occult Knowledge terms Fohat.

In spite of all that is drawing science and Theosophy together, their ways still diverge — science being the loser.

Rapprochement will not be possible until science has learned how to bring onto a higher plane *its own discovery that force and matter are mutually supplementing aspects.*

The true character of natural phenomena will not be understood so

long as science continues to investigate material phenomena only — and even fields of force are still material. To each material process corresponds a spiritual activity, the soul, so to speak, of this process.

Not until the "spasm of concentration" on the material world has been overcome, will it be possible for science and the Ancient Wisdom to go hand in hand; only then will H. P. B.'s Message to science be understood.

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Magnetism (1)

Descartes, although a worshipper of matter, was one of the most devoted teachers of the magnetic doctrine and, in a certain sense, even of Alchemy. His system of physics was very much like that of other great philosophers. Space, which is infinite, is composed, or rather filled up with a fluid and elementary matter, and is the sole fountain of all life, enclosing all the celestial globes and keeping them in perpetual motion. The magnet-streams of Mesmer are disguised by him into the Cartesian vortices, and both rest on the same principle. . . .

Such also was the doctrine of Tenzel Wirdig. It may even be found expounded in his works, with far more clearness, logic, and vigor, than in those of other mystical authors who have treated of the same subject. In his famous treatise, *The New Spiritual Medicine*, he demonstrates, on the ground of the later-accepted fact of universal attraction and repulsion — now called "gravitation" — that the whole nature is *ensouled*. Wirdig calls this magnetic sympathy "the accordance of spirits." Everything is drawn to its like, and converges with natures congenial to itself. Out of this sympathy and antipathy arises a constant movement in the whole world, and in all its parts, and uninterrupted communion between heaven and earth, which produces universal harmony. Everything lives and perishes through magnetism; one thing affects another one, even at great distances, and its "congenitals" may be influenced to health and disease by the power of this sympathy, at any time, and notwithstanding the intervening space. . . .

Kepler, the forerunner of Newton in many great truths, even in that of the universal "gravitation" which he very justly attributed to magnetic attraction, notwithstanding that he terms astrology "the insane daughter of a most wise mother" — Astronomy, shares the kabalistic

belief that the spirits of the stars are so many "intelligences." *He firmly believes that each planet is the seat of an intelligent principle, and that they are all inhabited by spiritual beings, who exercise influences over other beings inhabiting more gross and material spheres than their own and especially our earth.* As Kepler's *spiritual* starry influences were superseded by the vortices of the more materialistic Descartes, . . . so the vortices of the latter and his astronomical doctrines may some day give place to the *intelligent* magnetic streams which are directed by the *Anima Mundi*.

. . . In 1643, there appeared among the mystics a monk, Father Kircher, who taught a complete philosophy of universal magnetism. His numerous works embrace many of the subjects merely hinted at by Paracelsus. His definition of magnetism is very original, for he contradicted Gilbert's theory that the earth was a great magnet. He asserted that although every particle of matter, and even the intangible invisible "powers" were magnetic, they did not themselves constitute a magnet. *There is but one big MAGNET in the universe, and from it proceeds the magnetization of everything existing.* This magnet is of course what the kabalists term the central Spiritual Sun, or God. The sun, moon, planets, and stars he affirmed are highly magnetic; but they have become so by induction from living in the universal magnetic fluid — the Spiritual light. — I, 206-9

Evidently Proclus does not advocate here simply a superstition, but science; for notwithstanding that it is occult, and unknown to our scholars, who deny its possibilities, magic is still a science. It is firmly and solely based on the mysterious affinities existing between organic and inorganic bodies, the visible productions of the four kingdoms, and the invisible powers of the universe. That which science calls gravitation, the ancients and the mediaeval hermetists called magnetism, attraction, affinity. It is the universal law, which is understood by Plato and explained in *Timaeus* as the attraction of lesser bodies to larger ones, and of similar bodies to similar, the latter exhibiting a magnetic power rather than following the law of gravitation. The anti-Aristotelean formula that *gravity causes all bodies*

to descend with equal rapidity, without reference to their weight, the difference being caused by some other unknown agency, would seem to point a great deal more forcibly to magnetism than to gravitation, the former attracting rather in virtue of the substance than of the weight. A thorough familiarity with the occult faculties of everything existing in nature, visible as well as invisible; their mutual relations, attractions, and repulsions; the cause of these, traced to the spiritual principle which pervades and animates all things; the ability to furnish the best conditions for this principle to manifest itself, in other words a profound and exhaustive knowledge of natural law — this was and is the basis of magic. — I, 244

If the reader will recall what is said by the learned authors of the *Unseen Universe*, as to the positive effect produced upon the universal ether by so small a cause as the evolution of thought in a single human brain, how reasonable will it not appear that the terrific impulses imparted to this common medium by the sweep of the myriad blazing orbs that are rushing through "the interstellar depths," should affect us and the earth upon which we live, in a powerful degree? If astronomers cannot explain to us the occult law by which the drifting particles of cosmic matter aggregate into worlds, and then take their places in the majestic procession which is ceaselessly moving around some central point of attraction, how can any one assume to say what mystic influences may or may not be darting through space and affecting the issues of life upon this and other planets? Almost nothing is known of the laws of magnetism and the other imponderable agents; almost nothing of their effects upon our bodies and minds; even that which is known and moreover perfectly demonstrated, is attributed to chance, and curious *coincidences*. — I, 273-4

... The Pythagoreans held that neither the sun nor the stars were the *sources* of light and heat, and that the former was but an agent; but the modern schools teach the contrary.

The same may be said respecting the Newtonian law of gravitation. Following strictly the Pythagorean doctrine, Plato held that gravitation

was not merely a law of the magnetic attraction of lesser bodies to larger ones, but a magnetic repulsion of similars and attraction of dissimilars. "Things brought together," says he, "contrary to nature, are naturally at war, and repel one another." This cannot be taken to mean that repulsion occurs of necessity between bodies of dissimilar properties, but simply that when naturally antagonistic bodies are brought together they repel one another. The researches of Bart and Schweigger leave us in little or no doubt that the ancients were well acquainted with the mutual attractions of iron and the lodestone, as well as with the positive and negative properties of electricity, by whatever name they may have called it. The reciprocal magnetic relations of the planetary orbs, which are all magnets, was with them an accepted fact, and aerolites were not only called by them magnetic stones, but used in the Mysteries for purposes to which we now apply the magnet. When, therefore, Professor A. M. Mayer, of the Stevens Institute of Technology, in 1872, told the Yale Scientific Club that the earth is a great magnet, and that "on any sudden agitation of the sun's surface the magnetism of the earth receives a profound disturbance in its equilibrium, causing fitful tremors in the magnets of our observatories, and producing those grand outbursts of the polar lights, whose lambent flames dance in rhythm to the quivering needle," he only restated, in good English, what was taught in good Doric untold centuries before the first Christian philosopher saw the light. . . .

. . . By the radiant light of the universal magnetic ocean, whose electric waves bind the cosmos together, and in their ceaseless motion penetrate every atom and molecule of the boundless creation, the disciples of mesmerism — howbeit insufficient their various experiments — intuitively perceive the alpha and omega of the great mystery. Alone, the study of this agent, which is the divine breath, can unlock the secrets of psychology and physiology, of cosmical and spiritual phenomena. — I, 281-2

FOOTNOTE:

1. When H. P. Blavatsky published her first major work *Isis Unveiled* in

1879, it aroused almost universally unfavorable comment and criticism from the representatives of Science of that day; but during the intervening sixty years Science has rapidly approached the viewpoint of the Ancient Wisdom, and it will be interesting to note during the next decade to what extent they will be further willing to recognise certain occult keys she has given out, as instanced in this series. The above extracts are all taken from *Isis Unveiled*. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Reactions to Novels and Films

I understand that thoughts, emotions, and desires, as well as actions, have a corresponding reaction upon one, called the Law of Karman, or the Law of Cause and Effect. Do the thoughts, emotions, and desires, engendered in one by the sympathetic experiences one has with the characters in novels, movies, etc., have the same reactions upon one, adding an unnecessary factor for still more Karman? — E. R. P.

G. F. K. — It all depends upon how we react. Taking extreme cases as illustrative: If we enjoy revelling in an emotional orgy over scenes of crime, hatred, or unregulated emotionalism, then we are adding an unnecessary karmic burden to our store of evil tendencies, not primarily because the movie or novel gave us the chance to indulge these unhealthy conditions of hysteria, but precisely because we allow ourselves to be swept away by astral currents, and for the time strengthened in our undeveloped and low biases of character. Another person can witness the same scenes, but because of the lack of psychomagnetic attraction to these low currents of the Astral Light, he will be totally unaffected by them.

Conversely, if we experience the refining and uplifting feelings of pity, compassion, love and sympathy for the suffering of others, if we are raised interiorly through witnessing supreme sacrifice or selfless love, whether in fiction or on the screen, so that for the passing moments at least we actually undergo a benediction, then we are indeed adding to the store of harmonious reactions upon our psycho-mental apparatus, for by just such experiences do we help to strengthen the upward tendencies of the soul.

All of us affect each other for good or ill. No thing, no being, no circumstance, can ever be completely outside of ourselves, hence every

thought, emotion, and action, must leave its impress on the general thought-atmosphere with consequent effect upon us human beings in accordance with our individual evolution. Weak characters allow themselves to be swung to and fro without reservation, and become lost in the hopeless confusion of conflicting emotions. We do not need to be weak unsteady creatures, but can strive to direct our feelings, control our thought-processes, and thus learn to protect our own mental-emotional nature from the onslaughts of violent emotion of any kind. High aspiration put into practice through the intelligent application of knowledge is fool-proof insurance against the serpentine dominance of the Astral Light.

Mystery of the Growing Plant

What is there in the consciousness of a plant that gives it the impulse to grow towards the light and succeed, no matter what obstacles impede its progress? — *P. P.*

G. de P. — The consciousness of a plant, and indeed that of a beast, or even of a man, — and we may add, the almost latent consciousness of the mineral kingdom — is the spiritual, combining with the astral, fluid in the constitution of a plant, let us say, which possesses the undying instinct or hunger to move forwards and upwards; and it is this instinct for growth, or seeking the Light as we say, which is the pushing cause or the great urge behind all evolution to better and higher things.

Thus the plant-seed, if it happen to be caught in some awkward place where the light is difficult to obtain, will, as it grows, because of this monadic fluid urging it to grow and reach upwards towards what it wants, twist and turn around a stone or up through pavement, until it pushes its first tiny green blade to the light. It is really a most beautiful thing to think of and to watch, and has been a puzzle for science for two hundred years or more.

Theosophy supplies the answer, as I have tried to state it. I have seen a stone pavement, and also an asphalt pavement, actually broken or burst by some tender little plant, which by its monadic instinct knew

the light was on the other side of the stone or the asphalt above it; and instead of growing and growing and growing under the asphalt or stone until it came to the edge, and then poking its way into the light, it just pushes with its tender little blade- points between the particles of the pavement, and breaks them apart little by little, until finally, like the chick leaving the egg, pecking through the shell, it pokes its nose into the light of the world above. Is this clear? It is the monadic fluid, or vital-astral fluid — the same thing in its lower form — which is instinct with intuitive consciousness, which drives or impels the plant to do exactly the right thing to reach the light.

Man Not Descended from Ape

Theosophy teaches that man is *not* descended from the ape, as does the evolution theory of today, but on the contrary, that the ape is an offshoot of man and one of the higher animals in ages long past. Since there is a rigid bar to reproduction between different classes and kingdoms of Nature, how could this have been possible? — *W. G. S.*

L. G. P. — This question makes reference to a time, millions of years ago when early mankind united with the beasts and brought forth strange beings, half-man and half-beast, which originated the ape-stocks, and some of the higher monkeys. It is quite true that there is a natural bar prohibiting such an unnatural union, but this bar is the result of the march of evolution, and did not hold at that time. In all likelihood, man was not the only creature (for creature he was in those times) who reproduced out of kind, but it is quite tenable that many of the species today on the Earth are the descendants of what might have once been monstrosities, hybrids from the union of a certain few prevailing stocks that had previously ruled the world. Referring once more to the anthropoid apes, they form what is called the "delayed" race. Half-men, as they are, they will not have to wait until the dawn of a new planetary life-cycle before entering the human kingdom, as will all the other beasts, but they will have the opportunity of becoming humans at the beginning of one of the minor cycles of this Earth's

present life-cycle, and they will do so with a clean slate, as it were, with no load of past human karma. They will, of course be representative of man's most primitive state, for they will be mere children, evolutionally speaking.

Which T. S. Shall I Join?

"As to what you say about my joining the T. S., I see no reason at all why I should. . . . If I should join the T. S. because of what it has done and its sponsorship (in its inception by the Masters) THEN WHICH T. S. SHALL I JOIN?? Three in New York City! What about *them* going together and standing on the principle of fellowship and brotherhood that is supposed to be their one main tenet, instead of their scattering their forces as they do! There are two T. S. Lodges dividing the field at San Diego also. Yes, the question is a leading one: *which* shall one join to be loyal to some of the things given to the world in their period of unity? The Theosophists themselves have not been loyal to the principles on which their Society was founded — they have split on personality. If I were to choose one of the several rival societies to join, I would have to do so on the basis of personality, for they all claim to be teaching the same philosophy; and therefore the differences must be based on personality." (Capitals and italics by questioner.)

H. T. Edge — The inquirer is a little exacting and impatient. The proposal that he should affiliate with brother Theosophists was doubtless kindly meant, but no one is expected to join a society if he prefers a solitary path. As to the imperfections alleged against Theosophists and their organizations, their existence may be frankly, if regretfully, conceded; but it is a pity to view them in so exaggerated a light as to become blinded to the vast preponderance of good that is to be weighed against them. Those who founded the Theosophical Society were fully aware of the very imperfect materials with which they would have to work; but this did not deter them. The little troubles of which the inquirer complains are microscopic in comparison with

those which H. P. Blavatsky had to face; yet she did not flinch. Had she been content to criticize and stand aloof, where would be Theosophy today?

But, in spite of the many failings of men, she had faith enough in their better qualities; and the result has justified that faith. For when we consider what Theosophy has been able to achieve in the years that followed, we shall find sufficient proof that an effective majority of Theosophists have remained steadfast to their ideals and loyal to the lofty purposes of the work. All worth-while movements of reform must needs be subject to drawbacks arising from the imperfect state of the world and the people that it comprises; and we should rather congratulate ourselves that, in the case of Theosophy as compared with other movements, such drawbacks have been so few.

Those who expect to join such a movement must expect to meet conditions which will test their patience and devotion; but these are qualities which Theosophy inculcates, and it is by opportunity for their exercise that they are developed. It is, however, always open for those who prefer the more peaceful life of a student to keep themselves free. The first requisite for a Theosophist is devotion to his ideals; not a merely ideal devotion that entails no sacrifice, but a devotion that will drive him triumphantly through any obstacles and discouragements that may beset his path.

The truth is worth fighting for, and nothing really worth having is to be had for the mere asking. We must not expect that things will be made too easy for us. If the inquirer has met with two or more societies, and is in doubt which to join, that is not a good reason for joining none. It would be wiser for him to try them all and make up his mind which of them will best enable him to pursue his ideal. A man must do his own thinking, make his own decisions.

Instead of complaining that the lofty ideal of brotherhood is not so fully realized as it ought to be, let us do what we can to make it better realized; and if we cannot help, at least let us refrain from contributing our mite to the universal habit of magnifying the faults of our fellows

while overlooking their excellences.

"How Do You Know?"

How would you answer the question most frequently put to Theosophists who are trying to interest others: "How do you Theosophists know these things?" — *L. M. P.*

J. T. — Just as there are masters and adepts in the human arts and sciences, so are there masters and adepts in the science of life and the wisdom of the ages. These great men, who are known as Mahatmans, first inspired the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875 in order to awaken men once more to their glorious possibilities. They taught and trained the foundress, H. P. Blavatsky. These Flowers of the human race have developed their inner powers and hence have great vision and understanding of things as they are in their essences. Everything of any importance originates in the inner invisible worlds, therefore, if we are to understand the visible world we live in, which is merely the outer effect of inner causes, we must develop our higher powers and inner senses. This demands a higher training than is known to most men. Until we have undergone this spiritual disciplinary life which is necessary in order to attain wisdom at first hand we naturally look to the truths and teachings given to us by these Adepts of Wisdom. We know about these deeper truths of the universe because we have been taught by disciples of these Mahatmans.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME — *H. T. Edge*

Time is the destroyer of worlds; another time has for its nature to bring to pass. This latter, according as it is gross or minute, is called by two names — real and unreal. — *Surya Siddhanta*

Here at least we get one clue to the mystery — that the word "time" stands for a good many different things. If there is confusion in discussions, surely the fact that the same word is being used in two or more different senses, without the discussers suspecting it, is reason enough for the confusion. To begin with, we habitually speak of time (1) as an extended magnitude, a sort of line reaching forward and backward; (2) as a motion along this line, a velocity. So that we speak of traveling through time; but (as Mr. J. W. Dunne points out) it takes time to travel anywhere, even through time. It takes time to travel through time. So here are two sorts of time already. Mr. Dunne, having thus got two terms of a series, proceeds to make it an infinite series, so he gets an indefinite number of sorts of time. This is his "serial time"; and, not satisfied with that, he gives us a serial universe.

Philosophy has discussed whether time is subjective or objective — whether it is an element of consciousness, or whether it is something existing in the world outside of consciousness. When we see a divergence like that, it is a good indication that both views are wrong and both right. And we find in a quotation from James Ward, which is given in Webster's Dictionary, that time and space belong neither to the subject alone apart from the object, nor to the object alone apart from the subject, but to experience as the duality of both. They are neither subjective forms psychologically or logically prior to experience, nor are they objective realities independent of experience.

And in fact, subject and object are abstractions from reality; they constitute a distinction which we must make in order to define cognition. And that tyrant Time lies deeper in the mysteries of reality

than such distinctions, so that neither a subjective nor an objective view can compass the whole of him.

The chief difficulty experienced in discussing the nature of time is that our very thought-processes are bound up in it. To view a thing properly it is necessary to stand outside of it. The essence of time (the kind of time now being spoken of) is succession; and when we think or reason, we are conscious of a *succession* of thoughts. Hence we cannot eliminate time so as to be able to take a detached view of it. To see time, we must stand outside time. That is, we must stop thinking. ("Mind is the slayer of the real: let the disciple slay the slayer.") And so we argue about the nature of time, using in our arguments such words as "now" and "then," which presuppose the very thing we are trying to deduce. It is clear that, to understand the time of our ordinary consciousness, we must step into another plane of consciousness; and if succession is an indispensable attribute of time, then we must get into a state of consciousness where there is no succession, no procession of things following one after another, but what has to be clumsily called "an eternal present" or an "eternal now."

The Secret Doctrine contrasts Time with Duration (a substitute word borrowed for want of a better), in the same way as phenomenon is contrasted with noumenon, or manifest with unmanifest, finite with infinite. There is an epoch (there again we have to use a question-begging word), "when" eternal Duration gives place to Time, which is no longer infinite but is measured and divided. The common conception of eternity as simply a very great deal of time is of course wrong. Eternity or Duration, is not Time at all, whether much or little. What it is I do not know, and if I knew I could not tell. But if we cannot know what a thing is, it may help somewhat to know what it is not.

The present, as pointed out in *The Secret Doctrine*, if it is to be defined as the boundary between past and future, becomes thereby reduced to a mathematical point, and therefore has no dimension, and is in fact reduced to nothing at all. But what we *call* the present is a blurred impression of a number of such atomic present moments, bound

together by memory and anticipation, much as the successive images in a motion picture, each of which is too brief to make an impression on the eye, are blurred into a visible image.

As just stated, the present, when analysed, becomes reduced to a dimensionless point, and therefore no object or event can be said to have any existence at all in the present; it has no duration, *The Secret Doctrine* says. Hence we realize the necessity of regarding time (that is, lapse of time or duration in time) as a necessary component in the specification of an object or an event. And thus we arrive at the four-dimensional space-time continuum, so dear to fourth dimensionalists and relativists. Our existence in any moment is only a cross-section of our total existence; and to represent our totality we must take in every moment from the beginning to the end of our existence. And the analogy of a solid figure passing through a plane is adduced. But having passed from three dimensions to four, is there a reason for stopping there, or may we go further? This method of reasoning is probably one way of referring to the various "time-series" of Dunne, the various "planes" of consciousness or of matter, the various "principles" in man and the kosmos, etc.

In thinking of infinity and eternity, we are apt to imagine them as very large; which is a good deal like imagining God to be simply a very large man. But the characteristic of infinitude is that it is not bounded. We have instances familiar to experience. A circle is an infinite line, without boundaries or parts (if we place a point in it, we divide it into *one* part; before that, it had *no* parts). The surface of a sphere is a boundless plane, and it is an interesting effort of imagination to try to imagine oneself placed on the surface of a perfectly smooth and uniform sphere. One might wander indefinitely in any direction without ever coming anywhere and without being in the least aware that one was perhaps traversing the same ground over and over again. Yet this surface, though infinite in one sense, is not so in another; for it has a definite size as compared with other objects. Mathematicians would say that it is "doubly infinite," and the circle "singly infinite." And so, applying this to time, we get the idea of various orders of

infinitude; time may be singly infinite, doubly infinite, etc. This is quite an advance over the crude notion of jumping at once from finity to absolute infinity. Time, then, seems to have become a medley of relative velocities, and any difficulty we may have in defining it is due merely to impatience and the desire to arrive at consummate knowledge without passing through the requisite grades.

As our conceptions of time enlarge, as a result of study and contemplation, we may escape some of the horrors and lamentations which ordinarily attend the subject. We may banish the Nevermore and the Irrevocable and that time which, "like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away." For, as has been shown, all things have an eternal existence independently of their brief flitting across the focus of what we call the present; so that the past may be said to live in more than a mere figurative sense. Again, we view time as cyclic, so that the ever-rolling stream will some day bear all its sons back again. The able novelist, after portraying the events of a life and the evolution of a character, is perforce obliged to ring down the curtain, as the hand of death renders everything abortive and turns the whole drama into a useless farce. How different is the Theosophical view of a life and a character!

In this impatient age we are too apt to forget how mighty an agent, how useful a tool, is mere time. We want something that will clean in five minutes or five seconds; when pure water will do a better job if only given time. And if I can move one end of a piano one inch, I can move the whole piano any required distance: it is only a question of time. Get time on your side!

IS AETHER SPIRIT OR MATTER? (1) — *G. de Purucker*

15th June, 1938

Prof. C. J. Ryan Lomaland

Dear Charles:

Thanks for your note. I sent you the clipping not from any occult reason, but simply I thought you would be interested in seeing what the newspapers had to say. I think this much can safely be said at any time from these newspaper reports, which just as you so truly say are horribly confusing, because the poor newspaper reporters probably have but the vaguest rudiments of scientific training, and often are writing about things they do not understand.

I think this can be safely said, to wit: that whatever the new discovery about Ether may be, or be supposed to be:

a) some discovery has been made which proves that an Ether of some kind exists, probably not the old scientific idea of Cosmic Ether, about which I will have something to say in an instant; and b) that the tendency of science today is away from Einstein's former idea that an Ether according to the general theory of relativity really is not needed. In this Einstein is quite wrong. It arose from the fact that the mathematical chopper gives you back just what you put into it. It is correct reasoning upon premisses laid down, and if these premisses are wrong or partly wrong, the deductions will be logical and correct in logic, but wrong or partly wrong in fact. Mathematics never proves anything if the premisses are imaginary or uncertain.

Now here is the main point of all I want to say to you or any other Theosophist. When these scientists talk about an Ether, our Theosophists constantly confuse our theosophical idea of a Cosmic Ether, or many Cosmic Ethers, with what the scientists mean. And the scientific view of an Ether has ranged all the way from a kind of gas

very dense and elastic perhaps, but still physical matter in a gaseous form, to something slightly more subtil but still quite physical stuff; and naturally the scientists wonder why such a Cosmic Ether if it exists does not affect the movement of planets, suns, comets, and other bodies, through it. But this is not our idea of a Cosmic Ether. Our idea of a Cosmic Ether is physical prakriti or matter in its first or second or even third or possibly fourth states, counting downwards from the highest. When we Theosophists speak of an Ether we never mean physical stuff, however tenuous, and emphatically never mean a gas, such as the laboratory understands the term. Therefore scientists have been quite right in refusing to admit the existence of a mere Ether of gas, however tenuous. But they have been quite wrong in refusing to admit an immaterial Ether, immaterial here meaning something which is not matter in the physical sense, but nevertheless distinctly substance in our theosophical and philosophical sense; and yet not spirit, for spirit is infinitely more tenuous and etherealized so to speak.

Einstein's relativity is a theory and a helpful one. His fundamental idea of the relativity of nature in its various functionings and departments is sound archaic philosophy; but some of his premisses in his mathematical reasonings are utterly unacceptable to us, and therefore, as I have said, we cannot accept most of his mathematical reasonings, not because his mathematics are wrong, but because his premisses are only partly right or wrong. I hope this is clear. Nevertheless, when I speak of our theosophical Cosmic Ether, I do not mean a mere unsubstantiality, something which has no substance, which is not stuff. I mean just the contrary. It is at once, physically speaking, almost spiritually tenuous, and yet it is a prakriti on our own Cosmic Plane, but in physical prakriti's highest forms there, and it is certainly far too gross to be called spirit. Therefore it is matter in our theosophical sense. But it is not matter as the scientists understand it. For when they say matter, they mean things which are solid, liquid, or gaseous, in other words what we call the grossest, even sub-astral matter of physical space. And the Ether of space, or the Ethers of space, are far more tenuous and ethereal than such scientific conception as they have

had it. The Cosmic Ether does not affect the motion of bodies through it, because the bodies are grossly physical and the Cosmic Ether, while matter of the lowest prakritic cosmic plane, is immensely more tenuous than physical matter.

You might as well say that heat or light will prevent the bodies moving through cosmic space, because of pressure. It is true that they will, but in an exceedingly slight degree, practically too slight to be observed. Already scientists know about the pressure of sunlight, for instance.

I hope all this is clear. It ought to have all been understood when H. P. B. wrote her *The Secret Doctrine*. But during all these years our theosophical scientists have confused our idea of Cosmic Ethers with the very gross scientific ideas of Cosmic Ethers.

Yours in haste,

(Sgd.) G. de P.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The above letter written to THE FORUM's scientific commentator was sent by the latter to the Editors as containing points of interest not only for scientific minds but for readers in general. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

AT HOME IN THE UNIVERSE (1) — *Linda Barlow*

When the great Prince Siddhartha of India had attained to Buddhahood, and returned to the cities to teach the common people, he used to begin by pointing out the universal overwhelming fact of Sorrow. This obvious truth arrested their attention, so that they listened eagerly while the Master went on to tell them the cause of their pain, and its cure.

To-day, 2500 years after the passing of the gentle Prince, we still live familiarly with sorrow, brought upon ourselves by what he called desire, and what our modern teachers sometimes call "the heresy of separateness"; for to desire anything implies a real or imagined separateness from that thing; and every evil in the universe may be traced to man's continual and pitiful conviction that he is separate from that universe, and that all its forces are arrayed against him. And just as fear, in an animal, causes physical contraction, an automatic preparation for fight or flight, so the fear, in man, of a supposedly hostile universe, causes a spiritual contraction, a density, which makes it almost impossible for his own inner light to shine through.

So is formed a vicious circle, of fear prolonging ignorance, and ignorance causing fear; ignorance of that law which is the basis of Theosophy and the supreme fact of the universe — the Law of Unity. Life is one. And since we are taught that there is no such thing as a particle of dead matter, and that everything that exists, whether seen or unseen, is a vibrating mass of myriads of lives, it follows that man, being one with a living universe, is about as reasonable in his fear as a drop of ocean spray would be if it feared to fall back into the sea.

"What a piece of work is a man! . . . in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!"

Shakespeare might have added that man is of all beings the completest

representative of the All. He is, in fact, the universe in miniature. Standing at the middle point of the path of evolution, he may claim kinship with every phase of existence, material or ethereal, each having its counterpart in his own sevenfold constitution. The beasts below him lack the thinking principle. The gods above him have no further need for the physical body. But man is god, thinker and animal in one — a spark of the Divine, enwrapped in layer upon layer of consciousness epitomising in successive stages the entire plan of the universe.

In the Stanzas of Dzyan we are told how the spirits of the sun, moon and earth combined to produce the form of man; how every kingdom of nature contributed its share; and how, at length, when the vehicle was ready, the gods themselves leaned down and added of their own immortal essence — the crowning endowment of Mind.

How indissolubly linked is this son of the gods with the universe that produced him, may be seen for example in the action of the cyclic law, to which he is subject in common with every other form of life.

The circling of the planets, the procession of the seasons, the rise and fall of civilizations, the tides of the sea, express a rhythm which is equally apparent in the life of man, in his breathing, in his sleeping and waking, his working and resting, his successive incarnations upon earth.

And if his composite and complicated nature makes of him a sort of battleground, and causes trials and difficulties, it should also, when even a little understood, give him joy as a vessel of eternal truth, dignity as an incarnate god, serenity as a child-soul of the great soul of the universe, and compassion as an elder brother of less evolved men and of beasts.

The beginning of an understanding of himself will lead to the realization of the folly of fear; to the expansion of mind and spirit until they embrace the whole of humanity, so that he will regard personal misfortune no longer as something hostile, but as an opportunity to lift

at least a small part of the vast accumulation of Karmic debt forever from the shoulders of men. That which the world calls good fortune, he will see as something neither to be courted nor shunned, but to be shared and passed on to his brothers; even as their kindness to him, their help in trouble, is a thing not necessarily to be repaid to the giver, but to be passed on again to those who need it. He will feel an added tenderness for friends who for untold ages have trod the pilgrim's path beside him; and a new and kindlier interest in enemies, whom he himself has caused as it were to haunt him, but whose innermost light is identical with his own.

He will look upon his present fleeting personality as a guise, a mask, a medium for earthly experience; upon the span of life as one short chapter in a breathlessly exciting tale; upon the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth with its mountains and molehills, its birds and its beasts and its rivers and every speck of dust and blade of grass upon it, as his own, his companions, his greater and lesser brothers, his fellow-pilgrims, all subject to the one vast and ultimately friendly Law, all striving, toiling, gradually evolving towards the perfect beauty, the perfect harmony, the perfect peace. He will cherish this perfection, which, though seen dimly and afar, yet abides eternally and mysteriously at the heart of him; and he will know himself to be forever unassailable and indestructible, depending only for his guidance on that inner divinity which the followers of the gentle Siddhartha proclaim to this day:

"I take my refuge in the Buddha."

"I unify myself with the god within me."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwm Theosoffaid*, May, 1938. ([return to text](#))

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS — *William Q. Judge*

[Under the above title Mr. Judge in 1887-8 conducted a column in his magazine *The Path* where he answered questions from Theosophists and inquirers under the penname Zadok. Beginning with this issue of the FORUM these questions and answers are being reprinted in response to many requests. Eds.]

Is celibacy necessary to the highest spiritual life and attainment. Is this your idea of true occultism?

By no single way is the highest spiritual life attained. The highest Adept and the true occult student, have at some time been wedded to woman. The highest attainment is never reached until a man has passed through this experience. Under certain conditions and at a certain time celibacy is a great aid, but if the student is wedded then it is his *duty* to continue in that condition, and instead of proving a barrier it will be an assistance to his progress if he rightly comprehends its significance. All the lessons which are taught the true occult student are given in daily life and through nature's laws. The celibate loses some of these lessons — lessons which he must inevitably learn — because he violates a great law of nature. The result of celibacy is that the student works by intellect alone. It is necessary for true occult work that the heart be used also. One of the greater of the "mysteries" can never be learned by the celibate, for he never stands hand in hand with God a controller of a creative force.

Is a purely vegetable diet indispensable to a high and serene spiritual life?

One might eat grass, grain and turnips, a million years, but that *of itself* would not produce a high or serene spiritual life. All these things are aids, not necessities.

If the physical condition is such that animal food can be dispensed

with, or without disturbing other people and neglecting the labor given, then it is wise to do away with it. The physical is thereby purified, making it less gross, material and animal like. But "one man's meat is another man's poison." Use that which seems the wisest to you. "It is not that which goeth into the mouth but that which cometh out that defileth a man." The right thought, the proper motive, the true Will have more to do with true Occultism than any exterior acts and practices.

Am I the result of a series of existences or a series of coexistences?

That which is known as you is the result of one continuous existence of an entity. Your present body and your soul (or the personality) are the results of a series of existences. Your Karma is a result of coexistence. The individuality, or spirit, is the cause of the soul and personality, or what is called "you." You are the manifestation of an entity and are the result of many appearances of that entity upon this stage of action in various personalities.

May one journey along the Path without being able to see into the Astral Light, or without recognizing anything extraordinary?

One may journey an entire life time on "The Path" and not see into the Astral Light *consciously*. All men see into it, for all who dream are looking there, the body being asleep and not receptive.

One may journey a long distance and not see, for all do not work in the same manner. Some may hear "ages before they see," or may feel a long time before either seeing or hearing. The tool most efficient at a certain period is the one used.

We may journey the entire way without recognizing anything extraordinary or encountering phenomena. The most extraordinary things are found in the most ordinary, and are overlooked because of their seeming familiarity. When the understanding is directed to the natural, one finds the supra-natural or supra-human things.

All questions are vital so long as they remain unsolved but all will be

answered. It requires patience in ourselves, for many times the answers do not come until years after the question has been propounded. If I can be of further use to you please consider me at your service.

What is the true Will?

Is it a faculty of the soul?

How is it one with the Divine Will and how may we make our will at one with the Divine? Is it something which now we know not, or may we perceive its germ in our own Will, or is it an instinctive movement of the soul?

The will as known to man is that force which he exerts for the accomplishment of his aims — he uses it blindly and ignorantly — and self is always the one for which he uses it. It is used as a brute force. As ordinarily used *it* has little tendency to lift the personality farther than the attainment of material results. It has for its source, the lower elements of the soul. The true will is a concentrated force working steadily yet gently, dominating both soul and person, having its source in the spirit and highest elements of the soul. It is never used for the gratification of self, is inspired by the highest of motives, is never interposed to violate a law, but works in harmony with the unseen as well as the seen. It is manifested through the human will for things visible.

(2.) It is more than a faculty of the soul, for it is the soul at work. The spirit is unmanifest except through the soul. The soul manifesting the spirit is the true will. The human will is the lowest form of this manifestation.

(3.) As the true will is the manifestation of the spirit through the soul, it must be at one with the divine, inasmuch as the spirit is the divine in man. It is the God in man, a portion of the all-pervading. Asserting itself through the soul, the true will is brought forth and in truth we say, "It is the will of God." We may make our finite wills at one with the divine by elevating our aim, using it for good or in the search for God, in striving to find how to use it in harmony with the laws of God. By

proper use in the right direction the human will becomes purified, elevated, and being exerted only in conformity with our highest ideal, eventually becomes at one with the highest in man.

In our ordinary material state we know only the human will. Through the human will we reach the divine will. We become aware of the true will through the ordinary will just as we become aware of the soul through the body. It is not instinctive of the soul. The soul is father of the human will — the spirit is father of the true will.

The Theosophical Forum

ISOSTASY PROVES ASSERTIONS OF H. P. B. — *Cyrus Field Willard*

The reference by Professor C. J. Ryan in March 1938 THEOSOPIICAL FORUM to the "heat-death" theory of the old scientists has brought to the mind of the writer that the heat-death theory from the continuous cooling of the earth which would finally render the earth uninhabitable, as enunciated by Lord Kelvin, has finally met its death. Like many others of the materialistic theories of former scientists, in this swift-moving world with the many discoveries of our present age, just as H. P. B. predicted they would be, they show that this Russian genius knew what she was talking about, fifty years ago. This reversal of materialistic concepts was hastened by the discovery of radium by the Polish woman Mme. Curie and by "Isostasy" (equal status), both of which are now recognised as facts by men of science. Isostasy is dependent also on the discovery of the radio-activity of the rocks of the earth. These two fundamentals of the surface of the earth are presented by John Joly, SC. D., F. R. S., Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, in his great book of recent date entitled *The Surface History of the Earth*, Oxford Clarendon Press, 1930. These elements include the transgression of the seas on the continents and the retrogression of those seas taking place after many millions of years when the rising of the mountain ranges built mainly of the sediments collected in the depths of the former continental waters. In his story of the accumulation of heat from the radio-active rocks and its periodical dissipation, this scientist says our old world "possesses the gift of rejuvenation." It is a great temptation to quote from him at length, when he speaks of "thermal Cycles." This radio-active heat melted the internal rocks and formed a molten substratum on which the continents float, and on which the moon has a tidal effect or influence. Seismology enables us to infer that the continental rocks extend downwards some 30 to 40 kilometers (about 18 to 25 miles). Samples of basaltic rock which have reached the surface were found to be in every case radio-active, which insures the generation of heat. Here we have to take into account the great fact of Isostasy. This means

that the continents which are floating in the semi-viscous understratum of basaltic material which extends far down beneath the basaltic rocks, themselves are continually generating heat which has no direct means of escape. The sub-continental basalts grow ever hotter until they melt. As they melt they expand a little and so lose density, and accordingly the floating continents sink a little. As the continents sink relatively to the floor of the ocean, the waters must flow over their lower levels. As a consequence tensions develop in the continents and mountains are formed and volcanic eruptions occur over large areas. When the condition of fluidity creeps upward beneath the ocean floor, the accumulated heat begins to leak into the ocean, and tidal phenomena in the fluid substratum occur. With the escape of heat the continents revert to their former state, while the earth's radius goes back to its former dimensions, with attendant mountain-building and buckling of the ocean floor. Then comes a repetition of this "stately history," as Joly says.

This description of the manner in which our Mother Earth becomes wrinkled and has her face lifted is most interesting to a geologist and especially to one who is a theosophist and has read *The Secret Doctrine*. It explains how the subterranean fires may have destroyed the Atlanteans and proves the derided statements of H. P. Blavatsky, as to the great age of the earth. This heat from the radio-active rock has an important contribution from the potassium, everywhere present in the rocks. The geologist can point to five great Revolutions, the geological record of which covers, so Joly says, many hundreds of millions of years. This statement from such a competent geologist as Professor Joly is acknowledged to be, amply confirms all H. P. Blavatsky's assertions as to the age of our Mother Earth, and more.

It also proves the possibility, as she asserted, of initiates traveling dry-shod from Egypt to England *before* some depression allowed the ocean to rush in and form the Strait of Dover.

Note by C. J. Ryan

Dr. Joly's theory, quoted above by Mr. Cyrus Willard, has been very

fully discussed for many years, but it has held its own in principle as the most probable cause of the great cyclic changes for which no satisfactory explanation could be found until the radioactivity of the rocks was recently discovered. Professor W. W. Watts, in his Presidential Address to the British Association in 1935 devoted great attention to Dr. Joly's theory. With certain modifications in detail which do not affect the main principle, he strongly supported it. Geology recognises at least four or five great "Revolutions" within the available record of hundreds of millions of years, and suspects more. In this connexion, it is important to remember that, according to the Theosophical teachings, while it is true that the ordinary physical and mechanical forces such as radio-activity, heat, denudation, etc., are operative in these Revolutions on the earth's surface there are other and hidden causes behind them, unknown to modern science. H. P. Blavatsky says:

Therefore, it is absolutely *false*, and but an additional demonstration of the great conceit of our age, to assert . . . that all the great geologic changes and terrible convulsions have been produced *by ordinary and known physical forces*. For these forces were but the tools and final means for the accomplishment of certain purposes, acting periodically, and apparently mechanically, through an inward impulse mixed up with, but beyond their material nature. There is a purpose in every important act of Nature, whose acts are all cyclic and periodical. But spiritual Forces having been usually confused with the purely physical, the former are denied by, and therefore have to remain unknown to Science, because left unexamined. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 640

In all Nature there exists the Basic Unity behind the apparent diversity, and we cannot separate the Divine Cosmic Consciousness from its material manifestation or we fall into the "heresy of separateness," the only heresy recognised by Theosophy.

THE SIX GREAT SCHOOLS OF THE ANCIENTS — *G. de Purucker*

For those who are especially interested in the different Schools of Hindu philosophy, and in order to give a more correct delineation of the main principles of these Schools, the following lines may be found helpful.

There are six "Darsanas" or Schools recognised as being correct exponents of Hindu philosophical thought, and all these six *Darsanas* — a Sanskrit word literally meaning "Visions" — may be divided into three pairs. The six Darsanas or Visions or Schools are, respectively, the *Nyaya* founded by Gotama; the *Vaiseshika* founded by Kanada; the *Sankhya* founded by Kapila; the *Yoga* founded by Patanjali; and the Less and the Greater *Vedanta* founded by Vyasa; and of the Vedanta, the most important school of the Greater, the Adwaita, was due to the teaching of the Hindu Avatara Sankaracharya. This, the *Adwaita-Vedanta*, is probably the most widely diffused philosophical School in India at the present time.

Now these six Darsanas, called in Sanskrit the *Shad-darsanas*, to the Occultist, contain, all of them, truth, and indeed esoteric truth in no small degree; but again to the Occultist each one is but a single "Vision" or "Branch" of the all-unifying Master-School, which — whether recognised or not — is the Esoteric Philosophy, which thus is the Mother of them all and the container of the master-keys by which each and all of the other six may be correctly understood and properly elucidated.

These six "Visions" or Schools may be divided into three pairs, each couple being paired because of similarity in systemic formulation and philosophical outlook; so that the six great systems of Hindu philosophy are thus logically reducible to three, corresponding to the Arambha, the Parinama, and the Vivarta, respectively. These pairs are as follows: (a) the *Nyaya* and *Vaiseshika*, which one may perhaps

briefly call the Atomistic School, corresponding again with the Arambha; (b) the Sankhya and Yoga, which because of their characteristic philosophical principles and system may be called the school of philosophy dealing with emanational evolution combined with practice in aspiration and self-training. This second pair corresponds with the Parinama; (c) the Less and the Greater Vedanta, which, especially the Greater Vedanta, may be called the Idealistic School of Hindu religio-philosophy, and correspond with the Vivarta-vada.

From still another standpoint the above-mentioned philosophical pairs may respectively be compared with the three operations of the human spirit and mind which are known in the Occident under the names of Science, Philosophy, Religion — not of course any one sectarian religious faith, but Religion *per se*. The Arambha is to be classified with the scientific outlook; the Parinama with the philosophical vision; and the third pair, classified with Vivarta, is comparable with the religious manner of visioning truth.

All these three couples, as stated above, are, each one, considered to be more or less imperfect from the standpoint of the Esoteric Philosophy, because each is incomplete. The Esoteric Philosophy unifies all three couples (or all six Darsanas) into one grand comprehensive System — the Esoteric Philosophy itself — which contains and explicates or explains the substance of all.

To recapitulate: the Arambha is that view of the Universe and of the origins of things, which, qualified as being scientific, envisions the Universe as proceeding forth as a "new" production of already pre-existent Cosmic Intelligence and pre-existent "points" of individuality or what the Esoteric Philosophy would term "Monads" as being a more correct term than "atoms." Although such newly produced Universe, from this viewpoint, is recognised as being the karmic resultant or consequence of a preceding Universe, the former "self of the present, nevertheless emphasis in this line of thought is laid upon *beginnings*, upon the Universe as a "new" production, very much as even

Occidental science construes the Universe to be.

The Parinama, while having many points of contact with the Arambha point of view, nevertheless lays emphasis upon the fact of the coming forth of the Universe into being, with all it contains, as a production by powers and entities and substances "unrolling from within," and thus bringing the Universe into existence by a species of emanational or evolutional conversion or unfolding.

The Vivarta-system, finally, penetrates still more deeply into the womb of the Cosmic Mystery and fixes its attention upon the unending duration of the Divine Essence, which it considers as producing "appearances" of itself through modifications of itself, or portions thereof, brought about by emanational evolution from within, these modifications or "portions" being the Cosmic Maha-maya — or Cosmic Illusion. The technical name for these "appearances" is nama-rupa, a Sanskrit compound literally meaning: "name-form," otherwise understood as *nama* equaling "idea" or "ideas" or "concepts," and *rupa* equaling "objectivization" or "images" or "forms" in which these ideas manifest themselves. Hence it is that in the Vivarta-system the entire objective Universe, visible and invisible, is considered to be illusory because merely a collective modification, or series of modifications, of the productive Divine Essence, which last always remains Itself, yet produces "appearances" of itself, or shows forth itself by way of ideas or concepts and through objectivization by unfolding procession, i. e., emanational evolution.

The above may seem to be rather high metaphysics, but it seems needful to embody these facts for the benefit of those whose minds ask for scientific or philosophic or religious particularizations and comparisons.

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE MESSAGE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY — *H. Groot*

III

In 1907 a book was published, entitled *Two New Worlds*, which made serious, sober workers in the field of natural science rub their eyes incredulously.

The author, an Irishman, Fournier d'Albe, had already made important scientific-technical investigations, *inter alia* into the properties of that strange, photo-sensitive metal, selenium.

But the remarkable fact is that in the first part of his book he makes a profound study of what he calls the "infra-world," that is, the world in which atoms and electrons take the place of solar systems and planets. In the second part of his book he attempts to visualize the difference in proportions, considering our earth as an electron, our solar system as an atom of a "supra world." Fantasy? No doubt; but fantasy based on thorough knowledge. His views and calculations are partly founded on the results of scientific investigations into the structure of matter, partly guided by an excellent understanding of the laws of analogy, which he applied with masterly skill. Fantasy? Yes, but fantasy largely due to a keen intuition of that which cannot be grasped with mere knowledge of facts, and which is virtually veiled by the latter — and certainly not with the knowledge of scientific facts, which, naturally, is incomplete knowledge.

Thus, if we must at present revise Fournier d'Albe's results, it is because of our growing knowledge of the structure of matter.

Fournier d'Albe's intuitive basic idea is that there are various interpenetrating worlds, the denizens of one being yet utterly incognisant of the existence of other similar worlds, also inhabited by living beings, only on a scale many million times larger or smaller than their own; this really Theosophical conception holds equally well at

present as when Fournier d'Albe surprised and amused the world by the "fantasies" referred to above.

To what issues did mathematics and analogy lead Fournier d'Albe? This may be made clear with reference to a few points discussed in his book.

First of all he showed what relation the units of length, time, force, and density of the infra-world bear to those applicable to our own world, arriving at the following conclusions.

In the infra-world the unit of length, like that of time, is 10^{22} times smaller than that of the "ordinary" world. The unit of force is even 10^{33} times smaller, the unit of density 10^{11} times *larger* than our own. A few examples will illustrate the immense significance of these seemingly simple facts.

Before proceeding any further, however, we would direct attention to the following observations.

Fournier d'Albe is convinced that each of the millions of infra-worlds of which the minutest speck of dust, or the smallest bacterium of our earth, is built up, is a world which, in outline, resembles our own. On this point he says:

No life remotely resembling our own is possible on any scale intermediate between us and the infra-world. But if the main thesis of this essay is true, and *the infra-world is a habitable universe not essentially different from our own*, then there is no valid argument, either in physiology or psychology, to show the impossibility of our having been inhabitants of the infra-world previous to our birth into this world. A life of "seventy years" into the infra-world might be crowded with events, and yet it would add but an altogether inappreciable fraction to our earthly span of life. The facts of embryology are far from being accounted for, and the phenomena of ontogenetic development are so obscure that a reasonable hypothesis like the above can

only tend towards their elucidation. It certainly removes the difficulty experienced in conceiving the boundless possibilities of life as being contained in an invisibly small germ.

In the latter part of this reasoning the unit of time plays an important role. Let us, for a better understanding, try to realize how long the "70 years" of the infra-world would appear to us. A simple calculation shows that the 2×10^9 (1) seconds of the infra-world (which practically form the seventy years in question) last shorter than a fifth of a billionth (Am. trillionth) part of a second in our world. A single wink of the eye takes longer in the infra-world than terrestrial geology accepts for the formation of the earth's crust. And yet, the infra-creatures live their lives, are born, grow and die, without any knowledge of the — in our eyes — tearing pace of their world.

Also infra-astronomy exists!

It will have taken the astronomers of the infra-world (i. e. an electron revolving about, say, an oxygen nucleus) many centuries to discover the laws in accordance with which the planets of this solar system — the remaining electrons of the atom — travel round their sun. If their attempts have finally been successful, they will have discovered . . . Kepler's laws, while their perturbation theory — though it may be different from ours in some respects — will also use the methods which the earth astronomers constantly apply.

Also the following example, which has been literally taken from Fournier d'Albe, may be useful to gain some understanding of the difference in time-scale. It shows how differently identical facts are interpreted by a terrestrial observer and an astronomer of the infra-world who lives on the planet "Talav" of the solar system "Grean." This solar system — an atom — consists, in addition to its sun and "Talav," of two other planets — electrons — called "Secunda" and "Tertia." A fourth electron has just joined this atom, but it is expelled from the system under the influence of ultra-violet radiation — a process which occurs countless times in every gas that is acted upon by ultra-violet

light, and which process takes an unimaginably short period of time.

These events are described in the astronomical reports of the "Talav" observatory as follows:

"From the Records of the Talav Observatory" Year 5280, July 1. — This year's conjunction of Prima, Secunda, and Tertia is looked forward to with considerable interest. Tertia will certainly be lost to our system if she undergoes any additional outward perturbation.

Oct. 5. — Last night's observations show that the conjunction has not expelled Tertia. She is therefore safe for another 72 years, unless something extraordinary happens.

Year 5283, Feb. 5. — An unknown comet has been sighted in the orbital plane of Secunda. Approaching with a speed of 10^8 cm. per second, and will pass Grean at half Talav's distance. Will probably join our system.

March 1. — New comet turns out to be a planet of the size and mass of Talav, and same charge. Has joined our system, and will have an orbit of great eccentricity, extending considerably beyond that of Tertia.

Year 5285, March 15. — New planet is approaching apo-Grean, but is showing decided perturbations, which are shared by all other planets. These are cosmic and periodic. Period estimated at three months.

April 4. — New planet's orbit has become parabolic under influence of cosmic perturbations, and the planet will be lost to our system. (*Terrestrial Note.* — The above entries represent a case of ionisation by ultra-violet light.)

However interesting these speculations of Fournier d'Albe's may be, it is not to be denied that at the present moment they are no longer in perfect agreement with our scientific knowledge about the structure of

matter. Although his reasonings and calculations have by no means become obsolete, present-day knowledge of facts — in so far as scientific facts exist — is different from what was known in 1907. Then, atoms and electrons were not yet the immaterial wave-structures which they may nowadays be conceived of without a risk of conflict with established facts.

However, this implies that even if the basis of Fournier d'Albe's reasonings (viz., his insight into the power of analogy) remains valid, his conceptions will nevertheless have to be modified so that his original ideas will hardly be recognised. His central idea, however, the one basis of his investigation, holds true *now* as well as it did *then*. Summarizing we may perhaps formulate this basis as follows: the great is repeated in the small. An atom is a solar system, just as we may look upon a solar system as an atom of gigantic dimensions. These ideas, it need scarcely be said, are purely Theosophical, and that is just why we want to reflect on them again, asking ourselves to what conceptions the Hermetic fundamental idea "as above, so below" may lead if it is applied in Fournier d'Albe's manner to what we at present know about the building stones of matter: the atoms. This is of particular importance since our Theosophical literature concerning these comparisons is still based on Bohr's model, although this model has long been superseded by the modern conceptions of matter-waves and the quantum-theory. The atom is no longer a system with a nucleus about which revolve spatially well defined electrons, nor is it off-hand comparable any longer with a material sun round which material planets are moving. It is this too — from a *particular* point of view — but it is much more, and this seems quite worthy of attention, because it may make for clarity of profound Theosophical doctrines. Moreover, such speculations might have a fructifying effect on the opinion of science about certain astronomical problems.

On the whole, scientists do not care for speculations such as Fournier d'Albe's. The reason again lies in the conflict between science — always searching for facts and their mutual relations — and philosophy — constantly attempting to penetrate behind the facts and undergo their

realization, and this, we hold, should be the primary object of each investigation, and especially in the field of natural science.

However, we are not concerned here with the question whether or not science cares for the above speculation, but whether it disagrees with the findings of modern science; for if *this* should prove to be the case, science would rightly point to the field of perhaps attractive, but deceptive fantasies.

Now, the far-reaching analogy between a solar system and an atom cannot in a single detail be contradicted scientifically. Indeed, it is remarkable how, after first having exercised a fructifying influence on Bohr's conception of the atom — present-day astronomy itself shows a tendency to consult the atom-physicist and wants to be informed on certain details regarding the solar system which are puzzling it.

A case in point is the article by St. Mohorovicic, entitled: "Ein neues Gesetz für die Entfernungen im Sonnensystem," which was published recently in the classical journal of astronomy: *Astro-nomische Nachrichten*, where the author says: "Our law, which probably indicates the most stable orbits, also applies to the atom-theory. Consequently, quite new conceptions will have to be introduced in theoretical astronomy, as has already been the case in the atom-theory."

It is easy to understand why in this article the atom-theory is taken as an example, for this theory treats of the regularity that is detectable in the distances between the various planets and the sun, and which greatly resemble the succession of the so-called "stable" orbits of the electrons round a nucleus. As these latter may be satisfactorily explained by the modern quantum theory as a result of the interference of matter-waves, it is obvious that the astronomer is looking for similar explanations of the succession of the planets' orbits. He may find them, if, reasoning along the same lines as Fournier d'Albe and Theosophy, he will look upon the solar system as a kind of atom on a gigantic scale, although he should bear in mind that analogy is not quite the same as *identity*. The solar system *differs* from the atom in

many details. The laws that hold true for the atom cannot off-hand be applied to the solar system, but have to be formulated anew according to the prevailing conditions, though on the basis of the same principle. Thus also in astronomy the fundamental principle of the law of gravitation leads to quite different laws according as it is applied to the movements in a system consisting of the sun and a number of planets, or to the movements of a planet that is subject to the attraction of a binary star. The key of analogy is capable of opening many doors, but the entrant will perceive that there is a variety of rooms behind these doors, and that, to be able to live there, he will have to adapt himself to the prevailing conditions — which will often require his utmost exertions.

There does exist an analogy between a solar system and an atom. No scientific investigator can reasonably deny it in the light of our modern conceptions about the structure of the atom. For the analogy is so evident that the study of Bohr's model was facilitated by the fact that a large number of mathematical problems which presented themselves, proved to be closely related to problems astronomers had encountered in the perturbation-theory. As to the formal resemblance between the two systems — and science, especially mathematics, is silent where non-formality is concerned — not a single well-founded objection can possibly be raised to making an attempt to ascertain in how far the speculations of a Fournier d'Albe may be adapted to our present knowledge of facts.

In the following pages we shall try to give an outline of the consequences to which speculations as mentioned above may lead.

However, since a line of thought is something dynamic, and as such always of greater importance than any result obtained, which is therefore static, we shall especially try to explain in detail the trend of thought pursued, and hardly pay any attention to the provisional results found by this method.

This involves a difficulty, namely the unfeasibility of indulging in technical-mathematical speculations, while it is nevertheless just the

short, symbolic notation of higher mathematics which is capable of throwing a vivid light on the scientific foundations of theoretical physics, for on this science our investigations are based as far as actual facts are concerned. This difficulty cannot be overcome. The best thing we can do is to steer between the Charybdis of these far-reaching theoretical speculations and the Scylla of superficial popularization.

First of all, we have to state more clearly the difference between Bohr's atom and the atom as conceived of in wave-mechanics.

In 1913 Bohr enunciated the idea that an atom is a solar system in miniature, consisting of a "nucleus" with a positive electric charge — the sun — about which particles with a negative electric charge — electrons — are revolving in circular or elliptical orbits. The electrons move under the influence of the electrostatic forces of the atomic system, and these movements are perfectly analogous to those of the planets of classical astronomy, which, *inter alia*, appears from the fact that, to a first approximation, Kepler's laws are also applicable to the atom. However, Bohr's hypothesis made it necessary to accept an atomic model that was quite different from all that theoretical astronomy tells us about the proportions of a solar system. For, Newton's law of gravitation, which in theoretical astronomy governs all the movements in a planetary system, does not in any way impose limitations on the magnitude of a planet's orbit about the sun. Nor does this law in the least interfere with the possibility of a certain planet following its course between the orbits of Venus and the Earth.

However, it does not apply — according to Bohr — to the miniature solar system of the nucleus with its electrons. Here, the electrons are only capable of moving in orbits of sharply defined dimensions, each electron having the choice between a number of orbits of different lengths, but it cannot remain revolving in an intermediate orbit. If an electron is thrown out of its course somehow (by collision, release or absorption of energy) it cannot possibly change over to another differing but slightly from its previous orbit. Causes, which were quite obscure to Bohr — but which at any rate do not flow from the law of gravitation — compel the electron to take one of the other so-called

"stable" orbits. The transition from one orbit to another takes place in such an infinitesimally short period of time that Bohr speaks of a "jump."

Bohr's new and daring hypothesis may therefore be summarized as follows: Sometimes the electron "jumps" — compelled by external causes — from one stable orbit to another. This jump (and this is the second new feature of Bohr's atomic model) involves the release or absorption of light by the atom, the characteristics of the light (color, wave-length) only depending on the jump in question.

The longer we reflect on this model, the more questions arise. What made Bohr introduce conditions that are not accepted in classical physics? What remains of the resemblance between the solar system and the atom, where the electron-planets are obliged to follow accurately prescribed courses, with the only possibility of "jumping" from one orbit to another? What is the analogy between the orbits of the planets and the stable orbits of the electrons? Is there something analogous to the "jump," something comparable with the emission or absorption of light during the jump?

It looks as if the beautiful analogy which first attracted us so much was a very superficial one, and that the scientific thinker — *just on the strength of Bohr's atomic model* — has to reject all speculations such as Fournier d'Albe's.

It indeed seems to be so — but is it true?

We would first of all state that Bohr's model has led to such great triumphs for theoretical as well as experimental physics and that it proved so capable of correlating such a large number of seemingly quite allied facts, that it must be largely based on reality.

However, as Bohr did not understand the proper background of his hypothesis — and could only point to their confirmations — it is clear that his model need by no means embody the whole truth.

In the years following 1913, investigators tried to penetrate deeper and

deeper into the essence of Bohr's representation. Men like de Broglie, Schrodinger, Heisenberg, Dirac, and others, obtained very elucidating results in this respect. Bohr's atom proved to be only a very rough picture of the much more complicated *events* that together form what we call an *atom of matter*.

The greatest progress that our knowledge about the structure of matter has made is, philosophically speaking, the fact that science has come to the conclusion that matter has to be described in terms that do no longer indicate any material property. Science begins to understand that the essentials of matter can only be approximated by the dematerialization of matter.

It is true, the Theosophical standpoint that spirit and matter are two aspects of one and the same "substance" (i. e., "that which stands firm") has not yet been altogether accepted. Science has but just started to leave its materialistic line of thought for a more spiritual one. But: *la verite est en marche*.

At this juncture it may be justly asked to what results the above investigations have given rise. In agreement with the more or less materialistic basic tendencies predominating in modern science, two directions have been followed, both of which lead to the same mathematical basic equation. This equation, as far as we are able to see it at present, governs all the problems of atom-physics; technically it is called "wave-equation." However, the opinions about the interpretation of this equation vary considerably. One group of scientists adhere to the existence of the smallest particles of which matter is said to be built up. But if this is true, they will have to give up the notion of *causality* as applicable to the behavior of these smallest particles. The natural laws are then no longer causal laws, but statistical laws of *probability*.

The other view, which at present has perhaps fewer adherents in the scientific world, definitely breaks with the conception of smallest particles as realities. It considers the separate particles, electrons, nuclei, or whatever they may be called, as more or less an illusion of the underlying reality. However, this reality itself cannot be

understood in terms of time and space, for it transcends them altogether. Reality is one and indivisible, and its manifestations may be conceived of as a vast, universal vibration-process. If we direct our attention to definite, local areas — such as we may observe in the individual waves in looking at the sea — the causal laws operate with respect to the actions of these several parts among themselves. But as soon as we want to delimit a particular area more sharply, it becomes blurred and no longer possesses any well-defined boundaries, any more than a sea-wave is an isolated thing. However, this does by no means interfere with the notion of *causality*, which, strictly speaking, is applicable only to the actions of entities sharply separated by time and space, but rather expands it to universal *interaction*. Everything is related to everything else, because the entire multiplicity that we perceive with the senses or postulate with our mind behind the objects observed, is but an illusion of what is in reality One Whole. This thought, although science does not express it, is the basis of the "wave-structure" of matter. This is a purely Theosophical conception, for it is but the modern way of expressing that the world in which we live is a world of maya.

As said before, the two opinions about the significance of the wave-equation are still contending for priority. Direct observation — which is the only criterion acknowledged by science — has so far not been able to find anything that might turn the scale. But as soon as we reject the scientific line of thought and inquire after the *sense* of what has been found, then, at least as far as the Theosophist is concerned, there need be no doubt which of the two viewpoints approaches the occult truth more closely.

As we are, moreover, perfectly justified scientifically in considering matter as a wave-structure, we shall now return to the investigation in question, and try to find out whether a modification of Bohr's atom in accordance with the wave-theory, will clear up the difficulties mentioned above.

In view of the limited space available, we shall not enter into details on

this point, but nevertheless we would establish the following fact: all the difficulties which Bohr's peculiar conceptions present disappear completely, while the points that attracted us in the above atomic model remain unchanged. For, so long as we continue to focus our attention on a small area, which, for convenience, might be called an atom, we indeed see something which, in outline, corresponds perfectly to Bohr's model: a "nucleus" surrounded by "stable" orbits in which an "electron" moves in the manner described above (in accordance with Kepler's laws, etc.). But this picture suggests itself only so long as we do not look attentively. As soon as we direct our attention to the electron, say, to find out its actual size, or to ascertain where it is at a given moment, then it resolves itself into what, for lack of a better expression, is frequently called a "wave-packet." It is not sharply defined spatially. It cannot be considered as an isolated part distinct from the other electrons and the nucleus. The atom, which seemed to consist of discrete components — the nucleus, the electron, the stable orbits, etc. — appears to be one indivisible unit, which cannot be split up into its constituents except artificially.

It is not possible to explain these results in more detail or make them acceptable. Nor is this necessary, for any more elaborate treatise on wave-mechanics or atom-structure will inform the reader of these technical questions as fully as he likes — if he wants to take the trouble to indulge in scientific investigations. For us, the principal question is: Is our solar system still comparable with an atom if we accept the views about the structure of matter and in particular those about the structure of the atom based on the wave-theory developed by de Broglie; or have Fournier d'Albe's speculations to be rejected altogether as being unfounded and not in agreement with actual facts?

Let us not give our answer too rashly. What are the facts that have to be considered?

First there is the atomic model of wave-mechanics, which shows us a solar system in which Kepler's laws hold good, but in which we have also to reckon with the existence of "stable" orbits, the "jumps" of

electrons, and the radiation-phenomena to which they give rise. In addition, we know at present that this picture was founded on superficial observations. We also know that things are different in reality, that the sphere of action of each of these electrons extends through the whole atom; yes, in the last analysis, there are no isolated electrons, but only the one reality, which, as an atom, was separated from a still vaster reality beyond it, with which it forms one whole, just as the electron is *one* with the reality we have called "Atom."

The same line of thought has to be followed in regard to the solar system. There, we see the sun about which the planets travel in their orbits in accordance with the laws of gravitation, of which Kepler's laws are special cases.

Do stable orbits exist?

The majority of astronomers will be inclined to answer this question in the negative — and yet: there is the "law" of Bode and Titius, pointing to a remarkable grouping which is so strikingly regular that "fortuity" seems out of the question — although science has so far not quite succeeded in finding an "explanation" for this regularity; yes, even the correct mathematical expression for regularity is still a moot point.

Nor of *this* subject shall we give the technical details; suffice it to say that probably *not* all the orbits which are conceivable on the basis of the law of gravitation really exist — on the contrary, it is only very definite orbits that seem to be available for the planets. This inference permits the assumption that the atom possesses stable orbits, although finality has not by any means been reached in this matter; however, the orbits of *different* planets should not be confused with the *different orbits* in which *one and the same electron* may revolve.

"But," the opponents of the Fournier d'Albe theory will no doubt put forward, "even if we should admit the possibility of the existence of "stable" orbits in a planetary system, even then the fact remains that we have never yet observed a "jump" from one orbit to another." Quite true, of course. But the argument is not a sound one, since these

opponents probably lose sight of the difference in time-scale. The "jump" of an electron takes an almost incomputably short time, we wrote — certainly, but measured with *our* standards! If we should describe this event in the language of the Talav astronomers, the word "jump" would not suggest itself at all. We should learn that, owing to a certain cosmic disturbance which it either would be or would not be possible to specify any further, the orbit of a particular planet slowly shifted altogether over a period of many thousands of centuries. And as to the chance of such an event occurring, it should be borne in mind that between every two "jumps" of the same electron, milliards of "electron centuries" elapse; and when a new "jump" begins to take place, even the remembrance of the preceding "jump" will therefore have been obliterated.

The same consideration might be applied to our solar system if we should like to maintain the analogy in question. Not a single argument based on actual facts is capable of contradicting the *possibility* of the existence of "stable" orbits and "jumps" in our planetary system. Nor can we point to events that argue *for* this assumption. However, as facts are lacking and Fournier d'Albe's views seem plausible, it is *permissible* to adopt them and to posit a far-reaching analogy between the atom and the solar system — as this is in perfect agreement with the Gupta-Vidya.

But if we do this seriously, we have to go a considerable step further. For then we can no longer look upon the sun and the planets as spatially limited and isolated bodies. Just as the electron as an isolated particle proved to be an illusion, we shall have to give up the idea of the planets and the sun being separate units.

On the face of it, this seems to be an unrealizable demand. But if we reflect on it and make ourselves familiar with the idea, the truth begins to dawn upon us with the conviction that such a view is perfectly tenable.

Our opinion about the limitation and separateness of each several planet is in the last analysis based on our deep-rooted materialistic

views, which make a fundamental difference between "matter" and the "force" exerted by that "matter." But it is just the most recent atomic theories that are beginning to doubt the validity of such a distinction. Matter and force — on a higher plane: *pro-matter and spirit* — are aspects of the one Substance. This novel truth — which has been known to the Keepers of the holy Occult Wisdom or Gupta-Vidya from time immemorial, but which became lost for the bulk of humanity — cannot be repeated too often. The discoveries of science will prove the correctness of the Old Wisdom at the same rate as science will succeed in understanding the profound meaning of the latter.

As already said before: In the light of wave-mechanics there is no essential difference between an electron and the field of force of that electron. But does not exactly the same apply to a planet? Also a planet makes itself felt far beyond its immediate vicinity by the action it exercises, surrounded as it is by its own field of gravitation, by an electric and a magnetic field. If we pay attention to its sphere of action and identify the planet with it — as we dissolved an electron into a system of interpenetrating waves interfering with each other — then each planet occupies the whole space of the solar system, and a planetary system can no longer be considered as a unit made up of the sun and a number of relatively small, delimited orbs traveling about the sun, but as a complex conglomerate of interpenetrating spheres, which are moving in and through each other and interacting most intimately.

Thus, the old idea that the different planets influence each other, which the modern pseudo-science of astrology has taken from the true Astrology of the Ancients, also called the Science of the Gods, regains its true significance. And in this connexion it should be especially noted that the interaction of the planets is not restricted to the physically perceptible actions of gravitation or magnetic and electrical influence, but that this action and penetration also include astral and spiritual influences — which science has so far remained utterly ignorant of.

This far-reaching conclusion suggests itself at once if we revise

Fournier d'Albe's speculations and bring them into line with the modern scientific conception about the structure of the atom.

Is it saying too much to maintain that modern science perfectly agrees with the teachings of the Old Wisdom, thus confirming H. P. Blavatsky's Message?

FOOTNOTE:

1. The reader need not look askance at this probably queer notation. We chose it to be able to write in a simple form otherwise inconveniently large and unmanageably long figures. For instance, 10^9 (read: ten to the ninth power). ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

HARMONY IN WORD AND ACT — *G. van Pelt*

The key to one of the seven portals this is, the key which leads to the land of bliss, "to the other shore" where the vision is clear in a land of reality, and the nightmare of separateness, the ever-gnawing hunger for peace, the crazy confusion of values, is seen in the distance dissolving like some foul miasma.

If only as the New Year opens before us with its influx of fresh life from the inexhaustible Cosmic source — if only the people of our little Earth could realize that this key is within their grasp, nay more, that it is already theirs to use, that almost by the wave of a fairy wand they could find themselves upon a shore of clear vision. And if they could only discover that this needs but a change of viewpoint!

This key, which for so many is hidden, was well known in the Golden Age, and we ourselves, who lived in those days, painted many a picture in words to be handed down as a beacon light to hold the vision for the days when we must pass through the valleys of matter in order to gain power and strength. One of these pictures was that of the Asvattha Tree, the Tree of Life, rooted above in the unknown depths of Being, whose branches and branchlets grow until they fill all Space. It is a picture which tells of the unity of all life, of the actual *fact* that our Universe is one Being, of which we are all a part, that it is indeed a *living Organism*, every unit as responsive to every other as are the cells of our body to its other cells, all working to a common end, so bound together that Space, as we have conceived it, is annihilated; that Time upon which we have counted to wipe out causes, is but the eternal Now. But alas! in these valleys of Matter, we have lost the knowledge of ancient days. It is not now so clear to all that every force in this Organism is but the transmutation of the same force, whether called love of the atoms, brotherhood, co-operation, or compassion; that there must be a reaction everywhere when the eternal majesty of the law of harmony is broken on any plane — more and more intense the higher

the plane. Loss of this knowledge has brought us to the Crossways. Our western civilization is a sorry object lesson of a people who do not *know* that there is a scientific, a moral, and a spiritual basis for ethics.

But the ignorant and childish notion that action and reaction exist only on the plane which can be perceived by the physical senses is passing. We see everywhere evidence that the flooding of the thought atmosphere with the ancient teachings of the Wisdom Religion is producing results, and happily for our race it will be borne in upon its consciousness that literally "as ye sow, so shall ye reap." - — These will less and less become empty words. With human reason harnessed to intuition we shall attain some of the results for which the Theosophical Movement is striving.

Above, within, at the source of all energy and life, is the compassionate power which keeps the cosmic harmony, the stars in their appointed orbits, the atoms at their appointed tasks. Should this be withdrawn for an instant — the Universe would crumble.

The Theosophical Forum

INTRODUCTION TO ELECTROMAGNETIC SOLAR SYSTEM — *Cornelius O'Connor*

Nothing in the history of science is more remarkable than the fundamental influence exerted by the teachings of Pythagoras in mathematics, astronomy and physics. To the great discoveries in those fields, perhaps now may be added a solution of the baffling mystery of electromagnetism.

It has been found that the regularity of planetary intervals which has attracted many astronomers since Kepler's time can be attributed to the action of electromagnetic waves radiated by the sun. This discovery conforms with the original ideas of Johann Kepler, a modern disciple of Pythagoras. Kepler believed the physical basis of his laws was identified with magnetism, which he conceived to be a form of vortical motion.

ELECTROMAGNETIC SOLAR SYSTEM

Through a simple formula it can be shown that planetary distance intervals closely follow a common series of wave frequencies. The numbers derived through the formula are:

paired, i. e., products of pairs are constant: numbers for Mercury and Saturn; Venus and Jupiter; Earth and planetoid; Mars and Vesta. Orbits of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto would pair with possible orbits between Mercury and the Sun.

That corresponding planetary numbers are derived through a formula involving the velocity of light as shown above, leads to the inference that planetary distances and motions are regulated by electromagnetic waves radiated by the sun. This inference is supported by the fact that a related series of numbers shows direct correspondence between the velocity of light and the cube roots of planetary periodic times (in seconds).

P.time numbers	192	256	324	384	486	576	729	972	1380	1728	2048
Planets:	Merc.	Venus	Earth	Mars	Ves.	ptd.	Jup.	Sat.	Uran.	Nep.	Pluto
Cu. rts. of per time:	197	268	316	390	480	...	722	975	1383	1735	2000

The serial numbers are paired, i. e., products of pairs are constant:

Mercury & Saturn;	Venus & Jupiter;	Earth & planetoid;	Mars & Vesta
(192 X 972)	(256 X 729)	(324 X 576)	(384 X 486)

The constant product is 186,624, which when multiplied by appropriate length/time units (1 m.p.s. or 1.6km./s.) equals the velocity of light.

From the foregoing figures the conclusion may be drawn that the frequencies of the solar electromagnetic waves are as the cube roots of the periodic times; these frequencies and the velocity of light determine wave-lengths.

$$(c/t_{1/3} = \lambda)$$

The initial amplitude of the waves would be as the radius of the sun and the electromagnetic intensity

(equivalent to gravitational mass) would be as the square of the amplitude.

The space between Mars and Jupiter would correspond to a region of wave interference, directly affecting the orbits of Mercury and Saturn and contributing to orbital ellipticities.

Similar wave elements can be computed for all planet-satellite systems.

The planetary numbers are also related to the characteristic line spectra of all atoms.

The planetary numbers:

64 96 144 216 324 486

are as the actual vibrational frequencies of:

C G D A E B

on a diatonic scale.

Truly, there is "Music of the Spheres."

The identification of solar system motions with electromagnet-ism is a reminder of the "Central Fire" of Pythagoras.

Solar system bodies often have been compared to giant electromagnets and planetary orbits are comparable to the concentric rings which surround wires carrying electricity familiar to all students of physics.

Thus the sun may be conceived as a great stabilized electromagnetic vortex radiating a continuous succession of spinning ring-waves in which the planets move in obedience to Kepler's laws. The planets would be similar but smaller vortices and the chemical elements would be similar structures on an atomic scale.

Electromagnetism might be defined generally as vortical motion in a Space Plenum. Positive and negative effects would be due to differences in the direction of rotation.

The spiral form and simple numerical relations seem to be characteristic of all natural phenomena from celestial galaxies to atoms. The Pythagorean right-triangle represents the projection of a spiral; Mendeleef's octaves in the chemical table and the helical arrangement of atomic progression shown by de Chancour-tois and Stoney and Mendel's biological laws all illustrate the principle. The progression of genera and species in biology is analagous to the progression of the chemical elements. Leaf formations are universally spiral and the blood stream follows a spiral circuit. And all have a rhythm in harmony with the "Music of the Spheres."

Genung has shown that creative thought follows a spiral law. There are curious traces of this in the history of human beliefs. The vortical nature of electromagnetic motion may be compared to a fiery serpent pursuing its tail. The swastika might be interpreted as a symbol of rotation. Intuitively we perceive the significance of the symbols but a Pythagoras is required to interpret them for us.

The doctrine of Love which eventually will lead us to a real brotherhood of men, was voiced by great spiritual leaders, including Lao-Tse, Gautama, and Jesus, as well as Pythagoras. Through their beautiful teachings we hope to achieve some day a social state on earth worthy of the sublime harmonies of the Universe now so vaguely apprehended.

Note by C. J. Ryan

Mr. O'Connor's article with its mathematical demonstrations of the orderly relations between the velocity of light (an electro-magnetic phenomenon), the *radius* of the sun (the distance of the center of the sun from its surface), and the distance of the planets from the center of the solar system, is extremely interesting to students

of *The Secret Doctrine* for many reasons. It is another demonstration that the universe is not a helter-skelter combination of objects thrown together by blind chance, but that there is Mind working in an intelligent way behind the visible manifestations, or, as Sir James Jeans says, the universe is nearer to a great thought than to a great machine.

Mr. O'Connor refers to Pythagoras and his modern disciple, Kepler, with justified admiration; but those great men looked more deeply into the causes of the exquisitely beautiful adjustments of celestial motions than most of our modern physicists. Dr. Max Planck is one of the few who boldly declares the ancient doctrine that consciousness is fundamental, and that matter is derivative from consciousness. Without this vital factor astronomy is a body without a soul.

Kepler, whose three "Laws" of motion have long been accepted as fundamentals, realized that the "harmony of the spheres" was controlled by Cosmic Intelligence in the ether of space, the "Holy Ghost" as he called it. He accepted the ancient belief in an "Angelus Rector," a spiritual conscious entity conducting each planet, and he understood how the Pythagoreans could believe that all the globes disseminated through space were rational Intelligences or Spiritual Powers which may be regarded as Divinities. Even in these prosaic days one leading astronomer has dared to suggest that every star may well be the seat or vehicle of a sublime Being whose conscious life-history transcends our highest conceptions as greatly as his span of years — millions or billions — exceeds that of a human incarnation!

In the 15th century Gilbert of Colchester made his great discoveries in magnetism which must have been known to Kepler, who declared that the sun was a powerful center of magnetism (now scientifically demonstrated). Kepler worked out a curious relationship between the Platonic solids and the orbits of five of the seven "Sacred Planets," naturally omitting the sun and the moon (and of course the outer planets, which were not known in his

day).

It is curious that the work of Copernicus and Kepler, which was founded on a mystical basis derived from Plato and Pythagoras and ultimately from Oriental teaching, should have led through Galileo, Newton, and the French Encyclopaedists of the 18th century, and the modern Germans, to a purely mechanistic philosophy of nature and life! Fortunately, Relativity and the new atomic theories bid fair to liberate science from the crude materialism of the 19th century and to open the way to a more spiritual outlook. Speaking of the materialism that was so general at the time she brought Theosophy to the West H. P. Blavatsky says:

It is only with the theories of such men of learning as Kepler, Kant, Oersted and Sir W Herschel, who believed in a Spiritual world, that Occult Cosmogony might treat, and attempt a satisfactory compromise.
— *The Secret Doctrine* I, 589

She shows that Space is a substantial "living entity," the real world, while ours is an "artificial" one. Space is studded with countless phenomenal universes, systems, and mirage-like worlds; a Unity, bottomless at its depths, illusive (*maydvi*) on its surface. The Ancient Wisdom — Theosophy — has always taught that the real universe is a complex of forces indeed, but not of blind, unintelligent forces. Theosophy is an objective idealism. Students would benefit by a careful perusal of the magnificent philosophic passages in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, page 615.

In Mr. O'Connor's presentation we see that a perfectly adjusted rhythm is back of the solar system, a true "harmony of the spheres," corroborating the Pythagorean teaching that a marvelous system of mathematical combinations lies hidden behind the physical appearance. Plato, a Pythagorean, expressed the same idea when he said that God geometrizes. But these mathematical concepts were far from being mechanistic, for it was the

gods and their intelligent guidance that were expressed geometrically or numerically in the theogony of the heavenly host.

Pythagoras associated the numerical arrangement of the planets with the harmonic intervals between musical sounds which he is credited with discovering, though "revealing" would probably be a more correct term. Mr. O'Connor carries the analogy into the world of electro-magnetism which perhaps may be called "sound" or vibration on another plane. "Sound," according to the Oriental philosophy, is the great creative power, the Logos, the Word. H. P. Blavatsky devotes many pages to this important topic, and modern science is beginning to study the extraordinary powers of *inaudible* sounds of high pitch.

It is exceedingly difficult to explain to those who have been trained in the mechanistic schools of the West what is meant by intelligent, creative forces as understood by Oriental philosophers. The subject is so important that H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters of Wisdom devoted many pages of *The Secret Doctrine* to its elucidation. A few modern scientist-philosophers, such as Dr. Gustaf Stromberg of Mount Wilson Observatory in his *The Soul of the Universe*, etc., and perhaps Sir Oliver Lodge, have approached very nearly to the Oriental position. Dr. Stromberg's hypothesis of an "immaterial" fine-structure in space through which the Cosmic Consciousness can express itself intelligently in atomic, electronic, or perhaps still finer forms of matter is a close approach to H. P. Blavatsky's "real world," the *substantial* (not material) "living entity, Space." For the benefit of those readers who have no copy of *The Secret Doctrine* at hand we will quote a comprehensive passage from Vol. I, page 493:

The Occultist sees in the manifestation of every force in Nature, the action of the quality, or the special characteristic of its noumenon; which *noumenon* is a distinct and intelligent Individuality *on the other side of the manifested mechanical Universe*. Now the Occultist does not deny — on the contrary he will support the claim — that light, heat, electricity and so on are *affections* (not properties or qualities) of

matter. To put it more clearly: matter is the condition — the necessary basis or vehicle, a *sine qua non* — for the manifestation of these forces, or agents, on this plane.

In regard to Mr. O'Connor's demonstration of the electro-magnetic vortex theory of the solar system, the following quotation from *Scientists are Human* by David Lindsay Watson, just published by Watts and Co., London, will interest our readers as illustrating the trend toward entirely new views in regard to the forces of nature, which is exactly what H. P. Blavatsky said would occur before the 20th century was very old. Mr. Watson seems to agree with the principle advanced by Mr. O'Connor:

The orthodox gravitational theory of the sun, the mathematics of which is impeccable, will probably go into the discard for this reason. . . [the lack of sufficient imagination being used by scientists in not giving due consideration to all sides of a problem before starting to work it out] . . . The recent theory of Ross Gunn, on the contrary, suggests that the stability of the sun and the configuration of the solar system can be adequately explained only if previously-ignored electro-magnetical forces are taken into account — not gravitational forces alone. The accepted theories have hypnotised the scientific world by the elegance of their mathematics, and this elegance has retarded the realization that electro-magnetic forces are crucial to the problem. — page 99

Dr. Ross Gunn is a member of the Naval Research Laboratory at Washington. In 1933 he criticized the estimates of the solar temperature in view of his observations of the magnetic conditions of the sun's atmosphere and the corona. He claimed that electro-magnetism and suchlike forces have a major part to play in solar phenomena. Since then moving pictures of the solar prominences have revealed phenomena, hitherto unseen, which are said strongly to suggest the activity of electro-magnetic forces.

Mr. O'Connor's reference to vortical and spiral motions in Cosmic and atomic phenomena is particularly interesting in view of the importance attached to them in the Esoteric Philosophy. While the vortical movement is one of the oldest conceptions of Greek philosophy it is really an echo of the far older archaic wisdom, wherein it is found in the Tibetan teaching about "Fohat," the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation. H. P. Blavatsky defines Fohat as the intelligent guiding power in all manifestation, the "Thought Divine" transmitted and manifested through the "Dhyān Chohans," the Architects of the visible world, the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying, as it were, every atom into life. Christian theology called such Intelligences Archangels, Seraphs, and the like. She says Fohat is the key to Occultism and that it unriddles many mysteries of the Egyptian, Chaldaean and Indian religious philosophies. Quoting from the archaic Stanzas of Dzyan, on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, she writes in regard to the "circular and spiral" action of Fohat:

FOHAT TRACES SPIRAL LINES TO UNITE THE SIX TO THE SEVENTH [the inner to the outer]. . . .

HOW DOES FOHAT BUILD THEM? [the worlds]. . . HE MAKES BALLS OF FIRE, RUNS THROUGH THEM AND ROUND THEM, INFUSING LIFE THEREINTO; THEN SETS THEM INTO MOTION, SOME ONE, SOME THE OTHER WAY. THEY ARE COLD — HE MAKES THEM HOT. THEY ARE DRY — HE MAKES THEM MOIST.

THEY SHINE — HE FANS AND COOLS THEM.

THUS ACTS FOHAT FROM ONE *Twilight* TO THE OTHER DURING SEVEN ETERNITIES. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 118, 144

The cycles of evolution, of involution, of reincarnation and other forms of reimpodiment, are also connected with the activity of Fohat in "running circular errands," a quaint though expressive archaic expression of the Stanzas of Dzyan.

THEOSOPHY AN OBJECTIVE IDEALISM — *Abbott Clark*

Among philosophies, Theosophy is an Objective Idealism an Idealism because it recognises the fundamental Reality as spiritual and teaches that all manifestation, spiritual as well as physical, inner as well as outer, is guided by Divine Ideation. Yet it is not a pure Idealism, because it acknowledges the objective world to have a relative or transitory reality — for to beings in a manifested world objective things are very real while they last.

The Universe is one living, throbbing, vibrating whole: Divine in origin, essential nature, and destiny. From the One Divine Reality all manifestation proceeds as an emanational unfolding. From plane to plane, from world to world, and from loka to loka, the process is a condensation from Spirit into matter, from reality to illusion, on the descending arc, until matter predominates over spirit and the beings enmeshed in the material spheres suffer the limitations of matter with its "pairs of opposites" — including intense oscillations from pleasure to pain, from joy to sorrow. The material worlds are the "hell" worlds, and the more material the state the lower the hell.

On the returning or ascending arc the process is reversed. From the lowest material sphere to the highest spiritual worlds is a succession of awakenings. From state to state, from plane to plane or world, the transition can be likened to a series of initiations or awakenings from a lower to a higher state, from ignorance and illusion to a greater and ever greater realization of Truth and Reality. There is an ever-growing expansion of consciousness, a quickening of perception, and an increase in intelligence. There is a greater development of Individuality, a greater nobility of character, a larger sympathy and more universal love. There is an ever-increasing degree of the power and freedom of the Will, as man rises above the plane of contention, antagonism and hate, into love and peace, into harmony and co-operation with the universal Divine Order. During the long process of

evolution the man, or Monad, passes from the purity and innocence of ignorance to a greater purity of enlightenment and wisdom, from the status of an elemental workman to that of a cosmic creative Architect.

As the objective and the subjective become one, the ideal becomes the Real, the Maya is resolved, the consciousness attains Truth and Reality.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME, DURATION, AND THE ETERNAL NOW (1) — *G. de Purucker*

The main thing to remember about Time is this: that it exists, but *is not* in the absolute sense. That which *is* in the absolute sense is Duration. What is the distinction between Time and Duration? Time like all things in manifestation is relative and is divisible. Time has past, has present, has future, and these three are distinct each from the other twain. Duration has no divisibility. It has no past, it has no future, and consequently there is no distinctive time present. But there is what we in our feeble language call an Eternal Now. Oh, how difficult it is to describe this, and yet it is so simple to catch the thought.

For instance, the Romans lived and suffered and joyed and died and strutted their little ways upon the stage of life in their time, as Shakespeare said. But they are now gone. That is ended. Yet in Duration those Romans are just as much alive now as they were then, for all exists in an Eternal Now. Similarly with us of the present; and we look to the future as something that is coming. Time in our consciousness has an effect of distance, which it has because our minds are relative. But in Duration that future is here now.

For instance, if my mind, if my thought, if my consciousness, were now at the present instant functioning in Duration, I would not see things, such as the Romans of the past, dead, gone forever — then ourselves here now, and something unknown to come in the future. But functioning in Duration all things would be present in my consciousness with me now: What we call Past, what we call the Future, what we call the Present, would be with me now, and not only those things, but all the Now of infinite Space, and endless, frontierless Duration.

Time exists most emphatically, it is an illusion, a maya, which merely means we find it very difficult to understand it and do not understand it exactly as it should be understood; but that is not time's fault, that is

our fault. Our understanding is too weak to grasp it as it is, as it exists. Therefore, we call it a *maya* to us. In English we say an illusion. Yes, but illusion does not mean something that does not exist. If it did not exist, obviously it would not be an illusion. It means something which deludes our understanding, an illusion or a delusion to us.

Now you know Newton, as they now try to point out, had an idea that Time was an absolute entity, like Space, and Matter; and that Time as an absolute entity was in actual movement, flowing was the word, flowing out from the past into the present into the future. The scientific philosophers of today have rejected that idea. They say it is all very well to look upon past, present, and future, as easy, convenient ways of doing our daily tasks, of understanding the life around us; but it is an unreal thing. Time is not an absolute entity. You ask then, what is the absolute entity? They will say it is the space-time continuum — about which there is a lot of truth, for they have at last welded together in one thing, Space and what we call Time; and both of these are what we call Duration. For Duration is Space, and all its manifestations are Time, in Time, of Time.

Many illustrations have already been given this evening by the different speakers to show us how Time is illusory to our understanding. When you are happy, time passes quickly. When you are a child, time passes very quickly, or terribly slowly, depending upon the mood of the child. As you grow older, time just flows by, or drags, depending upon your mood. Therefore what is Time itself? It is the functioning of consciousness, in the present case our human consciousness, and our human consciousness is an attribute of what we call the space-time continuum of Cosmic Infinitude.

Now I wonder if you are much wiser after all this philosophical discussion! I can tell you this though. There is a way of becoming conscious of Duration *per se* — when the consciousness seems to be taken right out of Time. It is something you cannot describe. You have to be it for the time being to understand it. And yet I wonder how many of you have not had this experience, where at the instant between

dreaming and waking, or just before falling asleep, or perhaps during a fainting-fit or just before or after it, when all the attributes of Time suddenly have vanished, and you are conscious only of utter immensity, utter reality, and timelessness, and everything has vanished that is comprehensible to the brain-mind; very understandable, however, by the intuition. And this raised to the nth degree, i. e., into the pure unadulterate consciousness of the spirit within, where all wisdom and knowledge and vision are, is what the Hindu yogins mean when they talk about sambuddhi-samadhi, or simply samadhi sometimes. And when the consciousness is fixed in this state that I have just touched, the Buddhists call it Nirvana. Do you want to know why? Nirvana means "blown out." Do you know why? Because of just what I have described. All the lower attributes of the personal ego have sunken into latency, have gone, or have been surmounted. Your consciousness is for the time co-extensive with the Universe. Therein there is no consciousness of the movements and changes of things combined with the psychological interplay of attributes, with these together producing division or sense of time; the procession of events has passed out of the picture, for the consciousness has risen above these events of manifestation, and you are now in timeless Duration.

As a mere illustration of how illusory time is — and please remember that such an illusion does not mean that it is nonexistent, for if it were non-existent there would be no argument about it — I would recall to those of you who have had dreams, vivid or vague, how curiously time and its phenomena seem to change in these dreams. It is a well-known fact of psychology that in dreams, or even under the influence of some drug, the events of a life-time seem to be condensed within a few moments; or contrariwise, what would in waking, feeling life take but a few moments, can in these sub- or super-normal states be so stretched out as to cover years. It is the same consciousness which experiences these extraordinary visionings, and thus "Time" in any of these states or in the normal Jagrata or waking-state seems to the experiencing consciousness just as "real" as any other of its experiences in and with

Time.

These facts lead the reflective mind almost instantly to see that it is the experiencing consciousness which really is the time-maker, weaving this making out of the stuff of timeless Duration, which in a true sense is identical with the essence of Consciousness itself. Many a drowning but later resuscitated man has had all the events of his lifetime pass in a rapid panoramic vision before his consciousness; the whole procession of events which originally took years to experience now flash before the mind's eye in a few moments of clock-time, and yet the experiencing consciousness is cognisant of no incongruity or unconsciousness about all this.

Time, therefore, when compared with Duration, is something like extension when compared with Space. Time is a phenomenon of Duration, just as extension is a phenomenon of Space, and in both cases Duration and Space are realities or noumena, and Time and extensions are the phenomena or illusions, in other words, the maya, in each case.

Remember also that there are collective mayas, such as we human beings ordinarily experience as when all human beings on earth have the same time-consciousness of day or night, or a group of men and women will have the same consciousness of an hour passed in a theater, or on a picnic, or in a train, or a week at sea, etc., etc.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Extemporaneous remarks after a meeting of the Point Loma Lodge, Sunday evening, June 12, 1938. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

FALSE TIME AND REAL TIME — *H. T. Edge*

Dr. J. W. Dunne has written a new book, *The New Immortality* (1) which is a continuation of his previous books, *An Experiment with Time*, and *The Serial Universe*, reviewed in our numbers for May and November, 1938. But it is much briefer and in more popular form, and the author must be congratulated for having made things as clear to the ordinary understanding as it is possible to make such a subject. But of course it will be necessary that the book should be studied through, since we cannot condense what is already a condensation.

It will be remembered that Mr. Dunne in his previous books speaks of an indefinite number of different orders of time, moving relatively to one another; but here, for simplicity's sake and as a first step, he limits himself to two, which he calls false time and real time. The false time, that which we wrongly call time, he represents as the traveling of a point of attention along the field of the real time. The present-moment view which we have of a thing is an abstraction from reality. The reality is four-dimensional, and we are to conceive ourselves as three-dimensional beings traveling through this four-dimensional world. Here we may appositely quote from *The Secret Doctrine*:

Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration. (I, 37)

What we call time therefore is a sort of spatial dimension, or, since it represents a velocity, the term "vector" may be more applicable. Past and future events exist in the real time, but we classify them as past and future according as we have left them behind or not yet arrived at them. This view of the world has a notable bearing on the philosophy of materialism, as shown in the following quotation:

If you mistake the hybrid thing of which I am speaking for real time, you will come inevitably to the conclusion that everything in the universe is transient and rushing to destruction. In real

time the exact contrary is the case. Everything which has established its existence *remains in existence*. A rose which has bloomed once blooms for ever. As for Man, he is not accorded distinctive treatment; he merely remains with the rest.

This is the basis of the new immortality. This immortality is not a condition upon which we enter suddenly at death, as not having been in it before. It is a condition which exists now, but which we have overlooked. It is quite in accordance with the beliefs of Theosophists that immortality should be thus regarded.

The mistakes made by physicists, according to Mr. Dunne (more fully explained in his *Serial Universe*) are largely due to their having confused the false time with the real, confused the abstraction with the reality from which it was abstracted. How many vexed problems can be cleared up by correcting this mistake is a matter too deep to go into here, but we understand that it has already profoundly impressed some competent scientific and philosophic thinkers.

One is glad to notice that Mr. Dunne complains of the absurdity of requiring people to *prove* the postulates which they have *assumed* for the purposes of an argument.

To demand that a writer on problems which are based upon the acceptance of space and time as elementary indefinables shall begin by denning either term, is to demand that he shall abandon these as terms, discover something more fundamental than either, and proceed to discuss a different problem.

This logical error is one of the most fertile sources of futile logomachy.

The first part of the book is devoted to "The two Nows," which is a way of naming the two sorts of time; one is a moving ever-changing now; the other is a fixed and unchanging now. Birth and death, says the author, are not episodes; they are states; they are there permanently in the real Now. We are three-dimensional beings with a four-dimensional outlook. We have at least two selves, one of which is the owner of the other. This is implied in the term "myself."

A good deal is said about the dream state. When we fall asleep, our senses cease to act, and our moving point of attention is no longer chained to its direct line; hence it becomes free to wander over the vast range of experiences, past, present, and future. But, not being accustomed to such a state of affairs, we stumble about and mix things up, so that events separated by lapses of time are seen together. If it be objected that this is a state of illusion, Mr. Dunne asks us wherein is this state more illusory than the waking state; and further reminds us that, in thinking of a dream, we are comparing a present experience with a mere memory — an unfair comparison; we should rather compare our memories of dreams with our *memories* of waking experience.

There is one place where the author says what will remind Theosophists of certain after-death states which are described as subjective or illusory. When liberated from the tyranny of the present moment, either by dream or in some other way, we can hold apparent communion with our loved ones. And, what seems best of all, these loved ones are far more agreeable than they were in life, for they respond to our every wish. But here comes the hitch: the reason they are so facile and complacent is that *we have made them to order*. And further, though we seem to be with our friend, yet our friend is not with us; he is enjoying a little paradise of his own. When we meet on earth, the attention of both parties is focussed on the same instant of pseudo-time, and there is a true meeting. But in this other state —

You may hear again the spoken words, you may receive and give the same caresses. But the attention of that other may not be there. In that case there is no *meeting*.

This may sound discouraging, but there is a remedy, a sure and safe one. It is the old medicine — *escape from self*.

To avoid or to escape from that, you must be willing to surrender some of your sovereignty. You must be prepared to build to please others. Where there is unselfish love there must

be obviously the required measure of agreement. Then you will meet very fully that other whom you seek. You will encounter once again that difference in outlook and desire which makes that other other than you. You two will *do things together*. Your solo will cease and become part of a duet.

And elsewhere we read that "God is the escape from Self. . . . He is Love. But he is not a distributor of rewards for "virtues" and of punishments for "iniquities." "

But the author does not see why we should not reach these conclusions by way of mathematics; nor did Pythagoras. Perhaps it is a fault of our times to consider mathematics in a derogatory or a jocular sense.

We regard these books of Mr. Dunne's as part of a movement now going on, by which we are escaping from what might be called a one-plane view of the universe. The universe as conceived by science has been a picture correlative with the physical senses. But this is only a partial picture, a cross-section of the universe, as some might call it. It has been found insufficient to explain the facts of experience. Science has found it necessary to go beyond it; and we have now so much evidence of supernormal faculties that it is no longer possible to explain it away. We have to admit that, if our physical senses can become inactive, our mind may thereby be enabled to function in another way, to contact the universe through other channels, and thus to make for itself a new picture of the universe, a new form of objectivity. This, in Theosophical language, would be called planes of consciousness and planes of objectivity corresponding thereto. Mr. Dunne's method of approach is original and highly suggestive. He has put his finger on a common logical error regarding "time," which many must have felt without being able to analyse; he has shown, as others have done before him, how science has been giving a fictitious reality to abstractions.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The New Immortality*, by J. W. Dunne. Faber and Faber, London,

1938. 3s. 6d. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS — *William Q. Judge*

[Under the above title Mr. Judge in 1887-8 conducted a column in his magazine *The Path* where under the pen-name Zadok he answered questions from Theosophists and inquirers. Beginning with the February issue of THE FORUM these questions and answers are being reprinted in response to many requests. — Eds.]

Is it well to cultivate the intellect at the expense of the heart? Do we not pay too much attention to intellectual progress, and in so doing allow the Heart-Mind to wander where it may?

It is not wise to cultivate either at the expense of the other. Each alone will end at the same place — The Threshold. Both are excellent means for the manifestation of that which is higher than either, when cultivated to their highest in unison. Both are useless after a certain point, except as tools for truth. Metaphysics, logic and emotion all end at a dead wall.

Do not the words and teachings of Jesus, taken in their esoteric sense, point one {the} way to the Theosophic Path?

Taken in the sense he intended the people to take them, they lead to *the way*. Taken in the sense in which he desired his Disciples to receive them, they are teachings upon *the way*. Taken in their esoteric sense — as he knew them — they *are the way*. Were the wisdom of Egypt and India to-day blotted out from both the seen and unseen worlds — the true seeker would find in his teachings, *when rightly studied*, all the teachings of Isis and Buddha. As he received his instruction from Egypt, heired from India, it is more than probable that esoterically his teachings are identical with both.

Will the Devachanic period form an interruption to work for humanity in the case of one devoted to this during earth life? Is Devachan then a rejuvenating, strengthening period necessary for us while in the bonds of

flesh, and is the Elixir of Life the only escape from this egoistic period? May an answer be given to this?

As the Devachanic period is a result of work for humanity — the true and pure devachanic state being only thus obtained — it should form no interruption to such work. It only does become such when the soul is selfish enough to prefer Devachan to a continuance of work for other men, and even then to a certain extent the soul continues its work. There is rest in Devachan, but not idleness. As this state is frequently entered and passed through while yet in the body, it should be an aid, not a hindrance, to true work. In truth it is a state of reward, but in that state no rewards are received. There is no state up to Nirvana that can be an obstacle to work for humanity for those who are devoted to that work. The Elixir of Life is the only means by which we can pass beyond both Devachan and the thoughts of it; the Magnum Opus is the only thing that entitles us to it.

Are the Astral and the lowest plane of mental life synonymous terms?

They are not. The impulses for all mental life originate beyond the Astral. The outer man with his mind interprets these as he conceives they should be. The lowest as well as the highest mental life may receive knowledge from the Astral, but it is not the Astral. All that all forms of mental life produce is indelibly impressed upon the Astral.

Is the "rising above the Astral" in effect rising above the stings and approbation of public opinion?

For us, there is no public opinion. We know neither sting nor approbation. Rising above public opinion is merely rising above the material. Until men forget the material, they cannot rise above self. Until they forget self, they can not rise above the Astral: All things that please as well as those that distress men are in and through the Astral. Rise above both.

Whence come the visions seen just before dropping to sleep? They are uncontrollable — Sometimes unpleasant, and have increased since childhood, and since beginning the study of Occultism?

When we enter that condition called sleep, we open wide the doors and windows of the body or this house we live in, and the soul goes forth as a bird freed from its cage. In partial unconsciousness or falling into sleep, the body has, to a great extent, ceased to act, but the brain is still sensitive or receptive to the pictures or impressions of the Astral. Of the lower principles the Astral is the last to cease action either in sleep or death. The brain is its instrument. In the partial somnolent condition, the pictures of the Astral are conveyed to the brain; through that the outer man realizes and beholds the visions. If he were fully asleep these visions would be dreams. Precisely, as dreams, they may be either pleasant or the reverse. Like dreams they are uncontrollable by the ordinary every day mortal. The Occultist being master of himself beholds only that which he desires, either in vision, or dream, or neither. As one makes himself more sensitive to impressions from the Astral when and after he begins the study of occultism, visions and dreams will increase in frequency for a time.

A most perplexed individual is writing to you. I have been for three years endeavoring to study Theosophy. I have heard lectures, have read an immense amount of literature devoted to that cult, from the sages of old down to the Sinnetts, Olcotts, and Blavatskys of the present day. I have conned the Yoga Philosophy and I read THE PATH. Light on the Path aids me not, nor does Bhagavad-Gita, and why? Because I am yet without the first steps towards practice. (Surely Theosophy — like other sciences — must have SOMETHING practical about it?) Guide me with your friendly hints. Imagine me alone in a room. How to commence? Show me the first step upon the practical ladder! All I have heard and read seemeth to me so elaborately unintelligible that I lay it aside and beg you to instruct me in my Theosophical ABC. Astral Light! Is it a figurative light, i. e. Revelation? or is it a light, as electricity — the Heavens — coal — gives light? If abstraction (into insensibility) is necessary, can you instruct me upon Hypnotism (self mesmerism)! "A shining object" is advised to stare at! A mirror is a shining object, for instance. But of what avail to stare at a mirror and see reflected ugliness!

You say that for three years you have been endeavoring to *study* Theosophy. Such being the case, you will meet with but little success. Divine Wisdom can not be a subject for *study*, but it may be an object of *search*. With the love for this same wisdom uppermost in our hearts, we ask you if it would not be wiser to lay aside the *study* of so called Theosophy and study yourself. Knowing yourself you know all men, the worlds seen and occult, and find Theo-Sophia. One cannot absorb Theosophy as a sponge does water, to be expelled at the slightest touch. Our conception of Theosophy is apt to be based upon the idea that it is an especial line of teaching — a larger, wider, and greater doctrine than others perhaps, but still a doctrine, and therefore limited. We must bear in mind that the true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all; that he can find the true object of his search equally as well in the Hebrew bible as in the Yoga philosophy, in the New Testament equally as well as in the Bhagavad-Gita.

You say you have "conned the Yoga philosophy." This is not enough; merely to "con" it is not to know it. It is in fact a most practical system (if you refer to that of Patanjali), and one that will meet all requirements you have in the way of difficulty; for it is one of the most difficult. It is not possible for you to judge its merits without practice: and it gives full directions. If for three years you study and practice it — aye for one year — you will find that you need no other. In these matters there is no child's play nor the usual English and American method of mere booklearning, — we must absorb and work into the practice and the theory laid down, for they are not written merely for the *intellect* but for the whole spiritual nature. There must be within the man something which he already knows, that leaps up and out when he scans the books of wisdom; a thing already existing, which only takes an added life or confirmation from books. True Theosophy has all that is practical, but many forget this: there is no greater system of practice than that required by it.

Desire wisdom; love all men; do your duty; forget yourself; let each thought and act of your life have for its aim the finding of divine wisdom; strive to apply that wisdom for the good of other men. If you

search in every direction, Light must come to you. Let the place in which you now are be the lonely room you speak of, and seek to find in everything the meaning. Strive to know what they are, and by what governed or caused. This is the first step. Live your life with this ever before you. Purify your thoughts as well as your body. Reason all you can, feel all with your heart you may, and when intellect and heart fail you, seek for something higher. This is the A. B. C; it is enough for the present.

It is not Theosophy that is a science, but its application. It is not a "cult," for it covers and includes all.

The Astral Light is an actuality. It is not revelation, but a means through which that which causes revelation acts. Electricity, the heavens, all lower fires, are but the shadows of the Astral Light, just as the Astral Light is but the darkness of the Ineffable Light.

Abstraction into insensibility is not intended. If it had been so intended, it would be unnecessary for us to be in these bodies. If you can forget yourself sufficiently — forget that you exist as a human body, you will not need to stare at a mirror; but so long as you realize, when staring into a glass, whether you be pretty or ugly, you can not reach Celestial sensibility or terrestrial insensibility.

Hypnotism is the controlling of other personalities. Under this you would be but a puppet for the thoughts of another. Your outer self had better become a puppet for your own thought.

We seek to make the body alive, not to kill it.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MEANING OF EASTER

Try to keep in your thought the essential meaning of Easter as the time of rebirth, regeneration, resurrection. No man or woman, pagan so called, or non-pagan, non-Christian or Christian, can understand the meaning of Easter, the Great Day as the ancients called it, and the symbolic mythos of the risen Christ in all its beauty, who has not himself, at least to some extent, undergone within himself the resurrection.

Easter is an appeal to men to change their lives upwards, to bring out the Inner Buddha, the Christ glory, from within. When a man can do this he is great whether he is known or unknown, high placed in social station or a humble peasant. He is then a living example of an imbodyed divinity, a Christ-like man, as the Christians say, an imbodyed Buddha as they say in the far Orient.

That is the teaching of Easter. Let us resurrect ourselves from the tomb each year.

— *From a talk given by G. de P. in the Temple, Point Loma, April 17, 1938*

WHEN THE SLEEPER AWAKES — Marjorie M. Tyberg

Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he

Who finds himself, loses his misery.

— Matthew Arnold

Every year is enacted the ancient marvel: that part of life which has withdrawn to the invisible, returns, and tree and plant burst out in leaf and blossom. Every morning this ancient marvel is performed when the Self which withdrew to its invisible bourne returns to resume physical body and waking life. With every child that is born there is the marvel of an infinitesimal seed coming to manifest as infant, youth, and man. But what is that which is awake throughout the whole cycle? What is the Unseen which produces the visible, the bodily? Are we, the day-selves, asleep, who know it not? Truly, the Great Awakening for us will be when we know ourselves as the Self who put forth Spirit, Soul, and Body, and abides, watching and waiting for the sleeper bound in the palace of form to awaken to the day of Self-consciousness.

That Self has in the past won power to send forth rays of Itself, seeds of humanity on a planet as it begins its cycle of life, to come to flower in godhood. For planets, too, have their periods of rest and withdrawal, followed by return to material form and physical activity. The Moon died, but its seeds of life remained in space and with a planetary dawn these awoke, we among them, and began our day on our new Earth-home. Humanity is the Earth-child, human from the first, in "structural intent," even as the human embryo is recognised to be.

There is co-operation in the Universe. The Sun, Moon, Stars, and Planets, combined to build Humanity, and when a form befitting had been prepared, latent mind was awakened by superior hierarchies of beings, the young Humanity's Guardians. Science and history have told us of the evolution of form and something of what mind has done for man; but they have not yet told, and evidently cannot tell us what

happens when the cycle of destiny turns upward, and latent *divinity* has its turn to hold sway.

This does not look likely at present, does it? When fourteen of the known civilizations have gone down, and almost all the conditions that prevailed when they fell are just about what we read accounts of in the daily newspapers; when fear, nerve-racking uncertainty, distrust of human destiny, are expressed generally, the future looks black indeed. But all this crumbling is but making way for the new that is to be born. The poet Lowell was wise when he wrote in "The Cathedral," "Change is the mask that all continuance wears." The Spirit and Divinity in man are waiting to take command and direct the activities of the New Day.

This is to take place on Earth: Humanity is stationed on Earth at present. There will be no escape to a brighter star, to a heavenly home of eternal bliss. The ancients tell us that death is a stairway reaching to the stars; but with every rebirth we step down and back to Earth, to be human here, even as the violet will be a violet next spring, and not an astronomer. Sleep may be a quick ascent to the stars, but there is as quick a descent, and we wake where sleep overtook us the night before. All this is familiar to us but full of meaning not yet realized by us.

What is not familiar to us is the program for Humanity's New Day on Earth, that Day when the Divinity within each of us, that Self of Union and Will, shall, on the luminous upper arc of our destiny, express itself in the relations and institutions of life on Earth.

The attributes of this Divine Self are Peace, Power, Beauty, Truth, and Wisdom. They dwell in that Inmost Self, which even the most modern thinkers are now bidding us seek. How would it help us if that Self, which has won consciousness of divinity and knowledge of the cosmic pattern of life in long ages of planetary, solar, and starry experience, were in command, were encouraged, invoked to pour down through the purified channel of mind and feeling its wisdom and light? Let us picture it.

If you knew that you are, in your inmost, and that I am, in my inmost, a divine being waiting to manifest, and I too knew that you and I are, in our inmost, divine beings, would there not be a spiritual rock of ages on which we could stand, a common ground of divine origin, of hope and interest and purpose, firm enough to support us in working out our destiny as individuals?

As individuals it must be; individuals so much our whole selves that we can rejoice in the diversity of mankind, inevitable because there is in each of us an essential characteristic, a creative individual waiting to manifest fully. Picture us as so truly ourselves that we want others to be themselves, to enjoy what they can add to the tapestry of life. For, not unison but harmony is the highest ideal, and only conscious individuals can unite to produce the cosmic harmony that is to be. The less developed do not unite, they merge, and we have herd-consciousness and the chance for mob-psychology to be used in exploiting the less evolved entities. Harmony is never born from herd-consciousness. If the performers cannot play their own instruments there is no music.

We must learn to differ without dividing. Why not believe in new and happy combinations and associations of individuals aware of their powers and possibilities? And do you believe that if human minds actuated by selfish desire for possessive power and material advantage over their fellows can devise means that threaten wholesale destruction of the human race — do you believe that human minds illumined by light from the Divine Self cannot conceive some godlike, friendly, convincing way of dissolving human differences? It is unworthy, it is unholy, to hold so limited a view of human possibilities.

What makes man human is the power to control, to restrain harmful, separative feelings, thoughts, speech, and acts. What strife will be avoided when this power of inhibition, when spiritual will, is used, *not* to build these barriers of misunderstanding and bitterness. The exercise of this power liberates a new sense of proportion, a fresh glimpse of realms of activity under our own control that exhilarates,

that brings spiritual humor, and a rich and harmless zest to life.

It is said, too, that the joy, the calm, the peace and certainty, of the true mystic, may be the common religious experience of humanity in the future — that inner reconciliation, that stilling of the transitory, doubting self by the enduring divine inner Self, which has blest those of whatever religion who have sounded the depths of their own natures. It is said too that the realms of beauty and meaning and power to which artists, poets, musicians, and inventors have occasional access, may become the common field of vision of Humanity in the bright future. What boundless possibilities for the operation of invisible, integrating, non-violent influences in that meeting-place where Spiritual Power, Love, Truth, Beauty, and Harmony abide.

The gift of Theosophy to Beauty is the cosmic framework that reveals man a child of Divinity, fostered and guided by Spiritual and Divine Hierarchies of Sun and Stars, who watch over Earth and us. The Cosmic Myth — myriad forms of which have nurtured art and literature and religions in all ages — lifts all conceptions of life and truth and beauty — and duty — to higher levels of cooperation, consciousness, and creative realization. It is this Truth which, once apprehended, will form the basis for world-unity, for the new social imagination, for purer art, greater poetry, wiser living, power to call upon resources of inward attainment in the regulation of human affairs. In this Awakening to the Self we may be laggards; or, we may be adventurers in cosmic ideas, leaders in the conquest of the spiritual frontiers within, and Self-Discoverers in this cyclic dawn of a New Day for Humanity.

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Paracelsus — the Most Wondrous Intellect of his Age

As the dawn of physical science broke into a glaring day-light, the spiritual sciences merged deeper and deeper into night, and in their turn they were denied. So, now, these greatest masters in psychology are looked upon as "ignorant and superstitious ancestors"; as mountebanks and jugglers, because, forsooth, the sun of modern learning shines to-day so bright, it has become an axiom that the philosophers and men of science of the olden time knew nothing, and lived in a night of superstition. But their traducers forget that the sun of to-day will seem dark by comparison with the luminary of to-morrow, whether justly or not; and as the men of our century think their ancestors ignorant, so will perhaps their descendants count them for *know-nothings*. The world moves in cycles. The coming races will be but the reproductions of races long bygone; as we, perhaps, are the images of those who lived a hundred centuries ago. The time will come when those who now in public slander the hermetists, but ponder in secret their dust-covered volumes; who plagiarize their ideas, assimilate and give them out as their own — will receive their dues. "Who," honestly exclaims Pfaff — "what man has ever taken more comprehensive views of nature than Paracelsus? He was the bold creator of chemical medicines; the founder of courageous parties; victorious in controversy, belonging to those spirits who have created amongst us a new mode of thinking on the natural existence of things. What he scattered through his writings on the philosopher's stone, on pigmies and spirits of the mines; on signs, on homunculi, and the elixir of life, and which are employed by many to lower his estimation, cannot extinguish our grateful remembrance of his general works, nor our admiration of his free, bold exertions, and his noble, intellectual life."

More than one pathologist, chemist, homoeopathist, and magnetist has

quenched his thirst for knowledge in the books of Paracelsus. Frederick Hufeland got his theoretical doctrines on infection from this mediaeval "quack," as Sprengel delights in calling one who was immeasurably higher than himself. Hemman, who endeavors to vindicate this great philosopher, and nobly tries to redress his slandered memory, speaks of him as the "*greatest* chemist of his time." So do Professor Molitor, and Dr. Ennemoser, the eminent German psychologist. According to their criticisms on the labors of this Hermetist, Paracelsus is the most "wondrous intellect of his age," a "noble genius." — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 51-2

"The will," says Van Helmont, "is the first of all powers. For through the will of the Creator all things were made and put in motion. . . . The will is the property of all spiritual beings, and displays itself in them the more actively the more they are freed from matter." And Paracelsus, "the divine," as he was called, adds in the same strain: "*Faith* must confirm the imagination, for faith establishes the *will*. . . . Determined will is the beginning of all magical operations. . . . Because men do not perfectly imagine and believe the result, is that the arts are uncertain, while they might be perfectly certain." — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 57

Christopher Columbus discovered America, and Americus Vesputius reaped the glory and usurped his dues. Theophrastus Paracelsus re-discovered the occult properties of the magnet — "the bone of Horus" which, twelve centuries before his time, had played such an important part in the theurgic mysteries — and he very naturally became the founder of the school of magnetism and of mediaeval magico-theurgy. But Mesmer, who lived nearly three hundred years after him, and as a disciple of his school brought the magnetic wonders before the public, reaped the glory that was due to the fire-philosopher, while the great master died in a hospital!

So goes the world: new discoveries, evolving from old sciences; new men — the same old nature! — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 71-2

And now to the doctrine of Paracelsus. His incomprehensible, though lively style must be read like the biblio-rolls of Ezekiel, "*within and*

without." The peril of propounding heterodox theories was great in those days; the Church was powerful, and sorcerers were burnt by the dozens. For this reason, we find Paracelsus, Agrippa, and Eugenius Philalethes as notable for their pious declarations as they were famous for their achievements in alchemy and magic. The full views of Paracelsus on the occult properties of the magnet are explained partially in his famous book, *Archidaxarum*, in which he describes the wonderful tincture, a medicine extracted from the magnet and called *Magisterium Magnetis*, and partially in the *De Ente Dei*, and *De Ente Astrorum*, Lib. I. But the explanations are all given in a diction unintelligible to the profane. "Every peasant sees," said he, "that a magnet will attract iron, but a wise man must inquire for himself. . . . I have discovered that the magnet, besides this visible power, that of attracting iron, possesses another *and concealed* power."

He demonstrates further that in man lies hidden a "*sidereal* force," which is that emanation from the stars and celestial bodies of which the spiritual form of man — the astral spirit — is composed. This identity of essence, which we may term the spirit of cometary matter, always stands in direct relation with the stars from which it was drawn, and thus there exists a mutual attraction between the two, both being magnets. The identical composition of the earth and all other planetary bodies and man's terrestrial body was a fundamental idea in his philosophy. "The body comes from the elements, the [astral] spirit from the stars. . . . Man eats and drinks of the elements, for the sustenance of his blood and flesh; from the stars are the intellect and thoughts sustained in his spirit." *The spectroscope has made good his theory as to the identical composition of man and stars; the physicists now lecture to their classes upon the magnetic attractions of the sun and planets.*

Of the substances known to compose the body of man, there have been discovered in the stars already, hydrogen, sodium, calcium, magnesium and iron. In all the stars observed, numbering many hundreds, hydrogen was found, except in two. Now, if we recollect how they have deprecated Paracelsus and his theory of man and the stars being

composed of like substances; how ridiculed he was by astronomers and physicists, for his ideas of chemical affinity and attraction between the two; and then realize that the spectroscope has vindicated one of his assertions at least, is it so absurd to prophesy that in time all the rest of his theories will be substantiated?

And now, a very natural question is suggested. How did Paracelsus come to learn anything of the composition of the stars, when, till a very recent period — till the discovery of the spectroscope in fact — the constituents of the heavenly bodies were utterly unknown to our learned academies? And even now, notwithstanding tele-spectroscope and other very important modern improvements, except a few elements and a hypothetical chromosphere, everything is yet a mystery for them in the stars. Could Paracelsus have been so sure of the nature of the starry host, unless he had means of which science knows nothing? Yet knowing nothing she will not even hear pronounced the very names of these means, which are — hermetic philosophy and alchemy.

We must bear in mind, moreover, that *Paracelsus was the discoverer of hydrogen, and knew well all its properties and composition* long before any of the orthodox academicians ever thought of it; that he had studied astrology and astronomy, as all the fire-philosophers did; and that, if he did assert that man is in a direct affinity with the stars, he knew well what he asserted. — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 167-9

The unity of the universe was asserted by Paracelsus, who says that "the human body is possessed of primeval stuff (or cosmic matter); the spectroscope has proved the assertion by showing that the same chemical elements which exist upon earth and in the sun, are also found in all the stars. The spectroscope does more: it shows that all the stars are *suns*, similar in constitution to our own; and as we are told by Professor Mayer, that the magnetic condition of the earth changes with every variation upon the sun's surface, and it is said to be "in subjection to *emanations* from the sun," the stars being suns must also give off emanations which affect us in proportionate degrees.

"In our dreams," says Paracelsus, "we are like the plants, which have also the elementary and vital body, but possess not the spirit. In our sleep the astral body is free and can, by the elasticity of its nature, either hover round in proximity with its sleeping vehicle, or soar higher to hold converse with its starry parents, or even communicate with its brothers at great distances. Dreams of a prophetic character, prescience, and present wants, are the faculties of the astral spirit. To our elementary and grosser body, these gifts are not imparted, for at death it descends into the bosom of the earth and is reunited to the physical elements, while the several spirits return to the stars. The animals," he adds, "have also their presentiments, for they too have an astral body." — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pp. 169-70

. . . although there have been alchemists before the days of Paracelsus, he was the first who had passed through the true initiation, that last ceremony which conferred on the adept the power of travelling toward the "burning bush" over the holy ground, and to "burn the golden calf in the fire, grind it to powder, and strow it upon the water." — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 349

. . . Paracelsus, the alchemists, and other mystics, meant by *mercurius vitae*, the living spirit of silver, the *aura* of silver, not the *argent vive*; and this *aura* is certainly not the mercury known to our physicians and druggists. There can be no doubt that the imputation that Paracelsus introduced mercury into medical practice is utterly incorrect. No mercury, whether prepared by a mediaeval fire-philosopher or a modern self-styled physician, can or ever did restore the body to perfect health. Only an unmitigated charlatan ever will use such a drug. And it is the opinion of many that it is just with the wicked intention of presenting Paracelsus in the eyes of posterity as a *quack*, that his enemies have invented such a preposterous lie. — *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 621

But TRUTH, however distasteful to the generally blind majorities, has always had her champions, ready to die for her, and it is not the Occultists who will protest against its adoption by Science under

whatever new name. But, until absolutely forced on the notice and acceptance of Scientists, many an Occult truth will be tabooed, as the phenomena of the Spiritualists and other psychic manifestations were, to be finally appropriated by its ex-traducers without the least acknowledgment or thanks. Nitrogen has added considerably to chemical knowledge, but its discoverer, Paracelsus, is to this day called a "quack." — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 297

Had Dr. Richardson studied all the secret works of Paracelsus, he would not have been obliged to confess so often — "we do not know" . . . "it is not known to us" . . . etc., etc. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 532

We, who unfortunately have learned at our personal expense how easily malevolent insinuations and calumny take root, can never be brought to believe that the great Paracelsus was a drunkard. There is a "mystery," and we fondly hope it will be explained some day. No great man's reputation was ever yet allowed to rest undisturbed. — *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, Vol. IV, p. 177

For centuries the selection of Chelas — outside the hereditary group within the *gon-pa* (temple) — has been made by the Himalayan Mahatmas themselves from among the class — in Tibet, a considerable one as to number — of natural mystics. The only exceptions have been in the cases of Western men like Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, Paracelsus, Pico di Mirandolo, Count St. Germain, etc., whose temperamental affinity to this celestial science more or less forced the distant Adepts to come into personal relations with them, and enabled them to *get* such small (or large) proportion of the whole truth as was possible under their social surroundings. — *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, Vol. IV, pp. 354-5

THE CHELA AND HIS GURU (1) — *Peter Flach*

"Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself."

We find these words in *The Voice of the Silence*, and they embody the gist of chelaship. We must live the life, and live it truly, before we can really receive, or as our present Leader so clearly puts it:

You cannot receive anything from without before it is already within, awakened, aroused. Seek ye first the divine within yourself, cultivate it, evoke it, awake it, and just in proportion as you do this, you will receive from without, because you give from within. You cannot receive anything from without, until there is something within you to receive.

Hence we see that discipleship consists first and foremost in doing. How can the Teacher and Guru lead and teach us unless we bring forth those qualities slumbering within which can raise us to those high levels where we can reach him? The Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by force. Mere goody-goodness and irreproachable life is not enough. The chela must swim against the stream. He must work, work uphill. Will, irresistible, indomitable, can alone carry him upward. Only one who toils hard can ascend a mountain-peak.

But here, as everywhere, we have to try to use our common sense. The mountaineer who ascends too fast in order to reach the summit can very easily, especially when he reaches the high altitudes, overstrain himself and entirely wreck his endeavor. I think the same can also happen in chelaship. In his enthusiasm and will to reach the high and wonderful planes of chelaship, the chela must carefully see that he does not draw upon himself more than his powers can withstand, and must also guard each step, or he may, like a mountaineer who does not probe the rock he is stepping upon, find himself plunging down a precipice. The narrow path of a chela is by no means easy going. The

chela is exposed to all temptations. He must show his fitness to what he aspires at every corner, he must show that he has more of the spirit in him than of matter. He may fall, but he can also recover the lost ground if he has determination enough.

What is it that makes the climbing hard? What prevents the godlike qualities blossoming forth? It is the veils enshrouding the personal self, the concentration of thought and ideas around the individual personal, egotistic center. Living the life, or becoming the Path itself, is therefore a drawing away from the personal self, and a widening interest and love in all that is, or, to put it in other words: a right comprehension of the meaning of Universal Brotherhood, the Spiritual Brotherhood of all Beings; the fact that all beings are linked together, not merely by the bond of emotional thought and feeling, but by the very fabric of the Universe itself. The more this fact is realized and put into practical operation, the more are the veils preventing the inner light to shine forth, torn away. Thus we see the wonderful paradox: the more we are working and living impersonally to help other beings, without an egoistical motive, the more we in reality gain for ourselves.

There are as many ways of developing the slumbering qualities and organs in us as there are persons. It is here we need the help of the guru. The clear-seeing guru alone can say what is good for each, taking into consideration his individual constitution, temper, mode of life, habit, character, etc.

The relationship between the chela and his guru is an extremely sacred one. The guru is the giver of the inner Light and giver of the inner Life. Or as H. P. B. states in the "Book of Discipline":

To the earnest disciple the Teacher takes the place of Father and Mother, for, whereas they gave him his body and its faculties, its life and causal form, the Teacher shows him how to develop the inner faculties for the acquisition of the Eternal Wisdom.

But the chela must walk each step himself. The guru can only show him the way, guide him and help him to develop the latent spiritual

potencies in his mind and heart. He himself must be the vehicle of the inner Light, must gain it. How do we best help a small child when it is growing up to find its bearings in life? Not by solving its small problems or shouldering all its difficulties but by helping and guiding so that it learns from experience. Thus it grows strong. It is the same in chelaship. The chela himself must walk each step.

The sacred relationship between the chela and his guru is based upon the highest virtues: Loyalty to the Teacher, Devotion to the Teacher and the complete fulfilling of all Duties to the Teacher. Why? Because the Teacher is the giver of inner Light and inner Life. Because the Teacher is taking upon himself a large responsibility and the Karmic consequences of his doing. In no way is the relationship of the chela toward the guru one of mental servitude or mental subservience. Emphatically, no! It lies on a high and sacred level. Nature permits no slavery in life. The guru's great purpose in leading and guiding the chela is *not* the development of the chela's slumbering faculties and powers, *only*, but to bring forth a new co-worker with Mother Nature, a new member of the Great White Lodge, working and striving to help humanity. Thus he guides and leads in wisdom and love but never is his effort bent to enslave the will of the chela. In fact, the Masters look upon no mortal failing as so great in defect of right as that of bowing the conscience in mental servitude to the dictates of another. Their main purpose is to bring forth strong men, free-willing men, fit to cooperate in their great work for humanity.

Let us compare ourselves with small children, or those below us in scale of civilization. In so many ways our doings are inscrutable to them. The Masters are still higher above us than we are above the small children, and this is the reason we have such difficulties in understanding them. They live on a higher plane and look upon things from an entirely different standpoint.

In order to make it possible for the guru to lead and guide, the chela must cleanse his brain from any feeling for anything worldly, from hatred, anger, avarice, or passions. The guru then will be able to

impress upon the chela's brain, and this is often the first mode adopted by the guru to lead the chela. It may often be done without the chela's knowing anything about it. What is the object of the training supervised and led by the guru? It is to bring forth and cultivate the chela's latent inner qualities and powers. It is to teach him that within him are the keys to wisdom, great wisdom beyond human description. Nothing really can come from without, every thing is within waiting to blossom forth. Within is the Path, and this Path is Himself — his Spiritual Self, his Divine Self, that part which is the root of his being. It is also the heart of the Universe. So when he has found his greater Self, his Spiritual Self, the Inner God, then he has not only found the Path which leads to the heart of the Universe, but he has found himself and it to be One.

When the inner eye is opened he shall have spiritual clairvoyance and the spiritual ability to see and to see aright; and in seeing to know that his seeing is truth.

I will conclude now with some words by William Quan Judge:

Friends, the struggle for the eternal is not in the daring deed nor yet in hundreds of them. It is the calm, unbroken forgetfulness of the lower self for all time. Begin it now on your present plane. You have within you that same guide that the Masters possess. By obeying it they have become what they are.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address given at the European Convention, Visingsö, Sweden, July 31, 1938. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

AWARENESS IN THE MOMENT AND THE DAY — A. Trevor Barker

All the great Teachers have laid stress upon the importance, not of envisaging an enormous period of time before you to do the difficult things of the spiritual life, but to pay attention to the little passing moments, the minutes and hours of each day. Therefore they taught: Fill the day full; watch over it, guide it; regard each single day as if it were the last day that you knew you were going to live. It has a wonderful effect upon the inner spiritual life, if we live each single moment with that awareness, that watchfulness, which has the feeling in it that after all we would not wish to leave an inharmonious impression upon those with whom we are associated, if at the close of the day we were leaving them not to return. It is an idea that is worth remembering and bringing to bear in every single moment and every single hour of the day.

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY? (1) — G. de Purucker

Mr. President, Madame Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen — Friends, Companions, Brothers:

This is the first time I have had the pleasure of addressing a Danish audience, and I have heard that Theosophy in your country is not unknown, that already you know something about it, and that is exceedingly good; but I venture to say that when minds come into an approach of the study of the god-wisdom which we call Theosophy, there is always something new to learn, something to get that will give comfort to the heart, more light to the mind.

If I were to ask you as individuals: "What is Theosophy, please?", do you think that anyone in this auditorium could give me a comprehensive answer? Could you tell me where it comes from, what it is, what its purposes and objectives are, and what we Theosophists are trying to do? I do not think so. And it is along these lines of thought that I will make my brief address to you tonight.

Now then, in the first place, Theosophy is a word which of course comes from the Greek, *he theosophia* to which we Theosophists love to add the adjective *ourania*, the divine god-wisdom of the universe. This is no revelation granted unto men by an extra-cosmic power whom men in reverence call God; but is wisdom concerning the Universe, its structure, its nature, its characteristics, its laws, its origin and its destiny, originally given unto the first human beings on this earth by divine entities coming unto infant humanity from other spheres in order to instruct these human children of the universe in the laws of right doing, right thinking, and therefore right and beautiful destiny. Theosophy is not so much the wisdom of God, as it has been translated sometimes, as divine wisdom, god-wisdom, invented by no man, given to us by spiritual beings, and of which god-wisdom every great seer and sage in ancient times has been the voice to his age. These great

men, Buddhas or Avatars or Christs, call them by what name we will or may, have been some of these sages and seers who have spoken to the children of men in language that they could easily understand, giving to them a divine philosophy of life, telling them what life is, explaining it, pointing out what the Universe is, pointing out likewise that we men and women are children of this wondrous universe which surrounds us, and therefore that there is no separation between all that is and us human beings.

You see what this means? It means that we are given ethics, morals, an ethical system based on the very divine heart of the universe, which as I have said in the West men with reverence call "God," but of which all the ancient sages and seers spoke, not in terms of names, but as the ancient sages of Hindusthan described it, simply *THAT* — *TAT*. So high a reverence had they for this divine heart of things, this divine heart of harmony, of infinite love and compassion, of cosmic intelligence, that they gave it no descriptive name such as men give to *things*, but simply said *THAT*. From *THAT* we come, back to *THAT* we go. We come out from *IT* again and are reborn as men to learn new lessons in life, to undo the mistakes of the past, to strengthen our characters; and thus as the ages go by, and we reincarnate time after time, we grow in wisdom and strength and character, our hearts expanding with love for all that is, and for our fellow-men, and our minds enlarging with what we learn — the knowledge that is stored within what men in the West call the Soul, but which we Theosophists prefer to call the Reincarnating Ego — two names for the same thing if you will.

Now when a man feels and knows, because of a philosophy of life which satisfies his intellect and purifies his heart, that he and his brother men and the Universe around us are all parts of one cosmic organic entity, an organism, a living being, which we call the Universe, then he has a basis for ethics which is scientific, philosophic, purely religious, that is, religion per se, not any one religion changed by men, modified by men, however good, but the Religion of the human spirit which seeks its home with divinity — therefore, the religion of intuition, of the human divine spark, which makes us all that is best in

us. You see also that this gives us a firm basis for philosophy, for we start from a unity which the mind can understand, and the heart with its tender instincts can grasp. The truth that man and all Being are one, one in essence, apparently separated only in bodies: this is ethics; for instantly we see that when a man injures his brother, he injures himself likewise, for he injures the cosmic harmony, the cosmic unity. We see likewise in this wonderful verity, the fundamental unity of all beings and things, and that men are but inseparable portions of the infinite universe: a true basis for scientific thinking, for here we start from a fundamental postulate that all sane men must accept; for if man is different from the universe, then will someone please explain how it is that he is subject to its laws, and formed of the stuff of the universe? Any other postulate is impossible. Whatever is in the universe is in the man, in me, in you. Conversely, whatever is in the man is in the Universe. I have thought, I have conscience, I have intuition, I have feeling. Because they are here in the part, shall the whole have them not? Do you get it? The fact that the part has these, proves that the universe has them; for show me something which does not contain what a part of it contains? That is foolishness.

Deduction from this wondrous teaching of Theosophy: It means that the Universe is conscious, conscious of course in infinite and varying degrees, but conscious; for from that consciousness of the universe we draw our consciousness. The whole gives to the parts. Because the man has consciousness, the ethical sense, therefore the universe is ethical, has what we men call consciousness. Is it possible that the part should have something which the All, the Whole, has not? Of course not.

These are some of the simplest teachings of Theosophy, given to us as I have already stated by spiritual beings ages and ages ago, given to the first human thinkers on our globe by spiritual beings from other spheres; and out of this primeval revelation of truth to men, were born as the ages passed, out of the Schools of the Mysteries, the different great philosophies and religions of the world — each one founded by some great sage and seer, like Jesus the Christ, Gautama the Buddha, Lao-tse in China, Krishna the Avatara, Sankaracharya the Avatara, and

similar great ones in other lands, in other times. Each one spoke from the wisdom of the esoteric sanctuary, that great School of Wisdom of the Mysteries which exists today and has its branches in certain of the countries of the world.

The greatest one of these Schools is at present in a little known district of Asia, and we Theosophists in reverence refer to it as Sambhala, which is a Sanskrit name. There still beats the sacred heart of all mankind, so to speak, for there still live (and they teach their chosen pupils or chelas) the noblest spiritual intellects that the human race has ever known. We call them Masters of Wisdom, men of Christ-like life, of Buddha-like life, of Buddha- and Christ-like wisdom. They have their pupils, and from time to time one of these pupils is sent forth into the world as an envoy to teach men once again the age-old doctrine of the god-wisdom, of the *theosophia ourania*, the divine, the starry wisdom of the gods.

Such an envoy was H. P. Blavatsky, and the teaching which she brought came directly from that Sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, the Sanctum Sanctorum of the human race which we Theosophists call Sambhala; and the message which she brought she called Theosophy. It is not new. It is as old as man. As I have told you, it was given to the earliest men by these spiritual beings from other spheres. In different ages it is called by different names. But the names are simply tickets placed over the Reality. The Wisdom is one, merely the terms by which it is given to men in different ages change.

Furthermore, and this I think is a very important point, dear friends: If you care to study, if you are really interested, in finding out that the statements that I have made to you tonight are true statements, then investigate for yourselves. Study, study the ancient religious and philosophical books of the world, from all countries; and beneath and behind the words and the terms, look for the body of ideas, the essential teachings. You will find them identical everywhere. That is Theosophy as taught today, as taught a million years ago in the past, as will be taught a million years in the future, as it is taught on planets

other than our own circling around our own sun, as it is taught on the planets whirling in their orbits around other suns in cosmic space in the galaxy. Why? Because truth is truth, and what is true on our planet Terra is true on Jupiter and Venus, on Stella Polaris, on Canopus and Sirius, anywhere. That is Theosophy.

Now, in the Theosophical Society, dear friends, we have no dogmas, we have no creeds. We have a marvelous system of wisdom-teaching, the wisdom of the gods, Theosophy. But at this fountain of wisdom, from these doctrines, every Theosophical student takes what he or she can assimilate, can understand, is capable of receiving. Some men can receive some, other men can receive more. Other men can receive still more. Thus we have no dogmas. We have no creeds. We have no set forms of belief. Yet, I do think — and I speak with reverence for the good people in the West who call themselves Christians — that there is no more religious man on earth than the true Theosophist. I think there is no more truly scientific thinker on earth than the Theosophist. I think there is no more philosophical mind on earth than that of the Theosophist. And you see the reason why. We have no creeds, we have no dogmas, our consciences are free as the winds of heaven. We are searchers for truth, hungering for it, and we have found where we may find it. And we have learned this wonderful truth: that before a man can take the wisdom of the gods, he has to train his life to be ethical, moral.

To me it is one of the saddest things in the world that the West has lost the ethical sense, very largely — I do not mean entirely, but very largely — and the reason is obvious also. Science has destroyed the religion of former days, so that today the Christian religionist must believe almost against the convictions of his mind, and therefore his nature is rent in twain, and that must mean suffering. And on the other hand, our science, wonderful as it is, is expanding and growing greater and grander every day, so that today scientific men are actually becoming Theosophists. Yet does science offer us anything upon which we can lean, rest, and feel assured that upon this ground we stand in permanence? No, for it changes from day to day, from year to year, and

this is its basis. The scientists say that the greatest thing about scientific research is that it is growing; and it is so, and that is very fine. But can you find the truths of the Universe in something which is not even a system of thought, but is merely a growing and expanding understanding of the physical world around us? Obviously not. It does not teach us ethics. It does not satisfy that strong, tender religious instinct of the human heart, that man is the same as the cosmic spirit. It does not fully satisfy the inquiries of a man's mind; because as soon as we begin to study scientific doctrine, the first thing we find is that it is continually changing, so that what was scientific dogma to our fathers, today is discarded. What is scientific truth today, five years from now will be past scientific history, old scientific books no longer studied. We shall have advanced beyond that! Do you see? And the consequence: religion today teaches an ethic of words, but gives you no proof that ethics are based on the universe itself. Science gives us no foundation for morals, for it does not understand them. Morals, the scientists say, are not within their sphere.

Philosophy? Philosophy in the West is but an infant, striving and struggling to attain a greater light, but an infant; and all the philosophical speculations of Western philosophy are but gropings, blind gropings, after light. Pathetic!

So, with our god-wisdom, having no creeds and no dogmas, in addition to being searchers for truth, philaletheians, we are likewise philanthropists in the Greek sense of this word, lovers of our fellowmen, lovers of the universe around us, seeing a wondrous mystery in a flower, sensing a religious doctrine in a star, looking into the eye of a fellow human being, seeing heaven there, or, it may be, a hell!

What are the objectives of the Theosophical Society? First of all I should think to give unto men these wondrous doctrines of our god-wisdom. Next, to keep alive in men their spiritual intuitions. Note these words: their spiritual intuitions — something which the West has forgotten the existence of, just as it has forgotten the sanctions of

ethics; and just as the West thinks that ethics are mere conventions keeping us out of the police courts and out of jails, so the West today thinks that the intuitions of the human soul are too dangerous, too vague, to trust to. Theosophy tells you on the contrary that there is a way of cultivating the intuition of the human soul, so that it becomes a powerful factor in our lives, so that by cultivating this intuition, this intuitive perception of truth, this inner vision, we gain wisdom ourselves. We do not have to go to the books of other men, we do not have to go and learn from others. We sense our oneness with divinity; and although we have Masters and Teachers and revere these, no Theosophist accepts any doctrine which is contrary to his conscience, and yet withal our god-wisdom likewise teaches us to revere the lives and teachings of the greatest spiritual intellects that the world has known, for we recognize as well as are taught that these have derived from wisdom, from divinity. Hence the teachings and the great books of these wise men of the past — as will be the case in the future — are wonderful torches of light to guide us on our pathway. Thus we revere the wisdom of the past, but realize that the understanding of it must come from the development of our own powers and faculties within.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Delivered at the opening of a public question-and-answer-meeting held in Copenhagen, Denmark, September 17, 1937. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE CYCLE OF INITIATION — *Abbott Clark*

The Cycle of Initiation was the crowning glory of the work of the ancient Mystery Schools. It was not a ritual formulated by the brain-mind of man. It was instituted by wise Sages and Seers, highly developed spiritual men, in an effort to co-ordinate the initiate with the forces of nature, especially the higher spiritual forces. We all believe in the inseparability of Man and Nature, but the process of initiation has to make that unity a living dynamic reality, so that through that unity the initiate becomes a master of Nature and her forces.

The Sages have chosen the seasons of the year when the cosmic and solar forces favor this the consummation of the most sublime achievement of human evolution. The object of initiation, if successfully accomplished, is to raise man to the stature, nature, and dignity of conscious godhood.

The ancient Mystery Schools were not founded by primitive men magnifying the glories and mysteries of nature, as is described in the encyclopaedias and other learned and labored books on the subject. Quite the contrary. The Mystery Schools were founded by great spiritually and intellectually enlightened men for the purpose of retaining and preserving the instruction given to them by great spiritual and intellectual beings commonly called the gods, who descended on earth to inaugurate and give the primal impulse to the intellectual and spiritual evolution of mankind. The Mystery Schools were essentially and fundamentally ethical and moral. In them were stored, as an Ark of Safety, the teaching of the gods as to the origin, nature, mode of operation, and destiny of the macrocosm and the microcosm, man and his limitless self, the universe.

The Mystery Schools, especially the central one, were designed as an Ark of Safety in which the wisdom of the gods could be preserved and

carried on from generation to generation of initiates, from age to age, through cycles of spiritual light and of materialistic darkness, to the present, and will continue onward to the end of human time, when man shall have fully achieved his evolution on earth and graduated from humanhood to conscious godhood. From time to time as cyclic law permitted and human intellect searched for truth, and eager, aspiring human hearts demanded spiritual light and help, Messengers were sent from the Lodge of Light to supply the wants and fulfil the needs of the time. Thus were founded the great religions and philosophies which have raised mankind to such degrees of civilization as the different ages have attained. The greatest of these Teachers were the religious and spiritual ones, called by men in their love and gratitude "Saviors". At the evening twilight of descending cycles all is done that can be done to sustain mankind through the dark ages. At the dawn of rising cycles — as at present in the West — more teaching is given out by the Lodge, and provision is made that Mystery Schools or College-Temples, Theosophical Universities, or some form of permanent esoteric bodies suited to the times, are formed, and in them it is provided that a succession of Teachers shall carry on the light from generation to generation, clarifying and amplifying the teachings, and giving out all that the intelligence and character of the age can understand and assimilate.

Into these Esoteric Schools were attracted the intelligentsia of the youth of the age, though the elders were not excluded, and there they received definite teachings on the science of the soul and of the inner causal worlds far more definite, complete and accurate, than modern technical science. They had a system of education that educes and unfolds the entire intellectual, moral, and spiritual nature into full flower. A system more complete and efficient than has entered into the imagination of any modern educator or the best practice of any college or university. The esoteric discipline produced men with self-knowledge and self-control, and Christlike thoughtfulness for others.

There were many of these branch Mystery Schools, each suited to its time and place, and all radiating from the Central Lodge of the

Brotherhood of Compassion. From them came thousands of the best citizens, men of talent, of genius, statesmen, and leaders, and teachers. The branch centers, Mystical Schools, College-Temples, Theosophical Universities all, were the life-giving heart and center of the civilization in which they lived. Sometimes these civilizations were sustained, through rising and falling periods, for countless thousands of years, and attained heights unimagined by us.

It is the noble destiny and sublime privilege and responsibility of the Theosophical Society to revive the knowledge of these lost mysteries of antiquity, and establish these centers of spiritual light and learning in the west where they will be the radiating heart and center of a new order of the ages, of a higher civilization in the occidental world. The Theosophical University is the first of these College-Temples. It is, and is to be, the radiant esoteric center of the occidental world.

For dynamic reasons the Cycle of Initiation coincided with the solstices and the equinoxes. The cycle begins with the Winter Solstice, December 21-22, when the sun reaches the southernmost point of his journey, and turning northward — is reborn as the saying goes. The exact moment of this last Solstice, the astronomers tell us, was December 22nd, 4:14 a. m. at Point Loma, 7:14 Eastern Standard Time, 1938.

Then follows the initiation at the Spring Equinox; then the Summer Solstice; and the Autumnal Equinox. Each initiation has relation to and is in co-ordination with the cosmic forces of the season. The Winter Solstice is the season of the greatest of the initiations — when the Christs and Buddhas are born — spiritually born. Christmas is celebrated on the 24-25 of December through a shift in the calendar.

A few words about what initiation really means is important because there are those who make a pretense of selling secrets of initiation, and also because so much nonsense has been written on the subject. The process is one of accelerated evolution. In a sense it is terrible, because the slow work of ages is focalized and concentrated into three or fourteen days. The "tragedy" is depicted in many religions, mystery-tales, and hero stories, such as the Labors of Hercules, the Descent of

Orpheus into the Under-world, the Crucifixion of Christ, and the trial of the Buddha under the Bo-tree.

In the Near East at the time of the beginning of the Christian Era, the initiate was laid upon a cruciform couch, though any comfortable couch would do, and was plunged into the "sleep of siloam," a deep spiritual trance, in which the soul, the thinker, the individual man himself, was freed from the chains of the body and the attractions of the earth. He first went into the underworld where he met all his own bad Karman congealed into objective form and focalized upon him in all its force and quality, and he had to face and overcome and dissipate it. Next he had to meet and overcome all the elemental forces of nature — forces that are natural and all right in their own sphere, but so far beneath the highly evolved individuality of man that they are evil and inimical to him. This "battle" is variously described, as in the Temptation of Jesus by the devil, and Gautama under the Bo-tree — a struggle from which the triumphant Siddhartha rose as the divinely illuminated Buddha. Having become master of himself within, and of the elemental forces of nature without, he right there begins to practice his powers as a member of the Brotherhood of Compassion by ministering to the denizens of these nether spheres, "preaching to the spirits in prison." (1)

Now, master of himself, of the Underworld, and of Nature, his free spirit wings its way through the air-ways of the soul, along the "circulations of the Cosmos," to the Inner Worlds, the spiritual or causal worlds, to the "many mansions in my Father's house," or certain of the Sacred Planets, where he gains first-hand knowledge by actual experience, by becoming for a time a denizen of these Inner Spheres. In daily life man can aspire or pray or appeal for help to his Higher Self, to the powers within or above him; but in initiation the initiate can have no outside help. It is he himself, as a man, that is being tested; it is he himself that must have developed and become strong in his own inherent godlike qualities. He must now and henceforward be the captain of his own soul. Furthermore he must know what to do and where to go through the air-ways of the soul. For this he must have had

a Teacher to impart to him definite technical knowledge during the period of his novitiate. He must now through his own definite knowledge and inherent power be his own pilot; he can have no benevolent hand of god or Master extended to him. No kindly Mercury or Pushan can act as psychopomp, shepherd of the souls of the dead, to guide him as the Monad has during sleep and death.

Having accomplished his journey through certain Sacred Planets he goes to the Sun, where he fully unfolds the solar qualities which we all have, and for a time he becomes a Sun-god, one of the Solar Logoi. Then he returns to earth by the same pathway through which he went, and rises from the "tomb" or couch or "cross" as a full Initiate, a Master of Life and Death, osirified, a Son of the Sun. He rises resplendent, radiant, with the light of Divinity. No words are needed to tell who he is; his condition is self-evident by his presence. To put it into words, his condition is well described by the Cry of Jesus Christ on the Cross, rightly translated: O God, my God within me, how Thou dost fill me with glory!

FOOTNOTE:

1. *1 Peter*, iii, 18-19. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS — *William Q. Judge*

[Under the above title Mr. Judge in 1887-8 conducted a column in his magazine *The Path* where under the pen-name Zadok he answered questions from Theosophists and inquirers. Beginning with the February issue of THE FORUM these questions and answers are being reprinted in response to many requests. — Eds.]

Suppose persons have reason to believe they have found the beginning of the Way, and then find they do not care to investigate the mysteries of Occultism; that they are content to remain without knowledge on these subjects, though they found Truth through Theosophy, and that they are happy because they feel that whatever God orders in their lives must be right, whether it is pleasure or pain.

Suppose also that such persons, though having put themselves in a spiritually receptive condition, feel no weight of Karma, though willing to suffer to whatever extent is needed from it. Do you not think such persons may be deceiving themselves in thinking they are Theosophists, when they have lived many weeks in this condition? Do you think it harder for women to attain spirituality than men? and if so, still should they not strive all the more to obtain it? I know we should not avoid anything merely because it is irksome or uninteresting.

Do not Theosophists allow themselves to feel happy if happiness comes to them without their desiring it? Also why do Theosophists wish to avoid feeling pain or pleasure, if God orders the circumstances which produce them, after we have subjected our will to His? Please answer in your next issue of THE PATH.

Men attach an erroneous meaning to Occultism. If one has found the beginning of *the Way* he has found some of the mysteries of Occultism, for none find *the Way* until they find something of the unseen. It is impossible for one to put himself in a spiritually receptive condition without "investigation" of or being under the sway of Occultism or

Occult conditions; and it is through these same conditions that he knows that pain and pleasure are one and all wise. Karma does not always manifest itself as suffering, by any means; it is quite as likely to produce joy as sorrow, and Karma is not always weighty. Such persons of whom you speak may be trying to become Theosophists, but are not Theosophists. A seeker for Divine wisdom seeks in all directions and refuses none.

2. It is as hard for man as for woman to enter the mysteries. Man works through the intellect, woman through the emotions or heart. Both are equally useless after a time, and of the two the heart is the better tool. But woman becomes engrossed or overcome by her emotions, and passes no farther. The greatest Teachers have been those who have had most of the womanly in their natures. It is more difficult to master the body as a woman than as a man. This can be answered only partially in print.

3. The *True* Theosophist allows himself, or *is taught* to feel, both pain and pleasure, happiness and sorrow, for he knows them all to be wise. Men long for and desire; they fight for happiness and do not find it. We have given to us peace, which is far beyond happiness. Happiness is of this world and is a mockery of the True; yet as all other men we feel it, for we feel all things, for in all these things lie the lessons to be learned as men. I dare not speak for other men, but were I to wish to avoid either pleasure or pain, knowing them to be God's will, then would I utterly fail. Once having subjected *my* will — my human will — to His, then I avoid nothing that *is* His will.

1. Why, since the Deity chose of His own divine will to make the descent into matter, or — as some put it — by this process alone came to Him a realizing sense of His being, in the manifestation through and by matter, why should this be considered a "fall," or, indeed, AN EVIL AT ALL, since, being the work and choice of the Deity, it must necessarily have been both wisdom and goodness which dictated the "descent"; and as Theosophy teaches the inner light and indwelling Emanuel (God with us) to be ever present in all forms of life, wherein consists the evil of this

divine descent, and why must this EXPERIENCE be necessarily associated with evil at all?

2. I met an F. T. S. the other day who believes he has arrived at "Saintship" and cannot therefore err. He cannot bear the slightest contradiction, believing that he has arrived at such a state of "enlightenment" that he is infallible, whereas we less gifted mortals feel that he often makes grave mistakes. Of course this assumption is untenable in this case, but are sainthood and consequent infallibility likely to result from the humdrum every-day life of an ordinary nineteenth century man?

For the Deity there is no fall. He can not fall. In the so-called descent into matter, He must manifest *through* something. Never does the Ineffable stand unveiled before mortal man. When the All Wise deemed it good to manifest Himself as individualities, He did so through the soul. After creating the human man with the soul that all things possess, "He breathed into his nostrils and man became a *living* soul," or the Deity manifested Himself through the soul in the man. Nothing below man is immortal. Man is not immortal; his soul is not immortal; but the breath of God, which is God's life or God himself, is *forever*. Man was to have lived as the angels, "for they also were made"; but, although by the grosser elements of matter or nature, by its lusts and desires, its seductive beauties and deceptive pleasures, realized most fully through the senses of the human body, the *soul* was drawn *down* instead of upward, into *ignorance of the true* instead of toward the wisdom of God, holding and binding thus the spirit in the meshes of the grossest part of nature, and so *fell*. God did not fall, — the spirit; nor did man as the human man; but the soul, being a free agent, did so, causing the spirit to be limited, and entailing pain and anguish upon the human man. Man with the Divine manifest in him was to know only the good, or wisdom; but, not content, he must eat of the *tree of the* KNOWLEDGE of good and evil, or the misapplication of the good, and *fell* into ignorance. There can be no greater evil than losing the wisdom of a God for the ignorance of a man. Herein consists the only evil of the *fall* after the descent into matter.

2. How do you know that he makes grave mistakes? I may not say that anyone errs or makes mistakes, other than my own self. Neither you or I may say another is saint or devil from our own standpoint of what makes either. Both you and I have been taught, however, that one who has arrived at the state of "Saintship" never lays claim to it or to "enlightenment."

Saintship and a certain measure of infallibility will result from humdrum every-day life in the nineteenth century, and in no other way, if rightly comprehended. Otherwise one would not be here at all, or would have lived in some other time, before time was. To become a saint one must know what sinners are and what sin is. The best way to arrive at this knowledge is through the nineteenth century or the time in which we live, through life and all it tells us. Believing that one cannot err and in one's infallibility is however not a characteristic of saintship.

The Theosophical Forum

ENCOURAGEMENT ON THE PATH — *G. de Purucker*

No human being is without trouble of some kind, and let us remember that it is the sorrows and the troubles of life which are our true friends — friends because they strengthen our character, they give us a feeling of sympathy with those who suffer and are in pain; and also they enable us, by the strength of the moral fiber that they build in to us, to carry our own burdens with a lighter and a more joyous heart; so that in time, when the suffering has wrought its magical work upon us, the suffering no longer seems to us to be suffering, but we see it with quiet and luminous eyes, and a glad heart, as being the mysterious working of the very gods.

It is through suffering and yearning for light that we advance; and, when the light comes, then also come the great peace and the great wisdom, and our hearts are at rest.

So keep these thoughts in mind when your troubles come upon you, and try to cultivate beautiful calm, sweet inner peace, and a love for your fellows; and you will discover that these bring happiness and success in all things worth while.

Remember that the karman of suffering is never eternal, and is usually short, although it may seem long at the time; and once this karman has worked itself out, exhausted itself, then it ends, and gives birth to a new and better cycle. — G. de P. (extract from a letter to one in time of sorrow).

Now, I will try to answer your question regarding your lack of time to make a regular study of our deeper Theosophical teachings. I know just what your situation is, and I know how you long to devote more time to getting a knowledge of technical Theosophy. This indeed is very, very, very important; but, on the other hand, may I not point out to you that even greater and even nobler than having a knowledge of technical Theosophy is the devoting of one's life to our Masters' Cause, and this is

what you are doing. This latter makes a karman even nobler than the spending of one's life in study of technical Theosophy, although that is important too.

Your situation reminds me of that of some chelas whose hearts yearn to pass more time in technical study of the Wisdom of the gods, but who are called upon by our Superiors to sacrifice their wish and to go forth into the world as messengers and envoys in order to give to others what they have already acquired. Don't you see that your case is somewhat like that of these chelas I speak of, who, in giving up their own heart's wish for more light, are growing spiritually, and actually gaining more interiorly than they would gain if they neglected a duty laid upon them by our Teachers?

Therefore take comfort in this thought. You are progressing spiritually and intellectually. You are also growing morally because you are living a noble life in service to our sacred Cause, giving all you can without thought of reward; and the Masters ask no more than this even from their highest disciples.

Therefore, do not feel sad, and do not be discouraged. You have asked for my frank opinion, and for my advice, and I am now giving these to you; and I tell you again that you are growing spiritually and intellectually faster in what you are now doing than you would if you sat down somewhere alone in luxurious ease and devoted your life to study for yourself alone. Remember that the chela's path begins in self-sacrifice for the world, and ends in self-sacrifice for the world — if indeed there be an ending, which is not the case. It is thus that the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace are evolved. It is thus that the Buddhas are developed.

Nevertheless, technical study is very, very important, and I am so glad that you speak of this so frequently, because it shows that you have the exactly right view. But I know too that you are gaining a great deal of technical knowledge just by throwing yourself so whole-heartedly into the Theosophical work. You are absorbing it without perhaps realizing it. You are imbibing it from the Theosophical atmosphere; and all that I

have read that you have written shows me that you are gaining a great deal of the technical *understanding*. It is an actual truth of white magic, that a man learns more by self-forgetful service in our Cause, than he does by thinking only of his own advancement and devoting his whole time to merely personal development. The latter, after all, and in the last analysis, is selfish, and closes the doors of both heart and mind to the entrance of the spiritual light; and therefore, although the desire for self-progress is *de facto* a noble one, yet when it is followed selfishly, the selfish desire actually prevents the attainment of the objective which such a man longs for. You have nothing to fear in this respect. Your life of beautiful service in our sacred Cause is placing you in a position spiritually and intellectually where you are really learning more, as I have said, perhaps without realizing it now, than you could in any other wise. I am well satisfied with your work. — G. de P.
(extracts from a letter to a student who, in his devoted service, found but little time for Theosophical study).

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Occult Standing of Great Men (1)

ÆSCHYLUS

The latter writers [Cicero and Clemens Alexandrinus] are the only ones who attribute the fact that Æschylus was charged by the Athenians with sacrilege and condemned to be stoned to death, to its true cause. They say that having been himself uninitiated, Æschylus had profaned the Mysteries by exposing them in his trilogies on a public stage. (2) But he would have incurred the same condemnation had he been initiated — which must have been the case, as otherwise he must, like Socrates, have had a *daimon* to reveal to him the secret and sacred allegorical drama of initiation. At all events, it is not the "father of the Greek tragedy" who invented the prophecy of Prometheus; for he only repeated in dramatic form that which was revealed by the priests during the MYSTERIA of the Sabasia. . . .

The translators of the drama wonder how Æschylus could become guilty of such "discrepancy between the character of Zeus as portrayed in the "Prometheus Bound" and that depicted in the remaining dramas". (*Mrs. A. Swanwick.*) This is just because Æschylus, like Shakespeare, was and will ever remain the intellectual "Sphinx" of the ages. — *S. D.* II, 419

LEIBNITZ

It is well known that Leibnitz came several times very near the truth, but defined monadic evolution incorrectly, which is not to be wondered at, since he was not an INITIATE, nor even a Mystic, only a very intuitional philosopher. Yet no psycho-physicist ever came nearer than he has to the esoteric general outline of evolution. This evolution — viewed from its several standpoints — *i. e.*, as the *universal* and the *individualized* Monad; and the chief aspects of the Evolving Energy,

after differentiation — the purely Spiritual, the Intellectual, the Psychic and the Physical — may be thus formulated as an invariable law; a descent of Spirit into Matter, equivalent to an ascent in physical evolution; a re-ascent from the depths of materiality towards its *status quo ante*, with a corresponding dissipation of concrete form and substance up to the LAYA state, or what Science calls "the zero-point," and beyond. — *S. D.* I, 619-20

THOMAS TAYLOR

One of the very few commentators on old Greek and Latin authors, who have given their just dues to the ancients for their mental development, is Thomas Taylor. In his translation of Iamblichus' *Life of Pythagoras*, we find him remarking as follows: "Since Pythagoras, as Iamblichus informs us, was initiated in all the Mysteries of Byblus and Tyre, in the sacred operations of the Syrians, and in the Mysteries of the Phoenicians, and also that he spent two and twenty years in the adyta of the temples in Egypt, associated with the magians in Babylon, and was instructed by them in their venerable knowledge, it is not at all wonderful that he was skilled in magic, or theurgy, and was therefore able to perform things which surpass merely human power, and which appear to be perfectly incredible to the vulgar." — *Isis*, I, 284

. . . we will recur to the untiring labors of that honest and brave defender of the ancient faith, Thomas Taylor, and his works.

However much dogmatic Greek scholarship may have found to say against his "mistranslations," his memory must be dear to every true Platonist, who seeks rather to learn the inner thought of the great philosopher than enjoy the mere external mechanism of his writings. Better classical translators may have rendered us, in more correct phraseology, Plato's *words*, but Taylor shows us Plato's *meaning*, and this is more than can be said of Zeller, Jowett, and their predecessors. Yet, as writes Professor A. Wilder, "Taylor's works have met with favor at the hands of men capable of profound and recondite thinking; and it must be conceded that he was endowed with a superior qualification — that of an intuitive perception of the

interior meaning of the subjects which he considered. Others may have known more Greek, but he knew more Plato." — *Isis*, II, 109

JACOB BOEHME

Thus Newton, whose profound mind read easily between the lines, and fathomed the spiritual thought of the great Seer in its mystic rendering, owes his great discovery to Jacob Boehme, the nursling of the genii (Nirmanakayas) who watched over and guided him, of whom the author of the article in question so truly remarks, that "every new scientific discovery goes to prove *his profound and intuitive insight into the most secret workings of nature.*" — *S. D.* I, 494

This number [seven] is closely connected with the moon, whose occult influence is ever manifesting itself in septenary periods. It is the moon which is the guide of the occult side of terrestrial nature, while the Sun is the regulator and factor of manifested life; and this truth was ever evident to the Seers and the adepts. Jacob Boehme, by insisting on the fundamental doctrine of the seven properties of everlasting mother Nature, proved himself thereby a great Occultist. — *S. D.* II 595

PLATO

The danger was this: Doctrines such as the planetary chain, or the seven races, at once give the clue to the seven-fold nature of man, for each principle is correlated to a plane, a planet, and a race; and the human principles are, on every plane, correlated to seven-fold occult forces — those of the higher planes being of tremendous power. So that any septenary division at once gives a clue to tremendous occult powers, the abuse of which would cause incalculable evil to humanity. A clue, which is, perhaps, no clue to the present generation — especially the Westerns — protected as they are by their very blindness and ignorant materialistic disbelief in the occult; but a clue which would nevertheless, have been very real in the early centuries of the Christian era, to people fully convinced of the reality of occultism, and entering a cycle of degradation, which made them rife for abuse of occult powers and sorcery of the worst description.

The documents were concealed, it is true, but the knowledge itself and its actual existence had never been made a secret of by the Hierophants of the Temple, wherein MYSTERIES have ever been made a discipline and stimulus to virtue. This is very old news, and was repeatedly made known by the great adepts, from Pythagoras and Plato down to the Neoplatonists. — S. D. I, xxxv

Plato and his school never understood the Deity otherwise, many epithets of his applied to the "God over all" (ὁ ἐπίπασι θεός) notwithstanding. Plato having been initiated, could not believe in a personal God — a gigantic Shadow of Man. His epithets of "monarch" and "Law-giver of the Universe" bear an abstract meaning well understood by every Occultist, who, no less than any Christian, believes in the One Law that governs the Universe, recognizing it at the same time as immutable. . . . Is it Plato, the greatest pupil of the archaic Sages, a sage himself, for whom there was but a single object of attainment in this life — REAL KNOWLEDGE — who would have ever believed in a deity that curses and damns men for ever, on the slightest provocation? Not he, who considered only those to be genuine philosophers and students of truth who possessed the knowledge of the *really existing* in opposition to mere seeming; of the *always existing* in opposition to the transitory; and of that which exists *permanently* in opposition to that which waxes, wanes, and is developed and destroyed alternately. — S. D. II, 554-5

PROF. W. CROOKES

Here is an example: Prof. W. Crookes' latest discovery of what he has named *protyle*. In the "Notes on the Bhagavat Gita", by one of the best metaphysicians and Vedantic scholars in India [T. Subba Row] the lecturer, referring cautiously to "things occult" in that great Indian esoteric work, makes a remark as suggestive as it is strictly correct. ". . . . Into the details of the evolution of the solar system itself," he says, "*it is not necessary for me to enter*. You may gather some idea *as to the way* in which the various elements start into existence from these THREE principles into which MULAPRAKRITI is differentiated (the Pythagorean

triangle), by examining the lecture delivered by Professor Crookes a short time ago upon the so-called elements of modern chemistry. This lecture will give you some idea of the way in which these Elements spring from *Vishwanara*, the most objective of these three principles, which seems to stand in the place of the *protyle* mentioned in that lecture. *Except in a few particulars*, this lecture seems to give the outlines of the theory of physical evolution on the plane of *Vishwanara*, and is, so far as I know, *the nearest approach made by modern investigators* TO THE REAL OCCULT THEORY *on the subject.*"

These words will be re-echoed and approved by every Eastern Occultist. . . . Since then, there has been another lecture delivered, as remarkable as the first one, on the "Genesis of the Elements," and also a third one. Here we have almost a corroboration of the teachings of Esoteric philosophy concerning the mode of primeval evolution. It is, indeed, as *near an approach*, made by a great scholar and specialist in chemistry, to the Secret Doctrine, as could be made apart from the application of the monads and atoms to the dogmas of pure transcendental metaphysics, and their connection and correlation with "Gods and intelligent Conscious Monads. — S.D. I, 620-1

. . . . The revolution produced in old chemistry by Avogadro was the first page in the Volume of *New Chemistry*. Mr. Crookes has now turned the second page, and is boldly pointing *to what may be the last*. For once *protyle* accepted and recognized — *as invisible Ether was, both being logical and scientific necessities* — Chemistry will have virtually ceased to live: it will reappear in its reincarnation as *New Alchemy*, or METACHEMISTRY. The discoverer of radiant matter will have vindicated in time the Archaic Aryan works on Occultism and even the Vedas and Puranas. — S. D. I, 622-3

Science may, of course, if it so pleases her, call electricity a force. Only by grouping it together with light and heat, to which the name of force is decidedly refused, she has either to plead guilty of inconsistency, or to tacitly admit that it is a "species of matter." But whether electricity has weight or not, no true scientist is prepared to show that there is no

matter so light as to be beyond weighing with our present instruments. And this brings us directly to the latest discovery, one of the grandest in science, I mean Mr. Crookes' "radiant matter" or — as it is now called THE FOURTH STATE OF MATTER. — *The Complete Works of H. P. B.*, Vol. IV, p. 93

SWEDENBORG

Swedenborg, following the mystical doctrines of the Hermetic philosophers, devoted a number of volumes to the elucidation of the "internal sense" of *Genesis*. Swedenborg was undoubtedly a "natural-born magician," a seer; he was *not* an *adept*. Thus, however closely he may have followed the apparent method of interpretation used by the alchemists and mystic writers, he partially failed; the more so, that the model chosen by him in this method was one who, albeit a great alchemist, was no more of an adept than the Swedish seer himself, in the fullest sense of the word. Eugenius Philalethes had never attained "the highest pyrotechny," to use the diction of the mystic philosophers. But, although both have missed the whole truth in its details, Swedenborg has virtually given the same interpretation of the first chapter of *Genesis* as the Hermetic philosophers. The seer, as well as the initiates, notwithstanding their veiled phraseology, clearly show that the first chapters of *Genesis* relate to the *regeneration*, or a new birth of man, not to the creation of our universe and its crown work — MAN. — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 306

FOOTNOTES:

1. Scattered throughout H. P. Blavatsky's writings are illuminating hints for the student on the occult standing of great or famous men down the ages. Such hints are an aid in correctly estimating the works of these men when studying or reading them. The present collection does not pretend to be at all exhaustive even as regards the few names given here, taken almost at random (hundreds of others might be found), but are merely an indication of how one's efforts are richly rewarded if one searches for such information in H. P. B.'s Works. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. Herodotus and Pausanias supposed that the cause of the condemnation was that Æschylus, adopting the theogony of the Egyptians, made Diana, the daughter of Ceres, and not of Latona. . . . But Æschylus *was* initiated. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SILENCE — *H. T. Edge*

"The things which are supposed to have made life easier, such as the telegraph, telephone, typewriter, motor-car, lift, and so on, have really made it vastly more strenuous."

So says "Artifex" in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, and goes on to say that prayer and silence are needed. The more labor-saving devices we invent, the more we labor. Make a man's work easier, and instead of resting he does more work. If he can go anywhere in as many hours as it used to take days, he does not save the hours, but travels farther. Give him a shorthand typist, and he writes ten times as many letters. Comforts and luxuries become necessities, so that we become more dependent on circumstances and apparatus. We invent so many new cures, drugs, and treatments, that nothing can keep pace with them — except indeed the innumerable diseases that are invented every day. Our ancestors may not have had the cures, but at all events they did not have the complaints.

We are chasing our tail, and the faster we go, the farther we *have* to go. The thing is not merely accidental or temporary; there is a wrong principle behind it. We are like a machine without a governor, and will go on accelerating until the wheels fly apart. We are like a constitution that is being consumed by phthisis, with every function running full blast and the central vitality wasting away.

And in our very efforts to cure this disease we use the same wrong principle over again; we try to cure the disease by more of the thing that causes it, as a man might try to overcome the effects of drink by more drink. The process will end in a cataclysm unless we can adopt an entirely different principle. It will not be adopted until we are driven to it by sheer necessity; but it will help much to have it ready when the time comes. We are living in an atmosphere of constant stimulation, living in externals, living in sensory experience. Silence and solitude

are unbearable to one living in such an atmosphere. A man spends his life strenuously in doing and achieving; and when he gets old and can strive no more, and finds he has gotten nowhere, he turns on the gas because he cannot stand being alone with himself; and leaves a note to save his face.

The silence! Cultivate the silence, love it. Learn to know the fullness of the seeming void and you will realize the voidness of the seeming full. Theosophy teaches a man not to be afraid of himself, not to try and run away from himself, but to know himself. This does not mean that we must become hermits:

Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body
agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain
lake. — *The Voice of the Silence*

The Theosophical Forum

THE APPLICATION OF THEOSOPHICAL THEORIES (1) — William Q. Judge

The mistake is being made by a great many persons, among them being Theosophists, of applying several of the doctrines current in Theosophical literature, to only one or two phases of a question or to only one thing at a time, limiting rules which have universal application to a few cases, when in fact all those doctrines which have been current in the East for so long a time should be universally applied. For instance, take the law of Karma. Some people say, "yes we believe in that," but they only apply it to human beings. They consider it only in its relation to their own acts or to the acts of all men.

Sometimes they fail to see that it has its effect not only on themselves and their fellows, but as well on the greatest Mahatmas. Those great Beings are not exempt from it; in fact they are, so to say, more bound by it than we are. Although they are said to be *above Karma*, this is only to be taken to mean that, having escaped from the wheel of Samsara (which means the wheel of life and death, or rebirths), and in that sense are above Karma, at the same time we will find them often unable to act in a given case. Why? If they have transcended Karma, how can it be possible that in any instance they may not break the law, or perform certain acts which to us seem to be proper at just that juncture? Why can they not, say in the case of a chela who has worked for them and for the cause, for years with the most exalted unselfishness, interfere and save him from suddenly falling or being overwhelmed by horrible misfortune; or interfere to help or to direct a movement? It is because they have become part of the great law of Karma itself. It would be impossible for them to lift a finger.

Again, we know that at a certain period of progress, far above this sublunary world, the adept reaches a point when he may, if he so chooses, formulate a wish that he might be one of the *Devas*, one of that bright host of beings of whose pleasure, glory and power we can have no idea. The mere formulation of the wish is enough. At that moment

he becomes one of the *Devas*. He then for a period of time in its extent incalculable, enjoys that condition — then what? Then he has to begin again low down in the scale, in a mode and for a purpose which it would be useless to detail here, because it could not be understood, and also because I am not able to put it in any language with which I am conversant. In this, then, is not this particular adept who thus fell, subject to the law of Karma?

There is in the Hindoo books a pretty story which illustrates this. A certain man heard that every day a most beautiful woman rose up out of the sea, and combed her hair. He resolved that he would go to see her. He went, and she rose up as usual. He sprang into the sea *behind her*, and with her went down to her abode. There he lived with her for a vast length of time. One day she said she had to go away and stated that he must not touch a picture which was on the wall, and then departed. In a few days, fired by curiosity, he went to look at the picture; saw that it was an enameled one of a most ravishingly beautiful person, and he put out his hand to touch it. At that moment the foot of the figure suddenly enlarged, flew out from the frame, and sent him back to the scenes of earth, where he met with only sorrow and trouble.

The law of Karma must be applied to everything. Nothing is exempt from it. It rules the vital molecule from plant up to Brahma himself. Apply it then to the vegetable, animal and human kingdom alike.

Another law is that of Reincarnation. This is not to be confined only to the souls and bodies of men. Why not use it for every branch of nature to which it may be applicable? Not only are we, men and women, reincarnated, but also every molecule of which our bodies are composed. In what way, then, can we connect this rule with all of our thoughts? Does it apply there? It seems to me that it does, and with as much force as anywhere. Each thought is of definite length. It does not last for over what we may call an instant, but the time of its duration is in fact much shorter. It springs into life and then it dies; but it is at once reborn in the form of another thought. And thus the process goes on

from moment to moment, from hour to hour, from day to day. And each one of these reincarnated thoughts lives its life, some good, some bad, some so terrible in their nature that if we could see them we would shrink back in affright. Further than that, a number of these thoughts form themselves into a certain idea, and it dies to be reincarnated in its time. Thus on rolls this vast flood. Will it overwhelm us? It may; it often does. Let us then make our thoughts pure. Our thoughts are the matrix, the mine, the fountain, the source of all that we are and of all that we may be.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Occult Word*, Rochester, N. Y., May, 1886. This magazine, published and edited by Mrs. Josephine W. Cables, between the years 1884-88, was the first Theosophical magazine that appeared in the U. S. A. There are only a few copies extant today. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

RECOLLECTIONS OF A THEOSOPHICAL SPEAKER: III — *Leoline Leonard Wright*

How easily we accept privileges and allow the fine edge of our appreciation to be dulled by the daily use of them! As I look back over my experiences in the Theosophical Society I realize keenly now in the retrospect the extraordinary good fortune which has marked my Theosophical experience, especially in association with the Leaders. Claude Wright knew H. P. B. intimately, and though I never met her he brought her before me in frequent anecdotes and pictures — her spiritual depth and greatness, her charm and intellectual fascination. My slight but beautiful association with Mr. Judge is one of the treasures of a lifetime. And to Katherine Tingley I owe a debt which I trust I may have opportunity actively to repay through many future incarnations.

One of the greatest events in the history of the T. S. was the Ninth Annual Convention of the American Section T. S. held in Boston on April 28 and 29, 1895. I attended this convention as a delegate from the Chicago Branch, and the spirit of that great occasion still speaks in the present.

At that convention the American Section T. S. reconstituted itself 'The Theosophical Society in America'. At the same time it took what proved a great forward step when it not only elected William Q. Judge President for life but also gave him the power to appoint his successor. In looking back we realize that this wise and significant action saved our part of the Theosophical Movement many mistakes and dissensions and held us free from confusing entanglements. Say what you please, the life-course of the Theosophical Society under our four Leaders has been one of happy and uninterrupted fulfilment of Theosophical and Occult promise.

The picture that stands out most vividly in my memory of those two

days is of Mr. Judge sitting before us tranquilly on the platform — so frail, yet with a quiet and confident power. How soon (had we but known it) he was to leave us! It was the last time I saw him. And the realization of all that he was so unjustly and cruelly made to suffer is one of the few shadows over those happy and fruitful early days.

Yet behind all shadows there is light. The fervor of enthusiasm which brought the T. S. in America into being and launched it upon its indomitable way was born then of our loyalty to what W. Q. J. stood for. It is good to remember the swelling wave of vindication and trust that must in that hour have lifted his tired heart. His was indeed a perfect example of the Chela-life.

There was one slight incident during the convention which gave me intense personal satisfaction, as it linked me — even if with but an infinitesimal link — to the historical march of the proceedings. I registered two votes as delegate from the Chicago Branch for the new T. S. in America. One of those votes was immediately challenged by Alexander Fullerton, who asserted that the second vote was mine by proxy for another delegate who had been unable at the last moment to come. And, said this positive gentleman, her vote would most certainly have been cast against the motion then before the convention.

Now I had just graduated from a class in Parliamentary Law brilliantly conducted by Mrs. Caroline Ober in Chicago. So I was able to silence this objector by reminding him that a delegate can vote a proxy in any way he sees fit, providing the absent delegate has given him no instructions. And my co-delegate when asking me to act as her proxy, having failed to instruct me in any way, I felt justified in following my own judgment in the matter. So my two votes for the T. S. in America were recorded. And, as the saying goes, that was distinctly that.

When I went to Boston to attend the convention I had hoped to remain in the East, perhaps to go to New York to work. But as it happened there was a place ready and apparently waiting for someone like me at the Boston Headquarters at 24 Mt. Vernon Street. Miss Marguerite Guild had been for a long time in charge of the Headquarters Bookstore

and Information Bureau, which was open every day to the public. But she lived far away in Cambridge, was the busy President of the large Cambridge Branch, and having as well many personal calls upon her time, it was imperative to relieve her. I happened to be free of ties, with a small income, and had had some experience in Branch work. Consequently I was invited to take daily charge of the bookstore and I need hardly say was glad to be in a position to accept the offer.

There followed a year of happy work with many amusing and vital experiences in the lecture field, helping to organize the picturesque Brotherhood Suppers, and other events which I shall try to describe in a later instalment. It is many years since I was then in Boston. I hope, whatever changes have taken place, the literal modern spirit has passed by my dear Mt. Vernon Street. The big Headquarters there has long since been sold, having proved something of a white elephant, though with much of the fortuitous distinction which belongs to that sacred animal. For the house itself had been the residence of an aristocratic Boston family. Its neighborhood, in the hinterland of Beacon Street, basked in the authentic New England atmosphere. This old-world charm was like an antique wine to a young lady from the sprawling artlessness of the Middle West. My explorations were of endless fascination. Opposite No. 24 lived Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and a few well known painters had houses in the vicinity. I was always chancing across quiet old courts with their ancient houses withdrawn into a green privacy, or high, old-fashioned brick walls behind which historical mansions disdained public admiration. And there were old streets that turned upon themselves like the Egyptian Labyrinth. All this had a beauty for me which was as fresh as the Light of the Ancient Wisdom breaking into my young world.

My room at the Headquarters was a tiny one up four heartbreaking flights of stairs. But it looked right into the sunrise across the bay and to me was a truly romantic eyrie. The house at that time was crowded with Theosophical residents, some of whom you will remember for their outstanding work in the T. S. I hope to introduce a few of them to you in my next chapter.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS — *William Q. Judge*

[Under the above title Mr. Judge in 1887-8 conducted a column in his magazine *The Path* where under the pen-name Zadok he answered questions from Theosophists and inquirers. Beginning with the February issue of THE FORUM these questions and answers are being reprinted in response to many requests. — Eds.]

*"There are two ways to ascend and descend, the direct and indirect." (1)
What are these ways?*

The thistle down is blown hither and thither with every breath of wind:
The arrow speeds straight to the mark from the powerful bow.

The indirect way is that of the thistle down; the Astral going out when the body is asleep, does so in a diffused condition — a passive state — with no adequate force to control it or master unseen forces. It floats at the mercy of every current in the Astral, gleaning here and there as a butterfly but taking the good and bad indiscriminately. It may reach high spheres, but is more likely to remain in those nearest to the physical. This way is traveled by all when asleep, and there dreams are made. It is the passive state where desire is the ruler, and is sometimes traveled in the waking conscious state, but is uncontrollable and unreliable.

The direct way is that of the arrow from the bow. The Astral speeds directly to the sphere which holds the knowledge it is to receive. It does so in obedience to an irresistible force — the Will; Will in accordance with divine law. It is concrete going and returning in obedience to this force, bringing little with it from intermediate spheres other than that for which it is seeking. This occurs in dreamless slumber and the knowledge acquired is not communicated in a dream. This way is travelled in the conscious state for it is the way of the student of the Occult. Unless the man's thought and motive are pure, he is incapable of using the true will, and his Astral goes where other wills or forces

drive it. It pauses when other forces interfere — learns from the place it happens to be in, and brings back a horrible jumble sometimes.

Where do these ways lead?

One way leads to Theosophia — Illumination — when travelled awake or asleep.

The other to consideration of self — ordinary living with its erroneous conceptions — as an Occult way, to love of phenomena and spiritism.

They lead to spheres within the astral, for the astral body passes not beyond astral limits. Only when the soul is freed from the astral and material bodies does it pass to higher spheres. These ways lead to planets, stars and other worlds, for all these may be within the astral of this globe.

Apollonius is said to have worn a mantle of wool to aid in insulating himself from the astral currents. Has wool in itself any such property as is seemingly ascribed to it? The question has this value, perhaps, whether the occult laws which govern the merely physical regulation of the toiler toward adept-ship, may not be of great value from a sanitary point of view and form, if properly understood, a useful medical creed.

Wool in itself has no especial occult power. It is a non-absorbent to the exhalations of the human body; it is lighter, cooler in hot and warmer in cold weather than any other fabric. The late discoveries of a German scientist prove it the best of all materials from a sanitary point of view. It is a conductor of electricity and other unseen forces. Apollonius, as well as other occult students, knew its value and uses. Being a student of nature's laws he was well aware of nature's requirements. Upon the knowledge gained by occult students touching the human body are founded the schools of medicine. Bathing is essential, a woolen dress where permissible, as little animal food as possible, a sparing diet at best — a high ideal — an exalted motive and strong will, a total forgetting of self otherwise, and neither elementals or human beings will oppress one.

"A great deal depends on purity of thought and motive." (2) Please explain what should be the actuating motive in developing psychic capacities.

The desire to find God, the desire to know one's self, our possibilities and capabilities, that we may be of true use to the world, these are the motives. The thought should be unselfish, undisturbed by material affairs — free from wonder seeking curiosity, concentrated, and in entire accord with the motive, the search for God.

What steps must I take to open the heart so as to exercise the Will for governing the Astral body?

There is but one way to open the heart. That is by living the life. It is a simple matter to govern the will, but this is not the true will. The governing of the Astral body is the smallest of the tasks of the true will. The will should be used to obtain wisdom, and when so used it will control the Astral body without effort. We should exert psychic powers only to benefit others, never to free ourselves from the disagreeable. Let your aim be to find God; your motive, to know yourself for the sake of Theo Sophia and humanity: your desire, to help humanity, and the true Will will be developed, the heart opened and you will not only control the Astral body but all in the Astral. You must seek beyond the Astral for powers, but it is not wise to desire the acquisition of powers. Let your aim be beyond that, and the powers will grow of themselves. If the strong-willed or sick depress you, seek to aid each in some way, forget that you are depressed, *forget your self*, and they will not affect you. The life of the Occult student is full of sorrow, anguish and depressing influences. These go to make him a student in the Occult. A portion of his training is to become aware of these only in so far as they affect others. As to their affecting his own personality, he does not know they exist. If you desire to help humanity, then you possess the true motive. If you use your will in this cause, wisdom, peace and all the powers will be given.

During sleep I have a feeling that I can fly by an intense act of will. I then float in dream over the ground, my body seeming rigid. The force

exhausts, then I have to descend. What is your explanation of this?

It is part of the effort of your inner man to demonstrate to your outer self the existence and action of unrecognised and unfamiliar forces, which every man has in him the latent power to use. Dreamless slumber is better.

In Theosophical books I find occult or magical phenomena referred to. I am disposed to reject these and consider their publication of a very questionable character in light of matter for the improvement of intelligent seekers after truth. Still I do not deny them, and hold myself open for conviction in any direction.

Why then bother yourself with the phenomena of your dream state? The dream of flying is as much a phenomenon as any other that Theosophical literature contains. The proper attitude for true Theosophists is not to be ready or anxious to bring conviction as to any phenomena to inquirers. Hence we cannot enter into proofs. We know personally that phenomena of a most extraordinary character have taken place, and are still occurring; we also agree with you that the constant publication of accounts of phenomena is unwise. Still it must sometimes be done, as some minds have to advance through the aid of these things.

We also know that the Masters who are behind the Theosophical Society have, in writing, condemned the thirst for phenomena made so often degrading, and stated that the Society ought to progress through its moral worth. One phenomenon can be seen by but a limited number of people, some of whom even will always doubt, and each one hearing of it afterwards will want a repetition for himself. Further than that, it would be certain to bring on a thirst for mere sight-seeing, resulting in a total forgetfulness of spirit. But, on the other hand, there are laws that cannot be guessed at without phenomena. And in each human being is a complete universe in which daily occur phenomena that should be studied. This is the proper realm for each student to investigate, for therein — and nowhere else — is placed the gate through which each one must advance.

(This concludes the series of "Answers to Questioners" appearing in *The Path*. In the issue of July, 1888, appears the following statement: "A change of circumstances having made it necessary for Zadok to remove to another sphere of action, no more answers to queries will appear from his pen." — Eds)

FOOTNOTES:

1. The questioner is here quoting a part of what Mr. Judge says in *The Path*, October, 1887, in answer to a question about things remembered from the sleeping-state. Mr. Judge's words are as follows: "We go away in deep dreamless sleep to other spheres and states, where we get ideas and so forth, and the way back is through many different states, all having their denizens and obstructions. Besides that, there are two ways to ascend and descend: the direct and the indirect." — Eds.

[\(return to text\)](#)

2. Mr. Judge's words from *The Path*, October, 1887, are: "We must be patient, because it takes time to find out how to walk, and much time is spent in getting hold of clues. A great deal depends on purity of thought and motive, and breadth of view." [\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

THOUGHTS ON SPECIALIZATION — *Arthur A. Beale*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

In contemplating the vast subject of specialization, one marvels at its range of application, its overwhelming influence in the evolution of the ingredients and population of the cosmos, and one almost despairs of capturing its subtil meaning, just as when listening to a masterly rendition of a musical orchestra: the cry is then wrung from one's soul — "How manifold are thy works, O Lord!"

Specialization might be described as a law or habit of Nature, affecting all evolving creatures on the downward arc of evolution — into matter — leading them into deflections from the spiritual standard of perfection, whilst striving for perfection on the material plane, in their execution of free will.

Cosmic evolution seems to be a process of unfolding a stream or mass of consciousness in the crude material (in a similar way to the unwinding of an enormous roll of carpet, or tides of the sea), and then by some magic power rolling it up in the assimilated form, and so producing relative perfection, in "a web of destiny," as H. P. Blavatsky so beautifully phrases it.

Visitors to a modern zoo can see samples of evolution in the "crude," in the mean propensities of ordinary men and women (as we meet them on the streets) minus the mental control, masquerading in animal forms. These propensities give trends which affect the shapes of animals as well as their character, so much so that they have become maxims: as cunning as a fox, as mischievous as a monkey, as fearless as a lion, as rapacious as a wolf, as intelligent as a horse, as stupid as an ass, as pigheaded as a hog.

We see an approach to perfection in the assimilation of traits in the glorious personality of a saint, or an adept, illustrating the process of involution on the upward arc of the evolutionary ladder.

Our Teachers tell us that human evolution represents a straight, vertical, pristine, and primitive stock, phylum, or current, through which are evolved all creatures, because at the heart of man exists the monadic essence which contains all potentialities. But because all creatures have free will, in their blind attempts to reach perfection they acquire independent trends, specializations; and so they build up their essential characteristic or swabhava, by the action of karma, in their evolution, through countless reïmbodiments in various groups of hierarchies. Yet ultimately, by the working of all these, all come back into the human stream and finally reach perfection.

Now this same trend works not only on the evolution of forms, so varied in our non-human mammals, but in man's higher evolution the same trend leads man in society far from his destiny in countless back currents in the stream of life.

Theosophy is, as it were, the central, clean, pure, primitive, fundamental, and universal doctrine. Any society, sect, movement, cause, or cult, which commences to pervert the Ancient Wisdom-teachings by adulteration with brain-mind concepts, and proceeds to adopt such personal standards, thereby introduces a trend of specialization ultimately leading to a cul-de-sac and deterioration.

The history of our Root-Race is punctuated with such crippled children of the supreme universal doctrine. At every Messianic Cycle (i. e., when the sun enters a new zodiacal sign) efforts are made by the Trustees of Humanity, to flood the human consciousness with a stream of pure doctrine: such an effort was that of the Christian Era. Primitive Christianity involved a doctrine which was *pari passu* identified with the Theosophical doctrine, until it fell into the hands of a sect which found the impersonal teachings inconvenient to their objectives.

At one of the historical Councils held at Constantinople, an edict was

drawn up in which the essential fundamental cosmic principles of Reincarnation, Hierarchies, the Essential Divinity of Man, the Spiritual Nature of Heavenly Bodies, the Heliocentric System — all of which were taught by the Christian Father and Neo-Platonist, Origen — were declared heretical. The result of this edict led to a form of specialization which in time destroyed the primitive characteristics of the teachings. These degenerate trends marked the features of a descending arc of evolution and inaugurated that period of occidental history described as the Dark Ages.

A similar transmutation, perchance in a less acute form, marked other previous attempts of regeneration: these in time descended into personal cults, whilst maintaining recognisable basic principles, although encumbered with dogmas. Thus they passed on to posterity as sects or religions. All have the characteristic of sidetracking the primitive, universal, fundamental, central doctrines in various forms of crystallization or specialization. These trends are traceable in Brahmanism, Buddhism, the Egyptian cults, Mithraism, Parseeism, Judaism, and others.

In order to restore harmony, as before stated, special baptisms of truth come to the world. This is indicated in the profound pronouncement made by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "And thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness." (ch. iv) These periods seem to the writer to correspond by analogy to those cosmic cycles when the mammals must again pass through the human primitive stock: thereby they are assisted in purifying themselves and ultimately they become restored to the human family.

In order to prevent a recurrence of such degeneration and specialization after the restoration of the primitive, true doctrine (and such an effort was that of Theosophy, brought by H. P. Blavatsky at the close of the nineteenth century, when the Sun entered the zodiacal sign of Aquarius, in the precession of the equinoxes), it is the sacred trust of all Theosophists to prevent the desecration of the ancient teachings

from side-tracking processes. Let us therefore beware of all those adventitious and insidious attempts to seduce us into espousing causes, teachings, and doctrines with eccentric illusions of the truth. "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. . . . Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not." — *Matt.*, xxiv, 4, 5, 23 And it was Paul who said: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." — *1 Cor.*, x, 12 The same law in regard to specialization seems to operate in other circles as well. For instance, one wonders, whether or not the trend in the medical profession to espouse some specialty is not itself a decadent trend. One is impressed with the fact that Egypt, in its period of decadence, was full of specialists, as the historian Herodotus, tells us. Is there not a danger in this specialization? For it often runs into decimals, instead of using simple numbers: every specialty having lesser gamuts of specialties, which logically implies contraction into infinitesimals, and consequent relative annihilation.

The natural healthy duty should be to retain the broad fundamentals of health: to maintain the working of all the organs as harmonious as possible, to restore the deficiencies in the system, to use natural processes and Nature's primitive methods to acquire "*Mens sana in corpore sano*" (a sound mind in a sound body).

Is it not true that no one can *cure* any one else? For it is Nature that cures — if we give her a chance: the wise physician guides the functions into the simple, pure pathways of health and peace, restores broken laws, restrains abuses, acts wisely, justly; and so remains at peace.

A GREAT loss of esoteric and mystical truth in the Occident . . . has been the supposed separate existence of the individual human being from the Divinity which infills the Universe. How is this possible! Nothing is so near as Divinity, nothing is so intimate, nothing is so familiar; for the Kosmic Divinity is that Kosmic Consciousness, that Kosmic Life,

frontierless and indivisible, which fills everything and throughout boundless duration infills everything, and of which everything and every being is an offspring — not only human beings, but every other entity and thing in boundless Space. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 208-9

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Shall We Delete the "Difficult" Teachings?

A Theosophical writer recently brought up a point in regard to the relationship between Theosophy and Science which deserves consideration. It may be summarized as follows: Is it not better to concentrate on rules for present guidance in affairs of life than to speculate on or propound scientifically questionable hypotheses which may only deter serious inquirers? The same writer doubts that particles of matter can be refined or modified by passing through living bodies, or that the same atoms which helped to form a human body can return to the same Ego when reincarnated, and so forth. It would seem, however, that these ideas are not mere speculations by ordinary students but that they were advanced by H. P. Blavatsky and reiterated by her successors. They were first stated in *The Theosophist*, August, 1883, in her article "Transmigration of the Life-Atoms." Dr. de Purucker discusses it in his *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* and *The Esoteric Tradition*. These ideas are undoubtedly new to modern western thinkers, and there are many more of an equally "disturbing" nature which have been given out by H. P. Blavatsky. Some — nay many — of her most revolutionary teachings have been confirmed by modern science since her death, utterly improbable as it seemed in the nineteenth century, the heyday of materialism.

Are we then justified in suppressing such teachings, teachings which are not the invention of over-enthusiastic and irresponsible camp-followers, groundless speculations, but are essential parts of the broad scheme brought to the West by the Founder of Theosophy? Are we to abandon our posts in fear of some scientific Mrs. Grundy, especially in

view of the certainty of further discoveries in support of the rest of the more "difficult" teachings of Theosophy which approach the domain of modern science? Reasonable prudence in presentation must be used, of course, and, above all, the would-be exponent must be sure he has not misunderstood the teachings. There is nothing in Theosophy that could give a greater shock to the mind than was suffered by the recent introduction of such amazing concepts as "curved space," the "expansion of the universe," or the "Lorenz contraction."

The Theosophical Movement exists for the object of giving ideas, and the Society was established for that purpose. Its ideas are the basis for the "rules for guidance in the affairs of life" which are so all-important, but the ideas must be known before the world will accept the rules. Otherwise the rules are mere dogmatism. Theosophists, when sincere, can justly claim to be philanthropists — lovers of humanity — and will naturally take every opportunity that comes their way to relieve distress by practical help, as H. P. Blavatsky says "by individual effort, not collective." She herself set an example when she could. But she made it plain that the work of the Theosophical Movement is more far-reaching than any other humanitarian activity, for it goes to the root of suffering. It deals with causes rather than effects. Some well-meaning Theosophists have tried to include within the scope of the Society Social Reform, Charitable and other activities which were not emphasized by its Founder as parts of its *specific* work. The Society was not established for such purposes, but for a work that no ordinary philanthropic society can do. H. P. Blavatsky gave five clear and positive instructions to Theosophists in her authoritative *Key to Theosophy*. Briefly stated, they are:

To study and comprehend the doctrines in order to teach them to others; to spread interest in Theosophy and remove misconceptions; to circulate the literature; to defend the Society from unjust aspersions; and, "most important of all," to become examples of the Theosophical life.

But never does she even suggest that Theosophists *as individuals* should

not do any acts of charity or support any charitable work they have a mind to. She writes in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."

In regard to the widespread presentation of the more difficult teachings of Theosophy in our literature, which, some say, may deter serious inquirers, we must remember that pioneers of progress are seeking for new ideas, new lines of effort, just as chemists and engineers are striving to find new combinations and devices, and they are well aware that modern science in its present condition is not yet equal to the onerous task of leading us out of the wilderness of spiritual darkness. There is no reason why it may not rise to that exalted position, but today it has deliberately limited its field of research, leaving vast and important regions to — shall we say? — the poets and the philosophers. And also science is not too steady in its saddle. For instance, Sir James Jeans, the famous astronomer, is reported as saying to the Edinburgh Astronomical Society on October 8, 1938:

He "confessed," too, that to him it was still very open to question as to whether space was finite or infinite, whether it was curved or flat, whether the so-called constants of nature changed in value or stood still — if, indeed, any of these questions had any meaning! — *News-Chronicle*, London

The more "difficult" teachings of Theosophy, such as the doctrine of the life-atoms, the globe-chain, man's evolution as a spiritual being, and so forth, not to speak of the information in regard to astral or psychic subjects, may indeed be "questionable" to many scientists, but may not the bold utterance of such unusual ideas be effective in suggesting a higher order of research to independent and original thinkers among scientists, such, for example, as Dr. Rhine of Duke University, Professor Julian Huxley, and others who have already ventured into the "forbidden land" of telepathic investigation? The Theosophical Society is not angling for membership at the expense of truth; its object is to spread ideas as widely as possible so that those who are "ready" can find the help they need. William Q. Judge says in *Letters That Have*

Helped Me: "Each one who really comes into it [Theosophy] does so because it is only "an extension of previous beliefs." Those who have no such background may be expected to regard some of its doctrines as "questionable," but closer inspection may modify their views. Why should they not have the chance of learning that they exist?"

This applies even to the existence of gross psychical phenomena. Quite recently, for instance, outbreaks of abnormal "poltergeist" phenomena — violent disturbances such as moving of heavy furniture, alarming noises, etc. — have aroused attention from intelligent persons in America and England, but as they bring entirely "incredible" factors into the accepted schemes of physics and psychology the majority of scientists will simply ignore them. Yet every well-established account of this kind adds weight to the mass of evidence for the "Borderland" between the visible and the invisible planes. It leads to important logical conclusions which help to break down obstinate prejudices. Until two or three hundred years ago such phenomena were universally accepted by learned and unlearned as part of nature, but with the development of mechanistic science with its concentration on the laws of the visible and material they ceased to be respectable. Perhaps this is not surprising because, unfortunately, those in the West who courageously defended their reality had no rational or philosophical explanation to offer, but the case is different now. The universe of hard atomic matter has given place to a "mysterious universe" of "mind-stuff" and curious ideas of "probability" are being advanced. The way is visibly opening for the understanding of the basic principles of the occult structure of the Kosmos brought to the West by H. P. Blavatsky.

Dr. Robert Broom's Remarkable Discovery of a New Anthropoid Ape
South Africa is the present center of interest in regard to research for the ancestors of man. An entirely unexpected family of anthropoid apes has lately been discovered by South African scientists. At least three individuals have been found which are more human than any other living or fossilized apes, and the latest specimen, discovered by

Dr. Robert Broom, F. R. S., a few months ago and named *Paranthropus Robustus* (popularly known as the Kromdraai Ape from the place where it was found), is of special importance. It has been widely hailed by the journalists as "the Missing Link" and the unscientific reader might easily be misled into thinking that a real link (or links) has been found, ancestral to man, which directly connects the earliest true human races with the apes. This is not so, for the newly-discovered South African anthropoids flourished long after the Piltdown, Peking, and other true men appeared. *Paranthropus* possesses certain distinctively human characteristics, especially in the teeth, but, as Dr. Broom makes very clear, it is "too late to have been the direct ancestor of man." It is, like the other anthropoids, a distant relative, and probably lived between two and three hundred thousand years ago, during the Middle Pleistocene period. The earliest true men whose remains have been discovered are far earlier than that. The South African anthropoids, especially *Paranthropus*, are only "links" in the sense that in certain anatomical structures they resemble man more closely than any other apes.

Sir Arthur Keith, the great English authority on anthropology, says that the discovery of *Paranthropus*, "an ape with human teeth" *who existed at a far more recent date than that of very ancient man*, is

perhaps the last thing I ever expected. All my landmarks have gone. . . . Indeed, had these remains been found in strata of older geological date, experts would certainly have agreed that at last the anthropoid stage of man's ancestry had certainly been found [!]

But the fact remains that ape-men of the desired type *preceding* true man have not been found. The mystery of human origin still remains for anthropologists to learn. Many varieties of anthropoids have been found — a new one was unearthed in Europe the other day — but "the series of progressive types from ape to man" is as conspicuous for its absence as it was in H. P. Blavatsky's day.

The Ancient Wisdom explains the appearance of the anthropoids as

not the product of natural evolution but an *accident*, a cross-breed between an animal being, or form, and man . . . "a transformation of species most directly connected with that of the human family — a *hybrid branch engrafted on their own stock before the final perfection of the latter*" — or man. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 262

The student who wishes to follow this subject more fully will find it explained in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 262-3, 678, 689, etc. On page 652, H. P. Blavatsky severely criticizes the materialistic biologist, Haeckel, for his sneers at the suggestion that spiritual causes could possibly be called upon to explain the origin of the human race, which he considered was the result of "simple mechanical causes, from physical and chemical forces." In this connexion it is interesting to notice that Dr. Broom, in his description of the latest discoveries does not agree with the materialistic position, although he still holds that man must have originated in some way from the lower kingdoms, even though a very great increase in the brain (perhaps 100 per cent) would be necessary. He writes in *The Forum*, Johannesburg, September 5, 1938:

The occasional occurrence of microcephalic idiots among men suggests that the rapid and great growth of the human brain may have been the result of a mutation or a series of mutations, but if so it seems to me such mutations must have been deliberately brought about by some spiritual guiding power and could not have been the result of blind chance.

The student will find an interesting reference to Dr. Broom's position in *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 322, where the author discusses the causes of the inner urge behind the evolution of form — the psychical yearning of the lower kingdoms to become human.

THE URGE THAT MUST BE SATISFIED — *Lester A. Todd*

When a human being reaches that state of evolution where the material experiences of life no longer satisfy him, it is a natural working of his sub-conscious Ego to create such a tremendous urge within him that it must of necessity find an outlet in the thoughts and actions that dominate his personality. He becomes a Pilgrim, mentally wandering here and there, seeking that certain something which will satisfy this urge within him. He may try this or that, and may almost despair of the hope of finding what he subconsciously seeks so earnestly. There may be among those that read these lines just such a person. To him let me say that we who have also groped about in the darkness of materialism, prodded by the spiritual urge within us, and who have finally found our way on to the true path of Life, welcome this possible opportunity of assisting you, our fellow-man, to find that which you may be seeking.

So, as briefly and simply as I can, in every-day language, I will tell you a little, a very little, about Theosophy. The operations of human consciousness are threefold and are designated by men as Religion, Philosophy, and Science. These three are not fundamentally different things, but may be likened to the three sides of an equilateral triangle; three views of looking at Truth. An attempted separation of Religion, Philosophy, and Science is unnatural, so the Theosophist uses their unified vision to proclaim the hidden facts of Being. We may then define Theosophy as a Scientific Religion, a Religious Science, and a Philosophy of Nature — the Oneness of Man with the Universe. We are taught that there is One Infinite Life without beginning or end. Everything is alive. There is no such thing as 'Dead Matter' existing in Nature. The manifestation of Life in dualities of Spirit and Matter descends in cycles of Activity and Repose, whether applied to Cosmic, Solar World Periods, or to such common alternations as Sleeping and Waking, with which we are all familiar. Man on Earth is a 'Life-Atom'

of the Divine, immersed in matter, a Pilgrim seeking his way back to the Source.

You have probably been taught from an orthodox source that you have a Soul; you know you have a Body, because you can see it. Theosophy teaches us that each one of us is a Soul, and that our body is nothing but the vehicle of our present evolution in this particular incarnation or life. You may liken your body to a house in which dwells the real man, the Inner Man, the man with the wee small voice, which is sometimes called Conscience.

Theosophy teaches that the real nature of Man is sevenfold, classified as:

First — SPIRIT, the highest part of man, which gives to him, and indeed to every other Entity or thing, its sentient consciousness of Selfhood.

Second — SPIRITUAL SOUL, which gives to Man Spiritual Consciousness, and is the Vehicle of Spirit.

Third — HUMAN SOUL, the center of Ego-consciousness in Man, Mind, the essentially human element.

Fourth — OUR PASSIONS AND DESIRES, the driving or impelling force within us.

Fifth — VITALITY or Life principle.

Sixth — ASTRAL BODY, the Model or Pattern or framework around which the physical body is builded.

Seventh — PHYSICAL BODY, the House, Man's carrier, and no more an essential part of him than are the clothes in which his body is garmented.

Now that I have told you briefly of the seven principles of Man, let us consider the very ancient and worldwide doctrine of Reincarnation, or Reimbodiment in flesh. It is the doctrine that man lives many times on earth as a human being, the conditions of each incarnation being the natural result of the causes set in motion in former lives. Think of the hope that is given us by our belief in Reincarnation: We get another chance to make up for all the frustrations of this life, the inequalities,

the unfinished business, the failures — all necessary experiences and part of our evolution. Does Reincarnation not answer the "Why did this have to happen?" that we hear so often. Does it not explain and give logic to accidents and deaths of little children and babies and men and women cut down at the very threshold of their careers? Reincarnation is a magnificent prospect; it makes of Man a God, and gives to every part of Nature the possibility of rising in the scale or on the Ladder of Life. What is the Universe for, and for what final purpose is Man, the immortal thinker, here in evolution? It is all for the experience and evolution of the soul, for the purpose of raising the entire mass of manifested matter up to the stature, nature and dignity of conscious god-hood. The only way physical and spiritual evolution can be carried on is by Reincarnation.

You ask "Why do we not remember our former lives?" Because memory is a product of the physical brain and perishes with the body. The soul does remember its past experiences and in the too seldom flashes of intuition or 'hunch' we have the answer and the possibilities.

Reincarnation, the natural method by which the soul evolves, logically implies that we experience the results of our thoughts and actions in past lives. These experiences, the adjustment of causes to effects, are the manifestation of the Law of Karman. Karmic Law is unerring, it is the natural Law of Justice, which wisely, intelligently, and equitably adjusts each effect to its cause. It is in no sense fatalism or chance, which have no place in Theosophy. With this knowledge of Karmic Law we have the comforting thought that our destiny is in our own hands. We not only can control such destiny, but we must do so. Bear in mind that every action, every thought that you have, is a force sent out from within you, that later on — no matter how much later — comes back to you as an effect, and the effect must produce equilibrium or harmony with its cause. Each one is therefore his own karman, and whatever happens to us is the natural harvest of former plantings. This principle is beautifully expressed by our Leader, in his *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, wherein he says:

Sow an act, and you will reap a habit. Sow a habit, and you will reap a destiny, because habits build character. This is the sequence: an act, a habit, a character, and a destiny. You are the creator of yourself. What you make yourself to be now, you will be in the future. What you are now, is precisely what you have made yourself to be in the past. What you sow, you shall reap.

Our evolution goes on and on according to the Law of Cycles, not like a train on a straight track, but rather along a spiral path, ever returning toward a past circuit of our experience, but always bounding the curve in another, broader sweep. There are cycles within cycles. We are familiar with the alternations of day and night, life and death, sleeping and waking, the ebb and flow of the tides, the four Seasons. Nature continually repeats itself and so do all manifestations of Nature including ourselves.

This simple exposition of the Theosophic teachings of the Seven Principles of Man, of Reincarnation, Karma, and Cyclic Law, may awaken in your consciousness the knowledge that you are not the helpless mortal that you may have thought you were, to cringe in fear of a divine wrath that might be visited on you because of your human frailties. Not at all. You are a definite part of the Divinity of all Nature. Below you in varying states of evolution are the Elementals, the Mineral Kingdom, the Vegetable Kingdom, and the Animals. Above you are the Mahatmans, those perfect men, relatively speaking, whom Theosophists call Teachers, Elder Brothers, Masters, Sages, and Seers. They are the Guardians of the Race, and of the Records of past ages, portions of which they give out from time to time, when the world is ready to receive them, as fragments of a now long forgotten Wisdom.

You are one class of 'young Gods' incarnated in bodies of flesh at the present stage of your own particular evolutionary journey. The human stage of evolution is about half way between the undeveloped life-atom and the fully developed Kosmic Spirit or God.

Recognise your Divinity, and with such recognition realize your responsibilities to all Nature. Begin within you, to acquire that inherent

sense of Universal Brotherhood, not in the sense of sentimental unity or political or social co-operation, but in the Spiritual Brotherhood of all Beings. Begin with your thoughts. Thoughts are powerful energies and each one is an embryo of your future karman. That is the thought I would like to leave with you.

If these few simple Theosophical truths are understood and accepted by you, limitless possibilities of action within yourselves will be opened up, and by the very impetus of your own efforts you will go forward, unafraid, and with dignity, to your inescapable destiny.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME AND THE CHILD — *Jalie Neville Shore*

Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but "lies asleep." " This is an explanation of Time given in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. I, 37) which continues: "The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past. Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change — or the same — for a billionth part of a second. . . ."

The use of the word "human," H. P. Blavatsky wrote in the same volume (page 106) applies "to those Intelligences that have reached the appropriate equilibrium between matter-and spirit. . . ." These two definitions of time and the human have become to the Theosophist axiomatic. It is only when he hears time being discussed as something dependent upon a clock that stops or connected with a six-hour-a-week law, and the human being defined as primarily a physical organism dependent upon external forces for his culture that the Theosophist is ever aware that anyone can and does think differently about these two fundamental terms. This happens rather frequently.

What occurs less frequently and is therefore the more startling is the presentation of a thesis in refreshing agreement with Theosophical concepts by men of science and responsibility who have not studied the Secret Wisdom but who apparently from the depths of their own being have drawn out aspects of the Truth and with conviction have presented them to the world. This has been the case of Dr. E. Graham Howe, medical psychologist of England, who wrote *War Dance* a few years ago and who has recently collected a series of lectures he gave to the educators in England into a little book which he has called *Time and the Child*. (1)

The caption beneath the title reads "A Study of Morality and Reality," which suggests a great deal about the book — and the author, who is remembered especially for having written *War Dance* and *I and Me*. *Time and the Child* is in fact a recasting of Dr. Howe's book *Morality and Reality*, and, I believe, has a more happily chosen title. "Time," the author proves, is a fluid, eternal, Ever-Present Now; and the "Child" (the word child symbolizes adults and pre-adults alike) is that imbodiment of consciousness which is never static but moves from hour to hour in an ebb and flow of comprehension of and adjustment to interior and exterior circumstances surrounding it. It is the intelligent bridging of the subjective and the objective, the "I-Am" (no weird concepts are suggested) and the surrounding reality; in short, the child and his environment which embraces his spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical equipment that the author of *Time and the Child* concerns himself with.

Man is the mediator between two worlds: the material and the spiritual, Dr. Howe believes. He must live in both, cannot run from either, must accept both since they are both contained in him. "He is the bridge between the two, to touch both sides of his opposites with love." He has two main objectives: to see more light and as a creative artist to bring fire from heaven to earth to make more things that "matter by their movement." This is man's balance: more light to see by and more capacity to make and use and enjoy things but not to hold them *fixed*.

Holding things fixed, hanging on to them, whether they are ideas or material treasures, constitutes man's greatest mistake causing him his greatest pain. Fear, Dr. Howe sets forth, originates in the inability to accept "Reality" which is defined as "not what ought to be" but what "simply is, and being what it is, it moves and is *Becoming*." It is both yes and no and pleasure and pain. It is not a matter of personal law or personal convenience, but a matter of fact. Basing a pretty straight-thinking argument on that statement, Dr. Howe presents an excellent discussion of discipline and punishment which is utterly lacking in any namby-pamby suggestions of a moot question. People are too often

"kind" with lack of wisdom. This is not facing "Reality," and he deplors the fact that there is no law that punishes moral burglars and murderers. Society is not so much interested in the protection of beings as in the safeguarding of fixtures. We need courageous adults in order to have courageous children, and rebellion against Truth is not so courageous or virtuous as facing it. This the author makes quite clear and also that until we learn what true sublimation is we shall be like a tin can tied to a dog's tail, "tied to something we can't control."

The purpose of morality is both a convenience and a convention. If it is good it bows to Truth. If it is a "fixer" it does not measure up to Truth, for Truth and Reality are always moving in Time. Morality is likely the "imposition of somebody else's will by big battalions," and it is the imposition of the adult will on the child's that Dr. Howe protests against vigorously and effectively. An adult should be an interpreter, an adjuster, a bridge, not a Will-Inflicter. The age, Dr. Howe analyses, is one of morality, arguing good and evil, etc., but not one particularly interested in Truth. Two currents he pictures as running strong: one (regression) which is material progress, destructive of opposition and authoritative supremacy, and the other, the one that "seeks to dissolve the problem of opposites by accepting both; it is finding unity and wholeness through deeper insight into the meaning of our common brotherhood. For this principle of universal oneness, love is the key."

The capacity to suffer (in the sense of accepting as well as feeling pain) is the criterion of love, as well as of life. Love is the warmth and light that lets things grow. It can work miracles without ever knowing clearly how it is done. It does not have anything to do with like and dislike. Instinct is something to be watched very carefully and never to be relied upon; while intuition is the source of information which convinces one because it is true. Intuition is illumination, while instinct is self-protective. (Thus we have the Theosophist's intuition of direct perception.)

These are some of Dr. Howe's thoughtful and stimulating declarations. The reader will also enjoy his study of words (words like: educate,

holiness, sacrifice, renounce, disease) and his original diagrams. The diagram called "Incarnation" is especially interesting to Theosophists. In it the little figure (man) is seen coming from the "Ideal Spiral" down through the "Border Line" into the point of the "Real-Me-Now" of the "Material-Space-temporal (our time) Real Earth."

Dr. Howe is a man who has learned a great deal and who has the ability to give much. He expresses himself with charm, simplicity, and sincerity. He has a good time in his thinking — moving on, not crystallized in one idea, not grooved in one concept. *Time and the Child* exemplifies the author's own definition of growth "which is not a matter of form, it is movement of the spirit, of the hidden life within, of the meaning of the whole but not of any particular part."

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Time and the Child*, by E. Graham Howe. Faber and Faber, London. 7s. 6d. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Esoteric Wisdom in the Bible (1)

Nevertheless, however disfigured for Rabbinical purposes is the original *Elohistic* version by Ezra, however repulsive at times even the *esoteric* meaning in the Hebrew scrolls, which is far more so than its outward *veil* or *cloaking* may be — once the *Jehovistic* portions are eliminated, the Mosaic Books are found full of purely occult and priceless knowledge, especially in the first six chapters.

Read by the aid of the Kabala one finds a matchless temple of occult truths, a well of deeply concealed beauty hidden under a structure, the *visible* architecture of which, its apparent symmetry notwithstanding, is unable to stand the criticism of cold reason, or to reveal its age, for it belongs to all the ages. There is more wisdom concealed under the exoteric *fables* of Puranas and Bible than in all the exoteric *facts* and science in the literature of the world, and more OCCULT true Science, than there is of exact knowledge in all the academies. Or, in plainer and stronger language, there is as much esoteric wisdom in some portions of the *exoteric* Puranas and Pentateuch, as there is of nonsense and of designed childish fancy in it, when read only in the dead-letter murderous interpretations of great dogmatic religions, and especially of sects.

Let anyone read the first verses of chapter i of *Genesis* and reflect upon them. There "God" commands to *another* "god", *who does his bidding* — even in the *cautious* English Protestant translation of James the First's authorised edition. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 335-6

The "fall of *man*" was no fall, *for he was irresponsible*. But "Creation" having been invented on the dualistic system as the "prerogative of God alone," the legitimate *attribute* patented by theology in the name of an *infinite* deity of their own making, this power had to be regarded as "Satanic," and as an usurpation of divine rights. Thus, the foregoing, in

the light of such narrow views, must naturally be considered as a terrible slander on man, "created in the image of God," a still more dreadful blasphemy in the face of the dead-letter dogma. . . . The *esoteric* interpretation of the Bible, however, sufficiently refutes this slanderous invention of theology; . . .

The old doctrine about the true meaning of the "Fallen Angels", in its anthropological and evolutionary sense, is contained in the Kabala, and explains the Bible. It is found pre-eminent in *Genesis* when the latter is read in a spirit of research for truth, with no eye to dogma, and in no mood of preconception. . . . But what is, in reality, the "Book of Enoch" itself, from which the author of *Revelation* and even the St. John of the Fourth Gospel have so profusely quoted? (e. g., verse 8 in chapter 10, about all who have come before Jesus, being "thieves and robbers.") Simply a *Book of Initiation*, giving out in allegory and cautious phraseology the programme of certain archaic mysteries performed in the *inner* temples. . . .

The "Serpent" fallen from on high, "*deorsum fluens*," was credited with the possession of the Keys of the Empire of the Dead, to that day, when Jesus saw it "falling like lightning from heaven" (*Luke* x. 17, 18), the Roman Catholic interpretation of *cadebat ut fulgur* to the contrary, notwithstanding; and it means indeed that even "the devils are subject" to the *Logos* — who is WISDOM, but who, as the opponent of ignorance, is Satan or Lucifer at the same time. This remark refers to divine Wisdom falling like lightning on, and quickening the intellects of those who fight the devils of ignorance and superstition. Up to the time when Wisdom, in the shape of the incarnating Spirits of MAHAT, descended from on high to animate and call the Third Race to real conscious life, humanity — if it can be so called in its animal, senseless state — was of course doomed to *moral* as well as to physical death. The Angels *fallen into generation* are referred to metaphorically as *Serpents* and *Dragons of Wisdom*. On the other hand, regarded in the light of the LOGOS, the Christian Saviour, like Krishna, whether as man or logos, may be said to have saved those who believed in the secret teachings from "eternal death," to have conquered the Kingdom of Darkness, or Hell, as every

Initiate does. This in the human, terrestrial form of the Initiates, and also because the *logos* is Christos, that principle of our inner nature which develops in us into the Spiritual Ego — the Higher-Self — being formed of the indissoluble union of *Buddhi* (the sixth) and the spiritual efflorescence of *Manas*, the fifth principle. — *Op. cit.*, II, 228-31

... Thus the remark made by the great Initiate [in *Luke*, x, 18] — one that referred allegorically to the ray of Enlightenment and reason, *falling like lightning* from on high into the hearts and *minds* of the converts to that old wisdom-religion then presented in a new form by the wise Galilean Adept (2) — was distorted out of recognition (as was his own personality), and made to fit in with one of the most cruel as the most pernicious of all theological dogmas. — *Op. cit.*, II, 231

The Book of Enoch, in short, is a *resume*, a compound of the main features of the History of the Third, Fourth and Fifth Races; a very few prophecies from the present age of the world; a long retrospective, introspective and prophetic summary of universal and quite *historical* events — geological, ethnological, astronomical, and psychic — with a touch of theogony out of the antediluvian records. The Book of this mysterious personage is referred to and quoted copiously in the *Pistis Sophia*, and also in the *Zohar* and its most ancient Midrashim. Origen and Clement of Alexandria held it in the highest esteem. . . . From the XVIIIth to the Lth chapter, the Visions of Enoch are all descriptive of the Mysteries of Initiation, one of which is the Burning Valley of the "Fallen Angels." — *Op. cit.*, II, 535

[Solomon] Whose 700 wives and 300 concubines, by the bye, are merely the personations of man's attributes, feelings, passions and his various occult powers: the Kabalistic numbers 7 and 3 showing it plainly. Solomon himself, moreover, being, simply, the emblem of SOL — the "Solar Initiate" or the Christ-Sun, is a variant of the Indian "Vikarttana" (the Sun) shorn of his beams by Vis-wakarma, his Hierophant-Initiator, who thus shears the Chrestos-candidate for initiation of his golden radiance and crowns him with a dark, blackened aureole — the "crown of thorns." (See the "Secret Doctrine"

for full explanation.) Solomon was never a living man. As described in *Kings*, his life and works are an allegory on the trials and glory of Initiation. — *Lucifer*, Nov. 1888

According to the Kabalists, the three Kings or Magi were white, black, and brown. The White presented gold, the symbol of Life, and Light. The Black presented myrrh, the symbol of Death and Night; and the Brown presented the frankincense, the symbol of Divinity and of the dogma which reconciles the antagonistic duads of the Universe. — *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, IV, 120

It is a fact worthy of remark, that so long as the initiate kept silent "on what he knew," he was perfectly safe. So was it in days of old, and so it is now. As soon as the Christian God, emanating forth from *Silence*, manifested himself as the *Word* or Logos, the latter became the cause of his death. The serpent is the symbol of wisdom and eloquence, but it is likewise the symbol of destruction. "To dare, to know, to will, *and be silent*," are the cardinal axioms of the kabalist. Like Apollo and other gods, Jesus is killed by his *Logos*; he rises again, kills him in his turn, and becomes his master. Can it be that this old symbol has, like the rest of ancient philosophical conceptions, more than one allegorical and never-suspected meaning? The coincidences are too strange to be results of mere chance. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 510

... The "Man" of chapter i. [the book of *Genesis*] is radically different from the "Adam" of chapter ii., for the former was created "male and female" — that is, bi-sexed — and in the image of God; while the latter, according to verse seven, was formed of the dust of the ground, and became "a living soul," after the Lord God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Moreover, *this Adam* was a male being, and in verse twenty we are told that "there was not found a helpmeet for him." The Adonai, being pure spiritual entities, had no sex, or rather had both sexes united in themselves, like their Creator; and the ancients understood this so well that they represented many of their deities as of dual sex. The Biblical student must either accept this interpretation, or make the passages in the two chapters alluded to absurdly

contradict each other. . . . Not only are these two races of beings thus clearly indicated in *Genesis*, but even a third and a fourth one are ushered before the reader in chapter iv., where the "sons of God" and the race of "giants" are spoken of. — *Op. cit.*, I, 303

There is one more important emblem connected with the sloughing of the serpent's skin, which, so far as we are aware, has never been heretofore noticed by our symbolists. As the reptile upon casting his coat becomes freed from a casing of gross matter, which cramped a body grown too large for it, and resumes its existence with renewed activity, so *man, by casting off the gross material body, enters upon the next stage of his existence with enlarged powers and quickened vitality.* Inversely, the Chaldean Kabalists tell us that primeval man, who, contrary to the Darwinian theory was purer, wiser, and far more spiritual, as shown by the myths of the Scandinavian Bur, the Hindu Dejotas, and the Mosaic "sons of God," — in short, of a far higher nature than the man of the present Adamic race, became *despiritualized* or tainted with matter, and then, for the first time, was given the *fleshy body*, which is typified in *Genesis* in that profoundly significant verse: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God *make coats of skin*, and clothed them." Unless the commentators would make of the First Cause a *celestial tailor*, what else can the apparently absurd words mean, but that the spiritual man had reached, through the progress of involution, to that point where matter, predominating over and conquering spirit, had transformed him into the physical man, or the second Adam, of the second chapter of *Genesis*? . . .

. . . While some Kabalists, and even archaeologists say that "Adam, Enoch, and Noah might, in outward appearance, be different men, but they were really the selfsame divine person." Others explain that between Adam and Noah there intervened several cycles. That is to say, that every one of the antediluvian patriarchs stood as the representative of a race which had its place in a succession of cycles; and each of which races was less spiritual than its predecessor. Thus Noah, though a good man, could not have borne comparison with his ancestor, Enoch, who "walked with God and did not die." Hence the

allegorical interpretation which makes Noah have this coat of skin by inheritance from the second Adam and Enoch, but not wear it himself, for if otherwise, Ham could not have stolen it. . . . The coat of skin worn by Cush "in secret," — *i. e.*, when his spiritual nature began to be tainted by the material — is placed on Nimrod, the most powerful and strongest of physical men on this side of the flood — the last remnant of the antediluvian giants. — *Op. cit.*, I, 149-50

The exoteric plan of the *Bible* was made to answer also to four ages. Thus, they reckon the Golden Age from Adam to Abraham; the silver, from Abraham to David; copper, from David to the Captivity; thenceforward, the iron. But the secret computation is quite different, and does not vary at all from the zodiacal calculations of the Brahmans. We are in the Iron Age, or Kali-Yug, but it began with Noah, the mythical ancestor of our race. — *Op. cit.*, II, 443

The animals shut up in the ark are the human passions. They typify certain ordeals of initiation, and the mysteries which were instituted among many nations in commemoration of this allegory. (3) — *Op. cit.*, II, 447

FOOTNOTES:

1. As in other instances of this series, only a very few of the many, many allusions to the occult significance of the Bible and its various books have been chosen. The extracts here given are merely an indication to the student of what can be found. Many people unfortunately have the impression that H. P. B. cast aspersions on the Bible and Christianity, whereas if one really reads what she says, one finds that she illuminates the Biblical teachings, and gives them great dignity. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. To make it plainer, any one who reads that passage in *Luke*, will see that the remark follows the report of the *seventy*, who rejoice that "even the devils (the spirit of controversy and reasoning, or the opposing power, since Satan means simply "*adversary*" or *opponent*) are subject unto us through thy name." (*Luke* x 17) Now, "thy name"

means the name of Christos, or Logos, or the spirit of true divine wisdom, as distinct from the spirit of intellectual or mere materialistic reasoning — the HIGHER SELF in short. And when Jesus remarks to this that he has "beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," it is a mere statement of his clairvoyant powers, notifying them that he already knew it, and a reference to the incarnation of the divine ray (the gods or angels) which *falls into generation*. For not all men, by any means, benefit by that incarnation, and with some the power remains latent and dead during the whole life. Truly "No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son" as added by Jesus then and there (*Ibid* x, 22) — the Church "of Christ" less than any one else. The Initiates alone understood the secret meaning of the term "Father and the Son," and knew that it referred to Spirit and Soul on the Earth. For the teachings of Christ were *occult* teachings, which could only be explained at the *initiation*. They were never intended for the masses, for Jesus forbade the twelve to go to the Gentiles and the Samaritans (*Matt. x. 8*), and repeated to his disciples that the "mysteries of Heaven" were for them alone, not for the multitudes (*Mark iv. II*). — *Ibid.*, II, 231 ([return to text](#))

3. The "animals" referred to by H. P. B. here in connexion with Noah and the Ark, refer not to the allegory of the Cosmic Noah and the Cosmic Ark, but to that phase of the Arkite theory or story in connexion with Man alone. If the student is interested in other branches or aspects of the story of Noah and the Ark, consult H. P B.'s writings on the subject, not only in *Isis Unveiled*, but in *The Secret Doctrine*. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SUPERCONDUCTIVITY — *Raymond Rugland*

A crackling spark leaps and twists between two copper terminals. A flash of dynamic power blazes a zigzag path, and an aggregate embodiment of countless millions of souls of the electronic world surges from one column to the other. The power of a Genie, the mystery of a flame, is electricity! Whirling magnets and rotors bring light, power, and heat into our homes; a tiny copper strand leads the way for the electrons to follow. In nature is revealed this vast collection of infinitesimal electrical entities throughout the width and breadth of our entire objective existence. Are not heat, motion, friction, and light witnesses to the constant presence of magnetism and electricity? Because our minds are bound by our physical restrictions and we cannot measure the infinite smallness of each electron, are we justified in assigning it to a place of insignificance? Consciousness is all-permeant and is limitless in its expression whether in the macrocosm or the microcosm. The Theosophist regards the atom as a tiny solar system, protons being the atomic sun, and electrons, the atomic planets. Not inert particles, but ensouled individualities rooted in an eternal Monad — these are the electrons which the Theosophist fits into the Universal Scheme. Does atomic or molecular consciousness merit the real consideration of the scientific researcher? One electrical phenomenon is of special interest in consideration of ensouled planet electrons.

Superconductivity, as an electrical phenomenon, has baffled the physicists for almost twenty years. In vain they seek a physical means of explanation but each time the true answer eludes their grasp. Superconductivity refers to the behavior of an electric current passing through a metallic conductor at low temperatures. Only in recent times have conditions been perfected so as to enable the physicist to work experimentally with temperatures as low as minus 270 degrees Centigrade. In chemical research, atoms warp and twist under the

direction of researchers as they subject different substances to the uncanny effect of sub-zero temperatures. These infinitesimal particles are not found to be as inert and irresponsive as was presumed or entirely in harmony with the theories that had been framed beforehand.

Every pure metallic conductor offers a resistance to the movement of the current through it and for different temperatures, other things being equal, we find that as the temperature of the conductor is raised, the resistance becomes greater with a uniform constancy. The atoms of positive electricity — the protons — are relatively heavy, and are, as a rule, immobile; atoms of negative electricity — the electrons — are much lighter than the protons, and in every body some are free to move. A current in a wire is merely a stream of these electrons and the battery or dynamo "pushing" the current through the wire acts as an electron pump. As the temperature of the conductor rises, the atoms composing the conductor speed up in their natural motion as do the electrons flowing as an electrical stream, and the result is that there is a continual bombarding of atoms and electrons so that the motion of the electric current is impeded by constant jostling of atomic neighbors. According to this explanation, as the temperature of the conductor lowers, the atoms should gradually slow down and offer less resistance to the electric current. To within a certain limit this is true. It was found that at a temperature a few degrees above absolute zero (minus 273° Centigrade) the resistance of certain metals vanished completely and without warning. A current started in an endless conductor would continue to flow for hours without any resistance and with its intensity undiminished without the aid of any outside electromotive force or battery. It seemed that the electrons appear to know the location of the moving atoms and to avoid colliding with any of them, although such collisions would be frequent at a slightly higher temperature. Such a discovery violated the expected calculations of the scientists and once again left them with a phenomenon for which they had no explanation. Here is a case wherein atomic and molecular behavior seems to have acted from some impulse within the nature of

these micro-cosmic entities rather than from some external material or physical factor. For science, remains the renewed search for the hidden potencies and powers of the micro-organisms. Theosophy mirrors the Plan of the Universe to reflect in the electron. Lo! — A planet of some microcosmic sun, an entity like our own Earth, linked in a vast Scheme of evolving Conscious Infinitude.

The Theosophical Forum

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD — *Alan Shurlock*

Universal Brotherhood is a Theosophist's way of saying that all things in Nature are akin, from the dust under our feet to the farthest star in the sky. The phrase "Universal Brotherhood" is not new or startling, although its true meaning is not often used. It has been the theme of poets and philosophers, the ideal of statesmen and patriots. Scientific research even shows that all matter may be resolved into its primary division of atoms, so that everything in this physical world is related and akin to everything else.

Many persons, however, examining the racial and religious differences of human beings, find that Universal Brotherhood is only a platitude or possibly a consummation devoutly to be wished, as far as mankind is concerned. But a Theosophist understanding that everything physical and mental is only a reflexion of the Divinity that is the source of all things, states positively that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature. Wars, sorrow, and confusion among mankind are proofs in themselves of this fact. We are all bound together with the golden cord that comes from the heart of the universe, and what affects the smallest part affects the whole. The poet Francis Thompson expresses our belief very beautifully, when he says:

All things by immortal power
Near or far
Hiddenly
To each other linked are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling of a star.

Once we have an understanding of the fundamental laws of the universe, the belief in Universal Brotherhood becomes a real thing and part of our daily living. Stated simply, these laws are:

The Law of Hierarchies; the Law of Balance; the Law of Cycles. The

Law of Hierarchies may be explained as the division of all nature into groups or kingdoms, one above the other, without end. All kingdoms are alike in one particular: they are all groups of living beings in some form or another, coming into being as expressions of the universal life force that shows itself in the myriad shapes and patterns that fill the world with beauty. Each kingdom is related to and dependent upon the one below for its existence. At the same time it is gradually reaching up or evolving towards the kingdom above.

We see this relationship in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. Trees and plants have their roots in the soil from which they draw their life-sap. Animals, in turn, depend on grass, vegetables, and fruit for their existence. Mankind, having an animal body, is likewise dependent on the kingdoms below, but having developed mind and will-power, is evolving towards the kingdom of the gods above. Why should this be thought a stretch of the imagination? We cannot truly conceive ourselves, in our present state, as being the ultimate, the finest product of the universe. Is it not reasonable, then, to assume that there are higher beings who have evolved beyond man's state, even though our physical eyes cannot see them? And so Theosophists say that these beings, call them gods, archangels, Mahatmas, Super-Men, as you will, do exist; and that though our bodies are chained to the physical kingdoms below, our spiritual selves are reaching up to the state of godhood above us. And beyond the gods stretch even higher realms of consciousness, without end; all related and a part of the grand whole.

As we study the universe and its operations we begin to see that there is nothing hit-or-miss about the way it is run. The sun rises daily; the flowers bloom and die and are reborn year after year; the stars move in their appointed courses in spite of our wars, quarrels, and ignoble confusion. Why does the universe run so grandly and why don't we live in an equally grand manner?

Here is where the second law comes into effect — the law called by Theosophists Karman. Interpreted, this means the Law of Cause and

Effect, attraction and repulsion; or better still, the Law of Balance. This law keeps the universe running so beautifully year after year. As the result of our own actions it operates to bring us war or peace, happiness or misery; and thus we become the judges, juries, and policemen of ourselves.

A cold-blooded fatalistic belief, you say? Not at all. A complete understanding of this law can be had only by considering it together with the third universal law, the Law of Cycles. This last law may be explained as the belief and realization that everything in nature progresses upwards in a spiral path, that is, a series of circles each one higher than the other. Another side of this law is the fact that all manifestation is dual — the well known pairs of opposites that Plato and other philosophers have written about. A study of nature and our own lives gives us many examples: day and night, winter and summer, and the familiar daily routine of sleeping and awakening. Each day is a miniature life; our whole life, a series of days in which we learnt life's lessons, or flunked them; we do noble or ignoble deeds; we help others or live in a selfish world of our own. But no life, no matter how well lived, can be complete in itself. There is always so much more to learn and to do and to undo, even for the brightest of us. So, in harmony with this law of cycles Theosophists believe in reïmbodiment: the return to earth again and again to take up our progress where we left off, after a period of rest; just as every day we go to work, refreshed after the night's rest, to pick up the incompleting thread of the previous day's business.

With this cyclic law in mind, the Law of Balance becomes logical and not fatalistic. We return in another life to reap here the benefits of our previous helpful actions, or to straighten out the injustices we have done before. And thus, from life to life, we gradually progress upwards.

An explanation should be given here of what is meant by "we" in this paper. As stated before, Theosophists believe that there is Divinity behind all physical matter, including ourselves. Our real selves are composed of finer and more spiritual grades of consciousness than our

physical bodies, which in turn are lit up by the pure spark which is a part of the Divine Whole. This spiritual part of ourselves, sometimes called the soul, reincarnates again and again until it has learned all that can be learned through materialization into physical matter. This process, in turn, gradually spiritualizes the physical matter with which our soul comes into contact while residing in our bodies, so that this physical matter will evolve in time into a spiritual being.

How is this done? Consider the makeup of our physical bodies. Forming the flesh, bone, and blood are tiny atoms, each of which has a spiritual counterpart. These atoms enter our system through the food we eat, and during their stay with us they become colored with the thoughts, magnetism, and individuality of ourselves. As we progress upward by spiritual enlightenment we in turn impart a touch of our growth to these atoms, so that they are lifted up by their contact with us. This is just one example of what is meant by a Theosophist when he states that everything in nature is dependent and related to the rest.

Having considered and interpreted Universal Brotherhood through the fundamental laws of the universe, let us see how it affects the progress of mankind. In a previous paragraph concerning the Law of Balance the suggestion was made that man seems to be an inharmonious unit in a seemingly harmonious whole. The apparent discrepancy is explained by the fact that human beings are endowed with the power to discriminate. Man is more than a mere animal, because man has the power of Mind, the ability to choose between good and evil. Until men learn how to use this power for the good of their brothers, instead of their harm, there will be discord, wars, and suffering.

Theosophy gives us the key to understand ourselves; the power to end all strife and sorrow. What is it? To live to benefit mankind. The same thought can be found in all religions. The Eastern scriptures say: By loss of self alone can Self be found, which is a beautiful, concise way of saying that by overthrowing our personal, selfish nature we shall find the real, the spiritual part of our being. And this can be done only by living to help others. It is the sacrifice of the personal self that gives us

advancement., The greatest paradox of the universe is that through self-sacrifice, devotion to others, and practice of altruism we gain infinitely more than we give up. The very virtues and qualities we possess that endear us to our fellow-men were obtained only by self-sacrifices on our part sometime or another in our various existences.

Jesus was asked: "Teacher, what is the great injunction in the Law?" He replied: "Thou shalt love the Lord God thy God, in all thy heart and in all thy soul, and in all thy consciousness. This is the prime and great injunction. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt *love thy neighbor as thyself*. In these two injunctions hang all the Law and all the prophets."

The spirit of brotherhood, properly understood, may be found throughout nature, even in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. It has been said that nature is ruthless, "red in tooth and claw." Could it not be better stated that the Monads or life-entities back of each kingdom understand that by sacrificing themselves as food for the kingdom above they are undergoing spiritual development by coming in contact with a higher-developed form of consciousness? Mankind, the top kingdom in material development, makes his material sacrifice by devoting himself to the advancement of his brothers. Thus is the principle of Brotherhood carried out everywhere in the universe.

When we understand the operation of the laws of Karman and Reimbodiment the true meaning of brotherhood becomes very clear. Every action, kind or unkind, helpful or harmful to our fellow-beings becomes a force we have created that will help or hinder us in our own evolution. "For every flower of love and charity we plant in our neighbor's garden, a loathsome weed will disappear from our own." A thief can steal only from himself. The energy created by such an action remains long after the act has been forgotten, until it is balanced by an act of restitution, perhaps in a future existence. A nation robs and plunders other nations, as Spain did the Incas of Peru and the Aztecs of Mexico. Today Spain is undergoing war and destruction.

Does anyone doubt that the condition of Europe today is not the result of past European thoughts, words, and misdeeds? I think it is quite reasonable to say that there would not have been dictators in Europe today had a magnanimous peace treaty been drafted after the World War. The karmic results of the failure of all the nations to live harmoniously with each other are only too clear. We, as citizens of these nations, are all somewhat to blame. If our individual lives are not unselfish and harmonious, we cannot expect our national actions to be any different. If we Theosophists had worked harder before the world war to create a current of unselfish thoughts and actions perhaps the results might have been different today.

I think the gist of this discussion may be condensed into the simple quotation learned in my childhood: "Helping and sharing is what Brotherhood means." Everything in nature has one hand fastened to the kingdom below and the other touching the hand of the kingdom above. We can only progress by helping those below us, thereby making it possible for those above us to help us.

For those considering Universal Brotherhood from a practical viewpoint the following reasons are cited to show that this idea is not only ethically and philosophically correct, but full of common sense as well:

1. Because everything in nature is related and dependent on everything else; we cannot progress upward without helping those below. Consequently, by helping those below, we make it possible for those above to give us a helping hand.
2. We are responsible for our thoughts, words, and deeds. Therefore every selfish entry in the Karmic ledger only retards our progress, while every unselfish thought and act helps us to evolve, and consequently helps also, because we are all related and interdependent, the evolution of the universe.
3. The law of rebirth shows that selfishness, snobbishness, and isolation, whether done individually, in groups, or by a nation, are

futile and illusory. Such actions cause similar reactions to be produced, and react against those who originated these acts. There is no racial group, or individual superiority, as spiritually we are all One, and souls incarnate into different racial bodies only for experience and progress.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How Old Is the Aryan Race?

In your article on "The Cradleland of Our Race," in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, June, 1937, the birth of the Aryan stock from Atlantean tribes is given as 7- to 8,000,000 years ago (p. 410). On page 413, it is stated twice that it is 4- or 5,000,000 years since the original germinal condition of the Fifth Root-Race, though as a race *sui generis* it is about 1,000,000 years old. What puzzles me is the difference between the 7- or 8,000,000 and the 4- or 5,000,000 years as the age of what I supposed was the same Race. Does the larger number refer to that hint in *The Secret Doctrine* that the Aryans could trace their descent back to Lemuria-Atlantis? — L. R.

G. de P. — In dealing with time-periods in a general article it naturally is difficult to find English words to give the exact picture the writer desires to paint. Hence, on reading your note I see how my words could have been misunderstood; yet I do think a careful reading of the article in THE FORUM compared with the diagram I gave in *Fundamentals* on page 251, of how a race is born from, or originates in, the middle period of the parent race, will show what I had in mind. I will now try to explain.

Every Race, Root-Race I mean, great stock-Race, takes its origin, its beginnings, its genesis, i. e. its birth as a differentiated, that is different, stock from its parent at about the middle point of that parent's age or time-period. This we can properly call the birth of the new race, likening it to the birth of a child. This in the case of the Aryan Race was between four and five million years ago. The Atlantean Root-Race has lasted altogether from its birth to its present time some eight million years, that is from its germinal period to its now dying out scattered remnants of savages. So we can truly say the Atlantean Race, including

its germinal period all down the ages to its now scattered savage remnants, is about eight million years old; but our own Aryan Race so called, is only four million plus years old from its birth, born at the half-period of the Atlantean Race, say four or five million years ago.

On the other hand, when we consider that a Race before *it* is born, i. e. before it becomes a distinctly differentiated Race from its parents, must have had its germinal growth, slowly through the ages differentiating from its parent, we see that we can trace the germinal period of a Race, such as our Aryan Race, back almost to the beginnings of the Atlantean Race. So that our own Aryan Race from its germ-period to the present day is about seven million years old.

Of course, the characteristics of a Race in its germ-period are so closely alike to its parent-stock, that in the case you submit, the germ-period of the Aryans really showed them as scarcely differentiated from the Atlanteans. Yet these germs grew through the ages, and after three million years or so, at about the middle period of Atlantis, became the distinctly differentiated Aryan Race.

Thus take the case of a human being: the average human being is born as a baby, not in the infancy of its parents, but when its parents have attained let us say their majority, roughly at about middle age or somewhat before. Yet the germ of a child when it exists in its parent's body can be said to be so like the parent's body, even the parent's body in its early youth, that it is scarcely differentiated from the parent. This analogy is a feeble one, but it will express what I am trying to say with regard to the Races. I hope this is clear. It is what I had in mind when writing the article.

To recapitulate: (a) our Aryan Race from its germinal beginnings in early Atlantis is about seven million years old, although this is not a proper way to count it. It is merely rounding out the picture. These germs in Atlantis slowly through the ages of Atlantean heyday became more and more differentiated into a Race apart, and this occurred at about the middle period of Atlantis, and this was the real birth or beginning in that sense of the Aryan Race.

(b) Yet so slowly does nature work in these things, that our own Aryan Race was quite Atlanteanesque, so to speak, until about 1,000,000 years ago when it very definitely in all respects shook off the Atlantean characteristics, and became a true Race *sui generis*. Our own Aryan Race is now in its kali-yuga, beginning it, and the new Sixth Root-Race is already around us in millions of scattered individuals, beginning feebly to differentiate into the Sixth Root-Race qualities; and in some three hundred thousand years from now, while we Aryans are ending our kali-yuga, the Sixth Root-Race will be said to be definitely born as the Sixth Root-Race, but will remain Aryanesque for millions of years yet, until our own Aryan Race is represented only by degenerate remnants; at which time the new Sixth Root-Race will be becoming typically a race *sui generis* itself. I hope all this is clear.

Animals and the Law of Karman

I can understand the Law of Karman, cause and effect, as related to free-willed, responsible man, but I do not understand how or when innocent and irresponsible animals brought upon themselves karman of suffering through the cruelty of man: vivisection practices, etc. As Mother Nature allows of much pain and suffering in bringing up her children, is there not some other law at work aside from the Law of Karman — i. e., the Law of Justice? — *E. S. P.*

O. I. C. — There is no entity in the Universe but has or has had in the past some degree of free will or the power of choice. *Are* animals innocent, or are they rapacious?

Animals are without the human sense of moral responsibility, but those who have had the most to do with them would be about the last, I think, to regard them as wholly innocent. Animals have made karman in the past, and are reaping it and making it now. They are not wholly irresponsible. The spark of divinity which is in the animal has chosen that imbodiment to work out its evolution and to purge itself of unlovely qualities. In other words, every creature obtains that

imbodiment and way of life to which its own desires, relative perfections or imperfections, and state of evolution draw it. There is no *outside* law or god or chance that can put and keep creatures in an imbodiment and way of life wholly contrary to their own nature.

Why are there rapacious and thieving animals? Because in the long past their desires and choosings have led them to that character and form. Animals are animalistic because somehow, somewhere along the path of evolution they have chosen to be so. They are in the process of developing conscience, the beginnings of conscience, else they would not be on the way toward becoming human. No creature in the Universe is wholly without higher guidance. Animals do not perfectly follow the highest guidance that they have. Anyone sufficiently familiar with them knows that they do inflict unnecessary cruelty on each other. Hence they do make bad karman — physical karman, which is the kind of karman that animals make, suffer, and enjoy.

We cannot judge animals as a whole by our pets, which have become unnatural. The behavior of the natural animals seldom indicates prolonged suffering and seldom if ever indicates mental anguish. This is because they are not self-consciously living on the mental plane. Even their physical sufferings cannot be as keen as those of humans, who add the force of imagination and horror to theirs. Animals appear to die easily as a rule. We are told that they reincarnate quickly, and certainly they reincarnate easily as compared with humans. But woe to the human who causes them unnecessary suffering!

Karman, true justice, includes all other laws. It certainly includes, nay, *is* in the long run, mercy and progress. We all know well that not all suffering is truly bad karman. Seen from the largest viewpoint suffering is corrective and purifying. Every creature must experience "unmerited" suffering and joy (we must not forget the undeserved joys!) from the acts of others, but karman is just, and such experiences are fully compensated for soon or in the more distant future, though our so limited perceptions may not see the compensation. Also, those who bring suffering or joy to others will be suitably compensated. H. P.

Blavatsky has said that animals will be recompensed for the sufferings (vivisection, etc.) caused to them by human beings.

When we experience "unmerited" suffering we learn, whether we will or not, what a terrible thing it is to inflict unnecessary suffering on others, which in obvious or subtil ways we are doing constantly. If thus we learn, do not the animals also learn? By all right and reason and intuition we must recognize that deep within *every* creature there is that which learns from the consequences — karman — of its own imperfections, and thus improvement takes place.

Why Do Children Suffer?

Why do children have to suffer, as they cannot understand or feel any responsibility for wrongs done in former lives? — *W. F.*

J. E. C. — Have you stopped to consider what would happen to a child if it could not suffer? Suffering is not just a punishment. As a matter of fact I do not think it is punishment at all from the true standpoint. Suffering is Nature's method of teaching us. If we put our hand in the fire it is burned. If we eat the wrong food we have the "tummy-ache," etc. If it were not for Nature's kindly warnings our bodies would be destroyed in no time. I think all of the suffering of a child is disciplinary and that some of it can be said to be due to karmic consequences of previous lives, except as far as the environment is concerned, and even there it is for the best good of the child or incarnating entity from the ultimate standpoint. Yet it should be added that this teaching in no wise excuses us for inflicting suffering on children, or anyone else, for that matter, or for refusing to alleviate suffering where we can and may. *H. P. B.* points out that if we take it upon ourselves to inflict suffering, under cover of "meting out Justice," we are simply setting ourselves up as superior to a great Cosmic Law, the Law of Karman — which is, after all, the Law of Compassion.

In the Dim Evolutionary Past

There was a certain time long ago, when we used to be animals; and long before that, when these animals emerged from one cell

organisms (according to Darwin). What was before that? — W.
F.

J. E. C. — This question is based on a partial misconception which it would take too much time and space to go into at the present writing, for it involves the whole of the difference between the Theosophical idea of evolution and the Darwinian concept. However, we can overlook that fact for the time being to get at the real heart of the question, which is: What was the condition of evolving entities before they started their period of evolution in this Hierarchy or field of consciousness? Perhaps this can best be answered by taking the analogy of successive lives upon earth. The body of a man starts as a single germ cell from which the embryo gradually develops until it is finally ready to leave the womb, after which it becomes a separate organism and continues its growth and development through all the phases of physical life. Meanwhile the reincarnating ego has gradually learned to control the physical instrument through which it gains experience and knowledge of this hierarchy. Previous to that it had passed through a semi-spiritual condition known as Devachan, and previous to that it had passed through another life in another body.

Now this same process occurred on a greater scale in the experience of the same monadic entity that is now working in this life through the physical body. In another hierarchy the monad went through life after life until it had gained all possible experience in that hierarchy. Then it went into Nirvana, which might for brevity be called a greater Devachan, and emerged from that into its present hierarchy, working up from point to point, starting on the lowest rung of the ladder, the simplest manifestation of life in the hierarchy. In any single earth life the analogy is completed through the repeated incarnation of the monadic ray when it awakens from sleep each morning, followed by the repetition of the opposite condition, discarnation, when the consciousness leaves the body at night.

On the "Origin of the Mammals"

I understand from *The Esoteric Tradition* that the animals were

formed or arose from man in the manner therein described, i. e., during the Lemurian period when man was more or less of a "jelly-bag" physically. Am I correct in supposing that the urge or thought sent out when these forms took place determined the nature or kind of animal produced or resulting? If this is so where did the thought or urge giving that "nature or kind" come from since at that time man had not yet come in contact with the Manas-principle or Mind of an individual nature? — *H. W. F.*

G. Barborka — Replying to the first question: "Am I correct in supposing that the urge or thought sent out . . . determined the nature or kind of animal . . ." the answer is, No, for the reason which the questioner supplies, i. e., the Manas-principle was not yet functioning *consciously* in the humanity of that far-distant period. Enlarging upon the answer: there are three important points that should be borne in mind when considering this subject of the off-throwings from early humanity: (1) the humanity of that far-distant epoch (the *early* Third Root-Race) was entirely different from that of the present time; and although described as more or less of a jelly-bag — which implies a loosely cohering entity — nevertheless parts or portions could easily detach themselves from the mass; (2) the "animals" that arose from the off-throwings were solely *mammalian* in type; (3) the various parts forming the "body" of early humanity were not under the "dominant urge" which stamped such parts as fitting solely to the status of the human frame. The reason why any part of the human body *today* cannot give rise to a group-vehicle which in time would result in an "animal" is because the parts composing the human body are stamped so strongly with the "human quality" that any separated aggregate cannot start "making something" on its own. In other words, the life-atoms so sloughed off from a human body today (as for instance in an amputated limb) simply pursue their peregrinations in their proper terrain or field. Nor can an amputated limb be replaced by another such limb "growing forth" from the human frame today. It may be suggested that the particular urge or trend given to the early off-throwings depended upon the original position that such off-cast

portion had in relation to the frame of early humanity.

It should also be remembered that the first mammals were not *animals with bones*, but "ethereal proto-organisms, just as man was." It was during the Third Root-Race that "the boneless animals grew and changed: they became animals with bones, their chhayas became solid also." (*The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, page 183)

The Theosophical Forum

BLAVATSKY'S INSTRUCTION TO A NEOPHYTE (1)

The following was received from Madame Blavatsky, by Thomas H. Evans, deceased, of Washington, D. C, and sent by him to us for publication in THE OCCULT WORD:

"I am always delighted to be brought into relation with a new seeker after truth, and only wish I had hours enough in the day to take each by the hand and lead him the long journey through that ends at the door of Esoteric Wisdom. But it has been decreed, from time immemorial, that each one must be his own sufficient pilot and body-guard so far as visible things are concerned. The 'Kingdom of Heaven,' which I need not tell you is but the dominion of man's immortal spirit over the inner force of the Universe, must be taken by violence. I am sorry to be compelled to tell you, that the prize of Wisdom and Power must be won through danger, trial, temptation, the allurements of sense and all the besetments of this world of matter which they counterpoise, hence antagonist of spirit. Broad, smooth and flower-sprinkled is the way to the world's rewards; narrow, hard, sorrow beset the path to the Temple of Truth.

Do not take the above, pray, for literary flourishes, or an attempt to throw a mysterious coloring over our correspondence. What I say is simple and naked truth. As I read your letter, it appears to me that you have reason for encouragement. Your aspirations are warm and proper, your reading in the right direction, and I see in your poetry that the *Inner-man* has more to do with it than the mere physical brains of the writer. You need to keep on and never turn a glance backward. Your greatest need you have yourself stated; it is *Will-Power*. There never was either Adept of White Magic, or Sorcerer of the Goethic Art without that. Magic is impossible without it.

... To help those who need it is the object of all my life and my most sacred duty. Pray lay aside all ideas of conventionality as regards sex

and acquaintance. The *true* Occult is sexless — or rather androgynous. He lives in the Spirit, he merely exists in the fleshy capsule that covers him, indifferent whether it be called man or woman by those who only see it externally."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Occult Word*, December, 1885, published and edited by Mrs. Josephine W. Cables, Rochester, N. Y. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE, AS TRAPPER — *M. G. Gowsell*

Man, the human animal, is said to be the child of earth, the progeny of the *Anima Mundi*, or world soul: call it Mother Nature if you like. And this is true, as far as this limited portion of his composite make-up is concerned. But, in the grand scale of evolution, man's position is a wide stride in advance of that of Mother Nature. She is acutely conscious that man is her superior. Moreover she is jealous, in fear that man may so advance as to outstrip and leave her in the lurch, without his help, which she needs and which she feels to be her due.

In order therefore to slow him down, to circumvent, to deter, delay and to detain him, she resorts to artifice and stratagem and sets numerous traps. They are all nearby, attractively baited, placed to advantage and within easy reach. Every one of man's shortcomings and limitations is an instance in point. Egoity, ambition, laziness, greed, desire, personality, likes and dislikes and criticism; these are all traps designed and set by Nature for the purpose of holding man back. Some of the traps are very comfortable, so much so that it is difficult to realize that one has been caught. They are also very large, so extensive in fact that whole nations at a time may fall into a trap. Others are so constructed that failing to grip and hold they may so stun as to render the victim partially or wholly insensible. The subtlest of the devices are so designed as to take away or prevent man from acquiring vision. And thus bereft he can hardly hope to escape the larger pitfalls. It might be added that there is no closed season for Nature in this field as trapper. Nor are there any game wardens. In that respect she has a perfectly free hand. There is a modicum of humor in this grim affair. But we have been told by all the world Sages just where the traps are and what they are and how to avoid them.

ATLANTIS — ROMANCE OR REALITY? — *C. J. Ryan*

It seems that popular interest in the possibility of discovering lands once inhabited by civilized man but now lying beneath the deep seas, has not diminished. Even the scientific journals mention it now and then, though without much enthusiasm. A writer in *Science News Letter* recently queried whether "Telegraph Ridge," the undersea mountain range in the middle of the Atlantic, could be remains of the lost Atlantis of Plato or merely the submerged backbone of an acknowledged geological continent 300,000,000 years old. He left the problem unsolved.

Mr. James Bramwell's *Lost Atlantis* (1) is the latest book on this thorny subject and he has made a praiseworthy effort to approach it without prejudice. Up to the time of writing, he is not a believer, though he cannot help being fascinated by the romance of the glittering vision which rises when the word Atlantis is mentioned. He feels that the significance of the legend for us lies in its appeal as "a classic example of spiritual adventure, an imaginative interpretation of facts in the light of some higher reality, the nature of which depends on subjective experience." It is "an escape from the dust and rattle of machine-governed existence" for those who have lost faith in so-called progress. "It may, however, be of great importance if its actuality is ever established," which he greatly doubts. After examining a quantity of geological and other scientific evidence he concludes that our present knowledge is not sufficient to settle the question. He finds very little in favor of the Atlantean hypothesis as presented by the average exponent in modern books and popular magazines, but the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky's Theosophy is not discussed.

Although he cannot be called a supporter of Atlantis, in the small compass of 288 pages he has condensed a mass of information and argument of great importance for those who would know exactly how the problem appears to the skeptical historian and the scientist. These

facts and controversial points should be familiar to Theosophical students who wish to write or speak on Atlantis and to be prepared to meet critical and informed inquirers.

The Introduction describes the efforts to establish Societies for Atlantean research, and their difficulties. The various more or less cranky books and theories that have been offered in recent years are considered, and also the references to Atlantis by Plato, Homer, Diodorus, Theopompus and other classical writers, and the suggested Cretan associations.

Then comes a long discussion on the scientific search for Atlantis, in which are critically analysed the arguments and evidences offered by Mr. Lewis Spence whom the author recognises as the most responsible and able pleader for Atlantis of our day; as we have always maintained, while not admitting all his points. Mr. Bramwell then touches on the Celtic legends of St. Brendan's Isle, etc.; and Lyonesse; and some of the geological evidence for comparatively recent submersions of land under the North Atlantic. The latter point deserves special attention from students who seek something tangible in favor of a "scientific" Atlantis. Mr. Bramwell admits that it is so important that further discoveries may compel a complete reconsideration of the whole subject.

Modern exploration has shown that extensive areas of land lying under comparatively shallow water extend for a great distance from the shores of the Atlantic (and elsewhere). The abysmal depths are much further out. The probability that these slightly submerged regions were once above the waters has been made almost a certainty by the discovery of numerous wide valleys and immense gorges or canyons, thousands of feet deep spreading out from the shores. The submarine extension of the Hudson River has been measured 130 miles south-east of Sandy Hook. Submarine activities, such as currents, earth-movements, etc., fail to explain them. It is widely held by geologists that they were eroded by ordinary rivers when the continental "shelves" were dryland. How long ago was this? Quite recently, late Tertiary

fossils were dredged up from the cliffs of the Georges Bank Canyons showing that the Tertiary continental shelf had been cut through by rivers *since* the Tertiary period, and therefore great tracts of the Atlantic area were dry land in the Quaternary. Geological dates are very vague and subject to modification, but Mr. Bramwell suggests the moderate date of 500,000 years ago in this connexion. Anyway, it would be well within the human period, even if that figure were doubled or more.

Whether this tremendous change of level was brought about by the sinking of the continental shelves in many parts of the world or by a tremendous lowering and then raising of the *sea* itself, amounting possibly to 8,000 feet, is the scientific problem awaiting solution. The chief objection to such a world-wide uprising of the sea is that it would be a catastrophe of incredible magnitude! But would it not explain the world-wide traditions of Deluges and destruction of whole civilizations?

The interest in Atlantis is shown by the fact that the bibliography of publications up to 1926 includes 1700 items. But few are in English, a reason given by Mr. Bramwell for writing his comprehensive volume, which indeed needs no excuse. Ignatius Donnelly's popular book on Atlantis, a pioneer which attracted much attention to the subject nearly sixty years ago, though rather out-of-date and no longer an authority, is given adequate attention, but as Mr. Lewis Spence's scholarly contribution to the literature in favor of Atlantis demands serious consideration, more than thirty pages are devoted to it. In regard to other writers, whose zeal has exceeded their discretion, to put it mildly, Mr. Bramwell's analysis is devastating though not discourteous, though in regard to one outstanding example of pure folly he rightly remarks that such productions — widely read by the uninformed — have caused thoughtful critics to express "the notion that everybody who is interested in the subject must be tainted with lunacy or charlatanism."

One unhappy case is that of a relative of the celebrated Schliemann, discoverer of Troy, who published a sensational story in 1912 of alleged

Atlantean discoveries at Troy, by Schliemann held secret under oath! Being associated with an honored name it attracted scientific attention, but it turned out to be merely the fabric of a dream which one authority calls "an essay in mystification." Mr. Lewis Spence effectually disposed of it, and Mr. Bramwell says it is a "curious gem of Atlantean aberration." We mention this because an ill-informed writer in an otherwise well-edited Theosophical magazine recently quoted it as strong confirmation of Atlantis. "Save me from my friends!"

The last chapters of *Lost Atlantis* treat of Atlantis in occult and other literature and poetry, including the writings of Cosmas Indicopleustes, sixth century Byzantine geographer, Jean Bailly, French astronomer, William Blake, John Masefield and others; an interesting study.

Mr. Bramwell describes eight of the main hypotheses of recent years offered in solution of the Atlantean problem. Atlantis has been located in America, in three different parts of Africa, the Indian Ocean (where sunken lands have actually been found), submerged territory between Ireland and Brittany, "Tartessos" or Tarshish in Spain, and an island in the Atlantic. He reasonably singles out the latter for fullest consideration.

In deference to prevailing views about the comparatively recent development of man from barbarism, and to Plato's date of the final destruction of *his* Atlantis, nearly all the theories assume that the great continent in the Atlantic flourished only a comparatively few thousand years ago. But if we place the great Atlantis (or a fancied "Mu" in the Pacific) more recently than hundreds of thousands, nay perhaps millions, of years ago, we run into insurmountable practical difficulties, and it is largely for this reason that the critics make light of Atlantis. For instance, if, as many proponents of Atlantis assume, the great continent acted as a land bridge between the Old and the New Worlds within five, ten or twenty thousand years, or even rather more, no explanation covers the well-known objections that the cultivated plants and domestic animals (excepting the dog, which probably came from Asia *via* Bering Strait) are entirely different on the two sides of

the ocean, that the wheel was unknown in America, etc. If, however, the breaking of the land bridge finally took place, as H. P. Blavatsky indicates, almost a million years ago, it is easily seen that these difficulties are not insurmountable. Though certain islands remained above water, apparently in remote places, after the general submergence, they also perished a very long time ago.

Great areas of land did not plunge into the ocean in a few years or even a few millenniums, nor did a new continent immediately pop up in another ocean to replace it, as some seem to imagine from a literal reading of semi-allegorical stories like Noah's Deluge and others. Theosophy agrees with geology that the major progressive changes are gradual, although minor cataclysms no doubt occur at critical times. There is good reason to believe that the great land-masses of the world have kept their places for many millions of years, yet enormous changes have undoubtedly taken place which would justify the traditions of submerged territories. The earth is not uniformly dense, and according to the new theories developed by Dr. Joly and improved by other geologists the great continental areas are actually "floating," as it were, on denser material. By the cumulative action of radio-activity the underlying mass becomes at times hotter and lighter by expansion, and the upper strata sink until the balance is restored. After very long periods of time the basic material cools again and the balance is again restored by the rising of the upper and lighter parts. The process is repeated at long intervals producing alternating cyclic changes in the geographical contours. Other factors, volcanic, seismic, and perhaps axial would still further modify the areas of land and water, until the map of the earth would no longer be recognisable.

The author rightly says that for Theosophists and Occult Students in general the former existence of a very ancient race of men, culturally advanced in certain localities such as "Atlantis" (a very wide-embracing term), is essential to the understanding of the major cycles of human incarnation. When science lifts the veil of mysterious Nature a little higher and has become dissatisfied with mechanistic interpretations of life, the reason for an "Atlantean" stage will become plain. The

terrestrial evolution of form and intelligence is only the external sign of the activity and involution of spirit and step after step, each a little different from the last, has to be taken to fulfil the needed cyclic experiences of the soul. Objection is made that a truly civilized humanity living at a time when Darwinians believe only apes or ape-men existed does not agree with Plato's picturesque story of his relatively modern Atlantis of about 9500 b. c. Quite so, but H. P. Blavatsky tells us the reason why Plato put the case in that disguise. The true story of the ancient civilization was part of the Mystery Teachings and Plato being an Initiate could not reveal the whole truth. By skilfully combining fact and fiction and by deliberately confusing the Atlantis of Tertiary or post-Tertiary age with a small island (Poseidonis) known to the Egyptians which sank about the date mentioned by Plato he was able to give all that was permitted at that time.

We notice a short quotation from H. P. Blavatsky in this book but the author shows no evidence of having studied her illuminating remarks about lost continents, and unfortunately spends many pages criticizing writings, claimed to be derived from "astral clairvoyance," by Scott-Elliott and other pseudo-theosophical authors, most of which are fantastic and, as Mr. Bramwell says, "could have been concocted without any recourse to psychic powers, by commonsense induction, flagrant disregard of historical data and a fertile imagination stimulated by fairly wide reading." (2)

In contrast to the flamboyant misconstructions of some of these enthusiasts the sober and restrained treatment of the subject by H. P. Blavatsky is conspicuous. The broad outline is described, but in regard to detail little is given except hints and suggestive quotations from archaic records which serve to point the way for future research.

From the nature of the case it is not easy to find tangible evidence, though oceanographic research has lately become a promising field, owing to the new instrumental methods in use. How little evidence of our civilization will remain after a million years even if no great

geological changes take place! Until lately we knew nothing of Troy, Crete, Pompeii, Mayan and Pre-Incan America, the archaic civilization of the cities on the Indus river, and others; yet these are, comparatively speaking, but of yesterday.

Tradition, in the shape of world-wide myths and allegories, is the most likely method by which knowledge of a Lost World would survive. When properly interpreted these indicate a specific Atlantean culture which takes its place in the magnificent scheme of human evolution with its major and minor cycles of rise and fall, but always advancing on the whole.

The story of Noah's Deluge is the most familiar tradition of a world-wide destruction following wrong living, but it is only one of many similar flood stories from Mediterranean lands, the Near East, India, China, America, Ireland and other places. H. P. Blavatsky pays special attention to these ancient legends and gives many reasons in demonstration of the remarkable way the folk-memory has preserved the knowledge of Atlantis in so many distant localities. Mr. Bramwell remarks that Theosophists and other occult students "care nothing for scientific discussions" but trust entirely to astral investigation and evidence. We beg to differ, and can refer him to his own quotation from H. P. Blavatsky where she says that certain thoughtful students "have their secret records in which are preserved the fruits of the long line of recluses whose successors they are." (p. 193) Those records are preserved in temple crypts and subterranean libraries and are tangible enough. It is claimed that the "long line" reaches back to Atlantean times. H. P. Blavatsky says that if the Alexandrian Library had not been dispersed we should have ample documentary evidence for the Atlantean tradition.

The contradictory nature of the astral reports published by various alleged clairvoyants — some of which Mr. Bramwell reprints and discredits — about Atlantis does not inspire confidence. The case is different in regard to the true Adepts who were behind H. P. Blavatsky. Having been trained by severe self-discipline under the direction of

qualified Teachers they can penetrate to high spiritual planes where mistakes in vision are impossible, yet they are careful to preserve the tangible records brought down from past ages.

We believe that the author of this interesting volume would find it profitable to study the illuminating teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* on human evolution and the Atlantean Cycle with the same fairmindedness that he shows in the analysis of the material discussed in his book. He might find, that "the Lost Atlantis may yet be recovered from the depths of the ocean which engulfed it."

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Lost Atlantis*, by James Bramwell, published by Cobden Sanderson, London.288 pp., 7/6. ([return to text](#))
2. Information indicating the dubious foundation of certain widely circulated "clairvoyant researches" into Atlantis may be found in Professor Ernest Wood's *Is This Theosophy?* wherein a supporter of the Atlantean theory gives reasons for distrusting their authenticity. ([return to text](#))

ABOUT THESE "HORMONES" — *H. T. Edge*

What are "hormones"? Some mysterious and marvelous agent in our body, that we hear about. According to an eminent man of science, the well-being of our body depends on the influence of these things — these chemicals or whatever they are. They are found in certain glands, which pour them into the blood and thus produce various effects on our body and our health. But here comes the serious difficulty: for the same man, in the same article, says that the body *manufactures* these hormones. Now is not this very like saying that an engine manufactures its own steam, or that a dynamo is driven by the current which it generates? We are reminded of a joke in an old number of the *London Punch*. A rustic is contemplating the newly-erected telegraph wires, and asks, "What be they postes for"? The answer is, "Why to hold up the wires, of course." "Then what be the wires for"? "Why to hold up the postes, certainly, Jarge." It is what the logicians call a "vicious circle."

The same thing was found in physics. What is a "force"? Force is what moves matter; also, force is generated by matter in motion. Obviously there are two kinds of force: one which sets matter in motion, and one which is generated when matter moves. The latter is the kind that engineers use; the former is a subject of speculation.

Again, the same difficulty as regards "life." Does life drive the body, or does the body make life? Is life the cause or the effect of our activity? Or are there two kinds of life, one driving the body and the other generated by the body?

We know for a fact that our thoughts and emotions influence the production of hormones in our body. So then, our thoughts produce hormones, and hormones drive the body; and this is understandable; the hormones may be an intermediate link between mind and body. People have speculated endlessly on how mind can act on matter, and

have never been able to imagine a connecting link between them. But as long as we begin by imagining mind and matter to be separate, we shall never be able to explain how the one acts on the other. The fact is they are *not separate*; mind and matter is an artificial distinction which we have made for convenience, but the distinction is not real. The only real thing in nature is *spirit-matter, life*. The most recent science has discovered that matter, when deeply probed, vanishes into nothing but radiating centers of energy or fire or electricity. Our thought is a form of energy, which transmutes itself into one form after another and finally manifests itself as physical or bodily energy. Also, it is equally true to say that our thoughts are a form of matter, which becomes denser until it is manifested as the matter of our body. Thus the thoughts and the hormones and the bodily functions and tissues form a continuous chain.

There are action and interaction between mind and body; each influences the other. By injecting hormones into the blood with a syringe, you can produce various effects on the body and hence on the mind. But however useful this may be in emergencies, it is not to be commended as a way of living. Thought comes first. Let us rule our thoughts by our will, and the hormones will take care of themselves.

The Theosophical Forum

BUDDHI-MAGIC — *Leoline L. Wright*

Many students look upon the Higher Triad as a mysterious and almost unknowable terrain. Much is written about the personality, about kamic human nature, and the astral body. But how little we find, except in the scattered hints of our Teachers, to give us any definite picture of the Higher Triad and its vital relation to daily living.

If, however, we bring together from various sources even a few of these many hints a more definite outline begins to shape itself. We suddenly find ourselves standing at the frontier of a new country. It is a region whose hidden valleys and shadowy foothills lead the vision to the uplands of morning and the pinnacled splendor of the Mystic Mountains of the East.

Now whence and what is our Buddhic principle? We are told that we derive our seven principles from the seven great principles of the Cosmos. This of course does not mean that we are like seven passive cups into which are poured a portion of each of the Cosmic Principles themselves.

A closer study of *The Secret Doctrine* and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* leads us to see the Universe as a close-knit organism made up of seven ranges of beings. These seven ranges of beings are the seven principles of the Cosmos. Each of these ranges has its own particular kind of life-atoms. The life-atoms of the highest are so far beyond our understanding that we cannot even conceive of what they are. But we know a good deal about the life-atoms of the lowest of the seven because they are the informing entities behind our own and the Earth's physical atoms. And those other inconceivably high spiritual life-atoms cluster together, much as physical atoms do, to form the bodies, or more accurately the vehicles, which clothe each of the three highest principles of the Cosmos.

But we are studying only our Buddhic principle and its derivations. So

let us confine ourselves as far as possible to the Buddhist hierarchy of our Universe. At the heart of this hierarchy dwells the Primordial or Adi-Buddhi, from which all the other Buddhist beings of that hierarchy stem. At the beginning of a Cosmic period of evolution when the moment comes for the appearance or emanation of the second Cosmic principle all these Buddhist essences or beings are thrown off by the central or Adi-Buddhi. They form its vehicles, its spiritual, psychological, and substance-vehicles with each its own organism of corresponding life-atoms.

From certain of the highest of these almost inconceivably high Buddhist entities proceeds in due course the emanation of Mahat, the so-called Universal Mind. But Mahat is no abstraction. Mahat is itself a great range or hierarchy, the sum of all Manasic or egoic entities in the Universe. These are all solar gods, of various ranges of intelligence and power. And each in similar fashion is clad in its appropriate vehicle of solar life-atoms.

It is from some of the lower ranges of these Buddhist and Manasic solar energies that man derives his Buddhi-Manas. That, again, does not mean that these Buddhist and Manasic essences of ours are poured into us by higher beings. It means that my Buddhi and your Buddhi are as it were life-atoms belonging to the vehicles of certain ranges of these Buddhist and Manasic solar gods. It is I believe in this sense that we are, as Dr. de Purucker has told us, "bone of the bone and flesh of the flesh" of the Universe.

Thus we see whence we derive our spiritual heredity. *We are* divine. In our innermost we are life-atoms of the gods. The Inner God at the apex and center of our consciousness is a living part, an emanation, a life-atom, of the Solar Hierarchy. But *we* are not yet that Inner God. We are still but human souls. But the human soul is the vehicle on this earth of that Inner God. We can even so think and live that the psychological life-atoms which form the apparatus of the human soul may be transmuted into the solar essence. And even our physical atoms may be made as if transparent to the light of the divinity within. It is all a

matter of the right kind of emotional and thought vibrations, as we have often been told by our Teachers.

Just here it is interesting to bring together a fact established by science with a fact stated on page 50 of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*. We are told by science that the sun is made of radiant matter and that the life of its every atom consists in spending itself in the radiation of solar energy. In the passage referred to from *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* it is stated that the sun is "physical matter in its sixth state" — that is, in its Buddhist state. The nucleus of the Sun, "a particle or a solar atom of primal matter-stuff, or spirit-stuff, is matter in the seventh state counting upwards . . ."

Thus the Sun in its activity is essentially Buddhist — giving itself ceaselessly for all the beings in its solar hierarchy in the spiritual and magnetic energies which keep its dependent ranges of beings in balance and health.

This is the foundation of all Buddhi-magic, this essential activity and law of sacrifice of our Father-Sun. And if we would know the spiritual Sun within ourselves we must learn to practise for ourselves this same magic. It begins with impersonal love; with, "the calm, unbroken forgetfulness of the lower self for all time," as W. Q. Judge expressed it. It will mean never doing or saying anything, or feeling or thinking anything at the expense of others. It means no criticism, no cankering hard feelings or corroding resentments. It implies first the desire and then the power to give without measure and to expect for one's self nothing.

And what does this magic develop in us in place of the fugitive rewards of ordinary personal life? First of all, peace of heart. Such peace that once a man has glimpsed it he will never again be satisfied until he has entered permanently into the heart of that blessed impersonal silence. For that man will be healed of all fevers, the swelled head of praise and the bitter pain of resented criticism and personal injuries. Fear will depart from him, for his spiritual possessions are himself and cannot be taken from him. No loss will be possible to him. For he will realize

himself consciously united to all he loves and will never know the sorrow of ordinary personal bereavement. And the only failure that can afflict him and the only suffering he can truly feel will be the failures and the sufferings of that humanity to whose welfare he has dedicated himself.

The Theosophical Forum

"I AIN" VERY MUCH, BUT I'SE ALL I GOT" — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

This simple statement made by Noah to De Lawd in *Green Pastures* expresses several of the verities of universal being. What actually are we? and what part of ourselves can we claim as our own?

We are vast treasuries of eternity. Out of the spheres ethereal in nebula and comet, by attraction and repulsion weaning from the fulness of space our contacts, we have come. Air, water, and earth, have equipped us: we have shared the vigil of elemental, mineral, vegetable, and beast; and now, as man, we presage the infinite scope and sublimity of an endless future stirring within us. We are signets of eternity: we are children of the Universe — and we are human beings.

Truly, we are not what we ought to be. We are only that part of ourselves which is ensouled. We are intellectual and spiritual or moral, or moral and intellectual or spiritual, when we should be the three as one — the perfect Man. However, if what we are be true to the vision of our ideal at all times, that much reaches towards Godhood, and some day will lead us through manhood to divinity and onward. Our yearning aspirations speed our flight.

Yet all we can have and all we need lies within us. Our aspirations act as magnets in quickening our own universal contact-centers, whereupon all the forces of life rush in to exhilarate, to build, and to test every step in this process of ensouling. The result of this mystical alchemy is what we possess: a solar system *in potentia* is what we are!

We have known immeasurable heights, but vicariously, so to speak. During our sojourn on Earth we plumb the depths so that the human being, becoming universally ensouled, may win the heights by his own effort and right. And what then? To quote Mary Brent Woodside:

"Who has known heights must bear forevermore
An incommunicable thing

That hurts his heart, as if a wing
Beat at the portal challenging
And yet — lured by the gleam his vision wore —
Who once has trodden stars seeks peace no more.

The Theosophical Forum

THE CAUSES OF UNHAPPINESS AND THE MEANS OF HAPPINESS — *Pundit L. Ram Sahijpal*

Flesh is earthly, and spiritually void and weak, whilst Soul in its higher nature is heavenly, and spiritually rich and strong. The latter is bipolar; in its lower nature it lives in the former, the flesh, and its contact with the fleshly part of man imparts to it the material tendencies and idiosyncrasies, and renders it stupefied and blind to the realities beyond matter as long as and whenever its life in matter persists. In its blindness, alas! the Lower Soul sees reality nowhere else but where it lives, knows no other reality but what its physical consciousness enables it to perceive, and if a ray of Buddhic Splendor does manage to penetrate through the thick veils of matter, it fails to take root therein because the physical affords no suitable soil for a spiritual seed. Even if a glimmer of light inculcates a certain truth it cannot bring it into practice because it is at present of flesh and spiritually weak.

Sometimes man laments and is breaking his heart crying because some beloved one of his has recently passed on to the other side of life on earth. Though his experience tells him and he knows well that his cries cannot bring his deceased friend back to earth, nor could they be recommended for the well-being of his own body and soul, yet he cries and is miserable and unhappy. Why? Public opinion in general, no doubt, would maintain that his love for his late colleague is the cause of his sorrow. But is it, indeed, his love alone, or is it his spiritual weakness, which is the author of his unhappiness? It is a question as to which of the two is making him sad. It is rather a subtle point. Ponder! Reflect! If it is love which is the cause of his sadness, it is the personal one — of physical nature. Love, of course, is a divine principle in whatever form or grade it may be exhibited. It creates, it preserves, and it destroys. Love makes one mourn as well as rejoice. It is the cause of pain as well as of bliss. In fact, no two atoms could have been brought together; no earth could have been developed nor any beings

to inhabit it; the manifestation of "Divine Self would have been but a dream unrealized, without the vestures that Love knits; and, indeed, the possibility of evolution would have been but a phantasy of mind, but for Love! Love is "All" and Love is "Naught" — it is both the manifested and the un-manifested. Love is the Essence Unknowable. It is the slayer and the slain. But the fact remains that there is love and Love. The former is personal, belongs to personality, and is born of the manifested, hence temporary: "This is my father and I love him. But as neither he is, nor I am, here on earth for ever, and our relation dissolves as the breath leaves the body, therefore this my love is not eternal but mayavi."

On the other hand there is Love which is impersonal, pertains to Individuality, and is Universal and deathless — eternal: "All are sparks of the same deathless Divinity, and I am one of them, hence all are my eternal brothers in whichever forms and colors they may be existing and wherever they may be; and I love all that is. This is Eternal Love." The former, the personal love, doubtless has its due place. It is by no means to be totally ill-regarded but on the contrary it is known to play a most prominent part in the building and upkeep of manifestations, since personality is the most efficient weapon in the hand of Individuality to self-express itself; but when the personal and the love pertaining to it overdo and choke, as it were, Individuality and the love impersonal, the spiritual situation of the Divine Soul is ingressively threatened, and the Higher Ego is laid open to the possibility of losing its way. The vital fact, that is the heart of the Ancient Wisdom herein, is that the Divine Spark — each one of us — leaving its Divine Home, peregrinating from sphere to sphere downwards in the course of the evolution of matter, going through the chain of reimbodiments at each realm or plane on its way earthwards, inhabiting grosser and grosser environments, and wearing the self-produced and self-made "coats of skin one after the other, has been tainted and impregnated with the propensities and temperaments of the lower matter, and "That" which is divine in its origin, has Its Higher Swabhava sunk into the lap of matter, and now thinks, acts, and loves earthly and hence limitedly —

materially and personally — in its best. Worldly love always and in each and every case has a certain amount of selfishness, however insignificant and unsuspected it may be. And this amount of worldliness is the root of man's weakness and tends to tie him to earth. The spiritually wise love selflessly, impersonally, and hence spiritually. Their love is celestial and divine. The man possessing it is a really prosperous and strong man. He can be a real help to all who come in touch with him. The ancient Rishis lifted countless souls out of the coil of the snake of illusion, and put their feet on the path of Gods — the right-hand path — that leads to Heaven. Remember that one may be a family-man, a householder, and yet a Rishi at the same time. To become an initiate it is not necessary to leave all and take to the woods for contemplation. In fact that would be an act of cowardice. Brave man is he who feeds his dependents and wins victory over his carnal self, and develops inwardly, living among men. He loves his people, but wisely and unattachedly.

Lest the remarks concerning the personal love should be misunderstood, it is to be stated clearly once again that it, even as it is, is utterly indispensable to spirit. The latter could not enter into physical life without the material love because it is the love for earth-life that brings the spiritual Soul to earth again after death; soul could not learn what earth can teach because it is only by becoming earthly that it can make mistakes and it is by its mistakes that it learns. In fact the earth could not be kept as it is — a fit and proper habitat for its creatures, the infant Gods — because man would not be interested in worldly affairs without love; and, indeed, the door of earth would have been closed on the face of the reincarnating Ego without earthly love because there would have been nothing to unite two persons together to develop a physical body for it. It is verily the most subtle scheme of Mother Nature that she has trapped man into the net of worldly love. In her deepest wisdom she has it that the "Divine Spark" — the Un-self-conscious God-Spark at its outset — must descend into the grossest states of matter, then ascend to the highest spheres or states, and finally become fully Self-Conscious God. And she achieves her mission

through the instrumentality of illusion, illusory love, "Maya." All these remarks about the lower love are true to the letter, but they fail to obscure the truth that man under its overwhelming sway has dozed off into a spiritual torpor, has forgotten his divine origin, ceased to recognise that the higher realms of life are his real abodes, and has become a living and talking doll of clay. Should no savior either in the form of man or but a holy thought, come to his rescue by putting a bend in his headlong dropping into the darker and darker caves and coves of this ever-tempting and misleading material, sensual and illusory love, he would lose his only real possession, the "Jewel in the Lotus," his higher Ego. As a divine being he is immortal, painless, harmless, and harmonious, but as a creature of earth he is subject to decay, sorrow, and other aches hereof. Perverted by the timely allurements of this Canopus of ours and caught in the whirl of "Maya," the spiritual man has lost his light in this dark dome of matter. He is groping, but knows not what he has lost that he is looking for. He is crying but he hardly knows "why." He is cognisant of the fact that the dead cannot be restored to life, and also it can be explained to him that the vibrations set up by the love-saturated mournings issuing forth from the mourner's heart may revivify and quicken the sympathetic cord between him and the deceased before the latter reaches "Devachan" — Swarga Puri — and that such awakening tends to impede the reincarnating "Ego" from cleansing itself of its mortal Coats, delays their disintegration, and thus it is no aid to the "Spiritual Soul" in following Its Sublime Journey towards and through "Swarga-Lokas." Thus he could be solicited and informed that his lamentations and cries are a great detriment to the well-being of his departed friend, and prove to be an act of unkindness on his part rather than love. But, alas! yet he cries. Should we take his cries as the manifestations of his love for the departed? Or should we call it his lack of spiritual attainment? Think! Reflect! and Know! We, poor humans! hardly know at times what we do. We often hurt with our love-taps those whom we love most, unconsciously to ourselves. When the matter is weighed up unbiasedly and according to the Ancient Wisdom, it is not so much of a love as of a sheer spiritual weakness, which, indeed, is the cause of his

unhappiness. He lives in flesh, enjoys physical consciousness, and in consequence is weak and unprepared to face the higher and unfamiliar operations of man's real nature. No doubt, there are very few whose hearts do not shrivel at the loss of their best companions, and the writer is quite conscious of that fact, but the matter when truly understood stands as given in the statements hereinbefore made. The extent of grief on the death of a friend is in exact proportion with the insufficiency of higher understanding and spiritual power. This lack is the child, as it were, of the physical consciousness; and it is only the Blessed Ones who have control over this weakness and do not shed tears on the death of their beloved ones. The secret of their reserve and ability lies in their wisdom, their vision, and their spiritual will-power that enables them to act wisely. They can see (1) the nature of their worldly relations as compared with their real — the inner — relation with all that lives, (2) what the "Real Love" is, (3) where it lies, and (4) how to gratify it.

Underneath the garb of flesh each soul is an independent entity on the path of evolution. One, as a child of Spirit, is as good as any other. It is the worldly agency through whom he receives his physical body, and who nominates, as it were, his earthly relatives on earth, with whom he has no concern whatsoever after he discards his body. When the body is gone the relations are gone: "this is my so-and-so, and that is my so-and-so," are no more. In fact, Ego is neither masculine nor feminine but neutral before it enters into the embryo. And when death supervenes, it is neutral again. It ought to be quite clear that even our senses are but earthly and hence unreal. Note well the fickleness of the worldly relations and equipments. Of course the karmic ties play their parts again when the Ego returns to earth after Swarga-basa — Devachanic life. One looks upon someone as his son, his father, his mother, or as any other relative on earth, but this is but a "Mayavic look." In reality all are the leaves, as it were, of the same tree of "life," or the rays of the same "Spiritual Sun." The entities and their embodiments, and their names, are but the colors, forms, and names of the same Ishwar — Reality — underlying them all. It is impersonal; it is

Eternal. May be that it is an atom, or a man, a God, a star, or a Universe, all are but the manifestations of, and united together by, the same one thread, the "One Essence." Beings are like the beads of a rosary, and that subtle tie is but the thread running through the hearts of them all. One may fly to the tip of the North Pole or to the highest region of the Galaxy, our Home Universe — -he cannot, even if he may wish to, fall out of it. "It" is the "Sutratman," the Bond of "One Universal Brotherhood." This is eternal, Impersonal, and the only real relation that one must take to his heart and love all that lives. Doing so he is an impersonal lover; being that, he becomes a co-worker with Nature and she begins to confide in him and teaches him all he can learn; and in time he becomes a Master, a Buddha, a "Jivanmukta," immortal — and a Savior of Men. He grieves not, he flutters not like a bird in a trap, he is still like the calm sea, and his vision is as clear as the blue sky. Take from here, O reader, the key to open the gate that leads to happiness inexhaustible, "Ananda." "The Blessed Ones" possess it and never fill their eyes with tears when their earthly relatives have left earth for heaven. To them man never dies but only changes his dwelling.

Love as conceived by the world of men in general is the product of materialized Swabhava. It lies on the surface of things as a rule. But the real love lies in the inmost core of man's heart. And this fact is another main cause of the indifferent attitude of the wise ones towards the deceased. Now listen to this: "Man is at a farther distance from another when on earth than when he is dead, even though they both live in the same family." Reflect! and Reflect! It is another deep point. During the earthly life the real man is imprisoned in the physical body and enchained by the fetters of material pursuits and temptations, but after death he is free from all such shackles and is, considering the case of the average man, in Devachan or Swarga as we call it in India. Devachan, of course, refers to a certain locality too, but, technically speaking, it is the name of a state of consciousness. Now, a man living on earth can, if he be trained, launch himself into the Devachanic state of Consciousness — Sushupti — which is the third state of Consciousness in the core of man's "heart and mind," and can thus

bring himself closer to his departed friend now than when the latter was in earthly life, although Nature allows no one to disturb a Devachani or "Swarga-basi." Nor do the Wise indulge in such acts, but they rejoice in the fact, which is a solemn and sublime truth, that their beloved one is resting in the inmost core of their heart. "He is here but we must not disturb him," say they to themselves, and rejoice in the nearness of their friend who is in blissful repose in the third state of their mind. Remember that even if one is not trained to this high state, still his deceased friend is there in the inmost of his heart. And the untrained minds could surely solve the problem of their sorrow and be happy like those who are trained, but only if the former could believe in this truth! But, alas! how few can even believe in such subtle but grand truths. On earth one could never be nearer to anyone than when in Devachan because the human mind in the former case — one can almost say — is never concentrated in one state of Consciousness — not even for a full minute; secondly, it is most rare that two minds can adequately be in one and the same state of consciousness simultaneously on earth. Whereas Sushupti-State may be enjoyed by more than one mind at one time more or less because "That World" is more harmonious, void of disturbance, and more calm than "this one." Here is another key to wipe the tears from the mourner's eyes: "My beloved one sleepeth in the inmost core of my heart but I must not disturb him," must he say to himself, and keep happy on the loss of his deceased beloved ones.

II

One by one the cogs of the ever running wheel of life keep falling behind. Every hour the clock chimes tells one who has ears to hear, "another hour is cut off from your life on earth" — a mystic warning, indeed! Time is never off its wings and is always fleeting. Tomorrow is more anxious to come than today. Days pass into months, and months into years. Three score and ten mortal years that on the average make up man's longevity, bid farewell like a flash of lightning. Everything is on the continuous whirl of change, and man of yesterday is not man of today; as the years go into the womb of the past, the time-worn body

begins to look like a weather-worn rock. Time comes when the old "vahan" must be changed for a new one because it is no longer a suitable vehicle for the conveyance of the soul within, and the latter also needs rest after life-long hard work. Then comes what the people call "death" but what the "Great Ones" call the merciful "act" of Mother Nature. In the past, at times, he had been unhappy and shedding tears when his beloved ones had passed away, but, this time, he has no words to express his grief because he himself is going. Alas! he cannot do otherwise. He had been living on earth as if it were his only habitat, and had forgotten his real "Home" where he is now going — a fact which even at this moment he may or may not believe in. He had been spending his years in equipping himself with weapons to conquer the riches of this world as if they were the only possessions worth having and real — in fact, an humble "Sadhan" might have often appeared to him but a time wastrel. Hunting and horse-races, cinema-scenes and theaters, and many a low hobby, and pleasure-grounds, let alone his worldly friends, none of whom would now change place with him, had been claiming and receiving his fullest attention as if they were the only springs emitting elixir of life for him. But now finding them all to be nothing but a mirage of the desert and a sheer waste of time, and seeing none around him who could and would accompany him and whom he could call really his own, he feels lost to both the worlds. Should one wonder that he is upset and unhappy? The causes of his unhappiness are too subtle and probably too many to be recorded here, but the main fact which is of the utmost importance, is that during the earthly period he had led the life of attachment and had bedded himself body and soul in the inmost recesses of material environments. He had fastened himself so tightly to earth and its things that now at the time of break he inevitably feels it painful. This break is a severe jerk and a sudden shock; and he has nothing to balance it with. In the esoteric sense he is a bankrupt. He sees now that the riches he had accumulated, the friends he had made, and the thoughts that he had been cherishing, are all of no help to him, hence are valueless. He cannot carry them with him, hence they are not his real possessions. He realizes what a waste of time and energy it all was. He had seldom

been interested in the veiled side of life and had never, perhaps, garnered the invisible holy crops in the depository of his inner Soul; hence he has nothing with which to mitigate the blow of this shock. The intensity of his bewilderment depends upon the balance between his spiritual and material behaviors during the life just lived as well as the one carried forward previously. If he had only thought during his life as the sages think: "our life on earth is but a few days" wonder, another chance given to redeem the past, to learn lessons, and to go higher and higher, to learn more and more on the evolutionary ladder of our Eternal Life," he would have halfway loosened the knot of personality that ties him to earth. If he had only worded as the Blessed Ones word: "Kindly and serenely, lest the voice of the "Silence" should pass unheard and the inmost God ignored," he would have now a guide with him to show him the path. Oh! but if he had done what the gods do: "minding all but ignoring themselves and living in the midst yet above it all — unattachment"; he would then have entirely robbed death of its sting and would have passed on as the heroes do, with a smile of glory on his face, happy here and hereafter as well. O Reader! Draw aroma from these lines, inhale it, and inspire your soul to aspire. Here is the key to unlock the mystic cabin of Bliss.

Again, is this the only life that man has ever lived or shall ever live? Emphatically No; but on the contrary he has lived millions of lives before and shall live countless more besides his present one — "the chain of Chaurasi" — before he attains to Jivan-mukti, Nirvana. And every time that he lived, he probably had a family and friends whom he had to leave, and he shall have to do likewise in the future reincarnations. If this is his eternal mode of conduct, why should he worry and break his heart about his present family situation? He ought to have adapted himself to such separation and be always ready to meet it. But, alas! he neglects the serious side of his eternal life and finds it strange and irksome when he has to face it. Really, an awakened mind is a great guard against the hot winds of time, and a real help to those to whom it belongs.

Birth is death and death is birth. In other words, birth on earth is the

death of Spirit in the Swarga-Iokas, and the death on earth is the rebirth of Spirit in Its native realms, the Swarga-lokas. Birth and death are two aspects of the being of the same entity, who as it were, is playing the part of two actors on two different stages, the spiritual and the physical. On the former he plays the part of a god and on the latter that of a man. When one part is being played the other part is in obscurity, or resting. Rest and work, or work and then rest, are two alternate intervals of his eternal life. But for this procedure he would have gone hopelessly fatigued and blunted, and his progress, or spiritual income, would have receded rather than proceeded. Hence if he only knew what death means to him, he would have taken it as his best friend and not as his enemy. In the distant future when mankind shall be more spiritual than it is today, the approach of death shall no longer be a dread to it but a sublime anticipation and hope of a period of blissful rest brought about by the merciful law of Mother Nature.

What has been said above about the causes of unhappiness and the means of happiness at the time of death, is by no means all that can be said. In fact, there are some means of happiness that are more practical and substantial than those hitherto written. Here is one which is of a more esoteric nature than an exoteric one. Let a student study a sacred and devotional book, such as *Bhagavad-Gita*, or *Golden Precepts of Esotericism* by G. de Purucker, the two books known to the writer to be most suitable. Let him dwell upon what he has read. It will be cleansing his mind all the time while he is reflecting. Let him also study some deep philosophical book written by a real spiritual teacher, such as *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by G. de Purucker, or *The Ocean of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge; these are to be recommended for a new student. Let him dwell upon what he has read in the philosophical book. The former study tends to carry the mind towards God within and the latter educates him in deep thinking and thus leads him inward. Both the studies shall purify and feed the mind of the student with right food. If he brings his knowledge thus acquired into practice and builds his character thereby, a time will come when he becomes what is called "Ready," and Gurudeva shall appear to him. If he is

found fit and worthy to be taken on, the latter shall accept him as his Chela. If successful in Chelaship and again ready to rise higher in the future, he shall be raised still higher.

Let it be understood that the men who have attained to Chelaship, Mastership, etc., are only those recipients of spiritual attainments who have become co-workers with Nature. Their postmortem career is quite different from that of the average humanity. At the time of leaving this earthly life they know to a great extent what is their position then and thereafter. The approach of death cannot and does not annoy them because they know that it only means living and working on earth in a subtle body instead of the physical one. After they have died their families and friends may think that they are no more, but as far as they themselves are concerned they are quite conscious where they are and what they are doing, even though known to be dead. In fact, they might be visiting those whom they had left behind if there be a call for them. They live and work consciously to themselves on behalf of Nature wherever they are. Dying is only a little more difficult process for them than taking their garments off before going to bed. Where is then the horror of death? Nowhere, if man would do only what he ought to do. The dread of death is but the bogy of a child, and only those who are spiritually young fear it.

If a student, or a striver, dies before reaching the recognised stages of spiritual unfoldment — Chelaship, Adeptship, etc. — and before he has developed to be a co-worker with Nature, his death is no different from the average mankind, but his cleansing period in the Kama-loka becomes considerably shorter, and his entry into the (Swarga-Dham) Swarga-Lokas is quicker and most blissful.

III

Points connected with man's departure from this earth are rather serious and of the gravest importance, hence they have been emphasized in the previous pages by affording them the first place in the limited scope of this article. Nevertheless, there are besides death other things that often, nay, mostly, during one's life on earth do

crucify him on the cross of fiery ordeals, tribulations, diseases and heartaches. Man, who in manifestation is speeding through life's sunshines and shadows, happinesses and unhappinesses, is too often seen with his head bowed on his knees. Probably he is out of work, cannot provide himself and his family with daily bread, fit raiment, and a shelter over their heads; and however he tries to get on he fails and consequently he is unhappy. If unemployment is not the cause of his being tormented, probably some mental or physical disease is making prey of him. If he is in good health and regularly at his work, perhaps some of his youngsters or his wife is going through some kind of agony and that is the cause of his being unhappy. In short, there is something somewhere that concerns him and is at present out of order which is making him miserable. O Brother in pain and despair, listen to this! No matter what kind of suffering, mental or physical, how intense, and of how long a period, it may be; and, on the other hand, no matter of what kind, how blissful, and of what duration, may the happy circumstances be; all are the results of the Karmic accounts opened by man, consciously or unconsciously to himself, between himself and Nature in the past. They are the fruits of the seeds sown by him in the field of the invisible world. They are the effects of the causes that he had set into motion by his thoughts, words, and acts, in this life or in those that preceded it. There is not a sigh nor a smile which is not either the fruition of past conduct or a new account opened. The effects of the past lie within and without the fabric of man awaiting an opportunity to befall. When time is ripe for them they bring forth their ill or favorable influences, whichever the case may be, upon him. When he is suffering either through poverty or through mental or physical ailments the effects are being exhausted, or, as the theologians would say, "his past sins are being washed away," not through a vicarious atonement as the latter maintain it, but through his own efforts and inflictions. It is only through self-directed activity and by bearing discomposure, mortifications, and distresses of whatever kind, that man gets the remission of his mistakes. The cleansing away of the past sins, the remission of one's past mistakes, and the exhaustion of the effects of one's past misbehavior, are but different manners of

expression to explain the same one truth, but, in reality, none of them exposes the matter adequately.

The fact is that what is called "Karma" is in a way the solidified matter, or, in other words, the karmic effects are the concreted thoughts that once upon a time in the past were cherished and were forces or ethereal matter then, but now they are concreted matters and compose man's sevenfold constitution, of which the only visible part is his physical body. When something comes on the scene the atoms or the solidified thoughts are melted, as it were, retransformed into an ethereal state and their influence upon him is that they bring a change in his condition either for the better or for the worse. However, whatever kind of change or influence they may play upon him, it is of secondary importance; but the main point to be emphasized is that after the period of bitterness, calamity, or suffering, or the pains of narrow circumstances, one must be sure that certain of the past misthoughts or misdeeds that were waiting for an opportunity to burst upon him, are dead and buried, and he need not be afraid of them any longer, because they are dissolved, exhausted, remitted, forgiven, and are no more. He is a new man again — a sinless man as far as those sins are concerned. Hence, elucidating the matter of "bad Karma or the ill Karmic effects" philosophically and satisfactorily, they are the concentrated and concreted ill-ethereal matters manifesting themselves as various kinds of diseases and bad happenings or a certain kind of poverty. And when the unhealthy situation is abolished it means that the ill-past, or certain poisonous atoms bedded in man's fabric or his body, are smoked out or burnt out, and the man is put on his right feet again.

That being so, is there nothing at all which is most beautiful and helpful even in man's suffering? If he be told and somehow made to believe that his present low waters are but the cleansing stuff and the means of the atonements of his past errors, and that they are only transitory, would he not feel a lofty promise of hope and a glimmer, however dim, of the silver lining mysteriously surging upwards beneath the glooms of his heart? And at the termination of his stormy

days if he be told again: "Your past sins are forgiven, go ye and sin no more," would he not feel that his Savior had spoken to him? O Reader! Man's sufferings, of whatever kind, are his saviors, teachers, and the means of his spiritual evolution. Blessed are they who suffer! And really happy are they alone who in their palmy days are careful! The Sun of prosperity does not shine always. Nothing is forever. Poor days are in store for those who drink too much of the delicious cup proffered by their present happy privileges! Happy times are the times during which shiploads of new sins are most likely to be created and taken on if care be not taken, and thus they tend to be the cause of future calamities. Hence, O Martyrs, take cheer! and Midases, beware!

Cases have been known where men are enjoying the best of health, have well-established positions, and all and everything belonging to them is going pretty well and smoothly, yet they are miserable and can by no means be called the happiest, because Mr. So-and-So has larger banking accounts, rides in cars, and smokes costly cigars, and they have less of such privileges and consequently they are discontented and unhappy. Probably, even if such things were provided for them, they would feel no better after a short time and would want to be still richer. If all the treasures and every pie of this vale of "Maya" be melted into one mass and given to them they would still be found wanting and unhappy. Their unhappiness is no less than that of a man who cannot afford to have for himself and his family even the daily necessities of life. In fact, in the majority of cases the poor and the down-trodden are found to be happier, of higher moral courage and spiritual strength than the mighty rich. What is the cause of the latter's unhappiness? Discontentment, greed, and the perversion, or the materialization, or the unnaturalization, of the Higher Mind into becoming the lower mind. Take away every pie that they have, give them the life of the poor, and oblige them to be contented with a morsel of rice, or what the humble humanity are destined to eat; then, after a certain period of time, their minds, once duped by the material tendencies, but now having nothing to be duped by, will come to their natural setting — contented and happier — and that would be the

rejuvenation of their higher part. This point belongs to the higher psychology and is illustrated herein by focusing the remarks on the rich among mankind as to what should be done for their recovery, if they are really gone down in their spiritual nature. The writer has no bias against the rich, in fact he is proud of them in a way, because in many ways they are a great support of the poor. Nevertheless, glory be to those who are contented!

(To be continued)

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On foretelling the future

J. B. Priestley says the Past, Present and Future are co-existent different vibrations existing at the same time in the same place, but our minds are capable of vibrating to only the Present because the Past has had some material effect on our mind and changed it, that is why we remember it. In other words, it has become part of us. The Future has not become part of us and so we cannot understand it except by noticing what the Past did to the Present, the Present did to the Future. He also says there is no Present really, but that it is just our perception of the unevolved in this plane (although it is evolved on another), the unevolved becoming the evolved.

Some of this seems curious to me. I can understand the clairvoyant going back into the past and seeing it as H. P. B. did, because it has happened and left a record. But how can the Clairvoyant go into the future and see that? If one has a super mind one can foretell the future as long as it is the extension of the Present. I mean that one can deduce what will happen, if all the facts are known, just as a builder can foretell the future of a house he is building. But to see the future on this method would need a mind larger than all the libraries in the world and an exact machine to give all knowledge its true ratio of importance, and a knowledge of how much and how fast Karma was going to be unrolled. Algebraical equations with 4 variables are hard enough, but an equation with an infinite number of variables, combined in an infinite number of ways is much too hard for even the most advanced combination of Manas and Buddhi. So I still don't know how one can foresee the future. — J. P. U.

G. de P. — The matter of "seeing the future," etc., seems awfully difficult

to answer, and indeed it is in a way, and is downright difficult to one who has not had any training in Theosophy. But here is the answer:

In occult philosophy, the past, the present, and the future, blend together in eternity, or what is called the ETERNAL NOW, for Eternity has neither past, present, nor future, it being an ETERNAL NOW. Eternity, furthermore, is the fundamental — or as we might say, eternity and infinity are the two sides of the same ultimate Reality, the fundamental, the ALL.

What the spiritual Seer does is to rise from this plane on which past, present, and future seem so positive and real to us, into as it were the ranges of his own spiritual being which bathe so to speak in the Eternal Now; and in this way the past is unrolled before his eyes, and the present is seen to be but a continuation of it into what we call the future, and both are glimpsed as an eternal drama whose keynote is Now. Thus likewise should karma be viewed, the karmic past, the karmic present, the karmic future; and in this way we avoid falling into the error of fatalism on the one hand, and on the other hand into the equally great error of karmic indeterminance.

As an illustration, from another angle: an atom in my body contains electrons, any atom does. On these electrons let us say there are inhabitants, living their own tiny lives, but at an enormous rate of speed compared with our time. Thus a whole cosmic solar system so to speak, of atomic size, can come into being, live its innumerable aeons, and vanish many thousand times in one of our human seconds. In other words, one of our human seconds compared with electronic time, is almost "eternally" long.

Now, imagine an inhabitant on such an electron, living at its tremendous rate of speed which to us humans would seem incomparably quicker than a lightning flash. Yet to the electronic inhabitant, long years would be going by. To him there would be a future which we, with our slower time, would not appreciate except as a now. Thus the electronic inhabitant, because of his intense tempo, immense speed, would be undergoing his past, present, and future;

whereas we, with our far more majestic time, with its slow rhythmic pulses, would scarcely realize it except by intellectual thought. To us it would be just simply now.

In exactly the same way, the gods, whose time-tempo is incomparably stately and to us humans what we would call slow, look upon *our* past, present, and future, which to us seem so real, as scarcely differentiated, because our time by comparison with theirs is so rapid. We have next week, next year, a billion years from now, but these are our tiny little human years. To one of the higher gods, the entire manvantara of our solar system would be scarcely a billionth part of that one god's seconds in that god's time. So in our solar system we would be looking forward into millions of years ahead, and looking back into millions of years of the past; whereas the god's consciousness would scarcely be aware of the entire life-period of the solar system as other than a tiny fraction of an instant.

Do you see now how it is possible to read the future? The Seer, the spiritual Seer, not the pretentious and half-baked clairvoyant, but the spiritual Seer, simply raises his consciousness into another tempo, into another higher plane, in which past, present, and future are visible to its vision as a Now. This of course requires initiatory training. But every adept is trained, depending upon his grade in the hierarchy, trained in some degree at least.

Now another thing: never forget that free will exists for every monad great or small in infinity. So that the tiny electronic inhabitant, just like the human on our big globe: each one has his own portion, so to speak, of free will, that is if we can divide free will up into portions that way! Really, free will is the amount of spiritual vitality and intellect that the evolving individual has been able to grasp through inner growth. Thus free will can be greatly increased, but it exists even in the tiniest atom, although of course on the scale of those spheres. Therefore, no matter what the time-ratio is, no matter whether one can foresee the future in large or in small, the entity having his portion of free will can always change his future course by that free will, which does not mean acting

contrary to the future, because this would be impossible, but modifying his own conduct with regard to the future, so that he can do, or refrain from doing, in proportion as his free will is strong or weak.

Unconsciousness at Moment of Death

Does the sleep that is spoken of in *Occult Glossary*, page 86, sometimes last till it is joined by the immortal part of the intermediate duad? — S. H. C.

I. R. P. — The query is based on a statement made in discussing the Kama-rupa: the word sleep is not used. The condition into which the "*personal* entity" is plunged at the moment of physical death is here called "a merciful stupor of unconsciousness," a state that varies in length according to the quality of the individual experiencing the processes of "death." A similar condition exists in the physical body in most cases of natural death during the last days, or hours, before the heart ceases to beat and the brain to register the panoramic vision. After the Second Death the "stupor of unconsciousness" merges into the dream and/or deep sleep of Devachan. These are states of relative consciousness enjoyed by the cognising *personal* entity. States and conditions have no existence apart from the entities or beings suffering or enjoying them.

The Center of the Earth

Is it known what is in the center of the Earth? — C. C. C.

C. J. Ryan — It is definitely known that the interior of the earth from about 2000 miles from the surface is far heavier than the outer parts, and that as far as we can penetrate it increases in heat. Calculations make it almost certain that the central part, about 4000 miles in depth, is heated to a temperature of many thousand degrees. This core is composed apparently of the heavier metals, and if it were not for the immense pressure of the outer layers would be melted into a liquid state by the heat. Owing to the pressure, however, it is supposed to be extremely dense and perhaps viscous, a curious combination. Most of our information about the interior of the earth is derived from the

study of the vibrations which pass through it that are produced by earthquakes, but there are other sources of knowledge. Scientific opinion is not unanimous on the subject of the condition of the central core, but Dr. Imamura of Japan, a high authority, states the case very clearly as follows:

The earth's core, supposedly composed of iron and nickel, may (be solid and yet have some liquid properties, like a wax candle, hard and brittle enough to break when struck with a hammer, but able to "flow" gradually under long-continued pressure. Pressure at the center is supposed to be about 22,000 tons to the square inch, and heat may increase at somewhere near the same rate, although scientists differ about this. Under tremendous pressure and heat, materials at the earth's core *may behave in ways not understood at the surface.*

The words we have italicized are interesting because of a curious problem in regard to the existence of great heat within the earth. While the earth seems to be a magnetic body with north and south magnetic poles, etc., and largely composed of iron, a magnetic metal, it is well known that iron loses its magnetism when heated! Dr. Francis Bitter, a high authority, recently wrote:

The magnetization of the Earth's core, however, is not included [in these theories of terrestrial magnetism] and the theories in their present form do not account for its existence at the high temperatures of the Earth's interior. — *Introduction to Ferromagnetism*

The sun is also believed to be intensely hot yet it is also a magnetic sphere. *The Secret Doctrine* speaks of cosmic material "forming the globe we live in around its *nucleus of intelligent* primeval substance." (I, 609)

Krishna and the Left-hand Path

On page 32 of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, it says: ". . . but whatever the path taken by mankind, that path is mine." How interpret this, in view of the left-hand path? — C. C. C.

G. F. K. — Krishna here stands for the Unknowable Divinity within all beings, remembering which man learns in time to distinguish the thing known from the Knower, to perceive Reality in maya. In the heart of every man reposes in spiritual sublimity the Krishna-spark of eternity. All paths taken by men therefore, though vastly divergent in character and advancement, belong to Krishna by virtue of identic origin. Let us regard ourselves as radii of a circle whose circumference is infinite and whose center is the pointless point of Spirit. No radius occupies the identic position, either in space or time, that a brother-radius does, yet no one will deny identity of origin to all radii. As soon as a radius is projected, differentiation sets in, the path of radius-A becomes distinct from the path of radius-B, two viewpoints arise, and disharmony, antagonism, and isolation, occur. This difference is not real, but apparent, and arises solely from judging appearances as reality, from viewing matters of origin from the *circumference-standpoint* alone, instead of from the Krishna- or center- point of view.

In the boundless circle of infinite productions, a circumference may be described at any point: the nearer to the center-point a circumference is described, the more closely bound are the separate radii, the more identic in spacial and temporal position, and the easier for each radius to comprehend and apprehend his unity with his brother-radius, his identity in divinity. The farther from the source a circumference is described, the longer the radii, and hence the more divergent become the tip-ends of such radii. Separateness thus appears the natural mode of life, and identity in divinity an absurdity.

The pursuance of the path outward may lead us to completely forget our source in Spirit, may tempt us to rupture the link between center and radius-tip, but Krishna in his manifold aspects of Divine power latent in the heart of all beings and things, is long-suffering and compassionately watchful. "Whatever the path taken by mankind, that path is mine" — as long as there remains one tiny spark of divine fervor, that man's path actively belongs to Krishna. No matter how foolishly one may misunderstand one's relationship to man and god,

how blatantly one may pray to this deity or to that pitri, if one is faithful to one's convictions, firm in resolve, unflagging in concentration of effort toward the supreme source, then such undaunted aspiration belongs to the Krishna-path. For Krishna is not bothered about labels, titles, or names. Devotion to truth, loyalty to one's intuition, fidelity to honor and troth, sealed with insistent longing to serve others — these things mark *activity* of the Krishna-fire in the heart.

"How interpret this, in view of the left-hand path"? The path toward Krishna is twofold: with recognition of values, the aspirant can travel the path of his radius inward, knowing that at least he is returning home after long and weary sojourn in the morass of ignorance; or secondly, he can follow the path inward with a heart unsteady in spiritual resolve, unpurged of cruel motive, and with unclean desire for control of spiritual force that he may become great, that mighty can be his power over others, that the strength of the infinite can flow through his veins for his own self-glory and consequent evil work. Let him follow this path, and it will lead to Krishna, but in what manner, with what result: with *death, horror, destruction of soul*.

Listen to the words of Arjuna in the eleventh chapter of the "Gita" wherein he describes Krishna in his manifold forms: to those of spiritual attainment Krishna shows himself glorious as the Sun in action, gentle as the Moon in repose, but to the sons of matter, Arjuna sees armies of evil forces "impetuously precipitating themselves into thy [Krishna's] mouths; . . . As troops of insects carried away *by strong impulse find death in the fire*, even so do these beings with swelling force pour into thy mouths for *their own destruction*." (itals. ours)

The reward of evil is no spiritual boon, but death of the soul in the fire of divinity.

Lipikas and Their Records

A short time ago I got rather a shock when I understood (I hope wrongly) from G. de P. on *Lipika* in the *Occult Glossary* that

everything we will do or will say has been recorded. If anyone attacked me on this point I could not distinguish it from fatalism or predestination. I would be most thankful to know that I have misunderstood. — J. P. U.

L. G. P. — What is actually said is that the lipikas record all that was, all that is, and all that ever will be. I take that to mean that this recording has always been going on, is going on at the present time, and will continue to go on forever. I do not take it in the sense that all that lies in the future has already been recorded, for it can be recorded only after it has happened. There is a point, however, that might be brought forward, and that is that nothing ever happens without a cause, and so, though an effect is still in the future, it lies even now within the cause. It is much like the winding of your watch. The energy you put into the spring will take time to expend itself, and while the hours and minutes are still in the future, the energy is present in the watch-spring. That there is no fatalism in this, may be shown by the fact that I may drop my watch immediately after winding it, and it will thereafter cease to run.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GREAT QUEST — *Abbott Clark*

Many of the greatest problems in human life, science and religion do not answer. Let us take up one problem which we will call "The Great Quest." I do not mean alone the quest to escape from pain and suffering, that is included, but especially the unrest and discontent which come to the most prosperous and successful — often in the very hour of triumph. When men realize, as some time they must do, that all the world is empty and all desires vain, they ask, "Why, O why, all this longing, desire and discontent? Why do disappointment and despair haunt men from the cradle to the grave — if for too long they have been content?"

The answer is simple — if we only knew it.

Man is essentially a spiritual being. His heart seeks, yearns, for spiritual light and life. He inwardly realizes that the whole material world is the outer garment of Spirit. It is a shell, a husk. Man's heart can never be satisfied with husks. Let him crack the nut of life. Seek within for the kernel. Reject the husks, yet treat them respectfully, for they may be very useful in their place, if wisely and properly used.

The Great Quest is the search for Reality, for the heart of things, for the kernel of the nut. The spiritual nature of man demands a spiritual life. It will never, for long, be satisfied with less.

Matter and spirit are not distinct and separate entities. They are One. Spirit is the eternal, divine life that shines through matter, on which matter rests, of which matter is the lowest plane, state or degree — the dregs. We live in spirit as the great earth does in the free and fluid ether, which penetrates and sustains it and us; yet we see it not, though we are of it, bathed in it, and penetrated by it.

When a man realizes his own Divinity and recognizes in all around him the same divinity, the eternal Beauty shining through, he fastens

his attention, his interest, on That. All his life undergoes a change for the better. Illusions and burdens fall away from him. Hope springs eternally in his breast and he feels that that hope is being, to a degree, eternally realized. The hope grows perennially and its realization grows along with it.

When a man's Higher nature awakens, pessimism, ennui, depression, discouragement, despair and even the blues, are gone forever. He may suffer, but having discovered the source of his being, he no longer says that Life is just one difficulty after another. True, it may be. But difficulties are no excuse for dejection. Difficulties are the spice of life to the strong man. Overcoming them is the athletic training by which strength of character is developed. Without difficulties our wills would atrophy. We should welcome them. They are more useful than pleasures. Pleasures teach us nothing, it is said. Some seek pleasures as an end in themselves, but pleasures overindulged in, bring reactions and satiety. The wise accept pleasures as the dusty traveler accepts the wayside inn, or the refreshing spring and shady grove — temporary refreshments.

When a man has found his own Soul he has found within himself a Place of Peace and of exhaustless energy that is infinitely more than pleasure. Within the heart of man is a Place of Peace where love and joy abide forever.

These are not negative virtues, but strong and positive qualities that cannot be irritated by any disturbance or overcome by any difficulty.

All this is not an idle dream, or just a beautiful picture. It is what evolution has in store for every evolving entity. It is a Hope, a Promise, and a Possibility, which every questing soul strives for and eventually will attain.

WHERE THE MASTERS WORK — *G. de Purucker*

Do the Masters help, inspire others than Theosophists, than the T. S.? Well you know, I should be awfully ashamed of any Theosophist who could not answer that question instantly. Of course they do! Why, it is one of our ABC thoughts, teachings, that the Masters aid and help and inspire anywhere where there is an open door to their entrance, in other words, where the soul is not surrounded with impassable frontiers, keeping the light out, the help away. Why of course! And if the Masters" influence were not felt in other organizations than the T. S., as indeed it may be felt, it would be in this case because they had lost touch, had enclosed themselves with the impassable barriers of the frontiers of thought and feelings. The truth is that the Masters work *anywhere* where the doors are opened to their entrance, and where the conditions propitious for their work exist.

Just take one thought which has been one of the dreams of my life from childhood. If the Christian Church or Churches could go back to the *original* teachings of their great Master, to really primitive Christianity, the blessed Masters would be working through them as one of the greatest channels in the West today to help men. And if they don't so work therein, it would be because the help is barred out by frontiers of thought and feeling.

And the T. S. — as I have often pointed out, it will depend upon us, Brothers and Friends, us members of the Theosophical Society, whether the Masters continue to work through it as an instrument as now they are doing, or abandon it. They will never abandon us as long as we keep our hearts and minds open; but if we begin to put frontiers around our consciousness, *we* do the work of exclusion, not they. The gods go to, said the old Greeks, the gods visit, the houses of those who open doors to them. Think what that means. Why not try to entertain divine and divinely human guests? You can do it.

The whole trouble with us and with civilization is that we build these frontiers around us. They are not placed there by Nature. They are builded by ourselves, frontiers of exclusion in thought, in feeling, in tradition, in everything. And what happens to the man who shuts himself up in a cell and lives there? Who loses? The world, or the foolish man? Such a cell is a frontier of consciousness. And the man (or the civilization) is great precisely in proportion as he can throw aside, break through, the barriers, the frontiers, with which habit and custom and he himself have surrounded himself, and move out to ever loftier houses of consciousness, ever receding frontiers of consciousness.

What makes a religion successful? The building around itself of frontiers of thought, frontiers, barriers of exclusion? Why of course not. The answer is obvious. Destroy the barriers, the door is open to all.

The Theosophical Forum

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE MESSAGE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY — *H. Groot*

In our previous discussions about the results obtained by modern science, we repeatedly pointed to the fact that these results are as many corroborations of the statements made by the Old Wisdom — at least as far as the material world is concerned.

In many cases the agreement referred to is of very recent date. When the Old Wisdom's views on scientific subjects were promulgated by H. P. Blavatsky, they were nearly all of them in flat contradiction of the then current conceptions and theories, yes, even with what then passed for "proved facts." This should put us on our guard when we see that some of these statements do even now seem irreconcilable with modern scientific opinions. One who closely watches the rapid progress of modern science and the great changes that our views have undergone, will be rash if he concludes that the present "facts" of science are not contestable. A statement that differs from what modern Science considers as true need certainly not be rejected *a priori* — history may prove the contrary. We would request the reader to bear this thought in mind when he reads the following reflexions on the contrast which seems as yet to exist between what modern astrophysics and the Ancient Wisdom tell us about the condition of the sun.

Let us first ask the solar-physicists. They tell us that the temperatures of the outer layers of the sun have for a long time been a moot point. The estimates, based on the interpretation of the observed distribution of energy over the colors of the solar spectrum, varied between 5000 and 7000°. This is not so strange as it may seem, since the determination of the temperature from the spectrum is based on laws that hold good for a radiant body that has the *same* temperature throughout. This is not the case with the sun. It sends us rays which come from layers of very different depths — thus from layers which will have highly different temperatures. As a consequence, such a calculation cannot be anything but a rough average for the outer

layers. In the more accurate methods that are used nowadays these conditions can be taken into account, and the results of more recent determinations are therefore in good agreement with each other.

Meanwhile, the direct measurements apply only to the outermost layers of the sun, to those parts of which H. P. Blavatsky says:

. . . externally is spread its robe (atmosphere, chromosphere, etc.) the nature of which is not matter, whether solid, liquid, or gaseous, such as you are acquainted with, but vital electricity, condensed and made visible.

For the knowledge of the temperatures of the deeper layers astrophysics has to rely entirely on theoretical considerations. All of them agree that the temperature increases to enormously high values from the outside to the center, although — according to the conception which is formed about the condition of the matter in the inside of the sun — opinions differ considerably as to the extent to which this increase takes place.

The temperature prevailing in the center of the sun is estimated at 20,000,000° C. Another more radical theory even speaks of 40 billion degrees!

Before asking ourselves how such results are to be interpreted, we shall consult our Theosophical literature, which also contains a few passages dealing with the temperature and the condition of solar matter. First, there is a passage from *Isis Unveiled*:

. . . the materialists, who will some day find that . . . the sun has no more heat in it than the moon or the space crowding hosts of sparkling stars.

Next, we read in "Some Inquiries suggested by Mr. Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism" in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, 1883:

The "Adepts," who are thus forced to demolish before they can reconstruct, deny most emphatically (a) that the sun is in combustion, in any ordinary sense of the word; or (b) that he is

incandescent, or even burning though he is glowing; . . .

The Secret Doctrine says:

Foremost of all, they [the astronomers] would have to repudiate the ideas on the Sun's *solidity* and *incandescence*; the Sun is "glowing" most undeniably but not burning . . .

And to add a quotation from a book written in our modern era, we would refer to the following passage from *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by Dr. G. de Purucker:

The so-called "solar flames" are not flames. The sun is not burning; it is not in combustion; it is not hot; what we see is the aura of the sun, the sixth sub-element or sub-principle of the first or lowest Prakriti. That aura therefore is the sun's material buddhic aura, and looked at from the scientific standpoint it is a globe of kosmic forces.

Was it saying too much when we stated that the conceptions of the Ancient Wisdom differ as yet considerably from those of astro-physics?

If these were the only remarks that could be made on this point, they might be considered of relatively little importance. Moreover, they would be out of place in a series of articles whose purpose it is to show how modern science step by step affirms the correctness of H. P. B.'s statements, which formerly sounded so absurd.

However, it seems to us that in spite of all difference of opinion, the views of science about the internal structure of the sun are noticeably approaching the above conception of the Old Wisdom.

Let us return to the statements of astro-physics on the temperature prevailing in the center of the sun. How are they to be understood? As wild fantasies, devoid of any sound basis? As unaccounted-for numerical results obtained by elaborating uncontrollable theoretical reflexions?

By no means! The internal structure of the sun and" stars is a well-

defined scientific problem, which is tackled with all exactitude that modern science is capable of displaying. Nearly all relevant reasonings are based on extensive empiric knowledge obtained and checked in the laboratory. However, there is one factor that cannot be controlled directly: *the condition of the matter in the inside of the sun*. And this is a factor of paramount importance! Each different conception that is formed about this condition leads to a different "model" of sun or star. Thus, we know Eddington's model, Jeans's model, Milne's model, to give some of the most familiar. To a first approximation they all differ from each other in the conception about the nature of the matter composing the inside of the sun. And this factor is of prime importance also according to the Ancient Wisdom. In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* we read:

We know that the *invisible* Sun is composed of *that* which has neither name, nor can it be compared to anything known to your science — on earth; and that its "reflection" [the visible sun] contains still less of anything like "gases," mineral matter, or *fire*, though even we when treating of it in your civilized tongue are compelled to use such expressions as "vapour" and "magnetic matter."

In *The Secret Doctrine* we read:

The Solar substance is immaterial. In the sense, of course, of matter existing in states unknown to Science.

And elsewhere in *The Secret Doctrine* we find this very suggestive key:

The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical.

These statements, too, had a queer ring in a time when science only knew three conditions of matter, viz. solid, liquid and gaseous, while not so very long ago Crookes discovered a fourth state, namely his "radiant matter" (our cathode rays). But now, looking back upon its old — at present obsolete! — conceptions, science can unconditionally

adopt the following words from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*:

Verily, when your astronomers speaking of *sun-matter*, term those lights and flames as "clouds of vapour" and "gases unknown to science" — (rather!) — chased by mighty whirlwinds and cyclones — whereas we know it to be simply magnetic matter in its usual state of activity — we feel inclined to smile at the expressions. . . .

It is also important to note what the Masters said with reference to Crookes's discovery:

If Mr. Crookes would penetrate Arcana beyond the corridors the tools of modern science have already excavated, let him . . . TRY. He tried and found the radiometer; tried again, and found Radiant matter; he may try again and find the "Kama-rupa" of matter — its *fifth* state. But to find its *Manas* he would have to pledge himself stronger to secrecy than he seems inclined to.

Crookes did not discover the "fifth state," to which reference is made in the above passage. This discovery was reserved for modern science, which identified this fifth state in the form of *photons*.

What are "photons"?

Let us ask Jeans. In his book *The New Background of Science* he tells us that photons are particles of — energy! Photons are not "ordinary" matter; they are not "atoms of electricity" such as electrons — no, they are "atoms of energy," particles that have lost all materiality. But yet they possess the qualities of inertia, i. e. they have a certain *mass*. "Like all other forms of energy," Jeans writes,

photons possess the property of inertia or mass. For this reason they exert pressure on anything they strike, here again behaving like shot from a gun. A regiment of men could be mown down by a sufficiently strong light just as surely as by the stream of shot from a machine gun.

Now although we may not like this latter picture, yet it shows clearly

that photons have to be considered as particles, which, in spite of their "immateriality," consist of matter in a state that is one of the degrees with which we are familiar. Jeans, too, points frankly to this resemblance in the following really intuitive passage:

Indeed it is easy to imagine beings in intergalactic space, where matter is rare, endowed with electric senses in place of our material senses, who would regard photons as the primary constituent of reality, and matter as something outside the general course of nature.

May not we see these photons as the fifth state of matter? The "kama-rupa" of matter, as the Master called it?

Why "kama-rupa"? Would not this mean that this 5th degree of matter is "immaterial" in the sense that it belongs to the lower *astral* conditions? Then, the 6th and 7th states, which are as yet unknown to science, would belong to successively higher astral planes. And this is in perfect agreement with the above remark that Crookes would not easily succeed in discovering the *Manas* of matter. Matter in its 6th state is called here "Manas," i. e. it is considered as belonging to the higher astral planes.

What relation does all this bear to the interior of the sun?

A very important one! Let us remember what H. P. B. has said about the solar matter in the quotation given on the second page of this article.

According to modern physics the interior of the sun consists largely of photons, that is, of matter in its 5th state. Eddington's calculations are the most moderate; according to him a quadrillion (Eng.; septillion, Am.) (10^{24} !) atoms, about twice as many electrons, and 20,000 trillion (Eng.; quintillion, Am.) protons are packed together in *one cubic centimeter* of his "model."

In the case of Milne's "model," the interior of the sun must almost exclusively consist of photons — and have a temperature of a few

billion (Eng.; trillion, Am.) degrees!

It really looks as though science is inclining to the statements which we read in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*:

The Sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid*, nor yet a gaseous glow; but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the store-house of universal *life* and *motion*, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the Maha Yug.

However, this does not alter the fact that the modern theories about the structure of the sun and the conditions of its interior, based as they are on the knowledge of only *five* states of matter, *cannot* possibly be in line with the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. For, the latter assures us that the sun — or what we look upon as the sun — consists of matter in its 6th and 7th states.

The assumption of sun-physics that fantastically high temperatures prevail in the center of the sun is based on the attempts that are being made to construct a model consisting of matter in the states known to science, which must therefore be in agreement with what spectroscope and camera tell us. Such a model is very informative. Has not it proved possible to "explain" many observed properties by means of models that use no other states of matter but the gaseous, such as Emden's model? But, of course, there remain many questions which the imperfect model fails to answer. Moreover, the model will often lead to results — especially where the conditions in the interior of the sun are concerned, which are incapable of direct control — that can be obtained only by *calculation*. These lose their value or are thoroughly modified as soon as the model is improved upon.

If we bear all this in mind, we come to the conclusion that the great differences between the statements of the Ancient Wisdom and those of sun-physics *may* lie in the fact that science has so far known but five different degrees of matter, whereas the Ancient Wisdom assures us that there exist two others which are of paramount importance

especially with regard to the nature and the essence of the sun. Thus, even the statement that the sun is *not hot*, might be confirmed if science should discover the properties of *matter in its 6th and 7th states*, and should modify its notion of "temperature" somewhat more than it has already done, by introducing "radiation temperatures." (This latter subject will be further discussed in a subsequent article.)

For one who is not familiar with these two states of matter, it is as impossible to develop a perfectly correct theory about the structure of the sun, as to evolve a psychology of man on the strength of what anatomy teaches us about the human body — without reckoning with the fact that he is a *spiritual* being. Writes Dr. G. de Purucker in his *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*:

Suppose that we go a step farther and say that the visible sun which we see is matter in its 6th state of ethereality, and that what is behind that tremendously brilliant veil or reflexion is an atom, so to say, an infinitesimal part of mother-substance, matter in its 7th state. It is easy to follow this thought. The sun is a mass of force; as even the medieval philosophers said: "Brother, when a man tells you that he has seen the sun, laugh at him. He has not. The sun is invisible. The true sun, the origin and center of these high forces, is on higher planes. . . ."

Not a single modern sun-physicist will probably agree with this statement. That is impossible. So long as science has not come to the conclusion that the 6th and 7th states of matter exist quite as well as cathode rays and photons — which latter two states of matter have not been known to it so very long — science will be incapable of drawing up its theories otherwise than it does. It must go its own way in the investigation of what our senses perceive as "the sun."

This investigation, which advanced science step by step in the past, will continue to advance it in the future, and compel it to reconsider its theories, and, as it were, to transcend itself more and more. If science goes on in this way, it must one day meet with phenomena which will induce it to extend its conceptions of matter to new conditions;

conditions of which science is at present incapable of conceiving. Who knows but the problem of the origin of the solar energy, about which volumes have been written, but which has not yet been satisfactorily solved by modern atom-physics, may prove the sign-post pointing to the discovery of that unimaginably small nucleus of matter in its 7th state, which — says the Ancient Wisdom — is the real source of the stupendous phenomenon which we see as the visible sun! It is also possible that the study of those fantastic "eruptions," known as "protuberances," will cause science to take a new course, leading to the realization that other, quite different forces from radiation-pressure, are resident in the sun.

Anyhow, science has to pursue its own way. A way that often displays all the windings that characterize a path which leads to the top of a steep mountain — but yet a path that leads upwards.

However, the Ancient Wisdom teaches that there is yet *another* road — the road of spiritual perfection, which is and has been followed by all the great Teachers and Adepts of all times.

This road leads to a Knowledge that is not based on logical reasoning about experimental data, but on the mystical realization of the unbreakable Unity of the Universe. The Knower and the Object of Knowing are in reality One. This mystical cognition permits of *knowing* — not by intellectual comprehension, but by *experiencing*, by *becoming* — that which one strives to understand.

It is this mystical Knowledge that enables the Masters to make such positive statements about the real nature of the sun and the character of the natural phenomena. This Knowledge, which is essentially *experiencing the Unity of the whole Universe*, and therefore *Universal Love*, slumbers in each one of us. If our love is truly Universal — *Universal* — we shall obtain Universal Knowledge. However, it is unfortunately but very seldom that this Universal Love manifests itself in us, and our mystical Knowledge is therefore proportionately limited.

That is why the men of our times search and investigate along the road

of science — which we cannot as yet dispense with. As said the Apostle Paul,

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. — *1 Cor.*, xiii, 10, 12

One day, however, we too shall obtain Universal Knowledge, and that according as the God within us will be freed from the shackles which keep Him imprisoned in this illusory world of ignorance.

The Theosophical Forum

THE DWELLER OF THE THRESHOLD (1) — *Eusebio Urban*

Has such a being any existence? Has any one ever seen it? Are there many or several, and has it any sex?

Such are the questions asked by nearly all students who read theosophical books. Some of those who all their life believed in fairies in secret and in the old tales of giants, have proceeded to test the question by calling upon the horrid shade to appear and freeze their blood with the awful eyes that Bulwer Lytton has made so famous in his "Zanoni." But the Dweller is not to be wooed in such a way, and has not appeared at all, but by absolute silence leads the invoker to at last scout the idea altogether.

But this same inquirer then studies theosophical books with diligence, and enters after a time on the attempt to find out his own inner nature. All this while the Dweller has waited, and, indeed, we may say, in complete ignorance as yet of the neophyte's existence. When the study has proceeded far enough to wake up long dormant senses and tendencies, the Dweller begins to feel that such a person as this student is at work. Certain influences are then felt, but not always with clearness, and at first never ascribed to the agency of what had long ago been relegated to the lumber-room of exploded superstitions. The study goes still farther and yet farther, until the awful Thing has revealed itself; and when that happens, it is not a superstition nor is it disbelieved. It can then never be gotten rid of, but will stay as a constant menace until it is triumphed over *and left behind*.

When Glyndon was left by Mejnour in the old castle in Italy, he found two vases which he had received directions not to open. But disobeying these he took out the stoppers, and at once the room was filled with intoxication, and soon the awful, loathsome creature appeared whose blazing eyes shone with malignant glare and penetrated to Glyndon's soul with a rush of horror such as he had never known.

In this story Lytton desired to show that the opening of the vases is like the approach of an enquirer to the secret recesses of his own nature. He opens the receptacles, and at first is full of joy and a sort of intoxication due to the new solutions offered for every problem in life and to the dimly seen vistas of power and advancement that open before him. If the vases *are kept open long enough*, the Dweller of the Threshold surely appears, and no man is exempt from the sight. Goodness is not sufficient to prevent its appearance, because even the good man who finds a muddy place in the way to his destination must of necessity pass through it to reach the end.

We must ask next, *WHAT* is the Dweller? It is the combined evil influence that is the result of the wicked thoughts and acts of the age in which any one may live, and it assumes to each student a definite shape at each appearance, being always either of one sort or changing each time. So that with one it may be as Bulwer Lytton pictured it, or with another only a dread horror, or even of any other sort of shape. It is specialized for each student and given its form by the tendencies and natural physical and psychical combinations that belong to his family and nation.

Where, then, does it dwell? is the very natural inquiry which will follow. It dwells in its own plane, and that may be understood in this manner.

Around each person are planes or zones, beginning with spirit and running down to gross matter. These zones extend, within their lateral boundaries, all around the being. That is to say, if we figure ourselves as being in the centre of a sphere, we will find that there is no way of escaping or skipping any one zone, because it extends in every direction until we pass its lateral boundary.

When the student has at last gotten hold of a real aspiration and some glimmer of the blazing goal of truth where Masters stand, and has also aroused the determination to know and to be, the whole bent of his nature, day and night, is to reach out beyond the limitations that hitherto had fettered his soul. No sooner he begin thus to step a little

forward, than he reaches the zone just beyond mere bodily and mental sensations. At first the minor dwellers of the threshold are aroused, and they in temptation, in bewilderment, in doubt or confusion, assail him. He only feels the effect, for they do not reveal themselves as shapes. But persistence in the work takes the inner man farther along, and with that progress comes a realization to the outer mind of the experiences met, until at last he has waked up the whole force of the evil power that naturally is arrayed against the good end he has set before him. Then the Dweller takes what form it may. That it does take some definite shape or impress itself with palpable horror is a fact testified to by many students.

One of these related to me that he saw it as an enormous slug with evil eyes whose malignancy could not be described. As he retreated — that is, grew fearful —, it seemed joyful and portentous, and when retreat was complete it was not. Then he fell further back in thought and action, having occasionally moments of determination to retrieve his lost ground. Whenever these came to him, the dreadful slug again appeared, only to leave him when he had given up again his aspirations. And he knew that he was only making the fight, if ever he should take it up again, all the harder.

Another says that he has seen the Dweller concentrated in the apparent form of a dark and sinister-looking man, whose slightest motions, whose merest glance, expressed the intention and ability to destroy the student's reason, and only the strongest effort of will and faith could dispel the evil influence. And the same student at other times has felt it as a vague, yet terrible, horror that seemed to enwrap him in its folds. Before this he has retreated for the time to prepare himself by strong self-study to be pure and brave for the next attack.

These things are not the same as the temptations of Saint Anthony. In his case he seems to have induced an hysterical erotic condition, in which the unvanquished secret thoughts of his own heart found visible appearance. The Dweller of the Threshold is not the product of the brain, but is an influence found in a plane that is extraneous to the

student, but in which his success or failure will be due to his own purity. It is not a thing to be dreaded by mere dilettante theosophists, and no earnest one who feels himself absolutely called to work persistently to the highest planes of development for the good of humanity, and not for his own, need fear aught that heaven or hell holds.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. III, 281-4, December, 1888. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE GREATNESS OF THE SMALL — *H. T. Edge*

I am watching an airplane gliding through the sky. It is very big, yet it is too far off for me to see what makes it move. But I know that the motive power and the skill of movement are all due to a man who must be sitting there, though at the distance he is reduced to such a speck that I cannot see him. Very well; the man moves the plane; but now what moves the man? It is his brain, comes the answer; and that brain is smaller than the man himself. And the power of the brain lies hid in some minute cerebral center, and the power of that center again lies hid in the ultra-microscopic particles that compose it. The smaller a thing is, the more potent it is. It is always the speck that does it, the atom lies at the root of matter, and the electron lies at the root of the atom. The potency of a medicine is all in an infinitesimal proportion of some one ingredient; all the rest is merely padding, vehicle. It is Gideon's band. For the instruction of those who do not know, and the reminding of those who have forgotten, we may recall that Gideon was to fight the Midianites. He had 32,000 men, but the Lord said this was too many; and the number was successively reduced to 300, and the victory thereby secured. Is there not a saying of Lao-Tse that the wise man deals with things when they are small? The point, the atom, is the basis of anything, and is the right handle by which to lay hold of it. In our efforts at reform we labor on details, leaving untouched the principles, like one who cuts off weeds instead of uprooting them. But we are told to seek the root of evil in ourself and tear it out. Who knows but any day he may discover in himself some error of principle, and by correcting it transform his whole life?

THE RELATION OF THE FINITE AND THE INFINITE (1) — *G. de Purucker*

Question: What is the relation between the infinite mind and the finite mind according to Theosophy? The trouble is if you say the finite mind is a part of the infinite mind, you must also ascribe to the infinite mind the vices of the finite. But if you say it is not a part of the infinite mind, then the infinite cannot be infinite.

Answer: The gentleman has asked a question which has been debated in all ages, among all races of men. It is the same problem which has vexed and harassed theologians, for it is obvious from the standpoint of theology, if God is infinite, and is nevertheless a creator, then everything that infinity creates must be infinite; but we see ourselves surrounded by an infinitude of finite things. How comes this? This is the same problem in theology that you, my dear sir, have spoken of as existing in philosophy. Now I don't know anything that can answer this question except the god-wisdom which today we call Theosophy, and you will understand it is not so easy to answer, because one must be trained in esoteric thought before complete conviction comes of the full adequacy of the answer. Yet I will try to state the facts in simple language.

I have always looked upon the idea that the infinite is an actor as utterly wrong, for infinitude cannot be an actor, because an actor is a limited entity. Infinitude does not act as a being, for a being is a limited entity. We can only say therefore that infinity is action per se, life per se, not *a* life; that is limitation, that is finity. You take me as a man, you as a man: a celestial body like the sun or a planet or a beast, a plant, what not, any limited entity: this limited entity, a finite being, in its physical expression lives and moves and has its existence in infinitude; it cannot be outside of it because infinitude has no frontiers, no boundaries, and no beyond. Therefore, that finite entity somewhere, somehow, in some part of it, has its roots in infinity, infinity washes it through, so to speak, as the sea washes through all that its waves

encompass, although of course infinity is a frontierless sea, so to speak.

Thus I, as a man, have my roots in the Divine, that Divine surrounds me everywhere, and permeates me throughout, in all my parts, in all my being. I cannot ever leave it. Therefore am I a child of it. Yet here am I, a man, in a weak, small, limited, physical body, with a weak, small, physical, limited brain as compared with the gods, a weak, small life, with a heart as we say, an ethical instinct, and what not. Yet I am a man. I have divine thoughts, I feel my unity with all that is. How? Why? Oh, that is the problem.

I will now hint at what esoteric Theosophy says on this point. There is an infinity of finites, a strange paradox. In other words, these entities or beings which we call finite are infinite in number. I wonder if you catch that point. Thus the atoms of boundless space are bound by no frontiers, each one is a finite entity, and yet they exist in infinite numbers. We can conceive no end because if our thought once says, there infinity ends, this is a limitation of the Infinitude which has produced finites here, and we say, with perfect justice, why should, how could, infinity limit itself in any way? This thought is repellant, we cannot accept it. It is the infinite whispering of Infinitude within me which enables my consciousness to catch this thread of understanding; this limited brain finds difficulty in holding within its small bounds an infinite idea. But I get an intuition, something within whispers, that is so. That is the Infinitude breathing through me, washing through me.

Thus, there is an infinitude of finite entities, gathered together in distinct aggregated masses, whatever they may be: men, planets, suns, stars, stones, or what not — call them atoms, because all these things are formed of atoms, or things smaller than atoms like electrons and protons, etc., etc. Indeed, all cosmic phenomena in the great or in the small follow the same general cosmic rule or pattern; and these are the phenomena of the universe as contrasted with the hid noumena or secret causes.

Now, we see thus that Occidental philosophy has made a capital mistake, a capital error, in its philosophical researches in saying that

infinity is around us, but that the finite is *radically* or *essentially* different from it. Strange paradox! Just because the finities are limitless, infinite numerically, therefore collectively as an infinitude they are a part of Infinitude, indeed, in a sense the garments of Infinity. They are it. In other words, we must change our outlook on the universe before we can understand why the infinite breathes in time as it does, in what we men call boundless space. There is a manner in which even a human thought is infinite because it is one of an infinite number of thoughts, energies, living in the heart of nature, and never able to leave infinitude.

If you catch this very subtil, difficult thought, you will have precisely what the esoteric philosophy teaches, as also, for instance, the Vedanta, the Adwaita-Vedanta of India. What does it as well as the sage of the Vedas teach its disciples? This: *Tat twam asi*. That, the Boundless, thou art. Because if That, thou, are different, then the thou is outside infinity, which is absurd, and infinity immediately becomes finite because there is something beyond it, which means that it is bounded, therefore limited, therefore non-infinite. Therefore that limited entity, that finity in this wondrous way is washed through with infinity, because in its heart, in its essence, it is of the substance of infinity.

Now turning to theology, this is just the reason why we Theosophists cannot accept Christian theology, although we accept the teachings of the Avatara Jesus. We look upon him as one of the greatest of Theosophists; but the theology of Christianity was built up by smaller men later in time who had lost the secret of the teachings of their great Master. And when Christian theology says that God is a creator, that "He" created the world out of nothing at a certain time in infinity, we say that is impossible, that limits "God." Infinity is no creator, it is not a maker, not a demiurge, to use the philosophical term, demiourgos of the Greeks; just as the sage of the Vedas, as the Adwaita-Vedanta of India and as the Esoteric Philosophy say, it is THAT. We give to it no concrete name, for such a name implies limitation. We simply say it is nameless, THAT. "THAT" is not a title, it is not a name; it is just an attempt of the human mind not to label Infinity, or to give it a name, or

to put a ticket on it, but just to use this term *That* as a means of reference in conversation.

And lastly, the Esoteric Philosophy teaches therefore, following these lines of subtil thinking, that even what we call the physical universe is infinite because composed of an infinite number of units, finities, strange paradox! And it is so from eternity — never had a beginning, never will have an ending. Because infinity has no beginning, has no ending. Infinity does not create and produce these finities. Therefore they are always from infinite past to infinite future, and are parts of Infinitude. Strange philosophical paradox. Marvelous intuitions of the archaic sages!

I sometimes think that while it is noble of us to investigate these recondite and difficult thoughts, because they raise us to higher levels of thinking and enlarge our minds, I sometimes think that I must agree with the ancient sage who said that the answer, the realest answer, the most real answer, to such problems is found in the Silence. Oh, how true that is. It is words that mislead us, words which entangle us and lead our thoughts astray. And yet we must use words to communicate with each other. If this gentleman is a professor or teacher in one of the Universities I sympathize with him, because I know the difficulty he has in giving thought so subtil sometimes to other minds. And yet he does so, teachers do so, because they know there is something in the learners, in the pupils, which can grasp at least an intuition of reality.

Friends, I trust you will forgive me if I speak with perfect frankness about your branch of teaching. I sometimes think that Western philosophy has lived under great disadvantages. It has suffered under a heavy handicap, and it is this, that Western philosophical thought has not had a real opportunity to develop and free itself from theological dogmatism. Of course, I know this perhaps is a ticklish subject to touch upon, but yet it is one of outstanding importance for the freedom of human thought. Philosophy in the Orient has not been laboring for thousands of years under this handicap. The thoughts of Oriental philosophers and of the archaic Mystery Schools have had the freedom

to grow and to develop; and I will now show you just what I mean.

In the Esoteric wisdom, as likewise in the philosophical and religious thought of the Orient — a direct descendant and child of Occultism, of Theosophy — the Infinite or Boundless or That is not good, nor is it bad. These are human limitations, and can apply only by contrasts to limited beings. It is a man or an angel or a god or a deva who is good or bad. A spirit of Good and a spirit of Evil? This is a blind intuition which Christian theology has had. What actually is, is that in the bosom of Infinity, out of it as from an eternal womb, come pouring forth hierarchies of lives, of monads as Leibniz would say, all spiritual beings in various grades and degrees of what we today call evolutionary unfoldment; so that for instance we have the highest of the highest of the highest gods, and beneath them the highest of the highest, and beneath them the highest, and then the gods, and then the Dhyani-Chohans, and then beings below them, until we reach us men, and then beings below us men on other ranges of hierarchies of entities, like the beasts and the plants and the elementals, all marching upward on their evolutionary way, higher and higher. Indeed, it is in this world in which we live that we find good and evil, and we see how beautiful good is, for it is harmony and love and peace and progress and development, evolution, expanding, in growth. And we likewise see what evil is, restriction, constriction, suffering, pain, inadequacies, ignorance, in other words imperfection in development often involving retrogressions or going downwards towards larger imperfections, until the lesson is learned by habit, and the entity begins the upward march. This is what the evil man does. He is going downwards and backwards for the time being, for the duration of his evil doing. So it is in the manifested things of the universe that we find beautiful good and the best, and horrid evil and the worst. This entire series of thoughts involving the productions of the hosts of hierarchies of finite beings and things was called in ancient philosophy the doctrine of Emanations, which Christian theology has condemned and scorned and mocked at, and which Western philosophy has never had a chance to understand because its teachers have been crippled. They have not

been truly free, for they have not had the chance that the philosophers of the Orient have. I know. I have been through it.

So we cannot say that the Infinite is good, because that is a limited term belonging solely to beings of emanated hierarchies; and when in the lower grades of these, we find them with less of the divine light. Then, as the Gnostics said — one School of ancient philosophy in early Christian times — they live in darkness, they are limited, they cannot see clearly, and that is evil, what we call evil, limitation.

So it is all wrong to talk about Infinitude as being good, because if Infinitude is good, how are we going to explain evil in the world? And there is lots of it! No, good and evil belong to the vast range of hierarchies existing in Infinity, coming forth into manifestation in one great Life-wave in some part of the Universe, living their times, advancing and progressing; and when they have reached the culmination or highest point of their growth in that time-period, then returning into the bosom of the Divine for rest, at some future time to come forth again on higher planes, in loftier spheres: a process that we see in Nature all around us, like the tree coming forth in the spring, bringing forth its leaves and shedding them in the autumn; just as we see men, for instance, re embody, part in the divine world and part in the physical, life after life, up and down the swing of the pendulum which is Nature's law. We see it around us. There is the great book which we should study: Nature, the things that are. And when I say Nature, I don't mean physical nature alone, but all nature in the esoteric sense, in the theosophical sense, the nature of the divine, the nature of the spiritual, the nature of the intellectual worlds, the nature of the physical worlds, the nature of the worlds beneath the physical. Who can, who dare, set bounds to the life in Infinity and of it?

I think in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, in regard to this question, that the esoteric philosophy, more than anything else I know, fills the heart with reverence, reverence for truth.

The gist of the answer to the question asked is, therefore, the following: Every unit of the limitless number of finite beings, or of things living in

and of infinitude, every such unit, I say, is in its highest, in its essence or fundamental substance, an identity with the substance of Infinitude; but these points of infinite substance or monadic centers in their several expressions as cosmic phenomena are, or become, or appear, or show themselves forth, as the finite units spoken of in the question. Thus, every unit is in its essential substance of the very stuff of Infinity, but all in their manifestations or emanated expressions are, or become, the discrete or "separated" units in their countless armies or hierarchies.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The above question was asked of the Leader by a Professor of Philosophy at the University of _____, Sweden, at a public meeting held at Malmo, Sweden, September 15, 1937, and answered then by G. de P.

[\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Relationship of Chela and Guru

Miss Olive Hicks — My question is encouraged by Dr. Barker's lecture this morning, and I would like to ask this: I have understood from Mr. Flach's lecture that the Guru takes on himself the karma of the chela. Why and how is this possible; and if possible, is this not taking away the chela's free will and karma; and so if the chela is deprived of his karma would it not make his karma still harder?

A. Trevor Barker — This question of the Guru's being said to take upon himself the karma of his pupil can possibly give rise to a wrong conception. I believe the true understanding of this point is simply this, that when a Teacher begins to transfer to the consciousness of the pupil some of the occult truths of Nature, he becomes responsible if the pupil should make a wrong use of that knowledge to his own detriment and to the detriment of humanity in general. It is in that sense that a Teacher takes upon himself a very heavy responsibility indeed, and that is why such rigorous testing and training is demanded before it is thought safe for the Mahatma to make the close bonds between pupil and Teacher. It is not that he takes upon himself all the ordinary karma of the pupil; but on the contrary, if you look in *The Mahatma Letters*, (1) it says that if we all had scavengers to go behind us and clear up the ill effects of our rashness or presumption, the path of chelaship would be altogether too easy. They only help their chelas when the chelas are entirely innocent of the causes which landed them into difficulty. If by any chance any of us get into the situation where we could misuse knowledge that had been transferred to us, then we also have a very heavy responsibility and we don't lose any of that responsibility.

Dr. Siren — It seems to me that the question of gurus and chelas also may be considered as a relative one; sometimes the chelas may have to act as teachers, i. e. gurus, though not of the same degree as the further

developed gurus. You who are speaking here are no doubt "gurus" for a number of less instructed people. It all depends on how you use the word "guru." You are at least teaching; you are opening a certain path for them, and you are giving them quite definite instructions regarding that path. Of course it is a preparatory stage; but nevertheless it is a stage on the path. I should think that you are, consciously or unconsciously, in the position of gurus in so far as you are awakening the higher side of these people's individual natures; a view that may throw some light on the relation between teachers and pupils. If the higher side of your nature is awakened, you will sooner or later become a kind of guru. It seems from one point of view a question of using words properly, and from another point of view a question of gradual evolution. I don't know whether Mr. Barker or anyone else would care, to go into it more in detail. My main contention would thus be, that as soon as the higher part, the spiritual or leading part, in the nature of an individual is awakened or aroused to conscious activity by the influence of another being, that other being is in the position of a guru in relation to his follower. Is that right?

A. T. Barker — I think that this is a rather thorny subject in some ways, because as Dr. Siren has very truly pointed out, a great deal depends on how you use this word "guru." There is one sense in which I can agree with him very easily, and that is the sense in which Mr. Judge described the Guruparampara-chain, that chain which even includes our school-teachers, who in this sense are part of the golden chain of teachers from whom we receive something. Now, if you want to understand it in that way, then anybody from whom you learn anything is in a position of a guru, the idea being that we should always treat such teachers with respect, so that we may learn from them in the best way. But I think I heard the statement (and the questioner was looking rather hard at me!) that anybody who is engaged in Theosophical work and who perhaps may be only the chairman of a study-class, is in the relationship of a guru. Well, now, except in the case that has just been mentioned, the Guruparampara-chain, there seems to me to be danger in this idea. If we people who are at best what H. P. B. called pupil-

teachers, those having no right to dogmatize, adopt the role of guru, then many troubles can arise in the Theosophical Movement. There are a lot of these gurus loose in the world. I think it should be clearly understood that Theosophical lecturers, whether National Presidents or otherwise, are simply transmitters of information to the best of their spiritual ability; but they do not take the position of guru. That position is reserved, and very properly so, to the Leader of the Society who takes upon himself the role of Teacher, and declares that he has been authorized to teach. The rest of us who are not so authorized, but in whom the spiritual light has penetrated to some extent the lower darkness, can also help in our own spheres and become transmitters of light to others. But there is a disease called "guru-fever," and it is a very difficult complaint to cure.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 310. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THIS PERSONALITY — *Arthur A. Beale*

This personality of ours — this orphan, this lonely pilgrim of the desert, this transient tramp of the ocean of life, the hope and despair of sages, the nursling of the gods, this prodigal of high mind, this tragedy which by courtesy we call a man — let us look to it. O mystery of mysteries, that comes like a meteor from the spaces of Space, flickers with a turmoil of feckless lights and shades, stirring up strife with countless flashes and clashes of its own irresponsible will for one small moment of Eternity which it calls its life, hoping eternally but daring sporadically, dreaming of conquests and glories yet feeling its impotence to accomplish, then too often despairing of all things it passes out, breaks on the rocks and shatters into ten million sparks and is gone!

What of it? Is this all? Is there no other side? Some pessimists say, No! "Like a snowflake on the river, a moment here, then gone for ever!" And to all appearances so it would seem. If this were all, however, then the Cosmos and especially that part which concerns us is a horrible joke; but if it is a joke then there must be a joker, and he is one who lacks judgment, compassion, or meaning.

On to this arena, however, come visions. These countless personalities feel internal urges, pictures of mighty potentialities, urges to do, to accomplish, to evolve, to create, to help, to prosper, even to sacrifice for others; a response to beauty, even an appreciation of wisdom, an innate consciousness of some sort of immortality, as evidenced in recent discoveries by the respect of the earliest remnants of prehistoric man for the disposal of the dead.

Whence comes to the personality, which is per se of the earth earthy and mortal and which has no evidence of immortality, whence comes this mystic touch, this almost pathetic craving for knowledge, for some certainty of capacities, potentialities and powers? There is but one

logical issue, namely, an illumination from some Source outside our personalities. This Source is flamingly conscious of immortality, indeed lives and has its being in immortality, and which, we affirm, is intimately related to our personalities.

Part of the tragedy of life — which has been described as a Vale of Tears — is, that we as personalities are largely mortal, yet have a modicum of immortal visions and aspirations: we are mostly conscious of our insatiable appetites for gratification of the senses of the body, and yet we have dreams of glory just outside our reach. Thus we live, being capable of all sorts of mean tricks on one another, of insinuations, of unjust accusations, of vaunted boasts of our own superiority, of competitions in good appearances and intellectual superiority, of converting our own superior aspirations into cunning traps which lead to graft; furthermore downing our competitors even to obliterating their existence if necessary should they stand in the way of our objectives.

Such then is one vision of the world of personalities in which we live, a sort of pandemonium which is periodically pulled up when one of the community "passes out" and we who are left are reminded that this too is our destiny in the fulness of time.

A collective expression of the evil side of personality is a nation of patriots run by megalomaniacs. Again we see the weary cycle of selfish ambitions, grandiose expressions of strength and superiority, intoxicated aspirations of imaginary gains, in fact an exhibition of running amuck, which in an individual would be met by incarceration, if possible, or put to death if necessary for general protection. These are all pictures of the general attitude or trend of personality when left to itself: vanity, self-glorification, egotism, greed, ambition, callousness, self-gratification, self-indulgence, self-pity, and plenty of other facets more or less disgraceful to a finer nature, and if indulged in inordinately leading either to insanity or destruction.

Yet these are the assets which form the raw material from which we have to weave the fine human attributes which constitute human

beings at their best. They are in fact the evolved sub-human or animal desires and propensities, sharpened by the human intellect, without the refining and controlling psychology of spiritual egoic illumination, in fact the incipient stage of what Theosophists call the Kama-Manas, or the lower mind.

Redemption comes when, by the action of free will and the pressure of karmic discomfort, the shallow satisfaction of such antics leads to the revolt so graphically described in the biblical parable of the prodigal son. In that moment the conscience awakes; then arise visions of another life and the hope of escape. From then on comes the intermittent zig-zag progress — of efforts upwards and slumps backward: man becomes two-minded, he sees the vision but he fails to capture it, and so the struggle persists. He develops the two selves, the redeemer and the sinner, the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde: between stands the human ego, Janus-faced. St. Paul described this stage when he cried:

For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. — *Rom.*, vii, 15

And he goes on to say that it is not he that wishes to do these evil things "but sin that dwelleth in me." "Who shall deliver me?"

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord, so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. — *Rom.*, vii, 25

To put these ideas into Theosophical language: the personality left to itself is impotent to accomplish any beneficent purpose without the help of the Christ-influence. What is this Christ-influence, or Christos, but our own spiritual mind or Higher Self?

Thus we realize the two minds in man: one seeking only the personal gratification of appetites and things of the body, which is its vehicle; the other not so concerned, giving us inspirations of beauty, beneficence, and benevolence, urging us to right action and harmony with Nature's holy laws, to aspirations of peace and concord, to visions

of high ideals. The one is the producer of diseases; the other is the great physician.

So our personalities are introduced to our spiritual father, who called us into existence, arranged for our incarnation, gave us birth by breathing into us the breath of his own life, in extreme sacrifice for us. We are his son: by our action we bless and enrich him or give him untold sorrow and distress; it is to us that he has to look for experiences and evolution, for we are the vehicle for contacting matter. This matter can itself be redeemed and raised, or condemned to pain and retrogression, bearing upon its surface the marks or impressions of our misdeeds, transgressions, or misjudgments.

This is part of the tragedy of life, for having endowed us with enough of itself to justify our right to choice — in the exhibition of our free will — the "father ego" has to stand by and watch our antics and our efforts to achieve, ever ready to help if we ask. But the choice is ours, and through our conscience it impels, but never compels.

So through our mind we waver and seek help alternately: periodically from time to time we indulge our corporal appetites till we feel the surfeit *ad nauseam* and then revolt against our ways. Again we experience that thrill of finer endeavor, and realize that the father is always there, waiting, waiting, for the call to help; but the call must come from us as personalities. The prodigal returns, with the joy and peace experienced, again to fall away into the old transgressions; until we gain the power and strength to resist the old temptations of the flesh, urged on by the "pricks" of karmic retributions and the discomfort of ignoring the urges and warnings that always come at critical moments of temptations, or thereabouts.

So if we rise we can shorten the deflections, make the resolutions stronger, till the blessed time comes when we no longer fall away, feeling only the urge to noble deeds, and no longer go back: then the rejoicing "over one sinner that repenteth"! This does not happen in a day, or perchance a lifetime, but necessitates many. Yet in the fulness of time the personality can say, "I and my father are one." In that glad

time the personality has become an individuality, a new spiritual mind:
an Arhan is born.

Such is man's destiny if all goes well, but oh the pitfalls that occur! Yet
we may "rise on stepping-stones of our dead selves to higher things." As
Tennyson says:

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Some day the lights will be reabsorbed!

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

Jesus As a Man (1)

We leave it to every impartial mind to judge whether Jesus is not more honoured by the Theosophists, who see in him, or the ideal he embodies, a perfect adept (the highest of his epoch), a mortal being far above uninitiated humanity, than he is by the Christians who have created out of him an imperfect solar-god, a saviour and Avatar, no better, and in more than one detail lower, than some of the Avatars who preceded him. No Theosophist, of those who ever gave a thought to Christianity — for our "heathen" members, of course, do not care one snap of their finger whether Christ and Paul lived or not — ever denied the existence of the Apostle who is an historical personage. Some of us, a few learned Christian mystics among our British Theosophists included, deny but the *Gospel* Jesus — who is *not* an historical personage — "Zero" and *padris* notwithstanding, — but believe in an *ideal* Christ. Others are inclined to see the real Jesus in the adept mentioned in the oldest Talmudic as well as some Christian books, and known as Jeshu Ben Panthera. — *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, IV, 193 (2)

In days of old the "mediators" of humanity were men like Christna, Gautama Buddha, Jesus, Paul, Apollonius of Tyana, Plotinus, Porphyry, and the like of them. They were Adepts, Philosophers — men who, by struggling their whole lives in purity, study, and self-sacrifice, through trials, privations and self-discipline, attained divine illumination and seemingly superhuman powers. — *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, I, 184

"The air is full of souls," states Philo, "*they descend to be tied to mortal bodies, being desirous to live in them.*" (*De Gigant.*, 222 C; *De Somnus*, p. 455).

Which shows that the Essenes believed in re-birth and many

reincarnations on Earth, as Jesus himself did, a fact we can prove from the New Testament itself. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 111

The motive of Jesus was evidently like that of Gautama-Buddha, to benefit humanity at large by producing a religious reform which should give it a religion of pure ethics; the true knowledge of God and nature having remained until then solely in the hands of the esoteric sects, and their adepts. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 133

All this points undeniably to the fact, that except a handful of self-styled Christians who subsequently won the day, all the civilized portion of the Pagans who knew of Jesus honored him as a philosopher, an *adept* whom they placed on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius. Whence such a veneration on their part for a man, were he simply, as represented by the Synoptics, a poor, unknown Jewish carpenter from Nazareth? As an incarnated God there is no single record of him on this earth capable of withstanding the critical examination of science; as one of the greatest reformers, an inveterate enemy of every theological dogmatism, a persecutor of bigotry, a teacher of one of the most sublime codes of ethics, Jesus is one of the grandest and most clearly-defined figures on the panorama of human history. His age may, with every day, be receding farther and farther back into the gloomy and hazy mists of the past; and his theology — based on human fancy and supported by untenable dogmas may, nay, must with every day lose more of its unmerited prestige; alone the grand figure of the philosopher and moral reformer instead of growing paler will become with every century more pronounced and more clearly defined. It will reign supreme and universal only on that day when the whole of humanity recognizes but one father — the UNKNOWN ONE above — and one brother — the whole of mankind below. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 150-1

Alas, alas! How little has the divine seed, scattered broadcast by the hand of the meek Judean philosopher, thrived or brought forth fruit. He, who himself had shunned hypocrisy, warned against public prayer, showing such contempt for any useless exhibition of the same, could he

but cast his sorrowful glance on the earth, from the regions of eternal bliss, would see that this seed fell neither on sterile rock nor by the way-side. Nay, it took deep root in the most prolific soil; one enriched even to plethora with lies and human gore! — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 303

All this did Siddhartha six centuries before another reformer, as noble and as loving, though less favored by opportunity, in another land. If both, aware of the great danger of furnishing an uncultivated populace with the double-edged weapon of *knowledge which gives power*, left the innermost corner of the sanctuary in the profoundest shade, who, that is acquainted with human nature, can blame them for it? But while one was actuated by prudence, the other was forced into such a course. Gautama left the esoteric and most dangerous portion of the "secret knowledge" untouched, and lived to the ripe old age of eighty, with the certainty of having taught the essential truths, and having converted to them one-third of the world; Jesus promised his disciples the knowledge which confers upon man the power of *producing far greater miracles than he ever did himself*, and he died, leaving but a few faithful men, only half way to knowledge, to struggle with the world to which they could impart but what they *half-knew* themselves. Later their followers disfigured truth still more than they themselves had done. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 319

While the mythical birth and life of Jesus are a faithful copy of those of the Brahmanical Christna, his historical character of a religious reformer in Palestine is the true type of Buddha in India. In more than one respect their great resemblance in philanthropic and spiritual aspirations, as well as external circumstances is truly striking. Though the son of a king, while Jesus was but a carpenter, Buddha was not of the high Brahmanical caste by birth. Like Jesus, he felt dissatisfied with the dogmatic spirit of the religion of his country, the intolerance and hypocrisy of the priesthood, their outward show of devotion, and their useless ceremonials and prayers. As Buddha broke violently through the traditional laws and rules of the Brahmans, so did Jesus declare war against the Pharisees, and the proud Sadducees. What the Nazarene did as a consequence of his humble birth and position,

Buddha did as a voluntary penance. He travelled about as a beggar; and — again like Jesus — later in life he sought by preference the companionship of publicans and sinners. Each aimed at a social as well as a religious reform; and giving a death-blow to the old religions of his countries, each became the founder of a new one. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 339

The "Life of Jesus" by Strauss, which Renan calls "*un livre, commode, exact, spirituel et consciencieux*" (a handy, exact, witty and conscientious book), rude and iconoclastic as it is, is nevertheless in many ways preferable to the "Vie de Jesus," of the French author. Laying aside the intrinsic and historical value of the two works — with which we have nothing to do, we now simply point to Renan's distorted outline-sketch of Jesus. We cannot think what led Renan into such an erroneous delineation of character. Few of those who, while rejecting the divinity of the Nazarene prophet, still believe that he is no myth, can read the work without experiencing an uneasy, and even angry feeling at such a psychological mutilation. He makes of Jesus a sort of sentimental ninny, a theatrical simpleton, enamored of his own poetical divagations and speeches, wanting every one to adore him, and finally caught in the snares of his enemies. Such was not Jesus, the Jewish philanthropist, the adept and mystic of a school now forgotten by the Christians and the Church — if it ever was known to her; the hero, who preferred even to risk death, rather than withhold some truths which he believed would benefit humanity. We prefer Strauss who openly names him an impostor and a pretender, occasionally calling in doubt his very existence; but who at least spares him that ridiculous color of sentimentalism in which Renan paints him. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 340-1 (Footnote)

Like Buddha and Jesus, Apollonius was the uncompromising enemy of all outward show of piety, all display of useless religious ceremonies and hypocrisy. If, like the Christian Saviour, the sage of Tyana had by preference sought the companionship of the poor and humble; and if instead of dying comfortably, at over one hundred years of age, he had been a voluntary martyr, proclaiming divine Truth from a cross, his

blood might have proved as efficacious for the subsequent dissemination of spiritual doctrines as that of the Christian Messiah. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 341-2

Let it not be imagined that we bring this reproach to any who revere Jesus as God. Whatever the faith, if the worshipper be but sincere, it should be respected in his presence. If we do not accept Jesus as God, we revere *him as a man*. Such a feeling honors him more than if we were to attribute to him the powers and personality of the Supreme, and credit him at the same time with having played a useless comedy with mankind, as, after all, his mission proves scarcely less than a complete failure; 2,000 years have passed, and Christians do not reckon one-fifth part of the population of the globe, nor is Christianity likely to progress any better in the future. No, we aim but at strict justice, leaving all personality aside. We question those who, adoring neither Jesus, Pythagoras, nor Apollonius, yet recite the idle gossip of their contemporaries; those who in their books either maintain a prudent silence, or speak of "our Saviour" and "our Lord," as though they believed any more in the made-up theological Christ, than in the fabulous Fo of China. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 530

There is quite enough in the four gospels to show what was the secret and most fervent hope of Jesus; the hope in which he began to teach, and in which he died. In his immense and unselfish love for humanity, he considers it unjust to deprive the many of the results of the knowledge acquired by the few. This result he accordingly preaches — the unity of a spiritual God, whose temple is within each of us, and in whom we live as He lives in us — in spirit. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 561

Apollonius, a contemporary of Jesus of Nazareth, was, like him, an enthusiastic founder of a new spiritual school. Perhaps less metaphysical and more practical than Jesus, less tender and perfect in his nature, he nevertheless inculcated the same quintessence of spirituality, and the same high moral truths. His great mistake was to confine them too closely to the higher classes of society. While to the poor and the humble Jesus preached "Peace on earth and good will to

men," Apollonius was the friend of kings, and moved with the aristocracy. He was born among the latter," and himself a man of wealth, while the "Son of man," representing the people, "had not where to lay his head;" nevertheless, the two "miracle-workers" exhibited striking similarity of purpose. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 341

FOOTNOTES:

1. The entire article, entitled *A Word with the Theosophists*, makes very interesting reading and goes into detail concerning the historical evidence of the life of Jesus. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. From these extracts from the writings of the main founder of the Theosophical Society, the reader will gather what is the Theosophical attitude towards the great Christian Teacher *as a man*, and the fact of his actual existence. Note particularly the distinction between Jesus as a man, and the Christ- or Christos-spirit in every man. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE CAUSES OF UNHAPPINESS AND THE MEANS OF HAPPINESS — *Pundit L. Ram Sahijpal*

IV

Why does Spirit suffer pain? Because it has body in which it lives. And body it must have or else it cannot manifest itself and least could it stand naked, as it were, without a cover in the wan and pallid, hence inappropriate, environments of our earth. Who gave it body? and why should it suffer from it? Body is its own Creation, though Mother Earth helped it in creating it; and it must suffer from it because it, the body, is its (Spirit's) concreted "Karman": Spirit has an inherent urge to self-express itself. Its urge sets up activity within it. The latter, propelled by the urge sends forth out of itself a bit of spiritual substance, or an emanation of a certain amount of spiritual force or energy. No sooner does the emanation issue forth than the elementals surrounding it make its vehicle and it develops to be a thought. The swabhava of the spiritual self colors it and directs it to follow a certain line of action. It, the emanated thought, acts upon the surrounding environments to which its swabhava leads it, and the environments react upon it. During this interaction there is a transference of substances between the aggressing and the aggressed parties, and in consequence the fabric of the former, the thought-self, is more or less coarsened in exact accordance with the nature of its action. Such actions and reactions continue resulting each time in a change and a thicker materialization of the thought-substance, and in time, the thought-self, that was spiritual or ethereal matter at the time of its coming into being, gets concreted, develops as its vehicle a life-atom, and then atoms which are employed in building and strengthening and concreting the body of their spiritual parent. These atoms are Spirit's concreted "Karman" because the latter is their parent, their Creator. These atoms are produced by the Spirit all the time. A certain number of them make one molecule and a certain number of molecules make one cell. Our

teachers of science tell us that twenty-six trillions of cells make one human body. Thus it is, and it ought to be quite clear from the above that the body, in which Spirit lives, is its own creation; and that it must suffer from it because it is entirely Spirit's own concreated "Karman."

Is Karma then the real cause of man's sufferings? Not quite so, because there would have been no karma had there been no desire to act. Is desire the ultimate cause of pains then? Not quite so, because there would have been no desire, as it is, but for "Swabhavic Egotism," self-exaltation. The latter, the Swabhavic Egotism, the element of self-importance, the Selfness, is due to the want of right discrimination, avidya, the thought and feeling of "I am I" instead of "I am." Hence the latter, "avidya," is the cause of all the sufferings. But because it is rooted in some other cause which is the ultimate one, it may be called the sub-main cause of Man's sufferings. This sub-main cause is planted in the Spiritual Self's urge to self-expression or self-manifestation necessary to learn more and to climb higher on the endless ladder of "Spirit's Eternal Life." Had there been nothing more for the Spirit to learn, it would have no longer the urge to self-express Itself, because its urge in its origin is the impress of the next step higher "Sutratman."

Yes, there is always something more to learn, and the entirety of wisdom is the Consciousness per se only. But the latter, like the boundless sea in which waves rise and fall but which is not their originator, cannot be called the cause of the urge of the Spirit. "It" is the Rootless Root, the Causeless Cause, and the observer but not the participator. The Consciousness per se is never the Cause although the Spirit rises to manifestation and falls back into IT. But the point is that the evolutionary process or course of Spiritual unfoldment is endless, the spirit is never perfect per

se, but to become more perfect It urges each time, and Its urge develops the whole of the manifestation to win the goal, the next step of spiritual Wisdom, at the end of it. Had the Spirit been perfect per se or had It nothing more to learn, there would have been no urge in it to Self-express itself, and, in fact, it would have been called spirit no more but

Consciousness per se, to which "Time" and "Space" have no meaning. Hence, the imperfection, or, using the technical term, Avidya, on the part of Spirit is the ultimate Cause of all Its manifestations, in which the sub-cause of man's sufferings, his "avidya," is planted. Avidya is eternal, of endless number of grades, and bipolar. Where there is Avidya, the darkness, there is wisdom, the light also. They are two eternal twin sisters. And the fact is that to attain to the latter the former must be suffered each time. Without sufferings, bitter circumstances, sorrows, pains, and aches, "Avidya" cannot be overcome and Wisdom cannot be attained. Spirit must suffer to learn more, so must man suffer to know more. Hence why complain when in the clutches of ill-Karma? It is for man's good that he is suffering. The black clouds are pregnant with sweet waters to irrigate the dry land, Darkness is condensed light, and our tortures and torments are our friends in disguise, for they reduce to ashes our sins and throw light on our path leading to the god-world and the immortal gods. Come, O Sadhu! smile inwardly when you are in the hem of calamity, learn what it can teach you, and sin no more.

V

The bud of rose is covered with thorns, and to the ignorant eyes it seems to be dangerous for the tender petals of the coming rose to rise among them. But when the time of their rising comes, thorns and thistles yield back leaving the central plane empty for the rose to land. Strange are thy ways, O Nature! how thou changest adverse hearts to be conformable companions! The very thorns that were looked upon as enemies are now the best friends of the rose, not only affording a room to stand, but defending their king, the rose, against the foreign forces, the fingers of the pluckers. That philosopher was very wise who said, "Every discord is a harmony not understood." To these physical, ignorant eyes appearance is everything. They smile or they frown at things for their forms and colors, and very often begin condemning or rewarding them, but they know not that "Reality" is hidden within, nor do they care to look behind the veil. May be that man is, worldly speaking, in bad circumstances, and if he is the victim of "avidya" he is

miserable and unhappy because he cannot see into the heart of things; but if he is wise he will rejoice amidst his present ills and be happy, because, being wise, he will know that his misfortunes are the results of his past mistakes and that his going through them means to him his salvation. Yes, the wise smile but the foolish frown when dark times have overshadowed them. O physically conscious man, worry not! It is only your short-sightedness that makes you fret. You are not ignored. There is an Eye which is always watching over you. You are like a babe playing in the yard, and that I is your invisible Mother always keeping you under her watch. All is well with you. Do not be discomposed by the hot winds of your low times. They are only like those thorns that after all were the best friends of the rose. There is not an atom in this universe, not to speak of the bigger entities, that is not under the shadow of that "Mighty Wing," the "Higher Self," the "Universal Self," which is all-pervading, all-knowing, and all-powerful. Some call it Father and some call it God; call it by what name you will, but "It" is there watching each and every move that you are making. It is Truth, It is Love, It is Light, and It is Life and all; All are in "Him" and He is in all. Verily, there is nothing else, but He alone is: these appearances, He, You, and I, are only His manifestations; and if one may look within, he would, no doubt, find "Him" there — He and He alone is there, the same One, in each heart.

Man does not know that he is a divine being, an infant god, a divine prince, whose futurity has it for him that some day he shall develop to be as boundless as his Father, "The Universal Self," in which he at present lives, moves, and has his being. If he only knew what he is in his essence — the Boundless — if he only knew that he is a born divine prince, and that no one in the whole of the Universe can deprive him of his princely birthright, and if he could only realize the High Descent to which he belongs, he would, indeed, feel dignified, cheat no more, kill no more, subject himself to low life no more, fear no more, worry no more, and would do what the gods do — forgive, forbear, love and let live. In the womb of the future we are already photographed as gods. Divinity is ours and we are "IT" in the inmost core of our heart. Let us

aspire, O dear reader! towards moral health, the upliftment of the fallen, and the life that Gods live, "eat to live, live to learn, learn to teach and help others, and do so with no reward in view."

VI

(a) There is no such thing as "Beginning per se," nor is "End per se" anything but moonshine, even though beginnings and ends are incalculable — a strange paradox! Out of the "Invisible Boundless" things arise in their serial times, exist for a time, short or long, and die adding more events to their endless past. Strictly speaking, the forms vanish but their impressions survive, and what at last becomes of them are the entities themselves, modified as they stand at any time. One of such multimyriads of cases is "Man," who is his own Karman, the sum-total or rather the modification and the stamp of his bygone endless eternities. His past has merged into his present, and his present is the cradle of his future that lies in its latency therein. Hence he is his past, present, and future. If he knew that he is all this — the Almighty in miniature (would to Immortal Gods that he did!) — he would never let his ill-present harass him but rather stand on his divine dignity as calm and grave as the "Mount Everest," challenge misery by not minding it, and be but a mere observer of it and happy amidst the raging fires of his own self-created "Suttee." That is the right kind of stuff to countervail miseries: or else the more one is crying the more he is made to cry. Encouragement and a lion-like heart are needed to face the music of one's self-made Karman.

(b) Loads of Karman are on man's back and loads besides in front of him, and in the middle stands his self, the inmost Center and the present "Now." If he could realise that his present "Now" — the modified self at any time under Karmic effects — is eternal and that it would always hold something for him that he would have to suffer from known or unknown to the world, he would learn to love it and live it happily. Then his present, however ill, would become quite natural to him and hence no longer a misery but something as usual.

(c) Casting off his shoulders the loads of his past he can have no future.

Cognising them as his enemies he would only increase the resistance, add more fuel to the fire as it were, and thus intensify the acuteness and strength of their bites. But giving them a most hearty welcome he rises above them; and by making the best of them and learning what they can teach he creates his beautiful future out of the ashes of the ill-past. Consequently, if misfortunes have called upon one's door he should welcome them with his hands stretched to embrace them to his heart. Such hospitality would prove itself as a cool and still water mountain tarn to absorb the heat of misfortune's hot steels, and emasculate them of their venom.

(d) The annals of his past eternities are replete with his mistakes and their consequential bitter fruits that he had to taste of to their very uttermost. The present one is another like them. Neither did they last forever, nor will this one forever be. Why worry?

(e) The pages of his soul are but an endless series of modifications. The present ordeal, however baneful, shall modify and improve it still more: and he shall rise higher at its end and become wiser and happier than ever he was before. Why worry? His misery is a friend in disguise.

(f) Time-periods last only for so long and pass away. The present one is no exception and it shall pass away too. Why worry? He must look ahead and be happy! His bad times are only temporary and his own creation, but he is the "Spirit Eternal" and the parent. He must be fatherly and soar above them.

(g) The world is full of variety in its countless phases. Among men some are rich and some are poor, some in raptures of delight and some in tears of sadness, and even amongst the latter some are worse off than others. If one's lot be among the humble and the lowly he must look towards those who are even humbler and lowlier than himself, and be contented and happy in being even as he is. And, furthermore, if he be sympathetic, kind, and serviceable to those who are below him, and if his sympathy, kindness, and service be impersonal and not selfish in any way, there will ooze out of his mental soil a spring of joy that will

not only be everlasting but probably the foundation of his future becoming a "World Savior" also.

VII

The causes of unhappiness and the means of happiness can by no means be said to have been given in their entirety in this paper, but the space intended to be devoted, is coming to its close. In conclusion a sovereign remedy to tone the toneless minds and their vahans — bodies — is explained and given in the following two paragraphs before the last and concluding one is given. Here it is: Holy thoughts — the thoughts of "Universal Brotherhood," Compassion for all that lives, Forgiveness, Self-forgetfulness in service, and Impersonal Love — are constitutionally, each, composed of the divine substances of the highest ranges of vibration and harmony. Each one is a spiritual matter, a matter which is superheated, as it were, and made conscious. It is most extensively vibrant but superlatively harmonious, hence extremely forceful and heating, yet extremely tranquil and cooling. From its very nature, or swabhava, it unnerves and dispatches the lower and venomous matters but unifies and gives life to the higher and life-giving matters. In connexion with a human mind which is, like a seam of coal with its occluded gases, congested with the Lower Kama-manas-stuff, the divine substance of a higher or holy thought simply burns, or rather boils, to nothing the dross that has choked the pores of the mental gauze, as it were. No doubt such lofty thoughts are too holy to enter such impure and sickly environments as those of an impure mind, but when man's "will" demands their presence therein they cannot disobey such command. The demanding will itself paves the way for them and they enter. To bring real happiness into his life man must fill his mind with lofty, compassionate, impersonally loving and helpful thoughts, cherish them, nurse them, dwell upon them, and make his mind their home. Such divine thoughts when loved and lived, purge the mind of all its paralytic contents, cleanse it, ventilate it, purify it, feed it with the nectar of Gods, thus strengthen it, rejuvenate it, and make it really happy. Simultaneously to its working in the mind the spiritual matter filters, radiates and percolates throughout the

lower parts of his seven-fold constitution. Wherever it goes it works on the same lines as in the case of mind but in varying degrees of effectiveness, and overhauls and resuscitates health and happiness everywhere in him. A sound mind in a sound body is like a happy bird in a clean cage. O dear Reader! it sings divine songs and exhibits heaven on earth; and do not wonder if it may penetrate through the veil and find itself treading the holy ground where his wondrous Master lives. Indeed, where holy thoughts reside, there the hand of divinity is felt at work, and the earthly pains and glooms are extirpated and washed away from the mental field to return no more. Let man take care of his thoughts, his words and acts will take care of themselves. Such a man whose thoughts, words, and acts, are godly, is a god among men. He is surrounded by a heavenly and spiritual atmosphere; and like a sweet-scented rose, which is not only gay and glorious for itself but inspires and gives pleasure to all who come near it also, he is holy and happy and blesses all with mirth and spiritual food who come to him.

Divine thoughts, cherished and nursed, are a rare panacea to cure mental and physical ailments, but that is not all which is most beautiful about them. They are the rarest foundation-stones of man's grand future — Godhood. The fact of the matter is that the more one dwells upon a divine thought the more points concerning it descend from the "Divine Self within him into his mind. The achievement of each new subtle point means to him another step traversed towards the inmost core of his holy "thought-self." The deeper one digs into its veins the greater and the subtler volumes of the Akasic substance surround him; and there is not much to wonder at if he should altogether disappear from the physical eyes of the world. The more enwrapped he is in the divine substance, the more he is dead to the outer world and the more quickened to the reality of the core of this holy thought and that of his own. Now he feels that there is a strange similarity between the two realities and that each one is pointing, or rather vibrating, towards the same mystic "North" — the heart of the Universe — like two magnetic needles pointing towards the same magnetic north. This strange

similarity of vibration develops a strange love — words fail to express it — between the two selves. This love brings them still more heart to heart with one another, and it enables him to see and enables the holy thought to disclose that both are one in essence but the former has so far been playing the part of a student, a searcher for truth, and the latter that of a teacher, a Gurudeva. Then, indeed, the thinking self distinctly sees that the divine thought, the subject of his meditation, is not a mere thought, a passing whim of every-day life, but that it is a part of his own self, that it is a divine ray, of which the top end is rooted in the "Divine Heart" and the lower end into his own, that it is a school in itself to raise the thinker out of the "Mayavi-net," and that it is a path that leads to the heart of his "Wondrous Being," then to his another "Wondrous Being," then to his another "Wondrous Being," and then to his "Parent Wondrous Being" whose feet the Galaxy is in kiss with. Sojourning inwards yet outwards and backwards, yet forward towards the heart of the Universe and along the long hollow core, as it were — the invisible Central thread which is insulated and girded with the Akasic thread — the sojourner, the meditating self, lands at last at the heart of its Inmost Self, the Universal Self, and becomes it. Then the thinker is a man no more but a fully developed Self-conscious God, a Buddha, a Jivan-Mukta, who is completely relieved from the chain of births and deaths, whom pains and so-called pleasures, heats and colds, forms and colors, and the rest of the earthly pairs of opposites have no hold upon, but whose heart is melted with compassion and whose last mission is to serve, to teach, and thus to uplift the rest of mankind to his own spiritual level. This is what a holy thought can and will do for you, O brother reader! See the sublime fruit it can bear — the freedom from the chain of "Chaurasi," the "Bliss," the "Ananda," that can only a Lord of meditation enjoy. Can any earthly sample of happiness beat it? None. One can never lay enough of emphasis upon the fact that the Spiritually rich thoughts — the thoughts of Universal Brotherhood, Compassion, forgiveness, self-forgetfulness in Service, and impersonal love — are each a golden ray of the "Father Sun," through the hollow, or rather sunyatic, archway of which one can, if he may dare, climb from the Foster Mother our earth, to the "Father Sun."

All holy thoughts are different paths yet all are one because they open out into each other. Taking any one of them one takes all of them automatically, as it were. To save oneself from being swept away from the direct path and pulled into the mayavi ones of this tempting world purity of mind is the key. To develop purity in the mind serene, kind, and holy thoughts are indispensable. Even the latter are less effective — nay, even they may mislead — without a trained guidance. Hence the Gurudeva is indispensable. But even the Gurudeva is helpless without the real devotion and heartfelt love of the disciple for him. O, yes, brother sojourner! the seeker of bliss and beatitude! if you would, indeed, be happy, learn to love and to forgive! because love is at the root of everything. My Gurudeva tells me that "Love is the Cement of the Universe."

PEACE BE WITH YOU.

The Theosophical Forum

RECOLLECTIONS OF A THEOSOPHICAL SPEAKER: IV — *Leoline Leonard Wright*

This modern world gives most of us very little time for genuine social reunion. The telephone, automobile, and airplane, though they eat up distance like magic, have also destroyed, paradoxically, much of human closeness. I venture to say that in being within such easy reach of one another we are actually farther apart than we have ever been before.

But in the times which these recollections are trying to recreate for a moment it was not so. In 1895 the auto was a rarity. Moving pictures, today's ubiquitous diversion, were unknown. If people got together they had to make a real effort to do so and had fewer excuses to do something else. Nevertheless they came together for mutual enjoyment far oftener than is customary nowadays. This was well illustrated in the T. S. The *Conversazione*, an idea which Claude Wright brought from the London Headquarters and helped to establish in all the Branches, became a quite "fashionable" feature of Branch activity.

One of the pleasantest pictures which comes before me of my Theosophical life in Boston was the evening dinner-table at 24 Mt. Vernon Street. The house was a spacious one and sheltered a large and genial Theosophical family. It also held the meeting-hall of the Boston Branch with its library, and public sales and reading room. The dining-room was in the basement and at six o'clock everyone in the house gathered around a long table which could seat about twenty people at a pinch. And there were never any vacant places. Besides the twelve or fourteen members living in the house there were always paying guests who dropped in unannounced and were made cordially welcome. And here I must say a word for Louis Wade and his wife who were in charge of Headquarters. He was a man of odd and brilliant intellect and a highly original character. It was Louis Wade who made possible the series of little volumes called *Studies in Occultism*, the reprints of

six of H. P. Blavatsky's most delightful articles, still in brisk demand by our students. It was Louis Wade who initiated and conducted the "Theosophical News" which later published letters and news items from Katherine Tingley's first great "Crusade Around the World." His wife, Minnie Hazleton Wade, was one of the most devoted Theosophists I have ever known, a tiny and charming bit of motherly femininity. They are both gone now, but the record of their fine and devoted work lives in my mind as clearly as if engraved in light.

One thing impressed me then and seems not in the least trivial but a matter of real significance. And that is that nowhere, in my wanderings over the world and my life in many cities both American and foreign, have I enjoyed better conversation than at that dinner table.

Theosophists are always intensely individual. Most of us have come into Theosophy through human trial and intense inner experience. We have been seekers through the religious and intellectual highways and byways of the world. As a consequence we are as a body of people decidedly worth while.

One particular evening stands out in my memory. Louis Wade with his witty cordiality was at the head of the table, and Minnie Wade, with their little son David beside her, was at the foot. Present were Mr. J. Emory Clapp and his wife (their first baby was the dearest of our household), Mr. and Mrs. Will W. Harmon with their little boy, and Miss Marie Pyffer, Lodge Librarian, a delightful Swiss girl now known as Mrs. Schoolcraft. Also there were fascinating Madame Olivia Petersen and her husband Dr. H. C. Petersen, a Norwegian physician who had no use for Theosophy but was always the genial dinner partner on my left, Gertrude Lyford, and myself. All of these were permanent guests. Robert Crosbie had dropped in that evening with Cyrus Field Willard, the well-known journalist and devoted F. T. S. and Mrs. Herron, who brought a touch of illustrious Boston society to our board. I even remember the dinner, which was frugal but delicious — Mrs. Wade had a genius for that difficult combination.

The talk on this particular evening had veered to H. P. B. and her

wonderful powers. Knowing Dr. Petersen's materialistic bias I made some jesting remark to him about his incredulity towards all this testimony. To my surprise he told me that he had met H. P. B. — had been present with his wife at meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge in London at which H. P. B. presided. He went on to say most emphatically that he had felt the greatest admiration for her.

"Why, Miss Leonard," he said, "some of the greatest savants in London were at those meetings and she could more than hold her own with them all, I can assure you."

This struck me as being a truly genuine and impressive tribute, coming spontaneously as it did from a somewhat egotistical and entirely skeptical materialist.

There was a small band of lecturers which covered the field around Boston. This comprised the Branches at Cambridge, Maiden, and Somerville. There were George Ayers, President of Maiden, Robert Crosbie, at that time President of the Boston Branch, Marguerite Guild, Cambridge President, Arthur Conger, then a student at Harvard, and others. One of the picturesque and popular activities at that time was the open-air lectures on Boston Common started by Thomas Seele, assisted by J. Emory Clapp and other speakers. One is tempted to wonder why a few activities of this popular kind could not be used to advantage today. A real difficulty at present is that there are literally millions of people who have never heard of Theosophy, especially of the younger generation. And of those who have, a large number associate it with the weird movements that have unfortunately been tacked on to some divisions of the Theosophical Society.

I have always thought it would be quite a good idea to send out in the summertime a small motor-bus or even one or two private autos carrying a few tried Theosophical speakers. This expedition could visit country towns, giving open-air talks on Reincarnation, Karma, Death, Perfectibility of Man, and other popular aspects of Theosophy. Literature could be sold too. Even if we never gained a member, the *real message* of Theosophy could be carried to places which we are

now unable to reach. Many people would then at least know what Theosophy stands for. I believe this plan would bear active consideration.

I must not close without referring to Arthur Conger's Sunday morning classes on the Bible at Mt. Vernon Street, which were well attended and greatly enjoyed. Owing to the fact that I was soon added to the list of public speakers and had to lecture every Sunday night I was unable to my great regret to attend these classes.

I am often amazed when I look back and recall the excellent work that was done by this little band of speakers — most of them young, all of them untrained and inexperienced. Yet each had immense enthusiasm and devotion, and the membership grew steadily. That I was very inexperienced myself was laughably proved to me when I met Miss Helen Morton years later in Lomaland. She had just arrived and we were all surrounding her at a reception given in her honor. She had been a member of the Somerville Branch and very kindly reminded me that the last time she had met me I had delivered a public lecture in Somerville. My curiosity was aroused and I said, "But of course you wouldn't remember the subject I spoke on?"

"Indeed I do," she replied. "It was "The Three Vestures," and a very good lecture it was." How we all gasped with incredulity and laughed at the absurdity of such a subject. *The Three Vestures?! (See The Voice of the Silence, Fragment III.)* A subject that might daunt the self-confidence of a seasoned chela! Yet in spite of the fact that we younger speakers were often too highbrow and startling, there can be no doubt that we somehow got away with it.

The Editors' warning lying heavy on my mind, I must reserve an account of our celebrated Brotherhood Suppers for a later instalment.

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

The Esoteric Philosophy on Dreams (1)

Q What are the "principles" which are active during dreams?

A The "principles" active during ordinary dreams — which ought to be distinguished from real dreams, and called idle visions — are *Kama*, the seat of the personal Ego and of desire awakened into chaotic activity by the slumbering reminiscences of the lower Manas.

Q What is the "lower Manas"?

A. It is usually called the animal soul (the *Nephesh* of the Hebrew Kabalists). It is the ray which emanates from the Higher Manas or permanent Ego, and is that "principle" which forms the human mind — in animals instinct, for animals also dream (2). The combined action of *Kama* and the "animal soul," however, are purely mechanical. It is instinct, not reason, which is active in them. During the sleep of the body they receive and send out mechanically electric shocks to and from various nerve-centres. The brain is hardly impressed by them, and memory stores them, of course, without order or sequence. On waking these impressions gradually fade out, as does every fleeting shadow that has no basic or substantial reality underlying it. The retentive faculty of the brain, however, may register and preserve them if they are only impressed strongly enough. But, as a rule, our memory registers only the fugitive and distorted impressions which the brain receives at the moment of awakening. This aspect of "dreams" however, has been sufficiently observed and is described correctly enough in modern physiological and biological works, as such human dreams do not differ much from those of the animals. That which is entirely *terra incognita* for Science is the real dreams and experiences of the higher Ego, which are also called dreams, but ought not to be so termed, or else the term for the other sleeping "visions" changed.

Q How do these differ?

A The nature and functions of real dreams cannot be understood unless we admit the existence of an immortal Ego in mortal man, independent of the physical body, for the subject becomes quite unintelligible unless we believe — that which is a fact — that during sleep there remains only an animated form of clay, whose powers of independent thinking are utterly paralyzed.

But if we admit the existence of a higher or permanent *Ego* in us — which Ego must not be confused with what we call the "Higher Self," we can comprehend that what we often regard as dreams, generally accepted as idle fancies, are, in truth, stray pages torn out from the life and experiences of the *inner* man, and the dim recollection of which at the moment of awakening becomes more or less distorted by our physical memory. The latter catches mechanically a few impressions of the thoughts, facts witnessed, and deeds performed by the *inner* man during its hours of complete freedom. For our *Ego* lives its own separate life within its prison of clay whenever it becomes free from the trammels of matter, *i e*, during the sleep of the physical man. This Ego it is which is the actor, the real man, the true human self. But the physical man cannot feel or be conscious during dreams; for the personality, the outer man, with its brain and thinking apparatus, are paralyzed more or less completely.

We might well compare the real Ego to a prisoner, and the physical personality to the gaoler of his prison. If the gaoler falls asleep, the prisoner escapes, or, at least, passes outside the walls of his prison. The gaoler is half asleep, and looks nodding all the time out of a window, through which he can catch only occasional glimpses of his prisoner, as he would a kind of shadow moving in front of it. But what can he perceive, and what can he know of the real actions, and especially the thoughts, of his charge?

Q. Do not the thoughts of the one impress themselves upon the other?

A. Not during sleep, at all events; for the real Ego does not think as his

evanescent and temporary personality does. During the waking hours the thoughts and Voice of the Higher Ego do or do not reach his gaoler — the physical man, for they are the *Voice of his Conscience*, but during his sleep they are absolutely the "Voice in the desert." In the thoughts of the *real* man, or the immortal "Individuality," the pictures and visions of the Past and Future are as the Present; nor are his thoughts like ours, subjective pictures in our cerebration, but living acts and deeds, present actualities. They are realities, even as they were when speech expressed in sounds did not exist; when thoughts were things, and men did not need to express them in speeches; for they instantly realised themselves in action by the power of *Kriya-Sakti*, that mysterious power which transforms instantaneously ideas into visible forms, and these were as objective to the "man" of the early *third* Race as objects of sight are now to us.

Q. How, then, does Esoteric Philosophy account for the transmission of even a few fragments of those thoughts of the Ego to our physical memory which it sometimes retains?

A. All such are reflected on the brain of the sleeper, like outside shadows on the canvas walls of a tent, which the occupier sees as he wakes. Then the man thinks that he has dreamed all that, and feels as though *he* had lived through something, while in reality it is the *thought-actions* of the true Ego which he has dimly perceived. As he becomes fully awake, his recollections become with every minute more distorted, and mingle with the images projected from the physical brain, under the action of the stimulus which causes the sleeper to awaken. These recollections, by the power of association, set in motion various trains of ideas.

Q. It is difficult to see how the Ego can be acting during the night things which have taken place long ago. Was it not stated that dreams are not subjective?

A. How can they be subjective when the dream state is itself for us, and on our plane, at any rate, a subjective one? To the dreamer (the Ego), on his own plane, the things on that plane are as objective to him as

our acts are to us.

Q. What are the senses which act in dreams?

A. The senses of the sleeper receive occasional shocks, and are awakened into mechanical action; what he hears and sees are, as has been said, a distorted reflection of the thoughts of the Ego. The latter is highly spiritual, and is linked very closely with the higher principles, Buddhi and Atma. These higher principles are entirely inactive on our plane, and the higher Ego (*Manas*) itself is more or less dormant during the waking of the physical man. This is especially the case with persons of very materialistic mind. So dormant are the Spiritual faculties, because the Ego is so trammelled by matter, that *It* can hardly give all its attention to the man's actions, even should the latter commit sins for which that Ego — when reunited with its *lower* *Manas* — will have to suffer conjointly in the future. It is, as I said, the impressions projected into the physical man by this Ego which constitute what we call "conscience"; and in proportion as the Personality, the lower Soul (or *Manas*), unites itself to its higher consciousness, or Ego, does the action of the latter upon the life of mortal man become more marked.

Q. This Ego, then, is the "Higher Ego"?

A. Yes; it is the higher *Manas* illuminated by Buddhi; the principle of self-consciousness, the "I-am-I," in short. It is the *Karana-Sarira*, the immortal man, which passes from one incarnation to another.

Q. Is the "register" or "tablet of memory" for the true dream-state different from that of waking life?

A. Since dreams are in reality the actions of the Ego during physical sleep, they are, of course, recorded on their own plane and produce their appropriate effects on this one. But it must be always remembered that dreams in general, and as we know them, are simply our waking and hazy recollections of these facts.

It often happens, indeed, that we have no recollection of having dreamt at all, but later in the day the remembrance of the dream will suddenly

flash upon us. Of this there are many causes. It is analogous to what sometimes happens to every one of us. Often a sensation, a smell, even a casual noise, or a sound, brings instantaneously to our mind long-forgotten events, scenes and persons. Something of what was seen, done, or thought by the "night-performer," the Ego, impressed itself at that time on the physical brain, but was not brought into the conscious, waking memory, owing to some physical condition or obstacle. This impression is registered on the brain in its appropriate cell or nerve centre, but owing to some accidental circumstance it "hangs fire," so to say, till something gives it the needed impulse. Then the brain slips it off immediately into the conscious memory of the waking man; for as soon as the conditions required are supplied, that particular centre starts forthwith into activity, and does the work which it had to do, but was hindered at the time from completing.

Q. How does this process take place?

A. There is a sort of conscious telegraphic communication going on incessantly, day and night, between the physical brain and the inner man. The brain is such a complex thing, both physically and metaphysically, that it is like a tree whose bark you can remove layer by layer, each layer being different from all the others, and each having its own special work, function, and properties.

Q. What distinguishes the "dreaming" memory and imagination from those of waking consciousness?

A. During sleep the physical memory and imagination are of course passive, because the dreamer is asleep: his brain is asleep, his memory is asleep, all his functions are dormant and at rest. It is only when they are stimulated, as I told you, that they are aroused. Thus the consciousness of the sleeper is not active, but passive. The inner man, however, the real Ego, acts independently during the sleep of the body; but it is doubtful if any of us — unless thoroughly acquainted with the physiology of occultism — could understand the nature of its action.

Q. What relation have the Astral Light and Akasa to memory?

A. The former is the "tablet of the memory" of the animal man, the latter of the spiritual Ego. The "dreams" of the Ego, as much as the acts of the physical man, are all recorded, since both are actions based on causes and producing results. Our "dreams," being simply the waking state and actions of the true Self, must be, of course, recorded somewhere. Read "Karmic Visions" in *Lucifer*, and note the description of the real Ego, sitting as a spectator of the life of the hero, and perhaps something will strike you.

Q. What, in reality, is the Astral Light?

A. As the Esoteric Philosophy teaches us, the *Astral Light* is simply the dregs of *Akasa* or the Universal Ideation in its metaphysical sense. Though invisible, it is yet, so to speak, the phosphorescent radiation of the latter, and is the medium between it and man's thought-faculties. It is these which pollute the Astral Light, and make it what it is — the storehouse of all human and especially psychic iniquities. In its primordial genesis, the astral light as a radiation is quite pure, though the lower it descends approaching our terrestrial sphere, the more it differentiates, and becomes as a result impure in its very constitution. But man helps considerably to this pollution, and gives it back its essence far worse than when he received it.

Q. Can you explain to us how it is related to man, and its action in dream-life?

A. Differentiation in the physical world is infinite. Universal ideation — or *Mahat*, if you like it — sends its homogeneous radiation into the heterogeneous world, and this reaches the human or *personal* minds through the Astral Light.

Q. But do not our minds receive their illuminations direct from the Higher Manas through the Lower? And is not the former the pure emanation of divine Ideation — the "Manasa-Putras," which incarnated in men?

A. They are. Individual *Manasa-Putras* or the Kumaras are the direct radiations of the divine Ideation — "individual" in the sense of later

differentiation, owing to numberless incarnations. In sum they are the collective aggregation of that Ideation, become on our plane, or from our point of view, *Mahat*, as the Dhyān Chohans are in their aggregate the WORD OF "Logos" in the formation of the World. Were the Personalities (Lower Manas or the *physical* minds) to be inspired and illumined solely by their higher *alter Egos* there would be little sin in this world. But they are not; and getting entangled in the meshes of the Astral Light, they separate themselves more and more from their parent Egos. Read and study what Eliphas Levi says of the Astral Light, which he calls Satan and the Great Serpent. The Astral Light has been taken too literally to mean some sort of a second blue sky. This imaginary space, however, on which are impressed the countless images of all that ever was, is, and will be, is but a too sad reality. It becomes in, and for, man — if at all psychic — and who is not? — a tempting Demon, his "evil angel," and the in-spirer of all our worst deeds. It acts on the will of even the sleeping man, through visions impressed upon his slumbering brain (which visions must not be confused with the "dreams"), and these germs bear their fruit when he awakes.

Q. What is the part played by Will in dreams?

A. The will of the outer man, our volition, is of course dormant and inactive during dreams; but a certain bent can be given to the slumbering will during its inactivity, and certain after-results developed by the mutual inter-action — produced almost mechanically — through union between two or more "principles" into one, so that they will act in perfect harmony, without any friction or a single false note, when awake. But this is one of the dodges of "black magic," and when used for good purposes belongs to the training of an Occultist. One must be far advanced on the "path" to have a will which can act consciously during his physical sleep, or act on the will of another person during the sleep of the latter, *e. g.*, to control his dreams, and thus control his actions when awake.

Q. We are taught that a man can unite all his "principles" into one —

what does this mean?

A. When an adept succeeds in doing this he is a *Jivanmukta*: he is no more of this earth virtually, and becomes a Nirvanee, who can go into *Samadhi* at will. Adepts are generally classed by the number of "principles" they have under their perfect control, for that which we call will has its seat in the higher EGO, and the latter, when it is rid of its sin-laden personality, is divine and pure.

Q. What part does Karma play in dreams? In India they say that every man receives the reward or punishment of all his acts, both in the waking and the dream state.

A. If they say so, it is because they have preserved in all their purity and remembered the traditions of their forefathers. They know that the Self is the *real* Ego, and that it lives and acts, though on a different plane. The external life is a "dream" to this Ego, while the inner life, or the life on what we call the dream plane, is the real life for it. And so the Hindus (the profane, of course) say that Karma is generous, and rewards the real man in dreams as well as it does the false personality in physical life.

Q. What is the difference, "karmically," between the two?

A. The physical animal man is as little responsible as a dog or a mouse. For the bodily form all is over with the death of the body. But the real SELF, that which emanated its own shadow, or the lower thinking personality, that enacted and pulled the wires during the life of the physical automaton, will have to suffer conjointly with its *factotum and alter ego* in its next incarnation.

Q. But the two, the higher and the lower, Manas are one, are they not?

A. They are, and yet they are not — and that is the great mystery. The Higher Manas or EGO is essentially divine, and therefore pure; no stain can pollute it, as no punishment can reach it, *per se*, the more so since it is innocent of, and takes no part in, the deliberate transactions of its Lower Ego. Yet by the very fact that, though dual and during life the

Higher is distinct from the Lower, "the Father and Son" *are one*, and because that in reuniting with the parent Ego, the Lower Soul fastens upon and impresses upon it all its bad as well as good actions — both have to suffer, the Higher Ego, though innocent and without blemish, has to bear the punishment of the misdeeds committed by the *lower* Self together with it in their future incarnation. The whole doctrine of atonement is built upon this old esoteric tenet; for the Higher Ego is the antitype of that which is on this earth the type, namely, the personality. It is, for those who understand it, the old Vedic story of Visvakarman over again, practically demonstrated. Visvakarman, the all-seeing Father-God, who is beyond the comprehension of mortals, ends, as son of Bhuvana, the holy Spirit, by *sacrificing himself to himself*, to save the worlds. The mystic name of the "Higher Ego" is, in the Indian philosophy, *Kshetrajna*, or "embodied Spirit," that which knows or informs *kshetra*, "the body." Etymologize the name, and you will find in it the term *aja*, "first-born," and also the "lamb." All this is very suggestive, and volumes might be written upon the pregenetic and postgenetic development of type and antitype — of *Christ-Kshetrajna*, the "God-Man," the First-born, symbolized as the "lamb." The *Secret Doctrine* shows that the Manasa-Putras or incarnating Egos have taken upon themselves, voluntarily and knowingly, the burden of all the future sins of their future personalities. Thence it is easy to see that it is neither Mr. A. nor Mr. B., nor any of the personalities that periodically clothe the Self-Sacrificing Ego, which are the real Sufferers, but verily the innocent *Christos* within us. Hence the mystic Hindus say that the Eternal Self, or the Ego (the one in three and three in one), is the "Charioteer" or driver; the personalities are the temporary and evanescent passengers; while the horses are the animal passions of man. It is, then, true to say that when we remain deaf to the Voice of our Conscience, we crucify the *Christos* within us. But let us return to dreams.

Q. Are so-called prophetic dreams a sign that the dreamer has strong clairvoyant faculties?

A. It may be said, in the case of persons who have truly prophetic

dreams, that it is because their physical brains and memory are in closer relation and sympathy with their "Higher Ego" than in the generality of men. The Ego-Self has more facilities for impressing upon the physical shell and memory that which is of importance to such persons than it has in the case of other less gifted persons. Remember that the only God man comes in contact with is his own God, called Spirit, Soul and Mind, or Consciousness, and these three are one.

But there are weeds that must be destroyed in order that a plant may grow. We must die, said St. Paul, that we may live again. It is through destruction that we may improve, and the three powers, the preserving, the creating and the destroying, are only so many aspects of the divine spark within man.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. As this material on the subject of Dreams is not easily available to students of H P B 's writings and as the subject is not dealt with anywhere else in Theosophical literature in such fulness, the Editors feel that it is appropriate to include it in this series It is reprinted from *The Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, originally issued as a booklet in 1889, and students will be interested to note that these Transactions were compiled from shorthand notes taken of H P B 's own words and are therefore those of Esoteric Philosophy as given by H P B herself. This series of Questions and Answers on Dreams will appear in this and the following issue of THE FORUM, and will then be available as a pamphlet from Theosophical University Press, Point Loma, California Price 10c. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. The word dream means really "to slumber" — the latter function being called in Russian "*dreamat*" — Ed [H P B] ([return to text](#))

ETERNAL LIFE — *G. Cardinal Le Gros*

The fields and hillsides throb with life
That is my own! The winds, the sky
Become myself, — no more apart;
And everywhere an answering cry
Rings out! The harmonies of Spring
Are woven in the azure air;
And life is song! and life is joy!
And faith to hold, and faith to share.

Do you ever think of the far reaches of space and let your heart go out to them, give back the aspiring part of you to the boundless silence of beauty and mystery out of which you came? It is true: the Reality that we seek is there, — the golden, beginningless past, the richness of all eternities, all that was and is.

It speaks to us not only from the skies. In the flower and the leaf it answers us. In all nature shines the sacred wisdom, beats the wondrous heart of eternal life. Its promise and its peace are woven in the dawn, and its soft tranquillity falls upon the gardens of the setting sun. All nature lives in a constant rejoicing, in at-one-ment with the harmony of Spirit.

Shall we not choose the pathway leading homeward, the way of quietude and love, where breathes a balm to heal all wounds and banish all distress? It is there: the path for everyone to follow, the path of service, of self-forgetfulness, of the finding of the Self, the path to a greater and greater awareness of the eternal life, of that Compassion which is the light of suns, the poetry of cloud and wave, the beating of each human heart.

FALL AND REDEMPTION — *H. T. Edge*

This is a universal doctrine; none can be more solidly based; the wise and experienced of all ages have agreed to regard the drama of life as a descent from the divine to the earthly and a reascent from the earthly to the divine. And this applies not only to man but to every living creature in the universe and to the universe itself. Great thinkers, seeking for the roots of all things, have found nothing more fundamental than the Great Breath, eternal motion, the principle of alternation; they have seen the cosmic process as the self-realization of an ineffable spirit, the self-manifestation of a supreme Being. The One becomes the Many; the Many return to the One. Outbreathing and inbreathing follow each other in endless succession; and this is a universal law, applicable alike to the smallest as to the greatest.

Man is a spark of the Divine Fire, which has descended on earth and is working amid the manifold toils of material life, like leaven in the mass, and thereby accomplishing a work of regeneration. The primal unity which was Man has been shattered into fragments and has to be reassembled. Christian mystics have thus interpreted their religion, but in many forms of Christianity the true meaning has been lost. The Fall of man has been represented as a great calamity, inspired by the spirit of evil. Man is supposed to become corrupt in nature through the sin of his first ancestor, and to require the intercession of a Savior for his salvation. But the real doctrine is that the Divine Spark, which is the real man, descended to earth for the purpose of fulfilling his destiny and accomplishing his evolution. The Serpent that tempted him in the garden was no evil spirit, but a divine teacher, who instructed him, awakened in him the sleeping fire of intellect, so that he became endowed with free will and the power of conscious choice. It resulted in his being banished from the state of passive bliss (figured as the Garden of Eden) in which he had been living. In brief, we have in the early chapters of *Genesis* an account (much mutilated it is true) of the

early history of mankind, and of the passage of man from an undeveloped and unawakened being to a self-conscious and responsible one. The Devil is said in theology to be a Fallen Angel, a rebel against God, and cast out of heaven, so that he becomes henceforth the head of a host of fallen angels who war continually against God and man. But these Fallen Angels were spirits of light, who descended from heaven in order to bring light and life to earth. The same allegory is found in the story of Prometheus, who so compassionated man that he stole fire from heaven and brought it down to earth. The very name Lucifer, which theology uses as the name of an evil spirit, means "light-bringer."

Man is no helpless sinner, born in hereditary corruption. He is a divine pilgrim, on his way to regain that which he has lost. His Savior is the divinity within him, his own real Self. It was by his own choice that he strayed; it is by his own will that he must be saved. How otherwise could he be a responsible being? Jesus Christ was a great and inspired Teacher, who had solved the mysteries of life for himself, and came to show the way to other men. There have been many such. He was not *the* Christ, but *a* Christ; and any man may become a Christ. For the Christ is the divinity in man, which is said to have sacrificed itself by being born in the flesh in order that it might raise the flesh. This teaching will be found in Paul's epistles.

Consider now how this principle of descent and reascent applies to the doctrine of evolution. We are told about the ascent of man from the lowliest beginnings through many stages; but there could be no ascent unless there had previously been a descent. Spirit descends into matter, and matter is thereby evolved into more and more perfect forms for the expression of spirit. A seed may produce a tree; but the essence of the future tree must have entered into the seed. The tree produces the seed, and the seed reproduces the tree. If man is from the lower creation, what was it that entered into matter to give it the power to evolve into such wonderful forms? Can we evade the question by saying that it was a power inherent in matter itself? That would be making matter the equivalent of Almighty God.

It is sad to see how wrong religious teachings have affected the whole thought of the world. The great novelists give us masterly pictures of human lives, portrayed with consummate skill and insight; yet the whole drama is brought to nought by death, which is represented as a final end; and one wonders what is the use of life at all if it is all to end in nothing. But as death is the end of life, so life is the end of death. Birth and death are recurrent events in a long life-drama, and each man's appearance on earth is but one scene in a drama. It is only a knowledge of this truth that can make sense out of the drama of human life. Death and rebirth, descent and reascent, fall and redemption, are the world's eternal ways.

The Theosophical Forum

SEEING ROUND THE CORNER — *Grace Frances Knoche*

"If I could only see round the corner; if I could know for certain there is a road; get a glimpse of the future so that I could know how to act now." Alas! how often this cry of despair escapes from the soul in its human blindness. But perhaps if we were vouchsafed a vision, could we stand it? How many of us would not be blinded or turned to stone in our desire for illegal gain! Let us draw the veil from the past and study conditions: Suppose we had known to a detail all the horror and pain that was in store; suppose we had visioned that corner after corner would reveal yet more doors of loneliness and pain; until finally, after perhaps years of agonizing stupidity the soul would have so rebelled at its ignorance and desire, that it would break free, and once again climb slowly the steps of inner self-respect to beauty and freedom. Suppose all this had been revealed in cruel detail? Could we have stood the sight? Would we have had the courage to meet karmic consequences with even the small measure of innate decency that we did? Perhaps; but very likely we would have so cringed, so quailed, before the unflinching fire of purgation, that instead of remembering that it was our own self which ended our misery, we might have cursed others and thrown our lot in with downward currents, thus delaying for even a longer period the awakening fire of understanding and consequent freedom.

No; Nature is far kindlier in her methods than man. In the merciful withholding of her dark secrets, she blinds not, but gradually restores light to the stricken soul. As time turns the pages of destiny and we observe the lives of our brothers, we see victory born of defeat, and we marvel at her understanding. Had they known the pain; had they known the sorrow; had they foreseen the poverty to come, or the near destruction of their life's work — perhaps ultimate success would not have come; possibly more pain, born of weakness and cowardice, would have resulted, until the soul had learned bravely to take the

karman of its past.

"If only we had known," how gratefully we would have tendered love and care instead of injury and indifference; how we would have sacrificed pettiness for generosity; selfishness for understanding. Possibly. The fact remains, however, that we were willing, though doubtless in partial ignorance, to walk roughshod over others' rights and feelings, showing that we needed badly to suffer the lesson of remorse. We had yet to learn, through the pain of awakening *too late*, how warming are the springs of forethought for others, how beautiful the silent sympathy for a comrade in travail, how worthy the determination to serve rather than receive.

In the *heart* lie the issues of life; the brain can be educated, trained, and polished; but progress in spiritual things is made only when the heart understands. No argument is stronger than unsatisfied desire springing from an unilluminated heart; likewise no edifice of thought is superior to courageous sympathy born of the understanding heart. The ways of Nature are kindly: she does not argue with a man about his weakness; she leads him to meet the issue of his folly through trials of the heart: gently she guides him through the valleys of pain, sorrow, and restraint. Then the heart stirs: sympathy, compassion, generosity of soul take birth. Instead of the conflict of tragedy, the man's life becomes a benediction of peace and intelligent harmony. A new corner is rounded, a corner leading to light, strength, and peace.

In our present stage of evolution, when selfishness, ignorance, and avarice, are the marks of "civilization," it is a blessing that the future is hid from our view. Just imagine an unkindly man knowing the pitfalls ahead for a brother: what a subject for the cruelty of watchfulness; for the horror of premeditated taunts by the scheming and unprincipled. Furthermore, what of the folly of our knowing the successes ahead for ourselves: would we not become mere laggards, or worse, arrogant fools?

We should not worry, therefore, about rounding corners; rather should we endeavor to hold tight through the difficult places to all that is

decent, upright, and generous. We should remember that *there is always a road round the corner*, despite the blanket of fog and mist. Perhaps a friend will come and bring courage and peace through friendship; maybe a new thought will find entrance into the heart bringing light in its train; perhaps a timely shock will open our eyes to beauties that in our selfish hugging of our sorrow we had shrunk from glimpsing, afraid to release our pain.

The future can be divined, at least in broad outline; but it is our protection that we can discern of it but a vague glimmering of events to come. The man of strong and selfless action alone can stand the brilliance of complete knowledge. His future is a road of light: what was once the way of loneliness becomes the pathway of solitude, what was pain becomes sensitive appreciation through sympathy, what was despair becomes knowledge of truth made living through service. Earthly experience is revealed as a passing event in the historic unfolding of the soul.

The Theosophical Forum

TO INVESTIGATE THE POWERS INNATE IN MAN — A. Bonset

It looks so simple, this fifth Object of the T. S.: "To investigate the powers innate in man"; and yet, if we duly reflect upon the meaning of these words, a picture is woven before our mind's eye, so beautiful, so vast, that it moves our heart of hearts. Being Theosophists, and having the Theosophical books at our disposal, we can perhaps better understand the grand unity of the Universe, which we human beings are a part of, and with which our inmost nature connects us. It is just for this reason that everything is contained in us that the Cosmos contains, every force, every energy, every power. Hence all this is within our reach, but it does not mean that we are able to employ these powers and forces at present, for many of them are latent, and it depends solely upon our own evolution whether or not we shall discover these powers and allow them to affect us.

How can we better develop ourselves than by trying to understand our Higher Self more and more. Was not the injunction "Know thyself," which all Great Ones left to humanity, meant as a stimulus for men to develop the powers innate in them?

These simple words "Know Thyself," do not they strike us as if they were the key to solve a great mystery? And while striving for self-knowledge, we enter the Path that will lead us to all-embracing Love, to infinite compassion for all that is and lives.

We can make progress on that Path only if we drop our personality and become altogether impersonal. Develop the spiritual, divine forces and powers in us by becoming unselfish, self-forgetful, selfless; learn to forgive; love, love impersonally — this is constantly impressed upon us.

We all who stand at the beginning of the Path, have not we understood that these simple words: "Love impersonally and forgive," comprise the whole occult training? This training involves the incessant practice of the moral powers that we feel within us. All these powers are of a

spiritual nature, they are Cosmic. They are present in anyone and will remain there forever.

Consider a child at school: he has to pass from one form to another in order that his sleeping intellect shall be developed, while it is essential that he should in the first place be taught the requisite knowledge, and secondly that, by means of his will, diligence and studiousness, he himself should assimilate this knowledge; and these very rules apply to the non-intellectual knowledge, the spiritual, Divine Wisdom, where adults are concerned. Just as children are taught simple subjects for the development of their intellects, similarly do we adults study the Theosophical teachings, teachings that have been preserved from time immemorial, truths that have always been known, although in times of spiritual decline it was only aspiring souls that were acquainted with them, men, who even in those dark ages, were searchers for Truth, and who received Wisdom in the ancient Mystery-Schools.

We, as fellows of the T. S., are able to receive this Wisdom and its doctrines: the Teachers place them at our disposal, but we ourselves must show the diligence, the studiousness and the wish to acquire this Divine Wisdom, these spiritual Truths.

If we reflect upon these teachings and are actually impersonal and loving in our thoughts and actions, we cannot help experiencing a certain feeling of bliss, a feeling of what I should like to call "extension of consciousness." And with extension of consciousness coincides an advance on the Path; veils fall off that prevented us from having a clear view into all these realms which, it is true, are open to us, and within our reach, but which remain hidden to us until we have made such progress on the Path that we can draw these veils aside.

Is not it a curious fact that all these powers are innate in any one of us, and that yet so few people are aware of them? Is not there an enormously vast field of activity lying before us?

For is it not through the Theosophical teachings that we became conscious, got the first glimpses at any rate, which made us understand

who and what man really is? Was it not the Theosophical teachings which, from the moment that they took hold of us, led us to realms of consciousness which we had never dreamed to enter? And did not we give up ourselves to serve our fellow-men, to serve the Great Law, which teaches us to live in a selfless way, for the benefit of mankind?

As soon as a man begins to discover what great powers he possesses, and opens his soul to this endless wisdom, he enters the path that leads to true development; and mysteries, formerly concealed, are revealed to him. The attempt to develop these powers, which have been given to us in embryo, should in fact be the basis of all growth.

We must strive, with all the energy, power, and will we possess, to penetrate into our inmost nature, to turn to the Spiritual, Divine Light, which is present in anyone, to the Light that is the source of all that makes life worth living, and which can render it noble and grand. It is in this way that we can become Seers, and are allowed to look into the very Heart of Things.

And that these forces, mentioned in the fifth Object of the T. S., have nothing mysterious about them, may be demonstrated by what one of the Masters said to a chela: "You have a great love for the power of magic, but the greatest magic is the power of Love!"

Let us ever keep before us the last words of the Message H. P. B. sent to the American Convention in 1891, and which still hold good at the present moment:

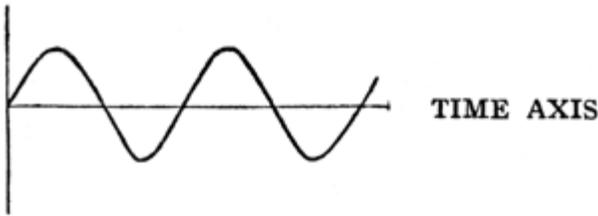
"In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the responsibility."

MODERN SCIENCE AND THE MESSAGE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY — *H. Groot*

VI

No conception is more widely acknowledged and more extensively applied in all fields of natural science than that of *periodicity*.

If we ask the mathematician about the essence of periodicity, he will draw a waving line thus:



"This line," he says, "depicts the nature of each periodic phenomenon. It is the graphical representation of the process under consideration; a certain magnitude regularly grows, reaches a maximum, decreases, passes through a minimum and starts growing again. In many, and actually in the majority of cases, the line representing periodicity looks more complicated than the above one, but however involved it may seem, it can invariably be reduced to this simple line."

More or less pronounced periodicities are met with everywhere. Biology knows them just as well as medical science. They form one of the basic tenets of that field of astronomy which studies the orbital movements of the celestial bodies. Meteorology has placed on its program the investigation of the long-time periodicities of climatic conditions. In its investigation of vulcanism, seismology and the rhythmical movements of the earth's surface, geology also acknowledges the existence of periodic phenomena. The theoretical developments of modern physics and chemistry are inconceivable without the two conceptions: vibrations and waves — and what are

they but periodicities?

The Theosophical reader is by no means surprised at this state of affairs — on the contrary; for he knows the doctrine of cycles, which tells him that *any* phenomena on the material as well as on the non-material plane, both in the manifested and the non-manifested universe, are subject to cyclic, i. e. periodical changes. He even goes a step farther and applies the conception of cycles or periodicity also to cases where science is unable to distinguish any periodicity at all: viz. to the phenomena of birth and death — irrespective of whether we are concerned with the birth and death of a human being, a universe or an atom. He does so because Theosophy shows him that life itself is one infinite, cyclical process. Birth and death are not the absolute beginning and end which they are thought to be by those who allow themselves to be dazzled by material illusions. No, birth and death are only transition-stages marking the beginning and end of a given period — the points where the curve in our figure (see above) intersects the time axis, nothing more. And just as these points — (of which there are a countless number) — are not essentially different from all other points on the curve, we see birth and death exclusively as the ever recurring transitions which characterize the periodicity of the process we call Life, but which may also be termed growth of consciousness.

Moreover, Theosophy couples the doctrine of evolution with that of cycles. Infinite, unvarying, periodic repetition would mean a vacuous terror to every thoughtful man. A doctrine that would lead to such conceptions arouses fierce intellectual opposition.

It is undoubtedly considerations of this kind which made scientists such as de Sitter and Eddington avowed adversaries of the idea of a universe that renews itself cyclically. In *New Pathways in Science* Eddington formulates his objections to such a conception as follows:

I find no difficulty in accepting the consequences of the present scientific theory as regards the future — the heat death of the universe. It may be billions of years hence, but slowly and inexorably the sands are running out. I feel no instinctive shrinking from this conclusion.

From a moral standpoint the conception of a cyclic universe, continually running down and continually rejuvenating itself, seems to me wholly retrograde. Must Sisyphus for ever roll his stone up the hill only for it to roll down again every time it approaches the top? That was a description of Hell.

We quite agree with this view. Indeed, the teaching of a universe that rejuvenates itself cyclically is to be rejected as amoral unless each rejuvenation means at the same time a step forward. If Sisyphus has rolled his stone to the top of the mountain, the stone falls down again — but. . . along a different side of the mountain. He has to roll his stone upwards again, but up the next mountain, which may be steeper, but which will certainly be higher than the previous one; and the view from this top will therefore be vaster, grander, and more imposing — well worth the new journey.

It is just *this* thought which Theosophy brings us by pointing to the doctrine of evolution in connexion with that of cycles. Universes, men, and atoms proceed along the cyclic road of evolution, urged by the activity of Karman; in doing so they unfold their swabhava and realize their inner being more and more, i. e. consciousness, divine consciousness, kosmic consciousness.

Only thus can the teaching of unlimited periodicity be accepted, and only thus does it make life significant. All other conceptions lead to absolute pessimism — such as may be found in the works of Nietzsche, who defended the view that the worlds eternally repeated themselves in the same way.

What other view is left to us if we do not accept cyclic evolution and reject the endless repetition of the same cycle as meaningless and amoral?

In one of his former works, *The Nature of the Physical World*, Eddington replies to this question as follows:

I am no Phoenix worshipper. This is a topic on which science is silent, and all that one can say is prejudice. But since prejudice

in favour of a never-ending cycle of rebirth of matter and worlds is often vocal, I may perhaps give voice to the opposite prejudice. I would feel more content that the universe should accomplish some great scheme of evolution and, having achieved whatever may be achieved, lapse back into chaotic changelessness, than that its purpose should be banalised by continual repetition. I am an Evolutionist, not a Multiplicationist. It seems rather stupid to keep doing the same thing over and over again.

According to this view birth and death, or beginning and end, are looked upon as *absolute*. In general, such is still the attitude of natural science. In physics it is found as the abstract formulation of the "second law" of thermodynamics, also called the law of increasing entropy. We shall not attempt to explain this law in physical terms. Popularly speaking, it is the so-called "heat-death" of the universe. It may be advisable to elucidate this latter expression. The term "heat-death" was first used by the Swedish physicist Svante Arrhenius. He pointed out that with each conversion taking place in the universe part of the available energy is converted into heat, which as such is lost for further conversions. In the long run, it is reasoned, all the available energy will have been converted into heat, evenly distributed over the universe. Then, the natural process will stop. The unceasing activity which now characterizes the universe will have come to a standstill. Changes will no longer take place. The universe has died its "heat-death," from which resurrection is impossible.

As said above, science bases this gloomy prospect on the second law of thermodynamics. According to this law the heat-death of the universe is unavoidable. "It may be billions of years hence, but slowly and inexorably the sands are running out" — were Eddington's words quoted above.

Various investigators have repeatedly tried to oppose this deduction and to contest the second law of thermodynamics. However, it proved to be an unequal fight, for this law is considered the most fundamental

of all natural laws. The attempts to disprove this law of entropy and the search for a *perpetuum mobile*, are considered as so many intellectual dissipations, and everyone knows that to find a *perpetuum mobile* is regarded as such an utter impossibility that the Academie Franchise have for many years refused to entertain any relevant inventions!

However, a remarkable point in this connexion is that thermodynamics, even in its classical form, frankly admits that neither the *perpetuum mobile*, nor a process that would disobey the law of entropy, is an *impossibility*. It is only — improbable, very improbable. In fact it is so improbable that nobody dwells on the possibility of it, so rich in zeros is the number that indicates the degree of improbability!

Moreover, the calculation of the degree of improbability is largely dependent on various factors which may change — and which *de facto are changing* — if different views on the fundamental conceptions in the natural world-philosophy will gain ground. We are living in a transition-period as far as physics goes. And we already saw ideas, which up to recently seemed unassailable, undergo many modifications. One example from many: When H. P. B. taught that matter is but crystallized light — this statement may be found, for instance, in *The Secret Doctrine* — scornful laughter was heard in the ranks of the physicists of that time. What? Matter is said to be light? Indeed, more absolute contrasts than those between unwieldy, heavy, tangible, and inert matter, and non-material, unseizable, and even invisible light were inconceivable! Now what considerable changes has this scientific view undergone.

In a book that was by no means intended to be popular, (1) the well-known French physicist Jean Perrin, who is responsible for several outstanding discoveries relating to the structure of the atom, writes, *inter alia*: "Des lors qu'on sait que des photons, c'est-a-dire de la Lumiere, peuvent se materialiser . . ." (From the moment that we know that photons, i. e. light, may *materialize* . . .). A few pages farther on there is a section bearing the heading: "Transformation de matiere en energie," (Conversion of matter into energy). There he discusses the

experiments made by Joliot and Thibaut, both of whom succeeded in demonstrating irrefutably the dematerialization of matter into light of short wave-length.

Are not these results the most convincing corroboration of the truths of the Ancient Wisdom, decried as foolish, and on account of which H. P. B. was persecuted and derided?

This single example may suffice to illustrate the enormous change which has taken place in the world of physical thinking, which is largely due to Einstein's relativity-theory. The limits of an article such as ours, however, do not permit of a detailed discussion of this matter. Moreover, we should have to give highly technical explanations. But we must direct attention to one fact in connexion with the subject under consideration: thermodynamics, too, has undergone a thorough change. We would quote the following passage from one of the modern handbooks, viz. *Relativity, Thermodynamics and Cosmology* (1934), by Richard C. Tolman, a recognised authority in this very difficult field:

At the very least it would seem wisest if we no longer dogmatically assert that the principles of thermodynamics necessarily require a universe which was created at a finite time in the past and which is fated for stagnation and death in the future.

Here, the inevitability of the heat-death is emphatically rejected by Tolman's investigations. What might be possible according to classical ideas, but what had at any rate to be considered highly improbable, is placed in a quite different light by the results of modern scientific investigations.

In the foregoing we do by no means want to assert that modern thermodynamics has settled the matter, for this is certainly not the case. But we did want to explain how modern physics begins to approach to the ancient teachings also in this respect — i.e. the possibility of the cyclical rejuvenation of a universe. It is realized more and more clearly that absolute starting- and end-points are non-

existent. Each end is a new beginning; each beginning issues from a — provisional-end.

Very interesting in this connexion is an article by Dr. Jac. van Essen, published in the Dutch daily *De Telegraaf*. It was entitled: "The new science of Old Age." Dr. van Essen does not go so far as to show birth and death as relative beginnings and ends in a physiological process of unlimited cyclical continuity. He only discusses the first curve, lying above the time-axis, of the line drawn in our figure. The starting-point he calls birth, then follows the rise, adolescence; next a very flat maximum, adulthood; thereupon a decrease, old age, and finally the end, death. If we regard the curves above the time-axis as belonging to the material plane, and if those lying below this axis may be regarded as belonging to non-material planes, it will be clear that Dr. van Essen does not see the possibility of the line discussed by him continuing *below* the time-axis to rise *above* it again in course of time. His view is in perfect agreement with the present medical and biological ideas which are still largely tied to materialistic notions. Nevertheless, this article is interesting because on some points it is suggestive of a distinct struggle with a new conception regarding the problem of old age. According to Dr. van Essen a man grows old because his life-processes gradually retard. This retardation is not considered an effect, but the *cause* of the diseases and infirmities of old age. After he has come to this conclusion Dr. van Essen clearly realizes that this cannot be an isolated phenomenon, but that he has touched upon a kosmic reality. He draws the following final conclusion, which we quote verbatim below:

Finally, we might apply the above principle much more extensively, for also kosmic phenomena are no doubt subject to the law controlling birth, adolescence, adulthood, and death. By condensation, nebulae give birth to solar systems, which shoot through space at a tremendous speed, emitting an excess of energy. After a certain lapse of time the motion of the system slackens, and the amount of emitted energy decreases. The unit cools down into planets and moons, which finally decompose

owing to the continued decline of its strength.

It is no use saying that we have been talking metaphorical language. It is the living reality of creation, reflected in the most different natural phenomena. Whereas formerly poets and thinkers could only make suppositions, we base ourselves on tenets that are quite reliable from a scientific point of view. Thus the new science of seneology (the science of old age) comprises much more than could be expected at first. In a limited sense, old age is only a problem of life, but in a wider sense it is a world-problem comprising the secret of the Being of all things, and modern science will disclose it with the utmost exertion.

Indeed, so it is! Old age is actually a world-problem. It can be solved only if science stops concentrating on the curve of the phenomena occurring on the visible, material plane that lies above the time-axis. This secret cannot be understood unless also the curve on the non-material plane is considered, unless the universal periodicity of *all* life processes is recognised and accepted.

Modern science is on the point of discovering the universal scope of periodicities, which it may notice everywhere on the manifested plane. As soon as it begins to direct its attention to events taking place on the non-material plane, the full significance of periodicities will be revealed to it.

The time is coming, and is perhaps nearer than science may presume, when the message of H. P. Blavatsky, that of the Ancient Wisdom, will find a response in the modern scientific world. In regard to the universally occurring periodicities this message says the following:

Worlds, men, and atoms accomplish infinite cycles; they reside in turn on the manifested and on the non-manifested plane. Evolution alternating with involution. But these continuous changes involve a steady progress to ever higher perfection. No beginning, no end; ever wider, ever grander, ever more stupendous perspectives — thus the

Ancient Wisdom shows us the future of atoms, men, solar systems, and universes.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Grains de Matiere et de Lumiere*. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

The Esoteric Philosophy on Dreams

Q. Do Adepts dream?

A. No advanced Adept dreams. An adept is one who has obtained mastery over his four lower principles, including his body, and does not, therefore, let flesh have its own way. He simply paralyzes his lower Self during Sleep, and becomes perfectly free. A dream, as we understand it, is an illusion. Shall an adept, then, dream when he has rid himself of every other illusion? In his sleep he simply lives on another and more real plane.

Q. Are there people who have never dreamed?

A. There is no such man in the world so far as I am aware. All dream more or less; only with most, dreams vanish suddenly upon waking. This depends on the more or less receptive condition of the brain ganglia. Unspiritual men, and those who do not exercise their imaginative faculties, or those whom manual labour has exhausted, so that the ganglia do not act even mechanically during rest, dream rarely, if ever, with any coherence.

Q. What is the difference between the dreams of men and those of beasts?

A. The dream state is common not only to all men, but also to all animals, of course, from the highest mammalia to the smallest birds, and even insects. Every being endowed with a physical brain, or organs approximating thereto, must dream. Every animal, large or small, has, more or less, physical senses; and though these senses are dulled during sleep, memory will still, so to say, act mechanically, reproducing past sensations. That dogs and horses and cattle dream we all know, and so also do canaries, but such dreams are, I think, merely physiological. Like the last embers of a dying fire, with its spasmodic flare and occasional flames, so acts the brain in falling asleep. Dreams

are not, as Dryden says, "interludes which fancy makes," for such can only refer to physiological dreams provoked by indigestion, or some idea or event which has impressed itself upon the active brain during waking hours.

Q. What, then, is the process of going to sleep?

A. This is partially explained by Physiology. It is said by Occultism to be the periodical and regulated exhaustion of the nervous centres, and especially of the sensory ganglia of the brain, which refuse to act any longer on this plane, and, if they would not become unfit for work, are compelled to recuperate their strength on another plane or *Upadhi*. First comes the *Svapna*, or dreaming state, and this leads to that of *Shushupti*. Now it must be remembered that our senses are all dual, and act according to the plane of consciousness on which the thinking entity energises. Physical sleep affords the greatest facility for its action on the various planes; at the same time it is a necessity, in order that the senses may recuperate and obtain a new lease of life for the *Jagrata*, or waking state, from the *Svapna* and *Shushupti*. According to *Raj Yoga*, *Turya* is the highest state. As a man exhausted by one state of the life fluid seeks another; as, for example, when exhausted by the hot air he refreshes himself with cool water; so sleep is the shady nook in the sunlit valley of life. Sleep is a sign that waking life has become too strong for the physical organism, and that the force of the life current must be broken by changing the waking for the sleeping state. Ask a good clairvoyant to describe the aura of a person just refreshed by sleep, and that of another just before going to sleep. The former will be seen bathed in rhythmical vibrations of life currents — golden, blue, and rosy; these are the electrical waves of Life. The latter is, as it were, in a mist of intense golden-orange hue, composed of atoms whirling with an almost incredible spasmodic rapidity, showing that the person begins to be too strongly saturated with Life; the life essence is too strong for his physical organs, and he must seek relief in the shadowy side of that essence, which side is the dream element, or physical sleep, one of the states of consciousness.

Q. But what is a dream?

A. That depends on the meaning of the term. You may "dream," or, as we say, sleep visions, awake or asleep. If the Astral Light is collected in a cup or metal vessel by will-power, and the eyes fixed on some point in it with a strong will to see, a waking vision or "dream" is the result, if the person is at all sensitive. The reflections in the Astral Light are seen better with closed eyes, and, in sleep, still more distinctly. From a lucid state, vision becomes trans-lucid; from normal organic consciousness it rises to a transcendental state of consciousness.

Q. To what causes are dreams chiefly due? A. There are many kinds of dreams, as we all know. Leaving the "digestion dream" aside, there are brain dreams and memory dreams, mechanical and conscious visions. Dreams of warning and premonition require the active co-operation of the inner Ego. They are also often due to the conscious or unconscious co-operation of the brains of two living persons, or of their two Egos.

Q. What is it that dreams, then?

A. Generally the physical brain of the personal Ego, the seat of memory, radiating and throwing off sparks like the dying embers of a fire. The memory of the Sleeper is like an Æolian seven-stringed harp; and his state of mind may be compared to the wind that sweeps over the chords. The corresponding string of the harp will respond to that one of the seven states of mental activity in which the sleeper was before falling asleep. If it is a gentle breeze the harp will be affected but little; if a hurricane, the vibrations will be proportionately powerful. If the personal Ego is in touch with its higher principles and the veils of the higher planes are drawn aside, all is well; if on the contrary it is of a materialistic animal nature, there will be probably no dreams; or if the memory by chance catch the breath of a "wind" from a higher plane, seeing that it will be impressed through the sensory ganglia of the cerebellum, and not by the direct agency of the spiritual Ego, it will receive pictures and sounds so distorted and inharmonious that even a Devachanic vision would appear a nightmare or grotesque caricature. Therefore there is no simple answer to the question "What is it that

dreams," for it depends entirely on each individual what principle will be the chief motor in dreams, and whether they will be remembered or forgotten.

Q. Is the apparent objectivity in a dream really objective or subjective?

A. If it is admitted to be apparent, then of course it is subjective. The question should rather be, to whom or what are the pictures or representations in dreams either objective or subjective? To the physical man, the *dreamer*, all he sees with his eyes shut, and in or through his mind, is of course subjective. But to the *Seer* within the physical dreamer, that Seer himself being subjective to our material senses, all he sees is as objective as he is himself to himself and to others like himself. Materialists will probably laugh, and say that we make of a man a whole family of entities, but this is not so. Occultism teaches that physical man is one, but the thinking man septenary, thinking, acting, feeling, and living on seven different states of being or planes of consciousness, and that for all these states and planes the permanent Ego (not the false personality) has a distinct set of senses.

Q. Can these different senses be distinguished?

A. Not unless you are an Adept or highly-trained Chela, thoroughly acquainted with these different states. Sciences, such as biology, physiology, and even psychology (of the Maudsley, Bain, and Herbert Spencer schools), do not touch on this subject. Science teaches us about the phenomena of volition, sensation, intellect, and instinct, and says that these are all manifested through the nervous centres, the most important of which is our brain. She will speak of the peculiar agent or substance through which these phenomena take place as the vascular and fibrous tissues, and explain their relation to one another, dividing the ganglionic centres into motor, sensory and sympathetic, but will never breathe one word of the mysterious agency of intellect itself, or of the mind and its functions.

Now, it frequently happens that we are conscious and know that we are dreaming; this is a very good proof that man is a multiple being on

the thought plane; so that not only is the Ego, or thinking man, Proteus, a multiform, ever-changing entity, but he is also, so to speak, capable of separating himself on the mind or dream plane into two or more entities; and on the plane of illusion which follows us to the threshold of Nirvana, he is like Ain-Soph talking to Ain-Soph, holding a dialogue with himself and speaking through, about, and to himself. And this is the mystery of the inscrutable Deity in the *Zohar*, as in the Hindu philosophies; it is the same in the Kabbala, Puranas, Vedantic metaphysics, or even in the so-called Christian mystery of the Godhead and Trinity. Man is the microcosm of the macrocosm; the god on earth is built on the pattern of the god in nature. But the universal consciousness of the real Ego transcends a millionfold the self-consciousness of the personal or false Ego.

Q. Is that which is termed "unconscious cerebration" during sleep a mechanical process of the physical brain, or is it a conscious operation of the Ego, the result of which only is impressed on the ordinary consciousness?

A. It is the latter; for is it possible to remember in our conscious state what took place while our brain worked unconsciously? This is apparently a contradiction in terms.

Q. How does it happen that persons who have never seen mountains in nature often see them distinctly in sleep, and are able to note their features?

A. Most probably because they have seen pictures of mountains; otherwise it is somebody or something in us which has previously seen them.

Q. What is the cause of that experience in dreams in which the dreamer seems to be ever striving after something, but never attaining it?

A. It is because the physical self and its memory are shut out of the possibility of knowing what the real Ego does. The dreamer only catches faint glimpses of the doings of the Ego, whose actions produce the so-called dream on the physical man, but is unable to follow it

consecutively. A delirious patient, on recovery, bears the same relation to the nurse who watched and tended him in his illness as the physical man to his real Ego. The Ego acts as consciously within and without him as the nurse acts in tending and watching over the sick man. But neither the patient after leaving his sick bed, nor the dreamer on awaking, will be able to remember anything except in snatches and glimpses.

Q. How does sleep differ from death?

A. There is an analogy certainly, but a very great difference between the two. In sleep there is a connection, weak though it may be, between the lower and higher mind of man, and the latter is more or less reflected into the former, however much its rays may be distorted. But once the body is dead, the body of illusion, *Mayavi Rupa*, becomes *Kama Rupa*, or the animal soul, and is left to its own devices. Therefore, there is as much difference between the spook and man as there is between a gross material, animal but sober mortal, and a man incapably drunk and unable to distinguish the most prominent surroundings; between a person shut up in a perfectly dark room and one in a room lighted, however imperfectly, by some light or other.

The lower principles are like wild beasts, and the higher *Manas* is the rational man who tames or subdues them more or less successfully. But once the animal gets free from the master who held it in subjection; no sooner has it ceased to hear his voice and see him than it starts off again to the jungle and its ancient den. It takes, however, some time for an animal to return to its original and natural state, but these lower principles or "spook" return instantly, and no sooner has the higher Triad entered the Devachanic state than the lower Duad rebecomes that which it was from the beginning, a principle endued with purely animal instinct, made happier still by the great change.

Q. What is the condition of the Linga Sarira, or plastic body, during dreams?

A. The condition of the Plastic form is to sleep with its body, unless

projected by some powerful desire generated in the higher Manas. In dreams it plays no active part, but on the contrary is entirely passive, being the involuntarily half-sleepy witness of the experiences through which the higher principles are passing.

Q. Under what circumstances is this wraith seen?

A. Sometimes, in cases of illness or very strong passion on the part of the person seen or the person who sees; the possibility is mutual. A sick person especially just before death, is very likely to see in dream, or vision, those whom he loves and is continually thinking of, and so also is a person awake, but intensely thinking of a person who is asleep at the time.

Q. Can a Magician summon such a dreaming entity and have intercourse with it?

A. In black Magic it is no rare thing to evoke the "spirit" of a sleeping person; the sorcerer may then learn from the apparition any secret he chooses, and the sleeper be quite ignorant of what is occurring. Under such circumstances that which appears is the *Mayavi rupa*; but there is always a danger that the memory of the living man will preserve the recollections of the evocation and remember it as a vivid dream. If it is not, however, at a great distance, the Double or *Linga Sarira* may be evoked, but this can neither speak nor give information, and there is always the possibility of the sleeper being killed through this forced separation. Many sudden deaths in sleep have thus occurred, and the world been no wiser.

Q. Can there be any connection between a dreamer and an entity in "Kama Loka"?

A. The dreamer of an entity in *Kama Loka* would probably bring upon himself a nightmare, or would run the risk of becoming "possessed" by the "spook" so attracted, if he happened to be a medium, or one who had made himself so passive during his waking hours that even his higher Self is now unable to protect him. This is why the mediumistic state of passivity is so dangerous, and in time renders the Higher Self

entirely helpless to aid or even warn the sleeping or entranced person. Passivity paralyzes the connection between the lower and higher principles. It is very rare to find instances of mediums who, while remaining passive *at will*, for the purpose of communicating with some higher Intelligence, some *exterraneous* spirit (not disembodied), will yet preserve sufficiently their personal will so as not to break off all connection with the higher Self.

Q. Can a dreamer be "en rapport" with an entity in Devachan?

A. The only possible means of communicating with Devachanees is during sleep by a dream or vision, or in trance state. No Devachanee can descend into our plane; it is for us — or rather our *inner Self* — to ascend to his.

Q. What is the state of mind of a drunkard during sleep?

A. It is no real sleep, but a heavy stupor; no physical rest, but worse than sleeplessness, and kills the drunkard as quickly. During such stupor, as also during the waking drunken state, everything turns and whirls round in the brain, producing in the imagination and fancy horrid and grotesque shapes in continual motion and convolutions.

Q. What is the cause of nightmare, and how is it that the dreams of persons suffering from advanced consumption are often pleasant?

A. The cause of the former is simply physiological. A nightmare arises from oppression and difficulty in breathing; and difficulty in breathing will always create such a feeling of oppression and produce a sensation of impending calamity. In the second case, dreams become pleasant because the consumptive grows daily severed from his material body, and more clairvoyant in proportion. As death approaches, the body wastes away and ceases to be an impediment or barrier between the brain of the physical man and his Higher Self.

Q. Is it a good thing to cultivate dreaming?

A. It is by cultivating the power of what is called "dreaming" that clairvoyance is developed.

Q. Are there any means of interpreting dreams — for instance, the interpretations given in dream-books?

A. None but the clairvoyant faculty and the spiritual intuition of the "interpreter." Every dreaming Ego differs from every other, as our physical bodies do. If everything in the universe has seven keys to its symbolism on the physical plane, how many keys may it not have on higher planes?

Q. Is there any way in which dreams may be classified?

A. We may roughly divide also dreams into seven classes, and subdivide these in turn. Thus, we would divide them into: —

1. Prophetic dreams. These are impressed on our memory by the Higher Self, and are generally plain and clear: either a voice heard or the coming event foreseen.
2. Allegorical dreams, or hazy glimpses of realities caught by the brain and distorted by our fancy. These are generally only half true.
3. Dreams sent by adepts, good or bad, by mesmerisers, or by the thoughts of very powerful minds bent on making us do their will.
4. Retrospective; dreams of events belonging to past incarnations.
5. Warning dreams for others who are unable to be impressed themselves.
6. Confused dreams, the causes of which have been discussed above.
7. Dreams which are mere fancies and chaotic pictures, owing to digestion, some mental trouble, or such-like external cause.

ATTRACTION AND REPULSION — *Lydia Ross*

If Science — with a capital S — should come out boldly with the pronouncement that "love does make the world go round," that *would* be "news." The Man-in-the-street would be faced with a new issue: Has Science gone sentimental or super-sensible? Such a departure from accepted concepts of Mother Nature's operation of our globe, would certainly be a change of front 4-plus. Modern Science has worked steadily for several decades to free its own tangible realm of verifiable facts from the intangible elements of the personal equation. The realm of physics has become the field of causes which, in turn, are also the standard of realities. The mind, emotions, insight, imaginations, and all such elements of unstable play have been catalogued among the *effects* of material forces, and, at most, have been granted a psycho-physiological rating.

However, there are rare ultra-modern scientists who, having followed matter to its "singular points" of ethereality, believe that the secret of life must be found within man himself, rather than in the laboratory. For instance, note Eddington's "discovery" that when we look into our own nature, we find that the physical universe fails to be "co-extensive with our experience of reality." Jeans, in turn, concludes that the controlling power of the universe has something "in common with our own individual minds."

Scientists, in dealing with the atom — — which is a grade of astral substance with condensed energy — have reached the borderland of refined material where it merges into the next or lower level of ethereal substance. This emergence is as simple, as natural, and as scientific as where H₂O emerges from its heavier state of water to expand into steam, and then manifest its energy as ethereal gas. Always, it is the One Life which finds fitting expression for its varied phases on all planes from the divine to the physical. The interplay of spirit and matter — or force and substance — is a universal law in the

career of sun and planets as it is in that of human beings. Man's mind and emotions and aspirations are not by-products of his brain and functioning organs, but are essential elements of his composition, and are of greater dynamic force than are the forces of his body.

The Ancients did not divorce man from Nature, in their majestic science of Life. They saw him as the microcosm of the macrocosm. Evidently, man evolves, or revolves, through recurring cycles of daily, yearly, and lifetime experience of both inner and outer kinds. Inwardly, he is poised at some angle between his invisible aspirations and his lower desires, impelled into motion by the counter attractions of his better and his baser self. Likewise the revolving globe he lives on is an entity not poised quite upright itself as it turns around in its cycles of experience. It, too, is held in space by invisible attraction and repulsion, the dual forces of "gravitation." The globe, being a magnet, is responsive to the spiritual forces of the sun and to the material forces of the solar system. The sun draws the earth onward with the power of life and light and progressive well-being, and brings it and the solar family into new regions of space by overcoming the backward pull. The spiritual attraction felt by the earth for the sun is, in essence, what pure human love is, writ large — an enduring impersonal romance of fidelity and charm, on the inner plane of the sidereal kingdom.

Human love manifests at all levels of man's composite nature. From intensely selfish phases at the lowest level, it ascends the scale in ever greater degree to the plane where the impersonal mental nature merges into the spiritual nature. Here, in its higher ranges where it has free play, it is an irresistible force. It is not to be located in the research laboratory by analytical or synthetical methods. Nevertheless, the present chaotic state of a so-called civilized world without Brotherhood is convincing negative evidence of its vital existence.

Some one has said that the "heart has reasons which reason never knows." That explains some positive evidence of the coordinating and evolutionary force of love which appeared in *The Science News Letter* of May 13, 1939. We read that Dr. Harold M. Skeels, Psychologist of

Iowa Board of Control of State Institutions, and Dr. Harold B. Dye, Supt. of the Institute for Feeble-Minded Children at Glenwood, Iowa, had a significant experience. Thirteen feeble-minded children from the orphanage were placed in the care of *feeble-minded young women* with the oversight of a house matron. As a result, some of these children made a gain of forty points in IQ, and all but one of them are *now rated normal in intelligence*. The doctors attribute the gain to a wealth of play materials, space and supervision for play, *varied experience*, and *much love and affection*. In the orphanage where they came from, twelve other children rated normal mostly, were found drifting back toward feeble-mindedness. This condition was ascribed to overcrowded cottages where there was enough medical and physical care, but the children were "mentally emaciated for want of adult affection and stimulation."

The *News* item did not state the gains of the backward young foster mothers who were given the care of something alive that appealed to the latent power in their hungry hearts and dormant minds. That, naturally, would enter into the reckoning of cause and effect. Altogether, the striking results have been regarded as a challenge to revise orphanage methods generally. Not the least significant part of the case is the doctors' recognition of the unique force of loving-kindness to turn the dim world of these little ones into a childhood's natural day of warmth and light. A medical psychology with so humanistic a "vision" of the needs of the whole nature argues for a scientific rating of "super-sensible" in its IQ. Dr. G. de Purucker's slogan rings true in the realms of Nature and in that of human nature: "Love is the cement of the Universe."

The Theosophical Forum

DOES THE LAW OF CYCLES IMPLY PREDESTINATION? — *H. T. Edge*

Some people may have asked themselves this question, wondering how, if all manifestation runs according to calculable cycles, there can be any possibility of independent action or any power of originating events. But this comes largely from taking a too rigid and mechanical view of the law of cycles, as if the universe were a sort of clock with cogs and pinions. In the universe the cogs and pinions are living beings endowed with spontaneity in varying degrees according to their evolutionary status. That the course of events does run in cycles is matter of observation; it is also matter of observation that such cycles do not rigidly confine our actions. The cycles of day and year come round unfaillingly and may be predicted with confidence for an indefinite future. Are we constrained by them? Well, we have to sow our grain at the right season and put on our woollens in the winter — unless indeed we choose to do otherwise, which is not wise. Why do we so often boggle over difficulties in the teachings as to cosmic laws, when we can find the solution within the limits of common experience? As the small, so is the great. As to freewill, if it means liberty to do what we want, we shall find that it is necessary to take into account the wants of other beings, two-legged or otherwise. If we intend to be a law unto ourself, we may get away with it for awhile, but a day of reckoning will surely come.

The great seers have been able to discover what are the laws of cosmic evolution for the manvantara we are in. These laws are inherent in the nature of the great Being who is manifesting Itself, and they unfold themselves in an inevitable course, according to a calculable plan of cycles. We, being essential parts of that great Being — of that Universe — play the several roles allotted to us, thus fulfilling our own sublime destiny and purpose, which is far greater than anything we may presume to call by the name of freewill — or freewont.

"OUR GALAXY, A SUPER-BRAIN" — C. Q. W.

Among the many fanciful stories published under the general classification of "scientific fiction" one is occasionally found to contain an amazing thought from the ancient wisdom. Such is a very short story printed in the current number (June, 1939) of *Science Fiction*.

The plot is trite — the invention of a receiver which picks up thought currents, with disastrous results to the inventor. But the finale of the story is noteworthy.

"A colossal brain, somewhere in space, and I'm listening to it Its power and intelligence — vast beyond belief. A super-brain, talking by thought to other super brains somewhere — ."

"Cosmic rays? Then cosmic rays are really the thought-waves of the super-brain? But they can't be — it's been proved that cosmic rays emanate from the stars of our galaxy."

"They do! But the stars are only atoms in larger space, and in that larger space the star-atoms could combine to form living matter, thinking matter, couldn't they?"

"Our galaxy, a mass of star-atoms gathered together into living, thinking matter — our galaxy is the super-brain!"

With the above, compare the following, quoted by H P Blavatsky (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 541) from an ancient Commentary. "*The sun is the heart of the Solar World (System) and its brain is hidden behind the (visible) Sun.*"

Everywhere — in science, in the pulpit, in the theater, in fiction — the Ancient Wisdom is once more coming into its own Soon the world will be compelled to recognise this priceless heritage, the corner-stone of religion, science, and philosophy, so long rejected.

THE LONG VIEW OF EVOLUTION — *Ira B. Crane*

Inability to take the long view has resulted in many a business failure. Anyone who has lived through a real-estate boom in a new town has seen business concerns come to birth like mushrooms, and like mushrooms, from unsoundness interiorly, wither into doubtfuls, and suddenly disappear. These failures have usually profited more in a few months than did the enduring firms in the same length of time, because the latter knew when they were mortgaging their own future, and chose to forego quick profit rather than to lose the respect and trust of a client.

In the school of life the soul stands to gain or to lose by our reaction to our experiences; were it only the personality, we should never have to learn to take the long view. This is why Theosophists are, to some critics, surprisingly inactive in using will power to meet that most popular of all demands today: "How shall I get rid of my ailments, mental and physical? Where shall I find a cure?" If the cry were, "Tell me the cause of my disease in a story that will satisfy my mind, my intellect, and my heart, so that I may gladly lay down my personal burdens, and forget myself, and take up the cause of humanity and sin no more," what a different appeal, and what a different treatment would be called forth!

This question was put to me by a friend, who had rejoiced with many in their relief, by faith cures, from suffering, but whose enthusiasm was now cooling because she had found that a certain smugness since the cure seemed to make further inquiry into the wisdom of the ages not only impossible and unnecessary, but an offense against their new discovery.

My reply to her question was prepared in my mind, for I had a very close relative who had become more separate and egotistical since her cure. I said: "What I deplore is the lack of interest they take in the long

view ahead of them. How much unnecessary karma they could save themselves by thinking about evolution, instead of thinking about heaven. Because of this they do not think it worth while to settle down to mental training or to strict moral discipline. It is exactly this settling down to the idea of lives of opportunity ahead and time for intellectual and spiritual development, attained through service, that brings peace, so that the mind can be stilled. The soul then expands, revealing a background of culture and poise from stored-up experience. How interesting to Theosophists is the distinction between culture and civilization that is made by the Reverend H. E. Fosdick of New York. He shows that culture is what we are; civilization is what we use — and are not getting anywhere with.

I went on to unburden my mind: "The habit of taking the long view brings a state of self-forgetfulness, and this is the best cure for mental and physical ills. It leaves no place for the popular urgency to get results — not, of course, that illness should be neglected. But it is a fact that to take up the service of humanity as one's life work, feeling sure that one's own evolution will look after itself, is a preventive. Educators in all lines seek to discover the prevention, while, of course, with the knowledge they have gained they try to cure or alleviate suffering. Many diseases are hangovers from a former life and are fortunately working their way out. By those who do not understand this, disease is often forced back, postponed, and this brings about an emotional change in the patient that is mistaken for a change of heart. A little knowledge is not enough to fit one to teach. A true Teacher shows a man how to become human. Teach a man to save himself by knowing his sevenfold constitution and the reaction of nature upon him, and he will prefer to treat his ills philosophically and kindly, and be happy in doing it. His vision of the long road before him will help him to forget his lower nature until it has to back off the stage and disappear."

"Virtue is then the norm, the sane state. It is a more subtle process than becoming converted or substituting virtues — for what could be more misleading than the spiritual pride of consciously having virtues? It is just this that prevents the "becoming as little children." Here only can

culture of the soul begin. The student now begins to think of the soul-life, rather than the one life of the personality. It was Irving Babbitt, the Harvard humanist, who warned against the "will to power" being used by those who do not understand the process of change that takes place by living the life of decorum, or the middle way. How different, he said, was the "will to affection" that must be born in a man before he can be of service to humanity. This "will to affection" is the child of much discipline, as Theosophists face it, and is not by any means a prize for converts one and all." My friend sighed, "In contrast with the present-day anxiety to get rid of things, with the relatively little inspiration following the supposed clearance, one's mind turns to its early inspirations such as the plea made by Jeremy Taylor for the "passive graces" of patience, meekness, and charity; and to Milton's attitude towards his own blindness, and the gifts of the soul that it bestowed upon him: ". . . if the choice were necessary, I would, Sir, prefer my blindness to yours." These churchmen understood how soul-culture was attained."

"Yes," I agreed, "Since we began this discussion I see two reasons why a true Teacher is more than ever needed after people have become aroused from their spiritual sleep. A Teacher would never cure a man suddenly and advise him to go into meditation. He would show him how to go about to weaken his passions, so that his aggressively trained nature would not beset him and work against him; thus causing an emotional turmoil equal to leading a man into a jungle and leaving him there — a state that makes the finding of the true Path in this life a precarious one, and often leaves the heart more crystallized."

"Another case," I continued, "is the man who has through certain religious striving gained unity with his divine soul. What does it profit him if the conundrum of his human soul is unfathomed? This latter is the soul that he is evolving. A Teacher, in this case, would probably not encourage the mystic in him, but would awaken his rational and philosophical nature, so that balance and understanding of his sevenfold constitution would result. The desire for tasting the ripe fruit immediately, and the consequent suffering, would diminish to its

rightful place in his evolutionary journey."

"This does seem an unusually difficult age to work one's own way through," my friend replied. "It is an age when the three aspects of human consciousness are awakened. We demand a Teacher who can lift the veil and show the long view. The student sees then that even the Masters are still humbly striving better to know themselves, rather than to get more out of the universe. His new vision would then allow him to take Jesus seriously when he said that man could hope to do greater things than he himself had done. It is possible with evolution. The seeing eye and the hearing ear now have something to see and to hear, on the guided upward journey of the pilgrim."

"I know," she continued, "that some people come to birth with this atmosphere of true culture that nothing but evolution makes possible. They make great progress with such a background; others, who have done too much substituting within themselves of one thing for another of more personal value, have the habits of impatience and doubt so instilled that they lull themselves in blind faith and a smile. Surely nothing but the soul-qualities will count as energies when certain types of reincarnating egos are being chosen for the leading races of the future."

The Theosophical Forum

THE HIERARCHICAL SYSTEM OF THE T. S. — G. de Purucker

What is meant by the phrase: the hierarchical system of the Theosophical Society?

Most people seem to think it means this: that the system of government in the T. S. is a great big boss at the top, delegating authority to smaller bosses but yet big ones who are the Presidents of the National Sections; and these, passing down the hierarchical system of authority, delegating their bossism to still smaller bosses, who are the Presidents of the Lodges, in other words that the hierarchical system of the T. S. is but a delegated system of bosses; and that is absolutely false and wrong — mischievous.

What we mean when we say the hierarchical system of government in the T. S. is simply the following: As in all else, we endeavor to copy our Brothers of the stars, of nature, in our case the gods who govern and inspire nature. Their system of government, if you will examine it, is not a system of bosses or autocrats or dictators in nature, for you won't see that anywhere. *But* a single body-corporate, a universe, a solar system; our own T. S., infilled with one life, having at its head a head; but every individual unit or limb of the body-corporate as free and independent in its own sphere as the top head in his, and maybe more so. Because under the hierarchical system of government of the spirit, the higher you go along the ladder upwards, the more the chief or head becomes the servant. It is the gods who serve the most, who are the servers of all below; so that as I, as the present Leader, have often said, quoting a Christian saying, *Ego sum servus servorum Dei*: I am the servant of the servants of the Divine.

The higher your soul is raised in understanding, the higher your hierarchical rung, the more universal you become, the more comprehensive — you take in more. The lower you are in the evolutionary development, the less you understand the universality of

things, and the more you want to gather in to yourself: constriction. The I comes uppermost. There is no autocrat, there is no despot, there is no worshiper of force, so fanatic as precisely he whose ideas are the least universal, the least spiritual; for spirituality means universality. The biggest boss in nature is precisely he who is not big enough to take others into his life. Do you catch it? Bossism means the imbodiment of selfishness: "I" and "my way."

The government of the T. S. is this: Every National Section is autonomous under the provisions of the Constitution of the T. S. This means it runs its own affairs as it will, well or badly. The Leader never interferes with the internal affairs of a National Section. Should he be asked for help, for advice, for counsel, he gives it instantly; but always with the reminder: Remember, Companions, you will never learn what responsibility is, you will never learn how to stand on your own feet, and do your own job like men, until you are willing to do it. I have refused a thousand times, I should think, to give advice which would have had the effect of making people look upon the Leader as a kind of Delphic Oracle, to whom they could come expecting him to bear the burden of all their own internal difficulties, solve all their problems, and do their thinking. I said: No! This guaranteeing under the Constitution of the individual freedom of the various units of the T. S. is my side of the problem and my duty and my happiness.

Another side of the picture is that throwing these dear people back upon themselves, they become men. They begin to think, begin to work. They thus feel their own responsibilities. And do you know, that is some of the finest training you can give to a good man, to put responsibility on his shoulders. Tell him to go do it. Then he does something, then he becomes an achiever instead of a dreamer or a leaner.

Similarly, within a National Section every Lodge is autonomous under the provisos of the Constitution of the T. S., and the By-laws of the Section. In other words, every Lodge in the T. S., in subordination to the Constitution and its national by-laws, can do exactly as it pleases, run

its own affairs without interference from anyone. If the members of a Lodge make a hash of it, so much the worse. Then they are in hot water! But they learn from it.

Now, where is your system of bossism in all this? It is just the opposite. This system is based upon the inherent elements so dear to the human heart; the inherent, the fundamental, elements of human psychology and spirituality. Our fundamental law is a freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, and freedom of action, and courtesy towards others, and brotherly love. The Leader's job is not only to keep the peace, but to see that these laws of freedom are held inviolate. These are glorious and beautiful ideas and ideals, the tradition of the heart of mankind. Freedom is fearless, slavery is always an abject hatred; and there is no slavery like that of selfishness, inability to see that the other man has just as many inherent rights in freedom and in duty as you have, no more, no less. He is a human being, your brother. He has the same right to think and feel in liberty of conscience; and as long as he conducts himself as a man and a gentleman should, in the T. S., there is no power that will gainsay him.

This hierarchical plan is based on nature. Look at the Solar System. The sun infills his kingdom with light and with life, and all within that kingdom are held subordinate to these common principles. But every planet follows its own path, spins on its own axis, produces its own inhabitants, has its own individuality, breeds its own productions: one common life, one common ideal, all in indissoluble unity, yet freedom under the law or constitution. That is the T. S. Authority is delegated from the Leader to the National Presidents, from them to the Lodge Presidents and officials, to see that these simple principles of our Constitution be carried out.

Any member of the T. S. of course has a full right of appeal to his Lodge President or to his National Secretary or President, or even direct to the Leader, if he think he does not get adequate justice; but actually, while this right exists, it is more or less academic. In the ordinary course, so dearly are these principles cherished, that the right of appeal is

exercised, if ever, with extremest rarity; for all our members realize that the most straightforward and honorable way, if an injustice should ever occur, is to lodge an appeal with the immediate official superior, who thereupon transmits the appeal, if he himself cannot determine it, a step farther along, etc.

Hierarchical? Yes, because we live in an indissoluble unity of ideas, and ideals, and in one common life, in one common inspiration, in one common love and one common code of brotherly law. Not written, this code, but engraved in our hearts by our Theosophical traditions and teachers. And one fundamental law written, but likewise living in our hearts: the Constitution of the T. S. Show me any bossism in this system, the big boss at the top, delegating to smaller bosses and then to smaller ones still, the authority to rule more or less arbitrarily — for that is what real bossism is; and any man who says to any other man, "You should believe as I do," is a tyrant, and in his heart has no conception of the blessings of liberty, freedom. There is not an atom of such bossism in the T. S., not an atom; and the Presidents of our National Sections and the Lodge Presidents are coming more and more to understand all this, for they have always loved it. The more they can give of brotherly love and understanding and helpfulness to other Theosophists, the closer they will come to the spiritual life to which we incline our hearts in reverence.

The Theosophical Forum

"REINCARNATION FOR EVERYMAN" (1) — *H. T. Edge*

The truths of Theosophy, brought to us by H. P. Blavatsky seventy years ago, have gradually infiltrated the world of thought until today we find Reincarnation and Karma the subject of essays and novels by well-known popular authors. This means that those doctrines will reach a public larger in numbers and different in kind than could be reached by the usual channels of propaganda: it is only a minority who go in search of truths; a majority wait until it is brought to their doors; moreover they will attend to teachings which reach them in this way, whereas prejudice and habit might have left them long unaware of the existence of the teachings if conveyed through the medium of societies and cults.

Any doctrine, in thus passing from its source through successive strata, undergoes modifications in accordance with laws of evolution. It becomes less abstract and universal, more particularized and adapted to conditions. Its technical terms are translated into familiar equivalents. It is an interesting question to consider the phenomena of such an evolution. It is not feasible to regard the process as wholly one of gain or of loss. Conservation and change are inseparable components of growth; an excess of either is disastrous — hide-bound dogmatism on the one hand, unrestrained license and promiscuity on the other. It may be supposed that H. P. Blavatsky neither expected nor wished to force upon the world a hard-and-fast ready-made creed, like some desk-made constitution palmed off upon a nation striving to rebuild after a revolution. What she anticipated was a leavening of thought along the lines she laid down. And is not this what we are witnessing? There are certain things which must be kept intact, not because they are dogmatic creeds, but because they are universal truths; and it is the duty of Theosophists, while watching the spread of their ideals in the world, to preserve inviolable the source whence the stream has flowed, and to balance the claims of permanence and

flexibility.

We have seen the noble truths of Reincarnation and Karman take many strange forms in the hands of some; for the husbandman had scattered his seeds generously, fall where they might. But no such charge can be brought against the present writer, who dwells on a high plane of thought and feeling. He is the author of *World-Birth, We Do Not Die*, and several novels; he has a wide public, and his little book will serve as an admirable introduction of his subject to those for whom it is untrodden ground. In short, we may regard it as a popular Theosophical manual. We are taken over ground familiar to Theosophists: the definition of reincarnation, the testimony in favor of it, the internal evidences of its truth, answers to the usual objections, and so forth. The author writes as a Christian, but, it must be conceded, a very liberal one, since he includes reincarnation as a part. God is for him the supreme ruler of the universe.

While admitting the compound nature of man, he prefers to limit himself chiefly to a tripartite division into body, soul, and spirit, or (as might be said) the lower, intermediate, and higher nature. In this we think he is wise, considering the end in view; as is also his refusal to be drawn into the discussion of origins and questions of infinitude. His inclination to present life under the aspect of love and beauty may prove a useful antidote to anyone who tends to represent the universe in a too cold and abstract guise. In speaking of the justice of Karman, he does not view that justice as the decree of an emotionless lawgiver, but as a manifestation of universal Love; which reminds us of Portia. Love is for him the universal law and spirit of all things; it is also the goal of human endeavor, after ages of successive rebirths shall have cleaned away the dross of self-seeking. Jesus is for him what we should call a *Nirmanakaya*, no longer necessitated to reincarnate, but accepting birth out of compassion for those yet on the way. And here we may point out that he represents the discarnate soul as having the choice whether or not to reincarnate, though he qualifies this by the statement that, nevertheless, that soul must sooner or later elect to visit earth again for purposes of its own necessary experience. Theosophists

say that the soul is drawn back to earth by *trishna*, the thirst for physical life, which cannot be resisted but by those who through long experience have succeeded in overcoming that thirst.

On this question of love, however, the author expresses some views with which most Theosophists will hesitate to concur. For instance we read the following:

We are passing from a materialist to a spiritual view of life and death, with Man and his partner, Woman, realizing, not only by faith but by demonstration, that they are immortal spirits, (p. 7)

Again and again we drop the thread of our love-story, but to pick it up either here or "Over There," which is the home of the "twin soul." I say it with all seriousness. The "twin soul" is fact. We do so return over and over again to earth to meet her or him whom we have loved — and lost but to find again, (p. 95)

Difficulty in discussing this question arises from the fact that it so readily lends itself to the raising of false issues. Theosophists, in stating their case, may be charged with a lack of appreciation of the power of love between the sexes, or with some temperamental or physical coldness, or lack of experience, or cynicism due to disillusionment, and so forth. This however is by no means the case; the kind of people thus indicated would not find themselves at home in the ranks of a society calling for energy and enthusiasm, depth of feeling and a fully developed nature. If fault is to be found with this writer, it is surely not with his ideals, of whose elevation we have such abundant proof, but with his manner of expressing some of them. What means purity and nobility for him will mean something quite different for others of a different mental caliber; and the experience of many Theosophists has taught them what such a term as "twin soul" may be made to stand for.

We would observe that what the author himself says about reincarnation scarcely bears out the idea that sex pertains to the reincarnating entity. Is it not rather, conformably to the author's own expositions, one of those qualities which belong to the temporary and

changing embodiments? Human love between the sexes derives its power and sublimity from its being a manifestation of that cosmic and impersonal love of which the author speaks so finely; but from its mixture with earthy and passionate elements it also derives that alloy which notoriously and proverbially makes it as fruitful of gall as of honey. Love between the sexes is truly a redeemer, opening for man the gates that lead him beyond selfishness and acquisitiveness; and the vicissitudes of feeling which it engenders are man's teachers. But many a soul, while still on earth, has passed beyond to regions where love, undisturbed by passion, unlimited by personality, has revealed its sublimer mysteries. Much more so, then, when the liberated Soul, no longer snared in the illusions of earth-life, rests in that land where they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

This writer dwells on psychic survival, spiritualistic phenomena, and similar matters, usually passed by or disparaged by Theosophical writers. But we must remember that he is not a Theosophical writer, but one who writes for the world he lives in. And it may be added that, while it is incumbent on Theosophists to draw clearly the distinction between psychic and spiritual, they would do so to better effect if they had a more intimate knowledge of what is actually going on in the world. To dismiss a matter lightly with a few vague and general statements will not satisfy people who want an explanation of real experiences.

One finds in this book, as elsewhere in advocacy, the attempt to prop a good case with bad arguments, and the use of arguments which neutralize each other. Thus, while the frequent mention of reincarnation by writers of all ages is adduced in support of a universal belief in reincarnation, yet when it comes to the silence of the Old Testament writers on the subject, that very silence is adduced in support of the same thesis. They were silent because reincarnation was so well known that it was needless to mention it. Again, it is stated that

They also forget that their objections do not make reincarnation

any the less a fact! Nature shows a magnificent indifference to human revolt!

That is, the *argumentum ad hominem*, the appeal to feeling, is rejected on logical grounds; yet it would be difficult to show that this same appeal to feeling is nowhere used throughout this book as an argument in favor of the case. But we are all guilty of this; and in a world where people are moved by their feelings, it is legitimate to use rhetoric as well as logic.

The question of reincarnation and heredity presents no difficulty, for the teachings as to Karman and Reincarnation are seen to be complementary to the scientific findings. The adducing of physical resemblance and habits between Elijah and John as evidences of reincarnation involves the assumption that successive incarnations have such resemblances; whereas from what is said elsewhere we might infer differences. According to Theosophy there may even be a difference of sex. There is a good deal in this book as to cases which are regarded as direct proof of reincarnation, the memory of past lives, recognitions, etc. This is a question fraught with grave danger of delusion, and such mental impressions may be explained otherwise than by reincarnation. The author makes a quotation often made by Theosophists — "In my Father's house are many mansions" — which he interprets as meaning that many different experiences await us in the course of our incarnations. He believes that there is no permanent and unchanging heaven or hell; that inspiration and genius are memory — the familiar Platonic doctrine; that Karma is not fatalism, as it does not preclude the action of will and freedom of choice; that "good" and "bad" are epithets often ignorantly applied to our fate; that the physical differences between planes of matter are differences of vibration rather than of density; that after death we pass to a world which we have prepared for ourselves by our own desires, good or bad, refined or coarse; that the personality is a temporary and limited affair, circumscribing the true individuality; and many other ideas familiar to Theosophists.

But we must close, with the regret that space has allowed us to quote only one of the passages we had marked:

I, who believe in no dogma, belong to no Church, shall hope to prove, that every man and woman of us all, from prince to peasant, from queen to kitchen-maid, gets a second chance. Not one second chance, but hundreds. That all of us are on a path which leads through eternity as inevitably to the stars as that the stars themselves hang high above us to beckon us on the road. And, finally, that, life after life, death is but the dying into new life, more abundant, more comprehensive.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Reincarnation for Everyman*. By Shaw Desmond. London: Andrew Dakers.1939. 5s. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY SPEAKS FOR HERSELF

H. P. B.'s "Grand Manner" (1)

The signal-fires of the olden times, which, lighted and extinguished by turns upon one hill-top after another, conveyed intelligence along a whole stretch of country, so we see a long line of "wise" men from the beginning of history down to our own times communicating the word of wisdom to their direct successors. Passing from seer to seer, the "Word" flashes out like lightning, and while carrying off the initiator from human sight forever, brings the new initiate into view. Meanwhile, whole nations murder each other in the name of another "Word" an empty substitute accepted literally by each, and misinterpreted by all! — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 571

We would that all who have a voice in the education of the masses should first know and then *teach* that the safest guides to human happiness and enlightenment are those writings which have descended to us from the remotest antiquity; and that nobler spiritual aspirations and a higher average morality prevail in the countries where the people take their precepts as the rule of their lives. We would have all to realize that magical, *i. e.*, spiritual powers exist in every man, and those few to practice them who feel called to teach, and are ready to pay the price of discipline and self-conquest which their development exacts.

Many men have arisen who had glimpses of the truth, and fancied they had it all. Such have failed to achieve the good they might have done and sought to do, because vanity has made them thrust their personality into such undue prominence as to interpose it between their believers and the *whole* truth that lay behind. The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church — the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter but

penetrable by any one who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God.*
— *Isis Unveiled*, II, 635

As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colors of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, in passing through the three-sided prism of man's nature, has been broken up into vari-colored fragments called RELIGIONS. And, as the rays of the spectrum, by imperceptible shadings, merge into each other, so the great theologies that have appeared at different degrees of divergence from the original source, have been connected by minor schisms, schools, and off-shoots from the one side or the other. Combined, their aggregate represents one eternal truth; separate, they are but shades of human error and the signs of imperfection.

For the purposes of a philosophical analysis, we need not take account of the enormities which have blackened the record of many of the world's religions. True faith is the embodiment of divine charity; those who minister at its altars, are but human. As we turn the blood-stained pages of ecclesiastical history, we find that, whoever may have been the hero, and whatever costumes the actors may have worn, the plot of the tragedy has ever been the same. But the Eternal Night was in and behind it all, and we pass from what we see to that which is invisible to the eye of sense. Our fervent wish has been to show true souls how they may lift aside the curtain, and, in the brightness of that Night made Day, look with undazzled gaze upon the UNVEILED TRUTH. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 640

FOOTNOTE:

1. H. P. Blavatsky was a Russian, and in Russia was accepted as one of the literary geniuses of the country. What is perhaps not so well recognized is her high standing as a stylist in English; even in this language her accomplishments are outstanding, her power of literary expression often lifting one to magnificent heights of inspiration. Her great work was to teach, to give anew to the world the Ancient Wisdom-Religion. She was not concerned merely with style or literary form. Yet one cannot fail to recognize and to acknowledge the literary

genius that burned behind her words. As witness of this we give a few extracts from her earliest work *Isis Unveiled*, taken from the last seventy-five pages. Throughout her voluminous writings students may without much effort find similar paragraphs written in "the Grand Manner." — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

On Initiation

Do we in initiation, or in the growth in purity through long years or ages of effort before initiation, drop or get rid of the influence of such evil planets as the earth, or the moon, or Saturn, or do we skip any of them?

A. B. C. — The initiate certainly has to overcome and eliminate from his nature all "evil" influences whatsoever, but he does not skip anything. Every element in Nature, the earth, the moon, Mars and Saturn, and every other planet, principle, or element in Nature, has its correspondence in man and its rightful place and use, both in man and in the Cosmos. What the long training and final purification of the Initiate does is to completely purify all influences and put them to rightful and beneficent use, each in its proper place.

Initiation has to take place here on this earth, not in some distant point in space. Initiation is the ennobling, exaltation and perfection of Manhood. Negative virtue does not accomplish this. It takes loving thoughtfulness for others, knowledge, wisdom and power to become an Initiate. The Initiate becomes a man-god radiating divine beneficence to all that lives. And his locus is here on earth.

Does initiation mean the killing of personality with all its evil passions, and is this done by renouncing the world?

A. B. C. — The personality is not killed. "The secret is transmutation, not murder," nor emasculation. No natural, inherent, principle or energy of the personality is destroyed. They are all purified and transmuted into higher more spiritual forms. Evil ceases by being replaced by good. The disciple does not leave the world. He renounces all selfish attachment thereto, without leaving or neglecting his duties therein. He lives in the world but not of it. He reverses the usual motives and lives not to get

and have and hold, but to give and love and serve. The personality is not killed. It is made the temple of a living god.

Destroyer or Preserver?

In *The Ocean of Theosophy*, page 50, when explaining the action of the hosts of minute lives that go to make up the human body it is stated that it is the Life Energy that kills. I understand this because I realize that it is the successful resistance set up by the human body against Prana and Jiva which makes life possible and that death ensues when the battle becomes unequal and the "Destroyers" win. What I do not understand is: If it is life-energy that kills why is it that this same life-energy in sleep rebuilds the body? — P. H.

L. G. P. — I think that we can best understand the action of life in relation to the human body by giving the illustration of a storage battery. Chemical action within the battery causes an electrical potential to be set up between the lead plates of the battery. But the battery must be charged with an electric current, and this process of charging the battery is analagous to the process of sleep. The flow of the electric current from the battery during its use is what runs it down and breaks down the potential between the plates, and this is analagous to the fatigue of the body after a day of activity. With the storage battery, it is electricity that does the work of charging up the battery and of running it down, the difference being that in the one case the electricity is supplied from the battery itself, and flows in a certain direction, and in the other, for charging the battery, electric current flowing in the opposite direction is sent *into* it, thus restoring the potential. Now, during the normal life of the battery, the materials of which it is composed are able to stand the wear and tear of the charging and the use, but in time their molecular structure breaks down, and the battery is worn out, and refuses to take a charge. Thus, you see, it is the electricity, the life of the battery, that wears it out. Similarly, with the body of man, it is the life, taken in and expended that, flowing through the body, works its final destruction.

Anger and its Effect

Suppose a person wrote a letter to a newspaper anonymously, and its publication aroused the anger of a large group, would the vibrations of anger from this group reach and affect the writer of the letter? — W. G. S.

G. F. K. — The currents of the Astral Light on which all thoughts, feelings, and actions are projected, are not hampered by anonymity. We are inescapably interdependent, and in the plane of thought and feeling strongly affect each other continuously. Every time a man thinks, feels, or acts, he is leaving an indelible impression on his own astral body, and *pari passu* on the community Astral Light — the plastic reservoir of thought-deposits for earth and men — whose deceitful and turbulent currents sweep through the hearts and minds of men uninterruptedly. Hence, the anger of a large group of people would leave a correspondingly stronger impression on the general astral storehouse, creating a whirlpool of angry heat-waves which would find no difficulty in reaching the anonymous writer.

Would the writer be affected? That depends entirely upon himself. If he is even moderately sensitive, he is bound to perceive the barrage of distorted feeling hurled against him, but whether he would be *affected* would be conditioned solely by his character and interior development. No man needs to be affected by anything unless he is in sympathy with it. We are all human, however, and naturally are highly sensitive to the anger or praise of others, especially perhaps when we feel that our sincere efforts have been misunderstood. It may be, however, that we need to learn the gentler method of winning the support of good people through love rather than anger.

Those strong in wisdom, while momentarily feeling hurt perhaps at the stupidity of others, will not be greatly affected by the anger or malice, but will continue to fight for right even against the opposition of the whole world. Through long years of purification and self-discipline they have built up that tenuous barrier of self-protection which instantly repels and dispels disturbed astral currents, and which leaves

them free to act in harmony with the inner forces instead of against them.

Past Lives and Memory

In remembering our past lives, do we remember the good and bad parts of each life, or just the former? You know when we enter Devachan, we take only the higher attributes or aspirations with us after each death. The mean, low, ignoble qualities we discard at death. — E L. T. S.

C. J. Ryan — Fortunately for us, under normal conditions very few persons remember the incidents of their past lives. It would be an unbearable burden. The Masters say that it is no pleasure for them to look into their past or that of others, and that they only do so when duty makes it necessary. To face the record of past deeds and misdeeds may be one of the trials of initiation. For ordinary humans one serious danger in trying to force the way into the astral region where Nature's record-book is kept is that it tends to exaggerate our sense of personal egoism, already too dominant. Everything being recorded there, a fully developed clairvoyance such as that of an Adept would naturally perceive both the good and the bad; a photographic plate has no choice. In *The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky says that at the time of death every man sees the whole of the past life in its minutest details and realizes the justice of karman. At birth we have a similar experience extending even a little way into prevision of the future, owing to the perception of the causes we have sown in the past and must soon reap. A great panorama of the past lives is also unrolled at the close of the Round, and this is repeated "collectively" we are told, at the end of the planetary Manvantara. The case is different in Devachan, when a selection is made, a natural process takes place during which the grosser materials are filtered out and fall into abeyance for the time being.

WAYS OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS — *Lydia Ross*

Where the *Gita* says that "light and darkness are the world's eternal ways," it refers to mankind's choice of two opposite pathways. On one, humanity travels toward the spiritual light; on the other, men wander largely in spiritual darkness. The individual, in turn, feels the conflicting impulses of his own dual nature. At times, he feels the urge of aspiration to reclaim his spiritual birthright; often he loiters along the human levels of a thinking animal. He does not "know himself as a being destined to go forward at his own pace. The majority do not rise very high or sink very low. They have certain ideals — not too high. They are shocked by low crime and degradation which are accounted for as phases of, or due to, "human nature." The cases of unselfish service and wise nobility are not so labelled. Yet man's dual human mind acts with his spiritual impulses and desires as well as with his selfish emotions and plans. It is really his higher human nature acting when he does his best — his animal self would not do as well, and his wholly spiritual self would do even better.

Is it not logical to suppose that very exceptional men would so far evolve their higher nature as to overtop even the best of the majority? They would live in the "light," no longer confused by the shadows of selfishness and prejudice. Their horizon would be large enough to show an undercurrent of Purpose beneath the changing ripples of events. In short, they would be Masters of Life, what are called Mahatmans, or great souls. They would be supernormal compared with the majority, but never supernatural. Self-directed evolution is more natural in a human being than is stagnant existence.

Why thinking people can question the existence of the Masters who sent H. P. Blavatsky to found the Theosophical Society, is hard to understand. Is it because the thought-world has been so long confined to the "miserable sinner" estimate of the "sons of God," that it cannot imagine the reality of a super-type? Not that we recognize the taint of

this old theological half-truth in our thinking, or that we believe that the world is but 6,000 years old. But the shadow of such pious fictions still darkens our understanding of our present knowledge. The Ancients had a perspective in their view of man and his planet that showed a basic Purpose running through the history of the individual, the Race, and the Globe itself.

H. P. Blavatsky's story of herself as a Messenger from the Great White Lodge of Masters stands on its entire consistency with all the facts in the case. She and her work can be measured by no standard but that of a spiritual Warrior fighting against powers of darkness. She was chosen to bring "light from the East" at the end of the nineteenth century, as others had been sent regularly for several hundred years previously. It is significant of high hope for humanity now struggling through a transition period, that her hard-won victories in the eternal contest of light and darkness carried the Movement over into the present century. Not only did the outer work of the Lodge carry over for the first time, but it is growing steadily in numbers and influence, while all the world's affairs are stricken with uncertainty.

H. P. Blavatsky's work was to throw light on the problems of her day, as other Messengers did in their times. She revealed the inner meaning of Christian teachings which theology had misinterpreted. She foretold startling scientific facts which have since been rediscovered. She showed her knowledge and control of finer forces within man. She consciously produced greater phenomena than were appearing through entranced mediums in her day. She explained the rationale of these things which were not spiritual, but evidence of the astral realm of a finer grade of matter. These were timely topics; but her reasoning fell on deaf ears among the Scientists and Spiritualists.

Of the Messengers sent to Europe in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, we read:

Mesmer . . . was an initiated member of the Brotherhoods of the *Fratres Lucis* and of Lukshoor (or Luxor), or the Egyptian Branch of the latter. It was the Council of "Luxor" which selected

him — according to the orders of the "Great Brotherhood" — to act in the XVIIIth century as their usual pioneer, sent in the last quarter of every century to enlighten a small portion of the Western nations in occult lore. It was St. Germain who supervised the development of events in this case; and later Cagliostro was commissioned to help, but having made a series of mistakes, more or less fatal, he was *recalled*. Of these three men who were at first regarded as quacks, Mesmer is already vindicated. The justification of the two others will follow in the next century. Mesmer founded the "Order of Universal Harmony" in 1783, in which presumably only animal magnetism was taught, but which in reality expounded the tenets of Hippocrates, the methods of the ancient *Asclepieia*, the Temples of Healing, and many other occult sciences. —

Theosophical Glossary

In the work of these three Messengers, each showed supernatural knowledge and the power to handle hidden forces of mind and matter. They showed the many who were then selfishly seeking the elixir of life and the transmutation of metals, that the real secret was not in the laboratory but in man himself. They worked unselfishly to heal the sick and to help the poor. As friends, confidants and advisers of Kings and the highest and mightiest in many lands, they forewarned those in power of political intrigues and of the impending upheaval of the French Revolution. Of course, their biographies are many.

One biography, written in 1934, by Margaret Goldsmith, gives a detailed picture of Mesmer, based on an extensive bibliography dating from his time up to the present. The book shows painstaking research, and it presents the course of the man's career carefully. He is presented as a nature-loving youth with no intimates, fond of music always; in college, he greedily read physics, mathematics, astronomy, and especially Paracelsus. Graduated, he did casual tutoring, studied law briefly, and then medicine seriously, and began to practise as a physician. He was tall, dignified, kindly but impersonal and aloof, devoted to his patients, especially the poor, indifferent to fame,

personal ambition, and money; was calm and tolerant even with his jealous enemies and slanderers; he was a tireless worker with a one-pointed desire to prove the reality of his work that the world might benefit thereby. Having done his work, he retired, feeling that the world was not ready for the light of truth which he held.

We question the author's conclusion that Mesmer could not make the dogmatic scientists understand the action of the magnetic fluid because the subject was not clear in his mind. How could he define what he knew was an imponderable fluid to prejudiced men who could not imagine matter not subject to the laws of physics? A hundred years later, H. P. Blavatsky found the foremost scientific minds equally closed to more light upon subjects in their own lines. She spoke to deaf ears of the electronic nature of matter, of the divisible atom, etc., ancient teachings which Science has since rediscovered. No doubt Mesmer was understood when he spoke of the deeper mysteries to those who had "ears to hear" in his "Order of Universal Harmony." That part of his work was the giving of "meat to strong men" who were united in those dark days to stand firm as champions of the unfading light.

The Messengers are not free to tell all they know. Moreover, in spite of their unselfish lives and work, the opposing forces of darkness fight to keep the masses ignorant of the truth. Yet in every age there are the "few" who recognise and support the Teacher. To such as these the Avatara Jesus told of the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." Our author, sketching methods of healing, speaks — not irreverently — of Jesus as "intuitively one of the greatest psychologists," and proceeds to analyse his curative methods of "suggestion," faith, laying on of hands, the hypnotic effect of his presence, etc. With remarkable insight and rare common sense, she says, "He intuitively used methods which, nowadays, young medical practitioners are taught cut-and-dried in their textbooks." (page 12)

We question the author's interpretation of the work of Jesus. His cures, far from being a "step in the direction of modern psychotherapy," were leagues ahead of our cut-and-dried psychologists who reckon without

the soul. Statistics, show that only a small fraction of them even believe in post-mortem survival. Again, instead of a "hypnotic" benumbing of the sick man's will, the very "presence" of Jesus aroused vibrations in others who largely cured themselves by faith in the natural reality of wholeness. They saw it embodied in Him who was "the way, the truth, and the life."

It is historically false to say that H. P. Blavatsky was ever "a member of the Spiritualistic Church," or that "her theosophical doctrines sprang from her earlier belief in Spiritualism." (page 254-5.) She was not a member of the Spiritualist organization, nor ever accepted their belief in the return of disembodied "spirits." She defended them from wholesale charges of fraud, seeing in their phenomena the scientific evidence of a finer grade of substance, while meantime warning all of the dangers of negative mediumship. She understood the laws of the astral realm which interpenetrates the physical universe. Its substance is not more intangible than those radio wave-lengths that encircle the world with the speed of light. She got her occult training from the Masters who also directed her practical experience of traveling into all the corners of the globe before she began to teach Theosophy. She owed nothing to any, or all of the movements of her day. She understood them better than did their advocates who were but dimly responding to the cyclic revival of the Ancient Light of which she was the conscious Witness.

The Theosophical Movement has come down the ages, a Plan too vast to be measured in the uncertain light of our bewildered modern civilization. Nevertheless, the thread of Purpose can be seen if one reads between the lines of history and research, spelling out the larger truth in its own universal language.

THE NEW KNOWLEDGE — *M. G. Gowsell*

A age of dawn. Cock crows to cock from zone to zone across the darkened leagues, thrilling the multitudes that wait in tense unrest. The phoenix of that universal, long-debated lore of olden time is rising on the wing, to take the sovereign morn renewed, redight, refulgent in its pristine power to stir the heart of man. Behold the flickering shafts of light that grow, as man makes effort to attain — to re-attain his lost prestige and favor of the stars. The scroll, invisible to eyes of flesh, wherein the record of his ancient past is writ, unrolls, revealing to the inner eye old glories once achieved and then, alas, forgot. The mind of man knows not of this. But mind is not the man. 'Tis but his tool. The man who was and is and evermore shall be is here, at work, wherever he may have been a hundred thousand years ago. Here, now, today, we, onetime denizens of fabled lands from out the silent night of time, recapitulate and body forth once more the bygone things that were on land and sea and almost native to the air. Transition. Dawntide big with promise, transcendently beyond belief. Marvels, revelations concerning every realm of man's composite being, become the order of the day. No one is surprised. Wherefore should one be? These things return again. They are our own. Swift our strides, say we with pride, yet understanding not. Yet too unaware that this our rapid march is but a summing up, a repetition, a rehearsal and a brief review of what had long since seen the sun. Meanwhile the scroll, that all-recording blueprint of the past and of the soul, continues to unroll. The age of fable and the age of fact are intertwined. Tradition speaks. Step by step we run our recapitulation of a civilization allotted to a time when Titans wrought amid the roar of war on Chaos in her waning prime, wherein the self-same we strove mightily for centuries to then achieve what now may be again in days, because it had been once. Even now, as we proceed apace on outer lines and swiftly win material skill, the reassembled phoenix hovers nigh. Our newborn knowledge of terrestrial worth is but a paltry detail of the plan. The coming

knowledge is of MAN.

The Theosophical Forum

KNOWLEDGE WITHIN YOUR REACH — *H. T. Edge*

Our path in life is mostly determined by what we call chance or accident. But if laws of cause and effect are universal, there can be no such thing as chance or accident. True, we may use such words for convenience, to denote events whose cause we cannot trace; but chance in the real sense of the word would mean an effect without a cause, which is impossible by the hypothesis.

Hence we must accept the conclusion that even the most casual events come under the general law of causation; and we dare not take refuge in the argument that, because we cannot explain a thing, therefore it does not exist.

If I toss a coin to decide which of two things to do, it is usually said that I am leaving the decision to chance. But what can this mean? What is it that determines whether the coin will show heads or tails? The same with cards and many other such things. Divination is based on this. Those who practised divination knew that the fall of the cards, etc., was not due to mere chance, but that it was governed by law.

There is a whole universe of unexplored territory here waiting investigation. We do not discern the connexion between events: events seem to us like physical atoms, separated from one another by empty space. Yet we know the atoms can act on one another, so our idea of the empty space must be wrong.

Scientific discovery is continually extending the range of our knowledge respecting the connexions between things: the connexion between sanitation and epidemic disease, between mental habits and insanity, between what goes on on the sun and what goes on on the earth, between what the moon does and what the fishes do, and so on. And where or why should we set a limit? The possible cannot be made to end just at the point where our knowledge at any given date leaves off. Astrologers know the connexion between planetary positions and

terrestrial events, between a natal figure and a character. What is an omen but an indication which someone has been able to read, and based on one of these invisible and unexplored connexions?

It has been said of modern science that it is after all but a very narrow selection of subjects for investigation, affording at every point clues that lead off in every direction, but the vast majority of which are ignored because they would conduct the investigator off the beaten track. It is not very likely that the science of the ancients would follow the selfsame beaten track. They probably followed up other clues and discovered things in Nature of which we have not obtained so much as a glimpse. For what is Nature to us but just so much of the world as we are able to see? How very much more there may be that we cannot see. There may be other planes, but before we begin soaring to them, why not learn a little more about the one we are on? All this seems to show that knowledge has not much to do with book-learning, and that it is the height of folly to pay fees to someone who offers to teach us, and that the gates of infinite knowledge lie open to anyone who can find in himself the keys to unlock them.

The Theosophical Forum

THE VISIBLE, THE UNREAL: THE INVISIBLE, THE REAL (1) — B. Finkernagel

Theosophy is a formulated teaching of Spiritual Realities. It is the truth about Nature and Man, explaining the operations of Nature, as they have been perceived by the piercing vision of Supermen — great Initiates and Seers. These Supermen have sent their consciousness behind the veils of Nature, contacting Truth at first hand. They formulated in human thought and speech what they had perceived. These formulations have been re-tested by every succeeding generation of seers throughout all time, leading invariably to the same conclusions.

Theosophy teaches that this Earth is the coarsest outer garment or crust of more ethereal, invisible, and causal worlds or planes, which this physical Earth enshrouds. Analogically we find that the physical body of man is also the densest enshrouding veil or garment of more ethereal principles within. In these inner principles there reside faculties and powers which in the course of long evolutionary time-periods will unfold and shine forth in the waking life of man. They do not now manifest in us, because our present coarse mode of thinking and acting, does not provide the necessary congenial soil. Generally, human life is too selfish and petty; it lacks the breadth of self-sacrificing love. Mankind is too deeply absorbed in purely physical life, which silences effectually the "Voice of the Spirit," for it cannot be heard amidst the insatiable clamorings of the life of sense. It is much the same as though the seed of a lovely flower is swept into a hard, barren, and dry crevice of unyielding rock where the conditions for the sprouting of seeds are lacking. While these conditions last, a flower will remain nothing more than a latent potential energy. Man provides the necessary conditions for the sprouting of his latent spiritual faculties when he begins to realize the spiritual basis of his being, and regulates his thinking and acting in harmony therewith. Selfishnesses in any form are effectual barriers preventing the manifestation of spiritual

energies in man. These can only become manifest in the measure that we become impersonal and universal in thought and action.

Our Universe is one vast organized unit of Life and Consciousness. All the countless entities, high or low, composing it are its children, for all of them at their core enshrine a spark of its Ultimate Essence, linking all into one vast interacting and inseparable Unit. This Spark is the Root, linking them all to the Central Flame — the Supreme Intelligence of the Cosmos. The man who realizes this basic fact of life is filled with deep compassion and pity when he perceives how greatly this basic truth is violated by all men, more or less, for most people are altogether oblivious of this truth, continuing life after life, to pay little heed to their responsibilities and duties to others, living for themselves almost exclusively. For the benefit of the few who do realize this fact, the following rule of life, will be found to be an excellent spiritual practice: Whenever the impulse is felt to concentrate upon personal ambitions and desires we should instantly remind ourselves that we have resolved to become impersonal and universal, and then to reflect to what extent we might be able to cleanse the selfish impulse of its personal elements. Every time we engage in selfish thoughts or actions we are forging another strong link with the personal side of life which we have decided to transcend.

The materially inclined person will of course regard these remarks with disdain, believing them to have no firmer basis than fantastic and man-made ethics. Yes, they are ethics indeed; but be it emphatically understood that ethics are not exotic and man-made empty sentiments, however much some ethics may have become disfigured by the crude thoughts of man. True ethics are based on the great facts and laws of life, upon impersonal and universal Love, upon self-sacrifice, harmony, and peace, all of which are the very breath and essence of Cosmic Being. It is these very qualities which make our Cosmos one all-embracing Unit, in which perfect Harmony and Love reign supreme. Ethics are based on Nature herself.

The reason some people look upon these sublime themes as being

impracticable fads is because of a decided material outlook upon life. These people regard the existence of finer, and to us invisible, principles within the physical Earth, and within the physical body of man, as impossible because they have no idea whatever of the immense amount of knowledge that can be had in regard to their existence. They are greatly influenced by the attitude of science in regard to all such subjects. Up to about a decade or two ago the scientific attitude in this respect was one of unqualified negation. But since then a very remarkable change has come over the minds of most of our foremost scientific thinkers due to scientific research into the constitution of matter. The discovery of Radio-activity has opened to these men a most enthralling field for the intense study of the constitution of the physical atom. It is some of these extraordinary discoveries which have revolutionized to a very great extent the scientific concepts in regard to the constitution of the Universe and its relation to consciousness. There are but few of the rank and file of materially thinking people who are conversant with the present day attitude of science in regard to this subject. We will, therefore, briefly review the position. But before doing so it should be mentioned that scientists today are divided into two sections, one being composed of those men who are so deeply impressed with modern scientific discoveries in regard to the constitution of matter that they have deliberately broken through some of the barriers which orthodox science in the past had set up against metaphysics (a decade or two ago it was considered a violation of the maxims of science for the scientific mind to pass in its reasoning beyond the borderline into Metaphysics!) whereas the other section of our scientists is composed of those men who strictly confine their reasoning within the artificially constructed borderline separating physics from metaphysics.

Many of our most eminent men of science have declared that the latest scientific discoveries force them to assume that the Universe is not moved by blind force, as declared by the old school of science, for this blind force they can neither explain nor account for; but that Intelligence and Design are at the back of all manifestation. They now

say that physical matter is an illusion, and that it has no actual existence at all because it consists mainly of what, for the want of a better term, we might call "holes in space." The impression of solidity is given to physical substance by hosts upon hosts of infinitely minute groups of still smaller entities which compose the atom and which they have called electrons. They say that these electrons are whirling with the inconceivable speed of several thousand miles per second around an inconceivably minute center, which they call a proton; and these enormous movements are confined within an area so infinitesimally small that the mind is incapable of conceiving it. They also say that the relative distances of these whirling electrons around their center, and their respective volume and orbits, seem to follow what astronomers call Bode's Law, which they say determines the orbits of our planets around our sun. Scientists, therefore, have likened the atom and the electrons to a solar system. They further say that all physical matter is crystallized thought-energy or consciousness. This implies that our physical Earth is an effect and the product of the conscious activity of countless entities at all stages of evolution, all of which compose our universe. We are also forced to assume, analogically, that man's physical body, and its characteristics, are the result of his thoughts, feelings, and emotions, which reproduce on the outside of us what each one is in his inner nature and being.

These statements, coming from our most eminent men of science, should make the materially inclined person reflect, for they most definitely point to the existence of subtler human principles than this outer dense physical body, as well as to subtler planes or worlds than this dense physical Earth. The most liberal of our scientific men seem to have arrived at a point in their thinking where they are willing to pass into the forbidden territory of metaphysics. The moral courage behind this attitude is most laudable, for it shows that these men will follow truth wherever it may point. They refuse to be tied to artificial restrictions imposed upon them by orthodox science. It should be self-evident that this is the only proper attitude which scientists should hold, for as Science is looking for Truth, they cannot afford to have a

fence set around their reasoning, beyond which they are not allowed to go.

Human life in all its departments seems to pass through transformations and birth-pains in the effort to bring to light something better than we now have. This applies equally to the social, economic, and religious life, as it does to the scientific.

One of the greatest of lessons which our humanity must learn from the existing welter of confusion and wretchedness prevailing everywhere, is the lesson of the solidarity of man — of Universal Brotherhood. It is only when mankind realizes that our Universe is not merely an agglomeration of unrelated and separate centers of life, but one vast, inter-related, and inter-acting Unit, and that nothing whatsoever stands separate and alone, that the concept of Universal Brotherhood can become the true basis for human thought and action. The keynote of human life today is separateness and selfishness, and not unity. Is it any wonder then that individuals as well as nations are in perpetual warfare with one another, mutual distrust, and fear, and selfishness being the motives which govern our human thoughts and actions? It is the absence of the ideal of Unity and Brotherhood which has transformed our world into an armed camp, fitted with the most hellish devices for fiendish wholesale slaughter, cruelty, and destruction; and if this frightful Bubble of War, now hanging over us should burst, it will involve the whole of the human race in a struggle which will destroy in quick time all the noblest achievements of many centuries of constructive endeavor, as well as bringing indescribable horrors upon mankind. It is this horror which is haunting men in their dreams, and which is the curse of their waking life. The only sure cure of this moral degradation is a return to sanity and the recognition of the Universal Brotherhood of man.

Through a long false thinking and acting the poison of selfishness has eaten into the hearts and minds of mankind in greater or lesser degree. One, therefore, does find at times this poison in evidence in the most unexpected places. The writer just now has in mind a particular kind of

person, to be found even among some classes of Theosophists, who will strenuously denounce the need of spiritual teachers, maintaining that all men have within themselves all that is necessary for their spiritual growth. Now although this statement is quite true in some respects, it is only one half of the truth, for it fails to take into account many other factors that are involved. It fails to consider all the manifold forces and energies, spiritual, intellectual, moral, psychic, and physical, all of which are interacting during the physical life of any man, and all of which have their proper place in life. The fact is also overlooked that as Spirit becomes more deeply involved in matter it becomes also more and more limited in its powers of manifestation on the material planes of life, and it will remain so limited until the lower principles succeed in attuning themselves to the keynote of the higher ensouling life. Spirit on its own planes of the Cosmos is as free as it wills to soar to the greatest heights of its own element. But when Spirit becomes clothed with a mental, psychic, and physical principle, it is so deeply buried in matter, that it must wait till its lower clothing has adjusted itself to its ensouling life, and not till then is Spirit enabled to shed its radiance into its lower vestures and their respective planes of matter. When this adjustment is left entirely to the exceedingly slow cosmic evolutionary urge, and to the spasmodic and ill-advised ignorant efforts of an uninformed brain-mind, spiritual growth is exceedingly slow, requiring immense time-periods for any appreciable growth. But this time factor can be enormously quickened by wisely directed effort and proper understanding of all the conditions, which can only be acquired by means of the invaluable assistance of a true spiritual teacher. The supply of such teachers is always assured by Nature's own wise laws, which demand that the "greater must ever give and sacrifice himself to the needs of the lesser." It is an occult law that every aspiring human soul must be devoted in selfless service to the whole of mankind without any thought for its personal self. The desire of impersonal service must arise spontaneously in the human heart, making compassion and self-sacrificing service its natural aim. It is only in the measure that the spiritually aspiring human soul is learning to live for others that the spiritual faculties latent in man can become manifest.

This is, as a matter of fact, the supreme reason why we incarnate in human bodies.

You have all probably heard of the Mystery-Schools of Antiquity. What were they? Were they engineered by a designing priesthood? Most surely they were not. They were Mystery-Schools originated by great Initiates and Supermen, in which was taught the most sublime knowledge which man is capable of knowing and assimilating. At one time a portion of this wisdom was more or less known and understood by all. But during the last two thousand years of spiritual decline these Mystery-Schools have disappeared from the outer life of man, and this Ancient Wisdom has been no longer openly taught. As a result the great mass of mankind has entirely forgotten that it has ever existed. About sixty years ago these Supermen started the Theosophical Society through their Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, in order to proclaim once more these ancient forgotten truths.

These Supermen are members of a Great Spiritual Brotherhood, which is sometimes spoken of as the Great White Lodge of Adepts, which includes in its ranks the humblest neophyte who has pledged himself to the selfless service of mankind. The neophyte here spoken of is a member of such a Mystery-School where he is being taught some of those deeper aspects of life. But the experience of many ages has taught that this sacred knowledge must not be given out indiscriminately to all who may come along. Before any person can be admitted to any such School he must prove by his own life and conduct that he can be safely entrusted with these sacred truths. Surely no one would ever dream of giving a box of matches to a little child to play with, and then lock it up in a room where it is surrounded with open barrels of gunpowder.

A neophyte then is a man who has been admitted to such a Mystery-School, where he is being taught some of the great spiritual facts of life, which by well-directed and self-devised efforts will hasten his spiritual unfoldment. In these efforts, impersonality and universality must wholly supersede personality and egoity, which means that the individual must learn to identify himself with the whole of mankind,

and live for it instead of for his personal self. Such a man has surely stepped out from among the great herd of men, and although he is still living in the world, he is no longer of it, and although he is still using his brain-mind for his physical expression, his consciousness is habitually focussed in his spiritual mind, where unity, service, self-sacrifice, and universal compassion, are the normal expression of the consciousness.

These Supermen have always their envoys in the world of men. But the question might arise, How can anyone be sure that any man is truly such an envoy? There are various ways by means of which such assurance may be gained. Here is one way, which is open and within the reach of all. Find out the kind of life such a man is leading. Study his teachings and the effect they have upon you and upon others. Do they inspire pure and unselfish thoughts, leading you to become more unselfish? Is he consistent throughout? If his teaching has such an ennobling effect, then all doubts ought to be set at rest, and we ought to feel that here is a man whom we can fully trust. But this does not mean that we must accept blindly all he says. We should always discriminate, and if we fail to understand some aspects of his teaching, this part is not yet for us. More likely than not, sooner or later we will find that it is true. But by refusing to accept what we did not understand, we were but exercising our divine prerogative of free will and choice. We will learn to know truth in course of time at sight. But on the other hand, if we find that his teaching appeals to us and synchronizes with all we have so far found to be true, then let us accept it gladly, and devote ourselves wholeheartedly to passing it on to others also. By so doing, compassion, ineffable peace, harmony, and love will abide within us, for by trying to live for, and to serve, others we are ever touching something in our innermost which nothing less than that can ever reach.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The leading thoughts of this article are taken from various lectures delivered by Dr. G. de Purucker. ([return to text](#))

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Centers of Ancient Mystery Teachings

Could you name for us the centers where Mystery-Schools existed in ancient times?

G. de P. — The mistake of all scholars and mystics is to put too much emphasis upon *places* as Mystery-Schools. And this is why comparatively little is said about localities and places of Mystery-Schools in occult literature — ours, for instance.

From time immemorial there have been Schools of the Mysteries, some more or less publicly known like those of Eleusis and Samothrace in Greece, others thought to exist, whispered about, but not known to the multitude. These Schools of the Mysteries were formed always of two aspects, the exoteric and the esoteric. Those schools which emphasized more strongly the exoteric aspect — which was a noble work in its way because it attracted the attention of the populace and raised their eyes to higher things — were such places as the Greek Eleusis and Samothrace, Abydos and Thebes in Egypt, Ephesus in Asia Minor.

Eleusis and Samothrace were almost wholly devoted to the Mysteries, and hence they are so often spoken of, and have become wrongly looked upon as the type of Mystery-Schools elsewhere in the world. This is not so. Most of these Mystery-Schools were attached as secret bodies to the main temples of different countries. In other words, every *great* temple had its private or secret Mystery-School which was unknown to the multitude or partially known. And this applies to all ancient countries. This does not mean that every ancient temple had a Mystery-School, for that is not true. It was only the main centers of religious teaching that were the places where the secret Mystery-Schools existed — not always, but usually so. Now this it seems to me is quite clear, and I hope you will understand it.

Sometimes the Mystery-Schools, as above said, were attached to the greatest of the temples; but the greater Schools of the Mysteries were those which paid no attention to buildings of any kind, mainly for the reason that buildings would at once attract attention and draw public notice, which is the very thing that these more secret, more esoteric Schools tried to avoid. Thus sometimes, when the temples were mere seats of exoteric ritual, the Mystery-Schools were held apart in secret, conducting their gatherings, meetings, initiations, initiatory rites, usually in caves carefully prepared and hid from common knowledge, occasionally even under the open sky as the Druids did among the oaks in their semi-primeval forests in Britain and in Brittany; and even in a few cases having no permanent or set location; but the Initiates receiving word where to meet from time to time, and to carry on their initiatory functions.

The location of these places was most carefully hid from everyone's knowledge, except that of the Initiates. Thus as regards Druidism and Mithraism and Judaism, as instances, the secret Mystery-Schools were often carried on in these underground or subterranean chambers; or even as in the case of the former two, in the midst of a forest — such, for instance, as Stonehenge in England, Carnac in Brittany, various places for Mithraism in the Roman Empire, and various places in Judaea, etc.

In India, certain ones of the great cave-temples like Karli, and one or two mentioned by H. P. B., were Mystery-Centers. There were equivalent ones in Ceylon and the south of India. Memphis, Abydos, Thebes, Abu-Simbel, and Karnak in Egypt, were Mystery-Centers. Sippar in Assyria, Ecbatana in Media, Babylon and Ur and Lagash were also others. But it would be a mistake to say that all the different countries which had places of exoteric worship were all likewise centers of esoteric initiations, for they were not.

Is it true that there are Mystery-Schools similar to those of the Ancients functioning today? — and if so, where are they, and why are they not better known?

G. de P. — People like concrete facts, but there is just a danger in giving concrete facts. Dynamite is a concrete fact, whereas we can *talk* about explosions with safety.

If I were to tell openly where some of the Mystery-Schools are situated, these places would be pestered and overrun, not so much now, because it might take years for people to grow to believe, but in future time. For example, the Mystery-Centers today in Tibet are largely held in secret places in the mountains, but there is a Mystery-School right in Shigatse, and I don't care to specify the place, for obvious reasons!

Just as in the past, the same general system of both exoteric and esoteric aspects of teaching the Occultism of the ages, in other words, *the same system of Mystery-Schools exists even today*. Only today, the exoteric form has been largely replaced by the different activities of the Theosophical Movement which itself is exoteric as a Movement.

The esoteric groups of Mystery-Schools are perhaps more numerous today than they have been for thousands of years, but they are more secretly conducted and more carefully hid.

You ask where these secret centers exist. My answer is, generally speaking, one in every great country; although as a matter of fact, "great" refers not to frontiers or the rolling leagues of land, but to influence. Thus a little country like the Netherlands might be the center of a secret Mystery-School whose ramifications and influence would extend over half of Europe — "great" in the sense of being at peace and quiet, etc. Yet as a matter of fact, every single National unit of the globe, has its own secret spiritual protectors, who as a body form a true esoteric center. We can call these the Occult Guardians of a people. Thus Britain has hers, Germany has hers, Russia has hers, likewise so with Switzerland, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, China, India, Japan, the United States, Mexico, Canada, Brazil, etc., etc., etc.

There is still a third aspect of this question which is much more complicated than the man in the street might think. There are actually groups whose sole business is forming occult centers of Initiation,

preparation of students for esoteric work in the world, and for the safeguarding of priceless treasures, the heirlooms of the human race, treasures both intellectual and material. The chief of such groups lives in what Theosophists call Sambhala. It is the center of the Occult Brotherhood of Tibet, called of Tibet merely because that happens to be at the present time the land chosen by them as the most easily guarded. There is another branch brotherhood, affiliated with the Chief Brotherhood of Tibet in Syria, still another one in Egypt, still another one in South America. There is one in Mexico and there is one in the United States. There is likewise one in Europe.

All these smaller groups are affiliates or subordinate to the mother-group of the Occult Hierarchy in Sambhala. Please understand that Sambhala is just the old Sanskrit name given to this occult center from almost immemorial time. The word Sambhala itself has no occult significance, I mean in the numerological sense or anything like that. It might just as readily have been called the Brahma Vidya, Asrama, or by some similar name, but the ancients called it Sambhala, and we merely perpetuate the same old name.

Do not confuse these occult centers just last spoken of with the National Guardians previously mentioned. These National Guardians never interfere in politics. One might almost say that their attempt is to undo the evil wrought by national and international political combines and activities. The National Guardians supervise the spiritual and intellectual welfare of the people over whom they watch, as far as karman and the natural intuitive faculties of the various peoples allow it to be done, but they never interfere in politics. They never make wars or revolutions or anything of that kind. Their work is purely spiritual, moral, intellectual, and wholly benevolent, and indeed universal, and is a silent guide to the intuitive minds of the different races. All these National Guardians are as it were envoys or deputies of one or other of the occult centers mentioned above.

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

Science and the Life-Atoms

No one who follows the trend of modern thought can fail to recognise that the fundamental principles of Theosophy are rapidly affecting the mental atmosphere around us, precisely as H. P. Blavatsky said would happen in the twentieth century. She worked for the future. We see this process in the scientific, religious, and educational worlds, though credit is too rarely given to the fount and origin, or the Messenger whose self-sacrifice opened the way. An interesting illustration of this occurs in *The Hibbert Journal* for July in an article by Sir Richard Tute entitled "Indications that the Universe is Alive," in which purely Theosophical conclusions are reached by "orthodox" scientific means. The author shows no indication of having studied technical Theosophical teachings, but makes use of the modern theories of Time and Space and the new atomic physics to present his intuitive reasonings. From this vantage ground he points out "a direction in which modern science has supplied a metaphysic of the universe which admits of belief in both religion and morality"!

The basis of this "metaphysic" is that everything in the universe, including the electron, "has to be treated as if it were a vital entity — as if it were alive." From this living "vibrant," as he calls it, he leads us to the combinations we call atoms, units which also act with some evidence of having living intelligence of a sort. Then come molecules and crystals of increasing complexity.

The carbon compounds, when associated in "organic" forms, move a step farther, and show greater evidences of life in their capacity of nutrition and reproduction. The protoplasmic cells, themselves complicated life-units with a certain range of choice and will, enter into higher combinations as tissues and organs, which themselves are controlled by the higher organisms of which they are components. In

all these stages we have what Sir Richard boldly calls "an ascending series of personalities which interlock with each other and which present an ascending scale of complexity."

This of course is the Theosophical principle of hierarchies set forth in scientific form, though few scientists would use the word "personalities." But the author is well able to defend his claim that the activities of "organic" and even so-called "inorganic" units of all classes are only possible if they are living entities with some measure of intelligence, purpose, and foreknowledge.

Space will not permit a recapitulation of his reasoning, but it is based on the philosophy of Monads advanced by the great Leibniz, adapted to the findings of modern science. Leibniz's view is, to quote from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

In his famous work, the *Monadology*, he [Leibniz] elaborated the theory that reality consists of an infinite number of individual forces or agents, psychic in nature, which he termed "monads." These individual minds or spirits exhibit every degree of mental development and complexity, from that of beings even higher than man (the angels) right down to that of psychic entities of so low an order that Leibniz described their being as a *mens momentanea*, or a mere flash of conscious awareness. In the hierarchy of mind a complete continuity from one level of development to another was postulated. Leibniz conceived each monad as reflecting within itself the rest of the universe from its own particular standpoint.

Students are aware of the importance H. P. Blavatsky attached to the Leibniz monadic theory. On page 623 of *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, she compares it with the Ancient Wisdom, quoting from the Sanskrit. The Divine Mind "Hidden in a veil of thin darkness, formed *mirrors of the atoms* of the world, and *cast reflection from its own face on every atom* . . ." In succeeding pages she shows high appreciation of Leibniz, and in the second volume, on pages 672 and 673, she returns to the subject. In Dr. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* he carries

this important subject still farther.

Sir Richard Tute carries his argument into the spaces of space, to the distant suns, and criticizes the popular idea that life and personality must be confined to a few planets like ours — if there are any — and that the universe is mostly a great waste of unconscious matter. He believes that the "vibrants" may show increasing complexity as they do on earth, and yet be capable of existing under conditions which would be instantly fatal to men.

Like the cells, they may have no organs that we can recognise as such. Like the cells, the universe will be to them wholly different from what it appears to us. They may be exceeding active and intelligent entities, but busied about matters of which we can form no picture and can have no comprehension.

This is excellent Theosophy.

In a most penetrating analysis of Time-Space, in which he makes a difficult subject unusually clear, he explains how a proper appreciation of it shows that an absolute beginning or end of any system, such as the Monads, is impossible; and he remarks that:

A personality which suddenly found itself free from all associations with the body and its functions would experience a continuum in which it would be conscious of itself and of its value in the great scheme of things. It would not be conscious of any passage of time. There would be no beginning to which it could look back, and no ending to which it could look forward.

This idea is plainly stated by the Master K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*.

Sir Richard concludes by pointing out that the philosophy of Monads with all that it implies, especially that which is now called the Space-Time continuum or in other words the world of Reality, was well known in ancient Greece to Plato and Parmenides and others, and to the Hindus in the doctrine of *maya*. He speaks of these "penetrating

glimpses into reality" as intuitions or revelations, and rejoices that:

The wonderful thing about the present age of knowledge is that science is establishing the necessity for recognising that the ancient intuitions, of which we have been speaking, are also scientific statements.

But it was more than mere "intuitions" that made Buddha say, with the authority of one who knew, that "To the eye of flesh, plants and trees appear to be gross matter, but to the eye of a Buddha they are composed of *minute spiritual particles*."

The Hibbert Journal is taken in all good libraries, and we strongly recommend defenders of Theosophy against current mechanistic views to read Sir Richard Tute's informative article which contains many valuable ideas in addition to the few we have mentioned.

The Problem of the Ether of Space

We are frequently asked what is the position of scientists in regard to the Ether, which according to *The Secret Doctrine*, has a very real existence and a most important place in nature.

It is fundamental in Theosophy that the Ether is a very subtil (to us) substance, the grossest form of Akasa, the fifth Cosmic Principle. Ether is the Astral Light. Akasa is not *matter* in any form which we can conceive, as can be supposed from H. P. Blavatsky's statement that it corresponds with the *Manas* or mind principle in man, and that *Manas* actually proceeds from it.

When the famous Chemist, Sir Richard Crookes, was in communication with the Mahatma K. H. in 1883, the latter advised A. P. Sinnett that if Crookes wanted to discover the "*Manasic*" state of matter, a far higher condition than his "radiant matter," "he would have to pledge himself stronger to secrecy than he seems inclined to," i. e., to enter the Mystery Schools.

Present day science is still uncertain as to the existence of an Ether. While some authorities assert its existence, others repudiate it, and

prefer to speak of "Space" and its properties. It seems to be largely a question of definition and terms. Sir Arthur Eddington points out that it cannot be of the nature of a *gas*, however attenuated. This is important and leaves plenty of room for the Theosophical claim that it is on a more subtil plane than the physical. Sir Oliver Lodge is a supporter of the ether, for which he considers he has sufficient evidence, presumably meaning mediumistic phenomena, which, of course, are largely concerned with the Astral Light.

The famous "Michelson-Morley experiment," in 1887, gave no evidence of the luminiferous ether and is still held as authoritative. But other experimenters, especially the distinguished Dr. Dayton C. Miller of the Case School of Applied Science, Cleveland, believe that it was not final and that recent experiments indicate that the earth is actually drifting through an ether which can affect the instruments employed. In the August *Scientific American* the subject of Dr. Miller's laborious experiments is considered and the writer says that "To this day these results have never been explained away," and that "Thus far, anyway, science does not know whether there is an ether or not," though "Preponderance of evidence seems against it at present." In regard to Dr. Miller's attitude on the subject we read: "He says calmly that the details of his work are now in the record, and that the future will prove them true or prove them wrong. In this he resembles Professor Einstein who, when told of Professor Miller's findings, calmly said that if they were finally verified the theory of relativity would automatically disappear. This is science."

The Theosophical Forum

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH IN THE T.S. – *G. de Purucker*

"Keep the teaching unadulterated and pure for the future" Oh, how those words ring in my heart; for it is what I want too; and yet I feel impelled and compelled to call your attention to a very serious danger here. Agreeing absolutely with the principle of the thing, I must call attention to the danger, and it is this: In striving to retain the purity of the teachings of our blessed God-Wisdom, let us never drop into the dogmatic attitude, which will spell the death of free conscience, free thought, free speech, sane and legitimate freedom of all kinds, in the T. S. By all means retain the purity of the teaching, it is the grandest thing we can do; but never refuse to a man his right to speak, and speak freely, even if you know what he says is not true, or distorted. The principle of freedom is so precious, it must never be forgotten. It was just there that the primitive Christians stumbled and became in time a dogmatic sectarian church: Desiring to keep the teachings of their Avatara-Master pure, unadulterated, simple and glorious as he gave them, they laid down certain dogmatic rules, credos, tests, somewhat like the fourteen points, twelve points, sixteen points, etc., etc., that we have heard of recently in Theosophical matters — a sure way to start a creed; and so anxious were people thereafter that all Christians should conform to these as it were codified laws of belief, the codification of belief, that they utterly forgot the inherent right of the human soul to think and think freely. Thereafter you have the Christian dogmatic church, and immediately they began to wax strong. Why? Because they all had one simple form of belief, and exoteric united force behind that belief.

But what do you lose when you get unity and force and nothing else? You lose everything of greatest value. Force is only good or even decent if it is the force of the spirit, which means no imposition of will upon any other mind: the force of conscience, the force of truth, the force of abstract right, the force of justice. That is the only force that is

excusable in human affairs. Any other force is from hell.

So let us therefore never allow the establishing within our own ranks of a dogmatic testing (which is but a creed) of other men's understanding of what we all, including these other men, hold so dear. It may be quite possibly true that these other individuals are brilliant, it may be even intuitive; and we can be grateful for the results of their studies and meditations; but to establish any form of testing by which others should believe, is to work a mischief that at all costs we should avoid.

The Theosophical Forum

LITTLE MAN AND HIS BIG UNIVERSE — *H. T. Edge*

When we consider the vastness and complexity which astronomers have revealed to us with regard to the starry heavens, we must often have been struck by the want of proportion between this particular view of the universe and the views which we take as regards other matters. Here we deal with distances utterly beyond the conception of the most soaring imagination, and with time periods on a corresponding scale of immensity. Nor is it only in the starry heavens that we see such vastness and infinite variety. In the stratigraphical scale of geology we find the same immeasurable extent both of time and space; in reviewing the animate kingdoms of Nature the same infinite variety and complexity confronts us. Everywhere we explore, it is the same.

Yet, in comparison with this, how feeble, how small-scale, how timorous, are our theories and speculations on such topics as the origin of man and the creation of worlds! That in a universe of such illimitable range and such viewless perspective, man should have appeared at an epoch which by comparison we may fitly describe as yesterday — this balks our sense of proportion. Again, consider the microscopic scale of our daily round, compared with the vast size and duration of the visible universe. But yet again, it is with our own mind that we conceive this vastness; and how great and how small is man! Great enough to comprehend his own littleness, small enough to marvel at this greatness. Verily this which we know as ourself cannot be but a minute fraction of our real self. Have we not then a greater self, whose range of experience is commensurate with the vastness of this universe whose outer shell we can contemplate with our eyes? Many people have asked themselves this question, glimpsing what must be the truth; yet such a speculation is after all but a first crude guess, a leaping at one bound from the finite to the infinite. Nature is far more complex than that; it is too simple to say that man has just a

mortal and an immortal part, and no degrees or stages between. Man is a slowly evolving creature. There are many planes of nature, many universes interblended with each other; and man has many stages of conscious existence, corresponding with all these various planes in the universe, so that he is capable of living consciously in many states. There is more than one "heaven"; there are many heavens — many mansions in my Father's house.

People may talk about being practical and living in the world in which we find ourselves; but, as said, we have reached a stage where our intellectual speculations have outsoared our ordinary life, and an adjustment between the two is due. It is not too much to say that we are living in a state of infancy, with most of our possibilities undeveloped, and in ignorance of what we really are. And people, so fond of hypnotizing themselves to sleep with a catchword, will say that human nature is always the same. This either amounts to saying that things which don't change don't change, or to saying that we cannot grow. Human passions may remain the same, but that does not prevent us from mastering them. And after all what is human nature? We cannot dogmatize on this until we have explored its possibilities.

Our ordinary daily consciousness is limited to earth; but there are actually within us faculties which extend beyond the earth, and whose home is in the greater systems of which the earth is but a part. But those higher faculties are for the most part latent; they are not present to our awareness. Yet it is within the power of any man to enter on that mysterious path of self-evolution by which the light of his inner selves can be focused upon the screen of his conscious awareness, so that he will thereby attain a larger consciousness and transcend the limits of the ordinary personal earthbound life. Though humanity as a whole evolves slowly and will not, as a whole, attain such stages for a long while, yet individuals can and do outstrip other individuals belonging to the same human family. On earth today, and constituting part of our present mankind, are men who have attained these heights in previous cycles of evolution, and who are here now for the purpose of acting as torchbearers to those who are to follow them. And also, the mankind of

this earth includes people in many different stages of evolution; even in a great modern city are grouped together people wearing the same clothes, and yet differing vastly in the stage of evolution which they have reached. Such is the complexity of Nature. Who then can say where he himself stands, or where his fellow man stands?

The idea of familiarizing the world with these ideas can hardly be overestimated, because the world has been kept back for so long by ideas that discourage progress, whether they be religious dogmas or scientific dogmas tending to give man a paltry view of his own nature and powers. When we have once vividly realized the *possibility* of attainment, we have already taken a long first step to an ultimate realization of the *actuality*. For our mind has made a call upon the light within, and a ray can be shot down which will at once begin its clarifying work on our minds and our lives.

Physically speaking, man is very small, the universe very great; but true greatness is not measured by physical proportions.

The Theosophical Forum

DENY NOTHING - AFFIRM ALL — *Christmas Humphreys*

To deny anything is to state: "I am not that." This affirmation expresses a duality in the thinker's consciousness between himself and that, whatever that may be, yet this assumption is the gravest error known to Eastern thought, the Heresy of Separateness.

The wise man learns to deny nothing and to affirm, by unconditional acceptance, all. To say, in terms or inferentially, "This is not that," though relatively reasonable, is basically untrue. At the heart of things is a Reality beyond description, for it is beyond the reach of the intellect. "We know that it is Unity, an all-embracing Wholeness from which nothing is left outside." It follows that "all duality is falsely imagined," yet so long as the mind confines itself to intellectual reasoning, it is bound by the limitations of dualistic thought. All that we know of anything is that it is not this and it is not that. We gain experience in terms of opposites, and because we know of the qualities of largeness, hardness, heaviness and heat we can describe a thing by saying that it is small and soft and light and cold. Of the countless pairs of opposites used by the mind to acquire experience one is the self and the not-self, and modern psychology concerns itself, beyond all else, with this duality. This mental process is a convenient, and for the first stage on the Path the only, way in which Man can acquire experience, but the time comes when the growing mind must realize that it is but a convention of consciousness, and therefore without ultimate validity. *Sabbe sankhara anatta*; there is no Self in man or in any compounded thing which is not part of a greater Unity. The sense of separateness is the Great Illusion, and the father of all self-ishness. To deny anything is to attempt to expel it from the circle of consciousness, but that which is not admitted does not thereby die. The aspects of that Unity which self denies live on, and later prowl, like hungry wolves, on the firelight's edge of consciousness. Nothing denied can be understood, and these unformulated facts breed fear. A patient of Professor Jung has ably

voiced a great discovery: "I always thought that when we accept things they overpower us in one way or another. Now this is not true at all, and it is only by accepting things that one can define an attitude towards them." It is the refusal to accept things, and the delusion that because they are unaccepted they are no longer there, that wraps the thinker closer in the lesser self of his own building and leads, when carried to excess, to schizophrenia, a splitting of the mind which is rightly called in-sanity. The causes may be various, but their basis is a thrusting or keeping out of consciousness of parts of the self ashamed of, or for other reasons undesired. Unwilling, to the point of frenzy, to admit that things are what they are, whether of thought or circumstance, the deluded patient builds a barrier between the self admitted and the self denied, and retires into a world of phantasy. The motive for this partitioning is the will to escape from the unacceptable aspects of the mind, and there is an amazing range of this escape technique. In the same way, when circumstances, the "larger self" are more than the mind has strength to face, the individual either creates for himself a world of daydreams where he need but accept the creatures and conditions of his own imagining, or else finds in material phantasies the alternatives to hard "reality." Some for this purpose use the stories of the screen or those in novels, and for countless minds these mass-produced alternatives to life's "realities" become as necessary as the drink or drugs with which a different temperament tries to create oblivion.

In the same way many a man, who accepted life as he found it until middle-age, retires as soon as funds permit to indulge the phantasies which seemed to him, while still at work, so infinitely preferable. Yet when he does retire he often finds his leisure strangely sterile, and cannot believe, as his health and vigor leave him, that whereas his work, however material, was at least carried out "with all the whole soul's will," the life of retirement is a life of illusion in which, unless other interests demanding his whole vigor are adopted speedily, the strain between fact and phantasy will tear the self in two. Of the same type, but more violent because unexpected, are the mental splittings

created by those who run from a threatened danger to their lives. The European crisis of September 1938 produced a remarkable crop of temporary schizophrenia. Some people shut themselves up in their daily occupations and refused to face the proximity of war, even refusing to read the news of its approach; others, who could not face the horrors of a war they thought was imminent, fled to the depths of the country, not as they claimed, to protect their bodies but to save intact their minds. Many of both these types, when the crisis was safely over, were physically ill; such was the visible working out of the mental strain created by the mind's denial.

Some men escape from the world of men for life. Of those who retire to monasteries, therein to exclude themselves from the world, many are no doubt genuinely seeking the self-realization which they do not think can be found in the distractions of daily life, but others desire to escape from worldly problems which they found insoluble. Yet no man can run away from life and find it. Only in possession of all his principles, and with the experience gained in each, can a man achieve self-realization in its perfect form. Just as the mind must face each aspect of its existence and know them as its own, so must the body face its own temptations and problems among those of its fellow men. True, from time to time we all need rest and re-creation, and for the mind to retire within itself in silent self-communion is as necessary as sleep to the physical vehicle, but not in the mountain fastness of this spiritual calm will the battle be won. As soon as the warrior is rested he must return to the battlefield, renewed in his sense of wholeness with his highest principles, to fight anew. More than this is refusal to accept reality, and the cause of the flight is fear. We run from that which we fear, and not from that we despise. If we have no fear of life, why should we strive to leave it? We deny then, that which we fear to accept as true, in ignorance of the ultimate affirmation, "I am That." From this deluded habit of the mind has sprung the wealth of poetry wherein the fearful, trembling soul flees from the call of the Beloved. It was denial, born of fear and ignorance, which caused the timorous soul in Thompson's *Hound of Heaven* to fly from its own immensity.

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
I fled Him down the arches of the years;
I fled Him down the labyrinthine ways
Of my own mind. . . .
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.

And the voice of the Whole spoke to the trembling part:

All which I took from thee I did but take,
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.

He who denies the littlest part of Life denies the all, and thereby denies his spiritual parentage. It is a popular belief that ostriches, on seeing an enemy, hide their heads in the sand, and imagine that, being themselves unable to see, they therefore cannot be seen. We do the same with our sins and blunders, and the problems we have set ourselves but cannot solve. And yet when Karma, the dispassionate principle of cause-effect, presents the reckoning for our deeds of ignorance, some part of our foolish mind perceives the enemy, and knows it for what it is, and when the rest of consciousness deliberately thrusts this knowledge in the sand and pretends to itself that, having seen no enemy, there is no enemy to be faced, the conflict arising in the mind from this self-deceit leaves little energy for fighting the common foe. The refusal to admit that the enemy exists is caused by fear, and fear is the child of selfishness or ignorance. As selfishness itself is caused by ignorance of the fact that life is indivisible, it may be said that ignorance is the basis of all fear. We deny, therefore, because we fear to admit, and we fear to admit because we know not the nature of that which seeks admittance — that it is but part of ourselves.

To accept is the first step on the way to affirm. Acceptance may be reluctant, and is apt to be negative, whereas to affirm is a cheerful admission that the accepted fact is an integral part of the self affirming. Yet to affirm is not the same as to approve. We may affirm an action and yet be ashamed of it, but so long as we readily admit responsibility for the act affirmed, however despicable, the self retains its integrity,

and can still move forward as a whole to better things. A sense of discrimination is a vital factor in applying the moral sense to experience, for the value of a fact, as distinct from its nature, is something added by the mind. Thus, to admit the nature of one's past life is to face a fact; to decide that it has been "good" or "ill" is valuation added to experience. One may either approve or deplore the facts admitted, and the function of valuation, which approves or deplores, pertains to the life side of the mind. As such, it is beyond the reach of ancient or modern psychology, for facts are forms, but value, or meaning is life. Matter and spirit are ultimately one, but in manifestation they are antitheses, and life, like the winds of heaven, dies in a lecture room. It follows that optimism and pessimism are alike unhealthy forms of phantasy, for the one undervalues and the other overrates experience. The wise man therefore values honestly, and accepts experience at the value found.

Those who have studied Evans-Wentz' *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines* will find in the "Precepts of the Gurus" much of the material now being re-discovered by the Western science of psychology. Among these Precepts there is a section on the Ten Things not to be Avoided. These include "Ideas, being the radiance of the mind," "Obscuring Passions, being the means of reminding one of Divine Wisdom," and "Affluence, being the manure and water for spiritual growth," this no doubt being added to curb the desire for asceticism as a way to enlightenment. Then come "Illness and Tribulations, being teachers of piety," "Enemies and Misfortunes, being the means of inclining one to a religious career," and finally, "the Thought of helping others," however limited one's abilities to help may be. A strange companionship, yet representative of the vast variety of human experience, all of which must finally be accepted and affirmed. Debts, of every kind, for example, must be at once admitted and faithfully discharged. Cause and effect are equal and opposite, not merely in the laboratory but in the mind, and every effect returns to the point of its causation for the adjustment of the balance which the act or thought disturbed. Cause and effect are as the two sides of a coin, save that, owing to the illusion

of time, our consciousness is only able to cognise them separately. The wise man knows that by the deliberate use of this law of Karma he may inevitably "acquire merit" for him self in lives to come by performing deeds of which the effect is happiness. Yet it is far more important in the great quest for enlightenment to pay off at once and willingly the debts of error, for nature demands exorbitant interest on all bills overdue. As Dr. Jung points out: "the veil of Maya cannot be lifted by a mere decision of reason, but demands the most thorough-going and wearisome preparation consisting in the right payment of all debts to life." Even the payment of money debts is important in the growth of character, for money is the blood of the body corporate, and to deprive the bloodstream of its due is to injure the larger self in which, and by the grace of which, the body lives. Still more important are the debts of mind, all undertakings, vows and promises, however rashly made. Even if the making of the debt be later regretted, yet it was made, and must be honored utterly, accompanied, maybe, with a resolve to be more careful about debt-creation in the days to come. All possessions are apt to create fetters in the mind. Wherefore the wise man pays his debts, and more, unstintingly. There was a Man of Nazareth who said: "If any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow turn not away." When all is said and done, life is a process of the soul's deliverance, and "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Debts are fetters; wherefore break them. For love give love, and love for hate, for in the words of the All-Compassionate, "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred, hatred ceaseth but by love." Refuse no application lightly, and never refuse a claim. That which claims is a part of yourself in greater need, and the need that waits your filling is your own.

An appointment is a debt of honor. He who incurred the debt should pay it punctually; else should it not have been made. He who in life keeps faith with life will not fear to keep faith with death. "I have a rendezvous with death," wrote Alan Seeger, in the trenches a few

weeks before he died.

And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous.

To affirm is to liberate; to refuse is to be bound. Wherefore refuse all fetters and be free. Above all, learn to accept responsibility when offered. What right have you to refuse? An offer is made. Affirm it promptly, and the powers of the mind will grow to the newborn need. To refuse to accept responsibility is to ignore the hand outstretched from the rock above you. Grasp the hand and climb. The grounds for refusal are fear, or else false modesty, a compound, usually, of laziness and self-deceit. An offer of responsibility is an opportunity earned by past endeavor. The opportunity is nature's payment of a debt incurred. Refuse it, and the payment has none the less been made by the debtor, while the creditor has let the opportunity go by.

Duties are the debts we owe, and rights the payments due to us. Yet the wise man is so occupied with the due performance of all duty that he has no time to claim his rights. A man inherits at the threshold of each life the debts of all his past, but this, his Karma, is more than can be handled in one life. Such portion of the debt as can be liquidated in the life to come is the Dharma of that life, his duty, which, if faithfully performed, will leave him stronger to perform the duty of such further lives as must be lived ere the last of his fetters falls at the threshold of Enlightenment. Much follows from an understanding of this doctrine, and a great content. No man is given a burden heavier than his strength will bear; conversely, all experience offered and all debts presented on whatever plane are due for payment when presented, and every debtor has, if he only knows it, the wherewithal to pay. It may be that his mental and physical make-up and his field of circumstance seem to offer a painfully limited scope for such repayment, but the digestion of all Karma is effected by the right attitude of mind, and the will to affirm will itself dissolve the problems of the daily round.

Deny nothing; affirm all. Life is, and we are part of it. Wherefore run to

meet it with open hands and heart. The Christian mystic calls this attitude a surrender of the will to God. Geraldine Coster calls it "sitting loose to life," and Jung translates the Tao-ist doctrine of *wu-wei* as learning "to let things happen," which he describes as "a real art of which few people know anything.

Consciousness is forever interfering, helping, correcting, and negating, and never leaving the simple growth of the psychic processes in peace. "Nor is the average mind content to leave other people's growth in peace, yet tolerance in its noblest sense is far more than conceding an opinion or a course of conduct with which one does not agree." In the infinite complexity of inner growth almost anything is right for someone at some time and in some circumstances. Where is the man who claims to judge what is right and wrong for another according to *his* needs?

Whatever is, is right, for someone. True tolerance is a form of charity, not in the Christian sense, which, as Keyserling points out, "means wishing to do good; in the Buddhist sense it means wanting to let everyone come into his own at his own level," which implies in turn a "sympathetic understanding for the positive qualities of every condition," affirming them as right for that individual. He is a brave man who can realize that all that is is right, yet so it is in the eyes of THAT, the eternal Namelessness.

The doctrine of acceptance is beyond the reach of justice as conceived by man. The wise man learns to accept all blame, though he be blameless, and suffering he knows he has not earned. Yet it is harder still for some to accept an offer of assistance, for pride is the last of the fetters to fall at the threshold of deliverance. It may be more blessed to give than to receive; it is certainly much easier. There is a difficult technique to learn in charity, both in finding a way of giving without condescension and in learning to ask and to receive in such a way that love is thereby strengthened, and not made forfeit to the gift.

Life is the greatest of all givers; meet life with open hands. All that it has is yours of right for the taking, and none shall take it from you

unless you strive to keep it for yourself alone. Life denies nothing, and offers all. There's beauty in the world, and silence, and love that laughs at hate. There's wisdom, too, that calls to folly and makes folly wise. These wait the mind's acceptance, and the open heart that, taking all life in its keeping, makes its owner say, as Thoreau said: "I know that the enterprise is worthy. I know that things work well. I have heard no bad news."

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHISTS ATTENTION! — *Vera Berg von Linde*

In these days when cruelty, insanity, ignorance and even misdirected idealism like a dark and dangerous thunderstorm sweep over poor Europe, one is almost inclined to think: Of what use is it *to* work for sublime purposes, for peace upon earth, for universal Brotherhood? Of what use trying to evolve forth the Buddhi-Atman within men?

For aeons we have been the most merciless, the most greedy creatures on Planet Terra. Verily, there is enough in the world for each nation, but not for the greediness of each nation. Do we humans really possess possibilities to transform our plain and selfish shape into a compassionate, divine being? Or is it our destiny as matter-heavy creatures always to follow the voice of lower self?

Let us just study ourself and examine: (1) from where we came; (2) whither we go; (3) and how far we have advanced. The archaic Wisdom teaches that we once as un-self-conscious god-sparks emanated from the Divine in order to make a pilgrimage through the matter-side of the universe, thus getting a deeper, greater knowledge about the worlds there inherent.

The archaic Wisdom teaches further that we through self-evolution, self-experience through an ever expanding consciousness finally shall be able to get rid of the strong attraction of these worlds, and again turn to our spiritual home. How far have we advanced towards this sublime goal? Dante says: half-way I stood in gloomy wood with losing steps, and could not gaze on the real path.

This is extremely characteristic of the individual today: a child of heaven, a child of earth is he standing partly in heaven, partly on earth. His body belongs to earth, but his intellect is able to think as keenly as the greatest intellects on earth, and he has a soul with flaming love and compassion enough to warm and enlighten the whole universe. Likewise is he the carrier of a Divine Self in which dwell all the divine

qualities of the universe. Nevertheless is he rather losing his way towards his divine destiny.

Can we human beings turn to the right again? Certainly, because every one of us has a yearning after beauty, harmony, and peace. In every human heart there is a longing to understand the universe in its multitudes of manifestations, a longing to ascend above the dull, daily life; in other words, to get a wider, brighter view of universal, eternal values. He who begins to feel at one with his Higher Self, recognises even the Divine outside himself, becomes aware of Him everywhere. Thus the spiritual seeing, the spiritual perceiving, individual understands that other human beings too have a spiritual longing, a spiritual aim. And he discovers even that there have existed men who manifested their Divine Self to such a degree that they verily can be regarded as the noble Leaders and Saviors of humanity. Last but not least this wonderful fact convinces us against all intellectual subtleties and arguments that our most refined aspirations are based upon truth.

The glorious predecessors of humanity are living testimony that it certainly is of use to work for sublime purposes, for peace upon earth and for evolving forth the divine principle within each human being. But how did these noble Masters reach so high a standard? Were they the lucky favorites of Mother Nature, or did an almighty, personal God create them such, or have they become what they are through self-effort, self-discipline, through a powerful self-directed will to reach this lofty goal? We believe in the last thought. We believe that man through the ages receives just what he creates for himself — not more, not less — and if he once accepts this fundamental truth with mind and heart, then he will turn towards the spiritual sun and let universal responsibility control his future acts and deeds. What a glorious hope for seeking, groping souls to know that these Great Saviors have existed, still exist and in the future will even appear upon earth, and that they evolve forth their mastership, not by chance, but through raising their consciousness from their animal-being into their spiritual Self.

What they have done every one of us can do, and shall every one of us sooner or later do, because it is the sole pathway home to the Divine again. We individuals are what we act and nothing else. And here we see the real, the terrible reason why we are already in the rigid claws of a new error. We ourselves created the causes for this state of violence, and every one of us is held responsible for what is going on now. We cannot blame one single person or one single nation. Were it as uncomplicated as that, a new war never could happen. For that reason we ought never to side with or against one or another of the fighting forces, but instead, in every noble manner, try to check that current of hatred which already flows forth from the personal human being; each such rivulet will when time is ripe well out into a new source for coming wars. We must even prevent our fellow-men from growing accustomed to the terrific war-deeds. If we in an indifferent manner begin to accept the evil doing, if we look upon the terrors on the battlefields with a more and more blunt insensibility, then we can pity ourselves more than the combatants, because this is synonymous with losing our soul, our only link with the Divine.

Friends, let us with love and compassion fight for that peace, harmony, and spiritual evolution which men with weapons in hand never can bring about. Violence is for the weak and faint-hearted. Non-violence for the fearless and daring. The spiritual occultist can give his life in defense of others, but never, under any circumstances, take the life of his nearest brother: a human being.

Let us equip all our possibilities and capacities spiritual and otherwise, and through multifold connected efforts try to find an enduring way out of this meaningless, debasing insanity. It is a fact that if a minority can establish a storm of violence, then a minority can even sing this storm into quiet and repose. Heaven itself helps those who possess sufficient conviction and will-power to fight for and collaborate with the White Brotherhood. But mind you, this requires other means in times of darkness and bewilderment than in happy days of peaceful lodge-work.

Please, Theosophists, make a proposal, and we shall indeed follow the spiritually wisest.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GOLDEN MOMENT — *Inga Sjostedt*

When, in past aeons, the gods helped and inspired the newly-born humanity, one of the younger gods — he of the smile that was almost too human — looked down from his garden of meditation and was aware of a growing heaviness in his heart. And the heaviness was sadness, for he saw with pity that men were unhappy creatures, bewildered and lost among their self-made sorrows in a world made fair by the gods. And the young god thought profoundly for an eternity, and out of that thought created a gift for mankind: and the gift was the Golden Moment. How shall I describe that Golden Moment? It was like the dawn sweeping through the chambers of the night, but more swift, more sudden, lasting but a heart-beat and then fading, quicker than thought. Had it been otherwise men might have known things too holy for their mortal perception. And the marvelous power of the Golden Moment lay in its ability to raise men one step nearer to the gods.

The young god sacrificed the joys of meditation for the sake of observing the effect of his gift on mankind. And he watched the destiny of one who was no worse and no better than most men. The Man lived through the days, intent on his desires — as all men are wont to do, except those who have learned to look higher and love more widely.

He followed a path leading to the future, the unknown; and the god watched him in silence. Suddenly, from some hidden recess, there came a cry of anguish and helplessness. He looked uncertainly in the direction from which the sound had come and saw a morass, dark and loathsome, with green treachery covering its surface, and knew that the cry had come from the other side. Irresolute he stood, not knowing what to do, and then the Golden Moment pierced the heavy skies and poured radiance over him, suffusing heaven and earth. The god waited, breathless, and then the Man lowered his head in shame and walked on quickly, unwilling to face hidden danger, and the Golden Moment, like a bird of flame, took wing and returned to its home-sphere,

unacknowledged.

The Man continued to follow the pathway of his destiny, and an Enemy came towards him, holding aloft a weapon. A combat ensued, and the Man overcame his Enemy and stood above him, his weapon raised to strike the other who lay helpless upon the ground.

"Spare me," said his Enemy. "My life is life to many around my hearth."

And the Golden Moment rent the night-blackness and illumined the earth, with stars and music in its trail - — but the music was not for mortal ears and only the gods heard it.

"Why should I spare you?" said the Man. "Are you not my enemy?"

And he brought down his weapon and killed his foe. And the Golden Moment faded, gathering its glory about it and stilling its music.

Then said the young god sorrowfully to himself:

"Of what avail is my gift to mankind? Blind eyes, deaf ears, cold hearts will never know the hidden, unfathomable wonder of my labor and my sacrifice!"

But as he looked down darkly on the earth a young soul looked up and met his gaze and smiled in recognition. Greatly the god rejoiced.

"They are my own," he said; "I had forgotten that the immortality of youth was infused into all humanity, even though it may become tarnished with the sophistry of age. Let the Golden Moment remain, that all whose hearts retain a vestige of their divine heritage may make use of it!"

And to this day the gift of the young god lies within the reach of all men. Only, how many have listened to the voice of the eternal youth within them?

OUR PROMISES — *M. G. Gowsell*

First and foremost of all human obligations is the one that lies nearest to hand. And it may well be owing to its immediate proximity, its too nearness perhaps, that it so often goes unrecognised, or is altogether obscured and hence denied fulfilment. The truth about duties, whatever they may be, might be viewed as one of those fundamental verities which are so recondite and yet so amazingly simple when once understood. Or, looked at in another light, as just another of the numerous prickly facts, let us say, which we have been so wont to kick against.

Obligations, like the word duty, convey to many a decidedly unsavory tang. And to such it might be news indeed were they to be told on good authority that the universe in which we live is absolutely dependent upon what amounts to just that. For there is, must of necessity be, the closest of links, bonds, intimate relationships and convenantal responsibilities, running through, knitting together and permeating every department, function, and operation of what we humans have agreed to call Nature. This applies in and all through her manifold activities, whether mundane, solar, or cosmic; it matters not which, for all is essentially One.

And now after this somewhat rambling preamble, it were well perhaps to expatiate a little upon the matter of promises, engagements — obligations of whatsoever kind. Looking at our mundane affairs today, one can readily relate much of the wide-spread misery to the effects of broken promises. The defaults pertain to our social, financial, commercial, and political life, all of which are intimately connected with and have had much to do in bringing about the present state of world affairs. We have all been witnesses to faithless, pie-crust promises between individuals, and the same stamp of engagements between nations; abrogations right and left, social, political, and economic, wherever and whenever self-interest and expediency have

got the upper hand. Can one any longer wonder at the world's trepidation and unrest.

At this point it might be pertinent to inquire as to just what part if any the average citizen of good intent may have had in the more major defaults that are causing us so much pain and suffering. For no man lives unto himself alone. We are not concerned at the moment with the brutality *in excelsis* that stalks abroad here and there the world over. That is another story. What we are endeavoring to do in a few words is to trace back to its primal fount, this harvest, this ripple of effect, and to ascertain the cause: "for this effect, defective, comes by cause."

But, one might ask, what have you and I had to do with all this grief? A great deal, in my humble opinion. Suppose we hold the mirror up to ourselves for a minute and see whether we may not have had some responsibility in the matter. There may be a much closer personal responsibility in this than would first appear, for we are all rather myopic when it comes to self-scrutiny.

Honest, indeed, is that man or woman who would rather die than forego a promise once made, an obligation once undertaken. How many of us have the power, the discrimination, the reflective judgment, to refuse to make a promise, *even to ourselves*, so long as there remained a doubt as to whether such might be successfully acted upon. These little dealings with ourselves: that is what we are trying to get at. It is in the small intimate defaults, gaps, abrogations and venial shortcomings, "whereof the execution did cry out against the non-performance," that we may glimpse the source, the small beginnings, of this river of insincerity that has become more or less endemic, if not pandemic. We should remember that there can be no great and no small in the divine economy, nor in any other economy in nature. Great and small are but human concepts. So that the smallest, most trivial of formulated intentions, promises, let us say, made to one's self and allowed to go by default, have but laid the foundation for more insincerity, each a step from the venial toward the venal.

No, it would be better far to make good any promise thus made, no

matter how seemingly trivial, and no matter if its execution should entail personal inconvenience, suffering even, or material loss. To do otherwise would be to forego some valuable lessons. The gain would be found to far, far outweigh any sort of loss. Moreover there would be none of that intimate, disconcerting, loss of face, that carking aftermath, which is bound to follow upon a breach of faith. One is reminded of the words put into the mouth of one of Shakespeare's characters, when he was made to say: "This above all, to thine own self be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

The Theosophical Forum

PLANTS OF ETERNITY — *Elsie Gray*

On the eve of his departure, Stanley Ransom was telling a few friends how one small event had set the course of his undertaking. He was a thoroughly trained and dynamic young man, about to engage in his first important commission for the American people.

"I came in with the century," he said. "I was fourteen years old when the war broke out in Europe. My oldest brother enlisted in the Canadian army and left at once. Later when America went in, I'd still have gone willingly enough, because I was not yet thoroughly disillusioned about the glory of war. But at that early age when my brother went, (and he never came back," he said in a subdued tone, and pausing as if to pay homage in his thought) "I was frantic to add years to my age or inches to *my* stature, somehow, anyhow, so I could go too.

"My old great-grandfather was living with us then, and this incident I have mentioned happened not long before he died. He was very old. To me he seemed like a man from another planet. His long white hair and patriarchal beard gave him an exotic appearance and all his thought and speech and action were foreign to our modern ways. I used to like to get him talking in order to argue with him, although I always came off defeated. He would go just so far, then turn away mumbling through his gums, stamp his cane on the floor, and relapse into silent thoughtfulness. It was a vivid agitated thoughtfulness, for he would lean forward in his easy chair, peering steadily into the fire for long moments. Finally shaking his head in discouragement he would fall asleep. He liked long evenings of talk about old times. He would often narrate in the most lucid and connected fashion stories of bygone days, of the Civil War, and of his experiences as Judge of the District Court, when he went from county to county on horseback to make his appointments.

"It was one evening when mother and father were out late that the thing happened. We were sitting by the evening fire, which grandfather must have until summer was blazing hot. The sinking of the *Lusitania* had been filling the news for some time, and President Wilson's notes to Berlin, and all that. I was more than usually unconsolated for not being old enough to go to war. My father had for years prophesied a war that would engage all Europe and he had many times said it would profoundly affect the United States; so I felt authoritative when I affirmed that no living man could afford not to have a hand in this war, and more to that effect. 'Making the world safe for Democracy' had not yet come into vogue.

"My grandfather turned on me savagely. The light from the fire made high lights in his blazing eyes. 'Boy,' he thundered, 'you don't know what you are talking about. War — war — when did war ever cause anything to live?'

"I had lost the thread of my argument. We sat very still for several minutes, grandfather pommeling the head of his cane with his cupped hand. Then he rose from his chair with great effort, but majestically. 'Come,' he demanded. 'Get your lantern and come.'

"I lighted the lantern very much in awe and followed him into the late spring night.

"I used to like to make a garden. I think I must have done it several successive seasons. This event caused me to remember my garden of that year. It was all in tender young plants. I had never seen the neat rows by lantern light, and it gave me a thrill nothing short of magic.

" 'Here are your beans,' grandfather pronounced, his voice vibrating with emotion. 'Here is the best plant in the row. Pull it up.'

"Pull it up! I didn't understand. 'Why,' I protested, 'it hasn't had any beans on it yet.'

" 'Pull it up,' grandfather repeated sternly.

"I obeyed, and I can feel right now how it tore my flesh as the white

roots came out of the earth.

"He took the plant in his hand. He was tender now. He touched it gently. 'War has descended on this living plant. It will never have any beans now.' He pinched it slowly into bits as if he feared I might replant it and so invalidate this graphic example of his convictions. He turned and trod heavily ahead of the lantern.

"We were both in bed when father and mother came home. And I don't remember that I ever had another long talk with grandfather.

"But that object lesson has affected the whole course of my life. Because from it I have studied sociology, economics, and law, political science, history, and all the great religions. I have been trying to find out why the adult world of apparently enlightened intelligence continues to condone the outrage of war.

"During the twenties I coasted mostly on the smooth-going of inflated times. I know I never thought as far as to conclude that grandfather had been wrong without the sick feeling at the bottom of my subconscious mind that he was entirely right and that something else was wrong, terribly, terribly wrong. But mostly I did not think as far as a conclusion. I was too busy.

"But when things began to go to the bad it took me the briefest possible time to switch back to that moment in the lantern-lit garden and my beloved bean plant in grandfather's trembling palm. "When I learned at the age of thirty-five that grandfather had left his very small fortune to me, that he had planned I should not receive it or even know of it until that mature age, I at last realized that the incident of the bean plant had had a deep meaning for both grandfather and me. He had learned something by means of living to a very old age. No mortal, he knew, had ever passed on his hard won knowledge to another by wish or word of his own. But somehow he must cause me to become the heir of what he had in his mind. He had already set his heart on me as a likely medium. There remained for him to place upon my life the indelible stamp that would give him assurance. What he did that night

he did with premeditation. Some dramatic moment was his only recourse. There was not a single request or recommendation embodied in his will.

"And grandfather was right. Grandfather still lives in my boyhood garden. I used the money he left me to transmute the degrees I had acquired into usable material of co-ordinated thought and first-hand knowledge. I am starting out now to discover where the gleam of that lantern leads me. The most prized bit of equipment I take with me is the light I see in the old man's eyes. It speaks plainly a very profound truth.

"It is that peace and the great glory of a great nation are tender plants that must be planted and watered and tended with great love in order to bear fruit. I know that intelligence put to this purpose can produce miracles without limit. Think of what a Burbank in the beautiful garden of our enlightened posterity will produce in the way of flowering humanity."

Stanley paused and looked inquiringly at each of us listeners. "There will be Burbanks," he said conclusively. "I shall be the great grandfather of at least one of them."

The company broke up almost immediately after Stanley left. It was as if the electric current had been switched off. We needed to think, not talk.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FLAME OF INTELLECT – *Leoline L. Wright*

As one candle-flame will light many others while remaining itself undiminished, so was man's mentality mystically enkindled by our more advanced divine Brothers. Symbolically we can regard the prepared animal-physical vehicle of man as the candle, and this aggregated host of higher Beings as a great Spiritual Flame. Descending to earth, this host of divine Beings who had once been men brought *mystically* to the waiting vehicles the flame of Divine Mind. The latent faculties of the animal-man were kindled into the first feeble spark of intellect.

— *Reincarnation, A Lost Chord in Modern Thought*

MAN'S ESSENTIAL NATURE — *L. Ram Sahijpal*

Man's present earth life is not for ever, and his earthly belongings and affairs which engage him day and night, and which are, no doubt, quite necessary to him to a certain extent, are not his everlastingly after all. It would indeed be worth his while to dedicate some of his time, however little, frequently and periodically to the study of the spiritual side of his being.

One of the many virtuous things pertaining to his eternal life and one the study of which should interest him, is his "Essential Nature." At present he knows very little of "who he is," and the realization of his real nature that will come to him in time if he perseveres with self-study and self-discipline will indeed be his real and eternal possession and companion, for it is a high mark in man's spiritual unfoldment, that follows strictly according to occult laws the promotion of the spiritual fabric of his soul.

Religions teach that man is the child of God, the Father, the Spirit, who is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. Certainly, then, if man is the child of God he must be an infant-god; and if God, the Spirit, is omnipresent, God must be present not only everywhere in the heavens above but also everywhere on earth; the very environment in which man stands or exists must be pervaded by God, and the very space that his body fills must be permeated too. Yes, God, the subtle Spiritual-self pervades the heart of every atom and organ of man's constitution.

Whilst the fact remains that the "Divine Self" is everywhere in and around man, the greatest importance is to be attached to the Holy Presence in his heart-mind organ alone, because it, the latter, is the originant of the whole of his earthly constitution and no part of man is so directly, entirely, and continuously connected with his life-activities on earth as is his mind. In fact it is the real or inner man who controls, during life on earth, the whole of the movements of the physical or

outer man. Theosophy, the Ancient Wisdom, which is a synthesis of religion, science, and philosophy, teaches that the outer man is rooted in the inner man, the intermediate self, the mind; and this latter in turn is rooted in the spiritual background of the "Divine Presence" — the "Universal Divine Self" that pervades the inmost core of man's heart-mind organ. Thus in its profoundest wisdom it promulgates that the fundamental nature of man is divine, or that man is a divine being in his "Essential Nature."

Man is a divine prince even though he knows it not, and in his heart there is "Heaven," in which his God, the Father, resides. This is literally true if the terms "Heaven" and "God" be interpreted esoterically, but though these terms are familiar to all, their inmost significance escapes many. O brother man! why not search out the Truth! Let us see what Theosophy can tell us about these mystic terms. In the heart-core of the human mind there is an invisible mystic Center, made of very highly ethereal substance and lit with dark light. Because of its invisibility, the height of its ethereal attributes, and the sacred significance of its being the maker and ruler, as explained previously, of the physical man, a part of earth, hence earth, this mystic center is maintained to stand above the latter, and is called by esotericists of all ages, by the mystic name "Heaven," meaning the invisible ethereal center, the causal realm whence the man of clay has sprung. The dark light within this center, the "Heaven" in man, is the invisible presence of the Universal Divine-consciousness-essence. Because it, the latter, lights, or inspires and stimulates, the heart-mind, "Heaven," to action, it is called God, the supreme maker and ruler of man, the child; and because it permeates that center it is called "God in Heaven." So, there it is, O dear reader, that "God" who is known to be in "Heaven," and in the search for whom man looks skyward, lies in the inmost core of his own heart and mind, because the latter is indeed that "Heaven" in the case of man. It would certainly have been the right step taken by him if he had looked heartward to commune with his "Maker." Furthermore, prayers, if heart-felt and sincere are, no doubt, a good means to evoke the Holy Spirit within the heart for Communion, but the *practical* life of pure

thoughts, kind and helpful words, and the holy deeds of Universal love and compassion for all that lives, win very rapidly, if not instantaneously and automatically, the Holy Communion of Divine Self.

Such is, in brief, the sacred teaching of Theosophy, the Wisdom of the Gods, concerning the "Essential Nature" of man and the basic rules of moral conduct to reach this sublime state.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHISTS AND PRAYER – *G. de Purucker*

Pray not to the gods, for hearing they may not act; for the gods themselves are held within the bonds of cosmic law from which they may not vary. Our prayers spring from our ignorance and weakness: ignorance of our own most real needs, and weakness because we want others to do things for us that we lack courage or will to begin to do for ourselves.

I pity those poor hearts who in their simplicity think that by praying to Almighty God their prayers will be answered. Just think it over. What is the reason that so many people like to pray? They really know by experience that their prayers are unanswered. But this is why they like to pray: because it brings peace, because it brings a sense of throwing their burdens upon some other; likewise because it strengthens the ineradicable feeling of the human heart that there are spiritual powers of enormous — what may I say? — enormous constant activity in the world, and that by thinking towards these beings, we come in touch with them.

Yes, it is thus far true. And were every prayer a yearning to come into closer contact with these spiritual powers, it would be beautiful. But change the picture: Two armies meet for mutual slaughter, destruction, each side sending petitions to Almighty God for victory for its own army. Don't you see something horribly blasphemous in this, an utter lack of understanding of the divine character of the governance of the Universe?

It is the petitionary prayer that Theosophists disbelieve in: the asking God Almighty for physical and other benefits which the petitioner is either too lazy or too indifferent to his duties to endeavor to secure for himself. Such prayers are often downright immoral, secretly or even openly; as when one prays to God Almighty for selfish advantages over one's fellows.

But oh, how the human heart longs for compassion, for sympathy, for beauty, for the understanding handclasp of someone else; and we realize from our studies and our intuitions, we keenly realize the living reality of great spiritual powers in the universe, surrounding us constantly, and our infinitely faithful allies and helpers when we strive to raise ourselves spiritually and intellectually towards them. Thus we Theosophists have something oh so much more beautiful and noble than prayers to non-hearing divinities. We have something incomparably closer to our human hearts and souls, something wondrously beautiful, gentle, compassionate, always listening, always helping: the Brotherhood of Compassion and Wisdom. This Brotherhood extends upwards from us men in an unbroken chain to the chelas and the Masters, and on to the very heights of the ethery spaces. I know not how high the Hierarchy runs, certainly as high as the highest peaks of our own Galaxy; and it is along this stairway that the chela, the disciple, climbs up, up, up forever more. And marvelous tale of occult meaning, he climbs most fast, most quickly, whose hand of compassion is extended backwards in help to those behind himself. Isn't that a strange marvel?

It is these Helpers of humanity, the Masters and their chelas, and those above the Masters, who extend to us constantly the help of their always pitiful hearts, their strength, marvelous as it is, yet given to us freely. And they are very wise in their giving, for the help they give is rarely known. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." I could tell you some of the things that the Helpers do for men, unseen, unknown, even by the recipients of their compassionate bounty and benevolence: lives saved in many a way, disasters prevented in many a way; those disasters which cannot be prevented, because invoked by man's own egoism and evil-doing, softened so that their asperities and harshnesses hurt men less. Things like these are done constantly, and we men know little or naught of it. We simply see the results. This is why this Hierarchy of Compassion is called the Guardian Wall around men.

The selfish and lazy who make no efforts to regenerate their own lives

do not climb the stairway leading to the Hierarchy of Compassion. Paradoxically, it is those asking the most who as a rule give the least. What gift is greater than a man's heart, than *himself*? Show me something nobler than that, something more practical, something that will bring about results more quickly. Why, do you know what is the matter with the world today? Men are distracted because of their own weaknesses; they have not will-power even to pursue a single path for a week at a time, or a month, still less a year. Their wills are asleep, their minds are weakened from lack of exercise and from depending upon help from without, their spirit within them has no chance to spread its wings and soar.

To say that Theosophists disbelieve in prayer is a misunderstanding of the Theosophical attitude. But most prayer, unfortunately, is petitionary, disguised or open, and prayer in this sense weakens the character. If I were the Christian God Almighty, I would say to the one who prays thus: "Son, you have the truth enshrined in your own heart. You have been taught it. Get upon your feet and *be*." The most beautiful prayer is aspiration transmuted into action. Then you have the real man, the real woman. No Theosophists through the ages have ever objected to prayer if it consist in inner aspiration, the will towards self-regeneration to spiritual things, and the transmuting of this inner attitude of the soul into positive action on earth. Where you have this prayer-inaction then the whole life becomes filled with the prayer of the Avatara Jesus: "Not my will, but thine be done!"

The Theosophical Forum

HOW ARE WE REBORN? — *L. Gordon Plummer*

The case for rebirth has been elaborated from time to time by Theosophical writers, and it has been pointed out clearly that the teaching of Reincarnation is one which appeals to every thinking man and woman. Who of us that has ideals and a love for humanity does not welcome the prospect of returning to take up the work we love? And who of us supposes that it is possible to accomplish all that we would like to in the short span of one earth-life? And who can fail to note the response to the challenge of the times, when the world hungers as never before for the facts concerning life and death? This response is Theosophical teaching. In this article the effort will be made to elaborate the "How" of rebirth.

By way of preface, we should point out that a clear understanding of the nature of the universe about us is imperative. The first step cannot be achieved until we recognise that the universe is a living organism — *alive* in every respect. For, were the universe a dead conglomeration of matter, it would be unable to support life anywhere, and we know that life is all about us on this earth at least. We must see all things as manifestations of life under varying conditions. We cannot see life, we see but its manifestations. This is only another way of saying that we live in a universe of phenomena, a universe of effects. It is impossible, however, to separate a cause from an effect, or vice versa, so that where we have a universe of effects (our visible, physical universe), there must be a universe of causes. This establishes a dual Cosmos, and eliminates at a stroke the old idea of a special creation. The idea of an extra-cosmic God is untenable. For if God is the cause of all that is, how can He be separated from the effects of his work? If we must hold to the idea of God, let us think of him as Cosmic Life, or the Universe of Causes.

Man is a child of Nature, and as such, he must resemble his parent. And as the Universe is twofold in the sense that in one aspect it is a universe

of cause, and in the other, a universe of effect, it follows that man in his turn is a being of cause and effect. This brings to mind the now well-known teaching of Karman, or the Law of Cause and Effect. When we say that each man is his own karman, we may interpret this in two manners. First as the twofold being just referred to, the outer phenomenal man of effects, and the inner man of causes, and secondly, in the sense that at any given moment a man is the sum-total, or the result, or the effect, of all that he has been in the past, and at the same time, he is the cause of all that he is destined to be in the future. Thus, he is his own cause and effect — his own karman.

Now, there is a ceaseless interplay going on between the Causal and the Phenomenal universes, and it might be stated in a very crude way that life and death are merely the transfer of the man from one universe to the other. In life, the man is in the phenomenal universe, and in death, he has returned to the subjective universe of causes, only to reissue at some future time, and enter once more the arena of earth-life. But there is a great deal more to it than that. In the first place, we must set aside the idea that life and death are opposites. The opposite of death is birth, and both are gateways in Life, one leading into and the other out of our phenomenal universe. But Life is eternal and all permeant, and we must endeavor to understand just what entrance into a universe of Causes implies. To do so, we must consider the relation between the subjective and the objective in Nature.

When we speak of things subjective, we are prone to consider them as being somewhat fanciful and unreal. If we hear of a man having had some horrible subjective experience, we are apt to pass it lightly by, and say, "Poor fellow, but it might have been much worse, and he will soon get over it," little realizing that an inner experience can change a whole life. Again, when we speak of subjective worlds, we think of them as worlds of fancy only, as though they were there in a sense, but quite unreal. When the facts are understood, we realize however, that the subjective, or causal universe is the real universe, without which there would be no physical universe at all. We can illustrate this best perhaps, by considering a book. What is a book? Is it the binding, or the

type, or the pages, or even the words on the pages? These indeed make the volume, the object, but the real book is the subject matter of the volume, the message that is being given out. It may be in the form of information, or it may be a story, but whatever it is, the subject-matter of the book is the only justification for the book having been published at all. Without it the book would be a meaningless jumble of words. The real book consists of the ideas that are couched in words, and imbodyed in the bound volume. So true is this that were all the books in the world destroyed, knowledge would live on, and there would always be the possibility for new books. Thus it is with this subjective universe. The causes arising out of the subjective universe are seen on the physical plane as our environment, and circumstances, and this physical world exists only because there is a continual outpouring of energy from the inner planes, resulting in outer phenomena. In like manner, man is a continual outpouring of energy from the inner reaches of his being. And this thought leads us to the main theme, the constitution of man as an integral part of the universe.

In the first place, we know that we are much more than a mere body, a mere bundle of senses. We have minds, we have inspirations and aspirations, we have desires and emotions, and we will ignore at the outset the idea that these are the results of ferments going on in the brain cells. Let us rather reach upwards and inwards in thought toward a true understanding of ourselves, commencing with the body — only because it is the most obvious part of our makeup.

One of the first things that comes to our notice when we study physiology is that there is a marked resemblance between all human bodies, not only in respect to general characteristics, but even in particulars, so that a surgeon, finding a certain bone or muscle in one human body, knows that he will find a corresponding bone or muscle in every human body. This suggests at once that the body is built around a certain pattern or plan, to which all human bodies conform. This pattern is called by the Theosophist the astral body, or double, and is in itself a very complex thing. For it grows, as does the physical body, which, in point of fact, grows only because it keeps pace with the astral

pattern, following slavishly all changes occurring therein. All of the five senses are in reality situated in the astral body, and function in the physical only through the appropriate organs. Furthermore, diseases which rack the body and mind originate in the astral body, and this is why it is so dangerous to "dam them back" by the applications of psychological treatment, as in Christian Science, or Psychoanalysis. For the disharmonies brought about in the astral body, resulting from inharmonious thoughts in the mind, must find their outlet through the body, and if they are not led out naturally and as easily as possible, they will accumulate in the astral pattern until the stress becomes so great that they cannot be held back any longer, and the man will suffer a hundredfold. This is only natural, because it conforms to the law of human affairs here on Earth.

The Astral Light, which is the source of the materials of which the astral body is formed, is the great storehouse of men's thoughts and passions, and wars do not commence on the battlefield. They originate in men's thoughts, and every thought of selfishness and avarice and hatred adds to the stress and strain, until finally the forces break through, and war results. The only way to cure these things is to reconstruct the thought-life of humanity by right education. As a man thinketh so is he.

The physical body is built around the model or pattern body, and is sustained as long as life lasts, or as long as there is vitality. This establishes another factor in the makeup of man, for these three, Vitality, the Astral Pattern, and the Physical Body, are intimately corporealized, building what Paul the Initiate called *Body*, when he divided man's nature into three — Body, Soul, and Spirit. Now, this triune entity, the vital-astral-physical portion of the man, is in reality the playground (or it may be, the battlefield) of man's life, and is in itself neither good nor evil, being but an instrument, built by the man for his use while here on Earth. It has the power to act as an entity, being endowed with a life of its own, and knows what it wants. It manifests the will to live, the desire for sensation; and just here, we have a fourth factor, or principle in the constitution of man — Desire.

Of course, the word desire is a very general term, and works under many aspects. It can be the almost automatic desire for life, or the instinct of self-preservation, or it can be the more deliberate desire to possess. Again it may take the form of the desire to be, rather than to have, and this may be ambition pure and simple, or it may be the natural expression of the evolutionary urge to grow. Again, desire in its highest form is aspiration, as being a self-conscious and deliberate choice of becoming a servant of the higher Law for the benefit of humanity. But however it may appear, it stands behind the will to live, and is the motivating power not in man alone, but throughout Nature. But Desire cannot function at its best unless it is guided by the Mind, a fifth factor in the constitution of man and that which places him evolutionarily above the beasts. It is in the mind that arises the feeling of "I am I." But the mind is not to be thought of as the apex of man's development, for intellect is not necessarily intelligence. Intellect is a technique of the mind, whereas intelligence is a quality of the Spirit. Without the warming influence of spiritual intelligence, a man may be a brute, a cold, heartless intellect ruling a clever personality and body, a menace to society. The heartlight of the spirit is a direct emanation of the Divine within man, his Inner God.

As it helps sometimes to bring home more forcibly to our minds the import of these teachings if they are placed before us in diagrammatical form, we shall now tabulate them as far as they have been enumerated, but shall do so with the warning that a tabulation or a diagram is not a picture of a thing, but merely the setting forth, in a clearer way perhaps, of the principles involved in the life of a man, or whatever else we may be studying at the time.

Divinity ————— The Inner God

Spiritual Intelligence — The Higher Self

Mind ————— The Higher Self / The Lower Self

Desire ————— The Lower Self

Vitality

Astral Pattern

Physical Body

It may be well to point out that it is the union of the mind with the spiritual intelligence which forms what in Theosophical parlance is called the Higher Self, the seat of all the finer qualities of the man, and the source of true understanding, for all knowledge is locked up within the heart of man, and education in spiritual matters is merely a bringing to the mind the things that are really his, and the process of learning is in reality a process of recognition. The Higher Self is the Teacher within, and is the Highest Teacher a man can have. All true teachers point the way toward a recognition of the Teacher within, for having once found him, an "outer" teacher is no longer necessary. The Higher Self becomes a reality to us when we realize that we can become one with its consciousness which is compassion, pure selfless joy, spiritual understanding, and utter peace. The Lower Self, on the contrary, is the union between the mind and the Desire principle, and is the source of disharmony, because its life is essentially selfish, and it is a natural law that to work for self is to court disappointment. The mind, which is the focus of consciousness of the man is torn between these opposing forces, drawn upward into the realms of spiritual feeling at times, and pulled down again into the irritating atmosphere of selfishness. And this is no metaphor — it is actual Theosophical Teaching as it has been given us by our Teachers.

And it is just here that we have the basis for ethics. When we are taught that if we wish the highest experiences possible for us to have in Death, we must live rightly, it is simply because we have to ally ourselves with one or the other of the forces above and below us. If we ally ourselves with the Spirit within, we naturally rise with it to its own wonderful home to which it returns after the death of the body; and there is no effort to do so, because our nature is akin to its own, we are a part of it. If, on the other hand, we choose to ally ourselves with the personal, selfish side of our natures, we breathe the heavy atmosphere of the Lower Self which cannot arise to those supernal heights to which the Soul belongs, and so we are held back in the dross and slime of the astral world until we are able after much labor to free ourselves, and

this is always a painful process. What it all amounts to is that we can do most of our dying here on Earth, and leap forward and upward when released from the body. This, however, is the reward of a life well lived; a life of devotion to a noble work, a life spent in service to others.

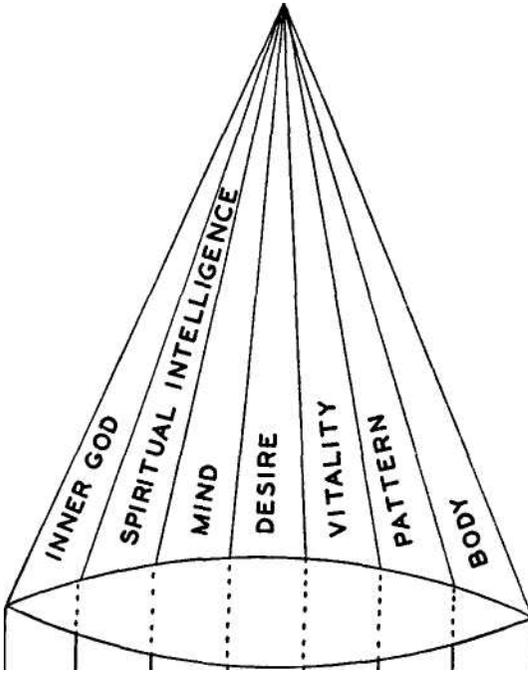
It is our intention to be a little more explicit as to the actual processes involved in the passage in and out of earth-life, and in doing so we must point out that death is essentially returning everything we have to Nature, and Life on Earth is essentially borrowing from Nature the materials we need for the building of the very complex vehicles that go to make up our bodies and personalities. What is the real man? He cannot be at once the thing that he is and the thing that he possesses. He possesses and uses his body, his mind; he speaks even of his spirit, as though implying possession, and his Divinity, as though he manifests through even that. He is, after all, a spark of That, the Boundless, higher in essence than all of the component parts of his constitution, not even excepting his Divinity. The real man, the spark of consciousness, functions through the human constitution as a whole, and any one of the seven principles in particular. At the present time it is natural for the stream of consciousness to flow through the mind-portion of the constitution with greater force than through any other principle, and evolution will in time work a change in him so that he will naturally focus his energies in and through the Spiritual portion of his being, and finally through the Divinity. This spark of That is deathless, and never loses contact with the Boundless, but it comes and goes, gathering materials on its way to the Earth from the planes of consciousness of which the universe is composed, and on the return journey to the Heart of things, it returns to Nature the materials which it had formerly gathered together for the purposes of manifested life.

Each one of our principles has a cosmic source. This is easy to understand in the case of the body which we know is built of the materials of the earth, the food we eat, the air we breathe, and so on. The mind of man is derived from the Cosmic Mind, the Spirit of man is one with the higher realms where the gods abide, and the Divinity within man sprung from Cosmic Deity. Let us think then of the Spark of

the Boundless which is to manifest as a man, as acting like a lens with which we can focus the rays of the sun, forming a true image of the sun, and which is composed of sunlight throughout. The rays of light are in no wise different from the light coming from the sun, for it is the same light, bent so as to form an image. And just as the light from the sun is sevenfold, consisting as it does of the seven colors, so is the light forming the image sevenfold, and may be broken into the seven spectral colors. The following diagram will help us to realize that every one of the seven principles of Man has a Cosmic origin. The earth is the cosmic origin of the body, the astral plane is the cosmic origin of the astral pattern. And the human vitality is simply a part of Cosmic Electricity, which manifests in so many ways. Some of the manifestations of Cosmic Electricity are: life, light, gravitation, electricity, magnetism, all instances of this one force acting on various planes. Then Desire is awakened in us, because everywhere there is the cosmic urge to become. It is this urge which brought the worlds into being, so that they, like man himself, are streams of cosmic energy flowing into this plane from other, invisible planes of life. The mind of man then came from Cosmic Mind, or rather, we should say, the mind stuff in which we clothe our ideas, sending them forth as thoughts, is the same as that of which the Cosmic Mind is composed. Then the spiritual intelligence is in reality an embryo god, and its natural home is the god-world, toward which it journeys during the after-death state, carrying us with it, if we are of the stuff that can rise with it to those supernal realms. And lastly, the Divinity within man is a spark of the Cosmic Deity — in no sense of the word "God" as a personalized entity, but the exhaustless fountain of all that is: but one remove from That.

We may see in our diagram that imbodyed life is like the light passing through the lens, and that man is therefore but a focused image of the universe. His principles bear somewhat the same relation to the Cosmic planes, from which they were derived, that lights bear to Light, beings to Being, sounds to Sound, thoughts to Thought, and so on. None of them could exist for a moment without their cosmic counterparts, for on them they rely for sustenance and maintenance. So Death is

somewhat like passing back through the lens, each of the principles becoming one with its source. And rebirth is a new focusing of the image.



How fortunate for us if we can so ally ourselves with the spiritual and the Divine within ourselves that we can enter the unutterable glory which companionship with the Gods alone can bring. And it depends upon ourselves entirely. We make of ourselves exactly what we are. We are just where we belong. There is no such thing as being out of place in the universe, for wherever we are, we belong; we have placed ourselves there; and the secret of mounting the ladder of Cosmic Being is to mount the ladder within, whose rungs are the human principles herein dealt with. When we learn how consciously to focus all our energies in the God Within, then it is easy to learn to know the inner worlds, because the Inner God has its natural home in those inner worlds, and it is merely a matter of "going home" whenever the call comes to do so. That is why Theosophy is so practical. Is it not worth a little study?

SYMPATHY WITH NATURE — *H. T. Edge*

What may be called the scientific age began (roughly) somewhere about the time of Francis Bacon, and has been characterized by a view which looked upon man as a being living in a world of dead matter and mechanical forces entirely external to himself. Whereas in other times this sharp separation between man and his world did not exist, but man was regarded as being part of nature, and nature was regarded as being alive, sentient, responsive. This view was regarded by the scientific age as superstitious, supernatural, poetic, sentimental.

We are now showing signs of a return to the older view. Whatever people's theories may be, their actual experience has never failed to give support to the older view. Certain people have a natural sympathy with certain objects, certain kinds of materials: it may be with plants and trees, it may be with wood or metal; or with fluids or chemicals or electricity or dry goods, or what not. These people are able to handle their materials and to evoke sympathetic response therefrom, where other people fail to do so. Such sympathies can be indicated by astrologers in the horoscope. Again, we find that we establish a sympathy or mutual understanding or friendship with our own tools — typewriter, razor, pen — and are reluctant to lend them for use by strange hands. We may be ashamed to speak of these things, and may treat the matter jocularly — the perversity of inanimate objects, and so forth; but nevertheless we are guided by them.

If it is the animal kingdom that is spoken of, then no one has any doubt that the animals respond sympathetically, so that one man may be able to handle dogs, horses, etc., and another not. Descending a degree we come to the plant kingdom. Some people can make anything grow anywhere; some people seem to have a deadly influence on plants. In the mineral kingdom, the world of so-called inanimate matter, the responsiveness there is even less, but still there is response; the question is one of degree, and there is nowhere that we can draw a

sharp line.

Theosophists speak of elementals, without having particularly clear-cut ideas of what they mean. These are beings with a certain limited amount of intelligence, which operate in nature and are essential for the workings of things. They fit in very well in the gap left by the scientific explanation of the universe; for science measures the operations of forces but does not know the origin of the forces.

In this view, the material world ceases to be so much dead matter outside of ourselves, and becomes a member of the great family of living beings. We can get into sympathetic relation with it. There can be no doubt that, by living with a wrong idea of nature, we have thereby shut ourselves out from much knowledge; but it follows that, once we have begun to entertain a juster view, we shall enter a path that will reveal to us things we did not see before.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA GLOSSARY

[Some years ago THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM mentioned that preparations were under way for the publication of an Encyclopedic Glossary of Theosophical Terms. Our readers will be glad to know that this work has been steadily going forward during the ensuing years and is now nearing completion. The material, which will probably fill several volumes, covers the whole exoteric field of ancient and modern Occultism and Theosophy, including mythology, anthropology, cosmogony, symbolism, the ancient Mysteries and allied subjects, and will prove to be an exhaustive mine of philosophical, religious, and scientific information. The work of writing and compilation has been carried on by a group of students at the General Offices. Dr. de Purucker has then carefully checked the definitions and in many cases added new and valuable material.

It is too early to state when this Encyclopedic Glossary will be published, but the FORUM Editors have obtained permission to share with readers of our magazine extracts from this forthcoming work. No effort has here been made to follow any special sequence of arrangement, but random pages have been purposely chosen. — Eds.]

ESSENES

Described by Josephus as one of three principal sects among Jews about the middle of the second century b. c, and later. The name is probably a derivative from the Hebrew (*asa*) to heal; the title Healer being often found as equivalent to Savior or Teacher. (Cf. *Therapeutae*.) They were a Jewish Theosophical Society of a kind, rather exclusive, and adhering to Jewish tradition in some respects, though regarded as heretical in others. They had an organization peculiar to themselves; their cardinal principles were active benevolence and self-discipline.

They had an esoteric school guarded by secrecy, and accessible through novitiate and degrees. It seems likely that they were originally diffused, but later compelled by troublous times to segregate themselves. Josephus, describing the rule of a community, gives us a picture of a tranquil life, divided between practical avocations, assemblies, and ritual observances. Their teachings were in some respects quite Theosophical. They had received at least portions of the Secret Doctrine from some one or other of the then existing foci, and were doing their best, aided by Jewish tenacity, to keep alive the true Gnosis and its realization in practical life, in an age of general dissolution.

AURA

Greek and Latin, originally meaning a "breeze" or "air." A subtil invisible essence or fluid emanating from and surrounding beings, both those we call animate and those usually classed as inanimate. To the eyes of clairvoyants the human aura appears as a halo of light, variously colored according to the temperament or momentary psychic and mental condition of the individual. Since everything in the universe is a center of living energies of one kind or another, it must necessarily be surrounded by what science would call a field of force, representing its radiations into the surrounding space and upon all objects within its sphere of influence. The question whether such influence is visible or invisible, subtil or gross, depends upon the viewpoint from which it is considered, and must be regarded in a relative sense. The human being is of a composite nature, and his aura will, therefore, be composite, including astral-vital emanations, psycho-mental, and spiritual, and any of these may be perceptible according to the plane on which the perceiver is able to function. But the aura, even though not commonly visible to our eyes, is nevertheless perceptible by the effects which it produces upon those subtil senses which we all possess in addition to the conventional five. By the auras of persons we are affected, both consciously and unconsciously, and thus is explained the influence which people exercise on each other. Such influence may be conscious or not; and, if conscious, or non-conscious, may be exerted beneficently or with evil intent and effect. Those able to

discern the aura may be enabled to estimate the character and disposition of another. Animals are in some ways far more sensitive to auras than we.

Auras also emanate from so-called inorganic substances; we have a familiar example in magnetic substances, and the subject has been investigated in connexion with different bodies by Reich-enbach and others, whose researches show that these emanations are bipolar as is ordinary magnetism. In general, an aura may be considered as the sphere of influence of a center of energy, consisting not merely of the space but of that which occupies it, namely as electricity, magnetism, or force-substance (for want of a better name). The phenomena of animal magnetism, investigated by Mesmer, illustrate this; for his magnetic fluid was a reality and not merely an effect on the imagination of his patients. The aura which thus pours forth from the living center of energy or the individual is a subtil invisible essence or fluid emanating from such center. It is in actuality a psychic-mental effluvium, and in its higher parts is a direct manifestation of the akasic portion of the auric egg surrounding every individual.

SAMÂDHI

"A compound word formed of *sam*, meaning "with" or "together"; *â*, meaning "towards"; and the verbal root *dhâ*, signifying "to place," or "to bring"; hence *Samâdhi*, meaning "to direct towards," generally meaning, therefore, to combine the faculties of the mind with a direction towards an object. Hence, intense contemplation or profound meditation, with the consciousness directed to the spiritual. It is the highest form of self-possession, in the sense of collecting all the faculties of the constitution towards reaching union or quasi-union, long or short in time as the case may be, with the divine-spiritual. One who possesses and is accustomed to use this power has complete, absolute, control over all his faculties, and is, therefore, said to be, as above hinted, "completely *self-possessed*." It is the highest state of Yoga — or "Union."

"*Samâdhi*, therefore, is a compound word of exceedingly mystical and

profound significance implying the complete abstraction of the percipient consciousness from all worldly, or exterior, or even mental concerns or attributes, and its absorption into, or perhaps better, its becoming the pure unadulterate, undilute super-consciousness of the god within. In other words, *Samâdhi* is self-conscious union with the Spiritual Monad of the human constitution. *Samâdhi* is the eighth or final stage of genuine occult Yoga, and can be attained at any time by the initiate without conscious recourse to the other phases or practices of Yoga enumerated in Oriental works, and which other and inferior practices are often misleading, in some cases distinctly injurious, and at the best mere props or aids in the attaining of complete mental abstraction from worldly concerns. . . .

"It may be observed, and should be carefully taken note of by the student, that when the initiate has attained *Samâdhi* he becomes practically omniscient for the Solar Universe in which he dwells, because his consciousness is functioning at the time in the spiritual-causal worlds. All knowledge is then to him like an open page because he is self-consciously conscious, to use a rather awkward phrase, of Nature's inner and spiritual realms, the reason being that his consciousness has become cosmic in its reaches." (*Occult Glossary*, 156-8)

Bodhi or "Enlightenment" is likewise the name of a particular state of *Samâdhi*, during which the subject reaches the culmination of spiritual knowledge. *Samâdhi* is septenary; its highest stage or degree is called *Turîya*. *Samadhi* is the highest state on earth that can be reached while in the body. To attain beyond this, the Initiate must have become a *Nirmânakâya*.

CATACOMBS

Subterranean caverns and galleries, of which some of the most celebrated are those extensive systems beneath buildings, in and around Rome and elsewhere. These were constructed for sepulture, but such was not the original purpose of many in other parts of the world, though many of these also were later used for burial and hence contain

bones. The original purpose of this latter class was for them to be used as secret temples for the enactment of initiatory rites. Says *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 379: "There were numerous catacombs in Egypt and Chaldea, some of them of a very vast extent. The most renowned of them were the subterranean crypts of Memphis and Thebes. The former, beginning on the western side of the Nile, extended towards the Libyan desert, and were known as the *Serpent's* catacombs, or passages. It was there that were performed the sacred mysteries of the *kuklos anankes*, the "Unavoidable Cycle," more generally known as "the circle of necessity"; the inexorable doom imposed upon every soul after the bodily death, and when it has been judged in the Amenthian region."

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"SOUNDING BRASS" — *Martyn A. Witter*

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

A great scholar may be able to deliver a very learned lecture upon Parabrahman and Brahma and yet if that scholar has not developed a genuine love for all men his words are as sounding brass. There is something that speaks through a man in a powerful language that leaves words and logic far behind, and that is the real nature of the man who speaks.

It is one thing to have an intellectual grasp of our starry science and another thing to have an intuitive grasp. The intellect compares while the intuition realizes. The latter can come only in proportion as one places the good of mankind above one's own good, and as one rises above the capability of sending out thoughts tinged with shaded animosity and cynicism. One may agree in an intellectual manner with the whole of the ethical doctrines implied in *The Voice of the Silence* and yet daily and even hourly send forth thoughts of shaded animosity toward those who disagree with him. This may be done without any feeling of inner conflict or the injustice of it all. It is the pursuance of the horrible doctrine that the end justifies the means. When such a doctrine is followed even unknowingly, the result is invariably disastrous in that the means soon displace the original end.

Intellect without a guiding light can be ruthless in manipulating ethics to fit its purposes. It can be blind to all other lights but its own. However, again intellect can, if galvanized into action by the Buddhist principle, be a useful instrument and a continual source of inspiration to others.

It is the duty of all Theosophists to put intellect in its place and to realize that what matters is not theory but Brotherhood. It is only by attaining proficiency in the science of sciences — ETHICS — that one can

travel the path of the Gods. While the Theosophical Movement is not meant to be a nursery for adepts, yet if it is to take the first step towards bettering the conditions of humanity it must have inherent in its actual deeds the cohesive force of toleration for differences brought about by intellectual bigotry. This cohesive force must be strong enough to hold the Theosophical Movement together for practical cooperation among its component elements. Otherwise it will become mired through lack of recognition of the limitations of its own creations which have had their birth largely through the intellect. If the Theosophical Movement does not attain cohesiveness, its voice will be as sounding brass to the world though our teachings are those of the Gods.

"If thou would'st not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm round humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils."

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Complexities of the Karman of Disease

Since disease is of a specific nature, such as blindness, paralysis, cancer, etc., is it known to Theosophists what type of ill-doing, or misdeeds, or "bad karma" would be responsible for each of these specified diseases? — *C. C. C.*

L. R. — As the available Theosophical literature does not make a differential diagnosis of the various diseases and give their occult causes, the "Theosophists" can hardly presume to do so. Any disease concerns a man's karman, past and present, as well as his physical, mental, psychic, and moral condition, his relation to other persons, his financial affairs, his habits, his temperament, his astrological position, the cycles which timed all the factors, etc. — no two cases alike. Evidently, the Lipikas are the only ones who can read the record. To come down to cases, however, the literature speaks of the many Westerners who today are seeking to gain "psychic powers," etc., by Hatha-Yoga methods of abnormal regulation of the breath and certain postures. The motive is usually one of some phase of self-interest, often at the expense of others' welfare. The result is a disturbance of the delicate balance of the dynamic forces which regulate and harmonize the various functions of the whole body. This tampering with the vital breath and nerve force brings about a disorder which gets out of control, and too often ends in tuberculosis or insanity. Again, consider the general mental and physical high tension of modern life, unrelieved by time and place of inner calm and moral peace for the real man within the body. Naturally, the trillions of body cells vibrate with the quality of the conscious man, and they may run riot at some point to pile up in a purposeless, functionless cancerous tumor. Or the fine-grained cells of heart and brain may degenerate for lack of the finer and nobler impulses which are the normal tonic of civilized tissues. These facts are more evident to a layman under an honest self-

analysis than they are under the expert's microscope or in the laboratory test-tube. Meantime, these generalities do not explain so complex a problem as the karman of an individual case, of which we must "judge not."

Conscious Electricity

In the Table of Contents of Vol. I of *The Secret Doctrine* (original edition), as a sub-title under "Stanza 3, the Awakening of Kosmos," is the following: "Conscious Electricity: Fohat . . . [page] 85." Turning to p. 85, this phrase also appears as the page-heading. I do not find, however, the phrase "conscious electricity" in the text either on page 85 or elsewhere in *The Secret Doctrine*. Is it to be understood, therefore, that the usage of the phrase "conscious electricity" in the Table of Contents and as page-heading is incorrect?

J. H. Fussell — By no means, for while the actual phrase "conscious electricity" is not employed in the text, the idea is plainly there, namely, that electricity is conscious. For instance, in the following (*S. D.*, I, p. 85): "Some faint idea of the nature of Fohat may be gathered from the appellation "Cosmic Electricity" sometimes applied to it; but to the commonly known property of electricity must, in this case, be added others, namely, intelligence." How can intelligence be conceived as apart from consciousness? If intelligence be predicated of electricity, so also must consciousness be predicated. Hence the employment of the phrase "conscious electricity" in the Table of Contents, and as a page head-line is entirely correct. Not only is this a teaching of the Secret Doctrine of Antiquity but our modern scientists are beginning to recognise that "consciousness is the fundamental of the universe." For instance:

Professor Max Planck: I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness.

Sir James Jeans: I regard matter as derivative from consciousness, not consciousness from the material universe.

Thus the teaching of the Ancient Wisdom, not only as expounded by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine* and by the Masters, but according to the greatest of our modern scientists, is that there is nothing in the Universe which does not have, or rather is not an expression of, consciousness. Thus whether we regard electricity as a force, or otherwise, it is a phase or manifestation of consciousness, and the employment of the phrase "conscious electricity" in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. I), in the Table of Contents, and as a head-line (I, 85) is entirely correct.

Common Sense in Study of the Bhagavad-Gita

I know I am bombarding you with questions, but when I cannot find an answer myself what is to be done? The allegory of physical combat on which the *Bhagavad-Gita* is based is hard enough to deal with, and I fear the pacifists will never agree that one could take one's brother's life whilst yet loving him, but I know what G. de P. has said about that, so I will not bother you about that, though I may mention that in a missionary tale I looked into that part of the Gita was used against the Hindus. But what I am puzzled about is where it goes on to say: "Mankind will speak ill of thee," etc. Now my own common sense tells me, and the Masters have said, that it is our own conscience that should be listened to (which of course we should be always trying to purify) and not what mankind will say about us. So I shall be very thankful for some light on this subject. — C. C. C.

H. T. Edge — The two statements are of course inconsistent, but one must not judge of a poem as if it were a treatise. The *Bhagavad-Gita* is an episode in the great Indian epic the *Mahabharata*, and conveys its teaching rather by a series of vivid pictures than by formal instruction. In it the allegorical and direct forms alternate and are mixed up. We find the same in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, where the allegorical

characters, who represent human characteristics, nevertheless often preach like a nonconformist minister of Bunyan's day; and where one of the characters dies by martyrdom without crossing the river of death. W. Q. Judge, in the Introduction to his version of the Gita, refuses to give a commentary, saying that each student must interpret for himself. The bows and arrows, chariots and conches, should not be mixed up with the exposition of the Yoga doctrine, with which Krishna follows his exposition of the Sankhya. So long as we can glean from this valuable scripture the lessons which will be useful to us, we need not vex ourselves with trying to reduce all the imagery to an exact formula.

Initiation of an Avatara

Why did Jesus, being a perfect physical body with the loaned part (psychological intermediate part) of a Master of Wisdom and overshadowed by the Atmic Ray, have to undergo a cycle of Initiation? Was he not beyond undergoing ritual ceremonies?

L. Gordon Plummer — In the first place, we must remember that this particular combination of perfect physical body, loaned psychological apparatus of a Master of Wisdom, and the Atmic Ray, which in this case is a Divinity, a God waiting and ready to manifest here on Earth, is what Dr. de Purucker calls a feat of white magic. The combination of that particular physical body with that particular psychological apparatus of that particular Master of Wisdom, and that particular waiting Divinity is a thing that had never taken place before, and will never take place again, though there have been many Avatars before Jesus' time, and there will be many in the future. Thus, these three parts of the Avatara Jesus had to learn to work together, they had to become amalgamated, we might say, into one being. This could be done only by means of the cycle of Initiation. Furthermore, we must not think of Initiation as ritual ceremony. Ceremony may play a part in some initiations, but only as an aid to the real work being done. Initiation is a conscious expansion of the intellectual and spiritual nature of the neophyte, so that he understands by firsthand experience just what goes on in the inner planes of being, and inasmuch as this

waiting Divinity comes from the inner planes of being, the only way the link can be established, first between the perfect physical body and the loaned psychological apparatus, is by the potential Avatara extending his consciousness to those inner planes. Then the second and greater link must be made with the waiting Divinity, and this does not happen until the man has reached maturity. And this can only be accomplished by making use of the forces at work during the highest of the Initiations known to man. So we see that these Initiations are not a matter of mere tests, but are an actual necessity, as the Avatara could not become such without them.

The Theosophical Forum

WAY OF LIVING (1) — H. D. Roderick

In *The Theosophical Path* for January 1919, appealing for sanity and just settlement by negotiation of international disputes, Katherine Tingley wrote among other things passages some of which are extracted below:

The New Way must be the way of Knowledge, of Unselfishness, of Love, of Justice, and of making the principles of Theosophy absolutely pure and strong in our lives. We may preach for eternity, we may have the greatest educational systems, the greatest writers, artists, poets, we may have everything to inspire us to right action, but if we have not begun to build *within ourselves* and to feel the necessity of finding something more within ourselves than we have had in the past; unless we can become something greater and grander than ordinary men and women, and know that we are something more than merely intellectual, mere flesh and blood, we are on the Wrong Path. We must reach a point where we can feel the power of the Soul and use it for the betterment of our nation — of all nations. There must be perpetual peace. We must constantly and persistently work for it: if we do not we shall retrograde, and in a few years we shall have A WAR OF NATIONS MORE TERRIBLE THAN EVER KNOWN.

Now, twenty years after this great-hearted, great-souled Leader of the Theosophical Society delivered her message and warning to the whole world, we stand before a Frankenstein of our own making. Verily, and alas, has the voice of Theosophy been as one in a wilderness.

Many are they who have listened and who have been intellectually entertained; few are they indeed who have consistently endeavoured to make Theosophy a living power in life. We must take our share of the responsibility therefore, for have we done that which we were

asked to do? K. T. says: —

Turn to the right Path! This is my pleading: "Find yourselves! Those who have not Theosophy, seek it; those who have it, cling to it, love it — hold to its teachings and make it a living power, not only in your own lives but in the lives of all your fellow-men. The storms and trials and sorrows that we now see raging in human life are indications of the passing away of the old order of things. All that we have to do is to seize our opportunities, TO DO FAITHFULLY OUR DUTIES AS THEY LIE BEFORE us, ingrain in the very atmosphere in which we live the finer vibrations of the Higher Law, study and work, love and serve. Bid the Christos Spirit come forth and enter upon the noble work NOW — for the woes of humanity are great."

Our woes come upon us because we are ignorant of, or indifferent to, spiritual things; we live in mental states, most of our lives, no wider than a parish square, and gull ourselves into believing we are the only people who matter or have ever mattered, and that the great white Universe exists 'just for us,' 'just for ME,' perhaps: 'I' dominate all things, or if 'I' don't 'I' shall soon get the other fellow's possessions!

"The Kingdom of God is *within* you." "The Spirit dwelleth within." So declares the New Testament. So have declared the Buddha Gautama and all Teachers of men of spiritual standing; yet even so men will gull themselves that Divinity is something hypothetical outside themselves. Maybe it is convenient to believe that way; saves one bothering about it possibly. But there it is: man obviously is a composite entity, a child of Spirit and Matter; or shall we say: Man is a soul, immortal in its higher consciousness, mortal in its bodies or lower consciousness, and in between 'higher' and 'lower' are mutations of both qualities: Can't you see this truth yourselves? Beauty and beast in every heart. Some men live wholly in the beast consciousness, bending mind in order to be a worse beast: such a one is selfishness personified. The other type, who live in the immortal part, are wholly Selfless, pure unselfishness, the beneficent ones of history (or otherwise), men who leave behind them

an aeon of blessings, Love, and Laws of Compassion. The Higher Self builds; the lower self more often destroys all that sane men hold sacred.

Now then — have not we men all these things in our consciousness: i. e. have we not all the propensity to do good and evil? What then will ye? The only reason; the sole reason why people convince themselves they are worms and incurable sinners is because they have never tried (perhaps) evoking from within them any other ideas. God is a word which comes from the word of ancient usage — Goode — meaning 'The Good,' and if you tell me that man has no good in him, meaning no Godness, then I pray you have another look at yourself within; and if another look tells you that God is something entirely apart and separate from you, then be sure such a one has the craze of domination — cure him!

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwm Theosoffaidd* (Cardiff, Wales), October, 1939. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SANTAYANA AND THE KEY TO INTERPRETATION — *H. T. Edge*

A foreword by Irwin Edman explains the purpose of this book, (1) which is to present an interpretation of the views of this versatile and many-sided philosopher. Santayana has covered so many aspects of contemporary culture — theory of knowledge, aesthetics, metaphysics, literary criticism, etc. — that it is natural to seek an essential unity underlying and uniting the diversity, a jewel behind the many facets presented to the eye. Such an interpretation will be valuable to many whose acquaintance with Santayana is less comprehensive, and also it will serve to vindicate him against misunderstandings arising from partial acquaintance with his writings. Another reason given for this interpretation is, however, more open to question; it is expressed in the following words:

To Santayana himself there does not seem to be any essential conflict between his Greek morality and his Buddhist-Christian detachment. But a philosopher does not always know himself best and it is a merit of an interpreter at once responsible and imaginative to elicit what is sometimes hidden from the philosopher himself, and from many unwary readers.

The above refers to the fact that in Santayana's philosophy we find two contrasted viewpoints, which to him do not seem to conflict essentially, but which the interpreter finds irreconcilable. These are what may be called the naturalistic or worldly view, and the mystic, transcendental, detached, or other-worldly view. For, says Dr. Munitz in his concluding summary:

[The Philosophy] exhibits two points of view that allow each one to criticize the other: the one being worldly, naturalistic, humanistic, Aristotelian; the other otherworldly, supernatural, dualistic, Platonic. Yet no ultimate synthesis or mixture such as Santayana evidently seeks is possible.

Now it may surely be argued that Santayana felt the truth of the adage that harmony results from the equilibrium of contraries, and that he felt himself under no necessity for attempting to reduce all his various points of view to a single formula. The truth must be whole and single; yet the ratiocinative function of our understanding is unable to present it as a unity, and can present it only as a series of pictures. But the ratiocinative faculty is not the whole of our understanding, and a unity which cannot be visualized may nevertheless be *felt* — seen with the inner eye, if the expression be preferred. A true picture can only be given by presenting both aspects; the emphasizing of one to the exclusion of the other will result in a lopsided and partial view. A true philosopher, having presented one side of the picture, will inevitably feel impelled to present the other side; and cannot be content to stay fixed at any position.

It should be pointed out here that the word "moral" and its derivatives "designates an interest in the conditions and ideals of human activity, rather than in preachment." Moral philosophy in this sense is declared by Santayana to be his chosen subject. The author divides his book into three sections under the headings: Naturalism and Dualism, The Life of Reason, The Spiritual Life. The problem of the relation of man and of his spirit to the universe, declared by Santayana to be the chief problem of philosophy, brings up the question of where man ends and the universe begins, and what is the difference between man and his spirit. If there is no essential difference between man and the universe, then the problem of understanding man's relation to the universe becomes reducible to the Delphic maxim, "Man, know *thyself*." In other words, there is nothing else to know. If man is essentially a unity, how can we distinguish his spirit from himself? However we feel that the philosopher must have realized this himself, and we need not cavil over distinctions which it is necessary to make for particular purposes.

The following quotation will be welcome to Theosophists:

What we call life, mind, spirit, are simply the forms, or in Santayana's language, the tropes that substance assumes when

it reaches certain degrees of complexity. The difference between what Santayana calls the psyche and the spirit are differences in the level of organization and function that we find in living beings.

And more to the same effect, which defines the Theosophical teaching of the unity of Life through diversity in its manifestations.

Under the heading of naturalism, the inadequacy of science is duly recognised, its very accuracy being obtained by means of strict limitation and exclusion. What is said about Christianity will also interest us; for, whatever that religion may have been originally, or may be now in the minds of its best representatives, it cannot be denied that Christianity as a historical fact has been characterized by a lamentable dualism. We read:

Santayana, in reviewing the point of view indigenous to Christianity, remarks that according to that view "all history was henceforth essentially nothing but the conflict between these two cities [the city of God and the city of Satan]; two moralities, one natural, the other supernatural; two philosophies, one rational, the other revealed; two beauties, one corporeal, the other spiritual; two glories, one temporal, the other eternal; two institutions, one the world, the other the Church. These, whatever their momentary alliances or compromises, were radically opposed and fundamentally alien to one another."

The more one reads the earnest and intelligent searchings of philosophers, the more is one impressed by the need for that master-key of interpretation, the Secret Doctrine of antiquity. No doubt an appeal to this may be classed as an appeal to tradition and authority; but it must be borne in mind that tradition and authority are as much a concomitant of our faith as are our intellect, our moral sense, or any other concomitants enumerated by philosophy; and that it is only when pushed to extremes that any one of them becomes questionable. Moreover the authority claimed by Theosophists is not to be accepted unquestioningly; it is verifiable, partly by the evidences of its

uniformity and invariability afforded by an examination of the religious and philosophical lore of all times and lands; and partly by the inner faculties of the student himself, which may be awakened to a direct perception. It is this ancient and universal philosophy alone which is sufficiently broadly based and comprehensive to reconcile all seeming contradictions and reveal the fundamental unity underlying all.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Moral Philosophy of Santayana*. By Milton Karl Munitz. Columbia University Press. 1939. \$1.75. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE YOGA OF THEOSOPHY – G. de Purucker

Theosophists use the word Yoga as a convenient word, but we do not use it so much in order to express our Theosophical discipline. Why? Because in the West the word has come to signify one or other of the five different Hindu Schools of Yoga; whereas the Theosophical yogic discipline includes the best in them all, and tops them with a nobler, a sixth.

Now, what are these five Indian Yoga Schools? They are these, beginning with the simplest and lowest: Hatha-yoga, the yoga of physiological psychical training, dealing almost wholly with the body and the lower mind. Next, Karma-yoga, from the word "karman," action. Third, Bhakti-yoga, the yoga of love and devotion. Fourth, Jñâna-yoga, the yoga of wisdom or knowledge, of study. Fifth, Raja-yoga, the yoga of *self-devised* effort to attain union with the god within, the yoga of discipline, such as the kings of the Kshatriya or Warrior Caste were supposed to exemplify as the leaders of their states; and the sixth, which we Theosophists add, is the Brahma-yoga, the yoga of the spirit, practically including the other five.

It is a sheer absurdity, taking human psychology and nature into account, to think that India is the only land that has ever known what Yoga is; yoga here meaning discipline, training, in order to attain self-conscious *union* with the god within, with the Inner Buddha, or the immanent Christ — call it by what name you like.

Take Karma-yoga: something of this form of discipline has been known for centuries in the Christian Church, as "salvation by works." It is a well-known training in the Christian discipline. Or Bhakti-yoga: something of this form of discipline has been known for centuries in the Christian Church as "salvation by devotion," or "love," "self-dedication": exactly the same things that the Hindu means by these words, and that the Theosophist means, and which arose

spontaneously in the heart of Christendom, as they arose spontaneously in the heart of Hindusthan, or in any other country. Then again there was the training of the Stoics — these and others are all different kinds of yoga. They did not call these trainings by the word "yoga." That is a Sanskrit term pertaining to, belonging to, Hindusthan; but the disciplines were known. The Christians called them salvation by this, salvation by that. The Hindus said union by this discipline, union by that discipline, etc.

The Theosophical occult discipline comprehends them all, because these different types of training or union correspond with the five main types of human minds or psychology, some men finding salvation in work, using the Christian term; others in love or devotion; others in theology or high thought. Why, even Christendom, in the monasteries especially, has known in the past a kind of Hatha-yoga in their physiological training — their flagellations, whippings, the wearing of sackcloth, and other practices of mortification and self-denial; in order, as they expressed it, to control and subordinate the lower passions and the body. These are typical examples of hatha-yoga of the lowest kind. However, when a man has the fortunate type of mind which will lead him into the training of the inner life, these other things follow sanely, automatically, if at all.

It is so with us Theosophists. Our training surpasses these different yogas. We do not have to bother with breathings and postures, flagellations and tortures. We know that to do our duty, we must work reverently, dedicate ourselves to duty, to effort, in the simplest things. We know that this is karma-yoga. We know that we must control the body from within, as well as our psychical impulses and our emotions, and keep the body clean and healthy, so that it be a fit instrument of the human spirit, and of the human soul. That is the real Hatha-yoga. We likewise know that to do our duty by ourselves and our fellow-men and by the glorious Movement to which we have dedicated ourselves, we must learn to give ourselves in devotion, in utter love, to the sublime objective — and this is Bhakti-yoga. We know that in order to understand life around us and our fellow-men, and our own selves,

and the glorious truths of the laws of nature upon which nature herself is builded, we must study the sublime god-wisdom intellectually — Jñâna-yoga. We likewise know that to practice all these lower yogas we must arouse the feeling of love for self-discipline, finding marvelous joy in the fact that we can control ourselves, that we are men, striving to be masters of ourselves, and not slaves. We do not need to think twice about that idea. Look at the man who can control himself, and look at the man who cannot control himself: master and slave.

Yoga when properly understood is what we might call the moral, spiritual, intellectual, psychical, and the occult training that the Theosophist has, if he is worthy of the name Theosophist. Of course if he merely accepts the philosophy because it appeals to him, because he thinks it is logical and fine, and that nothing has yet overthrown it, he is simply what Pythagoras and the great men of his School would merely call *akousmatikoi*, "hearers," "listeners." This stage is indeed something, much, but lacks greatly of the higher degrees of understanding and development.

And the final yoga, the sixth, Brahma-yoga, is the one that most Theosophical chelas, disciples, aim for. It means taking all the best in the lower forms of yoga that we have just spoken of, unifying them into one as it were, carrying them all up and nailing them as it were to the Spirit within. The thought, the emotions, the wish, are fixed like the flag nailed to the mast. It cannot be hauled down: Brahma-yoga, union with Brahman, the Spirit; the Âtman.

I would like to point out one thing more: How is it that these particular forms of yoga exist always in India? All yoga in India is discipline, as stated, methods of training; and these arise mainly in the key-thought contained in what the Hindus called the greatest, grandest, most comprehensive verse in all the Vedas, in, 62, 10, of the *Rig-Veda* called the Gayatri, or often the Savitri. This the Hindu recites upon rising in the morning, after he makes his ablutions, before he sleeps at night. Occidental Orientalists do not understand why the Hindus so reverently regard these two Sanskrit lines in the *Rig-Veda*. But the

reason is that the *Rig-Veda* is the chiefest of the Vedas; and, said the Hindus, within these two lines, are the heart of *Rig-Veda*. In Sanskrit they run thus:

Tat savitur varenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi,
Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.

And they mean this (I will give a close translation, only slightly paraphrased, so that you will get the heart of the great Rig-Vedic verse out of which sprang all Hindu philosophy, and all Hindu yoga.):

"That lofty inner soul of the god's sun, may it unite the thoughts of us, its offspring, and urge us into that union, the union of the lower with the superior, of the individual with the spirit of man, with divinity." When this union or yoga is won, achieved, then we have those grand cases of god-men, or men-gods: Jesus the Avatâra, Krishna, Buddha-Gautama and all the other Buddhas; even Apollonius of Tyana — there have been hundreds. When this union is less complete, we have the great Teachers, less great than those just spoken of, but great.

Out of this one phrase, this one yoga, as the Sanskrit word is, of the *Rig-Veda*, sprang all the philosophy and religion and occult science of archaic India, all the systems of training by which men have sought to ally that divine solar spark with themselves, to become in individualized union with the cosmic Spirit — first with Father Sun, and then with the Spirit Universal. For so reverent were these ancients, that nought in them was divorced from divinity. Every atom, every stone, every animal, every man, every deva or god, whatever it be, high or low or intermediate, was a child of the cosmic heart of Being, and could by degrees rise higher and higher into the self-conscious union, yoga with THAT. And when this glorious consummation is achieved, then you have a man-god, a god-man.

These thoughts are not anything particularly unique in Hindusthan. On the contrary, they are commonplaces of archaic and modern Theosophy. They were commonplaces actually of the Stoics, of the Platonists, and of other schools of Greece and Rome. They have been

known from immemorial time in Egypt and Persia. Read the ancient writings of these folks.

Yoga therefore, is training, discipline, by which that holiest of all human possibilities may be achieved: growth from manhood, expansion out of manhood, into godhood, divinity, which in our highest we already are. We simply become our highest selves. That is yoga achieved. I and my Father are one. Any Christ says the same. Any Buddha makes the same declaration. When you understand the profound wisdom behind it, there is nought of egoism in it. It is the spirit speaking through the lips of devotion in man.

The Theosophical Forum

FRONTIERS OF THE SOUL — *Claire Turner Wesner*

What intriguing connotations and thoughts the word frontier brings to our minds: heroes, romance, adventure, trials, deprivations, conquering, and very often, death. These are the very things the soul of each one of us is meeting every day; these are the things that the soul of our modern civilization, the world today is facing; trials, sacrifice, war, adventure, conquering, failing and often death. But the root of these conditions today is not in the geographical frontier but the frontier of our own being, our own soul, each and every one of us.

Civilization has conquered the geographical frontiers of the world; it has circled the globe, it has conquered both the north and south poles, there is no more new land to explore, to find, to claim.

To this Western World, the frontier has a definite meaning in the growth and development of America since its discovery in 1492. But looking through the pages of history we see civilizations and races surging and changing from one part of the globe to another. We see nations rise, flourish, decline, and fade out of existence to be replaced by other nations, on some other portion of the globe. But never in the recorded history of the world has civilization flourished on the five continents as it does today. True, there are large areas of the earth which are comparatively unknown, but speaking broadly we find the stir and congestion of modern life everywhere; and where it does not exist, the strong world powers are trying to gain admittance by force. In America — North and South — Europe, Asia, Africa to a less degree, there is the congestion of modern living, socially, politically, economically, and religiously.

Each nation or race is not suffering only from its own particular problems, for the world is so closely woven together with commerce and radio that what any one portion thinks and feels is reacted on the whole. Nations are no longer isolated but are forced to live, or perhaps

die, together. There is no escape. We are forced at last to face ourselves, to look within our own souls, the souls of each one of us as individuals, the soul of the nations, the soul of the world. This is where we shall find the solution of our congestion and turmoil; this is where we shall find the guidance for right living, of morals and ethics; this is where our frontier now lies, not a geographical location but the frontier of the soul.

And now just what do we mean by the word frontier? The dictionary defines it as the extreme part of a country, the border, an unsettled region. But a definition which appeals to me greatly and is really more applicable to our subject is one given by Norman Foerster in the introduction to his book *American Poetry and Prose*. Speaking of the development of Colonial literature he says:

And of the forces which grew from an interaction of the others, no influence has been more important than that peculiar state of mind (and it is a state of mind rather than a geographical line) which we call the frontier.

This is a point I want to stress. The frontier is a state of mind. It is this state of mind which has found outward expression in the expansion of a geographical location; we might say it has been the means of releasing our mental, emotional, and spiritual energies. And this is just why we find the conditions we do on any frontier — war, hate, license, bravado, fear, dangers of the unknown. It is the result of energies being used which we know nothing of or do not control. And yet how can we grow unless we enter new fields of endeavor? And every new field, every unknown condition we enter is a new frontier for experience. As Mr. Foerster tells us farther on in his book just mentioned, " — no historian, whether literary, cultural, political, or economic, could well neglect to consider the influence of the frontier." And why? Because it is the turning-point into a new cycle.

Today humanity is entering a new cycle — it has come to a turning-point. Not only is the old order of living fast breaking down but men and women as individuals are reaching a new point, a new stage of

evolutionary development. It is this change in the hearts and minds of men, of the individuals as units of the whole, which is reflected in world-conditions. In the *New York Times*, March 5, 1939, H. G. Wells is quoted as follows:

We are in the darkness before the dawn of a vast educational thrust. In the near tomorrow a collective human intelligence will be appearing and organizing itself in a collective human will.

Yet men and women do not know why this change is taking place in their hearts and minds because they do not know or understand themselves. Never was there greater need for religion and philosophy than there is today. As individuals our souls need guidance. Just as the old frontiersmen needed their scouts and guides to point and direct the way, so do we as souls need scouts and guides to point and direct the way through our ignorance and confusion. This is just what the technical teachings of Theosophy can do for us. It is the modern Theosophical Movement which can guide humanity and it is the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion behind the Theosophical Movement who are trying to guide our souls in the right direction, if we will but heed them.

Any experience which is new, strange, and unfamiliar to us is a new frontier for our soul, and these frontiers are many. In our growth through life from birth to childhood, to adulthood, old age, and death, the expansion of our consciousness constantly brings us new experiences: the growth of the soul through aeons of evolutionary development brings us even greater experiences: when individuals try to contact the invisible or astral realms by clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy and so forth, new frontiers of experience, and most dangerous ones too, are contacted: death and the processes of disimbodiment take the soul through new but more or less familiar frontiers: but perhaps the greatest frontier which the soul can cross and conquer is that of initiation, because it is through initiation that the soul consciously contacts the different spheres of the Universe.

Success means glory, failure means death.

These are the points I want to touch upon, to point out the real necessity and value of becoming familiar with the technical teachings of Theosophy and to show how practical these teachings are.

Evolution to the Theosophist means growth, an unfolding of the inner faculties, a development from within outwards. The outward manifested form is only the result of inner growth and as our inner and higher faculties evolve and develop, the outward form changes to meet its needs. So we can see at once that evolution occurs on all planes of our being, physical, psychical, mental, and spiritual. All life is changing, growing, evolving; there is no such thing as immobility in nature. Such a condition would mean stagnation and death. All the various kingdoms of nature, plant, mineral, animal, are evolving. Each kingdom is but the outward expression of an inner Intelligence which finds the particular kingdom in which it is manifest the most suitable vehicle for its present development. The vehicle is not the important consideration, but this inner Intelligence, or Guiding Force, which is the heart, the center of every composite and manifest entity.

Man then, as we know him today, will not always be a man. By inner growth, by the expansion of his soul, he will become something greater, first a master of life, a god-man, and then a god. To make this point clear it may be well to show how this Intelligence or Divinity unfolds its powers through the various kingdoms of nature.

First of all this evolutionary principle expresses itself as motion, the pulsating motion of space, often spoken of by Theosophists as the Great Breath. From motion came attraction. This attraction caused concretion and we have the kingdom of imbodiment. But imbodiment is not sufficient, a definite form is needed and we note this Inner Intelligence, this Guiding Power, manifesting as individualized shapes and we have the mineral or crystal kingdom. Here we see growth not only by accretion, as in crystals, but a growth which is in the direction of a definite form. Then in the next higher kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, we have not only definite form, but motion. With the plant kingdom we

can see the physical motion of growth, adaptation to climatic conditions, the flowering and dying with the seasons. Next with the animal kingdom we see this Inner Intelligence not only in motion but motion controlled by desire and intention. As the flowers love the sun, the animals love their young — they show emotion and feeling. Then with us, the human kingdom, we have not only controlled and conscious motion but the power to control motion outside ourselves. The Inner Intelligence is now expressing itself directly in man who has the power of free will and choice. But is this the end of outer expression and manifestation? No. Man will someday evolve to the next higher kingdom — the god kingdom — which not only controls motion outside and beyond itself but can actually and consciously, by the power of choice and free will, BECOME that which is outside himself. Such powers are expressed in degree even by the chela passing through initiation, who must place his consciousness into the various kingdoms of nature and actually become those kingdoms not only below him but up and beyond him to the planets and stars of the Universe.

With this brief outline we can see the inner unfoldment of the soul of nature expressing itself first as motion, then attraction, then individualization, then organization, then motion controlled by desire, then the power of free will and choice and the control of motion outside and beyond the individual, and then the power to actually become that which is outside and beyond the individual manifestation. From this we can get a slight adumbration of what is ahead for the human soul — what new and vast frontiers there are for it to explore. Instead of the physical or geographical boundaries, we have the universe for our frontier.

Now, to come home a little more closely let us consider those fields of experience which are not quite so abstract. Here I refer to the practices of contacting the invisible or astral worlds through the medium of hypnotism, clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, or some other form of psychism. I dare say, almost everyone has either had some such experience himself or has personally known of some one who has had.

That such astral realms exist is a fact taught by Theosophy and it is something which is constantly being studied and investigated by modern scientific research. We must remember that man's evolutionary progress is very slow and that our faculties unfold themselves gradually over a period of many lives. We do not gain any special or unusual powers or become highly intelligent or spiritual all at once; these are processes of gradual unfoldment from within outwards. Also we must remember that Man is a composite being — he is not matter, or emotion, or intelligence, or spirit, *per se*, but is a wondrous and mysterious combination of all of these faculties or qualities. And to understand just what happens when we contact the astral realms we should know something of man's composite being.

To begin with there is the lower, or material part of our nature which is transitory; it is not permanent but disintegrates at physical death. This lower part is composed of the physical body, the astral body, which is only slightly more ethereal than the physical, the desires and emotions, and the lower mind. From this we can readily see that any demonstrations of the astral or psychic faculties have to do with the lower part of our being, and that it is not true intelligence or spirit. It is not the true soul of our being. The true soul of man is the higher part of his consciousness — his higher intelligence or mind plus his spiritual and divine nature. It is this part, this higher part, which is conditionally immortal and lives from life to life. This is the real soul of man, which is growing and evolving through the use of the lower faculties.

Many and varied are the modern schools of psychic practice and research. There are the mediums and sensitives who consciously contact the astral realm of this lower nature. They see visions of spooks or receive messages from the invisible worlds. The astral world is really very gross, as said before, it is only slightly more ethereal than the physical. The so-called spooks and elementals which inhabit it are the reliquiae of departed souls. They are nothing more than the grossest passion and degraded substance of nature. Such spooks and elementals are in the process of disintegration. They have been severed from the higher spiritual planes of life. This is the lowest, material

portion of the constitution, which is dropped and left behind by the real soul of man who has been freed from earth by death. Contacting such an atmosphere has a very bad effect on anyone. Here is a strange unknown land full of horror, decay, and danger; and yet, through ignorance, we dare to let the consciousness of our soul be carried into such a frontier without knowledge and without guidance.

Then there are the hypnotists, and those who practice telepathy or thought-transference. Such persons contact the lower mind only, the mind of the lower nature; but it is probable that much scientific progress has been made in the study of telepathy within the past few years. Yet the investigation of telepathic power, or as science calls it, extra-sensory perception, is from a purely mechanical basis. How much better it would be to develop our functions of inspiration and intuition. These are the qualities of the real man. Where telepathy can carry us only into the borderland of our soul-frontier, inspiration and intuition can expand our souls to cosmic reaches. It is by the expression of inspiration and intuition that the greatest works of art, literature, music, science, and philosophy have come to us, and not through the powers of thought-transference.

Then there are the psychologists who are perhaps making the most scientific and balanced progress in the study of the human being and his possibilities. They consider not only the lower mind and the emotional nature but the more advanced consider man as an evolving soul. Of course there are many schools of psychology, each studying man's composite make-up from different aspects, and naturally some are nearer the truth and more progressive than others. Yet they are all trying to adjust man to his surroundings and his mode of living. There are modern psychologists who are sincerely endeavoring to help man to understand himself. They are breaking down old barriers by declaring that man is potentially a self-reliant individual and not a helpless non-entity, drifting haphazardly on the sea of life. Here I would like to quote a paragraph from the book, *The Re-Discovery of Man* by Dr. Henry C Link, Director of the Psychological Service Center in New York City. He says:

Man is still the potential creator rather than the victim of his creations. He is a creature of free will and untold possibilities, not the slave of environment. His capabilities are limited not so much by heredity or poverty as by his own vision of himself.

And this is just what Theosophy declares — man is limited by his own vision of himself. Yet the modern psychologist has not a comprehensive view of man's nature and destiny. None of these schools of thought or psychic research study or consider the complete man. This is what men and women need more than anything, a knowledge of their own nature, from the physical to the most divine essence at the heart of their being. Humanity is suffering from too much emotion and too much brain-mind — its soul needs the guidance of the spiritual nature. It needs the true vision of itself which can only come through the development of the higher intellectual and spiritual faculties, expressing themselves in the control of our thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

Broadly speaking then, we can say that man is dual: he has a higher and a lower nature with the soul fluctuating between the two. As the early pioneers had to conquer the dangers of the Western frontier, so do we, our souls, have to conquer the dangers and pitfalls of our lower nature, conquer our lower passions and desires and avoid the dangers of abnormal psychic practices. We must awake to our responsibilities toward each other, help each other along, become something more than animated matter. We must conquer present conditions before we can go on to new and larger frontiers. It takes strong characters to explore new fields.

Such strong characters are always with us, guiding and helping humanity. Such are the great mystics, poets, and philosophers. But greater still are those real frontiersmen of humanity, the spiritual leaders of the ages, some greater than others, but all pointing to the same goal, trying to awaken our own spiritual nature that our soul may rise and become at one with it. The Masters behind the Theosophical Movement today are such spiritual leaders and teachers,

guiding and helping us in the right direction, if we will but heed them. These Masters are the spiritual frontiersmen of humanity, and the teachings they have given us, the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, known today as Theosophy, are the guide-posts pointing the way.

By following the guidance Theosophy can give us and the guidance of our own higher natures, we can be led out of the maze of our present world-turmoil. Evolution of the soul is really frontier-less — there is no end. From men we become god-men, then gods, and on up the ladder of life, finally becoming freed souls, souls freed from matter, cosmic beings. Such are the frontiers of the soul. A poem by Walt Whitman beautifully expresses this very thought:

A noiseless patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
It launched forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.
And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to
connect them,
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor
hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

The Theosophical Forum

GNOSTICISM — P. A. Malpas

(Extract from a letter)

Dear Friend: You ask what I think of your programme of study, including a discussion on Gnosticism. I think it fine, but here in a small country village miles from anywhere, I have no books at all, so can only give some general hints from memory, as accurately as I can.

In the first centuries of the current era there were many groups and societies in the Mediterranean countries and the Near East which combined some special symbolical religious system with secret teachings. They can be called Mystery-Schools. Some were kabbalistic; some were more or less degenerated mystery-systems; some are more properly called gnostic. Strictly translated, the Greek word gnostic means "one who knows." In India the word Buddhist means one who has wisdom. A Jain means probably much the same thing as a Gnostic, etymologically speaking. The Jains are said to have been the early teachers of Gautama the Buddha. In Latin the word scientist should mean "one who knows" but as our modern official scientists of the West have scrupulously cut themselves off from all that cannot be weighed in a balance or examined in a test-tube they labour under serious limitations. Fortunately, since the advent of Madame Blavatsky official science has been forced to recognise inner unseen worlds and is now so far advanced as to realize that the outer phenomenal world is nothing in comparison therewith. By a "coincidence" the first breaches in the wall were made by such men as Sir William Crookes in H. P. B.'s time. Now we have progressed much farther. Soon the word science will mean what it ought to mean, knowledge on all available planes.

The Mandeans (oddly enough once called "Christians of St. John the Baptist" — although he was never a Christian) are similarly "people who know." Also the word *pistis* in the gospels means (higher manasic?) knowledge, but has curiously enough been crystallized into

the English conception "faith," which is not knowledge at all. I am of opinion that the very first pre-church Christianity was also "Gnosticism" and not faith at all with its adepts, if any. At any rate the historic "Founder of Christianity" was "one who knew." Even in the gospels of a far later date he is made to say of political (?) opponents, "You hold fast the keys of the Gnosis and prevent those who wish to enter in from doing so." (The word gnosis is translated in English "knowledge" thereby completely missing the point.) In *Timothy* we also read a warning against science or knowledge falsely so called — and the word is really the gnosis. This must have been written after the time when "Christianity" had so far lost all knowledge (as opposed to "faith") that "Gnosticism" was regarded as a deadly enemy.

Some of the leaders of the Gnostic schools were renowned — Basilides, the god-taught, Marcion, Valentinus. In *The Secret Doctrine* it is pointed out that the leaders of these Gnostic schools were initiates in the mysteries.

To me, Marcion is specially interesting. He was the son of a Black Sea shipowner in Sinope or Trebizond, I think. He was rich. He brought £1500 with him into the Church and that was a great sum in those days. They wanted to make him head of the Church at Rome — Pope as we should say. But there was a difficulty — they wanted him in exchange for their support to obey their political orders, so to say. He refused and left the church. They made the best of it and declared virtuously that they had thrown him out as a heretic, with his money. So passed the last one in the church at that time who really knew anything. It is true such folk as Origen also knew a little but the case was different. Faith with the passing of Gnosticism took the place of knowledge. Actually one or two Gnostic societies survived until recent centuries in Europe, but persecution finally annihilated them — they were at last only shadows of what Gnosticism had once been.

It was this Marcion who about the year 135 a. d. cut out about one-third of the *Gospel of Luke* as we have it, reducing it to the proportions it had possibly about the year 110. He cut out among other things the

childhood stories and the political anti-Herodian and other additions. If he was actually the writer or re-editor of *Luke*, he could very well do this — but it is quite possible that even Marcion's *Luke* was a greatly expanded gospel of earlier date than 110 a. d., this earlier gospel occupying perhaps only a few pages of a lodge-ritual. He seems to have been one of the two main writers or editors of *Acts* also.

Marcion's interpretation of the Christos saga is ingenious and very interesting. His gnostic Christ is not a historical man (the *historical* Jesus was added later), but the type of the higher man in all men, we might say perhaps the Buddhi-Manas in Sanskrit technology. I suppose this is a good example of a paradox. "Jesus" was a historical man or Avatara, but the original gospel does not seem to have referred to a historical Christ or Jesus at all. Only later was he put in as a type of the generality therein described. So when one man says, "The Christ of the Gospel is not historical," and another says "Jesus was indeed a historical character," both may be perfectly right. The paradox lies in the absence of the connecting links explaining precisely what each statement means. There are many such paradoxes.

Later, when the church had forgotten what had once been known, and had therefore ceased to be Gnostic, that church fought a bitter fight against the "Gnostics" as if they were some terrible species of heretics.

About fifty years after the drama of Marcion another little drama took the stage. About 180 a. d. we hear of curious doings at Lyons in Gaul. The "bishop" there, Irenaeus, quarreled with the "Gnostics" — quite likely his own lodge from which he might have demitted. It looks as if Irenaeus published the *Gospel of John* at this time — a gospel quite distinct from the other three. At any rate, *John* appeared about now, and it might have previously been the private ritual of some lodge and by no means so old as the synoptics.

Irenaeus seems to betray an odd situation. The Gnostics forced him into a corner by saying that "Jesus" in the gospels had such a short time for his mission that he could not found and train a body of disciples to form a church in say eighteen months or three years. The taunt was so

obviously true that Irenaeus is forced to say that Jesus preached for twenty years and died at the age of fifty-two, or thereabouts (I think I have the numbers approximately correct).

Very well. Then are we to suppose that Irenaeus knew perfectly well that the gospel story is pure allegory and that the historical Jesus is quite "another story"? It looks like it. Certainly the Jewish *Talmud* "Lives of Jesus" do suggest that he was active until his fifty-second year — but this was the *historical* Jesus, not the gospel Christ (or Jesus as he was before he died and became a Christ). If this is the solution then here we have a very interesting confirmation of the idea of the original gospel as a lodge-ritual, but not as history. The seemingly historical dates and names can be explained in another way — Tiberius, Herod, Pilate, etc.

What has all this to do with us? A great deal. Because Madame Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society in our age, and the real bringer of Theosophy to our modern world once more (acting as agent for others still greater than herself), was a "Gnostic" in the true sense of the word — she knew — and it was her business to wake in us the faculty of knowing, or at least the faculty of recognising that such is possible, plus an effort to attain it. So in a minor sense we are also Gnostics, or should be. We are against no churches, but we do help churches to regain the life they once had and to get rid of the accumulated rubbish (often political) of the ages which has overlaid their gospel. If they have only faith and not *pistis*, which is perhaps *spiritual knowledge*, that is their business, and if some few of them resent the fact that we seek knowledge rather than (blind) faith, we must be patient and wait until they see more light. If we claim that some of us have more light, more intuition, than others, and that some of us have experience confirming the possibility of its attainment, that is all the more reason for us to be kindly and to meet resentment with calm reserve — for time heals all things. Was there ever an age in the world's history when people had not to be given time to accustom themselves to more light when they were fortunate to get it?

THEOSOPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA GLOSSARY

[Some years ago THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM mentioned that preparations were under way for the publication of an Encyclopedic Glossary of Theosophical Terms. Our readers will be glad to know that this work has been steadily going forward during the ensuing years and is now nearing completion. The material, which will probably fill several volumes, covers the whole exoteric field of ancient and modern Occultism and Theosophy, including mythology, anthropology, cosmogony, symbolism, the ancient Mysteries and allied subjects, and will prove to be an exhaustive mine of philosophical, religious, and scientific information. The work of writing and compilation has been carried on by a group of students at the General Offices. Dr. de Purucker has then carefully checked the definitions and in many cases added new and valuable material.

It is too early to state when this Encyclopedic Glossary will be published, but the FORUM Editors have obtained permission to share with readers of our magazine extracts from this forthcoming work. No effort has here been made to follow any special sequence of arrangement, but random pages have been purposely chosen. — Eds.]

EQUINOX

The two annual epochs when the equator and ecliptic cut each other, occurring (since 1900) about March 21 and September 23, when the days and nights are equal to each other in length — hence the name "equal night." The position of this intersection or node, on the ecliptic, at the Vernal Equinox in the northern hemisphere, is called the first degree of Aries in the ecliptic zodiac. But this point shifts continuously, having a retrograde motion around the ecliptic occupying 25,920 years. (In astronomical tables, the annual recession is given as 50.2", which, if

uniform, would give 25,868 years; but to calculate the period in this way, it would be necessary to know the mean value of the recession during the entire period.)

This period is very important in Occultism, because every astronomical cycle is indicative of cycles in both cosmic and human history. In accordance with the Signs of the Zodiac it is divided into twelve parts, each of 2160 years, called in Occultism the "Messianic Cycle" and marking the coming of a World-Savior. The starting-point of this cycle is not publicly known, but it is possible to place it with fair accuracy by means of the data which occult history furnishes. The starting-point is said in Hindu astronomy to have been the star Revatî, which star, however, seems to have disappeared. The recession of the equinoxes from Pisces into Aquarius is stated to occur somewhere about the present age, and to mark a new spiritual dispensation.

In *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 330) a cycle is mentioned which is obtained by compounding the precessional cycle with the cycle of the apsidal revolution; this, according to the astronomical figures quoted, gives a cycle of 21,128 years, which is probably 21,160 years; but the exact period cannot be calculated by modern astronomers unless we know the mean annual recession of the equinoxes as referred to the apsides.

The two equinoctial epochs of each year are highly important in Occultism, as they indicate conditions favorable to certain operations, initiations, and ceremonies. These times were the ones often chosen as being favored for the celebration of the ancient Mysteries and the initiation of candidates; although it may as well be said here that the two solstices, falling respectively in December and June, are equally important in their way and for the same reasons; but the teaching concerning these matters is not such as can be unveiled in a published work.

NÂGA

(*Sanskrit*) A word meaning "serpent." The serpent has ever been used in the symbology of Occultism as the symbol of Immortality and

Wisdom, of renewed births, of secret Knowledge and, when the tail is held in the mouth, as a symbol of Eternity. The Nagas or "Serpents of Wisdom" are, therefore, full Initiates. "In the Secret Doctrine, the first *Nagas* — beings wiser than Serpents — are the "Sons of Will and Yoga," born before the complete separation of the sexes, "matured in the man-bearing eggs produced by the power (Kriyasakti) of the holy sages" of the early Third Race." (S. D. II, 181) These First Nâgas were the human Adept-originals, who were, later, symbolized by the terms "serpents" and "dragons." "These "originals" — called to this day in China "the Dragons of Wisdom" — were the first disciples of the Dhyanis, who were their instructors; in short, the primitive adepts of the Third Race, and later, of the Fourth and Fifth Races. The name became universal, and no sane man before the Christian era would ever have confounded the man and the symbol." (S. D. II, 210)

The early Mexican word Nagual, now meaning sorcerer and medicine-man, is akin in its meaning to the Sanskrit word Nâga; for "Some of the descendants of the primitive Nagas, the Serpents of Wisdom, peopled America, when its continent arose during the palmy days of the great Atlantis, (America being the *Pâtâla* or Antipodes of Jambu-Dwipa, not of Bharata-Varsha)." (S. D. II, 182) The Hebrew equivalent of Nâga is Nâhhâsh also meaning "magic," "enchantment"; thus showing the same connexion of ideas.

One of the Masters, in a letter to A. P. Sinnett, also uses the word Nâga as being equivalent to the Ananta-śesha, the seven-headed endless serpent of Vishnu, and speaks of it as "the great dragon eternity biting with its *active* head its *passive* tail, from the emanations of which spring worlds, beings and things. . . . Now think: the *Nag* awakes. He heaves a heavy breath and the latter is sent like an electric shock all along the wire encircling *Space*." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 73)

SARPA

(*Sanskrit*) "Serpent." The serpent has ever been used in symbological Occultism as signifying Wisdom, Immortality, therefore renewed birth,

and secret knowledge. Hence *Sarpa* is a mystical term applied to an initiate. (See *Nâga*, another Sanskrit word of similar meaning and of identic application.)

"There is a notable difference *esoterically* between the words *Sarpa* and *Naga*, though they are both used indiscriminately. *Sarpa* (serpent) is from the root *Srip*, *serpo* — to creep; and they are called "Ahi," from Ha, to abandon. "The *sarpa* was produced from Brahma's hair, which, owing to his fright at beholding the Yakshas, whom he had created horrible to behold, fell off from the head, each hair becoming a serpent. They are called *Sarpa* from their creeping, and *A hi* because they had deserted the head" (Wilson). But the *Nagas*, their serpent's tail notwithstanding, do not creep, but manage to walk, run and fight in the allegories." (S. D. II, 181-2)

The difference between these two Sanskrit terms *Sarpa* and *Naga* may be briefly set forth in the following observations: *Sarpa* was the original Sanskrit term signifying a snake or serpent; whereas *Naga*, although possibly originally likewise signifying a snake or serpent — which it does consistently throughout the range of Sanskrit literature — nevertheless early became identified in mystical thought with initiates because of their power of casting off human physical body after human physical body almost at will. Both terms therefore signify serpent or snake: the wriggling reptile was well known, and both later were used almost indiscriminately likewise to signify initiates. Nevertheless, because of habit or use, *Naga* is the more common term for a full initiate, *Sarpa* in this sense being of less frequent usage.

The point is that *Sarpa* is from the verbal root *srip* meaning "to wriggle," "to creep," "to crawl" — a meaning which it has not lost in any period of Sanskrit literature. Now initiates do not wriggle or creep or crawl. Hence *Nâga* is the better word for an initiate, despite the fact that through ignorance *Sarpa* has frequently been employed as the synonym of *Naga*.

Besides the facts given above, it must be remembered that just as the forces of Nature are in themselves neutral, and become "good" or "bad"

as they are used by individuals, similarly so is a symbol usable in a good sense or a bad sense. This is shown in the use of these two Sanskrit words Nâgas and Sarpas. The Brothers of Light are properly called Nâgas, and the Brothers of Darkness are more properly called Sarpas, from the verbal root *srip*, meaning "to wriggle," hence to insinuate, to creep in by stealth and deceive. Both the Brothers of Light and the Brothers of Darkness are focuses of power, of subtilty, of wisdom, and of knowledge; in the one case rightly and nobly applied, and in the other case wrongly applied. The former are the Nâgas, the Serpents of Light: subtil, wise, and with power to cast off the garment or vehicle when the body has grown old and to assume another at will. The others, the latter, are more strictly the Sarpas, the Serpents of Darkness, insinuating, worldly wise, selfishly shrewd, deceitful, venomous, and dangerous; and yet possessing the same powers, but in less degree, and using them wrongly, thus deceiving human hearts and succeeding in their work often by lies and misrepresentations. Nevertheless, precisely because the two words Nâgas and Sarpas are used almost indiscriminately, the student should be careful to remember this fact when, in reading, either of these two words falls under his eye. Either may apply both to the Servants of Light or to the Servants of Darkness.

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Antiquity of Civilization in America

In regard to the spread of civilization throughout the world since the Old Stone Age, two rival theories exist. One is that of the Convergents, who believe that similar cultures arose independently in remote places by the natural working of the human mind; the other school, the Diffusionists, argue that customs, inventions, etc., were gradually diffused from some original center, probably Central Asia, or perhaps Egypt, and ultimately reached America. We are not taking part in the discussion at this moment, but only refer to it to draw attention to a new archaeological discovery which indicates an immensely greater antiquity for the Maya civilization in America than has hitherto been allowed, or perhaps even suspected. Our information is derived from an article by Dr. W. D. Lighthall in the *Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada* for January on "The Diffusion of Culture Controversy."

The discovery was made by Robert Henseling, a German astronomer, as the result of his studies made in 1935 of the dates carved on early Mayan monuments at Naranjo in Yucatan, Mexico. It is well known that the Mayan astronomers had a predilection for exact reckonings, and, as he says: "All [researchers] agree that, regarding the motions in time of the heavenly bodies, the Maya priest-astronomers were very much better informed than those of any other old civilization; especially as to the methods of correcting errors of neglect of day-fractions of periods by insertion or omission of whole-daytime values." Their treatment of the leap-year problem was even more exact than the equation employed by us in the Gregorian calendar.

In brief, it seems that he discovered a "commencing or zero date" when many astronomical events converged, "a year of wonders," which the Mayans adopted as a natural starting-point for their time reckoning. This zero-epoch occurred as far back as b. c. 3373, almost exactly 3000 years before the earliest existing Maya monument whose age is known. This planetary "convergence" is mainly due to a rare synodic phase of the revolutions of the planets Saturn, Jupiter, and Mercury, and the data given include the subtil difference made by the precession of the equinoxes! As a convincing tribute to the reality and importance of the zero-date R. Henseling shows that it practically coincides with the Chinese starting-point of measurements along the ecliptic which dominates in ancient Chinese astronomy. He says, "On zero-day the sun and Saturn stood at this point in the heavens."

Dr. Lighthall, who appears to favor the Diffusion Theory, says: "*Henseling thus shows the original unity of the Maya system with the Chinese, and by so doing he mathematically decides the famous diffusion-of-culture controversy* in favor of those who class the Maya with the original archaic civilization." He also refers to the importance of the conjunctions of Jupiter and Saturn, but we cannot go into the matter further at present. It is perhaps worthy of note that modern astrologers allege that such conjunctions — separated by about twenty years — have proved very significant in United States history. The next occurs in 1941. Dr. Lighthall suggests that the zero date of b. c. 3373 is associated with the beginning of the First Dynasty of Egypt, but a comparison of the wide differences of opinion by Egyptologists about early Egyptian chronology — amounting in some cases to nearly two thousand years — warns us to go very slowly in such comparisons. The Egyptians did not date their monuments by any fixed point in time as the Mayas seem to have done.

Scientists Reconsider Evolutionary Theories

Many biologists are beginning to doubt the truth of mechanistic theories of evolution. A correspondent kindly sends us the following extract from *The Lancet*, the leading British Medical journal, which

relates to the difficulty in believing that reaction to environment explains the appearance of new forms of life:

But more profound puzzles confront the "Anatomist," and he poses the recurrent problem of the persistence in many groups of animals of primitive generalized types. If changing environments demand the evolution of more complex animals to meet the new needs, how is it that these have survived through aeons of time, apparently completely meeting the requirements without significant structural change, basic forms upon which all the higher developments of the group are founded? As examples of these "immortal" forms which have not developed their potentialities he gives the shark, the giant salamander, the tuatara lizard [with the third eye], the ostrich, and, following Bolls's thesis of infantilization, he would regard man as the permanent baby amongst mammals, emphasizing that lack of structural specialization which is man's saving grace.

In regard to the point referred to by the *Lancet* writer, the Theosophist refuses to accept the view that environment is the primary cause of the evolution of new complexities, and it is encouraging to know that the mechanistic evolutionists are being forced by their own studies to reconsider their position. According to the Ancient Wisdom, evolution is not haphazard, or the mechanical result of a reaction to environment, but is an orderly process of unfoldment of what is already latent in each creature or group. Environment has a minor place, no doubt. Some animals come to the end of their potentialities of specialization sooner than others and are then affected by the "Law of Retardation" mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*. They remain stationary, or practically so, but if the environment is unendurable, they die out and their monads seek other forms.

The expression used in the above quotation "man is the permanent baby (1) amongst mammals" has a deeper implication than the writer may suspect. It is true that by not specializing in *physical* development

man's body has not become lopsided or sidetracked and therefore unfit to be the instrument of the soul. His specializing is spiritual and intellectual and it permits unlimited progress. Man even in his bodily structure is very ancient, and is only "infantile" in the fact that he has remained practically unchanged for millions of years in form. In his inner and divine nature, however, man is immeasurably older and was the originator of the basic types of the mammals which gradually appeared on earth in orderly and lawful evolution by a process yet unrecognised by science. Spiritual "Man" is a repertory of archetypal forms. This may seem curious to those who are unacquainted with Theosophy, but we cannot further discuss the subject in these brief notes. A clear explanation will be found in Dr. G. de Purucker's *The Esoteric Tradition*, chapter x.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Called by H. P. Blavatsky a "persistent type of life" (Huxley's term). See *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 256, where she explains the importance to the Occult Philosophy of man being one of these persistent types. — C. J. R. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNINITIATED SEER AND THE TRUE ADEPT – *H. P. Blavatsky*

The difficulty of distinguishing between the creations of the seer's brain and spectral or spiritual phenomena really external to himself, appears to be the cause of the confusion into which untrained, uninitiated observers fall when natural mediumistic gifts enable them to cross the threshold of the world of spirit and awake to a perception of the wonders hanging like an *aura* around the physical planet. From Socrates to Swedenborg, from Swedenborg to the latest clairvoyant, no *uninitiated* seer ever saw quite correctly. But whatever confusing influences have been brought to bear on natural seers of past times, none have been beset with the artificial bewilderments that operate to cloud the faculties of the modern spiritualistic medium. A great mass of prepossessions occupy his mind at starting; every observation he makes, is twisted into the mould of an elaborate predetermined theory, and every picture presented to his finer senses is distorted to suit the expectations of his fancy and coloured to the complexion of a previously formulated creed. The spiritualist may honestly believe himself a seeker after truth, but the spiritualist, who is himself in any degree a medium, is fascinated by the creations of his faith and borne away on an induced current into a phantas-magorial world peopled with his own imaginings. Their apparent reality confirms the conjectures from which they spring, and all suggestions which claim a reconsideration of their character seem almost a blasphemy to their eager devotee. But to the student of occult philosophy there is a grander beauty in the consistent teaching of adeptship, than in the startling excitement of mediumistic revelation, while over it all there shines, for him, the solemn light of absolute truthfulness. Mediumship may afford sudden glimpses of unsuspected wonder — as bits of a strange landscape may be momentarily revealed by lightning, but the science of adeptship casts the steady light of day upon the whole scene.

SIGNPOSTS — A. E. Court

What is it that we can most readily do "to change the hearts and minds" of mankind with a view to bringing nearer to fruition an active expression of Universal Brotherhood in the world?

Just as a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step, that step nearest the traveler, just so does every accomplishment have its beginning. The seeker after Truth, contrary to the average belief, does not make his discovery in the fields of exploration about him, in books and experiments, but within himself. And just so can we attain to that Divine goal which is set before us, by beginning with that which is closest to us, ourselves.

Our journey is taking us to a land of Brotherhood. What was it that directed *us* to the way? It was the bright light of Compassion and Love displayed by one of our fellow-men whose path we crossed. He was literally a "Signpost," an animated expression of a "changed heart and mind," silently pointing to our own inherent possibilities and the way toward their attainment. It follows naturally, therefore, that our first duty lies with ourselves: the unfolding from within of the Divine essence of Brotherhood in order that it may be seen by our daily associates and act as a stimulus toward the changing of other hearts and minds.

Nature works its wonders in the silence, and so we, even though busily engaged in routine affairs, can be ever silently and surely lighting the pathway around us. The more "Veils of Illusion" we destroy in our nature, the brighter will our light shine, and eventually we will become a "Signpost" to men, more brilliant, more attractive, more vitally potent with significance and influence than anything we might otherwise do to attain our goal.

THE UNDERSTANDING HEART – *G. de Purucker*

Reverence is a godlike quality. I have a notion that the gods revere where we wonder only, and I think that the adult reveres where the child merely wonders. To me reverence is a mark of advancement in evolution; and the irreverent person is to me by so much short of wit, for it is vastly easier to criticize and to make fun, than it is to understand and in understanding discover reverence. It is difficult to understand, and I know myself that reverence grows apace in him who has the understanding heart.

I wish all of us had the understanding heart. I foresee that had we it, the most difficult points of philosophy would become easy to us all. For I have discovered one very interesting thing in my own life; that when I am vexed, troubled, anxious, worried with a problem, I never receive help from the brain, but always from the heart. The head seems all too often to increase the burden, because it is full of imaginations and often vacuous problems; but the heart understands, for there is a higher intellect in the heart than in the head. Or, if I might so phrase it, and I think correctly enough, there is more intellectual power in the heart-life than there is heart-life in thought.

It is small wonder, I believe, that the ancients used to place the focus of man's ordinary attention in the head; but his real intellect, his understanding, his intuition, his spiritual capacities, his sense of ethical responsibilities, in the heart.

Thus the Egyptians in their hieroglyphic representations, never showed the weighing of the brain or the head. They weighed the heart against the light feather of Truth. It was the heart that was weighed; and it is a curious thing that in the ancient Occultism, which still is the only true and best, it is the heart that is supposed to contain the higher parts of the human being. These thoughts are rather new to the Occident because we retain but something only of the ancient ideal wisdom;

although even in the Occident today we have retained the truth that love abides in the heart and not in the head.

So mark you, just along this line of thought: If you are doubtful whether someone loves you, watch that person, and if you find that person governed merely by prudential reasonings: is it wise? shall I gain? what will be thought of me? you can be fairly certain that that person's affection for you is not deep. There is a wisdom of the heart which is instinctive and instant, immediate and unquestioning, and it is far greater a protection to the innocent and to the sincere than is the always broken-up and merely prudential thinking of the head. You think it over.

I think that the greatest gift the gods can give to any of us is the understanding heart. It is eternally forgiving, it is full of charity, it is pitiful, it thinks of others before itself. It is wise, wise with the wisdom of the ages — for it is the breathing within us of the god-wisdom.

And remember, the heart is not the emotions. Oh, just there so many stumble on the path constantly. For the emotions are all too often connected with the head, as you will find, and perhaps have found; but the heart knows, and the heart is always hoping against hope that truth will be understood, that others will understand and help. The emotions are full of hot fire, of jealousy, suspicion, resentment. They have no vision, the emotions. So when we speak of the understanding heart, we never mean the emotions in which some people live and boast that it is a rich life. It is a poor life, a thin and a hungry, for the emotions are satisfied never. They are like the pisachas of ancient India, described by the visionaries thusly: beings of immense (or small) body, consumed with immense thirst or hunger, and with but a pin-size mouth, so small that a pin might not enter in; and they starve, and they thirst, and are not ever satisfied. This is figurative of the emotions; and it is a strange thing that it is just these pisachas which are the astral imbodyed kama-rupic emotions of dead men, built up during life on earth by those who have lived in the psychic nature, the brain-mind, and the emotions.

The heart is the center of the spiritual-intellectual fluids which in

conjunction with the manasic akasa filling the skull and permeating the brain, make the complete man, and the perfect man when they are fully harmonized and unified. Oh, pray the gods to give an understanding heart, and make that prayer real in your lives by yourselves opening the way for the gods that give it. Then your lives will be full of guidance, full of reverence, and rich with peace. All blessings will be yours.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL PONDERINGS — *Vera Berg von Linde*

Like a spectrum we human beings catch the white light of verity and reality, and through us it refracts into different colored religions, philosophies, and sciences.

It is the same white light which illuminated the ancient religions in China, India, and Egypt, and it is the same white light which illuminates, for instance, Christianity and the occidental magnificent sciences.

Thus every nation on Earth possesses a part of the universal wisdom; because where spiritual purity prevails the white light radiates through human minds with unabated strength.

It is the genuine invocation which opens the soul to the divine currents in the cosmos, and not a certain system or formula.

The ways towards the Divine are many, and what is suitable for one person, won't do for another, yea, might perhaps be his mental ruin.

It is a sublime fact that whatever path a human being enters upon he will, if he faithfully struggles onward, sooner or later reach the meeting of the ways where all various theories blend into divine wisdom and harmony. And this we ought to carry in our minds, because it gives to us an objective and a tolerant attitude.

A difficult point for non-theosophists to see in the same way that we do, is the doctrine of Reincarnation. This is rather curious, because simple logic obliges us to admit that what once had a beginning must have an end, that what is deathless must always be deathless, that eternity must exist on both sides of the present now, and thus the present now can only be a dot in the eternal.

Our philosophy teaches us that our divine Self is deathless and eternal, that it once emigrated from celestial abodes to material worlds and in

the course of its pilgrimage it has touched Mother Earth, where it has made for itself a human vehicle. According to this teaching our divine Self is deathless and has existed, shall exist in eternity on both sides of the actual moment; whereas our personal self and our human body have a beginning and an end; they are limited in time.

Goethe expresses the idea of reincarnation in the following beautiful manner: the human soul is like water, from heaven it comes, to heaven it returns, but again it must revert in permanent fluctuation.

The doctrine of Reincarnation solves many problems and shows us justice, where before we could see only the destructive working of seeming injustice.

If we in this present episode of our existence could but survey some of our preceding incarnations and catch a glimpse of the self-generated causes which created our destiny of today, then our loud complaints of unfairness would indeed cease.

Those conditions of life which we now in our blindness call too hard, too disastrous, would perhaps in the light of reincarnation show themselves as consistent effects of previous blunders. We should then understand that we are the architects of our own future, and that we never have met, never shall meet, anything we cannot in one way or another trace back to acts and deeds we ourselves committed.

If we and those about us regard ourselves as petty and insignificant individuals, it is indeed a comfort to know that this present earth-life is like a single schoolday in proportion to our age-long pilgrimage through the spaces of Cosmos; but this school-day is given to us that we may learn patience, toleration, and a profound understanding of the conditions under which we and our fellow-men exist.

With our veiled conception and our superficial comprehension of the universal drama, we ought not to condemn each other.

Likewise, with our lack of spiritual intuition we really don't know who it is we have beside us in our home and in our place of business. The

one we refuse to help now, helped us perhaps in a preceding incarnation, or will help us in one to come.

Many people maintain that it would be much better for us if we could remember at least our last preceding incarnation.

But surely it is more merciful as it is. Is it not obliviousness of our past lives which may make it possible for us to work in harmony with one who perhaps in the past was our mortal enemy? It is even easier for us in this earth-life to strive onward ethically, if we do not remember the crimes and evils whose effects possibly stick to us from archaic ages. Even a momentary glimpse of those past evils would probably paralyze us and weigh us towards earth, so that we should hardly manage to live.

When in the future we shall have reached the shore of divine wisdom and so strengthened our souls that we can behold our incarnations in a mighty and logical line of evolution, then our wondering eyes will be unveiled and we shall see just how our steps have been guided from darkness and isolation towards light and spiritual union.

Guided, yes — but by whom? By ourself, by our own Karman, states the theosophical teaching.

An Indian philosopher, Ramacharaka, explains it thus:

We are not punished *for* our misdeeds but *through* them, we are not rewarded *for* our good acts but *by means* of them. Thus punishment and reward will come from our true inner being, and our character is the summation of our desires. The desires are the propelling force in our Karman, and through our Karman our incarnations are directed.

After years of experiences people mostly declare that they really do not have the slightest desire for a new earth-life, and if nevertheless they are reborn, it certainly is against their dearest wishes.

Of course these people are sincere, but if we examine their mental state we discover that as a rule they are not tired of earth-life *per se*, but

rather of their own little individual earth-life. A long series of bright illusions have been shattered, and they are bored to death by their grey identical days of activity — or worse, lack of activity. But they admit, that if life had turned out so-and-so instead of so-and-so, then indeed they could have been happy.

Give these dear souls youth, health, beauty, success, and scarcely one of them will hesitate to begin turning a new wheel of earth-entanglements.

In these days we are experiencing a frightful effort at readjustment among the nations, a readjustment the sorrow and pain of which cannot be expressed in words, and yet in the light of Karman we are assured that not one of all the countless, desperate human beings in these nations has suffered or shall suffer in vain.

We Theosophists believe that thoughts are living entities in their own sphere, and that they have a disposition to manifest in our physical world with an intensity in proportion to the strength or violence with which we send them forth.

Through thousands of years humanity has despatched envious, malicious, hateful thoughts into our immense store-house of thinking. Sooner or later these thoughts must manifest upon our own stage of daily life not only as individual crimes, but even as collective crimes like revolutions and wars, which in this way may react upon the individual originator.

It is our egoism, social jealousy, antagonism against other persons, nations, races, which have created the terrible condition of poor Europe.

Really not one of us would have been born in time to suffer one or two wars, had we not in one way or another carried wood to this gigantic fire. War and murder will again and again give birth to new wars and new murders.

How dare we, who cannot even see the true meaning of one short

earth-life, hurry fellow-men by force into the holy dominions of majestic death?

How dare we extinguish a human life and cut short its natural line of evolution, thereby interfering with its future destiny?

Don't we realize how we fetter ourselves to the being we kill, fetter ourselves with karmic chains so strong that nothing, nothing but the grandest love and transcendent justice will be able to restore the violently dislocated divine harmony?

Blessed be the day when we, instead of killing a fellow-man in self-defense, can say from a pure and sincere heart: Forgive me, my brother, that I neglected to share with you my wisdom, so that now through your ignorance you will be guilty of my death.

Remember that the law of the ascending arc is often contrary to the law of the descending arc.

Blessed be the day when in the darkness of the Kali-yuga we succeed in manifesting what our Masters have shown us: that human eyes are made to reflect the light of our spirit, that the human voice is made to reconcile, console and guide, that human hands are made to transform into acts and deeds the purest feelings of our heart, the profoundest thoughts of our brain, that actual peace on planet Terra begins within the individual, and flowing therefrom can be a reality among collective humanity, and that it is only through unselfish living that we shall be able to raise ourselves and others from the coarse state of *Homo primigenius*, via man, towards the full-grown superman.

And lastly: it is at such holy hours as that of sunrise that we fully understand that not even the noblest of our Masters, Saints, and Seers are the appropriate objects of holy worship. For not by devious ways shall we approach That, which is nearer to us than our own heart and mind, That, which is the kernel in every entity in space.

Only in the most sacred part of our inner being shall we keep an altar of gratitude to the wondrous Creator of Cosmos — and there in

profound reverence, seclusion and silence, through sublime invocation try to recover the golden thread of love and compassion which that Wondrous Being in its boundless unselfishness has extended from itself to every lesser being in its gigantic kingdom; so that we, however great, however humble, can always find the way along this thread of glory back to that, the Beyond, of which we are an eternal, inseparable, and essentially divine counterpart.

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IS THERE AN "UNCONSCIOUS? (1) — Alan W. Watts

When we say that the chief contribution of modern psychology to human knowledge is the concept of the unconscious mind, we have to be careful of our terms. For the idea of the Unconscious does not belong by any means to all modern psychology, and those schools to which it does belong have somewhat different views on the subject. The concept is associated principally with the names of Freud, Jung and Adler, but there is no one name which covers their three schools. Freud's system is psycho-analysis; Jung's is analytical psychology; Adler's is individual psychology. There is no real reason, however, why they should not all be called psycho-analysis, because if, as is frequently done, we group them under the name "modern psychology" we thereby group them with such important systems as Gestalt Psychology in which the concept of the Unconscious plays no part. Popularly it is believed that psycho-analysis teaches that man has *an* unconscious mind; this is not strictly true, for the Unconscious is not to be understood as an entity or mental organism having definite location and identity. There is no actual division between the Unconscious and the rest of the human organism, for it bears somewhat the same relation to the mind as the glands, liver, kidneys, etc., bear to the body: they are integral parts of the body, but we are not ordinarily conscious of them. The only difference is that the Unconscious has no specific boundaries. It consists rather of the *condition* of being unaware of certain desires, impulses, tendencies, reactions and phantasies in our mental and emotional make-up. It has its physical parallel in the condition of being unaware of various bodily organs and processes.

There appears, however, to be little or no mention of the Unconscious in the world's religious, mystical and occult philosophy. Indeed, to many students of these matters the idea is distasteful, and Freud, the father of psycho-analysis, has never been forgiven for regarding religion as a neurosis. In fact, the majority of religious people, whether

of orthodox or heterodox persuasion, regard psycho-analysis in all its forms as an upstart science whose avowed object is to "debunk" all the noble impulses of humanity by ascribing them to repressed sexuality. Much of the contempt in which psycho-analysis is held is well deserved, but this should not blind us to a certain amount of gold among the dross. The trouble with this new science is not so much psycho-analysis as psycho-analysts. We might mention the professor in charge of a certain well-known clinic who devotes his life to the study of ink-blots. The patient is made to drop a blot of ink on a piece of paper and is suddenly asked what he thinks it looks like. Being rather puzzled and humorous the patient usually grins and says something like, "Oh, it might be an elephant with warts," whereat the professor assumes a far-away expression and murmurs, "Very significant. *Most* interesting. An elephant, yes. With warts. Exceedingly interesting." This case is not unusual, for the strange ways of psycho-analysts and psychiatrists would fill many volumes. I have heard fully qualified M. D.s discuss the case of a small boy whose propensity to bed-wetting was undoubtedly due to his unconscious identification of himself with Jupiter Pluvius. Still more significant are the gatherings of doctors and patients for summer schools where people take you by the hand, look into your eyes and ask you whether you are an extravert or an introvert. Indeed, such forms of psychology have swiftly acquired all the symptoms of crank religions. But just as there are half-wits and charlatans as well as true students in mysticism and occultism, psychology also has its heights and depths, both as to its ideas and its practitioners. There are, too, the same internal conflicts, the same personal idolatry, but one could hardly expect otherwise and the mutual contempt of religion and psychology is but "the pot calling the kettle black."

In spite of all, however, psycho-analysis has a definite and valuable contribution for students of religion *in our time*. I say "in our time" because psycho-analysis is essentially a modern remedy for a modern ill; it exists for that period in human history for which the Unconscious is a problem, and a problem it has been since man began to imagine

that all his difficulties of soul and circumstance could be solved by the unaided power of human reason. The ancient paths of mysticism and occultism resolved the problem of the Unconscious from the very beginning, even before it became a problem, for their first requirement was that man should *know himself*. Whereat he very quickly found that the huge, brute forces of Nature had their counterparts in his soul, that his being was not a simple unit but a pantheon of gods and demons. In fact, all the deities of the ancient theologies were known to the initiated as the inhabitants not of Olympus but of the human soul. They were not mere products of man's imagination any more than his heart, lungs and stomach are products of his imagination. On the contrary, they were very real forces belonging both to Nature, the macrocosm, and man, the microcosm. Occultism was thus the art of living with one's gods and demons, and you had to know how to deal with them in yourself before you could deal with them in the universe. The ancients understood the laws which man must follow in order to live with them, how by love the gods would become your friends and the demons your servants. In every initiation rite it was necessary to pass through that valley of the shadow where the neophyte comes face to face with the "Dweller on the Threshold" and all the most terrible powers of the psyche. But the rite could only be successful if he faced them with love, recognising them as manifestations of the same Divinity which was his own true Self. By this love he broke their spell and became a true initiate.

But man became over rational and forgot the gods and demons, relegating them to the realm of outworn superstitions. He looked for them in the skies and found only infinite spaces, dead rocks and orbs of burning gas. He looked for them in thunder and wind and found only unintelligent forces of atmosphere. He looked for them in woods and caverns and found only scuttling animals, creaking branches, shadows and draughts. He thought that the gods were dead, but in fact they became much more alive and dangerous because they were able to work unrecognised. For whereas the old occultists began with the principle "know thyself," the rationalists began with "rule thyself."

They chose what they considered to be a reasonable pattern of character and strove to impose it on their lives without any preliminary exploration. They forgot that it is impossible for man to behave like a sage until he has first come to terms with his inner pantheon; as a result he could only achieve a poor imitation of the sage's behavior because he had not done the necessary groundwork. For this reason the rationalist, puritanic mind is a veneer about a muck-heap, an attempt to copy greatness by wearing its clothes.

But when psychologists began to have the idea of the Unconscious this was simply man's fumbling rediscovery of the lost gods and demons. Naturally experienced occultists of both East and West were inclined to smile, for to them this New Force called the Unconscious had never existed as such. And when people started talking about the Unconscious as if it were just a repository of repressed sexuality, the occultists laughed outright, knowing that it contained far more powerful divinities than Libido, who was just a little imp dancing upon the surface. It must have seemed funnier still to hear the Unconscious discussed as if it were a sort of individual with secret, dark designs and an unfortunate habit of wanting and thinking in direct opposition to the conscious. For the Unconscious is not an individual; it is simply that about himself which man does not know. As such it is a purely relative term, because some people know more about themselves than others. Symbolically it may be represented as an individual, for in dreams the unknown aspect of men presents itself as a woman and *vice versa* with women. But actually when it is said that the Unconscious does this or that, it means that certain particular aspects of your internal universe are on the move without your conscious knowledge.

The concept of the Unconscious is nevertheless important to *modern* students of religion and occultism in that it is a reminder of the forgotten gods and of the place where they are to be found. Too many would-be mystics and occultists try to follow the rationalist technique of imposing a discipline upon themselves without first understanding the nature of the thing to be disciplined. You have to come to terms with the gods before you can ignore them, and those who jump straight

from ordinary ways of living into the complex disciplines of occultism are inviting trouble. For until those terms have been made, the gods rule us although we have a way of persuading ourselves that their often unreasonable dictates are our own free and considered choice. Thus imitation of the sage is often a device put up by the demons for our own destruction, for modern man simply does not realise that until he has been through the valley of the shadow his life is not his own. Until he looks within himself, seeks out his hidden pantheon and overcomes it by love (or what psychologists call "acceptance"), he remains its unwitting tool. In all the old philosophies — Yoga, Buddhism, the Greek Mysteries, the Egyptian Mysteries — this exploring of the unknown self was the essential first step and now the same thing is attempted by the psycho-analyst, using a different technique and terminology. That there are failures and mistakes is only to be expected, for here are men trying to work out the divine science on their own with little recourse to the experience of the ages, though to this there are a few notable exceptions. And though students of religion may be offended when religion is ascribed to repressed sexuality, it must be remembered that in many cases this may actually be true and that psychologists have had insufficient opportunities to study that comparatively rare phenomenon the genuine mystic or occultist. For what would such a person want with psycho-analysis? The warning to the beginner, however, still stands, for unless you really know yourself how can you say that your apparently noble aspirations are what they seem to be? Thoughts are often wolves in sheeps" clothing.

Then is the first step on the path a visit to a psycho-analyst? Unfortunately the matter is not quite so easy. If you can find a *competent* analyst, perhaps, but the profession of analyst attracts many who need their own medicine more than any of their patients. The reason is that psycho-analysis has not yet had sufficient profundity of experience to judge its own results, to institute a hierarchy of "initiates" who can be trusted to say who is and is not fit to take up the profession. There is another alternative, though the professional analyst usually

regards it with horror: that is to analyse yourself. It needs care and a pair of feet planted firmly on the earth, but if due regard is paid to the rules it can be done. You can follow the age-old techniques of meditation and you will often be safer in your own hands than in those of an analyst. Of course it is risky, but in these days so many people expect a "safe" way to wisdom. The way to wisdom is, however, a great deal less "safe" than the way to making a fortune; it is perhaps the riskiest and most worthwhile thing in the world, but you should not start out on it unless you are prepared to break your neck.

FOOTNOTES;

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The Theosophical Forum

A UNIVERSAL SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE — *H. I. Barborka*

A universal source of Knowledge has always existed, and always will exist throughout eternity. Man has made divisions of a unity, and so we have religion, science, philosophy, art, and literature; but all these in reality are parts or portions of a unity of knowledge which Theosophy calls the Ancient Wisdom.

The great minds of the present day, the men of science, the advanced thinkers of religion, the philosophers, artists, and men of letters are all drawing consciously or unconsciously on this universal source of knowledge. They are aided in their efforts by those whose duty it is to help and aid human endeavor, to inspire and enlighten the searching mind, the hungry heart, the aspiring soul. Such helpers are they who have advanced farther than their fellows in evolutionary development, and who have willingly offered themselves in whole-hearted service, life after life, for the benefit of humanity: they can draw consciously upon this source of wisdom and thereby benefit their fellow-men.

The scientists are no longer mere researchers into the material realms of knowledge, but are touching higher reaches of thought, and as they progress along these lines, they will find that religion, science, philosophy are aspects of one Truth. The day will come when the great minds of the world will unite in a Brotherhood of earnest-hearted men and women, working together for the common good of mankind. Already great minds of the present day voice statements embodying the thought of a unity of knowledge. Dr. Arthur H. Compton, Nobel prize-winner in physics, expresses it in these words, as quoted in the *Pasadena Star-News* of January 6, 1940:

I would like to stress the fact that there is no real conflict between science and religion. Many people have the mistaken idea that science is purely abstract investigation, utterly removed from the affairs of every-day life. Yet science in its

laboratories, in its study of the stars, in its theories and laws, has but one objective: an understanding of the world that will add value to life.

Further, the words of Sir Richard Gregory, Bart., in a lecture delivered at the General Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, at Richmond, Virginia, December 29, 1938, bear out the same idea:

It is through the acceptance of the idea of evolution in the spirit as well as in the body of man that the partition which formerly separated religion and science is being dissolved.

He realizes that science must join hands with religion for the common good of man; he urges that the scientists take an active part in solving the serious problems that their contributions to natural knowledge have created, and that they must help to assist in the establishment of a harmonious social order out of the "welter of human conflict into which the world has been thrown through the release of uncontrolled sources of industrial production and of lethal weapons." He concludes his address with the following words:

It is in the light of service to these high ideals that science, without which we can not live, and religion, without which most people see no meaning in life, can find a field in which both can work together for the highest human destiny. — Quoted in *Science*, Feb. 24, 1939

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SUNSHINE AFTER RAIN — I. R. P

The world in sunshine after rain symbolizes for us many of life's deepest mysteries; the vision of a soul's dedicated choice perceived in the depth of a young child's eyes, the vow in perpetuity which brings to us the Avatars and Bodhisattvas, the moment of decision, after great perplexity and soul searching we have all experienced, the nobility of character that results directly from suffering. All these contacts with the Heart of Things live for us in sunshine after rain.

It symbolizes the inherent co-operation existing between the highest forces and the lowest material spheres, a state towards which the wilful human soul gropes as the goal of its endeavor. It admonishes us: showing us that were we as receptive as thirsty leaf and soil, as poised and regal psychologically as tree and blossom, as trusting and abstemious as bird and beast, as quick to respond to cosmic rhythm as sea and sky, we, as self-conscious beings, would know this harmony an hundredfold enhanced.

For sunshine after rain mystically proclaims the consummated unity of spirit and matter in manifestation on Earth, the blending of energising potencies and material substances in evolution through involution, in Reimbodiment: thus is the Universal Law fulfilled.

ART AND THEOSOPHY — *Charlotte Braun*

We do not make an attempt to define Art, rather do we agree with Plotinus when he said, "Art deals with things forever beyond human definition." Theosophists, however, approach Art from a very interesting point of view. There are certain basic principles which form the foundation of great art; they are really standards whereby we unconsciously judge a work of art. The background of these principles forms what we might term the philosophy of Art and are the grounds upon which Art and Theosophy so beautifully meet. These principles are: Unity, Harmony, Order, Equilibrium or Proportion, Symmetry, Rhythm, and Love.

These are all Kosmic, Universal laws which govern all things in the Universe from galaxies to the individual stars and planets which compose the galaxy; from man to the atoms which build man's body. Everyone sees these laws at work in the heavens at night. They are beautifully exemplified by the stars and groups of stars as they follow their own orbits and circulate among each other in perfect order, as they travel with a rhythmic movement along those paths which form well balanced and proportioned, symmetrical patterns. These paths and patterns of the stars complete the vast unified whole. The secret of good composition, that of unity and yet diversity, of repetition and yet variety, is also perfectly exemplified as that living, breathing, thinking being behind the universe actually manifests itself in a unified diversity. All the myriads of lives visible and invisible, great and small which build the universe, exist in one perfect unity yet each one is unlike any other, each one possessing different characteristics. The whole panorama is held together by the all-encompassing cohesive power of impersonal love.

It should not seem far-fetched to find a relation between the stars and Art, for truly beauty was born with the heavens and the earth; and as Emerson, the lofty-minded Sage of Concord, said, "The creation of

beauty is Art." So it is then, that the work of art which imbodyes these universal principles and laws must be true art; for these are the lasting, the real, the vital things in life.

The study of these laws brings us a clear understanding of the basis of ethics and morals; they form the foundation of another art, that of living. This is a very important teaching of Theosophy. In our occidental, western way, we sometimes let ourselves make the mistake of believing ethics to be conventions invented by man. However, Theosophy teaches that which all keen observers of Nature's ways have found, that ethics is based upon the primordial laws of the Universe itself.

It is really quite a wonderful thought, that the qualities of the Universe which are the basic principles of Art, are also identical with the basis of ethics and should then be the living, guiding power in the life of a great man, a great *artist*. A truly great man is he to whom the teaching that he is linked to every other entity by the divine life at the root of his own being, is not a mere theory, but a vital actuality. No man has even guessed his own greatness until he has realized his unity with all other entities in the Universe. Furthermore, a great man is he who has learned to live in harmony with his fellow men; he who has become at peace with himself and he who strives to maintain equilibrium and balance in his life, to walk the middle way. In the devotional book, *The Bhagavad-Gita*, it is written, "Those who thus preserve an equal mind gain heaven even in this life, for the Supreme is free from sin and is equal-minded." Such a state is really most natural and normal, and one which we may all attain if we can only learn to keep the rhythm of our lives in tune with the vibration of these simple laws which are as inevitable as the movement of the sea.

The great poet, whether he be a painter, musician, architect, sculptor, or dancer — for they are all poets at heart — when he makes these universal truths a part of his life, reflects them in his art. He feels so keenly the reality, the trueness, the beauty of the ways of the universe, that his art flows forth spontaneously from his heart. Perhaps it is this

very spontaneity to which the Taoists of China refer when they speak of the Wu Wei. A student of Lao-Tse's teachings on this subject, Henri Borell, interprets them in this way: "The Poet sings because he sings, which is the same reason that the ocean roars and the small bird sings." But there is still another secret possessed by great leaders in Art in all ages, this is an impersonal unattachment to results. The great ones bring forth their song spontaneously from their hearts and let it stand as it is, while the smaller man tries to bend his art to conform to styles and trends. No creation can be greater than its creator.

With the ever more exciting discoveries being made of the Art of the Ancients, one can hardly avoid asking the question, "What, after all, is the origin of Art?" Theosophy, the Ancient Wisdom, gives a truly inspiring answer to this question. *The origin of Art was with the gods.* It is recorded that at the time that man was awakening to a realization of his own possibilities and dignity, that is, at the time when the light of mind had just been awakened in man, some 18,000,000 years ago, the arts and sciences of civilization and the Wisdom-Religion were taught him by wondrously wise beings who came to live for a while among men on earth.

These gods, these titan beings, had themselves at one time been men. They had unwrapped and unfolded from material meshes those godlike universal qualities which are latent in the hearts of all men, thus becoming one with the most beautiful things in nature, becoming gods. Dr. de Purucker has said, "Every human being, whether having evolved to the point of expressing it yet or not, is the *vehicle* of a *divine being*, of an inner God; and furthermore every human being has within him the capability of being a sage, a seer, a genius, a spiritual leader."

The teachings taught by the Gods at this early date have been kept alive, guarded and protected ever since and have been the inspiration behind all the ancient civilizations of man. There have been times in man's history when a large majority of the people made this God-taught knowledge a part of their everyday lives and therefore their art naturally reached a very high peak. This might well be the explanation

for a strange situation one finds at the dawn of the recorded history of all the great ancient civilizations. In China, Egypt, India, even Greece, as far back as can be traced, one finds a perfected language, the characteristics of each nation already manifested in their dress and physical aspect. This alone indicates a far, far more ancient civilization than the modern world recognizes. Then there is their art which we call primitive, but which is often pure, simple, and plainly symbolic of universal truths.

One cannot but feel that the artists who fashioned such relics as the old bronzes of ancient China were wise in the ways of the Universe. The older these bronzes are the more perfect is their proportion. It is very interesting, therefore, to note what H. P. Blavatsky said in *The Secret Doctrine* in regard to proportion. "All the rules of proportion were taught anciently at initiations, and there is deep esoteric significance hidden in every rule and law of proportion." When Madame Blavatsky speaks of *initiations* she undoubtedly refers to the Mystery-Schools of old. The Mystery-Schools were groups of devoted students who studied the mysteries of the Universe, the truths concerning man and his relation to the Universe, thus keeping alive the fire of truth kindled so long ago and at the same time forming a definite source of spiritual inspiration; forming the actual foundation of the culture of old.

It is really fascinating to find wonderful cosmic truths wrapped in the old legends we all know so well and to find many different interpretations of the symbolic art of these ancients. Indeed many believe, and it is not an impossibility, that some of the old epic poems of the ancients were based on actual episodes in history; that such beautiful and highly symbolic stories as the Iliad and the Odyssey were, at least in part, the experiences of men and women such as ourselves. S. C. Kaines Smith, an authority on all matters Grecian, beautifully expressed this very thought in reference to the Homeric poems. He wrote: "Of one thing we may be confident — that the greatest poem in the history of the world is not based upon "such stuff as dreams are made on," but that through the swinging cadence of its lines there runs the echo of reality — that the cup of Nestor, the shield of Achilles, the

riding-gear of Odysseus, the splendor of the palace of Agamemnon, of Menelaus, of Alcinous in far Phaecia, are memories of things seen, of things inherited from the mighty dead. . . ."

Of course we cannot agree that the poems of Homer are the greatest in the world, for the epic poems, *The Book of the Dead* of Egypt, and the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* of India cannot be overlooked.

The art of the ancients is not only symbolic but it often complies perfectly with all the principles of great art. For example there is the architecture and sculpture of Egypt, so grand and sweeping in proportion. One of the most wonderful and truly inspiring pieces of sculpture ever carved is the seated figure of King Khephren of the IVth Dynasty, the date of which is believed to be 2800 b. c. There is an atmosphere of most sacred serenity and infinite peace about this majestic work, carved from a slab of dark green diorite. The hawk at the back of the head indicates spiritual aspiration; it implies that he was in search of that same godlike goal of goals which was reached, which was realized, by Gautama the Buddha of India when he attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. One finds, therefore, this same atmosphere of infinite peace and compassion surrounding so many of the millions of statues of the Buddha which fill the temples of the Orient.

In China the art of painting reached an unparalleled height of refinement and spirituality because painting was the expression of the artist's highest, most lofty thoughts. The painting of the Chinese is great painting at its best. Especially is this true of the painting of the Tang period, sixth century a.d. At this time a large majority of the people possessed great knowledge of the universe and all things in it. But most important is the fact that they made practical use of their knowledge; they made the universal basis of ethics a necessary part of their lives, so that a glorious spiritual wave swept through the land. This wave had a most mystical and sacred source in the Tientai Monastery in the mountains of Cheh-kiang, where one hundred and thirty years before the Golden Age an esoteric school had been founded by Chih-i, the

Teacher. To this spiritual nucleus came both peasants and nobles, students and artists, to give themselves and their lives to unselfish service to humanity. After one hundred and thirty years the Tientai Theosophy bore its beautiful fruit: the spirituality of the lives of the people was reflected in their art. The Chinese art was carried to the greatest height it, or perhaps any art, ever attained

The same beautiful story unfolds itself in the history of Greece, where the Mysteries were taught at Eleusis and Samothrace. But in the sixth century a.d. the Mystery-Schools in the Western world were closed by Justinian, and since then there has been no art in the Occident in which we find a general, sweeping, cosmic significance. There has been great art, however, which has been produced wherever the individual artist breaks through to the universality in his own nature and grasps intuitively many of the most divine thoughts. Every Theosophist would agree with the Italian artist of the Renaissance, Michelangelo, when he said, "Nothing makes the soul so pure, so religious, as the endeavor to create something perfect. God is perfect. Whoever strives for perfection strives for something God-like."

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA GLOSSARY

[Some years ago THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM mentioned that preparations were under way for the publication of an Encyclopedic Glossary of Theosophical Terms. Our readers will be glad to know that this work has been steadily going forward during the ensuing years and is now nearing completion. The material, which will probably fill several volumes, covers the whole exoteric field of ancient and modern Occultism and Theosophy, including mythology, anthropology, cosmogony, symbolism, the ancient Mysteries and allied subjects, and will prove to be an exhaustive mine of philosophical, religious, and scientific information. The work of writing and compilation has been carried on by a group of students at the General Offices Dr. de Purucker has then carefully checked the definitions and in many cases added new and valuable material.

It is too early to state when this Encyclopedic Glossary will be published, but the FORUM Editors have obtained permission to share with readers of our magazine extracts from this forthcoming work. No effort has here been made to follow any special sequence of arrangement, but random pages have been purposely chosen. — Eds.]

KUNDALINĪ: KUNDALINĪ-ŚAKTI

(Sanskrit) One of the mystic and recondite powers in the human constitution. The essential meaning of the word is "circular" or "spiral." "*Kundalini* is called the 'Serpentine' or the *annular* power on account of its spiral-like working or progress in the body of the ascetic developing the power in himself. It is an electric fiery occult or *Fohatic* power, the great pristine force, which underlies all the organic and inorganic matter." (*The Voice of the Silence*, 77-8) "The 'Power' and the 'World-mother' are names given to *Kundalini* — one of the mystic 'Yogi

powers.' It is *Buddhi* considered as an active instead of a passive principle (which it is generally, when regarded only as the vehicle, or casket of the Supreme Spirit ATMA). It is an electro-spiritual force, a creative power which when aroused into action can as easily kill as it can create." (*The Voice of the Silence*, 76-7)

Kundalinî-śakti is "Literally the power or force which moves in a serpentine or curved path. It is the universal life-principle which everywhere manifests itself in Nature. This force includes in itself the two great forces of attraction and repulsion. Electricity and magnetism are but manifestations of it. This is the power or force which brings about that 'continuous adjustment of *internal relations to external relations*' which is the essence of life according to Herbert Spencer, and that 'continuous adjustment of *external relations to internal relations*' which is the basis of transmigration of souls or punarjanmam (re-birth) according to the doctrines of the ancient Hindu philosophers.

"A Yogi must thoroughly subjugate this power or force before he can attain moksham. This force is, in fact, the great serpent of the Bible." (*Five Years of Theosophy*, 111)

"*Kundalinî-śakti* is derivative of one of the elemental forces of Nature. It works in and through, in the case of man, his Auric Egg, and expresses itself in continuous action in many of the most familiar phenomena of existence even when man himself is unconscious of it. In its higher aspect *Kundalinî* is a power or force following winding or circular pathways carrying or conveying thought and force originating in the Higher Triad. Abstractly in the case of man it is of course one of the fundamental energies or qualities of the *Prānas*. Unskilled or unwise attempts to interfere with its normal working in the human body may readily result in insanity or malignant or enfeebling disease." (*Occult Glossary*, 92-3)

ANTHESTERIA

(*Greek*) "Flower-festival," from *anthos*, "a flower"; celebrated in the month of Anthesterion in early Spring, as a part of the Dionysiac

Mysteries. "At the mysteries of the Anthesteria . . . after the usual baptism of purification by water, the *Mystae* were made to pass through to another door (gate), and one particularly for that purpose, which was called "the gate of Dionysus," and that of "the *purified*:" (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 245-6)

These were the Less Mysteries, preliminary and complementary to those held in the month of Boedromion (September) in Eleusis. Modern scholars, seeing the analogy between climatic seasons and the stages of initiation, but beginning at the wrong end, have supposed that the festival celebrated primarily the advent of Spring, and that the rites were "symbolic" of this. Older and wiser heads knew that the initiations were the main events, and that they were held at times when Nature harmonized with the purpose in view.

The attention of the student is called to the fact that the name "Eleusis" where the Greater Mysteries were held in Greece signifies "Advent" or "Coming"; and the adjective from the name of this town or "Eleusinia" signified or meant "the things that are to come." The meaning of all this is that in the Mysteries the initiates or neophytes were taught of the secrets of the Universe and of man; and included in these Mysteries was the teaching concerning what was to happen in the future depending upon the history of the various Root-Races of mankind succeeding one another, and the passage of the seven or ten classes of monads from the seven or twelve Globes of the Planetary Chain. The teaching however was much more largely symbolic and allegorical than matters of fact delivered in plain language, as is more or less done in the teachings of Theosophy today.

CADUCEUS

(*Latin*) A herald's staff; specially, the wand of Mercury, God of Wisdom, son of Apollo-Python, one with Thoth and Hermes. It consists of a rod (or tree) with two serpents wound in opposite directions round it, their tails meeting below, and their heads approaching each other above. At the top of the rod is a knob in the Greek version, a serpent's head in the earlier Egyptian form, from which spring a pair of wings. The Caduceus

signifies the dual aspect of Wisdom by its twin serpents, Agathodaimon and Kakodaimon, "good" and "evil" in a relative sense, spirit and matter, etc. The emblem of the evolution of gods and atoms is shown by the two forces, positive and negative, spirit and matter, ascending and descending and meeting in several places denoting planes. An esoteric commentary quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 549 says: "The trunk of the ASVATTHA (the tree of Life and Being, the ROD of the caduceus) grows from and descends at every Beginning (every new manvantara) from the two dark wings of the Swan (HANSA) of Life. The two Serpents, the ever-living and its illusion (Spirit and matter) whose two heads grow from the one head between the wings, descend along the trunk, interlaced in close embrace. The two tails join on earth (the manifested Universe) into one, and this is the great illusion, O Lanoo!"

Mercury in his character of Psychopomp or conductor of souls uses it to conduct them to Hades, and to recall the dead to life. Like other symbols, it has been bedeviled by theology and degraded by unclean fancy. The physiological significance of the rod or tree with twined serpents on right and left and two wings above, needs no comment.

The Caduceus, like every one of the other great symbols or symbolic images of antiquity and of whatever nation, can be read or interpreted from several different standpoints. There is, for instance, a cosmic or astronomical significance, as well as a spiritual one, likewise an ethical one and indeed a physiological one. The significance changes with the application of the symbol to different things. The Caduceus likewise is one of the most revealing and mysterious of the symbols connected with the esoteric portion of Theosophy; for it is directly connected in its symbology with the Globes of the Planetary Chain and the circulations of the beings or Waves of Life on these globes, as well as with the human septenary or denary constitution and the mysterious events that happen to man after death. Just here we see the significance of the ancient Greek mythological stories making Mercury the Psycho-pomp or Psychagog or "conductor of souls" after death to the various inner spheres of the Universe; such as the Elysian Plains or the Meads of Asphodel.

OM

(*Sanskrit*) "Om" is a word considered very holy in the Brahmanical literature. It is a syllable of invocation, and its general usage as elucidated in the literature treating of it — which is rather voluminous, for this word "Om" has attained to almost divinity — is that it should never be uttered aloud, or in the presence of an outsider, a foreigner, or a non-Initiate, but it should be uttered in the silence of one's heart, in the intimacy of one's inner closet. We also have reason to believe, however, that it was uttered and uttered aloud in a monotone by the disciples in the presence of their Teacher. This word is always placed at the beginning of any scripture that is considered of unusual sanctity.

"The teaching is, that prolonging the uttering of this word, both of the O and the M, with the mouth closed, it re-echoes in and arouses vibration in the skull, and affects, *if the aspirations be pure*, the different nervous centers of the body for great good.

"The Brahmanas say that it is an unholy thing to utter this word in any place which is unholy." (*Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, 14, IS)

William Q. Judge states that OM "represents the constant undercurrent of meditation, which ought to be carried on by every man, even while engaged in the necessary duties of this life" (*The Path*, I, 7). "OM is the bow, the Self is the arrow, Brahman is called its aim." (*Mandukya-Upanishad*, II, Kh. 2)

The virtue or spiritual and magical properties attributed to this word arise out of the purity and devotion of the one uttering it.

THE FORCES OF THE UNIVERSE — *G. de Purucker*

To thoroughly comprehend the idea underlying every ancient cosmology necessitates the study, in a comparative analysis, of all the great religions of antiquity; as it is only by this method that the root idea will be made plain. Exact science — could the latter soar so high, while tracing the operations of nature to their ultimate and original sources — would call this idea the hierarchy of Forces. The original, transcendental and philosophical conception was one. But as systems began to reflect with every age more and more the idiosyncracies of nations; and as the latter, after separating, settled into distinct groups, each evolving along its own national or tribal groove, the main idea gradually became veiled with the overgrowth of human fancy. While in some countries the Forces, or rather the intelligent Powers of nature, received divine honours they were hardly entitled to, in others — as now in Europe and the *civilized* lands — the very thought of any such Force being endowed with intelligence seems absurd, and is proclaimed *unscientific*. . . . — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 424

I wonder how many of us really know what we mean when we speak of the "Forces of the Universe." You will be sure to be wrong if you think that by using the term "Forces of the Universe," we mean to signify the so-called scientific energies of the world. We do not. Why? Because the energies of science are soulless, without life, without intelligence, working haphazard, fortuitously, which means by chance; and how on earth these big-brained men can reconcile harmony, symmetry, mathematical perfection, in the Universe, with chance, is something utterly beyond me to attempt to explain! I do not think they have thought about it.

When we speak of "Forces of the Universe," we mean living beings, as much alive as we humans are alive. Just as any one of you is a living

being, a composite entity, with an inner life, with a spirit, a soul, and all your inner faculties working through a physical vehicle or sheath; just exactly so is there a supreme divinity, a hierarch, who is the informing principles of our Galaxy or Home-Universe. But he or it is only one of a host of others informing other similar galaxies in frontierless infinitude. The gods are infinite in number; and we are embryo-gods. If you want to understand the Universe, try to understand yourself, because you copy the Universe. The Universe repeats itself in every one of its atoms, which means in every one of its composite elements, in every one of its building bricks.

Just as man is informed by the divinity within or above him — both; so is the Universe informed by the divinity within or above it — both. And just as man is more than one, as he is a whole host of entities, all deriving their essence and being from his inmost heart of hearts, his divine Monad; just exactly so are all the Forces of the Universe derived from the cosmic divine Entity.

Take my body as an instance. It is alive, as your bodies are. It is alive because it is formed of living things, living cells. In the first place, these cells are formed of aggregates of atoms, which if they were dead would produce a dead aggregate; but the fact that they produce a living aggregate is a proof that they themselves live, are alive. The atoms, therefore, are alive, and they are alive because the building-bricks composing them are alive: the electrons and protons.

Now, that is what we mean when we speak of the Forces of the Universe. In the last analysis we mean gods, living gods which express themselves in the manner that we have some conception of when we look at the starry sky, or look at the sun in the daytime, or consider the world around us, and all the actions that take place there, the growing plants and beasts and rocks. They are all alive.

What is an earthquake? Something that happens fortuitously, by chance? To believe that is simply symptomatic either of intellectual laziness, or lack of intellectual penetration. I don't believe there is a single chance action in Infinity. I cannot reconcile chance with law,

because chance means the negation of law, and law means order, symmetry, harmony, mathematical relations. The Universe is alive because it is infilled with living things, with gods. The physical universe is the body of the god, as my body is the body of me. The idea has nothing to do whatsoever with the modern scientific theory of energies. Scientists are now even discarding the term "forces." It is too mysterious, too superstitious.

The way to handle these scientific thinkers is to pin them down to facts. Don't let your minds be led away by talk. Demand an explanation of why you are a living being. Don't be satisfied with talk about chemical action and reaction. It does not mean anything. Show me any chemical compound that man can make in the laboratory that moves and thinks and feels! And here we are, living and moving and thinking and feeling, demonstrating that everything we do, that every thought we think, that every feeling we have, is consciousness. This is so much so that the greater scientific thinkers today are talking about consciousness as being the fundamental essence of the Universe, coming at last to admit it. What does that mean? That these so-called energies that they keep in one compartment of their brains are simply examples of what they keep in the other water-tight compartment of their brains — consciousness, consciousnesses.

The very fact that the Universe is formed of aggregates of individuals is a proof of Polytheism, which means simply that the Universe is infilled with gods; and any Universe has at its head a supreme Divinity; as man, a microcosm or small universe, has at its head his own divine Hierarch, his essential, fundamental Self. But any such universe is only one among an infinitude of others. That is what we mean by the Forces of the Universe. I call them gods, because gods they are. When the sun rises tomorrow morning, look at Father-Sun, and remember that that brilliant divinity is a living being, the source of your own being in one sense, and that you are in your essence equally great, because both are manifestations of an indwelling divinity, the spirit of boundless infinity, the essence of boundless infinity, expressing a portion of itself in that sun, in those stars, in the planets, and all the entities that infill

space, high, low, intermediate.

The only reason that science has been misled from seeing the truth in the past has been the fact that men were miseducated in religion for hundreds of years, fed not on truth — although the Christian religion is founded on truth — but on men's ideas about truth, theologians' ideas as to Reality. Then when men began to think and began to investigate the Universe around us, they found that those ideas could not be harmonized with what they found to be the facts of the Universe. So they lost confidence in all religious thought. They did not know of any other religious philosophies or philosophical religions that they had any respect for. And instead of thinking for themselves, each man following his own intuition, the spirit of the living god within his breast, they said: "That will introduce all kinds of anarchy into scientific thought. Cling to the only things we know to be facts, the facts of the physical universe." Because they could not find a soul within living flesh (and in fact they did not know what they were looking for), they said: "Man is but an animate mechanism." But what is an animate mechanism, a living machine? Explain it. Those are mere words.

We are living in the life-sphere, the fohatic sphere, the prank sphere, of the divinity of our solar system, which divinity is the fountain-head of all the Christs and Buddhas that the human race from time to time brings forth. All movements of the world that we see around us: the earthquakes, the meteorological phenomena, rains, lightning, moving of clouds, thunder-storms, hail-storms, sunny, bright days, and overclouded days — all are movements of the vital essence of the planetary spirit working in and with the cooperation of the solar spirit or divinity, as that solar spirit or divinity moves within the life-sphere of an entity still greater, the galactic divinity, which in its turn moves within the life-sphere of a divinity still vaster — all precisely as the living cells which make a man's body live and move and have their being within his body, which is the vehicle of the holy presence which his spirit is, the god, the hierarch, of his constitution. It is a wonderful thought, and fills man's mind with reverence for the symmetry and harmony and majesty and beauty of the Universe. It makes him

reverent, it makes him respect his fellow-men; for what the human race has brought forth in the matter of great men once, it will reproduce many times.

Remember that on every occasion when you see the action of a natural force, you are seeing the automatic workings of the vitality of our own particular Planetary, or it may be Solar, Divinity. The only reason we cannot connect it with the human emotions and human thoughts that are familiar to us, is because its action is on a cosmic scale, so far beyond our understanding that we can only see, as it were, a small portion of it. The small portion of the web or pattern of our minds cannot take in the rest, and therefore we see what we think is purely mechanical action.

I will illustrate this: An entity living on an electron, helping to form one of the atoms of my body, would have no understanding or conception of my raising my hand, or of a movement of my leg, and even less of my intent when I speak; nevertheless all the interrelated forces giving my body life affect every molecule, every atom, every electron, in my body, destroy millions of them, bring millions of them into birth. In precisely the same way the gods, the Forces of Nature, have a range of action so vast and an intellect so far-reaching, and a vitality whose sweep is so all-inclusive, and a time-period — there is the key — so immense, that our understandings cannot take it in; and we search, as the scientists have done, looking for *human* consciousness in the movements of the planets and the suns, looking for *human* actions or causes, like human functions, in earthquakes and thunder-storms and the lightning-bolt. The scale is too vast, just as the scale of my speaking, my walking, the raising of my hand, is too vast for an inhabitant on an electron of one of the atoms of my body to comprehend. It perceives it, if at all vaguely, as an affection of matter.

As the great Greek Pythagoras said of the Music of the Spheres, the planets chiming and choring together in celestial harmony as they circle around the sun: the march is too great for human ear to take it in, because the human ear has been builded by evolution to take in

only a very short range of sound; and to right and to left of that range is virtual infinitude. The vibrations on either side, our ears are utterly incognisant of; and the same with our organ of sight. How small a fraction of the rays which produce vision in our optics, how small a fraction of the entire range of vibration, are we conscious of through the eye!

To illustrate again the vast range in which the Universe is builded: There are certain stars in which matter, and therefore the consequent play of energies and forces, is so tremendously dense, that it is a million times denser than anything we can produce or find in our laboratories. And in either direction also, in the fields of cosmic space, there are nebulae so tenuous and ethereal, that they are a million times less dense, in other words a million times more tenuous, than the most tenuous stuff that we can know or produce in our physical laboratories. A million times a million makes a trillion — a million millions; and we have one trillionth of this scale which we can investigate in our chemical laboratories — physical matter, gas, etc. Think of it, one in a trillion! Enormous density on one hand, tremendous tenuity, ethereality on the other hand. And matter as we know it on this earth in all its forms occupies just a tiny fraction; and that is our entire range of investigation.

Now then: that is what I mean by a scale so vast that our human minds cannot take it in. The intellect cognises that these extremes exist. Very good. Then let your thought go out into those extremes. Remember that they are as much a portion of the Universe as is this little bit which we can test in the laboratory. Remember that we know of only one portion in a trillion; and then be modest! Outside of anything else, it has always seemed an amazing thing to me that it has only recently come to be recognised that man is an integral part of the Universe in which he lives and moves and has his being, and from which he derives everything that he is. Theologians and scientists and philosophers alike have always in some inexplicable way based their intellectual researches on the utterly preposterous foundation that man was something essentially different from the Universe; and this false

concept runs throughout all the terms of our thought: subject, object.

This is an example of the Great Heresy, because it misleads you at every turn — the disjoining of or ungearing of yourself in your thought and feeling from the Universe in which you live, of which you are a component, inseparable part. Man cannot ever know an object if that object is essentially different from himself. There cannot be any union. He can only know what he himself is or becomes. True knowledge, true wisdom, comes when, to use the ridiculous phrase of Occidental philosophy (though the deduction drawn is true): "the subject becomes identified with the object," and finds itself to be not twain but one.

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Except for a "Mystery"

On page 96 of *The Mahatma Letters* one reads that the Lord Buddha would not have appeared in our epoch but for a mystery. What is the mystery referred to? — H. T.

Helen Harris — In answering the above it is taken for granted that the questioner has read what the Master K. H. says in regard to this subject on page 117 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, as well as on page 96. Therefore it will not be necessary to repeat any of the facts given in those passages.

When the Master K. H. made the statement that the Lord Buddha, a Sixth Round man, would not have appeared on earth when he did except for a "mystery," it was the Master's way of stating that there are times in human history and in the evolution of individuals when in order to bring about or to accomplish a certain work, the Gods "bend down" so to speak, and with the help of Nature open the way for an event that might be said from our standpoint to be "outside" the regular order of Nature's operations, but would nevertheless be in accordance with cyclic law. As an instance of this, we are taught that the appearance of an Avatara is brought about by an act of "white magic." The Master K. H. might have used the term "white magic" instead of the word "mystery," meaning that certain things had been brought about in accordance with laws unfamiliar to man at present, and therefore a "mystery" to us.

We may imagine that such a one as the Lord Buddha, who by his own great knowledge and spirituality ran far ahead into the higher spheres of our chain — so high as to have broken through into the realm or kingdom of the Dhyani-Chohans — had in so doing become subject to the laws that govern the beings existing in those higher realms, which laws would so transcend our understanding as to be a "mystery" to us.

However, even though the Lord Buddha had attained by his own efforts this high state, he was nevertheless, karmically and compassionately linked with the Humanity of this earth, for he had become one of the highest channels for our Great Race for the forces coming to us from the spiritual heart of our planet. The ways of the gods (Dhyani-Chohans) are as "mysterious" to us as are our mental processes to the kingdom below man. For one who lives self-consciously in the sacred presence of his own inner god, Nature's doors are opened wide to that which would be denied to others until the right time arrive in the distant future.

Summarizing the above, and condensing it into a single sentence, the "mystery" mentioned was, in simple language, that Gautama the Buddha attained his high grade or degree in order to work amongst us because of successfully passing one of the three highest initiations possible to men on this globe; and he was helped to do it. This is the "mystery" referred to in *The Mahatma Letters*.

What Is Memory?

What is Memory? It is evidently something that can be purified.
(See *The Mahatma Letters to A P Sinnett*, p.105) — W F C

I. R P — Memory may be defined as our individual mental awareness of the indelible record filed in our inner constitution, a record which continuously impresses itself like a watermark on every one of our own life-atoms; hence our dominant characteristics.

H. P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* and W. Q Judge in *The Ocean of Theosophy* and *The Theosophical Forum* give us much valuable information. Thus we learn that memory "is one of the rational faculties" and because the physical brain is its instrument it depends "entirely on the more or less healthy and normal functioning" of that organ and is therefore limited to a single lifetime at best. In addition there is a complete record "preserved in the inner man" which should properly be called "reminiscence, *the memory of the soul.*"

The "purified memory" of *The Mahatma Letters to A P Sinnett* refers to

the consciousness of Devachan, because as stated: "no sensual, material or unholy recollection" can adhere to the Ego entering that state. It retains only the reflexion of the ethereal and abstract attributes or skandhas after the Second Death in Kama-loka. W. Q. Judge uses the analogy of a photograph to show us how the Devachanic consciousness is but a rose-tinted print while Manas, the negative, holds the original and complete impression, and the lower aspects adhere to the Kama-rupa.

Since Manas is not yet fully evolved in humanity, or, in other words, man has not become ensouled by Manas, we can understand how true education, because it releases the latent potentialities within, trains memory, and evolution in the sense of an ever deepening universality leads man first to a state of conscious reminiscence, and later, at the close of this Manvantara, to Omniscience.

The Augoeides and the Causal Body

Is the Augoeides the causal body? May we know something more about this. Said one of the Masters of H.P.B.: "Eternal and immortal is her Augoeides" — E. S. W.

G. A. Barborka — As this question deals with two terms, let us first examine their definitions.

Causal Body: This term is somewhat of a misnomer, as "body" implies a vehicle, and whereas spiritual states at times make use of a vehicle in order to produce an appearance — as in the case of an Adept when he appears in his Mayavi-rupa — it is an illusory vehicle (as the literal meaning of the Sanskrit term indicates). In her definition of "Causal Body" in *The Theosophical Glossary*, H. P. Blavatsky states:

This "body," which is no body either objective or subjective, but *Buddhi*, the Spiritual Soul, is so called because it is the direct cause of the *Sushupti* condition, leading to the *Turya* state, the highest state of *Samadhi*. It is called *Karanopadhi*, "the basis of the Cause," by the Taraka Raja Yogis, and in the Vedanta system it corresponds to both the *Vignanamaya* and *Anandamaya*

Kosha, the latter coming next to Atma, and therefore being the vehicle of the universal Spirit. Buddhi alone could not be called a "Causal Body," but becomes so in conjunction with Manas, the incarnating Entity or Ego. (p. 74)

Thus we may say that the Causal Body would be equivalent to Buddhi-Manas.

The term *Augoeides* was made familiar by Bulwer Lytton in *Zanoni*. In a footnote he writes that it is "a word favoured by the mystical Platonists," and quotes an extract from Marcus Antoninus in Greek, which is translated as "the sphere of the soul is luminous, when nothing external has contact with the soul itself; but when lit by its own light, it sees the truth of all things and the truth centred in itself." *Augoeides* is a compound of two Greek words: *auge*, bright, light, with a subsidiary meaning of sheen, gleam; *eidōs*, form.

Paracelsus also uses the term: he is describing man's constitution and says that "three spirits live and actuate" him, the third "is the *Divine* spirit (*Augoeides*)" (quoted in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 212). H. P. Blavatsky uses the term in her first work also in the above sense, and in referring to an Adept and his initiation she says that

He recognized his God and felt the great Being within himself. The "Atman," the Self, — This "Self," which the Greek philosophers called *Augoeides*, the "Shining One," . . . showed his full power to him who could recognize the "*still small voice*." (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 317-8)

Thus it would seem that the term is equivalent to the Inner God — or Atma-Buddhi — while the Causal Body (as above stated) is Buddhi-Manas.

The phrase quoted in the question, "Eternal and immortal is her *Augoeides*," is from a letter to Col. Olcott from the Master Serapis, and the context refers to an initiation which H. P. B. was undergoing at the time. The term would be applicable to any initiate.

Are There "Astral Helpers"?

When an entity has passed on to the astral plane, can it be helped by one on earth? — F. L.

C. Q. W. — It is assumed that the questioner means "Can we who are still on earth help those who have passed through what we call death?" Let us remember that "sleep and death are brothers." How can we help our loved ones when they are sleeping, resting, in their bed-chamber? Simply by quietly leaving them alone.

Under Nature's compassionate law our loved ones who have passed away are preparing to enter higher spheres of life. The psychomagnetic ties with this world must be loosed, and any attempt by a living person to "help" or communicate with the dead only strengthens the psychic and astral bonds which hold the departed "earthbound."

Thoughts of impersonal, unselfish love are always a help and a blessing to any soul, wherever it may be sojourning in Nature's realms. The love that brought two souls together in this life will do so in future lives; let us not do anything to interrupt this beautiful relationship.

A Line of Zoroasters

There are several references to a series of Zoroasters, some of the statements giving thirteen as the correct number, others twelve or fourteen. Could you tell us how many Zoroasters there really were?

G. de P. — The number of Zoroasters who have appeared from time to time is confusing, so long as we consider, and wrongly consider, these Zoroasters to be reimpodiments of one single ego, instead of different egos embodying what we may interpret from the occult records as the "Zoroaster-spirit." The truth of the matter is that in the scheme and terminology of Zoroastrianism, every Root-Race and sub-race, and minor race of the latter, has its own Zoroaster or Zoroasters. The term Zoroaster means in Zoroastrianism, very much what the term Buddha does in Buddhism, or Avatara does in Brahmanism. Thus there were

great Zoroasters, and less Zoroasters — the qualificatory adjective depending upon the work done by each Zoroaster, and the sphere of things. Hence we can speak of the Zoroasters as being thirteen in number from one standpoint, or fourteen from another, or like the Manus in Brahmanism, or like the Buddhas in Buddhism, we can multiply each of these by seven again, or even fourteen if we take in every little branchlet race with its guiding Zoroaster-spirit.

The Theosophical Forum

THE IMMORTAL HUMAN RACE — *S. H. Wylde*

Immortal? Who doubts it? A few despairing souls dare to breathe the thought that if we keep on as we are going, mankind may actually destroy itself and leave the world a vast and mutilated graveyard. But most of us don't believe this.

Anne Douglas Sedgwick wrote in one of her letters, "That terrible human race, intent, as everywhere nowadays, in sawing off the branch they sit on!" But even she only imagined a bad tumble. There would always be the good solid earth beneath the branch to catch us.

It is true that some say our children's children may never know the comforts of "civilization" that we have known; that they may be born into a sterner world, a simpler one, one where the problems will be those of building again from rock-bottom; where there will be no place — and no inclination — for the million excrescences that we now find essential to living. Not the motor car but the plough, they say, may again be the symbol of our activity. Who knows? All this may come to pass. But something rebels within us when we hear it said that the human race will destroy itself.

We admit, yes, that civilization will crumble, old cultures be forgotten; that war may continue to decimate the nations; that famine, flood and earthquake will take their toll of human life (of human bodies) in the future as they have done in the past. But the human race itself? *It cannot die!*

Is there any basis in fact for our faith in our racial immortality? Or does it merely mean that we are not willing to face the worst? Let us examine our beliefs and see if we are justified in our faith.

If human souls are created, generation after generation, by a Deity, what guarantee have we that the supply may not suddenly be cut off? How can we be sure that such a Deity may not find a better and more

grateful planet to populate? Why need we even expect to wait for a final reckoning on the Day of Judgment? Surely the Divine Plan is not bound by our expectations! Or if, on the other hand, we believe that man is merely a highly organized mechanism that somehow stumbled upon something called 'life', what is to prevent the mechanism failing on a major scale to reproduce itself, as has happened to smaller human groups in the past where the women have become sterile and the race simply died out? Why should we stake everything on the infallibility of a machine?

Or perhaps we have never quite bothered as to what man is or how he gets here: whether he is a soul or just a machine: and yet our fellow men mean something real to us. We take, let us say, a vital interest in what they do, think and say. We perhaps even instinctively feel that in harming them we should be harming ourselves.

Here we have the three main classes into which most intelligent men of the West can be naturally grouped; and not among the members of any one of these three classes do we find a logical basis for a belief in the immortality of the human race. Yet, however we may have explained ourselves to ourselves — or failed to do so; however irrational or inadequate our viewpoint as to the status of the human race, we still cling to the belief — more than that: we take it for granted, that the human race will continue into the future, no matter how fearfully and persistently we seem bent on our own destruction.

We are willing to sacrifice much in order that those coming after may enjoy. It never occurs to us to think there may be no more coming after. We labor in the scientific laboratory in perfect faith that generation after generation will follow along our lines of research and investigation, discovering secrets of nature that are still dreams for us. We never doubt that there will be those following us to carry on the traditions of the human race. How can we explain this inherent, this undying faith?

There is only one answer; and it is as near to us as is the beating of our own heart. But many do not know this; only their faith speaks for them.

We are the answer to our own question. The immortality of the human race is bound up with the immortality of the individuals of the race.

Let us expand this thought with a teaching from the Ancient Wisdom. At a very remote period in the past, a vast group or association of spiritual beings, linked together from immemorial time by the close bonds of a common origin, a common objective, and a common type of development, came to live upon this earth. We are that mighty host, the great Human Family. Our hierarchy is made up of a definite number of individuals. Not all of this hierarchy are present here at one and the same time, however, because our earth-existence represents only a small arc of our circle of life. We are in constant circulation from the invisible worlds into our visible one and out again; and probably those on earth at any one time represent but a hundredth part of the complete group.

Like the flocks of wild geese that follow with one will the airways of the earth, north to south and south to north with the changing seasons, this host of human egos enters and leaves the earth again and again in continuous wheelings. But with us there is one unbroken circle of beings. Each child that is born, each soul that passes the doorway of so-called death, marks the forward motion of the slowly turning wheel of life.

We prepare the fields of earth-life for incoming egos who must cope with the results of our mistakes. We sow seeds of war, disintegration, economic instability, even anarchy, and our brother-selves whom we bring into life as our children, must carry on. But does it all end here? Do we escape to a happier and better realm (or are we perhaps "snuffed out'?) leaving a broken world behind? No. As surely as we have been on earth once we shall turn earthward again; and so finely adjusted is the equilibrium of Nature, that we shall find the world we return to strangely like the one we left behind. History repeats itself because we repeat ourselves.

Does the historian ever guess, when he points out the parallels between our problems, our fads, our amusements, our arts, our economic

systems, and those of past periods in Greece, Rome, Egypt, India, Babylon — does he guess that what he has stumbled upon are the records of a group of beings who hanker after the pursuits that so absorbed them here on earth, and being unable to stay away from the scenes of their former activities, keep returning to take up again their unfinished work? "The same old human nature!" laughs the historian. Yes indeed, because it is the same egos returning again and again, making the same mistakes, showing the same heroisms, moved by the same ethical principles, whether taught by a Confucius, a Buddha, or a Christ; loving and striving, scheming and sacrificing, always in the same old way. — Yet not quite the same either; for slowly out of the confused meaninglessness of it all; out of the tantalizing half-meanings that disturb our consciousness and will not let us forget, there gradually emerges an understanding of the purpose of our repetitive earth-existences. Through fluctuating cycles of ascent and descent our sight is gradually clearing; and even in these days, amid the bewildering confusions of conflicting wills, there are those who can cast their inner eye along the crests of centuries and see the immortal human race at last triumphant in the conquest of — itself.

When we issued forth from that great Mystery, that ineffable Splendor, which some peoples have given name to and others have left nameless, we had no knowledge of our differences, only of our oneness; when we entered earth-life we grew to recognise our differences and forgot our unity. We have been developing here as Individuals, and each such Individual has marked out the boundaries of his own little circle of consciousness. Yet as we follow our natures deep to their source we find the little circles merging into the One again; and it is this great circle of unity that we could not break even if we would.

Our common destiny is to be again — consciously where before it was unconscious — this circle of unity. And because the destiny of each one of us is bound up with the whole, we cannot perform an act, much less think a thought, without affecting to some degree every unit of that whole. Beneath the clash of race hatreds, with an urge more potent than our greed for power, our passion for supremacy, our egotisms and

our separative and destructive conflicts, there works a common will, the will of our own spiritual selves who know not the heresy of separateness. This will is working towards a mighty destiny for the human race, the realization of an actual spiritual Brotherhood operative upon earth.

The immortal nature of man is bound to win in the end because it has the weight of a cosmic principle behind it — that of Universal Brotherhood, the essential unity of all life with the One Life. With this thought in mind let the unpopular idealist of today, wherever he may be, take heart. Let each act of sympathy and consideration for others, every manifestation of courage or endurance, every proof that comes to his attention that human beings can still exemplify the principles of justice, understanding and compassion — let all of these be registered in his mind and heart as unmistakable signs that the immortal spirit of man is at work. That which is immortal can never be overwhelmed in the long cycle.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA GLOSSARY

[Some years ago THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM mentioned that preparations were under way for the publication of an Encyclopedic Glossary of Theosophical Terms. Our readers will be glad to know that this work has been steadily going forward during the ensuing years and is now nearing completion. The material, which will probably fill several volumes, covers the whole exoteric field of ancient and modern Occultism and Theosophy, including mythology, anthropology, cosmogony, symbolism, the ancient Mysteries and allied subjects, and will prove to be an exhaustive mine of philosophical, religious, and scientific information. The work of writing and compilation has been carried on by a group of students at the General Offices. Dr de Purucker has then carefully checked the definitions and in many cases added new and valuable material.

It is too early to state when this Encyclopedic Glossary will be published, but the FORUM Editors have obtained permission to share with readers of our magazine extracts from this forthcoming work. No effort has here been made to follow any special sequence of arrangement, but random pages have been purposely chosen. — Eds.]

CARDINAL POINTS

This may refer either to the four chief points of the compass, north, east, south, west, or to the four chief zodiacal constellations which have descended to us from antiquity as then being Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricornus, corresponding respectively thereto. From one important viewpoint it is of course true that due to the precession of the equinoxes the four cardinal zodiacal constellations shift as the ages pass. These four points are connected with the four arms of the equal-armed cross or with the swastika, as also with the cube, the cube has

six faces, which answer to the four points with zenith and nadir added. Sometimes the points are eight, and include northeast, etc. In the Scandinavian mythology we have the cow Audhumla, the great Mother, Astral Light, or cosmic soul, from whom flow four streams of 'milk', in the Bible, the four rivers of Eden. In the *Zohar* it is said that the three primordial elements and the four cardinal points and all the forces of nature form the Voice of the Will, which Voice is the manifested Logos. The Dodonaean Zeus includes in himself the four elements and the four cardinal points. Brahma is likewise four-faced. The pyramid is the triangle repeated on the four cardinal points, and symbolizes, among other things, the phenomenal merging into the noumenal.

The four cardinal points are presided over, or are the manifestations of, four cosmic genii, cosmic dragons, or cosmic Maharajas, or hidden "dragons of wisdom," or celestial Nagas. In the Egyptian temples and in the Jewish these points were represented by the four colors of the curtain hung before the Adytum, and also by the square Jewish tabernacle; but the symbol has been grossly materialized, and the points themselves have been honored instead of the celestial powers they merely represent. See *Ezekiel*, chapter i, about the four living creatures with the four faces. The general idea of the four cardinal points is that at a certain stage of manifestation the three become four, in this case the number of matter; and the subject has to be considered in connexion with the general subject of the quaternary, and with other groups of four.

AQUARIUS

(*Latin*) Meaning "pertaining to water," and, as a substantive, applied to the eleventh sign of the Zodiac. One of the four "fixed" signs, represents the Man or Angel among the Maharajas of the four quarters — Man, Bull, Eagle, Lion. In astrology it is one of the triplicity of "airy" signs. In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 785, speaking of submerged continents and allied subjects, H. P. Blavatsky equates Aquarius with Ganymede. Among the twelve sons of Jacob, who became the founders of the twelve tribes, he is Reuben, described as "unstable as water," or (in the

Vulgate) "rushing as water." In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 353, he is Rimmon, god of storms and rain. Subba Rao, in his article on the Zodiac, reprinted from *The Theosophist in Five Years of Theosophy*, translates its Hindu name Kumbha into the numerical equivalent of 14, for the 14 lokas. Bailly, quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 661 *et seq.*, calculates that in the year 3102 b. c. the origin of the Hindu Zodiac was in the sixth degree of Aquarius (which H. P. Blavatsky twice gives as Libra, which may or may not be intentional). It is stated that in 1898 the equinoctial point passed from Pisces to Aquarius of the stellar ('movable') zodiac, thus initiating a new Messianic cycle succeeding that of the Fish-man (Jesus). The Gnostic sun-god is depicted as a man covered with breasts, having a fish on his head and a sea-monster at his feet; which plainly indicates the group of three signs, Pisces, Aquarius, and Capricorn, and points to a fourfold division of the Zodiac, the Egyptian Bull Apis being the one which preceded Aquarius.

This is no place for modern and medieval astrology, or any kind of exoteric astrology; and, in the absence of more specific information in the works of Theosophical Leaders, it will be best to leave the interpretation of that most valuable of books, the Zodiac, to the intuition of students, rather than presume to present ideas which must necessarily be more or less personal to the writer.

ASTROLOGY

The universal analogy enables us to find a key to occult mysteries by studying the nature and motions of the celestial orbs, which radiate manifold influence upon events, and indicate positions in the geography of time. It is thus that the adept, in proportion to his skill, can interpret the past and estimate what is to come; by means of this key — among many others — he can define the interrelations of things and arrive at an understanding of the structure of macrocosm and microcosm, which are spread out alike in time as in space. The word therefore embraces a science of vast scope, permitting of studies which range from the sublime to the trivial, from the most spacious to the most confined. The records of the past show genuine astrology — very

different from the quasi-art which passes under the same name today — as a branch of the Sacred Mysteries. It is so today, but no longer with popular acclaim. In a future whereof the past is prophetic the Sacred Mysteries and their handmaid genuine astrology will once more claim recognition and wide respect.

The tattered remnant which in our day clings to the honored name of astrology is an impaired legacy from Greece and Rome through the medieval art, elaborated by the somewhat miscellaneous and speculative industry of modern students; and that same medieval astrology was itself no more, as just said, than a decayed scion of the ancient stock. Modern astrology is too often cultivated in a spirit which binds us to our personality or caters to frivolous curiosity; yet the sublime truths, thus unworthily bedizened, beckon the serious-minded to worthier aims and wider vision. To the merest tyro it soon becomes evident that the planets cause or indicate character and events; what use he will make of this knowledge depends on the motives with which he seeks it. Anxiety about personal fate, the desire for influence and notoriety, the need for earning bread, or even knowledge for its own sake — such motives will qualify his attainments in proportion to the scope of the sphere to which he limits himself. The wise Zoroaster bids us to let alone the stars in their courses: "They were not made for thee," he says. This was addressed to the merely curious and self-seeking.

It may help us if we remember that the heavenly bodies are in essence Gods, and that the influence they shed is the aura which likewise emanates from all living beings. The Seven Sacred Planets are correlated with the septenate in cosmos and in man; by learning the natures of these planets we find one key to an understanding of the natures of their correspondences. By their motions they measure cycles, determine epochs. Every being, if we reckon his life-cycle, is an event; his nature, his destiny, is shown if we know and can define the epoch of his birth. The knowledge that blesses is the meed of service to lofty aims. To apply it to the arts of mere divination or the quest of selfish gain and illusory fame, were to degrade the Mysteries and banish the goddess Truth, with but a hem of her garment in our

profane grasp. The student of this branch of the Esoteric Philosophy should always bear in mind the ancient dictum of the wiser ones even among the later astrologers: to wit, "*Stettae agunt, non cogunt,*" signifying: The stars impel, but do not compel.

CASTOR AND POLLUX

These two brothers of Greek mythology were also known as the Dioscuri. By one account Castor and Pollux (Polydeuces) were sons of Leda and Tyndareus king of Lacedaemon, hence brothers of Helen. Otherwise they were sons of Leda and Zeus, with their sister, Helen, born from an egg. Again Leda is represented as giving birth to Helen and Pollux by Zeus, and to Castor by Tyndareus, so that the two former were immortal, the last mortal. Various exploits are related of them, in one of which Castor is slain. Pollux, from affection, beseeches Zeus to allow him to die also; but this cannot be because he is immortal. But Zeus permits Castor to share his brother's immortality on condition that each of them descends on alternate days to Hades, spending the other days in Olympus. Still another account tells how Zeus rewarded their fraternal devotion by placing them together among the stars as Gemini. They received divine honors both in Greece and Rome, according to legend appearing at times and assisting humans in war or in maritime danger.

The several variants of the myth are due to different applications of a complex symbol. When the seven great Cosmic Gods are enumerated as only two, two Kabiri, these were Castor and Pollux esoterically, and Jupiter and Bacchus exoterically; and personify the terrestrial poles, also the duality seen in the contrast between the terrestrial poles and the celestial poles, and between physical and spiritual man. As twin sons of Tyndareus they stand for day and night; but when Zeus is their common father and they are egg-born, the myth is theogonic, Leda being one of those cosmic birds, such as the swan, the goose, or the Kalahansa, which lay "golden" eggs. Again, when one is of immortal, the other of mortal descent, the dual nature of man is signified, as also the Third Race when animal man becomes a quasi god-man with an

animal body. The "egg-born" Third Race has its first half largely mortal, having little that is able consciously to survive, and its latter half partially immortal because informed by Mind enlightened by Spirit. In this sublime legend is summed up the whole relation between our immortal Self and its mortal counterpart, together with those truths which are hidden under such misunderstood words as "redemption" and "sacrifice" and "vicarious atonement." It is love that binds the heavenly brother to his mortal counterpart, making him prefer death to separation. Whether, in following the impulse of his own being, he thereby sacrificed himself, is a question of interpretation; as is also the question whether Zeus, in rendering his mortal brother immortal, was conferring a reward for a meritorious deed or was merely fulfilling the divine karmic law of love. Albeit the higher could not do without the lower; and the two by their mutual devotion invoke a power which Zeus himself cannot ignore.

The significance of the zodiacal sign Gemini will call for special notice under that head. It is dual and succeeds Taurus which is called the One: twin rays from the Logos, destined to form the heavens above and the earth below; dual forces in man summed up, to be signified in detail in later chapters of the zodiacal Book.

The Theosophical Forum

LIGHT THE WAY FOR THE "LOST" — *Raymond Rugland*

Look deep within your soul and bring forth that vast Love that you have kindled for mankind, and let it manifest. With the zeal that you seek the spiritually stronger for guidance and inspiration, look for the weaker — find them in the slums, the gambling halls, the prisons; look for the others led astray, and be not surprised if your search takes you within the austere gates of universities. Know that there is but one Way — the way of the chela. With the growth of your own soul, your love has reached out to embrace all, and call them "brothers."

Remember well those days when you groped for the Light in Darkness, when you were a "lost" pilgrim as are the struggling souls that you see about you. Justify your love for them by attempting to see once again the world as they now see it through *their* eyes. If the divine teachings surge within you, seeking expression and a chance to manifest themselves in helping others, then, remember to be honest with yourself first. Be so honest that you can weep again those tears of remorse that were shed as you stood on the threshold of a "new life," as you tasted the bitter-sweetness of shame and salvation. Were not those tears so stingingly bitter that they brought you, for the first time, face to face with your greater compassionate Self? Be glad that you rose from the mire of selfishness and temptations, if only to help those that you left behind. Recall the time when your whole existence was centered in a world of selfish ambitions and desires, when there was seemingly absence of the Light that you are now beginning to see. No being is so far removed from the Light of Reality that he cannot begin to see its feeble glow from whatever rung of the Ladder he may be standing on now. If you are to be a teacher, you must first know your pupil.

It would be difficult to *prove* that Night is coming to one who had never witnessed Night following Day; he would be content to live only in the Day that he knew. Do you remember when you prided yourself on your

scepticism, when you lent a deaf ear to the man who could rationalize but who could not demonstrate the truth of his arguments? You looked "outward," but failed to look "inward." Perhaps vainly you totaled your limited and scattered "facts" of life, your "common-sense" valuations, yet you feared to step into the "unknown" to which those "facts" pointed, clinging desperately to your few straws of materialistic knowledge. You found that only in the greater Wisdom from Within did those scattered "facts" begin to take shape and conformity in the Mosaic Pattern of Truth. Who was that friend, that author — what spark was it that lit the wick of the mighty intuition which welded your scattered remnants of wisdom and understanding, binding them into a Becoming Whole, consistent with yourself and yet greater than yourself? No power outside of yourself led you to the Path to Reality. Knowing yourself in the light of your experience, realize that the others you would help must come the same Way.

Knowing this, then look at the world through the eyes of the man that you are trying to help. You must know each one of the "lost" as he knows himself, and armed with wisdom and compassion inspired by the Wisdom-Religion and the lives of great Teachers, realize that you can help him to find his inner self, possible because you are inspiring him to unfold his way and leading him to the conscious realization of the link between his human soul and his higher Ego. Realize that the "lost" soul is justified in being "lost" — both as a result of the limited experience that it has had, but more so because of the experience that it has not had. You can carry the torch of occult wisdom and inspiration wherever you go, its rays illuminating the Path and leading the pilgrim soul of the "lost" one to the field of new knowledge and experience. Just as the child knows its parent, so does the feeble light of the undeveloped intuition recognise the Parent Light from which it springs. The Light must be brought to the man so that he will be induced to follow the Path where its rays illumine. Bring the Light into the gutter if it be required, knowing that even in the fog of unholy places its dimmed rays can yet light the Way for the "lost."

THE THOUGHTS OF MEN — *Martyn Witter*

The thinking self of every individual is linked inseparably — with the accumulated thoughts of the past. This unwritten library is awaiting whoever wishes to draw from it. Like attracts like and as a man is so will he draw unto himself.

There may be some who regard a few of their thoughts as being original. From this point it is an easy step to the feeling of personal ownership and dogmatic protection of some of the fruits of the mind. However, such conceptions of originality exist only through the lack of knowledge of the past that leads to the present. One does not need to investigate far into the past to find cycles of ideas, having systematic patterns, recurring time and time again in human history. But there is not just endless repetition, but instead spiral progression. This progression comes from within the moral-intuitive side of man, the ideas being but effects. It is needless to say that though ideas may be effects they are living entities and react upon man their creator. In fact they are the material used by man in the continual process of bringing forth his swabhava. But there is a fallacy in the intimation that all that man is now or ever will be is contained in the process of projecting the past upon the future. This is determinism. While it is true that when the first thrill vibrated throughout the Universe at the beginning of this particular manvantara a certain potential was formed containing in germ all the patterns of thought possible to be realized during this particular manvantara, this is not determinism. Man and the kingdoms above are not passive instruments bound down to an inescapable chain of causation. Instead man is an active focus of interblended forces. His goal is to realize that which he is at the present unable to grasp.

Beyond the field of manifested thought, which is the common property of at least those who are active and not passive beings, lies the field of, as yet, unrealized thought — Universal Ideation. It is the most

advanced of humanity — adepts — who are the pioneers in contacting this field of Universal Ideation. It is they who feed humanity, allowing certain esoteric thoughts at cyclic times to pass into the thinking realm of men. It is these adepts who have the claim to originality if this fallacious term were to be used. When the veil of Isis is lifted, a manifestation of ideas occurs upon the sphere which influences those who are fit receptacles thereof. This is perhaps precisely the reason why esoteric truths are no longer esoteric upon being given out. That which becomes manifest becomes active, and there are some secrets of nature, we are told, which would wreak havoc upon humanity if made active before the moral natures of men were ready. It is needless to say that all realization is accomplished by penetrating within one's self, for therein lies the heart of the Universe.

In this connexion, let me quote from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. This quotation illustrates the degree to which humanity depends upon the Guardians for the transformation of Esoteric (Ideational) to universal realization (exoterical):

for it is we who were the divers and the pioneers and the men of science have but to reap where we have sown. It is our mission to plunge and bring the pearls of Truth to the surface; theirs — to clean them and set them into scientific jewels. — p. 51

But even thoughts manifesting upon the mental world are not captured for a song. On page 279 of the *Letters* we have the following:

On close observation you will find that it was never the intention of the Occultists really to conceal what they had been writing from earnest determined students, but rather to lock up their information for safety-sake, in a secure safe-box, the key to which is — intuition.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? — *E. J. Dadd*

What are we to think about these problems of pain, disharmony in human affairs and in the kingdoms below the human? And even worse, in a sense: what of the instability and unreliability of the very earth upon which we must live? We cannot migrate to another planet — which indeed might be worse for all we know. No; here, according to reliable observation, we must live again and again, and have lived before and before, involved in the destiny of the earth and all its creatures, until — until — what?

There is a confusion within us. We feel we are superior to this sorry mess in human affairs; we feel that the imperfection shown throughout nature is not the best that might be. And when the very earth opens beneath our feet we feel indeed let down.

Shall we go on questioning eternally? It would be good to remember that other ages and other peoples have pondered this problem; and good to note also that intelligent co-operation is as much called for in the world of mind and soul as in the world of commerce. We have found help in the Theosophy that came from the East through H. P. Blavatsky. Western philosophy is outgrowing its once postulated Creator, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good; and a devil who strives to undo all that the creator fashions. But we find it necessary to be charitable to this creator in so many other ways that we still must continue to question and wonder.

We might do better to forbear to postulate and have the dissatisfaction of not being able to make the facts fit the theory. Actually we are superior to the creator whom we have created, and our immense displeasure with so much of the life on our planet arises from the plain fact of our superiority to much of our surroundings — which we did not "create." Why not be scientific in our religion and deal with facts as we find them?

The pesky fly, which we find it so necessary to swat for reasons of cleanliness, is an aviator so much better than anything human that we must suppose the existence of intelligences needed to produce and maintain the supply of such wonderfully complex machines. These "creators" are superior to us in that respect — though they may not be so always. The same thing applies to nature throughout. She is superior to us in the matter of suchlike construction.

These intelligent supervisors of nature do their work in a way that calls forth our respect and wondering admiration. But are we not part of nature, and standing side by side with them in the general plan? Have we not a spiritual work to do which many of them are not fitted to perform? Their part may be to build and train the forms: ours to build and train the mental, moral, and spiritual egos within the forms.

Why postulate one god as being responsible for it all? Better to observe armies of gods, each working according to ability and probably with a sense of duty in so working. Our duty as "human" gods is to organize and improve life wherever we contact it. And since there is an observable element in our human affairs which works in the opposite direction, we ourselves are evidently both god and devil.

Is there then nothing to which we can look up with adoration, with speechless devotion? Yes, yes, indeed there is. Deep within our own hearts it lives; and from that divine source flows forth the urge to recognise our responsibility together with innumerable others in a mighty scheme of evolution, ever moving from imperfection to stages higher and relatively more perfect. As we help others and assist all life so shall we realize ever more keenly that divine Presence within us, our own Inner God.

That God of us is himself, itself, fulfilling a duty in a wider sweep of evolving nature than we are aware of. It is futile to try to fix responsibility upon any one being for the general state of nature as we see it. Better to get busy and do our part to improve human life. We might find as we make some progress that the lower side of nature had been reflecting our imperfections, and that we would have to shoulder

a good deal of responsibility ourselves.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ILLS OF THE SOUL — *Stanley Zueek*

In these days of countless panaceas for the ills of body, soul, and spirit, it is interesting to note how the ancients dealt with the problem of healing the diseases of the soul. Iamblichus, in his *Life of Pythagoras*, tells us that Pythagoras considered such conditions as sorrow, rage, fear, pride, and kindred passions, as diseases of the soul, and employed sound to heal the latter, playing certain combinations of melodies upon the lyre or even using the voice alone for the purpose. Pythagoras also employed music when his disciples were retiring, using another series of melodies to liberate them from the cares and distractions of the day and bring about peaceful sleep and pleasing and prophetic dreams. Upon arising, still another combination of sound and songs was used by him to free the disciples from the torpor and heaviness of sleep and prepare them for the day ahead. Plutarch, in his essay, *On Isis and Osiris*, also makes mention of this fact about the Pythagoreans and adds that the Egyptians followed a like practice but used instead certain types of incense to obtain similar results night and morning.

As for himself, however, Pythagoras did not use the lyre or the voice to produce a harmonious condition within himself, but listened instead to the music of the spheres through his inner spiritual hearing, and it was these harmonies of the spheres thus heard by him which he later transferred to the voice and lyre and presented to his disciples for their benefit. We are told further that he also employed select verses from Homer and Hesiod for the purpose of correcting the soul. Says Iamblichus: "After this manner, therefore, Pythagoras through music produced the most beneficial correction of human manners and lives."

It would seem from this, therefore, that, as herbs and simples, and various medicines are used to heal the physical body of its ills, the soul, being of a more tenuous substance than is the body, requires, therefore, a more tenuous healing agent, such as sound and music as used by Pythagoras.

In this connexion, another thought occurs in regard to the relation between a Teacher and his disciples. The soul of a Master or of a true Teacher, being so much more highly evolved than that of his disciples, produces, consequently, a much more glorious symphony of sound than do the souls of his pupils, so that the very presence of a Teacher, without even a word being spoken, evokes or strikes similar, but heretofore latent, vibrations within the souls of his disciples, much as the striking of a gong or bell evokes an instant response from all objects of a sympathetic pitch in the vicinity.

Thus, even in the silence, the soul grows and is benefited in the presence of a genuine Teacher, which brings to mind that Shakespeare uttered a great truth indeed when he wrote:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubims
Such harmony is in immortal souls,
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it
— *The Merchant of Venice*

And further,

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affections dark as Erebus
Let no such man be trusted — *Op at.*

"THOSE THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE" — *Lawrence Merkel*

War is a purely human phenomenon. . . . Man is unique in organizing the mass murder of his own species." Those words were written by Mr. Aldous Huxley.

In considering the serious crisis which we are all in the midst of today, one cannot but feel heartsick, at times even overwhelmed. There are many causes for the madness called war — library shelves are piled high with books written on the subject and there are perhaps as many solutions to the problem as there are solvers. However, in arriving at some conclusions we shall attempt to face facts without sidestepping, without painting a picture with pretty platitudes.

It is time that we admitted that no real peace will ever be achieved alone by the disarmament conference, the gentlemen's agreement, or the treaty written on stiff parchment with handsome gold seals and red ribbons. Even Mr. Clarence Streit's very laudable plan of a union of the democracies must be accepted only provisionally because it is really putting the cart before the horse. In the last analysis, before any permanent peace can come to man, man must change. And he must change fundamentally: his sense of values, his blurred view of life, and his ideas and ideals must be altered entirely. After all, a city or a state or a nation is but the sum of its individuals, so let us start our solution of the problem with the first equation first.

It is our purpose in this article to try to outline, as simply as possible, a few of the basic teachings of Theosophy, and in so doing we shall attempt to indicate how the *application* of these timeless truths by each individual must necessarily be the initial step toward real peace.

One wonders what instant effect it would have upon those who seek to settle their differences by conflict were they to realize that this life is but one of many, that we come back again and again to learn and to gain experience, that we resume where we have left off in the cyclic

journeyings of the soul. Knowing of reincarnation and believing it, wouldn't they see the utter stupidity of using brute force to crush the lives of others? For the barren meaninglessness of the one-life idea, the long view of existence with its opportunities and responsibilities would be substituted. It was Schopenhauer who once defined Europe as "that part of the world which is haunted by the incredible delusion that man was created out of nothing and that his present birth is his first entry into life."

Again one wonders what instant effect it would have upon those who seek to settle their differences by conflict were they to realize that what we sow, we reap — no questions asked. Wouldn't the war-makers have reason to hesitate, to "think fast, think deep"? For every misdeed, we have to pay, for every violation of nature's harmonies, we suffer — if not in this life then in the next. Ultimately the scales are balanced. We don't break the rules in themselves, we break ourselves *against* the rules. And if the real inciters of war only knew of this basic law of nature which Theosophy calls Karman, wouldn't they have something to replace an insane conception of justice? And wouldn't the inventors prostituting their genius to an end that may ultimately destroy a civilization have cause to hide themselves from themselves, if they could? "God is not mocked." "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you."

Now it is this teaching of Karman which focuses a blinding light on the fallacy that might makes right. The use of force is rarely, if ever, justifiable. It is a basic axiom that violence breeds nothing but violence. Let true ideals act as the only persuasive power against selfishness and greed. David Swing put it beautifully when he wrote that "In noble ideals there is something aggressive. They are not aggressive like an army with gun and spear, but aggressive like the sun which coaxes a June out of winter."

Once more one wonders what instant effect it would have upon those who seek to settle their differences by conflict were they to realize that man is far more than just a physical body, that he is really a composite

entity of which the physical body is merely the carrier or vehicle for experience on earth. That man, to use the simpler division, is a synthesis of body, soul and spirit, and that the spirit in each of us, in essence, is identical. It is this that links us through and through. And it is these teachings that must finally make enemies forget their enmity, and make them realize that when *one* violates nature's harmonies, *all* are affected. Then too, don't these teachings serve to quiet the anxieties of those whose duty places them among the combatants? Loss of physical life doesn't seem so ghastly or futile when we come to see that the soul-spirit is deathless, and that true love can never be destroyed by gas or gun.

And finally one wonders what instant effect it would have upon those who seek to settle their differences by conflict were they to realize that brotherhood among beings is fact, not fiction; that their implanted hatred of their enemies is a farce foisted upon them against their higher and truer instincts. There must be many unreported friendly rendezvous among those on opposing sides. Here we see the innate feeling of brotherhood living in spite of the heel of hypnotizing propaganda. It cannot be reiterated too often that we are all portions of a grand unity. H. P. Blavatsky full well knew what she was emphasizing when she insisted in *The Key to Theosophy* that

universal Unity and Causation; Human Solidarity; the Law of Karma; Reincarnation . . . are the four links of the golden chain which should bind humanity into one family, one universal Brotherhood.

While the world today surely needs the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, the world of tomorrow will be searching them out with an eagerness that comes only to those who have been burned in the fire of experience. And when this present futile outburst is a thing of the past, then more will want to listen to the age-old truths that must serve as the only basis for peace among men. Nevertheless, there is a great deal that all of us can do right now for Peace.

We might as well acknowledge the fact that we must share the blame

for what is going on at present. If we had nothing to do with causing it, we should not be in the world today. War is simply the result of the lower animal nature in man getting the upper hand, magnified, of course, to enormous and horrible proportions.

Back in the fifteenth century a little book called *The Imitation of Christ* was written, and its author was reputed to have been the Christian mystic, Thomas à Kempis. We turn to this remarkable work to extract a sentence which is extremely significant. It is this: "All men desire peace, but few desire those things which make for peace." The final words are of extreme importance: "but few desire those things which make for peace." And what, after all, are those things? An inner harmony with its spiritual vigor, a consideration for the feelings of others in our every thought and act, a kindly word substituted for a rash one, a careful control of the temper and the emotions, and the cure of a chronic condition of "I" trouble with an eager willingness to work for others. These are the things which become manifest by *living* Theosophy, these are the "things which make for peace."

The Theosophical Forum

THE USE WE GIVE TO WORDS — P. A. Malpas

It is remarkable that just at this time when so much emphasis is being laid upon accuracy of words in our studies and statements, words are being used and abused in the world as never before. With some people, so long as you can find a suitable word to excuse or cover anything bad, it becomes tolerable, if not actually good. Murder is the taking of human life and is justly abhorred by all decent people. Call it execution, elimination, removal, liquidation, "mercy killing," euthanasia, abortion, and for some unexplainable reason it becomes accepted as much less than murder, while in reality remaining what it was before.

Some people worship words; to them "Mesopotamia" has a blessed ring about it. David's "vigorous Saxon" in the Bible has a meaning all its own, regardless of the intention of the oriental original. It is even possible that some words acquire, so to say, an artificial life and force.

There is more even than that in the matter. There have been times and places where words have been used intentionally with two meanings, one for enlightenment and one for concealment. This is the case with many words in the Bible, which is an oriental collection of writings set in a Western frame. This gives any one expositor an opportunity to claim that his meaning is right and all others wrong, much to the confusion of the masses. For a time it seems that he has as much right as anyone else to claim authority. But we live in times of strange discoveries and even the exoteric world, learned and unlearned, begins to suspect if not to discern that there are methods of verification which are for them *terra incognita*. There was a time when it seemed impossible to analyse the substances of the sun. Then came spectrum analysis and the miracle seemed easy. The age of the earth appeared to be incalculable. Radio-activity was discovered and scientists positively assert that here is an accurate time-clock by which to judge. Actually they know nothing of radio-inhalation and radio-exhalation, so to say, and they will have someday to revise their conclusions, but at any rate,

it is a new method. Quite likely someday someone will find the key to the film-cupboard where nature has stored every incident, every thought, since the world began, and later the way to pick out any given picture instead of a nightmare order of scenes, or the chaos of so-called "clairvoyance," and then we shall have another scientific miracle of test and verification.

So it is with even such a simple thing as the "Bible," if anyone really wants to know what it all means and not what it seems to mean. It may be found that all these writings are private ritual writings of secret societies of mystical bent, and that the history of each and all has been carefully preserved by bodies of scientists or mystics who have an interest in so doing. Perhaps even some of the societies who produced them may still exist in quiet and privacy, undesirous of the turmoil of the outer world of dogma and doctrine.

Someday it will be found that many "authorities" are painfully inaccurate, such for instance as some of the Greek and Roman historians. We have been laughed at by learned men for suggesting that perhaps after all Alexander never conquered India and never even entered India proper, but there are just as good historians as the Greek who declare that it is so.

So we need have no qualms in pointing out that there are worlds unconquered in the words of even the gospels. The gospels are stories of the chrestos-pilgrim, "Everyman," who struggles and fights his way forward through the gates of initiation-death-birth until he becomes a Christos. Later an actual historical figure who had won through was set in this ideal frame, and so we have the historical "Christ." But what a terrible confusion has been caused for the exoteric student by this jumble of terms. It might well be the case, on the other hand, that any member of that secret school who used this symbolism should say, "Well, it is no concern of theirs. Why did they interfere and steal our property? They deserve never to know that there is a key to it. That they should demand the key is outrageous. We did well to use the words cautiously."

Look at Paul, also a member of some school of the mystics — one of the Tanaim, in fact. He spent his whole life, according to the records, in preaching the anastasis, the "resurrection." What a world of perplexity has grown up round his cautious use of the word! There are more meanings than one in his watchword, but if we say that "resurrection" of the physical body hardly enters the picture even as the merest shadow, we shall probably be right. He taught reincarnation; he taught the resurrection from materiality to spirituality, but the dead-letter of modern western material "resurrection" is an absurdity with him, unless he was willing that outsiders should purposely mislead themselves, not having the training to understand the teaching without doing more harm than good.

The teaching of "Peter" seems to have been what we call faith — *pistis*. It seems unfair to deride serious scholars, but really what many have made of this seems to justify the little child's definition of faith, "It's when you believe something which isn't true!" Actually the technical mystical meaning of the word as used by the mystical societies means something quite different, gloriously different. It might almost be defined as "soul-knowledge" as opposed to "brain-knowledge," which latter, by the way, is often a hindrance to true soul-knowledge.

Of the meanings of the word *Jesus* in the mystical societies of the near Orient we need not now speak. But an interesting volume might be written on the subject.

Only — is it not strange that all these key-words of the gospels and the New Testament should be so very wide of their mystical meaning when translated into "Saxon"?

If any seriously wish to know more of what these words and others do really mean, there is enough material in H. P. Blavatsky's works for months of study.

WHAT IS "LIFE"? — *H. T. Edge*

Materialistic philosophy starts by supposing that things are dead, and then has to invent a life-principle to explain how they come to be alive. But what this life-principle is, and where it came from, they cannot tell us. Ultramaterialistic science declared that the whole universe is made of inert particles of physical matter; and to account for the activities of these particles, it postulated something called "energy." Matter and energy were the twin uncreated and indestructible rudiments of all things. But if this energy is not material, what is it? Science did not allow of anything non-material in the universe. And so the "energy" of science is defined as a function of matter in motion; — energy and force are made out to be effects occurring in matter, not the causes of motion in matter.

It is little wonder that such an illogical theory did not satisfy some minds; and so there arose a school of Vitalists. Vitalism is the theory that the phenomena of organic life cannot be explained by the properties of physical matter alone, and that consequently they must be due to some vital principle of a non-physical nature. Attempts to define such a principle have been vague and various. If it is spirit, what can spirit be, apart from matter? Or how can spirit act on matter? Perhaps the vital principle is another kind of matter — an aether, a fluid. But the difficulty encountered by the vitalists is not peculiar to the so-called organic kingdoms of nature; it is fundamental in the entire materialistic philosophy. It has long been known to intelligent reasoners that there can be no such thing as an inert particle of matter; nor can there be such a thing as an immaterial force. And both these truths have now been proved by actual observation. The universe consists of living beings, whose activities, expressed collectively, may be called "life." The term "matter" has been applied to the static aspect of this life; the terms "force" and "energy," to the dynamic aspect. And why should a distinction be drawn between "organic" and "inorganic"

beings? Why should animals and plants be called alive, and minerals dead? If the vitalists require a vital principle for plants and animals, they should require it equally for the mineral kingdom. But, as said, there is no need to postulate such a principle in either case. The dead matter and the force of materialistic science are highly metaphysical abstractions. The minute analysis to which we are now able to subject physical matter has revealed no such thing as inert material particles. What is revealed is a living something, that cannot be called force or matter, and yet is both; a something that may be called streams of electrons, electric charges in motion, light, electricity, etc. What is this but the universal Prana, in its physical manifestation? For this Prana is not a disembodied spirit but a stream or ocean of life-atoms, that is living beings.

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

Time-Space and the Mystic Experience

In the January *Hibbert Journal*, Sir Richard Tute (whose previous article on Time-Space and Consciousness was strongly recommended to our readers in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for December, 1939) carries his argument farther in support of the spiritual importance of the modern scientific concept of Space-Time. He shows that while it does not resemble the ordinary conditions of living in our "three-dimensional universe" it is far greater and more inclusive. He considers that the ultimate constituents of the universe are *lives* (1) "personalities," living in Space-Time and projecting themselves under certain conditions into ordinary Time and Space. He approaches Dr. Strömberg's argument regarding the "fine-structure of space" from another angle.

Working on this line Sir Richard Tute relates these "personalities" with the scientific concept of Space-Time, which he shows is similar to the *direct experience* familiar to the great Mystics. Science then is trying to establish the existence of a state in which survival of the human soul not only can, but *must* take place, and is thus rendering true religion a great service, though unconsciously! Space-Time is, of course, very different from "ordinary" space or time, but it is precisely the state which is called the Mystic experience, perhaps *samâdhi* in India; "ecstasy"; the illumination mentioned by Plotinus; the "third heaven" known to St. Paul, etc. It is infinitely more real than the three dimensional world in which we think we live but which is only one aspect of something that includes "many mansions." Students should realize that H. P. Blavatsky gives much teaching in regard to Time-Space in *The Secret Doctrine* which illuminates the whole subject, especially in the second volume on pages 382 and 612. She shows how different aspects of Time and Space are contained in Oriental writings in allegories of the doings of gods, heroes, etc. Many surprises are awaiting Western scholars in a more enlightened age than this, and the

time is coming when it will be fully recognized that H. P. Blavatsky's admiration and reverence for the scientific knowledge as well as spiritual wisdom of the ancients was not exaggerated in the least. It is the glorious task of the Theosophical Movement to hasten this prospect for the benefit of humanity.

In regard to the illusion of Time caused by our limitations, the Mahatma K. H., speaking of the links between "men — the temporarily isolated fragments of the universal soul — and the cosmic soul," says: I feel even irritated at having to use these three clumsy words — past, present and future. Miserable concepts of the objective phases of the subjective whole, they are about as ill adapted for the purpose as an axe for fine carving. — *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 29

"Signs and Portents in the Heavens"

During the winter months the evening sky has presented a very unusual appearance which has attracted wide attention and which will not recur for many years. On February 29 the spectacle was specially interesting. All the planets were above the horizon soon after sunset, and the brightest ones, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn and Mars were lined up in a row across the western sky in the above order. Uranus, Pluto and Neptune came next but few people saw them as they need optical aid to become visible. In striking contrast to this brilliant planetary display, the morning sky was denuded of planets.

Interesting and beautiful as it was, this alinement was not claimed to have any special significance. Next year, however, a planetary position, or, more correctly, a series of planetary conjunctions, will occur which are regarded with considerable anxiety by astrologers. The phenomenon will not be so spectacular as the recent display, in fact the most remarkable conjunction will not be visible at all because the sun will be in the way. Behind the sun and in the line of sight from the earth the planets Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus will be situated; the moon will be in the same line but on the opposite side of the earth and therefore visible in its full phase.

This remarkable alinement takes place on May 11, 1941, and a similar one is said not to have occurred for about five thousand years.

According to the astrologers it is particularly threatening because it takes place in the sign of Taurus, a "fixed sign." In addition to this striking aspect, a number of other interesting conjunctions take place in Taurus from 1940 to 1943. On three occasions, August 8, October 20, 1940, and February 15, 1941, Jupiter will be in conjunction with Saturn, and Uranus will be twice in conjunction with Mars and once with Saturn.

Astrology tells us that the stars do not *compel* but merely *impel*. In at least one recent sensational and widely proclaimed prediction — the misfortunes and final loss of the liner *Queen Mary* within five years of launching — the stars certainly did not use much impulsion, for that ship has had no serious troubles and at time of writing is safe in New York harbor though the five years are well past! The element of uncertainty in such predictions is *very* great, although it can hardly be denied that a striking success is occasionally attained. It would be interesting to study the heavens at the dates of launching of, say, 10,000 ships, astrologically considered and to compare the horoscopes with the actual fate of each ship after a reasonable period of time. Has this ever been attempted on a large scale? Such an experiment, if successful in showing a real connexion between the two, would be a powerful weapon to use against the scientific skeptics!

We are responsible only for presenting the main facts about the unusual celestial events mentioned above. Such highly significant phenomena (according to the astrologers) are so exceedingly rare that they seem worth recording "without prejudice," as the lawyers say, in these pages. Bailly, the celebrated French astronomer of the eighteenth century, who considered that Hindu astronomy was the parent of that of the Egyptians, Greeks, etc., calculated that the Hindu record of another remarkable conjunction of planets at the exact opening of the epoch of Kali-Yuga, the Black Age (3102 b. c), was correct. On that date, Jupiter and Mercury were in perfect conjunction, Mars and Saturn,

quite close. The first 5000 years of Kali-Yuga ended in a. d. 1898.

It is curious that the beginning of Kali-Yuga, according to the Hindus, was so close to the "commencing or zero date" (3373 b. c.) of the Maya astronomical calculations, which practically coincides with the Chinese starting-point of ecliptic measurements mentioned in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for March, 1940.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The Buddha said: "To the eye of flesh, plants and trees appear to be gross matter, but to the eye of a Buddha they are composed of minute spiritual particles. Grass, trees, countries, the earth itself, all these shall enter into enlightenment." ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SOWING AND REAPING — *G. R. Tawson*

"Verily I say unto you that as a man soweth that shall he also reap."

This is one of the very ancient teachings of Theosophy handed down from remote times long before our so-called Christian era, and still taught in all religions. It is preached to us from the pulpits of our Christian churches in most serious and impressive tones. But the Christian churches of all shades of opinion and belief, although accepting this teaching, cannot or will not accept the teaching of Reincarnation, with the consequent result of canceling or annulling the teaching that we reap what we sow, in other words denying natural justice, which they indorse and teach.

Now let us see what is the practical result of teaching the one and denying the other, viz., Reincarnation. We are given to understand by the orthodox Christian that for every child that is born God creates a brand-new soul, that it comes into existence for the first time and has had no previous existence whatsoever, the consequence being that when it is born into this world, then, from the moment it draws its first breath it comes into conditions of circumstance and environment, of health or disease, poverty or wealth, and in every way, with which it is utterly unrelated, and is perforce compelled to accept conditions with which it has had no part whatsoever in the making. In other words it is compelled to reap what it has *not* sown or done anything to merit, whether pleasant or unpleasant; which is absolute injustice since it has not earned or merited any of these conditions: a complete martyrdom without rhyme or reason, and wholly unjust.

Now let us see what happens when it comes to die after perhaps a long lifetime of activity along various lines, enterprises, schemes, unfinished plans, good and perhaps evil acts, the consequences of which it has not yet experienced. It dies, and, since reincarnation is not admitted by the

orthodox believers, then in such case it is prevented from reaping the results of what it has sown, which is also unjust. *And so at birth it is compelled to reap what it has not sown, and at death it is prevented from reaping what it has sown.* What then in such case becomes of the sowing-and-reaping teaching?

It is quite possible here that the pious and devout Christian might say that all these things will be readjusted after death, and that when fully so done the soul will then, if it has been a believer in Jesus Christ, go to Heaven and abide there for ever and ever. This to the more philosophically minded appears to be incomplete and unsatisfactory, and for the following reason. If there is to be readjustment made after death and when completed the soul goes to, let us say, Heaven, the question arises as to how long it will remain there; for it is distinctly stated in the Bible that *Heaven is not a permanent state* — "Heaven and Earth shall pass away" — and so assuming that it goes to heaven and that heaven lasts for a certain length of time, then, when that time is fully completed and the Heaven state comes to an end, where does it go next?! An awkward question which the orthodox Christian will find hard to answer, except in the usual evasion: Ah! these things are beyond man's limited understanding. We must wait God's good pleasure to reveal to us those things which we are not capable of understanding!! — And this notwithstanding that the Bible says: "With all thy getting get understanding"; that it is the most priceless treasure of greatest value.

And so let us endeavor to get an understanding of this question of "Where next?" Here we would call attention to a law known as periodicity, a well-known law evident in all things with which we are familiar, and consisting of a duality of Action and Rest — "Action and Rest alternating and operating everywhere and in every thing. Nothing can exist without this perpetual Action and Rest. All motion, all growth, all progress are possible only by the alternation of action and rest. Evolution would be impossible without it — day and night; waking and sleeping; sowing and reaping. There is no death. It is but the moment of transition from waking to sleeping. All things grow and evolve in this

way from atoms to worlds. Planetary systems, universes, all come forth, evolve, and return to rest to come forth again with added growth and experience; and so also with man. When Heaven, or the state of rest, like sleep, comes to an end, the soul awakens once more and returns to the prior field of action and goes on where it left off. In this way we grow, we learn, and evolve higher and ever higher and reach towards grander and more sublime heights.

Thus we may say that sowing and reaping, waking and sleeping, are the eternal law of life. Without reincarnation there could be no existence whatsoever.

With all thy getting get understanding! The only cure for the world's troubles is to be found in true thinking, true teaching, and action based on true understanding.

There is no religion higher than Truth. "Light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect."

The Theosophical Forum

THE USE WE GIVE TO WORDS — *P. A. Malpas*

The very earliest church was in fact a secret society, as were its successors. Following the methods of such societies, they used words with two meanings, or even more than two. If the secrets were betrayed, then the public were little wiser than before. If the entered apprentice (*idiot* was the technical Greek term, the ignorant one, shall we say) thought he knew enough to betray the ritual to outsiders (technically "pro-fanes," those outside the temple), he was likely to find that he really knew nothing and that the secrets given him were mere blinds. The mystic teachers were not fools.

For instance, one of the passwords of the lodges or churches was *Amen*, with the almost childlike explanation that it means "So be it." This translation means very little indeed, but there are other explanations. Another password was *Maranatha* — "the Lord cometh," or "the Lord is come." Apprentices, companions and doubtless many a "master," thought this meant that some physical Jesus was coming at any moment to turn the world into a sort of glorified court-house with themselves as lawyers and judges. That was one of the symbolisms used in certain lodges. Some, we are told, even went so far as to sell their houses and camp in the streets in anticipation of the coming. Pious English people have done something very near that within our lifetime. These good people had simply no idea of what the word meant in its mystical meaning or meanings, and the outside profanes simply thought they were mad.

The Old Testament and the New, and for that matter many another mystical treatise or ritual-script, are full of words which have technical or disguised meanings.

Jesus says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Many good-hearted souls have taken this saying in the ordinary literal sense, and if they have acted up to it, they will

have their reward. It is good. But "little children" in the technical lodge language simply means "initiates," like the Brahmin "twice-born," or even the word "chela," unimaginatively translated by some, "a brat." And of course the "kingdom of heaven" is made up of initiates — and not of lawyers and judges judging all the other inhabitants of the globe who do not happen to belong to one particular sect.

We have said that "faith" as translated in the Gospels is not faith at all in the dictionary sense. Learned professors and rabbins might discuss the word for ages, but in that way they would never know more about it than a plow-boy who actually possesses a grain of it freed from intellectualism.

A very interesting code-word is that of the "city." H. P. Blavatsky in her *Secret Doctrine* (1) with her usual modesty, is delighted to find that one of the most learned Masons in Europe has explained that this is a mystery word for a religion, or an *esoteric worship* or mysteries. A city temple is an occult system, but the words can be varied as required. If she had said it first — what arguments! But as Ragon said it — who shall discuss?

The "Father" has more meanings than one, and a distinctly technical meaning in the lodge or church.

The Gospels are full of double meanings, even puns, especially *John*. The very word "Evangelium" has been suspected by one of the most learned mystics in Europe to have a rather surprising secret meaning.

The delicate play on words in the simile of asking *bread* and being given a *stone* is very ingenious. Jesus is born in Bethlehem, the "House of Bread." That is, he is the type of the central figure in the Bread-mysteries, and "our daily bread" is one of the most sacred prayers in the ritual, although in some gospels it is asked in a rather different formula, such as, "give us this day our *future* bread." Opposed to this is the unwelcome substitute — a stone. And one of the Greek words for stone is "Peter." As a Hebrew word *Peter* is something else, but that is not mentioned in the Gospels. Some rather surprising sayings or doings

of Jesus are really not what they seem to mean, the mistake being due to our scholars" ignorance of the mystic meaning of words.

The sea, the mountain, the heavens, wine (fancy a mystic drinking alcohol!), fishes, fishermen, the cross, the crown of acacia, the temple, the pearl, marriage, the garments — all these and many, many other words are technical terms of various mysteries. Their everyday meaning is often beautiful, and there is no harm in following that meaning, if good. But it is folly to say that the meaning we choose to give them, or the mere dictionary meaning, is the only one, or even the real one.

Paul is simply the Latin word for "the little one," the little child in the mystical sense. His real name was quite different. He was an initiate — a "little one" in that sense.

A small dictionary could be written of such words, but *cui bono* — to what purpose? What is wanted is not so much the technical meaning of words, but a knowledge of what they stand for. We have spoken of new methods of test and proof and research. Has it never occurred to any of the thousands of theological dogmatists that there is indeed such an infallible method to settle all their arguments? Let a man or a child tread the path of discipleship ever so lightly and he will be beyond the dead-letter of all the dictionaries ever published. He will know.

Someday in the distant future we may picture to ourselves the world full of "people who know" — gnostics — who may or may not know the *words*, but the *thing* they will know, because they have been through it by experience. Then will the world again be of "one lip" and the Tower of Babel, the Mouth of God, will be the temple of all humanity.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Volume II, page 796, original edition. ([return to text](#))

THE SYMBOLIC GEOGRAPHY OF THE ANCIENTS — *L. Whellams and I. M. Oderberg*

It will be apparent to all students of the Ancient Wisdom that in olden times one of the systems of teaching something of the Mysteries was the use of symbolic geography. As an example, in the account of the adventures of Horus of Edfu in the Egyptian religious ritual, (1) we have one instance of this system; for here is a dramatized story of the soul's descent in involution and ascent therefrom in evolution in the final return to its Source, wherein the great god Horus typifies the soul; and the country of Egypt, its towns, and the river Nile, typify the field of activity of that soul, and the Sutratman.

In reading the story of the Winged Disc, or the history of the Horus of Behudtet, we can see a picture of the mystical history of the land of Egypt, with the works of its gods and heroes, emblematic of the aspects and qualities of the soul, in conflict with Typhon-Set, or materiality, upon the arena or field of life (Kshetra, field or body in the Indian philosophy, cf. Kurukshetra in the *Bha-gavad-Gita*). (2)

This story of Horus can be interpreted as the emblematic or symbolic history of the true initiation of the Horus (or Christ) spark within himself. (3)

As Paul Brunton truly says:

We may understand, therefore, the real purport of ancient religions when we understand that their heroes also typify the human soul, and that their adventures typify the experience of that soul in its quest of the heavenly kingdom. Osiris therefore becomes a figure of the divine element in man, and a symbolic history of that element — its descent into material worlds and its reascent towards spiritual consciousness.

It is well worth rereading the story of Horus, keeping before one a

picture of the country of Egypt. One should view this map facing the South, which was the position assumed by the Egyptian initiate, and then we see the Delta as a triangle with point uppermost, suspended from a thread, the Nile. Imagine the far South as the higher planes, with the Atmic ray falling downwards through the Buddhic, Manasic, etc., planes to the Delta in the North, which can be looked upon as the lower planes. Take the Lower Egypt as the plane of the lower mind or kama-manas, the "place of thick darkness," and the South land, or *Upper Egypt*, as the higher mental plane, or the buddhi-manas, the "country of light," and the Nile as the sutratman or stream of life from above bringing life, light and vitality to the soul, mind, and body. (4)

Keeping this picture in mind one can see how the adventures of Horus in each particular locality symbolize and conform with the ideas of soul development which we have given to us in Theosophy today.

We read how Horus, the soul, offspring of Osiris, Atman, and the "goddess of wisdom" Isis, or his buddhic aspect, his sister-wife, sailed down the river, bade farewell temporarily to his father, and does battle with Typhon-Set; and how, continuing the work commenced by Ra, he is assisted and sustained by Isis, and finally vanquishes the opposing force, Typhon-Set.

The whole of the details in the legend should be studied carefully, the place-names, the localities, whether on the hills or the water, the very weapons used: all these convey to the student of symbolism absolute conviction that here is true wisdom-teaching of the ancients.

"Heliopolis plays a great part in the religious inscriptions and also holds an important place in the mythological geography, which is by no means the same as the terrestrial, for there is also a mythological Egypt with its cities and sanctuaries. Of this Celestial country On is the capital, the outstanding city. It is consequently a mistake if we always interpret a geographical name occurring in a religious text in the sense that it bears in a terrestrial map of the country. We often find, for instance, Osiris named as being the god of Dadon, the city of Busiris in the Delta; and it is there inferred that Osiris was a divinity of Lower

Egypt. But if we consult the *Book of the Dead*, we shall find that Dadon does not at all answer to a city in the Delta, but to a region in the East where Osiris is to be born and receive the breath of life, and where he is represented as the rising sun. Elsewhere Dadon is equivalent to the East, as Abydos is to the West." So says Naville in his book *The Old Egyptian Faith*.

In this aspect it is also instructive to read Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and the gospel story of Christ-Jesus where the scene of his labors, in this symbolic light, becomes the mental plane, with Jesus the personality aspect and Christ the Individuality aspect of the soul. Compare also the descent into Egypt and the phrase "out of Egypt have I called my Son." Another example is of course the story of the wars in the *Mahabharata*, and the story of Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

These old myths were well known to the people at large, and formed the background of the exoteric religions of Egypt and elsewhere; yet, as we are told in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*:

if you examine the literature, the symbology of the ancient literatures, philosophies, and sciences, with the understanding given to us by our own esoteric teachings, you will find that while the symbolism is exoteric because it has been published, it still remains esoteric because it is unexplained, its meaning is still hid.

Summing up, in the words of Blackden in *The Ritual of the Mysteries of the Judgment of the Soul*:

It is suggested that one of the methods by which the Ancient Priesthood strove to educate the people to a certain participation in the Mysteries was a system of Symbolic Geography, wherein the whole country was made to symbolise the Lodge, and the mountains, cities, and rivers, wherever locally possible, represented by their names the parts and furniture of the Lodge; the country's Mystic History was thus made emblematic of the true Initiation of the Soul.

And we are told that the mystic mason states that "the Lodge is Man."

The recent publication of *The Glastonbury Zodiac* excited no little interest and curiosity. While there is some justification for the conservative restraint towards the avenues of thought which it opens before us, the view that the Druids in England also used Symbolic Geography as a means of teaching the Celtic people is given further support by the fact that although the Road known as Watling Street is of Roman origin, the name Watling is derived from Wate, a starry divinity, and there is no little evidence that the Milky Way also was a "Watling Street." Does not this suggest an earlier road, the earthly symbol of the Milky Way (as we now call the vast group of millions of suns forming our galactic — or home — universe)? There are very good reasons for linking the two, and strange fields for speculation open out when we consider the derivation of the word Arthur, from Arturus, from Arcturus, associated with the Constellation of the Great Bear. Indeed, Arthur itself, in some quarters, is translated as "Wondrous or Great Bear."

But we must leave this field, and close with two interesting quotations. From a sixteenth century poem by Gawain Douglas:

Arthurys hous, and Hyades betaikning rane,
Watlingstrete, the Home and the Charlewane,
The fiers Orion with his goldin glave.

In the following two lines by Scott, "Arthur" is used for the whole constellation of Ursa Major:

Arthur's slow wain his course doth roll,
In utter darkness, round the Pole.

FOOTNOTES:

1. This is also known as the "Winged Disc Myth," and its similarity with the purpose and underlying meanings of the *Bhagavad-Gita* will be readily noted by all students making the comparison. ([return to text](#))
2. In Plutarch's essay *On Isis and Osiris*, xi, he says: "When, therefore,

you shall hear the fables the Egyptians tell about the gods — their wanderings, cutting to pieces, and many such-like mishaps, you ought to bear in mind what has been above stated (that is, that the Egyptians, and certain of the Greeks after them, wrapped their teachings in a symbolical, mysterious, and enigmatical style), and not to suppose that any of them happened or was done in the manner related."

It is interesting, too, to remember what Dr. de Purucker says of Sambhala in his *Occult Glossary*, that it (Sambhala) "is a Sanskrit place-name of highly *mystical* significance." ([return to text](#))

3. *It should be remembered that Horus, as the other Egyptian gods also, was a symbol with a wide range of meaning.* ([return to text](#))

4. Incidentally, those interested in the Great Pyramid will note that this ancient house of illumination stands on the West Bank of the Nile right on the dividing line of these upper and lower planes: the Neophyte enters from the North, or kama-manas regions, receives illumination and enters the buddhi-manas regions, takes a step to the left, the East in this case, and follows the stream upwards to its source. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

"FREEDOM OF THE SPIRIT" — Irene R. Ponsonby

Readers who appreciated his article 'Is There an Unconscious?' in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for April, 1940, will welcome this book, *The Meaning of Happiness* (1) by Alan W. Watts.

Periods of transition, of regeneration, such as the present cycle, test the fiber of human integrity. It is not remarkable, therefore, that psychological unrest and conflict work mental and physical havoc in the lives of an increasing number of men and women every year. And each year new efforts arise to combat the evil. For the most part, Psychology has man sitting on the fence besieged by the importunity of such terms as 'the two moralities,' 'neuroses,' and 'reflexes,' the 'acceptance of or escape from life,' while he tries to figure out just what he can or cannot tolerate in his life.

Why are so many of these movements which seek to eradicate the general misery failures in their own field of action? Because only those whose teachings are based on a recognition of universal law touch the hearts of men and heal the conflict. And all the time evolution takes care of the demons: the gods share man's association with divinity by invitation only — Man can redeem the whole by wholeheartedly identifying himself with the things he is proud and happy to cherish; the rest is best ignored.

This problem is not a new one nor is it unique to the West, though the above expressions are typical of the attitude and approach of Occidental thought. For ages the spiritual energies of the universe have delved into the material sphere and worked for the evolution of its manifestation. Now the tide of life has turned; involution of matter has begun, and in the consequent evolution of spirit, unification and universality become the keynotes of progress. That composite entities should be opposed one to another is inevitable, but conflict of self within the composites themselves points to inherent weakness of fiber.

Has the product of self-consciousness, the human soul, become so matter-enthralled in the realms of the descending arc that even egoity is jeopardized?

The East promulgated a solution of this problem ages before the advent of Western civilization. The seven stages of Yoga and Gautama's Four Verities and Noble Eightfold Path are but three of the least misunderstood doctrines of Hinduism and Buddhism treating of self-conquest. Due partly to this misunderstanding, but especially to the fact that the esoteric keys are unknown to the West, these great tenets have scarcely benefitted the average man. Will the teachings of Eastern and Western Psychology taken together be more successful? Will they point to a primitive and universal source of Religion?

The Meaning of Happiness is a stimulative study of the quest for freedom of the spirit in modern Psychology and the Wisdom of the East. Replete with fine material, the book "does not name a single thing one can *do* in order to be happy," but in living words "quite clear to the 'man-in-the-street' but utterly obscure to the philosopher" it reviews in seven chapters the pertinent aspects of ancient and modern thought as introductory to the central theme and final chapter, 'The Love of Life'. Believing that the simplest truths have to stand on their heads, as in a paradox, before we recognise them, the author shows us the fundamental simplicities of life as in a mirror, and phrased with originality of perspective and color — a setting in which the depth and glow of the grand tenets of Religion are enhanced. Here are a few ideas which set the reader's thought vibrating.

... if our eyes cannot see themselves, how much less can that something which looks through the eyes see itself. (p. xxiii)

The beauty of life is not in any of its stages but in the whole movement from birth to death, p. 53)

Centuries of civilization have orphaned us from nature both in and around us. (pp. 65-6)

The modern Westerner is apt to make a God of his ego rather

than an ego of his God. (p. 74)

... the free man is so filled with gratitude to life for the freedom to be all of himself *that he joyfully renounces it*. This is where true freedom guards itself against abuse, (p. 195).

The heresy of separateness and man's relation to the Universe are effectively discussed from many angles; so are the nature of the ego and the principle of duality. There are interesting comparisons between ancient and modern Psychology, in the course of which the several schools of the latter and their exponents receive just appraisal. In this context the author states:

In the West psychology is a new science; in the East it is very ancient, and in fact it is not correct to speak of Oriental *philosophy* at all, for in no sense is it philosophy as we understand it. Essentially it is neither speculative nor academic; it is experimental and practical, and is much closer to psychology than philosophy. (p. xv)

The Religions of the East postulate a composite universe and man, at least fivefold and more generally sevenfold in constitution, and they define for each of these centers or egos its particular sphere of consciousness. Therefore, while aptly describing the applicability of the Eastern teachings to *human* needs, Psychology seems too limiting a term for so comprehensive a system of Cosmology.

Some of Alan Watts's comments on Christianity are so arresting that they merit further elaboration; however he maintains:

Christianity is our traditional faith; it is in our blood and bones. Therefore it is possible and very desirable that the wisdom of Asia and the psychology of the unconscious will bring its treasures to light again and interpret them in a way that will give us an altogether new zest for it.

And then he explains that Christian symbolism had no real meaning for him until he had studied the religions of the East, though he

considers that the result would have been much the same had he read "Eckhart, Augustine, a. Kempis, Berdyaev and others of their caliber instead of the sages of India and China." (p. 137)

Be that as it may, it is the phrase 'traditional faith' that intrigues this reviewer. Humanity today is the ward of the ages, having expressed their racial and religious impress life after life through the cycles. Yet the individual is cognisant of inherent leaning towards one or another of such impresses. True, the die of our present cast is welded by Christianity — into its sphere we have been drawn by karmic attraction — but can the earlier and possibly stronger impressions of the past be entirely ignored? Surely the impact of such past experiences penetrates deeper than blood and bones. We prefer to believe that a heritage of the Wisdom-Religion of the ages stirs in the hearts of men of many varied creeds and some day they will claim this as their 'traditional faith.'

Here a necessary distinction should be drawn between Religion and religions, between those great movements that embody a cyclic impetus toward racial evolution and the numerous lesser efforts of a religio-philosophical or psychological character which arise as sincere but not always wise response on the part of earnest individuals to existing conditions. The former are causal in origin and effect; the latter are the product of transition, and seldom outlive the age that bred them. The persons of the great founders and the universality of the doctrines of the former point undeviatingly to a College of Sages and Seers, to a Mother-Source of Truth; whereas the diffusiveness of the latter contributes to their undoing.

Had this distinction been recognised by the author of *The Meaning of Happiness*, *bona fide* Theosophy, as the modern expression of "the essence of all Religion" and "the most serious movement of the age" would have received its due in this otherwise fine survey. In addition some aspects obscure in Alan Watts's interpretation of the sublime teachings of the East would have been revealed to add their power to the beauty of this book. Verily, "the freedoms of the spirit are not

attained by violence of the will but by an infinite patience of the imagination."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Harper and Brothers, New York. 200 pp. \$2.50. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE ESSENCE OF H. P. B.'s MESSAGE — *G. de Purucker*

We speak of rendering homage. There are various ways of so doing. There is the homage of words, and there is the homage of the heart which leads to emulation. The homage of words is good when the heart is behind it; but the homage imitating grand action is finer and higher still.

I think the best homage we can render to our beloved H. P. B., outside of the words with which we express our deep gratitude, is by copying her, copying her life and her work for mankind: being as like unto the example she gave to us as it is possible for us to be. She indeed said the same in regard to her relation to her own Teachers: They teach, I follow. My Message is not my own, but of those who sent me.

In the Theosophical world since our beloved H. P. B.'s passing there has been no small amount of talk about the successors of H. P. B.; and all this has seemed to me to be so perfectly trivial, a trifling with words and with the most sacred instincts and impulses of the human heart. For every true Theosophist is a successor of H. P. B. and should be glad of it and proud of it. We are all successors of H. P. B., every one of us without exception whatsoever. And the least is often the greatest amongst us. I do believe that every true Theosophist should essay to be a Theosophical leader and be proud of the title, and aspire to take his place in the foremost ranks of our teachers, of our lecturers, of our workers, of the exemplars of the Theosophical life. Here is a case where it is not conceit or arrogance but the impulse of a loving and grateful heart to come to the front and serve, and dedicate one's service to the Cause which our Teachers have served and which they still serve. What is grander than this? Actually it is the abdication, the rejection, of the low and the personal. It is the forgetting of the personal and the sinking of the self into the immensely greater Self of the Universe. When we forget ourselves, then something supremely grand is born in us; for the spiritual then, of which we humans are such feeble examples, has a

chance to come forth in us, to speak and to work in and through us, because then it begins to find its channel in and through the human heart and mind.

It has always seemed to me that H. P. B.'s great work was to ensoul men — words which are profound and very meaningful; to give men and women a philosophy-religion-science which should so mightily persuade both mind and heart that they would come to realize that the Universe itself is alive and conscious, and that we, her children, perforce and from that fact, are alive and conscious also, and are co-eternal, coeval with the Universe, from which we come, in which we live, and into the spiritual parts of which we shall again return.

When you get this simple thought in your heads and in your hearts so that it amounts to a conviction within, you are already becoming re-ensouled. The soul, nay rather, the spirit within you, is beginning to take command of you, and from that moment your lives will be changed. New and grand vistas will open to your vision, vistas which your intellect and your intuition will show you are realities, and you will begin to govern your life in accordance with the living, naming thoughts that will thereafter make their shrine in your hearts. You will begin then really to live. You will no longer be what Pythagoras called "the living dead" — those alive in their bodies and relatively unconscious in their souls. You will then actually be embodied souls.

This to me has always been one of the loftiest and most beautiful parts of H. P. B.'s work that she came to inaugurate: to ensoul men so that they might live anew with the vision glorious and with eternal hope.

No man will act against the dominating impulse within him. Let him change that dominating impulse from self-seeking interests to altruistic service for all, and life will take on a grandeur that up to that moment he had never seen or understood. Such a man is becoming truly ensouled. He sees the reason for his life. He sees the reason for the universe around him. He sees the reason for his own thoughts. He understands causal relations and effectual consequences. He sees vast and utterly grandiose visions opening before his mind's eye; and he

knows that all he has to do in order to attain still greater vistas, and to be of greater service, is to put the strength of his intellect in these intuitions and lofty feelings, center his power of action upon them and thus grow in ever enlarging stages of inner grandeur and inner understanding. His life will then have changed because the man will have changed. He will have been awakened. And he will then so rule his life and co-ordinate it to the life of the Universe around him and to the lives of his fellow human beings, that what we Theosophists call Universal Brotherhood will be his first instinct and the controlling impulse in both his thought and action. What magic! This to me is the essence of the message of H. P. B.

The Theosophical Forum

"NOT WITHOUT DUST AND HEAT" — *J. M. Prentice*

In the cleaning out of a pigeonhole in my office, a spot long undisturbed, a piece of paper was dislodged which, on examination, revealed a series of quotations that had been written down long ago by one of my predecessors. Reading them over, a sense of kinship was revealed; I wondered what military officer it was who had been thinking thoughts curiously like my own. Some unconscious Theosophist, perchance, aiming at the expression of a philosophy, dimly sensed, as through a glass darkly.

The first quotation I recognised at sight. It was from Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and it must have comforted many thousands in the years that have passed since the genius of the poet took fire in the contemplation of a myth that is one of the treasures of the Race.

To suffer woes which hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy power, which seems omnipotent;
To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates. . . .

Perhaps in some crisis in his life the one who had transcribed the lines so carefully had found comfort in learning "to love and bear," which is the key that unlocks the portal to all spiritual greatness. To love and bear up under all circumstances is to grow — it is the message of every World Teacher and is re-echoed by the genius of every generation.

The next quotation, put down some time later, by the color of the ink and the style of writing, suggests that the writer had found himself confronted by some momentous problem which could only be solved *by action*. It was vaguely familiar and was tracked down to Milton's *Areopagitica* — that superb plea for the freedom of the press and the right to express opinions freely and at length. Many people go through a whole life without being called upon to exercise their own wills and

arrive at their own decisions. Such negative lives cannot but provide a negative Devachan — conventional lives that are never tested by any real temptations nor tried in the fires of adversity. Evidently it was not so with my predecessor — in the face of some Kurukshetra he had noted down Milton's words and drew from them (one is permitted to hope) the breath of the spirit that enabled him to perform his duty, without fear and without reproach, even unto death.

I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. . . .

Let us hope that he won his garland in whatever arena he strove in. Truly those great prizes of the spirit, which far surpass the victories of civil or military life, are not achieved without effort that tries one to the very limit of strength, "not without dust and heat."

The next quotation was in Latin and was construed slowly and painfully because in the years wherein the paper was reposing in its forgotten pigeonhole this scribe was engaged in work in which mere scholarship had little place. The writing had something of Cicero about it — maybe some reader will recognise it in one of the letters written to Atticus.

Longumque illud tempus, quum non ero, magis me movet quam hoc exiguum.

In our English tongue it loses (in my effort at translation anyhow) something of its classic charm, but the dream of the future is as true today as when it was written in Rome and copied down by one who perhaps made the Great Sacrifice in one of the battles of more than twenty years ago:

I care more for that long age which I shall never see than for the little of Time that I hold. It is the old, old problem of Time and Eternity — yet not the Eternity of the church, the long age which, without the teaching of Reincarnation, stretches bleakly ahead as far as they who

contemplate are concerned, and which only a sublimely impersonal mind can regard as being something in which one can have no interest save that which is inspired by a desire to serve the well-being of the Race. If only Cicero (if he is our author), and my unknown friend could have realized that they and we are part of that long age and so can never escape from participation in it, because we are in ourselves timeless and of the Spirit.

Across the years we can greet the writer of these quotations and hope that he has gone to the Peace with duty done, with Dharma accomplished, inspired by the words of those who were perhaps the Theosophists of their periods. For Theosophy is the sum-total of that teaching that so often breaks through language and escapes, as far as mere words are concerned, but which takes root in human hearts and inspires men and women to do their duty under all circumstances, whether it be in the glare of the public places, or obscurely in the unlighted corners of the great world.

The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHIST'S BOOK SHELF — *Chas. E. Ball*

We can heartily agree with the late G. K. Chesterton who remarked in one of his humorous books that most things suffered from having been over praised, and gave a ridiculous list — including drink, love-making, and lawn-tennis! We might add reading, for unless directed to some end well defined, reading *is* but a specious trifling of the mind. The great point for us is that a right course of study and reading, of history particularly, gives that foundation of character and judgment which provides criteria for an understanding of life, men, and women. The present generation, generally speaking, are literally rudderless. The old good authors are rediscovered now and again by real lovers of literature and recommended to the hoi polloi, but to what avail?

As occult students we must try to catch that errant modern mind, awake as it is to the *ephemerally* important, and switch it on to what is *eternally* important. Times and circumstances will help us, for if Westerners go on much further on present lines, they will have spent so much on armor that nothing will remain to defend, as the eighteenth century cynic warned. It would seem that a principle of co-ordination is wanting. The poor drowning waifs of civilization seize on any loose floating spar or overturned boat near them. As we have the priceless wireless today which enables thousands of shipwrecked ones to be saved, so, likewise have we the *knowledge* of Occultism in the persons of thousands of its practising students, and the "Still small Voice" is reaching and will reach *some* of the drowning ones.

But a great army of men and women, real and human — because of their "soul-knowledge" — is required to lead and guide those minds which are opening towards the LIGHT OF THEIR OWN SOULS but who may still go astray for lack of a pilot.

There is, of course, much palaver today about a New Age and a juster world, and it is time for a prior consideration of the *ideal* men and

women who are to build it. Otherwise we may literally jump out of our hitherto-organized barbarism into a new and more fantastic dis-organized devilry. Surely, this is only common sense?

One outstanding and most noticeable point in the biographies of men who have moved the world in the past centuries is that they so often had excellent mothers!

In the oldest scriptures honor was always given to the female sex as to the male sex, and *Manu* has a verse to the effect that where women are treated with kindness and honor there the gods are favorable.

Alternatively it augurs no good for a country "where women rule," meaning obviously something like we have in Europe today.

Now, in this connexion of women, fathers, family life, etc., which is at the basis of all society, the works of Katherine Tingley are priceless, and the ideas inculcated will have to be grasped by the modern "psychology" monger if he wishes to see through the mephitic fog of animalism masquerading as sex-knowledge and beauty, the value of which is obvious by the women's faces in any "civilized" city.

For the modern person trying to get an understanding of life there are many books which contain a stream of thought leading to the Theosophical Ocean, for today one must lead the newspaper-snippet reader along easily. His mind is debilitated by thrillers and ideologies enough to stupefy an Atlantean, and he had better bathe first of all in such limpid water as the good Emerson's writings and the other New England Transcendentalists, for simplicity and an honest child-like outlook are absolutely necessary if one is to co-ordinate one's nature and feel the true rhythms of the "Dance of Siva."

Works on Buddhism are beautiful and fascinating too because of their smack of the ancient, blunt and definite statement of the foundation facts of human existence. Newspapers might with advantage reproduce that Buddhist picture of the world in the grip of the Demon of Desire, and print some selections from the *Life of Milarepa*, for instance. The lives of the Saints are nearly as fascinating as the lives of scoundrels

surely, once one has the proper key — that's the point — to what the would-be Saint is trying for.

The *Life of St. Francis of Assisi* is truly romantic, and his and other saints' lives prove them to have been *happy*, something which the fool worldling is always chasing after and never catches.

One great value of some study of Buddhism is its tendency to eliminate from a student's mind "cast iron" ways of viewing things; and the modern interest in the Zen school displays this (see Alan W. Watts's *The Legacy of Asia*). The molds of mind of the twentieth century, though fractured irremediably, have to be further treated in order to bring out that Cosmic framework of Things behind the phenomenalism which is all that modern man, even though an *exact* scientist, sees. A splendid book on the doctrine of Buddha is: *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot: Addresses on Religious Subjects* by the Rt. Rev. Soyen Shaku, Translated from the Japanese by Daisetz Tietaro Suzuki (the apostle of Zen).

In its own wonderful way Buddhism shows that there is no orthodoxy in these matters. Each human being as he advances in the understanding of his own divine nature becomes his own teacher:

What one with such a heart wills is what makes the bird sing and the flower smile, what has raised the mountain and makes the water flow. He is hungry and the universe wishes to eat; he is asleep and all the world hibernates. This sounds extraordinary, but the enlightened understand it perfectly well.
— *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot*

One of the first books a young student of Theosophy should tackle is H. P. Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy*, as by doing so he will save much trouble for himself and others by seeing the answers to the jejune questions all inquirers pelt one with. *The Ocean of Theosophy* and the other books of W. Q. Judge, and most important that book, par excellence, for continual reading by mystics, H. P. B.'s *The Voice of the Silence*, should all be required reading. There follow in due course the stupendous *Secret Doctrine*, following the most interesting and

readable *Isis Unveiled*, and the fascinating volumes of the present Leader, Dr. G. de Purucker.

As the study of these vast subjects proceeds the student will realize the value of his background of culture. It is a sort of vise to his passport, for many good men have died and become books, and their works do contain some of the syllables which go to spell the great secret.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA GLOSSARY

[Some years ago THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM mentioned that preparations were under way for the publication of an Encyclopedic Glossary of Theosophical Terms. Our readers will be glad to know that this work has been steadily going forward during the ensuing years and is now nearing completion. The material, which will probably fill several volumes, covers the whole exoteric field of ancient and modern Occultism and Theosophy, including mythology, anthropology, cosmogony, symbolism, the ancient Mysteries and allied subjects, and will prove to be an exhaustive mine of philosophical, religious, and scientific information. The work of writing and compilation has been carried on by a group of students at the General Offices. Dr. de Purucker has then carefully checked the definitions and in many cases added new and valuable material.

It is too early to state when this Encyclopedic Glossary will be published, but the FORUM Editors have obtained permission to share with readers of our magazine extracts from this forthcoming work. No effort has here been made to follow any special sequence of arrangement, but random pages have been purposely chosen. — Eds.]

DUGPAS

(*Tibetan*) Adherents of the Buddhist religion of Tibet, previous to the reform by Tson-kha-pa in the fourteenth century, following sorcery and other more or less Tantrik practices, which latter are, nevertheless, entirely foreign to the pure teachings of Buddhism. In Theosophical literature the term "Dugpa" has been used as a synonym for "Brother of the Shadow" — especially in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*.

The word is a compound: *Dug*, meaning "Thunder-Dragon," and the suffix *pa*, meaning "inhabitant," "man," or "son." Modern Orientalists

have distinguished between the Dugpas and the Bons, as for instance the noted Theosophical Oriental scholar Dr. Evans-Wentz, who writes: "As Dr. Waddell has very wisely emphasized, "much confusion has been caused in European books by misusing the name Dug-pa, employing it as a synonym for the Red Cap Sect, which properly is the Ñingma' (*The Buddhism of Tibet*). Furthermore, to assume, as certain non-Tibetan critics of Padma Sambhava seem to assume, that all Red Caps are Dug-pas, is equally erroneous." (*Milarepa*, p. 13) The Thunder-Dragon School "consists of three branches: the Lower Dug-pa; the Middle and Southern Dug-pa (now the Established Church of Bhutan); and the Upper Dug-pa." (Ibid.)

It should be noted that the Dugpas are usually found in the frontiers and on the border lands of Tibet, as for instance in Bhutan, Sikkhim, etc. Most European Orientalists having little or no acquaintance with conditions in the interior of Tibet make the mistake of applying to conditions all over the Tibetan provinces what they find among the religiously and philosophically degenerate sects that they meet with on the Tibetan frontiers.

FAKIR

(*Arabic*) A Mohammedan religious mendicant. The word is derived from *faqir*, meaning "poor" in Arabic, and should be strictly applied only to Mohammedans, but the term has come to be used loosely to apply to any mendicant devotee or yogin in India. This was the case when using the word in *Isis Unveiled*, but H. P. B. herself later called attention to the fact that "only *Mussulman* ascetics are entitled" to the word *fakir* (*Theosophical Glossary*, p. 118).

"M. D'hosson in his celebrated work on the Ottoman empire traces the origin of the Faquirs to the time of Mohammed in the following manner: In the first year of the Hegira, forty-five citizens of Mecca joined themselves to many others from Medina. They took an oath of fidelity to the doctrines of their Prophet, and formed a sect or fraternity, the object of which was to establish among themselves a community of property, and to perform every day certain religious

practices in a spirit of penitence and mortification. To distinguish themselves from other Mohammedans, they took the name of Sufis. This name, which later was attributed to the most zealous partizans of Islam, is the same still in use to indicate any Mussulman who retires from the world to study, to lead a life of pious contemplation, and to follow the most painful exercises of an exaggerated devotion. To the name of Sufi they added also that of Faquir, because their maxim was to renounce the goods of the earth, and to live in an entire abnegation of all worldly enjoyments, following thereby the words of the Prophet: "Poverty is my pride." Following their example, Abu Bakr and Ali established, even during the lifetime of the Prophet and under his own eyes, religious orders, over which each presided, with Zikrs or peculiar religious exercises, established by them separately, and a vow taken by each of the voluntary disciples forming them." (Quoted from an article by Bjerregaard, in *The Path*, I, 203-4)

According to T. P. Hughes, there are five principal orders of Fakirs in North India: the *Naqshbandia*, the *Qadiria*, the *Chishtia*, the *Jalalia*, the *Sarwardia* — all being *ba-Shara* Fakirs (Ibid.), i. e., "with the law" — those who govern their conduct according to the principles of Islam.

A synonymous term for a religious mendicant in Persia is *Dervish*. Fakirs should not be confounded with the Sannyasins or true Yogins of India.

DWELLER ON THE THRESHOLD

This is a term coined by Bulwer Lytton in his romantic story, *Zanoni*, wherein he represents under this phrase a malevolent entity of awful and terrifying aspect waiting to menace and to tempt the aspirant to Occultism. There is no such individual malevolent entity in reality, but the author, by means of this vivid portrayal, has expressed the well-known mystical fact that when one has taken a stand to overcome a certain weakness in one's nature, or be it even a habit, such resolution seems to array all the opposing forces against the aspirant. Thus, it may readily be understood that when one seeks to enter the domain of the "occult," a similar experience awaits the candidate: but the forces or

energies thus aroused are of one's own making, and they must be met and conquered by their originator before progress may be successfully made. This has been well expressed by the well-known Hindu Theosophist and philosopher Subba Row. After commenting upon Bulwer Lytton's "Dweller on the Threshold," he says: "But nevertheless there is a Dweller on the Threshold, whose influence on the mental plane is far more trying than any physical terror can be. The real Dweller on the Threshold is formed of the despair and despondency of the neophyte, who is called upon to give up all his old affections for kindred, parents and children, as well as his aspirations for objects of worldly ambition, which have perhaps been his associates for many incarnations. When called upon to give up these things, the neophyte feels a kind of blank, before he realises his higher possibilities. . . ." (*The Theosophist*, VII, 284)

Yet, to one who rushes heedlessly into the psychic world, there are dangers fully as menacing as Lytton's Dweller on the Threshold, for in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, on page 42, the Master K. H. outlines certain experiences undergone by the medium, Stainton Moses, which were far worse than Glyndon's in Lytton's *Zanoni*.

Generally speaking, because of their menacing and forbidding aspects, the term Dweller on the Threshold might be applied to some of the denizens of the Kama-loka, although specific Theosophical terms are available for every class of entities in that domain. This term, however, has a technical meaning, signifying past kama-lokic or astral remnants of a former incarnation which haunt the new imbodiment of the Reincarnating Ego. In other and clearer words, a man of strongly material impulse and desires and who gives way to them, thus forms for himself a kama-rupa, which, when the man dies, can even persist without undergoing complete dissolution until the quick return of such materially-minded human soul to reincarnation, when the kama-rupa is then and there strongly attracted to the man thus reimbodied and haunts him as an evil genius, continually instilling by automatic psycho-magnetic action thoughts and impulses of evil and temptations and suggestions of fear and terror — all of which the man himself was

responsible for in his last life.

There is even such a "Dweller" for globes of a Planetary Chain in the cases of such Planetary Chain being of strongly material characteristic. In fact our own Moon is such a Dweller to the Earth, the reason being that our Planetary Chain is by no means a spiritual one. All Planetary Chains in the Solar System probably have or have had their Moons, in fact must have had each one its Moon, because such Moon was its cosmic parent, but not in all have such Moon-Dwellers lasted long after the Planetary Chain undergoes imbodiment anew.

EPILEPSY

A disorder recognised in antiquity as an "obsession" or "possession" by an Elementary which ousts — at least temporarily — the astral-vital soul from the physical body and for the time being assumes control of the bodily mechanism. The mind thereby loses direct connexion with its physical vehicle and unconsciousness results. This true diagnosis has filtered down the ages in the so-called superstitions of the epileptic being possessed of a "devil." The attacks begin with sudden onset of muscular rigidity in tonic spasm, and, with unconsciousness, the person drops to the floor, if standing, hence the popular term of "falling sickness." Next follows the clonic stage of tumultuous spasms contorting the whole body in unnatural, unseemly, attitudes and motions. These typical attacks of *grand mal* (as the French call it, or "great sickness"), usually end in a sleep from which the victim awakens dulled, confused, and exhausted. Less severe cases are seen in many various degrees up to the transient forms of *petit mal*, or "small sickness," and the psychic equivalent types of continued unrest and disturbance which indicate that the astral body of the sufferer is at such times more or less affected by astral influences. "Jacksonian epilepsy," due to tumors or other mechanical pressure on motor areas of the brain, while having many of the classical symptoms, has a more tangible cause than the typical idiopathic cases.

The Theosophical teaching about the Elementaries — those kamic astral entities whose intense desires draw them to neurotic,

mediumistic, and negatively sensitive natures — gives the key to the injurious, purposeless explosions of force in the man who has been dissociated from his body and brain. Of the various "aurae" of bizarre sensations or emotions which usher in many typical attacks, one of the most common is the sudden look of fear or even terror with which the sufferer stares fixedly as if held in thrall by some gruesome astral sight. The frequent hallucinations of sight, sound, smell, etc., are, as a rule, of the same low morbid quality which the alcohol-addict senses in *delirium tremens*. The epileptic, naturally, is very susceptible to alcohols which, in themselves, strengthen the kamic influence. H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Key to Theosophy* (page 195) that epileptic fits are "the first and strongest symptom of genuine mediumship," and cites several outstanding examples.

Modern medicine, after all its searching analyses of the body, reports that some cases of "essential" or "idiopathic" epilepsy at times are normal individuals between attacks, and also that many autopsies reveal no organic disease to account for such marked disorder. The psychiatrists agree that the basic cause is not yet known. Of course, the predisposing neurotic constitution which succumbs to extreme fright, anxiety, or debauchery, is a karmic heritage from the afflicted one's past life when he cultivated abnormal psychic conditions and thus weakened his spiritual will.

The Theosophical Forum

DR. GUSTAF STROMBERG AND THE INVISIBLE STRUCTURE OF THE LIVING UNIVERSE — C. J. Ryan

In THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM of May, 1939, a review-article was printed of the Swedish edition of Dr. Gustaf Stromberg's *Universums Sjal*, a brilliant study of the rational nature of the Cosmos, the relationship between mind and matter, and the meaning and nature of human life and death. This book has now appeared in English under the title *The Soul of the Universe* (1) with a few additional passages of much significance, and it is with great pleasure that we take the opportunity of making some further remarks in appreciation of a purely scientific work which in so many respects supports the fundamental principles of Theosophy.

Dr. Stromberg, born in Gothenburg, Sweden, has been a member of the Staff at Mount Wilson Observatory since 1916, and is distinguished for his investigations in regard to the movements and luminosities of the stars and the structure of the universe, but his interests have included other scientific fields. As Dr. Walter S. Adams, Director of Mount Wilson Observatory, writes in the Preface:

In days of extreme specialization in science the appearance of a well-considered book which brings together many of the facts and conceptions of different branches of physical and biological science and discusses them from a unified and philosophical point is exceedingly welcome. Very often the specialist immersed in his own field of research has a very limited outlook and but little interest in the broader aspects of science or in its applications to human life and behavior.

How often has the complaint stated in the last sentence been put forward in Theosophical literature! To be able to meet criticism intelligently and to present Theosophy to science-minded persons, students should have a general even if only a modest knowledge of the

main lines on which science is moving — we may add, moving on the whole in the direction of the Ancient Wisdom. Dr. Stromberg, in his support of his argument, presents an array of facts of recent science which in themselves make his book highly interesting and instructive apart from the main thesis, though of course it is the latter which is the distinctive feature of the book. Here we find the mature thought of a scientist fully informed in the latest trends of modern research, who, by applying the principles of Relativity and the Quantum Theory to the field of biology and the relationship between mind and matter, has discovered, in his own words, "that the individual memory is probably indestructible and that the essence of all living elements is probably immortal. The study leads to the inevitable conclusion that there exists a World Soul or God."

Dr. Stromberg started on his adventure in search of the Soul of the Universe in high spirits, as he says, and his studies led him through familiar things such as trains and pendulums, vitamins and radio, plants and animals, up to the brain and the mind, and finally to the sublimities of Cosmic Space which he finds to be a Fulness, a Plenum, and not a Blank, but the Origin and inner World of Life. He found our familiar world of what we call space and time, the training-school of souls, to be different from the more real "world" of life and consciousness. There are elements, both material and what we must call "immaterial" for want of a better word, which connect these "worlds" and provide a rational foundation for the existence of the soul and its survival after "death." Finally he found that the power of the human will is great but that there is also a Cosmic Will and that man has developed an organ that is sensitive to the voice of a Cosmic Conscience, and that there are inspired men who have intuitively come in contact with the World Soul.

Dr. Stromberg begins by clarifying our ideas about Space, showing that it is not just "an empty place to put things in" as we may have thought, but that it has an objective reality, properties, and definite rules for its activities. The illustrations he gives of this are very striking. Time and clocks come next and we are painlessly introduced to *Space-Time*

which, he says, "seems to quiver with something which is akin to *Life* and *Consciousness*." This, of course, is in perfect harmony with the Theosophical teaching that no single point in the Universe is devoid of life and consciousness of some kind. We then learn something about Matter, a very mysterious substance, which leads to Gravitational and Electrical Fields and the nature of the atom, about which Dr. Stromberg has much to tell of special interest.

Then comes the most important factor in the argument, the so-called "*immaterial wave-structure*" in the Cosmos, the nature of which the most advanced physicists are now beginning to study. That is one moiety of the duality in physical nature, an invisible but an indispensable side, the "wave-aspect," the other being the "particle-aspect." The latter is controlled and organized by the immaterial waves. Dr. Stromberg says:

. . . we shall regard the two aspects as belonging to two different "worlds," which we designate by the terms *material* and *immaterial*. An electron will be regarded as belonging to the material world; electrical fields, radio waves and pilot waves will be regarded as belonging to the immaterial world. . . . An atom consists of *particles*, neutrons, positrons, electrons (perhaps also photons and neutrinos), which are cemented together into a unit by an *immaterial wave-structure* with certain space and time properties.

To illustrate the guidance or control by the "immaterial structure" and its "pilot" waves the author calls upon the development of the living cell, a most elaborate process and an unexplained "miracle" to Biology. He shows that material, physical, or even electric forces fail to explain these mysterious processes, but that "a *living* immaterial structure or wave system" *can* do so. Biologists have vaguely called the power which inspires the visible marshaling of the particles of the developing cell, an "organizing field," but Dr. Stromberg adopts the term *genie*, a word which, he says, "suggests a relation with genes" but "also suggests a wisdom far beyond our comprehension." He speaks of many grades

or hierarchies of genies, and the Supreme "Genie" may be called the Soul of the World or of the Cosmos, the Wellspring of all sensations, ideas, thoughts, and aspirations. The immaterial wave-structure of space greatly helps to solve the problem of memory, and therefore of survival after death. The matter in our brains is constantly being replaced, yet memories are accumulated and preserved during a long lifetime. Even long-forgotten events may suddenly flash into vivid consciousness when some inner contact is made. How could this be unless an immaterial living structure existed, in which memory inheres independent of the physical atoms? Furthermore, why should not this immaterial structure be carried on without impairment after death, regardless of the dissolution of the physical structure? Dr. Stromberg devotes many pages to the logical working out of these points, and feels satisfied that we have here a well-supported position from which the existence of the soul is scientifically demonstrable.

The extraordinary process of development of the embryo, the transformation of the caterpillar into the butterfly — incomprehensible from the purely mechanistic standpoint — the virus problem, etc., provide him with reasons for his immaterial "genies," or "gene-spirits," governing entities of a *unitary* character which cannot be annihilated. The reader will find this part of the argument intensely interesting but limitation of space will not allow us to follow it here.

In regard to what we commonly call the soul, a developing "genie," to adopt Dr. Stromberg's quaint though expressive term, his researches indicate that "A soul is indestructible and immortal. As an individual it has a beginning, but seemingly no end"; and he cites some strong evidence in favor of reincarnation. Possibly the words just quoted "as an *individual* it has a beginning" may allow for previous incarnations of the same soul-genie (Theosophists would say "monad," with Leibniz) which would not be the same *individual* (personality, we should say)? But we cannot see how anything (like a soul) that is *immortal*, i. e., transcending mortal or temporal conditions, can have a beginning. Its "vehicles" or manifestations — incarnations — can and must have beginnings and endings according to periodic law so widely manifested

throughout nature. Dr. Stromberg certainly seems to agree that a genuine reincarnation takes place in cell division through the action of the "living immaterial wave system" which forms the link between the succession of cells. He quotes, with evident approval, the strange case of Shanti Devi in India in 1936 where that girl gave very strong evidence of possessing the memory of her last (and very recent) incarnation.

Denying that the human soul has developed from an animal soul, Dr. Stromberg claims that "the capacity of abstract thinking probably requires a soul of a higher type," but he offers a hypothesis, shocking indeed to materialists, that "potential human souls with all their capabilities of development may well have been transmitted to the germ plasm of some anthropoid ape living at a certain time on the earth." This is practically the opinion of Wallace, Darwin's contemporary and friendly rival, who saw the insuperable difficulties in tracing the human soul to animals and decided that a more advanced spirit must have descended and illuminated the anthropoid, making it into Man. With the ape removed from the picture and replaced by an *unevolved human*, this is almost the ancient teaching of the descent of the Manasaputras, the "sons of God," or spiritual mind-principle, into nascent humanity in the Third Great Race, one of the leading doctrines of Theosophy.

The latter part of the book is devoted to problems of the mind and the soul, for Dr. Stromberg, like Theosophy, makes a distinction between them. In regard to the mind, he writes, "the memory of an individual is written in indelible script in space and time, it has become an eternal part of a Cosmos in development." Can it be revived or brought into visibility in some way from the invisible wave-structure of space in which it is enmeshed? This leads to an argument which uses certain psychic phenomena such as telepathy and apparitions in evidence. Dr. Stromberg suggests that in the former case intense mental agitation activates the "genes for telepathic transmission," and, as would be expected, no limitation in space-time seems to exist. Apparitions often correspond to the mental activities of someone who has died, and are

usually connected with definite places where some tragic event has occurred. At times they can be activated into conscious form, and, like ordinary memories, they often diminish in intensity and frequency of activation with the passage of time. All this strongly suggests properties in the Astral Light or the Akasa, well known by occultists, ancient and modern.

Dr. Stromberg illustrates the activation of memories by the notable case of Messrs. Brook-Farrar and G. A. Smith who recently took moving pictures of a temple in the jungles of Ceylon. The whole party saw a Tamil girl dancing on the steps and they immediately focussed their cameras on the picturesque scene *which was clearly visible in the finders*. After the pictures were taken the girl was no longer to be seen, and the villagers would give no information about her. On developing the films nothing appeared but the temple; the dancing girl had not registered on the films!

The author regards the soul as no mere combination of mental qualities, but as a *non-divisible*, rational entity, *like the Cosmos*. It gives unity to the mental complex; it is not a set of memories but the possessor of a particular group of memories. It perceives, feels, wills, thinks, and remembers. It has contact points which interact with certain nerve centers in the brain, but in itself it is essentially *unitary*.

"The potential souls come originally from the World Soul," and Dr. Stromberg thinks that individuals with quite new faculties may appear on earth as the result of new "genies and genes" entering and modifying their constitution. If these were transmitted through the action of the germ plasm a new race would be produced. Furthermore, intense desire and great mental exertion might not only call down these powers, but open channels to a realm beyond time and space. "In our own mind lies the creative power that can open the gates to this unfathomable domain in Cosmos." Surely this is what the great Seers and Sages of the Ages have succeeded in doing, and they have left the simple and beautiful instructions for us to follow which are the only means of attainment, but which the selfish world scorns as "my

grandmother's sermon."

In this brief and very incomplete outline of an inspiring record of intensive research and original thinking based on strictly scientific data we have had regretfully to omit many important points. In nearly every main principle Dr. Stromberg's conclusions are in line with the Ancient Wisdom, now called Theosophy, and in none do we find serious differences. It is intensely interesting to see how some of the more intuitive modern thinkers are presenting ideas which they have obtained by the aid of research with modern instruments of precision but which were known to the Seers and Sages of civilizations now lost in the mists of antiquity. Great scientists are even now talking of *Cosmic Mind* and *Cosmic Love*, revoicing the teachings of the ancients as if they themselves were coming back to teach them under modern conditions. Students of Theosophy do not forget that H. P. Blavatsky said that it was only in the nineteenth century that its teachings would be rejected *a priori*:

For in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognise that the Secret Doctrine has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined. . . . — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. xxxviii

It is only in the XXth century that portions, if not the whole, of the present work will be vindicated. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 442

Dr. Stromberg dedicates this volume to Professor John Elof Boodin, Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Los Angeles, the distinguished scholar whose highly Theosophical ideas are quoted at length by Dr. G. de Purucker in his *The Esoteric Tradition*.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Soul of the Universe*. By Gustaf Stromberg. David McKay Co., Philadelphia. 244 pp. \$2.00. ([return to text](#))

THE WORK OF THE GREATEST SCIENTISTS — A. Trevor Barker

Should we not be making a mistake if we were to run away with the idea that the work of a great scientist is something which is non-creative and, in a sense, material, because it is Manasic? I have never read myself in any department of Theosophical teaching that Manas *per se* is either negative or non-creative; but I have a further suggestion to make and that is, that the work of the greatest scientists is something more even than Manasic, because it has a quality of universality that is an example to religious and even Theosophical movements; for a truth that is won by the effort of a scientist is immediately made available for all humanity. Now that is one of the Buddhic aspects of human consciousness working. It is something beyond even the Manasic. It is an aspect of Buddhi, active as direct cognition, and then proving the high nature and exercise of that faculty by its immediate availability in the universal service of all men.

H. P. B., THE LIGHT-BRINGER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY (1) — J. M. Prentice

Just forty-nine years ago yesterday H. P. Blavatsky laid down her physical body and entered into a period of rest. H. P. B. was one of the outstanding personalities of the nineteenth century. Professor H. Corson, who was professor of literature at one of the American Universities, called her the greatest individual that he had contacted; and many others have paid tribute to the magnificence and the opulence, one might say, of her character and personality.

Around the world during the last twenty-four hours a wave of loving remembrance and commemoration has flowed steadily. Somewhere in America it will terminate within the next few hours, and for another year there will be opportunity for all those who love the name of H. P. B. to continue quietly in the work that she inaugurated.

I would like to stress tonight the fact that H. P. B. can be described in three different ways, or as the expression of three different capacities: the woman of noble birth, born in Russia, she was first and foremost a great artist — not only a great musician but a very great artist in the use of words, and in at least three of the world's languages. She was an artist in the masterly delineation of character such as marked her description of the Nilgiri tribes in India. She produced a volume which represented the "thriller" type of short story at its very finest. So you have got the woman who was an artist in every sense of the word. She was also an outstanding pianist at one period of her career; her love of music remained with her right to the time of her death.

Her noble birth as well as her high physical courage enabled her to meet every class of society and wherever she went there were attracted to her those who were able to appreciate the greatness of soul and the stupendous talent that she possessed. That is the first, as it were the outer, H. P. B.

And she was not only a great artist. Her physical characteristics as well as her great courage enabled her at certain periods of her career to don male attire and do physical battle for the righting of physical wrongs. She served as a soldier in the Italian army that helped to free Italy. She served under Garibaldi as one of those that helped to bring freedom into certain of the Papal States. That still belongs to the outer aspect of H. P. B.

Then a little later we find her as the H. P. B. possessed of powers that were far beyond the normal powers of men and women, the H. P. B. of phenomena, who was able to duplicate all those extraordinary happenings that had been associated with medium-ship in the world of spiritism. But, as she was careful to explain, these wonders were performed of and at her own volition and not as the operations of any discarnate entity: by her own use of the power she possessed over the forces of nature. These phenomena were sometimes regarded by some people as fraudulent; but the most careful examination into them — an examination which has extended into our own day — has never been able to provide a shadow of proof that any of these things were brought about by apparently mechanical means or by actual fraud.

During this period she was in America, in India, and on the continent of Europe, and always these extraordinary happenings, which, mind you, were under the control of her will at all times, attracted those who were interested in the study of curious phenomena.

And there is the third and the deeper side of this amazing and remarkable woman, which endears her to so many people and which will keep her name ever green in the history of modern Teachers: that is that she was the presenter to the world of Theosophy in its modern guise.

Her written words are open to all those who care to study them. You will find that there is no chapter of religion, philosophy, or science that she did not illuminate by the greatness of her knowledge. And yet of this knowledge she claimed nothing for herself, but insisted and emphasized that she was but the servant of those Great Men whose

existence has been acknowledged in all ages — those possessors of super-human, super-physical powers, who have tried and tested for themselves this age-old, universal philosophy, and who chose her to be their representative in the outer world in the nineteenth century.

At the very commencement of her greatest of all books — *The Secret Doctrine* — you will find a little quotation from the French writer Montaigne, in which, quoting this French writer, she says that those things she had brought together were like a nosegay. All that she claimed to have provided was the string that tied them together. But she claimed nothing further; above all, she did not claim that she was the originator of the teachings. Yet she brought them home not only to the hearts and minds of students of her own day, but to ever widening circles of thinking people during the years since she herself finished her physical work and went into the Peace.

The Theosophical teaching represents the greatest philosophical system the world has ever seen. That is a very great claim to make but it is one that can be substantiated, because there is practically no department of philosophy that has not been illumined by the light that she brought. It was an illumination that touched the physical world as well as the mind and soul. She brought together isolated facts; she gave hints of new discoveries in the world of science and the world of the mind; so that she antedated and preceded most of the great discoveries that have taken place in the last fifty years.

Beyond all that, it was the priceless teaching of the spirit in man that she revealed — a teaching that had been largely forgotten — and of the composite nature of man's being. It is true that she challenged many of the religious conceptions of the world and particularly of Christian theology of the period in which she lived; but her reverence for those who were true disciples of any of the world's great religions, was always forthcoming. Never did she offer the slightest challenge to any teaching that was universally true; but only those things which belonged to the present or to the immediate past. Her teaching constantly epitomized St. Paul's words: "The things which are seen are

temporal; the things which are unseen are eternal." She was forever seeking to draw men's minds and hearts and aspirations to those things which are of the eternal.

And so, in addition to influencing a great many of those associated with her, she also provided a repository of teaching in her books, and those books cover every aspect of the universal philosophy which she presented. I have already mentioned *The Secret Doctrine*, which is a veritable treasure-house of information, an encyclopaedia in which are set forth a spiritual cosmogony and an anthropology which will be recognised for its universal application in ages yet to come.

She was so great a transmitter of Eastern thought that she gave to us *The Voice of the Silence* — three priceless little Buddhist scriptures or sermons which she claimed she had learned in the period of her own probation.

A literary artist and spiritual Teacher combined, in the very last years of her life when from day to day she was almost on the very verge of physical dissolution, she gave us *The Key to Theosophy*, which is still in its way one of the very finest textbooks we can ever refer to. Any statement ever made, pertaining to Theosophical teaching, which does not dovetail with *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Key to Theosophy*, should be unhesitatingly laid aside as something to be tried and tested but not accepted merely because it is labeled "Theosophical."

During her last years she made her greatest efforts for the uplifting of men and women. She was a great exponent of esotericism, the inner meaning of life, of the divine in man and in nature, of the divine principle in the heart of the heart of man. This was perhaps her greatest, most universal teaching.

Of the priceless treasure of these teachings she gave unstintingly; but behind and beyond all other things she sounded the keynote of the century and of the age that was just then coming into being — the keynote of universal brotherhood. Living as we are now in the shadow of war, we realize how desperate is the need on the part of humanity to

recognise that fundamental, basic principle of universal brotherhood. Because without it there is nothing else that will serve to satisfy man's physical and mental needs and provide him with the leisure that will enable him to cultivate the things of the spirit.

It is my private belief that H. P. B. visualized a great deal of what was ahead for humanity. Again and again she stressed the fact that unless we could develop this conception of universal brotherhood, based of course on the principle of the unity in man, it would be impossible to get through this present century without some tragic conflict. So you see she set the keynote for the years that are to be. I myself have very strongly the feeling that she was the beginner, the forerunner, of a more spacious and more gracious mode of life in which there will be more co-operation between men and women. I like to think of her as being regarded, from the viewpoint of a thousand years hence, as a sort of woman Buddha, setting the keynote of a new Age in which, amongst other things, the influence of women, the feminine aspect of Humanity, was to be stressed. Future generations will learn to know and to respect and love the likeness of the Teacher who so profoundly influenced the period in which she lived, and she will be to them an inspiration to build for the magnificence and the splendor of the future. In her teachings can be discerned "the shape of things to come."

There is no cause for feeling any sorrow at her passing. Her work for the time being was accomplished. She had laid the foundation of a superstructure which was yet to be built. She knew it would take some time to change the level of the thoughts of men. I like to think of her as the artist who outlined a magnificent painting just in the very barest outline, stupendous in conception and grandiose in design. It was for those who were to come after her to fill in all the details, to provide the color, to add the glow to that superb outline. If we can do that, if we can direct our aspirations along the same line that she inaugurated, if we can show our gratitude and reverence for her by following the path that she presented before our feet, then indeed her work will not have been in vain.

Her last words as she was dying in London forty-nine years ago were: "Keep the link unbroken, so that my last incarnation shall not have been in vain." To achieve this each year we must consecrate ourselves anew, and pledge ourselves with unfailing loyalty to keep that link unbroken by standing four-square in alignment with the teaching that she gave, by living the life that she indicated, and by making as widely known as possible the spiritual birthright that is part of her message. I sincerely hope it will be to each one of us an inspiration to rededicate ourselves to the work which she founded — which she started, after all, only sixty-five years ago. And yet in that period round and round the world has gone the ringing challenge of her voice and of her words; and all those who have really partaken of the teaching she gave have found a new interest in life, a new inspiration in living, a new philosophy upon which to base their daily thoughts, an inner spiritual wealth that goes on into the future. Above all there is an interior peace that comes to us as we begin to realize that only those are Theosophists who endeavor to live Theosophy. Life takes on a new color, a new splendor, and there comes to each and every one of us a new and greater love of humanity, a new desire to serve and to work.

It is a wonderful inspiration that is to be found in the life of H. P. B., the lightbringer of the twentieth century. In spreading her teaching peace will come to us, for the spiritual side of things upon which she taught us to rely, is full of peace.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address on White Lotus Day, 1940, Sydney, Australia, by the President of the Australasian Section, T. S. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

KARMAN: PLEASANT AND UNPLEASANT (1) — G. de Purucker

The title of this brief note on Karman well represents, I believe, the manner in which people, Theosophists or otherwise, who are acquainted with our majestic doctrine of karman, look upon it: in other words that karman is something which in itself is pleasant to us or unpleasant to us; and of course as a matter of psychological fact the viewpoint is natural, because we all feel when karman impinges upon us that its blows are hard and unpleasant, or gentle and soothing or what we call pleasant.

Yet is it not rather the truth that karman in all its actions, inner and outer, general or particular, is considered by us to be "pleasant" or "unpleasant" because of our own reactions and attitude towards what destiny lays upon us?

In other words, I am trying to say that the laws of Nature, of which karman is one of the most recondite, the most mysterious, and indeed the most comforting, are all of them absolutely impersonal, and in them there is neither variation or variability nor any shadow of turning.

It is just in this perfect reliance on the fundamental justice in universal Nature herself, that we find or discover or uncover happiness, peace of mind, and far more important than these, our indomitable resolves so to conform to Nature's spiritual harmonies that our lives shall be lived in accordance therewith, and that thus we may become co-operators with Nature, intelligent companions with her; and when we advance into grander human spheres of activity able to become such willing collaborators with Nature's plans, that we take our places by the sides of the Masters, and the Gods of the Hierarchy of Light, who have become in their various evolutionary degrees instruments, conscious and willing, of the lipikas.

Now these lipikas are extremely mysterious and occult entities in

Universal Nature's structural harmonies, and indeed in the carpentry of the Cosmos itself. Little has been openly or rather publicly said of the lipikas, either by the Masters or by H. P. B., or by other Theosophical Leaders; and yet the place they occupy in the Universe is clear enough. They are in fact Dhyani-Chohans of the very highest rank in the Arupa-Worlds so called, and indeed because they are as it were the first channels or vehicles through which cosmic ideation manifests itself or flows, they become thereby the highest and most powerful instruments of karman originating from seeds held within the structure of cosmic ideation itself. Thus they are called the Agents of Karman; and furthermore, because they not only distribute Cosmic Ideas downwards to lower hierarchies, but as it were carry karmic results upwards in order to deposit them so to speak in the treasury of cosmic ideation itself, they are, and mainly for the latter reason, called the Scribes of Karman or Recorders of Karman, etc.

Essentially karman therefore is but a name we give to the operations or to the processes of the universal cosmic harmony seeking readjustments, moral and otherwise, that is to say cosmic equilibriums throughout the Universal Structure.

From the foregoing we may easily, if we wish, deduce the highly important and significant fact that what we call our karman, and whether we qualify it as pleasant or unpleasant, is actually results of manifold types or characters coming to us out of the past from what we and others around us, hierarchically speaking, have thought and felt and done in that past; and that in a precisely similar way our future karman and that of those around us, hierarchically speaking, will be what we are now, through our thoughts and feelings and actions, building as our future destiny.

Thus, as H. P. B. so magnificently points out, it is not karman which arbitrarily compensates or punishes us in what we call the rewards or retributions of destiny; but it is we ourselves and those around us, hierarchically speaking, who have made ourselves in the past what now we are, and who are now making ourselves to be what we shall in

future become; and it is merely our present reactions to karmic destiny or circumstance which makes us qualify karman as pleasant or unpleasant. As a final thought, let me say plainly to my beloved Companions everywhere, that I have proved one thing, and proved it to the hilt, in connexion with karman, and it is that just as often as not, the karmic strokes of destiny that we call unpleasant or perhaps harsh, often turn out to be very blessings of the gods as it were coming to us in the guise and habiliments which for the nonce we regard with distaste, and it may be often with fear. After all, it is but a truism to say that too much prosperity, too much happiness, can weaken the fiber of the best of us; but that when we find ourselves obliged to struggle or are driven to take action, often perhaps against our wish, we develop thereby not only will-power but intellectual and moral fiber because of the innate faculties and latent powers called forth and given exercise.

Karman in whatever guise it come is a blessing, and let us never forget it. — G. de P.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Lucifer: the Light-bringer*, April, 1940, official organ of the American Section, T. S. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ADRIFT IN THE ASTRAL LIGHT — *Helen Savage*

Above all things men desire security. But security means different things to different people. It is to every man the assured permanence of those things which he values most. To many, to most perhaps, it is written in terms of family or fortune. For a scholar his precious books are a symbol of it. The wise man seeks for it only in the freedom of his soul.

But is it possible to find any kind of security in an age whose very characteristic is its unpredictable quality? Not through possessions truly, nor in power, nor in position. Not even in the knowledge that friends and family are around one. Not to any outward thing can we look.

Recognising this, men are asking: What about the soul? Is it secure? This is the very question that Nature intends man to ask of himself. If he is not interested, she will contrive ways to force him to look inwards. She will strip the outward life of its glamour and of its security, so that he will begin to explore within, where the springs of life arise.

Yet, turning from the outer things, he finds at first that he is living, inwardly, in a subtle realm far more shifting and unreliable than the world of objects. He is within his own thought-and-feeling world whose labyrinthine ways are uncharted, whose resources are totally unknown to him, into whose depths and whose heights his consciousness plunges in a confused mingling of terrors and delights. He seems to be floating in a great sea of impalpable substance-energy, composed, he finds, not only of his own thoughts and feelings, but those of other men also, all mingling confusedly in a common reservoir of multifarious energies.

He has, in fact, begun to discover for himself, what the initiated seers of all ages have known and taught to their disciples, and which Theosophy is again calling attention to today, namely, that we, as

invisible albeit substantial beings, are constantly washed around by, that we indeed live in, a great sea of ethereal substance sometimes called the Astral Light. It is the invisible medium by which thought speeds from mind to mind; the magic agent that unites us in an intercommunication far more swift and complete than does the radio.

Thus no man thinks unto himself alone. No impulse, whether of hate or love, dies in the mind that gave it birth. Once born, such energies go forth to become the common property of the race, to be picked up — who knows where or by whom — modified, added to, intensified, sent on again along the astral currents in a ceaseless round of action.

Unenlightened man is truly adrift in this astral sea. Through ignorance, and because of untrained powers, he becomes a victim of the very things he has himself created. He is tossed hither and yon. Every astral eddy threatens to engulf him. The mob hysterias of this age, as of others, the swift effects of evil propaganda, the political frenzies, the alarming spread of nervous and mental disease, the general instability both moral and mental, can be accounted for by the fact of the action of the Astral Light upon will-less souls or those souls whose wills are misdirected.

All this is reflected in the individual. He finds himself, even against his own reason and better instincts, at times like the present, indulging perhaps in bitter hatreds or corrosive criticisms, in sudden unaccountable uprisings of temper, in fits of depression that hold him as in a vise. He finds his powers of concentration lessening, his usual clear-thinking blurred; his purpose swayed now this way, now that.

In halcyon days he is not alarmed into an attitude of questioning and inquiry into the causes of psychological instability. But a time like the present so exaggerates the evil influences that play upon the weak human soul, that it serves as a vivid object lesson, and he again questions: Is there, then, no security for the human soul? Must it forever drift, a victim to elemental forces?

It is just here that Theosophy is ready with the answer, for it says —

what every Savior of man has said — that there is at the center of man's being the impregnable stronghold of the true Self. Like a noble castle rising mightily from a storm-tossed sea, this inner sanctuary stands unscathed amid the swirling astral currents. It is no mere tower of escape for the timid soul, but the home of the true Self whose light shines above and beyond the troubled astral waves. Every Teacher has said: Find this true Self, by will and imagination, by devotion and courage; hold fast to It, become one with It. When this has been achieved, even in a small degree, then one finds that spiritual security which is our rightful heritage as human beings, and upon which all outward security if it is to be genuine must be built.

The Theosophical Forum

MAN'S INJUSTICE TO HIMSELF — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

Look east, look west, at present, in the Old World, and those who respect the gift of Life find horrifying confirmation of man's inhumanity to man, of his ruthless use of skill acquired and now used to destroy the human bodies, which are man's instrument in carrying out his destiny on Earth. And what darkens the outlook and deepens the despair and anguish and havoc wrought is man's failure as yet, through ignorance or denial, to make full avail of all the resources of his nature in meeting this terrible crisis. Therein lies man's injustice to himself.

But the very violence and anguish will serve to shatter some of the barriers between man's everyday self and his enduring Shining Self, which, all unrecognised is the source of every noble and compassionate impulse of his character. We may hope that man will yet realize his high destiny and do what only man can do, what the human race will have to do — keep open the channel for the Forces of Light to enter and fill men's minds with the vision of the New Age, with knowledge of the building that can be begun *now* for a time when the physical and mental power will at last be directed by the Shining Self, rather than from an intermediate self largely influenced by craving for domination. The thoughts and pictures imaginatively created now will later be released as human institutions expressive of man's spiritual characteristics. Daily resort to man's inner seat of spiritual might, the center from which come the highest creative impulses, brings the only feeling of security and of triumph for the right to be gained at present. It is a source of understanding, of strength, of calm.

And strangely enough, the effort to ascend this pillar of light to man's inmost self, where all are One, is, according to the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy, blessed with greater success in Kali-yuga — does any one doubt that we are living in the Black Age given that name? — than at any other time. In Kali-yuga the high gods more

readily descend to help mankind to begin building for the New Age. This is man's opportunity to qualify to co-operate consciously with the Hierarchy of Builders, whose work becomes visible when the old forms have perished — as we see them perishing at present. Hosts of souls responsive to these higher beings will work under their direction.

We have witnessed man's triumph over the natural forces, we have seen his conquest of them for his own use; we have seen the triumph of man in the invention and direction of these forces with fiendish skill; and have yet to see the triumphant use of man's spiritual faculties, which it is man's destiny to unfold, not in any heaven, but on Earth. There is that which can be done to help — at any time, at any place, namely, the recollection of, the momentary spring to, the reality of the enduring Shining Self — rising to which in thought and aspiration man learns that he finds the Shining Self which is common to all that lives.

To those whom destiny has not drawn into the clash and din of actual conflict, who are not dying in the bombed cities, who are not fleeing, fear-stricken, with the homeless, there is an urgent call, a challenge to make an end of man's injustice to himself, to use the spiritual will which works on the plane where things to be have their birth, to ascend the arc to meet, to invite, the descending celestial influences, to widen the sphere of light above the clouds of war, to make a channel free of all enmity and hate, glowing with love and trust and compassion.

How to do this? By resolute recollection, by frequent meditation — the ascent is made more readily with every effort, and demands no sacrifice of duty. The Gods await. Let the answer to their call be "I unify myself with the god within me."

ARE THEY DEAD? — *H. I. Barborka*

Where are they? Those bright spirits who with such a gallant gesture gave and are giving the rich gift of their lives, renouncing all hope of the things men hold dear, to make a better and happier world for us, and for the future? Are they dead? No indeed! Death is not an end. Life is continuous. There is a pulsing rhythm in life which manifests as an outpouring of energy and activity, followed by a withdrawal of energy: a time of recuperation and rest.

Man's life on earth is such a period of activity, while death is a time of rest in a large way, as sleep is in the small. It is so natural to go to sleep tired and to wake in the morning refreshed. That is all that death is. Men, at the end of their life here on earth, lay aside the physical body, their vehicle of expression on earth, and fall asleep and dream, then wake to a new life with a new body, invigorated and rested.

Death, so called, is the end of one "day-life" here, and then the tired souls rest in the heaven-world, passing their time between earth-lives in dreams of utter bliss. No sorrow can touch them there. They dream happy, wonderful dreams which they have made for themselves while here on earth, for life after death "is an idealized and subjective continuation of earth-life."

Those who have passed on are not conscious of having left earth-life. They imagine themselves surrounded by those they loved on earth, living out in perfect and unalloyed bliss and happiness all their unfulfilled spiritual hopes and longings, all the unsatisfied yearnings of heart and mind, and assimilating the experiences of the life just passed. Sleeping the perfect sleep in the heaven-world (Devachan) they rest and dream, until the time comes for them to return to earth in order to continue their unfinished tasks here, to work out in justice the effects of causes set in motion in other lives, drawn back also by the powerfully attractive force of love to those places and to the people

whom they loved in former lives. Are they dead? No, they are sleeping, dreaming, resting in a state of unutterable bliss. There is no death, only endless life. Men pass from sphere to sphere, from periods of activity to periods of rest, but everywhere there is always continuity of life and consciousness.

Yes, Shelley, we say with you,

How wonderful is Death —
Death, and his brother Sleep!

Rest for the weary travelers on life's long pilgrimage, until with the dawn of another "day-life" they are called back to earth, their home, to commence a new life, to be reunited in love with hearts they loved in former lives, with their hearts singing in the sunshine of a new day.

The Theosophical Forum

WANTED! TODAY! — *Iverson L. Harris*

First: Men and women with courage and vision based on unshakable faith in the ultimate triumph of spirituality and brotherhood over cynicism and hatred.

Second: Men and women who know that in our higher parts we are all one, whether we will or whether we nill, and that when we injure one, we injure all, and that we ourselves — all of us — must sooner or later reap the consequences of any infringement on our own part of the law of Universal Brotherhood.

Third: Men and women who refuse to allow propaganda of hatred from any source at any time about anything whatsoever to blind their vision as regards the essential truths of life which they readily recognise when their inner eyes are undimmed by fear, or falsehood, or emotional disturbance, or unreasonable partisanship.

Fourth: Men and women who are capable of taking a long-range view of human history and evolution, and while responding as best they can to the immediate calls of duty lose not sight of the distant goal towards which the Enlightened Ones of the ages have pointed.

Fifth: Men and women who have evolved from within themselves, aided by outward experience and the spiritual legacy left them by their predecessors on the Path, an adequate philosophy of life that permits them to remain calm and clear-sighted in the midst of turmoil and confusion.

Sixth: Men and women who know that *thought* is not only free but potent, and that no matter what the exigencies of a world in travail may demand of any of us outwardly and temporarily, there still remains to us, in the words of Browning, "that inmost center within us all, where truth abides in fulness."

Seventh: Men and women who can rise in thought above the clashes of

classes, of parties, of nations, of races, or of ideologies, and fight the battle of the gods with the weapons of the gods: wisdom, vision, and almighty love.

Eighth: Men and women who recognise that on this, our planet Terra, races and nations must inevitably follow the universal course of birth, growth, maturity, age, and death, and who, therefore, lend their enlightened efforts as regards nations and races and systems of thought quite as much as in regard to every precious individual of the race, towards making

The *birth* loving and welcome;

The *growth* strong and purposeful;

The *maturity* fruitful and illuminated;

The *old age* wise and compassionate;

And the *death*, peaceful and transfiguring like a sunset.

Ninth: Men and women who realize that the real growth and lasting progress of the race takes place through *evolution* rather than through *revolution*; and that just as the human individual body evolves by growth from cell to cell, so does the body politic grow by evolution of every individual "cell" in that social structure; hence the way to establish a healthy body politic is for each individual to take command of the little world which he regards as his own — himself — and by self-directed evolution spread his beneficent influence among those with whom karman has surrounded him. When we have established peace and normal growth *within* ourselves and *among* our immediate fellows, we may then hope for peace and normal growth in the larger social or national or racial groups to which we belong. This is something which everyone of us *can* begin to do, right here and now.

Tenth, and finally: Most urgently wanted *today* are real Theosophists!

SANSKRIT THEOSOPHICAL TERMS AND THEIR MEANINGS

Sanskrit Terms from *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*

LOKA-ASPECTS	TALA-ASPECTS	Satya-loka	1	Atala
Spiritual world	Material world	Tapar-loka	2	Vitala
Light side	Night side	Janar-loka	3	Sutala
High	Low	Mahar-loka	4	Rasâtala
Positive	Negative	Svar-loka	5	Talâtala
Luminous Arc	Shadowy Arc	Bhuvar-loka	6	Mahâtala
Zenith	Nadir	Bhûr-loka	7	Pâtâla

The Ancient Wisdom teachings divide the Universe into seven great Planes or worlds of beings, each of which is bi-polarized into a Loka and a Tala. These pairs of Lokas and Talas are as inseparable as the two sides of a coin. They represent those two universally contrasting forces of nature which are expressed by good and evil, high and low, spirit and matter, etc. The word Loka means "a vast space," "a world," and is applied to a spiritual sphere. The seven Lokas are called in Hindu writings the "seven regions of the blessed" or the "seven heavens." The word Tala means "lower part," "base," and is applied to a material place or region. The seven Talas have been called the "seven Hells" or the "seven inferior places."

Each couple of Loka and Tala represents a cosmic plane, or rather a sphere ranging from its loka or spiritual parts to its tala or physical parts. The highest and most spiritual and inmost of the lokas and talas produces the next lower or next outer loka and tala, which in its turn contains within itself the qualities of its parent and of

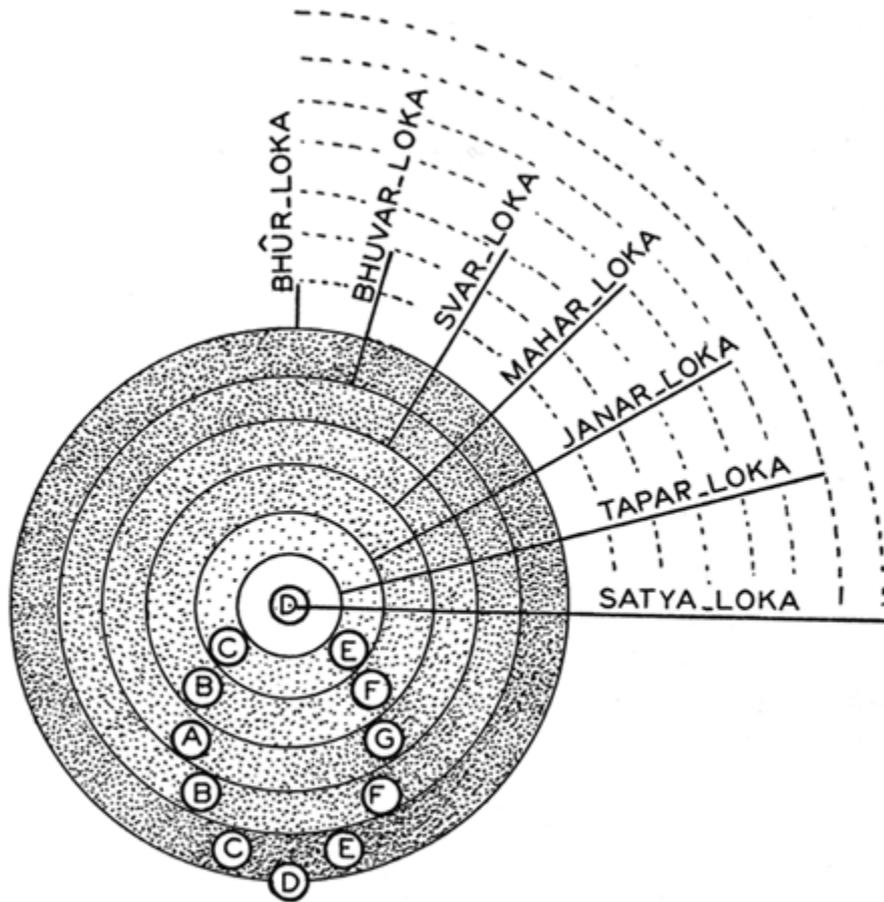
the lokas and talas beneath or without it as well as its own dominant characteristic qualities. So on down to the lowest or outermost loka and tala. Therefore we see that each loka and tala is sevenfold, and contains aspects of all the other lokas and talas within it or without it.

These lokas and talas represent different stages in evolutionary unfoldment. All evolution may be described as a series of spirals. Beings, in order to evolve, come forth from the Great All, the Divine Source, and then descend along a series of spheres, each more material than the preceding, and on each of these they build for themselves bodies in which to live. When they reach the lowest point of the descent, the most material sphere, they then proceed upwards to unfold consciously the spiritual and inner beauty latent and wrapped within their bodies of different degrees of physical texture. As they advance upwards they cast aside their garments gradually, the most material first, and become more and more divine in manifested virtue and power, until they reach once more the highest, the Divine Source, but not in the same condition as that in which they last sprang forth from it, but on a higher level, wiser, grander, and more universal. There they rest for a while until the urge to become greater brings them once more into manifestation. The coming forth into manifestation, the putting on of garments, each one more material as the descent continues, is another way of saying that a man, or any other being, passes through the tala-side of the seven great divisions of the Universe. The conscious return to the Divine Source, the unfolding of the divine qualities and the casting off of the material forms of different grades, is another way of saying that a man, or any other being, is passing through the loka-side of the seven great divisions of the Universe. Hence Theo-sophy teaches that as a human Life-Wave comes into being on this Earth it passes around or through the twelve Globes of the Earth's Planetary Chain which are distributed over the seven Great Cosmic Spheres or planes. There is one such Globe on the highest and lowest planes, and two such Globes on each of the planes between. (See accompanying diagram.) Hence as the Human Race appears, it passes from Globe D" to C to B" to A to B to C to D on its Descending Arc into matter, and as it does this, on each Globe it

builds for itself bodies appropriate to the sphere through which it passes. This descent through the globes is actually a passing through the seven Talas of the Universe. Then from the midpoint of the cycle of time passed on Globe D the Human Race ascends upwards, passing from Globe D to E to F to G to F" to E" to D'. This ascent through the globes is actually a passing through the lokas. This same tala-descent and loka-ascent may be applied analogically to anything that evolves, from atom to universe.

Arûpa	Atala	Śani ♃		Âtman or Auric Egg ○ Globe D'		Satya-loka
	Âdi-bhûta			Unity with All	Kumbha ☵	Âdi-tattva
	Vitala	Uśanas-Śukra ♀		Buddhi ○ Globe C'	Budha ☿	Tapar-loka
	Anupapâdaka-bhûta	R̥ishabha ♂		Spiritual Understanding ○ Globe E'	Mithuna ♋	Anupapâdaka-tattva
Rûpa	Sutala	Bṛihaspati ♃		Buddhi-Manas	Aṅgaraka ♂	Janar-loka
	Âkâśa-bhûta	Mîna ♉	○ Globe B'	Hearing	Mesha ♈	Âkâśa-tattva
	Rasâtala	Sûrya ☉		Kâma-Manas	Soma ☽	Mahar-loka
	Taijasa-bhûta	Sim̥ha ♌	○ Globe A	Touch	Karkaṭaka ♋	○ Globe G Taijasa-tattva
Rûpa	Talâtala	Bṛihaspati ♃		Kâma-Prâṇa	Aṅgaraka ♂	Svar-loka
	Vâyu-bhûta	Dhanus ♐	○ Globe B	Sight	Vṛiśchika ♎	Vâyu-tattva
	Mahâtala	Uśanas-Śukra ○		Linga-śarîra	Rudha ☿	Rbhuv-loka

Manataia	Usanas-Sukta	+	Linga-Sarira	Durga	¥	Prithivî-Loka
Apas-bhûta	Tulâ	≈	○ Globe C Taste	○ Globe E Kanyâ	᳚	Apas-tattva
Pâtâla	Śani	᳚	Sthûla-śarîra			Bhûr-loka
Prithivî-bhûta			○ Globe D Smell	Makara	᳚	Prithivî-tattva



The five Globes on the three Inner Spheres may be called B', C', D', E', F', as in opposite diagram.

The diagram to the left shows these lokas and talas and the Globes of the Planetary Chain in planes one above the other. This diagram, though useful in showing corresponding aspects in several hierarchies, can be misleading. The circular diagram above is more nearly correct. But these circles representing the lokas and talas must not be considered as flat geometric planes, but as spheres with a common center lying one within another. The inmost, which is the most spiritual and ethereal, penetrates all the other spheres, and goes far out beyond them all, whereas the outermost Loka-Tala, though permeated by the influences and atmospheres of all the other lokas and talas, does not itself reach beyond its own atmosphere.

We thus see by observing the circular diagram that every one of the lokas and talas is sevenfold and that though each pair is permeated by the six others, it has its own essential and dominant characteristic. This demonstrates the truth that at any moment, right here on earth in the Bhurloka-Patala in which we at present live we may penetrate the depths and inner spiritual parts of ourselves and our sphere and commune with our higher Selves and our Spiritual Guardians. We must become fully conscious in all the lokas and talas and sub-lokas and sub-talas before we truly know the Universe and ourselves.

The *unconscious descent through the talas*, into matter, is the *first* and necessary process of evolution, a process which prepares the way for the *second* and most important half of the evolutionary journey, that of the *conscious ascent through the lokas*, the self-directed unfoldment of the lofty inner qualities and powers. The Human Race is *now* in this *second stage* of development, because it long ago reached Globe D, the nadir of the descent. Therefore the different bodies, physical, astral, mental, and spiritual, with which we have clothed ourselves in our descent, should now be kept pure in order that they may be used as sacred instruments on that self-directed spiritual journey upwards. The *first descent through the talas* is not evil, is not against nature's laws; but a *second* and *conscious descent through the talas*, brought about by the choosing of that which is low and the

self-willing identification with matter and its limiting and selfish attributes, is evil, for it is against nature's laws. This latter is the Downward Path to annihilation, the path of a Lost Soul or of a Brother of the Shadow.

So we may say that the tala-side of nature has its two poles, its two contrasting aspects, the good — that which enables beings to build forms on their descent into existence; and the evil — that of self-identification with the base and selfish side of nature. Likewise the lokas have this dual aspect, which is demonstrated in the Path of the Buddhas of Compassion and the Path of the Pratyeka-Buddhas. (See Lesson II.)

Though these lokas and talas may be depicted as states of consciousness or conditions of beings they are also actual localities in which different classes of beings, high, intermediate, and low, live. The particular meaning of each set of loka and tala beginning with the highest is as follows:

Satya-loka is the "world of truth and reality," the realm in which live divine beings and Nirvanins. It is the highest state of consciousness possible to a human being, the loftiest Samadhi. Its atmosphere extends into regions far beyond our ken, out into the fields of infinitude. Its nether pole, *Atala*, is the first suggestion of a place, the first *something* of existence. It is called *a-tala*, "not-a-place," because it is of such spiritual-ethereal matter that it can scarcely be considered a place. A Lost Soul or one who follows the Downward Path, suffers final annihilation in *Atala*.

Tapar-loka is the "world of spiritual meditation and devotion," the realm in which live the Spiritual Guardians of our Universe, the state in which the Christos or the Buddhist Splendor manifests itself in its fulness. Its atmosphere, though not as far-reaching as *Satya-loka*, extends beyond our ken. Its nether pole, *Vitala*, is that spiritual-ethereal place in which there is a change (*vi*) towards matter, therefore it is a "better place for matter." It is in *Vitala* that the one who self-consciously following the Downward Path breaks the final link with his

Higher Nature.

Janar-loka is the "world of spiritual birth," the realm in which dwell the Kumaras, Agnishwattas, and Manasaputras, the state in which the Higher Manas of man becomes the complete master of the lower principles. Its atmosphere extends to the reaches of our Galaxy. Its nether pole *Sutala* is a "good place," that is, a place that is good (*su*) for matter. In *Sutala* a human being who has selfconsciously followed the Downward Path has brought his mind into the condition of an absolute slave to his lower desires.

Mahar-loka is the "great world," whose field of influence extends to the limits of our Solar System. It is the realm in which live the different classes of Devas who are intimately connected with the mind and the senses. In this loka a man's brain-mind is no longer deluded by Maya, but is concerned with compassionate service to all. The nether pole, *Rasatala*, is the "place of taste," that place in which one can perceive with one of the organs of sense. A human being whose brain-mind is wholly concerned with things of the senses and the objective world is immersed in *Rasatala*.

Svar-loka is the "heaven world" wherein the human being enjoys the after-death state of Devachan. It is the state in which a human being unfolds his higher aspirations. It is the abode of the higher Elementals, and its atmosphere extends to the pole star. Its nether pole is *Talatala*. This word is a compound of *tala-atala*, meaning "a place not a place" and implying that this place is more of a tala than those above it but is not yet a fully substantial tala. A man who centers his mind and energies in the gratification of his senses is in *Talatala*.

Bhuvar-loka is the "world of becoming," the region of the Astral Light which extends to the Sun, and the abode of the lower Nature-spirits. A man who has attained to this Ioka has become aware of his inner and higher nature and hence has become more impersonal, and therefore more unselfish, more spiritual. The nether pole of

Bhuvar-loka is *Mahdtala*, the "great place/ the abode of man's astral shadow. When a man performs deeds which are selfish and unkind and impure he is in Mahatala.

Bhur-loka is the "earth sphere" in which our planet Terra or Globe D exists. It is the abode of human beings who are thoughtful and good, but not necessarily spiritually awakened. Bhur-loka's nether pole is Patala or the "nethermost tala" or the region beneath us, the Underworld. The derivation of Patala is obscure, but it may be a contracted form of *pata* — sunk or fallen, and *tala*. Patala is the dwelling-place of man's physical body and personal self, of animals, and of Nature-spirits such as the gnomes. Instinctual selfishness, self-preservation, gratification of the senses, and the helpless innocence of childhood are characteristic marks of one who is in Patala. Patala is often used for our word "Hell."

Such are the ranges of the Human Spirit: from the darkest regions of Patala to the loftiest and divinest regions of truth — Satya-loka!

Arupa Rupa is body or form. Arupa, a compound of a — not, Rupa and *rupa* — body, is applied to something without form or body. The three highest of the Lokas and Talas and the five higher Globes of the Planetary Chain are called Arupa, not because they have no material form, but because to our physical senses they would appear as formless. The four lower Lokas and Talas and the seven lower Globes are called Rupa worlds and Globes because their bodies are of a substantial nature more like unto our own.

Tattva Mahabhuta The word *Tattva* means the "reality" or "that-ness" (*tat-tva*) of a thing. The seven Tattvas are the Principles or Essences of the Cosmos, the conscious and directing forces, the sources of the manifested Elements or rudimentary stuffs of the Cosmos, which last are known as the Maha-bhutas or the "Great has-beens." These great Elements are not the earth, air, water, and fire we perceive here; these latter are but

presentiments of these great Maha-bhutas. The two highest of these Tattvas and Bhutas are not as yet recognised by humans, but will be in future ages. Taijasa and Apas are the adjectival forms of *tejas* — fire, and *apas* — water.

Like the Lokas and Talas, each Tattva and Bhuta gives birth to the Tattva and Bhuta below it and retains a portion of all the other tattvas and bhutas within it and yet manifests its own dominant characteristic. Each Tattva has a corresponding Bhuta of the same name. Below are the seven Tattvas with their meaning:

Âdi-tattva	Original Principle or THE ONE
Anupapâdaka-tattva	Parentless Principle or The Spiritual
Âkâsa-tattva	Aether Principle
Taijasa or Tejas-tattva	Fire Principle
Vâyu-tattva	Air Principle
Âpas or Apas-tattva	Water Principle
Prithivî-tattva	Earth Principle

Not only do the seven Lokas and Talas have their correspondences with the seven Tattvas and Bhutas and with the twelve Globes of the Planetary Chain, but they likewise correspond to the seven principles in man (see Lesson I), and also to the development of the seven senses, as shown in the large diagram. Just as two of the Cosmic Elements are as yet unknown to us, so are two of the senses. Intuition, a harbinger of the sense of Spiritual Understanding, is just beginning to be recognised. As the ages roll by and the Sixth Race men appear, this spiritual sense will become more and more evident. In order to explain the planets and Constellations of the Zodiac, as given in the large diagram, I quote from Dr. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*,

page 488:

There is a strict and close correspondence between each of the seven Sacred Planets and one of the globes of our Earth-Chain, respectively; and between each one of the globes and one of the constellations of the Zodiac — one of the Houses of the Circle of Life, as the Greeks called it. But while it is true that the Seven Sacred Planets of the ancients, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun (as a substitute for a secret planet), Venus, Mercury, and the Moon (as a substitute for another secret planet), do actually build and oversee our Planetary Chain as a whole (one of the Sacred Planets respectively to one of the Globes), nevertheless while the influences of the other six of the Seven Sacred Planets are at work therein also, yet the one predominating power over each globe comes from its especial sacred Planet. Likewise, under the particular oversight, or overseeing, of one of the constellations of the Zodiac, that is to say of the predominating Genius or Rector of that constellation of the Zodiac, nevertheless each one of the other eleven constellations is also at work in each of the twelve globes of the Chain. There can be no separation of forces, for everything works together in Nature towards a common end — which is one of the noblest proofs we have of our doctrine of Universal Brotherhood.

Below are the Sanskrit and English names of the seven Sacred Planets and the twelve Constellations of the Zodiac:

CONSTELLATIONS OF ZODIAC

Mesha	♈	The Ram
Ṛishaba	♉	The Bull
Mithuna	♊	The Twins
Karkaṭaka	♋	The Crab
Siṃha	♌	The Lion
Kanyâ	♍	The Virgin
Tulâ	♎	The Scales
Vṛiśchika	♏	The Scorpion
Dhanus	♐	The Archer
Makara	♑	The Sea-Goat
Kumbha	♒	The Watering Man
Mîna	♓	The Fish

THE SEVEN SACRED PLANETS

Śani	♄	Saturn
Bṛihaspati	♃	Jupiter
Aṅgâraka	♂	Mars
Sûrya	☉	Sun
Uśanas-Śukra	♀	Venus
Budha	☿	Mercury
Soma	☾	Moon

WITHIN THE MIND AND HEART — *Allan Stover*

Never in historical times has there been such world-wide unrest, distress and uncertainty, or despair as to the future, as there is at present. Wherever located, all feel the strain in some degree. Many have found relief in doing something for those unfortunates in every country who are despairing. Others are busy in some duty. There are many ways in which those who are able can give material aid to others.

But on the other hand one hears such questions as, What does it all mean? What will become of us? Has there ever been such a time before?

The student of Theosophy knows that in times such as the present the thoughts we permit ourselves to think are as important as the things we do. He knows that however and wherever situated each one contacts within his own nature the same conditions that are distressing the world. Within the mind and within the heart of each one arise thoughts and impulses coming from that ocean of thought, the astral light, in which — emotionally — we live.

If we admit a thought of hatred, fear, suspicion or worse into our minds, give it added impulse and send it forth, we are adding to the total quantity of such horrors in the world. We are becoming responsible for our part of it: responsible for the acts which result from such thinking.

If, on the other hand, we refuse to admit unworthy thoughts and impulses we are reducing, transmuting, the total of such things in the world, and by just so much are making the world a better place to live in.

It is the lack of right thought in the nations of today which is largely responsible for the present confusion.

TECHNICAL THEOSOPHY — G. de Purucker

I want to point out the extreme need of disseminating technical Theosophical teachings in the outside world of men and women; and by "outside world", I mean those who are not privileged to study together as we do. That is the only sense in which I use the word "outside". There are millions whose place, spiritually and intellectually, is here amongst us. But we have not succeeded in giving them the chance yet; we have not yet been able, with our teachings, to reach their imaginations, their hunger for more light, for more truth. Their lives are already founded in ethics and they are ethically inclined, they have the ethics of the magnificent religions and philosophies in the world, and they have the instincts of decency in the human heart. What they need is the technical Theosophy to show them *How* and *Why* and *What* — something that can be achieved only by giving them and making them to love the *study* of our technical Theosophical doctrines.

Why do the Avatars come amongst us? To help us who to them are spirits in chains of matter, to raise ourselves out of the condition in which are those whom Pythagoras called the "Living Dead", into at least genuinely good men and women whose lives are good because they are *ensouled*, in other words who have a conception of spirituality and who love it, and loving it follow it.

Faint indeed must be the whisperings of the spirit within you if a picture like this does not arouse something within you as it did in me when first as a child or boy I was taught it again in this life, in this embodiment. Then it was that I first dedicated my life to Theosophy.

What is the burthen of all the teachings of all our great godlike men? Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, comfort the heavy-laden. Do you think this means merely material benefits? It means aid and feed the naked and suffering and hungry *souls* of men — as well as their bodies; and if we can arouse by our Theosophical

work, working under the mandate that we have received, sufficient enthusiasm along these lines, sufficient to change the thoughts and hearts of men, all the material wants of all mankind will be taken care of because men will no longer allow their fellow human beings to suffer the material wants.

All these latter things are needed, but they sink into utter insignificance compared with the majestic drama of the human soul swinging between spirit and matter, between Divinity and Avichi. And often, too much of the good things of life, too much concentration of thought and mind, too much devotion unto the material things, are dangerous because they concentrate the attention on and attachment to material things alone, and there is danger in this.

Notice that neither the Buddha nor Jesus the Avatara, nor Krishna, went around establishing soup-kitchens and charitable organizations and hospitals and things like these, great and beautiful though these often are. They were feeding and raising the hungry souls of men; they were ministering to the intellectual wants of their fellowmen; they were clothing their spiritual nakedness with the sheaths of consciousness, the garments of truth, knowing that when they did these things, a multitude thus ensouled would attend to the material wants of our fellow human beings.

Not that I decry soup-kitchens and things like that! Sometimes they are very needed; but when I hear people ask me: "Well, you Theosophists talk about loving your fellowmen, and you believe in Universal Brotherhood. Why don't you establish soup-kitchens, and do philanthropic work among the poor and visit hospitals?" Our answer is obvious: We have done it, and we are doing it as much as we can as individuals, and will do much more of it when we get the millions upon millions of the wealth of the churches, or the philanthropic organizations. But what we are doing is cutting at the root which brings these physical material wants, needs, lacks, into being. In other words we work mainly to change men's minds and hearts. What produces the poverty amongst us, and the illnesses, the un-tended material wants,

the exactions on the poor and the weak who are the least able to respond to exactions? Human cruelty, human selfishness, human weaknesses, human thoughtlessness, the lack of an active warm beating heart feeling the woes of the world. Correct these, and you cut at the roots of all the material evils of mankind. That is what the Great Ones of the earth have always done, they cut at the root of the evil, knowing that when they get the multitudes together in a common ideal, if the multitudes are faithful these other things will be attended to.

Now, don't go to extremes. The next time you hear the cry for food, physical food, or the cry for a cup of water, don't say: "No, I am doing Master's work on a higher plane. Go elsewhere to him or her, he or she will attend to your wants." Take what comes in your daily work, and set the example of universal pity and helpfulness; but remember that these noble philanthropic material things will automatically come about if we first take care of the greater things.

It is really a terrible situation. The materialization of our age has become frenzied, so frenzied that there are millions of men and women in the world of today who have no patience with things of the spirit. They are utter materialists; they think there is no good in anything except what will benefit the human body. That is wrong and distorted, and as evil-working a state of mind as is the mind of those frenetic spiritualists in the other sense of the word, who want to be up in the clouds all the time, and will not even give a cup of cold water to a man whose body is thirsting. There are such.

When you remember that the majority of our fellow human beings are destined for two things, unconsciousness, with no progress, and no further light and no further help for aeons and aeons and aeons, unless they get spiritual enlightenment and intellectual help; or, on the other hand, destined to the annihilation of the Planet of Death or of Avichi — what is your reaction? I put it to you. I think these things ought to be talked from the housetops, preached all the time, brought to notice on every occasion possible. It does not matter two pins if people mock. The average man and woman today likes, like the Athenians of old, to hear

something new; and even if a smile of incomprehension comes to the face — mark you the first time you attended a Theosophical gathering, and consider what your reaction possibly was. For all you know, you may be sowing seeds of thought every time you utter a technical Theosophical teaching. So wonderfully appealing and persuasive are they, that no matter how much a man may grin and hesitate and argue, and even mock perhaps at first, it may be for months, the seed sown will germinate some day. You may have saved that human soul and you know what I mean by "saving"; and for pity's sake, when you talk about philanthropy, raise this grand old Greek word to the plane where we understand it, and don't think that the giving of glasses of water, or mush and sausages, or soup and stale bread, is going to save souls. I have seen these things done so mechanically and soullessly that it was almost an insult to the receiver, and a disgrace to the giver. I have seen it, and have blushed.

Of course I don't say all the philanthropy of human beings is like that. Undoubtedly there are thousands and thousands of noble men and women in the world who have never heard a word of genuine Theosophical teaching, whose hearts ache for the sufferings of their fellows, and who do what they can. But I am talking of mechanical charity, and the charity which humiliates when it is given.

What we want is to do away with the need of charity, and you will never succeed in this until you change men's hearts and their minds. The multi-millionaire who endows a College or a University, or some scientific institution, with several millions which he could spare perhaps as easily as the wealthiest among us could spare a few dollars, and immediately sees his name in the newspapers, may be doing far less good for his fellowman than the poor woman at the cottage door who will give of the little she has to the wayfarer who may come and knock. The latter act is true human sympathy. The other may or may not be commendable.

I tell you this, it is my own pet dogma: I don't believe you will get any genuine spiritual brotherhood, no matter what the form of the power

behind the movement, which is not based on spirituality and Theosophy. You will get mechanics and political theories and emotional outbreaks of charitable people. And these are often more dangerous than they are workers of good, because their whole concentration is on the things of the body. It is needful to have the body cared for, undoubtedly. Nobody questions it for a moment. But look here. You can feed a man's body and starve his soul to death. You can give him work and kill his spirit. You can give him a job and clothe him well and guarantee him against the cold of winter and the heat of summer, and you can starve that man to death. You may have made a lost soul out of him. Why? Because the concentration here is solely on the things of matter. When Jesus spoke of "feeding my little ones", do you think he meant babies? Children? "Little ones" is an old occult term for disciples, learners, as children are; loving as children are; receiving as children do: therefore "little ones". And such — and I say this with deepest reverence for human hearts and minds — and such, I repeat, are all those millions who await hungrily to be fed the bread of life and the water of inspiration that Theosophy, technical Theosophy, only can satisfy.

The Theosophical Forum

HUMAN NATURE, IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY — *B. Finkernagel*

There are comparatively few people who are aware of the fact that their constitution is composed of three distinct evolutionary streams of life, which we speak of as the animal soul, the human soul, and the spiritual soul. Each of these in itself is an evolving entity with a distinct evolutionary growth and destiny of its own. These three streams of life are enshrined in a physical body, the presiding human consciousness of which, by its modes of thought, feeling, and action, and by persistent endeavor, can so attune the physical brain, that it slowly acquires the power to respond to any impulses appropriate to the individual's aims and objectives. The complexity of our human constitution at times gives rise to phenomena which will often baffle the understanding of the academic psychologist, but are well enough understood by one who has acquired a clear understanding of what Theosophy has to teach in regard to the septenary constitution of man.

The supreme importance of what Theosophy teaches in regard to this subject cannot be over-estimated, for without this information it is well-nigh impossible to understand our human nature, or to live our lives intelligently and well. We should never allow our waking consciousness to engage in any thoughts, desires, feelings, or emotions, without subjecting them continuously to our discrimination, so that we may clearly realize from what part of our human constitution they have come and particularly if they come from our lower nature, that is to say, the animal soul. We should discriminate whether these impulses are, from the higher human point of view, desirable or not, and refuse instantly to give them "house-room" if they do not conform to the objectives and ideals for which we are striving. It is just because the great mass of the people do not understand the processes which educe their thoughts, emotions, and feelings, that we find so much sorrow and suffering among men.

Quite a large proportion of mankind live entirely in their animal soul,

as a result of which their human soul and spiritual soul find but little expression in physical life. In this type of person, the life of sense dominates almost completely the individual's thinking and acting. He will have no knowledge whatever of his higher nature. He identifies himself completely with his body, emotions, and feelings, and if this continues throughout the term of the physical life, he is sure to repeat, in his next embodiment on earth, the same follies and the same mode of life as characterized his previous life on earth; for as he has failed to generate spiritual causes, which alone can produce effects of a spiritual and elevating nature, there will then be but little spiritual material which would predispose him to something higher than he was in his previous existence on earth. Although such a man resides in a physical human body, he lives altogether in his animal soul, and therefore he is actually less than man. It is quite impossible to help such a person, unless his human soul awakens from its stupor and torpidity, so that it may be able to see life as it actually is, and not what it appears to be, or what he thinks it is.

It is quite a relief to pass from this gloomy review, to a higher type of man, and to be able to point out that the average human type stands far higher in the evolutionary scale. In the average man discrimination is certainly active, although it is always more or less hampered by ignorance of the higher nature, as well as by the insistence with which the animal impulses are trying to impose themselves upon the human consciousness. Nevertheless, the average man, instinctually, though vaguely, is beginning to realize that he must endeavor to control all those lower impulses which, if indulged in by him, will bring pain and suffering upon himself, as well as upon other beings; and to his credit it should be said, that he often follows this higher impulse, provided his will-power is strong enough to hold out against the imperious demands of his animal promptings, and his still deeply-rooted selfishness. But there are usually many instances in the waking life of this type of man where his humble efforts to live a higher life — be those efforts successful or not — do generate spiritual effects, which do presage a nobler existence in future lives on earth.

As we ascend the evolutionary scale of our race, we shall find that this type slowly merges into a still higher one, in which the meaning and the purpose of life are much better understood and the universal fact of Unity and Non-separateness is definitely perceived. It is this higher understanding of life which forces the realization upon the ever more awakening spiritual man, of his greater responsibilities and duties to his fellow-beings, than hitherto he has recognised. He begins to see that this fuller understanding demands of him a never-ceasing watchfulness, and an obligation to eliminate ever more and more completely from his character, all the countless evidences of human frailty and selfish tendencies, which are still able to influence his thoughts and feelings.

When the individual perceives that in his higher nature he is actually a Ray of Divinity, and identical with the Heart of the Universe, which is all-inclusive, then the fact becomes self-evident that selfishness in all its forms, great or small, is a direct violation of the Cosmic Harmony, and of the Law of Being. When this is fully seen, the aspiring soul, if sincere, will find neither peace nor rest, unless the efforts it puts forward are at least equal to the greater spiritual illumination that has come to it. There will, therefore, be an ever increasing stimulus for greater efforts, as the growth of the individual proceeds, and thus every ounce of will-power, devotion, and determination is marshalled to the fore, so that the person may realize his aims and ideals. The soul perceives that it must become godlike before it can become at one with Divinity, before it can link its consciousness with the Master-soul which resides at the core of its being. He is thus ever on guard, alert and watchful, in regard to all that he allows himself to think, feel, say, or do. From henceforth, this man's daily task will be to make himself incapable of yielding to anger, hate, or wrath; to cast out all traces of vanity, pride, malice, envy, strife, or fear; to become utterly humble, meek, and lowly in heart and mind; patient, calm, and self-controlled; never to strike back, or to retaliate; never to respond to hate with hate, but instead, to respond to all injuries and insults with instant forgiveness, sympathy, and pity, realizing that the person who is ill-using him, lacks spiritual

understanding, and that these unbrotherly actions are due to the man's soul-destroying identification with his animal body and passions. The aspirant is trying to do all this without complaint, trusting utterly to the Law of Life, and therefore he finds the strength to suffer silently, forgivingly, patiently, and with an attitude of heart and soul which is ever shedding rays of love, sympathy, and pity — like our glorious Solar Orb shining in its effulgence in the heavens upon good and bad alike.

But in case your courage fails you as you read this formidable list of what the aspiring human soul must accomplish before it can definitely enter upon that steep and thorny Path which will lead it to a stage in evolution where it becomes more than man — let me add that no ordinary man can possibly acquire fully all these divine accomplishments in one short month, or year, or lifetime, even. What has just been said outlines the ideal which every earnest aspirant must ever hold before himself, and which must become, so to speak, the background of all that he thinks, feels, says and does.

Let us all clearly realize that the good Law of Life requires no more from anyone, be he high or low, than what he or she is able to accomplish. If one does all he can, as he struggles onward towards his ideal, be that all much or little, it is all that is expected of him.

The three types of people above described are, so to speak, landmarks, indicating the general road along which our humanity, during its aeonian past upon this globe, has been evolving. But human history, as well as tradition does record the occasional appearance of glorious Beings, who tower far above even the highest types of ordinary humanity. These Beings are the very embodiment of divine power and wisdom, of compassion and self-sacrificing love. They have always appeared on earth, whenever our human race was approaching a serious crisis, invariably brought about through a long false thinking and acting by mankind in the mass. It is at such times as these that Supermen do appear — meteor-like — on our human horizon, for the purpose of bringing help, counsel, and spiritual understanding to an

ignorant, suffering and spiritually perverted world. I am referring to such Supermen as the Buddha Gautama-Sakyamuni, Sri-Krishna, Jesus, Lao-Tse, Tsong-Kha-Pa, and many others.

I submit that any perspicacious mind on reflexion should be able to perceive that these outstanding figures are indeed more than ordinary men, and that they belong to, and have their native home in, a world which stands far above the place which our physical earth occupies in the cosmic scheme of things. They have their true home in a world which in all respects corresponds to their exalted stage of evolution to which they have attained through self-directed evolutionary effort. They come into this nether-world of ours — which is indeed a veritable hell to them — for the purpose of helping, instructing, and uplifting mankind. The intuitive mind will perceive in these occasional appearances of Supermen, an actual proof of the existence of subtler worlds than our own, worlds which are invisible to ordinary men, because human selfishness and materiality has so coarsened our human lower nature, that these higher worlds, which are of exceeding subtilty and purity, cannot be perceived by our coarse lower principles. Our humanity has befouled its human constitution, through ages of false thinking and acting.

The cocksureness with which the materialist usually denies the existence of invisible worlds, as taught in Theosophy, and also of everything which is beyond his powers of physical perception, invariably produces feelings of profound pity and regret in a clearer-seeing and spiritually perceiving mind. It is painful to think that rational and often scientifically trained minds can be so utterly blinded by bias, prejudice, and foregone conclusions, as to deny the existence of anything super-physical, when even the familiar processes of our daily experiences and consciousness so often point to — and I feel tempted to add — prove the existence of these super-physical worlds. If those able but misguided men were only willing to approach with an open mind the subject of Theosophy, they would before long discover to their utter surprise, that it embodies in its teachings the highest wisdom ever perceived by man, and that it is not only absolutely consistent

throughout its entire range of thought, but that it is vast; for it is an all-inclusive exposition of the entire universe and of man, dealing not only with the visible worlds, their scope and their destiny, but also with the invisible worlds. It may well be claimed by Theosophists that Theosophy is the Supreme Science of all sciences. And when it is perceived that its teaching is the combined wisdom, gathered throughout all the ages of the greatest Seers and Sages of all time, and that every portion of it has been subjected to the most meticulous methods of research on all the four lower planes of our world, and that the findings of these Supermen have been checked and counter-checked innumerable times by other Seers and Sages in all ages — then, perhaps, this cocksureness, this presumptuous attitude of mind, will disappear, and a more fitting and humble willingness to learn what they do not know, will take its place.

Theosophy is indeed a great and synthetic Whole, of which every portion is necessary for the full understanding of every other part. Let it, therefore, be clearly understood that one cannot in fairness and justice take any single portion of the teaching and pull it to pieces, apart from all the rest, and then denounce it. Every part of the teaching must be kept in mind, and must have its place in the consideration of any particular part of it, for one cannot possibly come to any correct conclusions otherwise. If it is not so considered, then any, or all conclusions arrived at, lose all their value and claim for recognition.

And now in conclusion, may I be permitted to express the ardent hope that this humble attempt to point to a few aspects of these sublime teachings in respect to the highly complex nature of the Universe and of man, may educe from within us all a sympathetic consideration of what has been said, as well as a sincere attempt and firm resolve to live, and to be in some measure — equivalent to each one's capacity — the noble ideal of the Spiritual Man. This Universe exists for this purpose, and even the least of men, as countless ages succeed each other, must and will attain to this noble ideal.

THE HOLY RIGHT OF SANCTUARY — *J. M. Prentice*

In the midst of a busy life and from some quite unexpected touch on a chord of memory some lines by Longfellow came unbidden:

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden and with reverent feet
Enter and cross himself, and on the floor

Kneel to repeat his Paternoster o'er.
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an indistinguishable roar. . . .

and immediately I recalled the ancient and holy right of Sanctuary. This was one of the gracious aspects of the otherwise frequently brutal life of the Middle Ages, and he who sought it was safe from pursuit, provided he dropped for the time being all worldly weapons, and surrendered himself utterly to spiritual forces.

There are no such physical sanctuaries nowadays. The need of them exists, however, and in their *present absence* we can create for ourselves inner retreats to which we can repair when we are attacked by either the physical or the more insidious psychic forces that are operating today. The need for this inner sanctuary is very real when around us forces are operating that are either evil in themselves or liable to do us hurt by arousing in us fears and distractions that torment the soul. To seek this inner silence is not to try to escape from reality; rather is it to draw upon the resources of the greater Reality that is our own innermost being, "which to know is Life eternal." It is the means whereby we enter into the peace that passeth all understanding, which lives and moves in those who know the Self as One.

It is never entirely wise to create of the entering into this Inner Sanctuary anything that tends to become a ritual. Rituals are the scaffolding by means of which a building may be erected, a house built, but they should be temporary, a means to an end. Any one who develops a ritualistic method will defeat the desired objective. Yet in the beginning a phrase, a verse, may have almost the effect of a *mantram* — one of those potent syllables of power that are found in the Sanskrit tongue and are used by those who are trained in some Eastern Schools. I myself have often found that some lines by Matthew Arnold have this effect. They are from an almost forgotten poem called *Lines Written in Kensington Gardens*,

and they run:

Calm Soul of All Things, make it mine
To feel amid the city's jar
That there exists a Peace of Thine
Man did not make, and cannot mar.
The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give,
Calm, calm me more, nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.

Memorize these lines and recall them when the heat and burden of the day seems almost too great to be borne. Then, with the words as the gateway or entrance into the Inner Reality, be still and know that you are of the Eternal. What will happen to you in the Silence is your own affair; moreover it is something that in practically every case will vanish if you attempt to share it with any one else. But this is certain: you will find within yourself, as you go deeper and deeper into the mystery of your own consciousness, that there is a peace such as you have never known, a power that makes all things new. It is a power that you will never be able to use for selfish or personal ends because it belongs to the Impersonal. But it will be to you a Sanctuary far better than any built by medieval hands, more hushed with peace than any cathedral, however splendid with fume of incense, glory of stained

glass, or harmony of organ music.

Not necessarily the lines which I have written above. It may be a line from some such book as *Light on the Path*, a sloka from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the words from an unidentified Upanishad that are quoted at the beginning of *Letters That Have Helped Me*. It is the method rather than the actual words at which we would hint. Find some apt quotation — and use it. Enter into this inner world deliberately and consciously, but remembering always to avail yourself of the opportunity afforded you of laying aside all your physical weapons, of doffing the garments of consciousness you wear in the world of outer things, and thereby allowing your mind to become a mirror that reflects your higher consciousness.

The contemplation of a beautiful picture, the hearing or the recalling of some exquisite melody, are other but similar means to the same end. There are as many such means as there are individuals to use them. But behind all such incursions there must be a motive — to obtain therefrom surcease from the cares and worries of the world in order only that we may overcome the world. There must be nothing selfish involved. Indeed it may well be that viewed from without we may seem more negative than ever; yet in this very lack of aggression it will be found that we are centers of peace to which others will flock. Walking ever in the light from within, we develop spiritual forces and weapons that can be used against the evil that seems to be uppermost in the world today. The whole process may be described in a term that was popular in the early days of the Theosophical Movement — "swearing allegiance to the Higher Self."

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THE LAND OF THE SHADOWS — *Martyn Witter*

It was time to retire from the duties of the day and to enter the land of sweet repose and rest. But there is no rest for those who open their hearts to the woes of humanity. How can anyone rest when there spreads such unspeakable woe over the races of men? Instead there is joy in feverish activity, for there is so much to do. We must prepare for that cyclic moment when the races of men shall make the "Great Choice". Oh, how many will perhaps fail in the struggle and be sent back to the bottom of the ladder to learn all over again, step by step! In this age of blindness how few there are of those who are preparing themselves to help this struggling orphan — humanity. But then the dismal valley of doubt and despair is occasionally lighted by the Spiritual Fathers. Where there is darkness there is in time a call for light — more light. The Great Ones have been waiting and waiting for a long time. But not until the pupil calls for truth, as one who is dying of thirst cries for water, can the Teacher instruct.

As the above thoughts ran through my mind, burning like searing irons, I slipped into that land of sleep. How long I slept I do not know but I awoke to find myself in that world where time is not; there is only a ceaseless flow of duration. Here all earth-life seems as a dream. Thought and existence appear inseparable; the thinker and Universal Life being indistinguishably and inseparably One. Only as a dim remembrance can one recall the earthly conceptions where physical space seemed to exist as distance separating one object from another. Oh, what illusions there exist in the "Land of Shadows" where men think that they are separate from one another. But, why did this "Land of Shadows" come into being? Why? To answer my own question I had but to turn thought upon thought. The answer came as a reflexion of thought upon the mirror of mind. It was silent, yet it spoke saying:

"It is because many another similar to you, knows not the answer to this question that the "Land of Shadows" is a necessity. You are the

creators of yourselves and your lands of woe. Do you not know that suffering is the greatest of all teachers and that your land of woe is but the state of your own consciousness?"

In agony I cried for the veils to be rent apart that I might see and seeing know. This time the thought came as an almost unbearable surge of energy. It seemed to say:

"Know that you are the veil which hides the unspeakable from your eyes. It is only when the burning spirit within rises like a flame and consumes all, that the veil shall exist not. Until self is merged into Self, veils must necessarily exist. Know that when you seek knowledge for self it ever recedes. Know that only when you seek but to feed others, little caring whether you taste of it or not, shall knowledge be yours. Not until seeker turns into giver can the seeker receive reality instead of illusion."

It was then that I grasped an inner realization of the unworthiness of my shrine. Not until the giver gives solely for the motive of giving shall he be united unto that which is given. In the land of shadows, which we call the earth, how few there are of those who while giving do not take great pride therein.

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THE ACTS — P. A. Malpas

(Extract from a letter)

Dear Friend: You ask me what I have to say about the *Acts of the Apostles*, or the "Apostle-history," as it is sometimes called.

An interesting point is that until recently it was supposed that the *Gospel of Luke* and the *Acts* were written by Luke — a physician, a doctor, as we should say. This is based on a single remark "Luke the beloved physician." But it should not be forgotten that the Essenes, the Therapeutae, were "physicians" of the soul, also the first "Christians."

But the much quoted evidence that only a physician had the technical knowledge to write such a treatise or book can be equally applied to the assumption that both books were written by a sailor. Many years ago I worked on this idea, probably suggested by some remark of H. P. Blavatsky's in *Isis Unveiled*. Since then other scholars have come to the same conclusion.

But this disregards later research, which seems to show at least two writers for the *Acts*. Probably the sailor was one of them. And that sailor seems to have been no less a person than Marcion the Gnostic, practically the last in his day, somewhere about 135 A. D., who knew what the inner meaning of the church was. He was forced to leave it owing to political moves in the church government. After him, it was not much more than any other exoteric church or sect. He was a rich man, as riches went then, and his money would have been very useful if, as the intention was, they had elected him head or pope.

It has often been pointed out that the *Acts* is an artificial compilation, with the proof thereof in the long speech of the martyr Stephen — which of course nobody took down either in shorthand or longhand. It is simply a fine piece of rhetorical writing. Yes, they had shorthand writers in those days, often in teams of two, one to write quickly and

the other to transcribe it in copper plate, so to say. But it needs much imagination to suppose that the scene was prepared beforehand, if indeed, it is historical at all and not like so much else, mystery narrative.

The purpose of the *Acts* seems fairly clear; at least, *one* purpose. The idea seems to have been to blend the more or less opposite currents of Petrine and Pauline history and teachings. You have the Peter history and then the Paul history, and the attempt at reconciliation is evident. It is hard to say how far this plan might have been carried, but the fact seems to be that the *Acts* is really an unfinished treatise.

It is difficult to imagine that the narratives are meant to be historical rather than artificial, though of course, there may be much history in them.

But look at Paul's own story. He is represented as being suddenly converted, violently converted, one may say, in a few hours.

Dramatically this is fine, but it hardly happens in real life. His own tale is that he studied seventeen years, seemingly in seclusion in the Arabian desert, with one small exception about the third year, as he says in *Galatians*. This is much more plausible and reasonable.

Assuming that this view is correct, that the work is a technical mystical treatise and not historical, then we must pause before we accept the usual reports of the death of Paul and Peter as being historical. It is quite likely that Paul was never martyred at Rome at all. The *Talmud* makes him out to be a very old man indeed and a very vigorous one, years after the destruction of Jerusalem, while the *Acts* describe him as a man of middle age. I think the story of his martyrdom is based on a single obscure statement of some writer much later in the day who may or may not have known something about him. We are too prone to accept statements as historical simply because they are old and because they agree with orthodox views.

As for Peter, there seems to be no real evidence at all that he was ever at Rome. It is just a tradition. The Jewish writings, also much mixed

with allegory and fancy, make him out to have died in exile at Babylon after living there for many years as an ascetic. One story seems to be as authoritative as the other. Of course, "Peter" as a mystical character and not historical, is simply the *interpreter*, as the Hebrew word Peter implies, between the mystic hierophant and the disciples. Joseph in *Genesis* (1) is Pharaoh's "Peter" or dream-interpreter. This is the character he occupied in the Roman mysteries long before "b. c. 1," and he was not any one man but an official. Speaking of the play of words so often found in these mystic writings, is it not curious that the church is founded, not on the Hierophant, the Teacher, but only on his *interpreter*?

I suppose the historical Paul was really a very interesting character and his life full of startling adventure. But it is not easy to sort out fact from fancy. If a film showed all the adventures attributed to him it would be regarded as impossibly fantastic, as a story no one man could ever have lived through.

H. P. Blavatsky makes a very interesting remark in her articles on "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels":

There are, besides great Initiates into scriptural symbology, a number of quiet students of the mysteries of archaic exotericism, of scholars proficient in Hebrew and other dead tongues, who have devoted their lives to unriddle the speeches of the Sphinx of the world-religions. And these students, though none of them has yet mastered all the "seven keys" that open the great problem, have discovered enough to be able to say: "There was a universal mystery-language, in which all the World Scriptures were written, from *Vedas* to "Revelation," from the Book of the Dead to the *Acts*."

Serious scholars should think of this. It is the only way to reconcile the absurd discrepancy between the story of Paul in the *Acts*, and his own story as given in *Galatians*, unless we are to say that one is a pure forgery or fiction.

It was more H. P. B.'s work to give keys to study than to scatter facts indiscriminately. Here is such a key.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Gen., xli, 15. ([return to text](#))

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A FABLE — A. W. Ferguson

(Concerning the Finding of the Philosopher's Stone)

On a certain day when the sun shone like a great ball of fire and the sea rose and fell in restless fashion as if in keeping with the evermoving streams of life which made the City, on that day Callan, a young and noble Celtic Chief in whom a strange discontent moved and to whose young life already had come a sorrow and weariness, cried:

"I shall go away from here and search the whole world. Surely there must be some place wherein is to be found the Philosopher's Stone." On the hills surrounding the harbor were many men at work.

There young Callan beheld many men in rags pulling up great buckets of fuel from the bowels of the earth, and his heart was heavy. In the City many women and young girls sat like automatons before great pillars of steel, and the heart of young Callan was sad. And in the harbor men pulled up great heavy anchors and slimy dead fish; and the heart of young Callan was sick.

"I shall go away from here; surely, there must be some place in which is to be found the Philosopher's Stone."

And so it was that young Callan, now grown to manhood, went forth into the dark and solitary night. The road was bare. The hills were bare. Here was no happy companionship, but lonely days and black nights.

And on a certain day when the sun had reached its zenith Callan, who was now grown old and grey, came upon a certain City. And on the hills here and there were men in rags pulling up great buckets of fuel from the bowels of the earth. And in the City were many women and young girls who sat like automatons in front of pillars of steel. And in the harbor were men at work pulling up great anchors and dead fish from the sea.

And in the evening when the Sun like a great red disk sank below the horizon, Callan who was now grown wise fell into a peaceful sleep.

The Sun was a great globe of light whose pulsating life filled space. The Sun was the Heart of a Universe. The Sun was a great Being full of Conscious Life. And all the Universe was a part of that Life, in Harmony, in Tune, and in Love.

And Callan saw that the hills surrounding the harbor were Nature's plan. And the sea was calm. And the whole scene was an immortal sight. And there was no dark and solitary night. And the hills were of burnished gold.

And Callan went down into the city and among the great pillars of steel, among the men in rags, and to each and every one and to the women and young girls, to each and every one he gave a laurel wreath.

It was in this manner that Callan came by the Philosopher's Stone.

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MATHEMATICS AND THE IMAGINATION (1) — *H. T. Edge*

Mathematics, as the authors say, like other familiar things, is easier to describe and to illustrate than to define: it is hard to find one general idea that will embrace all the manifold applications. But the impression we have received after reading this book is that mathematics is an attempt to systematize the universe: first some small part of the universe, then a larger part, and so on, until we begin to suspect that we shall need a formula as complex as the universe itself if we are to embrace all. As viewed from the standpoint of the intellect, mathematics is the most abstract and fundamental of all the sciences, being a sort of master-science underlying all the rest. To give the layman some notion of what it is all about has been the laudable aim of these writers, who have produced a most interesting and informative book.

First we have chapters on numbers, especially very large numbers. It is explained that primitive minds count without the use of numbers, by the simple process of matching one plurality with another; and that the idea of number apart from a particular plurality of objects is an abstraction which comes later. The existence of the very large numbers is an inference rather than a conclusion from observation. One very large number, facetiously called a "googol," is 10 to the power of 100, or a 1 with a hundred zeros after it. But Eddington estimates that the number of electrons in the entire universe is only 10 to the power of 79. If we wish to climb to farther heights we can speak of 10 to the power of one googol, which would be represented by a 1 with so many zeros after it that there would not be room to write them if you wrote one every inch all the way to the farthest nebula. Such a number may have no use in mensuration, but it may in the calculus of probabilities, as estimating the probability that my typewriter may suddenly jump off the table and land on the bed, or that an electron may do some excessively unusual thing.

Then follow chapters on the meanings of the word "infinite," the infinitely large, the infinitely small, the unbounded, the undivided; and the numerous paradoxes and fallacies which arise from a neglect to distinguish these meanings. The very big and the infinite are entirely different; there is no point where the very big begins to merge into the infinite; however large a number or magnitude you may reach, you will still be no nearer the infinite than you were at the start. The idea of the infinite is arrived at through "reasoning by recurrence": what we have done once we can do again, and we assume that we can go on doing it indefinitely. The paradoxes of Zeno are considered. Some of them are due to his failure to recognise that an infinite series may have a finite sum, and some depend upon a relation between position and motion which has engaged the attention of the profoundest mathematical minds. Leibniz tried to explain the infinitely small to Queen Sophie Charlotte of Prussia, but she said the behavior of her courtiers had made her so familiar with it that she did not need to be taught.

The principle of logarithms is clearly explained, with the remark that it is wonderful it was not thought of before. This may suggest to some that it has been thought of before; many of our mathematical discoveries may be rediscoveries, and there may have been things known to our remote ancestors that have not yet been rediscovered. Transcendental and imaginary numbers, π , i and e , come in for consideration, and a great many formulas for approximations to π are given.

In the sections on assorted geometries we are introduced to the four-dimensionalists and flatlanders, and it is shown how they neglect to distinguish between physics and pure geometry, between physical space (that of our sensory experiences) and ideal space. Euclidean space is ideal and abstract; a three-dimensional geometric solid is as imaginary as a two-dimensional figure, and quite distinct from a solid physical body. The word "dimension," as used in mathematics, does not necessarily mean an extended line at right angles to other lines. Its meaning must be abstracted from that of physical space, and it is better

to substitute the word "co-ordinate." Physical space is a three-dimensional manifold. When mathematicians speak of multi-dimensional manifolds they have no reference to physical space; such manifolds (or "spaces") have only the properties expressed by the postulates and axioms of the particular geometry concerned.

Euclidean geometry is shown to be only a theory, in which the propositions are deduced with faultless logic from the axioms and postulates laid down. But Lobachevsky, Bolyai, and Riemann have constructed equally consistent geometries upon other postulates, and these geometries are better adapted for the mensuration of curved surfaces than is Euclid's. Here again we see that geometries are an indefinite number of different systems invented for the purpose of co-ordinating certain groups of experiences which we have of the universe.

The chapter on mathematical puzzles will prove of great interest to many readers; we have here quite a large selection of such posers: various versions of the problem of a man crossing by a ferry and having with him a fox, a goose, and a bag of corn, only one of which he can carry at a time; the problem of the eight-quart jug of wine which is to be divided into two equal shares by means of jugs holding five and three quarts; mechanical puzzles with wires and rings; etc. The International Beer-Drinking Problem is as follows:

In a town on the border between the United States and Mexico the state of exchange was such that an American dollar was worth only 90 cents in Mexico, while a Mexican dollar was worth only 90 cents in America. So a man crosses the border into Mexico and orders ten cents worth of beer, which he pays for with a Mexican dollar, receiving an American dollar as change. With this he recrosses the border and buys another ten cents worth of beer with his American dollar, receiving a Mexican dollar as change. He keeps this up all day until he is quite full of beer. Question — who pays for the beer?

Another chapter is on paradoxes or inconsistencies, many of them

hoary with antiquity. The paradoxes of Zeno naturally come in for consideration. That of Achilles and the Tortoise depends on the fact that Zeno confuses an infinite distance with a finite distance infinitely subdivided; but his problem of the moving arrow involves considerations which have exercised the greatest mathematical minds. Motion, when analysed by our logical mind, appears to become reduced to a series of disconnected stationary positions, which our perceptions synthesize in a way similar to that by which the separate images on the film are made to resemble figures in motion. In the same way a continuous line may be analysed into a series of separate points, or a continuous solid body into an aggregate of disconnected atoms. It would seem that the analytical function of the mind is bound to lead to dilemmas; and is not this what Zeno was aiming to demonstrate?

The section on chance and probability carries us into deep water. The calculus of probabilities succeeds to perfection on the large scale, but breaks down utterly in the details. It is thanks to the former virtue that our insurance companies can profitably enable us to sit in our armchair and smoke at forty for the rest of our life; but they cannot for the life of them tell whether it is going to rain tomorrow. I can toss a coin a thousand times with the assurance that the proportion of heads and tails will be almost exactly 50 — 50; but I have not the least idea, if I only make one toss, whether it will be heads or tails. According to the rules the chance of heads or tails is always equal, no matter how often I may have thrown heads in succession. But what about the betting odds?

Edgar Poe calls attention to this discrepancy: the fact of sixes having been thrown twice with dice is warrant for betting the largest odds that sixes will not be thrown a third time; yet the intellect cannot see how the past throws can influence the ones that follow them. The error involved, he says, is one of an infinite series of mistakes which arise in the path of Reason through her propensity for seeking truth in detail. This can only mean that the successive throws *are* connected; that the Reason is wrong and the intuition right.

The kinetic theory of gases explains their expansive pressure by an elaborate integration of the kinetic energies of all the molecules; but when we consider a single molecule, we visualize it as flying about at its own free will like a midge in a sunbeam. This may help us to reconcile our doubts about the compatibility of free will with law. If you only have a sufficient number of individual free wills, they will together fulfil the law: the calculus of probability proves it.

The authors point out that classical physics regarded as immutable laws of Nature phenomena which had been shown to hold good within a limited range of experience; and that modern physics has extended its observations to regions wherein some of those rules do not hold good. Thus natural law has been largely replaced, perhaps even ousted, by statistical inference. The laws of Nature are no longer regarded as "simple and constant." We used to say: "All men die; Socrates is a man; therefore Socrates will die." Now we say: "All men die so far as we know; Socrates is a man; therefore he will probably die."

Mathematics is formulation, and formulation is a method of approximating the truth by stages. Such is the impression we receive.

A word should be said on the subject of abstractions. The meaning of this word depends on the point of view. If moving bodies are considered as real, then motion becomes an abstraction from this reality. But if motion itself be regarded as real, then moving bodies must be regarded as only particular manifestations of motion. Is the infinite merely the negation of the finite? Or is the finite a limitation of the infinite? Which is the prior term? Descartes held that the infinite is the positive idea, and the finite the negative, and that therefore the infinite presupposes the finite. Kant held that space is not a general conception, abstracted from particular ideas of space, but that particular spaces are arrived at by limitations of the one infinite space that is prior to them. This is of course the way space is viewed in *The Secret Doctrine*; and so also is number. Number, which from our viewpoint is an abstraction, is viewed as a reality. That may seem unthinkable, but the universe is not likely to be conditioned by the

infirmities of our conceptual powers. We can form no idea of what a number is in itself; we can only think of a plurality of objects or parts. So long as we have to rely on the argumentative and analysing faculties, we are bound to come up against dualities, antinomies, contradictions; and mathematics has sought to palliate the difficulty by all sorts of subtle and ingenious devices. But Theosophists believe that the human mind is able to rid itself of this kind of *Maya* and thus to be able to grasp ideas beyond the scope of our ordinary powers. The book concludes with a chapter on the Calculus and the meaning of Change and Changeability as understood by mathematicians. Much praise must be given to the excellent illustrations and diagrams by Rufus Isaacs.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Mathematics and the Imagination*. By Edward Kasner and James Newman. Simon and Schuster: New York: 1940. \$2.75. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

AFTER DEATH: YOU ARE YOURSELF — G. de Purucker

I hope that the time will come when we Theosophists shall weigh more strongly than we have been doing on the teachings of what happens after death in the Kama-loka and the Devachan. The average man seems to be today not so much immoral as amoral, i. e., seems to have largely lost the sense of moral responsibility. If men could realize what is going to happen to them after death, it would awaken a certain sense of needed behavior or conduct.

Now let us try to restore to mankind the teaching of the Ancient Wisdom: As ye live so will ye be after ye die. It is a simple teaching and it is so logical, it appeals. Men may resent it at first, men may not like it; but there is a thought there which on account of its logic, on account of its justice, will finally throw forth sprouts of thought in the mind.

If you want to understand the kama-loka and the devachan, just study yourself *now*, and you will know what you are going to get. Just that. You are going to get a continuation of precisely what now you are. If a man indulges in vice, what is going to happen to him? He reaps the consequences of his evil-doing. He learns by it the lessons that come out of the suffering. If a man fills his mind with gross thoughts and evil dreams, he learns by it in the long run through suffering, but the effects and consequences on his mind and character will ensue. He suffers, he is in torture, he pays the penalty, he has poisoned his inner system and he won't have peace until the poison has worked itself out, until he has become what is called re-formed, i. e., re-shaped. Then he will have peace again, then he will be able to sleep in peace again.

So the answer lies, it seems to me, in just these thoughts. Study yourself in your daily consciousness; and also study what kind of dreams you have. Why are these two conjoined? Because your dreams are from your own mind, and therefore are a part of your own consciousness. A man during his waking hours has evil dreams, evil thoughts; when he

sleeps he has nightmares; he learns by them, but he certainly is not going, when he sleeps, to have a heaven of dreams because he has filled his mind with horrid, hateful, mean, degrading thoughts. He has not builded the substances of heaven.

There you have the answer: and the kama-loka is simply a state of consciousness which the man's consciousness itself is in after death because he has made himself during his lifetime to have that consciousness. It works itself out, and then he rises or sinks into whatever is his destiny: a weak devachan, no devachan at all, according to the individual. In other words, if he has made for himself a character which is X, he will have that character X, whatever it is, after death. He won't have character Y, or Z, or A, or B. Contrariwise, a man who during life has kept himself in hand, has controlled himself, has lived manly, experiences the same law precisely: the after-death state will be unconscious in the kama-loka, or very nearly so, because he has no kama-loka biases in himself; and probably there will be a blissful devachan.

Suppose a man has no marked character at all, is neither particularly good, nor particularly bad. What kind of an after-death state is he going to have? He will have a colorless kama-loka, nothing particularly bad; and he will have a colorless devachan, nothing particularly beautiful or blissful. It will all be like a sort of vague, intangible dream. It doesn't amount to much and consequently he won't amount to much after he dies.

Or take the case of a young man of evil ways who reforms, let us say, at about middle age, and spends the rest of his life in deeds of virtue, of self-improvement. What will be his fate in the worlds to come? As I told you before, the kama-loka and the devachan are simply a continuation of what the man is when he dies. So consequently an evil young man becoming a good old man has practically no kama-loka of an unpleasant kind at all. He will have to pay to the uttermost farthing for any evil he did as a youth — but in his future life. His evil deeds are thought-deposits there. But as he reformed at about middle-age, and

had lived a clean decent life as a decent man, his kama-loka will be very slight, because it will be simply a continuation of what he was when he died, and the devachan will be in accordance likewise.

One can be in the kama-loka, as well as in the devachan, before death comes; indeed, it is possible to be in the avichi-condition even while imbodyed. And here is a very important deduction we should draw from this fact: if we have kama-loka while imbodyed men and women, we shall have it after death; and precisely according to the same law because we have spiritual yearnings, dreams of a spiritual kind and type or character while imbodyed, we shall have the devachan after death. Do you see the point? The kama-loka is a prolongation or a continuation, until it is worked out, of what you have been through in your life. If you set your thought and mind and heart on things which bring you pain, which make you suffer because you are selfish, and stiff-necked in pride and egoism, you will assuredly continue the same bending of your consciousness after death. It cannot be otherwise. It is simply you. Therefore, the devachan and the kama-loka are prolongations or continuations of the same states of consciousness respectively that you have gone through on earth — with this difference: that being out of the body, which is at once a blind and a shield of protection, you are, as it were, thought, naked thought. Do you see what I am trying to say? And if your thought has been during life on things of horror, or if you have allowed your thought to bend in those directions while imbodyed, you won't be washed free of stain merely because you have cast off the body. Your thought, which is yourself, will continue and you will have to pass through the kama-loka and exhaust that phase of thought. It will have to die out as a fire will burn itself out.

Similarly, indeed exactly: if you have had beautiful thoughts, grand thoughts, sublime thoughts, in life, you will assuredly have the same thing, but a thousandfold stronger because no longer smothered by the body, when you have cast it off; and if you want to know what your destiny will be after death, just study yourself now and take warning. There is a very important and pertinent lesson that we can learn from

this fact, just in that. You can make your post-mortem condition what you will it to be now, before it is too late. Nothing in the universe can prevent the bliss of devachan coming to you, or rather your making it for yourself.

Deduction: Take yourself in hand. There you have the teaching of the kama-loka. There you have the teaching of the devachan. It is very simple. All the intricate, abstract questions I think arise largely in failing to understand the elementary principles of the teachings. When you lie down you dream, or you are unconscious. When you die you dream, or you are unconscious. You have, when you lie down at night, evil dreams or good dreams, or you are unconscious. When you die you will have evil dreams or beautiful dreams or you will be unconscious — all depending upon the individual and the life he has led.

So the kama-loka and the devachan and indeed the avichi, are not things that are going suddenly to happen to you when you die; but because your consciousness has been that way while imbodyed, they, one or the other, will continue after you die. You see now the importance of ethics, and why all the great Sages and Seers throughout time have tried to teach men to spiritualize their thoughts, to refine their thoughts, to live in the heart-life as some people have said, to cast out the things which are wrong and evil. There is the whole thing, simple as A B C. The devachan is not waiting for you. The kama-loka is not waiting for you — I mean as absolute conditions now separate from you. If you had them in life, you will have them after death. The man who has had no thought of hatred or horror or detestation or venom toward another, in other words whose heart and mind have never been nests of evil, will have neither an avichi in life nor after death, nor an unhappy kama-loka in life or after death; he will have an exquisite devachan, and will come back refreshed and vigorous and strong and renewed to begin a new life and with everything in his favor.

After death you continue to be precisely what you are when you die. There is the whole thing. There is the secret of the kama-loka and of the

devachan and of all the intermediate states of the Bardo, as the Tibetans call it. All the rest is detail, and that is why I keep emphasizing in my public lectures and in my writings, that death is but a sleep. Death is a perfect sleep and sleep an imperfect death. It is literally so. When you sleep you are partly dead. When you die, you are absolutely asleep. If you grasp these simple ideas you will have the whole teaching on your thumbnail, a thumbnail picture.

Now this is another point. I have heard people say that they don't want to remain in devachan, it is a waste of time. This is a misunderstanding. You might as well say: I don't want to have sleep tonight, it is a waste of time. As a matter of fact, you need the rest, recuperation, assimilation of the experiences of the past life. You are strengthened by it, you grow by it. So that while the devachan is not a time for evolution, it is a time for building, for recuperation, for assimilation, for inner digestion, for strengthening, and is just as much needed as a man's night's rest in bed is for his body.

There will come a time in human evolution when even the devachan is no longer required, because the man has learned to live in the higher part of his being. Devachan, however beautiful, is an illusion. The time will come in the future when men will no longer have to sleep at night; they won't require it. They will have different kinds of bodies and thus learn to do without the devachan, and thus reincarnate almost immediately in order to help mankind — which is the thing they love most of all — and all other beings. These men are what we now call Masters, in all their grades. But for us ordinary human beings the devachan is a necessary episode.

The devachan, however, while a beautiful experience of the consciousness, is an experience of the higher *personal* consciousness, the higher part of us human egos, the higher part of the personal man, its aroma so to speak. In this fact lies the training bringing about the shortening of the devachan. If you learn to live outside of the personality, and as the Christians say, in the Eternal, while you are imbodyed, if it becomes habitual with you, your devachan will be

correspondingly shortened because you won't want it. You won't need it. The bent of your mind is not in selfish beatific satisfactions of the soul. That is what the devachan is, a fool's paradise. When compared with Reality, it is an illusion. But just because men and women strain for those things and suffer to attain them, the devachan in Nature's infinite pity becomes the time when they have it, the resting, relaxing time, the time of recuperation, digestion, assimilation. As we grow, as the ages pass, in future ages, we won't long so desperately to have these beatific satisfactions of the soul. We shall find our happiness in impersonal attachments to things of beauty, things which belong to the higher spiritual man, and not to the hungry human soul. Do you catch the thought?

That is where the training lies that all chelas are taught, that same truth, that and nothing more. Rise out of the personality so that you learn to use it as a willing, acquiescent instrument, and live in the spiritual part of you, which means impersonally; live universally so that you are not swayed by your own hunger for the things that please and help and rest you; but live in the spiritual, in the universal, and all these other things will be added unto you.

I do feel that we should talk more about the kama-loka and the devachan, and especially the kama-loka, in our public lectures. Let people know how logical our teachings are, how simple, how natural — that you get precisely what you have sown in yourself as character, i. e., what is coming to you. It gives man a powerful reason for living decently. It appeals to his reason, it appeals to his instincts of justice. And while Theosophy has removed the fear of death, we must instil also the sense of ethical responsibility lying upon me, upon you, upon every human being.

SEMPER FIDELIS — *Madeline Clark*

What we love better than we love ourselves we find means to safeguard and protect. Theosophy is that to us, because it is the wellspring of truth and spiritual Tightness, and because it brings the promise of better things, like the waters of life, to humanity.

We know from what unsullied heights the pure stream of Theosophy comes down to us; and there is no wish nearer to our hearts than that of preserving its purity: passing it on to others without divergences from its fundamental verities. For well we know in this regard that any departure from the original, eternal quality of its essential truths can only come about through the vagrant and transitory conceptions of our imperfectly evolved human minds.

Herein lies the significance and value to Theosophists of the traditional words that have come down through the centuries in the schools of Theosophy: "Iti maya srutam" — "Thus have I heard"; with the added implication: " — and thus only do I pass it on." Here we have the surest of all safeguards to the preservation of the teachings: not in the mere formal utterance of words, of course, but in the traditional attitude of mind and heart which gives us, first, in all our studies, an intentness upon the true import of the teachings; and then, the same high quality of intellectual honesty in giving them forth again.

There is profound interest attaching to this tradition of the passing on of the teachings. It takes us back through the ages to the half-forgotten days of the Mystery-Schools, and farther back to that period in Atlantis when the Mystery-Schools had their beginnings; and beyond these again to the Divine Instructors of the later Third Root-Race, when they first entrusted to mankind the treasures of divine wisdom. Through such a lapse of time the Ancient Wisdom has been passed down from teacher to pupil, from elder to younger, with such integrity that we have it now, today, as pure and fresh as when the gods first sent it

forth. *We* are the beneficiaries of this long, long labor of fidelity; we are the generation whose turn it is now to preserve and pass on the sacred heritage.

The Theosophical Forum

OUR MIRRORS — I. R. P.

When the pessimist says "many despair of the race because they know little of it save what they see in their mirrors," his ignorance would seem self-acknowledged; for did we really understand our mirrored reflection the keys to all wisdom and progress would be ours.

To any study of man, Theosophy contributes what the x-ray brings to the specialist's diagnosis of physical imperfection. It teaches that in totality our mirrors reflect a sevenfold Universe, a miniature reproduction in structure, substance, functioning, vitality, and destiny, of the greater Universe in which we live and form an inseparable part. And at the very least, we see the physical and outermost garment of a composite entity marred or enhanced, as the case may be, by the impacting activity of the composite entity's present karma or life.

Even the latter mirrored reflection portrays to the discriminating eye traces of past racial characteristics discernible through the present dominant impress. In this we have definite evidence of our previous participation in differing racial experiences during past lives or incarnations.

Viewed from another aspect what we see in our mirrors is a reflection of a reflection reflected in our individual perception. In other words our conception of ourselves is the psycho-emotionally perceived human aspect of a divine prototype mirrored in reverse, a completely illusory vision save for the degree of spiritual ensoulment we have attained. For in reality the visible man is but a condensed expanse of space strewn with a handful of scattered nebulae, that combined and in vibration conveys to us the impression we classify as a human being.

Those who are becoming spiritually ensouled contact the divinity permeating their own hearts and minds and thereby recognise themselves, and all other human beings, as spiritual candidates for Godhood now serving their human apprenticeship on earth.

So comprehensive a knowledge of what we see in our mirrors with its cosmic, racial, human, physical and individual aspects, banishes crippling despair. It fills us with a compassionate understanding of human endeavor, and a creative hope in the future of humanity based on gratitude for, and trust and confidence in the universal laws of life in whose currents, whether we realize it or not, we are actively involved.

The Theosophical Forum

HOW TO BECOME AN ADEPT (1) — *E. V. Savage*

In choosing this subject, I was reminded of the old story told of Charles Darwin when he was at the height of his fame. (The same story, by the way, has been told making one or more others the hero of it!) Two boys thought they would play a practical joke on him, and they collected various parts from several different insects and small creatures and very cleverly glued them together to resemble a complete creature. They took this to the Naturalist and asked him to examine it and tell them what it was. Darwin looked at it very closely and examined it, and then asked: "Does it hop?" The boys answered: "Yes," delighted that he was falling into their trap. "Then it is most certainly a bug. Does it hum?" he asked. "Yes," said the boys. "Then it must be a humbug," answered the scientist.

TRUTH MUST BE SHARED

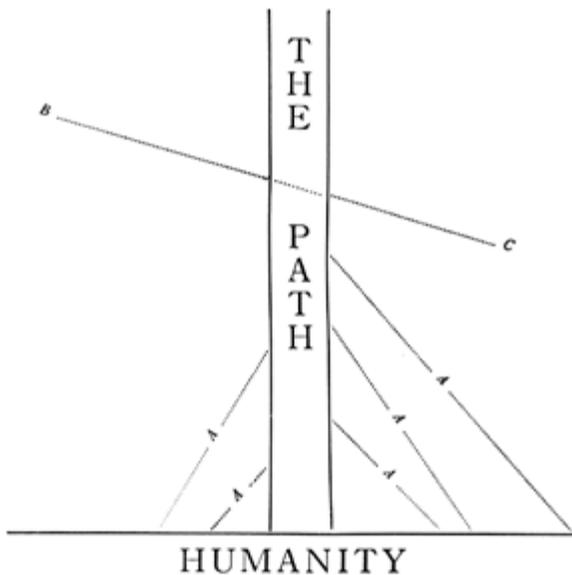
And that tale has two morals to it in the present instance. You can't fool an adept in the line in which he is skilled, and above all not in spiritual matters can you fool one "who has attained." And the second moral is that I feel somewhat of a humbug myself in trying to talk to you on such a subject. But the fact is that one does not always need to be fully skilled or adept in the things one talks about and shares with others, as long as one realizes, of course, one's shortcomings. For instance, I am no god and could not create a sunset. I am not even an artist and could not paint one. But I can call a friend from a busy day at his desk and ask him to come out and share with me the beauties of a sunset and gain inspiration from it.

So it is in the studies we pursue along the Path. We do not need to wait until we have attained Adeptship before sharing what we have learned. The very essence of the teachings is that they must be given. They lose their true value if they are not given. For instance, the purpose of a pane of glass in a window is to be the medium through which light can

come. Suppose that pane of glass decided it would no longer give the light that came to it, but would store it up for itself. Soon the many vibrations of light, and the images, etc., coming to that window would become so thick that the window would no longer be transparent, and its usefulness and very reason for existence would be destroyed.

THOSE WHO TREAD THE PATH

What is this Path that we speak of, and who tread it? We call it technically "The Path," but it could be better described perhaps as "A way of Life" or of living. Let us take a diagram to illustrate our idea, remembering of course that this is only a diagram and not an exact picture.



We have at the bottom of the diagram the large mass of humanity, good, bad, and indifferent, who for generation after generation drift and live, making little or no purposeful evolutionary progress. But in every age there are those who feel an upward urge and start "treading the Path," or at least begin to turn their faces towards it; because there is a vast difference between yearning to lead a higher life, and actually conforming to its requirements in every particular. These who are turning their faces towards the Path are represented by the lines marked A.

There are three general classes of beings who are definitely on the Path. When a man, after many lives of sincere striving for self-improvement and self-progress — please note that I say *self*-improvement and *self*-progress — has finally succeeded in planting his feet irrevocably on the Path, he goes on and on, upward and upward, casting aside one by one the heavinesses of this earth which would drag him down. He finally reaches a state of unalloyed freedom and bliss, which we call Nirvana, and he no more has to worry over the problems of this earth, nor of the many souls struggling beneath him.

How does that picture appeal to you? Theosophy calls such a Nirvani a Pratyeka-Buddha. He has sought spiritual advancement for himself. There is nothing ugly or degrading about him. He is holy and spiritual. In fact many religious systems teach the beauty of such a goal. But he is spiritually selfish because he has advanced alone; not at the expense of his fellows it is true, but disregarding them and not being impeded by them or their sufferings.

The second type who travel the Path, but travel it in the opposite direction, we call Sorcerers or Black Magicians, in contradistinction to those who travel on the upward way who may be called White Magicians. As in everything else in life and the universe, there are always the opposites, such as day and night, black and white, good and evil, positive and negative. We need not concern ourselves much with this second class today, except to point out that they do exist, and that their goal is not reached by merely a sudden step in the wrong direction, but by life after life dedicated to evil-doing, to selfishness at the expense of others and because of a love of evil. I do not believe the number of such travelers on this Path is large.

The third class are those we call the Buddhas of Compassion, who win their title because the very essence of their journey on the Path is that they shall help others. They are ready at any time to delay their own progress if they can stop to help a fellow human being; and, as beautifully expressed in *The Voice of the Silence*, they seek out him who knows still less than they, and give him hope and consolation and let

him hear the Law. These we consider the greatest of all beings known to us on earth.

LET US TURN TOWARDS THE SUN

But let us consider ourselves, all of us here in this Temple, ordinary human beings. We have, let us say, become dissatisfied with merely drifting as the large mass of humanity does. We are beginning the journey on the Path. Let us turn to the diagram again. There is the Path, and below, the mass of humanity. From time to time an individual here, a body of people there, feel an urge to hasten their evolution. On the diagram the lines marked *A* all converge on to the Path itself. But all too often our aspirations do not lead us immediately in the right direction. We wander around vaguely, searching and seeking (I was unable to procure the expensive cut for the diagram which would have shown this); and thereby often give the opportunity to pseudo-teachers to start their various sects and gain a following. But it is also the opportunity for a true Teacher to come among men and act as a genuine Spiritual Guide.

We have heard that it is in times of spiritual darkness that a Teacher appears among men. True, because if all men were spiritually awakened and treading the Path, they would not be in so great a need of a Guide. On the other hand, there must be some at least who are looking towards the Path, searching for wisdom; because only when a Call is made can a Teacher respond. What happens? He finds truth-seekers, searching sometimes in vain for the true Path. He comes among them, if he is of the Order of the Buddhas of Compassion, because he forgets his own self-advancement and lives only to help others.

So the Teacher appears (at the point marked *C* in the diagram let us say,) to lead men back to the Path, and men follow him as they followed the Buddha and Jesus Christ. But in their blind eagerness, when the Teacher has gone they continue too far in the direction set (represented by the continuation of *C* marked *B*), and instead of going upward when they reach the Path, they are led astray again, until another cycle

comes around, and another Teacher comes among them to turn their faces forwards to the Sun again. This shows us why it is that from age to age, although Truth is one, and all great Teachers teach that same Truth, it is necessary for the Great Lodge periodically to send out its Messengers to teach mankind.

In our yearnings towards the Path, I am reminded of a good illustration I read in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*:

the rays of the Sun, which contribute to the growth of vegetation, do not select this or that plant to shine upon. Uproot the plant and transfer it to a piece of soil where the sunbeam cannot reach it, and the latter will not follow it. So with the Atman: unless the higher Self or Ego gravitates towards its Sun — the Monad — the lower *Ego*, or *personal* Self, will have the upper hand in every case. — Vol. II, p. 110

It is a long and arduous journey we are undertaking. Every Teacher has warned us that it must not be viewed lightly. What shall be our equipment, our luggage so to speak? I have selected four qualities or attributes to begin this journey with. You may choose different ones. It doesn't greatly matter, as long as you feel well equipped. I have chosen Courage, Spiritual Discernment, a Sense of Humor, and Selflessness. Let us examine each of these and see in what way it will prove a useful part of our luggage.

COURAGE

I name this quality first because I believe it is the first requisite. Every student of occultism should know that a difficult task is ahead of him. It is a serious undertaking. Mistakes made on the Path are fraught with more dire consequences than those made by ordinary men. The higher you climb a ladder, the more dangerous is a fall therefrom. I would like to read part of a letter written personally by Madame Blavatsky to one who started to tread the Path. It is reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM* for July, 1939:

I am always delighted to be brought into relation with a new

seeker after truth, and only wish I had hours enough in the day to take each by the hand and lead him the long journey through that ends at the door of Esoteric Wisdom. But it has been decreed, from time immemorial, that each one must be his own sufficient pilot and body-guard so far as visible things are concerned. The "Kingdom of Heaven," which I need not tell you is but the dominion of man's immortal spirit over the inner force of the Universe, must be taken by violence. I am sorry to be compelled to tell you, that the prize of Wisdom and Power must be won through danger, trial, temptation, the allurements of sense and all the besetments of this world of matter which they counterpoise, hence antagonist of spirit. Broad, smooth and flower-sprinkled is the way to the world's rewards; narrow, hard, sorrow beset the path to the Temple of Truth.

Do not take the above, pray, for literary flourishes, or an attempt to throw a mysterious coloring over our correspondence. What I say is simple and naked truth. . . . Your greatest need you have yourself stated; it is *Will-Power*. There never was either Adept of White Magic, or Sorcerer of the Goetic Art without that. . . .

To help those who need it is the object of all my life and my most sacred duty.

There was a phrase that caught my fancy in an article in *The Reader's Digest* by Dorothy Canfield, entitled "We Just Live," in which, speaking of a fine old woman, she called her "a general in the army of spiritual forces." That is a good vision to hold before us. When life seems to be particularly hard and perplexing, let's picture ourselves as generals in the army of spiritual forces, and I believe our tasks will become easier.

I think that one thing that will help us to make the courageous attitude our own is to think differently about suffering. We are too accustomed to thinking of the happy life, the easy-flowing life, as the desirable one. We wish our loved ones "a happy and peaceful future." A more useful wish, I should imagine would be "May you always have courage and

strength to meet what life has in store for you."

I agree with Shaw Desmond, writing in his book, *Reincarnation for Everyman*, when he speaks thus of suffering:

There is another way of looking at suffering. Suffering is a privilege reserved for those who are advancing on the Path. It is the *power* to suffer which makes us tender to the sufferings of others and helps us to relieve those sufferings, and with them our own. — p. 168

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

This is our second attribute, and I chose it because I have often thought that if some "good fairy" came along and gave me a choice of one wish to be granted, I should choose the gift of Spiritual Discrimination because it is so easy to strive vigorously towards some goal in life, and after years of futile effort find that we have been going in a wrong direction; and this is particularly important in one's relations with others, when one may, with the best intentions in the world, be "helping" a person one loves to his own detriment. But Spiritual discernment is the function of two very important parts of man's nature, his mind, *Manas*; and his spiritual nature, *Buddhi*, that part which illumines the mind and urges man to noble action. The spiritual part alone is not enough, not for functioning in this world. One of my favorite passages in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* is that which tells us that

the supreme energy [of man] resides in the *Buddhi*; latent — when wedded to *Atman* alone, active and irresistible when galvanized by the *essence* of "Manas." . . . — p. 341

It is true that needful warnings must be given the student not to let his brain-mind rule him, but the urgency of these warnings has, I fear, made us sometimes lose sight of the necessity for using one's mind, and I think that perhaps nowhere as acutely as in spiritual or occult matters is keen intelligence needed. Mr. J. B. Priestley seems to recognise this when he says in his *Rain Upon Godshill* that persistence along any line

of action must be coupled with intelligence, otherwise we might be persisting along stupid or wrong lines.

I would like to quote again from Madame Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, p. 80, to show what an important part Mind plays in man's life, (or should play!):

. . . we find primeval man, issued from the bodies of his *spiritually fireless* progenitors, described as aeriform, devoid of compactness, and MINDLESS. He had no middle principle to serve him as a medium between the *highest* and the *lowest*, the spiritual man and the physical brain, for he lacked *Manas*. The Monads which incarnated in those *empty* SHELLS, remained as unconscious as when separated from their previous incomplete forms and vehicles. There is no potentiality for creation, or self-Consciousness, in a *pure* Spirit on this our plane, unless its too homogeneous, perfect, because divine, nature is, so to say, mixed with, and strengthened by, an essence already differentiated. It is only the lower line of the Triangle — - representing the first triad that emanates from the Universal MONAD — that can furnish this needed consciousness on the plane of differentiated Nature.

However, having put up a brief for the use of our minds, I do not mean to infer that the mind is all-important. How easy it is for men to use their discriminating faculty without spiritual illumination. The great heresy of the age is separateness, and see how it manifests in all walks of life! Men are continually creating divisions. We make a distinction between the old and young, forgetting that the old can be young in spirit and the young can be old in knowledge. One hears stupid questions asked about whether women can become adepts — as if sex had anything to do with spiritual development! Don't trust any religion or philosophical school which lays emphasis on sex, because it is not dealing with the higher, the lasting part of man's nature.

So greatly have we emphasized the difference between East and West that for centuries in the West, the East was looked down upon as being

beneath us on all lines of progress. Then in revolt against this narrow-minded view, people began looking towards the East as though everything that came from there was an embodiment of wisdom, and the itinerant yogis and swamis reaped a rich harvest.

But perhaps the most insidious of divisions men make is in their religion. What should be the highest and most unifying force in men's lives is all too often used to make the greatest breaches among them. I have even heard people divide mankind into Theosophists and non-Theosophists and ask: "Can a Christian travel the Path, or must he become a Theosophist to do so?" Here is Madame Blavatsky's definition of a Theosophist:

Any person of average intellectual capacities and a leaning towards the metaphysical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbor than in receiving help himself, and who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasure for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness, and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer — is a Theosophist.

That is a high ideal and one that few of us measure up to; but you will notice that it does not exclude believers in other forms of thought than the strictly Theosophical. It is not a sign of greatness when a man makes dividing lines in any walk of life. The younger and the more inexperienced the student, the more intolerant and exclusive he is likely to be. Who is so self-righteous as the reformed reprobate? It is an unfortunate fact that one of the first dangers on the Path that besets the student is the tendency to see others who differ from him and who perhaps have not taken the steps he has, in a bad light, and to set himself above them and to dogmatize. The adept on the other hand, widens his sympathies.

I have tried to illustrate on the diagram the absurdity of expecting all men to follow exactly the same lines and to hold that one path only leads to Truth. The lines *A* are all running towards the path, but are also running in different *directions*. If one on the right side faces the

path, and then expects a fellowman on the left side to face in the same direction as he is, he is merely directing his brother away from Truth.

As a final word on the necessity of spiritual discernment, I will call attention to two pieces of practical advice or warning given to the student by Dr. de Purucker. He says that splendid as honesty and sincerity are, they are not sufficient in themselves and can often even lead us astray, for a time at least. But honesty must be illumined by wisdom, else it often becomes harsh. And showing the need of using our intellectual, discriminative faculties, he points out that there is nothing that leads so quickly to fanaticism as *blind* faith. Certainly there is nothing that can so easily lead us into the queer by-paths of pseudo-occultism.

A SENSE OF HUMOR

I was almost tempted to put this quality first, as it is so very important, I should say a *sine qua non*, and in fact embraces a multitude of virtues, pre-eminently common-sense, and a sense of proportion, of the fitness of things — indispensable qualities. Keeping our feet firmly planted on earth, we can let our vision and inspirations soar to the farthest star. Also, to make of spiritual endeavor a lugubrious affair does not encourage mankind to travel the Path with us; but a true sense of humor does prevent our doing some of the ludicrous things that the uninitiated think are necessary to become adepts.

A sense of humor prevents us from having too magnified an idea of ourselves, but it also prevents our having that equally grave fault, an inferiority complex. One is as bad as the other. In a machine, for instance, if one necessary part of the mechanism becomes swelled with its own importance, it will no longer fit, and will have to be discarded, or at least chiseled down. But if one becomes so self-centered and conscious of one's own shortcomings, that one feels like shrinking into insignificance, the likelihood is that one will no longer be large enough to fit into the mechanism of the whole, and will therefore likewise have to be replaced.

The idea is to fill sensibly and whole-heartedly whatever position life's duties have given one, and to attempt to live up to one's highest principles. But please mark that each one of us must live up to *his own* highest principles; and we should neither go through life trying to make our conduct measure up to some other person's idea of what we should do, nor should we try to make other people shape their conduct according to our pattern. Observance of this one simple rule would save a lot of needless heartache, and perhaps enable us to make much quicker progress — if that is what we are seeking!

To me one of the most fascinating aspects of the life of any great Teacher is his sense of humor and of the appropriateness of things. I should like in this connexion to recommend for reading, Edward Thompson's delightful and beautiful book *The Youngest Disciple* which gives such a wholesome and lovable picture of the Lord Buddha.

SELFLESSNESS

This fourth quality I placed last because I think it is the most difficult, because by selflessness I mean vastly more than being unselfish. Mr. Judge puts it very neatly, I think, when he says that the true selfless disciple is not even concerned about himself being the one to render service. He is just as happy if to some other one comes the opportunity for self-sacrifice and service to the world.

I think it is appropriate to illustrate here the difference between the Buddhas of Compassion and the Pratyeka-Buddhas, in terms of their relationship to other men. The Pratyeka-Buddha follows strictly the upward path, without deviation. His course might be shown on the diagram as a spiral ascending upwards, but so small a spiral that there is no danger of its reaching beyond the confines of the Path. The Buddha of Compassion on the other hand, though firmly rooted on the Path, keeps on widening his circle of consciousness, so that it extends not only higher and higher, but also wider and wider and lower and lower, encircling within his compassionate embrace all the toiling pilgrims behind him.

That is one of the first lessons we must learn: not to exclude others, and in our realization of the faults we (hopefully) have left behind, not to dismiss from our consciousness those whom we consider (very probably mistakenly) to have evolved less than we have. In other words, we should avoid Spiritual Pride as we would the plague.

One of the finest things I have read recently along this line, was in a book-review written by H. A. Overstreet in the *New York Herald Tribune*. The book itself has nothing to do with my argument, so I will merely quote the pertinent passages from Mr. Overstreet's review. He says:

___'s tendency — like that of many another disillusioned western mind — is to go oriental. The oriental way, however, is always easy because it does not involve relationships to other people. It asks only for a sustained occupation with one's inner powers. One may well doubt, however, whether our human evolution is to be accomplished by an absorbed occupation with our own consciousness. It seems far more likely that the way of evolutionary advance is that of losing oneself; in short, of caring so much about other people that one's ego, unwatched, redeems itself from egocentricity.

___'s book is a fascinating and instructive account of man's efforts to storm the citadel of his mind. It is highly probable, however, that this is not the way the mind is to be released. For the point is that the mind, to release itself, must forget itself. It must aim not at its own expansion, but at the expansion of life around it. Meditation is good, but better than meditation is active love of one's fellows.

And Mr. J. B. Priestley states somewhat the same idea more succinctly in his *Rain Upon Godshill*: "Nobody ever saved his soul by perpetually worrying about it."

In the foregoing I have attempted to show that the way to adeptship is not essentially following some course of instruction *given to us*, but it is

living one's own life and conquering one's own faults — in other world *self-discipline* from beginning to end. And whatever part outward observances or initiatory rites play in it, they are not the essence of what is needed. But equipped with the virtues I have mentioned, when we have taken full possession of them, many other virtues will have been added unto them, and our circle of consciousness will be so enlarged that we will truly have "set our feet upon the Path." It is a slow journey, and it is difficult; but with courage that admits of no discouragement, with keen intellect illumined by the spiritual light above, a sense of humor that keeps us traveling the Middle Way, and with a selflessness that is devoid of Spiritual Pride, we are bound to succeed.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address delivered in the Temple, Point Loma, March 17, 1940.

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The Theosophical Forum

A CHURCH DILEMMA — P. A. Malpas

Four years ago the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of the Church of England, set up an inquiry into "spiritualism." The Committee of twelve reported a year ago, but until now, the report has not been published.

An English Psychic Journal says that nine of the more influential members of the Committee reported that "spiritualism is true." In reply, Lambeth Palace issued a statement that this is "unauthorised and inaccurate." Also that "it is not proposed to publish the report at present, as further investigation is required."

It is a strange dilemma, the only escape from the horns of which is through Theosophy.

Elsewhere a very able writer, very positive and convincing, tells the world, and especially the military world, that "there is no death." He has *proof*, he says, consisting of the usual psychic manifestations. But these proofs are very unsatisfactory, since they make out that the "dead" are rather less intelligent than the very average man, though capable of certain psychic faculties which seem wonderful simply because we are not accustomed to them; in themselves they are of no ascertainable value at all.

The greatest difficulty appears to be that some people report phenomena of a certain class, and others do not believe these phenomena occur. Those who experience them give an explanation which is obvious to themselves, but discourages belief on the part of others who are more reasoning than psychic, more intellectual than emotional or sentimental. And sentiment plays a great part in the matter.

A very fair statement of the case that will please few is that the phenomena are seen and heard, but that the explanations of them are very wide of the mark.

A person is seen or heard, so it is thought, and the mere sight or statement is accepted without question. But if a mischievous schoolboy telephoned in his best mimicked voice that he was the one now dead, people would not invariably accept that as proof of his statement. Nor if he could imitate the figure or reproduce the thoughts of the dead person would it be any proof at all that he is the dead person. If one thing is certain it is that these psychic appearances, etc., have, in general, a rooted faculty for imitation. Why, is a question well answered in the older Theosophical literature.

One who can coolly analyse the phenomena is struck by the fact that in practically no case has any information been given which is of the slightest use or more than can be learned among living men. It is a fact that a "spirit" once stated the "truth of reincarnation," to use as loose a phrase as the one we started with in our quotation about spiritualism, but nobody seems to have paid much attention — it was not orthodox, perhaps. It was certainly exceptional.

Why not accept the obvious deduction from this and say that the so-called spirits are in no way higher than or superior to ordinary living men, that is, that they are not "spiritual," but psychic, and no more.

There are people whose sentimental nature is tremendously attracted by the mortal remains of their beloved dead. But most realize that the body is *not* the dead friend or relative, and are very content to let it disintegrate.

Would anyone like to have his thoughts immortalized? I think not. Why not let them die, too, and disintegrate? Why not, as the next step, let the psychic nature die and be purified in nature's way? The *man* is more than all these. Let him rest, so far as he needs rest and as long as he needs rest. But that higher and highest part of him that is above even the need of rest, let it seek its own place so long as it will.

Can anyone imagine the *man* trying to come back to communicate with the, to it, childish brains it left behind? I cannot. But I can imagine the *man* in his own sphere of consciousness, free from earthly psychism —

earthly, sensual, *devilish*, as an old Christian in the Bible calls it — saying, "Let those who love me come to me, when they are asleep, perhaps. Then let them take back what they can to their brains and bodies and minds. But I want none of their earth-life *here*. Time enough when I have to go back to it. I need my rest from it first."

It all seems so strange, all this effort to drag a man back from his happiness to our muddy world, when he is free. Is it because we are too indolent to make an effort to rise to where *he* is — not where his body is, nor his psychic cast-offs, nor his unspiritual thoughts, but where he is himself?

Meanwhile all the healthy instinct of a balanced mind rebels against these dealings with the dead, the worship of the dead, as it is called in the East.

The Churches would find new life if they could recall the old teachings on these matters in their early lodges and seek what lies above and beyond all that is material, psychic, mentally intellectual, and lead their peoples upwards instead of into the byways of the desert. Let them recognise by all means that certain phenomena do occur of a psychic sort, but let them study their old teachers and realize that these phenomena have nothing whatever to do with their beloved dead, who have gone far, far beyond such trivialities.

There are no dead men — but they leave a lot of dead garments behind them. And the so-called dead men come back in due time to take new garments, new bodies. It is not fair to them to try to drag them down before their time, even if the efforts are so feeble that they are fruitless, except as disturbing the order of nature and her provisions for their needed rest between two lives on earth.

"Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

TO MAKE LIFE INTERESTING — *Leoline L. Wright*

What a life!" groans someone, tumbling out of bed on a wet Monday morning to take up again the week's relentless grind. And that, I am afraid, describes most of us.

Yet is this feeling really necessary? Life in itself of course *is* uninteresting. It's always the same thing, more or less, over and over and over again — from the stars and planets arriving on the dot at the same point in their heavenly pathways year after year through the millenniums, to the cook starting the percolator at 6.30 on every morning of the year!

Routine governs the universe. Fortunately for us too. For without almost endless repetition there could be no development, in other words no evolution. Doesn't it take any one of us a fearfully long time to learn anything? Walking, talking, controlling temper, learning to play a musical instrument — anything. So repetition and routine are facts that we have to reckon with. We cannot change the habit of the universe. But what I maintain is that there is still a whole lot we can do about it.

If you ask what that is, I reply: "By developing our occult powers." But don't let me mislead you. You may be thinking I am going to talk about the power to precipitate violets and carnations out of the atmosphere, or make an emerald turn up in the apple pie. And that would make life interesting, I admit. But the Editors would never let me get by with it.

Seriously, however, if you really were going to precipitate objects out of the ether you would have to use exactly those occult powers which every normal human being possesses in abundance. But few realize they have them because they are seldom taught to think about and train them. They are "occult" simply because they are concealed from observation by indifference, and because their true range of use is unsuspected.

The particular powers I am referring to are three — imagination, will, and impersonal love. Can you use your imagination whenever you wish to get creative results? To write a story or give a talk, or think up the real way to help a neighbor? Is your will-power right on the job the instant you need it — to control irritation or check unkind retort? Can you look with the piercing eye of impersonal love into every situation which confronts you and determine exactly what you ought to do about it?

Let us look into life as we know it and answer these questions in the light of every-day experience. Now "creative imagination" sounds like a large term, I agree. It may suggest to you only such pictures as Beethoven working out the "Moonlight Sonata," or Turner dashing upon canvass his inspired vermilion and gold, even of someone like the late S. S. Van Dine turning out one of his bestsellers. Strange, how seldom it occurs to anyone that life itself is the highest art of them all.

If we could only bring ourselves to realize that the principles of creative imagination can consciously be applied to marriage, parenthood, a business or professional career, there would be fewer failures. A human being has the powers within himself to take the most commonplace events of daily life — in the office, the schoolroom, the nursery, or the kitchen — and make each one of them a creative masterpiece. Perhaps it is neglect of this power in the home that sends children so often to the moving pictures.

But you must first *want* to do this. "Back of will stands desire," as the Sages tell us. And you must believe in your Divine Self and its creative powers. Are we not children of Buddhi-Manas? Within our own higher principles reside the germs of all the creative ideas and the power and glory of the unfathomable cosmos.

Think about this just before you sleep. *Think about it.* Train yourself to remember it the instant you wake in the morning. Rouse yourself to it before the groan and the gloom can get busy. Call at once upon the god within you to inspire you to create a happy day. You will have to use

your will-power to accomplish it. This tiresome personality of ours takes more pleasure, seemingly, in being miserable than in standing up to things. It is far more dramatic to feel oneself unhappy and thwarted. It gives a chance to comfort our weaknesses with self-pity, the most destructive of all human qualities.

So let us gird ourselves and call upon the spiritual will. A mere sentimental desire will not do the work. It must be purposeful, determined, and continuous effort. If we will begin like this and keep it up day after day (repetition again, you see), our very cells will begin to change. We shall be transforming the life-atoms of our brains and nervous systems — so often drugged with the poison of egotism and self-pity — by using the electric, actually the *fohatic*, currents stepped down to us by our higher principles from the creative inner spheres.

If John Everyman will carry into his office work this creative use of his imagination, aided by a determined will purified by the power of impersonal love, surprising results will follow. By impersonal love is meant that kind of interest in others which puts their welfare before his own. This may sound to him impractical as applied in a business office. But has he really tried it? If he does, it can be confidently predicted that this attitude will open up within him all sorts of new channels of service. These will include inspired suggestions, new ideas for his own job, such as increasing his power of initiative and invention. For it is the Buddhic quality of universal intelligence within ourselves from which all inspiration flows. And Buddhi cannot register in a mind always constricted within its own selfish personal limits.

His standing as a human being will now go up about 75% with his office team mates. For he will be giving constructive sympathy instead of criticism or sentimentality. He will be a living example of fair play and helpful suggestion. And he will meet unfair criticism of himself either with goodnatured silence or some kindly impersonal response, even perhaps a touch of disarming humor at his own expense.

When in turn we consider mothers and school teachers, doctors and nurses, school principals and business executives, or any other career

that might be suggested, we have only to apply creative imagination to realize how these occult powers of ours can be applied. Especially in the home life are these powers invincible.

In conclusion, to the many who sincerely aspire to the ultimate goal of direct chelaship under the Mahatmans another thought should occur. It is not, we can feel sure, until the daily problems of our own individual cosmos have been tackled and completely mastered that Karman will call us to higher and wider fields of action By developing today in our own environment the creative vision and a will purified by the understanding love that gives all and demands for itself nothing, we are taking the first step towards that desired goal. It will call out, strengthen and develop for practical use, every occult faculty of our being. Will it not then serve to make life, for the first time, supremely interesting?

The Theosophical Forum

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST TRADITION — *C. J. Ryan*

In regard to the work *Peaks and Lamas* (1) we agree with Dr Coomaraswamy's appreciation in *Asia* magazine that this:

is one of those very rare books which it is impossible to overpraise. This is we feel, the book with which every student of Tibet and of Mahayana Buddhism should prepare himself and over and above this it is altogether pertinent to the consideration of the tragic problems with which humanity is faced at the present day, as well in Europe as in Asia.

We would add that to the student of Theosophy it is especially valuable for its confirmation by an unprejudiced and keen observer of the favorable impression of the majority of the people of Tibet and neighborhood given by H P Blavatsky and her Indian Masters as well as by Theosophical scholars like Dr W. Y. Evans-Wentz, and other writers and travelers whose firsthand knowledge of Tibet qualifies them to speak.

Mr Marco Pallis, the author, leader of an English mountain climbing party, came in 1933 into close and friendly contact with certain lamas while he was conducting an expedition to scale the highest peaks of the Ganges-Satlej watershed on the border of Tibet. At Lachhen in Sikkim he received valuable preliminary instruction from a lama-anchorite who seems to be the one mentioned with great respect by Mme David-Neel in her *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*. Not being able to penetrate into Tibet proper, but seeking more wisdom, Mr. Pallis was advised to travel to the western border of Tibet where later he continued his studies of Tibetan Buddhism under several learned and spiritual-minded lamas.

For some readers his detailed accounts of ascents of the great Himalayan peaks will be the most interesting parts of the book, while others will be attracted by the word-paintings of the sublime mountain and forest scenery. Everyone will enjoy his delightful sketches or

studies of the people he met, including high and really holy lamas and hermits as well as distinctly inferior ones, down to the simple peasants and the porters in his expedition. His humor is conspicuous but it never transcends the bounds of kindness and good taste. In return for the friendliness and consideration shown to all by Mr. Pallis and his associates they received an equal if not greater return in kind. He was so happy as a guest in one monastery in Ladak that he writes under its photograph "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem!" And this reminds us that we must not forget to mention the magnificent and unusual series of photographs of scenery, temples and monasteries, symbolic and other works of art, and interesting people.

During the last few years a number of valuable books about Tibet have appeared, such as Professor Roerich's *Shamballa*, F. S. Chapman's *Lhasa: the Holy City*, T. Bernard's *The Penthouse of the Gods*, Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz's and Madame David-Neels scholarly works, and others; all of which treat Tibetan religion and the Tibetans from a thoroughly sympathetic point of view. These books have removed much Western prejudice founded on ignorance. Mr. Pallis, tired of being a mere observer, adopted the costume, food, ways of living and, as far as possible, the mentality of the people of the Tibetan borderland, and was thereby able to make close personal and especially spiritual association with them. His tribute to the Tibetan character in general is high. Honesty, goodnature, and cheerfulness in adversity as well as prosperity, tolerance, politeness, and the absence of servile manners became more conspicuous as he approached the Tibetan border. He quotes the well-known French observer, Professor Jacques Bacot:

The Tibetans impress one at once by the dignity of their persons. . . . The Tibetans are not barbarous, not uncultivated; nor for that matter is their country. Under their rough hide they conceal refinements that we lack, much courtesy and philosophy, and the need for beautifying common things, be it a tent, a knife or a stirrup. . . . Moreover they are gay, these Tibetans, and happy as is not the case elsewhere today, more so than our wretched workers in their wretched factories. . . . The more densely the

country is populated, the tamer is the wild game¹. The Tibetans have long since lost the taste for killing which we still keep. . . . I love their companionship during the long rides, for they are taciturn, or else they only speak with good sense, originality, and a taste for speculative things.

Kindness to animals is the rule, though the blind and literal following of the injunction to avoid hurting living creatures often leads to unintentional cruelty when an injured or sick animal is allowed to suffer. While many "superstitions" are rampant, such as the fear of demons and the widespread belief in charms and the like, Mr. Pallis points out that with Tibetans superstition does not lead to such horrors as the burning of witches, and he absolutely denies that superstition has replaced religion. He found that "the Doctrine had left its mark deeply even on simple inarticulate souls." In regard to the charge of lack of cleanliness, which, he says, "is a great standby of a certain class of lecturer or writer, when they can find nothing else to say about the people whose hospitality they have enjoyed," he claims that it is greatly exaggerated. He quotes impartial travelers who make no special complaints. The long bitter winters do not encourage indulgence in cold baths and fuel is scarce. Taking one thing with another, he calls the inhabitants of the Buddhist lands where he traveled, "one of the earth's most civilized peoples." Mme Alexandra David-Neel, the famous Orientalist and traveler, agrees with this. Writing in her *Magic and Mystery in Tibet*, she says: "I had vaguely imagined that beyond the Himalayas the country would become wild, but now I was beginning to realize that on the contrary I was coming into contact with a truly civilized people." Mr. Pallis often "had to whet his intellect to its keenest edge, trying to keep pace with the descant of some contemplative recluse upon a theme of pure metaphysic," after having exchanged elegant and truly expressive courtesies. He found a profound respect for learning ingrained in the average Tibetan: can we say this of the West?

In view of such tributes by Mr. Pallis and the other authorities it is

interesting to note the opinion of a still more competent observer, who resides in Tibet but who is also not a Tibetan. We refer to the Mahatman Koot Hoomi who wrote: "For ages has been Tibet the last corner of the globe not so entirely corrupted as to preclude the mingling together of the two atmospheres — the physical and the spiritual." He adds that the Tibetans are a moral, pure-hearted, simple people, untainted with the vices of "civilization." (See *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 434.)

To the Theosophical or other student who is looking for more important spiritual values than are contained in the mere technical study of "comparative religion" the main interest of this work will be the admirable exposition of the deeper meaning of Tibetan Buddhism which the author acquired under unusually favorable conditions after he abandoned the rarefied air of the snow peaks to seek the more rarefied heights of the spirit.

Mr. Pallis warns us against "the grotesque travesties of doctrines and customs with which certain persons with obvious axes to grind try to saddle the thinkers of India and Tibet." He strongly protests against the narrowness of too many well-meaning western missionaries in the Orient "whose consciousness of their own righteousness" and of the defects of the "heathen" is still very marked. He contrasts it with the open-minded spirit of the lamas and their followers in general. When he commented on this to Tibetans they told him "we are taught that it is a sin to speak disrespectfully of other religions or to treat their ministers in unfriendly fashion." This is, of course, nothing new. H. P. Blavatsky mentions it in her article "Lamas and Druses" in *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, Volume III, where she describes the respect shown by the Tibetans to other religions and their representatives. She compares the refined courtesy extended by a very high lama at Kum-Bum to the Abbe Hue and his colleague about a hundred years ago, with the gross impoliteness of the "lamas of Jehovah," as they called themselves, to the Tibetan prelate, "a poor heathen." The Abbe describes the unbecoming incident without a qualm, in his *Journey through Tartary, Tibet and China*.

While Mr. Pallis believes that Christianity has been one of the great "Traditional" (2) avenues for the transmission of the True Doctrine and that the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount and that of the Buddha in the Deer Park are practically the same, he claims that his "meetings with a good many missionaries and the perusal of their literature have led me to the opinion that, on the whole, their activities are disruptive and their methods open to severe criticism."

In saying this Mr. Pallis is not condemning the Christian "Tradition." On the contrary, he devotes many pages to the demonstration of its fundamental identity with the Tibetan Buddhist "Tradition," though outward forms differ in many points. In support of this, he quotes passages from medieval orthodox Christian writers which might be taken from the Tibetan Canon. He claims, as does the Theosophist, that all authentic "Traditions" are united by their "Note" of universality, though it has been trammelled more severely in the West by dualistic and "warlike" mentality than in India, China or Tibet. He shows that even the Doctrine of the "Void" or *Nirvana* was definitely taught in the fourteenth century by the English Benedictine monk, Father Augustine Baker, but he rather drily remarks that today it would be more intelligible to a Tibetan lama than to the monk's modern Western countrymen!

The "Void" is actual "Knowledge," Reality; to us it may appear to be empty because it transcends the capacity of our ordinary consciousness. But this Reality may be reached through the illumination obtained by initiation. The Gnostics called it the *Pleroma* or Fulness. Father Baker evidently realized this when he wrote, as quoted by Mr. Pallis:

The nought . . . is God, to whom the soul may be united when she is nowhere bodily, nor hath in her any image of creatures. And when she is nowhere bodily then she is everywhere spiritually; and being in such condition she is fit to be united with the said nothing, which also is in all places . . . our inner man calls it All. .

..

The "Knowledge" mentioned as the Reality is, as Mr. Pallis points out, superior to Reason. It is the fruit of direct intuitive experience, which is not so much a thing acquired by accretion; rather it is a thing already there from the moment that the obstacles to its realization have ceased to be. Our whole problem is, How shall we clear away the obstacles?

Many true followers of the Lord Buddha employ certain ascetic measures for inner development, but the object of these exercises is not personal salvation *per se* in its ordinary Western meaning. Nor is it, as mistakenly thought by some, the cultivation of psychic powers or occult arts. The wise disciple seeks the power to rise above personal limitations to the high and serene state of Liberation from which poor ignorant, suffering humanity may be effectively helped. Before you can save others you must have freed yourself from the chains of the lower self. Mr. Pallis says that the spiritually high lamas he met — and there were not a few — were hardworking practical helpers of their people who only retired at times to their solitary hermitages to seek further inner growth in wisdom. Of course there were others whose apparent devotion was merely lip-service for worldly ends, and whose monasteries were ill conducted. He frankly describes such cases, but he did not see many. Mr. Pallis gives many pages to the interpretation of the well-known Buddhist Wheel or Round of Life found in every Buddhist Temple, which he learned from his lama teachers. The study of the Wheel is very desirable in order to understand the meaning of Liberation. Under a quaint but expressive symbolism the divisions of the Wheel represent the processes which "gods," "demons," men, and even animals, have to go through while they are bound by illusion. Its "hells" and "heavens" are here and now, and the Agent which keeps this Wheel of Fortune is Karman. (We note that the Sanskrit word *Karman* is spelt thus in this scholarly though not pedantic work.) The only remedy for the ills caused by seeking happiness in the impermanent and mocking region of Desire is true Knowledge, which of course includes Compassion.

Mr. Pallis, at his first contact with Tibetans and lamas of the Tibetan

borderland, found that he "had stepped right out of the circle of influences that had enclosed our lives hitherto," and the lively temperament, bodily vigor, and kindly serenity of spirit of those he met induced him seriously to study the teachings which were able to produce such results. He found that the lives of the people in general have been powerfully influenced by the sublime teaching of the Great Renunciation, the refusal of the bliss of *Nirvana*, exemplified in Tibetan Buddhism by the self-sacrifice of (among others) the Bodhisattva Chenrezi (Avalokitesvara in India), "the Good Shepherd, the Savior, sinless and all-knowing who offers himself for the Universe in the supreme sacrifice of redemptive love."

Deeply impressed by one of the first lamas he met, and referring to the power of Compassion which he radiated, Mr. Pallis writes:

Our lama's love possessed a note of serenity which seemed to distinguish it from the similarly-named but usually more passionately expressed virtue found among Europeans. I do not believe that this Compassion, said by some to be special to Buddhism, really differs in essence from Christian Charity; but it is . . . *consciously linked with a certain intellectual concept, of which it is the corollary — a recognition of the relations which exist between all creatures, including man, based on an insight into the true nature of the Universe, and not dependent on a vague emotional appeal.* (Italics ours.)

This eternal virtue, Compassion, then, is not an emotional byproduct but is closely linked (or identical) with a scientific understanding of the universe. It is one of the most important teachings of Theosophy that ethics and morality cannot be divorced from other expressions of natural law, because the Kosmos is fundamentally a unity, and as Dr. de Purucker says, "Love is the cement of the universe." Mr. Pallis points out that loving impulses are less likely to be upset by a swing of the emotional pendulum when they are firmly linked with definite ideas. We may rejoice that he is able to show the world that these Theosophical principles are being taught by the lamas.

Mr. Pallis records a rich harvest of teaching he derived from the spiritually and intellectually qualified lamas under whom he studied. It includes difficult problems such as the true nature of man, of gods and of demons, asceticism, "idol" worship, Karma and Reincarnation, the difference between Knowledge and Reason, the perilous Short or Direct Path of initiation or Liberation, and many other cognate subjects. Whenever he asked for the best way to find the Path, the answer never varied — the first thing of all is to find a Teacher. He was warned that though certain Western translations from the Sanskrit are said to contain "practical methods" for seekers toward Enlightenment, any attempt to apply those methods without the watchful guidance of a real Teacher, an adept, is more than foolish, it is dangerous in the extreme. Even in the purely intellectual study of abstruse and condensed doctrinal texts many a Western savant presumes to pass judgments and to write commentaries, though he is ignorant of the vast amount of detail which is left to be filled in by the word of mouth of the Teacher. This is precisely what Col. H. S. Olcott, under H. P. Blavatsky's inspiration, brought to the attention of Professor Max Muller, the great Sanskritist, when he denied that within the outer meaning of the Hindu Scriptures lay concealed a hidden and esoteric one. Mme. David-Neel, rather better informed than Max Muller, while insisting that all the Buddhistic doctrines taught in mystic circles can be found in books, admits that in Tibet certain secret information is imparted to a few — "initiates," she calls them. But she believes that this esoteric teaching merely consists of methods of training the mind or, in lower degrees, of developing psychic or "supernormal" powers. We feel that Mr. Pallis has reached a truer understanding of the kind of "esoteric teaching" given to real disciples, such as H. P. Blavatsky received from her Tibetan Teachers, and which is primarily spiritual and intellectual; not psychic even though occult powers may appear as by-products. She was allowed to give out a few of the hitherto secret teachings in her *The Secret Doctrine*. Theosophical students of the Hindu sacred literature or the Tibetan Buddhist writings such as the series translated by the Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup and annotated by Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, can see far deeper meanings in such writings than the learned scholars who

ignore the key of interpretation she brought from the East.

Considerable misunderstanding has prevailed about certain aspects of Tibetan Buddhist art works, and Mr. Pallis makes praiseworthy efforts to help us understand what the lama artists meant to convey. Everyone knows that the subjects represented in Tibetan religious art are marked by a strong duality. One moiety consists largely of serene and gracious Beings sitting on lotus pedestals in dignified attitudes, the other displays numerous frightful apparitions frenziedly dancing on or torturing men and even animals. The Western traveler or observer of museum pieces who may only be acquainted with medieval pictures of saints and prophets might interpret the Tibetan benign divinities with some approach to accuracy, but, with his recollection of the medieval pictures of Satan and his imps, he would probably misunderstand the symbolism of the Buddhist forms of horror and imagine that the Tibetans worshiped devils and offered sacrifices to them! Mr. Pallis redeems the reputation of the Oriental philosophers and artists by lucidly explaining the significance of this symbolic Duality.

Much confusion has also arisen in regard to the so-called Tibetan "Devil-Dances," and this is explained. These performances are not entertainment in the ordinary sense, but they are ceremonial dramatizations of religious themes of profound significance to the devout onlookers; in fact they are true Mystery Plays. Mr. Pallis speaks with deep admiration for the beauty and magnificence of some of these spectacles. Very few foreigners have seen them.

The author also discusses the alleged objectionable nature of a certain class of paintings of deities which are seldom shown to travelers. He explains that they are merely symbolic, which is no doubt correct, and that their philosophic meaning is pure and profound; but, to speak plainly, we feel that although in the Orient, as in antiquity, the creative aspect of nature is frankly recognised and treated in art without Occidental reserve, yet far too much emphasis has been placed in the East on its emblems. According to Theosophy, sex is merely a temporary expression of Duality, and its symbolism, however pure and

philosophic in intent, is liable to serious abuse. Without defending a false prudery we may well protest against the cruder developments in India, and to a lesser degree perhaps in Tibet, of such pictorial or sculptural symbolism of metaphysical concepts. We deny that they have any place in the presentations of the pure teachings of Buddhism. They are seemingly relics of the dark Bonpa magic and the dangerous worship of nature spirits, which is said to have come from ancient Chaldaea and originally from degenerating Atlantis. Mr. Pallis says that the adherents of the old Bonpa Tradition are still feared for their skill in sorcery, but he charitably suggests that "from all accounts they are really harmless enough people." Maybe, but other writers think differently.

In regard to magic, black or white, the phenomenon-hunter will find little to gratify his curiosity in this book. The author was too deeply absorbed in real occultism as we understand it, spiritual wisdom, to spend precious time on side-issues. But his references to Mme. David-Neel's experiences, especially with *Tummo*, the occult art of keeping oneself warm and comfortable without fuel or winter clothing in the bitterest cold of the ice caves or the frozen wastes, which she studied successfully, and his remarks about the magical doings of the great Tibetan ascetic and poet Mila Repa, show that he does not avoid the subject through ignorance. Moreover, he gives three pages to the mystical subject of the *Tulkus*, or Incarnations of Heavenly Beings or other Saintly Personages in human personalities which in some cases, such as that of certain Avatars, like Jesus, are acts of White Magic. Mr. Pallis was puzzled by accounts of *Tulkus* who do not at all times act up to their high reputation; but this is not strange when we learn that the incarnating soul of a superior being, or in some instances a projected Ray, is not always "on deck," as it were, in its chosen physical vehicle. It may withdraw for a while, or even permanently.

There has been considerable misunderstanding in the West about the supposed "sacrifices" made by Tibetan lamas or yogis who retire for long or short periods to mountain retreats. Mr. Pallis explains from personal observation that the Buddhist conception of asceticism is very

different from that of the early Christian anchorites who fled from the temptations of the world to the Egyptian deserts in order to save their own souls from eternal destruction. He says:

There is no idea of mortifying the flesh by painful austerities. The Buddha formally condemned the extremes both of luxury and self-torture. . . . Nothing which is calculated to damage health is encouraged, for with impaired health must come deterioration of mental powers which is an obstacle in the pursuit of Knowledge.

Each monastery (*Gompa*) owns a number of solitary retreats or cells for meditation and inner development free from distraction. No one is expected to intrude during the period of seclusion, be it long or short, but any suggestion of imprisonment or compulsion would be ridiculous. Mr. Pallis corroborates Mme. David-Neel's experiences among the genuine ascetics. They do not suffer from the absence of social intercourse during their retreats. Their days are occupied by methodical exercises in spiritual training, meditation on profound philosophical problems, and efforts to reach higher states of consciousness. Passionately interested in these strenuous investigations and introspections, they are too busy to notice their isolation. Members of the Kargyitpa Order, who follow the teachings of Mila Repa, sometimes withdraw into icy glacier caves in the high mountain solitudes where a cotton cloth is their only garment! They keep warm by the occult process of Tummo already mentioned. But the general practice is to make retreats under sufficiently comfortable conditions.

The author deals with many highly interesting and instructive matters which cannot even be mentioned, and in every case he throws light on his subject. His point of view is original, and even in the rare cases where we may not agree with him, his conclusions demand careful consideration. He has no hesitation in discussing difficult problems, such as the disputed question of the Tantras, which are so frequently confused with the archaic Bon black magic, yet which did not fall into

disrepute until about 400 years ago. In regard to the problem of the Tibetan Deities he has much to say of great interest. Do the instructed lamas believe them to be real Divine Personages or merely metaphorical abstractions? Apparently neither, or both! He quotes the great fourteenth century Adept and Reformer, Tsong-kha-pa, to the effect that from the standpoint of the consciousness which lives in the region of "name and form," to use the technical expression, the conventional Deities do exist, but to the fully Enlightened who understand "Reality" they "simply are not."

But we must not take the words "are not" too literally. A clue to the deeper meaning may be found in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 128-32, etc.) where the *Lipika*, the Recorders or Agents of Karman, are discussed. Mr. Pallis shows that the Tibetan Judge of the Dead, Shindje, is Karman itself, the law of cause and effect, from which none can escape. Karman is real enough! It is reassuring to find that Mr. Pallis was protected by his lama teachers from falling into the common error of regarding Karman as merely retribution for evil doing. He explains that it is not a process of reward or punishment in the ordinary meaning of those words; it is simply *inexorable justice* which returns to you exactly what you have called for by your thoughts and deeds, be it pleasant or otherwise. Like other laws of this orderly universe it can be absolutely relied upon. To the evil-doers Shindje, the Karmic Judge of the Dead, is naturally a terrible monster, and in order to warn them while there is time to repent he is depicted as such.

The latter part of this illuminating book deals with the present conditions and the dangers threatening the culture of the lands in which the Tibetan Buddhist "Tradition" still holds its own. Mr. Pallis discusses these profoundly important problems with a breadth of outlook and a sympathetic insight rare indeed in a Western writer. "Advanced" social and educational reformers, so-called, will find much that is new to them and much instruction on lines unfamiliar in the West, presented temperately but convincingly.

Among many cultural phases of the Buddhist "Tradition" discussed, but

which we have no room to do more than mention, interesting and important though they be, are vegetarianism, non-resistance, war, education and the meaning of "progress," crime and punishment, the social conditions and family life, and many others, all of which supply a solid foundation for judgment.

Mr. Pallis eloquently sets forth the high standard of the "Traditional" arts, music, architecture, painting, handwoven textiles and so forth. He greatly dreads the mechanistic commercial irruptions which seriously threaten to injure or destroy the creative inspiration which has developed these fine results. As one example; the native paints with their harmonious colors are being replaced here and there by cruder (and cheaper) commercial importations, and in consequence the appreciation of subtil shades of color is already beginning to degenerate.

In regard to the knowledge of Man, the Buddhist Tradition has much to teach us, as Mr. Pallis quickly found. Our Western scientists, by hard work directed on materialistic lines mostly, have discovered worthwhile information about the brain and its mechanisms, and have developed some rudimentary theories of psychology, a science admittedly in its early infancy. All this from external observation. By harder work and at enormous sacrifice in another direction — mostly internal observation — generations untold of Oriental researchers have discovered an infinitely larger field of study in man's consciousness and have reduced it to an exact science. Their science has a high moral and spiritual background and aim, which unfortunately ours disregards as of no practical significance. But they get results which the world cannot afford to lose!

The respect for learning is ingrained even among the illiterate, but the learning must have a spiritual motive or background. Mr. Pallis is firmly convinced that the isolation of Tibet has been no misfortune. It has enabled a considerable vestige of the finer atmosphere of the ancient world to survive, a spirit which the West has lost in its competitive race for materialistic commercial domination and in its

worship of the Western god of inventive science. He feels that the Tibetans and their neighbors hold something spiritually and intellectually precious in their keeping, and that if they can realize the importance of their trust and preserve it from contamination, it may become the expanding focus from which the Oriental "Tradition" in its purity will spread widely over the earth. But if this fails, he believes, the world may drift into sheer opportunism, out of which it will take almost superhuman efforts to rise. He frankly admits that he would like to reincarnate in Tibet *if it remains Tibet* and refuses to become a slavish copy of the meretricious civilization of the West!

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Peaks and Lamas*, by Marco Pallis Alfred Knopf, New York 99 illustrations and maps. 428 pp. \$5. 00 ([return to text](#))

2. He employs the word "Tradition" to convey the idea of something wider than any closed system of religion or philosophy Though it includes religion and philosophy "Tradition" embraces a characteristic culture or mode of life, ethical, social and cultural in general, for which such antitheses as "sacred and profane" are meaningless. He prefers to use "the Tibetan Buddhist Tradition" as being more expressive than "Lamaism" which is misleading as well as offensive in its implications. ([return to text](#))

LIKE AND UNLIKE — *H. T. Edge*

It is said that "like attracts like," and also that like repels like. Instances of both are found in science: if a solution of two or three different salts, is left to crystallize, the particles of each salt will congregate together. On the other hand, the like poles of a magnet will repel each other.

The trouble arises from the use of an undefined word, the word "like." A woman is like a man in the sense that both are human as contrasted with animal or vegetable. But if we are thinking of humanity alone, we can describe the woman as a polar opposite of man. Therefore man and woman are at the same time like and unlike each other. Birds of a feather flock together, says the proverb; and that is because like attracts like; but all the same there may be a terrible scrap if two male mocking-birds should happen to meet in the mating season. This is because like repels like.

This is just one example of the way in which people arguing may get a temperature, all because they are using undefined words, or students may find what they call contradictions in teachings. We have to learn to think in thoughts, not in words; and to detach words from ideas; also not to let ourselves be hypnotized by proverbial expressions.

JUSTICE RULES — *Helen G. Steward*

Nothing "just happens." If things just happened there would be no system of planets. Everything would be a jumble; there would be no order, no system anywhere; because what holds good in one place, as far as cosmic law is concerned, holds good in all places. Chaos, destruction, death would be the rule if things "just happened."

But the truth is that all moves in a sequential, orderly manner. Nothing ever really dies, nothing is lost. Everything, everywhere, is balanced. Action and reaction are equal and opposite. Let us remember that the aggressor of today is but the defender of yester-year. Old scores, old hates, old debts must be met, must be balanced, if not in this life then in a succeeding earth-incarnation. Fundamentally, perfect justice rules the world. We should hold tightly in our hearts to this fundamental idea: out of the welter of seeming injustice something better, finer, nobler will be born; some thing, some lesson or lessons the world needs will be born out of the seemingly impossible situation stalking abroad today on this stage called Life.

Remember too that nothing can come to us either for good or for ill but what *is ours*: ours to be met, ours to be repaid, ours to conquer, but never ours to "get even with." "Hatred ceaseth never by hatred, hatred ceaseth by love" — uttered centuries ago is still applicable today.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How Old are the Hindu Schools of Philosophy?

Can you give me any hint as to age or time of origin of the six Darsanas or Hindu schools of philosophy? When did Kapila and Patanjali actually live? There is so much argument on these two personages and the time of their birth. — J. T.

G. de P. — You ask first about the origin and second about the various ages, of the Six Great Darsanas or Philosophic Visions, otherwise Schools of Philosophy in India; and collaterally with these you ask about the ages of their various Founders, such as Kanada, Kapila, Gotama (not the Buddha of course here), Patanjali, etc.

First, as regards the ages of the founders: The truth is that all the ages, or dates rather, given by European Orientalists are little more than speculations; they have never been proved, even though they may be generally accepted. Consequently we Theosophists refuse to accept them. They are almost invariably too late in time, too close to us. That is what I would say.

On the other hand, I would accept with much more respect a date that might be worked out as given by some eminent Hindu of old times himself. Of course I know this would be a vast work, sifting the material, and I merely mention it to show that I would prefer the Hindu tradition, as to when so-and-so lived, to the theorizings of modern Occidentalists who are all psychologized with scientific ideas of the recent development of thinking man, etc., etc.

In the old days it used to be held that the world was created only four thousand odd years ago, and this was a then Christian view; and consequently every date had to be brought down as close to ours as they could push it. So much for the dates of the founders of these Schools. Every one of these founders was not actually a founder in the

sense of starting a new School, but merely carried on, perhaps rejuvenated, perhaps modified, what already had been known for heaven knows how many ages before he lived: somewhat in the same way that H. P. B. brought the archaic Theosophy to our age and presented it in its modern form, although it is ageless as time.

This leads me to the origin of these Six Darsanas. Occidental Orientalists, as I have already pointed out, in trying to keep within the limits of their new facts, say that each such School was probably started by the philosopher named. But I have just pointed out why in actual fact this need not be so.

It is my opinion, in fact my conviction, that every one of these Six Darsanas is of enormous age. The fact that they are such natural productions of the human intellect shows that they must have occurred ages and ages and ages ago to other philosophic minds. Personally I think they run back in their reaches even to Atlantean times, not in their present presentations or forms, but I mean the philosophic ground-thoughts that these Schools respectively represent. The various so-called founders were merely more or less recent; and by that I mean long after Atlantis, but not in our time — Hindu philosophers who themselves were attracted by one or other of these Schools; and each one was so successful in interpreting and propagandizing his own particular choice or philosophic preference, that in time he became the founder of this School or that School.

For instance, take the Yoga School of Patanjali. I think that it flourished ages beyond the age of Patanjali, whenever he lived, because Yoga has been active in the thought of man's mind since immemorial time. Patanjali did not discover it. He merely acted as I have above stated. The same with the Nyaya School of Logical Philosophy of Gotama, or the Vaiseshika, the Atomic School of Kanada. Thoughts like these must have been in the minds of men since Atlantean times. Similarly with the Vedanta, especially the Adwaita. The Adwaita form of it was magnificently presented and formulated by the great Sankaracharya, and this is just an instance in point. Some occidental scholars now call

him the Founder of the Adwaita-Vedanta, as if men never had the thoughts in the Adwaita-Vedanta before Sankaracharya. He merely took this aspect of the Vedanta, and re-formed it according to the ideas of his time, and did so so wonderfully that he became known as its great Teacher. But Adwaita-Vedanta is so native to the human spirit, it must have existed for ages and ages before ever Sankaracharya was dreamed of, by the Gods that be.

As we Theosophists say, the Six Darsanas contain the six various types or methods in which human philosophy through the ages has been cast, and we unite them all in the highest or seventh, which is our own Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy — or to put it more correctly, it is from this God-Wisdom or Wisdom-Religion that all these six various Darsanas have come forth as six special presentations or six specializations of philosophy, each one along its own line, the scientific, the mystical, the logical, the scientific-mystic, the objectively idealistic, call them by what names you like.

Theosophical Interpretation of God

Please tell me, in as simple words as possible, what is the Theosophical interpretation of God?

Irene R. Ponsonby — Theosophists exalt no one god over all other gods. We believe the Universe to be composed of god-stuff — divine substance — in varying grades of evolutionary development or self-expression. These grades form the hierarchies or kingdoms of Nature, and at the apex of each hierarchy a god or hierarch presides as the focussing and emanating center of that hierarchy for the forces pouring into it from the farther reaches of the Universe and radiating through every unit composing the hierarchy. There are, therefore, numberless gods — low, less low, intermediate, high, higher, and highest; extending to reaches the human mind cannot now conceive — each one the god for its particular sphere, a self-contained universe among countless universes in the Galaxy.

One god there is to which the Theosophist attunes his heart and mind

in reverence and aspiration. This is the god of his being, his Inner God. It is the source of all the inspiration that fills his life with radiance, that sustains and vitalizes him, and is his link with the sublime realms of Life and Light beyond his present sphere of activity.

Life's Progressive Drama on Earth

If the personality is lost at death, how can we carry over what we have learned during life, and benefit by our experience?

Lydia Ross — A new personality for each incarnation is only the costume which the Real Man wears in that life's drama. Or, better say that it is his wardrobe for his whole life's dramatic career. Because each lifetime the reincarnating Ego is costumed by the different outfits of body, brains, and characteristics which are suitable for the parts of infancy, childhood, youth, manhood, and age.

The knowledge and skill which we gain in learning to walk and talk and read, etc., are used in our adult work and study. All that is gained in playing juvenile roles — both successes and failures — go into our enlarging character and resources. It is character which counts and which prepares us for future roles in life's progressive drama on earth. No adult actor can go back, even if he would, and rebecome his juvenile self. Why should he, when all that he *has been* is merged into what he *now is*. No more can the reincarnating man — wiser for his Devachanic visions of possible ideals — be wholly limited to the outgrown stature and ideas of his by-gone personalities. Just as we leave a whole series of our childish and youthful personalities behind, as little by little we become adults, so do we leave them all for good when we die.

The great mysteries of life and death are everyday events writ large. If we know the meaning of the familiar events, we have the key to the rest. It is right that we should know. That is why we are here on earth. Truth is the natural heritage of mankind, and Theosophy shows the way to reclaim our birthright.

Beware of Labeling!

Please define for us the difference in the signification of the two words "spiritual" and "mystical" as used in the Wisdom-Religion.

H. T. E. — These words are vague in their meaning and used in different senses by different writers. I know of no standard meaning for either of them, whether taken separately or when compared and contrasted with each other. A particular writer may decide, for his particular purpose, to give definite meanings to them in his writings, and to define a distinction between them. Any decision I might make on the subject myself would be liable to contradiction by other people. We should strive to think in *ideas* rather than in words. The wish to have things neatly labeled and docketed is natural enough, but is apt to fetter the mind. When any writer on the Wisdom-Religion uses these words, it is usually easy enough to find out his meaning, and that is all that really matters.

Reimbodiment is Nature's Law

What does the future hold for one who does not accept the Doctrine of Reincarnation?

C. Q. Wesner — There are two general classes of those who do not accept the Doctrine of Reincarnation: (1) those who hold some other theory regarding the post-mortem life, for example, the orthodox Christians, and (2) the rank materialist who believes that "when you're dead you're dead all over."

The members of the first class pass into their kama-loka. As a large percentage are really good people who live up to their ideas of a good life as best they can, they soon enter their devachan, which will correspond to their earthly pictures of Heaven. But sooner or later this state of consciousness fades and — they reincarnate.

The members of the second class, during life have built nothing into their "thought-self which can survive the dissolution of the physical body. To quote H. P. Blavatsky:

For the materialist, who, notwithstanding his materialism, was

not a bad man, the interval between the two lives will be like the unbroken and placid sleep of a child, either entirely dreamless, or filled with pictures of which he will have no definite perception: . . . — *The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 161-2

Nature is no respecter of persons. Reimbodiment, being Nature's Law, applies to all beings without respecting the wishes, thoughts, or desires of anyone. Learn Nature's Laws, live in accord with them, and even while we are "bound to the wheel of Necessity," it is possible so to shape our lives — and our future destiny — that the journey may be a joyous pilgrimage toward our spiritual goal — self-conscious divinity.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MAIN PURPOSES OF THE T. S. — *G. de Purucker*

Why do Theosophists devote so much time and energy and intelligence to a study of recondite doctrines? What is the use of it? To be very Occidental, "does it pay?" It won't pay a particle if your mind is directed downwards. But if you are a normal human being, with normal human aspirations, and want to be more and greater than you are, if your mind is directed upwards, it will "pay" enormously. Why? I will tell you why.

The Theosophical Society was founded by the Masters of Wisdom for one purpose mainly. The secondary purpose was to give priceless comfort and help to human individuals, giving them courage and hope and a sublime objective in life. But the main purpose was to give to mankind a religio-philosophical and scientific explanation of life's riddles, based on the natural fact of Universal Brotherhood, which would bring about a moral and spiritual revolution in the world.

The Masters knew that the world was entering upon conditions which if not checked would lead us to hell, conditions spiritual and intellectual, social, political, conditions of all kinds, of which the psychical outbreaks are only symptomatic. The purpose of the Theosophical Society therefore, principally, is to establish a nucleus of a true Universal Brotherhood, and to give unto thinking men and women the reasons for this. When you can persuade men's and women's reason, and charm their hearts, you have won; and you cannot persuade thinking man that a thing is right if all his instincts rebel against it, instincts intellectual and other. So the Masters founded the Theosophical Society once more in our age in order to give anew to a very materialistic and discouraged world, the teachings of the God-Wisdom of all the ages, man's heritage. Now understand that clearly. And we study these Theosophical doctrines so that we, becoming acquainted with them, understanding them, and ourselves persuaded by them, i. e. our minds and hearts captured by their grandeur and

completeness, will change our own lives. Then we shall be able so to present them to other men that they too will see the Vision Sublime which we at least have caught glimpses of.

That is why we study the Theosophical Doctrines; and I can tell you that had it not been for the very perilous conditions that the human race began to go into with the downfall of the so-called Pagan religions and philosophies of two thousand years ago, had it not been for world conditions, I myself doubt very much if the Theosophical Society would have ever been founded for two or three or six thousand years. Individuals would have been helped in the silence and privately. But conditions were such that help from above, from wiser heads than ordinary men, was needed. It was given.

I will tell you, the problem in the world today is not with the men on either side of the fence, or any side of the fence. Men are human beings. The trouble is *wrong ideas*, which make wrong conduct. You change ideas and you have conduct in conformity therewith. If you can set men going crazy about some fad or other, you can just as easily fire them and enthuse them with the love of something sublime, and change the whole course of life: bring peace on earth and good will to men.

But you have to know how to persuade men. You have to give them a philosophy that they can study and respect and have conviction in, and which will grow upon them as they study it the more; the greater study, the greater belief. Truth is marvelously persuasive in itself. Men are inherently decent and good; and a good many, I do believe, of the so-called criminals of the past and of the present are people, men and women, who have become so absolutely discouraged that they have lost their grip. If they had had a decent chance, the inherent weaknesses in their characters might probably not have overpowered, paradoxically as it sounds, the higher part.

I believe in my fellow human beings. I know men, and I know that men think and feel — no matter what their race, no matter what their beliefs. Men are men the world over, and fundamentally decent, and

they love decency and grand things. Look how the appeal of an heroic action runs like wild fire in all countries; all men respond. That shows the inherent right and decency in the human heart. It is to these things that we appeal. If fads can sweep over not only one people, but the whole world and fascinate mankind for a thousand years or more, making them all kinds of things which we now look upon as crazy; you can just as well, and with just as much hope, and with infinitely more chance of permanent success, appeal to the decency in men, to the good in men, to the common fellow-feeling that we are human beings, that we at least will learn to respect each other's convictions in harmony and in peace. There is where real decency comes out. Not in the attempt to convert with violence, always bringing forth more violence and resentment.

There is the pathos of the situation. I personally have never yet found it to fail in my own dealings with my fellow humans, I have never found kindness, consideration, and the appeal to the decency in other men — I have never found these to fail. If the response has not always been what I have wished for, then I have questioned myself, whether I myself have longed for the things I have wanted, longed for them strongly enough.

That is one reason why the Theosophical Society admits to its Fellowship men of all races, of all creeds. There is no distinction of race, caste, creed or color in our organization. Remember the main objective of the Theosophical Society: to establish a nucleus of a genuine Universal Brotherhood, a nucleus which is absolutely and throughout non-political, based on no sentimental reasons. This perhaps may never make an appeal to some of the hard-heads, those wilfully blind, who simply will not see. Our appeal is to intellect and decency in moral instincts, and points to the laws of the universe as the foundation on which life is builded. That is why we study Theosophy and its sublime religio-philosophico-scientific doctrines. It is the Occult Hierarchy that sent our H. P. B. to establish the Theosophical Society, whose work is not to labor spectacularly, showily, theatrically, but to work steadily, untiringly, to change the hearts and minds of men.

Secondarily, the work of the T. S. is to help us as individual Theosophists.

The Theosophical Forum

THE LARGER VIEW — *Lydia Ross*

Those who measure the practical importance and the essential value of a movement in terms of money and a huge membership, fail to see the vital influence and the progressive character of the Theosophical Movement. Granted, the Theosophical Society is anything but a money-making venture, and its enrolled members are a small percent of the two billions populating the planet. Nevertheless, this international organization, as a human experiment in the study and application of a universal philosophy of life, is demonstrating the solution of the individual and social problems which evidently are beyond the scope of money and majorities. The Ancient Wisdom proves that the practice of Universal Brotherhood is the simple and fundamental means of justice and progress for all men. Only by unity in diversity can each human unit fulfill his destiny by moving forward in his own place in the grand scheme for the perfecting of all humanity in the course of many lives

Knowledge of this larger view of the original and ultimate plan of a spiritual democracy, so changes the minds and hearts of men that they progress by natural evolution instead of by unnatural revolution.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish " Study Theosophy if you would read the deeper meaning of the chaotic signs of the times! —

Lydia Ross

DAMODAR, A SUCCESSFUL CHELA — *Helen Savage*

"Happy Damodar! He went to the land of Bliss, to Tibet, and must now be far away in the regions of our Masters."

H. P. Blavatsky undoubtedly wrote these words with a mingling of many feelings in her heart. There must have been genuine happiness for her young co-disciple who had attained in so short a time the goal of his one-pointed will; and a warm affection for the faithful friend who, with a loyalty to the cause of Theosophy equal to her own, stood by her day after long arduous day in the task of issuing her magazine, *The Theosophist*. She must have felt also a nostalgic wistfulness as she thought of the time when she too, her herculean task at last completed, would return "Home."

But she had not yet written *The Secret Doctrine* (it was only 1885); and while it was her lot to struggle on in the world of men for six more years of intense labor, it was Damodar's to be admitted to the Tibetan Mystery-School whose graduates become the spiritual Teachers of the race. This privilege he had won by natural right; but he knew, and H. P. B. herself knew, that it was not a matter of going to a "land of Bliss." It would be for the boy a period of the most intense and severe training; for Masterhood is not cheaply won.

Damodar's story from the time he "disappeared" in 1885 is, of course, a closed book; and his childhood and youth were much like that of other boys brought up in a well-to-do Brahmin household. So that it is the few short years between 1879, when he joined the T. S., and the spring of 1885 that embrace that portion of his life-story so interesting to Theosophists. This story has been told in a lively and sympathetic way by Col. Olcott in his *Old Diary Leaves*, but Damodar's own writings, (1) found scattered through the pages of the early numbers of *The Theosophist*, as well as his letters to W. Q. Judge and others, add much to our understanding of the character and capabilities of this

remarkable figure in the group of workers at the Headquarters during the early days of the T. S. in India.

Damodar tells us that it was the reading of *Isis Unveiled* that first awakened him in this life, and he lost no time in joining the Theosophical Society and starting right in to *work*. He says:

It is really no exaggeration to say that I have been a really living man only these few months; for between life as it appears to me now and life as I comprehended it before, there is an unfathomable abyss. I feel that now for the first time I have a glimpse of what man and life are — the nature and powers of the one, the possibilities, duties and joys of the other.

He seems to have been entirely free from a tendency to the vacillation which so often assails the new aspirant to wisdom when faced with grave issues. When he found that remaining in his caste was not compatible with his ever-increasing breadth of vision and compassionate feeling towards his countrymen, and indeed towards all mankind, he made the decisive move of stepping outside his caste, though it cost him the love of his nearest of kin. He tells about this in his article "Castes in India," and his profession of faith becomes truly eloquent through the burning sincerity of conviction that shines through the simple and straightforward language.

Though Damodar never writes about his own state of health, we have, besides the testimony of Olcott, references from H. P. Blavatsky and the Masters as to his frail physique and constant ill health. To carry on unremitting labor from early dawn until far into the night is difficult enough even for the robust; but here was Damodar constantly ailing, "just off the school bench," and quite untrained, and moreover handicapped by the discomforts of an impossible climate, yet doing the work of at least three men, and doing it in such a way that the Master K. H. speaks of him as "indispensable at Headquarters," and H. P. B. cries, on one occasion when the Masters had taken him to one of their asramas in Kashmir for a few days: "What shall *we* do in the office *without* Damodar!"

One can imagine that there were some pretty lively times at Headquarters in the efforts of the understaffed editorial office to get out *The Theosophist* on time each month. When one looks through the old volumes of this magazine and notes the odd editorial slips and printer's errors that occur here and there throughout its pages, one is reminded of H. P. B.'s own words in a letter to Sinnett written in one of her fits of desperation: "Damodar is loony as a March hare!" How many times must Damodar have had such epithets heaped upon his devoted if not always brilliant head!

Whatever his shortcomings, his writings show a consistent steadiness and concentration that is praiseworthy. Among his duties as Joint Recording Secretary he wrote for *The Theosophist* a great many Reports and Notices of activities, and these are all done with an earnest thoroughness that never falters. On occasion too he could wield a lively pen when he felt called upon to defend the Mahatmans and the Founders of the Society, and one is reminded, when coming upon this pugnacious spirit, that he did indeed write under the aegis of H. P. B., than whom there never has been a more royal battler for Truth.

Working as he always was at top speed, it is only natural that he should not have had the opportunities of a leisured man of letters to turn out elegant essays, but his qualities of resoluteness and uncompromising honesty, noticeable in every smallest item he penned, mark his style with a certain distinctive charm.

On more than one occasion it fell to his lot to review books for the magazine, and there is never anything perfunctory in the way he attacks his job. With great energy he dissects the toughest metaphysical themes, marking, not without some skill, the inadequate or faulty lines of reasoning; and when he has thoroughly torn the whole into bits, with the consideration of a good chela he graciously finds some excellent point of the book to recommend to the reader. His consideration is not so active, however, when it comes to the matter of paragraphing! He seemed to have an unnatural aversion to paragraphs, so that his columns in *The Theosophist* nearly always

present an unbroken and formidable mass of print.

His occasional answers to Questions are handled with impersonal bluntness, and he nearly always manages to put the Inquirer in his place, firmly reproving him for asking questions already clearly dealt with, or for not framing his questions clearly, etc. To one inquirer he says: "Question Three would never have been put by one who had properly *studied* the article . . ." It was this same quality of blunt sincerity together with his zealous loyalty to the Masters that led him at times into errors of judgment the results of which he had to answer for, as the Mahatmans mention in several of their letters.

It is interesting, however, that with all his directness of approach and his unequivocal methods of handling matter under discussion, he yet manages to avoid even the suggestion of anything dogmatic. It was probably his genuine modesty that saved him from this latter fault. He recognises no hard and fast formulas — whether in running a T. S. Lodge, in meditation, vegetarianism, or prayer, but in all cases stresses the broad and general principles of the philosophy, believing that the interpretation of these should be left to the intuition and initiative of each student. His article "Answer to * * * 's Misconceptions" contains an excellent discussion of the free platform of the Theosophical Society, whose ideal is to maintain harmony among its members not by the enforcement of a uniform creed but by fostering in each member a large-hearted appreciation of the views of his fellows. And further than that, he urges an approach to the plane of thinking where differences vanish and Truth is revealed. The true student of occultism "tries to penetrate into the *spirit* of everything. For him, all exotericism is a mere wrangling of terms." Yet he recognises that it is no more right to ignore than to overestimate the outward aspect of things. "Both the objective and subjective standpoints are essential for the attainment of true knowledge."

It is such traits as these which mark Damodar as one who came into this life with the memory of training along the lines of those age-old principles that are the fundamentals of the esoteric tradition. And

there are three other qualities noticeable in his writings which still more single him out as a student well advanced in training. The first is his attitude of reserve in discussing certain deeper aspects of the teachings; the second, his total lack of interest in rituals, postures, etc.; and the third — an attribute which includes the other two — his unerring comprehension of the true nature of occultism.

He speaks with the voice of authority when he says in his article "Contemplation":

Raj Yoga encourages no shams, no physical postures. It has to deal with the inner man whose sphere lies in the world of thought. To have the highest ideal placed before oneself and strive incessantly to rise up to it is the only true concentration recognised by Esoteric Philosophy which deals with the inner world of *noumena*, not the outer shell of *phenomena*.

He shows how futile it is for members to want to rush into Occultism through some sentimental feeling of disgust, however genuine, at the shallowness of the worldly life; or to imagine that the T. S. was formed for the purpose of providing every member with a Teacher ready-made who would take the aspirant under his special charge for training in the attainment of "powers." He felt passionately, as his own self-sacrificing years at the Headquarters testify, that in return for the soul-quickenning philosophy the members received, the most practical thing they could do to show their gratitude was to fit themselves by service to become in time co-workers with their spiritual benefactors.

Yet it is not all these excellent qualities of the young Damodar, not his arduous work on the editorial staff of *The Theosophist* (and later as Manager), not his fidelity to duty nor his loyalty to H. P. B., that give him the place of distinction he holds in the history of the Theosophical Society. So lightly are we apt to pass over qualities of character, that the young Hindu lad, not a particularly attractive figure as the world judges things, might almost have been forgotten after these fifty years or more, were it not for the one significant fact: he was found worthy to be, almost from the first, and as the months went by, in increasing

degree, under the special attention of the Masters themselves, and after only *four years* of probation was found to be a fit candidate for special training in Tibet.

Damodar writes that as a child, during a severe fever, a vision of some great personage appeared to him, and though through the years of his formal education the image had become indistinct, it was always there in the background of his consciousness, and with his first meeting with H. P. B. he felt that it would be in some way through her that the mystery of his early experience would be explained.

It was not long before his Teacher, the Mahatman Koot Hoomi made himself known to him, and from that time, running parallel with his Theosophical duties and responsibilities, he went through a series of remarkable experiences which read as though drawn from the pages of the most enthralling occult story. These Damodar tells about in a number of letters written to W. Q. Judge in 1880 and 1881; and they are the basis for the series "A Hindu Chela's Diary" that appeared in Judge's *Path* several years later. It seems likely that it was Judge himself, who with the instinct of the true story-teller, saw the narrative possibilities in these most unusual experiences of Damodar, and wove them into the tale of occult mystery and wonder that has intrigued so many Theosophists.

There is one of Damodar's letters to Mr. Judge which is of quite a different character from those just mentioned. It was his first, written in October, 1879, when these two remarkable men were as yet unacquainted with each other. H. P. B. and Col. Olcott had set sail for India, via England, just a year before this, and the dynamic force of the titan energy H. P. B. was withdrawn from the group of American Theosophists. There was Judge left stranded, harassed by family and professional duties, almost alone Theosophically speaking. Is it any wonder that in writing to H. P. B., a note of despair must have been present in his letter? H. P. B. evidently asked Damodar to answer Judge's letter for her and he does so in his characteristically thorough but somewhat unimaginative way. To the Theosophist, aware to some

extent at least, of Mr. Judge's superior stature, the letter reads like the most blatant bit of patronizing. But when we remember that Damodar himself had just joined the T. S., and wrote with the zeal of an enthusiastic neophyte, our feeling changes to one of understanding. It is interesting to note also, that in his second (extant) letter to Judge he assumes quite a different tone, saying: "I cannot give you my reflections on this matter for the reasons already stated to you, and because (judging from your letter) I find you are far superior to me in intellect and have made a greater progress."

Wherever Damodar throughout his writings mentions things of an occult nature, there is never the slightest touch or suggestion of psychic unbalance. He was called upon on various occasions to testify to the existence of Mahatmans as *real men*, not just dis-embodied spirits, and in every case, he narrates whatever he has to with a frankness albeit modesty that one instinctively feels is wholesome above all else. He came in for his share, just as H. P. B. did, of being called a "medium" influenced by a "spirit guide," and his reply to one of such charges is both spirited and witty. He said he was visited on this occasion by his Master in the body "for three nights consecutively for about three hours each time, I myself retaining full consciousness." And he continues that he never heard of a medium who could, with complete consciousness, meet his "spirit guide" by previous appointment in the compound of his dwelling-place, invite him in, offer him a seat, and converse with him for three hours or more, the while the medium himself retained full consciousness!

Though Damodar does not dwell on the subject of occult powers — continually pointing out, in fact, that they are only for the few — when he finds it necessary to explain any point along this line he does so in that natural and lucid way which proves him to be writing from first-hand knowledge. In his article entitled "Phenomena" he stoutly defends the Masters against the charge of merely using their occult powers in a cheap and flamboyant way for the amusement of their admirers. He shows that, as a matter of fact, where perfect rapport exists between Master and Chela, there is no undue use of extraordinary power, but

that sending messages by the "Astral Telegraph" is as natural a phenomenon as is the sending of ordinary messages by wireless.

He explains that, like other intelligent beings, the Mahatmans use the most efficient means at their disposal to carry on their work. He himself was in constant communication with his Teacher; in fact he tells Mr. Judge that if he were to mention all the communications he had received from his Teacher they would fill a small volume.

Among other occult powers which Damodar had well developed was that of being able to leave his body when required to do so on business for his Master. He stands as an excellent example of a truth so often repeated in Theosophical literature, and which has so often been criticized as being nothing more than a bit of adroit side-stepping, i. e., that when the disciple reaches a certain stage of development the higher psychic powers develop naturally, with no strain and no evil results, and are performed by conscious will. This is a point to keep well in mind, for the accomplishments of Damodar along occult lines are to be considered as far removed as possible from the specious glamour of mere psychic tricks.

Damodar's own writings in *The Theosophist* cease in January, 1885, and like echoes from a faraway country there appear after this time jottings here and there in H. P. B.'s and the Masters' letters which assure us that all is well with him. In 1886 there appeared in *The Theosophist* an official notice signed by H. S. Olcott and T. Subba Row, containing the last word we have of the Hindu chela: ". . . we are happy to state that we have positive news as late as the 7th of June that he has safely reached his destination, is alive, and under the guardianship of the friends whom he sought. . . ."

This authoritative statement silenced the rumors that had been abroad that Damodar had perished in the snows on the borders of Tibet. To the uninitiated it was indeed a "hare-brained scheme" to set out towards an uncertain and to some minds even a mythical goal, without adequate food and clothing, and leaving even his guides near the Tibetan frontier. But faith born of knowledge was the urge that spurred

him on; and viewed from the inner world, where cause and effect write their flawless record, success marked his journey from the first step. The words of the Mahatman K. H., written on an occasion quite different in character, are significant here: "Those whom we desire to know us will find us at the very frontiers. Those who have set against themselves the Chohans . . . — would not find us were they to go [to] L'hasa with an army."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Damodar's writings have now been gathered in a book entitled *Damodar: The Writings of a Hindu Chela*. It contains also Biographical Notes by C. J. Ryan, extracts from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* and *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, and the fascinating tale, "A Hindu Chela's Diary," which first appeared in W. Q. Judge's magazine *The Path*. (See back cover of this issue for further information.) ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

BY THE SEA — *G. Cardinal Le Gros*

It was on an evening, I like to think, when there was nothing at all but the illimitable loneness of the sea, and from the rim of it, and on into infinity, the rose-flame of the sky.

He was going to a far country, not to return, and his words drifted away with pale leaves and delicate blossoms over the star-clear waters:

*Brightest of all the bright
Blossoms along the sea,
Cradled in song and light, —
Bloom in the soul of me!*

After the sunset-gleam,
Over the twilight-dew
Gather me, dream by dream,
Into the dream of you.

There had been a time, he remembered, in his childhood, when the flowers that he saw were more than flowers and the songs that he heard were more than songs. The faces of people glowed with a strange, beautiful light: there was hope in them and a remembrance of something ineffable. But as the years passed, dark veils fell before his eyes. The flowers lost their bright enchantment, becoming flowers, the songs songs. The light in human faces was gone. Towered in gloom a different world appeared: sunlessness and starlessness brooded over the cities and the mountains and the sea. Only in memory, and slowly retreating, was the golden world with its luminous flowers and living songs and faces that were not faces at all, but living souls.

The long music of the waters, whispering through the avenues of the waves, heard him and listened; and then, strand upon beautiful strand, climbed slowly upward through the jewel-mist of the stars. . . .

And if it was the wind that made words, speaking to him, he did not

know. And if it was the loneliness of the sea, or the sky above it that made words, speaking to him, he did not know. But he heard, somewhere in the world, near him or afar he was never able to tell, words spoken not in time, but in the vastness and quietness of eternity. And hearing them, he thought of waving flowers in the morning, flowers of pale and delicate flame that reached upward to heaven, and he thought of songs that rose like sunlight on swift wings, pouring melody over the world, and he thought of human faces luminous with beauty and joy.

The whole world, with its mountains and seas, and the sky above it, and him, became — and he knew that it had always been so — a divine loneliness and oneness of peace. Even the words of eternity were of him, spoken by him, through the winds or the sky or the waters he was never to know. But wherever flowers were, or songs, there was he. And wherever human hearts beat there he was also.

It was on an evening, I like to think, when there was nothing at all but the illimitable loneliness of the sea, and from the rim of it, and on into infinity, the rose-flame of the sky.

The Theosophical Forum

TWO WAYS OF VIEWING REALITY — *G. de Purucker*

The Real, the Reality, Sat, or more accurately Asat, Tat, is that which is during cosmic maha-pralaya; and all the manifested universes are dreamed forth when Brahman falls asleep during what we call manvantara.

It is to be noted that just here there is a divergence not of knowledge, but of expression, even among the occultists themselves. The more common way in ancient times was to speak — and I will now use the Hindu terms — of Brahman awaking, becoming Brahmâ and the manifested universe with all in it. In other words Brahman awakes when manvantara begins, and falls asleep when pralaya comes. This is quite correct if you want to look at it from this standpoint, and I might add, was a familiar notion to Greek and Latin philosophic thought, as in the statement attributed to the Stoic philosopher Cleanthes which has been rendered into Latin, although he was a Greek, in the following words: "Quodcumque audiveris, quodcumque videris, est Juppiter." That is: "Whatsoever thou mayest hear, whatsoever thou mayest see, is Jupiter;" a thought very familiar in ancient Hindusthan where Brahmâ is said to evolve forth the universe from itself, in other words, that Brahmâ is the universe and yet transcendent to it: the universe and all of it, and yet transcendent! Which reminds one of the statement attributed to Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gîtâ*: "I establish all this universe from a portion of myself, and yet remain transcendent."

But the other manner of viewing this matter and equally correct — and I will frankly say that sometimes as I ponder the matter, perhaps more spiritual, perhaps more correct than the former, but more difficult of understanding by us men — is to think that Brahman awakes when mahâ-pralaya begins; for then Reality, so to speak, recommences its flow of lives. The phenomenal universes have been swept out of their existences until the next manvantara and disappear like autumn leaves when the autumn ends and winter begins. Driven along, as it were, by

the winds of pralaya, all manifested life is swept out of existence as *manifested life*. Everything that is real is withdrawn inwards and upwards to its parent Reality, and then divinity is in its own. This is Para-nirvâna. It is then awake and dreams no more until the next manvantara.

Those in ancient times who grasped this other manner of viewing, of making Reality come into its own when manifested or phenomenal things pass away into pralaya, have stated the matter after various tropes or figures of speech, the favorite one however, being this: all the manifested worlds are but the dreams of Brahman. Brahman sleeps and dreams karmic dreams, dreams brought about by karman. These dreams are the worlds of manifestation and all that is in them. When the dream ends and the universe vanishes, when the dreams end and the universes vanish, then Brahman awakes. It is coming into itself once more.

I think both views are correct. Yet I have often wondered in my own mind whether the second way of viewing it be not somewhat loftier, closer to the ineffable truth than is the more popular way because more easily understood. We have analogies in our own lives. When we awaken in the morning, we go about our daily duties and we do them and they are karmic. But it is when we fall asleep at night and the things of physical matter and the lower mental plane vanish away, that we come closer to the divinity within us. We rise upwards, closer to the god within us, towards the abstract and away from the concrete.

I think the second view, though perhaps no more true than the first way of viewing — I think perhaps the second way of viewing the matter, makes what they call Mahâ -mâyâ, cosmic Mâyâ, somewhat more understandable by us men.

At the end of Brahmâ's life, when even the Days and Nights of Brahmâ pass away into the utterly Real, the Reality at the heart of the Real, when all is swept out and away or indrawn and withdrawn upwards: I wonder if in this last thought we do not have as it were, a striking confirmation of the statement that perhaps the second way of viewing

Brahmâ awake and Brahmâ asleep is not the more real. For at the end of Brahmâ's life, when Brahmâ re-becomes Brahman, not only do all manifested things pass out of existence as so much dissolving mist, but even Cosmic Mahat is indrawn or vanishes. Mahâ-Buddhi disappears and naught remains but Brahman. For an infinity, as it would seem to us men, hundreds of trillions of years, Brahmâ is awake, itself, no longer dreaming dreams of karmic universes, but as we are forced to express it, sunken in Reality in the inexpressible deeps of Brahman's own essence. All has vanished except Brahman; the dreams are ended. Then when the new life, when Brahmâ rather, imbodyes itself again, then the galaxy re-awakens, but Brahman begins again to dream, dreaming the worlds, dreaming the universes into existence, dreaming the karmic dreams of destiny. Then the One becomes the Many. The armies, the hosts, the multitudes, begin to issue forth from the consciousness of the ineffable. Abstract space is once more filled with suns and solar systems and whirling worlds.

We see therefore that Brahman and Brahmâ, the offspring of Brahman, may have reference not merely to a planetary chain, but to a solar system or to a galaxy, and on a still more magnificent scale to a super-galaxy including many galaxies in the womb of endless space. In other words, Brahman and its offspring Brahmâ, may apply to any one or to all of these different ranges on an increasing scale of grandeur.

Brahman dreams karmic dreams of destiny and the universes flash into being; they appear like seeds of life or the spawn of Mother Space, and this we call manvantara or maha-manvantara. And conversely, when Brahman's dreaming ends, the worlds are swept out of existence and Brahman awakens as Brahman's Self.

Let us also remember as a final thought, that when we speak of frontierless infinitude, or of the beginningless and endless or boundless, we call this Tat, from the Sanskrit word meaning THAT; and that innumerable Brahmans greater or smaller, in countless numbers, are comprised within the boundless Tat.

"PHILOSOPHY AND LIVING" (1) — *H. T. Edge*

Under the head of "Penguin Books," these publishers are bringing out a series of low-price reprints Mr. Stapledon's book, "*First and Last Men*" has thus been reprinted; the present two volumes were written specially for the series.

As indicated by his title, the author uses the word "philosophy," not for a barren intellectual discipline, but in a sense akin to its original and etymological meaning. Philosophy is a way of life; it must seek an answer to such questions as, Shall I live forever? What am I? Is there a God? What ought we to do with our lives? And, since the question of immortality or survival seems the central problem, he devotes thereto his next chapter.

Mr. Stapledon has a tidy mind and is commendably lucid and concise; his meaning is not obscured by verbiage or terms and phrases unfamiliar to the non-philosophical reader. In enumerating the arguments for and against survival, he recognises that the first requisite is to state the question accurately, and shows that this is not done by the average inquirer. This vagueness in stating the question renders it impossible to give either a positive or a negative answer. To do so, we must first answer a number of other questions. Do we mean immortality or survival? What is meant by "I"? What is the nature of selfhood? What is the relation of mind and body?

Do we envision a time-sequence, as here on earth, or will our present conceptions of time, space, and other things, prove not to be universals but merely peculiar to our earthly existence, and therefore not applicable to the afterlife? Is our condition to be a repetition of earthly experience, or a static condition, or a progressive condition?

Hence the answer has to be deferred until these questions have been considered in his other chapters. We see that no single problem can be settled by considering it in isolation. Our knowledge must be

comprehensive; in default of which our reasoning is based on false premises, and our questions involve implications contrary to fact, and are therefore unanswerable.

We see here what an advantage is gained by those who approach these problems in the light of the teachings of Theosophy. It is true there are some people who, when Theosophy is presented to them, insist that its doctrines shall be validated by some familiar process which in their minds amounts alone to demonstration, and without which a doctrine is a mere article of faith and may be disregarded. But in books of this kind we see that much discussion and reasoning leads up at last to a cautious and tentative admission of doctrines which, to a Theosophist, are presented at the outset. For instance, the author cites the views of C. D. Broad regarding the evidence of survival offered by Spiritualists. This evidence, says Broad, is not sufficient to establish the survival of the deceased personality, but does prove the survival of something which he calls a "psychic factor." Now Theosophists are taught from the beginning that man is compounded of different principles, and the nature of each of these, together with its destination after the death of the body, is fully explained. Thus the Theosophist starts with a map of the country in his hand, instead of having to wander about, stopping at every cross-road, compass in hand, until he either loses his way or finds it by accident after much tribulation. A study of philosophy should certainly include a sufficient acquaintance with the systems of ancient India, which go so fully into the composite nature of man and the various states in which human beings exist after physical decease.

What is it that survives? The ordinary man is not interested in mere survival; he wants to know if *he* survives. To answer this we must have some knowledge of what is meant by true and false personality, of the Self and its vestures, of the dual nature of man while still in the body, and many other such questions. Also it is futile to argue as though man is merely an immortal essence in a mortal body, and that he passes at once from his present state to "the other world." The infinite complexity and amplitude of the mere physical universe, with its countless orbs, should suffice to suggest a similar plenitude and variety

in other parts of the universe.

In all processes of reasoning we must inevitably assume certain things as "given," and which we must therefore not try to prove. This being so, why not begin by *assuming* survival? If we do not assume this, it is pertinent to ask, Then what shall we assume? Careful examination, such as we find in this book, will show that those who argue against immortality, or those who posit the question pro and con, assume quite as many unprovable or unwarrantable things as they can accuse their opponents of assuming. And if it be found that the assumption of survival makes sense out of life, while the contrary assumption makes nonsense or perplexity, what more in the way of demonstration can be asked?

After considering various arguments for survival, the author glances at arguments against, and finds them in general trifling and futile. The alleged overcrowding of the "other world"! No wonder the author complains that this generation has neglected the power of constructive imagination. Yet even in this world an overcrowded omnibus may have an upper deck, and we imagine it was Jesus who said there were many mansions in his Father's house. Besides, as we are admittedly not speaking of physical bodies, we cannot venture to dogmatize as to the methods by which disembodied souls may be warehoused in the "other world." The objection that there can be no survival because the mind is dependent on the body, is either an indirect begging of the question, or it is reasoning from a mere dogma.

The author concludes that the problem cannot be solved in the present state of human knowledge, as it depends on so many other problems which must be solved first. "Is there perhaps," he asks, "some other kind of knowledge, which is not subject to the disabilities of intellect, and which apprehends and enters into its object intuitively?"

We must content ourselves with a mere enumeration of the chapter headings in the rest of these volumes: Mind and Body, the External World and I, Reasoning, the Scope and Limitations of Reason, Ethics, Personality, Community, Social Change, Metaphysics. The result is

summed up in "The Practical Upshot." Here the conditions of the world are reviewed. Science is transforming the world. (Or is it that some more potent underlying influence is transforming science and everything else as well?) The economic motive in civilization has run to seed; and, despite of wild theories, we must look to some more equitable distribution of material goods. The East seems destined to play a greater part in the future. We have lost faith in intangible values; man has risen by the "critical and imaginative intelligence and the capacity for community," but these powers are declining in scope and even coming into disrepute.

This is certainly a good diagnosis of the patient's ailment; and it is true enough that an accurate diagnosis is a necessary preliminary to a cure. And there are such diagnoses in plenty today. But more is needed.

Whence is the source by which humanity progresses on its march through the cycles of its evolution? Before we can answer this we must see what we understand by evolution. Evolution is commonly viewed merely as *process*, though by a strange confusion of thought that process is in some way spoken of as if it were also *cause*. What is called the materialistic view, or what we might perhaps call the one-plane view, presents us with a picture of a machine moving itself, or generating the power which moves it. The history of humanity becomes a succession of linked cause-effects, running in what science calls a closed system, without interference from without itself. Such a machine could only run down by the gradual frittering away of energy never renewed. Humanity is to be saved by intelligence and imagination, and is at the same time expected to create these powers. It is just the same doctrine as that by which the human organism is supposed to create those hormones by whose power it is actuated. All logic and analogy demand that evolution, progress, demand a continually renewed access of power from without the "closed system." A study of history reveals that progress is achieved by the work of inspired individuals who appear from time to time and initiate mighty tidal waves of renewal. The doctrine of reincarnation teaches us that there is a constant accession of human egos enriched, ennobled, made

potent, by their own past experience. It is not inconsistent with any doctrine of evolution that there should exist human beings who have evolved beyond the level of the common human attainment; and Theosophy teaches that these perfected human beings now discharge their role of inspiring humanity from behind the scenes. Study history without prejudice, and you shall find ample proof of their existence and their work in all ages and climes.

It is they who have inspired the Theosophical movement, and we can best help humanity by spreading the knowledge of that marvelous all-embracing philosophy which they have made accessible to us; for without it life must remain an insoluble enigma, without purpose or hope.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Philosophy and Living*, by Olaf Stapledon, M A, Ph D Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England 1939 2 volumes, each 6d. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

LIFE'S DAILY BREAD — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

Thomas Mann defines "Truth, and the freedom to seek it as "life's daily bread"; thus simply expressing a series of profound ideas which claim further consideration.

How much we lose when we limit the term 'daily bread' to nourishment for the physical body alone! Experience in various fields of investigation has proved that food is not the all-important need we often think it is. Man has many vital needs which food for the body does not satisfy. And here the septenary man is meant. Water and air are vital to life, but creative occupation for the mind and hands is also of paramount importance. Had we cyclic perspective we would realize that soul-starvation is a far greater menace to this generation than is physical malnutrition. Man's mind and body are the pampered darlings of *our* age: his soul has long been called the orphan of the ages by the wise! Our bodies are the periodic earthly vehicles of our souls. They merit our care, and cannot be held responsible for the sins of the desire-ridden mind-man; yet they last but a single life-span as bodies, whereas the human soul or ego exists in progress or deterioration throughout the entire series of cycles of a planetary manvantara. An evolved soul can function without marked limitation in a frail body, but an impoverished soul is incapable of fashioning a healthy body, however well nourished the actual physical atoms may be. The body often gains more from our casual neglect than it gains by our ignorant interference; and definitely benefits when freed from the wear and tear of our undisciplined minds, as is evident in some cases of insanity.

If truth be the bread of life, it stands to reason that that in man which is nourished by truth must be akin to truth. This points to a fundamental teaching of Theosophy voiced by the intuitive of all ages and cultures:

Truth is within ourselves; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate'er you may believe.

There is an inmost center in us all
Where truth abides in fulness; . . .

wrote Robert Browning in *Paracelsus*. There in that divine center, the core of man's being, all the qualities and capacities of the Universe inhere, for the most part in latency. It requires the stimulus, the nourishment of the good, the true, and the beautiful, to bring these faculties and attributes which embody Truth in its cyclic manifestation, into fruition. The recognition of Truth and the freedom to seek it are quickening forces.

Truth *per se* is as all pervasive and all encompassing and eternal as Life itself, but man's immediate conception is limited to the confines of his not yet fully evolved consciousness, which for most of us extends little beyond the scope of the manifested world. The vision of the sage is commensurate with the Galaxy, and tracing its horizons his gaze keeps pace with the cycles.

Therefore freedom in which to seek truth means not merely the possession of leisure, the opportunity for research in a favorable environment, and a will set to attain. It implies judgment, discrimination, and altruism, for one blinded and misguided by ignorance and prejudice is enslaved. It presupposes freedom to receive, receptivity, and to give; a mutual sharing in the benefits of the Universe. Only Truth so acquired can be life's daily bread!

Let us build for the day when this definition will form the criterion upon which civilization will be judged.

The Theosophical Forum

OTHER MORAL ISSUES — *Arthur A. Beale*

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. — *1 Cor.*, xiii, 1

With our hearts torn and our minds confounded with the chaos of conditions in the world today, as personalities we are tangled in a meshwork of emotions, ranging through the gamuts of disappointments, dreads, despairs, and despondencies, even to the frontiers of hopelessness. However, as disciples of the Masters of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace, let us listen to the still small voice calling: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, O my people!" For have we not behind us a philosophy of the ages, compiled from divine sources, which has watched the vicissitudes of humanity through the ages in its oft-repeated attempts to emasculate itself, which have brought misfortune to man and the world, till the millstream of confusion burst the banks of compassionate toleration of the Law into a flood of cataclysms, from which has arisen like a phoenix a new order of ages?

Once more we vision the birth-throes of our mother Earth, and we wait, wait, wait for the new infant Humanity which will lead us into the promised land under the watchful eye of the gods.

Let us not forget that the mass of mankind is only in the puberty stage of the evolution of the animal soul of man — constituting the basis of personality — and is marching to its profound destiny towards divinity. However, the pioneers have evolved previously on another world, and already glimpse the roseate dawn above the hilltops, and whisper to us in the valley, the good tidings of hope through the god-given teachings of Theosophy. In the meantime we are having once more a taste of medievalism, as though it were part of that cleaning up process of Siva, who at cyclic periods with his army of "destroying angels" sweeps up the debris of old karmic misdeeds, in order to prepare for a

rejuvenation, so as to enthrone once more a new Brahma — the creator — with his attendant Vishnu — the preserver. Such is the law.

In the body of man: when it has been polluted with disease due to his misdeeds, it is ravaged by the microbes of destruction before the vital fiery lives can be let loose for rebirth. Similarly the old static civilizations — as in Europe and perchance in America too — have to be shaken up, and useless traditions destroyed, before man is ready to receive the New Doctrine of the new order of the ages.

The mills of God grind slowly
But they grind exceeding small.

For three and a half Rounds according to our teachings, representing many millions of years, the old earth travailed to bring forth vehicles worthy to receive a thinking man, and this latter event happened only about 18 million years ago, previous to which man was in the gestatory stage.

During this long time, evil traditions and habits have been formed which with personal man are quite automatic. The animal propensities of egotism, selfishness, and combative competition, personal and national, and pride, are prominent factors in man's destiny, and so, over and over again, man repeats follies of judgment that are seeds of further strife.

Until the finer factors of self-control, co-operation, compassion, and helpfulness are instituted in place of the former propensities, no hope of harmony, peace, and concord are possible. "Be not deceived. God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." If we sow to the wind, we shall reap a whirlwind.

So here we are today, battling with the petty follies of a selfish humanity, not to be trusted with the sacred rights of manhood, only exhibiting the immature follies of youth. But when we realize the sacred offices of the Theosophical Society — the child of the Guardians of the Race, the sacred Lodge of Adepts, to whom we are pledged as co-workers for humanity — let us not forget our great responsibilities in

creating the proper psychological atmosphere that will make early redemption possible. This, we are told by our Teachers, is made possible by making the teachings not only receptive but actually vital in our lives; in fact by living Theosophy. Then indeed may we be worthy bricks in the Guardian Wall.

What the world wants, it seems to the writer, are new ideals, new initiatives, new out-looks. Surely every Theosophist views war with abhorrence as being a futile solution to our troubles. Not only is it a futile method, but decadent; for war is the recognised antiquated method adopted by personalities. When mankind realizes the saner issues of Spiritual initiatives, then will shame be felt in using the old methods. These saner ideals will only come when men strive to ensoul themselves by endeavoring to live in the higher aspects of their nature.

Here is a straight hint for Theosophists as voiced by Thomas Carlyle: "Be an honest man yourself and there will be one rogue less in the world." So it would seem that Theosophists have a sacred duty to accomplish: to ensoul themselves with spiritual impulses, never to despair nor be despondent, but "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Some day mankind may realize that instead of going out to fight other peoples, it were better to create a center amongst the more enlightened which will be a beacon and stronghold of righteousness. Then these enlightened people will arise to protect the recalcitrant Powers from injuring themselves and the whole world, but this center must come through co-operation, through sacrifice of national deceits and egotisms, and by seeking not the welfare of themselves but of all Humanity.

While the destroyers are at work, let us work for the rejuvenation of the Race, so that the war-weary pilgrims may have a goal towards which they may turn their weary eyes and find a sanctuary of sound ideals, a nucleus, a "laya center," of divine essence opening out into vistas of unspeakable beauty, wisdom, and peace, a veritable "new order of ages," upon which a real civilization can be built and from

which the past will appear as a bad dream only. Thus an atmosphere of goodwill, hope, and persistent peace may be visioned: a new Humanity — in the words of Tennyson:

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be; . .

.

Till the war-drum throb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were
furl'd

In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

The Theosophical Forum

A POSSIBLE ATLANTIS TRADITION — *Cyrus Field Willard*

In looking over my file of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for the year 1939, I saw in the July issue an article by C. J. Ryan, M. A., entitled "Atlantis — Romance or Reality?" As I had always thought from study of *The Secret Doctrine* that Atlantis was a reality, curiosity led me to read the article, and then to look up what H. P. Blavatsky had written as to its reality. On page 8, Vol. II, she said: "Atlantis is the fourth Continent."

It would be the first historical land, were the traditions of the ancients to receive more attention than they have hitherto. The famous island of Plato of that name was but a fragment of this great Continent. The Fifth Continent was America.

There was a time when the delta of Egypt and Northern Africa belonged to Europe, before the formation of the Straits of Gibraltar, and a further upheaval of the continent changed entirely the face of the map of Europe.

How it was possible for the Straits of Gibraltar to be formed, was outlined in an article by the writer in the February, 1939, issue of this magazine, entitled "Isostasy Proves Assertions of H. P. B."

H. P. Blavatsky goes on to say on the same page:

The last serious change occurred some 12,000 years ago and was followed by the submersion of Plato's little Atlantic island, which he calls Atlantis after its parent continent.

It is an absorbing and instructive study to take the Index at the back of Vol. II, and read all the pages mentioned therein, under name of "Atlantis." On page 141 she speaks of various deluges and the submersion of the last little island of Atlantis. On page 408 she says:

whether the peak of Teneriffe or not *was a volcano* when the sinking of the "western Atala" (or hell) began, and those who

were saved told the tale to their children. Plato's Atlantis perished between water below and fire above; the great mountain vomiting flames all the while. "The 'fire-vomiting Monster' survived alone out of the ruins of the unfortunate island."

(I have preserved the curious quotation-marks just as she used them.) Teneriffe is now one of the Canary Islands of volcanic origin and located about 150 miles west of Africa in 27° to 30° North Latitude and about 15° West. The island of Teneriffe, in my encyclopedia, is said to be 60 miles long and about 25 miles wide; and its peak is a notable sight from the sea. Prof. Ryan, in his article in which he discusses a book by James Bramwell entitled *Lost Atlantis*, after castigating flamboyant misconstructions of some writers on Atlantis, says:

Tradition in the shape of world-wide myths and allegories is the most likely method by which knowledge of a Lost World would survive.

But where shall we look for this "tradition that is most likely to survive"? H. P. B. indicates this when she placed in juxtaposition her statement that Atlantis was the fourth Continent and America the fifth. So it is in America, after the last fragment of Atlantis had disappeared, that we must look for this tradition where "it is most likely to survive." And although Bramwell says Theosophists care little for "scientific discussions," yet the writer desires to submit his investigations which show how untrue this assertion is and the wisdom of following the faint signboards H. P. B. erects; — for the statements taken from the Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, Government Printing Office 1891, should be scientific enough for Mr. Bramwell and prove to him that Theosophists do care for scientific discussions. In this large profusely illustrated volume are preserved the traditions of the Ojibwa Indians as gathered by a scientist, a trained Ethnologist of the Bureau of Ethnology, Dr. W. J. Hoffman, who submits in this Report a very full paper on the traditions, cosmogony and religion of the Ojibwa Nation now living in

Northern Minnesota, near the Western end of Lake Superior, which point to these Americans being of Atlantean descent. This paper by Dr. Hoffman begins at page 149 and continues to page 300, and as each page is 7¹/₂ X 11 inches it is evident that but little can be quoted in extenso of this mass of information. Dr. Hoffman's special paper is entitled "The Mide'wiwin Or 'Grand Medicine Society.' " He says:

The Ojibwa is one of the largest of the Indian Tribes of the United States, and is scattered over a considerable area, from the Province of Ontario on the east to the Red River of the North on the west, and from Manitoba southward through the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

On page 151 the term "sorcerer" is used to designate those persons who profess to have the power of prophecy and practice incantations and administer medicinal preparations. Constant reference is made to these personages and their opposition to the introduction of Christianity. The cause of this antagonism seems to lie in the fact that the traditions of the Indian genesis and Cosmogony and the ritual of initiation into the Society of the Mide'wiwin constitute what is to them a Religion, even more powerful and impressive than the Christian religion is to the average civilized man. These initiation rites of the Mide'wiwin are like those of the Egyptian mysteries, or of a Masonic Lodge, which are said to descend from Egypt; where dramatic representations were used to impart ethical or religious ideas. This is done in a medicine Lodge, like a Masonic Lodge, oriented due East and West, with presiding officer seated in the East, and entered from the West. This Lodge is of a form that Dr. Hoffman terms "an oblong square," a technical Masonic phrase, which explains how he, evidently a Mason, was able to get the description of their ceremonies, and to find an ancient birchbark chart with delicately incised hieroglyphics which was interpreted to him by some of the old priest officers of the secret society of the Mide'. In this Lodge there are four degrees instead of three, as in the Masonic Lodge. The similarities are striking in other respects.

While this whole paper is intensely interesting to a Theosophist and

Mason, yet the principal thing now is their traditions which link them up with what Plato calls "Atlantis." Dr. Hoffman quotes much from *The History of the Ojibway Nation*, by W. W. Warren, an Ojibwa of mixed blood, an educated man and later a member of the Minnesota Legislature, published in Vol. V of *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, St. Paul, 1885. He spoke the language perfectly, was related to them, was initiated, and yet he said (p. 160) that he stood, "as it were, on the threshold of the Me-da-we Lodge." Mr. Warren says on p. 161 of this Report:

In the Me-da-we Rite is incorporated most that is ancient among them — songs and traditions that descended *not orally, but in hieroglyphics* for at least a long line of generations. [Italics mine. C. F. W.]

The ritual of the Mide'wiwin is based on traditions pertaining to the Cosmogony and genesis of the Ojibwas and to the thoughtful consideration of the Great Spirit for the Indian; so it is looked upon by them as their religion, as they themselves so designate it. They fully believe, and it forms a part of their religion, that the world has once been covered by a deluge, and that we are now living on what they term "the new Earth." This idea is fully accounted for by their vague traditions; and in their Mide'wiwin religion, hieroglyphics are used to denote this New Earth. Furthermore they fully believe that the red man mortally angered the Great Spirit, who caused the deluge, and at the commencement of the new earth, it was only through the medium and intercession of a powerful being whom they name Mana-bo-sho that they were allowed to exist, and means were given them whereby to subsist and support life; and a code of religion was more lately bestowed on them whereby they could commune with the offended Great Spirit, and ward off the approach and ravages of death. Each tribe has its medicine man or woman, and here the word "medicine" means something above the material. They form an order of priesthood, who are consulted and employed in times of sickness. Those who wish to join it are taught the virtues of certain plants, certain incantations, how to chant the medicine song, how to pray,

which prayer is addressed to the Master of Life. The Ojibwas believe in a multiplicity of spirits who inhabit all space, whom they call man'ido. The chief or superior one is called Ki'tshi Man'ido, approaching to some extent the God of the Christian religion.

Dr. Hoffman was fortunate enough to find at the Red Lake Minnesota reservation an ancient birchbark mnemonic chart on which were delicately incised hieroglyphics of which a photographic reproduction is given on large plates in this volume. It was interpreted to Dr. Hoffman by some of the priests of the Mide'wiwin showing positions of the priests and the "snakes" in the initiations. It tells of the origin of the Mide'wiwin and their traditions and cosmogony. It tells of one who was feared by all and was called "He- who-lives-on-the-Island." On page 170 it tells of the 4th degree Mide" priest who was supposed to be able to accomplish "the greatest feats of necromancy and magic" (for which Atlantis was destroyed, according to H. P. B.). He is also not only endowed with the power to read the thoughts of others but to call forth the shadow (soul) (put in parentheses on page 170 of report), and retain it in his grasp at his pleasure as long as he wished. In Theosophic language this would be called the "astral body," and it will be seen that this is what is termed "Black Magic" in Theosophic literature. On the chart deviations from the right-hand path are shown. Plato says, as does H. P. B., that the Egyptians are descendants of the Atlanteans. Sir E. Wallis Budge, the celebrated Egyptologist, has openly declared his belief in Egyptian magic. The plates showing the Medicine Lodge has rows of figures on the side-lines resembling Egyptian figures. On page 174 reference is made to the one central island from which the Ojibwas originated. The tradition of their origins and their migrations from what may have been what Plato called "Atlantis" is the most interesting to Theosophists and is given on page 183 by the intelligent and partly initiated Mr. Warren. He informs us that he was told, during an initiation, by one of the officiating priests:

Our forefathers, many strings of lives ago [they believed in reincarnation] lived on the shores of the great salt water in the east. Here, while they were suffering the ravages of sickness and

death, the Great Spirit at the intercession of Man-a-bo-sho, the great common uncle of An-ish-in-aub-ag [Original people], granted them this rite, wherewith life is restored and prolonged. Our forefathers moved from the shores of the great water and proceeded westward. The Me-da-we lodge was pulled down and it was not again erected until our forefathers took a stand on the shores of the great river [St Lawrence] where Mo-ne-aung (Montreal) now stands. In the course of time, this town was again deserted and our forefathers, still proceeding westward, lit not their fires till they reached the shores of Lake Huron . . .

Two other migrations are mentioned in repetition, which, for brevity will be omitted here, but which took the Ojibwas from the gulf of St. Lawrence to the far end of Lake Superior. Whether it was fear of the fire-vomiting mountain that took them as far as they could go in their canoes to which they would have to go when they reached the west end of Lake Ontario, at Niagara Falls, is not told. But the fact of the migrations of the Ojibwas from the shores of the Great Salt Water far to the east is preserved in the 7th annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology. It has taken time to condense and gather the full sense of the many statements that have confirmed belief in the writer that the Ojibwas are descended from the Atlanteans.

Teneriffe, which H. P. Blavatsky intimated vomited fire on the island of Atlantis which must have been close by, is on one of the Canary Islands, 150 miles west of Africa, in Latitude of about 29° North and Longitude about 15° West, while the Gulf of St. Lawrence is about 60° North and 60° West. This would be but a short slant to the west before the north-east trade wind, for such skilful sailors as the Atlanteans, "the people of the sea," who were some of the survivors of the deluge, and H. P. Blavatsky intimates that there were some. The preserved traditions of the Ojibwas show that they came across the great Salt water to the Gulf of St. Lawrence from shores far to the East. An island is spoken of in one place "fleeing before a great deluge" that had destroyed many caused by their doing some wrong things that angered the Great Spirit, and the sorcery that is described in this report is similar to the black

magic, for which the Atlanteans were destroyed, according to H.P.B. Enough has been given to fill the specifications given by Prof. Ryan. More could be given, but the traditions mentioned have another potent fact to support them, and that is that the Egyptians, the descendants of the Atlanteans, in depicting themselves always painted their faces as having the same coppery-red color as the Red Indians of North America, the fifth continent. This would seem to fill the bill of proof.

NOTE by C. J. Ryan

It is indeed significant that the ancient American traditions so definitely indicate that the Indians came from the Eastern sea after some world-shaking disaster. This story is widely spread in both north and south America, and is a very strong argument for Atlantis. Many anthropologists insist that the Indians must have come to this continent by way of Bering Strait, but this is not supported by Indian tradition. Why should those stories, many of which were handed down in picture writing and held very sacred, be utterly ignored or rejected? We believe there are many great surprises in store in regard to the origin and past history of the Indians. Even during the last few years the length of man's habitation of America has had to be extended from as little as 4,000 years, according to some leading Americanists, to more than 30,000 according to more daring investigators. It is the opinion of some authorities that man was here a good while before the end of the great ice age, a terrible heresy until recently!

In regard to the cause of the destruction of Atlantis referred to by Mr. Willard I should like to draw attention to a certain ambiguity in this matter which has puzzled many students. Several passages in *The Secret Doctrine* deal with the alleged result of Atlantean sorcery. In Vol. II, p. 350 we are told that the Fourth Race was *not destroyed because of its depravity* but because the end of the cycle had arrived. This is repeated on page 410, but on page 636 we read "the Atlanteans became the terrible sorcerers now celebrated in so many of the oldest MSS. of India only toward their fall, the submersion of their continent having been brought on by it." On page 427 it is said that Atlantis was doomed

and the sorcerers "have to descend with her." In *Isis Unveiled* there is a reference to a final battle between the black and white magicians, after which the end came. Somewhere H. P. Blavatsky, I think, indicates that the rapid disappearance of the Atlantean civilization prevented humanity from descending to greater depths from which it would have been very hard to rise. In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 178, H. P. Blavatsky speaks of the *untimely* end of the Atlanteans.

Does it not seem that the most reasonable interpretation of the statements about Atlantis is that while its cycle was running to its natural end, the final crisis, the actual "submersion," was hurried up by the violence and rapidity of the descent into sorcery? Perhaps someone can suggest a better explanation?

The Theosophical Forum

TO THOSE WHO MOURN — *G. de Purucker*

The beautiful message that Theosophy has to give to those who mourn, those who sorrow, applies not only to death and those left behind by the passing ones, but just as much to those who are not yet touched by death, to all those who have to live on this earth where there is more of sorrow and trouble and weariness of spirit than of happiness and real peace. For I wonder if any tenderhearted man or woman can really be happy in a world like ours, when we see surrounding us on all sides the most awful proofs of man's inhumanity to his fellow-men. How can we retire into our water-tight or spirit-tight or heart-tight compartments of life when we know what is going on around us, not only among men, but among the helpless beasts: suffering and pain and sorrow, and on every side the cry of these martyrs raised to heaven?

We talk about those who mourn and restrict it, each one of us, to our individual selves. How then? Do we not love the hand of kindness extended in sympathy and understanding to others, who suffer lonely, who sorrow in loneliness? Death itself is nothing to grieve at. We have been through death a thousand times and more on this earth. We know it well. It is an old experience; and here we are back again. But we feel for those who mourn while they live: mourn for the loss of beloved ones; mourn for the loss of fortune, so that they are in difficulties to give even the physical bread to the bodies of those they love; mourn over the difficulties to find work so that they may work like men and women and feed the mouths of their hungry children; mourn because they have lost friendship, lost love, lost hope, and perhaps most awful of all, lost trust in their fellow-men.

Every son and daughter of man mourns, or he or she is heartless. The man who cannot mourn and who does not mourn to my mind is inhuman; and so great and wonderfully is nature builded that it is precisely this divine capacity for mourning that gives us sympathy for others, and to the mourners the hearts of understanding; and, strange

magic of the human spirit, mourning, sorrow, suffering are our wisest friend. How these enrich our hearts! What priceless treasury is the expansion of consciousness that comes when mourning sets its often burning but always healing hand on our hearts! We sacrifice; but in this sacrifice is purification, is the awakening to the greater life. It is in sorrow, it is in mourning, it is in the evocation by these of pity, of compassion, that we learn truly to live. Even little children know what sorrow is, and how blessed it is for them that they may learn life's greatest thing: to learn and become enlarged by it, made grander by it. How pitiful is the man who cannot feel for others and is enwrapped solely in the small prison of his minuscule self. Where in him is grandeur? You seek for it and find it not. But the man who has suffered feels for all the world. On his heart each cry of mourning falls like a scalding tear, and he is made grand by it. Nature here works a magic, for in this process is born rosy hope, a star-lighted inspiration that comes from the enlarged consciousness.

Blessed peace, the most exquisite joy and happiness that human hearts and minds can bear, is the appanage or spiritual heritage of those whose hearts have been softened by suffering. They who never suffer are the hard-hearted ones, unripe in their own restricted consciousness. The man who has never suffered knows not what peace is. He has never entered into it. The man who has never experienced sorrow knows not the surcease nor the blessedness that comes when quiet comes.

It is to those who mourn — which comprise really all the human race — that Theosophy brings its own, its ineffable doctrine of hope and peace, and this because it teaches us to understand. The French have a proverb: *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*, the meaning of which is: if you *fully* understand you forgive all.

Isn't it clear to us that inner grandeur comes from enlargement, and that enlargement of our consciousness as we say, of our understanding and of our heart, comes from suffering? Joy too can bring the smile to our lips and the light of happiness to our eyes; but isn't it a mere truism

that all of life's ordinary joys turn to ashes in the mouth? Isn't it also true that the joys of life all too often make us selfish? We grab the joys to us, afraid lest we lose them. These commonplace joys often narrow us. But fellow-feeling, sympathy brought about by suffering, make the whole world akin. The man who has known naught but joy in life perhaps does not mind inflicting sorrow upon a fellow. He is not awakened. He does not understand. He is misled. He is ignorant. But the man who has suffered, the woman who has suffered, who has mourned, these are they who are great in their gentleness, who are great in their understanding because they comprehend, take in; they are enlarged, they are magnified. And the extreme of this is glorification in its true original sense. They become glorified, the next thing to god-men on earth.

Such simple thoughts! I dare say that every child knows them and understands.

So our blessed message to those who mourn is this: Fear not the bright and holy flame. It will make you men and women, not mere males and females. What is the great and outstanding characteristic mark of the god-men who have come among us from time to time? It has been the understanding heart: so that they could speak to the woman in trouble and help; to the man in ignorance and bring him succor and peace; to the little children and they will understand. For the great man's own simple heart speaks to the simple direct heart of the child before it has been sophisticated, spoiled by the falsities which it all too often learns as it grows up and has to unlearn in order to be truly a man, truly a woman.

To those who mourn comes the blessed Gospel: let the holy flame enter into your hearts as a visiting god. Treat it very friendly. Welcome it. Receive it as a guest; and that guest, sorrow-clad, will cast off the habiliments of mourning, and you will realize that you have been entertaining unawares a god. And that god is you. Then you have entered into your own.

A VINDICATION OF H. P. BLAVATSKY'S WORK AND MESSAGE — *J. H. Venema*

Well might the great lion-hearted H. P. Blavatsky have said with Shakespeare in *The Merchant of Venice*

What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?

but, on the contrary, as we must recognise more and more every year, doing a grand and sublime work for the benefit of humanity! There is a story of a famous and inspired singer, a man with a heavenly voice, whose audiences were enraptured night after night. But one evening, when he was to sing in a great concert, an embittered rival of his had played a trick upon him and had put in the first row a man who even during the most inspiring music and songs did not respond and who sat motionless, with cold staring eyes, untouched by the most spiritual notes, apparently without any feelings, no "music in his soul" The story tells that the famous singer, moved by profound love and compassion — for he always sang to bring beauty and inspiration to his audience through the medium of impersonal art, the "most divine and spiritual of arts," music — though at first greatly distressed by the icy coldness of that man in the first row, firmly determined to awaken him, to bring a wonderful beauty into his life. Pathetically the author reveals to us how the singer sacrifices himself, how he gives heart and soul, and succeeds in bringing down to earth the divine music of the Gods above, the harmony of the spheres, indeed, how in the end he sacrifices his physical vehicle in the supreme effort to awaken one human being, and died on the platform, a victim to the machinations of his rival — for that one man in the first row was a deaf-mute.

When H. P. B. came to this world in the previous century — the "Heavenly Gandharva," the Singer and Revealer of Heaven and Divine Truths — she was in a similar position, with this great difference, that she brought her message to hundreds of thousands who were *spiritually* deaf and dumb, ignorant of what they were, what their

destiny might be, and who, consequently, at first remained unmoved, cold, bearing malice toward her and her work. And she did succeed in awakening them, partly in the beginning, more as time went on, until she was recognised by a certain number of noble souls, who began to help her in her titanic task. She also sacrificed her very heart-blood in order to bring an ancient, divine Message to this world.

Perhaps, as Theosophists who study and try to grasp the teachings, we are so accustomed to reckon by manvantaric and pralayaic periods, that in 1938 we are inclined to think of H. P. B.'s time as a cycle long ago! That *she* and her workers were the "pioneers," and *we* continue, *we* of a later period. In one way this thought contains truth; there have indeed been great changes since she passed away, indescribably great work has been done. But, on the other hand, there are in many respects no very great differences, for we know that the spiritual evolution of mankind takes ages and ages. From that point of view we are still pioneers and we shall be for many, many years; millions around us are still educated on the basis of the old dogmas and crystallized ideas of the last century, though numbers and numbers continually outgrow them! To these millions Theosophy is and will remain *a new message!*

In studying the subject under discussion let us pay attention to Judge's words in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, Ch. XIV, the conclusion:

The first 5000 years of *Kali Yuga* will end between the years 1897 and 1898. This *Yuga* began about 3102 years before the Christian era, at the time of Krishna's death. As 1897-98 are not far off, the scientific men of today will have an opportunity of seeing whether the close of the five thousand year cycle will be preceded or followed by any convulsions or great changes political, scientific, or physical, or all of these combined. Cyclic changes are now proceeding as year after year the souls from prior civilizations are being incarnated in this period when liberty of thought and action are not so restricted in the West as they have been in the past by dogmatic religious prejudice and bigotry. And at the present time we are in a cycle of transition,

when, as a transition period should indicate, everything in philosophy, religion, and society is changing. In a transition period the full and complete figures and rules respecting cycles are not given out to a generation which elevates money above all thoughts and scoffs at the spiritual view of man and nature.

Let us also pay attention to H. P. B.'s own words in *The Secret Doctrine*:

They [the esoteric doctrines] are said to emanate from a source (Occultism) repudiated by science. . . . The rejection of these teachings may be expected, and must be accepted beforehand. . . . They will be derided and rejected *a priori* in this century; but only in this one. For in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas. — I, p. xxxvii

And on page xxiv, referring to the first cycle of Kali-Yuga:

We have not long to wait, and many of us will witness the Dawn of the New Cycle at the end of which not a few accounts will be settled and squared between the races.

Though we do not as yet know anything about that "end" spoken of, let us recognise the truth and importance of the words just now quoted. Let us admit that we are still — and Heaven knows how long yet — right in the middle of this transition period. It is worth considering for all of us to what extent H. P. B.'s work and message has been vindicated so far, both in what we might call "outside" the T. S., in the world, and inside the T. S. or rather the Theosophical Movement, though, of course, we realize that there is no real separation here; there is a constant influence through the "channel" into the world and the influences of the latter react on the Movement, at least in exoteric aspects.

Now a Convention like this, where so many subjects are tackled, is not the place to go into a detailed and technical study of what is happening in science, philosophy and religion and to make comparisons. Those of

us who are alert and study magazines and books of the present day get one example after the other of the truth of H. P. B.'s statements and — shall we call them "predictions?" (Predictions here were based on knowledge of the cycles!) Our own periodicals and books continually point to the hundreds and hundreds of instances, and it would indeed be interesting to quote some of them here.

We are living in a strange period; on the one hand turmoil and struggle, discord and strife, reminding us of the cruelty and darkness of the Middle Ages, on the other hand a breaking through of light, a search of human minds for truth about life and death, about the universe, as never before. New conceptions everywhere, broadening of ideas and ideals, all in themselves a vindication of what H. P. B. stated and predicted. We are reminded here of her IF at the end of *The Key to Theosophy*:

ENQUIRER. But if this danger be averted? [the danger of dogmas and degeneration into sects of the T. S.]

THEOSOPHIST. Then the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty and Philanthropy. Slowly but surely it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices; it will break down racial and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realization of the Brotherhood of all men.

It is especially the statements in this concluding chapter of H. P. B.'s *Key to Theosophy* that are very important to us, for either partly or wholly we find her work and message vindicated by comparing what she stated with what has happened after she left us and what at present takes place in the world around us.

In the world of science almost every new discovery means a vindication. Read the books on astronomy, biology, archaeology, on the therapy of many medical men of the present day. Cosmic ideas

penetrating everywhere! Here is an instance, the concluding words of a well-known Doctor of Medicine in a weekly article in one of the big Netherlands papers:

The tragedy of man is that all sorrow finds its origin in his own nature, because he does not know what he is doing. There will probably come a time when we, doctors of medicine, no longer make a difference between diseases of the body and of the mind (soul), because there is no difference between matter and spirit. For matter is spirit and spirit is matter. However, this is not a modern view at all; we do not owe it to modern science, physics and chemistry, though they have given recent proofs of the fact. Four hundred years ago already the physician Paracelsus stated it in his *Volumen Paramirum*. And in curing diseases this fact will have to be taken into consideration. For the more deeply one penetrates into some process of a disease, the more one realizes that the causes of it lie in the occult, and that nobody, with the light of nature, can be a (real) physician, if he fails to find the causes of the visible in the invisible (realms). — Dr. P. H. van de Hoog, in *Het Vaderland*, The Hague

And here is a statement from a book by Geraldine Coster on *Yoga and Western Psychology*, a most interesting work:

My plea is then that Yoga as followed in the East is a practical method of mind development, quite as practical as analytical therapy, and far more practical and closely related to real life than the average university course.

H. P. B. said in the *Key*:

The West will learn to understand and appreciate the East at its true value.

Only a couple of weeks ago in The Hague two very well known men of science lectured on the publication of a book called *Scientia*. It was a significant gathering; there were interesting people, one could feel the predominance of the manasic qualities throughout the hall. But what

struck us was the great effort of the two learned speakers to convince the audience that a unification of the various and specialized branches of science had absolutely become necessary, so that the men of science could approach each other and a synthesis could be found, seeing that *Spirit is one*. We were led to think of many passages in *The Secret Doctrine* when listening to the very interesting speeches of these two scholars.

It would take too much time to give the hundreds and hundreds of instances where H. P. B.'s work and message is vindicated in religious and philosophic thought. There is everywhere an enormous interest in Tibet just now, the existence of the Great Ones and their disciples or chelas is accepted. H. P. B.'s words are quoted either directly or indirectly in ever so many periodicals and books. After the first wild phases of psychism, an ignorant search to cultivate psychic powers, there may now be seen everywhere a turn of the tide. There is a closer investigation, a careful proceeding on this path of minds more receptive as to the existence of forces in man and nature, dangerous on one hand but worth investigating on the other hand, so that in course of time, as H. P. B. said, mankind may be guided along normal and healthy lines. She said in *The Key to Theosophy*:

Further, the development of the psychic powers and faculties . . . will proceed healthily and normally. Mankind will be saved from the terrible dangers, both mental and bodily, which are inevitable when that unfolding takes place, as it threatens to do, in a hot-bed of selfishness and all evil passions. Man's mental and psychic growth will proceed in harmony with his moral improvement, while his material surroundings will reflect the peace and fraternal goodwill which will reign in his mind, instead of the discord and strife which is everywhere apparent around us today.

Now speaking more from the standpoint of one *inside* the T.S.! What lessons we get! "Its future," said H. P. B. "will depend almost entirely upon the degree of selflessness, earnestness, devotion, and last, but not

least, on the amount of knowledge and wisdom possessed by those members, on whom it will fall to carry on the work, and to direct the Society after the death of the Founders."

"*Unite and work as one mind, one heart,*" said H. P. B. to the Conventions in her time (1890). And in 1891:

Never has it been more necessary for members of the T. S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood.

Well then, in our time, a man comes and again repeats *the same message* to the Theosophical Movement: UNITE! Our present Leader, Dr. de Purucker, issued the plea to all Theosophists, no matter what their present organizational affiliations may be, to unite on the fundamental principles of Theosophy, if they really love H. P. B. and her work. I sometimes ask if some of our friends are blind that they do not see that *here* especially H. P. B.'s work and efforts are vindicated. And as to deeper aspects, hardly to be understood by the outside world, read H. P. B.'s article on "Chelas and Lay Chelas," see the state of affairs in those times, the dangers and difficulties, nay, disasters, compare the work done by the Leaders after she left and by the forces behind them with that which was done later, leading to a limitation of the dangers of the inner Path, the avoiding of sudden occurrences by the gradual steps, just as in the Mystery-School, which the T. S. indeed is.

For those who have made a study of the influences at work in the Theosophical Movement it is not only a *fact* that the T. S. will live on and through the twentieth century, that it is leavening and permeating in any case a *great part* of the mass of thinking and intelligent people, but also that it is being guided by the same forces as in H. P. B.'s time. And that guidance is of such a great importance to them and such an indescribable and continual inspiration to them, *for that is indeed the greatest vindication* of H. P. B.'s work we can ever think of. There was the unforgettable training of K. T. — and I mention this especially,

because it may not be so well known to the members who have come in in later years preparing the way for greater things and by this very method vindicating Blavatsky's work and message in the most esoteric way. There is the grand work of G. de P., whose methods of work and guidance, whose marvelously clear and profound statements in the magazines and books, *always* confirming and corroborating H. P. B.'s teachings, i. e., the doctrines of the Esoteric Wisdom, prove to us that Blavatsky's promise that *more would be given* in this century if all went well, has been fulfilled to the letter.

Reflect! no disappointments in our T. S. as regards leadership and teachings, always proofs of the impersonal forces working through the top of the hierarchy, always definite evidence that H. P. B.'s teachings were given out in strict conformity with the indications of the Great Ones who sent her. No withdrawal of fragments of doctrines or even of whole aspects of teachings, but, on the contrary, an ever greater vision is given to us of the esoteric, majestic verities in *The Secret Doctrine*. Is not this a vindication that should make us think and guide us as to the work we have to do for the future? For we should not forget that the greatest vindication of H. P. B.'s work is still to come by *our* work, i. e., by our trying to prepare the time as pioneers in our days for the realization of the Theosophical basis of life for *every* human being, for communities and nations, indeed for the whole world. This very Convention shows us that we mean business, this very meeting of members and officials from various places in Europe is a most beautiful vindication of the noble efforts of the lion-hearted Founder of the Theosophical Movement.

H. P. B., her work and message! The *insignia majestatis* of the really Great Ones were there. The real teachers always have that great impersonality, there is no desire or effort to make personal followers. They seem to say: I only do my duty, I teach but to pass on. They always make us love humanity and never attract attention to themselves, for which very fact they must needs get our attention in the shape of great respect and gratitude. They teach us that we should in our turn be impersonal instruments, that really nothing remains of us but the

spiritual aroma of our work as such instruments, though this will come back even in future manvantaras!

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY? — *Iverson L. Harris*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

FIRST: Theosophy is a way of living, a path through the labyrinth of life, lighted from within by the fires of aspiration, of love and compassion and sympathy for all that lives, and illuminated from without by the self-shining sign-posts all along the way left by the Enlightened Ones of all ages and of all peoples, who have trodden the Path before us.

Second: Theosophy is a magic treasure-house of spiritual and intellectual wisdom, into which anyone may enter and partake of the riches therein offered, to the extent that he is willing to pay the price for them — the price being sincerity and disinterestedness of purpose, readiness to work and study and strive and serve and give. Marvelous paradox! The more one avails himself of the riches of this treasure-house, the greater one finds therein the riches yet untouched; and the more one gives to others of the treasures received, the more richly he finds himself endowed. Such is the magic of sharing in spiritual and intellectual treasures. There are no letters patent issued by the Keepers of this Thesaurus. Its treasure-chests are open to any and all who will give the right knock; and no one can shut the doors to the treasury except oneself.

Third: Theosophy is a master-locksmith, who supplies gratis keys to all who earnestly apply for them and are willing to serve their apprenticeship in order to learn how rightly to use them — keys to the basic, underlying, hidden, and noumenal causes behind the superficial, outward, obvious, and phenomenal effects which so mystify and baffle thinking men searching for solutions to the deeper problems of religion, philosophy, and science.

Fourth: Theosophy is a universal Baedeker or guide-book, which describes the travel-routes, points out the places of interest, recommends the best stopping-places, warns of the dangers, and answers age-old questions for the serious wayfarer on his eternal pilgrimage from un-self-conscious god-spark to fully self-conscious god: Who am I? Where did I come from? Whither am I bound? What is the purpose of it all? What is my relationship to the vast universe — visible and invisible — which surrounds me? And, perhaps most important of all, What is my relationship and my duty to my fellow-pilgrims along the way?

Fifth: Theosophy affords me the companionship of real men and women in many varying degrees of evolutionary development, enlightenment, and awareness; and from the moment these companions have really been touched by the spirit of Theosophy — even if not yet familiar with it by name — all are at once linked with me in a marvelous web of destiny — my spiritual brothers and sisters, closer to me, mayhap, than those of my own flesh and blood. To some of these — my younger brothers in Theosophy — I may be able to give light and help, because I may have passed through the grades into which they are just entering; as to the majority, I study and grow and aspire with them, each sharing with all the others the lessons learned, the experiences passed through, the difficulties overcome, the victories won, the achievements recorded, the enemies inside ourselves conquered. From those wiser and more evolved than ourselves — our leaders and teachers — we receive inspiration, light, and guidance. Fallible human beings like us, as they themselves remind us, they are perhaps closer to us for that very reason; while they nevertheless enrich our lives with the brilliance of their genius, the loftiness of their ideals, the creative power of their imagination, the dynamic force of their resilient vitality, the bountiful generosity of their intellectual and spiritual gifts. And beyond them, through Theosophy, we are made aware of our link with the real Elder Brothers of the Race, the *Mahatmans*, the highly illuminated spiritual Sages and Seers, the men in whom the living spirit of the Christ and of the Buddha actually

abides and manifests itself in the outpouring of magnificent philosophy, occult science, lofty ethics, universal religion, and all-embracing love.

If, perchance, some are unfamiliar with the treasures that Theosophy has to offer, and doubt that such riches as I have spoken of are actually available in this sad world of ours, then to such I say: Do yourselves the service of investigating personally. Dare you plunge in deeply into the arcana of occult lore? Seek you to know the Masters of Wisdom by their own words and teachings? Then read and study *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* or the synthesis of religion, philosophy, and science transmitted from them to the world by H. P. Blavatsky over fifty years ago in her monumental masterpiece, *The Secret Doctrine*. Let me whet your appetites with a brief quotation from each of these works. Listen first to this daring figure from *The Mahatma Letters* (page 339):

The culture of society more often inclines to lawn-tennis philosophy than to that of the banned "adepts," whose wider game has worlds for balls, and etheric space for its shaven lawn.

And in the Preface to *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky states that the teachings contained therein

. . . belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism, nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original elements, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialized.

Do you seek to share in the universal ethical ideals and devotional teachings which Theosophy has to offer? Then study and memorize and make a part of your lives the golden rules contained in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*, William Q. Judge's recension of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and G. de Purucker's *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*. A brief quotation from each by way of example: From *The Voice of the*

Silence:

For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy mind and soul.

From the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

Even if the good of mankind only is considered by thee, the performance of thy duty will be plain; for whatever is practised by the most excellent men, that is also practised by others. The world follows whatever example they set. (ch. iii, page 25)

From *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*:

Love is the most beautiful, the holiest, thing known to human beings. It gives to man hope; it holds his heart in aspiration; it stimulates the noblest qualities of the human being, such as the sacrifice of self for others; it brings about self-forgetfulness; it brings also peace and joy that know no bounds. It is the noblest thing in the universe.

Do you seek to know more about the application of Theosophy to the problems of home and education and every-day living? Then read Katherine Tingley's *Theosophy, the Path of the Mystic* or her *Wine of Life*. In the first of these works she wrote:

Think of Theosophy not so much as a body of philosophic or other teachings, but as the highest law of conduct, which is the enacted expression of divine love or compassion, (p. 3)

And in *The Wine of Life* Katherine Tingley wrote:

Theosophy is not exclusive, it is all-inclusive; it is not for the "chosen people"; it is for all humanity. It is the great, sweeping breath of truth, (p. 131)

Do you desire to share in the light which the technical doctrines of Theosophy, expressed in easily understood language, have to throw on some of the basic questions of religion, philosophy, and science? Then

read H. P. Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy*, William Q. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, or G. de Purucker's *Esoteric Tradition*. In the concluding chapter of *The Key*, H. P. B. wrote:

Theosophy . . . , as it has existed eternally throughout the endless cycles upon cycles of the Past, so it will ever exist throughout the infinitudes of the Future, because Theosophy is synonymous with EVERLASTING TRUTH.

In his opening chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy*, William Q. Judge declared:

Theosophy is that ocean of knowledge which spreads from shore to shore of the evolution of sentient beings; unfathomable in its deepest parts, it gives the greatest minds their fullest scope, yet, shallow enough at its shores, it will not overwhelm the understanding of a child. It is wisdom about God for those who believe that he is all things and in all, and wisdom about nature for the man who accepts the statement found in the Christian Bible that God cannot be measured or discovered, and that darkness is around his pavilion. Although it contains by derivation the name God and thus may seem at first sight to embrace religion alone, it does not neglect science, for it is the science of sciences and therefore has been called the Wisdom-Religion. For no science is complete which leaves out any department of nature, whether visible or invisible, and that religion which, depending solely on an assumed revelation, turns away from things and the laws which govern them is nothing but a delusion, a foe to progress, an obstacle in the way of man's advancement toward happiness. Embracing both the scientific and the religious, Theosophy is a scientific religion and a religious science.

In *The Esoteric Tradition*, our present Leader, Dr. de Purucker says on page 406:

It [Theosophy] is the result of innumerable ages of human

experience, of human research and experiment by the Great Sages, the Masters of Life and Wisdom, and of their deep thinking and reflexion, casting this Wisdom-Knowledge into systematic formulation. It is the result of their correlation of the knowledge that they have wrested from the womb of Nature and have formulated into systematic exposition. Such Great Men still live as a Brotherhood.

Elsewhere, Dr. de Purucker has stated:

Theosophy is a formulation in human language of the operations, structure, origin, present state, and destiny of the Universe. . . .

Light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect: all three must be satisfied in every man before he has real peace.

Finally, would you like to take the first steps in this wide field of intellectual and spiritual culture and development? Then, I say, join a Theosophical study-group or lodge, or enroll in the free Theosophical Correspondence Class, and read the series of fifteen little *Theosophical Manuals* issued this year as a complete set by the Theosophical University Press. They are entitled respectively:

1. What is Theosophy? A General View for Inquirers
2. Reincarnation: A Lost Chord in Modern Thought
3. Karman: The Doctrine of Consequences
4. The Seven Principles of Man
5. After Death — What?
6. Evolution
7. Rounds and Races: Man's Divine Parentage and Destiny
8. The Doctrine of Cycles
9. Hierarchies: The Ladder of Life
10. The Astral Light
11. Psychic Powers
12. Theosophy and Christianity

13. Mahatmans and Chelas

14. The Mystery-Schools

15. Yoga and Yoga Discipline: A Theosophical Interpretation

As a verbal keystone to the great arch in the temple of Theosophy, I think the following message from one of the Masters transmitted through H P. Blavatsky to her students is superlatively inspiring and bears constant repetition.

Behold the Truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it, a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defense of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the Secret Science (*Gupta-Vidya*) depicts — these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the temple of Divine Wisdom

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS — *M. G. G.*

Can you explain in words just why
So many are afraid to die?
Why should the creeps be twinned with fear
At thoughts of Nature's ruling here?
Are we so loath to close our eyes
While stars bedight Night's purple skies?
Why then, when this, our perfect sleep,
Allows the Spirit Cosmic sweep?
Is there today a way whereby

Rare souls, prepared, might amplify
Self-knowledge by a thousandfold,
Precisely as in days of old?
Might one foretread that old, old road
Which the immortal gods have strode,
And know just what it means to be
Some Rounds ahead of you and me?

The Red Man views the Milky Way
As one vast "Road of Souls," they say.
Is this a fragment of old lore
That all men shared long heretofore?
Did they then know the metes and bounds,
The ultimate of future Rounds,
That Man must make in times to come
When we have solved the Cosmic Sum?

— *M. G. G.*

CONSCIOUSNESS AND SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS — *Abbott Clark*

Consciousness is awareness of any thing on any plane. It is knowledge or perception of any state, object, or sensation, mental, emotional, or physical. It is all that makes us different from insensate matter. If we were not conscious on this plane we would be asleep or in a faint or a trance. In such cases our consciousness is transferred or tuned in to another plane. We are then temporarily conscious on some inner plane. If we were not conscious at all on any plane we simply would not *be* at all.

Self-consciousness is an affirmation of duality: I, and myself. But what is the *I* that scrutinizes myself? It is evidently not the body, nor its life, nor the emotions or desires, for I can scrutinize them and exercise my will upon them. I am not my mind, for I can view and study its operations and train, change and control it.

What then is this mysterious I? This awareness of being an individual? An individuality which never changes from birth to death? It is the Atmic Ray, the Christos, within us. The ray of the immortal monad. If we could turn inward and follow this sense of reality, this stream of consciousness, to its source we should become illuminated. We should realize our divinity.

Consciousness and energy are inseparable, two aspects of one thing. The will in man is the energy aspect of his individual consciousness, of his mind and soul. For purposes of discussion we often separate mind and will and make of each an empty abstraction; but in fact and in nature they are two inseparable aspects of one thing. We cannot be conscious, or think, without motion, life, energy; for consciousness and life or energy are one.

Other beings both above and below man are conscious and exhibit varying degrees of intelligence, often high intelligence. But they are not self-conscious. It is said in the Vedas that the gods (*devas*) in heaven

envy suffering, struggling man on earth. Why is this? Because of man's vast possibilities; because of his having free will and the creative fire. He can think, imagine, will, and create, and so become "as one of us," i. e., as one of the creative gods. There are some classes of gods who have not been through the human stage. They have not developed self-conscious free will. The human stage on any planet is the stage in which self-conscious free will is developed.

Other beings below man are moved to act by a general hierarchical impulse, as flocks of birds and schools of fish. The teaching is that there are classes of devas, spiritually far above man, who have not this self-conscious free will or power of choice and the creative fire. It is they who are jealous or envious of man, according to Vedic lore, as indicated by the story of Prometheus. Most men are far from being fully human yet. They are in a low primitive state of evolution. They move with the "herd mind," are swayed by mass psychology. They have hardly begun to think and reason for themselves. They are experimenting on each other in the use of their wills, and vexatious or terrible is the conflict. Deluded by the sense of separateness, "the great delusion," they injure each other. But nature is beneficent. They learn by suffering.

All the myriad parts of complex man are perfectly right and good and pure in their proper place. They become evil only when out of place, as fertile soil is "dirt" when in the house. It is the limited, egoistic, emotional, personal man that misuses his powers for selfish gratification that makes all the trouble. It is the object of the Theosophical Movement to teach man to know and control himself and use his powers aright. The personal, emotional man and the desires are not to be destroyed or annihilated. Without them we could not live or work on earth. They are to be purified, elevated, perfected and used aright. For example, the creative power which man possesses is a pure cosmic force. It can be used for procreation, or worse than wasted for gratification, or utterly purified from bestial and selfish desire. It can be used on the intellectual, moral and spiritual plane, where one of its powers is kriyasakti, the power to create or materialize objective forms

by the imagination and will.

Initiation and masterhood must be accomplished while in a body here on earth.

As man rises spiritward in the scale of evolution the sense of separateness disappears and the conflict of wills ceases. Man's consciousness blends in love and sympathy with his fellow-men and in fact with all nature. He becomes an impersonal force for good, universally beneficent. The object of the human stage of evolution has been accomplished. The human host has joined the army of Compassion. They have learned to use their wills, the power of thought and imagination, and all their creative faculties in full constructive co-operation with the gods.

The Theosophical Forum

CHARACTER: A THEOSOPHICAL EXPLANATION (1) — Clifton Meek

Editor *Norwalk Hour*:

Several weeks ago there appeared in the *Norwalk Hour* a very excellent letter by Judge Light entitled "What is Character?" Perhaps some of your readers may be interested in further thoughts on the subject from a theosophical viewpoint. The lack of time has prevented me from commenting earlier. I believe that character can be explained and defined by Reincarnation, at least to the satisfaction of some, for as a lecturer on the subject once facetiously remarked: "Reincarnation explains human nature. People could not have become so stupid in just one life here on earth."

There can be no satisfactory explanation of character that can be universally applied to all cases that is based upon popular religious and scientific concepts now prevalent in the Occident. Science accepts nothing that it cannot prove by its own physical methods of investigation, and hence gives little consideration to the inner man and his spiritual reactions to life. Character is a spiritual quality which cannot be boiled down to a residue in test tubes. Christian theology, a distorted interpretation of the early Christian mystery teachings, tells us that man is a trinity — body, soul, and spirit, a classification which is true as far as it goes, but one which is sadly lacking in detail as far as a practical and workable basis upon which to build a better understanding of the real man is concerned. It briefly mentions man's intermediate nature as a soul, but gives us no information concerning the mental and psychical processes which take place, e. g., desire, and, most important of all, free will, by which man may shape his own destiny. We are further told that the earthly experiences of man are limited to one brief, short, and fleeting life here upon earth, during which time he is supposed to acquire perfection much in the manner that a student would master algebra and higher mathematics by attending school for one day. Such a theory is contradicted by every

known law of nature. All life, great and small, from stars to atoms, is governed by the law of cycles, a habit of nature, so accurately and perfectly balanced that astronomers are able to compute and foretell solar eclipses hundreds of years hence, and there is no logical reason or criterion in the realm of nature to assume that man is an exception to this universal law. It is only when we view life from the large perspective — that the spiritual man returns to the sphere of earthly existence innumerable times until the last lesson has been learned and coined into the spiritual currency of character and made a par of himself, that we can account, with any degree of logic and reason for the inequalities of human nature and why some men innately have more character than others. A man who has character is simply more of a man than one who hasn't for the reason that he has incorporated the fruits of experience and the lessons of many lives into the fiber of his being, and it has become himself. His very nature bears the stamp of a nobler life.

This does not mean, however, that character is something which is acquired from without and added to man like so many bricks as a building is constructed. Rather it is the unfoldment of spiritual and divine qualities inherently within; the manifestation of higher attributes brought about by the trials and experiences of earth-life through many incarnations.

Let a man once grasp the idea that he is essentially a divine being in his inmost nature, and that life is a school of discipline to which he must return until the selfish impulses of his animal nature are transmuted into an unselfish love for all that lives, his life will become purposeful and an elevating influence within the sphere of his relationship with his fellow-men, and I hold that this, and this alone will bring about permanent world betterment and the abatement of those evils which today cast their blight over the face of the earth. The general trend of western civilization, both in secular and religious matters, has been dominated by the selfish ambition of men to GET something rather than to BE something. If it hasn't been worldly things it has been a glorified selfishness for eternal salvation. The purpose of life is to make

something of men here and now, and the future will take care of itself.

For nearly two thousand years western civilization has been fed on theological husks instead of the basic Christian and Theosophical teaching that it is the divine nature of man alone that can restore peace and happiness on earth, and today the gods of war are reaping a bountiful harvest.

If character is to be developed in human nature, something more is necessary than merely preaching to men that they must be good. This is an age of inquiry and investigation, and the mere repetition of platitudes no longer satisfies thinking people who refuse to blindly accept spiritual guidance on the strength of supposed authority. Man is endowed with an intellectual apparatus and if he is to grow and keep pace with the evolutionary process of nature he will have to do his own thinking and learn to discriminate between Truth and the mass of non-essentials with which religion has become incrustated. An orderly society cannot be created by teaching men for centuries that they are like so many rotten apples that can be made whole again by some supernatural, external power. In time they will begin to believe that they are inherently bad and sooner or later the bad spots of spiritual decay and dry rot will begin to appear on the surface of society, which is exactly what is happening today. Although the idea of Reincarnation has been promulgated in the western world for a comparatively short time, it has gained wide acceptance in all walks of life and many professed Christians have accepted it as a part of their religion. It is the only teaching, religious, philosophical, or scientific, that explains the apparent inequalities of life with any degree of justice.

I would define character as the accumulated wisdom of many lives — the urge to live a nobler life more in harmony with the moral and ethical laws of Universal Nature which underly all manifested life.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Norwalk Hour*, July 6, 1940. ([return to text](#))

WHAT THEOSOPHY MEANS TO ME — *Margaret Adams Faulconer*

Theosophy is a comprehensive answer to the questions which arise in us all at times of great exaltation or trouble. It explains our awe at beauty and satisfies our yearning to know that our aspirations are not in vain, but will have their fulfilment in good time. It teaches that there is *no* unfinished business; that right thinking results in proper action, and that evil brings its own appropriate punishment.

Theosophy purges life of its most virulent poison: regret, and fills us with a glorious sense of adventure, reaching beyond our numbered years. It ties us in with cosmic consciousness akin to ecstasy. Crying for the moon is no longer futile; we may help ourselves to all the starry universe, for of it we are an integral part.

"And the stars sang in their courses." The poet who wrote that understood Theosophy; he must have, to convey to us the feeling of joyousness in Nature.

Theosophy frees us from the trammels of dogma and doctrine which, if we are sincere in our research, must result in Theosophical conclusions. It shows Science and Religion and Philosophy to be fluid, not static, but ever unfolding; as today's theories are nullified by tomorrow's, many times, even so we evolve and expand in our reactions and understanding. Its teaching of compassion is appealing, for without this outpouring of tenderness there can be no brotherliness; and hate and envy are not negative but strong forces which bar all advancement and are even physically poisonous. Unlike religion, Theosophy imbues us with a great necessity to share the sense of freedom with others. Religion has its missionaries, but they seek to impose hard and fast dogma. We strive to point out this above mentioned freedom, the freedom of self-discipline; freedom to be oneself, and exert every effort toward the "good Life" here, so that we may "graduate," so to speak, from this phase and do "post-graduate

work" of evolvment as cycle succeeds cycle. Theosophy is a study, of course, with limitless avenues to follow, to develop and deepen our capacity to receive Truth; but the beginner cannot dissociate the study and the practice: as we progress in understanding of Theosophy we find that what we took as something to peruse we have automatically made a habit of living.

Theosophy has shown me that it works, because it does not require that one go outside the province of one's daily circle of influence, nor side-track any of the normal duties of life, but rather it stresses the importance of being the best possible, responsible person, in attitude, faithfulness, etc., right in that sphere where we find ourselves. Many times a religion interests people because it furnishes an excuse for chucking the hum-drum, daily duties. But that will never help us to grow, and others watching for the effects of a newly acquired philosophy are unfavorably impressed when the student neglects his immediate responsibilities.

To sum up:

(a) Theosophy is the science, philosophy, and religion combined which every thinking man needs to keep balanced in this muddled world.

(b) Theosophy tells us why we are here and helps us to prepare for the next step in our evolution.

(c) Theosophy points to a possible "heaven" on earth if only all mankind could feel and practise the tender compassion it teaches.

The Theosophical Forum

A DREAM FROM THE SEAS OF THOUGHT — *F. F. Webster*

F. Spanner, U. S. Navy, Retired, woke up in the morning still full of the ideas he had gotten from a dream that was as clear as a real experience. It impressed him so much that while it was still fresh in his memory he went and told it to his wise old friend, Mr. Whitely. It ran very much as follows.

"It seemed as if my old Navy shipmate Sparks, the Radioman, and I were having an interesting experience testing a new radio device by which a person could listen in to the thoughts of other folk — their actual thought — not the seeming thoughts back of their conversation, and also that the same device made it possible for Sparks and myself to broadcast our actual thoughts to impinge on the minds of any particular persons we wished.

"While I was intent on broadcasting to a certain group some thoughts that seemed helpful and kind and friendly, I happened to glance over at Sparks. His face showed a sort of puzzled concern, so that I asked him what was wrong. He answered that he had been listening in on the thoughts of a group of people together at some apparently friendly entertainment. There seemed to be, as it were, two sets of thought-actions going on in the minds of each of the folk he was studying. There were the thought-forms directly connected with the conversations, which were amiable and friendly, and then there seemed to be certain vigorous thought-forms that appeared to be stamped with suspicion, distrust, and fear. And further, these qualities of thought coming from one person seemed to react on others so as to increase the disturbing thoughts already in their minds. While Sparks and I were talking about it, I woke up."

After Mr. Spanner finished telling his dream Mr. Whitely remained quiet, in deep thought, for a while. Then he turned to Mr. Spanner and said: "You have been dreaming about some very serious facts that the

majority of men do not consider. Men's brains are very wonderful radio sets that are fitted for both sending and receiving ideas. It is very important to understand this quality of brain structure in these days when people are in such close association with each other. It is just as dangerous to be ignorant of this as it is to be wilfully destructive, as you can see. Unfriendly ideas, unexpressed, build up into dangerous forces for destructiveness. It is a further fact that a person in a group where such harmful thought-emanations are building up, can by a strong, positive, friendly, good-will thought-force from himself counteract the unfriendly thought-structure and may even start a wave of positive friendly thoughts that will build up into bases for real trust and true friendship. Refuse to think unkind thoughts; think kind thoughts, and trust and friendship are bound to develop. That is what makes real civilization."

The Theosophical Forum

A RIGHT PHILOSOPHY — H. T. Edge

Some people say they are so occupied with daily cares that they have no time for Theosophy. But this is nonsense and shows that they have not grasped what Theosophy is. It is true that it includes deep studies which demand much time; but apart from this, Theosophy is a way of looking at life. However preoccupied we may be with the daily task, we cannot help thinking; everybody has *some* philosophy of life, though he may not call it by that name; and surely it is better to have a right philosophy which will help you to face life than a wrong one which will make life more difficult. The advantage of Theosophy is that it explains the problems of life instead of teaching doctrines that do not agree with our experience.

Take the question of the duality of human nature. That is a fact which everyone knows well enough from his own experience, both in his own character and in the characters of his associates. This fact cannot be explained away and must be faced; but if we can understand the reason for it we shall be better able to grapple with it. Sometimes it has been called the angel and the demon in man, or man's higher self and lower self.

We all know that our mind is a battle-ground of opposing forces — those that make for peace and happiness, and those that make for trouble. But what too many do not realize is that every man has within him the power to determine his own destiny. We have in our nature unfathomable depths, and this is a *fact* which not all the dogmas of science or religion can do away with. Who has sounded the depths of human nature? Who dare set limits to the power of the human spirit? This is a time when each man is called upon to stand on his own feet and manfully assert the power of his own individuality against any doctrines which may teach him that he is only an improved animal or that he is a helpless miserable sinner.

There are various movements of self-culture, New Thought, etc., which teach the calling forth of our innate powers, but there is no definite body of scientific teachings behind. Theosophy, with its teachings as to the sevenfold constitution of man, gives the clue to the problem. Man is not a mere collection of instincts and desires and fancies; he is not merely an improved animal; nor is he the plaything of indifferent cosmic forces, or a poor helpless creature doomed by deity to play a sorry and incomprehensible part. Man is essentially a divine being, a god dwelling in a tabernacle of clay. There are "humanist" movements, which concentrate on making human nature the chief thing; and they are right so far, but they do not know enough about human nature and its possibilities. The essential divinity of man, the sevenfold nature of man, Reincarnation, the doctrine of Karma: these are some of the things which must be understood if we are to understand human nature. And Theosophy explains them all.

The Theosophical Forum

TO A NOVICE IN WRITING — *Leoline L. Wright*

About once a month on an average someone writes to me, or I hear someone say: "I wish / could write an article on Theosophy." Instead of replying: "Well then, why not go to it?" — let me make a few simple suggestions.

First of all as to material. Here, you cannot be new. Everything allowed at present to be known about the Esoteric Philosophy has already been said, and by the Teachers themselves. But remember this. Not one of these wonderful truths has yet been brought out in the light of *your* experience.

In that sense — providing you are writing what *you* think and feel and not what you have read in *The Secret Doctrine* or *The Esoteric Tradition* — in that sense alone you yourself have something new and highly worthwhile to say. No reader is going to be struck with mere repetitions from the Theosophical classics. He can read those for himself. And neither you nor I can possibly put these things as they have there been written once and forever. But your own thoughts about them; your own fresh-minted ideas brought from your individual use of them — there is the secret in the choice of fresh material in writing an article on Theosophy.

Second. Before starting your article lay aside your textbooks for a week or two and concentrate on a fresh point of view. So many Theosophists read nothing but Theosophical books. The result is that many of us go round and round in the same spate of cliches and figures of speech and expression until we are like caged squirrels in their eternal treadmills. In this way some of the grandest Theosophical phrases have become threadbare and almost wearisome.

One of the best preparatory exercises I know is to read the books of some of our great modern writers. And if you will tackle one or two on a subject you *don't* like, you will get a whole lot more out of it than if

you just follow the trend of your own mentality. The reason being that the expressions used will be fresh to you. As an exercise in rich and virile English the works of Winston Churchill, the English Prime Minister, can be particularly recommended. Priestley is another gold mine. Search out some good writer, anyway, on a topic that is unfamiliar to you, and study closely the style and vocabulary. In this way you will free your mind from the too familiar treadmill of daily thinking.

Also, freshen up your sense of human values. Pay a visit to your local post office and take in the types; or sit for an hour or so in a public park or the zoo; take a ride on a popular bus-line — anything that will enable you to soak up the common human atmosphere of everyday people and their lives. Focus observation, sympathy, and imagination on the people and slight happenings which you may encounter. Then during the next day or two write out a description of your impressions. It is simple and persistent work of this kind that has laid the foundations of all great writing. The biographies of the masters of prose tell us that all of them habitually carried a notebook wherein to imprison the fugitive phrase or the chance scene.

Wasn't it Anatole France who once set his pupils to describe a certain tree with which they were all familiar? He told them to look at that tree and find something to say about it that had never been said before. Thus emphasizing that it is not through one's material — for there is nothing new under the sun — but in what the observer finds to say about it, that the masterpiece is constructed.

Do not be afraid to use color. And cultivate what the rhetoric books call "tropes" or figures of speech. That means you must try to make pictures, and dramatize rather than describe your material. The use of too many adjectives is fatal. Learn to choose nouns that embody in their meanings the quality of the thing you are describing; and you won't need many adjectives. Choose verbs of action instead of just describing how a thing appeared to be done. Make your reader *see* what you mean.

Be careful, however, to keep your first articles close to your own life. Fill them full with illustrations from your daily experience. After all the true laboratory of life is found in the business office, the nursery, the kitchen, or the workshop. For in these common places it is that the average man or woman may begin to sprout the first few prickly pinfeathers of the wings of Initiation.

The Theosophical Forum

THE DRAGON'S DEATH — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

Dragon's Death" is, writes Basil de Selincourt, "the price of men's joy and of their peace together." Surely this is a most intuitive and arresting thought!

Swiftly it unfurls visions of the dragon in art and literature — the great gold and crimson dragon of Chinese temple and festival, the dragon of the Nibelungenlied, and our own St. Michael and the dragon — each and everyone of these representing some aspect of a universally recognised symbol. What does the dragon symbolize, and how and why is its death "the price of men's joy and of their peace together?"

The dragon is the personified individuality in man, a stalwart step-son of the gods and the lusty product of the material sphere of evolution, as distinct from its elder brother, the universal individuality, the pilgrim of the ages which the dragon-slayer or St. Michael represents.

This personified egoity is the fertile source of human ignorance and illusion, for from it exude the manifold disruptive influences of life the ancients collectively termed the "heresy of separateness." The dragon would have man imagine himself a plaything of the gods pitted against the Universe, its laws and its forces; and competing with man and beast for a meager existence on Earth.

This the dragon-slayer knows to be a fraud and a delusion that he must destroy by using the strength and intrepidity possessed by the dragon, to divert its energies, now disruptively directed, into the constructive channels of evolution, of universal progress. Knowing himself a potential Universe, one with its very heart — a son of Sun, Stars and Earth, now participating with all the kingdoms of Nature, in the life of this planet — St. Michael can by the power inherent in his divine kinship thus slay the dragon.

With the death of the dragon, the psychological distortions causing

enmity and discord, fear and disease, will become amenable to the disciplined will of the dragon-slayer and learn to conform gladly to the good of the whole. The dragon's death means bringing the loved ideal into creation in the world of men instead of building a world man can no longer rejoice in.

Is this too heavy a price to pay for man's joy in his fellow-men of all nations and races and for the peace wherein to fulfill his joy? The dragon would take all, and when all else had been consumed — consume itself: St. Michael gives royally of what is worthy, retaining for himself but the right to transcend his own limitations, to garner from that experience yet greater treasures for the giving.

The advent of Justice, Altruism, and Compassion — the death of the dragon, antagonism — verily this is "the price of man's joy and of their peace together."

The Theosophical Forum

THOUGHTS ON MAN (1) — J. P. Upton

It appears that man is essentially an ego. Difficult as it is to define the word, it must be taken to be some point which has intelligence and, when this is used, it has force.

We can then say that man's mind is the extension of this point although it may not be the first differentiation of the origin.

The obvious expression of one of his stages of manifestation, is the brain, and its local instrument the body, both of which are but to give means for the operation of a non-material force on a material plane.

Man's actions produce his environment which in turn encourages the fuller development of that type of action which he is in the habit of performing on account of his character. If this type is unethical, it eventually leads to its own destruction. If it is a moral type, it is self-consolidating and leads to a greater intensity of the action.

Where does this begin with the individual? His birth is determined by his previous actions, it is a balance brought forward. He then begins to act according to his own swabhava, which allows him to act in accordance with it or he can act contrary to it, although this will be against his "nature." He can at any time turn from stage one to the next although at first he does so by reason of compulsion of feeling or education. Later, when he begins to think, he will decide to turn because he thinks it is right to, even when he does not want to. This stage is not dependent on age, in years, but of development. Until man reaches this stage he is not adult, not capable of independent intellectual thought, unaffected by passion, yet not cold because over-fathered by the new intuition of the divinity of life.

Most men do not think. They only react against the circumstances around them, this is why so many naturally grouse. They then pull themselves up and determine to be cheerful, in which state of mind

they still do not think, but ignore inharmonious conditions, and pretend that either they do not exist or else they cannot affect them.

When man becomes more aware of the planes of thought, he will perceive that there exist many webs of thought vibrations. He can tune himself to any of these within his range, and he will then think as all the others in that web. If this is a powerful vibration he will be so overcome with it that he will believe it to be the only true one, and if his mind is limited in its ability to encompass the new thought-form, he will tend to become a fanatic. Those who rise into the higher principles of their own composition, meet the divine aspects of life. They have a much higher perception of the values of life, and so powerful and so true is this awareness of things that they say they have seen God.

Man usually has the humility to accord the responsibility for this supreme vision to something outside himself. Here he is both right and wrong, for the truths that he feels are relating to a factor which is present in all men, even if it is only latent, and so he is wrong in attributing this to a source outside himself.

And yet he is also right, for he has now become acquainted for the first time with the essence that is present in all men, but this is the lowest plane of expression on which it shows. Below this man is chiefly a thing of personality, and this obscures the common denominator; especially as we all try to develop the personality so much nowadays. This stratum in the many man has, is called by various names, often the Christos, the Higher Self, or just the Conscience.

Many battles have been fought about the particular label that shall be applied to the exact name that shall be given to a certain stratum. Names tend to divide men, and they should try to feel the idea that the other is putting forward. Most of us think that our way of looking at an idea is the best one, and perhaps the only one. Yet if we could put our aspect into the minds of the other man, it would not appeal so much to him as his own, because we all have different backgrounds and tendencies.

Therefore the actual mental process and conclusion is unimportant. Too much thinking dulls the edge of action. Thinking is not to be made an end in itself, it is only a middle stage in three stages of living. The first is experience of action, then comes the realisation of what has happened, coupled with the mental reaction of what should next be done, and finally the doing of it.

Turning to the third stage of the swing of the pendulum of life, the action resolved on after careful weighing of the experience of the day; we find that we have choices of several ways. If our actions have brought us unhappiness, we can still do the same things again, with promise of still more unhappiness. Most of us have deliberately done things, that we know we shall rue. We have felt impelled by external forces to do them. Paul described this choice, and rightly ascribed the tendency to do the wrong thing, to his lower nature. All of us have to go through this experience, and return to it many times, long after we thought we had quelled its influence. Many of us blame this apparent dictation on our wills, we say we have bad tempers, or are too weak-willed to resist certain tendencies in our characters. We forget that the will is but the kinetic force of the mass of thoughts we hold. The nature of these thoughts is determined by desire. If we wish to change the desire, we must first uproot it for inspection, and this many of us are afraid to do, because we like the experience the possession of this or that desire gives us. We do not like the payment that we have to give for its possession, but while we subject our minds to its sensations, we love it and are glad to see it grow. But when the time comes to pay for the damage it does, its cost of upkeep, our minds revolt and we determine to get rid of the animal, which it truly is. During this revulsion the detached ego sees truth in a rather too stark contrast to its surroundings and rapid repentance sets in. This is but the first stage in determining one's future policy. Repentance is easy, it is automatic. Burning of one's boats is helpful, in deciding to take the other way, but unless the focus of consciousness is deliberately fixed on the goal of the other way, and above all an attempt is made to like it, no lasting results will occur.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwm Tkeosoffaid*, July, 1940, Cardiff, Wales.
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The Theosophical Forum

FUNCTIONS OF THE PINEAL AND PITUITARY GLANDS — *G. de Purucker*

The pineal gland was in earliest mankind an exterior organ of physical vision, and of spiritual and psychic sight. But due to the evolutionary course that the human frame followed, as time passed on and our present two optics began to show themselves, the pineal gland or the third eye, the "Eye of Siva," the "Eye of Dangma," the spiritual eye — call it what you like — began to recede within the skull, which latter finally covered it with bone and hair. It then lost its function as an organ of *physical* vision, but has never ceased to continue its functions even now as an organ of spiritual sight and insight. When a man has a "hunch," the pineal gland is commencing to vibrate gently. When a man or a woman has an intuition, or an inspiration, or a sudden flash of understanding, the pineal gland begins to vibrate still more strongly, albeit softly, gently. Its functions still, and can be cultivated to function more, if we believe in ourselves, and if we believe in the things we have and demonstrate in our daily lives.

Whence comes our ethical sense, whence comes our spiritual insight, whence comes our sense of justice, whence comes the power that makes us men and not mere beasts? Why, these are energies that have to be accounted for. Merely to say they are, is no explanation. These various energies function through the different organs of the brain, some of them arising in the heart and reaching the brain, each such energy through its own appropriate organ or gland, or what not.

The spiritual being works on, plays on, the physical body, as the master musician plays on a wondrous lute or harp. The strings of this instrument, some of them, are coarse catgut and can produce coarse, heavy, sensual sounds. But the strings of this wondrously constructed physical human frame, the body, run from the coarsest catgut to the silver, the gold, and finally to the intangible strings of the spirit; and the master plays on these strings with masterly sweep of will, the master-hand, when we allow it. Mostly we human beings refrain from

playing on the nobler and higher strings, and play on the coarse catgut only. Think!

Why, as a matter of fact, this body of ours is one of the marvels of the universe. It is marvelously constructed. We human beings at present have no realization of what it contains, of its powers to be developed in the future as evolving time will bring them forth, but which we can hasten in their growth now. For instance: What did the ancient Hindus mean when they spoke of the different chakras of the human body, speaking in language which was hid, as all ancient occult teaching was hid? I will enumerate a few of the human chakras as they rightly are, and I am now going behind the veil of the exoteric teachings of the T. S., a bit. I will speak of seven organs or glands in the human frame, beginning with the lowest (which can be the highest). I will recite them first: the genital, the liver, the spleen, the cardiac, the brain as a whole, and the pineal and pituitary glands; and there are other subordinate centers or ganglia in the body. Every one of these organs or glands has its own appropriate function, activity, purpose, and work in the human frame. By our will, by proper study, by living the life, we can make the higher, the incomparably more powerful ones within us, active far more than they now are active, and thus become gods among men. Most of us do not do that. We live in the world below the human diaphragm as it were. And yet, despite our worst efforts to kill the god within us, I mean to destroy its holy work, the pineal gland and the pituitary gland, and the heart, continue functioning just the same. We are protected as it were against our own foolishness.

The lowest of these chakras then can be made one of the noblest by changing its functional direction for creative spirituality. I am now talking of the body. Waste brings loss; that particular organ in the human frame can be made the organ for the production of the mightiest and noblest works of genius. It has a spiritual as well as a physical side, as all these organs and glands have — every one of them. How many men remember the holiness of spiritual creation, so to say?

The liver is the seat of the personal man, the kama-manasic individual;

and the spleen, the "lieutenant" of the former, is the seat of the astral body, the *linga-sarira*; and even at seances today — which I would not advise anyone to frequent unless he goes there knowing more than the average man does — even they have shown how the astral body of the medium oozes out, first as a slender thread, and then becomes, when the manifestation is *genuine*, what is now called "ectoplasm," really thickened astral stuff. It comes through the spleen, it comes forth from the spleen. The liver, as stated, is the seat of the personal man, and the spleen is its lieutenant or adjutant.

Then the heart, the organ of the god within us, of the divine-spiritual: here in the physical heart considered now as a spiritual organ, and not merely as a vital pump which it is also: here in the heart, is the god within; not in person so to speak, but its ray, touches the heart and fills it as it were with its auric presence — a holy of holies. Out of the heart come all the great issues of life. Here is where conscience abides, and love and peace and perfect self-confidence, and hope, and divine wisdom. Their seat is in the mystic heart of which the physical organ is the physical vital instrument.

The brain *as a whole* is the organ of the brain-mind, as a whole the field of activity of our ordinary reasoning, ratiocinative mentation by which we think ordinary and even higher thoughts, and by which also we go about our daily tasks. This is the function of the brain as a whole. But connected with the brain are two wonderful glands already spoken of, the pineal and the pituitary. The pineal gland is as it were a casement opening out into infinite seas and horizons of light, for it is the organ that in us men receives the direct mahatic ray, the ray direct from the cosmic intellect. It is the organ of inspiration, of intuition, of vision, a casement as it were opening unto infinite horizons. The heart is higher, because it is the organ of the individual's spiritual nature, including the higher manas or spiritual intellect. When the heart inflames the pineal gland and sets it vibrating rapidly, then so strong is the inflow of spiritual force that the man experiencing this has his very body clothed in an aureole of glory; a nimbus is behind his head, for the pineal gland is vibrating rapidly, the inner eye is opened and sees infinity; and the

aureole or nimbus is the energetic outflow from this activity of the pineal gland.

The pituitary gland is the lieutenant of the pineal. It is the organ of will and hence also of automatic growth. Even in another sense, I believe today medical research has discovered that gigantism is due to an unwonted activity and growth of the pituitary. This is just one aspect. It is the organ of will and urge and growth and impulse; but when the pineal sets the pituitary vibrating in synchrony with its own vibration, you have a god-man, for there is the intellect envisaging infinity, the divinity in the heart speaking and vibrating synchronously with the pineal gland, which sees infinity. And the pituitary thus inspired to action of will working through the other chakras or organs or glands, makes all the man a harmony of higher energies — relatively godlike. Strange paradox!

To enumerate, then, once more the seven main centers of energies in the body: the genital, one; the liver, two; the spleen, three; the heart, four; the brain as a whole, five; the pituitary, six; and the pineal, seven; and there are others subordinate to those. But I would call these seven organs or glands in this wonderful human frame of ours the chiefs, the most important. And strangely enough, they are as it were paired: the heart and the brain; the pineal and the pituitary; the liver and spleen again a pair; the pair of the lowest couple, as a matter of fact, is the solar plexus — but this is a story by itself.

The pineal gland functions but slightly in the average man simply because he does not believe there is anything in him of worth except the body as a unitary whole. Nearly all he lives for is to eat, to drink, to sleep and to breed — all proper things in their places, but not proper things for man to live for. There is an ethical sense which abides in us all, and is as it were the free whisperings of divinity in our hearts. It is worthwhile to cultivate this, to allow it to live and to flourish.

Now then, would you like to know how to increase the vibration of your pineal gland in your skull? It is in a sense the easiest thing in the world; you have been told ten billion times! All great spiritual leaders

and teachers the world over, the great men-gods and god-men of the human race, have told you: First, live as a true man — it is as simple as that. That is the first rule. Do everything you have to do, and do it in accordance with your best. Your ideas of what is best will grow and improve, but begin. The next thing is to cultivate *specifically as units* the higher qualities in you which you know perfectly well make you superiorly human as contrasted with inferiorly human. For instance, be just, be gentle, be forgiving, be compassionate and pitiful. Learn the wondrous beauty of self-sacrifice for others; there is something grandly heroic about it. No wonder the world loves a hero. I sometimes think that there is a divine quality in a human soul which is called hero-worship — not worshiping a mere man, but that wonderful divine something that works through certain men so that when the test comes they rise up like gods. Why, every one of us loves it! Keep these things in your heart. Believe that you have intuition. Believe that you have a heart. Try to love others. Try to love all things, great and small.

Live in your higher being. What then happens? You will be living above the diaphragm, from the solar plexus upwards; and that wonderful pineal gland will begin to vibrate. You will get intuition, you will see, you will know; and when that can be kept up continuously so that it becomes your life, habitual to you, then the time will come for you to become a glorious Buddha, a man made perfect. You will manifest the Immanent Christ within you, you will embody it. There is the physiology of it. It is the spiritual physiology of it that I have tried to explain to you.

These various organs with their respective functions in the human frame have been known and studied from time immemorial in the Orient, studied both casually as shown in exoteric literature, and definitely and specifically in certain occult schools. In India these organs and their functions are referred to as chakras. Strictly speaking, the chakras are the astral organs or functions which have never yet been properly placed, exoterically at least, or openly, as connected with specific physical organs in the human frame. Hence the chakras as regards specific allocations to organs, are surrounded in the exoteric

literature with mystery and uncertainty. Yet, while the chakras as taught in Hindu literature are really invisible or astral organs or functions, their allocations to physical organs are as I have named them and outlined them above. The Sanskrit names for these can be found in our exoteric Theosophical literature dealing with the subject.

The Theosophical Forum

THREE GREAT IDEAS — *Iverson L. Harris*

Under this title, *Three Great Ideas*, William Q. Judge wrote in *The Irish Theosophist* for February, 1895, as follows:

Among many ideas brought forward through the theosophical movement there are three which should never be lost sight of. Not speech, but thought, really rules the world; so, if these three ideas are good let them be rescued again and again from oblivion.

The first idea is, that there is a great Cause — in the sense of an enterprise — called the Cause of Sublime Perfection and Human Brotherhood. This rests upon the essential unity of the whole human family, and is a possibility because sublimity in perfectness and actual realization of brotherhood on every plane of being are one and the same thing. . . .

The second idea is, that man is a being who may be raised up to perfection, to the stature of the Godhead, because he himself is God incarnate. This noble doctrine was in the mind of Jesus, no doubt, when he said that we must be perfect even as is the father in heaven. This is the idea of human perfectibility. . . .

The third idea is the illustration, the proof, the high result of the others. It is, that the Masters — those who have reached up to what perfection this period of evolution and this solar system will allow — are living, veritable facts, and not abstractions cold and distant. They are, as our old H. P. B. so often said, *living men*. . . . The Masters as living facts and high ideals will fill the soul with hope, will themselves help all who wish to raise the human race.

Let us not forget these three great ideas.

The core of the first of these Three Great Ideas is that of universal brotherhood based upon the essential spiritual unity of the whole human family. Never was it more necessary than now to remind ourselves of this fundamental, basic fact in nature; for "truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again." This idea of inescapable human brotherhood I firmly believe expresses a truth without whose recognition a lasting cure of the world's scourges is impossible. And never doubt that man's highest aspirations and yearnings will eventually triumph over their temporary negation. *Yadyad devata kamayate, tattad devata bhavati*, taught the ancient Vedic Sages: "Whatever a divine being longs for, that very thing the divine being becomes." And the Lord Buddha proclaimed twenty-four hundred years ago: "Hatred ceaseth never by hatred; hatred ceaseth only by love." Each one of us can prove this in his own individual life; and be it remembered that communities, states, nations, and races, are aggregates of individuals — individuals with conflicting wills and desires, to be sure, which fact is the basic cause of the world's ills; but even conflicting wills in their deepest reaches hunger for harmony and peace and enlightenment; and hunger of any kind must eventually be satisfied, even if, alas! the hunger must first be aroused by labor, suffering, or starvation.

Endeavoring to see somewhat beyond present world-outlooks I am convinced that the time is coming when it will dawn on the consciousness of men at the helm of affairs in all countries that persistent individual or national self-aggrandisement, which fails to recognise the fundamental fact of human brotherhood, of the essential unity of all men, is self-doomed to ultimate failure. Since divine justice, law, and order exist in the Universe — and they surely do, because the hunger for them exists in the souls of men, children of the Universe — then justice, law, and order must ultimately triumph over everything which works against the universal harmony. As Dr. G. de Purucker writes in *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*:

Nature will not tolerate for long persistent self-preferment to the detriment of others: for the very heart of Nature is harmony,

the very fabric and structure of the Universe is co-ordination and cooperation, spiritual union; and the human being who seeks self-preferment unremittingly, without surcease, ends in that far-distant country of the "Mystic West," the Land of Forgotten Hopes, the land of spiritual decay; for Nature will have none of him for long. He has set his puny, undeveloped will against the mighty currents of the Cosmos, and sooner or later he is washed on to some sand-bank of the River of Life, where he decays. Nature will not tolerate persistent and inveterate selfishness.

The only prerequisite to fellowship in the Theosophical Society is a sincere acceptance of this first great idea — this principle of Universal Brotherhood; and the only heresy that I have ever seen referred to in Theosophical literature is "the heresy of separateness" — the denial of one's spiritual unity with his fellow-men. Let any serious and thoughtful man ask himself: Is not this heresy of separateness at the root of all the dire calamities which beset a world turned into an international bedlam? And the remedy? It is as simple as this — so simple that few will see it: A universal recognition of human solidarity, a sincere acknowledgment by each man to himself that when he injures his brother he actually injures himself — not merely from a sentimental viewpoint, not alone even because he will reap the consequences of his wrong-doing by at least marring his own character — but also from the standpoint of absolute law and fact, because in our higher parts, I and my brother are actually one, just as in our highest parts, as Jesus told us, "I and my Father are one."

The clashes of men and of aggregates of men never come when they are functioning on the higher planes of thought and feeling. These clashes come solely when men's center of consciousness is focused in the lower reaches of the stream of consciousness which is man. Men do not fight when they are occupied with the grand, universal, impersonal problems or achievements of life, or even when occupied with the humbler harmonious things that preserve our conviction of Universal Brotherhood. For example, one could hardly imagine a serious

altercation, on the one hand, over the composing of a Beethoven symphony, the painting of a Chinese landscape, the writing of a Shakespearean drama, the building of the Taj Mahal, the discovery of radium, the enunciation of the Theory of Relativity; no, nor on the other hand, are world-conflicts started over a mother tenderly caring for her child, a father conscientiously providing for his family, a physician ministering to his patient, an artisan diligently practising his skill, or a laborer proving himself worthy of his hire. These are the things that attest the truth of this first great idea, that of universal brotherhood based upon the essential unity of the whole human family. As the Master Koot Hoomi Lal Singh writes in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (page 17):

The term "Universal Brotherhood" is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us. . . . It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind: and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*.

THE SECOND GREAT IDEA

This brings us to a consideration of the second great idea, that of human perfectibility. If we would understand the truth of this second great idea we shall have to share in the aspiration of the true Adept towards realization of Universal Brotherhood. We can grasp the idea of human perfectibility by opening our eyes to the relative perfection of the great spiritual Sages and Seers, the Buddhas and the Christs, who have trodden the path ahead of us, and by comparing our own past and present imperfection with, hopefully, our yearnings and aspirations towards ever greater perfection in the endless journey before us. Such aspirations lie at the heart of every right-thinking man and woman.

The proof of the verity of this second great idea, i. e., that man is a being who may raise himself towards perfection, to the stature of Godhead, because he himself is God incarnate, is found in the response of every normal human being to the innate godlike qualities made manifest in individual lives. We all admire the man of courage; we

reverence the woman of compassion; we seek help from the learned and guidance from the wise; we rejoice in generosity and we are in love with love. Our higher self triumphantly responds to the call of duty even when the performance of that duty may involve the destruction of the outer man. That within us which is less than Godhead, alas, often veils the shining splendor which is our real self marching on towards perfection. But it is this real self which forever assures us in our moments of aspiration of the truth of this second great idea, which the Master Jesus reminded us of when he said that we must be perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect.

The greatest and most enduring thoughts in our literary heritage are those which proclaim in some form the perfectibility of man. "Come up higher" is the essence of every truly inspired message appealing to the god within us. This Inner Buddha, this Christ Immanent, is the source of the grand manner in poetry and in prose, in epic and in saga, in psalm and in *sastra*. The hunger of our inmost being for perfection will not permit us to be satisfied with the husks of merely limited, selfish, personal, animal existence. This spiritual hunger is the cause of our divine discontent. It is the origin of every sincere effort to make the world a better world to live in.

The innate hunger in the soul of man for perfection is nourished and satisfied by the enduring truths of religion and philosophy and science, and by the creative labors of mind and hand. Said a wise man: "Perfection is the standard of Heaven; the desire for perfection is the standard of men."

Many have been the sign-posts which the spiritual Teachers of all ages have left us, by following which we may tread the path towards perfection. The scriptures of ancient China, India, Persia, Palestine, Greece, Rome, the Moslem Empire, and old Scandinavia, as well as the most enduring literature of the modern world, are full of spiritual food to satisfy man's hunger for ever-increasing perfection.

The Voice of the Silence, translated by H. P. Blavatsky from an ancient Eastern scripture called "The Book of the Golden Precepts," is a

veritable treasure-chest of priceless jewels of thought set in exquisite words, all evidencing the truth of this second great idea of human perfectibility and pointing to the path of its realization.

Have patience, Candidate, as one who fears no failure, courts no success. Fix thy Soul's gaze upon the star whose ray thou art, the flaming star that shines within the lightless depths of ever-being, the boundless fields of the Unknown.

Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure. Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live forever, that which in thee *knows*, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life: it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike.

Do these directions of the Exalted Ones bearing witness to their realization of the perfectibility of man seem too transcendental for us ordinary mortals? To be sure, they are beacon-lights from the mountain-tops beckoning us to come up higher, ever higher; but the mountain-tops must be scaled step by step. I know of nothing more helpful and reassuring to the humble traveler along the path of human perfectibility than the following inspiring passage from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (page 372):

Does it seem to you a small thing that the past year has been spent only in your "family duties?" Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty? Believe me my "pupil," the man or woman who is placed by Karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices and loving-kindnesses, will through those faithfully fulfilled rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all Humanity — what better path towards the enlightenment you are striving after than the daily conquest of Self, the perseverance in spite of want of visible psychic progress, the bearing of ill-fortune with that serene fortitude which turns it to spiritual advantage — since good and evil are not to be measured by events on the lower or physical plane.

THE THIRD GREAT IDEA

The third great idea proclaimed by William Q. Judge is, as he tells us, "the illustration, the proof, the high result of the others. It is that the Masters — those who have reached up to what perfection this period of evolution and this solar system will allow — are living veritable facts."

Perhaps no idea with which H. P. Blavatsky and the early Fellows of the Theosophical Society made the Western world familiar caused so much controversy as did this one about living Adepts, Masters of Wisdom, Elder Brothers, *Mahatmans*, Initiates, as they are variously called. It was at once the most startling, the most inspiring, the most intriguing, the most controversial, and the most abused of all the doctrines introduced into occidental thought by the Theosophical Society.

The whole question of the actual existence of the Theosophical Mahatmans and of the abuse of sacred names and terms is admirably summarized by H. P. Blavatsky in Section XIV of *The Key to Theosophy*. The gist of her argument is that if these Adepts and Masters from whom she stated she received her teachings are mere figments of her own fertile imagination, as alleged by her enemies, then she must be credited with being herself three times over a Mahatman by virtue of the magnificent system of science, philosophy, and religion which she promulgated but which she never for one moment claimed to have originated out of her own mind or studies. In her greatest work, *The Secret Doctrine*, she says, in substance, that the teachings therein contained are not hers, but Theirs who sent her.

Now, some intuitive, spiritually-minded people of my acquaintance, whose good faith I would no more question than I would doubt that the sun shines, actually *know* of the existence of the Masters in ways that to them are conclusive. Others have had to arrive at a conviction of the existence of living Masters by a process of hard thinking. For the benefit of those who may be of this latter type of mind, I will briefly rehearse the logical processes of thought through which one such, whom I shall call Mr. X, became satisfied as to the existence of living

Masters of Wisdom.

1. This individual was startled into thinking along this line by reading that Thomas Henry Huxley, the great English biologist, had come to the conclusion that there must be beings as far more evolved than we ourselves are, as we are above the black beetle.
2. X began by saying to himself: "My father and my mother, my teachers and my friends, grand and lovable people as they are, surely cannot be the last word in evolution, even on this globe of ours."
3. X read Carlyle's lectures on *Heroes and Hero-Worship* and began to acquire a philosophical understanding of the basis of man's innate admiration and love for the great qualities of genius in men more highly evolved than ourselves.
4. X began to study and to familiarize himself in some measure with the lives and teachings of the spiritually Enlightened Ones — the founders of the great religions and philosophies; and X soon recognised that here, at least, were historical characters who were obviously far more evolved than any of the good people whom it had been his privilege to know personally.
5. X attended meetings in the Theosophical Temple at Point Loma, and heard Dr. de Purucker say over and over again, in substance: "What nature has produced once, nature can produce again."
(X was getting "hot on the trail" of a deep-seated conviction as to the actual existence of living Adepts and Masters.)
6. X read *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and he knew that those letters could not possibly have been written by men less evolved than members of the Brotherhood of *Mahatmans* or "Great Souls."
7. In those *Mahatma Letters* X came across two passages among many others, which he thought might have been directed to him — generically speaking, in other words, to men of his type of mind. Here they are. On page 246, X read:

It is not *physical* phenomena that will ever bring conviction to

the hearts of the unbelievers in the "Brotherhood" but rather phenomena of *intellectuality*, *philosophy* and logic, if I may so express it.

The other passage had to do with the founding of The Theosophical Society and occurs on page 263. The letter from which it is quoted, was received in February, 1882, by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, a distinguished Anglo-Indian journalist at Allahabad. It was written by the Master Morya and reads in part as follows:

On the 17th of November next the Septenary term of trial given the Society at its foundation in which to discreetly "preach us" will expire. One or two of us hoped that the world had so far advanced intellectually, if not intuitionally, that the Occult doctrine might gain an intellectual acceptance, and the impulse given for a new cycle of occult research. Others — wiser as it would now seem — held differently, but consent was given for the trial. . .

In a few more months the term of probation will end. If by that time the status of the Society as regards ourselves — the question of the "Brothers" be not definitely settled (either dropped out of the Society's programme or accepted on our own terms) that will be the last of the "Brothers" of all shapes and colours, sizes or degrees. We will subside out of public view like a vapour into the ocean. Only those who have proved faithful to themselves and to Truth through everything, will be allowed further intercourse with us.

That last sentence also contains the implied promise that those who do prove faithful to themselves and to truth through everything *shall* be allowed further intercourse with the Masters. In any case they have left us abundant teaching and guidance.

Having become convinced in his own mind of the actual existence of this Brotherhood of the Masters, X was amazed to find in his serious reading, even outside of specifically Theosophical literature, many

hints hitherto hidden from him of the existence of the Adepts throughout the ages, also valuable directions as to how to become like unto them. In the November, 1940, issue of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM there is an article by Elsie V. Savage on this very subject: "How to Become an Adept." I commend it to everyone who is interested. The November issue of *The Reader's Digest* has a fine article by Walter B. Pitkin, author of *Life Begins at Forty*. He tells about the most unforgettable character he ever knew, Henry Sherrard, who taught Greek at the Detroit High School in the 1890's. Mr. Pitkin describes his hero in these words: ". . . Sherrard was that rarest of humans, a perfectionist whose devotion to perfection was itself perfection," and he quotes Sherrard as saying to his pupils on the first day in class: "I don't like good students. I like only the best. I don't like a good translation. I like only the right translation."

The goal of adeptship is not to be reached without toil and strict adherence to the ideal of doing every single task as perfectly as possible. If we do this, we shall be able to appreciate the following passage from Emerson's *Essay on Nature*:

Who can set bounds to the possibilities of man? Once inhale the upper air, being admitted to behold the absolute natures of justice and truth, and we learn that man has access to the entire mind of the Creator, is himself the Creator in the finite. This view, which admonishes me where the sources of wisdom and power lie, and points to virtue as to

"The golden key
Which opes the palace of Eternity,"

carries upon its face the highest certificate of truth, because it animates me to create my own world through the purification of my soul.

The Noblest Thing

The noblest thing that we can do is so to change the thought of the world that men will realize their Oneness with the inner

beings on the various planes of Life Universal, and govern themselves accordingly, not merely in the legislatures, but in their teachings and in their personal conduct of life, and in their care for their brothers, and in their sense of loyalty and fidelity to their teachers, those whom they know and believe to have that truth. — G. de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 318

The Theosophical Forum

THE REAL BASIS OF UNIVERSAL ETHICS (1) — *Dr. H. Groot*

What is the real basis of universal ethics? This will be our subject for meditation, our object to bring forward one of the many aspects relative to this question.

To begin with, we want to lay stress on the words: *basis, real basis* of ethics. The existence and universal value of ethics is not called in question. The ethical law, the ethical commandment — speaking through the voice of conscience — is beyond any doubt. Are we not at every act, at every thought, at every impulse placed before the choice: this way, or that way?

Not a fraction of a second is lost, but the voice of our inner God tells us how we can and should live in accordance with our higher nature. But at the same time there is our lower nature, weak and cowardly, inclined to hide and steal away, tending to exalt and raise personality. And its voice, which so often sounds more powerful and persuasive than the still, small voice of the God within us, speaks of other possibilities, sounding more attractive to the lower man. Yet, though this voice may drown the other, never can it silence it.

Often we do not recognise this truth, but if we honestly look inwards, we realize that two voices are constantly speaking within us, for good or for evil; that at any time we can choose between two paths, the left-hand and the right-hand path.

This indeed is ethics: the power of distinguishing between high and low, between good and evil, between the voice of divinity and the other voice. *He* lives conformably to ethics, who is alive to the difference between his higher and his lower nature — and lives up to it.

This view can be traced in every religion, in every philosophical system, and indeed in the conviction of every normal man. The form in which it is clothed may vary, but in its essence it will always come to

what, for want of a better definition, we may call the *command* of ethics: *act, think, live in harmony with your divine nature.*

If this is then the case, the question arises: what is the deepest foundation of this command?

It is obvious that this basis must not be looked for outside man. The religions and philosophies, which, it is true, know and respect this demand of ethics, but are of opinion that it arises from a *command* imposed upon us from the outside, lower the universal ethical nature of this demand to a *prohibition*. They think that in the last instance its basis is an arbitrary one. Arbitrariness of a God, it is true, but yet arbitrary. By saying so, however, they affect the root of ethics itself. Why should we obey a command laid upon us from without? From fear, from weakness, from a feeling of dependence, from thousands of motives, none of which, after all, has anything to do with real ethics.

No, the real basis of ethics must be looked for where we can find it: within the man who acts ethically.

In endeavoring to find the deepest basis, we first consider that man is the first thinking being that becomes conscious of this ethical command. In the planes below him, the animal, the vegetable, and the elemental kingdoms, there is no impulse of acting ethically. Ethics awake at once with the thinking faculty.

The Manasaputras, who brought us the thinking faculty, at the same time bestowed upon us the knowledge of good and evil. This is symbolized in the Paradise story, as the eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which, in veiled words, implies the awakening of the higher thinking faculty. The thinking faculty is the instrument that makes ethical consciousness possible.

But it is not the *basis*, only the *instrument*. Where to find the real basis then?

Let us consider this a little further. We have seen that it must be possible to find the basis in every man. Besides we know that ethics has

a universal meaning, that its command holds good for every being in whom the thinking faculty has awakened. Accordingly the basis we look for must be findable in every individual and at the same time span the universe entirely and completely. But how can the whole universe lie hidden, not partly but wholly in the individual?

The solution of this paradox is very simple. In the individual is all that is in the universe, because man and universe are inseparably one. There is no such thing as separateness. The individual *is* the universe and the universe reflects itself in the individual. Such is the real basis of universal ethics.

This also is the basis for understanding Jesus' words, which form the summary of ethics: "But I say unto you: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." It is on this basis that Jesus could say: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

For divine love — called by Dr. de Purucker the cement of the universe — is an utterance of the inseparable unity of all things, which *seem* to be separate, but in their deepest essence are not.

Similarly Karman, which essentially is nothing but love and harmony, is only possible as a result of this deepest and most universal truth, holding good for both man and universe. IN ESSENCE MAN AND UNIVERSE ARE ONE. Outwardly they are manifestations of a multiplicity of entities; inwardly, apart from the manifestation, in their inseparable unity they are THAT, which human words cannot describe.

This unity is the basis, the real basis, of universal ethics. It manifests itself in the workings of Karman, in the command of all-embracing Love, in the great Harmony of the Universe. Its witness is the secret voice in every living being, which will always place us before the choice: illusion or reality — the lower or the higher — hatred or love. The essence of all these opposites is forever the same. It all can be traced back to the basic choice: *Maya*, or the one-ness of THAT, which is

also the essence of our inner divine nature.

The basis of universal Ethics is found in the identity of our divine Self with the great SELF of the Universe.

Om, mani padme hum.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Presented before the European Convention of the Theosophical Society, held at Visingsö, Sweden, August 1, 1938. Dr. Groot is Doctor of Physics and Astronomy, University of Utrecht, Holland. ([return to text](#))

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THE CENTRE OF THE WHIRLWIND (1) — *Blodwen Davies*

Here and there among your friends and mine are a few rare individuals who seem to have within them and about them a kind of serenity which is so real that it is almost tangible. It is a sort of potency in which we can refresh ourselves as we would at a spring in the cool of the woods. There is with this serenity, a quality that is dynamic, not passive, and an assurance against which all the fretful swirls of our anxieties and our suspicions break harmlessly and disappear. These magnetic persons have about them also a sense of endurance, as though their serenity had come to them not through a life protected from storms, but from having sailed through so many storms safely that the ordinary breezes of life do not trouble them at all.

In these days when the old familiar landmarks of our social, intellectual and political lives seem to be either demolished or bewitched, these few rare men and women become our life buoys. They rise and fall to the rhythm of currents and winds, but we know they have their anchors well grounded in some terrain which we cannot see. We know that within them there is a good store of oil, and a light that will not fail.

What is the secret of their difference? Oftentimes they have little in the way of possessions or worldly advantages, yet they have what we can truly call a culture for they are integrated, tolerant, compassionate. They are often rebels, but they are those dangerous and cheerful rebels who do not waste themselves in play-acting as liberators and reformers. So what is the source from which they draw that which makes them unique?

We are told that each individual has a sort of store house, or treasure house, into which is withdrawn at the end of each life all that remains from that life as the essence of experience. Just as the chaff is blown away as the kernels of grain are extracted from the sheaves in the

threshing machine, so everything that has not been transmuted from activity into essence in the human life is also blown away and only the kernels are stored in that body of light which is the home of the Inner Thinker. The more diligent an individual has been in this process of transmutation, the greater the store of his treasure and the more radiant his immortal dwelling place. In it is stored so much of wisdom that whenever man returns to dwell there he has at his disposal so much truth, about so many things, that he has a universal vision. Here are stored kernels he has harvested in every state of being, in all the kingdoms of nature, in all the ages of this earth. So long as he dwells within that place of light he can look upon any experience in this life in its true perspective and he has compassionate understanding in abundance for all those who have not yet found their way back to their own dwelling-places of light. Even if he has just discovered for himself the key to that treasure house and has not more than begun to explore its resources, he cannot help but live and act like one who knows that he dwells in the centre of the whirlwind where there is peace. He knows the whirlwind rages and that the farther he wanders from that centre the more he will become prey to the devastating winds of life. And even if he must face them, and travel through them, he knows that, his task ended, he can return to the place of light which is immovable and indestructible.

No man even finds the way to that treasure house or the key to its door except through repeated and sometimes desperate crises. But once the Path is trodden to the end and the key of alignment is turned in the door, the whole inexhaustible treasure is his to spend freely for his fellows.

Each one who dwells in the centre of his own whirlwind knows the meaning of the process of return when he sees others on their way. Most important of all, today he sees the race travelling the Path and nearing the door. He knows that when the present series of crises is ended the door will open and the stored treasure and light of the race will be poured out. So in compassionate serenity, himself a very token of fulfillment and of victory, he who lives in the centre of his own

whirlwind pours out his own individual light to cheer the long troubled road the race travels. The greater the number who achieve that serenity and who hold their lights steady, the easier will be the race's journey to its immediate goal, and the faster the travelling.

The unflickering light in the centre of the whirlwind. . . .

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted by permission of the Editor from *Toronto Theosophical News*, October, 1940. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE'S THREE QUALITIES — *Oswald Busch*

Theosophists frequently refer to the various "Pairs of Opposites" perceived through the senses, such as hot and cold, waking and sleeping, male and female, positive and negative, force and matter, etc. They are innumerable.

Our ideas of life and our conduct are largely based on the recognition of these contrasting principles and their operations, and we, generally, are satisfied in accepting this dualism as a full explanation of phenomena being observed.

Yet the Ancients taught that all Nature partakes of three qualities instead of two. They are referred to in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the sacred scripture of the East, and are called — using their Sanskrit names — *sattva*, light or truth; *rajas*, action, passion or desire; *tamas*, indifference or darkness.

Accepting merely the two antagonistic elements — a partial truth — or using certain words or ideas in the sense of their being pairs of opposites, when actually they are not, might be the cause of much of the error, confusion and perplexity which exists in our conception of Life and Nature and in our subsequent action and conduct. By treating this theme from different angles, an attempt will be made to clarify it to a certain extent.

EQUILIBRIUM

All the Christian Kabbalists understood well the Eastern root idea: The active Power, the "Perpetual motion of the great Breath," only awakens Kosmos at the dawn of every new Period, setting it into motion by means of the two contrary Forces, (1) and thus causing it to become objective on the plane of Illusion. In other words, that dual motion transfers Kosmos from the plane of the Eternal Ideal into that of finite manifestation, or from the *noumenal* to the *phenomenal* plane. Everything that *is*, *was*, and *will be*, eternally is, even the countless forms which are finite and perishable only in their objective, not in their ideal *form*. They existed as Ideas, in the Eternity, and, when they pass away, will exist as reflexions.

Many phenomena, observed superficially, appear as single actions or forces — as, for instance, the act of walking! We are apt to overlook the

fact that the tendency of a youngster, when crossing a street, is to run. It may be a matter of years before he is able to restrain himself to a walk. The impulse of the aged, on the contrary, is to step back when alarmed by an approaching vehicle. The alert and mature, only, manifest the necessary balance of these two inclinations.

A similar theory applies in locomotion. In automobile driving, the brakes are of equal importance with the motor, and equilibrium has to be maintained in their use to meet constantly changing conditions of terrain and also to avoid coming in contact with other vehicles or pedestrians.

Again, in nature, we note the falling rain, only, and do not see the counter action of the evaporation of moisture. Winds near the surface of the earth are perceived blowing from one general direction, but higher up there is a contrary movement. The warm ocean currents flow, mainly, towards the Poles, and unnoticed are the currents of cold water near the bottom returning towards the Equator and thereby completing the circuit.

COMPENSATION

Furthermore, Nature has two aspects, a positive and a negative aspect. . . . "Nature" has these two poles or sides: the positive pole or side and the negative pole or side. Examine yourself closely, and you will find that even your mind is dual, like everything else, for it mirrors Nature. It has its passive side, its "unconscious reflexes," just as the body has, just as Nature has. It has also its positive or active side. There is a great difference between the conscious will and the unconscious will. — G. de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 171

Another familiar phenomenon of nature is being discussed somewhat in detail as a number of analogies will be drawn from the same later on. This is the daily alternation of daylight and darkness in the yearly cycle.

As we all know, there are twenty-four hours of daylight at the North Pole at the summer solstice. Latitudes towards the south show a gradual recession from this absolute of daylight possible and at the Equator a point is reached where the day is evenly divided between daylight and darkness.

During the same time, conditions in the southern hemisphere are reversed,

with the quality of darkness being in the ascendancy.

At the winter solstice, we find twenty-four hours of darkness at the North Pole and the same hours of daylight at the South Pole.

The following aspects of this phenomenon might be emphasized:

1. In the northern hemisphere, during the spring and summer months, the positive quality of daylight predominates.
2. In the southern hemisphere, during the same period, the negative opposite of darkness prevails.
3. At the Equator there is no variation; night and day being always of equal length.
4. During the course of the year, the sun shines an equal number of hours upon all parts of the earth's surface.
5. Also, were the earth's axis perpendicular to the plane of its orbit, instead of being about $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees from a perpendicular to that plane, we would find every day balanced — having an equal amount of daylight and darkness upon every spot on our globe.
6. A cycle exists between every degree north of the Equator and its corresponding degree south of it as regards the number of hours of daylight and darkness existing during the course of any one day. For example, should there be 15 hours of daylight in this latitude, then the same hours of darkness would obtain at the corresponding point in the southern hemisphere.
7. At the Poles are found the greatest variations.

ILLUSIONS

In human nature, evil denotes only the polarity of matter and Spirit, a struggle for life between the two manifested Principles in Space and Time, which principles are one *per se*, inasmuch [as] they are rooted in the Absolute. In Kosmos, the equilibrium must be preserved. The operations of the two contraries produce harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which are necessary to each other — mutually inter-dependent — "in order that both should live." If one is arrested, the action of the other will become immediately self-destructive. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 416

The philosophical view of Indian metaphysics places the Root of Evil in the differentiation of the Homogeneous into the Heterogeneous, of the unit into plurality. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 421, footnote

Years ago, when horses were more in evidence than they are now, one often witnessed a team passing by. Occasionally, it might happen that one of the horses would drop back a pace while the other advanced correspondingly. This would cause them to fall out of the straight line in which they had been advancing and thereby they would draw the wagon to which they were hitched from what might be designated as positive and negative positions. Invariably, the driver, in anger, would whip the horse which appeared to be lagging, being under the impression that this horse was not pulling its share of the load.

No doubt, such a driver labors under an illusion, for, presumably, both horses are performing equal work. The thought that "They offset and balance in Nature — like all other "pairs of opposites"" would, undoubtedly, apply here!

Misconceptions like the above have given rise to much of the error existing in our ideas as to what is good or evil. As finite qualities, these are, likewise, a pair of opposites and relative only to the beneficiaries or victims of the same.

Limiting Nature to only two qualities and accepting the positive as good and the negative as evil is more common than is generally realized! Consider such opposites as light and darkness, day and night, summer and winter, hot and cold, etc. It is customary to use the positive poles of the above pairs as synonyms of what is desirable and the negative poles as synonyms of what is undesirable. The same distinction has at times been applied to the sexes; some religions taught that the woman was by nature evil or inferior.

Regardless of whether an opposite be designated positive or negative, the fact remains that either is good when it mitigates an extreme condition existing at the time, and evil when it aggravates that extreme condition. To illustrate from physical nature: In this eastern section of the U. S. A. during the extremely hot and humid days of summer, a cold fresh northwest wind

is greatly welcomed. The same kind of wind blowing in winter is the cause of much hardship.

Intuitive individuals have grasped such ideas as are contained in the above illustrations. They have given expression to the same by such common sayings as "One man's meat is another man's poison"; "A half truth"; "Everything has two sides"; "The law of averages"; "The law of compensation."

RAJAS	TAMAS
daylight	darkness
motor	brake
force	matter
hot	cold
waking	sleeping
male	female
positive	negative

VIRTUES

Two painters each painted a picture to illustrate his conception of rest. The first chose for his scene a still, lone lake among the far-off mountains. The second drew on his canvas a thundering water-fall, with a fragile birch-tree bending over the foam; at the fork of a branch almost wet with the cataract's spray a robin sat on its nest. The first was only Stagnation, the last was Rest. For in rest there are always two elements — tranquillity and energy, silence and turbulence; creation and destruction; fearlessness and fearfulness. Thus it was in Christ. — Henry Drummond, *Pax Vobiscum*

. . . Looking back on my own experiences, they all converge towards a kind of insight to which I cannot help ascribing some metaphysical significance. The keynote of it is invariably a reconciliation. It is as if the opposites of the world, whose contradictoriness and conflict make all our difficulties and troubles, were melted into unity. Not only do they, as contrasted species, belong to one and the same genus, but *one of the species*, the nobler and better one, *is itself the genus, and so soaks up and absorbs its opposite into itself*. This is a dark saying, I know, when thus

expressed in terms of common logic, but I cannot wholly escape from its authority. I feel as if it must mean something, something like what the Hegelian philosophy means, if one could only lay hold of it more clearly. Those who have ears to hear, let them hear; to me the living sense of its reality only comes in the artificial mystic state of mind. — William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 387

In *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, page 153, H. P. Blavatsky states that "*Analogy* is the guiding law in Nature, the only true Ariadne's thread that can lead us, through the inextricable paths of her domain, toward her primal and final mysteries."

This article, so far, has been chiefly confined to a consideration of matters pertaining to physical nature but it is accepted that a parallelism exists with the metaphysical and further arguments will be made according to this belief.

Henry Drummond, in the quotation which appears above, shows that the genuine Virtues, appearing as unities, are composed of diverse qualities! In confirmation of his idea, remarks follow regarding some of them. Comments will also be made under succeeding headings about additional Moral and Ethical characteristics of man.

One of the definitions of temper is: "A due proportion of different qualities or ingredients." In the tempering of steel, skill is required as, otherwise, the treated metal may turn out to be either too soft or too hard. As regards man, the word Temper is similarly used. This substantiates the assumption that Virtues are compounded of unlike properties.

Vigilance is considered a Desirable attribute. This is defined: "Attentive to discover and avoid danger." Two attitudes can be inferred here, an offense and a defense.

Innocence is often mistaken for unsophistication, but the former is a potent Virtue. Innocence does not harm others; and there is an inner strength which wards off evil.

The Just man will not take advantage of the abject. He also has sufficient vigor to resist being taken advantage of by the despotic.

The Helpful or Accommodating individual willingly helps others. He possesses sufficient self-restraint not to intrude in their private affairs. One who lacks this check is merely officious.

The Liberal will advance when circumstances warrant it, but he has an added attribute — Self-control — which prevents him from going too far. Here might be used as an analogy the idea of locomotion previously mentioned. The brakes on an automobile might be used to illustrate the quality of conservatism and the motor that of radicalism. The Liberal holds these two elements in Equilibrium.

In the Law of Inertia, as taught by Physics, we find this stated in two parts, as follows: "A body at rest tends to remain at rest and a body in motion tends to remain in motion unless acted upon by an outside force." Perhaps the idea herein contained might be extended to the domain of Metaphysics. Note, for example, the act of working. We find the lazy or debilitated worker possessed of a similar quality to that mentioned in the first part of the Law of Inertia. Then there is the one who works hurriedly and intensively. He is often given credit for being a model workman, yet it seems that this might not be the case. His actions are automatic. The second part of the rule might apply to him. The Steady worker exhibits both of these characteristics and is in addition Self-controlled.

RAJAS	SATTVA	TAMAS
hardness	Temper	softness
offense	Vigilance	defense
sophistication	Innocence	unsophistication
despotic	Just	abject
officious	Accommodating, Helpful	unaccommodating
radical	Liberal	conservative
intensive, hurried	Steady, Self-controlled	debilitated, lazy

MORALS

. . . we say that from the moment when manifestation begins, it acts dualistically, that is to say, that everything in Nature from that point onwards is crossed by pairs of opposites, such as long and short, high and low, night and day, good and evil, consciousness and non-

consciousness, etc., — and that all these things are essentially mayic or illusory — real while they last, but the lasting is not eternal. It is through and by these pairs of opposites that the self-conscious soul learns Truth.

What is the basis of morals? This is the most important question that can be asked of any system of thought. Is morality based on the dicta of man? Is morality based on the conviction in most men's hearts that for human safety it is necessary to have certain abstract rules which it is merely *convenient* to follow? Are we mere opportunists? or is morality, ethics, based on Truth, which it is not merely expedient for man to follow, but needful, necessary? Surely upon the latter! — G. de Purucker, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 21

In the remarks about the opposites, daylight and darkness, it was noted that the distribution of these might be placed in three categories. For six months of the year, one of them predominates in one hemisphere while the other is in the ascendancy in the other. But at the Equator these diverse qualities are always in Equilibrium — the day being composed of twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of darkness.

By correspondence, the same law would apply to metaphysical phenomena. And it is therefore assumed that what we designate as Virtues, Moral or Ethical characteristics, are the various pairs of opposites manifesting in Balance! This, of course, is the doctrine called the Middle Way by the Ancients.

They taught that True Morality never varies, but is ever the same, yesterday, today and forever. Conventions and customs change, following the cycles of the opposites, but the Virtues remain "fixed." A relevant thought appears in *Light on the Path*:

The condition of the soul when it lives for the life of sensation as distinguished from that of knowledge, is vibratory or oscillating, as distinguished from fixed. — p. 42

To the gullible, patronage may be mistaken for Benevolence, but the dispenser of the former places the recipient under obligation and the favor

will have to be repaid, oftentimes at usurious interest. The Benevolent individual, making a gift, does so impersonally and does not calculate on or expect a return.

The writer was in the army during the Great War and often talked with other soldiers who had been called upon for service at the front. Some confided to him the emotions they experienced while under danger. A number of the latter confessed that at first they felt great fear, but later there came a reaction and then they charged the enemy. They admitted that this latter emotion was self-preservation. Spiritual Courage or Bravery faces every duty without apprehension for there is the realization that "Verily never was I not, nor thou, nor these rulers of men; nor shall any of us hereafter cease to be" (*Bhagavad-Gita*).

Recklessness — the positive aspect of another quality — is indulged in, it is thought, more through a non-realization of possible danger than through the taking of a risk deliberately. When and

if the reckless person meets with an accident, he will react to over-cautiousness. The Cautious consider all the factors involved, strike a balance between the above pair and act accordingly.

Passion or rage is an active emotion which only one with a "superiority complex" can afford. The person with an "inferiority complex" has to be content with its passive counterpart, moodiness or sullenness. Equanimity and Equality might be used in designating the Sattva qualities of the foregoing.

RAJAS	SATTVA	TAMAS
patronage	Benevolence	obligation
self-preservation	Courage, Bravery	cowardice
reckless	Cautious	over-cautious
passion, rage	Equanimity	moodiness, sullenness
superiority	Equality	inferiority
mock-pity	Compassion	self-pity
cultured, polite	Courteous, Gentle	uncultured, boorish

ETHICS

The universal force, which is one, is really composed of positive and

negative electricity and the unnamable Something behind it which the West is trying to grasp. Should they not be humble in reflecting that thousands of years ago the wise men of China taught that it was the Yin and the Yang, the positive and negative principles, the masculine and the feminine principles, which are one and, being one, drive the universe? And this is Law — and Love. — L. Adams Beck, *The Garden of Vision*, p. 345

. . . The ONE, can, when manifesting, become only 3. . . . The "Deep" is *Space* — both male and female. — K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 347

Words or ideas are often used in contrast which, actually, are not pairs of opposites. This error, it is believed, is caused by the conception that there are only two qualities manifesting in Nature. It is, of course, proper to use phrases as Spirit and matter, Higher and lower nature, Virtue and vice, Desirable and undesirable human attributes, etc. Here we have opposed properties of the Noumenal World and the phenomenal. But it must be remembered that the latter are bi-polar so that, in fact, three qualities are being inferred.

One often finds, for example, optimism and pessimism used in the sense that the former is a Desirable characteristic and the latter is an undesirable one. But such a definition would constitute a philosophical absurdity on a par with contrasting a horse with half of a cow. For if Optimism be used as a Virtue, pessimism would merely be the negative pole of its finite reflexion.

In THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, issue of January 1940, Christmas Humphreys defines these two words. He writes:

It follows that optimism and pessimism are alike unhealthy forms of phantasy for the one undervalues and the other overrates experience. The wise man therefore values honestly, and accepts experience at the value found.

An example is also given by Dr. G. de Purucker. He states that "It is an error in logic to contrast life and death. The opposite of death is birth and to life there is no contrast. Life is infinite." Life simply changes its forms,

periodically, in the two words mentioned.

Humble and haughty are used in a like sense many times. But the haughty react to obsequiousness. Real Humbleness is a Firm Moral characteristic.

In *The Saturday Evening Post*, issue of November 26, 1938, the Editor makes some relevant observations as regards an imputed antagonism between democracy and dictatorship, as assumed by many persons. In the first paragraph, he says: "The danger is not that the principle of popular government will be overthrown by the opposite principle in battle; the danger is that it will defeat itself beforehand." Further on he mentions that "It is an axiom of history that great human institutions must first be weakened within before they can be destroyed from without, which means that, in fact, they destroy themselves." Towards the end of the editorial he states that "To meet dictatorship in battle — if it were that — we should have embraced dictatorship ourselves."

His remarks support the contention being made that to the genuine Virtues — in this case that of Pure Democracy — there can be no opposition.

Incidentally, our American government follows a form which might be considered as being patterned after the three qualities of Nature. This refers to the distinct branches: judicial, executive and legislative.

RAJAS	SATTVA	TAMAS
optimism	Enthusiasm	pessimism
birth	Life	death
haughty	Humble, Modest	obsequious
autocrat	Democrat	communist
executive	Judicial	legislative
license	Liberty	prohibition
politician	Statesman	henchman

PERCEPTION

"Harmony results from the equilibrium of contraries." . . . The truth must be whole and single; yet the ratiocinative function of our understanding is unable to present it as a unity, and can present it only as a series of pictures.

The old idea of a purely objective universe, outside the spectator, the same for all observers, always the same for any observer, is no longer tenable. What each man calls the universe is the interaction between the outer physical world and the inner private world; scientific truth is relative to the mind of the observer. — THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM (H. T. Edge)

It is quite commonly assumed that there is only one mode of perception — that phenomena are discerned the same by all. But, in further corroboration of the ancient doctrine that all Nature partakes of three qualities, it may be noted that this universality applies here also. L. L. Wright's "Paradox," below, can be used to illustrate this on the physical plane.

Think for example of a brass curtain-rod. If it is held lengthwise before the eye it looks like a straight line; if held end-on the eye sees it as a tiny disk; if it is slanted a little it becomes a line which appears shorter than its true length. But by co-ordination of eye and brain these deceptive appearances are instantly combined into a single mental image.

The idea herein contained from the field of the senses can by analogy be extended to the intangible faculties of perception. Cognition in certain persons is colored by their emotions. In others, it is tinged by their mental bias. The brain-mind is considered by many as being the faculty par excellence, yet, the "Intellect without a guiding light can be ruthless in manipulating ethics to fit its purposes." Figuratively, the emotional would only see the curtain rod end-on and the intellectual would see it lengthwise. The Intuition is the Spiritual faculty of "co-ordination" for "the intellect compares while the intuition realizes."

Emotions and impulses operate through the animal body; instinct and intellectualism through the human brain-mind; while intuition and innate intelligence act through a Spiritual vehicle.

In the domain of psychic investigation the universal law of the three qualities of Nature applies also. We find, on the one hand, the negative medium; on the other hand, the positive control or hypnotist. In the dangerous, lower psychism, in order to perceive phenomena, these two

types act together. The Higher Clairvoyance operates only through the Spiritual, Self-controlled individual. He does not need to become negative to the influence of another and is therefore able to guard himself against malignant evil influences which might be contacted on other planes of perception.

RAJAS	SATTVA	TAMAS
instinct	Intuition	impulse
intellect	Intelligence	emotions
brain-mind	Spirit	body
personality	Individuality	animality
hypnotist	Clairvoyant, Clairaudient	medium
thought	Illumination, Ecstasy	feeling
human-nature	Higher-Nature	animal-nature

ACTION

"Man know thyself," saith the Delphian oracle. There is nothing "improper" — certainly in such a curiosity. Only would it not be still more proper to study our own present personality before attempting to learn anything of its *creator*, — predecessor, and fashioner, — the man *that was?* — K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 145

All that we know of anything is that it is not this and it is not that. We gain experience in terms of opposites.

We are all familiar with the law of Magnetism: "Unlike poles attract each other; like poles repel each other." In human relationships, the same rule applies — in so far as this is confined to the finite world of the opposites.

Here, the above law can be stated thus: "Persons of unlike temperaments attract each other; those of like temperaments repel each other." It would probably be quite simple to predict the reactions of others were their experiences of life confined entirely to the sensual world. But this is not the case, for all individuals contact, though in varying degree, the Higher planes.

When reference is made to a dictionary one often finds words like dishonest or untruthful listed as antonyms of Honest or Truthful,

respectively. From this, one is apt to infer that any pair of synonyms and antonyms completely covers the specific characteristic being considered.

But it may be noted, for instance, the dishonest person takes advantage, not of the Honest, but of the gullible. Similarly, the untruthful are only able to influence the credulous, not the Truthful. And, by what may appear as a peculiar quirk of human nature, the gullible and credulous seem to "like it." Honest and Truthful individuals may meet with cold receptions if they try to convey to the latter types that they are being imposed upon.

Tolerance and intolerance are listed in like manner. Yet, there is a pseudo-tolerance; tolerance allied with condescension. This is a passive property and, it is believed, exists only because of its impotence, due to adverse conditions prevalent at the time. Should conditions become favorable, it would become active intolerance. Real Tolerance is a realization that the beliefs of others may be right for them at their stage of evolution.

In attempting to demonstrate the actions of the pairs of opposites and their intensity or degree, three different examples are offered.

First, consider the two sides of a triangle formed by the swinging of a pendulum. The two lines could be used to represent a pair of these. At the apex, where the two lines meet, is the point where they melt into unity. The farther the distance from this center, the greater the sweep of the pendulum, and the greater the intensity of the opposites.

A second illustration. The positive vibrations from a Broadcasting Company are received through negative receiving sets, when tuned in to the same wave-length. In like manner, there is a different vibration for each pair of opposites and action takes place between those of identical wave-lengths.

It was noted that, as regards the opposites, daylight and darkness, a cycle exists between every latitude on the northern hemisphere and its corresponding degree in the southern hemisphere and, also, that the greatest variation is found at the poles. In other words, any of these two contrasting points are parts of one whole. Similarly, as regards the finite human characteristics, it can be inferred that their oscillations follow the same law.

We are all prone to flatter ourselves in believing that we always stand at the Equator where the antagonistic forces are equally balanced. But if we find ourselves in opposition with another located some distance from it, it might be well to consider whether we are not located the same distance away in the opposite direction.

Between individuals in whom the Sattva quality is operating, the law of Magnetism does not prevail. Action here may be called Sympathy.

Perhaps the two distinctions made might help explain some of the paradoxical statements so often met with and which puzzle us all, as, for instance, "It is desirable that persons of opposite characteristics should marry," and "People with like aims, only, should marry." Presumably there is no contradiction, for in the former the law of polarity would apply. The latter would be more of a platonic union. Here attraction and repulsion would be harmonized and a state of Sympathy would obtain.

RAJAS	SATTVA	TAMAS
repulsion	Sympathy	attraction
lust	Continenence	fascination
abandon	Chastity	prudery
intolerance	Tolerance	pseudo-tolerance
dishonest	Honest	gullible
untruthful	Truthful	credulous
greedy	Provident	improvident

CONDUCT

That man who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction is wise among men.

He is considered to be an ascetic who seeks nothing and nothing rejects, being free from the influence of the "pairs of opposites." The truly devoted, for the purification of the heart, perform actions with their bodies, their minds, their understanding, and their senses, putting away all self interest. The man who is devoted and not attached to the fruit of his actions obtains tranquillity; whilst he who through desire has attachment for the fruit of action is bound down thereby. — *Bhagavad-Gita*

In man, the pairs of opposites manifest only through his lower nature. At one period of his evolution — the Higher Nature still being latent — they operated automatically, within certain set limits. But, with the advent of Self-Consciousness, problems of Morality have arisen. The former condition of irresponsibility has long since passed and humanity is now entered upon a phase of evolution which is Self-directed. His duty now is to bring into Equilibrium the various pairs of opposites acting through him. To accomplish this, a position must be taken outside of them.

Some assert that — living in the finite world — it is impossible to separate oneself from the different forces which may prevail at the time, and that one must therefore always choose one of two sides. Presumably they belong to the type who still are considerably enmeshed by their lower natures. But, in our illustration from physical nature, we noted that at the Equator there always exists a zone of Equilibrium as far as the opposites, daylight and darkness, are concerned. Similarly, there is a center within each one of us where each of the conflicting elements of our lower nature can be brought under control.

And as an outside force is needed to bring the earth's axis perpendicular to the plane of its orbit and thereby creating, so far as that phenomenon is concerned, universal Harmony on our earth, so, likewise, in man, a force outside the pairs of opposites is required. This is the Spiritual Will which can be invoked through right Aspiration.

It was stated that the finite problem of good and evil was largely relative, but with the advent of the Higher Nature, the seat of such attributes as Self-Consciousness, Free Will, Conscience, etc., this is no longer the case. A conscious choice has now to be made as to which of two paths is to be followed.

Now, an identifying of oneself with the lower nature intensifies what were formerly merely animal propensities. This is the road which leads to black magic.

The truly Wise will no longer allow the innumerable pairs of opposites to make a playground of their minds but will strive to bring them into Equilibrium. The materialist may consider this course as leading to negation but the Ancients held that this was the way to Freedom of the

Self.

RAJAS	SATTVA	TAMAS
desire	Aspiration	satiety
willful	Spiritually willed	willess
conceited	Wisdom	ignorance
science	Philosophy	theology
self-seeking	Brotherhood	self-sacrifice
pleasure	Serenity	pain
creation	Preservation	destruction

FOOTNOTE:

1. The centripetal and centrifugal forces, which are male and female, positive and negative, physical and spiritual, the two being the one *Primordial Force*. — H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 282, footnote.
([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS — *M. G. G.*

NO THOROUGHFARE

Are there detours for getting by,
And yet transgress, in low or high?
Note you the highway's hopeful throng
Seeking such means the whole day long,
Their power to visualize long lost,
By just such search, at just such cost?
Would they, think you, endure the goad,
Did they but know there's no such road?

RESPONSIBILITY

Think you this be your first time here
To reap and sow in gloom or cheer
That what you are is what you are
Through some past blundering of a star,
Or hap some elemental sprite,
Unschool'd, unknowing wrong from right:
That you, yourself, have had no part
In what you are in mind and heart?

JUDGMENT

Why must the dying man review
Each detail of the life he knew,
While old familiar scenes recall
Past thoughts and deeds, however small?
Must he see more than merely these,
The warp and woof that plague or please?
Does he link cause with its effect,
And so know just what to expect
While weighing all these things of his

With Truth and Justice witnesses?

The Theosophical Forum

ANCIENT MYTHS AND SYMBOLS — *Ginevra Munson*

The wisest among early mankind, in order to hand down their knowledge for future generations of those aspiring to higher things, imbodyed their store of wisdom in myths and symbols. The keys to these symbols were kept secret from the uninitiated, hidden in caves and vaults and secret crypts.

The Tree-Myths were the most popular for explaining how the spirit of Life descended into physical matter. We find the Aswattha Tree of the Hindus, "whose roots grow above and its branches below, and the leaves of which are the Vedas." And there is the Yggdrasil of the Scandinavians, the eternal sacred tree; the Zampun of the Tibetans; Gogard, the sacred Tree of the *Avesta*, the Persian sacred scripture. In ancient Egypt the initiates into the Mysteries were even called "trees."

In the Eddas is described how "the first root of the Yggdrasil ran under the fountain of Life, the second root was under the well of Wit and Wisdom, the third reached into heaven."

The ancient Akkadians represented a tree in the Garden of Eden: "it grew in the center of the earth, its roots went down into the watery deeps, where the god of wisdom had his seat; it became green and teemed with fertility; its leaves formed the couch of the primeval mother. Into the heart of its holy house hath no man entered. There is the home of the mighty mother who passes across the sky," wrote an ancient scribe.

It is the most beautiful of all myths, the Universal-Tree! It was beneath the sacred Bodhi Tree that Gautama attained to Buddhahood in spite of all the tempters that assailed him. Here he overcame all the powers of darkness by his own enlightenment and his love for all mankind.

Then there are other symbols. The bird, the dragon, the serpent, the fish, the crocodile, all were much used in esoteric teaching.

The American Indian myths and symbols were all drawn from the forces of nature and the elements of water, fire, air, and earth.

The clouds, winds, rain and lightning were all thought of among them as agents of the Great Spirit. The four winds were identified with the four cardinal points, north, south, east and west. The four ancestors of the human race were supposed to come from the four winds. Michabo of the Algonquin tribe was their highest deity, called Light or the Dawn, the Sun in the East. The peoples of South America, the Peruvians, the ancient Toltecs and Incas had their God of Light who came from the East.

All the American tribes of both continents had their flood myths, in striking similitude with the religious records of all nations in which cosmic and terrestrial events are recorded. And this fact in itself seems conclusive proof that the Ancient Wisdom was the heritage of, and was known to, all primitive races of mankind from pole to pole.

The myth of the golden Egg laid by the Swan of Eternity, Kala-hansa, tells the story of the origin of universes and all forms of life within them, born of the invisible essence that is within every atom of space. And there are more elaborate series of symbols which tell the full story of evolution. H. P. Blavatsky, in *I sis Unveiled*, (I, 348) describes a picture telling of the doctrine of the cycles, which covers "a whole inner wall of a subterranean temple in the neighborhood of a great Buddhistic pagoda, . . ." To quote in full:

Imagine a given point in space as the primordial one; then with compasses draw a circle around this point; where the beginning and the end unite together, emanation and reabsorption meet. The circle itself is composed of innumerable smaller circles, like the rings of a bracelet, and each of these minor rings forms the belt of the goddess which represents that sphere. As the curve of the arc approaches the ultimate point of the semi-circle — the nadir of the grand cycle — at which is placed our planet by the mystical pointer, the face of each successive goddess becomes more dark and hideous than European imagination is able to

conceive. Every belt is covered with the representations of plants, animals, and human beings, belonging to the fauna, flora, and anthropology of that particular sphere. There is a certain distance between each of the spheres, purposely marked; for, after the accomplishment of the circles through various transmigrations, the soul is allowed a time of temporary nirvana, during which space of time the atma loses all remembrance of past sorrows. The intermediate ethereal space is filled with strange beings. Those between the highest ether and the earth below are the creatures of a "middle nature"; nature-spirits, or, as the kabalists term it sometimes, the elementary.

This picture is either a copy of the one described to posterity by Berosus, the priest of the temple of Belus, at Babylon, or the original. We leave it to the shrewdness of the modern archaeologist to decide.

This is a wonderful symbolic picture and quite in agreement with the Secret Doctrine teaching about the formation of the earth and its inhabitants in evolutionary development.

The Theosophical Forum

LEADERS ANCIENT AND MODERN — *H. A. W. Coryn*

There is one kind of leadership of which modern life has no understanding whatever. Indeed little or no study of leadership is made at all to see whether there *are* any different kinds. Yet one division — into true and seeming, is manifest in a moment. There are leaders who *go* ahead, and whom people follow; and those who are *carried* ahead, like a standard, who are but focus-points and merely voice strongly or eloquently what the people were already thinking.

The idea of leaders implies that of followers. But there are leaders who make with their followers an organic whole or unity; and there are men who, walking for themselves along a particular path of thought or action, are followed by others because that path which these others could not have cut for themselves, is thus made easy and attractive. These leaders may be indifferent whether they are followed or not; or they may like to be followed because they like the sense of power, the feeling of being influential. This constitutes more or less of their life-food, and if it is suddenly withdrawn they may actually die.

The chiefest division is between leaders who are either indifferent to a following, or who *want for themselves* something which a following can give — power, sense of influence, or life — or who find a following do for them what a good listener does for the ordinary individual, give him the chance either of clearing his thoughts to himself, of dumping the products of his intellectual activity on to a negative mind, or of drawing a fine picture of himself for himself to look at, in another mind —: and leaders who, because they love, desire only to *give*.

Of the highest type of this class, our day knows practically nothing. For not only is the wish to give necessary, and in such degree as to exclude all other wishes; but wisdom, *what* to give, *how* to give. Some of the older peoples recognised these men in their midst, and some of the old sacred writings describe them and their relation to their followers.

They were the Teachers, and, in the days before the degradation of the temples, the temple-Hierophants. Their relation to their immediate circle of pupils was much more hidden than visible, much more on *unspoken* — and truly unspeakable — planes of thought and feeling, than on that of words and visible association. The Teacher was credited with having attained conscious unity with the *Nous*, the Logos, of the world, and saw in that Mind the Idea, the spiritual Eidolon, of each pupil, the sum, the final, the full flower of all possibilities. That he held in his mind, and held before the superconsciousness — we need this word for the upper pole of that whose lower pole science calls the sub- or subliminal consciousness of the pupil. He placed his mind in inner touch with the pupil's, the pupil reacting and cooperating and clearing the path to the best of his ability, and was thereafter continuously open to the pupil's mental states. To these he sent back a reply which was the accentuation of the pupil's conscience. The pupil felt in his heart in a new way, in increasing degree, and with increasing understanding of it and its connexions, the presence of that "witness, admonisher, supporter, reprover, encourager, friend." Conscience is self at self's root (in the heart), and the currents from the Teacher playing constantly upon the pupil in response to — encouragement or discouragement of — the pupil's mental states, were such as finally to call him to self-consciousness in his divinity. It lay with the pupil to respond with his own will; for though the way was thus *shown* as no words could show it, it was neither trodden for the pupil nor was he in the least hypnotically forced upon it. Yet the currents did constitute strength for his use if he chose. They were the spiritual blood of the Teacher poured into his veins because he had asked. Not asked with words, which are nothing; but with a power that could not be refused — love. He had recognised ideal humanity in the Teacher, and loved it.

The Teacher found his own life and joy in this giving. He manifested himself and in a way dissolved himself in his pupils as earth-life manifests in the lives of earth; yet was always more. Some of the old writings exhaust themselves in symbols to describe the relation. It was a relation at once of service and of being, both ways.

The Teacher's duty was therefore never finished, never intermitted. He lived entirely for humanity, and more immediately for his pupils; as it was to be their endeavor to live for humanity, to develop and acquire — for humanity. There was no moment at which with human weakness he would be thinking: I have done enough for them today. This hour is for myself. Such a thought, indulged for one fleeting moment, would have shocked and chilled the temple atmosphere, and would have been felt by the pupils as a plant feels when a knife cuts its root.

Finally, the Hierophant, as the ideal man, was regarded, in his fixed will to give, in the richness of his life by self-surrender, in his willingness to manifest his life *through* the enriched lives of others — as foretype of what all men will be. It was held that then only will the immeasurable possibilities of life be disclosed.

Some of the ancient writings dealing with what is written above, are accessible to scholars, though few have as yet been seen by them. The greater part are not to be made accessible till the world is readier for the ideals they deal with.

The Theosophical Forum

SCIENCE AND RESEARCH — *C. J. Ryan*

The Connexion between Planets and certain Metals: New Evidence

Some readers may have thought that this Department has shown undue skepticism regarding astrology at times, but any criticism that has been made has always been directed against exaggerated claims, and mainly in favor of the need for great reserve in accepting widespread predictions about international and other public events. The number of failures is enormous (and generally ignored afterwards!), the number of successes extremely small. Yet it must be admitted that an unprejudiced observer, an honest critic, will find that the comparatively few successes or partial successes are more than can be explained by pure chance. In regard to character, as indicated in the chart drawn up for the moment of birth, the successful delineations are much greater, but a vast amount of study will have to be carried on before approximately convincing results can be expected. We must remember, too, that the Higher Astrology is only taught in the Mystery-Schools.

There is, however, a substantial foundation for astrology in the natural law of Analogy, but our modern astrology is held back by its ignorance of the existence and influence of the invisible globes of the solar system, a deprivation which invalidates many predictions and renders the art so uncertain. Some research students with a scientific background have been trying experiments in astro-chemistry with results that may be strong enough to convince unprejudiced minds that astrology has some basis after all. According to these experiments certain relative positions of the celestial bodies produce definite and unmistakable effects upon certain metals. Anyone who has an elementary chemical outfit, an astronomical almanac, and a sufficient store of patience can experiment for himself without having to take the word of anyone else. We feel that both from an occult and an astrological standpoint our readers would like to hear something of

this new line of research.

Occultism has always claimed that a sympathetic relation exists between terrestrial metals and certain planets, i. e., quicksilver with Mercury, copper with Venus, iron with Mars, tin with Jupiter, and lead with Saturn. The sun and the moon are in harmony with gold and silver, respectively. Modern science still regards such correspondences as fanciful and ignores them. So far as we know, it has not even inquired into the possible reasons for them. It also brushes aside the possibility that the revolutions of the celestial bodies have any effect upon terrestrial metals except by ordinary gravitation. But if scientists would venture out of their conventional standards a little farther than the new atomic theories have driven them, they might find that certain discoveries made by Mrs. L. Kolisko, one of the rather heterodox scientific researchers already mentioned, would open an unexplored field of study.

We do not pretend to assert that the results of Mrs. Kolisko's researches may not have some explanation other than the one she presents, but this is simple, rational, and it seems impossible to think of another. She has given fifteen years of intensive study to the subject and has tried almost innumerable experiments with consistent results. A report of her work was recently published in *Tomorrow* (London), from which we have obtained the information here presented in very brief outline owing to lack of space to do it justice. Tests already made at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society, Point Loma, have shown that extreme care and judgment in technique are required to avoid errors that would render the experiments useless. Mrs. Kolisko warns us that they must be conducted by one person as the process is so sensitive that the intrusion of another person may cause complications and failure. While this may seem strange to some, occult students will recognise that it is perfectly natural in such delicate matters.

Mrs. Kolisko's experiments were conducted with various metallic salts in solution. A strip of filter paper rolled into a cylinder was partly immersed in the liquid containing the metal to be studied. As the

solution gradually crept up the dry part of the paper it crystallized into a definite pattern of colored markings with a definite edge. *Each metal had its own characteristic pattern.* Some, such as gold, produced bright colorings, others, like silver, were noted for a greater variety of forms.

So far, Mrs. Kolisko's observations were interesting enough, but she went farther. If the metals are really in sympathy with and correspond to the planets, might not the development of the chemical patterns reflect the vicissitudes of those planets as they move relatively to each other? With this idea in view, she decided to try if anything happened to the solar pattern (gold) as it developed on the filter paper during a total eclipse of the sun, when the solar radiation is greatly reduced by the interposition of the moon (silver).

She made the first trial during the 1927 eclipse, and the results were striking. Using gold chloride for the sun and silver nitrate for the moon, in combination, she found that the colored pattern developed by the gold component gradually faded as the eclipse proceeded, being quite overpowered by the silver lunar pattern. After totality the solar pattern again strengthened and finally resumed its original brightness. The same experiment was tried with equal success at subsequent eclipses, including that of 1933 when thick rain-clouds covered the sky and the eclipse could not be seen.

Thinking it likely that the moon would affect the corresponding metal of a planet at the time of conjunction of the moon and such planet, in the same way it affected the sun during the conjunction that caused the eclipse, Mrs. Kolisko tried numerous experiments with the proper metals at lunar-planetary conjunctions with complete success. For instance, the pattern given by the solution of chloride of tin was suppressed by that of the lunar silver chloride as soon as the moon was conjoined with Jupiter, and so forth with the others. In each case the normal appearance of the patterns was restored when the conjunction no longer operated. Similar effects were found to occur at oppositions of the moon with the planets.

But is it likely that such a confirmation of the occult teaching of the

importance of the law of Analogy, of which H. P. Blavatsky speaks so often, will be listened to? Will even the more mystical astrologers welcome such an unexpected support to their claim that planetary positions powerfully affect things on the earth? These experiments require no trance mediumship, no mysterious proceedings, not even high mathematics; the methods are purely scientific and can easily be tried out. But even so, judging by the unhappy experiences of many discoverers of unwelcome occult truths we fear that if Mrs. Kolisko's researches attract any wide attention she must expect insults, the attribution of base motives, and the charge of gross superstition. There will be those, however, who will admire and respect her courage and devotion to Truth wherever it may lead.

Who is "Sandia Man"?

Gradually the authorities on American archaeology are retiring from their original bases to new positions in regard to the age of man in this country, forced back by a barrage of new discoveries! When the "Folsom Man" was found a few years ago in the Southwest, daring investigators ventured to suggest that he might be eight or ten thousand years old — a radical innovation on accepted views. Anyway he was the oldest possible human inhabitant of this continent and was decidedly a very barbarous kind of savage of purely nomadic habits and presumably no manners. All this is now upset by Dr. Frank H. H. Roberts of the Bureau of American Ethnology who has just discovered that the Folsom people had a community life in settlements with regular homes, and that they probably lived 25,000 years ago. Not only did they make the beautifully chipped and grooved javelin points associated with the name Folsom, and a variety of other stone tools, but they cut beads from bone and decorated them with simple patterns. They also used red and yellow paint. Dr. Roberts says that the Folsom culture compared favorably with the contemporary Stone Age culture of Europe. This is unexpected and will require considerable explaining.

But a step farther back into the unknown past of man in America has just been made by means of a discovery in the Sandia Mountains near

Albuquerque, New Mexico. In a cave, beneath several stratified deposits — one of which included Folsom points — stone implements were found which were undoubtedly made by men who lived long before the Folsom people. These implements were found just above the bedrock and well separated from the higher stratum containing the Folsom points and bones of extinct animals. No human bones of either the Folsom or the older Sandia men have been found, but the Sandia javelin points closely resemble those of the Old Stone Age in Europe, the oldest implements found there. If they are actually as ancient as the older European artefacts American man could claim hundreds of thousands of years of existence instead of the beggarly tens of thousands which liberal-minded archaeologists rather grudgingly allow him, but naturally this will require very conclusive proof. Dr. Frank C. Hibben of the University of New Mexico, reporting the discovery of Sandia Man in *The Scientific American* for July, humorously speculates on the possible aspect of this ancient Stone Age type saying: "The probable truth is that even such an oldster of the last of the ice age as Sandia Man would look no worse if we saw him on the street than some of the least attractive of our politicians"!

The Theosophical Forum

THE ARTIST OF LIFE — *Martyn Witter*

One of the most difficult of problems for the Theosophist to solve is that of how to touch the flame in men's hearts in order that they may become conscious of their duty to the universe. Here lies a crucial point. There are millions of religious mystics in the world who are conscious of some of the spiritual verities taught by the Sages. But can a spiritual flame be kindled that will truly glow in the hearts of men if their thoughts are but upon the favors that are to be gained from the Universe for the price of being good? For a long time the greater part of the spiritual labors of mankind have been devoted to the earning of bliss. Such a motive is a blight upon the evolution of the races of men. For thousands of years man has, under the cloak of his various religions, scrambled over the heads of his brothers to receive blessings either from a God or the Gods. Religious greed is but a refined form of material greed. One form of spiritual greed is the "holier than thou" attitude.

Today, there awaits a great opportunity for Theosophy to teach the world a lesson that *it* shall not soon forget. Theosophy can do this without cloaking itself with a "holier than thou" garment; for does it not teach that all men are potential Gods? It can teach man to give to the Gods and work with them instead of the traditional begging for favors. Men must be taught that they need not ask anything from without for there is nothing in the "thousand universes" that does not lie already within man.

The warping of motives lies at the heart of religious greed. A truly great artist will work at his art for the love of art alone. He would rather die from starvation than be torn from his work. He is not working for praise, glory nor financial reward, for his motive for action lies in action itself. The spiritual man is an artist of life. He loves to see all life developing and growing — from the flowers to the souls of his fellow men. His supreme motive for action lies in action itself. He feels the

challenge of all Life ringing in his ears and he answers that challenge by giving his will to the Universe and thereupon becoming an Artist and Master of Life. He considers only his duty to Man and the Universe, for fulfilment of that duty is his Supreme Art.

While our Theosophical Teachings are rich with the food of the Gods, there is no guarantee that the world will be impressed within time. The best of materials needed to produce a great work of art can be given to a man who is not an artist and nothing will happen. Though we have the teachings of the Gods, we are the agents of transmission and must play the role of the artist. Although, with the aid of our intellectual gifts, we bombard the world with our logical reasonings and writings, little will it avail if we, who are the transmitters, are mostly intellect, with little spirit. If we be not artists of life we shall fail to reach the millions of sleeping ones though we have the food of the Gods to offer.

It is always an inaudible voice that speaks in the causal realms while the physical man speaks with his tongue and pen. It is in the inner realms where the battle will be won. It is here where the spiritual warrior applies his art while the world thinks it is the physical man who speaks. The only solution is to live Theosophy with all the strength of one's being and make an Art out of Self-Discipline. A society of such individuals working in union would accomplish the seemingly impossible.

The Theosophical Forum

"LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION" — *G. de Purucker*

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." When the Avatara Jesus made this beautiful statement to his disciples, he made it to help them. If you read the New Testament of the Christians, you will there see that this prayer, as the Christians call it, was given to them for use. And therefore the entire prayer is based on psychology and must be read from the standpoint of psychology. I don't mean the psychology of the present age, which is little more than a kind of — it is hard to describe — a kind of sublimated physiology; but I mean the psychology of the great seers, the titan intellects of all times, in other words, the science of the human soul, the intermediate part of man; not the spirit, not the body, but the soul.

The point is a subtil one: do you know that when you wish to avoid doing something that you realize is not good for you, one of the best things is not merely to face the fact, but to state it clearly through your own mind? Often the ugliness of the thought or of the action repels. The temptation is seen in its proper outlines. Thus it is never the Higher Self or the god within, what the Christians call God, which ever leads one into temptation. But the higher parts of our being, the spirit within, the god within us, is exercising upon us constantly the inner urge to do better, to be more, to strike out, to awake, to cast off the slumber and be and do. And often this wonderful brain mind, which is not, however, as yet fully evolved, cannot get the true import of the inspiration from above and it distorts.

Remembering these facts which you have been taught, this is the import of the Avatara's speech. The very fact that you will say to yourselves in an uprush of aspiration: Lead me not to follow paths which appear holy or which are veiled in the illusory colors or glory of what I want, lead me not to be tempted to what seems to be high, but deliver me from these things: These very thoughts in the mind make the temptation to lose all its seduction. The outline is seen for what it is.

You know the old fable about stripping off the garment which deceived the knight. He sees coming towards him the yearning of his heart; he is on trial, a knightly course of trial. Will he succumb to the temptation which seems to be the very yearning of his heart? Nobody knows. He is on trial, the trial of the knight. He steps up to the seductive illusion, pulls aside the enchanting veils and sees the death's head. This is the meaning.

The very fact that Jesus warned his disciples to take this as their aspiration every day, showed that it had a psychological veritable protection for his disciples; in other words, they were to build up what modern psychologists call a framework or wall of thought around the mind.

Modern psychology has struck one truth, and it is that temptations come to us because of what modern psychologists have called schizophrenia, a long, ugly Greek word which simply means the good old-fashioned statement that a man's nature is often divided against itself. Schizophrenia means split mind, split personality. The good old saying was, a mind is often divided against itself, or, we are in two minds about it. That is what they mean today with this horrible Greek word schizophrenia.

Now what is the psychology of this thing? It is this: Weld your mind together again into one and you won't succumb. Every decent man knows the truth of this if he examines himself. We fall into temptation because we allow our mind to become split, one part of the mind to bemean the other and then we scheme. "Can we not get away with it?"

In other words, don't try to ride two horses. Once the god within bathes our mind, our brain, with its holy light, with its love, schizophrenia becomes a horror of the past. Refusing to allow this mental division within ourselves, we become single-minded; we sense the inner divinity; and when this is possessed in extreme degree we have a Christ or a Buddha. These have appeared among us. There is no reason why they should not appear today.

THE MAKING OF A GOSPEL — *Philip A. Malpas*

Most of us have found our Gospels ready made and it has not occurred to us to speculate as to their birth. Millions of us have accepted them as simple history, in fact as "Gospel truth."

To avoid a long story, let us assume that we are at the beginning of a gospel-birth and that it is a single event, not spread out.

From the great storehouse of all wisdom and all the wise men of all the ages comes a Teacher — high, medium, or low, according to the ripeness of the time, or the reverse. He desires to set going keynotes of spiritual aspiration to last a certain time, until other Teachers and keynotes are due. How shall he do it? First, he must have a pupil or pupils — that is the aim of a Teacher. There may be pupils intellectually ready and, with luck, also spiritually ready, to assimilate and digest more teaching than they have. The Teacher's business is to lead them as far as they can safely go, if possible at that point dropping them as incapable of further progression at the moment, and not as opponents or enemies. Best of all is the rarer case where they never cease to progress. Delicate management is required, because the Teacher knows the tendencies of the imperfect human, like a moth with a candle, to oppose the Light when he has failed to advance with undazzled vision beyond a certain point of approach. Therefore caution is necessary. Also, how can he clearly express spiritual truths in terms of the intellect, however brilliant. In fact, the more brilliant the intellect unguided by the spirit, the more difficult it is for the spiritual light to penetrate the man's character. Only an approximation is possible, the closer the better.

The time is ripe; the pupils, whose destiny it is from past actions, are born in the time of their Teacher, and he begins. One lifetime is a very short period to found and establish a school, even among old pupils who are now to have their next chance. So the Teacher sometimes

knocks at a strange door. He demonstrates certain unfamiliar laws of nature, which are often called miracles. Although in early Christian literature we find complaints that, though there are no "proofs" of the miracles of Jesus the Teacher, those of Apollonius, who lived a hundred years or so later are well known. The one who complains is perhaps unaware that the "miracles" of Jesus are not meant to be actual incidents in daily life, but types of a Teacher's credentials. They are dangerous credentials because of men's ignorance — either they may kill him as a sorcerer or they may worship him as a God, neither of which courses is welcome to him. What he wants is to awaken their spirituality and get them to live the spiritual life for themselves. And if they are very intellectual or psychically inclined, those qualities are often great stumbling-blocks, sometimes almost insuperable.

So he attracts his pupils as best he can. Soul calls to soul, and they recognise him according to their degree of perception.

He forms a school. There are pupils of very varying degrees. How can he amalgamate them? By forming degrees of classes. Also by teaching allegorically, "as through a glass darkly," to the least progressed, "face to face" with others who are ready.

His teaching is the story of man's evolution in theory and if possible, practice. So he builds up a "legend," a "mystery," and uses it as a lodge-ritual or drama of Everyman's life, now and in the future, in "life" and in the great intervals between lives that men call "death." Perhaps he chooses only a certain aspect or part of that non-stop life which we may call life-death-life.

Sometimes the allegory or symbolism is built up on familiar figures known to the intellect which can be used, so to say, as *language*, to describe the soul-processes which no intellect can really define.

One Teacher takes the symbolism of building a Temple as that of the building up or evolution of the soul, the Man. Another takes the Vineyard, and the intellectual-minded actually confuse the spiritual Wine of Life, the true Bacchic communion, with alcohol! The Sheepfold

is a beautiful and graphic symbolism. The Bread or Corn is one of the most sublime. The Heavenly Marriage is also grand in its conception, but in the present state of mankind's development so little likely to be interpreted spiritually and not materially that it is very dangerous — as some early Christian sects found it. How can the public be expected to understand the symbolism of marriage among ascetics as spiritual symbolism and no more? Trees, doves, serpents, dragons, children, fishes, crosses — all have their uses as descriptive figure-material for such a symbol-ritual.

Because of the inevitable misunderstanding and degradation in the hands of untrained or unpledged disciples or profanes, it is necessary to keep the ritual secret or private, or at least its real application and working.

There were wise Greeks who said that Homer and Hesiod ought to have been condemned for their stories of the gods and their failings. They said they were a direct encouragement to bad men to do the same. But these stories were high symbolism and should have been kept for the crypt, the lodge, alone, where they were known to be symbolic. The same applies to many Bible stories of the little tribe of Jews in Palestine.

A very good plan for such a lodge-ritual or symbolism is to take the story of a man standing symbolically for every man, and show him coming through struggles to the goal of everyman, the spiritual state of a god.

Suppose such a Teacher wanted to build up on the beautiful Temple symbolism. He could take the Temple — the Great Pyramid, for instance, which some call El Harran — and show a great builder constructing it. The builder and the Temple could really be the same, separated for purposes of symbolism. Is not Man the builder of his own temple, himself?

The details of the building can be elaborated in any direction. And there you have a wonderful story, as a lodge-ritual. It would take too

long to go into detail, but we can imagine the typical man being named *Hermes* with the strong guttural V. In the Egyptian language he might be connected with coens, cohens, or cowans, or priests, and some Egyptian form of the word *Hermes*. But in the Orient the word might well be chohans. The point is that all these names can be "localized" in forming a new ritual-story for any particular people or place. Thoth, Khnum, Kheper, Isis, and all the whole host of names might well be adapted from Sanskrit equivalents to make an Egyptian god-story.

A hint is even given by Plato and H. P. Blavatsky that Atlantean names were so transferred to Egyptian equivalents and thence to other Greek equivalents, each language concealing the story behind the name.

Our Teacher then, of high degree or low, might wish to transfer, or localize, shall we say, an Egyptian ritual into a Hebrew ritual. He would take the name *Hermes* in its Greek form and render it say "*Hiram*," each form of the word containing the essential consonants H-rr-m. Thoth he might make into Tot or D-o-D, Daud or even David, the "writer." Sol-om-on, the god-name in three languages, fits in very well with Suleyman or its variations, Salamon, Salmon, etc. Just as in Greek Sol-on is also "the wisest man who ever lived."

So a purely local ritual may be built up of Egyptian, Chaldaean, Hindu, or Atlantean elements. The hierophant and the adepts know perfectly well what it all means, but the lower degrees know in ever more veiled form, until the profanes — those "outside the temple," if they get to know the stories and names, know nothing of their real significance. In time, as corruption and materialism increase, the inner meanings are lost or, for safety, withdrawn, and you have the exoteric local story as "history," or at least myth or mythos.

I have never heard that the Jews made of *Hiram* a god, much less worshiped him. If they did so, it must have been very much in secret. The Temple story is very beautiful, and every word has its inner meaning down to the very open confession that it was "made without the sound of axe or hammer" or any noise. The growth of the soul always is in the silence. But I have no doubt that there were many

neophytes who became "Hirams" for the period of their initiation before as many "Solomons."

It is easy to figurate some later Teacher who desires to give a new spiritual impulse to some group, perhaps not a high teacher, or possibly a high teacher unable to utilize his full strength owing to the quality of the time and the pupils, working with a group in a downward cycle preparing for a period of worse materialism than usual. He might also choose a Hebrew setting for his ritual. "Man" is "Ish." Joshua the "Savior" is also a form of "Ish," "Ish-u," shall we say. Rendered more Latin or Greek in form it is the same word as "Jesus" or "Iesous." The story of the Chrest — the pilgrim, the man, the neophyte, the struggler towards spirituality, is a very good figure for the Ish or Jesus.

It would take too long to go into all details, but the general idea is clear. A ritual is built up, and like all others made by experts; it is a beautiful allegory of the soul's, or man's evolution, and his hothouse evolution also, so to say, or initiation.

But whatever the lodge or sect or brotherhood or gnostic association that used this little ritual, it became more or less public and therefore inevitably corrupt through lack of knowledge. In some inexplicable way the Chrest became tangled up with the Christ — quite a different affair. The Chrest does not become a Christ before he dies the initiation-death, but how were the uninitiated to know that? The result is that at some later date a wholesale substitution of "Christ" for "Chrest" occurred, or even for "Jesus." Quite in line with this is the odd deletion of the name *Jesus Barabbas*, because no one could understand that such a bad *man* and *criminal* (instead of a personified human principle!) could bear the name Jesus. (But a few of the oldest MSS., or copies of them, still retain the *Jesus Barabbas* — Jesus the son of the Father!)

We have run a little ahead of our story. The original "gospels" might have been small fragments, each complete in itself, which were later hammered together in the Museum at Alexandria into what we call the

gospel. At some point along the line it was evidently decided to make the mythos into history and a real living historical man was sought as the typical Ish or "Man" (Mensch). It was not difficult to find one. There was a great Avatara who had chosen to be born in a Syrian or Palestinian body, or if you prefer it more accurately, a divine power chose to overenlighten a highly spiritual being who in his turn had chosen a Syrian body. That was in the troublous reign of King Alexander Jannaeus of Judea, there or thereabouts, say 120 b. c. His name might or might not have been Jesus, or that name might have been given him in view of the Savior and Ish and Joshua implications; often a mystic name has many meanings. This historical figure, almost unknown to history as to his personal life, was dovetailed into the beautiful and significant mythos, and the ritual became "history." More, this grand figure even came to be worshiped by the profanes as a god — not that they quite know what a god is or might be, but a sense of vagueness adds to the illusion.

So now we have, launched upon the world, the exoteric story of the personified Man or Soul on its way to Godhead. And the "gospel" has become a very exoteric gospel indeed.

One could write volumes on the theme, but we have said enough.

A final hint may be given for thought. Has anyone ever thought of the lower class of gods who are the creator and creators, and the higher — the architect? The Creator god is not a high god at all except for the uninformed public — the pro-fane. One of the most ingenious and beautiful Gnostic mythoi describes the origin of Christianity as being the supplanting of the material, violent, revengeful, material God of the Jews by the much higher Gnostic God, Jesus or Christ, the architect God, because the creator, the workman, the builder god, did not know he was not the highest, and therefore was making a sorry business of his reign, impossible to continue as such.

But the Creator principle is still very beautifully allegorized and symbolized in its place. It is the Jot or Jod, the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And it has a very striking resemblance to the

Western word God, Gott, and its variations. I believe it is one of the Siva symbols, equally beautiful to a beautiful mind. You might write it as "I" in Hebrew and "G" in English.

The word "Evangelion" in Greek, which we translate Gospel, would also bear a little thought, remembering that these adept ritual-makers more than often hid meaning after meaning under the "cloak" of the outer word or narrative, and especially names. Some sort of a play of the words is made as meaning the "good message" the good-spel or god-spel, the gospel — but there may be other and not uninteresting derivations for our cryptographers who know the Gnostic methods of "concealing while half-revealing." Who can say?

The Theosophical Forum

THE LANGUAGE OF SYMBOLS — H. T. Edge

Poets and prophets, heathen and Christian, alike express themselves symbolically, and, if we believe that this language prevailed in the early ages of the world, before the external and intellectual life had predominated over the instinctive and emotional, we must conclude it to be the natural language of man, who must therefore have been gifted with a conformable faculty of comprehending these hieroglyphics; and hence it arose that the interpreting of dreams became a legitimate art. Long after these instinctive faculties were lost, or rather obscured, by the turmoil and distractions of sensuous life, the memories and traditions of them remained, and hence the superstructure of jugglery and imposture that ensued, of which the gipsies form a signal example, in whom however there can be no doubt that some occasional gleams of this original endowment may still be found, as is the case, though more rarely, in individuals of all races and conditions. The whole of nature is one large book of symbols, which, because we have lost the key to it, we cannot decipher. — Catherine Crowe: *The Night-Side of Nature*

We recognise here an intuition of that universal mystery- language spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine*. The author is writing of symbolic dreams, of which she narrates many instances. She points out that the interpretation of the symbols is the same with all peoples, as, for instance, deep water means trouble, and pearls mean tears; and comments on the quickness and facility of this language as compared with the labored process of verbal speech. It is to be observed that this symbol language, as here conceived, is not of the nature of an arbitrary code, agreed upon by persons desirous of conveying information to those possessing the key, while withholding it from those who do not. It is a *natural* language, based on existing facts. In this language a single

symbol, such as a tree for instance, conveys a sort of compound or general idea, a root-idea underlying a variety of particular manifestations. The intuitive faculty would grasp the whole of the meaning at once, as a thought without words; whereas the ordinary mind has to decipher the various meanings laboriously one by one, and any Teacher trying to explain the matter may be thought guilty of contradicting himself by saying one thing at one time and another at another. Or take the geometrical symbols, triangle, circle, cross, etc. Is it not possible that, to the unclouded inner vision, no interpretation whatever would be needed, because the mere symbol would convey the entire meaning in a flash?

In the language which we customarily use, words stand either for concrete objects or for abstract notions. These abstractions are based on our experience in the physical world of consciousness. But what about other worlds and their conformable planes of consciousness? Is it to be expected that we should find there the same objects and the same abstract ideas as here? If so, it would be the same world and not a different world. Then why may there not be a world where the language is in wordless pictures, and the mind exercises a corresponding faculty of seizing the import of these pictures in a flash? The writer quoted above surmises that the highly intelligent in the ancient world could not have been satisfied for so long with a mythology which to us seems idle stories, if this mythology had been really such and nothing more. And it may be that they never troubled to "interpret" what to them seemed in no need of interpretation.

We think here of the true nature of art and poetry, of the ability of some minds to appreciate them, while other minds do not; and of attempts by these latter minds to explain and analyse the poetry and the art and reduce it to some system. We think of the minds of little children and of primitive peoples; and we begin to realize how the intellect (which of course has its own proper uses) clouds over these natural primitive faculties, these intuitions, these direct perceptions. All this links up with the doctrine of universal correspondences (also treated of in the book just quoted), and of how all things are

interrelated one with another. Upon the knowledge of this natural fact rest such things as sympathetic cures, amulets, sympathies and antipathies, totems, etc. There is a vast fund of knowledge about Nature which we do not possess, or perhaps have forgotten; and our attempts to explain these mysteries in such a way as to make them fit in with our own systematized acquaintance with physical Nature seem rather crude.

It is suggested in the quotation at the beginning of this article that our loss of knowledge has been due to a lack of simplicity, and that our inherent faculties have been obscured by our physical senses and our reasoning mind. And in this respect children, animals, and primitive peoples may be our superiors. It is of course true that we must become as little children in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and that the pupil must regain the child-state which he has lost. Yet this return to simplicity does not imply retrogression; it is futile to attempt to set back the hand of the clock. Our philosophy shows us that evolution winds along a spiral path, ever bringing us back to a phase similar to one which we have left behind, yet always one rung higher. The concentration of attention on physical matters, and the development of intellect are necessary stages in evolution; but we have to develop our intellect, not allow it to develop us.

Symbols then are not arbitrary chosen signs, but pictorial representations of compound ideas, which ideas cannot be grasped as wholes by the reasoning mind, but only in successive aspects; while to grasp the entire meaning in one flash requires the use of a higher faculty, which we may call intuition — one of the things we are called on to develop.

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS! — *G. de Purucker*

What is the exact state after death of a person who commits suicide to avoid present conditions? Does he remain in a temporary state before entering the rest due to one who has died a natural death?

G. de P. — Yes, a temporary state, and it depends upon the suicide's character as to just what kind of state this temporary state is. As ye sow, ye shall reap. All suicide is wrong, ethically and in every other way, for it is cowardice, it is shirking; and you know what happens to shirkers in life. As I have often said before, every human being is born with a certain magazine and reservoir of vitality; and the composite entity which is man holds together until that reservoir of vitality is exhausted. Then the composition breaks up. The spirit goes to Father-Sun; the reincarnating ego goes into its Devachan or heaven-world of unspeakable peace and bliss; and the lower parts break up and dissolve into their component atoms.

But in the case of a suicide, here is one, a human unfortunate, who, it may be harassed and wrung by sorrow and pain, in folly takes his life, thinking, blind man, that he can thwart Nature's purposes. He simply destroys the body, and all the man remains in the astral world in conditions which are at the very best the reverse of pleasant; and in the cases of evil suicides — men who suicide and who have also been extremely evil men — in their cases they are in a condition which is awful, for their whole consciousness is burning with all the unholy passions, hates, loves, fears, terrors, dreads, which caused them to commit suicide. They have no escape; in taking their own life they made the condition a thousandfold worse.

But there are suicides and suicides, and the individual case depends upon the individual suicide. That is all there is to it. The mental state in which the suicide was before he committed the act, continues in the

astral world, but intensified tremendously. Of course the time will come when the reservoir of vitality will be exhausted; and then whatever of beauty and grandeur and spiritual light there was in the soul of the suicide, all this receives its recompense in the Devachan then. But suicide is cowardice, and this should not be forgotten.

What happens to those who are slain in battle?

G. de P. — I daresay that the questioner thinks there must be some identity in what happens to those who are slain in battle and suicides, merely because the death in each case is quick; but it is not so. It is the motive, in every instance of violent death, whether wilful suicide or murder, or death in battle or accident, which governs the post-mortem state. Those slain in battle sink into utter unconsciousness, for in them there is no stain of cowardice seeking to shirk the duty, as in the case of the suicide, and therefore no harrowing anxiety, no harrowing and corroding fears of life itself. Those slain in battle simply lapse into blissful unconsciousness and so remain until the reservoir of astral-physical vitality is exhausted. Then they enter the Devachan, the heaven-world. Nature is rigidly just in all her rules and actions, because she is rigidly compassionate. Compassion, remember, means law, harmony, regular procedures of cause and effect. The very heart of Nature's being is compassion. The man who dies in battle, and the man who gives his life to save the life of a brother, are very much the same. Unconsciousness, dreamless and inexpressibly sweet, that is what they receive until the reservoir of vitality is exhausted; then they enter the Devachan, or heaven-world, and therein remain in inexpressibly beautiful and blissful rest until the next reimpodiment on earth.

I have studied the technical Theosophical literature and understand that man is a composite being. Also, I have read about what happens to the sevenfold hierarchy "Man," when he dies, but has not Theosophy also an ethical side in regard to death, with love and compassion?

My question is: What consolation for the heart, what inspiring

hope and courage, does Theosophy give to those who fear death, to the dying, to those who have lost their loved ones?

G. de P. — Theosophy teaches that death *per se* is not to be feared. It is a change to a better state, but only when death comes naturally. This questioner evidently has not read much of our Theosophical literature, wherein he would have been told that ethics are of the very essence of every doctrine that Theosophy has. Ethics are of the very structure of the Universe, for they mean harmony: that right is right, and that wrong is wrong, and that the correct thing is the correct thing, no matter when and where it is; also that the straight thing is the straight thing no matter where and when it is. The ethics of our teaching regarding death are what I have so often stated: That it is naught to fear; it is inexpressibly sweet, for it means ineffable rest, peace, bliss. When a man dies, he enters into the great Silence, just as happens when a man falls asleep and later awakens. These few words tell you the whole story, although none of the details of the story.

Do you remember what Robert Louis Stevenson wrote in his *Requiem*? He wrote this for his own grave, they say:

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie;
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I lay me down with a will.
This be the verse you grave for me:
"Here he lies where he longed to be.
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill."

Ay, very beautiful, for in it the spirit of Robert Louis Stevenson spoke; but why did he say: "Dig the grave and let me lie." Don't you see here the old horrible thought that the man is his physical body? I would have written: "Dig the grave and let me go free." I, an incarnate energy of the Universe — can you keep me within a grave? I, a flaming intelligence, an imbodyed spirit, can you enchain me within a coffin? Ay, the very bonds of the world are too small for me. My soul is native

with the stars, and whether it be Canopus or Sirius, or Stella Polaris, there I dwell on familiar terms. There I belong. Free me! "Glad did I live, and gladly I die, and I lay me down with a will. This be the verse you grave for me. Hence he has gone, where he longed to be."

Take the case of one who dearly loved someone else on earth, and the one who loves, dies: Does the dead one who loved, continue to love?

G. de P. — A very natural question indeed. The very meaning, the very essence, of the heaven-world state, or Devachan, is bliss and love, because bliss and spiritual yearnings have as their main motive-power that abstract impersonal function or energy of the human spirit which we men call love. The Devachan signifies all that is beautiful and good and sweet and holy and true and clean and pure. Love is immortal; it continues always; and, mark you, the more one loves, of course impersonally, the nobler he becomes. I don't here mean the ordinary gross, passionate love, for that can be even of the fires of hell. But I mean that inexpressibly sweet, divine flame which fills life with beauty, which instills thoughts of self-sacrifice for others. Love of that kind, impersonal love, is the very heart of the Universe. Therefore, I say, the one who loved and who died, loves still, for it is of the fabric of his soul.

The Theosophical Forum

ASTRONOMY IN THE MIDDLE AGES — C. J. Ryan

When we read of the curriculum of the European Universities during the Middle Ages we are inclined to think that certain classical studies, literature and languages, music, and mathematics, were almost the only subjects taught that had reasonable foundations. The natural sciences are generally supposed to have been in their infancy (as of course they were) when not purely fanciful, arbitrary, and grotesquely erroneous. But now and then side-light is thrown into some obscure corner and the existence of correct knowledge discovered among much that is doubtful or wrong.

A most interesting instance exists in an Irish Treatise on Astronomy now in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy, and which was translated into English by Mr. J. J. O'Farrelly in 1893. It was written about the year 1400, certainly not later, and is derived from the works of Messahalal, an Arabian Jew who lived between a. d. 754 and 833. Twelve of the thirty-nine chapters are not contained in the Latin versions of Messahalal's treatises from which the Gaelic translation was derived; their origin is unknown, but they probably came from other Arabian sources, or they may have been in part the results of the observations and studies of the Irish writer himself.

The treatise is based upon the Ptolemaic theory of the Solar System. It is remarkable that Ptolemy did not accept the Pythagorean System, which placed the sun as the central body instead of the earth, for the teachings of Pythagoras had been widely diffused in the time of Ptolemy. The result of his refusal to work on the correct system of the great Initiate, Pythagoras, was that the students of astronomy were misled and held back from the knowledge of the true relationship of the sun and the earth for many centuries, and much bitterness was aroused.

The Irish MS. carefully explains the globular shape of the earth, and

gives its true, approximate diameter, 8000 miles; the real causes of the phases of the moon, its eclipses, and the eclipses of the sun, are stated; the reason why the sun rises earlier if you travel eastward and later if you go westward is properly explained; the writer points out that the moon, like the planets, has no light of its own but reflects that of the sun. He also touches upon physical geography and geology. He gives, though with some hesitation, the true explanation of the rising of the Nile. His remarks about the wearing down of the mountains by the action of rivers, and upon the origin of fossil shells agree remarkably with the principles of modern geology. Yet, hundreds of years afterwards, geology had to fight for its life against the entrenched strongholds of learned ignorance and prejudice which went so far as to say that the fossils were artfully placed in the rocks by the Devil in order to try the faith of the pious in the literal accuracy of the *Genesis* account of creation in six days.

But the most curious thing in the whole treatise is a statement which shows the possession of information upon a subject of which it is generally believed that *nothing was or could be known* before the invention of the astronomical telescope by Galileo in 1609 — two hundred years later! This is that when the planets Venus and Mercury "are twelve degrees proceeding westward of the sun they are horned like the new moon."

One of the strongest arguments against the true theory (Pythagorean or Copernican) of the solar system was that Venus failed to show the crescent or horned phase like the moon as it should do. As the phases of Venus cannot be detected without optical aid, and as the critics possessed nothing of the kind, they had some show of reason in not accepting the truth; but when Galileo turned his "optic tube" upon the Planet of Love it was immediately seen that it *did* pass through exactly the phases of crescent, half-moon, and full-moon, that ought to be seen.

How then comes it that the unknown Irish writer was able two hundred years before Galileo, to write quite confidently of the crescent phase of Venus, and also of Mercury, a much more difficult object to

distinguish? Perhaps the answer to this will be forthcoming when it is explained how it was that the ancient Assyrians represented Bel, the Assyrian Jupiter, with *four star-tipped wings*, and the god corresponding to Saturn *standing within a ring*, as Proctor, the famous English astronomer, pointed out in *Our Place Among Infinities*, unless they knew by telescopic observation that Jupiter had four large moons and that Saturn was surrounded by a wonderful ring!

This is another instance of the debt owing to that remarkable Arabian civilization and culture which flourished so brilliantly in Spain and the nearer Orient, at a time when the intellect of Europe proper had not yet awakened. How dark those rightly termed Dark Ages were when the Arabian Jew Messahalal wrote in the ninth century, can only be appreciated by those who have given the time and energy necessary to understand it. When this fifteenth century Irish writer composed his treatise, the mind of Europe had already begun to stir; the priceless treasures of Greek knowledge had been lately brought to Europe and had quickened the sluggish and stupefied thought to unwonted activity, while the dullest could see the parallels in the Greek writers with the philosophy and science of the Jewish-Arabian culture. Just as the Greek intellect had expressed itself in science, philosophy, and mathematics, in Pythagoras, Plato, Eratosthenes, and Euclid, who themselves were to a large degree indebted to Asia, so the Saracens who studied and absorbed these writers, stamped their own productions with their own native genius, and in turn handed on to the European the Grecian thought, based as it was on Asiatic (Babylonian, Syrian, Egyptian) achievements. What a curious and interesting reflexion it is, that the theoretic and philosophical systems of the Egyptian Babylonian priest-scientists should have wandered from their native soils to Ionia, Peninsular Greece, and Magna Graecia; then to return to their native continent, and after greatly aiding to mold and soften the manners of the Men of the Desert, to be carried to Spain, and from Spain to meet again in the European Universities the other branch of the same stream of Asiatic learning flowing from Constantinople. Truly, so far as *European* history is concerned, no more fascinating page exists than

this period of renaissance. And, sad to say, no period has been treated so meagerly by historians.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEVEN SACRED PLANETS OF THE ANCIENTS — *Lawrence Merkel*

There is a genuine fascination, a strange reverence, that the subject of the seven sacred planets seems to evoke. Perhaps astronomy in general has always interested the writer, and that may account for the particular interest in the teachings of Theosophy relating to the heavenly spheres moving in their appointed routes in the skies. That this is a vast subject, a tyro would quickly admit; that it is important *in these times* may warrant some explanation.

The basic axiom of universal brotherhood takes on a profound and penetrating significance when one looks into the real structure and orderly operations of the kosmos. Brotherhood is no sentiment or mere emotional effervescing. We are all rooted together literally — linked with all that is, we have our ties with the suns, the moons, the planets, and even the encircling Milky Way. Nature is a unity! Is this teaching of importance *at this time*?

The study of the seven sacred planets is but one of four facets of a jewel — one of four subdivisions of a group of teachings in the Esoteric Philosophy called the Doctrine of the Spheres. One aspect of this general doctrine is that of the Universal Solar System, a system comprising all the planets and their satellites, visible and invisible, which belong to our solar family. It should be noted that aside from the nine planets of which present-day astronomy tells us, there are innumerable invisible planetary bodies which our "fourth plane" eyes cannot perceive. Our Universal Solar System is septenary; it has seven planes or worlds, seven suns of which our earthly vision takes in but one.

It may prove of interest to state that the planet Neptune does not belong to our Universal Solar System. While it is a "planet" in that it does revolve around our sun, in reality it is a "capture" — captured as other planets have taken to themselves "moons" (or more accurately,

satellites, as each planet can have only one true moon). Furthermore, inasmuch as the planet Uranus revolves around our sun, it is a member of our Universal Solar System, though not of our Solar System.

Our own solar system concerns the second of the four aspects of the general Doctrine of the Spheres. It is this portion of the teaching that deals with the seven sacred planets of the ancients.

But before returning to our theme, we will mention, for the purpose of completeness, the third and fourth subdivisions of the Doctrine of the Spheres. The third aspect is one which the author of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* refers to only by allusion, for obvious reasons. It deals with the relation of Mars and Mercury and the "four secret planets" to our earth. The fourth and final aspect of the Doctrine of the Spheres has to do with our Earth planetary chain.

To resume the study of our main theme: the seven sacred planets. We shall name them: a secret planet not visible to us; Mercury; Venus; a mystery planet now invisible to earth men — let us call it "Vulcan"; Mars; Jupiter; and Saturn. The secret planet, unnamed, is now dying, as it is nearing the end of its cycle. When the earth enters its seventh round, this secret planet will be its "moon," or more correctly, its satellite; our real moon will have become "atomic stellar dust."

Why were the seven planets considered and called "sacred" by the ancients? One reason was that our Earth's planetary chain, i. e., its seven globes, were formed and are under the guidance of these seven planets. Further, each sacred planet acts as a guide and protector of a Root-Race. But in two very succinct sentences, Dr. de Purucker gives the most telling reason for terming these seven planets "sacred." He explains:

There are seven main or Chief Rays or Forces which make and which inform the Sun; and these seven Forces are the Seven Solar Logoi. Each one of these seven main Logoi is sub-divided in its turn into seven; and these seven subdivisions of one chief Ray or Logos form the Rectors, the Genii, the Archangels, if you

will, of which the "Seven Sacred Planets" are the Houses.

—*Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 460

We may parenthetically state, as an example of the interblendings and interworkings in our kosmos, that our Earth itself is one of a series of seven planets (other than our own planetary chain) which aid in building the sevenfold planetary chains of certain other planets.

It was stated above that each globe of our Earth's planetary chain was builded or overseen in its construction by one of the seven sacred planets. More accurately, it is the spiritual Rectors of the sacred planets who are the builders or guides; and as an additional point it must be remembered that each globe of our Earth-chain has its own especial characteristics, its own swabhava which acts as a prime mover, a definite influence in its shaping.

We are told that the globes of our own septenary planetary chain, that is, Globes A, B, C, D (our earth), E, F, and G, were formed under the respective guidance of "Vulcan," Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mercury, Mars, and a secret planet. Further, each of the seven globes (A, B, C, etc.) is under the guidance of the following respective constellations of the zodiac: Leo, Sagittarius, Libra, Capricorn, Virgo, Scorpio, and Cancer. We have omitted mention of the five arupa, or formless globes, of our twelvefold planetary chain. We must enter a caveat here: It should not be assumed that *one* sacred planet, or *one* constellation solely, acts in forming a particular globe of our Earth-chain. It is true that *one* sacred planet and *one* constellation are the *predominating* influences, but every one of the others leaves its mark. Nature is a unity; there are no hard and fast dividing lines, no segregation into cubby-holes.

There are some very interesting details about the ages of each of the seven sacred planets, that is, their ages physically and spiritually speaking. As a general rule, the density of a planet will indicate its physical age. Also, generally speaking, the farther a body is from the sun, the physically younger it is. Mars, usually considered by astronomers as being older than the Earth merely because our telescopes seem to find few if any traces of organic life there, is actually

younger, physically, than the Earth. Theosophy holds Mars to be in obscurity — asleep — though it cannot be called dead. There is life on Mars; it has just ended its third "Round," or minor cycle within its greater Life-Cycle.

The planet Venus is in its seventh round — much older than the Earth — as is Mercury, likewise. The latter, however, is just beginning its last and seventh round. The planet Saturn, while physically younger than the Earth (being farther away from the Sun) is more advanced spiritually than our Earth.

There appears to be a mystery surrounding Mars. Often in listing the seven sacred planets, the Sun and the Moon are used as two substitute names for "Vulcan" and another unnamed secret planet. We find Mars "to a certain extent . . . in the same category."

Perhaps the most fundamental key iterated in Theosophy is the old old axiom of the Hermetists: "As above, so below." And as we find the Universe to be a living being, a vast organism, we may step down the analogy to a human walking here on Globe D- man being a replica, a microcosm of the universe, the macrocosm. As man has his organs, his nervous system, etc., so it is with the universe. The Kosmos has its organs, its circulatory system, its stream of life forces pulsating through certain well-defined, albeit invisible, channels with their centers (the planetary bodies)

corresponding to the ganglions of a human's nervous system. So it follows that the hosts of entities comprising our universe are not moving in a helter-skelter jumble, but in definite grooves, proper pathways toward which their magnetic or gravitational attractions draw them. Yes, everything in the Universe is connected, is a unity- a most heartening, a most stimulating teaching, a teaching which when comprehended and *lived* is found to be the only straight and true way to inner peace.

The mass of men worry themselves into nameless graves: here and there a great soul forgets himself into immortality. —

Emerson

INNER SERENITY THE WAY TO ENLIGHTENMENT — *Marguerite de Basquette*

The present generation, especially the youth of our time, is not without an earnest longing for spiritualization and the development of the divine forces in man. They attempt to reach this goal in many ways, but only a few succeed.

Why is spiritual attainment limited to the few? Is it so difficult to liberate ourselves from worldly desires to which the human soul is only too ready to yield? Or is it so hard to discover at all that we must free ourselves from worldly bonds in order to give birth and life to the divine forces within us?

The human mind is continuously disturbed by numberless forms of perception and thought, and the average man, being the helpless object of conflicting sensations, represents a labyrinth of unrest to the eye of the Enlightened, or to him who has considerably advanced on the road to higher knowledge. With many of our generation this inner unrest has already come to be a permanent condition, in which, without interruption, the vibrations of thought and perception mechanically revolve, just as in a vicious circle. *There are but very few who have attained true inner balance.*

Indeed, the most essential aim of our evolution should be this: *To create in ourselves a divine center of rest*, which stands immune to any change of conditions. Only after this has been achieved will the waves of emotion no longer be able to wash us away and cause us to perish. Only then "all things work together for the good," even if the greatest afflictions befall us.

In order to acquire the highest good we must, however, follow the road untiringly until the goal is reached.

Master Ekkehart says: "Do away with everything within you that is not from God, and only God will remain."

The more divine life increases in us the more earth-bound life decreases and loses its influence upon our soul. The eternal overcomes the temporal; the incorruptible the corruptible, which can no longer blind us or lead us astray. Doubts and worries cannot befall us, since the inner road has been unmistakably made known to us.

How can man ever overcome the obstacles on this burdensome road? Certainly, for the restless man of today it is difficult enough even to commence this change, this conscious turning away from the road hitherto pursued but now conceived as erroneous, and to do it so as not to grow fatigued in the presence of opposing conditions. *It is often the wrong beginning that leads to defeat and despair.*

Many of the present-day so-called esoteric schools point out to their disciples ways and means which necessarily cause aberration and failure. Most of the teachers of such schools consider, as the principal aim, the unfolding of the astral forces and medial abilities. This is a great mistake, involving serious danger. I have met many victims of those methods. The astral senses as well as the medial abilities, are, as a rule, much easier to awaken than those teachers believe. They forget, or do not take into consideration, that no one will successfully encounter this strange and transcendental world, unless he has first inwardly experienced these divine forces and already is in the process of developing them by daily struggle. The unawakened ones, restless in themselves, might become a mere tool of such forces and often end in religious mania, mediumship, and frenzy. Therefore, a certain theoretical study of the astral plane ought to be recommended only as far as it enables the student to distinguish between high and low, eternal and temporal. Exercises in meditation and concentration are useful only for the purpose of relaxing from worldly unrest and sinking into the divine.

It is also dangerous to repress our desires, if this be practicable at all. One is, indeed, well justified in warning against an exaggerated ascetic life and in emphasizing an organic spiritualization by means of ascetic practices and exercises.

Therefore, my advice is to try to regain "the innocence of the senses!" Indeed, we should strive for this innocence, which original man enjoyed, but lost in his "fall". Feeling our way in awe we should proceed step by step, leaving behind us all that we, conscious of our guilt, recognise as impure and worthless.

Even this gradual process of purification will not be painless, but will require the entire strength of our mind and soul. Therefore steady concentration is a thing needed in this divine training. Yet this concentration must have its primary motif in relaxing into the divine. Only through this unfoldment the divine ray of inspiration will shine into the cloudless soul, just as the rays of the sun can reach us only through an open, unclouded sky. From inspiration will arise enthusiasm and inexhaustible perseverance, making us capable of concentrating on the highest goal. The awakened soul, then, sets its own problems with a fine, purified instinct — that is "with the innocence of the senses" — in accordance with its respective ability of achievement.

Even worldly activity will thus become a divine service. This course will be pursued unswervingly. Gradually the difference between working days and holidays ceases, because our entire life is filled with holy work in accordance with the divine will. Therefore, we should first learn: Placid devotion to divine inspiration — and then only can we will, work, and achieve. All this, however, must not be selfish in purpose — not motivated by ambition or graft or "the struggle for power."

The clearest way to purify and deepen Self consists in serving humanity. Selfless work of love is impossible without sacrifice and, therefore, represents the most powerful process of purification. To teach means more and more to delve into the Divine Being, and thus to draw more liberally from the fountain of life. Everyone may become a giver, if he does not cease striving for it. All those who understand that their co-operation is a necessity will attain the great patience of those who know that they are indispensable.

This patience is the foundation of love, warmth, and enthusiasm. Love and enthusiasm are inner gifts, the reward of faithful and patient service rendered to mankind. They resemble the holy flame which consumes all that is impure. Those who are filled with this spirit will not easily be depressed. They feel satisfied, raised to a higher existence, yes, actually redeemed. All external work develops into conscious inner activity. The end is no longer in the outer world; we search and find it in ourselves. If we strive whole-heartedly for these things we can lay the foundation for a truly spiritual life.

The Theosophical Forum

LIGHT ON LUCIFER (1) — *Clifton Meek*

Editor of *The Norwalk Hour*:

In his recent letter to *The Hour*, Samuel Walter Taylor makes a very common error in his reference to Lucifer when speaking of his demoniac attributes, a theological misinterpretation which has gained almost universal acceptance. Like many of the other legends which were taken over and incorporated into occidental religion, the legend of Lucifer has been distorted to mean something which is diametrically opposite its original import, the proof of which should be obvious to any thinking person. Lux, or Lucifer, as the name itself connotes, means Light, and not darkness or something evil, but theologians, with their customary skill and proficiency in mutilating ancient allegories which they did not understand, made of Lucifer, the "Luminous Son of the Morning," the personification of evil, or Satan, the prince of darkness. This unscholarly and un-philosophical procedure can be attributed only to one of two things: either gross ignorance or willful misinterpretation. According to Yonge, "Lucifer is no profane or Satanic title. It is the Latin Lucifer, the light-bringer, the morning star . . . the name of the pure, pale herald of the daylight."

The allegory of Lucifer, the first Archangel who fell from the heavenly state, embodies some profound teachings of occult philosophy when rightly interpreted, but one cannot hope to find an enlightened interpretation in a school of thought that for centuries has denied the existence of an occult philosophy and that there is an esoteric aspect to religion as well as its external form and dead-letter interpretation.

According to occult philosophy, Lucifer, the "Luminous Son of the Morning" is symbolic of Divine Intelligence in the depths of Chaos in the early dawn of cosmic manifestation, for Light is the first differentiation of Space. As stated in *Genesis*, an occult account of cosmic evolution which the early Hebrews borrowed from the

Babylonian mystery teachings, and which the Babylonians had derived from still earlier sources; " — darkness was upon the face of the deep (Chaos), and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (Space). And God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." " Today, in the depths of outer space, in the "fiery" but cold nebulae, this same cosmic intelligence is at work as world systems are born in space and enter upon their aeon long day of cosmic manifestation, and Light, which is the first manifestation of Divine Intelligence projecting itself upon the screen of matter can be called "evil" only in the most abstract sense — that all manifested life, or material evolution, is relatively gross as compared with pure, unalloyed spirit. Both Spirit and Matter, like light and darkness, complement each other, and are but two aspects of the same thing — the Great Unknown and ever unknowable. Yet men have tried to define God by dragging the ineffable down to the level of their own feeble understanding with personal attributes and qualifications which at best can be but a sorry caricature. This is probably true of all the exoteric world religions with the exception of Buddhism, the teachings of which do not embody the idea of a "personal" God or "personal" Devil.

After man had invented a personal God to account for what was good out of necessity, and to balance the picture, he had to blame someone for what he considered evil, so Satan made his appearance upon the scene of theological speculation. As Lucifer of the ancient legend symbolized Light and Intelligence, what could be more natural than that men steeped in an age of superstition and medieval darkness, should point the accusing finger at this legendary hero of ancient lore, and make of him a scape-goat. Light and intelligence were not popular in those days, and it offered an excellent opportunity to discredit the older religions and philosophies. It never occurred to them, nor does it seem to have dawned upon the mass of mankind today, that it is man alone, due to his ignorance and violation of the impersonal laws of Universal Nature, who is the real creator of all evil, discord and strife. It is so much easier to blame someone else, so upon the person of poor Lucifer was planted all the evidence of the viciousness of human

nature, and he has been under sentence ever since.

By the same token it is likewise much easier to be "saved" by someone else rather than by our own striving to understand the fundamental laws of our own being and our own inherent spiritual capacities which alone can transmute the baser qualities of human nature. And there is little hope that the world will be spiritually improved to any perceptible extent until men are spiritually awakened to the truth of their own inherent divinity, and that "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world" is the real "Christos" crucified on the cross of matter. Beneath the external beauty and dramatic presentation of religious ritual lie those fundamental truths so necessary to man's well-being and spiritual progress, and which one day will be recognised for what they really are, bring new light and hope to the hearts and minds of men. And like the prodigal son, a regenerated humanity will wonder why it was blissfully content to live upon the husks for so long a time.

As Mr. Taylor suggests, there certainly is need for "more light" in our religious institutions and lives, but I do not believe the kind that comes in electric light bulbs will accomplish the desired result. If such were the case, Broadway would be a veritable paradise on earth. There is plenty of light there, but very little spirituality emanating from the blase faces of the mass that wander aimlessly about.

Light of a more profound nature is needed — a spiritualization of the ancient teachings which have become encrusted with mere ritual, ceremony and form with the passing of time and human misunderstanding.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Norwalk Hour*, December 28, 1940. ([return to text](#))

QUESTIONS — *M. G. G.*

COMPARISONS

Are we to think that stars complain
And deem their lives are lived in vain
Because they may not have their way
In some celestial roundelay?
One wonders, too, if comets free
To roam throughout a Galaxy
Give second thought to where to dine,
And what the food, and what the wine.

CHANCE?

Are we to feel at sea and lost
While now confronted with the cost
Of old misdeeds that slipped our mind,
Perhaps through aeons left behind?
Must we bemoan our several lot
Because the causes are forgot,
Or hold that Chance has played a prank
And happenstance is all to thank?

THOUGHTS

Know you our thoughts and deeds done here,
Once death has closed one's earth career,
Are amplified a thousandfold
And dwelt upon, in their same mould?
Think you that thoughts of love or hate
Are left behind at Death's wide gate,
Or that Oblivion sets a seal
On seeds of woe or seeds of weal,
Or that forgiveness wipes away

The Law's infringements any day?

The Theosophical Forum

DUTY — *Hannah Berman*

"Stern daughter of the voice of God," is Wordsworth's definition of Duty.

It would be hard to find a word which is more misused, more misrepresented and made more of an opportunist than the word "duty." In the dictionary of conduct its definition is legion. It can be made to fit so many different gaps and lapses and promises unfulfilled. Actually it is almost impossible to define it sufficiently clearly and satisfactorily to fit all cases. Duty itself is related to the spiritual part of man's make-up and is so wrapped around with impulses and so dissected by mind and intellect that its definition becomes an individual matter and varies accordingly. Of course, on broad lines — very broad lines, it can be defined. Shelley calls it:

The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

But that definition, though utterly beautiful, is not plain enough for the plain man. A study of Theosophy gives not one but many clues to the real meaning of the word. Here one finds that duty is very closely related to the doctrine of Karman, the law of cause and effect. The whole realm of nature is so ordered that nothing happens by "accident." Everything fits into a pattern like pieces into a jig-saw puzzle and follows a natural sequence. The smallest piece has its own place and can make or mar the perfection of the finished pattern. So in the pattern of Nature and the Universe. "Thou canst not stir a flower without the troubling of a star."

We must inevitably reap what we sow unless we make some definite individual effort to deflect the stream of events. "We make today our chances for tomorrow." We are our own destiny! Where, then, amidst all this comes "duty?"

First, Theosophy answers, lies duty to humanity; then like concentric circles, come duty to race, to country, to family, and lastly to self.

The difficulty lies in reconciling all these apparently different duties and making them fit into each other. Very often duties seem to be conflicting and then it is a test for the individual to work out the problem for himself.

Theosophy is full of wisdom and guidance to those who seek these ideals and will always point out the way when other standards fail.

The test of any ideas or ideals in the realm of good or not good is their universality. If this thought is really understood it is a great help on the way towards working out the definition of duty. From *Light on the Path* comes a seemingly paradoxical statement:

Desire only that which is within you.

Desire only that which is beyond you.

seemingly contradictory, but not really so. Men must always strive for that which seems out of reach, but which is within them and always beyond them because there is no end to the striving. "The ideal must always exceed the real or what's a heaven for?" Duty must never be allowed to become a rigid unlovely thing; because the moment it does so, it loses the bloom of its inspiration. Then what looks like duty is actually a hard, unrelenting, obstinate and always unwilling service. Real loving service done in a spirit of brotherhood is real duty and it is always a beautiful ideal to follow. Sometimes it falls to one's lot to carry out a duty which is repellent and which appears to contradict all one's ideas and ideals. In this case one has to dig deep and look searchingly "within" and "beyond" and view the matter impersonally before one can decide where duty lies. One might have to perform loathsome tasks; but looking beyond the farthest horizon through black clouds of doubt and horror one can see the gleam of sunshine ahead and know that the only thing to do is the duty that lies nearest. The quintessence of the meaning of duty lies in the concluding words of the poet:

Give unto me, made lowly wise

The spirit of self sacrifice.

or in the words of *The Voice of the Silence*:

To live to benefit mankind is the first step.

To practise the six glorious virtues is the second.

The Theosophical Forum

THREE ASPECTS OF KARMAN — *G. de Purucker*

The Greeks had a most interesting and indeed profound way of describing karman. You will remember that they spoke of Destiny, often called by the Latins the "Fates," sometimes as unitary, and sometimes as threefold, or the Three Moirae; as often we speak of karman as being unitary or as being threefold and separated over the three great time-periods, past, present, and future.

So the three Destinies, or the three Spinners of Destiny, were respectively named Atropos which means that which cannot be changed or set aside; Klotho, the spinner; Lachesis, that which happens to us out of the past. These three Destinies, said the ancient Greeks, were three in one, and one in three. Atropos was the Future, that which is inevitably coming. It was connected with the Sun, mystically it was connected with our spiritual-intellectual parts, or as we would say the treasury of destiny imbodyed in the Manasaputra. In art, it was expressed as a grave maiden pointing to a sundial — signifying what is waiting in the womb of time as the flowing hours bring it closer to us.

Klotho was the Spinner, that which is taking place now; that which we are now spinning or weaving in our minds, and in our feelings. It was called the Present, and was represented in art as a grave maiden holding a spindle, spinning the thread of present destiny to become the Future, and was linked in significance with our psycho-personal nature, what we call our mind, having intimate mystical and historical connexion with the Moon, the shadow of the Sun as it were, the reflexion, the reflected light.

Lachesis was connected with the Earth and represented the Past which we are now working out, and was represented in art as a grave maiden holding a staff pointing to a horoscope; that which you have builded in the past is now yours.

Atropos, the Future, the Sun, the Manasaputric intelligence; Klotho, the

Spinner, the Present, the Moon, the active present mind; Lachesis, the Past, which we are now working out, in this body, on this Earth. Don't you think this Greek conception is rather a marvelous way of envisioning karman as at once unitary and triple? The more I think of the subtil Greek mind having thought this out, the three in one and the one in three, the more I admire the conception. Karman is divisible by such methods into three paths of destiny: Past, Present, Future, one in three.

So a man predestines himself, has done so in the past; what he now is on earth is the fruit: with his mind or lunar part he is now weaving his destiny which will find as it were, when he unravels it, lodgment as garnered knowledge in the solar part of him, in the Sun, in the Manasaputric treasury of destiny, some day to become the Present, and shortly thereafter the Past.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERIES OF DEATH (1) — *A. Trevor Barker*

I would like to begin by reading to you a short passage on one of the great mysteries of man's inner nature: the mystery that all of us are confronted with at the final stage of our lives; the mystery that at certain times during the course of our earthly pilgrimage we are brought face to face with when someone with whom we have been closely connected — dear to us possibly — passes over the Great Divide and we are brought into living consciousness with eternal realities.

Now these mysteries that surround the whole great subject of Death absorb modern thought to a quite surprising degree. One of the biggest Movements of our times is that which is called the Movement of Spiritualism — miscalled as we think because it has little to do with Spirit, with the Divine; and it is my purpose tonight, after reading this short passage, to try to elucidate some of the thoughts that are contained therein. These lines are from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. In the pages of that book you will find an at present unexplored treasury of knowledge, a collection of information and facts about all the problems of Death — the problems with which the Spiritualists concern themselves — if you will examine them. Now listen to this:

Yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body — the brain, thinks and the Ego lives over in those brief seconds his whole life over again. Speak in whispers ye who assist at a death-bed, and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have you to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought, and hinder the busy work of the Past casting on its reflection upon the Veil of the Future.

Is there any one of us who could hope to reach to such language as that? If you have a literary sense you will realize that words like that can only come out of the very heart of being itself, from one of those High Beings — a Mahatman, a Great Soul, one who has learned to attune his mind and heart to great Universal Mind itself, and is one with it. Being master of the forces of his own being he can penetrate into the mysteries of Nature as a conscious, fully intelligent, and potentially omniscient being.

BEINGS WHO KNOW TRUTH

The doctrines that we are going to discuss tonight are not the vain speculations and theories of ancient or modern materialistic scientists who use instruments of matter, instruments of scientific precision; who reason from a collection of facts, observable by the external senses, and endeavor to deduce therefrom some working hypothesis which for the time being they will label "the laws of nature." It is not about such so-called scientific facts that we wish to speak, because it is our experience that, in a matter of two or three centuries, such so-called scientific laws change. The scientist discovers that what he thought was truth, was not, and a new theory, a new hypothesis, has to be evolved. From such sources as this we could get no inspiration or light for our mind, and no food for our hearts; no relief for the perplexities under which humanity suffers. Therefore we have to find some other avenue of information and of knowledge; otherwise those great problems that perplex the human heart will not be solved.

So the nature of these doctrines then must come from men who know; and it is the statement of Theosophy — and one of the most helpful and illuminating statements that is to be found in the whole of our philosophy — that not only does Truth exist, being the workings of Nature herself in all departments visible and invisible, within and without and below — but that there are Beings who know — for something which exists merely in the abstract is of no possible use for us; we cannot utilize it unless there are Beings who know. Therefore our approach to knowledge must be directly or indirectly by an

approach to those who already have this knowledge: and those, in a word, are the Ancient Teachers of the race who exist as a living Brotherhood among men, sending their Messengers from time to time out into the world — always at work, mostly secretly but nevertheless having witnesses on the scene to testify that Truth, and knowledge of it, exist, and that there is a way by which man may illumine this material brain of his, and learn the Truth if he will.

Now the truths that we are going to study tonight, then, you can expect will literally strip the veils from this vast Unknown mystery, the mystery that the teachings enshrined — and truly enshrined — in the Christian scriptures simply do not approach at all. Go anywhere you like in any Christian church, and unless by — I was going to say by accident — you happen to come across a learned Kabbalist (and it is most unlikely because you would not find him there) you will not get any knowledge whatsoever of the mysteries of Death. You will be informed that the Almighty, if he had meant you to understand these mysteries, would have given you this information if it had been good for you, and the fact that it is not given in the Christian Bible means that we are to know nothing about it.

Theosophy begins with the statement that an Adept — one who is trained and skilled in Nature's mysteries — can by the power of his own Spirit know all that has been known, all that is known, and all that ever will be known. Now that is a large statement, but it is a necessary one if we are to have the right approach to this problem of the mysteries of Death.

THE SPIRITUALISTIC MEDIUM

Take the Spiritualist position. Some scientists have joined the ranks of the Spiritualist Movement hoping to gain illumination, scientific facts, and data that will bring knowledge of a mystery of which they are entitled to have information and experience if it be possible, and those who began to investigate along these lines in the beginning of the last quarter of the last century found that in the majority of cases man has simply not got the equipment to enable him to go behind the curtain of

matter and examine the process of what happens when a living intelligence passes out of this world — never to return, as far as he knows.

And so we have the first fact that accounts for the existence of a certain class of human beings who call themselves mediums, i. e., persons who have a peculiar constitution — a constitution which is psychically sensitive, in exactly the same way as a cat has. I don't wish to be offensive; don't think that for a moment. A cat is part of the cat-family of nature, and its mechanism is extremely psychically sensitive. Those of you who have ridden on a horse on a dark night will know that horses also are clairvoyant: they see. Cats see, dogs, most animals do; so that these senses that the spiritualistic community imagine are so highly spiritual, are shared, dear friends, by the animal kingdom — nothing more exalted than that; and the nervous mechanism from which this vision functions is that of the sympathetic nervous system, having its seat and controlling factor in what in the human being we call the solar plexus.

Anybody who is physiologically instructed will know that this mechanism is not under the control of our will at all. It is an unconscious function; and therefore, as you would expect, the capacities and so-called powers of a medium will not be under his or her conscious control. On the contrary, a definition of medium is one who is a passive instrument of forces that control and guide him — exterior forces. The medium imagines that because some exterior force comes and as it were hypnotizes him, and he surrenders the control of the divine temple of his body to this extraneous force, therefore it must give wisdom, when he has lost control of it and it begins, like the oracle in ancient times, to give messages that are supposed to come from entities beyond the veil of death.

When somebody loses one who is dear to him, and, not being instructed perhaps in philosophical teachings, feels all the more keenly the loss, it is this human feeling of loss that leads him to be attracted to anyone within reason who declares that he is able to communicate

with the one he has lost — a very natural human feeling. So when such people hear that Theosophy challenges the position of Spiritualism, they begin to feel perhaps we are going to take something from them, and they perhaps for the time being give us a wide berth. Then perhaps they examine into Spiritualism; they attend seances — and what do they find? This is the crux of the situation. If they are patient enough and spend enough money: note this, spend enough money: they will see a variety of phenomena. In fact the number of diverse phenomena that they will see and perceive and learn about, and hear theories about, to try to explain them, are simply legion. I could not begin to tell you in an hour's talk more than the outer fringe of the numbers that they deal with; but nevertheless the most common, in whatever particular form of medium you are dealing with, is of course a message of some kind from one who has passed over.

Now then, practically the whole of the Spiritualistic Movement is built up on one idea; and it is simply that they can communicate with the dead through mediums. Mediums gain their living this way: and there is roughly the whole thing in a nutshell. Theosophy comes along and says: "But you don't have the philosophy to explain your beliefs. We know you get messages; we know that you get materializations of some entity who is made to look like and assume the features and appearance of someone you knew. That is possible." Then the Spiritualists answer: "But this is evidence. Nobody ever looked like that but so-and-so," — and for the time being you are convinced. They call it evidential value; yet it is in reality one of the things that go to prove how our senses deceive us.

TWO ASPECTS OF THE AFTER-DEATH STATE

What are the facts underlying this matter? When the last particle of animal soul, as we read from The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett, leaves the body, what happens? What is the nature of the being who is leaving its tenement of flesh? Whence did it come? Whither has it gone? Can our Christianity explain it? It cannot; it is only the knowledge of the ancient mystery teachings of antiquity that gives you

the answer for which men and women are looking today. Who are you? What am I? Am I this body which is endeavoring to utter words and phrases to convey certain ideas to you tonight? Is it the body that is I? No. Therefore when the tenement is cold, that inner flame of intelligence that energizes all manifested lives, and especially human beings, vanishes in a flash. The human consciousness, the inner Ego, the true individuality of the man who is passing, in the last moments before the body is completely cold, lives over again every incident from death to birth: every incident: nothing is left out. So that he understands the long chain of causes that he has set going, the meaning, in all their aggregate sequences, of every incident of life, and these he gathers together in his memory in a period of complete unconscious supervision. This is the first step.

Then what happens? Check what I tell you tonight with what you may have heard stated in the fields of Spiritualism. This inner entity, if he has led a decent and spiritual kind of life, will pass through those disturbing ghostlike regions of the purgatorial and astral world; pass through them very much as a child will pass through a den of vice and be unaffected by it; and then that indwelling consciousness, the Real Man that has shaken off his body, begins to divest itself of that clothing of subtler matter through which he expresses the emotions, feelings, desires, and lower thoughts. This clothing of subtler matter you can think of as corresponding to the physical body on earth; but though the body may be burnt, this form of desire in the shape of the man that we know on earth persists, and if you had the clairvoyant vision you could see the exact likeness of the man or woman that was. The form is the same that in the East they call the Kama-rupa, "the body of desire."

Now it is around the desire-body that the whole field of psychic phenomena centers, for this cast-off spook, this mere simulacrum of the man that was, has certain peculiar faculties. We cannot call them powers but they are faculties, if you can use the term thus, because these spooks of the dead are made up of matter that is living, and this matter contains the impress and memory of everything that happens to the entity or around the entity during life. The curious thing about the

mediumistic function is that directly such an entity is attracted to it, this dynamic force, this mediumistic power, acts very much like the energy that revolves the disc of the gramophone. The "gramophone" is set, and the medium then repeats whatever incident is wanted out of the memory of the individual that is gone. Whoever goes to a Spiritualistic seance carries with him his own memory of all the long history of his relationship with the one that is lost. It is all there: the appearance of the one he loved, and every incident, happy or unhappy, in the whole long existence. We carry around with us from birth to death the whole record of everything that we have done, thought, said, felt, desired or willed, all that we have seen or heard even; and the medium can read that record, for it can all be seen by one who has the inner vision.

Now you will be asking: "Well, if all that is left of us after death is a spook, what about our boasted immortality?" Aye, you may well ask, for immortality is something that, according to the Ancient Wisdom Teachings, we have to earn. I asked just now what is the nature of the being that has gone into the Great Unknown. Is it something essentially transitory and material; or is it something divine and immortal, winging its way into the spaces of space with the power and faculties of a god? And the answer to the question is, at least in part, that the transitory or "devilish" part of it cannot proceed; and yet that upon which the Spiritualist bases his so-called evidence of survival, is the most transitory part — except the body. Strange, isn't it, but it is a fact. That which does wing its way into the inner spaces, cannot be reached by the ordinary medium. Assuming that the entity who has passed on was a spiritual person while on earth, one who had led a clean, religious, and ethical life, he won't be held in the lower purgatorial regions at all. He will have a slight discomfort, perhaps, in shaking himself free of the lower vessels; but it will be in a kind of dream state, and he will experience, later on, either after the longer or shorter dream, something that is equivalent to the passing from earth life: a struggle, a brief struggle, as he frees himself finally from the last clinging bonds of matter. Then that inner entity enters into what in our

technical language we call a kind of gestation state — that which precedes birth; for Nature follows the same law everywhere, whether it is the birth of a mosquito, a human being, a planet, a sun or a solar system — the same law operates. It enters into a gestation period, and then very soon it enters into unspeakable peace and bliss where it commences to live over and over again from birth to death the spiritualized memory of the life it was living while on earth, with a memory as vivid as the imagination of a child. If you have watched a child you know what that means.

To the entities in the heaven-world there is no death: they have lost nothing. In their spiritualized dream they are surrounded by those they loved on earth, and they believe themselves to be on earth, for the life there is lived in terms of the real personality. I do not wish to dwell longer on this phase except to say this: that it is possible for us to rise in spirit and contact that entity in that state of unalloyed bliss, absorbed in its dream as it is; but I beg leave to doubt whether any paid medium is capable of doing it. And because the medium cannot rise so high, what happens? You get those puerile messages of mere repetition, containing perhaps what you call evidential value because it quotes some peculiar characteristic that you knew belonged to the entity that is gone. But does it give you anything of real explanation? Does it give you any more knowledge than the individual had in life? None whatever, and generally less.

THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Now if these theories are true — and you will find it very difficult, and I dare suggest impossible, to explode or knock a hole in them, because they are consistent with Nature: they hold water and are true to the facts as we know them — if these theories are true, there must be a practical application to our lives; for a great Master once said that he who possesses the keys to the mysteries of death is possessed of the keys to life. Why is that so? It means simply this: that if we know what is going to happen to our inner soul nature when it passes into the Great Beyond, we shall be extremely unwise if we do not order our

lives in accordance with that knowledge. If you know that to the extent that you live a sensual, devilish kind of life, if you know that a dwelling upon evil during physical life, in act and thought, will so intensify and materialise that which you have to meet face to face after death, if you know that you risk to have no rebirth into the spiritual world at all; that your experience after death will be one of intense suffering, and a suffering that you can do nothing at all about: will you not consider that it is time to do something about it now before it is too late? For, once we have passed over, our lives become dictated by the causes that we have set going in life: our hatreds and passions and desires are the things that will take possession in the after-life and make existence a perfect hell, an evil nightmare of unrequited desire for beings we loved, and which we cannot get rid of. These are the things that will surround us in the after-life with all the intensity of a horrible nightmare, and if this is multiplied and intensified as in the most evil cases it is, it means the death of all that is spiritual in us.

On the contrary and in the other pole of consciousness, if we have lived in the ethical and spiritual side of our being, then indeed we have a tremendous incentive and encouragement and hope, for as we live life here, so it will be there; and if you want to know what you are going to discover when you pass the portals of death, study your own life now, and you will have a very good clue to the nature of the experiences that you will then undergo.

FOOTNOTE:

1. A lecture given at the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society.
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The Theosophical Forum

OUR DESTINY IS OUR WILL — H. T. E.

John Stuart Mill says somewhere that "the interference of human will with the course of Nature is not an exception to law" — which may prove helpful to those who get themselves into a boggle over the question of free will and karman. It is quite an orthodox Theosophical tenet that every least operation of Nature is ultimately analysable into an act of will. The universe, we say, is an assemblage of living souls interacting with each other. What else, then, can Karman be but a manifestation of the action and reaction of the wills of living beings? When met with a manifestation of the effects of Karman (supposing it to be of the kind we do not relish), we can say with Faust: " 'Tis thou, proud heart, 'tis thou hast willed it so." In other words, we are but finishing something we had begun.

As to destiny and fate, see what is said in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 605, where the author is speaking of Μοίρα, Fate [Karmic Ego], whose business it is to lead the man to the end appointed for him. She explains that Moira is destiny, not "Fate"; and it is clear that this Destiny is the will of the true Self in man, so that destiny is equivalent to self-realization in the highest sense of that word. So we can say that our destiny is our will, so long only as we do not mean the will of any lesser ego in our compound nature. Destiny, then, may be said to be a force outside of man, in one sense; while, in another sense, it is the will of the man.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Consciousness After Death

I have heard that after-death consciousness in the Kama-loka is really only a dream-consciousness, however vivid. Is it, then, ever possible to be conscious, while in the Kama-loka, of what takes place on earth?

G. de P. — The matter of the human soul being conscious after death of what passes on earth, or among truly loved friends, is very far from being the simple thing that the spiritists imagine. They do not know the teaching of the god-wisdom, and it is quite natural for them to think that the human consciousness should go on uninterrupted after death with perhaps a slight unconsciousness at the moment of death itself. They utterly fail to take into account the frightful, perfectly ghastly, torture that in nearly every case possible, such consciousness after death would mean, could the dead look back upon earth and see what is happening to the ones left behind, and feel the utter inability to help; see disease, misery, wickedness perhaps, crime perhaps, sin, misfortune, as well as the good things.

Nature is infinitely more just and kind than that. And this is the reason why for all normal human beings, that is those neither very high nor very low, in other words, neither for initiates, nor for great sorcerers, unconsciousness supervenes at death, and the kama-loka is what I have often described it to be.

But, here is an interesting point. It has been said regarding the kama-loka and the devachan that the more spiritual the man or woman who dies, the less is the kama-lokic experience. The soul of such a noble spiritual character shoots through the kama-loka like a meteor, and unconscious of it, and therefore unconscious of things on earth. So you see that when we rise above the average of good men and women and begin to enter the class of somewhat nobler souls we have the

characters that make for no post-mortem consciousness whatsoever, no consciousness of the kama-loka horrors or dreads or fears, but immediate unconsciousness awakening into a very blissful devachan after the second death.

Now then, going still higher, when we have reached the grade of the initiates: they by this time have been taught to remain conscious not only in sleep, but after death also. But they do this self-consciously, and the after-death state in their cases has no terrors or horrors for them, except perhaps the disgust that they feel for astral cesspools.

Of course, in the case of sorcerers or extremely malignant and evil characters, they have a long kama-lokic experience, very intense, and just because their consciousness is still so earthly, they can even by magnetic sympathy in many cases come to see as it were, or to feel as it were, as in a sort of day-dream what is passing on earth, not every detail but, depending upon the individual, a more or less clear "getting it."

A Substitute for Corporal Punishment

I understand that Theosophists do not believe in corporal punishment. If that is correct, my question is, What have you to substitute in those not infrequent cases where nothing but physical force seems to command respect?

H. T. Edge — Kindred to the question of capital punishment, now so much discussed, is that of corporal punishment, the arguments for and against which follow similar lines. The general trend is towards mitigation of physical violence, whether in schools, prisons, or the army and navy; but now and again we see some letter or article in the papers advocating corporal punishment as being the only effectual means of dealing with certain cases. Instances are quoted to show how crimes of violence are put down by its employment, and encouraged by its abrogation; and the alleged salutary effect of the cane on youthful natures of a certain type is mentioned with approval.

Corporal punishment is an appeal to the lower nature of man; and, as

such, it must be classed with other forms of appeal to the lower sentiments, such as bribery and threats. The temporary effectiveness of these means is not disputed; but objection is made to their use, either on the ground of the harm they do in the long run, or because they violate higher principles which we value. These arguments are sufficient to meet the case of corporal punishment as an habitual practice; thus employed, it would tend toward the debasement both of individuals and of the tone of the school or community in which it prevailed. Against the occasional resort to violence stronger arguments may be needed. Advocates thereof may bring up such cases as that of the celebrated Dr. Arnold of Rugby, who reduced a disorderly school to a state of exemplary discipline by resorting to the wholesale use of the cane. Dr. Arnold's success in his immediate object is unquestionable; but if claims of justification are to be rested on the fact of success, it will be essential for those claiming such justification to be successful. Again, the Doctor was admittedly a man of such exceptional qualities that the mere use of the cane on this occasion is a detail; and it does not follow that an imitator would achieve the same success. We all know the story of the ass in a lion's skin, as also that of the frog that tried to blow himself out to the size of the ox. Next comes the question whether Rugby school could not have been reduced to order without the use of the cane — more effectually, perhaps, than with it — whether, in fact, Arnold's method was not a second-best, adopted in default of a best. Finally we have to consider whether the atmosphere thus created by Arnold in his school is just the kind of atmosphere we propose to create in any school or community of the present day; and this, of course, only with the presumption that it is possible for most people, or for any people at all, to imitate Arnold, a man of such exceptional character.

Letters to the papers from "Indignans," or some such person, advocating flogging for wife-beaters, appear from time to time. They usually make the mistake of considering special cases as apart from the general public polity, and this prevents the writers from realizing how many other things their proposed policy would entail if the principle were once admitted. In short, we cannot flog wife-beaters and stop

short at that; for logic and consistency would demand a similar treatment of other kinds of offenses. It is the realization of this fact that often prevents the adoption of measures which, if they could be considered apart, might be deemed permissible or desirable. The principle of administrative resort to violence is deprecated as a part of general policy, and cannot be admitted in particular cases without endangering the principle. Even though it should be admitted that wife-beaters ought to be whipped, still this question of general policy might prevail against the special plea; it is not only the welfare of the criminal that we have to consider, but the welfare of the community as a whole. And the community might well be considered as incurring greater risk from such a resort to rough methods than it would from refraining.

In the case of a school, even the advocates of corporal punishment, if they are sincere in recommending it as a means to discipline, must admit that it would be better if the discipline could be secured without violence. For it is not to be supposed that anyone recommends corporal punishment from sheer love thereof. Their justification, therefore, reduces itself to the advocating of a second-best in default of a best. "Let us cane," they say, "since we do not know how to secure order in any better way."

Sometimes it is contended that the objectors to corporal punishment are inexperienced theorists, and that experienced persons know better. Let us therefore put the case as strongly as possible, so as to cover all occasions that can arise in practice. Let it be granted that a boy in a school is of so coarse and degenerate a nature that all appeals to him are useless and the only thing he respects is physical pain. Let it be granted that corporal punishment would immediately reduce him to order for the next month. We will admit that the boy actually craves corporal punishment and does all he can to provoke its infliction; also that his master knows of this craving and that he could save himself much trouble by gratifying it. Most people under such circumstances would yield and inflict the cuff or the flogging; and, considering the many drawbacks they have to contend with, we should not be too ready to blame them. Nevertheless the necessity, if a necessity, is a

regrettable one. The act is a kind of confession of failure. The subconscious craving for corporal punishment, and the feelings which follow its infliction, are of the nature of animal propensities. It may require years of patience and endurance to deal with such a case without resorting to physical violence, but progress will be made, and thus the higher nature will be aroused to co-operate with the master in the cause of discipline, and fear will no longer be the ruler.

As to corporal punishment in the state, the same arguments apply to it as to capital punishment. In practice it would amount to a resort to the principle of attempting to destroy violence by violence. If we may make the same assumption as the advocates of corporal punishment make — namely, that the state has both the right and the power to act in the suggested manner — we suggest that the wife-beater be taken from his home and kept in a reform institution until such time as he should show by his conduct that it was safe to let him out again. It may be some time before we can have such institutions for criminals of all sorts; nevertheless that must be the ideal before us; if we are to have ideals at all, let them be high.

If anything remains to be said, it might be a word on the difference between firmness and anger, orderly maintenance of discipline and the resort to violence. Take for illustration the familiar case of the schoolmaster whose own nature is so unregulated that he can keep order only by the constant use of the cane; and contrast it with that of the master whose mere presence in the room is enough to reduce every pupil to absolute silence and order. It is the weaklings who have to resort to violence, not the strong. The real key to the control of others is self-control; and this is not a mere theory but a fact of experience, for vindication of which we may safely appeal to experienced persons.

Karman as Reward or Punishment

(1) I was asked whether the crucifixion of Jesus, or the martyrdom of any great soul, could be considered deserved karman? (2) Is it not unfortunate to stress the idea of reward or punishment as the necessary result of Karman? Does not the

reward and punishment theory give a very limited outlook upon which to base a philosophy of life? (3) Do we not sometimes have advanced problems to master, new karma to meet? — D. G. M.

Abbott Clark — (1) The crucifixion of Jesus is an allegory of initiation. Jesus was an Avatara and an Avatara does not make personal karma. The sacrifice of great souls for humanity deserves love and gratitude, not the martyrdom they usually get. They certainly "deserve" better treatment. However, this discussion is largely a play on words. Their sufferings are karma as all conditions are, but not in the sense of "deserts."

(2) The querent is quite right in thinking that "reward" and "punishment" are unfortunate terms to use in a philosophical or scientific discussion of so profound a subject as is Karma in its deeper aspects. But most men are neither philosophers nor scientists. To most people Karma is the most practical of all our Theosophical subjects. Karma is an impersonal, colorless process of nature. It is we who give it a color as an expression of our feelings. Karma does not reward or punish. It is we who reward or punish ourselves by setting in motion good or evil causes. We are the cause. Karma is the process, and the "reward" or "punishment" are words we use to describe the quality of the result.

A teacher of children has to use reward and punishment to get results. The children cannot yet understand moral laws apart from results, and the results are usually classed as either painful or pleasant, or as rewards or punishments. To get results, to effect improvement in human conduct, you have to use methods and speak in a language that will be understood by, and will appeal to, the grade of intelligence addressed. It is a case of "milk for babes and meat for men."

In a race of men who live for rewards and in fear of punishments and whose ignorance of the karmic law threatens to lead them to destroy themselves and their civilization, you have to teach Karma in terms they will understand and appeal to motives to which they will respond.

That being so, and H. P. Blavatsky being both wise and practical, she uses the words "reward" and "punishment" to designate the classes of karmic results. See *The Key to Theosophy*, Sections VII, VIII, and XI, where the words and the idea of reward and punishment are repeatedly used. However it will be an excellent thing when children can be taught to forget the selfish motives of fear and favor, reward and punishment, by being ever inspired to love the good, the true, and the beautiful, and to love duty and right action for impersonal motives. Thus they would avoid many of the usual mistakes in life with their resultant pain and sorrow. (3) As we advance we certainly do have new conditions to meet and new problems to master and each has its own Karman. New problems, new Karman.

Why Teach Impersonality

Why does Theosophy stress the importance of an impersonal outlook on life? Is impersonality a vital factor of Universal Brotherhood? Did Shakespeare touch one of the strings of the cosmic harp when he wrote, "Love thyself last"? Hamlet. — A. W. N.

W. E. S. — Impersonality means putting the thought of others first, and when faced with difficult decisions choosing that line of action or conduct which least advantages you personally but gives prime importance to the welfare of others. It means understandingly to "love yourself last," as the questioner suggests in quoting from Shakespeare.

Yes, impersonality is recognition of the all-embracing sway of universal brotherhood, which unites in one essential whole all that is, from the highest god of any hierarchy of superior beings to lowest elemental. All are linked together. All are essentially one. A technical grasp of this as revealed by the Theosophical teachings of hierarchies: of interlinking and interlocking spheres and worlds; of lokas and talas; of the doctrine of invisible worlds; and a clear conception of the illuminating Theosophical exposition of the two streams of consciousness, the matter (the dark) side and the spirit (the light) side, and their fundamental oneness — meditation on those subjects and an

understanding even in part of their far-reaching extension will bring growing conviction of the innate brotherhood of all that is.

Understanding of this extends within your consciousness to a realization that this brotherhood that pervades the Universe is also in man and is a thing to be practised; for a Theosophical truth when once realized is not a thing limited to intellectual or even philosophical appreciation, but stirs, impels rather, the sincere thinker to the daily effort to seek application of it. The Theosophist who faces the facts of life therefore tries to live impersonally for the benefit of others. Thus the man in his purely human personal nature finds his influence circumscribed to just that plane; but liberated, even partially, he is freed to undertake larger duties of intellectual and spiritual import which affect an ever widening circle. He is on the road to fuller awakening, which comes in fulness when he reaches Buddhahood, becomes one with his inner Buddha.

The simple facts are that personality reflects those qualities which bind, narrow, constrict the spiritual being within us. Therefore are we taught to seek to lead out the hid god-like attributes which are lasting and impersonal. This inevitably brings freedom and a more conscious allying of oneself with the brotherhood of evolving souls which forms all Nature.

Man's personality is something which through long ages has been evolved out of himself, not something therefore to be shunned as inherent evil. That is absurd. But on the other hand it should not be idealized as it so generally and blatantly is. It has its rightful place. It is the necessary vehicle of the individuality within us. It is the lesser human intermediate part of man. It is necessary for the expression of our present human life. There is much in it that not only is good but that we can look upon with real affection; but after all it is the vacillating human soul, which reflects the ordinary psychical and emotional phenomena of life. It is but the mask of the real actor-man who pilgrims through the spheres.

The business of life is to lift this lesser part until it becomes the greater;

and as one does this he gains self-mastery and learns the secrets of Nature. Attainment of even a certain amount of impersonality is acquirement, therefore, of a degree of occult power; for the higher the being, the larger is his sphere of activity and the more impersonal is his work — until finally, like Father Sun whose rays shine beneficently alike on all beings, he becomes so thoroughly allied with the inner Impersonality, the inner Individuality, that he likewise becomes benignly sunlike, shedding his spiritual influence, without thought of self, on all that lives.

The Theosophical Forum

LIFE BEGINS WITH THEOSOPHY — *L. Gordon Plummer*

It so happened, a long, long time ago (aeons b. c.) that there was a mathematical point. Not that there have not been mathematical points galore since that time, but this one commands our attention because he was representative of all mathematical points, and thus becomes the hero of our story.

Now he was nothing much to look at, having no size at all. You are not to think of him, however, as microscopically small, for to say that much of him would be to attach size to him, and we have stated that size was the one thing he lacked above all else. On the other hand, you might be inclined to imagine him to be very large, but again, though you conceive him to be larger than from here to Arcturus, you once more limit him by attaching size to him. Having no size, our hero was neither large nor small. He was at once nowhere and everywhere. Having thus definitely placed him, we discover that he was an idea in the Cosmic Mind.

Now he had heard that ideas rule the world, so he set out to find a world to rule, and was immediately snapped up by the mind of a man of that time. (The man didn't look like us, but we call him a man because he occupied a corresponding position in the evolutionary scale to what we do. Besides that, he could think.) The man was quite within his rights, for to think was his prerogative, and what is thinking but the clothing of ideas in mind-stuff, and sending them out again as thoughts? But this man was foolish and thought that the idea was his own, thereby mistaking his own thoughts for the idea itself. Thus, were it not that the man talked rather much, our story might have ended here. But it so happened that a Theosophist (there were Theosophists then as there are Theosophists now) heard him, and said "There's a grand idea behind what you say", after which he (the Theosophist) resurrected the idea, and brought it to light. Because he was a wise man, he was able to see clearly, and knew the idea for what it really

was, and so was able to give to it the suitable mind-stuff clothing. The fact of the matter is, he wrote a book about it, and so the idea occupied a good many minds all at once.

This was a bit complicated, but the Idea soon got used to it, and when he discovered that men acted on the thoughts they thought about him, he was in a position to make two important discoveries. Firstly, that life for him began with Theosophy. Secondly that there were three essentials for life: (1) the idea, (2) the thought, and (3) the action. He discovered that these three essentials operated everywhere; that the existence of the universe was dependent upon them. From this grew the knowledge that within himself was forming the skeleton-outline of a seven-principled being. To wit: there was (1) the Cosmic Mind from which he had sprung, (2) himself as the idea, (3) the human agent who had given him birth, (4) the thoughts in which he had found himself clothed (5) and (6), the resulting actions which are in reality both cause and effect, and (7) the life which vitalizes and permeates the whole. Of course, it must be remembered that this was but the beginning of what was destined finally to become a sevenfold being like ourselves; it might be said that he was an entity in the embryonic stage of life.

And now he was really aware that the universe was alive with beings of all kinds, and with some of them he had direct dealings. For, at this time, he was engaged in helping certain classes of beings to shape themselves, for all things must become imbodyed periodically, and there are certain nature forces that we call the elementals whose particular task it is to help build the vehicles in which all entities must manifest. And our aspiring mathematical point had become one of those busy elemental forces.

Do not think that he really knew what he was about. For at this early stage of his history, he worked quite automatically, and he was not conscious to the degree that he knew himself apart from all the other myriads of elemental lives working with him. As yet his consciousness was none other than the consciousness of the Cosmic Mind of which he was a part. Individuality for him was a mere potentiality. But little by

little the need for individual existence became felt, and this hunger after growth finally lifted him out of the low level of life he had occupied, and he found that he could build bodies on his own account, and thus he turned into a monad.

As a monad, he went through all sorts of experiences, first, inhabiting mineral bodies, so that we could have said he was in the mineral kingdom, had we spoken of him at all, in those times. There wasn't much for him to do, and he rested mostly, until finally, the desire for individual expression asserted itself once more, and he passed into the plant world, or the vegetable kingdom. Sometimes he breathed out the fragrance of the rose, or the buckthorn, sometimes he was the lowly moss underfoot, again he would look mischievously through the eye of the forget-me-not, or sometimes sing to the wind in his mantle of pine needles. But ever the need for individuality urged him on, until ages later, he learned to climb the mountainous crags as the wild goat, or soar aloft on the pinions of the eagle. He was now in the animal world, and the germ of individuality was sprouting. Yet he was not satisfied. Then after further ages had rolled by, and worlds had lived and died, he became a man, and once a man, always a man. Now his individuality was complete. He could think for himself. He had ideas, as a certain other man of long ago had had ideas.

But he was a rather foolish man. He had some ridiculous notions, as for instance that until only a few thousand years before his time, there were no humans, also that his was the only planet that was inhabited with intelligent beings. He thought likewise that he had come from an ape, but to crown all, he thought that the human being was the acme in evolutionary development, and that there were no beings in all the spaces of space who were more intelligent than he. Wherefrom grew a colossal egotism, and he was an easy prey to the heresy of separateness. He was so intoxicated with his new-found and complete individuality that he thought of himself as different from other men, not to speak of the animals and plants.

But the skeletoned pattern of a sevenfold being that we had discovered

in the life-atom of long ago, had now grown into what we call his seven human principles. He had a body, which was built around a definite pattern, which we call his astral, these two being held together and sustained by his vitality. This vital-astral-physical being was ruled by desires and emotions, which we call his Kama, and as such he was no better than the beasts themselves. However, being a man, he had a mind, his fifth principle. This sometimes asserted itself as cold dispassionate intellect, but again, it was sometimes warmed by the breath of the spiritual intelligence we call the Buddhic principle, which is the shrine of the holy flame of Atman, the essential self of the man, his divine nature. In time this divine self made itself felt in the man's heart, and after many re-embodiments, the need for something higher caused him to search deeper for the secret of existence. Thus it was that he finally met a Theosophist who gave him a new understanding of life. He was so intrigued with the new philosophy (not knowing that it was as old as Time itself) that he applied himself diligently to the study of its main postulates, to wit, Reincarnation, Karman, the Seven Jewels, and so on, until finally he learned for the second time that Life begins with Theosophy. He discovered how to live fully, completely, and to function in all parts of his nature.

And so a change came over him. It was an inner change that did not come about suddenly. It gradually dawned upon him that, though he was a completely individualized entity, he was aware of a universal consciousness permeating the whole of nature, excluding none, and that it was possible for him to ally himself with that universal consciousness, and that in time he might manifest it in himself. Whereupon he devoted several lives to Theosophical study and work in unselfish service to Humanity, so that in time he became a pupil of a spiritual Teacher, and received further instructions so that he joined a part of the ancient Brotherhood of Light. He himself became an Adept in the science of Life, and after ages of work in this field, he learned how to be conscious with the universal consciousness instead of with his own human consciousness, and with that initiation, for such it was, he stepped outside the boundaries of human existence, and became

what it is common to call a demi-god. He was such as are told of in myths and legends, which recount the days when gods walked the earth in company with men. And so he grew apace until he entered the company of those gods who are so grandiose and lofty in their reaches of consciousness that instead of manifesting in human bodies such as we have, they require glowing bodies of solar energy. We men foolishly think they are stars, and try to measure their magnitudes, densities, speeds, and what not, never guessing what mighty beings they really are.

And this brings us now to the year 1940 a. d. I could not tell you just which of the stars this wanderer became. For all I know, he might be one of the multitudes of invisible stars which people the fields of space. But there he is, working in company with his fellow-gods, learning, growing, evolving.

And just where do we come into the story? We are heroes of similar tales, following our own evolutionary pathways, reaching out to claim the same bright destiny that the wandering monad of our story has achieved.

Moreover, each of us is, at this present time, a life-atom, a part of one of those beings we call the gods. What greater privilege can come to man than the responsibility of representing here on Earth, one of the Gods in Heaven? Who of us fulfils that divine charge laid upon us, to so live in every thought and deed, that we may be worthy of that God that in the inmost of ourselves we already are?

The Theosophical Forum

WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION — *G. de Purucker*

This is the teaching of the great sages and seers of all the ages: work out your own salvation. Exercise the powers within you with which you are endowed. Harken: does the fact that men are bewildered and often troubled with questions of conscience signify that we have been left without guidance? Don't you see that that very fact is a call to us by nature to exercise the powers latent within us! By the exercise of judgment and discrimination, judgment and discrimination grow stronger. If we do not exercise our own god-like right of spiritual and intellectual judgment we grow weaker and weaker. It is by this exercise that we evolve, bring forth ever more the god-like powers within us.

Look at the great, the magnificent examples of human spirituality and genius with which the annals of human history are builded. These are indeed glorious and give us courage and show us how, since others have attained, so may we. These are sign-posts along that mystic path leading to the Mountains of the Spirit. But it is we ourselves who must tread that path, and we ourselves who must make our own judgments and abide by them. Just there is their great beauty. As ye sow, ye shall reap. Not something else than what you have sown. Think what this means. When men become convinced of this, their judgment will be broadened, they won't leap to points of conclusion, they will not lean negatively on others and thereby weaken their own judgment because no call is made upon it. They will accept the magnificent examples of human history as encouragements. "What he has done as a Son of Man, that also may I do by exercising within me the same powers that that grand figure of human history exercised." Their lives are a perennial example for us. But it is we ourselves who must grow, and by exercising our powers we do grow; and with each exercise the discrimination becomes more keen, the judgment becomes more sure, the light brighter. Then when the test comes we know which way to go.

THEOSOPHY AND INITIATION — *Loretta Colgrove*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The Lord Buddha has said that we must not believe a thing merely because it is said; nor traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor rumors, as such; nor writings by sages, because sages wrote them; nor fancies that we may suspect to have been inspired in us by a Deva (that is, in presumed spiritual inspiration); nor from inferences drawn from some haphazard assumption we may have made; nor because of what seems an analogical necessity; nor on the mere authority of our teachers or masters. But we are to believe when the writing, doctrine, or saying is corroborated by our own reason and consciousness. "For this," says he in concluding, "I taught you not to believe merely because you have heard, but when you believe of your consciousness, then to act accordingly and abundantly."

The subject of Initiation is of such a nature that it fascinates those who are wont to think. It is so abstruse that I have tried to eliminate as much as possible any ideas of my own and if I seem to *quote* too often, I trust it will be forgiven, for *only* "One Who Knows" can speak "as One having authority."

The message in this article is not directed to "the man in the street," but to *Fellow-Students*. To me there is no "man in the street" *per se*; there is only humanity in three walks of Life — Humanity in three Halls or Departments of Life. These are the Hall of Ignorance, the Hall of Learning, and the Hall of Wisdom to which so few aspire, yet it may be reached, for:

To every man there openeth a way, and ways, and a Way,
The high soul takes the high road, the low soul takes the low,
And in between on the misty flats the rest drift to and fro;

But to every man there openeth a high way and a low,

And every man decideth the way his soul shall go. —

Oxenham

To the Theosophist, or Esotericist, the Way is no other, can be no other, than the "Way of Initiation." The word "initiation" means "into," and "to go"; an entrance into or a new beginning. A changing from one condition into another, from a purely material life into a *spiritual one*. It is the first step and the succeeding steps upon the Path of Holiness; literally, therefore, one who has taken the first initiation is one who has taken the first step into the spiritual Kingdom of Nature, having passed out of the definitely human kingdom into the super-human, and has a right to be called "a spiritual man," in the technical significance of the word. But, "Except ye be converted (changed), and become as little children (initiates) ye shall *not* enter the kingdom of Heaven." (*Matt.*, xviii, 3)

In the middle of the Fourth Root-Race, the Atlantean, one door was closed and another opened. The opened door is known as the Portal of Initiation and is still open to permit members of the human family who are willing to undergo the necessary discipline, and to make the required strenuous effort, to enter the fifth or spiritual kingdom of Nature.

The Probationary Path precedes the Path of Holiness and marks that period in the life of a man when he definitely sets himself to the re-building of his own character, takes himself in hand and seeks with diligence to bring his personality under control. He will have to transfer his consciousness out of the personal into the Impersonal and during the transitional stage much of difficulty and suffering is necessarily endured. Yet in the overcoming of the lower self, in the EVER-BECOMING, higher and HIGHER, the Goal is finally attained. A SERVER OF THE RACE stands forth.

After a longer or shorter period of time the disciple stands at the

Portal of Initiation. We must remember that as one approaches this Portal and draws nearer to the Master, it is, as says *Light on the Path*, with the feet bathed in the blood of the heart. Each step up is ever through the sacrifice of all that the heart holds dear on one plane or another, and always must this sacrifice be voluntary.

To quote our Leader:

Initiation is the strait and narrow way, thorny and perilous, yet it is the short way, it is the way of the Teachers themselves, the way of self-renunciation to the service of the world; the way of personal self-forgetfulness; the relatively quick way of evolving forth the grandeur which lies latent within.

"There is a road steep and thorny, but yet a road, and it leads to the heart of the Universe." Wondrous words are these of H. P. Blavatsky! Initiation is the way by which the evolutionary process of growth can be quickened greatly; but a man must have attained the qualifications therefor, and have learned to know how to give the "right answers"; in other words, he must be *ready* for initiation before he may venture to attempt passing through its rites. All this involves very serious self-training, comprising a yearning for the Light, a being immensely hungry for it; and the possessing of an inflexible will to go ahead which nothing can daunt. In still other words, it means a man's becoming at-one with his inner higher constitution, with the higher part of himself: living in it and for it, and letting it prevail — actively working in his daily life — instead of doing, as the multitudes do, merely resting in quiescence, in somnolence, spiritually asleep, and indifferently allowing Nature's slow River of Time to carry him along on its tranquil and ever moving wave. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 1036-7

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the Heaven, a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to pluck up. — *Ecc*, iii

... everything in the Universe, in the last analysis, is based on the Cosmic Intelligence, so that even certain seasons of the year are more appropriate for initiatory ceremonies than other seasons. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 1080

These TIMES are called the Sacred Seasons, the two Solstices and the two Equinoxes, forming a *cross* in the Heavens.

The PLACES of Initiation have sometimes been described as chambers, caves, crypts, temples, halls, lodges, pyramids, and in the case of Iesous on the cross, Golgotha, the Place of a skull.

He who treads the Path is he who has counted the cost, whose sense of values has been re-adjusted; he is one who is attempting to take the "kingdom" by "violence," and in the attempt is prepared for the consequent suffering. He is one who counts all things but loss if he may win the goal, and who in the struggle for the Mastery of the lower self by the Higher, is willing to sacrifice even unto death.

Euripides has said: "O blest is he whose fortune it is to have learned the divine initiations; he sanctifies his life."

And Plato: "Constantly perfecting himself in perfect mysteries a man in them alone becomes truly *perfect*."

The Theosophical Forum

THE LAND OF THE CULT OF CAVES — *H. T. Edge*

In the January number of *The Review of Religion* (Columbia University Press) is the report of a lecture delivered last November at Columbia by Spyridon N. Marinatos, Professor of Prehistory at Athens University. It is entitled "The Cult of the Cretan Caves" and gives an interesting and sympathetic account of the many subterranean shrines found in Crete since this site of the ancient Minoan civilization was unearthed by Sir Arthur Evans in the early years of the present century. Professor Marinatos was himself a partaker in this more recent work of exploration. As we shall see, this account furnishes valuable items of confirmation for H. P. Blavatsky's thesis, that all cults have sprung from one ancient and universal parent-cult, which she called the Secret Doctrine or Wisdom-Religion. But, whereas H. P. Blavatsky takes the existence of that Secret Doctrine as a starting-point, and then proceeds to substantiate her claim by reference to recorded facts, archaeological research, on the other hand, proceeds in a contrary direction, theorizing on the basis of its knowledge up to date, and enlarging its theories step by step in order to accommodate new facts. These two roads to truth are destined to converge. The immediate acceptance of H. P. Blavatsky's thesis would mean a thorough recasting of prevalent ideas as to the nature of man and the immense antiquity of civilization — ideas which archaeologists are not ready to adopt — and in the meantime their inferences are handicapped by the persistence of narrower preconceptions which the light of knowledge has not yet dispelled.

Professor Marinatos says that the oldest civilizations were born in the lands surrounding the eastern Mediterranean, and that the Minoan civilization was the first upon the soil of Europe. The former of these statements seems too dogmatic, in view of the fact that it is based on the latest information, and hence is as liable to change in the near future as it has changed in past years. Indeed it is doubtful whether it

would meet with general concurrence among the archaeologists of today. The date assigned by the author for the Minoan civilization is from the early part of the third millennium b. c. to about 1200 b. c. This does not carry us very far back even in the history of the Fifth Root-Race of humanity, and says nothing of the preceding Root-Races or of the immense antiquity of civilization in Egypt, India, America, and other lands.

The religion, he says, was a kind of monotheism with a supreme goddess at the head, who has several aspects as goddess of sky, water, earth, domestic affairs, etc. One name for this divinity is Eileithyia (variously spelt as Ilythya, etc.), connected with childbirth and mentioned in the Odyssey. The ancient cave-worship in Crete is described by Greek writers, and the caves of Dicte and Ida are also mentioned by them. The author comments on the curious absence of temples and of large monumental buildings and plastic works in general; and regards the large caves as the Cretan substitute for such buildings. Crete is connected with the child Zeus, who was said to have been born here, and who must be distinguished from the Olympic or heavenly Zeus. In fact these caves were the seat of chthonic worship, the cult of earth-divinities.

Professor Marinatos says that Crete may be thought of as the classical land of the cult of caves, and that, in the light of archaeological research the Cretan cave cult is to be recognised as the origin of one of the most persistent motifs in religious history. But cave-worship is far more widely extended and far more ancient than that. Norse mythology provides us with Gimil's cave; Moses is said to have been initiated in the cave Horeb; we have the cave-temples of India; the site of the Delphic oracle was a cave; and so on. Caves were habitually used as places for a particular stage in initiation rites. The candidate, at this stage, had to descend into the underworld, there to undergo the mystic crucifixion. The major divinities in every land have their earthly or chthonic aspect as well as their celestial. What is done above is repeated below, whether in the sense of cosmic deities or of candidates for initiation. It was no superstitious awe that led to the use of caverns

for such purposes, but a knowledge that caverns were the naturally appropriate sites therefor.

The author takes us through a detailed account of the structures and artifacts found in the numerous caves, and makes a special point of the magnificent stalactite formations in the spacious cave of Eileithyia. He represents the ancients as being impressed with superstitious awe by these superb spectacles and as having regarded them as the work of Gods. But, we are told, science has now revealed their true origin. Others may hold that there is nothing in nature which is not due to divine power, and will regard the scientific explanation as concurrent, not alternative. We may be aware that the stalactites are formed by precipitation of calcium carbonate, but why should this detract from our feeling of reverence before a sublime manifestation of Nature's divine creative power? Does the dissection of a human body abrogate our faith in the immortal glory of the human soul?

The Theosophical Forum

THE FRIENDLY HEART — *Florence Wickenburg*

One of the most heartening and eye-opening teachings of Theosophy, and one that answers so many human problems is that of the Duality of Nature — Human Nature as well as Cosmic Nature. Through this knowledge we are in a position to apply Theosophy in a practical every-day manner. A little self-study will plainly indicate that within our being are two opposing forces, two "selves" each attempting triumph over the other. The question then becomes, which will we *allow* to win out? The answer is obvious. The moment we realize that there is a Friend within, a Lofty Nature, a God within our hearts, a Divine entity that has the ability of making the lower, petty, grumbling and selfish personality obey the higher mandates, a sudden courageous strength infills our being. Once we feel the friendly warmth pervading our being, we begin to listen for its "voice," and impulses arise to share our discovery with others.

This keynote not only changes our daily outlook, but our whole life becomes one of joyful service. Instead of duty being nothing but daily drudgery, our responsibilities a constant burden, those about us a nuisance preventing us from following our own selfish pursuits, we find a newborn Voice compelling service to others. This need not be in the form of frenzied emotionalism, a rushing among charitable organizations, forcing our ideas down others' throats "for their own good," or running around offering well meant but unwanted advice. No. That is only meddling, the lower personality doing good only to satisfy its own desires. The God within does good, not with loud noise and personal advertisement, not with thought of reward, or of earning what Theosophists call good karma, but silently, almost unconsciously, as the rose pours forth its perfume and sheds its beauty on all alike.

Practical, every-day Theosophy is simple. It means merely greeting those about us with an open hand, a friendly smile, a heartfelt word of

cheer, the shining eye, and in most cases with a sympathetic, understanding silence. It means doing our daily duty in the home or in the business world with a devoted heart, in self-forgetful service for others. It means welding our daily actions together with the torch of love.

And yet, this is not always as easy as the saying of it. It is all very well to read of lofty ideals, to meet together in common discussion of them, to carry them in mind and heart. This is necessary for spiritual development. It is quite another thing, however, to practise these ideals on Monday morning when the toast burns, the paper is late, the baby is cross, and hubby has a grouch on. If we can put Theosophical ideals to practical use under such trying conditions, shedding the warm glow of a loving heart over the breakfast table, soothing ruffled tempers, bringing harmony out of chaos, then we can begin to feel the joy of living. Learning to give loving service under stress of daily trials is one way to become better acquainted with the habits of the Higher Nature.

Again, it is one thing to listen to old platitudes about forgiveness, loving our enemies, and turning the other cheek. It is quite another thing, however, to forgive the boss when he meets us in a fit of temper over some small oversight. It is not so easy to walk serenely through a sea of criticism hurled at us by a jealous neighbor or competitor, or to be philosophical when a most promising prospect leaves for parts unknown instead of signing on the dotted line. However, it is just such daily commonplaces that offer the opportunity of listening to the mandates of the Higher Self, of expanding the soul-life, of rising higher along the path of evolution. Where would be the necessity of effort were there no trial?

Is this not the very same pathway the Great Ones have walked? Somewhere in the dim past, in former lives the Great Souls such as Gautama the Buddha and Jesus called the Christ had no doubt to face just such daily problems. But by conquering them, by listening to the Higher Voice, the Friend within, they at last became that Higher Self in reality. Think of the hope behind these facts! What courage it should

give us, how it should spur our efforts! For what these Great Souls accomplished by facing trial and temptation — and conquering them — we can also do.

Let us search for this Friendly Heart within, for it is ready for us to open its doors and allow the mellow light to shine forth for all the world to see. Let us not carry this light selfishly within, hidden from a troubled world, but let us share it with our next-door neighbor, the beggar at the door, the little child playing in the yard, the merchant down the street. Let us listen to the Voice of the Higher Self, and begin to make our life one of joy; not for our own benefit, but so that we can bring joy into the lives of others. Let us put our Theosophy into practical use, by remembering that

Toiling is not toiling
When the service that we give
Is to keep the living loving,
And to help the loving live.

The Theosophical Forum

REINCARNATION — *Verna Brackett*

The Law of Reimbodiment, or Reincarnation, teaches man that he is a very necessary part in the divine plan of things. What is needed first of all is to show that man is not a product of physical evolution only, but that he evolves mentally and spiritually as well. He is a being consisting of Spirit, Mind, and Matter. This trinity in essence is one, for they are aspects of the One Consciousness, One Life, One Spirit.

In the evolutionary plan of things, man is a deathless spiritual Ego, who uses mind and matter as a vehicle to gain experience and express himself in the external world. This spiritual Ego we can think of as the individual consciousness in man, as a ray of Universal Cosmic Consciousness, which is the First Cause back of all manifestation. Therefore the real inner man has always existed and cannot be destroyed any more than can the Boundless Universe of which he is an inseparable part. We can think of him as a center of consciousness in this Universal Consciousness.

The Universe itself is a product of evolution, and as it rises on the ladder of evolution, it carries with it all that it contains — atoms, plants, animals, worlds, suns, solar systems — to an ever higher state of being. This process is taking place because the Universe is the vehicle for the Universal Consciousness whose evolution is beyond human conception. It is a vast living organism, and in it there is no point in space which is not occupied by some form of matter, these forms being the vehicles for the multitudinous degrees of ideation. This includes atoms and collections of atoms from the tiniest molecule to the greatest solar system.

We can think of evolution as unfoldment, for all growth starts from within, as this growth is generated by the life force from within the ray itself. In the acorn are all the potentialities of the oak tree it is to become; also within the acorn is the essence of all its past evolutionary

experience. It is just the same with man, for in the core of his individual consciousness are the latent potentialities of his future being, and stored within this consciousness also is the essence of his entire pre-existence.

Before man's evolution on this earth he was a self-conscious being who had acquired a degree of perfection from past evolutions on other planets and took on a body of flesh again on this earth in order to gain all experience there is to be had in this world. The plan of evolution is for man to raise everything in the kingdoms below him to the state of man, and then by his own efforts to unfold himself upward again into his own plane of perfection or spiritual being.

This experience is gained through the laws of periodicity, that is, through cycles of activity and rest. We see this happening around us on every side. In Nature we have Spring, Summer, Autumn, and then the rest period of Winter, followed by Spring again. In man there is birth, childhood, adulthood, old age, then death which is the rest period for the Spiritual Ego, and in time birth again for that Ego. We observe in the daily living of man that he has his day of activity and his night-time rest period for his physical body. Although man sleeps, his consciousness is ever active although the sleeping brain is not always aware of that fact. But we know this must be true, for upon awakening, the man picks up his thinking of the preceding day and continues with his business of living.

So we see that in the rest periods of the Universe, or Nature, or Man, consciousness never ceases, for it is a beginningless and endless stream of activity.

In the human race Reimbodiment is called Reincarnation, or the putting on again of the body of flesh. The purpose of this law is to give time and opportunity for the spiritual potency in the core of man's being to develop or unfold into a self-conscious individualized spiritual being. Theosophy teaches us that the personal man, Mr. A. or Mrs. B., that which we familiarly call the personality, is not immortal because it changes each life according to its environment and experience. For

example the yearly foliage of the oak tree is not the real oak consciousness but merely its vehicle of expression which varies from year to year according to the elements of Nature.

Man is a composite being consisting of seven principles, but today we shall consider him as a threefold entity. First, there is the Spiritual Ego within whose deep reservoir of consciousness are all the fine aspirations and ideals of man's nature. Next we have the personality. Then, lowest of all, is the animal consciousness, including the body, which is the vehicle for the two higher aspects of man through which they express themselves. It is the higher Human Ego which reincarnates. The Theosophical name for it is Manas, which means, the Thinker. In it is the origin of our self-consciousness, that which wells up with us as "I am I." It is the seat of conscience, whose still small voice can tell us what not to do, for it is the voice of our vast pre-existent experience that is stored in the Spiritual Ego.

From our Higher Nature comes the inspiration for unselfishness, love, compassion, and our impulses to impersonal, charitable thought and action. So we have two selves existing within us: the Spiritual Ego or Thinker which persists throughout all reincarnation, and the personality which is mortal and breaks up at death. It is the constant duel between these two states of consciousness that makes up our lives and is such a mystery. The purpose of the spiritual consciousness is to change the personality's wrong thinking and its animal desires with its own pure understanding of selflessness, love, and compassion.

The question then arises as to the origin of all this duality. Theosophy describes how the animal vehicle of man was built up in the past ages of evolution on our globe by the lower forces of nature, and when it was ready the Spiritual Ego or Thinker overshadowed and guided it, until it had developed a personal consciousness of its own. Then this personal consciousness expanded through many ages of reincarnation, still under the shadow of the Higher Ego, until it became the human personality; and it is through this that the Higher Ego gains experience.

We see then the reason for the mixture of moods in our natures. We

are all Arjunas struggling to overcome our lower personalities by appealing to our own inner god. This struggle between our higher and lower natures develops a bundle of personal energies throughout an existence. When at the time of death the Spiritual Ego returns to its own sphere in Devachan, it leaves behind it these energies which Theosophy calls skandhas, and these skandhas are like the seeds which a plant drops into the earth when it withers and dies. So it is with man when he dies, the experiences of his life are deposited into his spiritual, mental, and physical life-atoms. These are the skandhas or attributes of character which shape the new personality in the Ego's next incarnation.

When the Reincarnating Ego passes out of this earth-life to its own spiritual plane in Devachan, it pauses for a moment and looks back over its past life and sees to the minutest detail all the experiences it had gone through there, and in turn connects up these experiences with the ones of its preceding existence. Then having rid himself of his lower vehicle he takes with him into Devachan all that is fine and spiritual of his personality. In Devachan, or plane of perfect bliss, he experiences only the high vision and memory of all that was great and grand in the past life.

The devachanic state is the rest-period for the Human Spiritual Ego, just as the sleep period in our daily lives is the rest period for our physical bodies. However, consciousness is always active, whether we experience earthly or devachanic rest. It is a constant beginningless and endless stream of activity.

The yearning for earth experiences, together with Karma (which is the law of cause and effect), draws the Ego back again to incarnation from its devachanic state. As the Ego descends into the material plane once more, it picks up the life-atoms on the spiritual, mental, and physical planes which contain the skandhas or traits of character which go to form the new personalities, and just before it enters the world it looks ahead and sees its future life laid out before it. And with this comes understanding as to why it has to have this particular life experience,

and the ego willingly accepts what it sees, and so enters into physical life again.

The Law of Reincarnation brings a new revelation into one's understanding of life, as it opens up an entirely new vista concerning our existence, and there dawns upon the mind the reality that there is only One Life, One Spirit, One Consciousness. This thought leads man on to see that all men are one, and that humanity is in essence one great brotherhood. The realization that within every man is an unfolding God should teach him to withhold judgment and condemnation of his fellow-men, for how can he truly judge from one life's experience? As we strive to unfold the spiritual Ego in our natures, we shall find that love and compassion will lift us from the personal to the impersonal, and by this process we shall be able to work for others in a truly unselfish way.

The Law of Reincarnation teaches us that everything reimbodies itself, and this thought applies to the Theosophical Movement as well. The power of love is the strongest power in the universe, and as we individuals strive to unfold this deep compassionate love from within our spiritual being, just so are we building the vehicle for the future Theosophic Movement. Let us hope that as this grand Movement grows and expands in its expression of love, more and more of humanity will be drawn to it. A united harmonious Theosophical Movement can bring about in some future time a Golden Age in which the Gods will walk among men, and misery and war will be unknown, for peace and harmony will reign in the world once more.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ONE AND THE MANY — *Martyn Witter*

In the pursual of self-knowledge the seeker after Truth is constantly confronted with the most difficult problem of How the One becomes the Many. As the spider depends upon a single strand for support at certain times, during the construction of its web, so do philosophical systems in the ultimate analysis hold for dear life to a partial solution of this most sublime paradox.

The problem of the One and the Many can be viewed from any one of a multitude of facets. For example one could go into the direct mechanics of emanation which would involve the science of the inter-relations of the vibratory essences forming the different vehicles for consciousnesses to work through. In contrast to the mechanics of material emanation one could deal with the emanations of states of consciousness and the manner in which one is derived from another. Then again the problem could be considered from a philosophical point of view entailing the why of the different steps of manifestation rather than the how. From here it would be but a step to the consideration of the transcendental problem of Being and Non-Being which would lead one directly to the consideration of individuality and Unity. We would have to consider the question as to whether the One really became the Many, involving a thorough analysis of the Doctrine of Maya, or illusion.

Dealing with these problems from any aspect brings one quickly to the realization that logic will go but a little way in grasping even the elements of the Occult Verities handed down to us by a long line of Seers. We can apply the law of analogy to the extent of our ability and thus obtain thereby a vague awareness on the mental plane of some of the basic verities. It is only the Adept of the Sacred Sciences who possesses the necessary development of those intuitional processes which enable him to know by direct perception. The real knower is the "thread self" of consciousness which stands behind all possible

conscious states. Taking the idea of the "thread self" to heart we can experiment by tracing beyond in our consciousness to the point where we stop through inadequacy of concentration. Upon performing this experiment we prove to ourselves that the centers of consciousness could not be perceived and used in a self-conscious manner unless there were always a higher conscious perception to register and record the state which we are experiencing at the time. By reflecting upon this, one is led to an appreciation of the fulness of the seeming void which appears to lie outside of our direct perception. At this point we must ask ourselves whether the Many could possibly perceive themselves as the Many if there did not exist an inexpressible fulness — a "Unity" or a hierarchy in which we move and have our being. This "Unity" is much more than a mere aggregation. However, as we found in our experiment upon consciousness, the "Unity," denoted abstractly as the One, could not be without its higher source. This process is an infinite one. This leads us to the conclusion that consciousness, in any state, throughout the vast myriads of manifesting Universes would be impossible without the existence of the "Unknowable" which is "Be-ness" in contrast to Being. No attributes can really be given to "Be-ness" although consciousness *per se* does regard it as the "Ever Darkness." "Be-ness" is transcendental to both homogeneity and heterogeneity as well as to the Unmanifested and the Manifested. We must not think of "Be-ness" as lying outside of our galaxy or somewhere in location for this would be contrary to its ever presence and would be the fallacy of projecting our physical conception of extension to that which is far removed. It is obvious that that which has no direct relation to the finite cannot of itself create.

Let us trace if we can the process of emanation as far as the reaches of mind allow. I submit the following for the reader's own reflexions. From "Tat" (That) springs the "One Unknowable Causality." Manifestation is still in the lap of "Non-Being" regardless of the eternal existence of "Tat." Perpetual Motion has its source in the ever "Unknowable Causality," for where there is causality there is motion, as the two are one. Perpetual Motion has an essence of Unconditioned

Consciousness which in turn has the essence of "The Great Breath," which Breath assumes the character of "Precosmic Ideation" bringing forth primordial Light through whose radiance the Eternal Thought (still Precosmic Ideation) assumes the essence of the Word. I would venture to say that the Word is the one Ray which awakens the Eternal Germ resting in Mother-Deep. As *The Secret Doctrine* expresses it on page 28 of Vol. I:

Her heart had not yet opened for the one ray to enter, thence to fall, as three into four, into the lap of Maya.

The germ is Father-Mother (Svabhavat) being as One. It appears that the Germ is Pre-Cosmic Substance and the Word (Ray) is Pre-Cosmic Ideation as above seen from the derivation of the Word from the One Unknowable Causality. It was a necessity for the Ray to fall upon the Germ, for Perpetual Motion neither had a beginning nor will it have an end. It is the origin of the One Law which the Adepts recognise — that of Eternal Harmony. With the awakening of the Germ we have the reappearance of Cosmic Ideation and Cosmic Substance. Cosmic Ideation uses Cosmic Substance as a vehicle through which to experience.

We have now entered upon the second phase of the awakening of the Cosmos, for the Ray has already struck the Germ, and the breath of differentiation has been drawn, its effect being the issuing of the atoms from a Laya-Center. This may be called the "Fire-Mist" period. It must be pointed out that the Word did not create but only awakened the Germ existing in its Chaos (great storehouse of Creation), which upon stirring brought forth as one portion Cosmic Ideation containing as its Seed The Flame which in turn awakened the Seven Gods who fashioned the Universe out of matter. On page 72 of Vol. I of *The Secret Doctrine*, we have the following:

He is called the "Blazing Dragon of Wisdom" because, firstly, he is that which the Greek philosophers called the Logos, the Verbum of the Thought Divine; and secondly, because in Esoteric philosophy this first manifestation, being the synthesis

of the aggregate of Universal Wisdom, Oeaoohoo, " the Son of the Son," contains in himself the Seven Creative Hosts (the Sephiroth), and is thus the essence of manifested Wisdom.

This Flame is as it were the connecting link between Pre-Cosmic Ideation contained in the Word and Cosmic Ideation of which it is a self-evolved product. This connecting link is the Golden Chain of Being formed by self-evolved links of compassion imbodyed in the "line of Teachers." All this has a direct relation to the "thread self in man. It is the unity of the "thread self" which instills in man's consciousness the awareness of Unity denoted abstractly as One. In contrast, man's personal consciousness creates for him the awareness of the Many. The One never becomes the Many but always remains the One. Moreover the term "One" is selected *a priori* by the consciousness of its opposite polarity to the Many. The One is a Unity which is Zero and can be divided *ad infinitum* without losing anything of its unity. In tracing the Ray from the Ever Darkness we could see the thread of unity existing which, while appearing to change, changes not, for its immutability consists in its Eternal Motion. Neither does it descend to become the Many any more than the sun leaves its orb to follow its Rays, and yet it is ever present in the circulations of its Rays, for all that Is, is inseparable. Thus we see that the Ideal One is really not a One strictly speaking but an incomprehensible and immutable Ideal Unity partaking of something analogous to the "Ever Darkness." The Many appear as the separate Manys because of the relativity of consciousness. This is not a denial of the existence of that which seems to be wrapped in Illusion, for our dreams exist and are real at the time of experiencing them.

There may be some who see in the ineffable "Unity" a Monotheistic God and Creator. But he who creates becomes that which he creates and we have seen that the ineffable "Unity" does not become the Many any more than expansion of the variety — "from within without" — means an increase in size; for infinite extension admits no enlargement.

It is the conscious wills of the infinitude of consciousnesses that form

the Habits of Being. Although the Infinite and unconditioned cannot have real relationship with the finite and conditioned yet it is the Ray partaking of the nature of the "Ineffable Unity," which awakens again and again the germs that lie in the Bosom of That which knows itself not. However, this awakening is not an act of creation but is simply Eternal Motion. It is the destiny of the Many ever to move onward as Eternal Motion. It is our destiny to press ever forwards into the Unknown by enlarging the circle of our sympathies. To stop expanding is death, while to press relentlessly outward is to realize with expanding vision the inseparability of All.

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND MODERN SCIENCE — *H. T. Edge*

Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths. (I, 261) 1. (1)

A few decades have witnessed the downfall of the best established principles and most firmly supported conclusions: a fact which shows the need of caution in basing general metaphysical principles on the advances of the different sciences. — *Matter and Light: the New Physics*: de Broglie, 1940

It is often remarked that H. P. Blavatsky forecast the lines along which science was destined to develop, and anticipated discoveries and changes of view which have been made since the time when *The Secret Doctrine* was published (1888). That there is plenty of warrant for such a statement is a matter of which anyone with a candid mind can convince himself by comparing what was said in *The Secret Doctrine* with the subsequent advances in science. But in these articles we propose to facilitate matters by calling attention to some major instances. Throughout the work scattered references are found, but the third section of each volume is specially dedicated to the consideration of science. The author criticizes and often assails the scientific views prevalent in her time; but, as will be seen, she is a champion of science so long as it remains loyal to truth and does not lapse into dogmatism and obscurantism. H. P. Blavatsky attacks some positions which are no longer held, but this merely illustrates our thesis; and in addition we may point out that we cannot adequately understand the science of today without some knowledge of the science of yesterday, for the present is always the child of the past.

ATTITUDE OF THEOSOPHY TO SCIENCE

This is explained at the beginning of Vol. I, Part iii, and is also the attitude of the present writer, who has been keenly interested in

science from childhood and may call himself by education and avocation a man of science. As H. P. Blavatsky points out, earnest and honest truthseekers are always comrades in arms, whatever their particular lines of investigation may be; and their efforts, if faithfully pursued, must inevitably lead to the same goal. She avows that Occultism can have no quarrel with men of science so long as they adhere to their own prescribed program — to investigate natural phenomena, to formulate and systematize them into laws, and by means of these laws to discover other phenomena. Science is sometimes said to be inductive, but it has been shown that no science can be purely inductive, and science itself has to reason deductively from its own provisional hypotheses. In fact the method is alternatively inductive and deductive: facts are observed, from them are made provisional hypotheses, and these provisional hypotheses have to be changed or enlarged from time to time to include additional facts which may be discovered. But men of science are human beings, and the frailties of human nature may sometimes intervene. The provisional nature of these hypotheses is forgotten and they are put forward as established truths; and there is the tendency, when new facts are adduced, to reject them because they do not fit the theory, instead of changing the theory so as to accommodate the new facts. Not to be unfair to men of science, we must credit the public with their share in building up this new dogmatism. In the interest of truth, and of men of science themselves, it is important to separate the true from the false. To quote from *The Secret Doctrine*:

There can be no possible conflict between the teachings of occult and so-called exact Science, where the conclusions of the latter are grounded on a substratum of unassailable fact. It is only when its more ardent exponents, over-stepping the limits of observed phenomena in order to penetrate into the arcana of Being, attempt to wrench the formation of Kosmos and its *living* Forces from Spirit, and attribute all to blind matter, that the Occultists claim the right to dispute and call in question their theories. Science cannot, owing to the very nature of things,

unveil the mystery of the universe around us. Science can, it is true, collect, classify, and generalize upon phenomena; but the occultist, arguing from admitted metaphysical data, declares that the daring explorer, who would probe the inmost secrets of Nature, must transcend the narrow limitations of sense, and transfer his consciousness into the region of noumena and the sphere of primal causes. To effect this, he must develop faculties which are absolutely dormant — save in a few rare and exceptional cases — in the constitution of the off-shoots of our present Fifth Root-race in Europe and America. He can in no other conceivable manner collect the facts on which to base his speculations. — I, 477-8

THE ATOMO-MECHANICAL THEORY

Professor P. G. Tait, in *The Properties of Matter*, 1885, says:

In the physical universe there are but two classes of things,
MATTER and ENERGY.

Note the qualification, "in the physical universe"; it allows us to infer that he recognises the existence of one or more other universes, or departments of the universe which are not physical. But this qualification was not adhered to; the doctrine was proclaimed that the *whole* universe is based on these two things, each of which was described as being eternal and indestructible. Not merely the physical world, but the mental, moral, and every other possible world, were based on Energy and Matter. Our very thoughts were merely the result of energy acting in matter. This is the doctrine with which H. P. Blavatsky finds fault. Since her day science has been forced, by its studies in intra-atomic physics and radiation, to acknowledge that these two primary postulates, as they were formerly understood, are inadequate to explain the phenomena. The physical rudiment could no longer be conceived as a definite particle of physical matter, moving in accordance with the laws of molar dynamics; nor could motion be regarded as merely the transference of matter from one part of space to another.

There were writers in H. P. Blavatsky's time who shared many of her views with regard to the science of the day, and from some of these she quotes. One was John Bernhard Stallo, a United States judge, 1823-1900, whose work, *Concepts of Modern Physics*, examines point by point and exhaustively all the details of what he calls the "atomo-mechanical theory" of the universe. He comes to the conclusion that this theory is of a highly metaphysical nature, being founded exclusively upon concepts. These concepts are abstractions from reality, assumed quite legitimately for the purposes originally intended; but to mistake them for truths is disastrous. Stallo finds that, whatever the differences among the scientists of his time, they were all agreed that the fundamentals of the universe are Matter and Motion — or better, Mass and Motion. To quote:

The mechanical theory postulates *mass* and *motion* as the absolutely real and indestructible elements of all forms of physical existence. Ordinarily these elements are designated as *matter* and *force*; but this designation is plainly inaccurate.

And he shows that neither mass nor motion can have any meaning at all apart from each other. We have experience of moving bodies, but not of motion in itself; it is an abstraction. Similarly we can have no experience of mass except in so far as it is affected by motion; our only knowledge of it is derived from its composition with motion in various dynamical units; but of what mass is in itself we have no perception or conception. Both mass and motion then are abstractions from reality — concepts, as Stallo calls them; and yet science was treating them as independent existences and using them as the fundamental building bricks of the universe.

It must be noted here that Stallo was not proving the inadequacy of the atomo-mechanical theory to explain the whole universe, but its inadequacy to explain even the physical universe. In his own words:

The considerations presented in the preceding pages lead to the

conclusion that the atomo-mechanical theory is not, and cannot be, the true basis of modern physics. On proper examination, this theory appears to be not only, as is generally conceded, incompetent to account for the phenomena of organic life, but it proves to be equally incompetent to serve as an explanation of the most ordinary cases of inorganic physical action. And the claim that, in contradistinction to metaphysical theories, it resorts to known assumptions, and operates with no elements save the data of sensible experience, is found to be wholly inadmissible.

NOUMENON AND PHENOMENON

Students of *The Secret Doctrine* know how often H. P. Blavatsky insists on the need for recognising the Noumenon behind Phenomena. She explains the Noumenon as the *conscious* cause of the phenomenon (I, 633, 517); the word is defined in metaphysics as an object apprehended by the understanding, without mediation of the senses; the Phenomenon therefore would be an object apprehended by the senses. This latter word means "appearance," in which sense it is contrasted with "reality"; though Theosophists at any rate would use the word "reality" in a relative sense. Things may be real relatively to phenomena which spring from them on a lower plane; yet they may themselves be unreal relatively to a higher plane. The noumenon on one plane may be regarded as a phenomenon relatively to a higher plane.

We have seen that attempts to explain phenomena without reference to any plane higher than the physical must land us in contradictions and logical absurdities; and this has become more apparent to men of science with the passing years. It is seen that behind matter, considered as an aggregate of molecules, there is a something of a more or less electrical nature, and that this also underlies energetic effects. We cannot perceive it directly with our senses; we study it through its effects. But this substance in its turn may be but the manifestation of something still more subtle and underlying. In short, there may be a

concatenation of substances, growing more and more refined as we proceed upwards from the physical plane. The question arises, Where does consciousness come in? Consciousness, in some degree and form, is everywhere present in the universe, but is this the same as saying that the atoms of physics are conscious? If these atoms are merely appearances, merely effects produced on our senses by some hidden cause, it would hardly be appropriate to speak of them as either conscious or unconscious. There is conscious life everywhere, and it produces in our senses various effects; we see a mineral, a plant, an animal. Somewhere behind that mineral, that plant, etc., there is consciousness; unless we possess the power of direct intuition of that consciousness, we can only know the effect produced on our senses — a stone, a tree. We can apprehend the phenomenon, but the noumenon can only be known by sympathy of consciousness. This is what is meant by recognising the noumena behind phenomena; it does not mean that a stone is a phenomenon with a noumenon inside it; it means that a stone is a living being, which impresses itself on our senses as a solid block of inert material. Perhaps this will suggest an explanation of the occult virtues attributed to stones and other so-called inanimate objects.

Biology is also striving in vain against the necessity for recognising the noumena in order to understand the phenomena. A good deal can be learned by viewing vital phenomena as processes merely, but we must somewhere come to a stopping point in this kind of explanation. We must come to a point where we see microscopic particles doing certain things, acting in a certain way, without being able to tell why they do so or what they may do next. If we trace backwards a chain of physical causes and effects, we must sooner or later reach a point where we can trace it no farther. The only conclusion which does not involve us in logical confusion is that living beings are at work, invisible to our physical senses, but whose physical operations we can to a certain extent discern. This brings us to another most important point in our collation of the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky with science: that is, the need for recognising the existence of the Astral Plane beyond the

Physical Plane.

THE ATOM — ACTIO IN DISTANS

H. P. Blavatsky has much to say about the atom. This word, in nineteenth century science, had a somewhat vague meaning. For one thing, as pointed out by H. P. Blavatsky, citing Stallo, the atom of chemistry was not the same thing as the atom of physics. In chemistry it was (and is) a convenient unit, but its physical qualifications were not in question. In physics it served as a basis for certain dynamical calculations, such as the kinetic theory of gaseous pressure. But the attempt to regard it as a particle of physical matter leads to hopeless confusion. For the physical properties of matter were interpreted as dependent upon the fact of the atomic structure of this matter. But the atom has (*ex hypothesi*) no such atomic structure; how then can it have any of those properties which arise from an atomic structure? How can the atom be elastic, compressible? And without these attributes, how can it obey the laws of motion and interaction, as required by the kinetic theory of gases? Again there comes up the question of *actio in distans*, action at a distance: in what conceivable way could such atoms act upon one another, as the theory requires us to assume that they do? The difficulty requires the assumption of a non-physical medium between the atoms, to convey energy from one to another. But the assumption of such a medium upsets the atomo-mechanical theory at once. For either this new substance is itself atomic, in which case we are still faced with the original difficulty; or else it is non-atomic.

As H. P. Blavatsky says (I, 487), most men of science reject *actio in distans*, while Stallo observes that there is no physical action which, on close examination, does not resolve itself into *actio in distans*. Thus they reject a principle which actually underlies their whole system, and which they must necessarily assume in order to define that system! On pages 400, 401, Newton is quoted to the effect that gravitational attraction must be caused by an agent, and he implies that this agent is not material (at least in the usual sense of the word). Euler is quoted as suggesting either a Spirit or some subtle medium.

The difficulty as regards *actio in distans* is evidently that we are trying to *demonstrate* what we have *assumed*; for the atomo-mechanical theory presupposes action at a distance. For the explanation of action at a distance we must step outside the atomo-mechanical theory; hence we find the mention of spirits, subtle mediums, and something which (whatever it may be) is *not* physical. "Distance" is in itself a conception founded on our sensory experience, our experience of the physical world. Is it necessarily applicable to the universe in general? Can we attach the idea of distance to our mental and emotional life? In short, if we are to explain the universe in physical terms, we shall be compelled to assume something which we cannot prove within the limits of physical science. H. P. Blavatsky says that *actio in distans* is one of the fundamental principles in the question of Aether or Akasa in Occultism (II, 487); and now today physical matter has been found to resolve itself into an affection of some substance which is not material in the old sense, though it may deserve the name of matter of another kind. This means that the supposed *separate* particles of matter are not really separate at all, so there is no longer any *distans* to be bridged.

It is easy to imagine how H. P. Blavatsky was perplexed to find words in the scientific vocabulary of her day to correspond to her words Aether, Akasa, etc. But now we find a word ready to use, much used by the great Einstein, though familiar to science before his vogue — that blessed word "field." What we need is a term which will embrace the notions of space and a fluid medium, without being too committal either way; and the word "field" just fits. Now it is admitted by the most orthodox science that a particle (or point, if you prefer) that is charged with energy can have a field of force extending to that unknown bourne known as "infinity," which is far enough surely; so here is your *actio in distans*, all complete, free from any trouble about particles and intervals. Then again, so far as action at a distance is concerned, there is no significant difference whatever between a small distance and a great one; and it has been shown that the behavior of intra-atomic particles (or whatever they are) simply laughs at the law about the square of the distance.

So, as Stallo shows, the physical world is merely phenomenal, and is underlaid by a world which we must necessarily call non-physical. The atom is a phenomenon taking place in some other kind of matter. We say "matter," but might as well say "energy"; in fact, both these terms, if considered separately, are abstractions, and neither one alone will apply to our hypothetical substratum.

ATOMS AND VIBRATIONS

In this connexion we must not forget the vortex theory of atoms, which at one time had some vogue. It was shown that a vortical motion taking place in a perfect fluid would have the same properties as were attributed by physicists to their atoms; and the idea was illustrated by creating vortices in smoke, and in other ways. But that "perfect fluid" presented an obstacle. Yet this theory foreshadowed an idea very much in vogue today; before speaking further of which, let us quote from *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 633:

Atoms are called "Vibrations" in Occultism. . . . The waves and undulations of Science are all produced by atoms propelling their molecules into activity *from within*. Atoms fill the immensity of Space, and by their continuous vibration *are* that MOTION which keeps the wheels of Life perpetually going.

(Remember that the writer of this did not have the word "electron" at her disposal, and so used the best words available).

Now it is characteristic of the science of today, as contrasted with that of yesterday, that the two notions of particle and vibration have become merged, so that a formula is sought which shall comprise the two in a single general idea. This but confirms the conclusion mentioned above, as being reached by Stallo and advocated by H. P. Blavatsky — that neither mass nor motion have any meaning when considered apart. It is true that they may be *assumed*, as primary postulates, for the purposes of a particular branch of investigation; and this was most successfully done, for the purpose of co-ordinating observed phenomena in physics and chemistry, and thus leading to

useful practical results. But it was not always remembered that the said assumption was provisional only, which led some scientists, and the public who accepted their dicta without examination, into an unjustifiable dogmatism. But now the investigations of physicists have forced them to admit the provisional nature of these assumptions, and they can no longer speak of mass and motion as independent absolutes. (2)

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTE:

1. In these articles, to avoid repetition, references to H. P. Blavatsky's great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, are indicated simply by numbers denoting the volume and page. ([return to text](#))

2. It should be stated here that, in saying that motion has no meaning apart from mass, we are not impugning anything that may be said in *The Secret Doctrine* or elsewhere as to the reality of MOTION as a fundamental hypostasis of the universe. The motion we are speaking of is that conceived by the modern science of physics. The MOTION spoken of by H. P. Blavatsky is a far more generalized idea, of which motion on the physical plane is merely a particular manifestation. If we speak of motion as characterizing our mental and emotional life, we do not think of anything like a transference of masses from one place to another; far less can we apply such a materialistic notion to planes .higher even than the mental and emotional. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?" — *Abbott Clark*

Yes, the night is dark and our dreams are nightmares. But the darkest nights end with the dawn and abnormal states give place to normalcy. No sensible man or student of history can consider the present state as normal. Storms, like convulsions, are abnormal and short lived, else evolution were false and savagery would never have given place to civilization. Our civilization is young and undeveloped and suffers relapses like the outbreaks of childish temper. In the immediate present the condition is sadder and more terrible than the mind can grasp and I would not try to minimize it. On the contrary, I think it should shake us from self-complacency and move us to the profoundest thought of which we are capable. The sadness and sorrow of the world should awaken every germ of sympathy and compassion of which we are capable and make us set our feet on the Path of Compassion. We admit that our minds are overwhelmed by the baffling Conditions. But there are greater minds than ours. The minds of our Masters are equal to the world-problems. They have anticipated present conditions and given us in advance the necessary solutions. The Theosophical Society was started for the very purpose of counteracting present conditions and inaugurating a new and better civilization. Theosophy is the answer to the problems that confront us in the immediate present and in the future.

Listen to the following extracts from a letter by the Mahatma K. H. in which he quotes his Teacher, the Maha-Chohan I emote only scattered fragments of a long letter printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer*, Vol. II, pp. 432-3, and often reprinted.

The Theosophical Society was chosen as the corner-stone of the future condition of the future religions of humanity. . . .

The doctrine we promulgate being the only true one, must become ultimately triumphant, as every other truth. . . .

For our doctrines to practically react on the so-called moral code or the ideas of truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc. — we have to popularize a knowledge of Theosophy. . . . It is not the individual determined purpose of attaining oneself Nirvana . . . but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbor, to cause as many of our fellow-creatures as we possibly can to benefit by it, which constitutes the true Theosophist. . . .

To be true, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem. That the world is in such a bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies . . . have ever possessed the TRUTH. The right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles, right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism, are as impossible to them now as they were 1880 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were but . . . there must be somewhere a consistent solution, and if our doctrines will show their competence to offer it, the world will be the first to confess, that ours must be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives truth and nothing but the TRUTH.

The Master K. H. says in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*:

The truths and mysteries of occultism [or Theosophy] constitute, indeed, a body of the highest spiritual importance, at once profound and practical for the world at large. Yet, it is not as a mere addition to the tangled mass of theory or speculation in the world of science that they are being given to you, but for their practical bearing on the interests of mankind. . . . They have to prove both destructive and constructive — *destructive* in [of] the pernicious errors of the past . . . but *constructive* of new institutions of a genuine practical Brotherhood of Humanity where all will become co-workers of nature, will work for the good of mankind. . . .

"Ideas rule the world"; and as men's minds receive new ideas laying aside the old and effete the world will advance; mighty revolutions will spring from them; *institutions* (aye, and even creeds and powers . . .) WILL crumble before their onward march crushed by their own inherent force. . . . It will be just as impossible to resist their influence when the time comes as to stay the progress of the tide. . . . — pp. 23-4 and 425

As a relief from the agonizing conditions of the present one can take refuge in a wider and a longer view. From the early days of the Theosophical Society we were taught that this was the time of the change of cycles. In fact, that several cycles, some of them very great ones, came to an end and new ones started at about this period. This would bring us under the sway of new and higher cosmic influences and of old karma, good and bad. The future of individuals, of societies, or of nations, depends upon the use or misuse they make of the flowing tide.

We as individuals, or collectively as societies, or as nations, may rise to the heights or sink to the depths. We, individually or collectively, are responsible. "On human shoulders rests the responsibility for human salvation." An old age is passing away in revolutions and cataclysms and a new and better age is succeeding. It is like the breaking-up of river-ice in the spring. At such times the storms and floods and calamities are often terrible. But they give way to and usher in the burgeoning energy of spring. Wind and frost and cold give way to sunshine and balmy days when you can feel and almost see things grow.

Cycles of history are like that. Convulsions of nature or revolutions of men have swept away whole civilizations and left, where once they flourished, nought but watery wastes or sandy deserts. But the flowing river of cyclic time flows on and new civilizations arise, as the hosts of souls who made them, re embody in congenial places.

Civilizations differ as widely as do men. Each brings something to near perfection — as Greece did art, and Egypt her monuments of stone, and

as our age is doing in the realm of mechanics and mechanical industry and the mechanical side of science. So the ancient Aryan race brought language to perfection. "It is impossible for us to conceive what minds men must have had in those days to have required such a language to express their thought." Yet that race left us no monuments of stone nor artifacts of high mechanical perfection. Their language, Sanskrit, furnishes us with the majority of our technical Theosophical terms with their rich and copious meaning. Those whose eyes are fixed on the mystic east will behold the glory of the dawn and live therein. In proportion to the degree that they embody the spiritual sunshine in their lives they will create a radiant atmosphere of love and harmony and intellectual inspiration which will flow out to all others.

We shall have to revise our ideas of the long reaches of human evolution and base our calculations on the evolution of souls who sweep round the earth in waves of spiritual Monads who derive their karma from the *long*, not the immediate, past. Ancient Egypt did not give birth to the modern fellaheen nor did the glory that was Greece nor the stability that was Rome find their re-embodiment in any modern Hellas or the peninsula of Italy. The souls that once made the philosophy and art that was born on Helicon will re-embody their imperishable ideas and ideals in some modern Athens where the spirit and the atmosphere of beauty and art and philosophical thought will find their high and noble expression. In our day-dreams and in our practical endeavors we have tried to give them an initial embodiment at our International Headquarters at Point Loma.

From a small seed the *sequoia gigantea* becomes the largest and oldest tree in the world. Just so, from small beginnings great civilizations grow. From one Teacher millions of men have received regenerative ideas and embodied them in institutions of learning or in religious philosophies that have lifted their sincere followers to as great a degree of spiritual enlightenment as their individual capacity or the race or age allowed.

We can rely on the beneficent laws of nature as embodied in the cycles

of history to continue their rounds and raise us out of the terrible trough of this wave and into a calm and placid sea. Fear not for the future. The peoples of Europe and America and the rest of the world are human souls and their inherent divinity will reassert itself when this feverish, convulsive sickness is over, and a healthy normalcy will supervene in which the Theosophical ideals now so rapidly spreading will find some full measure of imbodiment. Look not to the past. Visualize the future. Paint your mental pictures in beauty, symmetry, and glory and move out into each coming day with new and nobler resolutions. Others will follow. The Theosophical life will even become popular and more and more people will clothe themselves in the robes of love and kindness and thoughtfulness for others and the spring-time of a Theosophical era will be ushered in.

The Theosophical Forum

ASKING QUESTIONS — *H. P. Leonard*

Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions and humility. — *Bhagavad-Gita*

To ask a question, is commonly supposed to be one of the easiest things in the world; but is this so certain? Dull-witted people, whose interests are mainly centered in material things, go through life confronted at every step by problems of vital importance, and yet they never seem to reach the point of being able to make a clear-cut statement of their difficulty in the form of a question, a proceeding which not infrequently evokes the answer that is sought.

The vague perplexity of those animal-minded people, whom Pythagoras called "the living dead," may be compared to the effect of burning gun-powder in the open air — a few faint puffs, a flash, a little smoke, and nothing more. But when a man of more advanced development faces a problem which is vitally important for him to solve, it is like a man with a rifle, who rams his charge into the barrel and takes aim at a definite target. The dynamic demand of a man of this type is marked by concentration and direction.

A true question is not a negative thing: it is more than an intellectual void, a hole in the mind. A true question is an appeal to the Higher Law, and contains within itself that positive force for attracting its answer to which Madame Blavatsky refers in her dedication to *The Secret Doctrine*. "This work I dedicate to all true theosophists, in every country, and of every race, *for they called it forth*, and for them it was recorded."

Theosophists of past ages, like single drops before a shower, were coming back for reincarnation in ever-increasing numbers, and were eagerly looking around for a modern restatement of that which had been their support in lives long since gone by. Scattered here and there over the earth, and for the most part unknown to each other, they

actually succeeded in making an appeal which was collectively of sufficient intensity to induce the custodians of the Old Wisdom Religion to impart a generous measure of the stored-up wealth which they hold in trust for future humanity.

These experienced guardians never make the mistake, so common among other teachers, of answering questions before they are asked; but when we are goaded on to desperation by insistent need, to the point of formulating a question, *and ask it in the right way*, they impart out of their treasury with no niggard hand.

Our very consciousness of a void within, which no accumulation of material things or merely intellectual learning can satisfy, is a clear proof of that spark of Divinity which sleeps within the clod of animal man,

Irks care the crop-full bird?

Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

The measure of our dissatisfaction is the measure of our inward greatness, and contains the promise of our ultimately receiving the answers to the questions that we put.

The Theosophical Forum

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS!

When X Equals Sh

In the *Popol Vuh* and other writings dealing with the culture of the ancient Guatemalans and Southern Mexicans we often find proper names with initial X followed by a consonant, as:

Xbalanque, Xpiyacoc, Xmucane. Is there any way the proper pronunciation can be indicated by our modern English letters?

— C. Q. W.

H. L. — When the Spaniards came to the New World, they found many of the native Americans, whether Aztecs or Mayas, using the sound *sh*, which English people transliterate as *sh*, and French and Portuguese as *ch*, and the Germans as *sch*, all having the sound of *sh*.

Now the Spaniards have no such sound in their language; so they made a curious compromise, and represented the *sh* sound by the letter *x*. This complicated things in later years, because Spaniards often represent their *ch* sound, as the German *ch* of *machen*, by the *x*. Thus the Spanish even today writes *Mexico* with an *x*, or sometimes with a *j*, because in Spanish both *x* and *j*, in such a connexion, have this *ch* sound like the German *ch*.

However, custom brought it about that the *sh* sound in these native American tongues in Spanish writings, became represented by the *x*. Thus: the *xb* or *xy*, when taken from Spanish books, renders the early American sound *shba* or *shy*. *Xr* would be *shr*, if indeed it is used, etc.

Mental Healing and Mental Freedom

What are the reasons why Theosophists do not endorse the healing methods of Christian Science?

H. T. E. — First let me say that I take exception to the form of this question, as it seems to commit me to a kind of sectarian dissension

which is repugnant. I do not wish to pose as a member of one faith sitting in judgment upon the members of another faith, and setting a value upon my "endorsement" of their beliefs and practices. Moreover, the terms used are general and vague, lumping together all Theosophists on the one hand, and all Christian Scientists on the other. Any individual condemned just because he styles himself a Christian Scientist, and without reference to his personal qualities, has a right to feel aggrieved; nor have I, on my side, the right or the wish to borrow undeserved plumes from a title. But I am perfectly willing to give the reasons why I, being a Theosophist, have my doubts concerning the advisability and efficacy of certain methods of mental healing.

I believe that the practitioners of certain methods of mental healing are heedlessly experimenting with dangerous latent forces in the human constitution. The idea that what is not material must be spiritual is wrong; there are in man's constitution many powerful psychic forces, normally latent, which may be used for good or for ill, or may be dangerous for the same reason as a powerful electric generator is dangerous in the hands of an ignorant person. Anyone who, rashly and without knowledge, arouses these forces, upsets the delicate balance of his nature and thereby exposes himself to dangers great in proportion to any good that may ensue. If he tries the methods on other people, then he is interfering with their mental freedom, just as a hypnotist does.

It is of course admitted that cures are often wrought by these methods; but such cures are like those produced by powerful drugs which suppress the symptoms without healing the disease, and which merely give temporary relief at the price of greater suffering later on. It is true that the mind heals the body; but this should ensue by nature's healthy, gradual, and normal processes, not by violent interference. The spiritual will should be used to heal the mind; the body should be cured by medicine and proper regimen. Direct attempt to cure a disease by these psychic and mental methods is a violent and ignorant interference with natural processes; and results in driving back an evil which is trying to work its way out through the physical. There is so

much that is good in the beliefs of these healers that it is a pity that they should have got hold of things by the wrong handle. What is required is a much more thorough study of the complexities of the human constitution, physical, astral, psychic, mental, and spiritual. The word "Science" would then be much more appropriate. For further information, see the pamphlet, *Some of the Errors of Christian Science*, by H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge; and the latter part of Dr. G. de Purucker's *Theosophy and Modern Science*.

Nature and Her Immutable Laws

In *The Voice of the Silence* it is said, "Help Nature and work on with her." How is it possible to help Nature who works through Immutable Laws? I have personified Nature as H. P. B. did as "Isis Unveiled"? — *W. L. C.*

J. N. Shore — If, as we have been taught, Nature is a mighty mother, the answer to the question "how is it possible to help Nature who works through Immutable laws?" is easy to conceive. A wise parent teaches and trains the offspring, insisting on adherence to rules, the following of certain patterns of action and conduct. The work of the hierarchy of the family requires co-operation from all members of the hierarchy. Part of his duty lies beyond the level of accomplishment of his offspring while part of it consists of training his children in the actual technique of learning, living, and doing. The child in a well regulated home learns to work with his parent, carrying out suggestions, correcting errors, sharing responsibility, feeling himself a true helper in the work of the household and its organization. A good parent recognises meritorious effort and does not hesitate to give compensation in a wise way. In this manner, the parent makes obeisance to his child.

Just so does he copy the mighty mother who has and follows her own immutable laws. These laws are a part of her and she a part of them; for she herself has evolved them. Her children, young offspring of herself, and yet not separate from her, must learn these laws and make them part of their self-conscious selves. Then they begin to "work with Nature"; and in proportion to the success of learning and working

through these laws, does Nature reward her children with the power of discrimination and wisdom and the blessed talent of helpfulness. Thus does the mighty mother make obeisance to her offspring.

But she requires that her laws be thoroughly learned and observed. She brooks no disobedience of them. They, we have been told, are her *habits* and through these she expresses herself and teaches the less evolved entities for whom she is responsible. Thus she works through the law of re-imbodiment, through the law of cause and effect, through the law of periodicity. Thus she trains her offspring who are blood of her blood, bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh; part and parcel of her; individual and yet inseparable from her. Compassion, co-operation, and harmony are her life essence and she keeps her blood stream pure by strict, impartial, unvarying discipline. That is her duty — self-imposed and unending — carried out through her immutable laws, her self-evolved habits of action. Let one of her progeny go against the stream, refuse self-discipline, forget or ignore any of the rules of harmony, brotherhood, and compassion, and Nature (the culprit's own nature which is inseparable from the mighty mother) rebels and imposes on him the discipline that he has refused to exercise for himself. On the other hand, let him "work with Nature," remembering kindness, brotherly love, and forgiveness perhaps most of all, and he will discover the meaning of Nature's Immutable Laws. Eventually Nature will make obeisance to *him* as One Illumined and from Whom she has no secrets.

Avoid the Over-anxious Attitude

Some members of the Theosophical Society have much anxiety about those near and dear to them who seem to be quite unable to perceive the truth of Theosophical teachings, or who, if they do acknowledge the truth of them, still do not see any necessity for guiding their lives by them. What is the best attitude to take towards near and dear ones like this?

H. P. Leonard — If a person is unable to receive the truths of Theosophy there is a strong presumption that he has not yet

evolved to that point where he would be ready to assimilate them. Why be anxious? It only tends to erect a barrier that will estrange you from the object of your loving care. Trust in the Law which is slowly working towards the very end you have in view.

Apply Theosophy in your own life more completely, and your dear ones will be won over by the fresh outpouring of warmth and sweetness that they see in you. Theosophy applied in all its fulness is an attractive thing, and it may be that you have repelled your relatives by an over-anxious solicitude for their "conversion".

When the sun rises, some of the daisies in the meadow open their petals because they are ready: others less advanced remain closed — they are biding their time.

If other relatives accept Theosophy, but fail to apply it in daily life, they are piling up obligations which they will have to meet later on; but having sown the seed, your responsibility is at an end. Pass on. It is your duty to sow in every kind of soil, and you have no right to narrow your sphere of activity to those who are *personally* interesting to you. Humanity is your family, and by benefiting the whole, your influence will, by repercussion, finally be of benefit to your predilected group.

The Theosophical Forum

DEFENCE OF H. P. B. — *J. Emory Clapp*

Theosophists may take comfort in the fact that no great advance has ever been made in religion, science or philosophy without arousing the enmity of the forces of darkness. Working through the entrenched powers of those whose self-interest seems to be threatened, these dark forces, aided and abetted by the ignorance of their dupes, seek to hide the truth behind a smoke screen of unjustified attacks upon the personalities of those who are leading the advance of movements, which would be of benefit to mankind and help to arouse its spiritual intuitions.

The greatest leader of advanced thought in the nineteenth century was Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the chief founder of the Theosophical Society. Upon her devoted head the powers of darkness cast their arrows of suspicion, vituperation and hatred. Using every ignoble means at their command, they sought to discredit her by violent and unjust accusations, so that the noble philosophy which she resuscitated for the benefit of the human race would not be investigated or its truths become the common property of that humanity which needs it so greatly.

Lest anyone should think that it is no longer necessary to defend the memory of this Great Soul, I would call attention to the fact that scarcely a year goes by without some new attack being launched even more violent than those which had preceded it. As Theosophists, we should realize that one of our tasks is to combat these unjust attacks and rise to her defence at every opportunity. To show the need of such action let me quote the words of H. P. B.'s great teacher, the noble Mahatman Morya. On page 251 of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* we find the following statement made by him:

. . . it is the vilification and abuse of the founders, the general misconception of the aims and objects of the Society that

paralyses its progress — nothing else.

It will be observed that the Master mentions not only the attacks made on the founders, of which H. P. B. was the chief, but links these up with "the general misconception of the aims and objects of the Society" as being responsible for the lack of progress. I hope to show that these two matters are quite definitely related before closing my remarks but will consider the question of "defence" first. Although this statement was made nearly sixty years ago it seems as true now as the day it was made. The question naturally arises as to how best this defence can be made effective. It seems to me that there are many angles from which it can be approached, each one of which should be utilized to its fullest capacity, but the foundation of the defence must lie in the fact that the accusations made against her were wholly incompatible with her noble character, her self-sacrificing altruism, and a total lack of motive for wrong doing. She sought no selfish ends either in financial emoluments or personal aggrandizement. She would accept no money for the beautiful and glorious truths which she recalled to the attention of the world in the nineteenth century, and she resolutely disclaimed any originality. In the "Introductory" to her greatest work, *The Secret Doctrine* she modestly quoted the words of Montaigne: "I HAVE HERE MADE ONLY A NOSEGAY OF CULLED FLOWERS, AND HAVE BROUGHT NOTHING OF MY OWN BUT THE STRING THAT TIES THEM." Furthermore, she would not even accept an executive position in the Theosophical Society which she founded to promulgate the truths of Theosophy and would accept no other office than the unassuming position of Corresponding Secretary.

In order to demonstrate how unfounded were the charges that she was an adventuress and motivated by self interest, one has but to examine the unassailable facts that are known about her. These might be summed up under the following headings which have to do with her character, her outstanding intellectual ability, her comprehensive knowledge of both ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and her deep insight into the realities of being. Categorically they may be enumerated as follows:

I. Her altruism. II. The purity of her personal life.

II. The sublimity of the ethics which she taught (and lived).

III. Her ability as a seer which was shown by

(a) Her fore-knowledge of coming events

(b) Her prevision of the notable advances to be made during the succeeding century by great scientific thinkers.

V. Her demonstration of the unity of knowledge as shown by a comparison of the underlying truths to be found in the great religions, philosophies and sciences; and the revelation that all of these are contained in Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion which, when understood in its fulness, is shown to be a marvelous cosmic philosophy which agrees with all known facts and gives a satisfying and comprehensive explanation of all the problems of life.

VI. Her insistence upon the fact that science would have to go beyond the physical plane to the metaphysical or astral plane in order to arrive at the greater truths of nature and being.

VII. Her clear and cogent logic which demonstrated that the understanding of the simple teachings of Theosophy would form the foundation for "a new order of the ages"; and that by putting these teachings into practice, war, crime and disease would be gradually banished from the earth in proportion to the extent to which Theosophy was practised.

Let us take up these points one at a time, and offer evidence which should be convincing to those with an open mind:

I. There can be no question of H. P. B.'s altruism and the sacrifices which she made for the good of humanity. Her life was filled with instances that showed her unwillingness to accept any reward for the sublime spiritual teachings which she gave out. Her benevolence was so great that it seemed Quixotic to her friends. As an instance of this it was related that when she was about to take a trip from Europe to America she noted a poor woman with two children weeping in great distress. Upon being questioned by Madame Blavatsky the woman stated that her husband had sent her a ticket to take her to America

with her children, where he had prepared a home for them, but that she had lost the ticket. H. P. B. told the woman to come with her on board the vessel in which she was to sail, and insisted that the purser change her first-class cabin ticket into steerage tickets which would take herself and the woman and her children to America. It is also known that she earned her own living by menial tasks, at times, while she was engaged in writing her great books and that she gave freely out of her own restricted means to help the Theosophical Society.

II. Her personal life as seen by those who worked with her was beyond the shadow of suspicion, and her enemies had to concoct stories based on her travels in far places, which could not be either proved or disproved by reliable witnesses. Such vile stories, however, were disproved in an examination by a reputable physician.

III. To her disciples Madame Blavatsky gave the priceless little book known as *The Voice of the Silence*. This was based upon a translation which she made of *The Book of the Golden Precepts*, a work, written in an ancient tongue, given to her by her great Teachers. These precepts she had learned by heart. The following illustrate some of them:

To live to benefit mankind is the first step [on the path].
Step out from sunshine into shade to make more room for
others.

Let thy soul lend its ear to every cry of pain, like as the lotus
bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

Let not the fierce sun dry one tear of pain until thyself hast
wiped it from the sufferer's eye,

But let each burning tear drop on thy heart, and there remain
until the pain that caused it is removed.

IV. H. P. B.'s fore-knowledge of coming events was shown in many ways. One of the most remarkable of her predictions was to the effect that before the end of the first five thousand years of the Kali-yuga (within ten years) the veil of matter would be rent and marvelous scientific discoveries would change the whole basis of modern science. This statement was made in 1888, and during the next

ten years three events of great importance took place. First, Roentgen, while experimenting with vacuum tubes along the lines laid down by Sir William Crookes, discovered the X-ray. Second, Madame Curie discovered radium. Third, Sir James J. Thompson enunciated the electron theory, which has since been generally accepted. Thus was demonstrated the permeability of matter and the composite nature of the atom, and these in their turn led to a new foundation for the science of physics.

Many of the scientific concepts which were built up on this new foundation were predicted by Madame Blavatsky, including the material nature of electricity, the unity of force and matter, (these two being but the opposite poles of one substance-principle), and the corpuscular nature of light, thus reverting to Sir Isaac Newton's concept which modern science had thrown aside.

A score of other changes in the current scientific conceptions of that day were also mentioned in H. P. B.'s *Secret Doctrine*. H. P. Blavatsky did not claim to gain these facts by any other than the commonplace method of acceptance of the teachings given out by "Those who know."

Referring again to the statement made by Madame Blavatsky in her quotation from Montaigne, she remarked "pull the "string" to pieces and cut it up in shreds, if you will. As for the nosegay of FACTS — you will never be able to make away with them. You can only ignore them, and no more." It is marvelous to note that while many of the scientific statements in *The Secret Doctrine* have been independently proved to be true by the work of our modern scientists, not a single statement has been disproved, so far as I know.

In a recent bibliography of *The Secret Doctrine* which has been compiled by an old student of *The Secret Doctrine*, Dr. Thaddeus P. Hyatt of Stamford, Conn., some amazing facts have been brought to light. In this compilation, which Dr. Hyatt refers to as "A Check List of some of the books and authors quoted or referred to in the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*," it is shown that Madame Blavatsky referred to or quoted from more than 700 authors on over ninety

subjects with an astounding range of topics. Included in this list are books and articles on many branches of science, an amazing list of philosophers, besides all of the great religions known to the world today; in fact, there is scarcely an activity of human consciousness which is not touched upon in some way, and the Director of the Public Library in one of the largest cities in the United States has stated that this work of H. P. Blavatsky is one of the most amazing feats of which he has ever heard. A still more remarkable accomplishment is found in the fact that Madame Blavatsky displayed greater knowledge of the subjects referred to, in many cases, than was possessed by prominent authors who had devoted their life's work to the study of only one of this vast array of them.

As an instance, Dr. Carter Blake, anthropologist and zoologist has stated that Madame Blavatsky knew more than he did on his own particular line of anthropology, etc., and that her information was superior to his own on several of the topics which belonged to his line of work, some of which he listed in detail.

V. The factor which has caused more trouble in the world than any other one thing has been the lack of understanding that there is a unity of knowledge as shown by the great religions, sciences, and philosophies of the past. In *The Secret Doctrine*, Madame Blavatsky devotes much space to showing the underlying unity of these essential products of human consciousness, in religion particularly, with the key of symbology which she interpreted. A marvelous knowledge of ancient religions and philosophies, world-wide in extent, is manifested in this great work, which frequently refers to rare volumes unattainable by ordinary means, the only copies available being in such places as the British Museum, the Vatican Library and other important collections of ancient lore.

This proof of the essential unity of human knowledge immediately convinces the inquirer that there is no basis for the claim that any single religion or philosophy can claim to have all knowledge; in fact it was demonstrated that much of the knowledge was common to all,

while certain aspects of truth were found to be more fully explained, perhaps, in some one of them. From a consideration of these facts it is obvious that dogmatism and creeds are out of place and that all mankind should, as individuals, look with tolerance on the beliefs of others, showing them the same respect that one would desire for his own.

VI. Anyone who is at all familiar with the ideas of our great scientific thinkers as expressed in their articles and statements for consumption by the general public, can readily see that these advanced thinkers are arriving at the point where they agree with H. P. Blavatsky that the greater truths of nature and being can only be arrived at by extending the field of science to take in the metaphysical as well as the physical planes of being. Sir Arthur Eddington's phrase "mind-stuff," Sir James Jeans's conclusion that "consciousness is the only reality," and many other similar expressions by equally well-known scientists are a proof of this tendency.

VII. Every student of Theosophy is convinced that the understanding and practice of the simple teachings of Theosophy would banish three-quarters of the suffering to which mankind as a whole is subject at the present time. It has been an astonishing and inspiring experience to the writer to see how "Mr. Average Citizen" responds to Theosophical ideas simply presented, and in particular the unanimity of the idea that it is human selfishness that is responsible for practically all of those things which we dislike. Is not this conclusive evidence that what the world needs today more than anything else is an understanding of Theosophy, at least in its essential teachings such as "the four links of the golden chain" mentioned in *The Key to Theosophy*? If these are presented in a simple manner so that the teachings will be readily understood by average newspaper readers, I think we will agree that it will result eventually in great good to mankind.

In a quotation which I gave from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* in the early part of this address, there was a statement of the Master to which I called especial attention. I observed that I hoped to show that

this statement was quite pertinent to "the defence of H. P. B." It referred to "the general misconception of the aims and objects of the Society" as being responsible for the lack of progress. I think this misconception was the fact that the public did not then and does not now understand that the chief object of the Theosophical Society is to show men and women that Brotherhood is an inescapable fact; because the universe is a unity and therefore every individual part of it, which means all that is, must work in harmony with the laws of the universe and for the ultimate good of everything without exception. Here we have a foundation for the scientific demonstration that it is only through the practice of brotherhood that men and women can find happiness, peace, and true knowledge, and reach the ultimate goal toward which mankind is traveling on the evolutionary pathway.

Since the charges made from time to time against the honor and character of H. P. Blavatsky tend to distract the attention of men's minds from an investigation of Theosophy, it is quite essential that Theosophists should ever be ready to defend her memory from these unjust charges, and the best way to do that, is to show that these false charges are incompatible with her character and the nature of the philosophy that she taught, the latter being based upon utter unselfishness, backed by sublime ethics. Once you can get a reasonable person to understand that the attacks against her were intended to prevent the dissemination of a wonderful religion-philosophy-science which would not only solve all human problems but completely change the hearts and minds of men, such a person will be willing to spend a little time in examining the nature of Theosophy.

The attempt has been made to defend H. P. B. by making a critical analysis of the charges against her in an effort to show that these charges were either false or unproved. While this is helpful and particularly worth while for Theosophists, it is not a method that will work very well with most people. They do not feel that they have the time to read voluminous articles trying to prove that certain charges about which they are either poorly informed or not at all informed are false, and there is the further weakness that such a method of defence

simply brings up new charges and reiteration of old ones, in that way perhaps doing more harm than good. Publicity is just what sensational writers desire and the one thing which discourages them more than anything else is for the charges to be ignored.

Before closing, I would like to call your attention to the fact that May 8th, 1941, will be the fiftieth anniversary of the passing or "going home" of the Great Soul known as H. P. Blavatsky, to whom we owe so much. This anniversary, known as White Lotus Day, has for some years now been utilized for Fraternization efforts among Theosophists, irrespective of organizations. I would like to suggest that the Resolutions Committee of this Convention be instructed to formulate a suitable resolution calling attention to this fact and suggesting that this would be a good opportunity for Theosophists everywhere to unite in the celebration of this event, as a mark of the love and respect which they all hold for this great benefactor of the human race.

The Theosophical Forum

IS HYPNOTIC PRACTICE EVER JUSTIFIABLE? — G. de Purucker

Question — After having unconditionally condemned some 90% of all hypnotic phenomena and practices, is there any justification whatever in at least some of it, primarily in therapeutics? Such things as local anesthesia by hypnotism, prevention of birth-pains by the same means, seeming cure of small psychological defects and bad habits. This is at present done on a rather large scale, and it seems to be divided in two main categories: (a) under hypnosis and (b) without hypnotic sleep and solely by mental suggestion. My question does not refer to magnetization which, of course, can be of great help when done by clean-minded unselfish people.

— The above is one of many similar questions on this subject that have been sent to me. My answer follows hereunder:

Hypnotic practice is almost always bad, even though, somewhat like blood-transfusion, there are rare successes occasionally. It is just like playing with some dangerous explosive. It is fundamentally and generally bad because it weakens the will of the subject instead of evoking the will from within outwards into action thus building up a structure of inner life and power. Every repetition of hypnosis renders the subject still more flabby, still more negative, still weaker, and subjects the subject more and more to leaning on the outer instead of evoking inner powers.

Now of course like everything else, it is conceivable as a theory that an Adept, a Mahatman for instance, knowing nature's laws and all the tricks and oddities and peculiarities of human psychology and the astral body, could as an abstract theory use hypnosis in certain minor cases beneficially. But this is merely a theory, and I can assure you that no Mahatman or Adept ever would do such a thing, because the fundamental idea is wrong. They want to bring out or develop the will-power and inner vital strength of men, and hypnosis sends these last

fine things to sleep, weakens them, emasculates the inner powers of reserve. Still as a mere academic theory, by an Adept hypnotism could be used safely.

Now of course in some local things, like stroking with the hand on an affected part of the body to relieve pain such as a headache, this is really not so much hypnotic sleep in minor degree as a kind of mesmerism or animal magnetization, soothing the nerves but not weakening the will, the healthy body quieting, soothing the tangled and angry nerves of the invalid. And this is not bad if no attempt is made, as just said, to affect the will of the subject or his body as a whole, if it is purely local; because in the first place it is not hypnotism purely speaking, as this word is popularly understood, and in the second place it is purely local and the benefits are derived from the clean, strong magnetism of the operator. It is in fact animal magnetism in these last cases; and if the animal magnetism is healthy and clean, probably no harm is done and the patient can receive temporary relief, although it is not permanent because the cause is not eliminated.

I will say in this connexion that even auto-hypnosis or self-hypnosis, where the subject hypnotizes himself or herself by various means known for ages past, such as staring at a spot or a bright light or a piece of crystal or glass, or even looking at the tip of the nose concentratedly, or at the navel: all those things which are so well known are emphatically not good because they mean using the will by the subject himself to send his higher will upwards and out of the picture, and induce in the lower part of the constitution a false tranquillity or quiet by what is almost mechanical means. In other words the nerves, instead of being roused into clean wholesome healthy activity upon which the inner will can work, are put to sleep, hypnotized, (which means sending to sleep), and the brain and nervous system as stated sink below the threshold of ordinary consciousness into the vibrational rates of the glass, etc. Quiet is induced, but it is the quiet of death, of the Mineral kingdom, etc.

Therefore while self-hypnosis is not as bad as hypnosis by others, it

again is emphatically not good and is not used by the true Adepts, only by magicians and Shamans and medicine men of barbarous tribes. It is this power exactly which gives the steady unwinking eye of the snake its hypnotic power over a bird or a rabbit or a mouse, popularly called fascination; but it is the process I have just tried to explain. The glittering eye of the human hypnotizer starts hypnotism off with the same process. It is all unfortunate and if not exactly bad in its better side, is certainly not good.

Therefore all these things should be avoided. They are unwholesome. They lower the vibrational level down into the lower kingdom instead of raising the vibrational rate of consciousness upwards into the higher psychological, intellectual and spiritual realms.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME — A LINK — *Ernest A. Bunting*

We are told that Time as an entity has no existence, but that it is a man-made concept by which he measures the passage of Duration and marks or locates events relative to each other in his own consciousness.

True. But is not Time, that same man-made concept by which he also measures the progress of his own evolutionary unfoldment, a link with the past, with those great days of an earlier Race when the Gods brought to the then nascent mind of the slowly evolving mankind the first great principles and teachings of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion?

And is not Time also a link with the future, with that great future when, this present cycle of evolutionary unfoldment being complete, man will have worked out his own destiny and achieved oneness with his own Inner God, will in fact have become a God?

And the present, what of it? The present is the center, the hub if you like, to which the other two are linked by the links of Time; and which, by the same reasoning is linked to those other two by those same links of Time. The present is that point in infinite Duration as measured by man's measuring-stick, Time, in which he has the opportunity and the privilege of taking hold of the results of past mistakes and accomplishments and, by his own conscious efforts along the line of evolutionary unfoldment as taught by the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, Theosophy, of weaving out of these his own great destiny of a glorious future of yet greater service.

Past, Present, Future, these three, but the greatest of these is the Present; for it spells opportunity to grow and the privilege of service. Out of these, growth and service, shall a man weave his own destiny.

OUR NEED FOR AN INNER SANCTUARY — *Louis E. Van Norman*

Condensed from a lecture given at Point Loma, California

This is not the exposition of a doctrine, not a pronouncement, or a statement of a philosophical tenet. It is intended to be a recital of personal experiences in an attempt to help others who live in a busy, noisy world as to how they may flee to their inner temples, and there find peace, the ability to clarify their inner vision, and the means of cleansing their minds and spirits from the accumulations of the day's struggle with situations, things, and states of mind.

I propose to consider the inner sanctuary we all may have from three points of view:

1. As a refuge from the noisy world.
2. As an aid to perspective.
3. As a "Beauty Parlor" for the Mind and Spirit.

I have found out something about myself. I have discovered that, if I want to find spirituality, I must find it while living in the world, yet not being of it. I have found that a man can build a quiet church inside his own heart and be a ministering priest to his own self.

This does not mean any mysterious technique or imported Oriental procedure. We Westerners can make our own program of meditation and prayer. But first we must learn that the spirit as well as the body has rights and its own way of reacting to our physical life habits.

I — A REFUGE FROM THE WORLD

In the fighting days of the empires of antiquity and on into feudal times there existed a peculiar but beneficent institution known as the "right of asylum," or the city of refuge. Sometimes this was an actual city, sometimes only a building, a temple, or church. To this place of refuge hunted folk fled — fugitives from a pursuing enemy, an avenging

justice, or a tormenting conscience.

The "asylum" was recognised as something wholly apart from ordinary life, a holy place where the hunted one was safe from his pursuers. If such pursuer were his own tormenting conscience, the victim usually buried himself in some part of the house of God, in the church or a monastery. There he found peace, or, as it was often described, "sanctuary". The passing centuries saw the passing also of this haven of refuge, although the monastery — for women, the convent — still survives. It is true, as has been wittily said, Monasticism was an attempt to overcome the world by running away from it. This can be done for a while. But we do need an inner sanctuary. Jesus said, "When thou prayest, enter thou into thy closet and when thou hast shut the door. . . ."

Whatever it may be called, we of the modern world are in sore need of some such place, physical or mental or moral, to which we can escape from the assaults of the life around us when they become too hard for us to bear. If we are not able to find a physical place for our physical presence, we must find a sanctuary within our own souls where we may have peace. Otherwise the answer for, alas, too many of us, is futility, misery, or perhaps suicide.

The lower orders of life need — and possess — such protection. Certain animals, birds, and insects have been provided by Nature with what we call protective covering, a coloring, an outer shell, some defense against the outer world of hostility, noise, distraction, waste of energy, dissipation of attention, and so on, down the list of forces or happenings from without which might in any way tend to interfere with their ability to live the lives Nature intended them to live.

It has become the fashion these days to emphasize the dependence of the individual upon society. We are told that for our happiness and progress we need at all times the presence of our fellows. But is not the exact reverse of this the truth? Is it not only the cultivation of an internal solitude among crowded lives, the ability, as some one has said, to sit quiet for fifteen minutes alone in a room, that makes the

social order endurable? Even a little sociableness often murders solitude. Society, even that of really nice people, alas, often brings in its train all that "fretting, chafing, tantalizing, irritating flock of worrying thoughts that destroy the dignity and beauty of life much quicker than any lonely vice could."

Is it not true that our modern crowd consciousness has tended to vulgarize life and to eclipse the natural dignity of our nature, our spiritual personality? Have we not laid too much stress on the promised leisure which the machine age was to give us? If so many of us must "kill time" now, what would we do if we had more spare time?

The protective coloring we need is some philosophy to heighten and broaden our life in those moments when we can live to ourselves, a philosophy that will help us kill boredom, destroy inertia, dispel lethargy, drive away weariness, and overcome that sense of futility which so often accompanies modern so-called progress. The ability to withdraw from the trivialities of the sense life, even if only for a few moments at a time, is our human protective covering. The world is indeed too much with us. We need to re-establish our poise. We need to get to the point at which we can do without conversation or turning on the radio. We need to become acquainted with the God in all of us.

For years, the rule of my own life was that of the typical American: "Something doing all the time." Every minute had to be filled with movement, words, practical things. A moment of "doing nothing" except communing with myself, this was a wasted moment. But I have learned the lesson.

A keenly observant visitor from England recently remarked about our life in the United States: "You Americans live on the surface. You are driven by things, by facts of every-day life. The robot is the symbol of your national life, regimented, standardized and impersonal. Your world is one of noise, fury, and haste. Loudness and speed mark your activities in every area."

This observant foreigner says that we judge everything by measures of

speed, size, and cost. "Your homes, your schools, your business, your legislation, and even your religion, are set to the tempo of ever increasing miles per hour and quantitative production. The most tragic breakdown of modern life is not of economics but of inner life, or personal character. The supreme struggle is not of man to save his property, but to save himself. You talk too much and listen too little."

All this has a serious effect on our lives, even on our physical lives. Referring to the increasing number of cases of insanity in the United States, the late Dr. Charles H. Mayo, of the famous Mayo Clinic, said:

We Americans pass through more of the wonders of life in forty years than was possible for actually old people in the past. . . . For the moment we have almost got behind in our powers of adaptation. Today [1935] every other hospital bed in the United States is for mentally afflicted, insane, idiotic, feeble-minded, or senile persons. There is an enormous number of people who are almost fit for the asylum. Many people live to an age when they are dependent and senile. Only five percent of our people, at the age of sixty-five years, have independent means. Why? Because we have not, as yet, psychologically, morally, nervously, and spiritually caught up with the machine age which we have brought upon ourselves.

The world is too much with us all the time. Hard, difficult it is to escape it — the world with all its rush and bustle, its pressure and dominance of material, so-called practical affairs!

There is often much comfort in reciting to ourselves the words of deep thinkers of today and of other days long gone by. Let me begin by looking backward three thousand years.

The very ancient wisdom points to the voice of the silence. From an Egyptian papyrus written about by Dr. James Henry Breasted, said to be over three thousand years old, the "Wisdom of Amenemope" tells us:

The most effective means of gaining the favor of God is contemplative silence and inner communion. . . . Be not of many

words, for in silence shalt thou gain good.

The self-contained man is the truly silent one.

Set thyself in the arms of God until the silence overthroweth thine enemies.

Another Egyptian writer (1000 years ago) said:

Oh, Amon, Thou sweet Well for him that thirsteth in the desert. It is closed to him who speaketh, but it is open to him who is silent. When he who is silent cometh, lo, he findeth the Well.

A modern writer (Paul Brunton) says:

The voice of the silence is better than the voice of the priest.

Man is really engaged upon an inward pilgrimage. His outward speed gives no measure of his true progress.

Although spirituality does not assure financial prosperity, health, or fortune [no matter what the cult shops may say], yet what you work out in activity will be the test of what you have attained within your heart.

God is light and we meditate to see Him. But we must not forget that, as Occidentals, we cannot be ascetics; nor must we forget that spirituality and activity are not incompatible.

In her "Intimate Journal," written in 1840, Georges Sand, that erotic literary genius wrote:

God is not a force outside of us. He is the sun and the skies and the gold in the chalice. He is the bread. He is all the elements of the earth. He is the heart of man, and all men, with all their yearnings and fortunes, are one in Him. He is in us and outside of us. We are in Him and never outside of Him. He is the universal Spirit. He reveals himself to man. He is I and I am He.

More than one poet has told us that truth lies at the bottom of the well. Old Rabelais was one of the first to put it this way. Later, John Wolcot,

(who wrote as "Peter Pindar") put it thus quaintly:

The sages say Dame Truth delights to dwell
(Strange Mansion!) in the bottom of a well.
Questions are, then, the Windlass and the Rope
That will pull the grave old Gentlewoman up.

II — PERSPECTIVE

In the sanctuary, in the silence, we may, if we will, gain a sense of proportion, of perspective, not possible in the whirl and noise of the day hours.

From the time when the infant first learns that the toe he reaches for is nearer than the ball at the other side of the room, and, conversely, the ball is farther away than the toe, until the youth begins to understand that many things must always elude his eager grasp, life is a series of discoveries about perspective, or relationship to the physical, social, and spiritual universe in which we live. In the silence we may perceive proportions more clearly. "When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the One, the inner sound which kills the outer." Before I had read that beautiful message in *The Voice of the Silence*, I had realized this truth. The Christian Bible says the same thing in the injunction, "Be still and know that I am God."

We need no display, no blare of trumpets, no shouting from the housetops — only what Virginia Lee Eastham has so beautifully expressed in her tribute to her "Temple of Silence":

No church bells call me to worship,
I hear no thundering prayer,
I enter my temple of silence
And find God waiting there.
Silent, receptive, enlightened,
My soul in its glory stands;
And I am one with my Maker,
In the temple not made by hands.

A realization of perspective makes possible self-criticism. It is not easy to admit faults and failings when one is out in the open strife of the day amid the noise and in the presence of others. But, in the silence of the inner sanctuary, in contact with our real selves, we can see more clearly our mistakes and false moves.

We modern people, particularly we Americans, have been trained to regard education as something brought in from the outside, rather than as a faculty cultivated in our inner selves which makes us better fitted to live in our environment — whatever that may be — and be happy in it.

We really do not know ourselves, much as we may know, or think we know, the external world. In a recent lecture, a professor of philosophy in an eastern university, put it well when he said: "We don't even really know much about our surroundings, not much more than our parents. Only we have a larger vocabulary. We are sophisticated; that is, the "jazz" of the age has gone to our heads. Moreover, we really don't want to learn. We want to be "put wise." We despise the real things which are made known to us by our senses, calling them "obvious" and continually seeking something which can be labelled "believe it or not!"

"

In a recent address before the freshmen at Princeton, the great but simple Einstein advised them, "as an old man to young fellows," in these words:

Always find time to sit down and think without talking or making any noise. Moreover, never regard your study as a duty but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know the liberating influence of quiet beauty in the realm of the Spirit, for your own personal joy, and to the profit of the community to which your later work belongs.

III — BEAUTY PARLORS FOR THE MIND AND SPIRIT

Four and a quarter centuries ago, on a sunny April day, a Spanish gentleman named Ponce de Leon landed on the shores of what we now

know as the state of Florida. He was in search of the land of "Bimini", the Indian name for the land of the fountain of perpetual youth and beauty.

Since that day, and even long before it, a very large proportion of the inhabitants of these United States had been expending a goodly portion of their time, energy, and money in endeavoring to discover some method, some elixir, by which Americans, masculine and feminine, may remain young or restore their youth when it has passed, that they may be beautiful in body.

In both cases, however, — that of Ponce de Leon and Mr. and Mrs. Average Citizen — it was physical youth that was sought. The quest so far has been in vain. It is true that we talk glibly, at least our smart business folk and our beauty specialists do, in terms of prettily named cosmetics, of diet, of exercise. Our scientists tell us of the marvelous results we are soon to witness when we know just a little more about the behavior of glands, hormones, and other learnedly named factors in bodily growth. But the secret of perpetual youth, the youth of the physical body, as yet eludes us. We have not even begun to think that perhaps beauty is not after all limited to physical youth. In these days of depressions, government changes, unemployment, war, and all the other ills to which our young people have fallen heir, it is well to remember that inner peace and refinement will do infinitely more to beautify the countenance than any number or amount of applications from the outside. Socrates it was who said: "I pray Thee, O God, that I may be beautiful within." Vergil put it this way nearly two thousand years ago: "There is no beautification of complexion or form or behavior, like the wish and effort to scatter joy and not pain around us." Old Quarles of Elizabethan days said: "The fountain of beauty is the heart, and every generous thought illustrates the walls of your chamber." Finally, some critic of the present thus expresses the idea: "There are no better cosmetics than a severe temperance and purity, modesty and humility, a gracious temper and calmness of spirit; and there is no true beauty without the signature of those graven in the very countenance."

More and more we are learning that composure and peace are the best cosmetics. Meditation is the workshop in which these qualities are wrought out. "Sorrow and suffering," said a wise man of olden days, "have been well likened to the weight about a diver, necessary to keep him down while he is securing pearls."

We must learn to commune with ourselves, and not only how to analyse our character and appraise our habits of life, but also how to realize our relation to the universe, to feel our identification with God. Meditation may be considered the best beauty shop for the mind and soul. "No matter how deformed your body may be, it is possible for you to throw such a wealth of character — of love, of sweetness, of light — into your face, that all doors will fly open to you and you will be welcomed everywhere without introduction."

The race was very young when man first discovered the desirability of physical cleanliness, and it is many million years, probably, since our forebears began to use water to wash the body. The most primitive of races have believed, with Bacon, that "cleanliness of body is to be deemed to proceed from a reverence to God." Moreover, in the words of the poet Thomson, "Even from the body's purity the mind receives sympathetic aid."

Washing the body is no longer a religious ritual as it was in ancient days. It has become a necessary part of life just as have eating and sleeping. We admit, with Lord Palmerston, that "dirt is only something in the wrong place." But we insist upon removing it from the place where it should not be. "Beauty," said Addison, "commonly produces love, but cleanliness preserves it."

Each day brings its contact with this "something in the wrong place" which we call dirt. Each day we apply soap and water and emerge clean. Moreover, we admit that the course of our human life is such that physical dirt is not to be avoided. But we can wash, and when the unclean covering has been removed we forget it. Physical life is, as it were, a compromise with dirt.

How about our mental, esthetic, and moral life? When we retire at night, when we arise in the morning, is it possible to wash off the dirt of the day and night?

Yes. Intellectual and spiritual life in this world of duality is a compromise. How can we bathe and wash our minds, our spirits, so that they may be clean after the little compromises of the day — the yieldings to the lesser good, the pettiness, the tricks, the evasions, the white lies and all the other little concessions to expediency and assumed "welfare"?

Meditation and prayer are the only answer. I like that definition of prayer which makes it not a plea to get something but an earnest effort to be ready to receive what we receive, knowing that this is what we have brought to our own lives.

We can wash our mind and spirit in the clear light and flow of communion with our better selves, our oneness with the Universe, with God. Every night before we sleep, every morning before we start the day's work, we can follow our physical bath, our face and hand washing, with a cleansing of the mind, the character, the spirit, in the clear water of meditation and prayer. Every night, every morning, it should be said, In this beauty shop there are no "permanents" for men or women.

So, in our inner sanctuary we may, if we will, find refuge from the world of noise and self-seeking. We may gain a clearer picture of life in its real proportions and we may wash our spirits clean in the waters of the silence.

How can we enter the inner sanctuary? you ask. By earnest, constant striving to be worthy of our own better selves, of the God within.

QUESTIONS — *M. G. G.*

ADVANTAGES

Have we less noise, less care, less crime,
More peace, more poise, more joy, more time,
Since undreamed speed decreed that we
Should measure leagues with instancy?
Have hours and days and years so saved
Conferred the leisure men have craved,
Or rendered plain the reason why
Unkindly clouds begloom our sky?

IMMUNITY

Find we ourselves more chaste and pure
Since dire diseases are grown fewer;
That now, forsooth, with tonsils out,
Past plagues are things that we may flout?
Think you that Nature sets aside
Effects of causes we deride,
Or fails to have her final way,
Though circumvented for the day:
That sheer immunity be won
Through some new serum "neath the sun?

SPECULATION

Must we believe a love of power
Ensouls and motivates the flower,
Or that the Sun be moved by greed
The while his light and life proceed?
Do you suppose his neighbor "Jones"
Who some more brilliant planet owns
Might make his golden beams turn green

And show him in a spleenful mien,
Or that the planets cease to sing
Because a comet must its fling?

The Theosophical Forum

"FAMILIAR SOIL" — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

In death we tread familiar soil, possibly soil even more familiar than that of physical imbodiment! Why then do we fear death? Because most people's fear is based not on what they know, for general knowledge on the subject is negligible, but on the terror-breeding bogeys men's minds have entertained for several centuries, ever since ignorance about the states of consciousness we call death usurped the place in men's hearts once held by the teachings of the Mystery-Schools and their graduate-Initiates.

It is the false ideas we have about it that foster our fear of death, and singularly enough, this psychological bias is limited almost entirely to the most "civilized" people. The more primitive races look upon death as a highly honored guest, with awe, it is true, but without fear.

Lately, however, the age-old tides of thought have returned to the West in the teachings of Theosophy, and here and there in literature, art, and drama, these truths of antiquity are echoed, as in *Two Epitaphs* by Margaret Sackville:

So like to Heaven, my Earth — I seem to tread
Familiar soil, being what men call dead.
And, since I lived adoring, death to me
Is but a mood of finer ecstasy.

II

The first step done
My swift feet run
Firmer and fleeter;
And, like a verse,
Old songs I now rehearse
To a new metre.

Briefly and poetically these lines express the Theosophical teaching

that man's dominant state of mind during his physical life sets his condition in the spheres of death. In other words, the physically released man is the same bundle of consciousness in death that he was in life. Therefore his experiences are a continued reverberation of himself, intensified and accelerated because untrammelled. For the average person, the change is one of degree and tempo only. The "new metre" even, is regulated by our own dominant attitude at the time we leave the purely material realm. Are not all the events of life similarly affected by our approach to them?

The skeptic who refuses to countenance aught but the material, by that very contention immerses his higher than material consciousness in oblivion. No spiritual or ethereal contacts can broach his aloofness in life or in death until he changes his outlook. For him there can be no compensatory adjustment between the ideal and the real.

The querulous and fearful deny themselves the soul stimulation of a vital participation in the wondrous drama of Life both here and hereafter, while their lack of confidence limits future creative potentiality. Life urges us towards growth, encourages us to dare to be. It is the fruition of ripening that gives the bloom to the peach: the conscious fulfilment of consummated life that brings joy to the soul. He who shirks, dallies by the way, but cannot evade the issue, or as the proverb has it, "He who fears death lives not."

The evil individual continues in his wickedness in death and suffers; the righteous remains at peace with his world and rejoices; and the indifferent skims the surface of life and reaps no satisfaction anywhere. As in life so is it in death, only more so.

A few there are, whose unsophisticated, intuitive minds have been touched by the presaging radiance of death, as was the young airman who wrote, before going out on his last patrol: ". . . I have no fear of death, only a queer elation. . . I would have it no other way. . ."

These may have no technical knowledge about the states of death, but for them the perfect sleep of death will be long and true — "a finer

ecstasy" in fact. They will reach towards an ever deepening freedom of kinship with their own and all that is. Theirs will be a creative part in shaping this world far nearer to their spirits" purposes, a giving of themselves to causes as grand as they are universal. These it is who will some day return to make this world what it might be today were men's hearts and minds attuned to the laws of the Universe.

This Earth which is "so like to Heaven" is also like to Hell! Yet to it as one of the classrooms in the University of the human soul we owe fealty, the while intellectually and spiritually our allegiance soars to far nobler, because more harmoniously evolved, realms. In them we live adoring always whether we realize it or not, for they too are familiar soil, being the home of our spiritual natures as Earth is our physical mother.

The Theosophical Forum

NOTES ON THE ZEN PHILOSOPHY — *B. M.*

The Zen philosophy seems in several ways to be a very practical system in stimulating an awakening of the "Spiritual Qualities" by inducing spontaneity in mental reactions. It suggests that the methods used make an instantaneous connexion *through* the human apparatus to the Buddhic layer of consciousness. The resulting illumination and oneness, called Satori, would appear to be a matter of degree, and *not* necessarily of very great range, but belonging to the sub-plane and fields of knowledge and experience which are related to that degree.

The essential feature is that this inner light breaks through the ratiocinative processes of the Mind, and enables the entitative self-consciousness to receive something of the state of "things in themselves," and yet be able to translate the experience in terms of feeling and knowledge and action on the human plane. Its value to us appears to be in the growing ability to spontaneously react rightly in any circumstances and on all occasions; but I imagine that this right reaction would be an individual matter and by no means apply to anyone else — karmic considerations would be the main governing factor.

The flash of illumination would bring a deeper understanding by which *volitional* action could be exhibited more accurately and wisely; for, after all, as humans, we have to develop Manas, even though we need the greater "awareness" which Buddhi gives.

AN ATTITUDE OF BALANCE AND VISION — *G. de Purucker*

It is true that the world is in a saddened and anxious state. But mark you, I think it unwise and spiritually and psychologically unwholesome to emphasize this, for it raises none to higher things but depresses courage, the courage to meet life and carry on in a higher and nobler way. See the beauty in and behind things, see the beauty in your fellow men; see likewise the ignominy and the ugliness in life, although do not let these latter depress you or discourage you. There is no reason to lose our calm, our inner peace, in order to become like unto them of the mobs, passion driven, governed by prejudice. Such an attitude will not help us or those who suffer. But we can send forth into the world thoughts of courage and hope and an optimistic looking into the future, founded on our own blessed God-Wisdom: that no matter what happens through man's folly or infamy or infidelity to his spiritual inner God, to his spiritual Essence, there are always right and justice which will ultimately triumph over all. The only thing is to be sure we are on the side of right and justice — and we cannot always judge by appearances.

An English poet, Browning I think it was, expresses this thought, albeit in the theological language of the time when he said: "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." Those who do not like this optimistic outlook and conviction and who are trying to get down into the arena of hysteria and discouragement, mock at it; and yet every sane man who keeps his mind cool and clear and can think for himself realizes full well that the mightiest forces in this world are cosmic right and cosmic justice, and they in the long run will always prevail. There is no need to be discouraged. Avoid hysterias; or again on the other hand avoid running at one and the same time with the hares and chasing with the hounds, which is what we all do more or less. Have your own convictions and sometimes hide them if it is not wise to shout them from the housetops; but keep your own heart upright, in love with love,

hating hate, always standing up for justice and innate right. Only be sure that when you stand up you are not standing up for the propaganda-atmosphere around you, but for something that you in your own heart know to be right and true.

It would be a sorry thing indeed if there were naught to our world but what we see around us today, or have seen at particular intervals during the past; but every time and always the conscience and the sense of justice of mankind have proved supreme over all and risen above human feelings and follies, and marched onwards and upwards to balance and harmony. Don't be down-hearted or discouraged or think the world is going to the devil because you don't like what is going on. You have a right to like it or to dislike it. But be sure that you, as an individual, on your part do not add to the hatred in the world, to its discouragement and unhappiness. That is my point.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SYMBOLOGY OF THE SEAL OF THE T. S. — *E. V. Savage*

The subject I have chosen for this afternoon could cover a vast field; but I have selected four symbols only: the swastika, the serpent, the interlaced triangles, and the Egyptian tau or ansated cross. I shall endeavor to give you a few general keys to their symbolic meaning, as a detailed study of each could easily occupy an entire afternoon's lecture; and then I shall show how these combine to form the Seal of the Theosophical Society. A true emblem, one rooted in the Wisdom of the Ages, should contain in its interpretation all aspects of what it stands for; and you will see that the T. S. Seal carries in its meaning the vast range of Theosophical doctrine.

ITS PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Today's subject might seem a far cry from the so-called "practical problems of living," but I shall endeavor to show that the Wisdom that these symbols contain is very close to the living of our daily lives. A Theosophist is often asked what is the value of studying ancient religion, symbolism, the histories of by-gone peoples, the future of the Race, etc. I think of the Theosophical conception of man as being really *consciousness*, which should not be such a far-fetched idea even to a non-Theosophist. You don't have to be a Theosophist to realize that very little of *you* is your physical body; it plays little part in your spiritual and intellectual life, (unless you should be ill, when it is sometimes difficult to remove the consciousness from the body!) And you certainly realize that what you love in your friends is something quite apart from the physical part of them. In other words, it is your consciousness that you live and function in — which indeed is you yourself.

So then I realized that man actually extends, both in time and space, as far as his consciousness can go; and when we study the Wisdom of the ancients as we find it in history, symbolism, literature, or archaeology,

we are expanding our consciousness to embrace those egos of olden times. When we study the destiny of the human race in future aeons, we are expanding our consciousness into the future. When we study about the stars and the sun and other solar systems, we are expanding our consciousness out into space. Now, what do you suppose happens if students all over the world are also studying these subjects in their various aspects, each one expanding his consciousness (which is himself) in space and time? Don't you think these different consciousnesses must merge to a degree, thus proving that in the higher immortal part of man, each one of us is not separate from another? I shall presently show how that is illustrated in our Seal. I fully believe that widespread interest in and study of such lofty subjects would in time, because of this merging of the consciousness of one with another, do away with that spirit of 'separateness' which is the heresy of the present age. To me that is a very practical problem, closely affecting our every-day living.

FOUR TYPES OF SYMBOLISM

In a series of articles by Dr. Henry T. Edge, published in *THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM* during 1936, entitled "The Universal Mystery-Language," he states succinctly the part that symbols play in giving expression to truth. He says:

There are certain broad general truths which transcend the power of expression in ordinary verbal language; and this must necessarily be the case. For verbal language is the instrument of a certain portion of the mind which has limits; the knowledge of which we are speaking relates to powers of the mind which transcend those limits; and therefore they are beyond the power of words. Such profound ideas are expressed by symbols; the full meaning of these symbols has to be grasped intuitively by the exercise of higher faculties of the mind; but we can approximate to such a comprehension by studying the various meanings which the symbol conveys, and holding all these meanings in the mind, until finally we gain some sense of the

real underlying meaning

I think of four general types in symbology: (1) Universal symbols which have come down to us from the mists of history (and it is some of these that we shall study today). (2) Symbolism in the mind of an artist which he portrays in color or sound, expressing his ideas in concrete form. (3) Literary symbols, that is symbolism by means of stories or legends, metaphors and figures of speech, or truths hid in parables. (4) There are what we might call fictitious symbols, those which from day to day may be used to portray some idea, but are not based on any universal key. I might instance the use we make of red signals to indicate danger.

THE SWASTIKA



We come now to the first of the symbols we shall study: the swastika, the origin of which can be traced in occult records back to Atlantean times, and which is so universal that even in historic times it can be found among many peoples and in widely separated parts of the globe. The swastika is really a cross, and all crosses symbolize manifestation, that is life as contrasted with death, waking with sleeping; and in the cases of universes which also sleep and wake, it would portray the active life of a universe when Spirit comes "down" as it were from above, and Matter rises from below, and the two conjoin. No manifestation is possible without the conjunction of Spirit and Matter, the vertical line of the cross representing spirit, and the horizontal matter.

In the swastika each arm is bent backwards in the same direction, indicating the whirling motion of evolution, whether of worlds or men. Nothing can stand still while in manifestation, it must go forward or backward. The question is often asked whether there is a special occult significance to the direction in which the arms of the swastika are bent, but there is none. Some students seem to think that if they are bent towards the left, it is a sign of traveling on the left-hand path; but it

could as easily mean that, out of compassion for humanity, an advanced soul turned aside from his own forward evolution on the right-hand path, to help to lead "erring humanity" away from the left-hand. The swastika is found among many peoples with the arms bent either way.

As regards men, the swastika can stand for the dual forces in man at work all the time, energy and inertia, will and passivity. The center of the swastika is its neutral point, the focus towards which are drawn all evolving beings, who are "ground over and over" so to speak, on the wheel of evolution, by means of repeated lives, until they are transformed into something higher (which will be portrayed in another symbol).

This form of the cross was used by early Christians, and by the Greeks. It is also a favorite Buddhist symbol; and they use a beautiful metaphor in connexion with the periodic appearances of Teachers who come to give Truth to mankind: that each one comes and gives another "turning to the Wheel of the Law," which the swastika symbolizes.

THE SERPENT



This is really two symbols in one, the serpent meaning Wisdom, and in its form of a circle meaning immortality, endless cycles. The circle not only stands for Wisdom in the abstract, but for Those who have attained to Wisdom, in other words initiates and seers. In mythology the serpent has a dual meaning, the nagas and the sarpas, the nagas standing for initiates; the sarpas standing for those who are mean, tricky, wily, deceitful; but this may be only a man-made distortion. For instance, in the Bible narrative, the serpent is depicted as a tempter; but he really was a Teacher, 'tempting' Adam and Eve only in the sense

of showing them that their way towards salvation lay in leaving the passive Garden of Paradise and going out along the Path of Evolution; and he persuaded them to "eat of the Tree of Knowledge." We also have in the New Testament the exhortation "Be ye wise as serpents." In this symbol, with its active head biting its passive tail, it is shown that there is never a beginning or an end to things, the cyclic course of nature. If you start at the head of the serpent and travel around to its tail, you come to the head again. In the same way, if you begin with the morning of a twenty-four hour day, and go on through it, you do not come to an end, but to another morning. So the serpent in its circle represents birth and death and rebirth again, in other words reincarnation. This is also signified by the serpent casting off its old skin, as we do our old bodies, and emerging forth again with a fresh skin or garment.

Another interesting phase of the serpent biting its tail, thus forming a circle, is this: the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter is closely three to one, expressed by the mathematical constant π . But if you try to work out the figure exactly, you will find that you never can obtain a finite number. There is an endless line of figures after the decimal point. This is symbolic of the unknown factor in human affairs, both in the sense of there never being a definite period or stopping of anything; and in the sense of life not being pre-determined and governed by fatalism. Each act we do produces its effect, which in turn becomes an act producing its effect, and so on and on: in other words the constant working of the karmic law in nature.

The scales of the serpent also can have a double significance: they can represent the various facets of truth, each facet being one aspect of Truth as viewed by an individual; and they can also represent the myriads of individual men traveling on the path of evolution in search of truth.

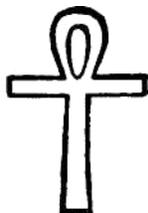
THE INTERLACED TRIANGLES

Here again we have Spirit and Matter combined, showing the worlds of manifestation. This symbol has been called the Seal of Solomon, also the Seal of Vishnu. The white triangle stands for Spirit, the dark one for

Matter. The white one should always point up, showing the mastery of Spirit, or the forces of light, over Matter or the forces of darkness. If the black one pointed upwards, it would indicate a reign of darkness and evil over the world. The two triangles interlaced can also stand for Wisdom concealed and Wisdom revealed. In order to make the wisdom of the ages available to men, it is necessary that it be "brought down" from the spiritual realms and "revealed" to men. You will notice also that there are six points or angles and a central enclosed space. These can show the sevenfold aspect of nature; and as regards man, the six points may stand for six of his principles, and the central space for his Seventh, the Atman, the Divine. It is in this seventh or highest that all things become one. It is the "Universal Principle."

There is a fascinating paragraph regarding the Interlaced triangles as they appear in our Seal, in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, where the Master refers to them as "a geometrical synthesis of the whole occult doctrine," and says that they contain "the great problem of Life and Death, and — the Mystery of Evil." And then the Master says "The *chela* who can explain this sign from every one of its aspects — is *virtually an adept*." So we can safely leave it with this partial explanation.

THE EGYPTIAN TAU



This is also called the ansated or handled cross, and as a cross it bears all the general meanings that the swastika does, only it has perhaps a more *cosmic* significance. The vertical part surmounted by a globe serves to show the descent of spirit from the inner realms, until it is crossed by the horizontal line of matter in the worlds of manifestation. This symbol also stands for regenerated Man, or for an Initiate, and is indeed a sign of initiation. In ancient pictures initiates were often

depicted carrying this cross. In Christian symbolism it conveys the idea of the "Word made flesh," mystically a crucifixion.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SEAL



Now we can place the serpent, with the swastika enclosed in a circle at its head, the interlaced triangles within the circle of the serpent, and the tau in the center; and we have the Theosophical Seal. The six points of the interlaced triangles almost touch the serpent, showing the reaching out by man, in all his principles, towards Wisdom and immortality during his evolutionary journey; and the tau, the regenerated man, stands in the center, which, representing the Divine or Atman, shows that man has become at one with his Divine part. But it is in our highest principle, the divine, that men find the realization that they are indeed not only brothers, but are in essence one and not separate entities. That is the aim of evolution: the realization of man's own divinity, and his kinship with all that is.

The Theosophical Forum

FOR ONE WHO DIED (1) — *Thomas Nugent*

Death, in the beautiful philosophy which has withstood the test of time, is a friend. People ask, What is Death? The wise of all ages have taught that Death is Sleep for the soul of man. And what is sleep? Sleep is Nature's method for restoring equilibrium to the tired body. Sleep is necessary for the continued life of man. It is one of Nature's unbreakable laws that we sleep.

No less necessary is the sleep we call Death. The grander life of the undying spirit-soul needs the sleep of death to refresh itself, to regain inner strength and equilibrium. Then, renewed, we can enter on our new day of life ready for what is to come. For the sake of the greater life which spans lifetime after lifetime the soul needs the sleep of death, and takes it.

And yet so many fear this Death, which is only Nature's seal to sanctify our orderly evolution and the release of the spirit for needed rest. They fear because they do not understand. And yet nowhere around us do we see death as an end in itself. We see change, growth, culmination of power, decline into death — and then rebirth. Always there is the rebirth. Always after the winter comes the renewal of life in the spring.

If we really want peace and strength we must learn to view man as an eternal being who wends his cyclic way from invisible world to visible world as what we call birth or death periodically claim him.

Man is not only a child of Earth but he is rooted in the Universe of which the Earth is but a single family-member. Therefore he is at home in the universe. When we become more familiar with death we shall not fear it; we shall know that in a long sleep we have merely left this our earth-house of life to go to other and more spiritual mansions in "my father's house" of the universe.

Remember that you are a child of infinitude, each one of you,

inseparable from the boundless Universe in which we all live and move and have our being; remember that you are well taken care of by almighty Nature's laws, which brought you here, which will take you out from this life, and which will infallibly guide you on your way. Trust yourself then to death in happy confidence; die with a strong and happy will; die with gladness when your time comes; be not afraid. . . .

Remember that you are well taken care of. — G. de Purucker:
Questions We All Ask

The man we loved is the enduring individuality, who after his rest will return to this earth-life, return to the old associations he loved, to the friends of yore, to meet the problems yet unsolved, to work out the pattern of his life, taking up the threads where last he left them.

But for long years of sleep, purified, beatified, this soul rests,

completely engrossed in the bliss of all his personal earthly affections, preferences and thoughts, and gathers in the fruit of his meritorious actions. No pain, no grief, nor even the shadow of a sorrow comes to darken the bright horizon of his unalloyed happiness: . . . — *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 101

There the soul, purified of all material yearnings, rests in its own sphere, in perfect peace, in perfect bliss, dreaming dreams of all the deeds that it longed to do and could not do; seeing the accomplishments in its consciousness of all the nobler acts that it wanted to achieve in the life last past and that it could not or did not achieve — dreams of spiritual beauty, dreams of spiritual happiness, dreams of spiritual peace, dreams of unspeakable reality. — G. de Purucker: *Questions We All Ask*

Law and order prevail throughout universal life. And one of these orderly procedures is what we call Death. But when we know we are eternal pilgrim-souls living life after life for experience, fear cannot touch us. We know "we are well taken care of." Poets and philosophers have sensed this truth of ancient wisdom and their writings for

centuries have carried the message of hope that this belief inspired them with. The great Frenchman Victor Hugo wrote:

I feel in myself the future life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflexion of unknown worlds.

You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of lilies, the violets and the rose as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history.

For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse; history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song; I have tried all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like many others, "I have finished my day's work." But I cannot say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens on the dawn.

And the Celtic poet Fiona McCleod wrote:

There is great serenity in the thought of death, when it is known to be the Gate of Life.

Nature is very wise. For the one who died there is peace. The hand of mourning does not touch the freed soul. And though we who are here are filled with sorrow, that sorrow is in reality for ourselves at our loss. But as we hold in thought that dear one who has gone, our hearts are sustained by the fact of those immutable inner bonds which unite us, and by the assurance that we are not separated in Nature. We stand

here waving a farewell, as it were, to that soul which has preceded us, knowing that we shall meet again. United by a communion of thought that is holy, we take courage, because we are endeavoring to forget our own loss in the recognition of the ineffable peace which soon will enfold the one who has gone. We raise ourselves inwardly to follow his own inward journey; and our own sympathy and understanding frame in words the thought, greater than mere comfort because born of experienced Truth, which bathes that soul itself, quitting this schoolroom of life:

O Divinity of me, that which is part of the Cosmic Essence of Being, thou hast fashioned a temple for the living god of me, my real undying Self. And I have lived there. But my work this time is done. I long for peace and rest. And so for a while I return Home. I need new strength before I return to earth to continue my conscious journey, endeavoring ever to grow inwardly that I may become strong and wise and able to help others!

O my Divinity, blend thou now with me that from the darkness of this earth I may go forth in Light!

FOOTNOTE:

1. Given at the funeral service of a friend, in San Diego, California.
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The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY (1) — *Harold W. Dempster*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Having joined the Christian Church at the age of twelve, I had read the Bible from cover to cover before I was twenty-one. I should, therefore, have a justifiable basis for speaking sympathetically on this subject: "Theosophy and Christianity." During the last seven years of association with the Theosophical teachings, I have become deeply convinced that Theosophy is not an enemy or a competitor of Christianity, but, on the contrary, is Christianity's greatest friend. Why? Because it points to, interprets and upholds the inner meaning of the Divine Nature and teachings of Christ, and at the same time confirms his mission in the world as a Great Spiritual Teacher of real Esoteric Wisdom, and therefore a Savior of the Human Race; that is, for those who have eyes to see and ears with which they may hear.

The main doctrine of Christ gives the comforting assurance that each individual may become like unto Him, in due course of time, in the familiar phrases: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" and, "Greater things than these shall ye do," again implying the future. He does not here refer to himself as a "personality" as being "the way" or as the performer of "miracles," but to the Divine Principle within Him, which exists within the hearts of all men. It is instinctive from within the deeper side of man to desire to help others. But in order to help others wisely in ways that are vitalizing and permanent, it is necessary to be in possession of and to understand the Knowledge that deals with the Facts of Nature. When properly understood, and I repeat, when properly understood, Theosophy is that Knowledge. Its literature abounds with logical and convincing interpretations of many hitherto misunderstood or little understood phrases in the Christian Scriptures. Theosophy simplifies, it does not complicate. Let me give you an

example: An early Church-Father by the name of St. Clement, writes that when Jesus was asked when his "kingdom" would come into being, he replied, "It will come when two and two make one; when the outside is like the inside; and when there is neither male nor female." Does this make sense to you? What does it mean? Referring to Theosophy as the "Interpreter," Dr. G. de Purucker, present Leader of the Theosophical Society at Point Loma, gives a very simple and interesting explanation of this, in somewhat the following manner:

"The two and two make one" portion of the phrase, refers to the two upper and the two lower principles of man's composite nature, the upper two being the Universal Spirit and the Inner Christ, while the lower two in this case are the Soul of man and its vehicle, the physical body with its counterparts. In the long course of man's evolutionary growth, the two lower will grow into or unite with, the two higher, thereby forming a single Unity; hence the two and two shall make one.

"When the outside is like the inside" refers to the type of body man will have in the distant future as he evolves out of the present Fifth Root-Race type of dense physical body into an ethereal, luminous and more or less transparent one when he evolves into the Sixth Root-Race type; therefore, the inside and outside could be said to resemble each other.

As to that portion of the passage referring to the disappearance of the sexes, this will actually take place also, in the far off future, as man evolves from a bi-sexual entity into a sex-less, god-like Being. Thus, when the higher and lower become unified, the body luminous and sexless, the Inner Christ will then be able to express itself with a greater degree of perfection, and the Kingdom of Christ or of Heaven shall become a reality upon earth. (2)

And so does Theosophy throw a flood-light upon all the early Christian scriptures. All that is needed is an open mind and an awakened intuition, which latter is really the Inner God. Nothing exists upon this earth that does not need periodic rejuvenation or quickening, whether it be a Theosophical Society, a Christian Church, or the Individual Soul of Man. And all men need the guidance of their own inner light and

that of a Spiritual Teacher; but this guidance must be put into expression and conveyed with a Universal feeling, if it is to be understood and convincing to others. To become alert to a greater light on existing Christian doctrine, is to become more individually awake and alike unto the disciples of the Great Teacher Himself. And this in turn makes us more alive to the needs of our fellows, and to the ways and means of offering — but never forcing — to bring a renewal of life and understanding into their hearts and minds, greater than they have ever experienced before.

Now let us examine the words we are using and define their meanings. The term Christ comes from the Greek word *Christos*, meaning "anointed," or one who has been prepared for initiation into the Mysteries, or Secrets of Nature. The Hebrew word for one who has been "anointed" was *Messiah*, a term by which Christ is often referred to.

The term Theosophy also has a Greek origin and comes from *Theos*, meaning a God; and *Sophia*, meaning Wisdom; hence it means God or Divine Wisdom, Wisdom of the Gods, or the Wisdom-Religion as it is frequently called. It is as ancient as thinking man, which is millions of years old, and is therefore sometimes called the Ancient Wisdom.

This Age-old Wisdom has been handed down to evolving man from the highest evolved Beings of the Human Race, those who have become by a more rapid evolutionary growth the God-men or Sages of the Race — the Giants of all mythologies, if you like — and who have given out to mankind through their Messengers, appropriate portions of this Wisdom of the ages, as needed by man, in the various time periods and stages of his evolutionary development. Why? The answer is very simple. As the child needs paternal care and guidance to train and educate it to the full flower of human adulthood, so does man, as a whole humanity, require a deeper knowledge of the Laws of Nature, as taught by these Great Ones of all the Ages. By understanding the knowledge already existing in the world by means of the light that a deeper interpretation throws upon that knowledge, vast strides toward

a greater unity of Science, Religion and Philosophy would result. Likewise a better relationship between one individual, one nation, or one Religion toward another would also certainly exist.

Instead of this, and due to ignorance of what the Theosophical interpretation of life and Nature really is, we have a world of confused thought, of angry emotional outbursts and wars, of prejudice against real truth, and forced thinking within certain accepted and traditional molds.

The facts of Universal Nature are so very simple. Let me name a few of them for you — Cause and Effect, Cyclic Periods, Evolution of Consciousness, the Spark of the Divine within all things, the Oneness of all Life, the Relationship of all to all or Universal Brotherhood. The child-like state of all clear and learning minds understands these instinctively and well, and strives to live by them. In fact, a man's Religion can be defined as that high standard of life or understanding by which he *lives*, not merely what he professes.

The study of the operations and laws of Universal Nature and of their relationship to man, is another way of referring to the primitive and therefore pure and simple doctrines of early Christianity, with which Theosophy is at one, because in essence they are one and the same. It is of little value to argue over the differences of meanings of various words and phrases in an unfriendly way. Unity comes from finding and understanding the factors that exist in common.

If I as a Christian discover in Theosophical writings an account of a similar story to the birth of Jesus in the story of Krishna, spiritual Savior of the Hindus of 5,000 years ago, I should not be disappointed because I had previously thought that the story of Jesus was that of the first and only Savior of the Human Race. Rather should I rejoice and be glad that the humanity of that day had a Savior who taught the Golden Rule as Jesus did, and elevated the human race thereby.

I see all men as evolving human Souls, growing greater each day, each year, each life-cycle upon earth. And I see all Souls eventually reaching

that Inner Kingdom of Heaven as the Soul and the Spirit are unified into one Being — a god-man made perfect by the radiations of the Inner Christ.

What about the phrase in Christian Scriptures, "Know ye not that ye are Gods, and that the Spirit of the Most High dwelleth in you?" What does this mean? Obviously we are not very god-like today; hence this implies what man will become in the future. We are today only Gods in the making. Many rebirths will be required before that attainment is reached. Did not Jesus say: "Ye must be born again."?

We approach this higher state of consciousness every time we allow the Better Self within us, to expand our minds and open our hearts to manifestations or expressions of the Best that lies within us. This is the way to peace and good cheer, for it is the path that leads to ever higher or deeper states of understanding toward the realization of the Oneness of all things, which is the basis for Universal Brotherhood.

May Christianity find in Theosophy what the Theosophical School of Thought seeks to give, namely: a deeper and clearer knowledge and understanding of each for the good of all.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Radio Broadcast over KFSD, under auspices of San Diego County Ministerial Association, Wednesday morning, February 26th, 1941, at 8.30 to 8.45 by the Regional Vice-President, Western District, American Section, The Theosophical Society. ([return to text](#))
2. See *The Esoteric Tradition*, pp. 64-6. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

QUESTIONS — *M. G. G.*

MEANING WHO?

Who did Pythagoras have in mind
Among the hosts of human kind
When speaking of the "living dead"?
Was it of those whose souls have fled:
Lost souls whose horrors few may learn,
Or those we meet at every turn:
The people who are sunken deep
In self-regard, and, dead asleep?

WHY AND HOW

Most people know that thoughts are things
Of instant speed on varied wings,
But who knows how and who knows why
These things loom larger when we die?
Does death tear down the fence between
The flesh and thought, befouled or clean,
To amplify a thousandfold
All things forgotten or grown cold?
And are our after states of death
Spun here and now from breath to breath?

MARTYRDOM

Why should one spurn chagrin or grief?
Or would one, thinking, just as lief
Be martyr to some galling thought
And care not what its future brought?
If we recount our thoughts and deeds,
In hades or in heavenly meads,
And these make up our after states,

Would we keep making hades dates?

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND MODERN SCIENCE — *H. T. Edge*

II

LIGHT OR MATTER

The quantitative law of electrolysis had, even before the days of *The Secret Doctrine* (1) familiarized us with the idea of a definite unit of electricity; but this was only in conjunction with atoms. It was left to J. J. Thomson to discover the electron as a unit independently of the atom. But an electric current is now regarded as a stream of electrons. Thus we have the electron as the basis both of matter and of electricity, and matter becomes an electric phenomenon. As we already knew from Maxwell that light is an electromagnetic phenomenon, we have thus light, electricity, and matter connected with each other. H. P. Blavatsky speaks of light condensing gradually into form and becoming matter (I, 73), of light becoming on the objective plane gross matter (II, 33), and of the mineral kingdom as being light itself (II, 169).

The essence of what has just been said is that the older idea, current in the days when *The Secret Doctrine* was written, that there are two independent principles, Force and Matter, or Motion and Mass, the one active and potent, the other inert; and that physical phenomena can be interpreted as the action of the active forces on the inert matter; that this idea has disappeared. In its place we are now coming to the idea taught by H. P. Blavatsky, the idea of a single life-principle, manifesting itself in various ways; matter itself being merely one of these ways. Matter is a condensation of the universal life-principle. Under the old view it was impossible to explain how the force acted on the matter; or how mind can act on matter. How could an immaterial spirit contact an inert material substance? The problem of *actio in distans* again. But under the new (or, rather, ancient) idea, both the force and the matter are different grades of the same thing; the difference is analogous to that between steam and ice.

"MODES OF MOTION"

H. P. Blavatsky frequently ridicules the idea that light, heat, sound, and other physical agents, are merely "modes of motion." Such an expression leads us to ask whether these "modes of motion" are causes or effects. There was always a notable ambiguity about the use of the word "force" by physicists. Dynamically speaking, force is an *effect* of matter in motion. Then what sets the matter in motion? The answer again must be "force." So that there would seem to be two kinds of force, one which acts as a cause setting matter in motion, and the other as an effect produced by matter in motion. Heat is defined as a form of energy, being either the energy of vibrating particles of matter, or the energy of a wave motion in the ether. Thus it is an effect; it is also an abstraction. The idea advocated by H. P. Blavatsky is that heat is an entity, a force independent of matter, one of whose effects is that of setting the particles of matter in vibration. But science said that the heat is that vibration. Speaking of the physical forces, H. P. Blavatsky says:

Occult Science defines all these as Super-sensuous effects in their hidden behavior, and as objective phenomena in the world of senses; the former requiring abnormal faculties to perceive them — the latter, our ordinary physical senses. They all pertain to, and are the emanations of, still more supersensuous spiritual qualities, not personated by, but belonging to, real and conscious CAUSES. (I, 145)

At I, 601 begins a chapter entitled suggestively, "Forces — Modes of Motion or Intelligences?" In it she points out that certain things which mechanical science has to assume for its groundwork can never be explained by mechanical principles (which is of course a logical truism). To explain them we must go beyond the limits of the particular science for which they were postulated as elementary indefinables. Take as an instance gravitation — or, to use a wider term, attraction. Attraction has to be assumed as one of the bases of a mechanical system; it is idle therefore to seek to refer it to a mechanical cause. The

great Newton suggests a Spirit, and seeks to penetrate no farther. H. P. Blavatsky here insists that behind all motion must lie intelligence. Prominent scientists of our day are willing to admit this. It is natural to suppose that what occurs in our own constitution, when we make a movement, also occurs in greater Nature — the thought precedes the act. Further she says that it is useless to seek the basis of physical matter in physical matter itself; if we are to have matter at all, then it must be matter in some other state. It is matter, she says, that cannot be conceived by the five physical senses, and therefore cannot be conceived by a mentality limited by those senses. This primeval matter she denotes by the Sanskrit word *Akasa*. The Esoteric Doctrine —

teaches that it is this original, primordial *prima materia*, divine and intelligent, the direct emanation of the Universal Mind — the *Daiviprakriti* (the divine light emanating from the *Logos*) — which formed the nuclei of all the "self-moving" orbs in Kosmos. It is the informing, ever-present moving-power and life-principle, the vital soul of the suns, moons, planets, and even of our Earth. (I, 602)

Speaking of "life," she quotes Dr. B. W. Richardson's views as to the existence of a vital principle, which he regards as of a material nature, but not of ordinary matter; and says that Theosophists recognise a distinct vital principle independent of the organism. A "mere interaction of molecules and atoms" is of course a mere abstraction: moreover it makes of life both a cause and an effect. We need life to account for the activity of the molecules; how then shall we define life as being nothing more than that very activity?

The source of the trouble about a life-principle is that we begin with the false assumption that matter is dead, and then try to explain why it is alive. If we began by assuming that it is alive, there would be no need to postulate a separate life-principle. The same difficulty occurs as to the problem of how mind acts on matter. The truth is that the two are not *essentially* different or separate. Theosophy teaches a doctrine which was partially advocated by Leibniz — that the manifested

universe is composed of *monads*, *i. e.*, living souls; so that physical matter is composed of monads in one state or degree of their evolution, and mind is composed of monads in another stage. It is the same as regards "life" and "inanimate matter": these terms denote a false distinction. By imagining a dead matter, we are obliged to imagine an immaterial life-principle; whereas all matter is living, and all life has a material basis. On this point Dr. Richardson is quoted:

"I speak only of a veritable *material agent*, refined, it may be, to the world at large, but *actual and substantial*." (I, 603)

Speaking of attraction and repulsion, H. P. Blavatsky continues:

Occultists . . . see, moreover, in these two opposite Forces only the two *aspects* of the universal unit, called "MANIFESTING MIND"; in which aspects, Occultism, through its great Seers, perceives an innumerable Host of operative Beings: Cosmic Dhyan-Chohans, Entities, whose essence, in its *dual* nature, is the cause of all terrestrial phenomena. For that essence is co-substantial with the universal Electric Ocean, which is LIFE; and being dual, as said — positive and negative — it is the emanations of that duality that now act on earth under the name of "modes of motion." (604)

Three points should be noticed in the above: (1) that "modes of motion," though a legitimate and convenient phrase, is merely the effect of unspecified causes; (2) that even such words as "mind" and "intelligence" denote abstractions, unless regarded as the attributes of *beings*. Science, considered as a speculative philosophy, is highly metaphysical, being built on abstractions, ideas; the only possible reality is a conscious being, an individual, a monad, a person — as it has been variously called. The universe is an assemblage of such beings, differing among themselves in the stage of evolution in which each may be, but alike in essence. (3) That direct perception of ultra-physical things requires the use of ultra-physical senses.

PLANCK AND EINSTEIN

Planck has endeavored to embrace the ideas of atom and vibration in a new physical unit, which he calls a quantum of "action," whose dimensions are energy X time, and which is measured in erg-seconds. This has a mathematical value, but we have not yet learned to form a mental picture to suit it.

Einstein, by combining the two principles that all motion is relative, and that the velocity of light is independent of the velocity of its source, has evolved a theory which seems to flout common-sense — namely, that the velocity of light is independent of the velocity of the beholder. This is agreeable to the negative results obtained by the oft-quoted Michelson-Morley experiment, which failed to detect any variation in the apparent velocity of light due to the motion of the earth relatively to the source of the light. But what we have called "common-sense" is based on Newtonian kinematics, by which space and time are taken as independent variables. This assumption, which is suitable for ordinary purposes and within the limits to which Newton confined himself, has proved unworkable in some of the fields of the very small and the very great which science is now investigating. Hence Einstein has chosen a new set of assumed data on which to build his kinematical and dynamical system. He no longer treats space and time as independent of each other, but makes them interdependent. He postulates no fixed space-framework by which we can measure velocities; velocities can only be measured relatively to each other.

SPACE

The meaning to be attached to the word Space is a frequent subject discussed in *The Secret Doctrine*. But to understand the relation between the views there propounded and the views commonly accepted, we have to understand not only the former but also the latter. And many people have confused ideas on this subject. They do not discriminate between physical space and geometrical space; which has led to all sorts of fantastic stories about "the fourth dimension." Physical space is that which is apparent to our bodily senses, and it is three-dimensional, neither more nor less. Geometrical space may have

as many dimensions as you please; for it is an ideal construction, devised for interpretative purposes. H. P. Blavatsky uses the word both generally and specially: she speaks of Space, and eternal principle; and of various kinds of space, each of them correlative to some particular plane of perception. If we think in words, rather than in ideas, we may fail to understand her; we must glean the meaning of the word, intended in any particular passage, from the context.

Our object is to show that the ideas of science have lately undergone a change in favor of those of H. P. Blavatsky.

Space was apt to be regarded as mere emptiness, as the absence of matter, as a container. But H. P. Blavatsky, in common with some philosophers, regarded space as an entity, and as being a fulness not an emptiness. It is called the Great Mother, the Womb of Nature. Now compare this with the view that many properties supposed to inhere in matter are now regarded as inhering in space, or rather in whatever may be between the particles or masses of matter. It was Faraday who long ago proved this as regards electrostatic charge; but the idea has now become developed and extended. It is true that, for space, we sometimes say "aether." At any rate the idea of empty space has mostly disappeared as a practical proposition. It is nowadays quite orthodox to regard interstellar space as a storehouse of energy; even to regard matter as a sort of exudation from space or condensation of space. Instead of space being a hole in matter, matter is a whole in space! The disciple has to learn "the fulness of the seeming void, the voidness of the seeming full." Space is one of the fundamental hypostases, according to the Secret Doctrine; and on all planes we have copies of it — spaces of different kinds and degrees. Space is Aristotle's "privation," it is the blank paper, the screen, whereon forms are to be made manifest. Only, the forms are not placed upon the paper, they are born from out it. Space contains in potency all that is subsequently manifested.

MOTION

This is another of the fundamental hypostases. Scientifically it is an

abstraction — that attribute possessed in common by all moving bodies. But the world and all that therein is was never created, never set to work and maintained in life by an abstraction. It is of course unfair to ask science to explain motion, since it is one of their fundamental unprovables, one of the things they have had to assume as a basis for their philosophy. A postulate cannot be proved within the limits of the science for which it is postulated. Similarly, if motion is to be taken as one of the fundamental hypostases of the universe, we obviously have no simpler terms by which to define it, and must leave it undefined, assume it. But perhaps it will not hurt us if for once we lay aside the itch to define and if we are content to say that motion simply *is*. But let us not transfer to other realms the idea of motion as we know it on the physical plane: a more general term will suit better — "change," for instance, or that blessed word "vibration." Even physical science finds it can no longer get along with the idea of motion as a simple transference of bodies from one part of space to another. The word also acquires a different idea when applied to the realms of thought and emotion. Motion means activity and change. It is seen in the Great Breath, the ceaseless alternation between Manvantara and Pralaya.

This "Be-ness" is symbolized in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute Abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness. Even our Western thinkers have shown that Consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, and motion best symbolizes change, its essential characteristic. This latter aspect of the one Reality, is also symbolized by the term "The Great Breath," a symbol sufficiently graphic to need no further elucidation. (I, 14)

The Secret Doctrine states that motion is essentially circular. A circular motion may generate a helix, and the helix bent into a circle yields a vortex, and so we may go on compounding indefinitely, generalizing by

saying that motion is Vortical. The Newtonian mechanics have assumed motion to be essentially rectilinear, and have explained the circular orbits by means of a gravitational pull exercised between the primary and its planets or satellites. Newton himself, while postulating this force, confesses his complete inability to explain its nature in scientific terms, and can only suggest a spirit. We have recently become familiarized with the idea that gravitation is not a force, but an effect produced in some other way.

ATTRACTION

We too easily slip into the habit of speaking of an effect as if it were a cause; and attraction is surely an effect. The word expresses the fact that two bodies are drawn towards each other. To say that they are thus drawn together by the force of attraction is playing with words, much as we might say that a body is moved by the force of motion, or a man walks by the force of ambulation. To recognise attraction as an effect (whose cause we do not know) does not prevent us from formulating those familiar laws which govern it, relating to the product of the masses and the square of their distance apart. The old bugbear of *actio in distans* crops up again here: the difficulty is caused by the attempt to explain nature in terms of an atomo-mechanical theory, which postulates particles and empty spaces as primaries. Such a theory, excellent for certain purposes, is insufficient for other purposes; a force of attraction has to be *assumed*. H. P. Blavatsky quotes Newton as to attraction:

To him it was, he said, a purely mathematical conception involving no consideration of real and primary physical causes. In one of the passages of his "Principia," he tells us plainly that, physically considered, attractions are rather *impulses*. In section xi (*Introduction*) he expresses the opinion that "there is some *subtle spirit by the force and action of which* all movements of matter are determined." (I, 490)

GRAVITATION

This comes under the head of attraction. As H. P. Blavatsky says, astronomers, finding the hypothesis of gravitation a convenient means of enabling them to represent the mechanics of the solar system, do not trouble as to the *cause* of this "universal law."

They call Gravity as law, a *cause* in itself. We call the forces acting under that name *effects*, and very secondary effects too. One day it will be found that the scientific hypothesis does not answer after all. (I, 490)

And we are reminded of Einstein's explanation, which claims that the effects attributed to gravitation follow logically upon his ideas of space and time, so that it is not necessary to suppose such a force at all. And furthermore, it is claimed that this new explanation accounts for certain celestial phenomena which gravitation has failed to explain. So that the prediction just quoted has been fulfilled to some extent at least. Others are studying the possibility of regarding the solar system as an electromagnetic system, and thus accounting for the effects which go under the name of gravitation. Newton protested against the assertion that he had proclaimed gravitation as the *cause* of his system; he declares he can form no notion of the cause of attraction, and is content merely to formulate its effects. In seeking for the Noumenon, he can only whisper reverently the name of God. But Occultism, disclaiming belief in a personal deity, and adding that even a supreme deity would not interfere directly in every detail of his universe, speaks of Gods, an ancient superstition, if you please, conceived in the infancy of humanity, but exploded in our cultured age. These Gods are "the creative fashioning powers" (I, 492); they are noumena of phenomena. Accepting man as a pattern of Nature, we may reasonably suppose intelligence behind the movements; which does not prevent us, if so minded, from formulating the mechanics of these movements. Failure attends those who seek to include even man himself in a purely mechanical system, and to make his very thoughts and volitions the results of molecular movements.

We can actually formulate a law of gravitation, based on the square of

the distance and the product of the masses; and we can investigate it on the small scale as in the Cavendish experiment; but this gives us no clue as to its cause, and even the law as formulated seems to have been proven inaccurate in the case of those anomalies which Einstein's theory claims to have accounted for.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTE:

1. To avoid repetition, references to H. P. Blavatsky's great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, are indicated simply by numbers denoting the volume and page. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SELF-DIRECTED EVOLUTION — *Martyn Witter*

Self-directed evolution becomes a reality when an individual takes it upon himself to wilfully direct his course of action along chosen paths. While evolution from the rocks to the stars does take place through the urge from within yet self-directed evolution is a self-conscious function. Indeed could not this be the end and purpose of self-consciousness?

Patanjali states in his *Yoga Aphorisms*, Book IV:

The mind, though assuming various forms by reason of innumerable mental deposits, exists for the purpose of the soul's emancipation and operates in co-operation therewith.

Likewise the *Maitri Upanishad* asserts that mind is the means of release for mankind while it can also be a bondage if it is directed to the material and objective state of things. Self-directed evolution can become a reality in our lives only if we have the strength of will to make it so.

As the driver of the car today controls its course by the mechanism of the steering wheel so can the occult student control his course of activity by attitudes of mind. The gas of the car corresponds to our will and the divine urge, the road to the path that has been blazed by those who have gone before, the car to our living temple, and the driver to the self-directed manas.

It is from the higher part of our constitution that we draw the necessary intuition and insight required to map out a course of action in the process of conquering self and to meet the many obstacles that are sure to come. We need the influence of the "thread self." As *The Voice of the Silence* has it:

Ere the gold flame can burn with steady light, the lamp must stand well guarded in a spot free from all wind. Exposed to

shifting breeze, the jet will flicker and the quivering flame cast shades deceptive, dark and ever-changing, on the Soul's white shrine. And then, O thou pursuer of the truth, thy Mind-Soul will become as a mad elephant, that rages in the jungle. Mistaking forest trees for living foes, he perishes in his attempts to kill the ever-shifting shadows dancing on the wall of sunlit rocks.

One must have great strength of will otherwise failure is insured from the start. The mind is but a burden unless it is brought under control and made into a servant. Side by side with mind control must come a deep insight and understanding of the emotional aspects of the personal man. Theosophy is the great illuminator and with its help we can easily see the personal side of our natures for what it is.

Understanding brings control. With control comes confidence and faith in ourselves, which is a necessity. Thus equipped we shall have started a task that requires as much vigilance as would be required to drive a racing car at high speed. Yet speed is an unhealthy state of affairs as we can see in our world today. Every student knows that it is best to make haste slowly. It is not speed that is required but vigilance. Indeed eternal vigilance is the price of victory!

The Theosophical Forum

STRENGTH THROUGH EXERCISE — *G. de Purucker*

Our destiny lies in our own hands, and we can make or mar ourselves. No god forbids, no god imposes; we are children of the Divine, and therefore partakers of the divine freedom of will; and in our own feeble way as only partly evolved souls, we work out our destiny. As we shape our lives, so those lives shall become: good, bad, shapely, distorted, beautiful, or ugly. We make them such. There is no fatalism in this. All Nature surrounding us is not only aiding us, but at the same time strangely enough, to a certain degree restricting us so that it gives us an opportunity to exercise our strength against opposition, which is the only way to develop a good pair of biceps!

Exercise brings out strength. If Nature gave us no chance to prove the god within us, we should never grow. Therefore Nature is not only a beauteous, helpful mother, but also a stern nurse watching over us with an infinitely compassionate eye, and insisting by her operations and reactions to what we do or follow with our own will, that this will shall grow in strength through exercise; that our understanding shall become brighter and keener through use.

MORALITY: THEOSOPHICAL VIEWS ON A VITAL SUBJECT (1) — *Clifton Meek*

Of all the mistaken theories that have masqueraded under the name of religion probably none has been more philosophically unsound than the idea that morality can be enforced upon men by external methods and mere physical observances. It has always failed for the obvious reason that it deals only with externals and the shell of things; the physical aspect of human nature. It does not reach the soul and spiritual nature of man from whence spring his nobler aspirations and the desire for better things which must necessarily precede all spiritual growth. Evil is born in the heart and mind of man, not in the chemical elements of the physical body, which is but the passive and temporary instrument of the vital forces of varying degree of spirituality that compose the real man. The hackneyed phrase "sins of the flesh" is a meaningless term designed to conceal men's ignorance of the true nature of the constitution of man and the spiritual process of universal nature working within his inner being.

The purpose of religion should be to instruct men in wisdom and the deeper laws of being, thereby arousing a spiritual desire for nobler living, instead of trying to "railroad" human souls to perfection by controlling their external actions on the physical plane. Man's spiritual evolution is a matter of inner growth and the un-foldment of inherent qualities, and attributes, not a "cramming" from without. It is the work of ages, and human beings will evolve no faster than their intellectual and spiritual faculties are unfolded and brought into play. When this occurs, the actions and events of man's external life will naturally fall into line and shape themselves accordingly, and the desires of his selfish, animal nature will no longer control him.

Orthodox religion, for the most part, has been working on the theory that man is inherently bad and that divinity could be high-pressured into his rusty spiritual bearings by an external process much in the fashion that an automobile is lubricated. He has been told that the

mechanism of his spiritual and moral betterment was a complicated machine outside of himself and beyond his understanding, rather than a state of consciousness within himself. In every age sincere but misguided men have not only attempted to force their interpretations of what they called "the laws of God" on others, but have inflicted inhuman suffering upon those who dared to follow the dictates of their own conscience which is the only royal road to perfection and spiritual enlightenment. No man, whatever his spiritual status may be, has the right to enforce his religious and moral concepts on another any more than he has the right to force physical servitude and slavery upon a fellow human being, and in fact, much less. The same law of nature that insists that man digest his own food likewise insists that he may learn to walk on his own spiritual feet. He may frequently stumble and fall, but such is the law of nature for it is the only way by which he can learn and grow. No man is a whit more moral, nor has his spiritual stature been increased an iota if he follows physical observances merely because some law prevents him from doing otherwise. He may completely master his physical body and its natural functions by the force of sheer will, but still have a mind and soul that is twisted and warped.

There is no better illustration than the case of the Hindu yogi. He may live the life of celibacy and lie on a bed of spikes all his life completely immune to physical pain, but still have a heart that is filled with evil and utterly lacking in love and compassion for his fellow human beings.

The untouchable of the lowest caste who goes about his daily life in a normal way, fulfilling his humble duties and who sees divinity in his humble, ragged neighbor, is his spiritual superior in every way, and neither the world nor mankind is better for the yogi's fanaticism

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Norwalk Hour*, and *New Canaan Advertiser*, April 15, 1941. ([return to text](#))

KUAN YIN, THE BUDDHIST MADONNA (1) — *Hans Nordewin von Koerber*

The Madonna-concept, both Christian and Buddhist, is a product of the genius of the Indo-European race. The Buddhist concept, in particular, had its inception in India, its youth in Central Asia, and received its elaboration and conventionalization in China through the inspiration of the Chinese people.

The Madonna-concept can be rightly evaluated only if we approach the god-concept of the race, which forms the background for the Madonna. If asked for information by a stranger unfamiliar with its meaning, we naturally will proceed to tell him of God, of St. Mary, and Jesus, the child, and of the relationship they have to mankind in particular and the universe as a whole in an attempt to make him see the significance correctly.

Thus it will be useful also, if we first take our imagination far away to India and erect as clearly as possible the god-concept that the ancient Brahmans had conceived and practised. We find, for instance, in *The Bhagavad Gita*, in the tenth chapter, the following statements concerning God, the Creator of heaven and earth:

I am the Self, seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of all beings. . . Having pervaded this whole universe with one fragment of Myself, I remain. . . Understand thou, O! Man, that thou hast gone forth from a fragment of My splendor.

And in the sixth chapter of the same text we read:

However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side, is Mine.

This only one God is called Janardana, that is "Infinite Glory." What a remarkable name that is; so much depends on the name that we give Him! As the name is, so is our attitude and approach to God. If we call Him Lord, we see in Him a lord with the corresponding amount of reserve on our part; if we call Him Judge Righteous, we see in Him a judge with the natural amount of fear in our heart; if we call Him the God of all gods, we approach Him accordingly; and so will our attitude be different, if we see in Him a God of Love and Compassion, or a Father, or Infinite Glory, etc. The prerequisite for lofty conceptions such as Infinite Glory, Father, God of Love and Compassion, and similar ones, are on the part of the race:

- (1) powerful ability to perceive
- (2) efficient susceptibility to receive
- (3) unobstructed mentality to conceive
- (4) an equivalent spiritual power not to abuse or misuse what comes to men in the nature of divine revelations.

There are races well endowed in that way, and others that are less gifted, and again others that are gifted very modestly only.

Of this Janardana it is said in the first chapter of the Vishnu Purana:

The only one God, Janardana, takes the designation of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, accordingly as He creates, preserves, or destroys. . . He is the cause of creation, preservation, and destruction.

This means that God continuously manifests in a threefold way, namely as a creative energy, as an ordaining and maintaining energy, and as a transforming and dissolving energy. Such a triplicity (called *trimurti*) reflects the essential nature and character of the godhead and is certainly identical with the trinitarian aspect of the godhead such as has been conveyed to us by the various Christian mystics throughout centuries, namely: LOVE (the creative energy), WISDOM (the ordaining and maintaining energy), and WILL OF HOLY GHOST (the transforming energy).

Around these three fundamental and concomitant manifestations of the Godhead had, in the course of time, developed philosophies and rituals; soon the three basic qualities of Janardana were made into deities, i. e., Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Therefore one speaks of the "three religions": Brahmanism, Vishnuism, and Shivaism. The Brahmanic civilization, as a social system, had been built up on the foundation and the essence of these three religions. As it is always the case in every civilization, there comes the time when the spiritual content vanishes more and more in proportion to the degree of mental and moral negligence on the part of mankind to whom the revelation originally came. If that takes place, the system becomes clogged with wrong thoughts and interpretations, the spirit becomes subdued, and soon petrification is the result.

Such happened also in ancient India. As a consequence of that there arose in the fifth century b. c, a young man by the name of Gautama Siddharta Sakyamuni, "The mighty of the Sakya family, the most victorious on earth," a prince of royal blood, the heir to the throne of his father, who took issue with the churches then well established. He had great compassion with suffering mankind and was himself struggling in the effort to solve the social problems of his days.

After receiving what they call "illumination" (*bodhi*), he became a *buddha* (an illumined one) and thus was the Buddha of our age or *Kalpa*. For well conceivable reasons he did not stress the existence of the godhead, although he certainly knew of it; it is beyond doubt that he had enjoyed the best education that India could give him in those days, and that he was well acquainted with the several "isms" of his time. He taught that the world came into existence by itself and is ruled by well-ordained laws. He neglected, however, at least in public, to draw the necessary conclusion, namely: where there are laws, there must also be a lawgiver, in other words, there must also be an Intelligence Supreme. Thus he put himself on an atheistic ground. This atheistic momentum is, of course, reflected everywhere in his own philosophy. He also maintained the belief in the cycle of reincarnations (metempsychosis), upheld Karma, i. e., the Law of Action and Reaction, and professed to have found the means to overcome this law of Karma and thus to be freed from the compulsion of rebirths, leading to a condition of freedom and beatitude, called Nirvana.

On such a ground, covering at least 2,000 years of evolution, has developed the seed for the Buddhist Madonna, a concept that was to grow mightily much later, about 1,000 years after the death of Buddha.

Gautama Siddharta was born in b. c. 561 and died in b. c. 480. About 150 years later, to be exact in b. c. 325, Alexander the Great, a Greek, the phenomenal conqueror and scholar, extended his domain to what today is Afghanistan and northwest India (Punjab) and established there a most prosperous outpost of Greek civilization and thought. It was through this contact with Greece and her several divinities (including the one great unknown god, in whose honor they had erected a temple in Athens) that *theistic* elements crept into the atheistic philosophy of the Buddhist church. When in b. c. 250 King Asoka officially accepted Buddhism and thereby became the Constantine of the Buddhist church, the Buddhist dogma had already considerably changed towards the positive. While this development went on, an ever-growing distance became noticeable between the orthodox Buddhists and the ones of northwestern India. This led, about 500 years after the death of Buddha, on the occasion of the Fourth Church Council (100 a. d.), to the great dissension and split: Hinayana and Mahayana, the former perpetuating dogmatic loyalty and narrowness with Pali as its sacred language, the latter breathing freedom and greater possibilities, using Sanskrit as its sacred language. Several developments in India gradually pushed Buddhism aside; it was completely expelled from its native land during the tenth and eleventh centuries, that is 1500 years after the death of Buddha!

Hinayana Buddhism with its atheistic dogma spread to and settled in Ceylon,

Burma, Siam, and French Indo-China. It also gained a foothold temporarily in the Malay Archipelago (Java in particular).

Mahayana Buddhism with its strong theistic tendencies — a mixture of Brahmanic and Greek thought — came to China about 900 years after the death of Buddha during the Wei Dynasty (386-550) and spread from there to Korea and Japan, and later to Tibet and Mongolia where it became closely associated with Hindu thought and native deities. This conglomerate religion of Tibet and Mongolia is usually called Lamaism.

It was in China, through the medium of theistic Mahayana Buddhism with its Greek inspiration, that the Madonna concept rose to prominence. Let us now trace this concept from its inception in India to its perfection in China.

Some time during the third or fourth centuries, two imaginary figures had developed in the "pantheon" of Mahayana Buddhism, whilst it still was in vogue in N. W. India and Central Asia, namely the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha, and the Dhyani Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. Both figures had reached completion in their evolution sometime during the fifth or sixth centuries, when the deification of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Saints was well on its way.

Who is Amitabha? Since Buddha, the historical one, is gone and no longer within the reach of mankind, dogma deemed it necessary, compelled by public dissatisfaction, to create a spiritual counterpart of him for the purpose of functioning on earth. Here is not the place to ventilate the several hypotheses that exist on this subject; it is sufficient to state that the essence of Gautama Siddharta became projected and embodied in a meditative or contemplative type of a Buddha (a dhyani Buddha), who is, together with others of the same category, permanently functioning and residing in the likewise imaginary paradise Sukhavati, located in northwest Tibet. There he is constantly exerting himself for the benefit of humanity by way of profound contemplation. No mortal may enter that paradise. However, man can approach Amitabha and communicate with him effectively through the medium of the congregation. Therefore, in Mahayana Buddhism Amitabha received more attention than Gautama Buddha himself, yea, he is the center of the worship, and as such most powerful. In China, Amitabha is called Omifo, and in Japan, Amida.

Who is Avalokitesvara? In order to satisfy the expectation and the prayers of both the worshipers and the faithful ones the creation of meditative Buddhas was not enough; Dhyani Bodhisattvas were still to step into the picture. Usually, a bodhisattva is a human being (sattva) who has already succeeded in obtaining a certain amount of illumination (bodhi) and need, therefore, not return any more

to earth for another incarnation. After his physical death he will be a buddha. The meditative Buddha Amitabha is so frequently moved in his compassion for suffering mankind that he deems it necessary and helpful, temporarily to take on the bodily form of a human being who is on his way to perfect illumination (i.e., the bodily form of a *bodhisattva*). In such a way Amitabha can walk among men and teach, can help and console, and live with them, can eat and sleep with them just as the Lord Buddha himself did when he walked over this earth. Naturally, such a temporary manifestation found an immense echo, and it is Avalokitesvara "the Lord (isvara) who graciously looks (lo-kita) down upon (ava) mankind," who actually is the most cherished and the most beloved divinity in the pantheon of Mahayana Buddhism. Yet let us not be forgetful of the fact that both Amitabha and Avalokitesvara are merely imaginary figures.

And in China, there happened something extraordinary to the Dhyani-bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. He had to perform a metamorphosis of a peculiar kind; he had to become female. Several influences led to this change. Only the most significant influence may be mentioned here. The Chinese were taught that Avalokitesvara is a lord of greatest compassion and profound divine love. It is just here at this psychological juncture that the genius of the Chinese race proved to be unwilling to accept this as it was. The Chinese can see in a lord, in a ruler, in an elder, in a father, a person of greatest respect and admiration; they can discover in him an abundance of friendliness, benevolence, and similar characteristic traits, but there is always a distance, a reserve, that remains. Genuine, real love — so they say — is only possible in a mother, where there is no distance between her and her child. And thus the Lord of Compassion and Love became female, a goddess. She rapidly developed to a national deity; yes, it is safe to say, that for some time she became *the* national divinity of China. Her name is Kuan Yin, an attempt to translate the name Avalokitesvara. This Kuan Yin concept was pretty well established by the end of the thirteenth century, that is, 1800 years after the death of Buddha. Kuan Yin prominently shows all the virtues of real womanhood: motherly love, humility, endurance in suffering, nobility in character, never failing in co-ordinating and subordinating her motherly instincts — really the most perfect representation of true and indisputable womanhood such as it should be in accordance with the ideal conceived by the genius of the Chinese race. From China Kuan Yin was introduced to Korea, and from there to Japan. In both lands, however, she never was accorded the place of a national deity. As such Kuan Yin exclusively belongs to China.

A word will still have to be said about the materials of which Kuan Yin figures were and are being made. The kind of material is really of importance as the

means by which the artist wants to show the inner nature of his conception as well as to arouse a corresponding emotion in the onlooker. The innermost of every unit of matter is spiritual, or, in other words, the substance of matter is spirit. Grass is grass because of its inner nature, tree is tree, not because of the name that man gives to it as the designation of a species, but because of the concept placed into it, because of the spiritual essence it contains and because of the purpose it reveals. Thus for the same reason water is water and not stone, fire is fire and not soil, etc. In other words, water is water because of its inner nature and fire is fire for the same reason. Water, ever in readiness to be used, shows humility and only thereby the right preparedness to serve; it betrays divine energy and thus quickens; it shows divine contempt of what is dirty and thus cleans and diffuses. Fire, reflecting God's benevolence, emanates warmth and light, two requisites absolutely necessary for Life; it also reveals the holiness of God and is thus consuming and thereby purifying. In a similar way we have first to disclose the innate spirit of the jewel, of the semi-precious stone, of wood, and of whatever material that may be. Both the artist, i. e., the creative genius, and the artisan or craftsman, i. e., the reproducing mind, intend to represent their conception of the madonna through the most appropriate means available, that is, through the right material that suggests to the onlooker the correspondence between the spirit inherent in matter and the spirit contained in the conception of the artist.

If, therefore, the artist wishes to stress *heavenly charm*, he takes sandalwood because of its grace and scent. If he wishes to emphasize *luminous virtues* he uses jade; if *diversity in virtues* he selects the carnelian. If he wants to show *refinement in character* he avails himself of ivory. If *spirituality* is his vision, rock-crystal appears to be the most appropriate material. Marble suggests *noble solidity and permanency*, sardonyx *heavenly emotions*, quartz *divinity in action*, onyx *luminous iridescence by virtue of spirit*, and turquoise *homogeneousness with the all-pervading ether*. Lacquer is used to suggest *successful evolution*, horn to show *freedom from poisonous qualities*, and iron to disclose *power to protect from evil forces*. Clay and porcelain in general is used, if the artist is especially concerned with the concept of *heavenly pliability* or *heavenly beatitude*, white porcelain (blanc de Chine) in particular to stress the *lovely innocence in virtues*. By way of painting the artist attempts to express the *esoteric approach to the divinity and through her to nature*.

This interpretation of the Buddhist Madonna would not be complete without a few remarks relative to the styles of the figure. Characteristic are its posture, its attitude, attire, and attributes. In order to bring out this distinction appropriately,

it is well to state first that Gautama Siddharta Buddha (the Lord Buddha) is usually represented in his classical attitude, standing, as a thinker, or teacher, garbed with a very simple monastic robe, while the Dhyani Buddha Amitabha mostly appears as being seated in the oriental fashion, cross-legged, upon a white lotus flower, holding the ambrosia vessel in his hands which are resting in his lap one above the other, palms upward. His hair has no adornment, only showing more prominently the topknot (*ushnisha*); his forehead is provided with the third eye, the eye of wisdom (*urna*). The attitude of crossing the legs with both soles of the feet upwards symbolizes that his whole body, including his feet that normally show downward and touch the ground, has become illumined; the celestial powers are thus streaming perfectly through his feet as well and bringing about a harmony of the two conflicting energies in the universe, i. e., bringing about the conciliation between the positive and the negative principles. The white lotus symbolizes the process of purification through which Buddha has gone successfully; therefore, he has the privilege as well as the right to be supported by the all-conquering and purifying forces of the spirit of the lotus. The ambrosia vessel represents the mendicant's bowl into which he received earthly food, and which is the bowl whereinto heaven now places its bread, ambrosia, for the nourishment of mankind.

The bodhisattva type is characterized by a standing figure of Greek fashion, and in China its distinctive attribute is the treating of the hair, in which the topknot (*ushnisha*) is drawn up into a mitre shape, often adorned with jewels, or concealed by a tiara. Other attributes frequently appear, such as necklace, armband and girdle, trailing scarfs over arm or from the waist, elaborate pleats of skirt or cloak, ear-rings and long swinging chains, all derived from Indian sources. Beside this, the Dhyani bodhisattva Avalokitesvara usually wears a five-leafed crown, of which the leaf in the middle shows the figure of Amitabha, his spiritual father. Thus we have in him an Indian divinity-concept placed in a Greek body showing attributes that represent ideals and fashions of India, Central Asia, Mongolia, and China. In addition to this, the Avalokitesvara figure in Korea discloses certain Korean features, the one in Japan Japanese characteristics, and the one in Tibet Tibetan traits. In the latter domain we find, for instance, figures of paintings representing Avalokitesvara with six arms and eleven heads, or with a thousand arms and eleven heads. In this way the primitive and therefore very natural mind of the people wishes to emphasize superexcellency and efficiency in seeing, hearing, thinking, helping, etc., on the part of the deity. Avalokitesvara as Kuan Yin in China is always represented as a charming and attractive woman or deity, usually sitting in the royal pastime attitude (the *maharaja lilasana*), in which the left leg is bent and the right knee raised to support the right arm, which is

propped against the background, usually an aureole or a niche. In such a posture she represents the Goddess of Mercy and Compassion; if she is sitting in such a way on a rock looking downward upon the waves of the ocean playing around the rock, she is seen as the protector-deity of the seafaring people.

At times she appears to be popularized and thus raised to the rank of a buddha-deity sitting cross-legged on the lotus flower.

She also appears as the protector-deity of mothers and is then represented Christianized by way of holding a child in her lap or in her arms.

Sometimes Kuan Yin is also represented in the true bodhisattva style as standing, holding the *ju-i* scepter in her left arm and a scroll in her right hand, the latter symbolizing truth divine as it has been written into the many forms of creation and then gradually abstracted and recopied by man in his book of law. The *ju-i* scepter, a Taoist symbol, is in the nature of a staff that ends in a peculiarly shaped leaf and intends to express the fulfilment of our purified desires. Divine fulfillment of our desires is only possible if they are in harmony with cosmic laws, or as the Christian would say, in harmony with the Will of God, which alone means real freedom and happiness on the part of the spirit.

If she holds in her right hand a gourd, or a pomegranate, whose many seeds suggest multiplication, and in her left hand a bottle containing dewdrops, i. e., heavenly water, the element of quickening, she then appears in the role of making alive those who are in death, as well as in the role of the one who is ushering in the Coming Buddha, Maitreya, "The Loving One," "The Lord of Love." Most remarkable statues of Kuan Yin and Maitreya, particularly showing them in this role just referred to, can be seen in the Munthe collection in our own Los Angeles Museum.

It will be in order to conclude this sketch by way of briefly comparing the two philosophies that are behind the Buddhist Madonna and the Christian Madonna.

In doing so we may arrive at the following picture:

Kuan Yin

St. Mary

An ideal, abounding in inspiration, beauty, strength and loveliness.

A reality, most sacred, noble in character and devotion, super-strong in sacrificing.

The child of an imaginary spiritual father: Amitabha.

The mother of a real child, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ.

This child developed into a friendly, most compassionate and *ever-helping goddess* attempting to lead humanity through fulness, purification to a life of beatitude.

In the child of Nazareth arose the most benign, the most perfect and *only savior of the world* in whom dwelled the Godhead in and who alone could say, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "The Father and I are One."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Address given to Town and Gown Club of the University of Southern California, March 28th, 1940. Dr von Koerber is a professor in the Department of Asiatic Studies at this University. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

DEATH TRANSFIGURED — *Madeline Clark*

Bereavement is one of life's supreme experiences. Torn is the veil of illusory things when death comes very near us, and through the rent pours "the white radiance of eternity," giving us truly an inkling of Reality — interpret it as we may when the brief moment of insight is over.

The Testament of Immortality (1) is a collection of such interpretations, a collection made by the anonymous author-compiler to sustain his heart at a time when he had suffered the loss of his only son in the prime of youth and promise. Wide reading and a kindly breadth of culture are so evident here that we follow the author delightedly in his selection and arrangement of these intuitive thoughts from great and lesser writers of both East and West. We thank him too for the list of authors cited, with their "dates," and a brief notation about each; and even the index shows the careful touch of the scholar.

The book itself is a garland sweet with the fragrance of trust and resignation; a pot-pourri filled with the essence distilled from grief, or from joy at the revelation of the happy thing that death is after all. It is a fitting gift to one in sorrow.

This is the first and chief impression; but if more is now said in a slightly different vein, it is because there may be value in going deeper; the truest solace is found after all in truth itself. So I would say that the effect of reading this book (or reading in it, for one does not sit down and read it through, naturally) is to induce a mood of exaltation which brings the emotions to a pleasant tension, satisfying to the esthetic sense, while the mind remains as much at sea in the Mystery as before. This is because, while we are led onward and upward by the mystical beauty of the thoughts, what we miss in them is a definite philosophy. The higher emotions are touched, but the longing for definite knowledge is not fulfilled.

Curiously enough, we have little suspected that there *could* be such definite knowledge. And yet Theosophy has it to offer, and on a highly scientific basis. We have to overcome the long-prevalent attitude that we must accept without question the inscrutable workings of a Law we were not meant to understand. The new time into which we are entering demands that we go forward with minds open to new spiritual possibilities. We must have the courage of research into the things of the spirit, yet always keeping close to the anchorage of the innate sense of right and fitness abiding in the heart.

Only one or two selections in the book contain any description of what may have really befallen the departed soul. On page 201 the writer quoted speaks truly of the experiences of death and birth as having been made familiar to the many-times-incarnated soul by long repetition; but her teaching that "We are conscious one moment on the physical plane and a moment later we have withdrawn on to another plane and are actively conscious there" is open to doubt. The Theosophical teaching postulates a longer or shorter period of unconsciousness immediately after the shock of death, to give rest and readjustment to the soul in its new conditions: a rule which seems not only merciful but very natural. This unconsciousness, we are taught, in the case of average human beings of virtuous life, continues more or less complete until the first main stage of post-mortem life, the *kama-loka*, is passed, and the vivid and blissful dream of the *devachan*, or assimilation-period, begins.

There is more than a hint too in the book of that curious haunting doubt: shall we really survive the change? and what proof can we have that we shall persist? Throughout the book, therefore, runs an undercurrent of reassurance (Are we whistling to keep up our courage?) The thoughts expressed do not rest on proof, they are bright inspirations of intuitive minds that hit upon the truth that we do survive, because that certainty is inherent in the spiritual soul itself. We simply know.

But only the ancient doctrine of Reincarnation as revived in modern

Theosophy can give an adequate picture of the continuous and harmonious progress of the soul in its eternal journey.

Noble and majestic are the ideas that throng this anthology, coming as they do from some of the finest minds of this and other times; yet, when all is said, the marvel remains with us that for so long in the West death has been regarded, if not with horror and dread, at least as cause for grief and mystification. The sense of loss, the heavy heart, seem to be its inescapable concomitants as things are now, and we need powerful helps to ease the load. But when we grow into an understanding of the real nature of our very selves and of our destiny in a perspective far beyond this one small life; when we take to ourselves this large and comprehensive philosophy which transcends emotion and makes clear the reasons for all our changing fortunes, we shall look calmly upon the face of "delicate death," because we shall know whither she is leading us. Peace comes with knowledge.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Testament of Immortality*. An Anthology selected and arranged by N. G., with a Preface by T. S. Eliot. Faber & Faber, Ltd., London. 280 pp. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

COMPOSITE MAN — *Allan J. Stover*

A five-year-old San Diego child met her father as he came home one evening and said "Daddy, are we animals? Do we belong to the animal kingdom?"

His reply was "There is a mineral, a vegetable, and an animal kingdom. We are not minerals. We are not vegetables. We belong to the animal kingdom."

The little girl then went to her mother with the same question and was told "No, dear, we are not animals. We belong to the Kingdom of Heaven."

Was the child satisfied? Would you have been?

The questions and answers quoted are representative not only of individual instances, but are also representative of the confusion and questioning throughout modern civilization. Men question, and science and religion answer to the puzzlement and confusion of the questioners.

Truth itself is not divided into compartments or differing schools. There can be only one truth regarding the universe or man, although there are many ways of viewing truth and also many distortions of truth. Theosophy tells us that we are composite, with a higher and a lower self. This anyone can prove by a little — a very little — self-study. If we study the fundamentals of esotericism we learn further that there is in man a divine ego, a spiritual ego, a human ego, a personal ego, a beast ego, and a physical body. While each of the egos is an evolving, conscious entity within the greater man, and each has its own range of consciousness, still, if we watch closely we may catch glimpses of these various selves, or some of them at least.

The beast ego is represented by the lower physical functions and desires, and when we give way to anger, greed or envy we have been

manifesting through the beast or animal part of ourselves. The personal ego thinks "I am John Jones," of "me," of "mine." The human ego thinks "I am I," and but little of "me" or "mine." It is more interested in humanity, of which it feels itself to be a part.

With the spiritual ego, the thought "I am I" has given way to that of "I am," with a sweep and range of consciousness beyond ordinary human conception. With the divine ego, one *becomes, is*, the Universal Self — deathless, omnipotent, one with the Gods.

The egos below and including the personal ego are mortal. These as vehicles of the deathless spirit are limited to one life. All above the personal is immortal, or relatively so.

As to the little girl's question, both answers were correct, though partial and misleading. Man is composite. There is an animal or beast self, a human, thinking self, a spiritual self, and a divine god within him.

Recently a well-known scientist said, "There is no plan, no purpose in Nature. Further, there is no law, for every law has so many exceptions as to make it no law."

No law in nature? How about death and birth? Do not all things have a beginning and an end? And if that is so, isn't a law of cycles established, and are there any exceptions to it? Here is one law that is universal in its sweep.

Again, if we examine any cycle — a day, or a year — we find that while it returns to a new beginning at regular periods, the beginning of each succeeding cycle is in every case different from the preceding one. In other words, progress has been made in certain ways, and progress is evolution. Here we have another law universal in its scope.

Once more consider the various cycles, the rotation of the electrons in an atom, the heart-beat of a man, the sun-spot cycle of a sun, the rise and fall of universes. Here are cycles, here is evolution, here also is something else, for each cycle is the life-course of some being — an atom, a man, a solar system, a universe, each contained within a

greater, and that in a still greater, and that in a greater still.

This structural plan or habit of Nature is called the law of hierarchies, and may be found operating everywhere.

To return to the first questions and the various egos or monads of man: If we apply the teaching of hierarchies here, we find these various aspects of man — each one, from the physical body to the divine ego — while living its own life, existing also in a larger, more fully conscious being, and that in a still greater. Here is the beginning of the answer to the little girl's question.

The Theosophical Forum

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS

Immortality and Good and Evil

I have been reading the record of H. P. B.'s Inner Group in this month's FORUM [January, 1941], and in an "Editor's Note" the statement is made that only by becoming actively good or evil can one achieve immortality. The ordinary folk, neither very good nor very evil, cease to be. Now, if I read this aright, it seems very terrible, and although a return to this troublous world does not seem enviable just now, one feels that surely those not wholly given up to evil have a better right to continue than the utterly evil.

Also it does not seem consistent with the teaching that *all* must eventually evolve to the highest.

Perhaps I am not clear in my reasoning, for I am still very much a beginner in Theosophical thought. I read and re-read the articles in the Forum, and often find that after many studies light dawns. But I do find this latest problem beyond me. — B.
M.

G. de P. — I am not at all astonished that the questioner was puzzled at the language used in the article in *Leaves of Theosophical History* as quoting from H. P. B.'s Inner Group, and the reason is that the teaching as here imbodyed is given patterned after the peculiar language of the French Qabbalist Eliphas Levi, who is notorious for extreme statements on the one hand, (for that was his psychology), and on the other hand for the singularity of his paradoxes. Yet because he was intuitive in some respects, H. P. B. often quoted him either verbatim or in substance.

Take careful note of the following facts: The *Monads* whether of gods or of men or of beasts or of plants or of stones or of elementals, are

immortal, for they are spiritual consciousness-centers. *But* the references in the passage that bothered the questioner, do not point to the monads, but to the various souls of the different hierarchies of lives or different kingdoms of lives, which either must rise up into immortality and "god" by joining with the spirit within them, or in other words with the spiritual side of the monad; or attain immortality in what is called "evil," by descending and becoming unified with what we Theosophists call absolute matter. In this way, philosophically speaking, there is immortality; and this is the important word here, *self-conscious* immortality either with the divine or with the absolutely material: absolute Spirit on the one hand, or absolute Matter on the other hand — so far as our own universe is concerned, that is.

We human beings, although immortal in our monads, cannot be called immortal in our souls, because our consciousness is interrupted by death. And here is the point to remember: A person is not immortal if there ensue long lapses of his consciousness, although he is immortal in the other sense of never-ending inner or monadic consciousness. Thus we human beings are immortal in our monads, conditionally immortal in our souls, and mortal in our bodies, because these last change and our stream of consciousness is interrupted by death. The soul, if worthy of it, has its dreamy blissful state in the devachan, and then is reembodied; but this is obviously not immortality of the *self-conscious soul*, because this consciousness changes. Immortality means an unchanging consciousness without modifications or variations, an uninterrupted continuance of a stream of thought, so to speak.

Now, if this stream of thought or of consciousness is interrupted by death, we cannot call it immortal. We must call it mortal, even though that stream of thought, because based in the monad, takes up its continuance when re embodiment occurs. The difficulty lies in the odd way of using the word "immortal" in the sense employed by Eliphas Levi and H. P. B. in this extreme thought quoted.

Thus the gods are immortal from the beginning of a manvantara to its ending, comprising billions of years; but we human beings, and

monads less evolved than the gods, have many interruptions from the beginning of a manvantara to its end; and we cannot thus be called immortal, because of these interruptions. Nevertheless we *are* immortal in our spiritual monads; and when we as humans or souls shall have become allied with our spiritual monads, and become Buddhas or Bodhisattvas or Christs, then we shall enter immortality in this peculiar sense of speaking.

The whole difficulty, therefore, is in understanding the peculiar technical sense in which the word "Immortal" is used in this extract. Hence Theosophists often speak of the soul as being mortal, conditionally so, or as being immortal, conditionally so, as H. P. B. does in *The Key to Theosophy*. The soul becomes immortal when it unites with the Buddha or Bodhisattva or Christ within itself, its "Father in Heaven," or in other words when the soul unites with the Monad. Then it enjoys the immortality of the monad, uninterrupted consciousness.

The Healing of Diseases

What does Theosophy teach about the Healing of Diseases?

H. T. Edge — The querent probably has in mind the treatment of diseases and mental disorders by what may roughly be termed occult or psychic means. Theosophists are in general averse to these practices. In ordinary medicine, much study is required in order to qualify for being a practitioner; and a large body of knowledge, the result of the experience of doctors for a long time, is behind the medical art. But in matters psychic — where are we to find anything like such safeguards, such conditions. This is truly ground where it may be said that "angels fear to tread"; yet we find that almost anybody is ready to rush in, and either to attempt to practise himself, or to undertake to teach others to do so. What would such a condition be called in the medical world?

Both the material dealt with — the finer parts of the human constitution — and the forces and methods to be used, are of a far more delicate and intricate kind than those which ordinary medicine deals with, delicate and intricate though the latter are. It is but reasonable to

infer that anyone aspiring to competence in this field would have to pass through a very long and difficult course of instruction and training before he could qualify; and that, if he should practise without such qualification, he would be likely to do more harm than good to his patients.

Diseases in general are evils which are in process of being cast out of the system. They had their origin in wrong thinking and feeling, and they have worked their way down to the physical body, which is trying to excrete them. If this natural process of elimination should be prevented, the evil would remain in the system, and the case would resemble that of stopping the flow from a suppurating sore. The relief given would be temporary, resulting in worse evil later on; moreover it would amount merely to a suppression of the symptoms, not a healing of the disease. This is a mistake to which psychic healing is peculiarly liable; and it is evident claims of immediate success do not refute the objection. An adept is needed to judge if and when it is advisable to interfere; and who of us has the profound knowledge which would enable us to take into account the intricate fabric of a human being's destiny and karma, so as to be sure that we shall benefit and not injure our patient?

Co-operate with Nature

What is the right and safe way of treating diseases?

H. T. Edge — The physical part of the treatment should be left to the doctor, who, if he is a wise physician, will pay much less attention to the administration of drugs than to assisting nature to do her own powerful remedial work. The patient should assist the remedial process by adapting his mind as much as possible to the circumstances. Realizing that a remedial process is going on, he will accept it as such, instead of rebelling against it. And he will endeavor, by living as healthily as he knows how, mentally, morally, and physically, to avoid setting up any further discordant conditions which would have to be cleared out of the system in the same painful way. He should try to forget his complaint rather than to focus his attention on it. It is well

known that people sometimes dwell on their complaints until they make them worse and believe themselves to have diseases which they have not; they become hypochondriacs or valetudinarians. The same thing can happen to those who try to drive away their complaint by concentrating on it; the disease feeds by attention, and besides the treatment is likely to be without knowledge and unskillful.

The Theosophical Forum

"THE THREE MONADIC VESTURES" — *Studley Hart*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The Christian teachings as found in the Bible speak of man as composed of a body, a soul, and a spirit. In Theosophy we study the Seven Principles of man; in other schemes of philosophical and religious thought we find two, four, five, and even, nine and twelve mentioned. Amidst these varied and diversified divisions it is small wonder that a newer student or inquirer feels lost, confused, and even perplexed to the point of deciding to take up some other more readily assimilated subject of study.

The truth of the matter can be said to be in the fundamental axiom of Theosophy as well as all the other great world systems of thought throughout the ages. Namely that the Root, the Base, or the Acme, the Flower of everything from the lowliest elementals to the highest Gods is ONE.

As the *Zohar* says:

The Divine animated all parts of the Universe with characteristic and appropriate spiritual beings, and thus all the hosts exist. — *Zohar*, III, 68a

In Theosophy we call this One Divine Principle, when manifesting, the Monas Monadum, that is, a Galactic Monad composed of hosts of Monadical centers. We may think of this ONE as a circle whose circumference is boundless and whose center is in every minute portion of limitless space on all its planes.

The Heart of the most inanimate and unevolved subject we can imagine is rooted in — in fact is the same as — the Heart, the Core of the being, of the consciousness, of the greatest Galactic Universe. The

only difference is one of expression in degree of consciousness. H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* expresses this thought in these words:

From Gods to *men*, from Worlds to atoms, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being — the World of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. The law of Analogy is the first key to the world-problem, and these links have to be studied co-ordinately in their occult relations to each other. — I, 604

This Oneness expresses itself on all planes of the Cosmos through transitory vehicles, built of the substances, forces and life-energies of the planes upon which it may be manifesting. These vehicles or sheaths of consciousness become ever more condensed, more material, as the Ray from the Monad descends through children-vehicles down into ever increasingly material spheres. Each plane is the sphere of being or consciousness, the home, of a ray of the Chief Monad of any entity whether a mineral or a God. The core of the vehicle of such a manifesting Jiva is called the Sutratman in the Vedantic philosophy, the thread soul, which has strung upon it various children monads. Each of these minor monads in the constitution is exactly the same in essence as the Chief Monad, the fountain from which they have all issued and in which they have their being; each is constituted in the same essences, vehicular bodies, and consciousness centers, although of varying degrees depending upon its evolutionary standing.

Now with this picture in mind, and with a general concept of the various methods of dividing man, we might say that the manner which is the most basic, in that further sub-divisions can be made, is the Threefold. Further separations should be made by each student according to the mode which gives him the clearest understanding and satisfies his mind and heart the most fully — with the added thought, however, that we should ever strive to keep an open mind and not allow ourselves to become crystallized in any one way of looking upon a subject, if we hope to expand our consciousness and the teachings as time goes on.

The triune division of man is the Self, the Ego, and the Soul. Every Monad may be said to express itself first consciously and then self-consciously through these primary Upadhis which it has built for itself and which are the reflexions in their respective fields of the One.

The Self, the I AM, is the immortal spark of any entity, which never dies or descends directly into the lower planes, but sends forth shoots or rays which are the spiritual heart of the pranic forces or life-energies of those planes. The Self of a monad, such as the human, which is largely unrealized, acts unselfconsciously as the "medium" through which these life-essences are transmitted to the human, through the Higher Ego, and which develops into self-consciousness in conjunction with the Ego.

The Ego, which is a garment or vehicle of the Self, of the I AM, is like a mirror which reflects the I AM, making of it the I AM I. It is that portion of us which in its higher parts gives us our spiritual yearnings and sublime realization of the essential Divine Root from which everything evolves and from which come our flashes of intuition. In its lower aspects it joins with the soul to give us our individualized personalities, our human self-consciousness.

The Soul in its turn is the vehicle or body of the Ego. On the higher planes it is a body of light; and on the lower it is ever more concreted light until it reaches this physical plane where it develops into the material elements we see on all sides. If we had the eye of a Seer, these bodies would look like millions of tiny lights, revolving and sparkling with the greatest of intensity. Each one of these lights, atoms, is in itself an expression of a ray of a monad — a monad manifesting in its turn through a Self, an Ego, and a Soul. As Madame Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine*:

The collective aggregation of these atoms forms thus the *Anima Mundi* of our Solar system, the *soul* of our little universe, [or of man, a miniature universe] each atom of which is of course a *soul*, a monad, a little universe endowed with consciousness, hence with *memory*. — *S. D.*, II, p. 672, footnote.

In the same manner that the Cosmos is the Universal World-Soul or Being in whom we are rooted, live, and have our being, so do we, the Human Ego and Soul, stand to these lesser lives. These less evolved monads exist in our constitution and draw their life and inner forces from and through us. Dr. G. de Purucker in his *The Esoteric Tradition* (Vol. I, p. 264) says that

Man is the parent of all the minor beings or lives of life-atoms which compose his various vehicles or sheaths of consciousness

....

Even a partial understanding of these teachings fills us with awe, and reverence too, for the sublime pattern of the Universe which is repeated throughout and which holds us responsible for the welfare and guidance of these lesser beings of our constitution. Our guardianship of them is as sublime in its way as that of the greater beings who have sacrificed themselves to help us in our struggle up the ladder of life to an ever fuller expansion of consciousness and self-conscious absorption with the Super-Divine Essence and work of the One.

The Theosophical Forum

WIN WITH GENTLENESS AND KINDNESS — *G. de Purucker*

I KNOW not what others think, but I have never enjoyed breaking idols, for I believe in the divine instinct in the human heart which at some past time brought those idols into being as works of love and understanding. It is we who do not understand what they represent and mean. It is rather we who are at fault than the Great Ones who gave birth to those works of past ages which have comforted millions century after century after century; and I do not enjoy breaking idols and crushing ideals in human hearts. Much better is it to teach, to show, to win with gentleness and kindness: "Search this out, Brother, here is something I have found, something I have discovered to be supremely grand and good. Try it yourself. Subject it to your own closest inspection, and if you find it good, come and help to give to others what you and I have found."

Smashing idols is easy work, and it has been a work which has persisted for too long in my judgment beyond its appointed place in the history of mankind. Oh, indeed if you like you can say that an idol contains a precious stone, and in order to get the precious stone, by all means let us smash. But there are other ways. If that idol contains a precious stone, it was put there by very wise men, and there is a way to get that precious stone out of the hiding idol without crushing it, and thereafter the idol becomes useless and is discarded.

And what are some of these idols? I do not mean brass and stone or wood only. I mean generally those idols which men worship and which they carry around in their minds and in their hearts. Don't you realize that sometimes by intemperate iconoclastic action you can actually set human hearts backwards, discourage them, throw them off the path? It is easy to be an idol-smasher. It is easy to smash; it is easy to crush; it is easy to overthrow — and it is often popular. But there is grander work for true men than that.

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND MODERN SCIENCE — *H. T. Edge*

III

LIGHT

Is light a body or not? Newton decided that it is a body; by his corpuscular theory it is the emission of particles from the source of light, or it is caused by such emission. But the phenomena of interference and some other effects could not be explained by this theory, and could be explained by the vibratory theory; so the latter supplanted the former. The theory of interference enables us to measure the wave-length of these vibrations; and by representing this length, and the distance gone by light in a second, in suitable units, and dividing the larger number by the smaller, we obtain a quotient representing the inconceivable rapidity of these vibrations, hundreds of trillion times in a second. For the vibrations we require a vibrating medium, which therefore has to be endowed with an inconceivable rapidity, while at the same time being so tenuous that it will not check the passage of bodies through it. We know of no such substance in our experience; but there seems no good reason why an hypothesis should not have those properties, and why an hypothesis should not be able to transmit those rapid vibrations and yet permit the passage of the earth through it without friction. However the question of the ether may be left aside for the moment. The point to be made now is that experimental science has found that, for certain classes of phenomena, it is necessary to regard light as a stream of particles. Allusion is here made particularly to the photo-electric effect. It was necessary therefore to conceive of light as being at once a wave-motion and a flow of particles

The only way of escaping from this difficulty, then is to assume that the wave aspect of light, and its corpuscular aspect, are as it were two different aspects of the same underlying reality.

This confirms what we quoted above from H. P. Blavatsky, that atoms are vibrations. It also confirms the teaching that there are *underlying* unities which reconcile apparent dualities. What can this word "underlying" mean but "on a higher plane"? And as to the word "reality," this is a relative term, for there is no apparent reason for regarding the higher unity as real, except in relation to its dual manifestation; while the manifestations themselves are real enough to our ordinary perceptions.

At all events we may now regard light as a body without transgressing scientific orthodoxy, and this is what H P. Blavatsky contended for. If light is not a body, it becomes reduced to a mere vibration, a "mode of motion," an effect in short. The word "light," as used in science, though deriving its name from visual sensations, really includes much more; for its effects are actinic, thermal, and otherwise, besides visual.

In *The Secret Doctrine* (1) it is described as one of the great primary forces of the universe. The expression *Fiat Lux* refers, as the Kabala says, to the evolution of the Sephiroth, the rays of the Logos.

That which is meant by the allegorical sentence, "*Fiat Lux*" is — when esoterically rendered — "Let there be the "Sons of Light'," or the noumena of all phenomena. (I, 481)

As we have said in the case of sound, science treats light as a physical phenomenon, and has little or nothing to say about the psychical phenomenon, the sensation of light, the visual faculty. And again here, as in the case of sound, we trace a chain of physical cause and effect up to the ends of certain nerves — and there comes the big jump. The gap between physical vibration and mental image is unbridged, whether we measure it as one second or as 186,000 miles. Why not say that we have light in our head or in our eye, and that the physical vibrations merely bring it into physical manifestation? That seems a pretty good theory. But with H P. Blavatsky, light is a primal force, operating on all planes, its physical manifestation being only one of these.

In the "beginning," that which is called in mystic phraseology "Cosmic *Desire*" evolves into absolute Light. Now light without any shadow would be absolute light — in other words, absolute darkness — as physical science seeks to prove. That shadow appears under the form of primordial matter allegorized — if one likes — in the shape of the Spirit of Creative Fire or Heat — (I, 201).

To know what is light, and whether it is an actual substance or a mere undulation of the "ethereal medium," Science has first to learn what are in reality Matter, Atom, Ether, Force. Now the truth is, that *it knows nothing of any of these*, and admits it. (I, 482)

This refers to the science of last century; and she continues, referring to Stallo, that the words enumerated were but convenient temporary hypotheses. They were what a surveyor might call bench marks, fixed arbitrarily as basis for a system of measurement, but subject to replacement at any necessary time. And now see what has become of the atom, the ether, force, and Matter. As shown above, it has been found impossible to measure light by the old bench marks: the question, Is light a body or not? becomes unanswerable. It is not a body in the old sense, but it is a body in another sense; nor can we call it a vibration in an ether unless we define better the words vibration and ether. Light is a cosmic energy producing manifestations on all planes, and science studies the physical manifestations, which include not only visual phenomena but also thermal and actinic effects.

ETHER

The subject of light leads to the subject of ether. The word itself is borrowed from the Greek, meaning an upper and clearer region of the atmosphere, and often the abode of the Gods; also called the empyrean. When light was defined as a vibratory phenomenon, it was necessary to imagine some extended medium in which such vibrations could inhere. Theorists were hampered by their experience of vibrating mediums in ponderable matter, such as the air with its sound

vibrations. They transferred these properties to their hypothetical aether, and tried to calculate what must be the density, rigidity, etc., of such a medium, in order that it could transmit such vibrations. But physical concepts are not applicable to an ultra-physical medium, as is now being found out. We need more data before theorizing. The aether has also had to be accommodated to electro-magnetic theory: it is at present an hypothesis, or group of hypotheses; we have no direct perception of it. The fact remains that light and electric impulses are transmitted across spaces void of physical matter, and that these impulses are of the nature of vibrations, which can be tuned.

H. P. Blavatsky, in seeking to present the ancient teachings in modern terms, makes use of this word "aether," which thus has to cover a variety of meanings. Aether, an aether, the aether, ether, Ether, etc., may be used in the desire to draw distinctions; and often the Sanskrit word *Akasa* is used in reference to higher grades of aether. Certain Hindu systems speak of five elements in Nature:

Prithivi or Earth

Apas or Water

Vayu or Air

Agni or Fire

Akasa or Ether

This system does not fit in with that of modern science, so that attempts to translate one system, word by word, into the other will not succeed. A study of these Hindu treatises is requisite, so that we may get an understanding of the meaning of these terms as used therein. However, we are concerned at present with the word "ether" only. It stands for the most subtle (from our point of view) of the series, being beyond Agni, which corresponds to luminous and thermal phenomena. The word *akasa* has been translated into "ether" for want of a better word; but we must beware of being misled into attaching to it other meanings which attach to "ether," and which do not necessarily pertain to *akasa*. Its peculiar property is stated to be sound, the other four elements being correlated to the other four senses. The scientific ether was

originally luminiferous, but since the development of wireless telephony we may surely speak of it as connected with sound. It is true that there is a conversion of sound waves into etheric waves, and back again, and that ordinary physical sound is not transmissible where there is no physical matter. But in spite of this, and in view of the wider use of the word "sound," the fact is suggestive, and may be a signpost for scientific discoveries yet to come. Some quotations from *The Secret Doctrine* may follow here.

The whole range of physical phenomena proceed from the *Primary* of Ether — Akasa, as dual-natured Akasa proceeds from undifferentiated *Chaos*, so-called, the latter being the primary *aspect* of Mulaprakriti. . . (I, 536)

The septenary gradation, and the innumerable subdivisions and differences, made by the ancients between the powers of *Ether* collectively, from its outward fringe of effects, with which our Science is so familiar, up to the "Imponderable Substance," once admitted as the "Ether of Space," now about to be rejected, has been ever a vexing riddle for every branch of knowledge. (I, 331)

Now, what does the modern science of physics know of Aether, the first concept of which belongs undeniably to ancient philosophers, the Greeks having borrowed it from the Aryans, and the origin of modern Aether being found in, and *disfigured* from, AKASA? (I, 485)

And a discussion follows as to whether we are to regard it as atomic and continuous, both alternatives being demanded by science for different reasons, and inconsistencies arising therefrom. At I, 342 and 464 we read that, with the ancients, aether was regarded as the synthesis of all the elements — synthesis, not in the sense of an additive compound, but a common source or parent. At I, 508 it is stated that, according to Occultism, aether is the source and cause of cohesion, chemical affinity, thermal, electric, and magnetic forces — in short, of the "properties of matter."

We are reminded of the quest of the Alchemists for an "Absolute," a primary element, a universal solvent, etc. Aether, as used in the above passages, is at once the source of elements and of forces. But these two words have recently lost most of their distinctiveness and have tended to become merged into one. They are Nature viewed under its active and passive aspects. When we recede from physical matter, the distinction between body and energy becomes obliterated; such a question as whether light is a body or an energy loses meaning: it is an element, and as such has both active and passive aspects. If the properties of matter are functions of ether, then it is absurd to try and explain ether itself in terms of these properties; so no wonder there is confusion if we try to do so. Ether is by hypothesis non-physical, so why expect to find physical properties in it?

And what does present-day science say about it? We have only to read current scientific literature to see how men of science are revising their views, and revising them along the lines indicated by H. P. Blavatsky. Is it not being openly said that the scientific philosophy is but a temporary structure, devised for particular purposes, but now due for alteration? This structure was made to accommodate a certain range of facts, but new facts have been discovered which do not fit into it. After all, this is but the declared scientific method, of making provisional hypotheses and enlarging them according to requirement. And many of the things which were once regarded as fundamental and universal are now seen to be merely superficial and local. The fixed and mutually independent time and space, the spatio-temporal scaffolding upon which physics has been built, has given way under the stress of the Relativity theory; and we now speak of the position of an *event* in a four-dimensional space-time continuum. It is necessary to recognise that the word "matter" may be made to cover a number of different things, of which physical matter is only one. We have to study the properties of higher forms of matter, and to bear in mind that we are endowed with higher perceptions adapted thereto, though these may be latent for want of use.

SOUND

This is a word used by science in a somewhat vague way. Ordinarily it implies audition, but the meaning has been extended to include effects which make no impression on our auditory sense. A wave-motion of a particular kind produces audible sounds when its frequency lies within certain limits; but similar vibrations can be created which lie outside those limits and produce no audible sound, and yet they are still included under the term "sound." A new name has lately been devised for the waves whose frequency is above the limit of audibility — "supersonics," and the effects of such waves have been experimentally studied. These effects are powerful, disintegrative, destructive. Classical mechanics shows that there must be a great energy in a motion which changes its direction so frequently, and corresponding energy is required to generate such a motion. Hence we have an illustration of the power of sound, or sound considered as a power. Sound, thus considered, becomes a name for longitudinal vibration in a medium. As to its connexion with audition, we are told that some animals will start at the blowing of a whistle which makes a sound too shrill for human ears to hear. What may be the case with insects? we ask ourselves. And, if man himself has subtler senses, may not these be correlated with still higher frequencies, and with vibrations thrilling in a medium subtler than any familiar to our physical perceptions? In a word, can the two ideas of sound as an energy and sound as a sensation be separated? Or are the physical and the psysical inseparably related?

In *The Secret Doctrine*, sound is spoken of as one of the primal forces in cosmos, having manifestations on every plane of objectivity, its physical manifestations being those which science studies. The creative Word, or Logos, has for its energetic aspect Sound, while on its formative side it is a Name: a mystery which underlies the use of mantrams and incantations. It would seem that no hard-and-fast distinction is made between sound as a sensation and sound as an energy, such distinction being artificial; planes of consciousness are everywhere correlated with planes of matter, the subjective with the objective; and where

sound is of a nature imperceptible to physical senses, there are other channels of perception susceptible to it. We find *Akasa* mentioned as the material cause of sound, (I, 296) and sound mentioned as the characteristic of *Akasa*. (I, 205) Another name for *Akasa* is Ether, used to connect the idea with a familiar scientific term; though, as Occultism recognises different ethers, the word *Akasa* is used to denote the higher forms as distinct from the lower. This higher Ether is spoken of as a vibratory soundboard of nature (I, 536). In Hindu systems, sound is correlated with *Akasa*. The scientific ether was postulated as a vehicle for the conveyance of undulatory vibrations of light and some other effects; but it remains merely a hypothesis, and by some is now regarded as unnecessary. Audible sounds are made perceptible by the vibrations of materials having mass — gaseous, liquid, solid — under the bell-jar of the vacuum pump, such sounds die away. There is no longer any physical sound, because there is no physical vehicle for its manifestation. There was a Punch joke where one man says to his mate: "Donal', have you got a light?" and the answer comes: "Yes, Tugal', but it's oot." What becomes of the sound when we can no longer hear it? Physics says that a certain order of vibration gives rise to a sensation called "sound"; vibration is tracked through the air to the tympanum, and from the tympanum through various structures to the auditory nerve and brain; and here we come to a big jump. The road to the bridge is magnificent, but the bridge is not crossed; as to how the molecular vibrations are converted into a sensation, science is silent — it emits no audible sound. As in the case of the human soul, the question of whose whereabouts after death is linked up with that of its whereabouts before birth, we may ask where is the sound when we cease to hear it, and where was it before it became audible. A particular vibration among physical molecules provides the condition for a physical manifestation of sound; but sound itself existed both before and after. "Music, when sweet voices die, Lingers in the memory;" and we can hear the voices of friends, and sing all the songs we like, "in our head," after our physical molecules have stopped vibrating. But perhaps this is metaphysics; very well, and science is another kind of metaphysics, for its philosophy is based, as has been

seen, on abstractions of a highly unphysical character. The study of phenomena ought surely to engross science; and these inaudible sounds in our head are phenomena. Recent scientific views confirm the need for taking into account such phenomena, if even physical phenomena are to be comprehended. The line between Knower and Known (or, if you prefer, between Subject and Object) is not a fixed line; the stakes may be shifted, so that what was once part of the Knower becomes part of the Known. We study physical phenomena with our physical senses, and then we study our physical senses with our minds: all of it is science. Once again we say that the Phenomenon cannot be understood without taking into account the Noumenon.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTE:

1. To avoid repetition references to H P Blavatsky's great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, are indicated simply by numbers denoting the volume and page. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

AN ORIGINAL POINT OF VIEW — *E. J. Dadd*

What is the "I", anyhow? For the most part it is just an egoic resultant of the interaction of a spiritual entity and an environment. Change the environment suddenly and a great deal of the warm halation which can arise in generously endowed surroundings, and which to the unwise is "I", will disappear like hot air from a pricked bladder. Oh what, what fools we mortals can be! We stand within the protecting shade of the great ones and are well pleased with what we accomplish. But are we so very confident that we shall not wilt when we move out into the hot sunlight?

Yet we must not be unduly severe with ourselves. Life, for the most of us, is very much of a riot. Our intentions are good and we step out valiantly to help the T. S. work along as best we may, lacking sufficient insight and experience to avoid the confusions along the pathway. The essential fact however that we *are* a spiritual entity within an environment will carry us through to relative safety. We may wilt for a time; but we shall gradually become used to the sunlight. And — and — shall I say it? — we may discover that we are still within the protecting shade of the great ones (and minus the halation). "Step out from shadow into sunshine in order to bring others within that protecting shade."

DUTY AND THE MORAL BALANCE — *G. de Purucker*

It is only the knowledge of blessed karman with its infinitely just measures of harmony which saves the man of mind and heart from being utterly discouraged. It is this key, to the man of the world when he understands it, which leads him up gentle gradations, upwards with an expanding vision; until finally he sees reality, as much of it as his mind can contain; and he knows that despite all his suffering in the world due to karmic necessity, fundamentally all is well.

Let no man harden his heart at this and think that he need not bestir himself to help others or to extend a helping hand or to give a draught of cooling water to the thirsty. Remember the old law that H. P. B. taught us: Inaction in a deed of pity becomes an action in a sin full of fate for you. You see why?

I wonder how many of us forget our fundamental teaching of Universal Brotherhood? Such simple words! They seem so trite, and yet they contain the doctrine of the gods. They contain, these words, UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD, all the Law and all the Prophets. Remember that knowledge brings not only power but responsibility. What might be excused unto you when you are ignorant, will be counted against you when you know the Law. This is just one of the reasons why the Masters keep the higher teachings of Theosophy, the occult doctrines, (one of the reasons at least) so strictly secret. Much is excused of a man who does not know. Little is excused the man who knows and who remains inactive. Nothing is excused the man who knows, who has power to act, and who lacks the urge to act. He is guilty of a crime against Nature; and the only thing we have to watch, we students of our Ancient Wisdom, is this: let us never so act that we offend a brother or injure him. It matters not how right we may think we may be. It matters not how wrong we are convinced our brother is. Your duty, my duty, is to care for our own dharma. Forgetting our own dharma or duty, and presuming to judge a brother and thereupon

acting against him, offending him, is full of danger. The duty, the dharma, of another for you is dangerous. Therefore do not criticize.

Such simple truths, so logical, so clear, so appealing! Our earth would be a heaven if men would but follow them. And yet today men flatter themselves, and they flatter those in high public posts, for the same evil: thinking that struggle, punishment, hate, become a moral duty. Show me one passage by the Saviors of the world that endorses this, one single passage. You will not find it. The secret is to do your own duty wherever you are and at any time. You have a duty to yourself, to your soul. The first duty of all that a man has, is to think uprightly, to think cleanly, to live rightly, never to hurt a brother. Then comes the duty to his family, then the duty to his country; and to certain rare ones there comes a duty to the gods, or demigods. This is all included however in the one statement of a man's universal duty to mankind which includes all. Whether we call this class of "rare ones" just mentioned Mahatmans, or super-Mahatmans, Bodhisattvas or Christs, it matters not.

Do not for a moment imagine that I have uttered contradictions, that there will ever be a struggle between your sense of right to Y or your sense of right to X. There never will be. Impossible! If there is a conflict in your mind, it shows that your mind is not yet clear, that you are hanging on to something. When your mind is crystal clear to the spiritual inspiration, you will have no doubts. Duty will always be clear before you; and I will tell you now that duty never calls for injuring someone else. The difficulty for us Theosophists is sometimes in moments of distress, when we are striving hard to know what is right, to *know* what is right. That comes of our imperfect spiritual and intellectual growth; and all we can do at such times is to do our best, keeping the principles of the rules before us: never injure another; be loyal to your word, be faithful to your pledge. Be honest, be cleanly in all things; be upright and harmless; wise as serpents, which means adepts; innocent or harmless as doves. The dove was in ancient times an emblem of the chela.

A great European once, when asked what he thought in a conflict of duties the most important to be, answered briefly: Do the duty which is first at hand. Then all others will find their proper places.

Thus, a man who is true to himself will be true to his family; he will be true to his country; and with the enlarging vision that this rule brings, he will be true to all mankind.

The Theosophical Forum

HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY (1) — *Clifton Meek*

1831 — 1891

"*There is no Religion Higher than Truth* "

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the passing of the founder of the Theosophical Society, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, in London, May 8, 1891, and Theosophists throughout the world are commemorating the event that brought to a close her eventful and turbulent life.

The dominant overtone of her life and work was a plea for brotherhood, charity, mutual understanding, and good-will among men, not merely a sentimental union, but an understanding of the basic law of life — universal brotherhood as a fact in nature — which she endeavored to inculcate by teaching technical Theosophy, again giving to mankind the long-hidden spiritual and literary treasures of the ancient East, the original fount of ancient wisdom from which the great religious founders and metaphysical philosophers of every age have drawn their inspiration. She claimed the teachings not as her own, but as the oldest known to mankind which she had derived from certain adepts of the Trans-Himalayan School whom she had personally met and studied under while in the Orient, and at whose instigation she was sent to America to form "a nucleus of universal brotherhood," the Theosophical Society, a mission which she inaugurated in 1875 in New York City. Considering the broad scope and depth of her teachings regarding religion, science and philosophy, probably the greatest compliment her critics paid her was the charge that she had "invented" them. Her crowning literary achievement, *The Secret Doctrine*, completed a short time before her death, has become increasingly popular with the passing years as a mine of information to students of Oriental philosophy and occult science. Dr. Thaddeus P. Hyatt of Stamford, an old student of *The Secret Doctrine*, recently

compiled a bibliography of that work in which he revealed that Madame Blavatsky referred to or quoted from more than 700 authors on over 90 subjects. This included many branches of science, many philosophers, and all the great religions known to the world today.

After a lapse of half a century it is possible to judge with some degree of fairness the effect of her teachings upon occidental thought. It is no exaggeration to say that perhaps no other single individual contributed more to breaking the materialistic and dogmatic concepts of the scientific and religious thought of that century. She frankly stated that it was her aim to "break the molds of mind," and that it was nobler to think than to merely believe and live in an air-tight mental closet of crystalized opinions. Like all others who have challenged the established beliefs and dogmas of any day and age, she aroused the enmity of fixed and static minds in both religion and science, but she attracted the most thoughtful and imaginative minds of her time. The scientific thought of her day was dominated by the Darwinian theory which was the direct offspring of the philosophy of Nietzsche and his theory of the "survival of the fittest," a materialistic doctrine which denied the spiritual aspect of man and nature, the logical conclusion of which can be seen in Europe today. It was a "dog eat dog" concept of life, the keynote of our present age into which a strange Russian woman attempted to introduce a breath of spiritual sanity.

Madame Blavatsky anticipated the present world crisis when in the early eighties she wrote: "Theosophy is Altruism, and we cannot repeat it too often. It is brotherly love, mutual help, unswerving devotion to Truth. If once men do but realise that in these alone can true happiness be found, and never in wealth, possessions, or any selfish gratification, then the dark clouds will roll away, and a new humanity will be born upon earth. Then, the Golden Age will be there, indeed. But if not, then the storm will burst, and our boasted western civilization and enlightenment will sink in such a sea of horror that its parallel History has never yet recorded." [*Lucifer*, Vol. IV, May, 1889]

"We are at the end of a cycle — geological and other — and at the

beginning of another. Cataclysm is to follow cataclysm. . . . We are not emulous of the prophet's honors; but still, let this stand as a prophecy." [The Theosophist, Vol. V, November, 1883]

Contrary to popular belief, Madame Blavatsky did not attempt to foist a "new religion" upon mankind, already overburdened with multitudinous sects and creeds, but sought to show the basic and fundamental truths — the Theosophy — underlying all religions which had become encrusted with man-made dogmas and creeds with the passing of time and the frailty of human understanding. In her introduction to *The Secret Doctrine* she stated: "The Esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life. The true philosopher, the student of esoteric wisdom, entirely loses sight of personalities, dogmatic beliefs and special religions. Moreover, esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips everyone of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute divine principle in nature. It denies deity no more than it does the sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in nature, nor deity as the absolute and abstract ens. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable."

An editorial published in the N. Y. Tribune, May 10, 1891, at the time of her passing, stated among other things: "Few women in our time have been more persistently misrepresented, slandered, and defamed, than Madame Blavatsky, but though slander and ignorance did their worst upon her, there are abundant indications that her life-work will vindicate itself, that it will endure, and that it will operate for good. For nearly 20 years she has devoted herself to the dissemination of doctrines the fundamental principles of which are of the loftiest ethical character. However Utopian may appear to some minds an attempt in the nineteenth century to break down the barriers of race, nationality,

caste and class prejudice, and to inculcate that spirit of brotherly love which the greatest of all teachers enjoined in the first century, the nobility of the aim can only be impeached by those who repudiate Christianity. Madame Blavatsky held that the regeneration of mankind must be based upon the development of altruism. In this she was at one with the greatest thinkers, not alone of the present day, but of all time. — This alone would entitle her teachings to the candid and serious consideration of all who respect the influences that make for righteousness. — No one in the present generation has done more toward reopening the long-sealed treasures of Eastern thought, wisdom and philosophy. — Her steps often led, indeed, where only a few initiates could follow, but the tone and tendency of all her writings were healthful, bracing and stimulating. The work of Madame Blavatsky has already borne fruit, and is destined, apparently, to produce still more marked and salutary effects in the future. She herself has finished the course, and after a strenuous life she rests. But her personal influence is not necessary to the continuance of the great work to which she put her hand. That will go on with the impulse it has received and some day, if not at once, the loftiness and purity of her aims, the wisdom and scope of her teachings, will be recognized more fully, and her memory will be accorded the honor to which it is justly entitled.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Norwalk Hour*, Norwalk, Conn, May 8, 1941.

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The Theosophical Forum

WHAT ABOUT ASTROLOGY? — *Charles J. Ryan*

DR. Carl G. Jung, the eminent psychologist and orientalist, says in his *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (p. 43) that "there are some facts adequately tested and fortified by a wealth of statistics which make the astrological problem seem worthy of philosophical investigation," adding that "the fact that it is possible to construct, in adequate fashion, a person's character from the date of his nativity, shows the relative value of astrology."

He bases his opinion on the time-honored philosophy which sees the Universe as *One* in the full meaning of the word, a cosmos in which every part is linked in perfect unison or correspondence with every other part at any given moment of time, regardless of such mechanical impediments on the physical plane as the limit attached to the speed of light. The Divine Power, Sustainer of all manifestation, "God Impersonal," who is Here and There without distinction, Omnipresent, cannot be located in any point of space or in a "heaven" of simple minds, to receive messages that take measurable time to be transmitted. In regard to the significance of an astrological chart as an index to the cosmic conditions at the moment of birth as mentioned by Dr. Jung, we might crudely represent the principle by the idea of a ball of string composed of various colors and materials connected without a break. Getting hold of one end of the string would enable us to unravel the ball and discover the nature of the interior. Dr. Jung says "whatever is born or done in *this moment of time* has the *qualities* of this moment of time," however diverse and distant the contemporary events may be; and he concludes that astrology is one definite method of making connexion with and thereby of discovering the content of any given "moment of time." The reader is referred to Dr. Jung's book for the exposition of this important point; space will not permit fuller treatment here. Philosophical students of astrology, such as Dr. Jung and his school, believe that it has a basis of truth unfamiliar to the

ordinary practitioner of the art. However, in the book mentioned above and in his *Disintegration of Personality*, Dr. Jung explains that astrology is not unique in its power to lift the veil of Isis, even if only a little. For instance, the Chinese method of divination by the "throwing-sticks" called "I Ching" has been effectively employed for at least 3000 years, and Dr. Jung describes a definite prediction obtained that way which he and a large group of psychologists personally witnessed, and which was perfectly fulfilled in due course.

Unfortunately, the line of study followed by the great majority of our "practical-minded" scientists is not in sympathy with that kind of research which seeks the more subtil aspects of nature, and anything savoring of "mysticism" (a much abused word) is suspect, even though backed by strong evidence and the support of brilliant minds. We are told by our contemporary astronomers, whose mathematical skill and profound researches into the *physical* aspect of the celestial spaces — their proper field — compel unstinted admiration, that astrology is a pure illusion, and that even the more philosophical and symbolical interpretation is no more than special pleading.

This attitude is natural enough in this "Age of Iron," and we can easily understand the difficulties that victims of our materialistic systems of thought and education, so-called, would meet in breaking through the mental observances in which they are enmeshed. Even in such a comparatively simple matter as telepathy the efforts of a few intuitive scientists to study it have encountered the same intolerance for heterodox innovations that Galileo suffered from when he rebelled against the overwhelming authority of certain erroneous teachings of Aristotle and thereby outraged the academic mind of his period.

Ever since the advent of the Theosophical Movement with its revelations of the Eastern knowledge about man and nature, a new spirit of inquiry into the Occult has arisen in the public mind, and already more than one so-called "superstition" has been found to be based on sober facts. While little is yet said openly, it is suspected that many scientists are feeling that the tides of thought are beginning to

turn and carry Western mechanistic speculation from its cramped and insecure anchorage to what they erroneously fear to be a dangerous and uncharted ocean of unreality!

But in regard to fake astrology, just as in the case of quack medicine, scientists have a right and a duty to protest against both the well-meaning incompetents and the horde of charlatans who pretend to "rule the planets" for the credulous in regard to stock quotations, love affairs, lucky days, as well as the newspapers which publish fabulous predictions, etc. Quite lately, a Boston local committee of the American Association of Scientific Workers has started a movement to break public belief in astrology in any form, calling it a "current fad" and pointing out that "physical scientists are apparently without exception opposed to the teaching of astrology." It should, we learn, be regarded merely if at all "as an interesting stage in the historical development of science that has definitely been superseded as the nature of the universe became more fully understood." (We might mention that probably never did so many persons in Western countries take an interest in the subject as at the present time!) The Boston group says that the practice of astrology (presumably for hire) is prohibited in a few of our States, and it urges more effective and uniform legal restrictions. If this means the suppression of astrological magazines it suggests the danger of an un-American regimentation of thought at the bidding of a scientific bureau.

The Report issued by this group does not indicate a really impartial handling of the subject, and we feel that no investigation can be satisfactory unless it is conducted without preconceived opinions or bias. A real study of astrology should give particular attention to the reason why so many intelligent people are satisfied that it contains valuable pearls of truth even though encrusted by a perhaps unprepossessing shell. Is it not possible that the scornful attitude of astronomers toward astrology is largely responsible for its abuses, because an unbiased scientific study would have probably, to use another simile, cleared away the jungle of superstitions which have choked the good grain? Careful and intelligent persons who have

obtained even a modicum of success in astrological research — results which exceed the possible amount allowed by the laws of chance — naturally wonder at the persistent opposition of the skeptics. For instance there is the French scientist and mathematician, Commandant Paul Choisnard, and his school, who more than forty years ago made a very elaborate statistical study of the dates of birth and death in the cases of very many thousand soldiers in military hospitals (where exact data were available) and found that the frequency of death in those cases where the transit of Mars was taking place over the position of the sun at birth was three times that of the general average. Careful observations like these and many others made by Choisnard on statistical lines, cannot be disregarded and classed as "medieval superstitions" by unbiased persons who know the facts. Perhaps some who have "come to curse may remain to bless" when they find that advanced students of astrology are familiar with the somewhat naive objections brought against it by most skeptics, and that they have even faced more serious objections than are suspected by the confident critics.

Investigating committees in other unwelcome fields of inquiry as well as astrology have followed the same course as this Boston group, and yet have failed to prove a negative. How many times have inventors and discoverers had to fight against every conceivable obstacle for recognition! For years the astronomical world refused to listen to the crazy, "superstitious" notion that stones — meteorites — could fall from the sky, in spite of clear evidence.

The latest recantation of the denial of genuine natural phenomena because they were "pure nonsense, baseless superstitions and old wives" tales," is of special interest in relation to the dogmatic condemnation of astrology still in vogue. We refer to divination for water or metals by the divining rod, or Dowsing as it is properly called, which at last has been studied by scientists using the technical equipment of modern physics, and reported on favorably. For a few decades one or two courageous scientists, such as Sir William Barrett, f. r. s., have dabbled with Dowsing, but rather suddenly it is becoming an

accepted fact in nature which can be studied by scientists without losing caste. Of course the technique is brought into line with the terminology of modern physics, formulas of high-frequency radiation, interference patterns, polarization, etc., but the important point is that it is admitted that the time-honored methods and results were sound. Yet the editorial writer in *The Scientific American* magazine for February, 1941, who discusses the most important physical studies of Dowsing with approval and admits the validity of the art, renders little honor or even attention to the efforts of the courageous, practical and sober-minded men who have for so many years demonstrated their peculiar powers in face of ridicule and the opposition of academic scientists who condemned without proper investigation; although he does censure their illogical attitude. At certain times Dowsing was a dangerous practice. According to an old book in the British Museum, *Mineralogia Cornubriensis*, by William Pryce m. d., "Hooson says that the first inventor of the *Virgula Divinatoria* [the Divining Rod] was hanged as a cheat and impostor!" The editorial writer merely rejoices that any supposed mystery or "occult" atmosphere has been removed from Dowsing. Well, some may think so; but many of its "mysteries" are still unsolved, among others the curious fact that certain persons can respond to radiations from water only, others from one or another metal or metals, and some can get definite information from large scale maps without actually traveling over the ground! The influence of the phases of the moon has also been traced. No mysteries left in Dowsing, indeed" Studies on these lines bring up the ancient philosophy of sympathies and antipathies, of stellar influences and that terrible subject — the Occult!

In regard to another disputed problem, the reality of psychic phenomena, the story of the battle for recognition is instructive. Ever since the time, about a century ago, when critical attention was directed toward such things as the "spirit rappings" of the Fox sisters at Hydesville, N. Y., many efforts have been started by skeptics, singly or in groups, to prove beyond all question that mediumistic phenomena, haunted houses, apparitions, telepathy even, and in short everything

that evidenced the existence of other planes of being than the physical, were absolutely non-existent. The reports of these skeptical investigators are instructive for they show that no final and unanimous conclusions were reached, and as it became clear that further study was needed to "prove" the negative verdict desired, a new committee and then another and another tried their hands. One result was, however, that many intelligent and unprejudiced persons became convinced that occult phenomena of one kind or another occur under certain circumstances and that they are produced under laws yet unknown to modern science, though strictly "natural." This is of course the Theosophical view, and by "natural" we include far more than the physical, however ethereal. From all that is suggested by experiment and from the teaching of the great occult Sages and Seers, it requires a high and rare spiritual development before these laws can be understood or controlled.

Quite recently *The Scientific American* started a new investigation into psychic phenomena conducted by a well-selected committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Dunninger, the famous exponent of the fine art of conjuring. This body has apparently not set out to "disprove" anything, but is looking for positive evidence one way or the other, the right scientific method. This committee may get more decisive results than its predecessors. In connexion with inquiries of this kind H. P. Blavatsky humorously comments:

If spiritualists are anxious to keep strictly dogmatic in their notions of the "spirit-world," they must not set *scientists* to investigate their phenomena in the true experimental spirit. The attempt would most surely result in a partial re-discovery of the magic of old — that of Moses and Paracelsus. Under the deceptive beauty of some of their apparitions, they might find some day the sylphs and fair Undines of the Rosicrucians playing in the currents of *psychic* and *odic* force — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 67

Is it not possible that the Boston committee which is seeking to expose

astrology will find it a hard task to reach a unanimous decision in the negative, and that even the few authentic teachings that have survived in modern astrology from the wreckage of the ancient Mystery Schools may provide enough demonstrable evidence to show that it has a substantial foundation?

To judge by the number of books on astrology recently published there seems to be no lessening of interest in the subject, and it should be noted by the skeptics that most of them, though not alarmingly technical, are not of a kind to attract the uneducated and the unthinking. Mr. Marc E. Jones's *How to Learn Astrology* is not intended for the illiterate, the credulous, nor the vulgar fortune-teller class; it is constructively critical. The publisher correctly describes it as an amazingly simple book based on a new and striking method of approach to the subject, and particularly to Natal Astrology. It contains much of value in a small compass. The author starts by showing the beginner how to regard an astrological chart in the way an artist looks at a picture, first getting a general impression and then studying the larger details and so forth until at last he is sufficiently prepared to make a fair interpretation of the whole and to cast a figure. Certain general groupings or "patterns" of the planets in a chart, regardless of their individual significance indicate the leading characteristic of the "native," and these can be easily detected if this interpretation is accepted. It is certainly worth careful examination.

Mr. Jones accepts the position taken by Dr. Carl G. Jung, already mentioned here, and says "The time of birth, modified by the geographical place of its occurrence, can be translated into the pattern of the instant, as this is given individual and recognizable form in the kaleidoscopic heavenly motions" and can "be captured on a piece of paper" for study. Mr. Jones apologizes for being too "hopelessly philosophical" for some readers, but we believe he is right in expressing the subtil philosophical point which may appeal to philosophic-minded students of science who would certainly not be impressed by baby-talk or mere assertions. He shows that many generations of astrological devotees have distrusted "the academic

mind" because of its conservatism and have unwisely refused to ask "the help which a careful scholarship might have given," but he very properly insists upon the need to employ exact scientific methods "without adopting the prejudices of the conventional scientists."

Dr. W. J. Tucker, editor of *Science and Astrology* magazine (London), in his *The How, What and Why of Astrology* takes a different point of view from that of Mr. Jones, and, we think, a less intuitive and philosophical one which inclines towards the mechanistic position and in which the doctrines of modern physics are called on to bear a heavier astrological load than they can legitimately bear. This appears in his criticism of "thoroughgoing occultists" in astrology who "merely account celestial phenomena and celestial bodies as *signs* and *symbols* of something which will happen months hence, or even years hence." Dr. Tucker calls this "insensate" for it is the stars and planets themselves which really affect human destinies. Such charged bodies, he claims, do this by producing variations in the magnetic field of the earth by their constant changes of position. Of course we know that from a purely physical aspect gravitational influences of the planets slightly affect the movements of the earth, and that the sun and moon have definite magnetic fields, but our information about planetary magnetism is very uncertain. Even the sun's magnetic field is so weak that it cannot be measured more than 200 miles above the surface, the photosphere.

In his rather brief reference to the Precession of the Equinoxes, Dr. Tucker explains that each sign of the moveable zodiac is a significator of character and has a powerful effect on different parts of the body, etc. Yet these Signs are, as he points out, "purely a mathematical proposition," "continuously shifting in respect to the stars," i. e., to the real stars in the real constellations which bear the same names as the abstract mathematical Signs. The Signs are only a mental picture, a geometrical figure which we project across the background of the sky in our imagination. Being moveable, they coincide only at very long intervals of time with the physical constellations from which radiations of light traverse abysses of space at a definite velocity, perhaps accompanied by induced magnetic fields. If these energies come from

the actual stars what is it that radiates from the mathematical, non-material Signs and according to astrology is able to produce effects on people and things? Can it be something mental or spiritual, such as we can only deal with symbolically, and haltingly follow with our laboring minds? Is it intelligent?

The problem of the seeming independence of the moveable Signs and the fixed constellations has long been a thorn in the side of popular astrology, and the application of the "scientific magnetic field" hypothesis does not reduce the apparent paradox. If we said that students of the deeper teachings of Theosophy have some clarifying information, our author might object that we were introducing the scientifically tabooed subject of Occultism! Well, perhaps it does, and perhaps Theosophy can show that though the problem is a paradox it is not a flat contradiction.

When, however, we are asked to believe that the light rays "with their accompanying magnetic fields," coming from the almost infinite distances of the stars can combine with those of the nearby planets at the moment of birth "to set the paths of the electrons which compose the child's body into a fixed and definite pattern which appears to exist for the duration of its life" (p. 22), we feel that the difficulties are even greater than those of the paradoxical Precessional problem. How can the radiations which take only a few hours at most to reach us from the constantly moving planets arrive so neatly at the same moment as those which have traveled for centuries from the stars and yet which must blend harmoniously with them to produce a workable personality? Furthermore, we must assume that such a mechanical combination of physical magnetic fields can explain the infinitely complex structure of a human being without any "occult" factor being introduced! The Boston anti-astrological group not unnaturally disputes the suggestion that mechanical forces or influences can produce tangible effects on people because, as they say, "the walls of hospitals and other buildings where babies are born are opaque to all known radiations of stars and planets," a sound objection if we only refer to the scientific definition of magnetism and magnetic fields, and

one that astrologers who want to keep in the good graces of modern physical science will find difficult to answer. The objection, of course, does not affect the "occult" interpretation of the activities of "nature's finer forces" which obey laws of another kind.

There are even more serious obstacles facing those who assert that human *temperaments and moral characters* are governed by stellar forces in any ordinary meaning of the words. We do not find scientists allowing for a moment that "magnetic fields" and so forth are *intelligent* in any shape or form, yet, if not, how can such mechanical factors creatively build up the infinite variety of combinations in the moral, intellectual, and spiritual character of a single individual? What have the scientist's "magnetic fields" in common with the emotions?

The difficulties in studying astrological influences greatly increase when branches of astrology such as those dealing with coming events, answers to questions, etc. (not included in either of the interesting books we are considering, which only treat of the birth-chart) are taken up without a recognition of the occult structure of the universe, of which the physical and material is but one manifestation. We fear that Dr. Tucker's laudable effort "to put the subject for the first time [!] on a firm scientific basis" will fail unless he greatly deepens and widens the common interpretation of the word "scientific," which only too often means "materialistic." Fortunately for humanity, there are increasing signs that materialistic views are losing ground in some departments of science. We can see by such books as Dr. Gustaf Strömbmberg's *The Soul of the Universe*, and Dr. Knut Lundmark's writings on stellar evolution and consciousness that high-ranking astronomers are not all satisfied with mechanistic theories.

Dr. Tucker handles the difficult problem of free will in astrology with good sense. He says that "the astrological dictum, "Character is Destiny," only holds true when a man acts phenomenally as a non-moral being"; but man has been given free will and a moral self with which to combat the lower desires, appetites, and ambitions; and that "the operation of the will will act as a deflecting force; and this is

something which will defeat any predictions which are based upon the arc of character-determinism." He divides man into three parts: (a) his character, which is determined, (b) his free will, and (c) his moral self. This is not far from the Theosophical point of view, but no explanation is offered for the alleged fact that we are obliged to accept a character determined by the action of "magnetic fields," for which we are not responsible, and which is often a very poor specimen. Without the factors of Reincarnation and Karma the character, and to a degree the destiny, perhaps, indicated by the birth-chart, would be purely a matter of chance and accident so far as the particular individual is concerned. Yet this is a universe of law!

Another point that needs stressing is that the character, however obtained, is only the temporary presentation of the limited personality, the mask, that the permanent Ego wears for that particular incarnation, Mr. Smith, or Mrs. Tomkins. Too many modern astrologers only think of the outer shell, the superficial aspect of the real man; but two well-known English students, Alan Leo and W. R. Old ("Sepharial"), who have exercised a profound influence by their philosophical approach to astrology, saw further; and Theosophists who are looking for more than signs and wonders in the heavens will not regret time spent in reading their works. Alan Leo, who took much from H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, must have had a strong intuitional faculty. He showed that while in Exoteric Astrology the planet ruling the ascending sign, and so forth, describes the personality, the "mask," the Lower Manas focussed in the brain, the student who can look deeper and discriminate will find indications of the Higher Self reflected even in the distorted form of the ordinary personal horoscope. It is seen as in a glass, darkly. Alan Leo works out the principle that in our higher nature we belong to the sun regarded as Divine consciousness, while the moon with its mental aspect symbolizes the limited and ever-changing personalities which feebly reflect the solar light.

As to the intrinsic value of astrology to those who desire to become true occultists, H. P. Blavatsky points out in her *Occultism and the Occult*

Arts that the incidental appendages to real Occultism such as Astrology, Palmistry, Ceremonial Magic, etc., when not useless or misleading are only indirect and imperfect methods of trying to gain knowledge of nature. She also shows that the acquirement of occult arts is only for the present incarnation, while those who travel on the true Path gain ground that is never lost. Many students have verified this teaching by experience, sometimes by great suffering before they discovered that they had wandered from "the strait and narrow" Path of Occultism which is the training and purification of heart and mind, self-discipline, impersonal love, self-forgetfulness, leading to Self-knowledge and the opening of the inner Vision. There is, of course, no objection to the study of astrology as a relaxation for spare time, but it cannot be regarded in its present imperfect condition as of importance in the training of character. When it becomes more enlightened and purified astrology may help to break down materialism, but it would still be far from the true Esoteric Astrology which H. P. Blavatsky refers to in a well-known passage:

Astrology is built wholly upon the mystic and intimate connection between the heavenly bodies and mankind; and it is one of the great secrets of Initiation and Occult mysteries — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 500

The Theosophical Forum

THE "THEOLOGY" OF THEOSOPHY — *Louis E. Van Norman*

"What I should like to have you explain to me," said a friend the other day, "is the theology of Theosophy." "Theosophy has no theology," I replied. "That is, if by the term theology you mean a system of dogmas, of precise doctrines drawn or inherited from historic sources, from the dicta of human beings, religious leaders."

"But would you claim that Theosophists don't have their particular brand of truth and insist upon your believing it?"

"Yes, I mean to say just that. Theosophy does not insist upon any particular brand of truth. On the contrary, it teaches that, since truth is reality, cosmic reality, and human intelligence is limited, man can go only so far toward truth as his intellectual and spiritual insight enables him to go. He himself must always be the judge. If the evidence honestly convinces him, it is for him the truth."

"But how about those with sectarian backgrounds? Can we accept such an attitude? What must we believe? In other words, can we become Theosophists I mean, without discarding our old faiths entirely?"

"Yes. Strange as it may seem to you, that is possible. I myself have found many different faiths represented in the Theosophical Society — Christians, Jews, Hindus. I believe you will find people with these backgrounds represented in the Theosophical Society, holding to the Ancient Wisdom which was originally in their own faiths. But now they understand what Theosophists mean when they refer to their teachings as God Wisdom."

"I am not convinced as to the theology point. Theosophists must have some sort of system to which they expect you to subscribe. I don't mean what they teach in their books. I mean the general objects of their teaching, if you like to put it that way. The other day I went to one of the meetings in the Temple at Point Loma and someone handed me a

circular which listed the "Objects" of the Theosophical Society. They seem to me to be a sort of Theology. Perhaps, if these "Objects" were stated in simpler language this flavor of theology might disappear."

"Does the language in which these "Objects" are stated really seem theological? Let me restate them — or try to do so — in even simpler phraseology. Let me use phrases which, even if somewhat less dignified than those in the circular, will perhaps be more comprehensible to the man in the street and the woman in the home in these United States of ours in the year 1941. If I can do this acceptably I believe no true Christian, Jew, Buddhist, or even so-called Agnostic, will find any real difficulty in agreeing with what is set forth and, at the same time, in holding to the basic tenets of his own particular faith. They all began as inheritances from the Ancient Wisdom which Theosophy teaches."

As set forth in the circular in question the first "Object" (a) of the Theosophical Society is:

"To diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the universe." This might be otherwise stated to read:

"To set down and explain, so far as may be possible, so that all who wish may understand, how things work in this universe in which we live."

We all know and believe that, as Browning has put it, "God's in His heaven, All's right with the world." But we will be happier and nobler if we understand something of the laws of God by whatever name we may know Him.

The second object of the Theosophical Society (b) is:

"To promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is, and to demonstrate that this unity is fundamental in Nature."

"Promulgate" is, perhaps, a rather stiff formal word. The dictionary says it means "to announce officially." Frankly, I confess I don't like the official smack to the word. But here it really means that the

Theosophical Society is willing to stand behind, to endorse, an organized effort to spread abroad facts and information going to prove that the universe in which we live is one, fundamentally one, and that man is part of this oneness. There are many scientific historical facts to prove this. We might make a paraphrase of this "Object" to read this way:

"To spread abroad, with the approval of the Theosophical leaders, and reference to historical sources, a knowledge of the fact that we are all one — animate and inanimate nature, the land, the sea, the stars, the animals, and man himself."

Let us leave until the last "Object (c)." It is in many ways the most important of all.

Now take "Object (d)":

"To study ancient and modern religion, science, and philosophy." This seems quite clear and concise as stated. It is of course a very large order. But how inspiring and stimulating.

"Object (e)" is stated as:

"To investigate the powers innate in man."

Most of us know very little about our powers. Today we are being told by all sorts of alleged authorities, including impostors, that we have powers over nature and ourselves. We need to know the truth about these powers. Not for material gain but for our spiritual enlightenment. The wise Greek said: "Man, know thyself," and thou shalt know all that can be known.

All of Theosophy, all of human duty and opportunity, is bound up in the lofty purpose set forth in "Object (c)":

"To form an active brotherhood among men."

This is regarded as so important by Theosophists that all they ask of those who wish to join their ranks is a sincere acceptance of this belief.

"Could any object be more lofty or important in these years in which we are living? Could any theology held to by any church, or other religious body, be more soul-inspiring, more divine, more practical than this?"

My friend left me with an admission that theologies are not so important as he had been accustomed to regard them, but that "Objects" are. He promised to read theosophical books to learn about the "teachings" of the great ones of all ages and all lands who have given us what we know as the Ancient Wisdom.

The Theosophical Forum

KINGS, LEADERS AND DICTATORS — *Arthur A. Beale*

The public mind today is much perturbed and often vexed on this question of Leadership and Dictatorship. It is important to clarify one's mind on what these issues stand for and do not stand for. Let us examine the cosmic system. Our Theosophical philosophy contains the explanation of fundamental principles that are universal, consistent, permanent, and convincing to minds prepared for the truth. It involves three propositions:

- I. A Universal, boundless, omnipresent, and immutable principle, concerning which speculation is impossible.
- II. The eternity of the Universe, carried with absolute Universality of periodicity.
- III. The fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Over-Soul, being the basis of Universal Brotherhood.

These three fundamental propositions work out through seven processes, but it is sufficient to mention four of these for our purpose. We wish to emphasize: 1. Reimbodiment. 2. Karman. 3. Hierarchies. 4. Evolution. That is, that all entities re embody; all are subject to the law of Karman or consequences; all evolve from lower grades to higher; and all in consequence find themselves associated with groups or Hierarchies and in their hierarchy find their proper level, not by designation of a superior being, but by their own affinity. In fact the whole Universe is a product of law and order.

Incidentally a hierarchy is a group of entities of common interests and grade of evolution, and composed of smaller groups contained in and part of this larger group. Every such group whether large or small belongs to and is incorporated in a hierarchy of more comprehensive bulk and importance, i. e., more evolved.

Every hierarchy has at its head, a hierarch or head, that is, an entity who has assimilated all the lessons of his hierarchy and therefore is its

"head-man." He is there not by any false process, not by election or choice, but by a "divine right." He has earned it, and by his own superior evolution, he is there, and one judges that this law is the origin of the saying "the divine right of kings." But let us not forget the ordinary king does not hold his position by divine right but often only by birth right; he is only a symbol.

In the old days when the Mystery-Schools played such an important part in the control of the race, there was recognized a spiritual hierarchy of adepts, that is, advanced souls. And there were priest-kings, those wonderful, compassionate and wise Souls, who by their innate powers and wisdom assumed control and responsibility; and when such a system was established the collective wisdom of the community and their spiritual demands ensured the continuous supply of subsequent hierarchs to fill the place of the one departing.

So one gets, as a natural law, a system of a succession of the most fit. This principle was adopted by Christianity as the apostolic succession, and this is an assumed principle of the Roman Catholic Church, that recognizes St. Peter as the first pope.

But these successors were adopted by a very frail system — a reflex of the collective moral, spiritual or non-spiritual consciousness of the extant community.

The fact remains that leaders, teachers, rulers are required in every movement or community of interests, and are evident in presidents of societies, premiers of governments, governors of states and rulers of nations.

It is a Universal principle, but is not always consistent with natural or divine principles; it is often only an artificial and imperfect simulation of these. The nature of the hierarch is always a reflection of the collective consciousness of the community. A corrupt or criminal community may acquire a gangster for its head. A spiritual community may and does by its inherent spirituality acquire a spiritual head. A pronounced individuality may and often does by his force of character

impose his individuality on a community, often with great benefit to that community. Such a ruler may prove himself a beneficent force, or he may, by a process of profound egotism and personal ambition degenerate from a beneficent force to a consummate nuisance.

Even an autocrat may be beneficent, but the tax on his personal makeup to retain his or her balance as a benevolent force is tremendous.

In the divine or cosmic system of hierarchs, before the hierarch is worthy to occupy such a place, he has to pass through incarnations or aeons of probation, till every virtue is tested and strengthened by long processes of trials and sufferings, till every selfish instinct, every bit of personal egotism, is swept out of his nature, every weakness to temptation is eradicated, in fact until a Christ-like compassion, a profound wisdom, an unassailable peace flows from his soul — and we see a Master of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace: a man incapable of meanness, weakness, fear or cupidity, a man of sound judgment, supreme knowledge, indomitable will and understanding heart. And such simply find their position in the golden chain of the spiritual hierarchy. They are the spiritual guides, comforters, protectors and kings of the race, in an unbroken chain of every grade of evolution. A self-appointed demagogue, who by his personal will, fine oratory, and forceful nature acquires a supreme control, is no guarantee of beneficent rulerhood, but is symbolical of the consciousness of those ruled. They have called him forth.

The moral of these suggestions is that because we have had throughout historical times evidences of leaders and dictators who have become nuisances, menaces, aggressors and objectionable autocrats, that is no argument against leadership, kingship, or autocrats. Yes, let us have autocrats, but divine autocrats, who know, who never encroach on another's right, who never self-seek, who are free from egotism, who are wise, compassionate and peaceful.

TWO GREAT PLAYS — A STUDY OF KARMAN — *Alice D. Peirce*

The Theosophical teaching about Karman is of the utmost practical importance in these days when a question-mark seems to be the most familiar mental symbol of the future. At best our knowledge of a teaching so fundamental and so profound in its deeper reaches is limited. But without some degree of understanding of this indispensable key to the mysteries of life, we have little to explain the bewildering facts and events of our world.

Extending the etymological meaning of the word, which is *action*, possibly the most accurate definition of Karman is the Law of Consequences. This so-called "law", or operation of Nature, is the unerring adjuster of disturbed balance, well-known to physical science in the formula: action and reaction are equal and opposite. Perform an act, there is reaction: produce a cause, there is sequence. If it were possible to imagine a condition where perfect equilibrium prevails, there would be no such thing as karman. The pendulum would be at rest.

In the physical world the operation of karman is unmistakable. Break the laws of health; defy gravitation; ignore the natural properties of fire, water, gases, chemicals, and dire results are to be expected. These reactions upon us are automatic. No account is taken of ignorance, of motive, or of any other conditions. An impersonal, inescapable law operates. We have the choice whether to act in conformity with law and order, or suffer the consequences. To trace effect back to cause is comparatively easy in the material world.

In the realm of the inner man, however, it becomes more difficult. Here subtil factors are involved — thought, emotion, desire, and our intricate relationships with all other beings whom we contact. Tracing effect to cause in this domain is often too entangled for our limited vision to accomplish, and utterly impossible if it be confined to the

compass of one earth life. Everyone has experiences for which there is no explanation on the basis of known causes. Only the correlative doctrine of Reimbodiment renders just or logical the fact that we suffer sometimes without the slightest notion of what brought it about. Realization that the thread of continuity is unbroken from life to life, brings the assurance that we suffer, justly, from our own past thoughts and deeds, and not, unjustly, from causes we had no part in producing. Appearing upon the stage of life at each rebirth with a definite character, built by ourselves in past lives, it follows that upon these innate characteristics depends our future destiny.

Karman is sometimes presented as though it were a ledger account, in black and red, of rewards and punishments. But it is much more than that and should not be conceived as so coldly mechanical.

Compassionately, karman operates to educate and correct, rather than to merely balance an account. Hourly choices which we make with free-will, determine whether our accounts conform to the primary law of Harmony, or work against it. The ultimate dictum, let us remember, is that harmony must prevail throughout Nature. If disturbed, it shall be restored — it may be soon, or "after many days."

Therefore Karman denotes a deeply philosophical doctrine, and means an operation of Nature which is utterly impersonal and unevadable. It is *not* Fate, for that implies some outside power or agency beyond human control which predetermines our lot. Endowed with the divine faculty of free-will, we alone have that power over our fortunes. For we are our own karman.

As a spider spins his cobweb with filament issuing from his own substance, each of us is weaving, strand by strand, a self-made destiny. Man being a lesser organism within a greater, the sum of all individual destinies constitutes a vast and complicated Kosmic fabric, formed of interwoven strands. It is because these separate destinies interweave, act upon and react against each other, that Karman is so difficult to fathom in its details. Only the vision of a Seer could disentangle an individual thread of destiny, spun through ages of material existence,

and trace each event to its originating cause.

The classic myth of the Three Fates shows that the old Greeks well understood that a continuous thread of destiny runs through every life. Clotho, the spinner; Lachesis who measured, and Atropos who clipped the thread with her shears, represent the whole cycle of life — Past, Present, and Future. Nemesis, the Greeks called the goddess of retributive justice. Without attributes and propelled into action by men and nations, she was made by them an avenging Fury or a rewarding Angel. Nemesis could never be appeased by prayers or sacrifices, nor deflected from the course automatically followed after some action produced a disturbance of harmony.

No lesson from the wisdom gleaned by older generations is so sorely needed today as this basic truth that, ultimately, justice will prevail. The baneful and utterly false idea that a man by last-minute profession of faith, and so-called repentance, or in any other way, can escape the just consequences of his actions, has undermined character and bred indifference to responsibility for wrongdoing. Knowledge of these inseparable laws of Karman and Reimbodiment must be extensive if we are to build a better world on sure foundations.

This teaching has been presented in many ways and from various angles during the more than three-score years since the mighty voice of Blavatsky proclaimed again these ever-rustless keys to the Temple of Truth. Effective in ancient days, as in modern times, is the use of dramatic presentations to drive home certain lessons. In the Mystery-Schools of many lands, and especially in the lower grades known as the Lesser Mysteries, the pupils witnessed and took part in mystery-dramas. These were designed as preparatory teaching, and dramatized experiences which later would be actually lived through by the candidates for initiation into the Greater Mysteries.

The value of drama as a teacher of Karman is the fact that we can see take place in a very short time the working out of causes to their appropriate sequences. For the true significance, of course, the action must be raised from the material to the psychological or mental plane,

where man actually weaves his destiny — by thought.

Glancing back over the road our race has traveled, certain intellectual and spiritual giants stand out, as do mountain-peaks upon the horizon. These are the philosophers, poets, dramatists, patriots, with something unmistakable in the tone of authority with which they speak through their chosen medium. We recognise them as spiritual voices bringing a spiritual message from higher spheres. Some of these have pictured life as a drama, which is fitting, because life in these manifested worlds is indeed the drama of the soul — made up of melodrama, comedy, and tragedy. Few of the players have more than a vague idea of plan or plot, it is true; but that is for their finding out. The inner, spiritual man assumes new garments and plays new roles with each reappearance upon the stage of earth-life. Gradually we learn to use our inner faculties to break through the illusions, to find reality behind the seeming.

There is an old myth which pictures the gods as looking down upon this human drama going on in our lower sphere, and moved to peals of Olympian laughter, which vibrates throughout the upper regions. The cause of their merriment, so the story goes, was to see the antics of actors who had so identified themselves with, and been deluded by, the roles they played and the trappings of their assumed characters, that they mistook the illusion for reality. There is wisdom here. All too often we fail to realize the illusory and transitory character of our earthly roles, taking lines, gestures, and poses all too seriously. Sometimes we even fail to distinguish between the fictitious and the real actor behind the mask — that divine being out of Eternity, destined to learn the lessons earth has to teach, then return to that ancestral home wherein illusion has no place.

Among the Titans of thought we select Shakespeare and Aeschylus, who unflinchingly drew their inspiration from universal fountains and proclaimed things which are eternally true. They depict the dual nature of man, good and evil, which are the opposite poles of his consciousness in conflict within him, and show convincingly how

following the one leads to destruction; the other, to heights sublime.

They taught that destiny is made by man himself. Therefore Karman, not Fate is at work. Agents for working out consequences are shown to be his own thoughts and actions, in other words, his character. Men are "themselves the authors of their proper woe." Figures of the play are types representing the many aspects of a man, or they represent a principle. Therefore each drama may be said to be Everyman.

In *Macbeth* more clearly than in the other great tragedies of Shakespeare, we see the quick results following from a man deliberately choosing wrongly, setting his higher nature aside and letting the evil in him dominate. At first Macbeth appears to be an average man, a good soldier who is exceptionally brave, well thought of, and apparently loyal to his kinsman, the King. When the witches first hailed him as "King that shall be," it seemed incredible. Yet almost immediately we see the suggestion working in his mind and taking root there. Promptly he wrote of this incident to Lady Macbeth that she might share in the anticipation of this possible good fortune. Evidently he knew of her ambition to be called "Queen." In her soliloquy after reading the letter, she expresses fear that Macbeth's nature was "too full of the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way"; and that he would not play false to gain an ambition. This shows Macbeth's nature inclined to honorable ways. Lady Macbeth had no scruples herself. Inflamed with ambitious hope, her mind worked fast with plans to bring about the consummation of her desire. Upon Macbeth's return home, she was ready with details of the plot to murder Duncan, the King, a guest under their own roof. With some difficulty she persuaded her lord. We have the speech wherein the struggle is shown between Macbeth and his conscience. He recognises that "even-handed justice commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice, to our own lips," and admits to himself, "I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself. . ." Spurred to the deed by his wife's taunts of cowardice — the most galling to a brave soldier — he commits the murder of Duncan — his kinsman, his guest, his King.

Then follow the consequences. It should be noted here that the act itself was the sequence of other causes, which had built into Macbeth's character a destructive weakness. Not alone by external forces, but by still more powerful inner enemies collaborating, does Shakespeare show his tragic hero to be destroyed. Karma is at work, justly bringing about the doom which Macbeth brought upon his own head.

Macbeth had a conscience so stinging in its reproaches and so appalling in its remorse that his inward torment compels our pity. This very struggle between the two natures shows that up to that point he had not completely cut himself off from the god within him. The fact that he can see the right and knows the better way, doubles his sufferings when he chooses the evil path. Realizing to some degree the disintegration of his better nature, he is pursued by the memory of his guilt.

One fatal step which contributed to his final ruin was traffic with the supernatural, in the form of the witches on the heath. Herein there is a tragic warning that we can profit by in these days of growing interest in psychic things, when people ignorantly seek the counsel of clairvoyants, crystal-gazers, and so-called astrologers, who advertise to reveal the future and, for a price, give superhuman advice. By opening his mind and inner nature to the suggestions of the witches, evil influences from the lower astral world poured in upon Macbeth. This astral world by which we are surrounded, is the storehouse for the effluvium of human vice and crime. Once open the door, the evil emanations accumulated there, flood in and seize upon the weak spot in the nature of the foolish one who dares to enter unprepared, and fans it into flame.

We follow the rapid progress of Macbeth's downfall. The first crime calls for another and then another to make secure the position. There is the ever-present goad of Lady Macbeth's ambition, which matched his own, and made them partners in crime. "Infirm of purpose! Give me the daggers," she taunts him. Matter-of-fact and unimaginative as Lady Macbeth was, driven by overpowering desire for position as queen, she

displays neither regret nor remorse. Later, Karma-Nemesis reaches her and we have in the "sleep-walking scene" one of the most dramatic pictures in all literature of retributive justice at work. Just as Macbeth, tormented by his guilt, heard a voice which cried, "Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep. . .", so the guilty Lady Macbeth, walking in her sleep, rehearsing over and over the events of that fatal night, cries, "What, will these hands ne'er be clean?".

The monster within, fully aroused, all restraint gives way and Macbeth, no longer a normal man, becomes but a destroying energy . — covetousness incarnate. Hate and passion surge through him as through a hollow wreck, and everything that stands in his path is violently removed. Finally outraged Nature reacts against him. Catastrophe arrives and he meets his doom at the hand of Macduff, the man he had so cruelly wronged.

Aeschylus, often called the "ancient Shakespeare," belonged to that noble company of Greeks whose creative genius has nourished the thought-life of the world to our day. He was born towards the close of that wonderful sixth century b. c, which produced half a dozen or more of the greatest intellectual and spiritual supermen in recorded history. Pythagoras was still living and there is evidence that Aeschylus spent some years of his early youth at his school and was initiated into the Mysteries there. He received highest honors for distinguished military service and for many years won first place in the yearly dramatic competitions held at Athens.

He saw, more clearly than others, ominous signs that all was not well in the State; that the "glory that was Greece" was beginning to wane. The Mysteries were becoming corrupted; sacred institutions were being done away with. Athenian arrogance was growing, and the rights of lesser states were being trampled upon and their sufferings disregarded.

Aeschylus chose tragic-drama as the medium through which to sound warnings to his countrymen that Karma-Nemesis would mete out even-handed justice for every wrong inflicted. This is the theme of all the

dramas that have come down to us — only seven out of nearly one hundred that he wrote. His well-timed message was, "Beware! Ill deeds bring forth offspring like to their parent stock." Especially in the Orestean trilogy did he drive the lessons of Karman home. It is interesting to note here that the plot of the tragedy of Orestes, up to a certain point, is almost identical with that of Hamlet. Of course Shakespeare has been called the arch-plagiarist. But there is nothing to show that he ever heard of Aeschylus and the trilogy.

Let us recall how Agamemnon led the Greek expedition against Troy and upon his return victorious, his wife, Clytemnestra, greets him with elaborate honors and makes honeyed speeches of welcome. While the fact of the matter is that she has been a faithless wife. Aegisthus, cousin of her husband, has become her lover, and together they have planned to murder Agamemnon so that Aegisthus might take his place as King and marry the queen. Clytemnestra has one bit of salve for her conscience in this, because she considers herself an agent of Nemesis. Agamemnon, in order to propitiate the gods and have fair winds for his undertaking, has supposedly sacrificed their daughter, Iphigenia. As a matter of fact she was saved by Artemis. By assuming this agency Clytemnestra has come under the ban of Karma-Nemesis as Agamemnon already was for the intended sacrifice of Iphigenia. The chorus chant their misgivings and are haunted by forebodings of dire results. Nemesis overtaking Agamemnon upon his return, he is murdered by Aegisthus and Clytemnestra.

Orestes, the son, absent from the city, returns at the behest of Apollo to avenge his father's death, which was then considered a religious obligation on the part of a son. The unnatural circumstances place Orestes in a deplorable position. He kills the guilty Aegisthus, and then with anguish of soul disregards his mother's pleas and tells her, "Thyself art guilty of thy death, not I." And, later, to the reproaching Chorus, "With Justice" sanction I my mother smote."

However, the guilt of matricide weighs him down and nearly unseats his reason. He realizes that he must be purified from this pollution in

spite of the high authority upon which he acted. He sees rising in the background the Furies, or Erinyes, gathering to haunt him. "Gorgon-like they come, vested in sable stoles, their locks entwined with clustering snakes." He seeks refuge at the temple of Apollo, where the Furies follow him. Apollo tells Orestes that he cannot free him from their hateful presence, and suggests that only the goddess of Wisdom, Pallas Athena, can do that. So he hurries to Athens to lay his case before this final court of justice.

Then follows the trial of Orestes. With Athena as judge, Apollo defends Orestes. The Furies are the accusers and the ancient Court of the Areopagus is the jury. The twelve votes cast by the Areopagites are evenly divided, but Athena, who by divine right has the deciding vote, casts hers for Orestes.

The Erinyes, complaining to Athena about thus losing their prey, are then transformed by her into the Eumenides, goddesses of good fortune.

It may be objected that if Karma-Nemesis was at work, Orestes should have suffered the consequences of his evil deeds, as Macbeth paid the price. But Aeschylus is portraying the drama of the soul and its final victory over the furies of the lower passions in human nature. Athena, the symbol of Wisdom, considered the motive in relation to both crimes. That of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, committed for purely selfish reasons to satisfy worldly ambition; that of Orestes in fulfilment of what he considered a religious duty to avenge his father's murder. This drama is depicting the soul's experiences in the school of life. Orestes, the inner spiritual entity, behind the mask of the outward personality, is the symbol of the soul. You cannot kill the soul.

The earth-spirits, or Furies, who haunt Orestes until he is freed by Athena, consider only the outward act and automatically exercise their functions in accordance with natural law. Wisdom takes motive into consideration and the whole character of the inner man. Free-will and moral power triumph over blind instinctive thirst for revenge. The transmutation of the Erinyes into Eumenides teaches not the

suppression or annihilation of the instinctive tendencies, but their subordination to become servants of the higher faculties of the soul.

Orestes sought refuge with his Higher Self — Wisdom, or the Buddhi principle. Considering this tragedy as taking place within one human being, it suggests that when the lower, undeveloped part of a man appeals for guidance to the highest within him, help is invariably received. Justice is tempered with mercy. Even if the soul is led to wisdom through suffering, compassion adjusts the karmic load so that it does not crush. Sorrow and darkness and the dread furies of the lower nature are but incidental means to that end. As Aeschylus says in *Agamemnon*, "Against their wills, rebellious men are tutored to be wise."

So we learn, or have the opportunity to learn, one of the most important lessons of life; that the eternal order of Kosmic Nature is Harmony and that soon or late, we shall have to conform to this divine law which,

Knows not wrath nor pardon, utter true
Its measures mete; its faultless balance weighs;
Times are as naught — tomorrow it will judge —
Or after many days.

Such is the law that moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!

THE SOURCE OF CLIMATE — A. J Stover

Many explanations have been advanced by scientists to account for the ice ages, or glacial periods. So far, all such have failed to explain either warm interglacial periods during the last ice age, or the focalization of continental glaciers such as the Cordilleran, Keewatin, or Labradorean glaciers.

The rapid retreat of glaciers in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Cascade Mountains and in the mountain ranges of Alaska during the past fifty years has called attention to a possible cause of glacial periods. For instance, since its discovery in 1880 Muir Glacier, in Alaska, has retreated about thirteen miles Paradise Glacier of Mount Rainier is retreating steadily at about seventy feet per year.

In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P Sinnett*, on pages 161 and 162, the Master K. H. makes the following statement:

. . . I wonder how Science has not hitherto understood that every atmospheric change and disturbance was due to the combined magnetism of the two great masses between which our atmosphere is compressed I call this meteoric dust a "mass" for it is really one. High above our earth's surface the air is impregnated and space *filled* with magnetic or meteoric dust, which does not even belong to our solar system. . . . Science makes too much and too little at the same time of "solar energy," and even of the Sun itself, and the Sun has nothing to do whatever with rain and very little with heat. I was under the impression that science was aware that the glacial periods as well as those periods when temperature is "like that of the carboniferous age" are due to the decrease and increase or rather to the expansion of our atmosphere, which expansion is itself due to the same meteoric presence? At any rate, we *all know*, that the heat that the earth receives by radiation from the Sun is at the utmost *one third* if not less of the amount received by her directly from the meteors.

In regard to the origin of the glacial and interglacial periods, the following thought seems to present a possible explanation: At present we find our world divided into "life zones," seven in all, three warm, one intermediate, and three cool.

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Boreal or Cool	Artic Alpine	Region of perpetual snow.
	Hudsonian	Timberline and tundra.
	Canadian	Zone of spruce and alpine firs.
Intermediate	Transition	Zone of the Yellow Pine.
Austral or Warm	Upper Sonoran	Chaparral and sagebrush.
	Lower Sonoran	Hot desert areas.
	Tropical	Enters U.S. only in Florida.

Suppose we imagine our earth surrounded by successive layers of these zones, onion-like, but with this difference: that certain zonal layers are thick at the equator, thinning out and finally disappearing as they recede to the north and south. The zonal layer at the equator would be the tropical zone. The next zone would be the Lower Austral (or Lower Sonoran), overlying the Tropical and extending far beyond it both north and south. The next layer, the Upper Austral (or Upper Sonoran), doing likewise. It will be seen that the layers are not uniformly deep in any locality: the dominant zone for that area is greatest in depth and influence. A mountain high enough to rise through these zones would support the forms of life common to each zone.

In general, for each thousand feet we rise in climbing a mountain we find an average decrease of four degrees Fahrenheit in temperature, with corresponding plant and animal life fitted to that environment. In short, we can find Canadian types of life by going to Canada, or by climbing a high mountain.

In the north we find the three higher zones expanding over a considerable range, with the lower zones, wherever present, greatly constricted. In California these same upper zones, when present in our higher mountains, are greatly compressed. Instead of occupying thousands of feet in altitudinal depth, they may occupy a mere few hundred feet. In Alaska, timberline may be near sea level. In Oregon, at about 4,000 feet In Southern California, at something over 11,000 feet.

Taking this passage in *The Mahatma Letters* as a clue, it seems possible that alternating ice ages and inter-glacial periods may largely be brought about, as the Master's statement suggests, by expansion and contraction of these zones; that cold sections of our zonal scale may have so expanded in depth as to cause the glaciers already existing there as nuclei to increase greatly in size, finally

merging one with the other to form once more an extensive glacial system. On the other hand, it may be that at present we are rapidly leaving the age of ice. Seattle, for instance, may not experience any great change climatically either in temperature or in rainfall, yet the Arctic Alpine-Hudsonian section of the life zone scale in that area may be so raised or reduced in thickness as to decrease the nearby mountain glaciers or even to cause their extinction, and this is likely to occur if the present rate of retreat continues.

The Theosophical Forum

UNVEILING THE SOUL — *Raymond Rugland*

Man is a trinity of spirit, soul, and body, a division which is enlarged by Theosophy into seven principles. The teaching regarding man as a triad has remained with the peoples of the West since the organization of *dogmatic* Christianity. As the Christian teachings have been passed down through the ages, they have gradually become veiled with deepening shades of materialism which were not part of the original Wisdom-Religion, their Mother. Today almost one-sixth of the world's population are adherents of Christianity.

What do men learn from the Sacred Book, the Bible, about their inner Natures, their destination, their purpose on Earth, and of their relationship with their Divinity?

It is not strange in this twentieth century that men meet with discouragement in the search for their "souls." Science speaks not of it, and with the churches there remains but a dim shadow of the original sublime teachings concerning the nature of the soul. Because it is a difficult task many have resigned from the search for the "soul." These have created their own barrier to Wisdom by seeking that which is *within*, externally. Blinded in the delusion of separateness, these people can only consider "soul" as something apart from themselves — as they do God. It is not that the soul must be found, but rather that we must become aware, self-consciously, that we *are souls*.

Among the defeated we hear: "It is not for us to know"; others dabble in psychology, spiritualism, mysticism, and the "subconscious" mind. The search among external objects takes the explorer down many a road and side-trail.

Locked within the allegories and parables of the Bible, albeit distorted almost beyond recognition, are verities regarding the inner nature of man, and much may he learn who can follow the labyrinth of teaching aided by the "golden thread" of Theosophy.

Analysing the Bible teaching of soul on its own merits and weaknesses, we note in *Genesis*, ii, 7: "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." This is Adam, the "first man" of the earth, as commonly considered, *created* by the Lord. God *created* both matter and life, teach the Christians; Matter He *created* when He fashioned the Universe; Life He *created* when he "breathed" Life into man and all the living kingdoms of earth. Could God have "made" Adam of those elements, life and matter, thus separating Himself from the Design of Matter and the Consciousness which is Life? Can any God, however high, separate himself from matter and life?

Man must be more than dead substance imbued with life, for he manifests intelligence and spirituality. The word for soul in the original Hebrew was "nephesh," and meant "animal soul." The "living soul" which Adam was created to be, is "nephesh," and, according to Theosophy, the physical soul refers to the lowest and most transitory principles of man's septenary constitution. Therefore, according to this exoteric picture, we cannot attribute to the Adam of *Genesis* immortality, self-conscious responsibility, or the spirit principle, Adam being but a *vital* soul. He was *created* sinless without knowledge of right or wrong, and not having entered upon material experience, was without power of discrimination. Adam became more than a "vital soul" when he ate of the "Tree of Knowledge," or when, according to Theosophy, his latent intellectual principles were awakened by the "sons of Mind."

The intelligent Adam became aware of himself and his actions, and could see the good and could see the evil. He became aware that his desires were not holy, realizing that he had "sinned." Through mind he became able to hear the voice of pleasure and the voice of the spirit or duty. Because intelligence linked his higher and lower nature, he became aware of both, and thus the director of his own actions.

Thus we build upon the picture of *Genesis*, and ask: If man is able to know the "good" or the Harmony of Divinity, must not that Divinity be

inherent in his own Nature? Not one man is exempt from the struggle between the higher and lower nature. Knowledge of good and evil is not enough, for there must be the voice of the Spirit that seeks to return the Pilgrim of experience to his Spiritual Home. Mere intelligence without material and spiritual desire is non-evolving and purposeless. It is through Mind that we are ever choosing; it was through Mind, plus the intuition of the Divine radiating from his own inner Spiritual Self, that Adam knew that he had "sinned."

If we return to the Christian picture depicting man as a wandering "soul," a *created* product, we can ask with what justice can God hold man to account for his life on Earth? The *soul* of man which God *creates* can appear from its description to be only a static thing, living but not self-conscious, intelligent but not responsible, non-evolving and with but a limited destiny which God has planned beforehand. If the soul represents the responsible part of man's nature — and it must be so since it is this *soul* that God judges for heaven or hell, and has *created* with all its virtues and weaknesses — there is no *reason* to expect man to assume the responsibility for living a noble life with a fated creation and environment. What kind of God is it that will judge all men alike, although he has tempted some and others not, placed some in a favorable environment, others in a poor one? Where is the equality of opportunity to gain justice?

We may justly wonder at the Divine Wisdom of God who separates from Eternity a few thousand years to express his planning. It is only human vanity that could conceive of the *creation* of endless universes so that the humanities of one small planet could be afforded with an environment for His purpose. Eternity cannot extend in one direction only, and we can ask: Had God done nothing before He brought the Universe into being? Did he fashion this great Structure merely so that after the Day of Judgment He might spend the remainder of Eternity watching his children suffer in hell or partake of the bliss of heaven, realizing his responsibility for their *creation*? No law-court of our times would mete out the same cruelty to a breaker of human law that the Most Holy has ordained.

In Theosophy is presented a magnificent vista of Design, Harmony, Purpose, and Justice which we have every right to expect of a Universe governed by Law — the result of Divine Intelligence and Planning. Here we see no Man-God like the Jewish Jehovah *creating* something out of nothing, and making a mockery of His Planning by omitting the Purpose of it. The immaterial "soul" of the Bible is not tried in a material hell. Theosophy shows that every man, like every entity in the Universe, is "self-directed" and "self-responsible" for every act and deed. There is no predestination or fate; there is no chance. Evolution is carried out in obedience to Natural Law and free will allowing for perfect justice in Karma for acts performed and causes created. Theosophy does not separate the Universe from Deity, but shows that every manifestation arises out of the One Spiritual Essence or Divinity, the Fountain-Source from which All has emanated and differentiated. This Divinity is eternal and regular in its manifestations.

Because we as human beings have emanated from the Spiritual Heart of the Universe, we manifest aspects of Its Desire, Its Intelligence, Its Harmony, Its Life. The very root of our Being is the Spiritual, and by consciously striving to attain the Reality of our Inmost we become the Imperishable, the Spiritually Glorified. This attainment is only possible by evolving to the Reality in many forms, bodies, or vehicles, in many worlds and environments, through many lives. It is by means of individual forms or vestures that the Enduring Self is linked with each realm of experiencing, but the Inmost Self needs these not when their purpose of gathering experience has ended; and they are therefore transitory.

To us, Universal Nature reveals the structure of its Scheme in seven Universally diffused principles of which all manifestation is made up. We as human beings are similarly composed of seven principles, our Immortality preserved in the three highest spiritual principles which include the Reincarnating Ego. The seven principles which compose Man may be broadly summarized by the Christian trinity of body, soul, and spirit. As "spirit," man's imperishable nature consists of: Atman,

the formless Divine Essence; Buddhi, the irrational soul or vehicle of the Atmic principle; and Higher Manas, the intellectual principle, born of Mahat, or Universal Mind, that adds rationality to Buddhi from *below*. Atman cannot be cognized, nor can it be possessed singly. It is the Universally diffused Central Kosmic Spiritual Fire which all share as their highest Principle. Buddhi, the Divine Soul, is irrational, because, being the *pure emanation* of Atman from which Reality and Truth flow as a stream, it can have no individual reason of its own on this plane, nor for us any attributes. In Buddhi is reflected the Wisdom from Atman; rationality is from Manas. It is the spiritually attracted part of Mind or Manas that survives the lower principles, and by assimilating this Higher Manas, Atman-Buddhi becomes consciously aware of its Divinity. These eternal three principles are known in Man as the Reincarnating Ego or Causal Body, and comprise his enduring individuality as contrasted with his *personality*, and assimilate all experience in the process of evolution and the living of many lives.

The *soul* of the Christians, as usually interpreted, is best compared to the Theosophical personal or human soul, the Ego in which resides the idea of "I," and which is preserved by the Spiritual Self, or the Reincarnating Ego, from one incarnation to the next. This *soul* is the agent for the transference of material experience into Spiritual Self-Consciousness, the intermediate link between Spirit and Body. Theosophy teaches that it is the two principles, Lower Manas or Intellectuality, and Kama or the principle of desire, that make up the intermediate nature. The personal *soul* is the personality, and is therefore perishable.

The most transitory of the souls of man is the terrestrial or animal soul, the "body" of the Christian trinity, the "nephesh" of *Genesis* before commented upon. The Sthula-sarira, man's physical body, and the Linga-sarira, the astral model body upon which the physical is shaped, imbued by Kama, the desire principle and Prana, the life principle, are the elements of man's constitution that are terrestrially attracted. Being of the earth they return to it at death, separating each from each, and from the principles comprising the personality and Reincarnating Ego.

At the "second death," the personality is severed from the Individuality, the immortal, and the Reincarnating Ego attains the "heaven-world" or Devachan.

Theosophy but reiterates the key-thought of all the Great Teachers of mankind: "Seek not in externals for that which is eternal, but look always *within*. You are your own Pathway to the highest God, for you are part of All that is."

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND MODERN SCIENCE — *H. T. Edge*

IV

TRANSMUTATION

The transmutation of elements is a perennial theme; and if we were to say that H. P. Blavatsky predicted that science would achieve it, we might be answered that this was an easy guess. But too many of those who have sought or speculated about the "absolute," the *prima materia*, the basic metal from which all other metals are derived, have sought for something "on the same plane" (as Theosophists say) as the substances to be derived from it. But it is not likely that the substratum from which are derived manifold substances would be of the same order of materiality as its derivatives; and this has been borne out by what has actually been discovered. Crookes dreamed much as to the existence of a single element from which the other chemical elements were derived, and H. P. Blavatsky quotes him liberally. When we speak of chemical elements, we think of chemical atoms, which were formerly regarded as the fundamentals in chemistry, as in physics, though the atom demanded by the chemists was not the same as that demanded by the physicists. The chief difficulty as to the chemical atom was that, if it was always the same, there was no way of explaining why the chemical elements differ from one another; to explain this it would seem necessary to postulate many different kinds of atoms, one kind for each chemical element; in fact we know that each element has its own atomic weight. So it was inevitable that Crookes and others should regard these atoms as composites; and now the thing has been proved true. We assign the differences in properties and weights to the number and arrangement of these subatomic elements, whose names and attributes are not yet sufficiently settled for us to venture much about them. Also transmutation has become an accomplished fact, though not exactly according to the golden dream of the alchemists. We learn too that the atom, far from being eternal and

rudimentary, is subject to progressive change, disintegration.

This leads to the conclusion that the chemical elements and their atoms are not permanent and invariable, that they are undergoing change, evolution. This is quite an Occult doctrine, and supports the contention that there is no *essential* distinction to be drawn between so-called living and so-called inorganic matter; all are changing, growing, evolving. We likewise get the idea that the lapse of long ages would give us quite a different assortment of chemical elements, so that our calculations as to physical conditions in far past times would be upset; and the inferences which we have been constrained to draw, based on our assumption that the elements have *not* changed, would be rendered false.

The *Magisterium* or powder of transmutation, of the Alchemists, was held capable of transmuting one metal directly into another; and such a transmutation implies the existence of an underlying basis common to both metals. Otherwise, instead of transmutation, we should have mere substitution. Some essence which at one time manifested itself as lead, is now made to manifest itself as gold. It is in this way that the chemical elements are now held to transmute themselves, by changes in the sub-atomic elements whereof they are compounded.

The idea of universal life is one of those ancient conceptions which are returning to the human mind in this [nineteenth] century, as a consequence of its liberation from anthropomorphic theology. Science, it is true, contents itself with tracing or postulating the signs of universal life, and has not yet been bold enough even to whisper "Anima Mundi!" The idea of "crystalline life," now familiar to science, would have been scouted half a century ago. Botanists are now searching for the nerves of plants; not that they suppose that plants can feel or think as animals do, but because they believe that some structure, bearing the same relation functionally to plant life that nerves bear to animal life, is necessary to explain vegetable growth and nutrition. It hardly seems possible that science can

disguise from itself much longer, by the use of terms such as "force" and "energy," the fact that things that have life are living things, whether they be atoms or planets. — (I, 49) (1)

Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths. With every day, the identity between the animal and physical man, between the plant and man, and even between the reptile and its nest, (2) the rock and man — is more and more clearly shown. The physical and chemical constituents of all being found to be identical, chemical science may well say that there is no difference between the matter which composes the ox and that which forms man. But the Occult doctrine is far more explicit. It says: — Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle — whether you call it organic or inorganic — *is a life*. — (I, 261)

In the science of today the distinction between organic and inorganic, or living and dead, is vanishing, though there is still much left to be done. But in the science of last century that distinction was prominent. The acceptance of such a distinction is not agreeable to the scientific ideal of seeking to reduce the complex to a common origin. For here, instead of one universal principle of Matter, we have two kinds of Matter, one living and one dead. To get over this objection, some postulated a life-principle, which, by acting on dead matter, could endow it with the properties of living matter. This gave rise to further questions as to the nature and origin of the life-principle. Others, seeing that this hypothesis involves the introduction of an immaterial essence into a materialistic universe, involved themselves in the logical absurdity of treating the manifestations of life as though they were life itself or the cause of life. All this is avoided if we assume at the start that there is no essential difference between organic and inorganic matter (so-called). This is the view for which H. P. Blavatsky contended,

and recent advances in science are tending towards the justification of this view. Our perfected apparatus has enabled us to make a more intimate study of the structure of crystals, of colloids, and of other conditions of matter, which seem intermediate between the matter in "living" bodies and that in "inorganic" bodies, and which give us hopes of finding consecutive stages of transition from one to the other. In the light of this, what happens to the old question as to the origin of life? At what particular point can we say that life enters? Just where can we say that life is absent? Life now becomes a set of phenomena or manifestations, continuous and with no particular dividing line; and, unless we are to fall into the old logical error, we must infer that these phenomena are caused by some agent, and that this agent is not material, or is material in another sense. And even then, it becomes necessary to infer that this life is the attribute of living beings, otherwise it remains an abstraction. So we are gradually brought back to the ancient, and often derided idea that all Nature is an assemblage of living beings.

The soil under our feet, which to some minds is just so much dead dust, is found to be a marvelous world of its own, teeming with living organisms of all kinds, and with potent chemicals, so important to the well-being of the plants that grow in it that we wonder which is the more important part of the plant, that which is above ground or that which is below. It is no longer possible to analyze the soil and to say, This part is dead, but that is alive; this is inorganic, but that is organic. Accumulating evidence compels us to the conclusion that life is everywhere, that life is the only thing, that there is nothing but life, nothing but living beings.

THE ASTRAL PLANE

The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter. — (II, 149)

The existence of astral prototypes, preceding the physical forms, is very

frequently mentioned in *S. D.*, though more often in connection with biology and anthropology than physics and chemistry. For instance, at II, 737, we read that —

Astral matter, it must be noted, is fourth state matter, having, like our gross matter, its own "protyle." There are several "protyles" in Nature, corresponding to the various planes of matter.

Here we see that the word "matter" may apply to various conditions of materiality, of which the physical is only one. It is important to observe that, when we pass from physical matter we do not thereby pass at one bound to "spirit;" we pass to another kind of matter. The distinction between what may be called spirit and matter — the active and passive sides of nature — obtains on all planes of manifestation; but here the word "matter" has to cover substances which have none of the properties by which we are accustomed to think of matter. A far more generalized conception is needed. The word "vehicle" is often used in Theosophy, as defining that in which forces or energies are manifested. But at present we are concerned only with that form of matter next in order above physical matter.

The existence of an astral body inside the physical is necessary to explain many familiar phenomena, such as the persistence of moles, scars, etc., although the physical atoms are continually changing. Such instances are striking, but after all they are but particular cases of a phenomenon that is general. For what is it that determines *form*? Why does a flower have its own particular form, a man his own features? Since the physical atoms come and go gradually, it cannot be they that preserve the form. There must be something that remains unchanged throughout, or at least changes much more slowly. There must be a pattern upon which the physical atoms are molded, a shape into which they run. Hence to speak of an invisible model-body within the physical is not to invent an arbitrary theory, for the thing is actually implied, necessitated: there *must* be such a model-body within every physical organism. But the scientific mind is reluctant to make this

inference, and certainly it would open up vast reaches of unfamiliar ground, necessitating an entire revision of the scientific philosophy. The attempt to explain matters without this hypothesis, however, results in confusion; there is no way of explaining how the shape of an organism maintains its integrity. Any direct perception of astral matter would involve the use of astral senses, and this again leads us onto unfamiliar and dreaded ground. We refer again to a quotation from H. P. Blavatsky at the beginning of this series, to the effect that, for direct knowledge of these higher planes of nature, we must develop faculties which have long been dormant in the people of our race. It is only thus that we can collect the factual data on which to reason; otherwise we can only speculate by reason and analogy, arriving at conclusions which present no picture to the mind and can be clothed in abstruse mathematical terms only. The question of higher faculties and their development is so hedged about with deception, charlatanry, delusion, and flightiness, that it is no wonder scientists are cautious; added to which is the fact that the development of psychic powers by no means implies a corresponding development of the will and the power to use them for good and not for ill. Investigators into these questions are too often attracted to the sinister aspects of their enquiry.

GODS, MONADS, ATOMS

Such is the heading of a chapter in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 610) which shows that it is needful for us to recognize something which the ancients believed, but which men of science have been wont to call superstition. This belief may be said to be universal, for it is shared by very many peoples living on earth to-day. A scientific name for it is "animism" — the belief in nature-spirits. Even empty space (so-called) was regarded as peopled with intelligent beings; and the mere external phenomena which science investigates were believed to be produced by the volitions of these intelligent beings.

One of such "degrading" beliefs — in the opinion of the all-denying sceptic — is found in the idea that Kosmos, besides its objective planetary inhabitants, its humanities in other

inhabited worlds, is full of invisible, intelligent *Existences*. The so-called Arch-Angels, Angels and Spirits, of the West, copies of their prototypes, the Dhyan-Chohans, the Devas and Pitris, of the East, are no real Beings but fictions. On this point Materialistic Science is inexorable. — (I, 611)

". . . God, Monad, and Atom are the correspondences of Spirit, Mind, and Body (*Atma, Manas, and Sthula-Sarira*) in man ". . .

"The Monads (*Jivas*) are the Souls of the Atoms, both are the fabric in which the Chohans (Dhyanis, *gods*) clothe themselves when a form is needed." — (I, 619, *quoted from Esoteric Catechism.*)

And now, having just quoted what *The Secret Doctrine* says, and what the science of those days said, let us quote the recent writing of an eminent scientist of today.

Dr. Gustaf Stromberg, a member of the Staff of Mount Wilson Observatory, and an eminent Swedish scientist, has written a book called *The Soul of the Universe*, which is reviewed at some length in our number for August, 1940, pp. 126 ff. He believes cosmic space to be a plenum, thus confirming what was quoted above. Moreover he regards this space as being the origin and inner world of life, the real world of life and consciousness. But he does not remain satisfied with the use of the abstract word "consciousness," but speaks of *conscious beings*, which actuate the phenomena of life, and for which he uses provisionally the term "genie." Under this term however he includes many different grades of intelligent beings. These beings, in their synthesis, may be regarded as the Soul of the World.

We could hardly look for a more complete vindication of H. P. Blavatsky's doctrines: she often uses the terms World-Soul, Anima Mundi, etc. in this collective sense, as being general terms for the hosts of intelligent beings which people the causative realms of Space. The necessity for postulating such intelligent causes, endowed with volition and design, is becoming every day more apparent. Without such an hypothesis, we are reduced to trying to build a cosmos out of a mass of

abstractions. In this same chapter of *The Secret Doctrine* we find it stated that

... To the average physicist, as remarked by a Kabbalist, "Space, Force, Matter, are, what signs in algebra are to the mathematician, merely conventional symbols;" or "Force as force, and Matter as matter, are as absolutely unknowable as is the empty space in which they are held to interact." — (I, 615)

In biology and cytology the want of such an hypothesis is even more striking; for what the microscope discerns is but minute specks coming into visibility and behaving in every respect as though actuated by intelligent purpose. The attempt to account for such behavior, and for the marvelous results of it, without postulating intelligent agencies at work, leads to preposterous theories. But to admit so much is a step which, once taken, would lead science to the threshold of a quite unfamiliar realm, wherein its vaunted certainty would be lost. It will be interesting to watch the issue.

SOCIAL BEARINGS OF SCIENCE

Keeping in mind the three things we are comparing — the science of 1888, H. P. Blavatsky's teachings, and the science of 1941 — we can hardly choose a more appropriate topic than the one indicated by our heading. As we write, the question of the social responsibilities of science is much to the fore. Many will maintain as a general proposition that neither art nor science nor any other one thing can be isolated from human life, any more than a plant can be isolated from the soil, or an individual person from his kind, without undergoing decay, thus losing its life and becoming a nuisance instead of a help to its surroundings. Moreover, such attempted isolation is apt to be one-sided: it enjoys privileges while shirking responsibilities. It claims non-interference from those very institutions by which its freedom to assert such a claim is guaranteed. It has flourished in the free atmosphere created by a certain order of society, yet claims no concern with the affairs of that order. Art for art's sake, and science for science" sake, are phrases which doubtless have a legitimate meaning, but may be

overdone. But the logic of facts is often sterner than the logic by which we are wont to support our wishful thinking.

In prominent scientific circles today the attitude of aloofness is mentioned as characteristic of an attitude that is passing; the pressure of events has forced the change. But there are still some who argue that science promotes knowledge, but is not responsible for the use made of it. But human conduct is governed by motives, and such knowledge as science provides will be used for wrong motives unless right motives prevail. Science cannot claim authority and disclaim it in the same breath. The separation of knowledge into departments may be useful or even necessary for practical convenience; but those who look beyond this aim must recognise the unity of knowledge. In arguments about religion and science we see attempts to bring together things which have been artificially separated, as though we were trying to assemble a human body out of its dismembered limbs. Such a process would give us a machine, rather than the original living whole. In the same way we are striving to bring about a *modus vivendi* between science and social polity, having first decided that the two are separate and different. But if the meaning of both these terms were extended to its just limits, we might find that social polity and science were one and the same thing, though we should need another name for this thing. Every year the meetings of scientific associations include more and more subjects which formerly were not considered as pertaining to science. Even within the limited sphere of modern science proper, barriers are disappearing; the border between physics and chemistry grows more shadowy, there is a domain wherein organic and inorganic so blend that we cannot decide which of the two realms we are in. The unity of knowledge becomes more apparent, as also the conviction grows that the only science is the science of man. The term "social relations of science" is as misleading as if we were to discuss the relations between the brain and the human body.

FOOTNOTES:

1. To avoid repetition, references to H. P. Blavatsky's great work, *The*

Secret Doctrine, are indicated simply by numbers denoting the volume and page. ([return to text](#))

2. Undoubtedly there is a typographical transposition here. The phrase, "the reptile and its nest," should follow the phrase, "of man and the ant." — H. T. E. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THE "ORIGIN OF EVIL"? — *Ingrid Fick*

We may well ponder over this question of evil when we see such a prevalence of hatred and destruction in the world today.

Fundamentally, evil is caused by the "*conflict of wills*," of evolving beings. Its powers are fed by such weaknesses of character as ambition, selfishness, and ignoble thoughts and passions of every kind. In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (p. 56), it is stated that "evil has no existence *per se* and is but the absence of good, and exists but for him who is made its victim." Before we can alleviate the causes of evil, we must as individuals, seek to work in harmony with nature's laws, and to lift our hearts and minds to the loftiest planes of being.

Duality in nature is the great instructor, the great necessity, for the opposition of forces produces balance in the Universe, produces life itself. Man would not recognize light, as light, unless he had witnessed darkness; so, in like manner, it would be impossible to realize the inherent value of good, if one never knew the nature of evil. This does not mean, however, that we should deliberately follow a course of evil action, should succumb to evil habits in order really to know life. Evil arises from imperfection, and as long as there is manifestation, there is imperfection. We are beings in manifestation, therefore we are imperfect. The great battle in life consists of learning to recognize imperfections, to be conscious of the duality in life, and thence to seek to rise above the snares of illusion. It is beneath the dignity of man's divine heritage to follow any other path than that of noble service to his fellow men.

Extending good and evil beyond mere human limitations, we may consider evil as relative imperfection, and good, as relative perfection. This applies to the vast range of beings infinitely above and infinitely below man, for there is no limit to progress — good and evil are the eternal ways of manifestation. The influence of these forces becomes an involved circle, because just as we, by our thoughts and deeds,

impress all entities below us in the evolutionary scale, from the atoms in our bodies, on up to the various kingdoms in nature: mineral, plant and animal, and are responsible for both the beneficent and harmful elements existing therein, so the Hosts of Light and the Brothers of the Shadow have a still more powerful influence on the thoughts and lives of men; the Dark Forces constantly seek to play upon men's weak wills. We never stand still on the evolutionary scale: every moment of the day we are adding to the forces of light or darkness. Our responsibility to all beings is tremendous, for our destinies are so interlinked and interblended. We are as many spokes in the great wheel of life; all rooted in Boundless Infinity.

The contributing causes towards human evil had their primal origin eighteen million years ago when those great divine beings, the Manasaputras, symbolized by Prometheus in Greek mythology, brought the fire of mind to infant humanity, gave us a part of their divine selves, thus activating our power of reason, and endowing us with *free will*, the power to choose between two pathways. At this point man was gradually released from his Divine Instructors, and in exploiting his so-called freedom, at first drifted far afield from his spiritual home. At cyclic intervals spiritual teachers have come to direct man along the true course of life, to teach him of his essential divinity and the karmic law of retribution, thus demonstrating that Will exerted by desires for self results in false freedom. With the coming of mind, not only the latent power of choice was awakened in man, but his egoic consciousness was set in operation, the "I am I" part of his being. From this point man's ultimate duty has been to raise the personal to become one with the divine, to blend his individual consciousness with the universal. This quest will continue to be ours for ages to come. We are still lurking in the illusory halls of false freedom. Mankind has yet to realize that true liberty is not brought about by the imposing of the will of one upon another, but by becoming true Servants of the Law, Co-workers with the Gods. One powerful contributing factor towards evil which has undermined the strength and morals of men for centuries and still continues to do so, is

the degrading influence of the many religions and creeds based on only *partial* truth — A little knowledge is worse than none. In *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* (p. 58) reference is made to the Irish, Italian and Slavonian peasant who would leave his family poverty stricken, in order to support his padre and pope; then, to India, where for two thousand years the Brahmans were the only privileged class; and again, to the followers of Christ and Mahomet, who for centuries have caused bloodshed in the name of their respective Saviors. Creeds and dogmas invariably breed selfishness and stagnation of thought. To quote the final significant lines:

Remember the sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, morality, and universal charity, the altars of their false gods.

The eternal battle of good and evil has been pictured in allegorical form in many of the ancient writings, and can be traced in all the various sects, no matter how corrupted they may be. In the ancient epic of India, the *Ramayana*, Ravana, the demon, is finally conquered by Rama, symbolizing the conquering of evil with the sword of the spiritual will. In Greece, knowledge was at one time brought to the people through the medium of the drama, and Aeschylus' trilogy, the *Oresteia*, one of the greatest tragedies of all time, is really a profound study of the operations of good and evil in human nature. Of particular significance is the *Eumenides*, the third of the trilogy, where we see the potential forces of good and evil, the *Eumenides*, transformed from darkness into light, through the exercise of the will of Orestes. In the Christian religion itself the forces of good and evil are represented in the much distorted belief of God and the Devil. It is fear of God and the Devil which has done much to destroy the very purpose of man's existence on earth — to become an individually and ethically responsible entity.

Deep in the hearts of men is the yearning to end the misery and suffering in the world, yet effort in that direction is not strong enough.

Progress is a slow and uphill grind. Brotherhood still remains a precept rather than a living power in men's lives, in spite of the noble efforts of the Great Ones to instill sympathy and compassion into the hearts of men. The fundamental importance of this teaching cannot be better expressed than in these few words of H P Blavatsky:

With right knowledge, or at any rate with a confident conviction that our neighbors will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, two-thirds of the world's evil would vanish into thin air.

The Theosophical Forum

REINCARNATION AND CHRISTIANITY — *John Gayner Banks*

Are they Incompatible? (1)

This thesis will not attempt to state any final conclusion. It merely faces the question above stated and attempts to set down on paper some of the reasons why the Christian Church has — almost consistently — rejected the *teaching* of Reincarnation, though according to some traditions many conspicuous members of the Early Church accepted the doctrine of Reimbodiment — or at least acquiesced in it.

No "regular" theosophist reading this brief monograph will be offended if the writer states at the outset that he has *sought in vain* for any authentic evidence that the Christian Church ever definitely taught this doctrine. What the Theosophical writers present as "evidence" on this subject is simply an accumulation of passages or excerpts from early documents indicating that this or that Christian disciple or teacher himself believed or accepted this doctrine.

What most theosophical writers seem to have overlooked is that the doctrine of Reincarnation could *never* have formed part of the orthodox teaching of the Christian Church, for the simple reason that it is inconsistent with the main body of teachings regarded within the Christian Church as constituting orthodox Theology.

This does not prove that Reincarnation as a "teaching" is wrong. The present writer concedes hypothetically that Christian Theology as presented by the historic Church may lack something, or may need radical revision or restatement. All he affirms here is that the doctrine of Reincarnation is inconsistent with Christian Theology as believed and held by accepted teachers of the Church. The clearest statement of why "orthodox" Christians do *not* accept the doctrine of Reincarnation may be found — not in any book of doctrine, but in a volume of essays by a mystical writer, Walter Leslie Wilmshurst, in his *Contemplations* (John M. Watkins, London, 1928) where he says:

Whatever be the truth about Reincarnation, the Christian mystic, if an actual and not a *soi-disant* mystic, may well say of it. . . . Save as a matter of intellectual curiosity, I am not concerned with this problem at all. It pertains not to the world of reality and permanence, but to that of time, flux and transiency. It does not interest me or influence my thought or conduct. Be the truth of the matter what it may, what alone interests me is to identify myself, my will, my purpose, my life, with the Divine Will, purpose and life; to become what they will, to go or come where they send or draw me, to live where, and in such form or body, as they bid or need me.

The Christ-teaching

Not only is the Christ-teaching passive upon the subject of Reincarnation; it points with great insistency in another direction so inconsistent with it as to forbid our building upon it.

It does not deny Reincarnation as a fact of nature; on the contrary, it may be taken as pre-supposing that fact. But its whole trend is towards ensuring such a change in, and development of, the individual incarnated soul that reincarnation in physical conditions shall no longer be its portion. Life in physical conditions necessarily emphasizes that very sense of individualism, egotism and separateness which of all things it is desirable to slay and die to. "Whoso loseth his life (the sense and the fact of separate existence) shall save it." "Whoso hates not his own life (by obliterating the idea of existence apart from Me) cannot be My disciple." One cannot therefore concentrate attention upon and attach value to the future destiny of his personality, and at the same time abandon that personality to an ideal which promises to transfigure and elevate it to a totally new and loftier order of Being. In a word the position would seem to be this:

the integration of the soul in Christ ensures its immunity from reincarnation; whilst, conversely, reincarnation is the menace and the penalty of failure to attain that goal. (Wilmshurst)

Authorities for Reincarnation Teaching

The Scriptures and Traditions of Oriental races with a great spiritual and philosophic past are emphatic in their inculcation of this doctrine. So too are the Pythagorean and Platonist systems. In fact (says Max Muller), "It is well known that this dogma has been accepted by the greatest philosophers of all ages." (*Lectures on the Vedanta Philosophy*) Outside the Greek philosophical and mystical schools the European mind has been unacquainted with it. The history of civilized Europe synchronizes virtually with that of the Christian Church, which has held (or withheld) the keys of information upon arcane matters, and since that Church was silent upon reincarnation, no means existed by which the idea could be propagated in the West until it became introduced by the "Theosophical" movement of our own day. Its acceptance was then facilitated by two causes; first, by the translation and popularization among westerners of the sacred and philosophic literature of the East, where the doctrine is consistently taught and believed; and secondly, by the recognition, by Western science of an evolutionary process at work in Nature, a process suggesting that all life advances by gradations and through a succession of ascending morphological changes. Even as (fairly) orthodox a writer as Dean Inge, for many years Dean of St. Paul's, London, says in his book *The Philosophy of Plotinus* that "The doctrine of successive rebirths is attractive"! The mind can hardly be otherwise than gratified at observing a gradual perfecting process involving a sequence of births and deaths, and at contemplating life "sleeping in the mineral, dreaming in the plant, waking in the animal, attaining self-consciousness and freedom of action in man," with the added prospect of further spiritualization and advancement as time goes on. What the mystical mind of the East has intuitively discerned and ever held as true, the practical intellect of the West has at last hit upon by scientific inductive research, the results of which suggest that *all life advances to more and more perfect consciousness, by slow patient gradation and through countless modes and forms*. This is the real Truth that lies back of the theory or doctrine of Reincarnation.

Walt Whitman expresses this Truth in his own impulsive and enthusiastic style:

Births have brought us richness and variety,
And other births will bring us richness and variety

I am an acme of things accomplished, and I am encloser of
things to be.

My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs;
On every step bunches of ages, and larger bunches between the
steps.

All below duly travell'd, and still I mount and mount. . . .

Nature Has Parallels for Reincarnation

A strong argument for Reincarnation is to be found in the periodic pulsations characterizing Nature in all her modes and activities. Outbreaking and indrawing, systole and diastole, ebb and flow, light and darkness: is human life alone an exception to the universal rhythm? Daily we wake to activity, and nightly are withdrawn into sleep; alternating throughout our lives between objective and subjective conditions. Are birth and death other than wakings and sleepings, and all our births and deaths but the overtones of a fundamental rhythm of *manvantara* and *pralaya* originating in the mighty heart-beats of the Lord of life? Such is the reasonable hypothesis on which a theosophist bases his belief in the doctrine of Reincarnation.

Reincarnation in the Christian Scriptures

The light here thrown upon the subject is at first sight small and perhaps of doubtful value. Modern advocates of the doctrine seem hard put to it to establish their claim by appealing to Biblical lore. They are usually content with pointing to Solomon's words (*Wisdom of Solomon*, viii, 20) that "being good, I came into a body undefiled;" to the case of the man born blind (*St. John*, ch. ix), of whom the Lord was asked whether the infirmity was due to his own past fault or to that of his parents; to the passages as to John the Baptist being a reincarnation

of Elijah (*Matt*, xiv, 2 and *Luke*, ix, 19); and to the text in the Book of Revelation (*Rev.*, iii, 12) as to the perfected soul becoming a pillar in the heavenly house and "going out no more," i. e., into earthly form. In the book above referred to Mr. W. L. Wilmshurst suggests that a much better case for Reincarnation can be constructed from the Bible by studying some less familiar texts, as for example Psalm 90 where at almost every Burial Service (at least in the Anglican communion) the Minister reads the significant words: "Lord, Thou hast been our Refuge from *one generation to another* . . . Thou turnest men to destruction; again, Thou sayest, *Come again*, ye children of men." The phrase "from one generation to another" means literally "from generation to generation." The Hebrew word *DOR* signifies not generations of descendants, but successive rounds or periods of existence; "comings in and goings out" of the soul in respect of physical existence; incarnations.

Granting all this, and assuming ourselves to be satisfied that reincarnation is a fact of life, what has Christian doctrine to say about that fact; and why has it not hitherto been recognised and proclaimed?

To deal with the latter point first, there are very good reasons and sound grounds why the Christian Church has been dumb upon the subject. During European history the Clergy could not of course teach that of which they were ignorant. But the Early Church was *not* in ignorance about it. It is incredible to suppose that the fact of reincarnation was unknown to those among whom the Christian religion originated, for Christian origins are traceable to the very sources where the doctrine was axiomatic, while some of the earliest patristic writings also testify to acquaintance with it.

The scanty direct reference to it in Scripture proves nothing, for we know that side by side with the written oracles was given an interpretive, supplemental, oral teaching, and that neither the written word nor the expository instruction was put to indiscriminate public use, but was reserved for inner circles of disciples dedicated to the religious life and to special study of spiritual science, among whom the

doctrine may be taken for granted as familiar.

Why Did The Church Avoid Mention of this Doctrine?

Briefly, for this reason. The Christian Evangel was one designed to offer means of *liberation* from the wheel of birth; it was one providing the means of *escape* from the prospect of otherwise interminable incarnations in the flesh; it was the charter guaranteeing the soul's final and permanent exodus from this land of its bondage. Once grasp this fact and it will be clear why Christian doctrine strove to divert attention from reincarnation. It viewed incarnation in the mortal body as the sign of the soul's defection and alienation from its Source. It sought to teach that the soul's aim should be as rapidly as possible to escape from the world of generation by attaining re-generation in Christ, so transcending and passing for ever away from a condition of existence into which, strictly, it ought never to have entered at all!

The central doctrine of the Christian Faith is now (and always has been) the *Incarnation of Jesus Christ* the Son of God. He was "incarnated" in order that Man might not be compelled to undergo endless reincarnations. Faith in Him, which implies obedience to His sublime "Way of Life" as well as acceptance of what He has accomplished for and in Man, enables His followers or disciples to neutralize that accumulated Karman which would (otherwise) have required many incarnations to expiate.

Protagonists of the Christian point of view on this theme would gladly concede the existence of Christian "Adepts" who, though their regeneration is complete, return to incarnate existence moved by love and compassion for their fellows on the earth plane. Obviously, such beings stand in a class by themselves and are outside the compulsion to which their spiritual juniors are subject. They are miniature "Christs," emulating in their own degree the cosmic self-oblation of their Divine Master.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Written as a thesis at the conclusion of the first year course in

Theosophy at Theosophical University. Dr. Banks is Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, San Diego, California. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE FATHER AND THE SON — *H. T. Edge*

The most important doctrine of essential Christianity, which links it with the Esoteric Philosophy, with Platonism, Neo-platonism, the Hindu philosophies, and countless others, is the doctrine of the Father and the Son. It is strange how little the usual church interpretation of Christianity has made of this: the ignoring or twisting of this vital truth is a most significant sign of the decadence of the original gospel. The Father is the Divine Spirit within every man: it is Atman. See *The Key to Theosophy*, chap. vii and chap. x. The Son is Manas, or (more accurately) Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the Christos, the SELF, the Ego or thinking Manas, the Logos or Son of soul and spirit, the Man-God, the Word-made-flesh. (See *Key*, chaps. v and x). The most frequent mention of the subject in the Bible is found in John's Gospel, where we read:

The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth . . . for as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quicken-eth whom he will. . . . As the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, (chap. v)

The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever, (viii, 35. Referring to the mortal personal man and the permanent Man.) If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (36)

This Gospel is clearly, in part at least, a Gnostic gospel; but we find the same Gnostic coloring elsewhere. See for instance *Matthew*, xi, 27:

All things are delivered to me [Christos] of my Father: and no man know-eth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Reference to the Gospels will reveal many other apposite quotations, with which we cannot burden the present writing. The God-Man is a cardinal doctrine of religions in their original purity, though this sublime truth has either been ignored or degraded into something evil or absurd. The Mithras of Mithraism was such a God-Man, as was the Gnostic Abraxas; we have the Father and Son in Osiris and Horus; and so on, for instances of which see *The Secret Doctrine*. All this gives the true key to the evolution of Man by convergence of an evolution from below upwards with an evolution from above downwards; and declares the existence in Man of an immortal Divine Self, who crucifies himself on the Cross of mundane existence, in order to make fully manifest on earth the Divine Nature, and who thereby *redeems* the lower nature of man. This is the true salvation, and it is our own Christos who is the real Mediator between God and Man, the real accomplisher of the At-One-Ment. Truly Theosophy, so far from being the opponent of Christianity, is its interpreter, its redeemer.

It is not faith in a particular person that saves man, but faith in his own Divine Nature; so the same way of salvation applies equally to all men, whatever their religion. What can be thought of those who, whether in the name of religion or of science, deny this Divine Nature, making of man either a creature born in sin and unable to help himself, or a mere intellectual animal?

The Theosophical Forum

REINCARNATION IN THE BIBLE (1) — *William Brehon*

An exhaustive paper on this subject is not contemplated in this article, but even a sketch will show that the Christian Bible has in it the doctrine of Reincarnation. Of course those who adhere only to what the church now teaches on the subject of man, his nature and destiny, will not quickly accept any construction outside of the theological one, but there are many who, while not in the church, still cling to the old book from which they were taught.

In the first place, it must be remembered that the writers of the biblical books were Jews with few exceptions, and that the founder of Christianity — Jesus — was himself a Jew. And examination of his own sayings shows that he thought his mission was to the Jews only and not to the Gentiles. He said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This clearly referred to the Jews and as clearly excluded the Gentiles. And on one occasion he refused for some time to do anything for a Gentile woman until her importunity at last compelled him to act: and then too he referred to his mission to the Jews. So in looking into these things we must also look at what were the beliefs of the day. The Jews then most undoubtedly believed in reincarnation. It was a commonly accepted doctrine as it is now in Hindustan, and Jesus must have been acquainted with it. This we must believe on two grounds: first, that he is claimed by the Christian to be the Son of God and full of all knowledge; and second, that he had received an education which permitted him to dispute with the doctors of divinity. The theory of reincarnation was very old at the time, and the old testament books show this to be so.

"Proverbs" gives the doctrine where Solomon says he was with the Creator from the beginning and that then his (Solomon's) delights were with the sons of men and in the habitable parts of the earth. This disposes of the explanation that he meant he existed in the foreknowledge of the Creator, by the use of the sentences detailing his

life on the earth and with men. Then again Elias and many other famous men were to actually return, and all the people were from time to time expecting them. Adam was held to have reincarnated to carry on the work he began so badly, and Seth, Moses, and others were reincarnated as different great persons of subsequent epochs. The land is an oriental one, and the orientals always held the doctrine of the rebirth of mortals. It was not always referred to in respect to the common man who died and was reborn, but came up prominently when the names of great prophets, seers, and legislators were mentioned. If readers will consult any well educated Jew who is not "reformed," they will gain much information on this national doctrine.

Coming now to the time of Jesus, all the foregoing has a bearing on what he said. And, of course, if what he said does not agree with the view of the church, then the church view must be given up or we will be guilty of doubting the wisdom of Jesus and his ability to conduct a great movement. This, indeed, is the real position of the Church, for it has promulgated dogmas and condemned doctrines wholly without any authority, and some that Jesus held himself it has put its anathema upon.

When there was brought into the presence of Jesus a man who was born blind, the disciples naturally wondered why he had thus been punished by the Almighty, and asked Jesus whether the man was thus born blind for some sin he had committed, or one done by his parents. The question was put by them with the doctrine of reincarnation fully accepted, for it is obvious the man must have lived before, in their estimation, in order to have done sin for which he was then punished. Now if the doctrine was wrong and pernicious, as the church has declared it to be by anathematizing it, Jesus must have known it to be wrong, and then was the time for him to deny the whole theory and explode it, as well as definitely putting his seal of condemnation upon it for all time. Yet he did not do so; he waived it then and said the blindness was for other reasons in that case. It was not a denial of it.

But again when John the Baptist, who had, so to say, ordained Jesus to

his ministry, was killed by the ruler of the country, the news was brought to Jesus, and he then distinctly affirmed the doctrine of reincarnation. Hence his waiving the matter in the case of the blind man is shown to have been no refusal to credit the theory. Jesus affirmed the doctrine, and also affirmed the old ideas in relation to the return to earth of the prophets by saying that the ruler had killed John not knowing that he, John, was Elias "who was for to come."

On another occasion the same subject arose between Jesus and the disciples when they were talking about the coming of a messenger before Jesus himself. The disciples did not understand, and said that Elias was to come first as the messenger, and Jesus distinctly replied that Elias had come already in the person called John the Baptist. This time, if any, was the time for Jesus to condemn the doctrine, but, on the contrary, he boldly asserts it and teaches it, or rather shows its application to certain individuals, as was most interesting and instructive for the disciples who had not enough insight to be able to tell who any man was in his real immortal nature. But Jesus, being a seer, could look into the past and tell just what historical character any one had been. And so he gave them details about John, and we must suppose more particulars were gone into than have come down to us in the writings naturally incomplete and confessed to be but a partial narrative of the doings and sayings of Jesus.

It must now be evident that there is a diametrical disagreement between the church and Jesus. The church has cursed the doctrine he taught. Which is right? The true believer in Jesus must reply that Jesus is; the church will say it is right by acting on that line. For if the doctrine be taught, then all men are put on an equal basis, and hence the power of the human rulers of heaven and earth is at once weakened. Such an important doctrine as this is one that Jesus could not afford to pass over. And if it is wrong, then it was his duty to condemn it: indeed, we must suppose that he would have done so were it not entirely right. And as he went further, even to the extent of affirming it, then it stands with his seal of approval for all time.

John the Revealer believed it of course, and so in his book we find the verse saying that the voice of the Almighty declared that the man who overcame should "go out no more" from heaven. This is mere rhetoric if reincarnation be denied; it is quite plain as a doctrine if we construe it to mean that the man who by constant struggle and many lives at last overcomes the delusions of matter will have no need to go out into life any more, but from that time will be a pillar, what the Theosophist knows as "Dhyan Chohan" forevermore. And this is exactly the old and oriental doctrine on the point.

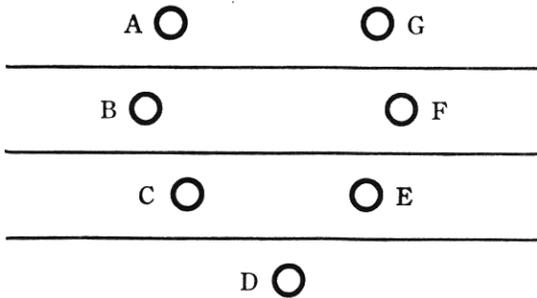
St. Paul also gives the theory of reincarnation in his epistles where he refers to the cases of Jacob and Esau, saying that the Lord loved the one and hated the other before they were born. It is obvious that the Lord cannot love or hate a non-existing thing, and that this means that Jacob and Esau had been in their former lives respectively good and bad and therefore the Lord — or Karma — loved the one and hated the other before their birth as the men known as Jacob and Esau. And Paul was here speaking of the same event that the older prophet Malachi spoke of in strict adherence to the prevalent idea. Following Paul and the disciples came the early fathers of the church, and many of them taught the same. Origen was the greatest of them. He gave the doctrine specifically, and it was because of the influence of his ideas that the Council of Constantinople 500 years after Jesus saw fit to condemn the whole thing as pernicious. This condemnation worked because the fathers were ignorant men, most of them Gentiles who did not care for old doctrines and, indeed, hated them. So it fell out of the public teaching and was at last lost to the Western world. But it must revive, for it is one of the founder's own beliefs, and as it gives a permanent and forceful basis for ethics it is really the most important of all the Theosophical doctrines.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. VII. William Brehon is one of the pen-names of W. Q. Judge, second Leader of the Theosophical Society. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

RADIO AND THE GLOBE-CHAINS — L. Gordon Plummer

We are constantly reminded that a diagram is not a picture of a thing but merely represents in pictorial form the underlying principles of the truths under study. This is particularly true in the case of the diagram commonly used to explain globe-chains. We designate by horizontal lines one above the other that there are planes of consciousness of varying degrees of energy and substance; and in those cosmic planes we allocate the globes of the planetary chain. We are not to suppose that the implication is made that the cosmic planes are actually one above the other. Yet there is good reason for showing it thus on our diagram.



That this diagram does not give a clue as to the true nature of the globes or their positions in the heavens, if they have any, can be better shown by using an analogy of the radio. The stations come in on your dial in a certain definite order according to their wave-lengths; and this order will be found on all radios.

Thus you think of the stations of high frequency at one end of your dial, and those of low frequency at the other. But no one supposes for an instant that the stations themselves all line up in this order. We know, as a matter of fact, that the stations are scattered all over the country, not to speak of the world; and, furthermore, that the wave-lengths from all the stations that are now broadcasting are penetrating your room at this very instant, and that there is not one section of your room

devoted to stations of certain frequencies and another section to those of another frequency. We know that every cubic inch of the room is permeated by all the wave-lengths, all interblended, not one of them interfering with any of the others, and that tuning-in one to the exclusion of all the others merely proves the point that the wave-lengths differ.

Thus the position of a station as it comes in on your dial gives no clue as to the nature of the wave-lengths, or the construction of the radio-station, or the fine technicalities involved in radio transmission.

So we can look at radio from three standpoints:

1. The order in which the stations come on your dial.
2. The positions of the various broadcasting stations throughout the world.
3. The nature of radio and the ether-waves.

Applying this now to our usual diagram of the globe-chains, we can really look at the globes in three ways:

1. The manner in which they are regarded on a diagram — which corresponds to the dial of your radio.
2. The actual positions or locations of the globes in space.
3. The nature of these globes, and the energies coming to us from them.

Thus the diagram has its right and proper place in our studies, but we must look deeper and find out *why* the globes are pictured as seven, what is the significance of their circular arrangement *in the diagram*, etc.; and having then solved, at least in some degree, the meaning of our symbol, we must pass on to other and perhaps deeper aspects of the truths about the globe-chains.

THE LIVING DEAD (1) — *Trevor Barker*

[The following article, "The Living Dead," was given as a lecture at the H. P. B. Lodge of the T. S. (Point Loma) in London, England, in 1934, by the late A. Trevor Barker. It is published here in connexion with the notice of his death on July 17th of this year, appearing elsewhere in these pages, as a tribute to one of our most valued contributors. Readers of THE FORUM will be pleased to know that the Editors have several of Dr. Barker's unpublished articles for future use in this magazine, and that the Literary Staff at Point Loma have likewise in mind the possibility of publishing the collected writings of Dr. Barker, or at least many of them. It is too soon to say whether this hope can be realized, but for those who are acquainted with the product of Dr. Barker's thought, and have been uplifted and inspired thereby, this hope, we feel, is sufficient to arouse deep interest. — Eds.]

One of the difficulties that we are all faced with in studying this great philosophy, is not so much that as a result of it we do not come to recognize and know certain things — our difficulty is rather in translating the implication of those ideas into action.

Now, it was because we came to a recognition that this is a difficulty the majority of us need to solve, that we were led to choose the title for this series of lectures: — "A Rational Basis for Ethics." What we are trying to do with each subject that we take up is first to consider very briefly what the teachings are; and then to try to extract the ethical implication from the metaphysical teaching, and see how we are going to translate it into action in our lives. That makes the philosophy a living power in our lives if we want it to be so.

I am taking for granted tonight necessarily that you are familiar with the subjects of the two preceding lectures in this series: the first was on

the Sevenfold Constitution and Powers of Man; and the second one dealt with Cyclic Law, Reincarnation, and to some extent Evolution. That is the background upon which the great Teachers of life and knowledge have thrown, as it were, upon a screen, the marvelous solutions and explanations that they have to give of the great mysteries of the life after death.

There are at least three ways that this title "The Living Dead" can be understood, because, as you will have divined, that title comes from the Mystery Schools of old time. The Living Dead can be understood as those who have put aside their mortal body — the people that colloquially we call "dead" people, but who, according to all the great religions of antiquity, and therefore in the teachings of Theosophy, are still indeed living. We can understand the title in that way, and we shall consider the Theosophical teachings on the subject from that point of view.

Then again, this phrase can signify living people, or those that we call living, but who none the less are really and truly dead, in the sense that they are unawakened — spiritually asleep. It is these that in the Mystery Schools of antiquity they called the "profane" — those who have not been awakened to the reality of the spiritual life.

And there is yet another way of looking at that title: those fewer in number, who, whilst still living in the body have dared to die in their personalities — who have dared to lose their personal lives, and have been reborn, spiritually speaking, and have therefore found their lives.

So we will try briefly to study the subject from these three points of view, amongst others.

Now may I try to give you a brief sketch of just what the Theosophical teachings are about the passage from what we call life through the intermediate worlds into the after-life, and back in cyclical return to earth again. The teachings on this subject in Theosophical philosophy are very rich. They are treated in great detail, and their implication is of tremendous importance and significance for us here. Then, when I

have given you that picture, I will try to extract from it some of the implications of an ethical kind. First at the moment of death everybody — whether dying quietly in their beds, whether what is called insane, or dying by accident or violence — everybody: young, old, under all conditions, experience in the last fleeting moments, when the cord of life is snapped, a complete review of every incident of the life from first to last. That is the first point we want to get the significance of, for surely it means that we have to remember, that in the memory of Nature nothing is ever forgotten. Do not let us deceive ourselves for an instant that any single one of our actions can be lost. We may choose to wipe it from our memories and forget it, but the soul memory cannot forget; the memory of Nature does not forget; and therefore sooner or later we have got to face the implications and consequences of our own acts.

Then, the review completed, the whole of the being that is life — the five-fold man, goes into that intermediate realm which in some parts of Christian doctrines is known as purgatory: into that region of purgation where the higher and lower elements of the being of the man are separated into their component parts. Therefore think of all that is left other than the body and life going into the great intermediate realm, and there instantly being subjected to a process by which the lower material parts of the man's being begin to separate by downward attraction from the spiritual efflorescence of his being, which is attracted inevitably upwards, upwards, upwards.

That is a process that happens without the man's will. If he dies a normal death he goes into that after-death condition but without the power to initiate new actions. He is in a subjective world; he can no longer will, perceive and know in a conscious way. He is rather like a man in a dream, or if his life has been very material it will be perhaps more like a nightmare.

Then he experiences what is known as the second death. Now please note this particular teaching, for of all teachings it probably has the greatest significance for those who want really to be reborn either

during life on earth, or after death. The result of the separation of the higher principles from the lower, leaving the lower to separate and disintegrate into their component parts — the lower consisting of all that is necessarily transient in Nature: the passions, the evil thoughts, the hatreds, all those qualities that are essentially impermanent and of the nature of death. They are doomed to fade out since there is no permanent survival of man's personality. And directly those principles are separated — the last process of which is a struggle resulting in another or second death — then is the man reborn into the Heaven world. Now what gives him birth there? Simply his spiritual aspirations, his religious yearnings, his philosophical and spiritual meditations of a lifetime; the high, beautiful and holy things that the man's heart was set upon during life. The innumerable mystical dreams and imaginations that most of us weave during life and never have a chance to work out and translate into action. They are ideal pictures, beautiful imaginings, true ideas — unfulfilled spiritual hopes. Now it is these things, not the will whether personal or spiritual, which cause a man to be reborn, spiritually speaking, in the Heaven world which in Theosophical teaching is called the world of Devachan or Sukhavati, the Land of the Gods.

What happens when he gets there, when he enters into that state of consciousness — for that is what it is? He is reborn as a little child as he was on earth, and his first recollections will be those that he had on earth — of his mother, his parents, his family, and from that tiny babylike beginning will be evolving the abstract effects of his own spiritual thinking, the causes of which were generated in the thought-life of the man's last personal incarnation. And there, in that after-death state he will be surrounded with all those that he loved and left on earth — the ideal picture of them, the idealized personalities of father and mother, husband and wife, and friends. He will be provided, as it were, by the creative power of his own imaginative thinking, with the opportunity of carrying to the nth degree his philosophical and mystical researches into the secret ways of the inner heart of Nature. He will be able to enter into the companionship of the great thinkers,

the great Sages and Teachers of the human race. He will be able to work out these ideas and translate them, as it seems to him, into action. Yet he is really only living in a glorious dream world, but full of happiness, peace, bliss and the power of the spirit. And when the full tide of the assimilation process, gradually waning, finally leaves him, with all the spiritual effects of his last personal life fully worked out, assimilated into the fabric of his spiritual being, what happens? Why, the efflorescence of that last life on earth, the fruit of that human soul is gathered up into the bosom of its Father in Heaven, merging into union with the Spiritual, there to experience the vast panoramic vision of all its past existences — each incarnation as it were a pearl upon the golden thread of life and consciousness. And in the memory of the Immortal Seer is seen every one of the causes that led to such and another effect in life after life on earth: that which he had done of good bringing beautiful results and that which he had done of evil resulting necessarily in suffering. Finally he sees as a whole the past life that he has just completed, and the destiny which he himself has created of the life that is about to open in his next incarnation — seeing as it were in the ideal thought of his own inner Divinity, the plan laid down there in his own highest spiritual self for the life which he is about to embark upon. Just like an ideal architectural plan of a universe to be — in this case the future life of a man on earth. Then when that wonderful vision of all that he will have to go through is complete, the triumphs of the spirit that he will experience, and the failures due to the blows of Karmic destiny — the results of those things of an evil kind which the man had generated in past existences; when all has been seen, he begins to descend step by step, drawing back to himself the life atoms, the very matter through which he had experienced his passions, desires, and thoughts, good, bad, and indifferent, of the last personality; drawing them all together by the power of attraction and finally emerging on the stage of life once again as a little child.

That in brief is an imperfect picture of the Theosophical teaching about the life after death for those people who die a normal natural death at the end of their life period. I have purposely left out all the exceptions

to the general law, because it would take us too far afield. But when we discover what the implications of these ideas are and we try to work out how to translate these implications into action in terms of ethics, then we begin truly to *think*; then indeed life begins for us and takes on an entirely different aspect to merely reading about these things in an intellectual way and leaving it there.

We spoke about the review of the past life. That is an automatic process, and we have already seen the implication that nothing is forgotten in the book of Nature, or in the Soul's memory. The man has passed from earth necessarily leaving behind him all his purely material possessions; and then you have the teaching about the separation of the principles and the second death. Now what are the implications of this idea? First that in terms of a man's spirituality, to the extent to which during life the higher and divine nature of the man had dominated the lower personal nature, to that extent will he pass through the intermediate worlds and purgatorial regions with speed: if a spiritual, if a holy life and pure one, the lower nature will just fade away. The higher will then gravitate upwards, rising like a cork does in the sea — it cannot help itself; and because the lower nature had been transcended during life there is very little to disintegrate, and so it vanishes away like the mist before the rising sun.

We see at once the tremendous spiritual benefit to the man who lives in terms of ethics during life even in that one fact. Now consider another aspect of it. Supposing the reverse kind of life had been led, and you have before you the life of a materialist, a man who has lived in the animal nature, pursuing the objects of the senses, living in his desires, the spiritual nature given no attention to — perhaps hardly wakened at all. The center of gravity is in the animal soul. He must pass a long period in the purgatorial regions, to the extent that he dies with active, vigorous hatreds and passions and desires, and he must suffer the unsatisfied longings which he can no longer assuage in the after-death world. These he will experience as a terrible nightmare, which he is unable to do anything about. A sufficient reason indeed for living an ethical life here — but still worse is to come, because it is just such

individuals who can be most easily attracted and drawn into the mediumistic vortex of the spiritualistic seance. Earthly is that animal soul by nature, and earthly are the forces that attract to the spiritualistic seance. And then that discarnate animal — almost devil — seeks to satiate the animal passions, vicariously as it were, through the human beings that he is brought into contact with through the medium; and unfortunately many are the cases of insanity, suicide, obsession, that are caused by such people. Not only do they do damage to the living, but through the excesses that they commit they gradually build into themselves worse and worse tendencies in that part of their nature than they had actually done during earth life. So you get an ethical implication there at once — the condemnation as a practice of getting in touch with these entities through the mediumistic seance, and at the same time a tremendous incentive to leave behind, to turn around from that kind of life while living on earth, because after death it is too late — you cannot do anything about it.

Now the third, and as I think, the most important application of this far-reaching doctrine: what is it that really causes a man to be reborn in the Heaven-world or Devachan? It is really a state during life of spiritual ignorance, a state of spirituality, of spiritual yearnings, spiritual imaginings and strivings, but without that deep understanding of the laws of Nature which would enable the individual to translate that ideal thinking into action in the living present, and therefore he has to work them out in an ideal state instead of here in the objective universe. Now that means that it is really a state of illusion, although much nearer reality, than earth-life — very much nearer; but nevertheless, from the point of view of a really spiritual self-conscious being such as any of the great Sages and Seers, the great religious Teachers of the human race — from their point of view it is a state of ignorance — something that can be transcended by a certain process. What is it? Simply this: that just as in the after-death state the spiritual nature by its predominance goes instantly into the higher worlds and expresses itself there in a rebirth of the spirit by transcending all the actions of the material, passional, lower nature; so

here in order to extract the ethical implication of this idea we have simply to realize that it is possible for us — you and I — at this moment, any time, from day to day, from hour to hour, to die to everything that is of a character that prevents the expression of our own high, divine, spiritual nature and powers. It is those things of a lower nature that are keeping us from a realization of the God Within, that are keeping us from being incarnate Gods here in the temple of the body. To avoid the illusory state — necessary, beneficent and useful as it is — of the Heaven-world, we simply have to take a high ethical standard of life and realize it in the body here and now; and that will mean to lose our personal lives completely from an ordinary point of view. It will be to follow the advice of the Initiate Paul: to die daily that he might be reborn in Christ. This is a possibility for us, and it simply means translating ethics from the realm of the ideal into the living present through action here and now. That is one of the main implications of the whole of the after-death teaching of Theosophy: the possibility first, and then the necessity, the impelling necessity for those who want to live in terms of the spiritual idea — to do the thing in the only place that it can be done, which is on earth here where we are. Here alone can we learn so to dominate by the power of the spirit the lower man, that we become actually reborn during life.

One last idea I want to draw your attention to: the plan that our Paramatman, our own Father in Heaven, has for each one of us; the plan that our own Inner God shows to us before we come into this world, of the incarnation that we are about to embark upon. That is something that has a tremendous importance, for deep down in the spiritual nature of our own being there is that which knows the justice of every single accident that will come to us in the life that is opening: the justice of the rewards and the retribution that we experience seemingly perhaps in some automatic way once the incarnation has begun. For if there is such a picture, such a plan of the ideal working-out of our destiny — destiny that we ourselves have created — then it rests with us so to live during life that we human, thinking entities, can reflect purely and perfectly that ideal plan for the living of our lives

that exists in the mind of the God Within. And if we learn to do that in our daily meditation, listening for the voice of the Inner Warrior, our Inner Deity, our Personal Savior, we shall have revealed before our own Inner Spiritual Eye, step by step, the pathway which that Inner Divinity wants us to follow if we only will — and the price of it is simply the willingness to live an entirely different sort of life; a willingness to translate into the living present those simple ethical principles that all the great Teachers of the human race have laid down as essential and necessary for the saving of the souls of men.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The English Theosophical Forum*, March 15, 1934.
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The Theosophical Forum

ACHIEVING THE IMPERSONAL — *M. G. Gowsell*

As the lengthening of the days following upon the winter solstice presages the coming of spring, so have we evidence of the nearness of the new time. Not least among such collective testimony is the spirit of inquiry among men as to the why and wherefore of things. There is also in this connexion a readiness, a willingness, if not an actual desire on the part of increasing numbers, to be shown. This is but natural, when we consider our appalling dearth of certitude about so many things. Call this attitude the higher criticism, or call it a robust scepticism if you will. It is that which has given birth to such popular phrases as: "Show me! I'm from Missouri!" etc., etc. One might take this more or less universal circumstance as the mental keynote of our day. People are clamoring for a modicum of certitude. They want to know. Herein is the reason for the appreciation of certain noteworthy achievements in that particular field of endeavor which has come to be known as debunking. It is one of the signs of health rather than of disease.

This lusty, iconoclastic infant, born of the exigencies of our time, holds great promise for the relatively immediate future. Moreover it threatens the very life of a tremendous amount of organized time-honored humbug. Intensive investigation and research among historical, archaeological and other records is beginning to bear fruit. History of the past — his story of the past, whoever he or she as chronicler may have been at the time — is being scrutinized and subjected to critical analysis as never before. His or her contemporary stories likewise, whether journalistic or brought to one's ears over the radio. There is something portentous, something irrevocable and juggernaut-like about this debunking of the spoken, written or printed word.

To get at the unbiased, impersonal truth in respect to this, that, or the other matter is the thing. It may involve more than one angle of

approach, and so may not be the same avenue for everyone. Some may grasp the essential truth concerned in any matter by means of intuition or insight; others by a process of reflexion, turning it over in the mind; others again by a purely logical habit of thought. Yet another approach, and not least among them, is by weeding out the non-essentials in any given case, the irrelevant in short, with which so many issues are decked out for presentation. Thus stripped of their trappings, the bare facts are more easily brought to light.

This is a way of approach that is within the scope of anyone and everyone. By seeing the unvarnished facts through the hole of discrimination, which each has to bore for himself, there results the essential, the impersonal view, the value of which may not be overestimated. If one is ever to achieve even a modicum of the impersonal some such attainment must be reached, some such implement used. It may often mean an abandonment of one's prejudices or preconceived ideas, but what of that? They will soon be seen for what they really are: impediments, preventives, in the way of the mind's being kept fluid, receptive, open and unbiased. It is through the accumulation of such mental and emotional rubbish that we find ourselves so destitute of vision today, so unresponsive to the teachings of events, the most impersonal teachers known, and the least appreciated, be it added.

Nearly everyone is interested in the news of the day, but inasmuch as the daily reports, false or true are, to the man in the street, so inextricably interwoven with propaganda, little credence is given to them. It is an old truism that falsehood goes down grade apace, while truth has to laboriously climb up hill. The reason is that in our present state of society the majority are inclined to believe the lie rather than the truth, particularly if it be presented in terms with an emotional meaning, which would naturally appeal to one's personal prejudices. And yet, speaking of propaganda, it cannot be denied that the most effective component in it is truth, although truth is usually called propaganda by the other side — the side against which this truth may be directed. But we are not in the slightest degree concerned with

world politics, nor with local politics. All these will some day be recognised to be the ineffectual, futile things they are. The day will arrive when they will be lined up and made to walk the plank, together with other major institutions still serving as separative barriers between man and man. This event, however, will not be until a far greater measure of impersonality becomes operative in the affairs of men.

Inasmuch as words are of such importance in life, let us see if they cannot be made to serve more impersonally, less colorfully, perhaps, less emotionally, certainly, wherever and whenever facts are at issue and certitude threatens to become obscured. We might profit by checking up on current words and phrases which reach us through conversation, or in our daily course of reading: books, magazines, newspapers or what not.

As might be expected under existing circumstances, the thoughts of uncounted millions are today completely dominated by emotion. Instead of using the head they have turned the job over to that much over-worked organ the liver, and we have what we have in consequence — "Insanity Fair" — Personality gone to seed. One may find evidence of this emotionalism in the foreign news, as reported in some of the daily papers, by noting the usual number of words suggesting disapproval, opprobrium, condemnation, or moral turpitude. But by replacing such emotion-evoking terms with neutral words which have a purely objective meaning we have an entirely different picture. Try this on the next political speech you hear.

There is something in the adage about giving a dog a bad name. Suppose for instance that some particular dog were of mixed ancestry, as a good many dogs are. He is regarded by his owner as a valuable and faithful companion. But to a complaining neighbor who may have heard him barking during the night he is a mongrel, a cur, plus a nuisance. This is to depart from the word dog which has a purely objective and neutral meaning. To refer to him as a dog of mixed breed would still preserve the objective meaning attached to the word dog.

But to call him a mongrel implies a measure of disapproval in connexion with that particular dog, while to call him a cur suggests downright worthlessness or even ugliness.

Words with emotional or colorful meanings have their place, their legitimate use in any language. And they need not be confined to poetry either, although poetry may furnish as good an illustration of such usage as any. Suppose we were describing a bit of mountain scenery in early summer and said:

*The little lake in borrowed blue
Mirrors the mountain sheen,
Faithful to nearby alpine firs
New-tipped in timid green.*

This would be more or less of a picture, one quite in keeping with the characteristic environment at such a time and place. A suggestion of consciousness, fidelity, and action is implied throughout, plus a picture. To say that the lake reflected the blue sky and the towering mountain a mile away, and that it included in its reflexion fir trees showing new growth would be to rob the lines of any poetry they might possess, particularly the endowment of such qualities as quietude, consciousness, and fidelity. Yet in so doing we should be using strictly neutral or objective words, but at some sacrifice of beauty.

Let us try to get away from the emotional language of local and other rival politicians and keep our mental furniture in order. It behooves all educators and thinking people generally not only to be on guard against any possible influences upon themselves which present-day emotion-arousing terminology might have, but to do their utmost to further the day when we shall be able to consider national and international problems, yes, and personal problems also, in the same dispassionate manner that the chemist adopts in the laboratory or the mathematician with the properties of numbers. For until we can do that it is to be feared that things may remain pretty much as they are.

THE SACRED TREE SCRIPT (1) — *H. T. Edge*

In a well-known passage in the Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky avers that the Secret Doctrine of antiquity will be rejected in the nineteenth century, but that in the twentieth century scholars will begin to recognize it as a fact. The present volume is one evidence of this forecast, for it deals with innumerable matters with which H. P. Blavatsky was concerned when she outlined the tenets of the Secret Doctrine and the evidences for its universal diffusion as the groundwork of all religions and great philosophical systems. The author, so far as we have been able to discover, shows no knowledge of H. P. Blavatsky's teachings, or of the numerous literature that has sprung therefrom; but he quotes a great number of authorities English, French, and German, and we have no means of knowing whether any of them had contact with Theosophical writings. But however the case may be, it is evident that the subject of a universal mystery and symbol language, which at once reveals and conceals ancient lore, is being widely studied by scholars of many lands. The author states in his Preface that he is about to consider several topics which may seem unrelated: the esoteric basis of Plato's science of numbers, the origin of the Runic script, the origin of some Old Testament legends, and the historical implications of Plato's metaphors. His endeavor is to show how these are related; but students of Theosophy know how very much wider a field is covered by such researches, and how not merely the few things mentioned by the author, but the sacred lore and symbolism of all lands and all times is included in the scheme. The author's scope, apart from occasional references, does not extend beyond the Aryan peoples (in the usual linguistic sense), and is confined mainly to ancient Greece. He takes a very high view of Plato, whom he regards as in possession of an esoteric knowledge, with numerical keys, and as being obliged, like Jesus, to address the multitude in parables.

It is still a mystery to me whether Plato actually knew the initial

source of all his inspirations. Was it intuition or schooling which led him to his "vision" of the cultural past of humanity?

The ancient thinkers knew how to conceal their esoteric doctrine from the laics. In order to get access to their treasury we must pass through Plato.

Speaking of references by Plato to the Sun as the source of Wisdom, he says:

The above-mentioned passage seems to indicate that for a "true philosopher," who understands the relationship between the shadows, images, reflections, pictures of things and their "ideas," the access to "true knowledge" is open. He actually sees "truth" as such. His eyes possess the power of penetrating into the very essence of things. Like the Solar God, Apollo, a "true philosopher," is able to approach the "eidon" [archetype] of a thing and to reveal it to his own view and to that of congenial fellow thinkers.

The worship of the sun is pan-Aryan. We find it among the Hindu, the Persians, the Greeks, the Goths, the Slavs.

The Apollonian myth is one of the few keys to the "Delphic mysteries."

There is a great deal about numbers and their correspondences here, reminding us of such books as Higgins's *Anacalypsis* and Skinner's *Source of Measures*; studies which involve us in intricacies, as students well know. The author has detected the existence of an octaval system of numeration (we forbear to risk the word "notation," which usually implies the use of a zero and positional value). Students too readily accept a group of digits, like 777, or 600, for instance, as denoting numbers in the ordinary decimal scale (an argument for photostatic reproduction!), whereas there is no knowing what numbers they may indicate.

He speaks of a "pre-logical" school, as representing an ancient cast of

thought contrasted with the "logical" school initiated by Aristotle, and which has set the pattern of subsequent Western thought. Plato was a mathematician of the Pythagorean school, he says, and this book is very largely on numbers. Students of *The Secret Doctrine* are aware of the importance attached to this subject, and Mr. Efron bears out H. P. Blavatsky's contention that numbers were formerly considered in a different way from the merely numerical way in which they are considered in our mathematics. A German author, G. Albert, is quoted to the effect that "the digits determine and are the skeleton of number; the zeros are in so far without importance." A French author, Shure, says that 7 represents the union between the divine and human, represented respectively by 3 and 4; also that 7 represents the law of evolution and complete realization. (But we observe that he cites and endorses a statement by Plato that the number 5040 has 44 factors, whereas it will be found to have 58).

The Sacred Tree Script is a figure found in the Runic inscription on the Gothic stone of Kylfver; it looks like a diagram of a fir tree, and speculation is made as to the meaning of the number and size and arrangement of the branches on each side, with a view to finding a numerical key of interpretation.

The first section of this book is on the Ideal Numbers; the second is on the Ship of State, described as Plato's leading metaphor which seems to determine the main features of his ideal city. Noah's ark is compared with it. Much is said in *The Secret Doctrine* about the symbol of the Ark, ship, boat, crescent, moon, etc., as denoting the feminine aspect of the Universal Spirit, the Great Mother, Isis, etc., the receptacle or container of all. The author has a chapter on the "Indic and Indo-German Background of the Genesis," in which he points out some of these analogies. Thus he has hold of a part of the scheme of the Wisdom-Religion.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Sacred Tree Script: the Esoteric Foundation of Plato's Wisdom*. By Andrew Efron. The Tuttle, Morehouse and Taylor Co., New Haven.

1941. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

REINCARNATION THROUGH THE AGES — *Stanley Zurek*

Reincarnation through the ages?" some sympathetic friend may query in surprise. "Yes," we reply, "through the ages." "But, how strange," our friend may continue, "I was always under the impression that the doctrine of reincarnation was a comparatively new teaching, introduced, I believe, by the Theosophists towards the end of the last century." "And so it was," we reply, "precisely. However not so much introduced as re-introduced, by the Theosophists of the last century."

And so, Friends, for the benefit of this hypothetical friend of ours, and of others who may be interested in this sublime teaching of the ages, we shall endeavor to present this afternoon a brief outline of the doctrine of reincarnation as it existed in the religions, philosophies, and literatures of various nations down the ages. And as the subject is a vast one, we must of necessity, limit ourselves to a few examples only, and have therefore chosen to present today some of the recorded instances of this teaching in a few specific nations only, such as India, Greece and Rome, Britain, and the United States.

But before proceeding with our presentation of these recorded examples, it might be wise to present an outline of the teaching itself for the benefit of those to whom the doctrine may be new or comparatively so.

REINCARNATION EXPLAINED

Briefly, the doctrine of reincarnation is the teaching that man is reborn on earth again after the change called death — and not once only, but many times. Why? it may be asked. For the simple reason that one life on earth is not sufficient to make of the imperfect man which we are at present, the Perfect Man which Nature demands.

Why is it that even in our ordinary every-day life there are such great discrepancies in character, ability, opportunities, and even physical

appearance among individuals? Why should one individual be born with a silver spoon in his mouth and another with an empty tin cup, so to say? Why should one be blessed with a strong, healthy and beautiful body and another come into the world with some deformity or perhaps a frail body, soon to be disease-ridden? Theosophy answers: Karma, or the Law of Consequences, or Cause and Effect, which is the twin-doctrine of Reincarnation — one unable to exist or function without the other. As we sow, so shall we reap — no more, no less.

In other words, the discrepancies or differences are due to men themselves — the types of lives they led in former incarnations on earth strictly and invariably determining their present state. This is so obvious and fair an argument that anyone who will but analyse and think over the matter carefully cannot but see the justice of it.

THE DOCTRINE OF ANOTHER CHANCE

The teaching of reincarnation is likewise the doctrine of another chance. How cruel, how cold, and how totally unjust is the teaching of a single life only when compared with the doctrine of another chance! Under the one-life theory, man is relegated after death either to an eternal blessedness in heaven or an eternal damnation in hell. How unjust, we repeat; for could a man possibly, within the span of a single lifetime only, have merited an eternity of either supreme bliss or supreme suffering? How could he possibly have accomplished so much good or so much harm within a single life to merit an eternity of reward or an eternity of punishment after death?

Under the doctrine of another chance man is given an opportunity to correct mistakes committed in former lives. He is given an opportunity to redress wrongs done to his fellow-men and by them to him. He is given an opportunity to become a genius and master of his art, profession, or chosen calling. What a hope and comfort this doctrine would be to the thousands who long for distinction in their work and do not seem to achieve it, no matter how hard they labor! No effort, however, is lost, not even the smallest, so if we do not attain success in this life, there are other lives to come in which the effort expended in

this life will give us just so much more talent or ability in our life-work. Rome wasn't built in a day, and neither is a Beethoven, a Shakespeare, or a Gainsborough the product of a single lifetime only.

And finally, in concluding our brief explanation of the doctrine of reincarnation, we should like to quote the old Kabalistic aphorism: "A stone becomes a plant; a plant, a beast; a beast, a man; a man, a spirit; and a spirit, a god." In other words, the teaching is that the inner entity or soul in man has inhabited all the lower kingdoms in nature, starting with the invisible elemental forms of what are called the gnomes, undines, sylphs and salamanders, and, rising through the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms, finally reaching the stature of man. But is that the end? No. From the imperfect men of today we shall become the perfected men of tomorrow — geniuses, and not in one calling only, but in all branches of knowledge: in religion, philosophy, science and the arts — to what are called today the Mahatmans or Masters of Wisdom, and from them to still higher states of life and consciousness, unendingly.

And now we will proceed to our presentation of the recorded examples of the teaching of reincarnation in the nations chosen for our study this afternoon.

INDIA

We shall begin with India, called the cradle of civilization, where the doctrine of reincarnation is practically universally believed in in one form or another. In order to clear up a most erroneous misconception in connexion with the teaching of reincarnation, we shall deliberately begin with two passages from the *Laws of Manu*, which is an elaborate system of laws and duties, religious and civil, said to have been written many thousands of years ago, and followed by priests and laymen alike. In the chapter entitled, "On Transmigration and Final Beatitude." the moral consequences of various human acts are given in great detail, of which the following are examples:

For sinful acts mostly corporeal, a man shall assume *after* death

a vegetable or mineral form; for such acts mostly verbal, the form of a bird or beast; for acts mostly mental, the lowest of human conditions.

A priest who has drunk spirituous liquor, shall migrate into the form of a smaller or larger worm or insect, or a moth, or of some ravenous animal.

"Why, how superstitious!" our friends may cry, and we quite agree with them, how superstitious indeed, *if accepted literally*, for Theosophy distinctly and unqualifiedly teaches that man does *not* re embody himself in animals or other lower forms of life after death. "Once a man, always a man," is the rule, *without any exceptions*. Let us examine, however, what the main Founder of the Theosophical Society, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, has to say on this subject. In her article, "Transmigration of the Life-Atoms," she writes:

Now to the Hindu doctrine of Metempsychosis. It has a basis of truth; and, in fact it is an axiomatic truth, but only in reference to human atoms and emanations, and that not only after a man's death, but during the whole period of his life. The esoteric meaning of the Laws of Manu bears no reference to the human Ego, but only to the atoms of his body, his lower triad and his fluidic emanations. It is all very well for the Brahmans to distort, in their own interest, the real meaning contained in these laws, but the words quoted never meant what they were made to yield later on.

In other words, the doctrine is there, but in a distorted form, for the *Laws of Manu* having been undoubtedly tampered with, the teaching is carried to an entirely erroneous extreme by its literal interpretation.

We will next consider the *Mahabharata*, the great epic poem of India. The original is written in the Sanskrit language and is the world's greatest poem, containing some two hundred thousand lines! It consists of countless episodes, legends, and philosophical treatises, strung upon

the thread of a single story and is historically based on the strife between the Aryan invaders of India and the original inhabitants. In India the reading of it is supposed to confer upon the happy reader every good and perfect gift.

One of the episodes of the *Mahabharata*, called the *Bhagavad-Gita* or *Song Celestial*, is studied and held in great esteem by all the sects in Hindusthan, except the Mohammedan, and is one of the best-loved of Theosophical devotional books, of which Mr. Judge has said that "It is the study of adepts." We are told that Ralph Waldo Emerson always had a copy on his desk. It consists of a dialog between Arjuna, prince of India, and his charioteer, the god Krishna, held in the open space between two opposing armies. The episode is allegorical, the god Krishna symbolizing man's Higher Self, his own Inner God. The doctrine of reincarnation is clearly stated in this work as the following passages will show.

Krishna speaking:

"Those great-souled ones who have attained to supreme perfection come unto me and no more incur rebirths rapidly revolving, which are mansions of pain and sorrow.

"Both I and thou have passed through many births, O harasser of thy foes! Mine are known unto me, but thou knowest not of thine.

"All worlds up to that of Brahman are subject to rebirth again and again, but they, O son of Kunti, who reach to me have no rebirth."

The last quotation is interesting as it bears out the Theosophical teaching that not only man but all beings below and above him are subject to rebirth.

We will now consider Buddhism, the religion based on the teachings of the greatest of the Oriental Spiritual Teachers. That reincarnation is taught in Buddhism is clearly evidenced by the famous *Jataka Tales* or

Book of Birth-Stories, attributed to the Buddha himself, and which contains some five hundred and fifty or more stories describing the Buddha's past incarnations, from the lowest form of life to the highest attainable by man on earth. The author of *Buddhism in Translations*, Henry Clarke Warren, states that some of these tales are much-traveled ones, and are to be found in Aesop's Fables, and in La Fontaine and other European works.

GREECE

We now come to Greece — brilliant highly-polished Greece — who received her wonderful civilization from Egypt, and which Egypt, in turn received from India. Four great names occur to us at once: Homer, Pythagoras, Plato and Plutarch. We shall treat of two.

Pythagoras, the Sage of Samos, who established a colony and school at Crotona in Italy, was one of the great Initiates of ancient times, having spent twenty-two years of study in the Temples of Egypt and twelve years with the Magi in Babylon. Iamblichus in his *Life of Pythagoras*, gives clear evidence of his belief in reincarnation:

. . . he reminded many of his familiars, by most clear and evident indications, of the former life which their soul had lived, before it was bound to this body, and demonstrated by indubitable arguments, that he had been Euphorbus the son of Panthus, who conquered Patroclus.

And further:

Let this, therefore, be one specimen of his piety, which also we have before mentioned, that he knew what his soul was, and whence it came into the body, and also its former lives, and that of these things he gave most evident indications.

We next take the great Plato, of whom Emerson wrote that "out of Plato come all things that are still written and debated among men of thought," and that "Mysticism finds in Plato all its texts." He taught reincarnation likewise. In the last book of his *Republic* occurs the

famous "Vision of Er," which we will summarize.

Er, the Pamphylian, had been slain in battle, and on the tenth day, when the bodies were taken up, his was found unaffected by decay and he was sent away to be buried. And on the twelfth day, as he was lying on the funeral pile, he suddenly returned to life and related what he had seen in the other world.

He reported that when his soul had left his body, he had found himself, in company with a great many others, before two mysterious openings in the earth, and above them two other openings into the heaven above. Out of these openings were emerging souls from the underworld and heaven respectively, and the newly-arrived souls from earth, after being sentenced by the judges, entered the openings leading to the place they deserved.

Er was told that for every wrong committed on earth, the soul had to suffer ten times over — that is, once in every hundred years — and likewise was it rewarded in the same proportion.

In company with the spirits, he finally arrived at a rainbow-colored column of light, piercing the sky and earth, where a prophet, having distributed lots among the spirits, instructed them to choose their coming lives on earth. The spectacle was sad and laughable and strange, for the choice of most souls was based on their experience of a previous life. The soul of what had once been Orpheus, chose the life of a swan, out of enmity to the race of women, hating to be born of a woman, as they had been his murderers. And Odysseus, whose lot happened to be last, spent a great deal of time looking for the life of a private man with no cares — and he had difficulty in finding this as it was lying about and had been neglected by everyone else. Then, after drinking of the River of Unmindfulness — that is, all the spirits with the exception of Er — which drinking made them forget all their past experiences, they were driven upwards in a thunder-storm and earthquake to birth on earth again.

Plato's description of the souls choosing their next lives on earth is

quite in keeping with the Theosophical teaching which states that the Reincarnating Ego chooses just the life best suited to work out certain Karma or set of consequences engendered in former lives.

His allusion to Orpheus, a great Teacher of Greece, as passing into the form of a swan, is no doubt allegorical, we are told, as the swan is the Hindu symbol of the immortal spirit, and signifies, therefore, that Orpheus had passed into the spiritual life, having reached the end of mortal existence. Plato, in common with all initiates, of whatever land or time, was compelled to use symbol and allegory in presenting deep teachings to the public, which was not prepared to receive the truth outright.

In his *Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, and IXth book of the *Laws* are to be found other references to reincarnation.

ROME

Coming now to Rome, the name of the immortal Vergil comes at once to mind — Vergil, of whom Tennyson writes:

I salute thee, Mantovano,
I that loved thee since my day began,
Wielder of the stateliest measure
Ever moulded by the lips of man.

While on the subject of poets, we might say here that in ancient times the poets were the Teachers of men — as Horace, a contemporary of Vergil, says: "Poets the first instructors of mankind," — and they employed verse instead of prose in their instruction. Dr. de Purucker tells us that the original metre or tempo of the ancient poetry placed the mind in a rhythmic condition which was conducive to a better understanding of the teachings.

In the great Roman epic, the *Aeneid*, which took Vergil eleven years to write, and which he did not consider complete when he died, the doctrine of reincarnation holds an important place. In the sixth book, Aeneas descends into the underworld to converse with his father,

Anchises, in the Fields of Elysium, which lay beyond the realms of punishment. While there, his father told him that the souls that visited the underworld were punished according to their deserts, and then sent into Elysium. Then after they had become cleansed of all their impurities, and after drinking of the River of Lethe, which made them forget their memories of the past, they again were reborn on earth in another form. In a crowd which passed them, Anchises pointed out to Aeneas, and to the priestess who helped him descend into the underworld, the men who would make his race famous in Italy. First of all there was his son Silvius — not yet born — and then Lavinia, his Italian wife-to-be; then Romulus, the founder of Rome; and then, greatest of all, the long foretold Augustus Caesar, who would restore the Golden Age.

Another great figure in Roman history was the great sage Apollonius of Tyana, who was born about the same time as Jesus Christ, and who possessed miraculous powers of healing and prophecy and was a friend and adviser to kings.

Philostratus, in his *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, records the fact that when Apollonius visited India, he was told by the Brahman sage, Iarchas, upon asking him his opinion of the soul, that it was "the same as was delivered by Pythagoras to you, and by us to the Egyptians." Apollonius also related to Iarchas that he, Apollonius, in a previous incarnation had been an Egyptian steersman who had refused the inducements offered him by pirates to guide his ship into their hands.

BRITAIN

Coming now to Britain, we are told by E. D. Walker, the author of *Reincarnation: A Study of Forgotten Truth*, that the circle of reïmbodiment was an essential principle of Druid faith. He says that the people held to this doctrine so vitally that they wept around the new-born infant and smiled upon his death; for the beginning and end of an earthly life were to them the imprisonment and release of a soul which must undergo repeated trials to remove degrading impurities before finally rising into a succession of higher spheres.

There is also an old legend that King Arthur, his body healed of his wounds, and his soul healed of the hurts of treachery, would come back again to teach and lead.

Many English poets have written with great feeling and beauty respecting this doctrine, in which connexion we might quote the words of Plato regarding poets: "Poets utter great and wise things which they do not themselves understand," and also the words of Bulwer Lytton, who said that "Poets are the truest diviners of nature."

William Wordsworth, in his "Intimations of Immortality," writes of it almost intuitively.

Alfred Tennyson, who was the poet-laureate of his time, also wrote of reincarnation with a sure and brilliant pen, of which "De Profundis," "Two Voices," and especially his Early Sonnet I, are examples in his poetry.

Robert Browning also writes of it in his "One Word More":

I shall never, in the years remaining,
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues.
This of verse alone, one life allows me: . . .
Other heights in other lives, God willing.

Sir Edwin Arnold's beautiful *Light of Asia* — describing the life of the Buddha Gautama — is a classic which presents the teaching of Reincarnation and Karman in a masterly way. The following passage is an example of his beautiful writing:

The Books say well, my Brothers! each man's life
The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes
The bygone right breeds bliss.
That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn. The silence and the Darkness knew!
So is a man's fate born.

And today, the present poet-laureate, John Masefield, in his "My Creed," gives a graphic and practical picture of this teaching.

Of prose writers, Marie Corelli, who was Queen Victoria's favorite author, was an ardent believer in reincarnation and it plays an important part in her novels. Kipling likewise, in his "The Finest Story in the World," writes of it, as did Henry More, Shelley, and Rossetti, among many others.

UNITED STATES

Coming now to our own United States, we find that many of the Indian tribes believed in reincarnation. The Maryland Indians stated that the white men were an ancient generation who had come to life again and had returned to seize their former land. Among the Algonquins, the women who desired to become mothers, flocked to the couch of those about to die in the hope that the soul, as it passed out from the body, would enter theirs.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was called the Plato of the nineteenth century, and who was also a student of the literatures of the East, was an ardent believer in the doctrine of reincarnation and in his "Representative Men" practically quotes Plato in connexion with Plato's teaching that "all knowledge is reminiscence."

But the most important exponent of Reincarnation in America, the one possessing the most actual knowledge on the subject and the greatest authority, was Madame H. P. Blavatsky, who in 1875 founded the Theosophical Society with several others in New York. We might add here that it is the teaching of Theosophy that in the last quarter of every century a messenger is sent from the Great White Lodge to do special public work in the world, and in the last century H. P. Blavatsky was this Messenger or Envoy, and the work she began is carried on today by our present Leader, Dr. G. de Purucker.

Madame Blavatsky's short definition of the word Reincarnation, as it appears in the Glossary of her *Key to Theosophy*, is so clear and concise

that I would like to read it to sum up the teaching. She writes:

Reincarnation, or Re-birth; the once universal doctrine, which taught that the Ego is born on this earth an innumerable number of times. Now-a-days it is denied by Christians, who seem to misunderstand their own gospels. Nevertheless, the putting on of flesh periodically and throughout long cycles by the higher human soul (Buddhi-Manas) or *Ego* is taught in the Bible as in all other ancient scriptures, and "resurrection" means only the *rebirth* of the Ego in another form.

In conclusion, Friends, I believe I can do no better than to end our study this afternoon with the words of the American poet, Oliver Wendell Holmes, which words, taken from his "The Chambered Nautilus," are really a petition or prayer to rise ever higher in each succeeding rebirth:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last.
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

The Theosophical Forum

"EVERESTS OF THE SPIRIT" — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

Frequent question, and a pertinent one, amid the present psychological chaos and physical conflict, is: Why, if the Great Ones come, or are sent, to humanity in time of need, does not a Master — a Christ, or a Buddha — come to the World now?

All the answers to this query are based on certain indisputable facts such as, that the Great Ones come only at the right and proper time and in conjunction with certain cycles — in periods of ignorance and "spiritual barrenness"; that the Sages and Seers can do their specific work for humanity more effectively now far from the arena of conflict and in the seclusion of their retreats; and that were a Christ or Buddha to come among men with his age-old truths, he would probably be imprisoned for reasons entirely divorced from guilt on his part. But while these statements are perfectly true, the deductions they point and emphasize are of still greater significance.

To the informed observer it is obvious that this is no time of "spiritual barrenness," despite the dreadful toll of human suffering and misery. On the contrary, materialism is swiftly and definitely waning, and the danger of psychism, while it menaces, is not great while psychic manifestation must take a physical outlet. The advent of the Theosophical Society in 1875 and its subsequent development under the guidance of wise leaders has insured a wholesome channel for and secure link with the Wisdom-Religion of the Ages and the sanctuary of the Sages and Seers. Through this vehicle truths withheld from public discussion for a thousand years or more, are being promulgated, and coincidentally, the very tragedy of world-conditions preparing the soil most fertile to it, a "stirring of the spirit" or a "new spiritual environment" is to be sensed springing up everywhere. This is a state totally opposed to that of spiritual stagnation and impotence which causes the desolate call of the soul-starved to bring forth a Great Teacher.

Therefore, today, it is for awakened men and women, possessors of this renewed wealth of truth, individually and collectively to evoke from themselves, through the application of their knowledge, the wisdom, the strength, and the individual leadership they look to a Sage to bring them.

A Christ or a Buddha coming would fulfill his mission irrespective of persecution or opposition, just as Jesus, H. P. Blavatsky, and the other Teachers did, but the main part of that mission would be to give vitality to the ancient teachings and to direct individual and collective human development. These factors are actively present in the world today.

Suffering is shattering illusion and self-satisfaction; sorrow is baring men's hearts and minds to the reception of truth, and the almost universal woe is adding urgency to effort. These are tragic but fructifying elements and they will not be denied. Danger unites: here too conditions we abhor are effectively working toward the ultimate good. Lack of unity in aim and ideal is the great destroyer of progress. The Teachers have always united their followers while they were with them; but humanity has yet to produce a *body* of united leaders each representing his own united people. This is the supreme need of the age!

This is one of those Everests of the Spirit which await the indomitable effort of an awakened humanity — a humanity blessed in the possession of holy truths after long centuries once more revealed; and united through the airways by an advanced Science. The Great Ones are doing their work — - of that there can be no doubt, nor are they estranged or aloof from humanity. It is our lack of integration both as individuals and as a human host that causes this sense of separation. Realizing this our feeble clamor for the presence of a Sage assumes its proper perspective, and, as Patric Dickinson writes:

Man's Spirit rooted in divinity
Springs on inviolate within the breast
Of Time, and grows not old nor hard nor cold

Whatever cloaks of flesh impede and mar,
Building anew each towering-tumbling world
From dust, from fallen star.

The Theosophical Forum

"PHYSICIAN HEAL THYSELF" — *Soren Dahl*

"Physician heal thyself" is a great saying and it is very closely allied to the ancient wisdom-teaching, "Know thyself."

It is a duty every man owes to himself and should therefore never be lost sight of. It is also his duty to All Life, the complete and perfect Unity of which man is a united part, to the Allness which is ever present to heal according to the choice, desire and capacity of the individual center.

By capacity is meant understanding, that which stands under his individuality, that upon which he rests, for which he stands and which can be increased. "Above all get understanding" is in perfect harmony with "Physician heal thyself."

The more a man is able to heal himself both mentally and physically, the greater will be the good he will be able to do for others and for himself and therefore the greater will be his joy in life. This is his duty; but also he gains great help in uplifting his individuality by helping and healing others as he travels through life. It is the Way, for by the practice of helping others he will secure both experience and strength by which he will be able to heal himself.

The danger of carrying the practice of helping others too far is that the needs of others shuts out the needs of your own self. But no man is justified in saying to another: "Physician heal thyself" insinuating thereby a limitation of ability to heal. For the fact that he has chosen to heal others first instead of himself, does not change the unchangeable truth, that all the power and wisdom there is, is ever present ready to fill the desires and choice of all individual centers.

An outstanding example of an insinuation of limitation is found in the life of Jesus where the chief priest declared "He saved others, himself he cannot save." This priest would have glorified himself if he could

have stated the truth of the situation — "He saved others, himself he had no desire to save."

However, any man is justified in saying to another: "Physician heal thyself," meaning that it is his duty to himself and to All Life that he does so. And further not only is any man so justified, but when an individual tries and persists in trying to heal with a degree of power and wisdom that is not sufficient to heal, then it becomes the duty of others to say "Physician heal thyself," meaning first he should strive to increase his understanding before he attempts to heal, or can heal, that upon which he is working.

A good example of such a case is presented in *I sis Unveiled*, Volume I, page 117, where H. P. Blavatsky recommends this "sensible bit of advice" to certain individual centers.

The Theosophical Forum

RISING ABOVE DESIRE — A. Trevor Barker

What does the occultist mean when he says we should endeavor to kill out desire? He does not mean that we should do away with the driving power in life. Desire is the motive force that sends the Universe along.

Unfortunately it has been my experience in the Theosophical Movement to see some very worthy people reduced to complete inertia thinking they were really striving along the Path and had killed out desire — and the poor things had! But you cannot perform any duty in life without the principle of desire energizing your being. It is a vehicle for your will. So, in considering this question, there must be a particular sense in which desires have to be killed out. It is only those desires that intensify your material and transitory nature that have to be killed out. We have to change or transmute finite desires into aspiration. If you are a Christian you call it prayer, and true prayer, which is aspiration towards the spiritual part of your being, to the Supreme itself, doing all actions without a selfish desire for the fruit of those actions — this is the state towards which we aspire, difficult enough, but true. That is the use of desire.

But there is another way of looking at this question. The highest philosophical and metaphysical concepts that we study in a Theosophical Lodge take the mind into a region that is really beyond the region of desire, and that is why we study them. It is to purify the desire nature and free the mind from identification therewith, that we study philosophy and metaphysics. To quote a lovely phrase of Gautama Buddha: We try to teach the mind to walk in the way of Truth; we try to instruct our mental part, our true individuality, to recognize its essential oneness, unity, identity with the one Mind, the one Being which is the Universe, for it is the greatest mistake in the world if you think of the planet and the solar system, and the marvelous Universe of which it is a part, as something outside of you. You are part, an essential spark of its own life; part of its great river of

being. So that we think of this Universe as a conscious living entity, we playing our little roles and parts in its gigantic term of life; and the purpose of the whole thing is to realize that there is not a moment of life when the atoms of the material part of us cannot be transcended and conquered by rising above desire into unity with the one mind, the Universal Soul, which incidentally is without bounds. Is that an idea that inspires you? If you have never thought of it before, dwell upon it, and think, for one of these days it will give you the greatest lift that it is possible for a philosophical idea to do, for then you will realize that you are not your weak and erring and sinful mind, but that if you are willing to rise above these things, to let them go out of your life, you have the power of the One Mind; you have the Life and the Knowledge and the Wisdom and the Truth of the Universal one Self, which is the same in you and in me.

The Theosophical Forum

LOST CONTINENTS AND OUR ATLANTEAN HERITAGE — *G. de Purucker*

The actual evidence for the existence in prehistoric and former geologic times, of now sunken continental land-massifs, is simply enormous. Items of proof have been brought together by very clever researchers and writers, not Theosophists alone, but eminent scientists and other investigators; and all in an attempt to solve the mystery: How on earth did the flora and fauna of the land-massifs, as they now exist, ever pass from one to the other over hundreds, maybe thousands, of leagues of rolling, stormy ocean?

An attempt was made during long years to explain the presence of similar and identic flora by means of migrating birds. Birds eat seeds and drop them, and perchance by the time the birds drop the seeds another land is reached, and the seeds take root. Or perhaps things float on the waves of the ocean, and after weeks and months, it may be years, are thrown up on some sandy coast and there take root! But common sense prevailed after a while. It was soon seen that these labored efforts at explaining the similarity if not identity of the vegetation and animals in widely separate continents, required something firmer and more concrete than speculative evidence of that type.

So it was the scientists themselves who, long preceding us Theosophists, began to ponder the existence or the possibility of formerly existing lands where now the oceans roll their stormy waves in the Atlantic and in the Pacific and elsewhere. It was certain scientists who collected data to prove that something like that must have existed during some former period in geologic history, in order to account for these things; and when geology and its discoveries brought further proofs of the existence in these widely separated continents, of flora and fauna in the Old World similar to if not identic with types in the New World, and discovered these in the Eocene, the Miocene, and Pliocene deposits, they said to themselves: Surely there must have been

land-connections between the Old World and the New, somewhen, somewhere. Those facts remain still unexplained.

Scientists themselves are already granting, and have granted for fifty or sixty years, the existence in former geologic times, of a great continental land-massif in the Pacific Ocean. Sclater sixty or more years ago called it Lemuria, from a little monkey-like animal called Lemur. Later a similar continental land-massif was imagined and called by some scientists Gondwana-land, if you please, to explain puzzles in distribution of flora and fauna in the Pacific and elsewhere that without these supposed land-connections could not be explained. And they have not yet been explained.

The reluctance of the scientists to accept the evidence of their own eyes is remarkable. They themselves brought the question forward, brought the proper answer forward, and in the case of the Atlantic continental land-massif, it is still, as they say, possible, even probable, but not proved. I don't know why. They have accepted it for the case of the vast Pacific Ocean lying to the west of us here, but not for the other ocean as yet; and yet the proofs are there.

Now then, I think one of the reasons for the reluctance of so many thousands to accept what must be the case, arises in an erroneous idea of what these former geologic land-massifs were. They seem to have got the idea that Atlantis, an immense stretch of land, exactly similar in type to our own present system of ocean and land, all sank in a night; and out of the then existing oceans came the new land, which is now ours. This is an absurdity. It is one of the commonest facts known to all even today, that land is slowly sinking, or rapidly sinking, all over the world; and that other lands not only are with slowness, but with equal regularity, rising. And this process of submergence and emergence through long and short geologic periods is just what took place first in Lemuria and ages and ages later in Atlantis. It took hundreds of thousands of years for the main portions of the great Atlantis-system of continents, big islands, small islands, and seas, even notably to change places — the land sinking, the oceans overwhelming the lands which

sank, and other new lands rising to take their places. This has continued through all geologic time, is continuing now, and will continue into the future. Yet there have been cases where islands even fairly large have sunken or risen rapidly, even in our short human view — cataclysms, as in the case of Plato's Poseidonis, an actual event of European pre-history as we now know history, which sank in a day and a night, some eleven or twelve thousand years ago, after fearful earthquakes and tidal waves. Poseidonis was an island the size of Ireland or less, which lay a good distance in the ocean off what is now the Straits of Gibraltar. But that was one of the last island-remnants of the great Atlantic continent, just a headland, as it were, which remained until it finally also sank.

Similarly so with Lemuria, the home, as we Theosophists say, of our Third Root-Race. It was not just one big land. It was a system of continents, great islands, small islands, oceans and seas, just as we have them now. As a matter of fact, there are some remnants of Lemuria still remaining above the waters of the oceans, and also of Atlantis. Talk about scientific proof! Why, the call for such land-connection is so tremendous that it is not for proof of such existence we should ask, but for proof that it has not existed. That is a perfectly justifiable and even a strong argument. I repeat it: even today, and during the Eocene and Miocene and Pliocene ages, the flora and the fauna were and are still so similar in so many respects in widely separated localities or lands, that some land-connexion at some time as among these separated lands is imperatively called for. The only alternate thing to say is that in those now far past geologic ages there must have existed an immensely civilized, powerful body of races of men, who, with mechanical devices equal to, or greater and finer than ours, could transplant the vegetable life and the animal life from continent to continent in proportion with their own migrations and colonizations, and that comes to the same thing.

When we know that land is sinking and land is rising, and has been throughout geologic time, as proven by the geologic record, and that it is going on secularly, progressively, through the millennia, actually

through millions of years, what is the answer? Prove to me that Atlantis did not exist. Why, one could talk for a day and a night simply about the almost innumerable data that have been collected by scholars of all kinds along this line. Books, scores of them, have been written on just these themes.

Now then, my other thought is this: The Atlanteans were a great body of races, just as we are today, a great body of races, with different colored skin, different kind of hair, different past histories from ours, but all human or semi-human. Some of them were good. But most of them, when judged by abstract standards of right and wrong, were evil — even more so than we are. And we cannot throw stones! Heaven knows, we are bad enough. But we are an improvement upon our Atlantean progenitors. For there, although there were millions, throughout the millions of years that Atlantis endured, who worshiped the Divine and the Spirit in preference to matter and selfish power, the majority in those days were worshipers of brute power, of strength, of matter, of influence for the self. Selfishness was the dominant keynote in the Atlantean race, just as it is even yet in ours; but in ours we have reached the point where we no longer glorify it, but recognize it and are ashamed of it. It shows that spirituality is entering, although slowly, into our consciousness; and even among crooks, honor and right and reason and justice are the key-words with which to charm the hearts and minds. With the Atlanteans it was power and strength, stuff, substance, wealth. But not so with all. There were millions and millions who in their hearts worshiped the Divine and Right and Justice, and these were the Elect, and from these Elect were formed the Mystery-Schools which have endured to this day, out of which Schools have come all the great religions and philosophies and sciences of human history, for the saving of men from worse things, for the helping of men, for the raising of men, for the softening and refining of men, and therefore of civilization.

Just as the Theosophical Society today came therefrom, so in past ages came the Theosophical Societies of other times, our own lineage. There they originated in far distant Atlantis: those who loved right and honor

and justice and truth and reason and pity, more than strength and power and selfish privilege. They were what we call the Sons of the Divine, the Sons of God; and they gathered together, collected together, and formed the first Mystery-Schools in which the Spirit of Truth was worshiped, revered and taught, instead of the spirit of power and dark self-interest. Just think how these thoughts sway human minds. Look even at our world today, and see how a thought of selfish profit or advantage, an egoism, can lead men astray. We have the old Atlantean spirit back amongst us, even yet, and this was what was meant by H. P. Blavatsky in saying that the karma of Atlantis still weighs heavily on us, on our souls, on our minds. We are still under its influence, but we are struggling out of it, out of its embrace.

In this connection a final word: There are certain groups today who in speaking of our blessed god-wisdom, Theosophy, say, "Oh, yes, that is very fine, that is the Eastern Tradition. We follow the Western Tradition." Is it conceivable that any one can so ill apprehend Theosophy as to speak of it in that way? The platform of the Theosophical Society, associate Fellowship in the Theosophical Society, is open to all of whatever race, Eastern or Western, Northern or Southern. Wherever the spirit of man has spoken, enlightened by the god within, there is something fine and good; and one professing it, teaching it, living it, and believing it, no matter what the Tradition is, is entitled to association in the Theosophical Society. But speaking of the Theosophical Society as this Tradition of the East, is the most preposterous nonsense, for it is the parent of them all. It is neither eastern nor western, northern nor southern, it includes them all, for from it, they, all, have come forth. Theosophy is the source of them. It recognizes its children in these various guises. Therefore I call it the Great Reconciler, the Great Harmonizer, the Comforter, the spiritual parent.

How true it is that we even today yearn for truth with all our hearts and souls, and that the mark of a great man, or a great thinker, is service and learning. Do you know that the proudest — what may I say? — not boast — but the proudest thing that we Theosophists can

say, is that we are learners, students of our god-wisdom, learning from each other in good fellowship, charitable to each other, seeing good in what the other has to present, looking only for candor, honesty, purity, decency of mind and heart. Let us never lose this. It is our safety, our protection, yes, and our open sesame into human hearts. Let the Atlantean spirit die. Let it molder into the dead bones of the past. Hatred, dislike, enmity, unreason, injustice, are all its products. Smallness and pettiness of mind, are its children.

The Theosophical Forum

AUTUMN AFTERNOON — *G. Cardinal Le Gros*

It is an Autumn afternoon and the streets are brown with leaves. Children are coming home from school, calling to each other in the cool, windless air. I think of other Autumns that have come and gone: each like a strange, wonderful symphony: the Autumns of childhood, boyhood, manhood. I wonder what this Autumn will mean to me, what I shall think of when the memory of it returns to me in the years to come?

There was a time when the Autumn days seemed to me the most beautiful of all the year: something unseen and ancient whispered to me from the falling leaves, called to me from the wild-geese overhead. I had only to go out and walk and dream and wonder, and the strange, precious glory dwelling in the mystery of Autumn would steal into my heart and make me one with all.

What will this Autumn mean to me? I think that I know: the cycles of the old years have turned, a new path is being traced by the wheel of time, my life of reveries is fading into the quiet past. I feel that my place is not to be in loneliness and dreams, but out among men, searching in their hearts for something precious, something to answer the mystery in my own.

Yes, I think that I know: there is divinity in the Inmost of men; there is something in me which knows that it is there. And so I have a new work, a new duty, of trying to see, to recognise, to encourage the divinity in men to come forth, to flame out and illumine the dreary dream that too many of us mistake for life. This Autumn can be the most wonderful of all; it can be the luminous veil of an inner, spiritual Autumn. Behind its beauty can shine the beauty of a divine universe.

THE FOUR WINDS — *Allan J. Stover*

When we consider the symbolism and thought of the American Indians it is necessary to keep in mind that both the Indian and his philosophy or religion are relics of a former great Root-Race and of another cycle. Also we should not read into symbol or idea too much of our own Theosophy. We should not suppose that the Indian of the past century understood his ancient symbolism as we today may understand it. We should not suppose even that the Indian of the past century understood this ancient symbolism of his as it was originally understood. Nor must we expect to find the Indians of this generation retaining much of the knowledge of their grandfathers, or, if they do, speaking of it to strangers.

There is abundant evidence, however, of a former mystical religion or system of thought, tinged though it often is with traces of Atlantean magic and Atlantean ideas.

Throughout North America one finds a graphic symbolic idea or plan — very simple and sketchy here, very elaborate there, but recognisable in some form — in most Indian tribes. The customary greeting offered to the Sun at sunrise; the symbolic four puffs of smoke as the pipe is passed around the circle of the council fire; the four divisions of a pottery bowl design; these and hundreds of other customs indicate the living symbol of which they are a part.

Here also lies the explanation of the curious white, red, blue, yellow, black and spotted Indian corn of the Southwest, symbolic of the four cardinal points, the regions above and the regions below, and why such pains have been taken to keep each strain pure. (Botanists tell us that for many thousands of years Indian corn has been propagated only with the aid of man, as it cannot reproduce itself without aid.) This widely distributed symbolic scheme is that of the Four Winds or, one may say, of the Four Directions. It appears on aboriginal pottery,

blankets, baskets, and sand paintings. Now one may hear it referred to as twofold, now fourfold, sixfold, or twelvefold, according to the degree in which this ancient idea is elaborated.

Among the native tribes of California, for instance, the belief is widespread that everything in the world — men, animals, and plants — belongs to either a water class or moiety, or a land class or moiety. The Miwok refer to these two classes as Frog People and Bluejay People. The Cupeno speak of them as the Coyote People and the Wildcat People. Other tribes have different names, but all signify a water or cold (lunar) division, and a land or warm (solar) division. One is reminded of the Yang and Yin of the Chinese philosophers, and the eight trigrams built up of various combinations of these two elements. In medieval Europe, Paracelsus said: "Two complexions of Nature should be noted: one is hot, the other cold." In old Greece, Ptolemy, in his *Tetrabiblos* divided the Zodiac into two parts, a solar half from Leo to Capricorn, and a lunar half from Cancer to Aquarius, the former dry, the latter watery. More recently, Baron Reichenbach found that his sensitives distinguished various substances as being either warm or cold, which qualities he designated as "plus od" or "minus od," and gave a long list of substances so classified.

The Aztec prayer to the Gods of the Showers began: "Ye who dwell at the four corners of the earth . . ." Both Algonquins and Dakotas traced their ancestry to four personages, identified with the four winds. The Creek Indians tell us of four brothers, who came from the four directions bringing fire from each of the cardinal points.

The Indians of the great plains, such as the Sioux and Omaha, emphasize the fourfold division, although they recognise each direction as threefold and also speak of the upper and lower regions. With them the North, represented by a buffalo, is the region of earth, agriculture, hunting, etc. The East, represented by the thunder-bird, is the region of fire. The South, the region of the wind-makers, is represented by an eagle. The West, the region of the beaver, is the home of the Water People.

Here we find water opposed to fire, and earth opposed to air, while Christian tradition and modern astrology transpose fire and water, placing earth opposite water, fire opposite air, and follow the order Fire, Water, Air, Earth. Certain western Masonic traditions, on the other hand, derived through the Talmud, follow the same order as the Indians.

Among the Osage tribe, each mystic hearth was consecrated by placing four sticks in the form of a cross and building the fire on these sticks. In doing this the Indian would, if he belonged to the fire gens, place the first stick towards the east; if of the water gens, he would point the first stick towards the west, and the others would be laid down in order.

Certain animals were symbolic of particular directions, and every Indian with an animal name was considered to belong to the element and direction associated with that animal. The class to which a man belonged was determined as he entered manhood, at which time he kept a prolonged fast on some isolated mountain until he dreamed or saw a vision which indicated to him his place and name in the tribal scheme. Just what the directions meant is difficult for us to understand. Certainly they symbolized much more than the points of the compass. Among the Plains Indians they seem to have signified directions of thought and consciousness as well. Among the Zuni of the Southwest they were sometimes referred to as "Inner Worlds." In general, the directions may be thought of as signifying the four elements, and the emotions and feelings associated with Fire, Air, Water, and Earth.

Those familiar with the visions described in the *Book of Enoch* may be surprised to learn that the Zuni tell of four great seas, one in each quarter of the Universe, in each of which rises a sacred mountain, each of a different color.

Among the Sioux, all adult members of the tribe belonged to one or other of the four directions and at the council fire the members sat in their appropriate quarter of the circle. In effect, the tribe was divided into four castes, each caste having definite occupations and ceremonies which they might attend and personal names which they might bear.

In the tribal organization, the Earth People assist the Fire People, the Fire People and Water People are hostile or inharmonious to one another. The Fire People and Wind-maker People are concerned in all kinds of suffering, and work together. The Water People are concerned in death and in the after-death states. They have charge of all funeral ceremonies. To still further complicate the picture, the guardian of each mystic direction has his servants assisting him in each of the other directions.

As with the two-fold classification of the California Indians, we here find everything classed according to a fourfold order.

When we use the expressions, "From the East comes light," or, "Look to the East," we are expressing the same sentiment the Indian does when he offers greetings to the Sun at daybreak, or when he refers to the four winds or four directions.

The Theosophical Forum

WHEN WILL THEOSOPHY BE WRITTEN IN ENGLISH? — *Grace Knoche*

This question, if it keeps on cropping up, will divide students into not two but several camps — that of the plain person who has little faith in his capacity for judging and perhaps little time for study; the devotee (a trifle inert very often) who thinks that ethical teachings are enough; the brilliant mind that is too impatient to be profound; the congenital reformer who knows that he ought to learn but, alas! would rather teach; and, rare nucleus for the future! those quiet and genuine students who see that the hurdle of a handful of technical terms is very little indeed to consider in view of the tremendous speeding-up, spiritual and intellectual, that he sees also is the sure reward of taking it. In addition, there is the puzzled inquirer who doesn't know what he is, or where, but who, come wind come weather, is going to find out about Theosophy somehow, yet is confused by this wordy fog.

One is amazed at the persistence of this question, for the answer is simplicity itself. Theosophy will be written in English when we who speak this language have English words to express, understandably and succinctly, its clear direct teachings and ideas. Unfortunately, when Theosophy was brought to the West we had no such words. How could we have names for teachings and ideas of which our dictionaries were chemically pure and even Western scholars had never heard? Alice in Wonderland might uncover an answer, but we are speaking from Globe D.

As a matter of fact, the question as stated is purely rhetorical. What it means is, When will Theosophy be written in English without the inclusion of Sanskrit words and terms? However, let us take it as it stands, and the first step is to settle upon what we mean by "English." Just what is English? A dictionary might know something about it and one happens to be before us — the Funk and Wagnalls Collegiate. A less than ten-minute perusal of its pages discovers the following Sanskrit words: *atman, amrita, buddha, guru, dharma, prakriti, sakti, sati*

(suttee) *maya*, *sutra*, *Indra*, *Vishnu*, *Siva*, *trimurti*, *nirvana*, *Mahabharata*, *vina*, *yoga*, and *yogi*.

Whatever these words were once, they're English now, as English as Chicago or Des Moines, regime, bouquet, piano, molasses, or some thousands of others once immigrant and suspect, now citizens. Returning however to the dictionary: it doubtless contains other Sanskrit words, perhaps many, but here we have twenty, a larger number than one can find in any but the most exceptional, even a technical, article. An Editorial Board composed of scholars, note, includes these words, without benefit of apology, in an English dictionary known to probably every college in America, thus posting them as belonging to the English language. Incidentally, before passing on, we check this list against the *Practical Standard Dictionary* on the shelves across the hall. We find every word there, too — and this in a dictionary described on the title-page as "Practical."

So what is this "English" in which Theosophy cannot be written, and yet can be? For we cannot repudiate these Sanskrit words without repudiating equally the almost numberless technical words today found not only in dictionaries but in dozens of glossaries on law, medicine, anatomy, botany, chemistry (Sanskrit, a language of compounds, has nothing to compare with the 40-letter unpronounceables of the chemist); or on pharmacy, versification, engineering, electrical science, etc., etc. Or on any subject that is technical but that, like Sanskrit, belongs in the now rising cycle of human knowledge and thus is worthy the steel of the worthwhile mind. Or glance down the columns of a competent Index in a technical book — say on botany which is well past its youth and harmless — and note the multitudes of words and terms at one time as strange to us as Sanskrit, but now by rite of adoption full citizens of the fatherland we call English. A bit of history must be inserted here, for the question, What is "English?" requires something more than a categorical answer.

What in due course came to be known as English had its roots in a spoken speech brought over to the island now called England, from the

continent — from the forests of the North Sea and the Baltic, the low terrain of the Elbe, the Weser, and the Rhine, by migrating groups sifted from populous clans. First the Angles, then the Saxons, then the Frisians, the Norsemen, and the Danes. They brought their wives and children and their strong will to stay; they brought their household goods and gods; they brought their speech, their dialects, whose words were as exotic, as wholly strange, as Sanskrit is to most of us today. They fought their way to and into this island-country, and they settled down to stay.

It does not make the politest picture, but history paints it so, and after a century of the spade-work which was to make "Anglo-Saxon" the speech of this new land, its inner terrain of thought and communication was plowed and furrowed and seeded-down with these new, strange words. The native Celtic, hardly more than spattered with Latin, mingled with the dialects of the invaders, for Rome had moved out, bag and baggage, and had taken its language along. The day of books and scholarship was to come. Fat books and many have been written around these proceedings and migrations, but a bare summary will suffice. So much however is indispensable, for we must define that word "English" and definitions have to rest on a foundation or they cannot define.

There were law-courts, and there was of course a church, but these alone concerned themselves with Latin. The vernacular was simply Old English, familiar in the college Manual, and comprised roughly of three main dialects: the Northumbrian, brought in by the Angles and so named because spoken north of the Humber; the Mercian of the Frisian clans, spoken south of this river to the Thames; and the Wessex or Saxon, still further south, the mother-tongue of Alfred the Great. Certainly there were minor dialects, and no doubt overlappings, but this will do. It is the dialect of Wessex that became the Anglo-Saxon of English history, its very name compounded of foreign words.

Now for the superstructure which is to furnish forth our definition. Not only were these outland dialects taken into the Celtic fold as they came

to be needed, or pushed their way in, but the native dialects borrowed words from foreign tongues, as well as from each other. So that by the time we arrive at Middle English, with its greater solidity and exactness, some hundreds of French words had filtered in, derived from the usages of the aristocracy, the clergy, and the courts of this now Norman England.

These paved the way inevitably for more and more of Latin, the beloved of the scholar and the church, while inflexions were changed and exchanged, added and lopped away; prefixes and suffixes were born and reborn; and participles and prepositions, adverbs, infinitives, and gerunds had their own growing-pains to modify forms here and there. It all seems curiously fluid. Yet it was natural, since language is essentially a fluid thing. One is reminded here of Blackstone's quite unforgettable definition of water (somewhere in his section on the Rights of Things) that

Water is a movable and wandering thing, but the land below it is permanent.

So is a language a "moveable and wandering thing," but the inner, the deeper forces that shape and in fact create it — these are permanent. While all the time more words come filtering in, raining in, dancing in, and muscling in, some to be adopted intact and unchanged, some to melt and fuse together with words they found, like candles left in the sun. By the fourteenth century, for instance, we find French words flowing like a tide, to rock merrily along with the rest in the cradle of a grammatical frame thoroughly Teutonic. Until at last, out of the crumble and break-up of the dialects there we find emerging a language. They called it "English," and it too went on borrowing, clasping strange, foreign words in its motherly embrace like so many breathless young children. But unlike the Old Woman who lived in the Shoe, English did know what to do. It adopted them — an irrevocable step, but by no means unique. For this is a language-habit, sprung from the essential nature of free utterance in its youth — and the Occident, bear in mind, is very young, compared with the Mystic East.

What, then, is English? A melting-pot? Not that exactly, for mostly the new words fit unchanged into the niches suddenly ready to receive them. They are adopted, and this because English finds suddenly that it needs them. By the mysterious, because trackless, procedures of the past they come in because they "belong." The English language is a hierarchy, therefore, with many hierarchies folded in it, but most of these left to remain just themselves to the degree that they co-operate with the rest. They become, thus, integral with that rest, tissue of its tissue now, life of its life. And just as English has welcomed the stranger-words that knocked for admission in the past, so will it in the future, because it is a hierarchy, in other words, a family, before all. It is the One cherishing within it the Many. Here is our definition, then, and should English ever cease to justify it, it would cease, in the deeper sense, to be English. But it will not cease. It will live its life, and normally, reach its prime, grow old, decline, and pass away as all composite things do, to give place to another language and a nobler — Sanskrit perhaps! (Very wise Teachers have said so, not today only, but in ancient days — but that is another story).

The point is, so English came to be, for with every new adventure, discovery, importation, gadget, horizon, or idea, in would come a new word or two, often a flock of them. This did not have to happen, to be sure. We might have refused the discovery, shut our eyes to the new horizon, our mind to the idea, and declined all that looked like adventure. But as it chanced, we didn't want to. We chose adventure and the new frontier, and English therefore took the path of growth and power and enchantment, and kept on inviting foreign words in, and is doing it still as the dictionaries attest — with each new edition we find the family enlarged — and never in all the history of English has anyone ever thought it queer.

Here are a few words, for instance, imported through the centuries from Holland — sturdy Dutch words, every one: botch, brake, spool, ruffle, tuck, cough, muddle, nag, luck, trick, sloop, mop, and so forth for the better part of a page, not to mention easel and landscape, and (quickly seized upon by writers) Boer-African *trek* and *veldt*. Alien and

exotic once, they are English now because adopted, and have all the rights, hereditaments, and smoky flavor of "a good old Anglo-Saxon word." We would not, because we positively could not, dispense with a single one, and incidentally, did it cost us hours of painful application to learn them? Is the use of them confined to the scholar, the bookworm, or those who have "time to study?" Such an argument doesn't stand up.

Nation after nation, foreign language after language past and present, has stamped its soul-impress upon English in just this way, some more indelibly, and some more spiritually, than others; but here these once-strange words are, all of them, without benefit of protest, English words now. And it will continue, the hoary process, because we who speak English are that way. When the first Giant Panda, for instance, was brought to our shores, or the little Koala-bear from Australia (with apologies, since it isn't a bear) did we accept them, and adopt the unknown words which they brought along as names? Or did we ship them back with the message that if the donors (or discoverers) "will give them English names we shall be pleased to look them over?" Of course not. We did the sensible and simple and perfectly obvious thing — we adopted these hitherto unknown Chinese and Blackfellow words, and hurried to the dictionary-makers with them.

But Sanskrit is different, you say, and you are right: it is very different. It is not bringing us curious animals, or insect-pests, or dangerous weeds with strange names, as the scientists do; not even nourishing foods and fruits like the mango, anone, cherimoya, and avocado pear; like the orange and lemon, apricot, sago, cinnamon and chocolate, molasses and marmalade, coffee and tea — words as foreign once as Sanskrit ever was. Nor does it vie with the native dialects of North America which have given us so lavishly of their words for names of lakes, rivers, cities, counties and states, that whole pages in a competent atlas make you wonder if geography is but another name for some verbal melange or pot pourri.

Sanskrit is different, for the burden of its strange new words is no

material thing. What it does bring is best described, perhaps, in the familiar words of our Leader: "Light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect." What it has to offer is a nosegay of forgotten truths and teachings — truths, by the way, upon which the great spiritual civilizations of the distant past were founded, and by which they lived out their cycle to reach a point of (relative) spiritual perfection.

What Sanskrit has to bring us, in a word, is Light — but some, because it is offered in lamps whose name and pattern are strange, must hesitate. (English doesn't hesitate: English adopts them. Question: does a language have more courage than a man? But that is an aside.) To imagine that any protest of ours can make a language stop dead in its tracks is to imagine something that simply does not happen. Languages do not evolve that way, and certainly English did not. That is why it is not ready-made and static; that is why it is spiritually alive. It is learning and growing as we are. What do we want to be polarized to, anyway — Spirit or Matter? What do we really want for our spiritual Polar Star?

The Theosophical Forum

THE ASCETIC — *Martyn Witter*

The ascetic seeks but the one flame that dwells in the innermost core of his being. It is many flames united into one. Around it is the silence that knows no discord of pain or pleasure. The ascetic seeks this source of his being as does the baby the breasts of the mother. It is his spiritual father and mother combined into the inner teacher. To it the disciple must go with purity if he is to gain admittance into that holy of holies.

He who can keep his spiritual eye focussed upon that holy flame within, during the waking hours, will wing his way to it consciously during sleep. He who can keep this contact between the consciousness imprisoned on earth and that gleaming star within receives the rivers of love and wisdom that flow as unto parched earth. He is never lonely. All the storms of life will exist not even though they may swirl around his body of clay. That man is an ascetic, for by his self-discipline he maintains a channel that helps to feed all around him. Only one who is an ascetic can hold back by his will the forces of dissension that rage outside the prison doors of clay. He is not one who breaks his bones, tears his flesh, and lives on a grain of barley. Instead he is one who seeks the flame within by exercising his divine will.

A PARABLE — *Miles MacAlpin*

A unit of consciousness and will, which for long ages had astonished astronomers on many man-bearing planets, quit behaving like a comet and went on with the karmic process of being re-born as a planet in one of the most illustrious solar universes.

Like any human unit, it went into darkness for a period of gestation. It multiplied itself into a suitable body — a bony structure of rocks, an arterial system, a breathing apparatus, a nervous network, a little vegetation on its outer surface. These sub-hierarchies were composed of units of consciousness and will, too; they had formed many successive imbodiments for the planetary unit, and the desire-fumes arising from the pent-up energy in all these body-forming units made an excellent root-base for the animal life that presently began to ooze, crawl, fly, swim and prowl in the elements of the planet's imbodiment. All the animals were shadow-prototypes of the solid forms they would ultimately become, like the desire-design that becomes a form through the mind of an inventor.

But this imbodiment was a crisis in the planet's evolution. The planet had reached the man-bearing degree of self-unfoldment, and was about to develop its first stream of thought-energy maintained by those weird units called "men" — young gods who must re embody thousands of times (at least, the greater number of them must) before they begin to wonder if they are elementary gods or postgraduate beasts.

The body-building skill of a re-born planet is no more amazing than the splendid technique shown by a human unit in its mother's womb; nor is the breeding of many types of men more remarkable than latent mentality in a baby becoming many thoughts of different types that use the perceptive senses as a means of adjusting self and environment.

So the planet's humanity presently became many men of different types varying in degree of evolutionary unfoldment. This took rather

longer to do than one might believe, for most of us find it difficult to think in time-periods of millions of years. If we calculate in seconds the time from a human baby's birth to the time it starts to think in an organized manner we might partially condition our minds toward a grasp of planetary and solar growth.

The mentality-units born to the planet may not have had elongated shells full of chemical apparatus similar to our bodies, nor four appendages thereto, called arms and legs, nor a spinal periscope with a head-like radio-station on top of it, as we have; but they could think of themselves as this, that or the other; they could self-consciously exercise choice in making adjustments between self and environment, and they soon began to wonder if they were animals or gods. So we may conclude that, relative to their planet, they were "men."

As is customary with worthy man-bearing planets, advanced units from the solar army of kindly helpers, conveniently called "gods," who at one time had been new men on some planet, walked, flew and talked with the newly born humanity. Many persons think of a god as something like a man but with much bigger and better ways of having a good time. But the gods that tutor young humanities are better thought of as basic principles; eternal, omnipresent, boundless and immutable relative to their particular unit-area of motion, or "hierarchy." The constant re-embodiment of these lofty gods gives man the finer qualities of love, faith, trust, etc., and as these qualities are just what makes a human baby lovable, it is evident that the gods walk and talk with a new-born baby as well as with a new-born humanity. To the perception of the young humanity the gods no doubt were living entities. Patience, humility, charity, hope, etc., may have appeared as focal centers, even imbodyed in ethereal forms similar to those of the planet's new men. At any rate, lofty, impersonal and impartial principles were in direct communication with the humanity, even serving as rulers and teachers. But when the humanity began thinking of itself as "many men," and each man began to think his way into a personality-shell that probably was a bit more important than any other shell, the new men grew a bit cocky and were certain that the

way of the old gods was out-of-date, old-fashioned and hardly fit to meet the exigencies of every-day, practical, modern life.

The universe being based on mathematical principles, it is quite reasonable to think of a new humanity as composed of ratio-units rather than of meat-and-bone structures, and so it was on this planet. One prominent type of man had a perception-ratio of one-to-two. In fact, this type of man *was* the ratio of one to two, but it is our unfortunate habit to think of "having" rather than "being" even when considering our own innate qualities. The type thought of itself as the $1/2$ — a much better type than the heathen across the mountains whose perception-ratio was $2/3$, and incredibly higher than the strange people over the ocean whose perception-ratio was an unheard-of $3/4$. When a type with a $1/6$ perception-ratio made its appearance, and international affairs were in a mess, the wiser units who still believed the gods could help some, went to the people's favorite preceptor, Ah Ping.

"We cannot get along as a humanity, Ah Ping, as you say we used to do; even the last million years has shown a marked decrease in human solidarity. The humanity is nothing but "types" and the types are fast becoming localized units, or "men," each of whom thinks of himself as a whole type — if not as a whole humanity!"

Ah Ping said, "You must introduce a new mode of thought. All the types must find a common working base and each type must adapt its perception-ratio to that base. For your types the base is 12. Teach the $1/2$ to think of itself as $6/12$, the $2/3$ as $8/12$, the $3/4$ as $9/12$, and the $1/6$ as $2/12$. Thus you can work together, yet no type will lose its own perception-ratio."

Aided by Ah Ping and other gods, the wise men established schools of the new mode of thought, and because the humanity was young and plastic a great deal of the old brotherhood of man was re-established in only a few thousand years. But of course not all the men accepted the new way to think of themselves, and indeed it is not easy to develop a root-base of twelve and make it a living power in one's life, even if one could live a thousand years at a stretch as these early men did. Who of

us could remember to ask for 6/12 of a yard of cloth if we desired only eighteen inches? Yet that is easy compared with acquiring some of the high modes of thought necessary to real elementary godhood.

Presently a 1/8 type appeared! Many men claimed that the new thing was a freak, a frivolity of the gods, and the older types began to accuse one another of being the parent of the outrageous new type that would not fit into the orthodox mode of thought. Ah Ping and the few wise men who had remained disciples of the gods established a new school to fit the ageless principle to the needs of the new cycle, and taught thought-exchange on a 1/24 basis. A sufficient number of men learned the new mode of thought to save the planet from a mental collapse, but it was a mighty task as the men had developed more solid bodies, more material knowledge and more lust for perishable goods. The basic principle of expansion of consciousness was being lost sight of by the people at large. They preferred to worship an image of 1/24, done in matter, man-like in form; a god with one eye and 24 hands, or some such thing. And soon most men forgot what the 1 and the 24 really meant. Besides, the men spent vital energy so rapidly that 200 years was a long time for a man to live, and why waste time learning new modes of thought? Let the best man win.

The time came when, according to law, the new humanity must more or less stand on its own intellectual-spiritual feet, with the gods accessible only by each man through his own higher, godlike qualities. Ah Ping and some of the other gods were at times available to a few of the highest disciples, who sent forth their young pupils from time to time to keep alive, if possible, the basic doctrine of an ever-expanding consciousness. The planet was at that time nearly two billion years old, comparable to a human unit of about 36 years who is full of physical energy but without much interest in the gods.

Two billion years seems a long time for Ah Ping and the other gods to stay with the new humanity. Of course, the first billion years might have passed before the new humanity was old enough to be taught by the gods. But certain classes of high gods have a remarkable ability to

reimbody at will, and part of their power to do this is their constant, impersonal and impartial devotion to the great evolutionary process throughout all space. Ah Ping himself was not always known to the public by that name, but it was he just the same.

It was at this mid-point of the planet's lifetime, when the men were nearing their most materialistic degree of involution, that the next radical type, the 4/5, appeared.

Two major schools of thought clashed with one another for possession of men's minds. One school claimed that a thought-base of 60 was quite enough, and the 1/8 type could be let drift into oblivion or go dig up a buried city out of some desert and live in it. The other school taught a thought-base of 120, including all types. Old-line orthodoxy said both new schools were abominations in the eyes of the gods. So the planet had its first religious war, and many good men were killed in the names of the prevailing spiritual teachers.

Ah Ping smiled when a committee of wise men said to him, "What will happen, O Master, when a 3/7 type is born, or a 7/9? Will the planet go crazy?"

"These fine types," said Ah Ping, "will evolve from the older types in the spiritual half of your planet's life. It would be impossible for so young a planet to develop men with modes of thought on a base of 840, to say nothing of a base of 2520 to include the 7/9 type. But in the sixth and seventh rounds of this planet's present life it will not be so difficult."

"Why not?" asked a careless one.

Ah Ping asked the disciple, "Will not the many re-become the One?"

THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES — C. J. Ryan

H. P. Blavatsky's Contribution to Astronomy. Part II

The "Expansion of the Universe" and the "Great Breath"

In our last article we considered the rhythmic or periodic appearances and disappearances of worlds and universes and the tentative approach that science is making to this important fundamental in Theosophical cosmogony. A casual reference was made to the "Expansion of the Universe," a remarkable and ingenious hypothesis devised to explain the affection of light called the "red shift" of the lines of the spectrum, the rainbow band of color into which light is analysed by the spectroscope. The apparent movement of the lines is very clearly marked in the light coming from the far distant galaxies of stars beyond our Milky Way system. In the majority of cases the lines are displaced toward the red end of the spectrum, which is taken as evidence that nearly all of the host of galaxies scattered all over the firmament are moving *away from us*; the greater the displacement the faster the motion. We cannot give the full particulars here but they can be found in any modern textbook of astronomy.

In regard to the velocity of recession a curious effect has been observed which has called forth the hypothesis that what is commonly called "*the Universe*" (rather a vague term as used by astronomers in this connexion) has been expanding from a central and small nucleus for billions of years. While the nearer galaxies appear to move away from us comparatively slowly, the more remote ones seem to travel more rapidly and the farther away they are the faster they go until the farthest yet discovered reach almost incredible velocities. By employing these observations and calculating backward to the time when the galaxies were starting out in all directions from the supposed central nucleus, the approximate date of the beginning of the explosion has been estimated. But unfortunately this does not give nearly enough

time to cover the generally accepted life-history or probable evolution of suns and systems. Yet if the expansion hypothesis is discarded science must look for some other explanation of the red shift. No satisfactory one is in sight, though several have been considered. One is that the red shift effects are produced by a process akin to "fatigue" as light travels through enormous distances in space. Another is that "the" universe of galaxies is expanding in some parts and contracting in others, and that immense regions are stationary. Dr. Herbert Dingle, distinguished British physicist, after suggesting other solutions of the expansion and other problems of space, says "or again, our universe may be of a character at present unconceived. . . . We leave off where we began: the universe eludes our apprehension. But we shall continue to pursue it."

The fact that the "Expansion of the Universe" is being seriously discussed by the scientists is of considerable significance to Theosophists, for it implies contraction as well as expansion and, probably, an endless succession of rhythmic activities on a cosmic scale as the logical deduction. The physical or material aspect of Expansion may be abandoned, but the general principle is very important for it points directly to one of the grandest teachings of the Ancient Wisdom — the Law of Periodicity or Rhythm which rules in the smallest manifestation of life-matter as well as in the greatest galaxies of stars. It is the framework within which evolution proceeds. In the Cosmos it appears as alternations of manifestation in form and matter and of withdrawal into the invisible and subjective, poetically but graphically called in Hindu philosophy the Outbreathing and Inbreathing of Brahma, a name derived from the Sanskrit "brih," to expand, to grow.

There is one marked difference, however, between the modern Expansion hypothesis and the Archaic Teaching. Both convey the idea of rhythmic pulsation, but the "Outbreathing" metaphor represents the re-appearance of life and consciousness into forms and compounds from the invisible ultimate Essence into objective existence, and the "Inbreathing" stands for the dissolution of all into the original state. Neither is external. The modern "Expansion" is supposed to be a purely

physical phenomenon, if it exists at all. It should not be overlooked, however, that neither the scientific hypothesis (or its modifications) nor the archaic Teaching excludes the other; they are not incompatible.

As we pointed out in the last article there is strong evidence that some tremendous cosmic change or so-called "catastrophe" *did* take place not very long ago, astronomically speaking, and the question arises: has cosmic evolution proceeded in our part of space more rapidly than seemed probable and may this catastrophe have been a minor though enormous cataclysm and reconstruction within vastly greater periodic cycles? Have any celestial bodies survived from a previous minor cycle through a reconstruction which would occur after a *partial* contraction — one of a series? This remarkable suggestion is being seriously considered by astronomers, as it would explain many difficulties.

As a help to the understanding of the Archaic Doctrine of Periodicity and its bearing on modern speculations the following passages from H. P. Blavatsky's works will be found convenient for reference:

The esoteric doctrine teaches, like Buddhism and Brahmanism, and even the Kabala, that the one infinite and unknown Essence exists from all eternity, and in regular and harmonious successions is either passive or active. In the poetical phraseology of Manu these conditions are called the "Days" and the "Nights" of Brahma. The latter is either "awake" or "asleep." . . . Upon inaugurating an active period, says the Secret Doctrine, an expansion of this Divine essence from without inwardly and from within outwardly, occurs in obedience to eternal and immutable law, and the phenomenal or visible universe is the ultimate result of the long chain of cosmical forces thus progressively set in motion. . . . an out-breathing of the "unknown essence" produces the world; and an inhalation causes it to disappear. This process has been going on from all eternity, and our present universe is but one of an infinite series, which had no beginning and will have no end. — See *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 3-4

The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as an out-breathing and inbreathing of "the Great Breath," which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute. . . . When the "Great Breath" is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is regarded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity — the One Existence — which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos. — *Op. cit.*, I, 43.

Intra-Cosmic motion is eternal and ceaseless; cosmic motion (the visible or that which is subject to perception) is finite and periodical. — *Op. cit.*, I, 3

The former [the inbreathing] represents a certain period of cosmic activity, the latter [the outbreathing] an equal one of cosmical repose. In the one, worlds are being evolved, and passing through their allotted four ages of existence; in the latter the "inbreathing" of Brahma reverses the tendency of the natural forces; everything visible becomes gradually dispersed; chaos comes; and a long night of repose reinvigorates the cosmos for its next term of evolution. In the morning of one of these "days" the formative processes are gradually reaching their climax of activity; in the evening imperceptibly diminishing the same until the *pralaya* arrives, and with it "night." . . . and it was a "day of Brahma" that the kabalistic author of *Genesis* had in mind each time when he said: "And the evening and the morning were the first (or fifth or sixth, or any other) *day*." — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 421-2

In the first book of Manu, we read: "Know that the sum of 1,000 divine ages, composes the totality of one day of Brahma; and one night is equal to that day." One thousand divine ages is equal to 4,320,000,000 of human years, in the Brahmanical calculations. — *Op. cit.*, II, 272

He alone, the Unconceivable, is unchangeable (ever latent), but the Creative Force, though also eternal, as it has been in the

former from "no beginning," yet must be subject to periodical cycles of activity and rest; as it had a *beginning* in one of its aspects, when it first emanated, therefore must also have an end. Thus, the evening succeeds the day, and the night of the deity approaches. Brahma is gradually falling asleep. In one of the books of *Sohar* [a Kabbalistic work of great antiquity, at least in part], we read the following: "As Moses was keeping a vigil on Mount Sinai, in company with the Deity, who was concealed from his sight by a cloud, he felt a great fear overcome him and suddenly asked: "Lord, where art Thou . . . sleepest thou, O Lord?" And the *Spirit* answered him: "I never sleep; were I to fall asleep for a moment *before my time*, all the Creation would crumble into dissolution in one instant." — *Op. cit.*, II, 273

How the Sun keeps its "Fires" burning

When H. P. Blavatsky brought the Archaic Wisdom to the West the method by which the sun pours out an apparently endless volume of light and other forms of energy was unanswered. To quote Dr. Harlow Shapley of Harvard Observatory, in a recent announcement:

It has long been a serious problem to explain why the sun exists at present, and why it radiates at apparently *the same rate as it did in Palaeozoic times*. The ancient plants and animals apparently lived under conditions similar to our own — two hundred million years ago.

When H. P. Blavatsky's Teachers challenged certain astronomical theories more than sixty years ago the problem of the sun's supply of energy was becoming acute. The most favored hypothesis was that of combustion — burning — in which compounds are formed by the chemical combination of free atoms or molecules. For instance, when the carbon in a piece of coal "burns" it unites with oxygen in the air to form carbon dioxide, and as this goes on a certain amount of energy in the form of heat and light is given off. When this principle was found inadequate (1), mechanical processes, such as the gravitational contraction of the sun or bombardment by meteors were tried, also

without success. When radium was discovered it seemed promising, but it failed to stand the test, and the problem remained unsolved till recently. It was unanimously agreed, however, that the sun could not be very old — only a comparatively few million years — and that its energies must be rapidly declining, astronomically speaking. With its approaching "heat-death" the planets would freeze to death and, as Balfour said, human life, "a rather discreditable episode on one of the meanest of the planets," would come to an inglorious end! It need hardly be said that this was not the view of the Adepts, the exponents of the Ancient Wisdom.

But the geologists and biologists were thoroughly dissatisfied with the limited time allowed by physics and astronomy, because the evidence of geology and of the evolution of life on earth demanded a far longer period. No solution seemed possible until the New Physics revealed the enormous energies locked up in the *atom* and the possibility of liberating them under conditions existing in the sun and the stars, and which can now be reproduced on a small scale in the laboratory. *Chemical* combinations need no longer be considered. A remarkable process of transmutation of certain elements — the dream of the alchemist — has been found to explain the sun's vast energy production, and, (with a little help from the solar contraction), its uninterrupted pouring forth for the billions of years required by science and, of course, Theosophy. The sun, then, is ceaselessly transmuting certain elements into others and liberating its stores of energy — *Life-Energy* we call it — as a "by-product," a very important one for us, however. The vital fact is now scientifically established that the sun has sufficient resources within itself to be independent of any outside help for untold billions of years, time enough to cover any reasonable scheme of human evolution on the *physical* plane. It can bountifully sustain its planetary family and ask no support in return.

(2)

Although Sir Arthur Eddington said a few years ago that "the sun contains within it the energy which is to last the rest of its life," the *modus operandi* was not then worked out; but he unwittingly repeated

what the Theosophical Teachers had openly declared from their own researches nearly sixty years ago. The problem was finally worked out by Dr. Hans Bethe, now of Cornell University, who in 1938 provided a solution which has received an enthusiastic reception and which has been further developed by Dr. George Gamow and others. It depends upon the demonstrated principle that when a lighter element is transmuted into a heavier one — in this case hydrogen into helium — an enormously greater quantity of energy in the form of light, heat, etc., is released than that produced by the most intense chemical combustion as mentioned above. The process is a long and complicated series of atomic transmutations which remind us of the extraordinary and complicated series of physical transformations called *mitosis* that nature adopts to produce the cells of our bodies. A brief description will give some notion of the process of the suns.

The process of atomic transmutation which liberates the required amount of solar radiation is composed of four elements (and some isotopes of three of them). These are carbon, oxygen, nitrogen and hydrogen, as already mentioned. The helium which appears at the close of the cycle is only the transformed residue of the hydrogen, the "ashes" as it has been called. The fact that the four elements are essential to the work is of primary importance to us in view of their special significance in occult science. We refer the reader to *The Secret Doctrine* II, pp. 592 and later, which should be carefully read by students of chemistry. Here she shows that the four elements are the basic factors in physical organic life, and defines their parallelism with the four lower "principles" of man. Once we recognise their importance in terrestrial affairs as described in *The Secret Doctrine*, the complicated and laborious series of transmutations of these particular elements no longer seems so extraordinary, even though we cannot yet penetrate further into the mystery.

The elements which appear in the chain or series of atomic transmutations that liberate the sun's life-energies are Carbon, Nitrogen, Oxygen and Hydrogen in one form or another. The process begins when an atom of carbon is struck by the nucleus of a hydrogen

atom and is transmuted into a special type of nitrogen (an "isotope"). More hydrogen comes along from time to time, and other changes take place during which the original carbon atom is transmuted into normal or isotopic forms of oxygen or nitrogen. Finally, it is restored to its original condition as a normal carbon atom, ready to start the whole cycle over again when another hydrogen proton attacks it. The last phase of the process is marked by a surprising and "magical" change, as one scientist calls it. The hydrogen that came in during the transmutations has disappeared as hydrogen but has been in part transmuted into the heavier element helium and in part into the liberated energy which constitutes the solar radiation that makes life possible on earth. Fortunately for us hydrogen is abundant in the sun, and though millions of tons are transmuted every second many billions of years will elapse before it is all used up, and even then other possibilities of energy supply are suspected which could carry on for a good while longer.

How the carbon, hydrogen and all the other elements in the sun originally were formed is a problem unanswered by modern science, but we may be sure that no attempted explanation can be more than superficial which ignores the Cosmic consciousness and intelligent control over the ceaseless and universal activities of the One Life that is behind all phenomena.

It is interesting to learn that the sun, structurally, possesses an unflinching and automatic regulating system which controls the output of energy and prevents any dangerous fluctuation in the steady flow until, like everything else in nature, its time has come to withdraw from active life on this plane.

In regard to the sun's ability to support itself and shine with undiminished brilliance without external assistance for the enormous time required for the Seven Rounds of human evolution at the very least, it is clear from the following quotations written about sixty years ago that the Masters of Wisdom possessed knowledge of natural phenomena quite unknown to Western scientists. In an authoritative

series of articles published by Madame Blavatsky in 1883 and called by her "the true occult teaching" (See *S. D. I*, 528, footnote) because they were written by the Masters and their advanced disciples, we read:

. . . [the sun] is quite as self-dependent as he is self-luminous; and for the maintenance of this heat requires no help, no foreign accession of vital energy, for he is the heart of his system, a heart that will not cease its throbbing until its hour of rest shall come. Were the sun "a cooling mass," our great life-giver would have indeed grown dim with age by this time, and found some trouble to keep his watch-fires burning for the future races to accomplish their cycles. . . . There would remain no hope for evolving humanity. . . . — *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, Sept., 1883. Also *Five Years of Theosophy*, pp. 251-2

The "cooling mass" mentioned by the Master of course relates to the general belief that the sun was like a coal fire burning by the ordinary process of chemical combustion and rapidly running down to extinction. He knew, however, that the sun sustained the steady output of heat and light it had been giving off for untold ages by some far more effective process — one that the contemporary scientists never suspected. The Master continues:

The "Adepts," who are thus forced to demolish before they can reconstruct, deny most emphatically (a) that the Sun is in combustion in any ordinary sense of the word; or (b) that he is *incandescent* or even *burning*, though he is *glowing*; . . . — *Ibid.*

Notice the words "in any ordinary sense of the word," because the sun's activities may be accurately called a very *extraordinary* kind of "combustion," a "combustion" of *atoms*, which would indeed have seemed incredible in 1883, but which is comprehensible in 1941 when our scientists have discovered atomic disintegration and transmutation. Again:

The Solar substance is immaterial. In the sense, of course, of matter existing in states unknown to science [in 1888, of course].

This statement, as we all know, has been amply verified by the new atomic discoveries which have proved that "matter" can exist in states that were utterly undreamed of in 1883. We must not forget, also, that the great discoveries in atomic physics were largely made possible by the technical researches of Sir William Crookes, a member of the Theosophical Society, and one who was in touch with the Mahatmans through H. P. Blavatsky. In future articles on modern scientific rediscovery of the Archaic Teaching we hope to discuss new and remarkable discoveries about the sun, the stars and the planets, and conclusions reached by astronomers which either positively confirm the teachings or show how closely science is approaching them.

FOOTNOTES:

1. According to the combustion theory, we are told that even if the sun were made of pure carbon burning in pure oxygen it probably could not be much more than 6,000 years old! But chemical compounds subjected to the enormous forces raging in the sun would be broken up into their elements and combustion could not begin. For instance, if carbon dioxide happened to get into the sun it would instantly be "unburned," as it were. The carbon and oxygen atoms in that combination would be torn apart and even perhaps disrupted within themselves by the radiations which are enough to melt a 40-foot shell of ice completely covering the sun in one minute. ([return to text](#))

2. The Mahatman K. H. says in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, written in 1882: "For indeed, there is but one thing — radiant energy which is *inexhaustible* and knows neither increase nor decrease and will go on with its self-generating work to the end of the Solar manvantara [period of life or physical manifestation], . . . Yes; call it "Radiant Energy" if you will: we call it Life — all-pervading, omnipresent life, ever at work in its great laboratory — the SUN." — p. 168 ([return to text](#))

MAKING HISTORY — *Hannah Berman*

A chance remark, quite carelessly made, sometimes gives the key to very trenchant facts. Such a remark is responsible for the birth of this article.

A public vehicle, loaded with passengers, all engaged in a heated discussion about the latest events — and then the remark: "What thrilling times we are living in! Why we are actually making history!"

One individual was obviously overwhelmed by the importance and greatness of the events happening around him — the big outstanding events, he meant, the things that occupy the front pages of the newspapers, the things that loom large like pillars of fate hiding the light beyond and throwing into shadow other things smaller and seemingly insignificant but strong and persistent and struggling for life.

It is always the case that in times of great cataclysmic happenings human beings are far too close to the events to judge their place in history and their importance in the scheme of evolutionary time.

It is often discovered later on, by those whose business it is to write chronicles of history, that small and seemingly unimportant events have had more far reaching effects than one could imagine. Actually it was the loss of an insignificant nail that was the cause of a kingdom's downfall: but this was only discovered when the historian traced back the big disaster to its first beginnings.

The teacher who had the sorry task of trying to "educate" Thomas Edison looked upon him only as a "nuisance" scholar and had no idea what wonderful miracles were striving for expression in the mind of one who could only be regarded as a very difficult pupil.

It is therefore very foolish and very dangerous to regard superficially events big or small which impinge on our lives today. Here and now

humanity is indeed "making history." Regarded from a Theosophical point of view and with some vision, the present age is a wonderful time in the history of humanity. The struggle between black and white forces goes on continually and is slowly but surely reaching a climax. Old standards of values are crashing about us; new ideas and ideals are forcing their way in; there is a general and persistent striving — men hardly know what it all portends; but the urge is there. Great and magnificent issues are bound to be the fruits of the present struggle. We can truly say of today as Wordsworth said of the French Revolution —

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive
And to be young were very heaven!

Humanity is adrift today on a stormy and perilous sea, yet there are rafts to which we can cling, have we the perception to see them. Primarily we must take care not to exaggerate the importance, good or bad, of the big events; neither in the same way must we disregard and neglect the small happenings that we see all around us. The Theosophical teachings will assuredly lead us into paths where lie the eternal verities and these we can regard and use as lifelines which will eventually take us to calmer waters and safety. Theosophy helps us to invoke the best that is within us and this means that we are enabled to build a bulwark between ourselves and the disastrous effects of humanity's folly, in the midst of which we are forced to live. But one thing it will have taught us and that is to endeavor to rise above it all and what is still more important — to *live* above it until an age of sanity returns.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIQUENESS OF MAN (1) — *H. T. Edge*

One must look into this book to see what the title means; but the title under which it was published in England is more informative: *The Uniqueness of Man* — which is also the title of the first of the essays. These essays, fifteen in number, are very miscellaneous, being reprints of magazine articles between 1927 and 1939, to very diverse readers. In seeking a thread to bind this collection, the author points out that they were all written during a period when an old order was passing and the birth-throes of a new order were supervening; so that they may be regarded as contributory to a general aspiration towards social amelioration. To the reader however a much closer bond of unity may be found in the fact that they together constitute a revelation of the mind of Professor Huxley himself, and of whatever school of thought he may be taken as representing. The author is no scientific recluse, but a man interested in human welfare and desirous to promote it. He is also greatly interested in the biological side of science, and has much knowledge in this field. The remaining question therefore is how to bring these two elements into useful relation to one another. It may seem to some however that the two elements do not mix very well, and even get in each other's way; so that we could be happier with either, were t'other fair charmer away. For Professor Huxley is charming when he describes and comments on interesting facts in biology and zoology and anthropology; of the way of the snake in the grass, the birds in their courtships, the untutored savage in his inspired ignorance. He has also a pretty good notion of what is the matter with us today, and of how much better things might be if they were not what they are. The same might be said of Mr. Wells. But his scientific philosophy seems rather a hindrance than a help.

In the essay on *The Uniqueness of Man*, he says that the gap between man and animal, lessened in the earlier days of Darwinism, has again widened, and that man stands unique in the powers of conceptual

thought and of formulating principles by the aggregation of facts. His view of the plan of evolution is far broader than the narrow views of bygone times; in place of a single line of development, he sees innumerable lines of deviation from a main trunk. The general law is one of dispersal into variations; the continuity of development is preserved only by the rare exceptions which do not thus become lost in unprofitable variation. It short, it is a series of experiments, of which most are failures, but which are ultimately crowned with success. (In this we are reminded of what is taught in *The Secret Doctrine* as to the various abortive attempts to produce man in the earlier stages of cosmic evolution.) But then comes the question, Who is trying the experiments and making the mistakes and achieving the ultimate successes? The work is the work of *Mind*. But *Mind* is excluded as an agent, because it is represented as a *product* of the process. The animals are shown not to possess it in the requisite degree; it is only in man that it arrives — and this *because his brain is so much more plastic*. "Mythical gods," and "philosophical absolutes" are waved away; but what takes their place? Is the universe automatic? Very well, but automatic means self-moving, voluntary as opposed to influenced, possessing inherent power — attributes applicable to the Causeless Cause of ancient philosophy, or to the God of theology. Such a power, such an intelligence, such a purpose, has to be assumed at the outset, in order that the machine may be set running at all. And yet these attributes are represented as the *result* of the process. Such an upside-down outlook as this may well prove an obstacle in the way of social planning. The only conceivable evolution is an evolution of *beings*. Moreover evolution cannot be a creating, by blind experiment, of things entirely new; but it is a bringing into manifestation of things that have pre-existed in potency. Mind must be at the beginning, not at the end only. Mind brings into being a series of vehicles for its own progressive expression.

We are left quite in the dark as to the origin of these powers of conceptual thought and generalization, to which Professor Huxley assigns such importance. He calls upon us to use our powers ("Let us

not put off our responsibilities onto the shoulders of mythical gods or philosophical absolutes, but shoulder them in the hopefulness of tempered pride.") It is an interesting speculation at what precise point in the evolutionary process blind experimentation and haphazard forces gave place to responsibility and the power of conscious planning. We are whole-heartedly with Professor Huxley in the wish that man should use his powers to further his own betterment; but we are not at all satisfied with his account of the manner in which man became possessed of those powers. And that is why we say his philosophy gets in his way. The same confusion between cause and effect is seen elsewhere: as for instance in speaking of a nation whose character has undergone a great change in a short time, it is said that biological causes could never have produced such an effect, and that it must be due to the social changes. But social changes are elsewhere spoken of as effects which we must bring about. However some justification may perhaps be found by saying that there is action and reaction between man and his environment, so that each alternately features as cause or effect.

Professor Huxley takes a just view of the relation between the agent and the machine, condemning alike those who say that change of heart alone is enough, and those who say that change of circumstances alone is enough. We must of course work at both ends. The final essay, "Life Can be Worth Living," illustrates well what we have said. There is earnestness of purpose, intuitive grasp of essentials, breadth and balance of ideas; but everywhere a cautious dread of arousing old specters of theology or some other -ology. Much faith in the power of human intelligence and goodness.

Man, as individual, as group, and collectively as mankind, can achieve a satisfying purpose in existence. . . . I believe that there exists a scale or hierarchy of values, ranging from simple physical comforts up to the highest satisfactions of love, aesthetic enjoyment, intellect, creative achievement, virtue. I do not believe that these are absolute, or transcendental in the sense of being vouchsafed by some external power or divinity;

they are the product of human nature interacting with the outer world.

He believes that among human personalities there exist the highest achievements of the universe; and that the State exists for individuals and not individuals for the State. An individual is not an isolated or separate thing; he is a transformer of matter and experience.

It is in the devotion of the sacrifice that he becomes most himself. . . . Finally, I believe that we can never reduce our principles to any few simple terms. Existence is always too various and too complicated. We must supplement principles with faith. And the only faith that is both concrete and comprehensive is in life, its abundance and its progress. My final belief is in life.

Yes; truly man's destiny is in his own hands. He is a being endowed with innate creative powers. All philanthropists recognise this, if not directly, then by necessary implication. Yet it is an immense advantage to have a philosophy which gives an understandable account of the origin of such powers, rather than a philosophy which can give no rational explanation. The efforts of all sincere philanthropists, whatever their beliefs, must be respected as contributory to the general forward movement. This book, as previously noted, combats the idea that attention to the spirit alone is enough, and that the circumstances will then adapt themselves without direct attention; it insists on the need for attention to outward things also. We have to put food into the children's stomachs before we can put knowledge into their heads. Social planning, it is true, tends to deal with mankind too much in the abstract, and to rely on the formula. But living people are many and various, and actuated by forces that will not submit to formulation; so that progress is achieved by experience, opportunism, the application of various means to particular ends as they come up, rather than by attempts to apply formulas and rules. People will not of their own accord mold their lives by fixed rules and cold logic; and if force is used in the effort to make them do so, then we get tyranny and the

suppression of free choice.

This book shows how greatly earnest and intelligent aspirations may be hampered by a fantastic philosophy of the origin and nature of man and of the world of which he is a part. Could there be a better way of helping progress than by replacing these ideas by a philosophy which gives a consistent and adequate account of the universe and its living components? The teachings of Theosophy have already infiltrated into the world of thought to a degree which causes wonder to those with an experience of half a century; and this process may be expected to continue with acceleration in the years to come.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Man Stands Alone*. By Julian S. Huxley. Harper Bros., 1941. \$2.75.

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The Theosophical Forum

NATURE'S ARCHITECTS — *Charlotte Braun*

There is a great challenge in the study of the majestic architects of universal nature, for they were once men and their stature suggests possible destinies awaiting us. Some of the members of this hierarchy of teachers, governors, architects, are, in fact, men. Fully developed spiritually and intellectually, these men are *masters* of the art of human living, and they are a rung in a ladder of beings which stretches out into the spaces and includes planetary, solar, and galactic intelligences. But we must approach this hierarchy of spiritual beings with the deepest reverence in our hearts for the highest of them are indeed gods and their abodes are sacred "temples."

Some of them dwell in cosmic substances and forces beyond our vision, others in visible stars and solar systems. They have representatives on every globe. We may live among and in them but their life is too great for our senses to perceive or encompass. Their consciousness is too vast for ours to encircle, and the rhythm of their lives is so great that to us it would not appear as motion but rather as the quiet and silence of a man in deep meditation. For this reason some of them are called by the Sanskrit terms Dhyani-Chohans, meaning "Lords of Meditation," and others, Dhyani-Buddhas, meaning "Buddhas of Meditation."

There are many aspects to the work of these titanic beings. Their architectural work is to bring forth the patterns, the blue prints of worlds, the plan which is to be wrought into a substantial structure by lesser workers, the Builders. They are responsible for the construction of worlds and the protection and guidance of inhabitants of worlds. The wheels of the universal mechanisms, physical, psychological, mental, must be kept spinning in perfect precision. But the most beautiful aspect of their work is the effort to stimulate spiritual growth and to formulate, preserve, and teach the truths about the universe. This is carried out not only on earth but in every sphere visible or not. Because of this special function the hierarchy is called the

Compassionate. The very essence of the existence of this Hierarchy of Compassion is selflessness and it is through much self-sacrifice that its members have fitted themselves to carry on this very necessary work.

Of course there are many grades and degrees of accomplishment in this hierarchy just as there are in any other group of beings. Some are of a more cosmic or Archetypal nature than others, while some belong to what Platonists would call the intelligible world, the creative world, the demiurgos. Among these latter intelligences there are those who, although highly advanced and carrying on the work of the Hierarchy of Compassion, also belong to the general line of beings called Builders. They receive the plans and orders from the ideative world, from the Architects and carry them out. The Greeks called these builders Kosmocratores, and like the Hebrew Jehovah they are "creators," fashioners, masons of worlds.

The work of this Hierarchy of Builders, which must in turn include many grades of intelligences, is to care for and guide all the details of the substantial structure and the operations of nature. It is they who marshal the many kinds of life-atoms, their building materials, into the endless variety of patterns and designs which we find repeated in such perfection or indeed imperfection as the case may be.

In this teaching of the intelligent constructors of nature lies the explanation, as Dr. de Purucker has said, of ". . . the philosophic and scientific framework, the structural carpentry, not only of the universe but of man's own consciousness."

The Manasaputras are particularly inspiring examples of the selflessness of these beings. They are the "Sons of Mind," god-beings who gave of the stuff of their own nature as a candle gives its flame to light another wick. Thus they did the work of builders, building the inner constitution of man, and at the same time the motive and act were a part of the work of the Hierarchy of Compassion. The functions and phenomena of nature which apparently happen without guidance and in a purely mechanical way, have been explained by so-called primitive peoples by attributing them to the work of fairies and

gnomes. By other peoples the elements and forces were personified into a pantheon of gods. But at least they all recognised that the intricate mechanisms of nature cannot operate by chance but that there must be some kind of directive, and in some cases intelligent, forces working through them.

This problem has troubled Europe's greatest philosophers. Kant was unwilling to say that the marvelous symmetry, unity, and beauty of the myriad forms in nature are due to what he called "supernatural design" because he could not close his eyes to the waste and chaos in certain aspects of nature and to what he thought useless repetition and multiplication. Our architects and builders fit into this picture, however, because their perfections are relative, not absolute. They are all growing and evolving beings ranging through many grades, and they have their own problems, mistakes, and even failures. Besides, how can we judge them when we cannot even understand them? Too often we permit them to go unappreciated and unthanked. What may seem to us a tragedy or a waste may in some cases even be a blessing.

Looking to the harmony and symmetry so evident for instance in the arrangement and movements of the planets and stars, in the structure of a flower, or in the pattern of a snowflake, we ask ourselves how the unseen helpers of nature provide and keep these designs. What is their source? They spring from the heart of the universe which is one and the same as the heart of a flower, or of a star, or of a snowflake. These architects, each according to its degree of evolution, have learned to draw their consciousness nearer to their own higher selves which are rooted also in this divine heart of the universe. To reach such a high spiritual state they purified their personality, they raised it, drew it into their higher nature so that it no longer impedes their vision and they reflect more clearly their innermost nature. In this wonderfully impersonal and selfless state they can be the instruments of the laws of a greater universe, they can reflect in their functioning and habits the ways of Divine Intelligence. They help nature geometrize, so to speak, for the symmetrical patterns and mathematical proportions which are repeated on all scales, were in this way first impressed on the

Archetypal world, and then being taken up by the Builders they were wrought into the myriad varieties of external worlds.

There is a very interesting relation between these two hierarchies, the Architects and Builders. They represent the two contrasting sides of being, and are the bi-polar forces which build all of nature. These two magnetic forces have many aspects; they are positive and negative, bright and shadowy, spirit and matter. The Chinese call them the Yang and the Yin, while in Sanskrit the bi-polar worlds are called the Lokas and Talas. But these contrasts are not separate from each other; everywhere they are found together and this is because they are two aspects of being, of the one fundamental life. The Hierarchy of Compassion is rooted in the spiritual-energy-consciousness side of life and the Hierarchy of Builders in the vehicular side. As we have shown, there are many beings who belong to either hierarchy, according to how one views them.

The spiritual-energy-consciousness side of nature includes in its span all the degrees of consciousness from the highly spiritual yet primordial and un-self-conscious god-spark which is unaware of its own divinity or even of its own identity, ranging upward and outward to the great masters of self who have gained a recognition of their divinity, faced the Divine One at their hearts, and have accepted the responsibilities which such recognition entails.

Humanity holds a unique position in this great scale of varying stages of development. We stand, from our plane of vision, midway in the journey; we are no longer among the un-self-conscious nor are we among the directive powers of nature, but with a modicum of self-awareness and the free will that this entails we may use these for the directing of our own evolution and thus follow the way of our guardians and teachers who have become masters of life. Always we must remember that these states and conditions are relative, that we are but one link, and in our higher natures a truly god-like one, in the vast chains of existence which stretch away beyond our vision or imagination.

The vehicular side of nature covers a span from primordial substance and force to matter which is to us apparently vegetative; indeed it includes the vehicles of all scales of entities from atoms microcosmic and atoms celestial. Each vehicle is in turn helping to build the body of a greater being. The atoms and molecules build our bodies, and the solar systems and galaxies are the atoms and molecules that build the bodies of greater universal beings. This principle applies not only to physical bodies but to vehicles of desire, to thought-bodies, and to spiritual sheaths.

The great necessity of knowing these facts lies in the vision it gives us of the goal of life, the destiny and heritage that may be ours. Plato in his *Republic* suggests this destiny when he says:

And what is it that he who has attained to knowledge knows? It is this: That all visible things are types, in which are mirrored to us the features of certain archetypes, and are, therefore, the mere shadows of higher realities. The aesthetic education of man consists in his learning thus to rise from the type to the archetype.

Here then is our goal, to learn to raise our consciousness and interests, to draw them up till they are one with the god reality.

The way to this goal has been pointed out by those who have succeeded in pushing past some of the shadows. Men like the Buddha, Lao-Tse, Jesus, and indeed Plato, great teachers of the race whose coming to us is vital evidence of the existence of such a goal and that it is not unattainable, are the strongest evidence of the existence of the Hierarchy of Compassion, and their precepts indicate that in joining the ranks of this Hierarchy we are taking the first steps toward our goal and the realizing of our highest destiny in accord with the universal plan. Their ethical precepts are the challenging golden rules of right living which indicate the way to fulfil our destiny. Godhood will not be thrust upon us. We must seize it ourselves, but first we must prepare ourselves, becoming ever more fully human, like those titan men, the Masters, who take an active part in the selfless work of the guardians

of nature.

It is very encouraging to know that this pathway has been followed before, and that the very difficulties which we now face in our selves have troubled the greater beings, and that in our efforts we will be watched over with their infinite understanding. We are told that every inspiration that comes to us to do good, to help another, every perception of the wonder of these secrets of nature, is to be cherished and remembered for it is a gift given us by our own higher selves and by the Hierarchy of Compassion. The chain of this hierarchy has a link on every planet, a nucleus in every solar system which is centered in the Sun of the system, and there is a spiritual center in every galaxy. We receive our knowledge of the universal structure and relations and our inspiration for better things down through this chain. It is stepped down to us from link to link. "Somewhere in Galactic space there is a company of Solar Gods. Somewhere in the fields of Cosmic space there is a celestial council of galactic divinities from whom we receive our light."

The Theosophical Forum

THE VISION OF THE LORD BUDDHA — *G. de Purucker*

When I was a boy of twelve, I came upon a Buddhist quotation which fascinated imagination, mind, and heart. I think it was one of the things which in this life awoke me more than any other thing that I can recollect; at any rate it was one of the first. It is pure Theosophy and genuine Buddhist doctrine. It is this: The Lord Buddha is speaking, and I am paraphrasing somewhat his words in order to make them somewhat clearer: "Oh! disciples, never let discouragement enter into your souls. See you suffering in the world, see you unhappiness and pain and ignorance, misery and distress which wring the heart? Disciples, all things are destined to pass into Buddhahood: the stones, the plants, the beasts, all the component atoms of these, each and every one, aye and sun and moon and stars and planets: all in future ages will become Buddha. Each one will become a Buddha."

What a marvelous picture! How it quiets the heart and stills the mind; for if one atom, one man, become a Buddha, everything will, for this Universe is one, broken into multitudes during Manvantara or manifestation; rooted in that One, living from it, and by it. In it we live and we move and have all our being. Therefore some day, somewhere in the incalculable aeons of what we call the future, all now of the multitudes, suns and stars, planets, comets, gods, men, animals, plants, stones, atoms, elements, worlds, everything, each as individual, is destined for Buddhahood.

When I read that — I have given you the expanded gist of what I heard — for nearly three months I went around in a daze of spiritual delight and inner reawakening. To this day I could not tell you whether I ate or drank or slept. I know I must have done so, but I have no recollection of anything except light; and the raising of the eyes inner and outer, upward and inward. Just that thought broke open the doors closed when I drank of the waters of Lethe, of forgetfulness, when last I died. The doors opened and the light came in, began to come in.

I think this extract gives us a most wonderful picture. Take the mineral kingdom: It is formed entirely of unconscious monads, that is monads unconscious on this plane, never unconscious in their own spheres. But what we call monads in the mineral kingdom are as it were the expressions of essential spiritual monads working and evolving down here on this plane, and going through these Gilgulim, as the Hebrew Qabbalah has it, meaning these lower halls of life and experience, these worlds of the ceaseless evolutionary journey; yet each one is essentially a god, each one in essence a Buddha, a ray of the Adi-Buddha or the Cosmic Buddha. And so it is with all things.

Therefore, the Lord Buddha said: "Disciples, when sorrow wrings your heart, when pain and suffering are too bitter to bear, when you see others dying for the needs, the mere needs of life: be not discouraged. Look into the future. Every one of the multitudes some day will be a Buddha, Adi-Buddha, therefore *a* Buddha, stones and plants, and beasts and men and gods, suns and stars and comets and the elements of them all."

Yet this recognition of the essential divinity of all, and the certain future Buddhahood of all, should never at any moment stay our hands from works of loving pity and helpfulness here and now; for it is here and now that lies our sublime duty of doing all we can to alleviate the world's suffering and need that are incident and necessary to the monads on their evolutionary journey.

EVOLVING THE SUPER-INTELLECTUAL SELF — *Kenneth Morris* (1)

If *you*, your personal self, do not set to work to tame, train and evolve that other *you*, your animal self: the latter *you* will make short work of the former. Watch your animal self and you will understand the animals; watch an animal, and you will get understanding of your animal self, the seat of your desires and passions. You may shoo her off the table a dozen times, but the cat will come for the bit of fish that is there: her soul, her nature, impels her to it, and no inward voice whispers a *Thou shalt not*. Nor does she take harm, in her natural state, by obeying the impulse of her nature; but in us, that impulse from the animal *must* be dominated; or the animal self, given the reins, would kill our minds and bodies. The evolution of our animal selves is forced upon us: we must act as agents of evolution or perish; and thus we see that evolution is a fact in nature. You, the personal self, have attained self-consciousness; which the animal self, whether in man or in the brutes, has not; and therefore you have to play your part as an agent of universal law and get busy evolving, training and sublimating your animal self.

Bellerophon, gazing into the waters of the fountain, saw the approach of the winged steed; you, searching thus into yourself, can discover the laws of the universe. Why bother to discover them? Because you can't live your life successfully unless you know the laws that govern life. Because the World — in the body and soul of which you are a component atom — is being run with disgraceful unsuccess; which cannot be bettered except by folk who understand the laws that govern life. Whatever one's job, one cannot do it properly unless one knows the principles involved. Life is the job of all of us; the World is the job of all of us. It is what it is, and not prosperous and happy, because people have not bothered to understand. That is why its most crying need today is Theosophy. Theosophy is, simply, understanding.

Matter is in itself non-existent: the atom, its ultimate subdivision, is

made of force, not matter; the proton-sun in that little solar system is a charge of positive, and its electron-planets are charges of negative, electricity. Force in the same way is nonexistent in itself; it is an appearance caused in turn by the action of Consciousness:

Consciousness stands to Force as Force stands to Matter. The universe is built of consciousness, of consciousnesses, of conscious beings: consciousness is the ultimate and only reality. You are consciousness; and therefore it is within yourself that you can discover the laws and principles that govern life.

Is there nothing in you that stands to the personal self as that does to the animal self? Examine your personal self. It is that in you which makes you feel distinct from everyone else, the sense that you are yourself. Sort it out; take the microscope or a small tooth-comb to it; note how it is composed and inhabited. Such and such fears, tendencies, dislikes and attractions; the memories that give you a sense of identity, or being the infinitesimal thing that dwells in your body and brain in the midst of this infinite universe. Is there nothing above it, as it is above the animal: nothing to make *it* worth while, as it must make the animal inexorbitant?

Of course there is. Take up a text-book of Theosophy, and begin reading. Soon you are out of your personal self; your thoughts are no longer personal and limited; you dwell no longer in the little body and brain, shut in; but in the dignity of "intellectual being," with "thoughts that wander through eternity." You are *thinking* now, in some real sense of the word: a giant to what you were; impersonal, and therefore free of the universe. Contrast the self of the petty concerns and trivial memories with this greater self that thinks; dwell on the contrast; examine it: discover the meaning of those two regions of what we call the mind.

The one so small, so unimportant; the other potentially as great as it was in Plato or any of the sages; as great, you may say, as the universe of which it makes you free. It is there, to be discovered and used; a continent of which we have for the most part but sighted the shores

afar. It is there in all of us; the dullest lout of us all, turning his attention that way, might yet in time carve out for himself grand kingdoms there; and not one of us can make his mark, or accomplish anything, or be worth while in any sense, unless sometimes he rises from the personal to the impersonal mind, and has begun to *think*.

This Higher Intellect is there, then; and has the job on its hands of evolving its shabby little poor relation, its marred reflexion, our personal selves. Is there nothing in turn that may be supposed to have the job of evolving *it*? What is the thing we call genius?

Beethoven (perhaps Europe's supreme Man of Genius), at the height of his illumination by it, when notes and numbers could carry him no further, broke out into the cry of that Super-intellectual Self which lies latent in all of us: "Joy to you, ye mortal millions! Here's a kiss for all mankind!" And there you have indication of what is the essential nature of genius — however perverted genius may become as it struggles down into manifestation. Its essential nature is an electric universality, a flaming compassion, a boundless joy in its universality and compassion, an exultant knowledge that the Inmost Self in all of us *is* universal; that one life, one Self, shines through all being, through ourselves and the sun and the stars. "God is love," said the Nazarene, with scientific exactitude. Love — which does not mean fastening your affections on some personality, whether another's or your own: but living not for self but to benefit mankind — is the manifestation in us of Pure Consciousness, the Self of our universe.

Thus we are Jacob's Ladders, a self in us for every rung, from these flesh-and-bone bodies of ours up to what you may call "God" if you want to use a thoroughly spoiled name for It. The business of each of these selves or rungs is twofold: to raise itself towards the self above, and to evolve the self below: of the animal self, to be mastered, trained and sublimated; of the personal self, to train the animal, and to learn to marshall great thoughts across the mind's surface instead of being at the mercy of what trivial or base thoughts come buzzing to it; of the Higher Intellect, to evolve the personal self, and to infuse itself with the

glory from above, Compassion. This is what Evolution means.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The late Kenneth Morris was President of the Welsh Section, T. S., from 1931 until his death in 1938. He was also known in the world of letters as author and literary critic, as well as interpreter of the ancient folklore and mysticism of ancient Wales. We feel that in time there is no doubt that equal recognition will be given him as a poet, particularly in the two fields he loved most, the Chinese and the Celtic.
— Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

CIVILIZATIONS OF PRE-HISTORY — *G. de Purucker*

The following questions concerning ancient civilizations have been sent to me, and I find the best way to answer them is through the pages of THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM.

Question: in a preface written to Dr Alexander Wilder's series of articles on the Egyptian Dynasties, published in the old *Universal Brotherhood Path*, occurs the statement that "Egypt is older than India, and America older than either." This preface is signed by Katherine Tingley.

This statement cannot be reconciled, it would seem, with the many statements made by H.P.B., both in *The Secret Doctrine* and in *Isis Unveiled*, to the effect that India is older than Egypt and that Egypt owed her civilization to India. For example the following:

"Egypt herself had, in those unknown ages when Menes reigned, received her laws, her social institutions, her arts, and her sciences from pre-Vedic India." — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 589

"Egypt owes her civilization, her civil institutions, and her arts, to India." — *Op. cit.*, II, 431

"Egypt owes her civilization, commonwealth, and arts — especially the art of building, to pre-Vedic India." — *Op. cit.*, II, 435

Isis Unveiled has several other similar statements, and *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 417, reads "India and Egypt were two kindred nations, and the Eastern Ethiopians (Egyptians) have come from India, as is now pretty well proved, it is hoped, in *Isis Unveiled*, II, 569-70 "

I have heard a statement that certain Atlantean stocks,

foreseeing the coming catastrophe, when Atlantis began to sink, migrated to new lands, and these lands became the Americas, became Africa, became parts of Asia, and that in time they lost all memory of their homeland and became the stocks of the ancient Americans, the Mayas, the Incas of Peru, and *also the archaic Egyptians, and the very earliest Aryans.*

Question: Can you throw some light upon the contradictions? Is it possible that Dr Wilder wrote that preface himself, as he wrote the preface to *Isis Unveiled*, which preface admittedly contains errors?

G. de P. — No, no. The statement therein is from Katherine Tingley and is quite true. America was, strictly speaking, the fifth continent to appear about the time of the sinking of the mainland of the Atlantic continental system. But for ages and ages after the first part of the original Americas had risen above the waters of the ocean, semi-continents, quasi-continents, great islands, of the Atlantean system still endured. And not so very long, geologically speaking, after the Americas had arisen above the waters — not then having their exact present configuration — the first roots of what later became Egypt, "the Gift of the River Nile," appeared; a little later than that, the larger part of what is now called upper Asia.

There is no contradiction at all between the statements, and I have often wondered why a contradiction should apparently be sought for where none exists. Is it not possible to understand that two statements can mean the same thing, but are made because viewing the same thing from two different angles? It is perfectly true that America is older than Egypt, and that Egypt is older than what is *now* called India.

What is now India was first colonized from the north, but almost contemporaneously from the south: from what was in ancient times, aeons ago, called Lanka, of which now vanished land, what was the northernmost highland is today called Ceylon. Lanka was one of the quasi-continents that I have just spoken of — I mean the ancient Lanka of the wide-flowing Atlantean system. The peoples inhabiting the

ancient Lanka, of which Ceylon is the northernmost tip or prolongation, were mythologically spoken of by the Greeks as the "eastern Aethiopians" — not meaning negroes, but Easterners, who were called "Aethiopians" on account of the dark color of their skin — as if the skin had been greatly sunburned.

Thus then, the original part of India had likewise received settlers from the south, coming from the remnant of the ancient Atlantean Lanka, inhabited, if you will remember, by Ravana, the foe of Rama, and by Ravana's armies of "monkeys" and "half-men." The common Sanskrit name for the inhabitants of ancient Lanka was Rakshasas.

Now, preceding the time when the Asiatic Atlantean Lanka was in the hey-day of its prosperity, there existed in what is now called the region of the Atlantic Ocean, a great and extensive and highly civilized range of land which was the continental back-bone throughout the ages of Atlantis. When this Atlantic Atlantean continent finally broke up and disappeared, leaving behind it large and small islands — which last condition existed after the original Asiatic Lanka had also broken up and disappeared — emigrants from these remaining islands of the Atlantic traveled eastward and settled on new land which had been rising out of the ocean to the eastward of these remnants of the Atlantean continent, and these new lands later consolidated — these new islands — and became what is now the district of the Abyssinian highlands and lands somewhat to the north of these.

As time passed, these Atlantean emigrants who had settled upon these new lands to the eastward, followed northwards the continual northward rising of new land — the extension of their shores northwards into the Atlantic Ocean; and this was the earliest Atlantean root-stock of what in later ages became the archaic or primitive Egyptians. Remember that the Egypt of history is the "Gift of the River Nile." The Nile flows northwards, and through the ages it has brought down enormous accumulations of sediment in its waters and has deposited these continually on the shore of the Atlantic Ocean into which the Nile flowed, so that little by little through the ages this shore-

deposit of the Nile extended ever more and more into the waters of the Atlantic, as the river kept bringing down, through the passing millennia, ever more and more detritus and earthly material, carried northwards in its waters and derived from the mountains of the hinterland, the back country, Abyssinia, and what is now Nubia and the other countries there. Thus the entire Nile Delta, as the Greeks called it: in other words the Egypt of history, and as it is today, is literally the Gift of the River Nile.

This original Delta was settled anew by further colonists of a later age from the last remnant of Atlantis, which Plato called "Poseidonis," which existed some eleven or twelve thousand years before his time; for Poseidonis then still existed in the Atlantic Ocean beyond the Pillars of Hercules; and this Poseidonis at about that time was a large island more or less of the size of Ireland today. These Poseidonians were they who settled anew on the Egypt of the Delta and built the great Pyramid some seventy or eighty thousand years ago. You see, therefore, that these Egyptians of the second important immigration were a much later Atlantean immigration than were the first that I have told you about. Furthermore, the Poseidonians had already become more or less mixed in blood with the Aryans — the new race which had already for several ages been coming down from the plateau of Asia, where, as Atlantean stocks, they had found refuge from the continental agony of Atlantis.

Remember, therefore, that these Aryans coming down from the plateau of Asia belonged to the original Atlantean emigration which I have told you of, which went eastwards to the new lands arising out of the waters of the then Far East.

Once more, still later than the time when Poseidonis sank, which was some twelve thousand or more years ago, Egypt was again invaded and settled by emigrants from what is now southern India who came into Egypt by two routes: over the Indian Ocean to Abyssinia and the countries around that range of land, and thence came down the River Nile into Egypt, conquering and settling the country as they went. The

other route was a land-route over what is now the Isthmus of Suez. These last immigrants into Egypt from southern India, the Egyptian records refer to as the "Sons of Horus," the Sun-God, coming out of the East.

Thus you see that Egypt had first a primal or primitive immigration of Atlantean stock before the Egypt of history had as yet been made by the River Nile. Then came a second and much later emigration of a mixed Atlantean stock from Poseidonis into Egypt, which mixed stock settled on the Egypt of history, some eighty, ninety, or one hundred thousand or more years ago. Still later again there came the third immigration into the Egypt of history, it may have been eight or nine thousand years ago or more, these immigrants coming from southern India; and it is this last immigration from India — an immigration of Indian stocks from southern India — who were the "eastern Aethiopians" who mixed with the Atlantean Egyptians and thus produced the composite racial stock which known history, recorded history, knows as having produced the dynasties of Egypt.

Thus America was the oldest continent; Egypt in its beginnings was much earlier than India; then came India; but also southern India at a later time sent her civilization, her arts, her mysteries, the teaching of her great mystical schools, to Egypt. These last south Indian immigrants into Egypt were themselves a mixed people partly of early Aryan stock but of a still stronger infusion of the ancient Atlantean inhabitants of the then already sunken and almost forgotten Atlantean Lanka.

This is a long and I fear a rather labored explanation of what is not a contradiction, but possibly a paradox.

Question: Archaeologists have found no remains of developed civilizations earlier than about 7000 years ago — not long before the beginning of Kali-Yuga.

There is positive evidence from tens of thousands of years before that, of a "primitive" mode of living — stone implements, etc., — and negative evidence of the same — the absence of

pottery, metals, buildings, etc.

H. P. Blavatsky says the lack of progress during the immense period of the Stone-Ages was due to the heavy Atlantean karma.

Was humanity really brutal and savage as a whole during the Stone-Ages, or are the appearances deceptive, and did a higher civilization exist during the 900,000 years since the destruction of the continent of Atlantis, though lacking the appurtenances we now consider essential to "civilization"?

G. de P. — Brutality and brutishness walk the streets of our cities; and you will see among us many examples of the so-called Stone-Age man of the archaeologists. There are Stone-Age men today, savage and barbarian tribes, using stones; and there are so-called civilized men also today. Consequently, my answer is, regarding civilizations that have existed during the last 900,000 years most emphatically so, certainly so. During the 900,000 years that this querent speaks of, which is by no means all the time since the downfall of the Atlantean civilization, but even within this smaller period of 900,000 years, there have been great civilizations in various parts of the globe, which were born, which flourished, which brought forth the best that they could achieve in the plenitude of their power, and then decayed; and not a wrack of them remains as a witness today. Our fate will be exactly the same; but while these brilliant civilizations flourished in various parts of the world, there were Stone-Age men then, just as there are today.

There are different kinds of waves of civilization which sweep over the earth, such as that which existed during the times of the Greek and the Roman Empires, when all over the world civilization was fairly low when looked at from a standpoint of merely mechanical achievements, and not so high in that respect as our civilization is at the present time; but from a nobler standpoint, higher than civilization is at present. The essence of civilization is the bringing forth into manifestation in human life of the spiritual and intellectual faculties and powers of men, whether men have automobiles and flying machines, or not.

When a man thinks and produces the fruits of his thought in noble works, in literature, in the mysteries, in religion, in philosophy, in human kindness, there we find a true civilization. It is a civilization of a higher type than one like our own. Yes, there have been many civilizations in the past more brilliant even than our own at present. We have not reached the fullest expression, the highest point, of our present cycle of growth. But that highest point is not far off, and then our turn will come to decay — unless the Theosophical Movement can arouse generally in the hearts of mankind, some greater longing for spiritual things; unless our spiritual movement arouse in the hearts and minds of men — so that it will carry them over the difficulties of the future — a vision, a vision of Truth, and of Reality; and above everything else, unless it can evoke brotherly kindness, brotherly love.

You will find brutes walking the streets of our great cities today, types and examples of those purely imaginary figures, but nevertheless drawn somewhat after such types in our streets, which imaginary figures, the imaginative archaeologists portray as the "dawn-man," or the "paleolithic man" or the "neolithic man," or the "Stone-Age man."

Not so many thousands of years before Greece attained the remarkable brilliance which characterized its civilization during the Periclean Age: not so many thousands of years before that, there flourished a civilization which would put ours to shame, actually a series of civilizations, and they had their habitat and stage in what is now Persia and Western Afghanistan, and in the lands to the north and east of these, lands which are now barren and desert countries. Brilliant civilizations flourished there. There were also civilizations which once covered with a perfect web of cities and towns what are now the Gobi plains — a howling waste of sands and desolation, but which were then dotted with prosperous cities and towns and villages. The land was highly cultivated. Astronomical observatories and chemical laboratories were as common as they are with us. What remains of them? Naught but legends, dreams of the past, a few scattered archaeological remnants, which are supposed by the degenerate

inhabitants of the Shamo desert today to be the dwelling-place of spirits or genii. Many parts of the earth were the seats of once brilliant civilizations of which not even a memory remains today.

The Theosophical Forum

HEAVENS AND HELLS: FACTS OR SUPERSTITIONS? — *Abbott B. Clark*

The ideas of Heavens and Hells are based on the facts that moral and ethical principles are fundamental in nature, that this is a universe of law and order, that it is divine in its origin, nature, and destiny, and that man is an inseparable part thereof and governed by the same set of laws.

Man is fundamentally a spiritual being, as the universe is, and this demands of him rectitude in life and conduct. Man is interdependent and interblended with every other entity in nature, hence every thought and act of man helps or hinders every other part of nature, and so has a moral and ethical value and significance. The unity of all living beings demands co-operation, altruism, and living a life of brotherly helpfulness, for we help or hinder each other at every stage of progress.

Conformity to this divine order, or natural fitness of things, produces harmony, peace and progress, the higher expression of which men call Heaven, whether it is experience in a body or out of a body, on this earth or some other sphere; here or hereafter. Deviation from this divine order produces pain, suffering, and retrogression, the result of which is called Hell, whether experienced in a body or out of a body.

Some of the superstitions about Heaven are: that only the members of one religion can attain it, or that any man ever reaches it without personal effort and merit; or that anyone ever loses Heaven by conscientious objections to any form of belief so long as his moral condition and conduct conform to the laws of rectitude and harmony.

The superstitions about Hell are legion. But first, what do we mean by superstition? What is the first thing suggested to any man's mind by the word superstition? Answer — The other man's religion! But that is not the definition given in the dictionary. The shortest definition given by Webster is "false belief, especially in religion." The first superstition

about Hell is that good men ever go there for using their reason in matters of religion; and, second, that bad men ever escape it by being caught and converted; or that it is largely inhabited by heathens who were loyal to the lofty principles of their religion; or by scientists, philosophers, saints and holy men who used their reason and judgment and rejected any particular form of salvation that did not appeal to their judgment. If they were all in that place, where bad Christians go, it would certainly be an interesting place to go to — plenty of good company!

Another superstition about Hell is that it lasts forever, and I think this is the most cruel of all the superstitions. There is no law in Nature which demands any such thing. The truth is that any suffering lasts only while there are causes to produce it, and *ceases* when the effects have been exhausted. All effects are exactly proportionate to their causes: there is no static Heaven filled with stationary saints, and no static Hell filled with changeless sinners. The worst pains and greatest pleasures end in time, for everything is transitory. The law of constant change and evolution rule everything in the higher spiritual spheres as well as in the material ones with which we are familiar.

Most religions have Heavens of various degrees of merit, and many Hells of different degrees, each suited to the purgation of a corresponding degree of evil. The Christians, unfortunately, have only one Hell, to which they consign all victims, without regard to degree of guilt, and which is supposed to last forever, without regard to the eternal laws of causation, equity and justice, or to the human sense of law and order, justice and fair play, love and compassion. Such a conception of Hell appeals only to the spirit of persecution, revenge and hate. It is a theological dogma happily quickly passing from the minds of intelligent people — a dogma and superstition of the Dark Ages, much of the effect of which, however, still lingers over us.

Theosophists will tolerate no such conception as an eternity of pain and misery, nor on the other hand, a static Heaven where there will be no evolution or progress.

The Theosophical teaching is that beneficent Mother Nature wisely cares for all her children. There is an eternal drive to betterment. Every atom in the universe, from high to low, every portion thereof, is carried upon a great sweep of evolution by something within urging to express itself. That urge is caused by the Divinity, which is the basis of the universe, which is at the heart of every entity, however great or small, because that Divinity or Divine Spirit is fundamental in Nature; therefore it is in the heart of every entity. It gives the "kick" to the atom that the modern scientists talk about, and gives the energy they are trying to liberate by exploding the nucleus of the atom. It is the urge of every human being to express himself in ever fuller measure.

Man has two selves, one linking him with the Spirit; the other with matter. He himself has to decide which of the selves he gives expression to — the lower or the higher: all his future is determined by that.

Why, if Nature is beneficent, is there so much pain and suffering in the world? Because neither Nature nor man is perfect. The whole is in a state of evolution, and therefore a long way from being perfect. Man is in a very primitive, unevolved state, and he is learning by the contrast between right and wrong, high and low, good and bad. By trial and error and experience, and by practice and by the lessons he learns, gradually he is improving and developing. The human stage that we at present are in is developing individuality, mind, and intelligence. Those below man are carried on by the general sweep of Nature as the birds in a flock move together, and the fishes in the sea; all are on a general tide that carries them on. But in the human stage the mind of man has the power of choice, free-will; he must choose, and abide by the consequences of his choice. Hence there must be a deliberate effort, because he has developed individuality and free-will, the ultimate purpose of which in Nature is that he will become wise enough to cooperate with Nature and cease trying, through selfishness and narrowness, to thwart her. When he does that he will cease to think evil, and have conscious spiritual life within himself.

Pain is not punitive nor vindictive; it is corrective, disciplinary and purifying. Pain is the warning of a beneficent Mother Nature ever urging man away from the paths of selfishness into altruism, wisdom and peace.

When a man dies he leaves this world. He goes alone. He takes with him nothing but himself — all the riches of the heart, mind and spirit. They could not be lost, because they are part of his very being. The man who has no riches of the spirit is poor indeed after death. The man whose mind is static, full of earthly thoughts alone, whose heart is attached to earthly things, whose spirit is empty of love, is poor indeed. He wanders a shade in the earth's astral atmosphere.

These facts of the after-life are of vast moral importance to living men on earth because they prove to us that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he, both here and hereafter.

In regard to the states immediately after death, the Desire World and the Heaven World, we Theosophists call them Kama-loka and Devachan, for we have definite names for definite things; Theosophy is a definite science.

The facts are that in the after-life man meets himself face to face. No God rewards or condemns him, no Devil pursues him. In the astral world surrounding the earth, where men go after death, the thoughts of man's life are visible, objective things; his thoughts are made of substantial substance, of the nature of thought-substance. They meet a man face to face and accuse or bless him. He sees himself at his true value. If his life and thoughts have been good, he is filled with pure joy. If his life has been evil, his evil thoughts become avenging fiends — regular little devils — and his after-life is like a bad dream or nightmare. This is what Theosophists call Kama-loka or the Desire World, where the man's desires — good, bad or indifferent, are exactly fulfilled. No mistakes or injustices enter here, no rewards or punishments, except what the man has decreed by his own previous thoughts and deeds.

This astral world which surrounds the earth is neither Heaven nor Hell *per se*, but it is just what the thoughts of men have filled it with. It is the psychological atmosphere of the earth, a treasure-house or a waste-basket. Every beautiful thought of a man's life shines like a jewel; every bad thought burns like fire. This is the true meaning of Heaven and Hell.

This Kama-loka or Desire World, or the next stage after this earth, is only the ante-chamber of the true Devachan or Heaven World. It is a sort of settling vat or filter where that part of the man which is of the earth, earthy, is left behind in the earth's atmosphere where it belongs. A man cannot carry his faults with him to Heaven; if he did, it would not be Heaven.

Every normal man, however, has more good intentions than bad, more desire for the good and beautiful than for the evil. A good deal of joking has been done about "good intentions" paving the way downward. I always object to that saying unless the intentions were hypocritical or no effort made to carry them out. After a great deal of experience doing Theosophical work in the State's prisons my conviction is that the road that leads downward is paved with tacks standing on their heads, and before a man has walked on that road to its end he has to walk bare-footed.

The aspirations and longings which every man has carry his soul — himself — that is the spirit, into the true spiritual world, where the spiritual part of his being is naturally attracted. They free him from the lower atmosphere of the earth. With his spiritual soul — what we call the Spiritual Monad — the human ego then sets out on a journey of beautiful and wonderful adventures in the "many mansions of my father's house."

The soul resting in Heaven is not disturbed by the events on earth. The mistakes and troubles of the life once lived on earth do not trouble or invade the heavenly abode; if they did, it would not be Heaven. But in a certain sense those in the heaven-world can help us. If our love carries our spirit to the plane on which they are, we may benefit greatly. To

put it in other words, we can tune in to their world of harmony, beauty and love, but they cannot tune in to our jazz.

The study of these things shows that Nature is established on a moral basis which demands rectitude in human life and conduct.

These are the facts in the case when freed from superstition.

They lift the burden of doubt and fear from the question of death and the after-life. They dissipate the spiritual gloom inherited from the theology of the Dark Ages; they dissolve the curse of materialism of modern thought and life, and liberate the soul of man. They launch man on a brave new world, the captain of his soul, the master of his life and destiny, full of joyous hope and aspiration, with endless vistas of spiritual evolution, adventures and conquest, before the ever-expanding consciousness and intelligence of his triumphant soul.

The Theosophical Forum

RELIGION ORIENTATED TO CATASTROPHE — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

The title of Dr. M. Chaning-Pearce's book *The Terrible Crystal: Studies in Kierkegaard and Modern Christianity* (1) is taken from the apocalyptic vision of the prophet Ezekiel and was selected as expressive of "the religion of a terrible and intense candour of spirit," brought to this quality by the intense inner experience of those face to face with catastrophe. The author views the thought of contemporary writers who see in inevitable catastrophe the very climate of religion and reality, and who seek a new faith based on the reality revealed to human consciousness in such terrible crises — a faith affirmed by the whole nature of man and termed by these writers "existential." He addresses his book to those who find Christianity in its traditional form inadequate to the present crisis, and who believe that a re-born religion, a revitalized Christianity, alone can avert the ruin of our world. He opens with a study of the Danish philosopher Kierkegaard, who, in his view, is the originator of this thought and who, after one hundred years have passed, remains its most profound and inspiring exponent.

After 1848 Kierkegaard abandoned his pseudonymous style of writing on various subjects and began to publish the studies of Christianity which have of late years become widely influential among both theologians and laymen. His purpose was to discover a religion rooted in life rather than in doctrine. By unflinching study and facing of his own nature, by long cultivation of inwardness and awareness, by relentless analysis of the official Christianity of his day — which, however, did not blind him to the heart of the Christian teachings — he came to the belief that with the mortification of the mind and the ephemeral self, man reaches a crisis, a state of fear and trembling, of utter suffering, where, by an act of choice and will, he can take a leap into the dark, into a new field of consciousness, and pass from death to life, reborn as his spiritual self; that from the purifying fire of suffering,

as from a crucible, can spring phoenix-like a new faith.

The instant of choice, the act of faith resulting from the death of arrogant reasoning, mark the co-ordination of the dual aspects of man's nature whereby alone does man become man capable of realizing his full destiny and powers. It is man's entry into "a new dimension of thought," an emergence from unreality to reality, a consciousness of God-relationship, which is the birth of true individuality. To Kierkegaard the life of Christ is the universal type of this experience of inward religion. He eliminates all historical limitations as to the possibility of man's power, unaided by priestly mediation, to reach this highest religious attainment; and thus he came into conflict with conventional and established Christianity. Kierkegaard founded no school, no system of theology or ethics, gave rather "a fundamental metaphysic of life" which has made a strong appeal to thinkers today.

Dr. Channing-Pearce's chapter on The Theology of Crisis deals with the teachings of Professor Karl Barth, a Swiss pastor of the Reformed Church, who, in 1918, found that he had nothing but a "bankrupt theology" to offer his flock, and turned back to the sources of Christianity to find a religion more adequate to their needs. He defines "crisis" as "a drastic reorientation and change of life and thought, necessary for the man who desires to be reborn, unescapable for the Christian"; and holds that *the whole modern world is faced with this crisis*. "Resurrection" he interprets not as an historical event, but as "a movement from above in which eternity invades time," as "the new world, the world of a new quality and kind" breaking in upon our natural world. "From first to last the work is God's, not man's" Barth asserts; "there is no way from man to God." He holds "the doctrine of likeness between the creature and the Creator to be the discovery of antichrist." Faith is the cornerstone of this theology and to those who make the leap of faith into the unknown, the Word of God is revealed — truth and knowledge beyond anything thought humanly possible.

This bold claim on behalf of the individual man was made at the time

when the prophecy of Kierkegaard was affirmed by the existing conditions, when all certainties seemed to be dissolving, and the post-war dread of imminent catastrophe was creeping into minds everywhere. Be a "void," said Barth, which God alone can and will fill; surrender all to Faith; be reborn into the new life, receive All from God. This Barthian interpretation of Christianity, given in 1918, for years stirred Christians in Europe to the depths, and led many to believe that a new prophet had arisen. We are indebted to Dr. Channing-Pearce for his account of Barth's thought, to which, for want of space, we are unable to do full justice.

Professor Emil Brunner's book *The Mediator* is a simpler presentation of the Barthian theology and a review of its implications. It is concerned with the link between God and man, the means by which this faith-knowledge is made available to man. Both writers are quoted by our author to show that they held that there must be "a clean break" between the old life and the new, "between knowledge and faith," between history and super-history"; a break into a fourth-dimensional Reality entirely other than that of the life we live. Man not only receives the revelation-truth, but also the capacity to receive and recognise it, as a gift from God. Dr. Channing-Pearce, after close study of this theology, finds that this sweeping elimination of all human participation in the mediation is not maintained throughout the works of Barth and Brunner, and remarks that there is that within the nature of man, which cleansed from selfish propensities, can receive the Word and foster the divine seed into growth and development. He regards the view as false, that human life is "entirely worthless, unreal, doomed, fit only for some cosmic incinerator." He states that "a humanity which can conceive God, is not wholly evil."

The life of man is not in itself damnable; it is damnable because and in so far as it is sundered from that Life of life which is God, and is at variance with that Life. . . . Man is not a *massa perditionis*. His heart is abominably evil, but there is within his being a golden grain of glory.

God Transcendent and Spirit and Truth, books by Professor Karl Heim, give an interpretation of Barth's teaching concerning Divine Transcendence. Heim asks:

Is there, after all, that which the spirit of our age denies, a Reality . . . transcending the whole order of things in which we live?

How is it that we, who live in the Copernican age, we, for whom the world has lost its centre and its bounds, can still hold to the idea of the Transcendent?

How, when this idea, so vital to religion, has become impossible for countless people, can they believe in God? He realizes that to abandon it is to succumb to the naturalism bequeathed to us by the nineteenth century, the naturalism that grants only "the chance interplay of immanent forces."

Professor Heim meets this problem with a most interesting analogy. As transcendence presupposes boundary, he suggests as a substitute for the boundaries of content, the boundary of dimension; and instances the threefold world of consciousness of "I," "Thou," and "It," which exist independently and still interpenetrate and have a place of meeting established by means of speech, action, or decision.

Why not, then, a divine transcendence which, in its turn, lies beyond both "I" and "Thou" and the entire consciousness of our human world? And if, in the human "word" which reveals a new world to the "I," contact between two worlds is established, why should not the "wholly other" world of the "Kingdom of God" have been revealed, just so, in the "Word" which was Christ?

To this is added a conception of Time also in conformity with modern thinkers such as Einstein and Whitehead. These ideas fill out a new world-picture where

Reality no longer consists of stationary entities which enter into relations, but of an activity in transition by which everything

that exists is forever being created anew . . . [a world] where a divine word, like the atmosphere, surrounds us invisibly on every side . . . [a world where the Church is] composed of a unique brotherhood . . . [for which] all spiritual sources of salvation are absolutely free.

It will be seen that the essential truths of Christianity restated in the light of this new cosmogony, may be a reassuring message to bewildered humanity.

Eighteen years after the Barthian theology became known Dr. Channing-Pearce, having made a survey of contemporary thought as expressed in painting, sculpture, poetry, fiction, literary criticism, and works on science and religion — the account of which will be of absorbing interest to readers who have observed gleams here and there and wondered and been glad — suggested that the Theology of Crisis may be viewed as

part of a general and long-gathering reaction against the overweening immanentism of nineteenth century evolutionary thought, and Karl Barth, in the main, a modern Luther pitted against the Papacy of Science.

While finding it difficult to overestimate the value of Barth's contribution to his age, Dr. Channing-Pearce holds that the Barthian ideas concerning the wholesale repudiation of human life, the absolute break between the human and the divine, will not appeal to the modern mind, which is more prone to deny God than to deny life. And, while open-eyed to every indication that there exists a tendency toward the expression "through sense of something beyond sense," "a mounting faith in a transcendental reality," a recognition that "Known truth isn't the same as scientific truth," a repudiation of the stress on personality so dominant a few decades ago, Dr. Channing-Pearce is just as alert to the extreme dangers existing in those dark unseen forces of magic that "ritualize man's optimism," and, in an age like ours, tempt those who have lost their former faiths and certainties. The perilous counterparts of the surrender to Transcendent Divinity which requires

self-purification and renunciation of material desires, are dealt with in a chapter that makes clear the difference between subservient dependence on magical rites and willed co-operation with the Divine.

By 1939, when the last chapter of *The Terrible Crystal* was written, catastrophe was no longer a mere prophecy, but had broken upon the world. Dr. Channing-Pearce's attitude to this is one of heroic inward acceptance of every terrific condition inevitably forced upon humanity. He believes that those who realize the catastrophic nature of the Christian religion, and the agony and travail that face humanity, can experience the "leap into the dark" and Kierkegaard's "first death, then life," can find spirit and will free to move into the new world here and now to which the teaching of Christ can give access, and find wisdom and peace.

The Terrible Crystal has some of the beauty of utter sincerity and compassionate inclusiveness. It is therefore the more surprising that the author, evidently so well abreast of numerous aspects of contemporary thought, has overlooked one potent spiritual movement and has omitted to mention the teachings of Theosophy. Ever since 1875, when H. P. Blavatsky restored knowledge of the Archaic Wisdom-Religion, the fount from which have flowed all the great religions of the world, there has been poured forth through the Theosophical Movement, a stream of Truth concerning man and his relations to the Universe and to Divinity. Her books have set forth the archaic cosmology and anthropology which is being confirmed by the most recent and reliable findings of science, but go far beyond these in presenting a conception of the origin and destiny of the human race in a cosmic setting that includes the rise and fall of many races and civilizations, the passing of that which has culminated ever leading to the rise of the new; includes also a view of the enduring principles which weave vehicles of varying grades, inner and outer, visible and invisible, for the purpose of experience and attainment of God-consciousness by the pilgrim souls which comprise humanity.

The sevenfold constitution of man, mirroring in little that of the

universe contains the secret of that re-co-ordination of the Divine Transcendent with the immanent, now, according to Dr. Channing-Pearce, the "S. O. S." of the distressed ship of our civilization to-day." It also supplies the complete ethics and psychology of Mediation, whereby man through the purification of his intermediate nature receives Light from the Divine Transcendent within, guided in this by those who have preceded him in the attainment of this higher consciousness; namely, by the Hierarchy of Compassion, one of the greatest among whom was Jesus the Christ. The Theosophical cosmology and philosophy thus give a wonderful background of Archaic Wisdom for the intuitions of fearless and compassionate thinkers today, and also vital significance to life on Earth.

We express our gratitude to the author of *The Terrible Crystal* for formulating so clearly the great thoughts which no doubt do much to inspire the sublime heroism of our brothers who are facing most directly the present catastrophe. His statement that "Misery is near to mystery" is a true word. Acceptance of the crucifixion of agony and suffering rends the veils between spirit and the mind which is "the Slayer of the Real," and enables human beings to participate understandingly as "knights of Faith" in that death which leads to birth of a new life for Humanity.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Terrible Crystal: Studies in Kierkegaard and Modern Christianity*. M. Channing-Pearce. Oxford University Press, N. Y. 1941. \$2 50. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERIES AND CHRISTIANITY: I (1) — F. Chapman Clemeshaw

What is the connection between the mysteries of the ancients, and Christianity? We shall let two early Christian writers answer for us: Ammonius Saccas (230 a. d.), founder of the Neo-Platonic school of philosophy at Alexandria, says that Christianity and Paganism, when properly understood, differ in no essential points, but had a common origin, and are really one and the same thing. St. Augustine, about the end of the fifth century, says:

The very thing which we now call the Christian Religion, really was known to the Ancients, nor was it wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race up to the time Christ came in the flesh; from which time the true religion, which previously existed, began to be called Christian, not as having been wanting in former times, but as having in later times received that name. (Augustine, *Opera*, I, 12)

In other words, each age gives rise to the succeeding age; history repeats itself, but what we want to know is how often does it repeat itself? Here we may very profitably make a brief historical retrospect before proceeding with our subject. To this end, the writer wishes to share with other students a recent study of the Messianic Cycle. This does not claim to be the whole truth, but is at least approximate truth. Some years ago, the writer came across an interesting contribution to H. P. Blavatsky's *Lucifer*, by W. Wynn Westcott. The name of the series of articles is, "Numbers, Their Occult Powers and Mystic Virtues." The particular article is to be found in Vol. V. (Dec. 15, 1889, p. 320), and the particular paragraph runs as follows:

It has been calculated by some savants, by the late Dr. Kenealy in particular, that a Messiah, or divine teacher, has been sent to the world every 600 years.

The astronomical period of 600 years, spoken of as the "Naros," the Cycle of the Sun, the Luni-Solar period or Sibylline year, is a period of peculiar properties. Cassini, a great astronomer, declares it to be the most perfect of all astronomical periods. He says:

If on a certain day at noon, a new moon took place at any certain point in the heavens, it would take place again at the expiration of 600 years, at the same place and time, and with the planets all in similar positions.

(Westcott, *Ibid.*, p. 320)

The Naros was always held to be a secret cycle, there being at least one good reason for the secrecy, for, were it commonly known that a messenger came every 600 years, how many impostors would there be at this time approached? It is interesting that in 1137 there was a Messiah, a pretender in France, and another in Persia. 1137 is very near to 1098, (marked *St. Bernard* on the diagram).

The Phoenix, though an excellent symbol for any cycle, has been especially associated with the Naros. Dr. Kenealy in his *The Book of God*, states that the ancient Irish ascribed a longevity of 600 years to their Phoenix, that Ovid and Herodotus mention it and say that it makes its appearance every 600 years. In Chaldee and Coptic it is called *Phennische*; these letters used as numbers add up to 600.

The coming of a Messiah is, of course, associated with the Annunciation. The spray of Lilies, which in the old pictures of the Annunciation, Gabriel presents to the Virgin, shows each lily as having six leaves and each flower six petals. This spray of lilies, typifying fire and water, or the idea of creation and generation, symbolizes *precisely the same idea as the Lotus* in the hand of the Bodhisattva who announces to Maha-Maya, Gautama's Mother, the birth of the world's Savior, Buddha (See S. D. I, p. 379, f. n.).

In the Sixth Century a. d. a certain scholarly monk, Dionysius Exiguus, calculated the date of the birth of Christ, and proposed that thenceforth all things should date as from that date. This proposal met with some opposition at first, but eventually its supporters, the Venerable Bede among them, carried the day. We are now told that the occult date of the birth of Jesus is 102, or 103 years earlier than the date set by Dionysius. Considering that modern scholars have been unable to discover any reliable information about the birth of Jesus, it must be admitted that Dionysius came pretty near to the truth.

Taking 102 b. c. as the birth of Jesus, it is a simple matter to keep adding 600 years and thus arrive at dates when messengers should appear. I was encouraged to pursue this study because of two statements to be found in Theosophical literature that quite evidently support the idea that Messengers are sent every 600 years. In *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 178) we find the statement that the Kali-Yuga commenced with the death of Krishna, 3102 b. c. That is 3000 years from 102 b. c, or five periods of 600 years.

The second statement is to be found in H. P. B.'s *Glossary*, under "Eleusinian Mysteries": "Epiphanius traces them to the days of Inachos (1800 b. c). founded, as another version has it, by Eumolpus, a king of Thrace and a hierophant." Again, three periods of 600 years. Also, I have noticed a disposition to use the expression, *eighteen-hundred years ago*, when comparing our own times with those at about the beginning of our era. (See *Studies in Occultism*, No. V, p. 253).

The diagram, therefore, is an effort to illustrate and test these statements and consequently shows a complete cycle of 1800 years divided into three periods of 600 years. There is another good reason for dividing the Messianic cycle (or any other cycle, for that matter) into three periods and that is what Dr. de Purucker points out in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for Sept., 1933, p. 6. He said:

The affairs of men are the manifestations of the thoughts of men; and the thoughts of men follow three distinct and separately characteristic types, as history demonstrates. They are: a religious era, always followed by a scientific era, invariably followed by a philosophical era, which ushers in again a religious era, which gives way in its turn to a scientific era, followed again by a philosophical era; and thus the wheel of life turns continuously around.

In tracing the above-mentioned changes, this diagram presents a difficulty. For instance, if we are studying the cycle started by Jesus, Inachos, and the others, at the point "B," then the point of the triangle at "B" would be marked *Scientific*; for all the Messengers come when they are needed, that is, when man's spiritual powers are in abeyance and when his scientific and inventive faculties rule the day. In this case, the point "C" would be marked *Philosophical*, and the point "A" *Religious*. This might be misleading, for then it might appear that the Messengers at "C" belonged to a philosophical group, and those at "A" belonged to a religious group. To avoid this difficulty, the points of the triangle were left unmarked,

the names shown on the diagram, the exact date of birth cannot be ascertained, for instance, there are four dates for the birth of Buddha and they vary as much as 103 years. If any presently accepted date falls within a period including the fifty years before and the fifty years after our theoretical date it is as close as we can hope to come.

Now let us trace these dates backward, beginning with 102 b. c. The first date is 702 b. c. This is a wonderful date, for about this time we have Gautama Buddha in India, Lao-Tse and Confucius in China, Numa Pompilius in Italy, and Isaiah in Palestine. Curiously enough, on Feb. 11 of this year, 1940, the Japanese celebrated the two-thousand six-hundredth anniversary of the birth of their first Emperor Jimmu. According to this, the Emperor was born on Feb. 11, 661 b. c.

Add another six hundred years, and we come to 1302 b. c. Dr. Kenealy gives Moses for this date, and it seems likely enough, for Mr. Budge, the Egyptologist, gives 1270 b. c. as the date of the Exodus; if we suppose that Moses was 32 years old at that time, then we get our date of 1302 b. c (2)

1902 b. c. we have already touched upon; on the authority of H. P. B. this point is marked Inachos. 2502 b. c, Dr. Kenealy gives Zoroaster for this date, but it cannot be verified. H. P. B., in her *Glossary*, points out that the dates vary from 6000 years before the time of Plato, to 1000 b. c. Neither of these dates help very much. In *Tabular Views of Universal History*, by Putman, there is this item: "2500 b. c, Reign of Seankh-kara, who dispatched an expedition to the land of Punt for Spices."

You may ask, is one warranted in picking out a name of a king simply because he reigned at the required time? Well, of course, it is easy to make a mistake, but if you are considering a time prior to the Sixth Century b. c. you are not likely to be far wrong; for H. P. B. (S. D., "Vol. III"), in speaking of Egypt, says, "It was Amasis, 570 b. c, who destroyed the priestly power and thus perished the ancient Theocracy." In other words, kings up to that time had been priest-kings, or Initiate-Kings. About 1800 years before Seankh-kara, Menes reigned in Egypt. W. Q. Judge places Menes among the Avataras, from which we may infer that Seankh-kara was also an Avatara; for our diagram shows that history repeats itself every 1800 years in any one nation or people.

In 3102 b. c. Krishna came; this we may accept as accurate, on the authority of Theosophical writings. For 3702 b. c. Dr. Kenealy gives Fo-Hi of China, but I

cannot check this. Modern scholars give Sargon I of Akkad, 3800 b. c. Was he a Messenger? Probably, from what has just been said, he was at least an Initiate-King. The story of the infant Moses being set afloat in a basket on the Nile is also told of Sargon; so we may infer that these two belong in the same category. In *The Theosophist* of June and July 1883, H. P. B., speaking of Zoroastrianism, writes:

Between Zoroaster, the primeval institutor of "Sun" *worship*, and Zarathushtra, the primeval expounder of the occult properties and transcendental powers of the divine (Promethean) Fire, there lies the abyss of ages. The latter was one of the earliest hierophants, . . . while . . . Bunsen places Zoroaster at Bactria and the emigration of the Bactrians to the Indus at 3784 b. c.

The above illustrates the difficulty that confronts those who essay to fix dates; however, we may include Zoroaster of Bactria in our list for if he were living in 3784 he must have been born very near our date of 3702 b. c. 4302 b. c. — Budge gives the date of Menes as 4400 b. c., and describes him as the first king of United Egypt; and as W. Q. Judge includes him among the Avatars, we may accept this name as fairly certain. (See *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 169).

It is not much good trying to carry these dates any further back into the past though there are many noble names that are not included, such as Rama, Orpheus, Hermes, Zoroaster, Mithras, Fo-Hi of China, and Kapila, besides those whom W. Q. Judge calls mixed characters. He writes

In these cycles we can include mixed characters who have had great influence on nations, such as King Arthur, Pharaoh, Moses, Charlemagne reincarnated as Napoleon Bonaparte, Clovis of France reborn as Emperor Frederic III of Germany, and Washington, the first President of the United States of America, where the root for the new race is being formed.

Napoleon, according to the *Memoirs* of Prince Talleyrand, believed himself to be a reincarnation of Charlemagne, (W. Q. Judge, *Op. Cit.*, p. 86). The time from Charlemagne to Napoleon is 1018 years; from Clovis to Emperor Frederic III is 1300 years.

Concerning the Messengers in our own era, first there is Mohammed, 498 a. d., whom W. Q. Judge in speaking of Avatars, describes as "a minor intermediate one for a certain part of the race." The accepted dates for the life of

Mohammed are 570-632, but even here there is some uncertainty, for the date of his birth is an *a priori* combination; thus ten years is allowed for the Mecca period; ten years for the Medina period; three years of secret work at the beginning, to which is added forty years, because citizens of Mecca did not become full citizens until they were forty years old. But who knows whether he was actually that age?

Between 498 and 570 there is a difference of seventy-two years, so, in order to get the Mohammedan cycle to fit into our scheme, we suggest that Mohammed bears the same relation to some Messenger unknown that Apollonius of Tyana bears to Jesus, and Sankaracharya to Buddha; or as H. P. Blavatsky to Count de Saint-Germain. This last suggestion will be further amplified when we come to the study of Saint-Germain. The writer therefore suggests that, as in the case of Sankaracharya, Apollonius, and perchance H. P. Blavatsky, Mohammed was carrying on a work given its initial impetus by one of whom it might be said that he came "but to the lost sheep of Israel." For a fuller elucidation of "I come but to the lost sheep of Israel" see *Questions We All Ask*, Ser. II, 199. Very briefly, it is this: Jesus came to teach those who were ready, but who had not yet received the teaching and who in the Mystery jargon of the Near East were called lost sheep. How else could any movement be started, either then or now? The following extracts from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1926 Ed.) seem to lend support to such a conjecture:

Before Mohimmet's time Arabian paganism had already been attacked both from the outside and from the inside. On the one hand the Northern tribes had gradually been christianized, owing to the influence of the Byzantine Empire, on the other hand South Arabia had fallen successively under Jewish, Abyssinian and Persian influence. . . . Christianity had some important representation in Najran far south of Mecca . . . Mecca itself and the neighbouring and allied Taif are said to have produced some monotheists or Christians we even hear of flagellant monks and persons vowed to a life of total abstinence among precursors of Islam.

So far as Mohammed may be said to have formulated a definite notion of his work, we should probably be right in thinking it to be the restoration of the religion of Abraham, . . . and there are stories, not necessarily apocryphal, of precursors of Mohammed going abroad in search of the "Religion of Abraham." . . . The precursors however,

appear to have felt no call to reform their fellow-citizens, whereas, it is evident that Mohammed regarded himself as charged with a message.

The above citations point to a pre-Islamic movement. This was possibly due to the zeal of some missionary from among the Copts of Egypt or Abyssinia; if so, it would account for the fact that "the Prophet Mohammed himself had prescribed indulgence to the Copts before his death. Amrus, the Arab conqueror of Egypt, was mercifully disposed to the Copts."

Mohammed also came under the influence of Persia. He is said to have congratulated himself on having been born during the reign of the Persian King, Nausherwan the Just. (See *Communalism and Its Cure By Theosophy*, p. 6, by Bhagavan Das). That Mohammed was in touch with sources of inspiration, both at home and abroad, is further suggested by the tradition that he was sent into the desert in his early years to learn the habits and language of the Bedouins; that he traveled by sea to Abyssinia, and that he spent a period of preparation and religious retirement at Mount Hira, South of Mecca, a Christian area, and that later when his public work began, "The Abyssinian King and his ecclesiastical advisers took the side of Mohammed and his followers, whom they appear to have regarded as persecuted Christians." In the light of the foregoing, it seems reasonable to place the beginning of the Mohammedan era some years earlier than the birth of Mohammed. Before passing to the next name, let us see what a significant century this was" taking our *a priori* date of a d. 498 as a center, that is 600 years from 102 b. c:

The closing of the Mystery-Schools at Eleusis	A.D. 529
The closing of the Mystery-Schools at Philae	A.D. 453
St. Benedict founds the monastery of Monte Casino, which became the center of Christian life	A.D. 529
St. Augustine to England	A.D. 560
St. Patrick to Ireland	A.D. 432
St. Columba to Scotland	A.D. 563
Baptism of Clovis	A.D. 496
Fall of the Western Roman Empire and the Great Migrations	A.D. 476
Start of the Mohammedan era, (as the writer thinks)	A.D. 498
The opening of a cycle of about 8,000 years, which we are told is a rising cycle	A.D. 476

For a. d. 1098, Dr. Kenealy gives Jenghiz Khan. His historical dates are 1162-1227. One hesitates to put Jenghiz Khan in the same category as Menes,

Buddha, and Jesus, not to mention other honored names; for generally he is looked upon as a hideous character, a combination of acute generalship coupled with a callous delight in butchery. In the West, at any rate, it seems to the writer that Bernard of Clairvaux has more title to be included in a list of Messengers than Jenghiz Khan. He was born in 1091, within several years of our date. He it was who may indeed be said to have carried on the work started by the Avatara Jesus, and his influence on succeeding centuries was very great. About this time we also note St. Francis of Assisi, El Cid in Spain, St. Ladislav in Hungary, and the leaders of the First Crusade.

The Count de Saint-Germain — 1710-1789; these are the dates generally given, but it is admitted that nobody really knows when he was born or when he died (if he did die?). *The Theosophist* for July, 1905, has an article by H. S. Olcott entitled "The Count de Saint-Germain and H. P. B., Two Messengers of the White Lodge." This is published as a pamphlet by the Adyar Society. The point of interest for our study is that he did no public teaching, as H. P. B. was evidently sent to do. Saint-Germain is regarded as an important figure in the early activities of Freemasonry, though efforts have been made to discredit his masonic affiliations. However, the memoirs of Cagliostro contain the statement that he was initiated into the Order of the Knights Templars by Saint-Germain, and the fact remains that Masonry, in its present form, came into being during the life of Saint-Germain. That he did no public teaching, and that he worked among the secret societies seems to parallel the statement made concerning Jesus, i. e., that he came but to the "lost sheep of Israel." Jesus was followed by Apollonius of Tyana and others, and Saint-Germain was followed by H. P. B. and others.

Concerning the names at the points of the dotted triangle: 198 a. d., we have the Church Fathers, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria. 798 a. d., Charlemagne, and 1800 years before that we have 1002 b. c, said to be the time of the first appearance of the Homeric poems. It is interesting to note that there is also a wealth of legendary stories clustering around the name of Charlemagne, and these stories or legends were not new. They resemble the Arthurian legends, just as the Homeric stories have their counterpart in the Mahabharata. These are a method of teaching and of preserving the Ancient Wisdom in a manner best suited to the times.

In 1398 a. d. Nicholas of Cusa, or Cardinal de Cusa, H. P. B. tells us (*The Secret Doctrine*, "Vol. III") reincarnated almost immediately as Copernicus, in order to

carry on important scientific research. Other names are Huss, Chaucer, and Thomas a Kempis, whose *Imitation of Christ* is the world's second-best seller.

This point also marks the beginning of the Renaissance, and the coming of the great reformer of Buddhism, Tsong-Ka-Pa (1356-1418). In 402 b. c. or 1800 years later than the last date, we have Plato, who marks the beginning of the renaissance of scientific thinking in the Grecian world, ending in the materialism of Rome — just as our renaissance is ending in the materialism of our time. It would be a mistake to suppose that these periodic changes are *caused* by the coming of one of the Messengers; it would be better to think of the Messengers as coming, or being sent to guide a certain portion of mankind through the changing conditions that confront that particular portion of mankind. Other and important events mark these cyclical times. We have already noted the important happenings of a. d. 498, or the point marked "Mohammed" on the diagram. Let us examine some of the other dates.

102 b. c. is the occult date of the birth of Jesus, but it is also the date of the birth of Julius Caesar; also, it is about the date of the removal of the libraries of Athens to Rome and the political end of Greece. 3102 b. c. is the death of Krishna, but it is also the beginning of the Kali-Yuga, and also marks the time when a number of the planets were in syzygy, as they will be again early in May, 1941.

Let us again look at the date 702 b. c. In Greece this is the beginning of the Hellenic period, a period that includes all the principal temples and monuments erected between 700 b. c. and 146 b. c. (or the fall of Corinth) — though her greatest masterpieces belong to a short period commencing some 200 years after 700 b. c. According to our theory that history repeats itself every 1800 years, we should expect to find a similar condition arising in the Christian era beginning with 1098 a. d. but with its greatest masterpieces belonging to a short period commencing some 200 years after 1098 a. d. which is exactly what we find to be the case.

The present writer holds that the achievements of the 13th and 14th centuries are in every way comparable with the achievements of the high water mark of the Hellenic period, furthermore, speaking as an architect, he makes bold to assert that in architecture the work of the 13th and 14th centuries far surpasses that of the Hellenic period — and why not? Are we not told that the European family race has been steadily rising since the downfall of the Western Roman Empire?

In some quarters it is the fashion to see no good in anything relating to the Christian era. We read that 1800 years ago some of the adherents of the Christian cult (the Theosophists in those days) were just as complacent and critical as some are today — H. P. B. gives us the reason for this state of affairs.

In *his Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 34, she writes: "An age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness is invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness. The one affords material for the analyzing and critical intellect of the other." It will not be difficult for the student of the history of art and architecture to decide whether the high-water mark of the Hellenic period in Greece and the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Europe are "periods of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness." There are some modern writers on art and literature who have compared the splendid achievement of the two periods, and this study of the law of cycles certainly appears to confirm their findings for students of Theosophy. It appears that a religion reaches its high-water mark about 1300 years after the coming of the Messenger who inspired it, and, as we have already shown this is also the time of the greatest achievement in art and architecture.

In the Greek world this would be from the point marked "Inachos" 1902 b. c. to, say, 600 b. c. In Christendom from 102 b. c. to the 13th century. A book called *The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries* by Walsh, is recommended to those interested in such studies. If we trace the same period of growth starting with Buddha, we come to about 500 a. d., after which time Buddhism fell upon evil days, even as Christianity did after the Fourteenth Century. Dr. Montell, in his *The Chinese Lama Temple of Potala of Jehol* says:

Asanga, a monk of Gandhara, about 500 a. d. played a role of fateful consequences. He brought in the theory of the union of the individual with the Spirit of the Universe from Brahmanism and thus prepared the way for tantrism. The final decadence of the Mahayana Buddhism took place in the Seventh century a. d., when Sivaistic Mysteries entered. To the Gods were assigned women companions, numberless demons and patrons were adopted, and in that way the framework of the structure of present-day northern Buddhism was constructed.

This mixture of religions was preached for the first time in Tibet about 640 a. d. . . . King Thi-Sron-Detsan summoned Guru Padma-Sambhava from India in 747 a. d. and he became the actual founder of Lamaism.

The monastic life in Tibet had fallen into decay, celibacy was a dead letter and the religious rites were merely practices of magic. At that time, early in the Fifteenth century, the great reformer Tsong-Ka-Pa appeared and founded a new sect that outstripped all the others and has become the state religion that yet obtains.

This last statement is very interesting; for Tsong-Ka-Pa was born in 1356 a. d., a little over 2000 years after the birth of Buddha; the messianic cycle had then run its course and Buddhism took on a new life. It is a little over 2000 years since the birth of Jesus. Will Christianity take on a new life? — At any rate the state of Christendom compares favorably with the state of the Buddhist world at the time of the coming of Tsong-Ka-Pa.

The present writer believes, with many others, that Christianity has already begun to take on a new life and consequently believes that one of the best ways of spreading Theosophy would be to assist in that re-statement of Christian doctrine that Christian leaders now say is called for, and towards which definite steps have already been taken within the Church itself.

The publication of "The Report of the Archbishops" Commission on the Doctrine of the Church of England" is a case in point, not to mention a steady stream of new books of a very liberal character, prominent among which, *Essential Christianity*, by Angus, should be mentioned.

If the Messianic Cycle divides naturally into three periods, then the one-hundred-year cycle should do the same; this will throw some light on our familiar teaching that a special effort to assist mankind spiritually is made during the last quarter of each century. Assuming that the diagram is equally descriptive of a century, and that the century commences at the point marked "A", then we may conclude that the effort is made during the *Religious* part of the century. If this is so, then certain encouragement may be drawn from this conclusion; for we should now be just past the first third of the century ending 1933, a time when mankind would be what we have called *Materialistic* in his outlook, and that therefore, conditions for this century are improving. As we are considering the *century* cycle, the following from Dr. Angus's book, *Essential Christianity*, is of interest:

Perhaps the truth is, that there has scarcely been a town in any Christian country since the time of Christ where a century has passed without exhibiting a character of such elevation that his mere presence

has shamed the bad and made the good better, and has been felt at times like the presence of God Himself. And if this be so, has Christ failed? or can Christianity die? — Seeley, *Ecce Homo*, Chap, xiv

The working out of this diagram has been a great help to the writer, and he hopes that it may be of use to other students. A pattern appears in history; odd statements and dates may be fitted into it. The key to it all is the constant change that we have been studying. If, as at present, things seem to be crumbling, we may say "This too will pass" and know at the same time, that history warrants the statement.

Before leaving this part of our study, let us see what may be deduced therefrom. First that there is continuity and order in the affairs of men. Secondly, that there is no need to be dismayed and to talk about the downfall of civilization, for somewhat similar conditions prevailed 1800 years ago, and will prevail again 1800 years hence; 1800 years ago, that is 140 a. d., Rome was at its zenith; Antoninus Pius was Emperor, and there were wars, of course. Thirdly, that Christian people do not need to be disturbed by the fact that our scholars say that no authoritative historical records of the birth of Jesus are to be found. A student of Theosophy is taught that he did indeed live and teach and that the time and place of his coming were known to those entitled to know. He came but to the "lost sheep of Israel," i. e., his work was among the few who were ready. Probably small groups were formed who avoided public attention at that time, but who, nevertheless, paved the way for those who should take up the more open work later, such as Apollonius of Tyana, Paul and others. And that is one reason why there are no historical records to be found.

Neither shall we be disturbed to contemplate the fact that Jesus was one of a long line of glorious Messengers and Saviors. This does not diminish the majesty and beauty of his character; rather, in knowing that all men in all times have had their "Sons of God" to teach and to inspire them, we shall take more joy in Christianity.

(To be concluded)

FOOTNOTES:

1. First read in January, 1940, at the La Mesa Lodge of the Theosophical Society, La Mesa, California. ([return to text](#))

2. Moses is a type figure, but founded on a real man sent to the Jews as a Messenger. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS

Individuality and Personality

Does Theosophy teach that we always retain our individuality in all states of consciousness?

G. de P. — Yes it does indeed, provided that we use "individuality" in the technical Theosophical sense. Remember that the individuality is a very different thing from the personality. The individuality is the deathless part of us, the *individuum*, that which cannot be divided. Otherwise stated, it is the Monadic Essence, it is the inner God, the spark of divinity within us, that spark of the Cosmic Fire of consciousness-life-substance which is our inmost essence. This in its root is Atman, the indivisible self, deathless, stainless, and in its own essence beginningless and endless; for it is of the very substance-consciousness of the Universe.

The personality is a vastly different thing, it is a reflection merely of the individuality; the personality is like the moonshine, reflected light from the sun; and this personality is mortal always — and how fortunate it is that it is so! Fancy what it would be like, living in eternity in our present personalities: imperfect, undeveloped, feeble, inept, incapable of any great advancement, a poor understander, a very poor follower of noble things, incapable of receiving and retaining for any length of time the best that is in us.

Yet the personality is a wonderful instrument or vehicle through which the individuality works. I think we may say generally that the individuality is the spirit, and the personality is the mortal brain-mind of us; changing with each birth.

Thus it is clear why the individuality is the same, and that "we retain" it in all states of consciousness, for these various states of consciousness, in all their manifold and often bewildering phases and shifting

qualities and attributes, when traced to their ultimate or original source, are light-stuff from the Atman. Consciousness contains many mysteries; and the real part of us is conscious even in those phases of consciousness wherein the personality is unconscious — a curious play upon words, yet containing a profound truth, and pointing to the same thought contained in the Sanskrit aphorism: *Atmanam Atmana pasya*, "Know the self by the Self."

On "Multiple Personality"

Does the teaching of the Seven Principles in man explain "multiple personality"?

Emma D. Wilcox — The teaching of the Seven Principles explains it indirectly as it shows man to be composite in nature. The term "multiple personality" is used mostly by psychologists and physicians to denote certain morbid mental states occurring in disease-neuroses or when a person is under hypnosis or in trance. The psychologist explains self-consciousness as the recognition of oneself as distinct from others, expressed through a definite and sustained group of characteristics called the personality.

It has been observed that under hypnosis a subject may show an entirely different group of characteristics, often opposite to those of his normal self, and in a second hypnosis enact still another group or even return to the first. In victims of hysteria the same phenomena have occurred. What gave rise to the belief that this proved the existence of more than one personality was the fact that when one group returned, it renewed its phases of action just where it had left them previously.

Various explanations of these phenomena of multiple personality have been made, such as subconscious mental states, clairvoyance, astral obsession, etc., but none of them has consistently responded to tests. Our best answer comes when we analyze what the term means.

Each individual shows in his daily life certain traits of character in his conduct towards others which, grouped together, are called his personality. What is termed a many-sided person will show different

groupings in differing circumstances or towards different people, yet with them all may be traced an underlying uniformity of character consistent with himself. How is one individual able to do this when most people show only a single group of personal traits? The answer is in what lies behind the personality. We are what we think, and most of us have an entirely different thought-world from that expressed by our everyday actions, a world which we guard closely from even our best friends. Normally, our thoughts dwell within the limits of three planes, that of the sensations, that of the emotions, and the purely mental plane, while between them is the will, which chooses the field of our thought-activity. Let the restraining power of the will be removed, and the owner is at the mercy of any outside influence which he may meet, or he may enact the varied and often chaotic pictures that in his thought-world he has lived and framed in the gallery of his mind.

Each act and thought is a life-force, an entity, held and registered within the aura of its creator, and in aggregate it makes that aura. Think what it may mean, then, to have the mind exposed to the vision of such an aura without the choice and control of the will! If the pictures are those which are registered by the acts of the lower principles alone, then, indeed, will one be like a rudderless ship swept hither and yon by wind and wave, a victim to whomever may board it. On the other hand, let the pictures be those from the higher mind and soul, then there can be no multiplicity of form or color, in other words, no *multiple* personality, because all imagery on the spiritual plane is selfless, free from physical sensation and desire, and therefore devoid of personality. Man is then SELF, not selves.

Four Questions on Centaurs and Satyrs

What is the Theosophical explanation of the Centaurs?

G. K. — According to Dr. de Purucker, Centaurs, beings of an intermediate type, half man, half beast, did at one time exist. They were one of Nature's experiments during an early period of evolution, aeons before there were beasts even faintly resembling those of today, or anything resembling our mankind. This period is described in the

archaic *Stanzas* or *Book of Dzryan*, the description (quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 16) stating that all were finally destroyed. "Mother Earth remained bare" — to receive higher forms.

H. P. Blavatsky also quotes Berosus as author of a creation-account which mentions:

the hideous beings born from the two-fold principle (Earth and Water) in the Abyss of primordial creation: Naras (Centaur, men with the limbs of horses and human bodies), and Kinnaras (men with the heads of horses) created by Brahma [Nature] in the commencement of the Kalpa [manvantara]. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 65, footnote

Obviously they could not have resembled the conception of the Centaur of modern art, which depicts the body as that of a highly evolved Fourth-Round animal with head and attitude intended to suggest indwelling, self-conscious Mind.

Why was Cheiron, the wise teacher of the Heroes who later became the Argonauts, depicted as a Centaur?

G. K. — Probably because Dual Man has been symbolized as half divine-human and half beast since Atlantean days and earlier. A familiar example is the Egyptian Sphinx. Cheiron, the Wise Man, the Sage and Teacher, who has conquered the beast-nature and functions in the divine or higher manasic, is still dual, and the intelligence and beauty which artists express in their portrayals of "Cheiron the Centaur" doubtless come from a sense of the relative perfection to which he had attained. A favorite subject in Greek art was the famous battle between the Centaurs and the Lapithae, a legendary people of Thessaly, upon the occasion of the marriage of Hippodamia, a Lapith maid. Here, though still handsome and intelligent, they are shown in their more brutal, or physical, aspect. The theme is purely symbolic, though the teaching connected with it has been lost.

What is the Theosophical explanation of the Satyrs?

G. K. — H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine*:

The numberless traditions about Satyrs are no fables, but represent an extinct race of animal men. The animal "Eves" were their foremothers, and the human "Adams" their forefathers. . . . — II, 262

But who were the *Nephilim* of *Genesis*, vi, 4? There were Palaeolithic and Neolithic men in Palestine ages before the events recorded in the book of the Beginnings. The theological tradition identifies these Nephilim with hairy men or Satyrs, the latter being mythical in the Fifth Race and the former historical in both the Fourth and Fifth Races. . . . But Esoteric records show these hairy creatures to be the last descendants of those Lemuro-Atlantean races, which begot children on female animals, of species long extinct. . . . — *Op. cit.*, II, 775

Why was Pan, the God of forests, pastures, and flocks, depicted as a Satyr?

G. K. — Because Nature is dual, half physical or material, half divine, well symbolized by the dual form of the Satyr with its higher aspect as God of Nature, friend of birds and beasts and flowers, and of children.

In THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, May, 1941, a question is asked and answered on pages 342-3, which is too long to write out in full. The heading "Avoid the Over-Anxious Attitude," emboldens me to ask, after saying "All fine, true": Suppose one whom you love deeply knows his Theosophy as well as you do, accepts it and relies on it, yet at times lives — or so it seems — diametrically opposite to all he believes, knows, accepts, *clings to*? Is my, our, responsibility at an end?

It seems to me Theosophists are rather prone to waive, as in *the last* paragraph of this article, ties, duties, unless they fit in with their, the Theosophists', idea. — H. F. S.

L. L. W. — I agree with this questioner that the "Pass on" attitude is not

a satisfactory one. Probably what H. P. L. really meant was that unasked for advice or suggestions to such a negligent Theosophist might do more harm than good. Anyone however would be quite justified in offering a tactful and kindly reminder — as when one hears a Theosophist spreading gossip or indulging in unkindly criticism. Perhaps in a case where a Theosophist has neglected some obvious duty, like Lodge work assigned and left undone, one might do the work himself without comment, and thus use the silent but always effective force of example. But in family or strictly personal matters what could an outsider suitably do? It all depends upon the particular case, the temperaments involved, and more than all upon the sympathy, tact and wisdom of the one who observes the failure. Few of us are perfect Theosophists. The more reason for using the understanding heart and wise impersonal love in dealing with what we believe to be the failings of others.

The Theosophical Forum

THE CLARION CALL OF THEOSOPHY — A. Trevor Barker

It is spiritual and individual regeneration that we want to find the key to. . . . It is that which is the clarion call of Theosophy to men and women of all religions and all races and all creeds: that if they will arise and seek out the ancient Teachers of the race, they can conquer, they can win in the greatest task that the spirit of man has ever had before it. Otherwise what is the good of philosophies and what is the good of religions, if they have no message for the millions of the outcast, the poor, the suffering and the oppressed — the people that seek for the bread of life and do not know where to find it?

If Theosophy were only for the few, for the one in ten millions, I would doubt its value. After all the same light lighteth every man into the world, the same problems beset humanity; and you have the great Masters of Compassion telling us always that their concern is not so much to care for the successful disciples, those who take knowledge by their own strength — for those people you cannot stop; they will seize their divine heritage and make it their own. But it is to take to the great orphan humanity the knowledge that they also have a Divine heritage; that it is for them also to open the gates of their inner being, to let in the light that is there shining, if they will but have courage to dare to enter upon the great adventure. — *The Hill of Discernment.*

DOES SCIENCE KNOW LIFE? — *Emma D. Wilcox*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Nearly a century ago Herbert Spencer summed up the unknown problem of what life was as "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations," and recently a well known scientist said that no one had as yet improved upon that definition. Three hundred years ago, Robert Hooke laying a lens on a piece of cork was surprised to see under it a succession of rings like little cells hollow in the center, as he described them. Testing farther, he found them in other plant forms and concluded that *they* were the unit of life. Not until two hundred years later was the smaller unit, the nucleus within the cell, discovered and in turn hailed as the center of life. But all this did not tell what life was; only the content of that cell, called by the term "protoplasm," could be regarded as the "physical basis of life," as Thomas Huxley phrased it.

In a study of the organization of living things in the final analysis all organisms may be disintegrated into units of structure called cells; yet this structure, although termed living matter, can be resolved into chemical elements called non-living, whose unit is the atom. The biologist claims that his aim is to study the processes of life and trace them back to their origin with the hope of finding their cause.

Although scientists still place everything outside of plant, animal, and human, as inanimate nature, that is as non-living, yet they themselves own that they cannot always draw the line between where one begins and the other ends; that the science of life is much easier to explain than to say what life is, or as one of them has said: "We know what living things can do under differing circumstances. We also know when life no longer exists, but the nature of this mysterious element is

still unknown."

When H. P. Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine* some sixty years ago, the atom was considered to be a solid particle like a "billiard ball," while the cell had not yet yielded up its genes. Yet in that book are these words:

It is on the doctrine of the illusive nature of matter, and the infinite divisibility of the atom, that the whole science of Occultism is built. It opens limitless horizons to *substance* informed by the divine breath of its soul in every possible state of tenuity, states still undreamt of by the most spiritually disposed chemists and physicists. — *S. D.*, I, 520

What says the new chemistry today? "Far from being an ultimate and indivisible particle, the atom is revealed as being complex and the seat of much concentrated energy." And the new physics: "By understanding matter and energy into which inanimate nature is divided, we shall be prepared to understand the sciences dealing with living organisms, and through them, we shall obtain an intelligent view of life itself." Again, "We shall find that matter alone does not account for the Universe. . . . Matter affects our senses only by means of energy — the two are inseparable. We can think of no energy without matter to carry it, and we know of no matter that does not contain energy."

Now take note of the following extracts from *The Secret Doctrine*:

In the realm of the Esoteric sciences the unit divided *ad infinitum*, instead of losing its unity, approaches with every division the planes of the only eternal REALITY. — I, 617

. . . the scientific hypothesis, that even the simplest elements of matter are identical in nature and differ from each other only owing to the variety of the distributions of *atoms* in the molecule or speck of substance, or by the modes of its *atomic vibration* gains every day more ground. — I, 455

Again we read:

The atom, as known to modern science, is inseparable from *Purusha* which is spirit but is now called "Energy" in Science. . . that which is called "energy" or "force" in Science . . . is never, in fact, and cannot be *energy* alone, for it is the substance of the world, its soul.

And in the footnote:

There are other forms of energy wedded to other forms of matter, which are super sensuous, yet known to the adepts. — I, 582

Occultism does not accept anything inorganic in the Kosmos. The expression employed by Science, "inorganic substance," means simply that the latent life slumbering in the molecules of so-called "inert matter" is incognizable. ALL IS LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE, though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism. — I, 248

Finally:

Atoms are called "Vibrations" in Occultism; also "Sound" — collectively. . . Atoms fill the immensity of Space, and by their continuous vibration *are* that MOTION which keeps the wheels of Life perpetually going. — I, 633

What does Science tell us today of the unit of matter and of life? The atom is an electrical field within which is a constant interplay of centers of energy; and protoplasm, the groundwork of the cell, is also an electric field within which the energy-units of life play their part.

This revelation has brought many open-minded scientists to the threshold of a new, unknown realm outside of ordinary physical perceptions, requiring the use of an intuition which hitherto has been considered outside of a strict scientific code; bringing them to the verge, as Professor Moulton has said, of the necessity "perhaps of accepting the existence of other planes of matter." Dr. Riddle of the Carnegie Institution said: "With the discovery of the electron, science

has dropped its old guides and has not yet found new ones." When Bertrand Russell said that "Matter has become as ghostly as anything in a spiritual seance," he spoke more truly than he realized, because "matter" is illusory. To a Theosophist the following words from Professor Shapley are especially fine: "All of creation may be one single unit, with all of its various divisions existing in direct relationship to each other and all possessing uniform properties and tendencies. The test-tube, the microscope and the spectroscope tell fundamentally the same story. Electricity, whose positive and negative particles constitute the smallest, whirling world of material things, may also make up the substance of the largest and most distant universes. There is substantially no difference between the lowly atom and the most remote cloud of twinkling stars." Compare this with these words:

. . . the Occultists are not alone in their beliefs. Nor are they so foolish, after all, in rejecting even the "gravity" of modern Science along with other *physical* laws, and in accepting instead *attraction* and *repulsion*. They see, moreover, in these two opposite Forces only the two *aspects* of the universal unit, called "MANIFESTING MIND"; in which aspects, Occultism, through its great Seers, perceives an innumerable Host of operative Beings: . . . whose essence, in its *dual* nature, is the cause of all terrestrial phenomena. . . . It is, . . . the dual *effects* of that dual essence, which have now been called centripetal and centrifugal forces, negative and positive poles, or polarity, heat and cold, light and darkness, etc. . . .

From *Gods to men*, from *Worlds to atoms*, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being — the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. — I, 604

In science a law is a statement based on experimental facts. To explain and account for these facts, scientists have adopted certain theories or hypotheses which seem to fit all or nearly all the facts. When new facts arise or later experiments disprove the old ones, the theories must be

revised or discarded. To quote Professor Conant of Harvard: "A theory always starts with certain suppositions which we cannot test experimentally. Beginning with these assumptions, we reason that such and such must be true. We cannot, however, say that the theory is proved, but merely that it is probably true."

Today, we hear a great deal of the electro-magnetic field and of the electric basis of phenomena in both physics and biology, that is, in what science divides as inanimate and animate nature. Here is where the Theosophist sees looming ahead a converging point where science will behold light and magnetism and heat and electricity, all as rays of Life — mineral, vegetable, or animal — electro-magnetic at one pole, psycho-magnetic at another. To quote some words from Robert Millikan "Since electric currents are always accompanied by electric fields, electrical disturbances must always be accompanied by magnetic disturbances, and electric radiations are actually electromagnetic radiations. The study of electromagnetic radiations has shown not only that they have the speed of light, but in fact, that they possess all the properties of light waves, the only apparent difference being in their greater wave length. Light waves are thought to be generated by the displacements of the electrically charged parts of the atom."

Also energy is said to be not locked up in the atom but generated by this electronic radiation, or as we would say, the focus or vehicle.

Sixty-five years ago when H P Blavatsky unfurled her flag of "All is Life" before a scornful and incredulous world, she made the prophecy that in the twentieth century, point by point, to science would be demonstrated that life exists in latency, whether atomic or in the "dead" or so-called non-living matter. Each new step has been perceived first by flashes of intuition, then by slow deduction and test of mechanics, until now the borderline is reached where more than one scientist has said that the road crosses into the metaphysical. Those who have taken that step have had opened to their intuition the perception of the One Universal Cause, the origin alike of the atom of

matter and of the unit of organic life — Consciousness, expressed by conscious Beings whose thought-radiations center in atoms of matter.

The following are a few quotations from the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, which mark the pathway by which Science is slowly but surely approaching the door to Universal Life.

... the primordial Electric Entity — for the Eastern Occultists insist that Electricity is an Entity — electrifies into life, and separates primordial stuff or pregenetic matter into atoms, themselves the source of all life and consciousness. — I, 76

When an Occultist speaks of Fohat — the energising and guiding intelligence in the Universal Electric or *Vital Fluid* — he is laughed at. . . . The Occultist sees in the manifestation of every force in Nature the action of the quality, or the special characteristic of its noumenon, which *noumenon* is a distinct and intelligent Individuality *on the other side of the manifested mechanical Universe*. — I, 493

The chief and most fatal mistake and fallacy made by Science, in the view of the Occultists lies in the idea of the possibility of such a thing as inorganic, or *dead* matter in nature. Is anything *dead* or *inorganic* capable of transformation or change? Occultism asks. And is there anything under the sun which remains immutable or changeless? — I, 507

Today the gross materialism against which H P Blavatsky battled so hard has softened in part. As Dr. de Purucker has expressed it in *The Esoteric Tradition*:

Our best minds thus derive the Universe and all in it from Mind or Consciousness possessing obviously, intelligence and artistry in operation of cosmic magnitude. And from Mind, they derive not only the gross physical universe and all that is in it, but all intermediate stages between. — p 179

The future is giving promise that some of the forerunners in science

will acknowledge the conception that everything is life, has its own consciousness each on its own plane, and that Cosmic Mind and Cosmic Consciousness manifest Life as Substance.

(To be concluded)

The Theosophical Forum

THE CHRISTMAS TREE — *G. de Purucker*

The Christmas tree, dotted with lights and bright with tinsel that reflects those lights and multiplies them manifold, is an old pre-Christian symbol used by the peoples of Northern Europe at the time of the Winter Solstice; and here is the inner significance of it:

Have you- never heard of the World-Tree with its roots in the realms of spirit and whose branches are the great suns and systems of suns? This World-Tree began in the beginning of this Cosmic Age to bring forth all the stellar hosts. Now the Winter Solstice is the beginning of the cosmic New Year, and so these northern peoples knowing some of the ancient truths, celebrated this cosmic event with the Christmas tree. It symbolizes the World-Tree, and the lights are the suns that bestrew the deeps of Space, hinting to us the message from the divinities who constantly give us the light of love, the light of mind, the light of hope eternal. But so far have we fallen from the wisdom of our forefathers that now the Christmas tree has become merely a sign of festivity, except for the few who preserve its significance in their hearts.

The giving of gifts on the Christmas tree was emblematic of the self-dedication of the gods so that the worlds might come into being. "Here is my gift. It is born from myself."

THE VIRGIN-BORN — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

On or about the 21st of December every year, after passing far to the South, the Sun, speaking astronomically, slips out of the sign of Sagittarius, the Archer, into that of Capricornus, the Sea-Goat. Long centuries before the coming of Jesus, the enlightened of all races recognized this season as the first, in cyclic sequence, of the four Sacred Seasons of the year marked by the four pivotal points of the Summer and Winter Solstices, and the Equinoxes of Spring and Autumn. Each of these periods had its own special significance and was the occasion for appropriate ceremonies and rites.

This particular sacred season, the Winter Solstice, the Ancient Wise Ones called the time of the Mystic Birth. For them it held — as for Theosophists today, it holds — a double significance. Cosmically, it commemorates the recurrent advent of the manifested worlds of Being from out the womb of Space, the Virgin-Mother, or Holy Spirit, through the Being of the Logos; and mystically it denotes the coming into being in the individual initiate of his Christ-hood through the mediation of his own virgin-spirit.

The Immanent Christ in the human being is that part of ourselves we contact in our dominant aspirations, in those times when revealing intuition illuminates situations for us, in the ideals that persist unbroken by the bitter attacks of material existence throughout our lives, in our deep allegiances and self-effacing loves. It is the part of us that is joyously free, soul-satisfyingly creative, compassionate and true, serene and wise. Through exercise and development of these qualities and attributes the initiate throughout his years of self-discipline and aspiration prepares himself for the Mystic Birth. Thus it is that the Christos-self of every man becomes the Virgin-Born in this second and spiritual birth.

The Universe is a composite Entity, a Being in which, as St. Paul taught,

"we live and move, and have our being": the last phrase of the sentence being of especial importance. Such a profound statement has many far-reaching implications.

It means that if the Universe is composite, man is a composite entity, as are all other entities comprising the Universe; if the Universe is a sevenfold compound, sevenfold is the constitution of man; if divinity, or deity, inheres in Universal Being, it is inherent in each of the seven sevenfolds of man; if the Universe is essentially divine in origin, and destiny, divine must be the destiny, just as it is the essence and was the origin of man. Pure divinity — Cosmic Spirits, Super-Gods and Gods — form the most highly evolved sections of the Universe and therefore in the virginity of his highest part man too, is divine, while universal spirit surges potentially through every sub-division of his humanhood. The functions, the forces, the influences, which result in the majestic cosmic processes we marvel at have their counterparts, their stirrings in our lives.

How sad it is that the significance of these mystic truths, so full of aspiration and power, has been lost to us or forgotten, and the beautiful symbols of the lighted Christmas Tree and Holy Family Group become little more than traditional emblems of a festival season! How arresting is their appeal when we know ourselves to be cosmic seeds of Eternity nourished by the spiritual essence and individuality of one divine Parent-Spirit and destined with the sacred tides of initiation to become God-men in our own right, just as the regal Pine becomes the sparkling Christmas Tree; when we feel within *ourselves* the power of divine Fatherhood and spiritual Motherhood quickening the Christ-babe sleeping in the inner sanctuary — a babe whose presence inspires our highest moments and pleads with us for truer, grander, nobler, self-expression, that whispers to us of the vast reaches of potential expansion surging within us. Knowing these things who can ever again see the lighted Tree or the Nativity Scene without a lifting of his heart in joyful self-dedication as he shares with all beings participation in the wondrous mysteries of the Winter Solstice. The gifts on the Tree also may be said to symbolize the divinity we share with, and that links us

to, the Universe — the gift of Selfhood which becomes the Christ-Man. This gift we share with all beings; and our personal gifts one to another are tokens of our individual recognition of this fact.

In *The Esoteric Tradition*, Dr. de Purucker tells us that the Three Wise Men or Magi of the Gospel-legend, Melchior, Kaspar, and Balthasar, when their names are properly understood, represent the planets Venus, Mercury, and the Moon. Thus we learn that Melchior means "King of Light"; Kaspar may be defined as "like unto a Scribe," and Balthasar is associated with Ba'al and probably means "Lord of Riches or of Prisoners." We have also been told that the gifts the Wise Men brought of gold, frankincense, and myrrh are not only associated each with its respective donor, but symbolize attributes or qualities possessed by those participating in the Christos-rite.

All Nature awaits this advent; the kingdoms respond to its impelling sway: bird and beast reverently rejoice and "flowers bloom in profusion" at the coming of the Virgin-Born, just as it has been portrayed in the Nativity Stories and Scenes of tradition. The Christs, like the Buddhas and all other World-Saviors, appear each in their proper season or cycle. These "hours" are marked on the Zodiacal Clock of the Universe and the Initiate-Astrologers — the Shepherds of the New Testament — noted the portents and therefore were guided not by one star, but by the hosts of stars, to anticipate the coming of a Sage or Savior in quite as natural a way as the astronomers and weather-experts today predict radio-disruption due to sun-spots or storms caused by varying pressures, etc. If the lower kingdoms of universal being are present at the Mystic Birth can we exclude the denizens of the Celestial Spheres?

The Sufi mystics relate a legend of a Wanderer in the Desert Places for whom a beckoning light shone ever beyond his reach. Seeking to attain this radiance he traveled over trackless stretches of barren waste, through sand-storms and intense cold, losing his way oft-times, and having to retrace his steps time and time again. He traversed rocky ravines and was taunted by many a mirage. The glory of sunrise and

sunset and the twinkling presences of heaven but enhanced his unsatisfied yearning search. Repeatedly as the years passed the gleaming radiance led him over the threshold of death, but always he returned once more to his seeking. Sometimes the light was dimmed and became just a glow within him. At other times it blazed like a search-light across his vision, all but blinding him.

Thus his pilgrimage continued. He began the ascent of a steep mountain on the peak of which the radiance seemed to rest. Up and onward he mounted: once an avalanche hurled him downward and at another time he traveled with a band of elated pilgrims who sought the light he followed. So onward and upward, ever upward and onward he climbed through beautiful meadows and round perilous bends, until at last he attained the crown of the mountain.

Light, rainbow-shaded, flooded the scene; light, tender and glowing, brilliant and penetrating, emanated from every surrounding atom and radiated in the heart and figure of a Being in the center of the Radiance.

With downcast eyes the Wanderer of the Desert stood in the blazing effulgence face to face with the Light he had so long and so faithfully sought. Overwhelmed with awe and enraptured by the forces surging within, he dared not lift his eyes.

Then from the earth beneath his feet, from the air about him and the sky above, the voices of Life rang with the challenge: "Raise your eyes and Look! Lift up your eyes! Behold!" The Wanderer lifted his eyes and gazed into the source of the Radiance and beheld — Himself.

At the Winter Solstice, the Season of the Mystic Birth, the Christs, Buddhas, and Apollos have been and are "born of the Virgin." But what significance has the season for us, for ordinary, earnestly striving and aspiring, but fallible men and women? Can there be for us a mystic birth — a happy Christmas in the truest sense of the wish?

The first and among the most important initiations take place in the kitchen, the office, the market, and on the street, in each and all of the

contacts of life. Initiation literally means "a beginning." And if, during the weeks intervening between the 21st of December and the 6th of January, as the days steadily but definitely lengthen, there is a similar steady and sure tide of purposiveness in our lives; a growth in character: if we are more generous in our judgment, more thoughtful of others, more self-controlled ourselves, and if we withstand the temptations which belittle us with an ever-stronger integrity; in as far as our motives are self-less there will be for us too a mystic birth of the Christ-Self within.

Even a Buddha or a Jesus had first to make a vow, which is a desire, in some life, that he would save the world or some part of it, and to persevere with the desire alive in his heart through countless lives. — *The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 46

Most auspicious is the Winter Solstice, the Season of the Virgin-Birth, for the making of such a vow.

The Theosophical Forum

"THE FOG MUST LIFT" (1) — *M. Sybil Tustin*

In these days, when the conversation turns almost invariably to discussions relative to war and its accompaniments, how may the Theosophist best preserve his own inner peace, and direct the thought currents that whirl about him?

We cannot begin to do this effectively until we, each one of us, has set his own, and no one else's house in order. The old adage, "Example is better than precept," may be trite, but it is also true. Others may listen, temporarily impressed by our Theosophic ideals, but they will also, even while acknowledging their beauty, almost subconsciously question — "Has this man — this woman, got what he or she claims to have — a guiding light which controls and beautifies the life of the recipient?"

Having attended to our own duties in this matter, it is essential to preserve harmony about us, to avoid and discourage destructive criticism of others, to be positive in our attitude to life and its lessons.

In these days of strain and danger to the physical and mental apparatus, often thrown out of gear, concentration tends to become difficult; emotion, whether of fear, anxiety, or grief threatens to usurp the will. At such a time it may be useful to recall the words of someone who has had experience of life's trials and dangers, and hold them in the mind, even repeating them, mantra fashion. You know the sort of thing — each will have some particular favorite, something appropriate to the moment. There are so many in our own Theosophical literature, that it is hardly necessary to quote any. But as an antidote to depression I have often found W. Q. Judge's words invaluable:

I could never let the least fear or despair come before me, but if I cannot see the road nor the goal for the fog, I would simply sit down and wait; I would not allow the fog to make me think no

road was there, and that I was not to pass it. *The fog must lift.*

Do you know Bunyan's song from *The Pilgrim's Progress* — "Who would true valor see"? Every line of it inspires courage, steadfastness. I like the bit:

No goblin nor foul fiend shall daunt his spirit,
He knows he at the end, shall life inherit.
Then fancies fly away, he'll not fear what men say,
He'll labour night and day, to be a pilgrim.

When the siren goes, when the bombs begin to fall, such memorized lines may spring to the mind, and may help to recall to us the fact that we are pilgrims whose job is to be undeterred and undaunted by anything that Karman may demand that we should face.

Such lines act as a trumpet-call to the spirit, a summons to the Warrior within, who will not fail to answer the call.

And while life in human form gives us the chance, let us not belittle the value of human sympathy and encouragement. This does not mean a putting of the lower before the Higher Self. We have to reveal our divinity in our humanity, as Jesus the Avatara did. Do not let us forget the letter that heartens, the greeting and commendation that warms. And do not let us neglect, in these days of over-taxed limbs and minds, the Theosophical Lodge meetings. If we make the effort, neglecting no duties, we shall derive new strength from such meetings; and too we shall radiate on those invisible and intangible lines of communication, the Force which works for good, for harmony, for the spread of Truth and right understanding. We shall be allying ourselves consciously and surely with the Cosmic Builders to defeat the Powers of Destruction

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwtn Theosofaidd*, May-June, 1941. ([return to text](#))

THE CLOSING OF THE DOOR INTO THE HUMAN KINGDOM AND THE
MOMENT OF CHOICE IN THE FIFTH ROUND (1) — G. de Purucker

I would like to say a few words about this "door" into the human kingdom. Of course it is not a door. That is just a way of speaking. Thus the door into a profession means graduation of the student. When the animal graduates interiorly, in other words has brought forth from within, the human qualities, it has graduated into the human kingdom; that is its door.

Now, the difference between the beasts, the plants, the stones, the men, the elementals, and the Dhyan-Chohans, the difference as amongst these, or between any two of them, is one not only of potentiality, but of developing ability. Thus the human child is potentially a man or woman, but not yet so, and will not have the adult ability until he is fully grown. The potentiality is there, but the ability lacks. It is not yet brought forth from within. It will come as the child grows. Just so with the beast. The potentiality of humanhood is there, but the beast is not yet human because it has not yet brought forth from within itself human qualities, attributes, power of thought, power of feeling, self respect, all the qualities that make us men men.

Why was there a door into the human kingdom which closed at the bottom point of the present manvantara? It simply means that the animals at that point had not as yet brought forth *front within themselves* those spiritual, mental attributes, which would enable them to climb up towards the next kingdom, which happens to be the human. They could not make the grade. They did not want to; they did not know anything about it because they were not yet awakened within themselves. The humans did. Consequently there was no door for the humans. They came down the Arc of Descent, passed the critical point, and began to climb up the Arc of Ascent; and we humans shall continue to climb until the end of the Seventh Round.

Here is a very interesting thing to note: There will be a door for us humans at the mid-point of the Fifth Round, and those humans who do not pass through that door, in other words who cannot then and there begin the grade upwards and enter into the lowest Dhyan-Chohanik kingdom in the Sixth Round, will be by the fact "failures," and will gradually die out, and will have to wait until the next Planetary imbodiment. But those humans who will make the grade, in other words who will make the upwards choice — when the great moment of upwards choice comes — they will continue to ascend the arc.

How does this all arise? There are ten or even twelve classes of monads. We may describe them thus: the three Dhyan-Chohanik classes above the human, that is the highest Dhyan-Chohanik, the intermediate, and the lowest of the Dhyan-Chohanik; then comes the human, then the beast, then the plant, then the stone, then come the three elemental kingdoms. Thus we have three elemental kingdoms on one hand, three Dhyan-Chohanik kingdoms on the other, and four intermediate kingdoms, human, beast, plant and stone, making ten distinct classes of monads; which merely means again, monads divisible into these ten classes because the individuals of each class have brought forth the qualities, attributes, in other words the type, attracting such monads to aggregate together in kingdoms or classes.

When any individual, any one of these ten classes, through evolutionary development brings out latent powers, attributes, faculties, within itself, it gradually rises and passes through the door into the next kingdom, graduating from the lower into the higher, and we call that a door. All the individuals congregate together who are like each other. All the X's are attracted together, all the Y's, all the Z's — in other words, to use the old proverb, "Birds of a feather flock together."

As regards the beasts: they will all show a tendency to die out in this manvantara, and it is a peculiar process which that one statement doesn't really cover, but it gives you a key. As for instance, all the beasts that were on earth in this Fourth Round will reappear again on this globe earth in the Fifth Round, but will have a shorter time here. In

other words, they will come and disappear more quickly; in the Sixth Round still more quickly; whereas in the Seventh Round it is probable that only the very highest of the beasts, the apes and perhaps a few more, will remain. The others will have died out. The reason is they could not "make the grade" in any way. It is my own opinion, subject to correction by those who know vastly more than I do, that probably the next Round, the Fifth, will see almost the last of the great majority of the beasts.

As regards the apes, there is an exceptional case. They are not human, but they are over-shadowed by humanhood. Human-hood is just beginning, as it were, to cast its rays into the ape's brain. If they can "make the grade," they will become men of a very low and degenerate type. No, the word is wrongly chosen — of a very low and *undeveloped* type during the next Round.

These classes are all monads, just as man is a monad. He makes his body to improve as he himself evolves. But when men's bodies become too gross for them, the bodies die out, the human monads won't have anything more to do with them, they are cast aside. "These are not fit rupas for us," they will say, and the bodies will vanish in that way. We shall then bring forth bodies approaching the type of Dhyan-Chohanic vehicles, that is bodies fit for Dhyan-Chohanic entities, which we shall have become during the Sixth and Seventh Rounds; and some humans more advanced than others even during the end of the Fifth Round.

So you see, all these ten classes of monads have the same potentialities, but do not rank alike, for they are exactly like human children in different grades in a school, from the little ones up to the graduate young folk leaving the university. The potentialities are the same, but the different degrees of development vary greatly, and it is these differences of evolutionary development which actually are the ten monadic classes.

But I want to remind you once again that even we humans during the next Round shall have an opportunity to enter the open door into the lowest of the three Dhyan-Chohanic kingdoms; and this open door has

been hinted at by H. P. B. and the Masters under the term "the moment of choice," or the time of choice. It means this: that when we shall have reached the middle point of the Fifth Round, more explicitly, the middle point of the Fourth Root-Race on the Fourth Globe during the Fifth Round, shall we be ready? Shall we have evolved to the point where we see the beyond and desire to go onwards towards it? If we have, we shall then pass through the door of choice. We shall then begin to approach the place that the lowest Dhyan-Chohanic kingdom now holds, and that kingdom will have gone a step higher. The Dhyan-Chohanic kingdoms are simply monads who have passed through the human stage, and they are ascending to the god-stage. They will become gods if they are successful. So we shall become Dhyan-Chohans if we "make the grade."

I will just say this: There is absolutely no time to lose, life is so rapid. We humans learn so slowly, and time is as fleeting in a single incarnation really as it is in a manvantara. There is no time to lose to make up your mind to succeed. And it does not require any abnormal asceticism or martyrdom or anything of the sort. It simply means being more human, so that by continuously becoming more truly human, you become more Dhyan-Chohanic. It doesn't mean only intellectual growth. It means moral growth, intellectual growth, psychical growth, but above everything else moral and spiritual growth.

Who are these Dhyan-Chohans we have been speaking of? If you can imagine the very grandest kind of a human being that your loftiest flights of fancy can picturate, you will come somewhere near, perhaps. They are just like we are, thinking, feeling, evolving beings, above us as we are above the beasts. They have their representatives on this earth called *sishtas*, remainders.

As a matter of fact, and turning for a moment to the subject of Rounds, it is interesting to note that the Third Dhyan-Chohanic kingdom will enter this earth when we as a life-wave shall have gone on to Globe E. They are the higher class coming on the Round behind us, not in evolution, because they are higher than we, but merely so far as serial

appearance is concerned; and these Dhyan-Chohans are now evolving on Globe C.

Referring now to our former topic: I have often thought what a world of warning lies in the words of the Master in the *Mahatma Letters*, "How many millions will perish?" It does not mean that they will be annihilated, it means that they will lose the remainder of this manvantara because they have been malingering before the moment of choice comes, unwilling to see, therefore too weak to go on, too indifferent to climb, lacking in spiritual and intellectual imagination to wish to become stronger and better and finer and nobler. Therefore these will not "make the grade." The truth is they just don't want to.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From a talk given in the Temple, Point Loma, California. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION AND MODERN RESEARCH — C. J. Ryan

While it is true that many distinguished biologists such as Dr. Frederic Wood Jones and the late Dr. H. Fairfield Osborn, etc., have abandoned the old belief that man is derived from any living or fossil *anthropoid ape* it is important to remember that scientists still believe that man is only a more advanced animal. Having repudiated the Biblical story of the creation of Adam, and ignoring (at present) the Theosophical solution of the problem, scientists see no other explanation. The only real difference between the modern and the older theories of human evolution is that it is now generally believed that the human stock separated from a primitive animal type (probably the Tarsioids) *before* the anthropoids appeared. So far as the *order of precedence* goes, this is the teaching of Theosophy and it was announced by H. P. Blavatsky long before the biologists thought of it. But Theosophy, of course, traces the human stock from a very different origin — a spiritual rather than a brute ancestry.

We all believe in Evolution, Theosophists and Scientists alike, and probably the majority of orthodox church people. Evolution is growth and development, and the only alternative is "special creation," which means that the world is static, that elephants and cats, birds and butterflies, oaks and cactuses, etc., *ad infinitum*, were each and all made at "the beginning" about as they are today. There is, however, considerable disagreement between the Theosophical and the Scientific Schools of thought in regard to what actually evolves, and what is the method by which evolution proceeds; in short what evolution really means. Theosophy presents a generous and comprehensive picture of progressive evolution founded upon the principle of universal consciousness ever advancing toward higher expression in form, all growth being governed by orderly processes under law, but not by a hard, ugly fatalism. Mind, not necessarily of a human order, is the leading factor in any true evolution; otherwise it is pure fortuity and

blind meaningless action.

Unfortunately biologists are doubtful about mind in nature, and in confining their attention, with few exceptions, to structure and function, they try to trace the transformation of one species into another to chemical and mechanical processes which leave out Mind or spiritual factors of any kind. Darwin's main energies were devoted to attempts to establish mechanistic "natural selection" as the leading principle in evolution, which means, of course, that if among minute variations spontaneously arising within a species one appeared which might be of advantage in the competitive "struggle for existence" its possessor would prosper at the expense of less favored individuals. If this advantageous variation were passed on by heredity the descendants would increase and multiply and if other improvements appeared new types would be formed. Darwinists sometimes illustrate this by the allegory of the Long Neck. In times of scarcity when the browsing animals had eaten all the leaves on the lower branches of the trees the one that had fortuitously developed a slightly longer neck would reach the higher branches and thrive while the rest were starving!

When Darwin brought forward his theory everyone knew that breeders were producing faster race horses and carrier pigeons, etc., by the *artificial selection* of the most promising parents, and so when he used the term "selection" it was easily understood. But the vital difference between his "natural" selection and that of the breeders was not so plain to the crowd. In the latter the matter of parents was carefully supervised, all interferences were prevented which might vitiate the purity of the new strain and the individual scions which happened to display the rudiments of the desired characters were protected from harm. If all this was neglected the new strain disappeared and reverted to the original type, as the artificially developed fancy pigeons went back to the plain "Blue Rocks" when allowed to interbreed at will. But according to Darwin's *natural selection* there was no supervising intelligence to take all this care, nothing but blind forces of nature without foresight or interest in the

result. Irrespective of the fact that "natural selection" does not attempt to explain the *cause* of his so-called fortuitous variations (the modern discovery of the combinations of the chromosomes in the germ cells only removes the fortuity one step backwards) it has been found so full of difficulties that it can no longer be regarded as the dominant feature in evolution, though, as H. P. Blavatsky frequently pointed out it has a subordinate part to play. Dr. Robert Broom, f. r. s., the distinguished biologist and anthropologist, sums up his argument for spiritual intelligence behind evolution from the primitive "jelly-speck" to the highest terrestrial life in a trenchant phrase: "The end seems to me to differ too greatly from the beginning to have been the result of chance." — *The Coming of Man*.

The twentieth century has revealed many new facts about the processes of life, and modern research into the mysteries of the cell and its complex activities has greatly diminished the belief in the all-sufficiency of Darwin's leading contribution to the subject of evolution, "natural selection." In this and other aspects of the appearance of new species in progressive order a certain number of leading scientists besides Dr. Broom are nearing Theosophical principles.

In opposition to current mechanistic hypotheses of the process of the appearance of new species, the great American biologist, Dr. H. Fairfield Osborn, worked out a new method of regarding it — the process, not the *cause* — which is important because it approaches closely to the Theosophical teaching that evolution means the unfolding or unrolling into manifestation of what is already in embryo. In bringing forward his hypothesis, which he calls *Aristo-genesis*, or the process of "absolutely inevitable and *predetermined* evolution, always tending toward improvement," he shows the inadequacy of the great historic attempts to explain the modes and causes of evolution which were founded on such concepts as, (a) spontaneous variations arising fortuitously (Darwin, etc.), (b) inheritance of acquired characters (Lamarck), (c) environment (Buffon, St. Hilaire).

Dr. Osborn of course accepted the fact (recognised by H. P. Blavatsky)

that the "survival of the fittest" and "the direct effect of environment" had *some* influence on biological evolution, but he insists that "the real underlying causes of evolution are entirely unknown . . . , and may prove to be unknowable," and "Pure Darwinism never sought to explain the *origin* of new characters. In fact, Darwin invariably used the word "chance" but open-mindedly declared that "chance" was a word that might simply express the ignorance of his time as to principles which might subsequently be discovered," and while modern observations undreamt of by Darwin have, according to Dr. Osborn, brought new facts to light they have in no way diminished the fact that the *cause* of variation is still totally unexplained by and unknown to scientists. Accepting this fully, he shows good reason for believing that the cause, whatever it may be, is connected with the germ plasm. He finds that the unfolding of the potentialities locked up in this mysterious "cause" are released in orderly response to the challenge of environment. They are not survivals from innumerable *accidental* mutations which happened to persist because they fitted into the environment. In the great families of mammalia, for instance, the earliest representatives possess the potentialities of the variations which gradually appear and finally segregate their descendants into genera or species. Dr. Osborn made intensive studies of the mammalia to establish this "*Creative Aristogenesis*," especially in the Proboscideans or elephant family throughout its 14,000,000 years of existence, and found, "absolutely concrete and irrefutable evidence of the actual modes of the origin of new characters in species, genera, and higher divisions." It is as he writes, "fatal to Darwin's working hypothesis of adaptation of survival of variations in any degree subject to chance."

In the teaching of Theosophy, however, the cause of the appearance of the great mammalian types (the larger "root-types" of *The Secret Doctrine*) is the existence and influence of prototypes on inner planes of life, which become physicalized, as it were, and activate the original germ plasms. After this, the physical forms differentiate within certain limits (as in the teeth, etc., of the Proboscideans) by the ordinary

secondary, physical causes such as climate, isolation, sex, diet, etc. Underlying all this, however, as H. P. Blavatsky writes in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 649,

is a sub-conscious intelligence pervading matter, ultimately traceable to a REFLECTION of the Divine and Dhyān-Chohanīc wisdom.

This is what has sometimes been called "the mystical dweller within the germ cell" activating the *nucleolus*.

The quotations from Dr. Osborn are taken from his articles in *Science* for December 2, 1932, and February 24, 1933, which are worth careful study.

Dr. Richard B. Goldschmidt, now professor of Zoology at the University of California, one of the world's leading biologists, has also broken with the pure Darwinian tradition and has unwittingly moved toward one of the most important teachings of the Ancient Wisdom about the appearance of new forms of life. Darwin required innumerable fortuitous variations and aeons of time for the laborious process of working out a new species by "natural selection," but Dr. Goldschmidt discards this principle and offers an impressive array of evidence in favor of rapid mutation in the embryo by which new species would emerge quickly, geologically speaking. In some cases two or more drastic changes would occur at the same time, in others the speed of inter-embryonic development of one or more normal characters would be reduced or increased allowing others to get ahead and dominate, etc. As he points out, such mutations, rare as they may be, might be fraught with tremendous results. They would satisfactorily explain the mechanism of the appearance of the air-breathing Amphibians from certain fishes. To produce such a revolutionary change by the extremely slow process of natural selection working on an occasional "accidental" variation would be, as Dr. Goldschmidt says, incredible, because no intermediate steps are possible and more than one mutation had to take place *simultaneously* to adapt the fish to terrestrial conditions.

But the mechanism of the transformations (if correctly interpreted by Dr. Goldschmidt) is far from explaining the deeper cause of the simultaneous and other mutations which produce such (literally) epoch-making consequences, for we must remember that the Amphibians led the way to the Reptiles and the Mammals! Was all this the result of a rare and accidental combination of chromosomes in the embryonic cells of some fish? One of Dr. Goldschmidt's critics, while admiring the austere simplicity of his interpretation of the evidence evidently fears that it is dangerous because it may lead to a teleological explanation, and so he calls it "the simplicity of a belief in miracles"! But why should the teleological explanation be so terrible? Theosophists do not think it is at all subversive to reason.

According to the Ancient Wisdom such fundamental changes are not produced by fortuitous happenings, but have a lawful place in the great scheme, and are traceable to Divine or Cosmic Intelligences as mentioned above. Physical matter is only a small part of the real universe. According to Theosophy the "astral" or ideal forms or "germs" of the new orders of life, were "projected" from inner planes of being into the terrestrial world when the conditions were suitable. These subtil elements forced the mutations in the embryo which provided the mechanism by which the more advanced type was able to incarnate, apparently "out of the blue." H. P. Blavatsky explains that when this is done innumerable minor modifications follow by the so-called "natural" ways familiar to biologists. She writes:

Those purely *secondary* causes of differentiation, grouped under the head of sexual selection, natural selection, climate, isolation, etc., etc., mislead the Western Evolutionist and offer no real explanation whatever of the "whence" of the "ancestral types" which served as the *starting point* for physical development. The truth is that the differentiating "causes" known to modern science only come into operation after the *physicalization of the primeval animal root-types out of the astral*. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 648-9

Dr. Goldschmidt's hypothesis should be valuable as an open door for biologists to find their way to the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom on the real meaning of "Evolution." An article by him, setting forth the main points of his argument in technical terms will be found in *Science* for December 15, 1933.

The Theosophical Forum

EGYPTIAN TEACHINGS IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY — *L. Whellams and I. M. Oderberg*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Verily there was some truth in the old saying, "The Wisdom of the Egyptians." . . . — H. P. Blavatsky

Origen tells us (in *Contra Celsum*, Bk. I, ch. xii) that the philosophers in Egypt had a "most noble and secret wisdom concerning the nature of the Divine which was disclosed to the people only under the garment of fables and allegories . . ." and indeed we cannot, by a study of the writings of and the comments about these ancient people, help but reach the conclusion that in its prime the civilization of the Nile valley possessed many of the keys to the doors of the Esoteric Wisdom.

From a review of the hieroglyphs, and the myths and legends, that have come down to us, we find that the wisdom the Egyptians knew and taught was enshrined in "picture writing," or as they termed it "the language of the gods." Indeed, the hieroglyphs seem to have occupied a position comparable to the language of ancient India, Sanskrit, being, as it were, the tongue of the Initiates and fully comprehended only by the Initiated.

The mundane meaning of these hieroglyphs and the eventual deterioration of their symbology at a later date does not concern us here, but it is probable that at about the period of the first decay, occurred so many of the erasures now noticeable upon the temple wall inscriptions and elsewhere. "The Napoleon Memorial Books" of the antiquities of Egypt as they were in Bonaparte's time indicate many hiatuses very clearly, and as the context is usually in good condition, there is only one conclusion at which we can arrive: that the Egyptians themselves erased the revealing portions of the glyphs, for fear they should "give away" too much to later and more "profane" peoples.

However, even in those relics which survive, it is certain that anything associated with the "gods" was of immense importance from the standpoint of the ancient Teachings. There were several "families" of gods, each with its own distinct set of symbols and philosophic meanings, and most of these deities had a "sevening" aspect much as the "seven principles of man" as given in present-day Theosophical literature have a "sevening" aspect: that is, that each principle contains the germ, as it were, of the other six.

In the attached diagram, within which may be found symbolized many of the

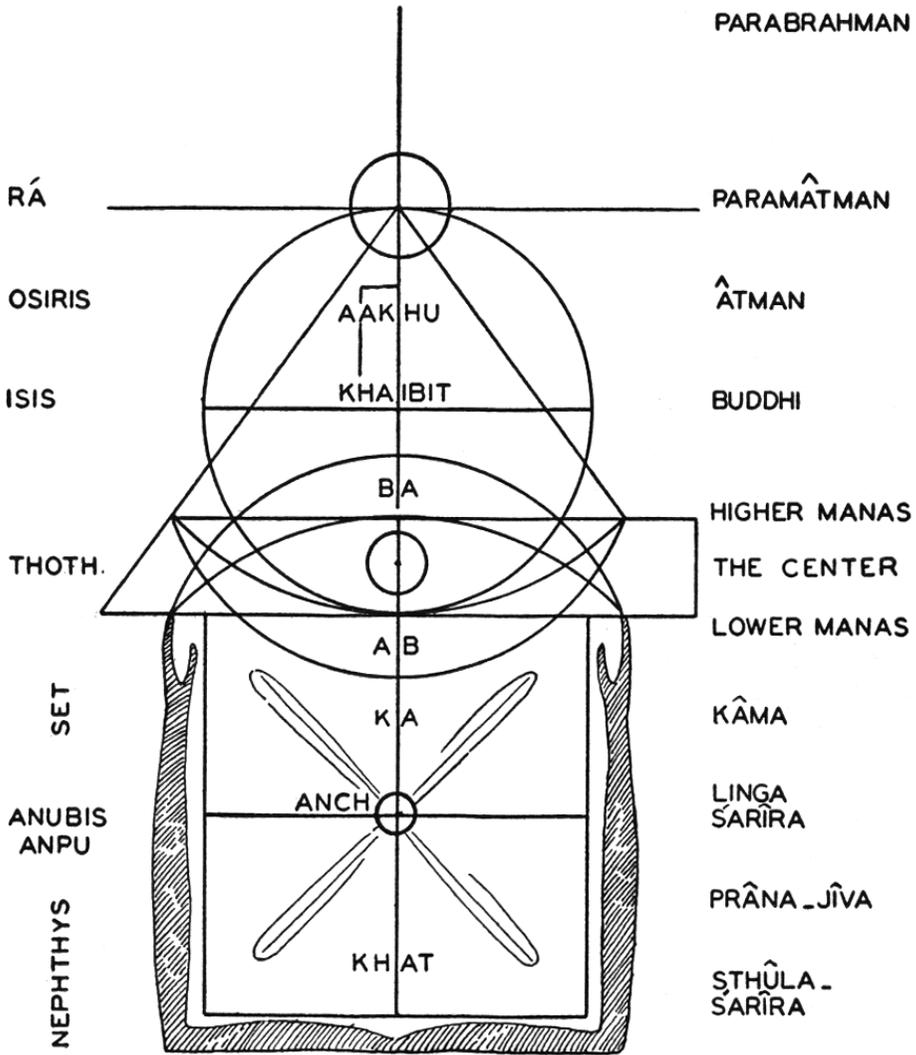
ideas of the ancient Egyptians (indeed, in it can be seen some of the actual hieroglyphic forms), we have endeavored to correlate these ideas with corresponding teachings of the presentations of Theosophy as we know them today.

CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN THE CELESTIAL AND HUMAN HIERARCHIES

FORMLESS Horus the Elder	1. Milky Way		
	2. Seraphim Nebulae: Comets		
	3. Cherubim Fixed Stars	Ra	Paramâtman
FORM Horus the Younger	4. Thrones Saturn ♄	Osiris	Aakhu Âtman
	5. Dominations Jupiter ♃	Isis	Khaibit Buddhi
	6. Virtues Mars ♂		Ba Higher Manas
	7. Powers Sun ☉	Thoth	Ab Lower Manas
	8. Principalities Venus ♀	Set	Ku Kâma
	9. Archangels Mercury ☿	Anubis	Anch Linga-śarîra
	10. Angels Moon ☾	Nephtys	Prâna — Jîva
	11. Men Earth		Khat Sthûla-śarîra

The symbology of the "gods" and the Egyptian hierarchical scheme is very complex, but one of its keys indicates the association with the component parts or principles of man. In this direction, it may be interesting to notice that clues lie in three divisions of any one "god": (a) the aspects of that god; (b) the attributes of the god; and (c) the powers of the god. In one sense, we may describe (c), as far as the principles are concerned, as the principles "in action," to use a colloquialism.

A DIAGRAM OF THE CAUSAL (POTENTIAL) MAN
 ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS



At the top of the diagram we find Ra, and it will be noted that Ra is placed on the Paramatmic plane. To the Egyptian, however, Ra had "many forms" and the three most important correspond with Parabrahman, Paramatman, and Brahman-Purusha-Prakriti.

Called the "Sun god," Ra's symbol is the circle and the dot — a universal symbol for the Logos (Supreme Self) manifesting as Khe-pera — and stands for the indwelling Self or immanent Horus. Ra saith: "I am the one who made heaven and the secrets of the double-horizon in which I have placed the force (or soul) of the the gods." (Turin Pap. cxxxiii) Ra occupies a position above and over the place of

thrones.

Ra regarded as the First or Unmanifest Logos is the Paramatmic aspect, but in his various "forms," as Ra-Tem, Ra-Harmachis, etc., he symbolizes Atman and its efflorescence on lower planes. (Compare the Highest Duad, Highest Divine Triad.) The spirit of Ra was believed to dwell in the Ben stone (see page 435).

The "birth of Ra" occurred when manifestation took place upon the Atmic plane, when the "boat of Ra," or the Karana-sarira, was launched upon the "buddhic waters." Ra saith: "I am he who came into being in the form of Kheper. I became the creator of all that came into manifestation. Heaven existed not, nor earth, nor had any created thing of earth."

In the "Praises to Ra" from the Royal Tombs of Thebes and translated by Budge, the worshiper exclaims: "Praise be unto thee, O Ra, exalted power, thou Word-Soul (Logos) who resteth on his high place. . . . Thou strengthened thy hidden aakhui (monads) They have their forms from thee. . . . Thou lord who advancest. . . . Truly thou art Isis. . . Whose head shineth more than what is in front of him; truly thou art the bodies of Nephthys. . . . Who art united in thy members, One, who collecteth all seed; truly thou art the bodies of Horus."

Next on the diagram are the "occupants" of the plane of thrones, the first, Osiris, Lord of the Underworld, and the second, Isis, his feminine aspect or vehicle. The symbol of Osiris is the throne, above which is the opened eye, the hieroglyph for Isis being simply the throne. In the Egyptian system there were five planes of manifestation, and in the Legend of Isis and Osiris these five planes were called the "five superadded days." (See Plutarch: *On Isis and Osiris*: "Upon the first of the five days Osiris was born, and a Voice from Heaven proclaimed, "the Lord of all hath appeared") This first plane corresponds with Atman and all below it represents the Tuat or underworld, over which Osiris ruled.

Amongst the many symbols of Osiris, an important one is the Tet, which shows the four lower planes of manifestation (Tattu or Dadui), through which "the tree of life" penetrates, and by aspiration, finally attains the summit.

There is interesting and illuminating information about Osiris in *The Theosophical Glossary* of H. P. Blavatsky, where he is referred to as the "first manifesting deity (our third Logos)." The whole monograph is worth close study.

In the work previously mentioned, *On Isis and Osiris*, Plutarch states that "Osiris was beautiful of face but with a dull or black complexion — his height exceeded five and a half yards." Interpreted, we have a clue to much that is hidden in this sentence. The Logos at manifestation is perfect potentially, but as it were

nonexistent, accordingly symbolized by the color black, which means the darkness *beyond* light as well as the darkness "beneath" light. In this case, black stands for negation, i. e., something beyond our conception. The "five-and-a-half yards in height" refers to his five planes on which he accomplished his evolution, and the half symbolizing the commencement from the Unmanifest above Atman, i. e., Ra.

The four chief aspects of Osiris were: (a) Osiris-Ptah (Light), the Spiritual; (b) Osiris-Horus (mind), the intelligent or manasic aspect; (c) Osiris-Lunus, the lunar or psychic aspect; (d) Osiris-Typhon, the physical, material, and therefore passionate or turbulent aspect. In the four aspects he symbolized the dual ego: the divine and the human, the cosmico-spiritual and the terrestrial." — H. P. Blavatsky

There are two further ideas about Osirian symbolism. The first refers to the "body of Osiris," which is to say the desire-body, astro-mental, in which the Self is "imprisoned"; and the second thought concerns the birth of Osiris, or the *manifestation* of the Highest Self.

Isis comes next in the chart, her symbol being the throne. She was the Divine Mother, the bringer-forth of the Horus, her symbol indicating that she was the vehicle or seat of Osiris.

In man, Isis corresponds with the Buddhic principle. The sister-wife of Osiris, her symbol the throne unoccupied (or incomplete without the eye of Osiris), she was the transcendental *vehicle* of the universal creative potency.

Viewed from the terrestrial aspect, Isis is Nephthys, hence she weeps for Osiris (in the legend of the dismemberment), because his divinity has become submerged in material existence.

Associated with Isis are one or two intriguing symbols, including the "thet," the so-called red carnelian "buckle of Isis." The red blood of Isis symbolizes the life-currents between the buddhic and astral planes by means of which the lower is transmuted to the higher. Another symbol is the vulture-cap, which stood for the transmuting power of Buddhi or Isis ('the lower nature, or personality, is consumed by vultures.')

The most mysterious of all the Egyptian pantheon comes next in the chart, Thoth or Tehuti, "the heart of Ra." In the symbolism the Ape of Thoth is crowned with a crescent containing the disk. As the vehicle of Ra, he is a center of Being on the mental plane ('the Eye in the boat'). This symbol would make of Manas the third Logos of the hierarchy within man.

Thoth is pre-eminently the symbol of the Divine Mind (cf. Afu-Ra, the Higher Self involved in matter). Afu-Ra stands in a boat, and has a ram's head surmounted by the Solar Disk. Ra saith: "The face of those who see thee (Thoth) will be opened in thee." He is the power or center or word by which the will of the god is carried into effect, and he corresponds to the manasic plane. The following is a thought-provoking citation: "And Cronos (Amon) going to the land of the South, gave the whole of Egypt to the god Tuaut (Thoth) to be his kingdom," ('Sanchuniathon,' Cory's *Ancient Fragments*).

To digress a little here, it is worthwhile to point out that the upper and lower natures in man, or more particularly, the upper Manas and the lower, were symbolized in the Egyptian legends by the terms Upper and Lower Egypt. It will repay the student to examine carefully the names of the nomes (counties or districts, we would call them today), and cities of Ancient Egypt, bearing in mind this symbolic division of the "two lands," and he will have many clues in his possession to the more recondite teachings about the inner nature of man. For instance, Hermopolis (the Greek form of the name), the great city of which Thoth was the patron or presiding deity, was located in Upper Egypt, in certain relationship with other cities which indicate some of the knowledge the Egyptians possessed about the intricacies of our manasic make-up. (1)

That this is no mere chance or coincidence, but must have been the original planned intentions of the first architects and builders in old Chem, is evidenced by the symbols of the various nomes used, and also by the brilliant light shed on obscure passages of the glyphs and portions of Egyptian myths, where names of nomes and cities occur as incidents in journeys.

To return, Budge says that "Thoth was called the heart and tongue of Ra," i. e., the Reason, Manasic or mental powers, of the gods. There is an interesting note in H. P. Blavatsky's *Theosophical Glossary* about Thoth, and it may be helpful to some to collate Thoth's symbol of the dog-headed ape, with the events of the middle Third Root-Race as recorded in *The Secret Doctrine*. The actual association would rather refer to the happenings of the period of the descent of the Manasaputras than to the miscegenating stocks or results thereof being taken as a symbol of Thoth or Manas.

A notable thing in the chart is the fact that the symbols for the kingdom of Thoth form the "Opened Eye." Said Proclus: "He (Thoth) presides over every species of condition, leading us to an *intelligible* essence from this mortal abode, governing the different herds of souls." (Italics our own.)

The meaning of his other symbol, the ibis, is suggested in the observation that the

"ibis devoured snake-eggs (i. e., symbols for the "bad serpents") of Egypt." On his head, Thoth wears the ibis symbol, thereby indicating its association with the Higher Mind (above the lower mind, eating the snakes or snake-eggs, etc., etc.).

The nine Apes which sang to Ra as he entered the *Tuat*, symbolized "the herds of souls" that shall pass through Horus to Divinity. This is equivalent to the Saints, in Christian symbology, who shall arise with Christ. In their lower aspects, the dog-headed Apes stand for the automatic or subjective mind (i. e., uncontrolled desire aspects, automatic body control, etc.).

Set (or better Sut) next attracts our attention. Set and Nephthys were the last two emanating from Ra. Set stands for the force of material construction, material evolution and spiritual involution. In man, Set symbolizes the Desire-mind (Kama-manas), and as the "desires and passions," is "the opponent of Osiris." (Cf. H. P. Bla-vatsky's *Theosophical Glossary on "Set"; "Nephthys"; and "Anubis"*).

Nephthys, "the mistress of the Temple," was "the extreme limit or end" (see Plutarch's *On Isis and Osiris*), and as such indicated the physical plane or principle. Her emblem was the cup which contains the higher principles. Usually she is associated with Isis (q. v.) in the sense that spirit and matter are associated, and therefore corresponds with sthula or the physical. Nephthys signifies what is in the underworld and "invisible," Isis that which is above and "visible." The circle touching both is the horizon, which is called Anubis (q. v.).

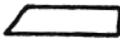
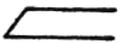
"The Opener of the Path," Anubis (Anpu), follows. He represents the astro-physical body with its mechanism of sensation and action which open the pathway of the soul's development. He is the vehicle of the soul, the product of Divine Energy and matter on the physical plane. (Osiris and Nephthys are his parents. Note that Set is not the father of Anubis-Anpu! there is more than one aspect of Anubis.) Apuleius, in his *Golden Ass*, says " [Anubis] that messenger between heaven and hell, displaying alternately a face as black as night, and as golden as day."

The last of the deities the chart symbolizes is the most difficult to deal with shortly, Horus (the son of Isis and Osiris), for which reason he is not actually indicated *on* the chart. There are so many aspects to Horus! In one, he is similar to the Theosophical concept of the Sutratman, the "thread-soul," on various planes, while Horus the Elder, emblemized the Self primordially manifest on the higher buddhic plane, Isis. Horus the Younger is the self born in the soul on the buddhic plane (Isis), prior to entering upon birth on the manasic plane. Horus the Child signifies the four sons of Horus, and indicates the birth of the inner Buddha in the soul on the buddhic (Isis) plane commencing to incarnate in the human vehicles (cf. the teaching about the Kumaras).

"Horus, the son of Osiris, born by Isis, is he with whom thou didst fill thy mouth" (see the symbology of the Mouth). The complex nature of Horus is one well worth the closest study.

Shortage of space requires us to hurry on to the symbols indicated in the diagram, which in itself is an illustrative symbol merely, and not a picture.

With regard to these symbols, the reader is called upon to note that the diagram forms certain shapes conforming to some Egyptian hieroglyphs. Many more not indicated in the chart, occur, shedding a flood of light on other of the Egyptian teachings, but space is at a premium, and simplicity is a thing much to be desired. Students may be able to fill in further symbols as these occur to their minds.

	ANCH		RA
	LEVEL		OSIRIS
	BRIDGE		ISIS
	BEN STONE		THOTH
	CAUSAL BODY		NEPHTHYS

The first is the Ankh (spelled Anch in *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II). It represents the manifested life of the Logos (the Sun — Ra), both the higher and the lower natures — the Divine Ray passing down through the lower quaternary. The circular part of the symbol means the higher planes. It should not really be quite circular, but more like a tear-drop, or somewhat egg-shaped (cf. the tear-drops of Isis), indicating the converging downwards of the activities. From the standpoint of man at his present stage of development, the aspiration upwards expands, and the tear of Isis become the "reborn" Osiris, the drop "reversed." The Ankh also symbolizes the life-principle (via the Pranic stream) in all things.

The "level" was a symbol of Maat, Truth, and was a testing instrument (its significance on the manasic plane should be noted). It is the plane upon which stands Osiris (also an important philosophic concept).

The "bridge" was the symbol for the Antahkarana, or joining together of the part "below" and the part "above." It was the hieroglyphic for the conjunction "with."

The pyramid on the base, also occurs in the diagram. It symbolized the unity of Osiris, Isis, and Thoth, forming the "throne of Ra." (The same idea was often

depicted as the figure of Osiris (including his aspect Isis) standing on the level, and holding the three scepters). The pyramid is sometimes shown upon a short shaft and it was then called the Ben stone. In early dynastic times it was looked upon as the home of the Spirit of Ra, which made itself manifest at "creation" by emerging from the top in the form of a bird called the Bennu Bird, in later texts pictured somewhat ibis-like with a long crest of two feathers. This was symbolic of the incarnation of the Soul or vehicle of Ra and the heart of Osiris. It was self-produced and appeared each "morning at dawn" on the sacred Persea tree of Annu. Now this is the Phoenix which appeared once every 500, 1461, (2) or 7006 years. Anu (Heliopolis: the On of the Old Testament) was used in the texts to symbolize the higher planes (Atman, Buddhi, and the Higher Manas). A temple called Het Bennu symbolized by a Bennu bird in a square with a smaller square in the top right corner, was in early times dedicated to it. This was the "great house of the Aged One (Ra) who dwelleth in Annu"; i. e., the temple of the soul is in the inner sanctuary of the Eternal Spirit, whose abode is on the higher planes of the soul.

This was the Higher Triad or the Unity of Atman-Buddhi-Manas. The reincarnating part of man's constitution was the phoenix, which clothed itself in a new personality or lower quaternary in each new earth-life. The pyramid is also seen above the square, indicating the four planes of the lower quaternary, the four sides or foundation or vehicle of the upper triangle. The whole glyph (pyramid above square) in a general way corresponds to the so-called "causal-body" and was in early times shown by the hieroglyph as shown in the Table. (See Ka.)

Applied to the cosmos, the term "each morning at dawn" refers to the dawn of a manvantara.

The symbol in the center of the diagram forms a mouth and was called by the Egyptians Ran, i. e., "the essence." As a principle of man the Ran or Ren stands for the transmuted Individuality of a man which is developed through the aspirations and effort of the personality. The Ran was considered to be seated in the Ka, and indistinguishable from it in fact. As a kind of laya-center it bridges the great gulf between the lower manas (personality) and the higher, but was usually referred to as being on the higher mental plane. In another way this "center" can be looked upon as the "unopened eye" which is hieroglyph for "a" and means "towards" or more mystically "a way," "a gate." But in our diagram it is shown with a center and therefore forms the "opened eye." Now, it stands for YR, meaning "to create," "to contemplate something," "manifestation." Thus it forms the center around which revolves the uttermost parts of our universe — is the "center from which

we cannot err" — our conscience or consciousness in other words (on the mental plane of course) now no longer sleeping. Thus we see the correspondences: for the Human Monad, "the Bhutatman, now aspires upwards to the Spiritual Soul — its root or base — the Reincarnating Ego." And so in the Ritual of the Egyptians the "soul" in the Judgment Hall says: "my eye is opened" and "I speak truth (Makheru) I am justified."

We have shown on the diagram the principles according to the Egyptians, but these are subject to much modification and elaboration. However, generally considered, the Aakhu or "Shining One" comes first. This principle is perhaps the efflorescence of the BA — higher manas or Individuality rising above the lower mental nature or Personality to a self-conscious individual life-center; and in this aspect it contacts Osiris (Atman). We could say this corresponds to Jivatman; but going a little deeper, it really is much more. The reader is asked to consider the relationship between the Aakhu (and also two other principles not shown but very frequently met with in literature on the religious or philosophic beliefs of Egypt: that is, the Sahu and the Sekhem) which should be looked upon more correctly as a Ba or "soul" of an unusual degree of attainment, and the "three glorious vestures or bodies," or Trikaya. According to the *Occult Glossary* of G. de Purucker the Trikaya consists of (1) Nirmanakaya or "formed body" (2) Sambhogakaya or "participation body"; and (3) Dharmakaya or "continuance body." We would refer those interested to *The Voice of the Silence* and H. P. Blavatsky's *Theosophical Glossary*.

The KA or "double" is sometimes considered by exotericists to stand simply for what the Theosophist calls the Linga-sarira. While this is all right and convenient as far as it goes, it does not go far enough, for the Ka is much more than the Linga-sarira. The Ka is that "forming body" or "causal body" of man which after "death" (involution) enters the tomb (of material existence) and there in the "house of the Ka" (the inner being) has to be fed or nourished with "meat and drink" (aspirations toward goodness and virtue) by the "priests" of the Ka (the spiritual mind of man), and thus develops during its incarnation. A better comparison in Theosophical terminology is Karana-sarira or Karanopadhi, that "causal-body" or "causal-instrument" on the buddhi-manas plane.

As an instance of the many similarities between the Egyptian and the Sanskrit, it is interesting to compare Ka (Egyptian) with Karana (Sanskrit). Also, see Karman, i.e.,

all that total of a soul which is itself, brought into present being by its own willing and thinking, and feeling, working upon the substance of itself, and

thus preparing its future destiny, as its present existence was the destiny prepared for itself by its own past lives." — G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 56

The lowest "physical" aspect (or seventh counting downwards) is of course built on the "design-body" or the Linga-sarira.

Ab, "the heart," is the atma-buddhic principle in the Karana-sarira. It was this which was weighed against the "feather" of truth (see the level) in the balance of Thoth. *There are two aspects, the higher corresponds to the Spiritual Soul, or the Individuality; the lower corresponds to the Human Soul, or the Personality. This lower aspect is the vehicle of the Spiritual Monad and the Human Monad.*

Ba, "the soul," is the vehicle of the spiritual Ego — Reincarnating Ego — which may rise to live with Osiris (Atman) in heaven (Buddhi), but will return again to the body (the mummy); cf. the ram-headed form of Osiris called Ba; and also cf. Afu-Ra. The Ba corresponds to the Higher Manas (cf. Ab).

Khaibit, "the shadow," may be referred to as the Isis or buddhic aspect of the Horus, that is to say, that part of the Karana-sarira or Karanopadhi which develops by means of the aspirations (of Manas) and the experiences of the lower self. (See H. P. Blavatsky's *Theosophical Glossary*, page 161.)

The Center may best be described by a quotation: "*Consciousness is on the mental plane and not below it.*" (See also the notes on Thoth.) *Across this center there is formed a "bridge" by the Ba and the Ab crossing or reflecting one another. This is (as are all the other divisions) a sort of laya center.* (The reader is again referred to H. P. Blavatsky's *The Theosophical Glossary*, page 161 on the Karana-sarira. See also Ba.)

The concluding note to be dealt with by this paper involves the Khat, and the quotation that follows best conveys the meaning of the khat: "Thine essence is in heaven, thy khat is in the earth." It is simply the fleshly vehicle of all the principles, the Sthula-sarira. The reader who has been interested in the subject of Symbolic Geography, wherein the names of the nomes and cities of earth have significance, will be intrigued, at the very least, to perceive that Mendes (in Lower Egypt) symbolized the lower nature, the symbol being the stranded fish (as it is called), which is also the symbol used for the khat.

This paper is an attempt to lift the veil that hides the Egyptian teachings from the unintuitive. The study of the hieroglyphs would yield an inexhaustible mine of information, which, correlated with what teaching appears in such works as *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Esoteric Tradition*, and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric*

Philosophy, as well as the two Glossaries of H. P. Blavatsky and G. de Purucker respectively, would provide a wonderful picture of the extent of that "wisdom of the Egyptians" for which they were so justly famed.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Since writing this article, we have come across a very interesting work: *Ritual of the Mystery of the Judgment of the Soul*, by M. Blakeden and published for the Soc. Ros. in Anglia by Quaritch Press, setting out "the papyrus of Ani" in a most illuminating way, while keeping strictly to the text. See also article in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, July, 1940, "The Symbolic Geography of the Ancients," for an interesting excerpt from this book. ([return to text](#))

2. The Sothiac Cycle used in ancient Egypt, connected with the star Sinus, whose Egyptian name was Sothis. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ORIGIN OF LIFE — *Emma D. Wilcox*

In the history and legends of all peoples from the beliefs of the crudest savage to the religions and philosophies of the most advanced minds of civilizations a dominant question has been, Whence came life, and what was its creation?

Today Science has taken the search from the hand of religion and philosophy, and geology and biology go hand in hand in seeking the beginnings of life. Both agree that life expresses itself in what is termed protoplasm. Here we come to the reef upon which all ships of science break. If protoplasm is life, when did it appear on Earth and where did it originate?

If the story of Geology is true as to the slow evolution of the globe of our Earth from an original gaseous or semi-fluid or molten state, then how and when did the first protoplasm appear? Also, if protoplasm is a chemical combination of simple, native elements, then what changes occurred in the evolutionary process to combine them as life in one case, and otherwise leave them free? The quandaries of thought into which such reasonings bring them are acknowledged by the scientists themselves. Many of them are complaining that the new experiments are drawing them more and more toward metaphysical concepts, many of which the old Greek philosophers held.

In one of her writings, H. P. Blavatsky speaks of a cyclic curve to scientific theories which in each new era brings around a recurrence of thought of an antecedent one but modified. A hint as to the reason for this is given by her:

Occult philosophy divulges few of its most important vital mysteries. It drops them like precious pearls, one by one, far and wide apart, and only when forced to do so by the evolutionary tidal wave that carries on humanity slowly, silently, but steadily toward the dawn of the Sixth-Race

Where, how, and when did life originate on Earth? In our western world, the general thought may be summed up into three main theories, each of which may be accepted as a facet in the Occult teaching of universal Life within its myriad forms. These three theories can be named as Special Creation from without; Spontaneous Generation from within; and Biogenesis.

The first is the theological one of an extra-cosmic Creator who said: "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth" (*Genesis*, i, 2); and later, it is interesting to note, the order was given that the "waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life." This latter agrees with the story of geology that the first forms of life developed in marine waters.

Science, as well as the Occult teaching, repudiates the idea of an anthropomorphic God creating something out of nothing, but some scientists are no better in thinking that life springs into existence by the chance meeting of certain chemical elements. As H. P. Blavatsky words it:

Have they not, these Titans of thought, dragged down God from His hiding-place, and given us instead a *protoplasm*? — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 223

And as to special creation, she states:

No more than Science, does esoteric philosophy admit *design* or "special creation." It rejects every claim to the "miraculous," and accepts nothing outside the uniform and immutable laws of Nature. But it teaches a cyclic law, a double stream of force (or spirit) and of matter, which, starting from the *neutral center* of Being, develops in its cyclic progress and incessant transformations. The primitive germ from which all vertebrate life has developed throughout the ages, being distinct from the primitive germ from which the vegetable and the animal life

have evolved, there are side laws whose work is determined by the conditions in which the materials to be worked upon are found . . .

. . . so there are centers of creative power for every ROOT or parent species of the host of forms of vegetable and animal life. This is, again, no "special creation," nor is there any "Design," except in the general "ground-plan" worked out by the universal law. But there are certainly "designers," though these are neither omnipotent nor omniscient in the absolute sense of the term." — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 731

What Science, of necessity, acknowledges as "Mind-stuff," we recognize to be intelligent entities, as part of Universal Being, working in and through universal nature.

Belief in the idea of spontaneous generation of living things from inorganic matter is so deeply ingrained that it still persists in the popular mind. This probably arose out of the old idea of a primordial slime, a mixture of earth and water from which under the heat of the sun, plants and animals sprang into existence. Certain forms of lichen, for instance, were supposed to be caused by dampness transforming the dead wood into organic life, or the leaf-like shoots which appear on the surface of pools and stagnant waters were thought to be a condensation of sun and water into organic life.

Since the discovery of micro-organisms — with which both earth and air are teeming — has disproved any possibility of spontaneous generation of living organisms in earth-life today, the question has been raised as to the first appearance of protoplasm, such as might occur from the slow gradual formation of such groupings of chemical elements needed in organic substances. The millions of years given by geology to the Azoic Age would allow for this. Recent discoveries in the action of enzymes seem to aid this theory. In some bacteria nuclear particles are found scattered through the cell, not in a unit; in others, quite as simple, a sort of symbiosis of differing protein units proves an enzyme activity. As yet, science has no generally accepted theory as to

how enzymes act and remain unchanged even when removed from their organism. In *The Secret Doctrine*, we find these words:

... should spontaneous generation be indeed proven impossible in our present world-periods and actual conditions — which the Occultists deny — still it would be no demonstration that it could not have taken place under different conditions. . . .

... If spontaneous generation has changed its methods now, owing perhaps to accumulated material on hand, so as to almost escape detection, it was in full swing in the genesis of terrestrial life. Even the simple physical form and the evolution of species show how Nature proceeds." — *S. D.*, I, 150

The following from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* is as true today as when written, some sixty years ago:

Life, after all, — the greatest problem within the ken of human conception is a mystery that the greatest of your men of Science will never solve. . . . It can never be grasped so long as it is studied separately and apart from universal life. . . . Let them try and examine, or analyze life apart from organism, and what remains of it? Simply a mode of motion; which, unless our doctrine of the all-Pervading, infinite, omnipresent Life is accepted — . . . has to remain unsolved. . . . The greatest, the most scientific minds on earth, have been keenly pressing forward toward a solution of the mystery, leaving no bye-path unexplored. . . . and all had to come to the same conclusion — . . . namely, that life in its concrete manifestation is the legitimate result and consequence of chemical affinity; as to life in its abstract sense, life pure and simple well, they know no more of it today, . . . Spirit, life and matter, are not natural principles existing independently of each other, but the effects of combinations produced by eternal motion in Space." (pp. 158-9)

Biogenesis or an eternal continuity of life is now held by an increasing number in Science. The three main qualities of protoplasm, found

inherent in no other form of matter, presuppose that the nature of organic life is entirely different from inorganic; these three qualities being the power that protoplasm has of producing internal motion, of self-nutrition and of reproduction.

Geology tells us that the Earth in its beginnings was at one time a molten liquid mass and at another covered by gases which were incapable of sustaining life. Then, if life can only come from life, where was it during those ages? Two theories as to this question are prominent today. One theory holds to the possibility of a transference of protoplasmic germs from another planet, but that raises the question as to how they originated there? The theory does not answer the question. Meteoric stones have been found to contain organic carbon in their centers it is true, but as to free organic compounds or micro-organisms passing through space to Earth, recent discoveries of the power of cosmic and ultra-violet rays to transform or destroy organic matter make improbable such transference. Scientists are also finding out the presence of continental layers around the Earth in space, the existence of which was told sixty years ago by the Theosophical Teachers:

our globe has its own special laboratory on the far-away outskirts of its atmosphere, crossing which, every atom and molecule change and differentiate from their primordial nature." — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 583

And again, speaking of the simple chemical elements of which all matter, organic as well as inorganic, is composed:

differentiated as these elements were in the beginning still they were not the compound bodies known to science as they are now. . . . for all these are the productions already recombined by the atmospheres of globes completely formed — even to fire — so that in the first periods of the earth's formation they were something quite *sui generis*. Now that the conditions and laws ruling our solar system are fully developed; and that the atmosphere of our earth, as of every other globe, has become, so

to say, a crucible of its own, Occult Science teaches that there is a perpetual exchange taking place in space of molecules, or of atoms rather, correlating, and thus changing their combining equivalents on every planet . . . the essence of cometary matter, for instance, . . . during rapid passage through our atmosphere, undergoes a certain change in its nature. — *S. D.*, I, 142

A very interesting theory to a Theosophist is that of the viability of germs lying latent within the mass of the globe and awakening as soon as cooling of waters and solidifying of soil material gave proper environment for growth. Much study is being made of fertility of seeds held in desert areas of geologic time and within glacial moraines. A thought apparently along this line is by W. F. Swann:

The fact that vital phenomena do not make themselves immediately evident in so-called non-living matter is no criterion as to the certainty of their complete absence therefrom. It is, in fact, not inconceivable that the existence of completely non-living matter as such might be unstable, and that the living activity might increase, perhaps slowly at first, but possibly at an increasing speed, until, at any rate, in the presence of suitable conditions and environment, it finally attained a steady state in which there was a definite equilibrium between the living and the non-living matter.

This idea of organic life being latent during the formative period of the globe is a step toward the Theosophical teaching, because the seeds of that life were inherent in the Earth when it came into its present imbodiment. Every material form in the manifested universe is a vehicle by which life expresses itself in slow and progressive development from simple to complex, then at the acme of that degree of unfoldment it returns to latency:

the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a

fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe. — *S. D.*, I, 17

In the mineral kingdom, the Monadic Life is "crystallized and immetallized"; in the vegetable, it expresses itself as seed, plant, fruit, and seed again. In the human kingdom, evolution at present is by incarnation as birth, growth, death, and a return in reincarnation.

Life is One; what is called life is its manifestation in form. To our physical perception Life is substance; to our conscious mind, Universal Life is Conscious Intelligence.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTERIES AND CHRISTIANITY: II — *F. Chapman Clemeshaw*

Now, we return to our subject of "The Mysteries and Christianity." Our study so far has helped us to realize that there is continuity and order in the affairs of men; so if we make the statement that Christianity is the latest expression of the Mysteries, it will not now sound amiss; nor will it need proving.

If we *really understood* the rituals and creeds of Christianity and also the inner meaning of the story as told in the Gospels, we should know as much as we can know of the Mysteries short of being initiated therein. It is the importance of really understanding these rituals and ceremonies of Christianity that we here stress, for therein are preserved for us an archaic language and an archaic symbolism, the *full* meaning of which can come only by much study; in fact, the *full* meaning can come only at initiation.

Such a study may now be undertaken, as some keys to its understanding have been given to us by our Teachers, and because the cyclical time has come again when the Ancient Wisdom may be publicly taught. In other words, the cyclical time has come again for a re-statement. All thinking people today realize the need for this re-statement. Please note, that the writer has borrowed this expression "need for re-statement" from a recent pronouncement of the Archbishop of Canterbury. This brings us to another point that should be emphasized, i. e., that the cyclical change that brought the Theosophical Society into being is affecting all in some degree. How quickly the Churches are moving toward a changed outlook may be known by those who care to keep themselves informed.

As an instance, that quotation from St. Augustine already used herein appears in an essay on the universality and antiquity of the Cross, in the "Winter, 1939-40" number of *The Cathedral Age*, (Pub. The National Cathedral Association, Mount Saint Albans, Washington, D. C). It is

important that Theosophists keep themselves informed, for by so doing, they are the less likely to fall into the error of attacking men of straw and flogging dead horses!

The history of Christianity — as well as other religions — is the history of these constantly changing outlooks caused by the continuous stream of Egos coming again into incarnation; these differ among themselves and cause the changes. In other words, there are times when younger Egos must have their turn. If the view were taken that the Germanic tribes were what we have called younger Egos, then it would help us greatly to understand our own era; perhaps we might say that they are younger Egos intellectually, but not without their own appropriate virtues such as loyalty to their chiefs, warlike valor, and respect for women. It will be admitted that the seeds of our present European nations were planted at this time, those centuries that we are graciously pleased to call the "Dark Ages" were the embryonic time. We know little about those centuries and so call them "Dark" but were those who lived and loved and died therein less happy than we are today? The thoughts of men are by turn materialistic, philosophical, and religious, as already pointed out; consequently, the church is by turns materialistic, philosophical and mystical in its manner of presentation. But the church is not the cause of these varying conditions. It is an effect. Notwithstanding what certain writers and critics have maintained to the contrary. One good example of this constant change in the manner of presentation is the way that the crucifixion has been symbolized down the centuries. First the cross alone, generally a Greek cross, sometimes with the figure of "The Lamb as it had been slain" in the center.

After the council of 603 a. d. it was directed that the figure of our Lord should take the place of the symbolic Lamb.

Until the eleventh century the body of Christ was always regally clothed, crowned, and is shown with a rayed nimbus; the figure does not suggest hanging on a cross but is rather standing in front of a cross.

The piteous figure created by the Renaissance artists illustrates the

change that was slowly taking place; the mysticism of the 13th was giving place to those tendencies that resulted in the skepticism of the 18th century only to end in the materialism of the 19th.

The cycle has turned, figures resembling those of the 11th century are re-appearing and are called "Modern!"

Now let us very briefly summarize the wealth of information to be found in our literature about the Mystery Schools or Colleges. Do not let us make the mistake of thinking of these schools or colleges as buildings or as what we moderns might be tempted to call a "plant!" They were schools or colleges in the sense of associations, with or without buildings as the case might be. No land or people has ever been without them, for the last four or five million years. Let us refresh our memories by mentioning the better known ones in the West. Beginning with Stonehenge; then Alesia and Bibracte in Gaul, Druidical centers destroyed by Caesar; Crotona, Eleusis, Samothrace, Byblos, Philae and Thebes.

What is meant by the word mysteries? The following from Masonic sources will give a good general answer:

By mysteries the educated reader will not understand merely doctrines or symbols, or even secrets as such, but a system of discipline and instruction in esoteric learning which was deemed too sacred and recondite for those who had not complied with the essential conditions. Every ancient country had its sacerdotal order, the members of which had been initiated into the mysteries; and even Jesus defended his practice of discoursing in parables or allegories, because that only to his disciples was it given to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God, whereas to the multitude it was not given. .

..

... The early Christians and heretical sects had also their signs of recognition, and were distinguished like the initiates of the older worships, according to their grade, as neophytes (*1*

Timothy, iii, 6), spiritual and perfect.

The mysteries most familiar to classical readers are the Eleusinia, which appear to have descended from the prehistoric periods. Pococke declares them to have been of Tartar origin, which is certainly plausible, and to have combined Brahmanical and Buddhistical ideas. Those admitted only to the Lesser Mysteries were denominated *Mystae*, or veiled; those initiated into the Greater Mysteries were *epoptai*, or seers. Socrates was not initiated yet after drinking the hemlock he addresses Crito: "We owe a cock to Aesculapius." This was the peculiar offering made by the initiates on the eve of the last day, and thus sublimely asserted that he was about to receive the great apocalypse. (Mackenzie: *Migrations of Symbols*)

As already said the Eleusinia were divided into two parts, the Greater and the Lesser. The Lesser Mysteries were celebrated at Agrae, in Attica, about the beginning of March; every fifth year the Greater Mysteries were celebrated at Eleusis about the time of the autumnal equinox. Now, here is another point, (See Dr. G. de Purucker, *THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM*, Dec. 15, 1929):

But there were Mysteries still greater, about which nothing was openly said. We only know from bare hints that they existed.

These bare hints were given by Greek and Roman writers. The need for secrecy was that there were wise men and foolish men in those days as there are today. The injunction to cast not pearls before swine, was needed then as now. "Swine" or dogs, sounds harsh, but it was part of the Mystery jargon of the Near East, and simply meant outsiders. The following quotation from Dr. G. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* must complete our brief review:

Even in the days when early Christianity had superseded the degenerate and corrupt religions of the Mediterranean countries, even then, fallen as the Eleusinia were from their former high state, yet they were considered so highly that

initiations still took place in them. They were actually finally stopped on the initiative of the Pagans themselves, the school closed by an order of the Christian Emperor Justinian in Constantinople, but closed on the petition of the so-called Pagans themselves. The truth is that the Mysteries were not overcome by Christianity, but fell because of intrinsic degeneracy. Can we imagine what those men must have felt in the day when they saw that which was dearer to them than life closed and ended by their own will, invaded and degraded by degenerate rites and beliefs, and, doubtless, also by the Christian fanatics?

This happened in 529 a. d., and when we remember that Christianity had received official recognition in the time of Constantine some 200 years earlier, we may realize how the Eleusinia were beloved by the people of those days. The following quotation is from THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, Aug. 15, 1932: "When the Mysteries finally disappeared in the West, the Christian Church took over some of the ritual or ceremonies of the Less Mysteries, and a few of the doctrines or teachings of the Greater." As Christianity at that time represented a reform movement, they naturally eliminated the degenerate rites already referred to. When we add to this the statement that some of the early Popes were initiates (*S. D. I*, p. 311) and that Origen, Synesius, and Clement of Alexandria had been initiated at Eleusis (*S. D. I*, p. xlv), and that Paul is also recognized as an initiate, we have the historic link between the Mysteries and Christianity.

What is the connection between the Gospels and the Ancient Mysteries? The gospels are manuals of initiation and were written by the Eoptae or initiates of the Alexandrian Schools to help those small groups of earnest people who had set their faces against the evils of the time. Or more fully:

The Christian Scriptures, that is the Christian New Testament, taken altogether, are an esoteric manual: a secret manual of instruction and of edification for the earliest Christians, for the

earliest adherents of the primitive Christian Church; and these secrets tell in allegorical, in mythological (if you look into the old Greek sense of the word) form what any great Seer or Sage, any World-Savior, any great and noble-hearted man who gave up his life for his fellows, underwent in the schools of mystical training.

In other words, they form that particular manual of initiation in true but symbolic imagery in the initiatory cycle as it was followed in Palestine, in Syria, and in the countries of the Hither Orient. — (*Questions We All Ask*, xv, Jan. 7, 1930)

It should be emphasized that what has been said about the Gospels is equally true of the sacred writings of other religions. They too are manuals of initiation, and that is why there is such a striking resemblance among them. (See *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 537). So we see that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, though necessarily preserved and taught as history, are dramatic presentations of events in the soul life of each of us, events that must be experienced by all sooner or later. This is a statement that mystical Christians today will accept, a statement that the *few* have accepted all down the centuries.

The Gospels, then, are the basis of the Christian Mysteries; their teachings are presented dramatically in the Mass. All instructed Catholics see in the prayers and ceremonies of the Mass a pictorial representation of the life of Jesus from the incarnation to the resurrection. The Church, as a whole, may be regarded as an exoteric school of religion (the Less Mysteries in fact), and the different orders therein regarded as esoteric schools for the practice of Yoga, such as Bhakti-yoga, or what would be called Salvation by love or devotion in Christendom; Karma-yoga, or Salvation by Works; Hatha-yoga or Salvation by self-imposed austerities. (See THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, March, 1940). How far some of these Orders may have lost the right to be considered as schools of Yoga, we do not undertake to say; it is the fact of their existence and of their relationship with the past that concerns us. Those who undertook these austerities were but human, and as the

history of monasticism shows, they had their periods of decline followed by periods of reform, that always started from within.

The method of the Less Mysteries is described in the following from the Glossary of *The Key to Theosophy*:

[The Sacred Mysteries] were enacted in the ancient temples by the initiated Hierophants for the benefit and instruction of candidates. . . .

In short, the Mysteries were in every country a series of dramatic performances, in which the mysteries of Cosmogony and nature in general were personified by the priests and neophytes, who enacted the parts of various gods and goddesses, repeating supposed scenes (allegories) from their respective lives. These were explained in their hidden meaning to the candidates for initiation, and incorporated into philosophical doctrines.

and this from THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, August, 1932:

The dramatic part belonged in old days to the Less Mysteries, and the teaching or training to the Superior or Higher; and the dramatic was used only as a help for those who needed, as it were, a ritualistic or ceremonial observance in aiding to concentrate their thoughts.

One age gives rise to the next, as already said. Listen to this from De Sacrificio Missae:

Since human nature, says the Council of Trent, does not easily lift itself to the meditation of Divine things without some outside help, our good Mother, the Church, in conformity with the discipline and the tradition of the Apostles, has established certain rites and made use of ceremonies: blessings, lights, incense, priestly vestments, and numerous other similar means, to bring out the majesty of the Divine Sacrifice, and to incite through these exterior signs of religion and piety to the

contemplation of the sublime mysteries which lie hidden therein.

So we see that the dramatic method of teaching was taken over by the Christians. Over and above their rituals and ceremonies there were the liturgical dramas, the earliest that has come down to us dates from the 9th century, the Morality Plays, Miracle plays, and processional spectacles, and most important of all, the mystery or Passion plays such as that of Oberammergau, which is carried on to this day. Older popular festivals were never lost, but were incorporated and refined. In this connexion, H. P. B. makes the following comment in speaking of the "Punch and Judy boxes," as she calls them, which contain little figures representing Joseph, Mary and the Angel, and another one showing the Infant Jesus in the manger. These were carried around Southern Russia and Poland during the Christmas season:

We remember the three king-Magi represented by three dolls in powdered wigs and colored tights; it is from recollecting the simple, profound veneration depicted on the faces of the pious audience, that we can the more readily appreciate the honest and just remark by the editor, in the introduction to the *Eleusinian Mysteries*, who says: "It is ignorance which leads to profanation. Men ridicule what they do not properly understand. . . The undercurrent of this world is set toward one goal; and inside human credulity — call it human weakness if you please — is a power almost infinite, a holy faith capable of apprehending the supremest truths of all existence." (*Isis Unveiled*, II, p. 120)

Precisely, but as we are just past the most materialistic and skeptical part of our cycle, and of our century cycle too (as the writer thinks) it is now the fashion to deny to our own era all intuition, all mysticism, all esoteric knowledge; we like to talk about *anthropomorphism*, *soporifics* and of all religious drama or ritual as *mummery*. Certainly "Men ridicule what they do not properly understand." It is a mistake to suppose that the creeds and dogmas that have come down to us need to

be re-written or discarded; they need to be understood; for ceremonial and sacramental Christianity is a prolongation of the Lesser Mysteries. For the many, these Lesser Mysteries are as much needed today as they were in the past; they are worthy of our sympathetic study in that they embody all that preceded them.

How about the Greater Mysteries? If it was true 1800 years ago that there were Mysteries about which nothing was openly said, and that we only know from bare hints that they existed, would it not be true today, both in Christendom and elsewhere?

By hints gathered here and there, we may know that the Roman Catholic Church has its "Inner Church," for as H. P. B. says (quoting Higgins) "we have the esoteric religion of the Vatican, a refined Gnosticism for the cardinals, a more gross one for the people." ("The Esoteric Character of the Gospels," p. 240). The Greek Church has its "Society of Om," the Protestant world its Masonry and other Secret Societies, from which much may be learned by study; but these things do not help the rank and file, for these necessarily impart their knowledge under an oath of secrecy. So the Ancient Wisdom is again being publicly taught because this is the correct cyclical time so to do, but this is not being done without exciting both secret and open opposition.

History repeats itself: Buddha incurred the opposition of the Brahmans by imparting knowledge held too closely by them; Jesus incurred the opposition of the Doctors of the Law by doing the same; H. P. B. brought upon herself persecution for the same reason. But this will pass.

The Ancient Wisdom, now called Theosophy, will in time reunite Christendom in yet another "re-statement." The core of it is, and ever has been the same; its outward expression will be rich in that it will embody all that has preceded it, this time from both East and West. It will still be called Christianity, or so the writer believes, but there will be an "Inner Church," or Inner Group called the "Theosophical Society."

SONS OF THE SUN — *Emily R. Plummer*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Unveil, O Thou, that givest sustenance to the universe, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, that face of the true sun, now hidden from us by a vase of golden light, that we may know the truth and do our whole duty on our journey to thy sacred seat. — *An ancient Vedic Invocation*

Among the many petitions, prayers, and invocations that the sons of ancient times have given us, is this Vedic invocation to the sun, and it is one of the most beautiful and instructive. Deeply inspiring in thought and emotion, it is moreover filled with esoteric wisdom. It indicates clearly the lofty position the sun holds in the scale of universal being; throws light upon its constitution, embracing the consciousness-side as well as the physical side; and indicates the spiritual and physical relationship existing between the sun, the earth and its inhabitants.

In studying and analysing the thoughts and words of this invocation or prayer, it is evident that the supplicant was a devotee of Archaic Theosophy, for he must have had knowledge of what the sun truly is, its place or function in the solar system, and man's ultimate goal or destiny therein. In the appeal that the face of the true sun be unveiled, as being hidden or concealed from him by a vase of golden light, he must have understood that there are various planes of manifestation, and also had an unbounded faith in spiritual powers and forces in the sun, and that through an inner, higher contact with these powers he could know the Truth, and as a true son of the sun, do his whole duty, on this "journey to thy sacred seat."

The Ancient Wisdom teaches that the sun and everything in the universe has not only one "face" or aspect, but seven and even more

such aspects or planes through which to work or function, consisting of an ever increasing degree of refinement in matter from the lowest physical to the highest grade or step in spiritual substance, during an objective manifestation of a universe, sun, planet or any lesser form of life. Our inner sight not being as yet active, we are not yet aware of the more ethereal planes or "faces" and if we would unveil, or penetrate with our understanding to these higher realms, it must be by the unfolding and growth of our inner, spiritual senses.

In the words of the invocation "that giveth sustenance to the universe," is contained the teaching as to the office of the sun in the solar system. The sun is the focus for life-forces pouring downwards from supernal realms beyond itself. The sun, in other words, is the reservoir for spiritual intelligences and powers flowing from invisible spheres and from which the solar system, the earth, and all that therein is, draws sustenance, not only physical life-nourishment, but spiritual food for the mind, soul, and higher nature. Every solar force has a focus in man acting or working naturally through him in accordance with the laws of Nature, in relation to his evolutionary status. (1)

Quoting from *The Esoteric Tradition* by G. de Purucker, in relation to the sun:

The solar system is a living organic entity, its heart and brain combined in the Sun; . . . — I, 188

According to the teaching of the Ancient Wisdom, the Esoteric Tradition, the composite aggregate or bundle of forces and substances which compose man's constitution has its ultimate source in the invisible, or Spiritual Sun. — II, 1080

. . . the physical sun, the day-star which our eyes see, is but the manifestation or vehicle of the inner spiritual and intellectual and other powers which flow forth from within through it and outwards, and thus give life as well as light to the solar system over which the sun presides. — II, 1100

Many of the Christian Fathers, Origen, Jerome and others of the early

Christian era, and the various sects and orders of those times, adhered to the esoteric teachings. Among the writings left by them we find certain esoteric truths: "The Christos spirit in man is the luminous substance of the sun"; and "an incarnation from the God-Sun was born in human form." This last referred to the divinity of an Avatara, Jesus, and other Great Ones. It is interesting to note in this connexion that the Christ-child and other divinities, angels, and saints, are pictured with a nimbus, aura, or aureole about the head. This is because such a one is "clothed with the sun," or "the Inner God clothes him with solar splendor shining through him." The aura which is about every man, although invisible to our physical sight, is the efflux of these forces playing through him from above downwards. It is a continuous stream of consciousness, and to the degree in which he lives and aspires towards this divine, spiritual consciousness, does he draw near the God-ray within him, and live enveloped in its radiance.

In the next few words of the invocation: "from whom all proceed, to whom all must return," is the pith or essence of the law of cycles operating throughout the universe: the periods of out-breathing and in-breathing of the Great Breath of the Divinity back of or behind all things — involution and evolution. The involution of spirit from the subjective states or planes to the substances of objective states or planes: the opposite pole — matter, with the resultant evolving or unfolding of spiritual powers and faculties in the general progression of lower life-forms to that of higher states of being. More familiar to us is that cycle of the eleven-year periodic expansion and contraction of the solar heart beat, performing the same office in the sun in relation to the solar system, as does the human heart for the human body — the sun's forces pulsating throughout the solar system of which we are a part and without which we could not live, move, and have our being.

The sun, being the repository of the forces from which the solar system draws life, is the home-cradle from which all things have issued forth during the cycle of objective life or manifestation, and the haven to which all things return for the subjective period of spiritual rest and experience. It is our Father-Sun from whom we, the sons of the sun,

were sent forth on this journey as un-self-conscious god-sparks, and to whom, after aeons of time in evolving and growing, we return at the journey's end, self-conscious gods.

In the next sentence, "that face of the true sun," the reference is to that highest, most spiritual aspect of the seven "faces" or planes in the constitution of all existing things. *The Esoteric Tradition* says:

Every sun, as indeed every other celestial body, is the outward veil or the body, or vehicle, of an indwelling Spiritual and Intellectual Agent or Presence or Solar Spirit. — I, 450

It is the Divinity manifesting through the sun and "hidden" to the ordinary physical sight. Even the physical body of the sun, as are the stars and many planets, being of a more attenuated or subtil form of matter than is the earth or its inhabitants, is therefore seen by us only as a fiery ball or, as expressed in the Vedic invocation, "a vase of golden light."

The plea "that we may know the truth," comes from the earnestly aspiring heart, and is one of the greatest needs of today. Truth has had a losing fight for many an age to keep its head above water. Although there is the Bible precept "The truth shall make us free," self-interest and personal ambitions in priestcraft on the one hand, and intellectual laziness and love of worldly pleasures in the great mass of people, on the other hand, have kept the soul of man in the bondage of ignorance, misbeliefs, and sin, until from lack of nourishment, the God-ray within becomes, as it were, a smoldering spark, as far as the human, personal nature is concerned, smothered in the ashes of neglect, until some shock through suffering awakens it. Pain is not a celestial revenge, but a natural, scientific, vibrating response or reaction of one force to that of another. The agony of pain turns the nature away from outward attractions and distractions to an inward, spiritual consolation, and consequent higher life, igniting and reviving the spark to life again. When it flames bright and strong, with an unsatisfied desire for reunion with the Divine fire at the source of being, one then becomes aware of the Truth and of the goal ahead. Without the light of this

knowledge, we unseeingly pursue our way, stumbling and groping about in many a blind alley, and into many a pitfall from which we must laboriously climb.

One of the means of avoiding delayed progress, is expressed in the following words from the invocation: "and do our whole duty." It is one of the finest expressions of devotion in this petition. Compare this noble, unselfish desire with other prayers of today, the response to, or the fulfilment of which rests usually upon a subscribing to certain man-made beliefs and requirements, differing in all lands as well as in opposing denominations and sects. The response to prayer is made quite clear by Dr. de Purucker in these words: "In the grand organization of which we are a part, every feeblest vibration or flow of energy, produces a corresponding effect or reaction. Thoughts reaching out in prayer, aspiration or the reverse touch the corresponding force." In other words, in this action and interaction of forces between the different planes of being, if we would have a response from some high source, it must be by the concentration of efforts on our part in raising our consciousness to that to which we appeal; in fitting our natures so that spiritual forces may find responsive expression in us. Again quoting Dr. de Purucker in these most fitting and helpful words: "You cannot receive anything from without before it is already within yourselves. Seek ye first the Divine in you, cultivate it, awake it, and just in proportion as you do that, you will receive from without, because you gave from within."

There is no single thing which clears the way and hastens one's steps on this journey of ours more than in the fulfilling of duties to others and to oneself, it being a law of nature that a neglected duty is but a delayed duty, to be met with at some future time. All thoughts, deeds, and acts involve one in duties or consequences, through nature's reaction to all forces good or bad in establishing an equilibrium. Selfishness, hates, jealousies, revengeful feelings, and so forth, bind and shackle one in chains of a like kind, in a vast, complicated connexion with others which may be very unpleasant and run over into many lives ahead for their working out. This law of cause and

effect, action and reaction, or Karma, acts with equal force in the opposite direction, in response to kindly thoughts, desires and actions. On the surface this may seem an ironic situation at times, as an unselfish person may be experiencing or reaping the effects of wrong actions sown in the past, and vice versa; which appears to be unjust suffering or, on the other hand, unmerited happiness. It is, however, but the result or working out of that law, "As ye sow so shall ye reap"; and the sooner it is recognised that unselfishness or impersonality is the key or password to eventual, lasting harmony and peace, the quicker and more easy is the ascent of that right-hand path leading to our evolutionary goal — Godhood.

Here the attention should be called to a left-hand path, the path which leads downwards, in the opposite direction, to darkness, the nether pole — matter; and with it final annihilation with accompanying anguish in the loss of the soul. Human nature like everything else is dual, having in it the germ of every virtue and of every sin, the difference in character being the degree to which the germs of these higher or lower forces are developed and used. The personality with its shifting moods and fancies, likes and dislikes, is made of various grades and intensities of these dual tendencies, the spiritual and material aspects of forces, such as love with its opposite, hate; or charity, avarice; honesty, deception; and so forth. So complex is human nature that even a virtue may be used to gain some personal satisfaction, aim or end, and even spiritual knowledge and powers misused. We are not our desires, good or bad, any more than we are our bodies, for we have the power to choose, direct, and use the forces of desire. The real man at the helm is beyond these.

"The Master is one who has conquered nature before nature has conquered him." He now controls thoughts, feelings, emotions, and desires. He is beyond the sway of joys, sorrows, and disappointments, and no longer stops to wallow in the mire of his own lower nature nor in that of others, thus adding to the hosts of evil forces already in operation; but with peace in the heart and with eyes raised, uplifted to the heights beyond the horizon, he speeds onwards, the nature,

spiritually awakened or relatively unawakened, placing the pilgrim-traveler at every moment of choice either on the one path or the other.

As the disciple, or chela, advances on the path of Light, duties and obligations assume a most necessary place in his inner training. An absolute requisite in the conquest of self, and familiar to all candidates, are the injunctions given by the great Teachers: "Do good to them who revile and persecute you"; "Resist not evil"; "Turn the other cheek"; "Defend not yourselves," and the like golden precepts; for in the training of the disciple or chela, the bearing of personal injustice becomes a holy duty. It is a purging fire to the dross in the personal, human nature, separating the lower tendencies from the higher. This silence forced or self-imposed upon the outer nature, compels him to stand alone in patience, endurance and forbearance. There being no outlet for pent-up forces, the personal will is subdued and he is thrown back upon his higher self. Seeking refuge in his impersonal, higher nature, he finds there the strength and support of the spiritual will. The desire for reprisal fades away into recognition of the realities beyond. The lower self becomes the higher self. This wonderful transformation in the nature, of course can be sought for selfishly, in the sole desire of attaining the spiritual goal, with no thought for mankind and its needs. But the true aspirant, with compassion for but no longer dependence upon others, is free to work unselfishly for mankind, yet forms no more entangling webs of evil about himself or his brothers.

The last beautiful thought in the Vedic prayer or invocation, "our journey to thy sacred seat," takes us to the goal of our long journey through life; for the sacred seat is that Divine center in the sun which is the home of the Gods. To the aspirant, the pathway is now realized to be within, and he becomes not only a channel, but a consciously responding or answering focus or center for the spiritual forces flowing forth from that sacred seat in the sun. He has sought and found that shining beam within him, and following it, is flooded with its wondrous light. He then consciously exists in spirit instead of matter, and attains Godhood.

This ancient prayer will always be a classic among devotees. Pure in its freedom from personal material wants and requests; pure in its intentions and aspirations, every word carries some spiritual meaning or Truth. When we feel the warmth of the sun's rays upon us and realize that were it not for those forces which pour forth from the sun to us, we would cease to be, it is a sad commentary upon our intelligence and hopes that we neglect in so many ways to consider the inner as well as the outer relations which there are between us and our life-giving source — the sun. Not that the sun as a body is to be worshiped, but since it is true that we owe our very existence to it; that the highest most spiritual part of our being is fed from the highest most spiritual part of the sun's being: the structure and the function of the sun in the solar system should be studied, known, and revered, and in the purpose and object of all life, and our part in it, should be impressed upon the nature constantly. The Ancient Wisdom teaches that it is by this inner development of spiritual consciousness gathered or garnered from spiritual forces flowing through the sun to us — as a part of his domain, the solar system — that we successfully make the ascent of that right-hand path and return to our Sun-Home as Sons of the Sun.

FOOTNOTE:

1. It might be well to note here that when man infringes upon or interferes in any way with the normal action of these laws, as in the abnormal development of any of the forces, such as the cultivating of psychic faculties, breath control practices, hypnotism, and so forth, there are bound to be disastrous results in the end for himself and for others. ([return to text](#))

THE GIVING OF THE SELF — *G. de Purucker*

There is no freedom so great, no happiness so large, so wide reaching, as the giving of self in service. It is the hero who gives himself. If he did not give himself utterly, there would be no heroism in it. It is the giving which is heroic.

And so it is with love. Where there is questioning about it — not uncertainty because uncertainty is always very natural in these things; one wishes to be sure — but where there is a question about the values involved, where there is a selfish searching of "what *I* want," there is no heroism, no love, no self-giving. There is not the ghost of a shadow of a chance there for the god-like, heroic quality of self-renunciation.

When the year begins, when it opens, the one mantram I always make to sound in my own heart and mind is this: A new year is opening. Can I give myself a little more than last year? I pity from my soul the man or woman who has not learned the exquisite joy of giving of the self. There is not anything on earth that equals it in beauty, in grandeur, in sublimity, and in the peace and richness it brings to both heart and mind.

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: I

Over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China, in the Spring of 1941, fifteen-minute weekly broadcasts were given — the result of the enthusiastic enterprise of Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist of the Shanghai Theosophical Lodge. The first talk, covering a general outline of our doctrines, was presented on March 23rd by Miss Bergqvist.

Good evening, everybody:

This first talk is going to be merely a preliminary survey to explain very briefly what Theosophy is. The word Theosophy is a combination of *Theos* and *sophia*, meaning the Divine Wisdom.

Many people when they hear the word Theosophy receive the impression that this is another new religion, one of the many sects which periodically spring up in all parts of the world. This is not so. Theosophy is not a religion invented by men for men. It is a study of life as it is, and includes all the departments of nature. After all there can be only one ultimate truth, though this truth may have many facets and may be seen from various angles. The three main roads by which mankind has sought to learn the truth throughout all ages are religion, philosophy, and science. If a fact has been found plausible by any one of these methods, a thinking man will be convinced of its truth only if it agrees with the tenets of the other two. This is why science and religion are so often at loggerheads both with each other and with philosophy. The reason we believe Theosophy to contain the truth is the fact that it reconciles religion, science, and philosophy, and shows plainly that these are merely three different roads to truth — and the point where they converge is Theosophy.

Yet Theosophy is not a synthesis of these three. Rather is it the parent. For the teachings contained in Theosophy are by no means new. So long as there has been life, so long has there also existed an

explanation of that life; and so long as mankind has lived on earth and been puzzled regarding the cause and meaning of its existence, so long also have the cause and meaning been taught. All the great world-teachers have given out certain facts regarding man's origin and the purpose of his life, and though the symbols and manner of speech have been fitted in each case to the particular recipients thereof, their teaching has always been identical. Though these teachers have lived at different periods, far separated in time and locality, yet their work is with us always. Mankind has never been without their guiding influence. Buddha and Christ, Sankaracharya and Lao-Tse, Plato and Zoroaster are not mere names of the past, but guiding influences in the world to all who care to heed, and their teaching is as much to the point today as it ever was.

In these days of mental and moral sickness we are all badly in need of a further dose of spiritual enlightenment, and we have the opportunity to study the teachings of these great men and others like them and to learn to understand their meaning, which is often difficult to grasp without the key furnished by Theosophy.

So far, little has been said about science and how it fits into the scheme of Theosophy. Physical science is, as any scientist will agree, as yet far from perfect and fails to explain some of the more obvious facts of life. If you ask a scientist: What is fire? he will be unable to answer you; yet fire is most widely used in all departments of life, and we are familiar with its habits and qualities. Yet even physical science, imperfect as it still is, is taking great strides. New discoveries are being made all the time, and it is approaching gradually more and more to Theosophy, and many of the tenets of Theosophy regarding the laws of the physical universe are gaining currency among the modern scientific thinkers. As for instance the scientific view regarding the composition of the atom, which has recently been modified to accord with what is taught in the archaic religion-science-philosophy. In fact many of the more intuitive modern scientists are tending to adopt more and more of the Theosophical views, even at the risk of being ridiculed, as was the astronomer Galileo — yet Galileo's name has since been completely

vindicated.

But Theosophy is no mere scientific and philosophical exposition of the facts of life. It is also religion. Not *a* religion, but religion in its highest and finest sense, for it demonstrates that ethics and morality are fundamental in nature; that the finer qualities we applaud are natural, that is to say that they are the laws of nature that must be followed, and that unhappiness and suffering arise out of the breaking of these laws. Humanity must learn to obey the natural ethical laws in order to maintain that order and harmony which are the basis of the universe. Any sin against these laws upsets the equilibrium on which the universe depends, and it is nature's reaction to restore balance which causes suffering.

I have sometimes been asked: Are Theosophists atheists? Indeed we are not. Theosophy maintains that there is a Divine Source from which all manifested existence springs. But we do not call it God, for the simple reason that God is a man-made conception of the Divine. The human understanding is limited to its own sphere of activity, and it is gross conceit on the part of man to "create god in his own image."

Divinity is unfathomable. It must be so, and to apply any human attributes such as goodness or kindness must be at best a ridiculous understatement. Therefore we give no name to the Divine, but content ourselves to call it THAT, as translated from the Sanskrit *Tat* — because it is beyond human comprehension. As soon as we try to give any epithet, however lofty, to an idea we immediately limit this idea, and as the thought cannot be greater than the thinker, we create a god smaller than ourselves. From our refusal to do this has sprung the misapprehension that Theosophists are atheists. Out of this has arisen another point of variance between Theosophy and those religions that hold that man has nothing divine in him. Divinity, being divine, cannot be limited in space, time, or in any other way; must therefore be omnipresent and eternal. From this we draw the conclusion that everything, from the meanest atom to the greatest galaxy contains Divinity. Man as an entity, therefore, is essentially Divine, therefore

essentially eternal, and contains in himself, in his essence, the potentiality for uniting himself consciously with Divinity. This is our aim and the reason why we live.

I repeat again, Theosophy is not new; it is as old as life. The facts that it teaches have been taught, whether publicly or secretly, to those whose minds were prepared to understand, from prehistoric times until today. Man is not the only pebble on the beach and is preceded and succeeded by other beings more or less evolved than himself. Those who have traveled farther on the path of evolution — the Masters and World-Teachers — have periodically appeared among mankind when we were ready to receive more of the divine knowledge, and their teaching has after their departure been misunderstood and dogmatized. But the identical core of all these many teachings can still be found, and the work of enlightening mankind still goes on. At the end of the last century the teachings were again given out, this time through the agency of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, the Messenger of the Masters in these days, who founded the Theosophical Society for this purpose. Theosophy has not yet had time to degenerate from the purity in which it was first presented, and we hope that it will long continue in its unsullied state and do great work in raising men's minds to a higher level of thought and inspiration.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ENIGMA OF CANCER — *Lydia Ross*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The Theosophical viewpoint regarding one of the most widely discussed of all human diseases. This article is extracted from the manuscript copy of the *Theosophical Encyclopedic Glossary* in preparation at Point Loma under the direction of Dr. G. de Purucker.

In the exhaustive medical literature on this subject, cancer or carcinoma, in brief, is known as a malignant epithelial tumor composed of a connective tissue-stroma surrounding groups or nests of multiplying epithelial cells. In general, carcinomas have capacity for unlimited growth, for invading adjacent tissues, and for producing similar typical growths in distant tissues in the same body, or, as in experimental research, by grafts which "take" in another animal's body. The invaded tissues do not become cancerous from contact with the growth which crowds them aside, and, robbing them of nutrition, substitutes its own type of cells for those of the infiltrated organ. These multiplying cells, drawing freely upon the nutritive materials of the blood — or of any living matter — pile up an unorganized, functionless, purposeless, uncontrolled local mass of cells running riot at the expense of the body. The cancer-cell, while closely resembling the normal cell, performs only one of the latter's dual activities of alternating division into fresh cells, with their typical organic functioning for the organized body's welfare. Of these alternate activities, division or "fission" is the more primitive, being that of the simple moneron-form of life.

The usual rapid production of new cells in a wound on a healthy body, or in a test-wound in normal tissue-culture, slows down when they

have healed the lesion, when they again take up the alternate role of their suspended functioning. The purposeless, self-centered cancer-cells which are allowed to multiply uncontrolled, finally destroy the body.

Malignant cultures prove to be varieties of normal epithelial cells from which their slight differences are "not qualitative but quantitative." Many years of intensive clinical study and research have found no explanation for this difference, which, paradoxically, groups normal units in pathological union. The consensus of medical opinion regards malignant growths as not contagious, and as not due to micro-organisms, or to diet-deficiency, or to inheritability. Also, statistics show that cancer is steadily increasing among civilized peoples — now having second place in mortality-records — while it is relatively rare among those various less developed and backward peoples who continue to live in their native states of crude and primitive conditions. The significance of this difference has been overlooked, while the search for causes has held "suspect" everything tangible in the human body and in man's *milieu*. Yet it is the different degree of development of the complex inner elements and urges of conscious quality which, giving personal play to the circulating life-forces, make the modern civilized type just what it is as a human phenomenon of interacting spirit and matter. The searching analyses have yet to stress the reaction of the modern man's combined mental, emotional, and ethical consciousness and vital forces upon the highly-organized matter in his own body. In its physical form and functioning it is not different from the body of any other human being.

Progressive biological research focused upon the state of the malignant cell-unit has proposed as possible causes the failure of some chemical relationships, or, again, some disturbed relation in the nuclear chromosomes; or some unknown factor in a supposed "organizer" which directs the rhythm of somatic cell-division, and which dictates the development of the embryo. Thus the unexplored fields of research, narrowed down to, and facing an *impasse* at the microscopic nucleus of the cell, justify the conclusion of some biologists that the cause of

cancer "is bound up with the enigma of life itself." In each man, the Cosmic forces of Vitality and of Intelligence (*The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 167) manifest, perforce, according to the individual karman. These combined factors, then, are the noumena of all the structural, chemical, functional, and biological phenomena which are studied. But these universal forces, in manifesting, are "stepped down," so to say, through the successive laya-centers of the inner man's spiritual, mental, emotional, and psychic nature. This series of conscious conditions provides and sets the stage, and directs the personal play of the manifesting impersonal forces. Every physical change as well as pathological phenomenon is

produced by certain conditions and changes in the tissues of the body which allow and force life to act in that body; that all this is due to those unseen creators and destroyers that are called in such a loose and general way microbes. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 262

The "enigma of life" is neither new nor local, for

there is nothing but life everywhere! And their physicians . . . did tell them [the Atlanteans], for they knew, that every disease of our bodies comes about from an excess of life, particularly what we may call the malignant or wasting diseases. In these cases, it is life running riot in the body, and that is what causes death. They knew it better than we. — *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 304

During life the entire human constitution is suffused or permeated by the organic vital fluid of the Reimbodying Ego, which acts as a cohering factor for all the life-atoms of all the planes of the constitution to form an organic "electrical field" wherein these life-atoms may inhere and work both collectively and individually, under the impulses and urges originating in the substance of the Reimbodying Ego. (*The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 812) At times, the intense and unceasing vital activities of the life-atoms overcomes the cohering, dominating influence of the organic psycho-electrical field. This is what brings about

many if perhaps not all of the various forms of disease of a lasting character. Cases of malignant disease are due to the same general cause but on account of specific and unusual circumstances are localized in some portion of the body where the power or control of the organic vitality becomes greatly weakened. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 813

Lingering diseases are often preceded by a gradual withdrawal on inner lines, of the higher parts of the human constitution, which, being denied timely expression here, are drawn or levitate toward their native spiritual levels of existence. Thus the waning influence of the cohering, harmonizing, and balancing spiritual life-atoms and forces, leaves the uncontrolled pranic forces to be expended upon the vital-astral-physical nature which manifests along the various materialistic mental and emotional and sensuous levels and lines of life. These latter are evidently the general trends of our strenuous, restless, unstable, matter-of-fact civilization, now at the critical stage of a disordered evolution. In a word, an overdeveloped materialism is usurping the natural place and preventing the functional play of the duly awakening higher mind and spirit — the essentials, at this stage, alike for our civilization's present safety and for its further progress.

This dangerous collective lack of balanced evolution is repeated in the play of the life-forces upon the cells of the cancerous individual. He is karmically responsible, as a self-conscious being with free will, for staging his own play of these impelling forces. He must choose, either to progress on finer, nobler lines of human selfhood, or to retrogress in needless rounds of outgrown experiences. His functionless cancer-cell with its one primitive activity of self-division, is a localized out-of-time biological "throwback" in type to the huge ethereal ovoid cell-forms of the First Root-Race. These primitive cells were then the normal encasement of the nascent, un-self-conscious men-to-be whose mode of reproduction was simple division. Now, the normal body-cell does not "go on its own," but it adds its function to the complex organism in whose development it also has acquired its minor place to work and to

evolve. The cancerous tumor, being without blood-vessels and nerves, often, when located internally, subtly enlarges without pain, until its unnourished center breaks down, and the malign condition is recognised, perhaps too late for treatment.

Nature, working always and everywhere on all lines to evolve the suitable forms for the progressive imbodiments of the manifesting One Life, leaves civilized man free to do his part by spiritually balancing his own human growth. Otherwise, he becomes an unnatural unit in the universal plan which makes ethics the natural cohering, harmonizing factor in the Universe itself which "actually is imbodied consciousnesses" (*The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 258). Highly evolved culture without spiritual leaven is only sublimated selfishness.

Long-continued selfish emotions cause a distorted and inharmonious flow of the pranic currents of the body, and they cause disease according to the type of the emotions. This concerns the majority today, for few have a working philosophy of life which can take things as they come. Aside from the frankly criminal and vicious types, the inner life of the many is self-centered and disturbed by the emotional play of worry, grief, disappointment, unhappiness, or a sense of futility, or of frustration — for all of whom there seems to be no way of escape. Even the exceptional cases who have no articulate troubles, and who outwardly seem free from the prevailing restlessness, suffer from a muted unrest and an inward tension. Many of these envied men and women have a haunting feeling of self-reproach for somehow being unworthy of themselves, while a more satisfying reality of life is waiting to be attained. Evidently, the emotional effect of all these conditions — to which the generally uncivilized are immune, *as yet* — reacts in disorder of the psycho-magnetic-electric forces flowing along the highly organized network of nerve-wires. The retarded or congested or "short-circuited" forces produce disease in one or another organ according to the type of the emotions. Statistics list the abdomen and the pelvis as the most frequent sites of cancer. Meantime, the normally enlarged range of highly civilized faculties is being given relatively little play, as guided by the harmonizing and self-giving

nobler mental and spiritual lines, while the general trend of the revitalizing and creative impulses retard the pranic forces unduly at the physiological levels. Back of all precancerous microscopical and chemical findings of changes in the blood, or in the polarity of the cells, or what not, are causative inharmonies or wrongs of the inner life.

No age or personal condition is wholly exempt from malignancy; and the karmic causes, in child or adult, may date back to a former life. Cancer, with its ability to grow in any living tissue, has been found in nearly all animals and in many plants, showing the closely knitted Nature-relationships between all forms of life, each Kingdom acting upon and reacting from harmonies or disturbances in other Kingdoms. Experimental research has taken it over to the animal world countless times. Moreover, humanity's *milieu* is, in a real sense, a part or emanation of itself, because the vital human stream of incoming and outgoing material and of life-atoms on all planes, is interchanged with, and used by all other things and beings. Hence, man's unbalanced quality stamped upon this visible and invisible substance, would predispose its impress to reappear, at times, in the physical forms of Nature's less conscious entities.

The Theosophical Forum

LOVE AT WORK IN THE UNIVERSE — *G. de Purucker*

When a man's heart and mind are penetrated with the conception of the fundamental and perfect unity of all things in the vast organism of the Cosmos, then he will realize that this Cosmos is the field of Universal Life, of Universal Consciousness, manifesting in every smallest particle of space; and that it is also the field of an ineffable and boundless Love — assuredly not love as we human beings understand it, but that intrinsic character of the Inexpressible, whose nature and functions we can but vaguely conceive and hint at by our human word love. It manifests in the atom as attraction. It manifests in the cells and the other smaller bodies as the force of coherence and cohesion. It manifests in the framework of the Cosmos as that marvelous power which holds the universe in union, all parts in mutual sympathy and harmony, each to each, each to all, all to each; in human beings as spiritual love, and in beings higher than the human as something so beautiful that our human minds can but feebly adumbrate it and call it self-sacrifice for others and for all. — *Man In Evolution*, pp. 331-2

WATCH YOUR DREAMS — Stanley Zurek

"Know Thyself," were the words which met the eyes of all who looked upward over the portico of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, for "Know Thyself," was the injunction of the ancient Delphic Oracle down the ages. "Know thyself, O son of man!" says Dr. de Purucker today, "for in thee lie all the mysteries of the Universe."

But *how* shall we go about knowing ourselves, we may ask. Let us try a method. Homer, for instance, tells us that sleep and death are twin-born; and Dr. de Purucker carries the analogy further by saying that not only are they brothers, but one!

Connecting these two statements, we shall find that if we analyse our sleeping state thoroughly, we shall arrive at a proper solution of what happens on a larger scale when we die. Spend our day in inharmonious thoughts, words and deeds, and what will be the result? Inharmonious thoughts, words and acts in sleep — a nightmare, mayhap, in some cases. Spend a day, contrariwise, in thoughts, words and deeds of good-will to men and the beings and creatures above and below him, and what is the result? A night of pleasant, joyful dreams, or, better yet, no dreams at all, for then the soul rises to such high realms that the brain-mind is not consciously impressed with the memory of the experiences undergone. In the former case, the soul is tied down in the vicinity of the body and the sleep is restless and of little benefit to the individual; in the latter case, the sleep is deep, profound, dreamless even, and we awake refreshed, not only physically, but mentally and spiritually.

Plutarch, in one of his ethical essays, tells us that Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, was of the opinion that a man could determine his progress and going forward in virtue by watching his dreams, showing progress therein if in his sleep he took no delight in seeing anything improper or dishonest, or intending, doing, or approving any unjust or outrageous action. How true, indeed, in the light of the teachings of Theosophy; for

Zeno and Plutarch were initiates and knew whereof they spoke. And likewise, if we wish to know our after-death state, let us, says Dr. de Purucker, watch our dreams, for death works no marvelous change in the individual — he is in death, as in sleep, the same — the same out of the body as in it.

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

"Now there are — there must be "failures" in the etherial races of the many classes of Dyan Chohans or Devas as well as among men. . ." (*et seq.*, see p. 87, *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*)

G. de P. — In the address of tonight a quotation was made from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* with reference to failures, spiritual failures; and as I know that this word has been greatly misunderstood, or at least apprehended wrongly, I ask your kind attention to what I have to say.

What may be failure among the gods, may be a glorious achievement for a human being or for a demi-god. The "failures" amongst the Dhyān-Chohans, or the gods if you wish, is a phrase which refers simply to those high beings, even amongst the Dhyān-Chohans, who have essayed more than they could successfully accomplish. But you see in a way how creditable this effort is. It is one of the divinest things in the consciousness not only of human beings, but of the Dhyān-Chohans, that they aspire forever beyond themselves. Such failures are victories in the long run, for they represent a sublime effort. And it is far nobler to try to seek the companionship of the gods in this life and fail because we are ourselves not yet gods, than it is to be forever merely human and reckon not whether the gods exist or not. So that these failures, all honest failures from the strictly logical meaning of not having done what was envisioned to be accomplished — these failures as beings are among the most glorious even among the Dhyān-Chohan hosts.

Now it is just these failures who were unable to top the last celestial rise and who had to wait until the next Manvantara before they could cross that peak of achievement — it is just these failures who headed the hosts of those who returned and built our earth and taught earliest mankind, who laid down the lines of work on which the elementals

and the lower Dhyān-Chohanīc hosts later labored to construct our world as it is. It was these failures who caught the vision, and, guided by the karma of our past, brought that karma as it were up a little higher. Failures, but saviors of us.

So indeed there are failures amongst human beings; and if we just take that word "failures," and do not know the teaching, how unjust could we be. Far nobler is the man who strives for chelaship and fails because of past weaknesses, past karma — far nobler is he than the man who has no such divine hunger to be more and to be better, higher than he was before.

There are failures also in initiation; but all this type of failure is glorious, for it represents noble effort, enlarging vision, increasing strength, and beautiful yearnings. It represents accomplishment. There are failures among the chelas who cannot reach Mahatmaship in this life. But how beautiful is their failure, for they tried and almost won. Fancy, if they had never tried! It is these rare spirits, whether amongst the gods or amongst us men, who see and try, and succeed or fail; but that failure itself is a success; and it is such failures as these that the mahatmic writer alludes to.

And what is it that H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Remember, thou that fightest for man's liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time. The holy germs that sprout and grow unseen in the disciple's soul, their stalks wax strong at each new trial, they bend like reeds but never break, nor can they e'er be lost. But when the hour has struck they blossom forth.

A NEW STUDY OF MAN (1) — Charles J. Ryan

This remarkable work is another sign of the gradual progress of modern thought toward a more idealistic and, in a sense, a more spiritual view of the universe than the scientifically materialistic one of the nineteenth century. The author, Sir Charles Sherrington, O. M, etc, is a distinguished scientist, said to be the foremost British physiologist, and his handling of the subject reveals the possession of that rare combination, the sensitive vision of the poet and the technical knowledge of a trained expert.

Though the study of physiology has led many of its votaries toward materialism and skepticism Sir Charles is no crude materialist — and in many respects he takes the Theosophical point of view. He insists on the underlying unity of the Cosmos, and denies that the mind is a "secretion of the brain" or that it is made of electric particles or even connected with the relativist quantum of action. It cannot be "energy" because it does not obey the laws of energy. We feel that his liberal outlook suggests that if he studied the Esoteric philosophy he would find the clues to many of his problems.

As a starting point Sir Charles takes a notable sixteenth-century treatise entitled *De Abditis Rerum Causis* (On the Hidden Causes of Things) by Dr Jean Fernel, physician to King Henri II of France. Dr Fernel had a powerful and critical mind and although his thinking was dominated by the religious atmosphere of his age he was a keen reasoner. His book appeared in 1598, when faith in the unseen was strong, and he naturally believed that "living things have souls, dead ones none." This complete dualism is not the modern view in which the notion of a definite separation between the animate and the inanimate scarcely exists, and much of the author's argument is devoted to the rebuttal of a crude dualism in nature. Here Sir Charles is in agreement with the Ancient Wisdom, though Theosophy carries the argument farther. H. P. Blavatsky writes:

. . . chemical science may well say that there is no difference between the matter which composes the ox and that which forms man. But the Occult doctrine is far more explicit. It says: — Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle — whether you call it organic or inorganic — *is a life*. . . — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 261

Sir Charles Sherrington's study contains many fascinatingly interesting though decidedly disquieting delineations of the marvelous workings of Nature in her incessant efforts to produce living creatures in overwhelming profusion. As he says, it is not easy to understand how a Benevolent and All-Powerful Designer can have "created" or even tolerated the ingenious and seemingly *guided* processes of reproduction and sustenance which produce horrifying tragedies on an enormous scale, especially those in which men and the higher animals are slowly and painfully destroyed by inferior creatures. For instance, in India alone about 1,200,000 human beings die of malaria annually, infected by the microscopic *plasmodium malariae*, and many more suffer intensely from the disease. The author holds the reader spellbound by his vivid description of the almost unbelievably complex and painstaking methods by which this venomous speck and many other equally lowly pests destroy the higher forms of life wholesale. In these cases, he says:

Life's prize is given to the aggressive and inferior life, destructive of other lives at the expense of suffering in them, and, sad as it may seem to us, suffering in proportion as they are lives high in life's scale.

Of course, numerous examples exist in which the same marvelous ingenuity and apparent "design" are employed for benevolent and constructive purposes, but on the other hand the examples of destructive "devilish ingenuity" such as those he describes are "an almost countless many."

Theosophists should know these things, for to many intelligent people they *stand as irresistible arguments for the materialistic denial of all spiritual possibilities in the universe*. Sir Charles, however, while fully appreciating the difficulties of the case, has not let his judgment be overwhelmed by the superficial appearance of an utterly ruthless Nature, "red in tooth and claw"; and of course a knowledge of the fundamental principles of Theosophy eliminates the necessity of resorting to the hopelessness of pessimism or the sophistries of materialism.

In Eastern philosophy the cosmos is an Ever-Becoming, an eternal process of approach which can be well illustrated by the mathematical "paradox," the asymptote, which always approaches but never arrives, and yet which is not a juggle or trick of numbers or lines. May we not believe that a certain measure of suffering is absolutely necessary, under present conditions, for progress? Are not pain and pleasure merely a "pair of opposites," contrasting poles or aspects of an infinitely higher sensation? Are they not temporary measures for the training of the Ego?

Returning to the antagonism discussed by the author between the medieval belief in a world "devised by a loving Father from every nook and corner," and the modern "unhalting and blood-stained conflict systematically permeating the field of Nature," perhaps Man is far more responsible than "blind Nature" for the plagues which pursue him so relentlessly? According to the Ancient Teaching:

Eastern wisdom teaches that spirit [the Monad] has to pass through the ordeal of incarnation and life, and be baptised with matter before it can reach experience and knowledge. After which only it receives the baptism of soul, or self-consciousness, and may return to its original condition of a god, *plus* experience, ending with omniscience. (2)

But the outer Man "whose intelligence makes him the one free agent in Nature" (H. P. Blavatsky) has been impelled by selfishness, passion, and

false ambitions to pit his personal will against the Cosmic harmonies, and in relation to man-made or man-attracted plagues, Sir Charles perhaps unwittingly provides us with a very significant argument. It seems that the malaria parasite, which according to his statement affects nearly *one-third* of the Earth's human population is apparently no older than the human race to which it is so closely attached. He writes:

Evolution has adapted it [the parasite] complexly, delicately and effectively to kill other lives. Since it requires man for its slaughter it would seem an evolution of recent date. Its hideous cycle has overcome with "ingenuity" great obstacles to perpetuate itself.

But as Dr de Purucker has so often pointed out, not only the evil fortunes of man and the cosmos, but progress through experience are actuated by the conflict of wills among the constituent Monads, and that when the disturbing causes are worn out, as it were, the cycles of time will restore all things to harmony, or at least to the utmost harmony possible in *this period* of the Ever-Becoming. Sir Charles Sherrington envisions something like this when he writes:

Our world we recognize today as a world in making and ourselves as a part of it likewise in the course of making. Our present is not only not static, its very motion is a motion which will tomorrow not repeat today. Our planetary islet is unfinished even as those island universes which the astronomer tells us are at various stages of becoming. . . . Living things are all the time busy becoming something other than what they are. And this, our mind with the rest. It is being made along with the planet's making. We do not know that it will ever be finished —
p. 169

While the author feels compelled to be at least temporarily satisfied with the chemical and physical explanation of life, he clearly realizes that the problem of mind is still an impenetrable mystery to science, and that the connection between mind and brain is unknown. This

reviewer at least is impressed with the idea that the author cannot escape the haunting suggestion that the most primitive forms of life, brainless and seemingly nerveless seek their food as if they had a modicum of mind, including deliberate choice, and the capacity to learn. This, of course, is fatal to materialism as H P Blavatsky shows in her invaluable "Psychic and Noetic Action" in *Studies in Occultism III*, which readers of Sir Charles Sherrington's *Man on his Nature* would find very enlightening on many of the problems he brings up.

Sir Charles Sherrington pays great attention to the apparent disconnection between mind and body, and decides that *mind and energy are not convertible terms*, and the brain is only "an organ of liaison [a connecting link] between energy and mind, but not a converter of energy into mind or vice versa" (p. 318). That is, Man is a temporary association of mind with a matter-brain which is a form of energy. This coupling is as mysterious as "matter" itself, now regarded in physics as a unity of seeming incompatibles — substantial particles and immaterial waves — a paradox which, as the author says "is accepted as an assumption and left unaccounted for," yet mind has an independent power of controlling our conduct. If modern scientists studied the Esoteric Teachings they would find that the links which unite mind and body were discovered ages ago in the so-called astral or etheric intermediary body; but if their own methods are preferred we commend Dr Gustaf Stromberg's scientific treatment of this crucial problem in his *The Soul of the Universe*. Among other points he shows that "chemistry" does *not* explain how memory can be carried through an ever-changing succession of brain cells without some "immaterial" (non-physical) and permanent structure to preserve it.

Sir Charles Sherrington concludes that "Mind, as we know it, is never any other than embodied mind," meaning, presumably, embodied in physical matter, and he seems to penetrate no farther into the higher states of consciousness than the mind, we hear no clear intimation of spirit. But his definition of mind is impressive:

Invisible, intangible, it is a thing not even in outline, it is not a

"thing." It remains without sensual confirmation and remains without it for ever. Stripped to nakedness there remains to it but itself. What then does that amount to? All that counts in life. Desire, zest, truth, love, knowledge, "values," and seeking metaphor to eke out expression, hell's depth and heaven's utmost height.

This could not have been written by a materialist at heart and when Sir Charles says that growth, the main characteristic of *life*, can be explained by "chemistry" we have his word that he is not identifying *Mind* with chemical reactions or any other form of energy. We believe, however, that no scientist would pretend to know what chemical activity is in its ultimate reaches. More than fifty years ago, when chemistry was very limited, H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 261

But she looked forward to a very different chemistry and physics from the mechanistic one of the nineteenth century which was largely based on the old "hard billiard ball" theories of the atom. And in physiology and biology she was looking to a future when a truly philosophic and spiritual science will abandon the naive concept that man with his innate and godlike powers is nothing but a physical organism, here today and gone tomorrow, "a monkey shaved."

We have enjoyed Sir Charles's optimistic anticipations of the future of humanity, but they are limited by the usual negations of what is wrongly called the "supernatural." He shows no awareness of the existence of supersensuous planes of Nature where conscious beings exist, higher as well as lower than ourselves. The elementary facts about these subtil conditions of being — etheric, as Sir Oliver Lodge called them — are ignored even by those scientists who claim to believe in a future life and yet make no effort to discover where it will be spent. Even a limited knowledge of the existence of an inner world changes our mental center of gravity and our outlook upon the future

of humanity. We agree with Sir Charles that a crude "anthropomorphic" outlook on Nature and a belief in a pseudo-"magical" interpretation should be rejected, and that Nature is a Harmony, a Whole, and free from the element of "lurid drama" to which he objects. If by "magic" he means a defiance of natural law by a man or by a Personal Deity, who perform "miracles," again we agree, and more, we assert that this is the Theosophical teaching. We need not confuse such pseudo-magic and superstition with true magic or even with the marvelous, both of which are strictly governed by natural law. But who knows the limits of natural law? And when science discovers that certain teachings of Theosophy, at present regarded as heretical, are perfectly "natural" even if "occult" in some cases, it will simply have to widen its doors, as has already been accomplished in certain directions.

The Ancient Wisdom teaches that

. . . the daring explorer, who would probe the inmost secrets of Nature, must transcend the narrow limitations of sense . . . he must develop faculties which are absolutely dormant — save in a few rare and exceptional cases. . . . — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 477-8

Sir Charles may not be prepared to accept such a possibility, but we can afford to wait till time proves its truth, notwithstanding his confidence that "To-day knowledge views the natural scene wide-eyed"!

The author discards the popular idea of survival because it implies a "supernatural or magical" break-up of the body-mind combination at death which he calls a crude and infantile relic of Dualism. We certainly agree that mind — or rather spirit — needs a bodily "vehicle" to contact the matter in which it is imbodyed, but this principle applies to other kinds of substance than gross physical matter. When the energy-body perishes the consciousness of the Real Man falls back upon its more subtil bodies or vehicles for contact with the "ethereal" conditions in which it then functions, magic or no magic!

The author analyses the increasing domination of man's higher nature in a very encouraging manner, though, of course, from the "regular" standpoint of the evolutionists. Early competitive and predatory strife was gradually modified by co-operation, and as mankind unfolded the qualities of pity, compassion and self-sacrifice the predatory form of living became more and more a curse. As "human life has among its privileges that of pre-eminence in pain" this sensitiveness brought increasing altruism and "a decenter-ing of the self and an admitting of certain "otherness" to interest on a par with the self's own"; in plain language an unselfish consciousness of universal brotherhood. Sir Charles adds the beautiful thought:

A great gift — some might say divine — comes to the "self when, perceiving certain suffering external to itself it so reacts to it that that suffering becomes its own, and is shared even as a "feeling." That gift is a gift, it would seem, uniquely human. It allots to human life a place unique among lives.

Well, we may ask, is the holder of this "*divine* gift" to perish for ever like the beasts of the field? Has "Nature" taken infinite pains to produce such a unique being merely to fling it away like a crushed flower? He quotes the verse:

"None can usurp this height," returned the Shade, "
But those to whom the miseries of the world
Are miseries, and will not let them rest."

"Will not let them rest"! Surely this is the fundamental teaching of the Buddha, the Great Renunciation of self for others" sake, the highest ideal of Theosophy!

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Man on his Nature*, by Sir Charles Sherrington (The Gifford Lectures, 1937-8) New York The Macmillan Co, and Cambridge University Press, England, 413 pp., \$3.75 ([return to text](#))
2. From "The Origin of Evil" by H. P. Blavatsky, *Lucifer*, October, 1887.

Reprinted in Theosophical University pamphlet *Good and Evil*. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

INITIATION AND SUFFERING — *G. de Purucker*

All Initiation is really a test or trial, but the preparation for that test or trial is daily life — from January 1st to January 2nd, to January 3rd and throughout the days to December 31st. What we call Initiation is simply the showing by the neophyte in the tests then and there laid upon him, whether his daily life's training has been sufficiently strong to make him fit to hitch his chariot to the stars.

That is why the Masters have told us that no especial tests whatsoever are put upon chelas, only when initiation comes and they are given a chance to face the trial. The tests come in daily living. Do you see the lesson to be drawn from this? Fit yourselves while the day is yet with us and before the night comes. Do you know what some of these tests are? There have been all kinds of romantic stories written by people about them. These have been mostly guess-work, but the fundamental idea is often true. The tests are these: Can you face the denizens of other planes and prevail with them in peace? Do you know what that means? Are you absolutely sure of yourself? The man who cannot even face himself and conquer himself when required on this familiar plane where he lives, how can he expect to face with safety the habitants of other planes, not only the elementals — they are not by any means the worst — but the intelligent creatures, beings, living on other planes?

Now then, anyone who has mastered himself, perhaps not completely, but who knows that if he sets his will to it he can control anything in his own character, and knows it by proving it, is ready to go through initiation. When this knowledge comes to him then he is given the chance.

So many people seem to think that Initiations are privileges granted to people who pretend to live the holy life and that kind of thing, but I will tell you something more that I myself know because I have seen it in my fellow human beings: there is more chance for the man or the

woman who has striven honestly and has fallen and risen again, in other words for one who has eaten the bread of bitterness, who has become softened and strengthened by it, than there is for one who has never passed through the fire. So compassionate and pitiful is universal nature, that it is precisely those who stumble on the path who are often in the end the richer. Holiness comes from the struggles with self fought and lost, and fought and lost, and fought and *Won*. And then compassion enters the heart, and pity, and understanding. We become gentle with others.

You see now why it is that the quick one to judge the faults of others is precisely he who himself has never stumbled on the path and therefore is not fit and ready. Compassion, pity, are marks of character, of strength gained through suffering. "Except the feet be washed in the blood of the heart" — there you have it! Look how compassionate the Christ was and the Buddha. Let us learn and do likewise.

I have often been asked or written to as to what my opinion would be concerning one who has been unhappy on life's pathway, has wandered from the straight and narrow path: and I have wondered how any Theosophist could ask me a question like that. Is it not obvious that it is precisely those who have learned through suffering who are stronger than those who have not? — and I here mean those who have suffered and conquered self "Judge not lest ye be judged." The one who has been through the fire never judges one who is passing through it. He knows what it means. It is the immature, the spiritually undeveloped, those who have never been through the fire of pain, who are quick to criticize and judge others. Judge not, lest ye be judged some day.

THE LAWS OF GOD — *Clifton Meek*

In a recent letter of a political nature Judge Light brought up the question of the "Laws of God." Aside from all political issues with which he was dealing, I think this touches upon something very basic and fundamental, and I agree, as I invariably do, with his philosophical viewpoint in principle. Personally, I have little faith in any political or economic panaceas as permanent corrections for the evils of our age or any other, for these things are but the froth and foam which rise to the surface of society in the fermentation of human evolution, and, I think the same can be said for creeds, dogmas and theologies in the field of religious endeavor. The best political and economic system that could be devised would be corrupted as long as the hearts and minds of men are perverse and selfish. Water can rise no higher than the level of its fountain source and the tragic state of human society today but reflects the height, or rather the level, of man's spiritual evolution. The world is as it is simply and only because men have made it so, due to the fact that they do not understand the basic laws of Universal Nature and their own being. If they did they would realize the futility and spiritual insanity of all selfishness, the basic evil and supreme hall-mark of ignorance.

The laws of Nature, as Judge Light stated, are the laws of God, so-called, not because they were objectively formulated and decreed by a personal God as many good people still believe, but because they are habits of Universal Nature, the essential characteristics of Divinity which is at the heart of nature. Beyond this point, all speculation as to the nature of God and the "laws of God" is futile and beyond the comprehension of the human mind. Through religious miseducation man has come to look upon life and himself as things apart from God, a super-natural creator who plays the role of absentee landlord, and with whom he must deal through agents. The word super-natural should be stricken from the vocabulary of man, for Universal Nature includes All,

and the idea that anything can exist above and beyond Boundless Infinitude is meaningless. God, or Divine Intelligence, must therefore of necessity be the essence of Nature rather than an extra-cosmical or so-called super-natural Being. The "Laws of God" is a term frequently used by religious spokesmen with little regard as to its deeper implications.

Purely speculative dogmas, at variance with the known laws of Nature, all philosophical reasoning, and even common sense, have been presented to man as the "laws of God."

There is not an atom, creature, or star of Boundless Infinitude whose very being and consciousness is not rooted in, and an expression of, Universal Consciousness, or what men call God, as countless hosts of entities pursue their evolutionary journey through the work-shop and realms of nature. It cannot be otherwise or they would not exist. When men are unselfish, kindly and compassionate they reflect the inherent divinity within themselves instead of allowing themselves to become enmeshed in the mire of materialistic and selfish desires, and build into their character that accumulated wealth of spirit, man's only permanent possession and the only one in which true happiness can be found. When stripped of the tinsel and trimmings, Religion per se is just that and nothing more, and it is the only philosophy of life that will stand the test of time and experience. Creeds and theologians come and go with every age as men attempt to dramatize the trials and sufferings through which the human soul must pass on its journey toward perfection. Every exoteric religion has had its legendary hero which but symbolized the Divinity in Man, the only constant and enduring factor amid the changing forms of religion and external observances.

Men follow the particular pattern of worship — or none at all — in accordance with their understanding of life and spiritual development. Whatever they may profess outwardly will have little influence upon the impersonal and inexorable laws of Universal Nature, for it is the moral and ethical aspect of their daily lives in relationship with their fellow beings and their own higher nature which alone determines the spiritual progress they have made. Every act and thought is a Karmic

seed of destiny sown in the fertile field of time and space, the ineluctable results of which, for weal or woe, can no more be set aside or side-stepped than the laws of Universal Nature can be declared unconstitutional.

On that day when religion will rid itself of the idea of a personal, supernatural God and creator who arbitrarily imposes suffering upon man, his own imperfect handiwork, and recognizes the fact that Divinity is the heart of Nature itself and not a thing apart, and that it is man alone who stupidly inflicts suffering upon himself and his fellow men by his spiritual insanity and violation of the ethical and moral laws of his own Inner God, perhaps the Sons of God will create a happier world.

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

I agree with those who just cannot see how the One could do otherwise than become the multitude. Consider the Universe around us everywhere. It represents the many. Reason tells us that being subservient to one common law, essentially formed of one common cosmic stuff, originally all the multitudes of beings and entities in this Universe must have come forth from one cosmic fountain of being and life. It is the teaching of Occultism of all the ages that back to that divinity all things are marching now: out from divinity as unself-conscious god-sparks for aeons and aeons of cosmic pilgrimage, undergoing all the various marvelous adventures that life in all its phases brings; then rising on the pathway and re-entering the bosom of the Divine, to issue forth again at the next cosmic Maha-manvantara. It is incomprehensible to me that anything else could take place; and there are so many remarkable illustrations that can be given of this eternal process.

SEDIMENTATION ON OUR EARTH

When the Masters or H. P. B. speak of the 320 million years since sedimentation on our earth took place, they refer to the beginning of *this Round* on Globe A; and when the impulse of the three elemental kingdoms, followed by the mineral kingdom, reached our earth, then not only sedimentation but volcanic action began. That is all there is to that. If you will read what I have to say on that in my *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* (and I labored hard in that book to make the process of evolutionary development on the different globes during a Round clear): if you will look to that book, you will have it, I hope, clear enough for comprehension. As a matter of fact, we have so much teaching that our dear people forget most of it! That is the plain truth. Our books are just packed with information; and one of the greatest helps possible to us students is to learn to collate and build up a picture by that collection, bringing together fact after fact and never being

satisfied until we have made a proper place for every fact. Then you have a picture, and you won't forget it.

CORRESPONDENCES IN THE ROUNDS

The Fourth Round is a copy of a more advanced type of everything that took place in the Third Round. Similarly, the Third Round was such of the Second. Remember that, after all, forms and shapes and bodies are all relatively unimportant.

There was a time in the Third Round correspondential to the descent of the Manasaputras in this Fourth. There was a time in the Third Round correspondential to the arrival of sex on this earth. There was a time in the Third Round correspondential to what will happen in the future when sex will disappear in this Round. And so with all events through which we have passed and are to pass in this Fourth Round.

Indeed, during the First Round, even, there was organized intelligence on this earth, not merely mindless entities. If you think that there was no intelligence of any kind in the First Round, it shows that you keep your thoughts restricted too much to human evolution. But there are the different evolutions of the Dhyan-Chohanics Kingdoms; and even in the First Round there were human beings. Never mind what the bodies were; that is of no importance. There were beings with will-power, who thought and felt. They were few, to be sure, but they did exist; and they were the star-sons, the Sons of the Firemist spoken of by H. P. B., the first grand Adepts on this earth and indeed on the other globes of our chain. There were very few because this was the First Round. There were more in the Second; more in the Third; more in the Fourth. There will be still more in the Fifth, and so forth; because every new Round raises every Kingdom one cosmic sub-sub-plane higher on the evolutionary scale. So much for that comment.

MAN-BEARING GLOBES

It is true that globes in a Solar System, or Planetary Chain too — it is the same thing really — can advance so high in their evolutionary or emanational development that they have passed the stage where

human beings or the human kingdom can find place on such globes of a chain, because they have passed high above the human kingdom — the whole chain has. But that is only half the picture. The other reason why there are non-man-bearing globes, that is chains in our Solar System which are not man-bearing, is that these other, forming the other part of the picture, have not yet reached the point where their life-waves have risen to the human stage. Do you see?

So then, the idea is that every globe in a planetary chain has been, is, or will be, man-bearing some time, *some time*. Those not yet having reached the stage of man-bearing produce the lower kingdoms, or some of them. Those which have evolved beyond or higher than the possibility of bringing the human kingdom on their globes bear the races of the Dhyan-Chohans exclusively, and beings even beyond those last.

So there are man-bearing chains or globes in our Solar System, and there are those which are non-man-bearing. As a matter of fact, you can say the same thing about any kingdom. There are globes in our chain which bear Dhyan-Chohans, as an example, and others which do not bear Dhyan-Chohans.

The Theosophical Forum

PARABLE OF THE BRICKLAYER — *Miles MacAlpin*

Long ago, during one of those cyclic periods when a planet's humanity is none too bright, a certain type of men grew old physically and died within a very few yards of the spot of their birth — as most of us do to this day in an intellectual-spiritual sense.

These "dark-age" men seemed to have a racial agoraphobia. Believing the world to be a flat disc, they worshiped the horizon as seen from their birth-place with great awe. It was the binding ring that held the world together, and any heretic who suggested travel was treated most unhappily by the masses. He was accused of wanting to shove the horizon over the edge of nothing so the world would fall apart. This seems much like what happens to major spiritual teachers to this day, if they venture to suggest intellectual-spiritual "travel" or self-directed motion. Is it not strange that we will raise eyebrows at the queer physical behavior of others while the mentality behind the eyebrows may be duplicating the queer behavior?

When the end of the cycle approached, and a new type of humanity began to ease its way into the economic situation, the adept-guardians of mankind helped the gods send an avatic spiritual messenger to offer some age-old basic truths to the world of karma-bound men. This is one of the kindly duties and pleasures of those who acquire degrees of mastership in the great college of evolution. Just how these elder brothers of humanity may be of assistance to the gods in this matter is a mystery, but a little thought on the matter brings forth the analogical thought that when we go to church to hear a minister of the gospel or to a philosophic school to hear a teacher speak, we not only go to "get something out of it" but to help build up an atmosphere that will enable the speaker to be the best possible vehicle for the truth he strives to present. It may be that at cyclic periods every adept, wherever he may be, lends something from his sevenfold nature for the use of the forthcoming avatar. A good way to know this lending technique is to

become an adept and find out for oneself.

At that time the planet was too young to have evolved a Buddha from among its own man-types, so one of the more active gods, Ah Ping in esoteric name, provided an egoic consciousness for a baby that was born to worthy parents on earth, and in a matter of thirty or more years the world heard the mysteries through a "new" spiritual teacher.

To "rise above" traditional bondage was the general mystery-message for the people of that time. It was taught, as usual, in parable form to the masses and in more or less straight doctrine to immediate disciples. The age-old doctrine of expansion of consciousness by the "upward and inward path" was interpreted in many different ways by the people, and a number of odd beliefs developed when earnest but untutored folk tried to work out for themselves the literal meaning of the teacher's words.

One philosopher observed, on his daily walk to a mountain top within orthodox horizon-limits, that his horizon was considerably expanded when upon the mountain. The people had been climbing this mountain for many centuries; but their perception-limitations being what they were, and furthermore being traditionally forbidden to expand horizons, they climbed for exercise or to hunt game or pick flowers or something equally important to their daily life-problems. This may seem strange to us, yet for many centuries all the material has been at hand in natural resources but we did not think of them in terms of radio, electric lights, steam-engines, internal combustion engines or induction motors. Ions, protons and electrons were within the atom long before we smart moderns discovered their presence. For many centuries during our own recent "dark-ages" science is said to have known nothing of the blood-circulation in man's own body. And even today, do we not climb mountains of intellectual-spiritual poise merely to pick the flowers of happy thoughts and feelings that seem to grow on such mountain-moments within the orthodox sense of our own rounded-out personality? How many of us are aware of any expansion of the horizon between self and environment?

So this philosopher, evidently one of the new type of humanity in an early stage of growth, built up a school of thought around the pin-point of knowledge that had seeped out of the depths of his being. We have a few of his kind today; they are like a rose that comes to bloom and radiates its aroma, believing it to be the aroma of the whole plant kingdom. This one had a soothing voice and a good line of words and phrases, so he soon had many persons in a "rising above" class. He and his mates would ascend the mountain and study the expansion of horizon-view as they ascended. The flower-pickers and the hunters considered them quite harmless, so they let them alone, although the horizon-expanders did not make any money out of their game and were therefore a bit off-center.

Presently the mountain was too low for the aspiring ones, so the master-mind went into deep meditation. It was no secret with the followers that the master often advised the gods on celestial matters, so they had seen to it that no worldly cares hampered their teacher's colossal work. This was too good a situation to lose, and how to hold his crowd together was the main theme of the master's meditation. At a ceremonial meeting he announced that Ah Ping in a person-to-person call had revealed the true "upward and inward" path, for which the disciples were now ready. This path was for each man to build himself a tower as high as he wished, the sky being the limit if and when reached. The master would build the first tower if the disciples would get busy and make bricks.

To provide truly an inward growth, the tower must be built around the individual. So the master stood on a certain spot and started to lay bricks around himself in a circle within easy arm reach. He became an excellent bricklayer, and grew fascinated with the art of laying bricks, especially as his wall became higher than his shoulders and his hands grew closer to one another. Presently, with a shout of triumph, he fitted in the key-brick in a well-executed dome over his own head. He had discovered things about brick-laying that no one heretofore had known or conceived as a possibility.

Most of the followers held a ceremony of praise and sang songs of tribute to the teacher. They hurled anathema at the few heretics who dared suggest that the master had missed his objective. So some more schools of tower-building got their start then and there. The philosopher's bones are still within his tower.

Many of us are like that in our tower-building with doctrinal bricks. We get so interested in cementing one doctrine onto another with the mortar of compassionate love as we understand it that we forget to move along with the tower. Institutions as well as individuals are likely to do this, according to historical evidence, unless they keep alive an awareness of the dual nature of intellectual-spiritual "rising above."

How could the master-mind in the parable have kept on rising? He could have built a scaffold or he could have walked around on his wall as he built it. If there had been a seepage of water or oil into his tower he could have risen on a float; but then there would be the timing-factor between his bricklaying speed and the rise of the liquid. This is probably the closest analogy to what happens to most of us; our progress requires eternal vigilance to keep the rising liquid of emotional control, the laying of doctrinal bricks and the knowledge of wider horizons well synchronized with one another and with the builder's responsibility to humanity.

Then again, the philosopher could have built a solid tower, taking more time and material but keeping a solid footing and rising with each layer of bricks. He could have worked in a circular stair on the outside to keep his communication with the world.

Of course, this parable of rising in a physical sense must be interpreted into terms of consciousness-growth, for the rising that one does toward self-conscious godhood is not a matter of crawling up so many feet above the earth or above one's own head.

There are many points to consider in this parable; many interesting and instructive analogy-points. The institution that gets too interested in bricklaying technique is more than apt to find itself under a

comfortable dome that becomes a "ring-pass-not" beyond which lie the mineral springs where heretics get baths in sulphur and brimstone. Institutional bricklaying fanaticism may again be analogous to overdone "membership-driving" — the chief interest becoming the laying of human bricks around the name of the school while the school falls behind in knowledge or in the ability to properly disseminate the knowledge it may have to new streams of human consciousness. History seems to show that to build a well-cemented, horizon-limiting dogma-dome over the world's major religio-philosophic institutions, or "churches," is a good way to help bring on and to add a little more darkness to another one of those cyclic periods when the planet's humanity is none too bright.

The Theosophical Forum

BUT WHAT OF DEATH AND AFTER? — *W. Q. Judge*

Is heaven a place or is it not? Theosophy teaches, as may be found in all sacred books, that after death the soul reaps a rest. This is from its own nature. It is a thinker, and cannot during life fulfil and carry out all, nor even a small part of the myriads of thoughts entertained. Hence when at death it casts off the body and the astral body and is released from the passions and desires, its natural forces have immediate sway and it thinks its thoughts out on the soul plane, clothed in a finer body suitable to that existence

This is called Devachan. It is the very state that has brought about the descriptions of heaven common to all religions, but this doctrine is very clearly put in the Buddhist and Hindu religions. It is a time of rest, because the physical body being absent the consciousness is not in the completer touch with nature which is possible on the material plane.

But it is a real experience and no more illusionary than earth life, it is where the essence of the thoughts of life that were as high as character permitted, expands and is garnered by the soul and mind. When the force of these thoughts is fully exhausted the soul is drawn back once more to earth, to that environment which is sufficiently like unto itself to give it the proper further evolution This alternation from state to state goes on until the being rises from repeated experiences above ignorance, and realizes in itself the actual unity of all spiritual beings. Then it passes on to higher and greater steps on the evolutionary road.

THE ORIGIN OF MAN AND THE LOWER KINGDOMS — *Peter Stoddard*

Students of Theosophy are aware, in a general way, that scientific ideas are approximating more closely to the Teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. In recent years this tendency has been very marked in regard to the vexed question of the "Origin of Man" and its related subjects of Darwinism and Evolution. The once popular idea that the Human Stock was derived from the lower kingdoms via the Simians and Anthropoids is now being abandoned by an ever-increasing number of Scientists; mainly because the merging of one kingdom into another, or of one stock into another, has never been demonstrated, and because the facts disclosed in the study of the anatomy of the human physical frame do not support such a theory. Further, the discoveries of human remains of high types in very ancient geological strata now prove that highly evolved men were contemporaneous with, or precedent to, some of the animals he was supposed to have been derived from.

To quote a few facts from the science of Anatomy. The constructions of the human arm and hand, and of the human leg and foot, prove that man was never pronograde, that is walking on four legs like the four-footed animals. Man possesses a muscle in the leg, the peroneus tertius, which enables him to stand and walk in an upright position. No other animal whatsoever has either this muscle, or a foot like the human foot. These are two specifically human characteristics, which are also found in the early development of the human embryo, thus proving them to be exceedingly primitive human features which could never have been inherited by man from any animal. The muscles, bones, and joints, of the human forearm are astonishingly primitive in structure, and therefore could not have been evolved at a late date in man's evolutionary history; and they show no traces of ever having been used as a supporting forelimb.

What are the Theosophical Teachings about the Origin of Man and of the Kingdoms of Nature accompanying him on this planet? They can be

summarized in one sentence, viz.: — "The Human Kingdom was derived from the Gods, and the lower Kingdoms were derived from Man." How? When? Where? That is a long and complicated story, which, in Theosophy, all along the line, is consistent with itself and with the known facts of life.

When Theosophy speaks of "The Gods," it means that there are "Creative Powers" in Nature, and that they contribute to, and assist in, man's evolution. How? By appropriate action in accordance with their function and destiny, much in the same way as a gardener tends his flowers. These "Gods" are of various grades and functions, and they have their own proper work to do in the evolutionary processes, even as man has. Theosophy declares there are designers in the world — designers of many degrees, vast hierarchies of them, infilling the Cosmos, and we live in them even as the cells of a man's body live and move and have their being in man. Further, that evolution proceeds on three general lines — the spiritual, the mental-emotional, and the vital-astral-physical; that man represents these three general lines of evolution, and that he is thus composite, having various "Principles" united in his constitution. Thus man is not merely an animal. His psychology, his mental abilities, his inventive genius, his art, his aspirations, his wonderful achievements, are the results of high powers acquired during various periods of evolution. Nature's processes are cyclical — She has the habit of repetition; and as man is a part of Nature, he also reflects this habit of periodicity in his repeated incarnations on earth. In the larger sense, the Human Life-Wave, consisting of Man in the aggregate, is also subject to the same Law of cycles, and his present association with the earth is only one (the fourth) of a septenary series of such events. Nature's processes are also gradual. The beginnings of Human life on this present earth were not necessarily material in the ordinary sense of that word. They were ethereal at first, and condensed only gradually into a material condition. These periods of gradual solidification occupied many millions of years, prior to the further millions of years during which the Human frame has been more or less material.

Now there is no confusion in the Theosophical Teachings, although there is great complexity. And the subject of the origin of the beasts is a complex one. Clearly, the many similarities between Man and the Kingdoms below him indicate a close connection. But must we therefore suppose that Man is derived from these lower Kingdoms? In view of the fact that the human stock is the most advanced, the logical deduction would be that it is the oldest. And if it is the oldest, it must have started the first; and if the lower kingdoms possess many features similar to man, the further logical deduction would be that they are derived from man. This is our thesis, viz.: — "The Human Stock, considered as a whole, is the most primitive of all the mammalian stocks of today, and always has been so in past time. The human stock is the primordial (ancient first) stock; the originator, on this earth, in the present Globe-Round, of the entire mammalian line, in a manner and according to the laws of nature fully explained in Theosophy. Man preceded the mammals, and they grew from him. Man did not grow from the mammals. But this does not apply to the other vertebrata and the invertebrates, although they came from the human stock, in the previous Globe-Round."

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: II

Over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China, in the Spring of 1941, fifteen-minute weekly broadcasts were given — the result of the enthusiastic enterprise of Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist of the Shanghai Theosophical Lodge. This second talk, given on March 30, was by Miss Inga Sjostedt. She outlines the Theosophical teaching of Universal Brotherhood.

Good evening, everybody:

The speaker last Sunday gave a broad, general outline of Theosophy and its main teachings. This evening I would like to explain and define Universal Brotherhood, the acceptance of which is the only pre-requisite for joining the Theosophical Society.

What do we mean by the word Brotherhood? It can, of course, be considered as a purely sentimental bond between man and man, but a student of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion means something much deeper than that when he speaks of Universal Brotherhood.

Throughout the ages the Wise Men, the Initiates, of all parts of the world have known and taught — sometimes publicly and sometimes secretly — the doctrine of the Divinity of Man. We have lost this noble and inspiring teaching in the West as our religions have degenerated through the dark Middle Ages which enveloped Europe in mental and spiritual darkness. But the ancients were familiar with this thought, and not only believed man to be basically divine, but believed that trees, animals, brooks and mountains were vitalized by an indwelling god. Today we say, as we consider the mythologies of different peoples, that these peoples were pantheists, childish pagans who believed in fairy tales — because we do not understand the deeper meaning behind these so-called fairy tales.

God, Divinity, the Spiritual and Ultimate Reality — we can call it what

we like — must be omnipresent to be infinite, eternal and truly divine. If we admit of a single atom in space without its core of indwelling divine fire, then we limit God, because He cannot be all-powerful if He is not contained in every particle of space. Divinity must infill all life, all created, finite entities, to *be* Divinity. This the seers and sages of humanity have always known; and they have passed their knowledge on to us under the guise of allegory and myth. The Greek pantheon is filled with deities presiding in so-called inanimate objects, such as trees, lakes, rocks, and so on. It is the same story with the Hindus. Even some of the early Christians endowed stars and planets with a soul of their own and believed that the stellar bodies visible to the eye were merely the bodies of bright spirits or gods.

There is much in us that is neither divine nor eternal, for instance our physical bodies, our instincts, and even our everyday thoughts; but the core of the core of our inner being is God, because it is the infinite in us which builds for itself garments and vehicles of perishable matter — though even the atoms of our physical bodies have a spark of the eternal in them.

Jesus knew this, as well as the other great spiritual Teachers of mankind. If we turn to the Christian scriptures for a moment, we shall find many references to the divinity of Man. In Psalm 82, verses 6 and 7, it is written: "I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." Jesus repeats this saying in the New Testament. In the Gospel according to St. John, Chapter 10, verse 34, he says, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?" In 1st Corinthians, Chapter 3, verse 16, it is written, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And this from Acts, Chapter 17, verse 28: "For in him we live, and move, and have our being." Could anything be said more plainly and incontrovertibly?

We are divine at heart, and because the divinity in us is the highest and noblest part of our complex being, it is our task, our destiny, to merge the lower human soul with the deathless God within. Then only can we

understand the injunction of Jesus as it stands recorded in the Gospel according to St. Matthew, Chapter 5, verse 48: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Not only is man divine at heart. But all things whatsoever that *are*, that live and exist in this world of ours, live and exist because they are projected onto the screen of existence by the indwelling Divinity which is their real originator. When we realize this: that we must unite in brotherhood with all humanity, because every man is basically identical with ourselves; that we must guide and protect the animals who stand below us on the evolutionary ladder because in them too there is a spark of the identical divine fire which inspires us; when we learn that the beauty in Nature appeals to us because it awakens a responsive chord in our own souls, then the words Universal Brotherhood begin to acquire a real meaning, based not only on sentimentality but on cold facts.

There is an old mystical Sufi tale which illustrates this teaching well. The story is that the Soul once came to the portals of the House of God and knocked. And God heard the knocking, and His voice rolled like thunder, saying, "Who knocks?" And the Soul answered, "It is I." And the voice of God spoke again, saying, "Who is I? I know thee not." And the Soul turned away from the House of God unhappily and wandered throughout the universe for untold ages. And at last it returned to the House of God and knocked again. And God's voice thundered forth as before, "Who knocks?" And the Soul answered, "*Thou* knockest." And then a whisper, inaudible to the ears, yet filling all the spaces, issued from the House of God, and it said, "Enter into thine own."

This is the keynote to our attitude in life. We are divine at heart; whatever our failings and imperfections, the pattern of perfection, of immortality, is graven on our spirit. We are the temple of the living God, as the New Testament says, and all inspiration, all understanding and spiritual power come — not from the outside, but from our own inner nature. It remains in our power to awaken the human nature to a recognition of the divine. When we have done that we shall be as gods.

There is a way of quickening the process, and that is by means of training under a reliable teacher. There are many men in India and Tibet today who have passed through such a training and who have mastered their lower human nature. They can perform feats which to a Westerner would seem nothing short of a miracle. These men, these Yogis, would laugh at the notion that the Spirit of Nature, or God, was something outside of themselves. They know, they have proof through experience, that true spiritual powers come from within themselves, that God, or Divinity, is at the root of their human selves. There is no such thing as a miracle, because there cannot be anything supernatural in nature; but masters of life like Jesus and Buddha, through drawing upon their inner Divinity, knew how to control the functions of physical nature, and to the uninitiated these things appeared to be supernatural because beyond their understanding.

The Theosophical Forum

FORGIVENESS AND KARMIC ACTION — *G. de Purucker*

Think of what the ancients meant when they spoke of men as the kin of the gods, the children of divinities, co-operating with the divinities in the affairs of the Solar Kingdom. It is true; and as time goes on and from manhood we pass into godhood, into becoming gods, our contributory efforts will be much better, much more beautiful, much wider, much richer, in every way grander. We are at present young gods at school, young gods at play. Our home is the Solar System. It is likewise our school-house, our university. This earth is, as it were, our school-room at present until we graduate to a higher school-room; but all our activity takes place in our university of life, which is the Solar System. How wonderful a picture! And I can assure you that every human thought is registered for eternity on the deathless tablets of time. A thought of mine will touch with the most delicate finger of influence the remotest star in the galaxy and will affect that star by so much, just as I am affected by all thoughts around me.

Imagine two billion human beings on earth, the human race — that is, the imbodyed portion of the human race. Suppose they are thinking, as men do, especially today due to the rapid improvements of intercommunication: suppose they think all more or less at the same time about the same thing and pretty much in the same way — let us say it is a scare or a war-hysteria or a great hate or a great emotion: do you think that that vast body of loosened psychic energy is not going to strike somewhere? Of course it will. And here is where karman comes in. It is an old, old teaching, taught more often in the earlier days of the Society than now, that the disasters that afflict mankind are mainly brought about by man, his own evil thinking and evil feeling throwing into the astral light or into the earth's atmosphere a simply terrific volume of energy, of force. You know the old English proverb, which is very true: Curses like chickens come home to roost. They do not go and roost in somebody else's farm. *Chickens come home*. Thoughts of love,

thoughts of beauty, thoughts of kindness, benevolent thoughts and feelings: they likewise come like messengers from the gods winging their way back to us. Someday, somewhen, somewhere, we reap what we sow. If men knew and felt this great law, how differently would they not act towards each other! All feelings of revenge and hatred, and that diabolic fruit of self-seeking materialism that you must protect yourself at any cost against your brother: such things could never again find lodgment in men's minds and hearts.

How true is the word of the old Hebrew Prophet: "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." What a warning! Theosophy shows us why and how. The man who suffers an injury would do infinitely better to accept and forgive, to take it manfully; for his guerdon in recompense someday will be great, an injurer will become his benefactor; and if he stays his own hand, not only does he not add to the fearful weight of evil karma pressing on him, but he raises his enemy. An act like that is godlike. I say unto you, "Love your enemies." So spake the Avatara. "Do good unto those who persecute you. Give not wrong for wrong, nor hate for hate." When will men learn this?

The Theosophical Forum

UNRECOGNISED INFLUENCE OF THE MYSTERIES — *H. T. Edge*

The cyclic appearance and reappearance of mystery schools implies that there has at all times existed a source from which these outward manifestations could spring, an undercurrent, a thread, an immortal basis, never absent, but alternately latent and manifest. This is somewhat like the familiar idea that the Masters of Wisdom, who collectively constitute the Great Lodge, continue to exist, while yet it is only at certain specific epochs that they send forth into the outer world of men their messengers to proclaim anew the tidings of the Wisdom-Religion or Secret Doctrine which they preserve and guard. But it is not to be doubted that these guardians of the ancient lore have at all times secret bodies of disciples in various parts of the world, unknown to mankind, yet secretly preserving the teachings; esoteric schools in fact, continuous as to their esoteric side, but only periodically exoteric. That this is not merely inference or speculation might readily be established by historical research; and if this has not already been done, it is only because the attention of scholars has not been turned in that direction. On the contrary, the attitude of mind of our historians has been such as to turn their eyes in a contrary direction. For we have to bear in mind that history is largely an artificial made-to-order commodity.

Historians examine ancient records, and from these they draw and put together all that they consider worthy of credence, rejecting whatever they regard as unworthy of credence. Such a selective process must inevitably result in the production of a biased history. But if a scholar, whose mind was not previously biased against such a subject as the mystery schools, were to go to a great library in search of all the evidence he could find — would he not then collect all the things which other scholars have rejected and ignored? In short, I maintain that the evidence will be forthcoming in abundance so soon as any scholar or historian is prepared to search for it with an unprejudiced mind. Some while ago I reviewed a book which dealt elaborately with mysticism in Europe throughout the centuries of the Christian era, and I was

astonished to find what a wealth of information is accessible of which the world at large, even the learned world, is entirely ignorant.

What we know as history may be a mere record of outward events, mere chronicles; or it may go a step further and be colored by some shade of political opinion, as the Whig history of Macaulay or the Tory history of Hume. Some historians may seek to give an economic color to history, others to interpret it according to theories of social evolution, and so on. There is a subject called the philosophy of history, in which writers seek to define the causes which produce events. Sometimes history has been viewed materialistically as a causal sequence of events, the one producing the other in an endless chain, with no cause operating from outside the chain. But such an interpretation would mean that there could be no progress; the stream of events would resemble a river running downhill and could never rise higher than it stood at any previous time. The facts prove that there is progress, and hence there must be forces operating from outside. One of these, as Theosophists know, is the continual reincarnation of souls who bring with them the results of their former experience. All great movements in history start from the dynamic effect of some great personality, who draws around him other personalities. But another potent force in the molding of events is surely that emanating from these secret mystery schools. How is it conveyed? It is neither easy nor indeed necessary to give a concise answer to this question; it hinges upon the general question of what theologians call inspiration. Whence did such men as Jacob Boehme, Meister Eckhart, Paracelsus, Giordano Bruno — to mention but a few out of an almost countless number — draw their inspiration? In what form or manner did they receive it? There may have been some who received instruction directly from wise men and who openly acknowledged the fact. Others there may have been who, though thus being taught, were precluded by vows of silence from acknowledging it. But apart from these two classes, how many mystics must there have been who received knowledge from the mystery schools by one of the means of what is called inspiration? We know not whence our thoughts

come to us; and a man of pure life and high aspirations opens that very door which the unseen helpers of humanity stand always ready to enter.

We Theosophists cannot afford to forget that, behind this outer world of visible events, there stands the mighty world of thought, whereof this outer world is but the visible manifestation; that, behind this stage whereon the actors play their parts, is the great drama itself which they are enacting, the author whose ideas they are bodying forth. The history of humanity unfolds itself according to the true laws of evolution: it grows from within. Whatever conventional historians may be, Theosophists are not metaphysical enough to imagine an evolution which grows mysteriously out of nothing towards an unknown goal. The drama shows us the progressive outward manifestation of what is latent within.

Mystery schools throughout the ages — even the darkest ages — have kept burning the sacred fires, have kept alive the seeds, as the winter snows preserve the seeds of future harvests. Had there been no such guardians, where would have been the means by which in our own time a new proclamation of the Wisdom-Religion could have been made? True, the sacred fire would have been there, in its own realm; but what of the link? For just as the human mind is the link between the Spiritual Soul and the man of flesh, so have the mystery schools been the link between the Light of the Great Lodge and the children of earth — a necessary vehicle that could not be allowed to perish.

The Eleusinia were highly esteemed in the ancient Greek world, for the beneficial moral influence which they diffused; though there were also, unfortunately, certain other schools which, through inculcating perverted doctrines and rites, diffused an influence that was recognised as pernicious. Some important names in Greek history have come down to us as owing the chief part of their prestige to their being more or less closely connected with one or another of these genuine schools. For example, we have Epaminondas, the celebrated Theban leader, who contacted the school of Pythagoras through a friend who

had come from there; and not only his unusual ability but also the magnanimity and justness of his character are celebrated by the historians. By his influence the Thebans are restrained from the usual acts of revenge and destruction upon some hostile and conquered neighbors, and these neighbors are instead treated mercifully and taken into alliance. Even so rapacious a man as Alexander the Great included in his character an element of nobility and enlightenment which he had imbibed indirectly through his teacher Aristotle, and which greatly tempered the severity of his policy towards the peoples whom he conquered. It would be easy to compile a list of similar instances of the direct and traceable effect of the mysteries upon men of prominence; and the more so, as I said before, if the minds of historians were directed towards finding, instead of ignoring, such cases.

Around the time of the Christian era, when the seat of civilization was the Roman empire and was spread around the Mediterranean as a center, there were many schools of occultism in Egypt, Asia Minor, and other adjacent territories. These undoubtedly had a connection with India. Through Egypt, India, Persia, filtered through many channels the ancient teachings of the Wisdom-Religion; and we have notable examples in the Neoplatonists and Gnostics, which it may please scholars to define as vague speculations or as syncretistic patchworks of Platonism and whatever else the professors of these cults could find. But a juster estimate, such as we are enabled to take, shows that both the Neoplatonists and the Gnostics had their source in the ancient Mysteries, and that instead of borrowing from religions, they simply interpreted them. Christianity in its origins was of this nature; and it was only through the course of some centuries that all the most valuable doctrines were driven out and the later materialistic and dogmatic religion formed. Yet were these elements not entirely killed; they were driven out of sight, compelled to hide; and a careful study of all the various secret schools and cults and isolated writers and teachers between those early centuries and the present day would prove amply that the contact between the outer world of men and the

inner world of the gods has never entirely ceased.

Perhaps we may see in this theme the solution of a historical problem which has puzzled many. I refer to the extraordinary vitality and influence of the Christian religion, so out of proportion, as far as one can see, with the merits of its content. Can it be that this hardy plant, however stunted or grotesque its visible form may be, is continually nourished from an inexhaustible fount of life that ever wells up anew and replenishes its dwindling vigor? This is surely the case, nor can we believe that such power could be brought to the external organism from the life fount within unless there have always existed intermediaries of some kind — not merely individuals but groups — the mystery schools or their equivalent in some one or other esoteric body.

When the Sanskrit literature first began to be translated, Europe experienced a second Renaissance. Then was a circuit closed which established contact with the ancient mystery schools of India. The Transcendental school in America, through Emerson, acknowledges its indebtedness to this source; in the realm of German philosophy, Schopenhauer profited by it. Its influence since then has steadily widened more and more, until now it is a source of inspiration for pulpit, pen, forum, and lecture hall in every quarter. This could not have happened if the Mystery Schools had not been kept alive.

We have been privileged in our day to witness and to participate in a revival of the lost Mysteries of antiquity, whose purpose and effect is to restore to actual use the eternal principles upon which successful living is based; and to counteract the desolating and destructive effect of those wrong principles which have ensued upon a too exclusive devotion to an individualistic selfishness aided by scientific discovery. Thus we have seen this influence diffused ever more widely, everywhere being recognised and applied; so that it needs only the rise of younger generations and the passing of the older, for great and beneficent changes in our whole social polity to become apparent and active. And this influence is conveyed not merely by the visible

channels of printed and spoken word, but also and powerfully through the invisible currents of thought which bring to receptive and aspiring minds the sacred teachings which we broadcast into the ether from our assemblies and from our private meditations. Organization is an all-important thing; every living being is an organism. Our society is an organism; it was formed largely to bring together into a common focus the many scattered sparks of divine fire cherished in the hearts of individuals powerless from their isolation. There are individuals who avail themselves of the benefits rendered available by organizations, without desiring themselves to affiliate with such an organization. They may have good and sufficient reasons which justly preponderate over arguments on the other side: it is not for us to judge. Yet for those of us who see the joining of an organization as being at once a privilege and a duty, the way seems sufficiently clear. It is ours to promote the work of the body of which we are members, and to stand ever loyal and true to our fellows and to those to whom we look up as leaders and inspirers.

The Theosophical Forum

AFTER DEATH — THE WEIGHING OF THE HEART — S. H. Wylde

The Vignette which accompanies Chapter 125 of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead* depicts the famous scene of The Weighing of the Heart. Between the great columns which support the Hall of Twofold Truth stands Osiris Ani. He has passed through the portals of death, and before he can proceed upon his journey his past earth-existence must be evaluated. In one scale of the Balance of Justice rests his heart, in the other the Feather of Truth. Is the heart undefiled, guileless and true; or has it become heavy with cupidity, sloth, or self-love? Horus stands in the center and observes the weight.

At this fateful moment no word is necessary. No supplications, no justifications, no specious sophistries avail. The Scales, presided over by Maat, inexorable Goddess of Truth, mark with impersonal exactness the worth or lack of worth of the pilgrim. Osiris, the sun-god, waits in an inner chamber while Thoth notes down upon his tablet the record of the life just over. What his report will be determines whether the pilgrim can continue to the solar heart or must enter for a time the purgatorial fires.

Thus in ancient days did the Egyptian hierophants by this graphic symbol teach to countless generations the secret of the after-death state. What must have been the psychological effect of such a vivid representation upon even the uninitiated people? And how would the knowledge of such a teaching affect the actions of men today? For this is not merely a relic of Egyptian religious ritual. Osiris Ani is Everyman, who must witness his own judgment after death. He must watch *himself* being prepared for the sifting process by which his "sins are separated from his soul," as the Egyptians phrased it, before, freed and purified, he can pass on to the "heaven-world."

How futile at this supreme hour will appear all the deceptions of the past life: the tortuous arguments with which we justified our actions;

the elaborate mayas we wrapped about ourselves, living in a fool's country of self-made dreams! How transparent the insincerities will become with which we cheated ourselves — and others; while within the secret chambers of the heart earthiness and corruption were entertained!

On the other hand, to one whose life, strive as he would, was clouded in confusions and misunderstandings, failures and disappointments, the weighing of the heart may bring an infinite peace and consolation, *if* through every trial and difficulty he has "kept his heart with all diligence." For this keeping of the heart means that he has held faithful to the behests of the Dweller within as far as his undeveloped capacities will allow. To do this consistently in all the occasions of life is no trifling task. The temptation to compromise, to put up a pleasing front to the world, to say the half-truth, to "play safe," to refuse to think when thinking reveals unpleasant things — all these temptations appear so plausible that we persuade ourselves we have solved the problems of living by making use of them. But the heart suffers meanwhile and becomes weighted down by these counterfeits; for each measure of deception, insincerity, prevarication or indolence that we indulge in adds its modicum of weight little by little through the years of our life, and thus we are, through ignorance, preparing an unfortunate after-death judgment for ourselves — ourselves working against our own best interests.

Purification of the heart requires an assiduity and alertness, a fidelity and strength of purpose that nothing can overthrow. It is the beginning and end of all progress; because this mystic heart, of which the physical vital organ is but a poor representative on earth, is the channel by means of which the human self contacts its divine original. May this, perhaps, account for that indefinable quality, that warmth, that radiance, surrounding those who live the heart-life even in minor degree? A little of the celestial light shines through?

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" — for they shall be found true in the trial of the Scales of Justice; and death shall mean

for them a passing on into the presence of Osiris, the god whose sun-splendor they have earned the right to share consciously.

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: III

This is the third of the series of weekly quarter-hour broadcasts given over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China, last Spring, by Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist of the Shanghai Theosophical Lodge. This talk, broadcast on April 6th, outlines several of the most important Theosophical doctrines.

Good evening, everybody:

The speaker last week explained the meaning of universal brotherhood as based on the fundamental divinity of all that is. This thought may seem at first sight incongruous in the face of present-day civilization, but we must realize that man today has travelled a long way from his spiritual home, and that his fall into matter has been an aeons-long proceeding. If we read the first few chapters of Genesis in the Christian Bible, we find there the story of the original fall of the spiritual entities into the beginnings of manifested life or material existence. In this allegory Adam and Eve were told regarding the fruit of the tree of Knowledge: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (*Gen. II, 17*). Tempted by the serpent, which is an ancient symbol of wisdom in all mythologies, they did eat, and it says in the next chapter of Genesis, verse 22: "The Lord God said: Behold the man is become as one of us to know good and evil." Thus the unself-conscious spiritual entities first acquired responsibility and free choice and began their pilgrimage through all the spheres of nature, gaining experience of all manner of manifested life, until they shall have attained to self-conscious union with the divine. That is the goal of all beings, from atoms to stars — man included. Nature never jumps, but all things evolve slowly by gradual growth in a spiral motion. A cycle of growth is succeeded by a cycle of decay, followed again by a cycle of growth on a higher plane. As a spiritual entity sinks into matter, its spiritual qualities recede and give place to the qualities pertaining to the opposite pole, the pole of matter. For spirit and matter, being the

opposite poles of life, are fundamentally life itself and inseparable from each other. Then the entity immersed in matter, has to evolve in itself its inherent spiritual qualities in order to return to its own divine source, as an experienced and fully conscious god. The teachers of mankind have taught us that we, as humanity today, are beginning our upward journey and must evolve those spiritual qualities in us, which are at present obscured by the material side of our nature. This is also the reason for the coming of the succession of spiritual teachers. We are at the turning-point, when we can develop no further in the direction of materiality and must return with the upward trend of evolution.

The cyclic course of evolution can be traced in all forms of life. Planets circle around the sun in regular order, and the seasons follow one another in due course. We live by day and sleep by night and return to pick up the threads of our waking life regularly each morning. In precisely similar fashion we are born, live and die in a regular cycle. Reincarnation does not mean, as so many people think, a return to life in animal bodies. The trend of evolution is ever forward, and an entity, having reached the human stage and developed the faculty through which human beings chiefly function, the self-conscious thinking mind, cannot lose that faculty and return to any lower form of life, but must evolve ever more of its latent capacities, until it becomes a truly spiritual being — a Master, as we call such a man. That is, one who has united himself with the divine self within him and functions consciously on the plane of spirit.

Reincarnation also provides the only satisfactory explanation of the obvious inequalities in life. We all wonder why some people are born with every opportunity for making life a splendid experience, while others are confronted with hardships and difficulties from the very beginning. If we regard life from the viewpoint furnished by a belief in reincarnation, we realize that these inequalities arise out of mistakes and successes in some former life. There is a Sanskrit word we often use in this connection — the word Karman. It means action and reaction. This speaks for itself. Karman is really a natural law, which

balances cause and effect, action and reaction. Any thing which in any way disturbs the natural harmony brings its own results. Theosophy does not countenance the idea of a god judging human beings after one short life on earth to eternal bliss or damnation. Either sentence would be ghastly. The thought of stagnating in heaven for all eternity imperfect as we are, must give the creeps to any honest man — not to mention an equally unending sojourn in hell. We say that nature provides her own punishments and rewards in exact proportion to the deeds or thoughts, which produced them, and that there is no arbitrary judgment by a deity either wrathful or merciful: "As ye sow, so shall ye also reap." The result is only the exact effect of the cause, not strictly speaking a punishment or a reward, but a natural outcome.

Thus the divine entity repeatedly imbodyes itself in vehicles suited to its sphere of action. These vehicles range from the first spiritual veil over pure divinity, through all the forms of intelligence and emotion down to the physical bodies. All beings have all these principles although not all are active. For instance the animal kingdom has not yet developed the use of its thinking faculty. The animals are not capable of abstract thought, whereas human beings are. But the animals have developed the principle of emotion, which in the vegetable kingdom still lies dormant — and so on. We humans have reached the point, where we must learn to use the spiritual principle, which we possess in latency. It is our next duty to learn to function in that still unexplored region of our composite constitution. This will not be accomplished in one life, nor yet in two. It may take hundreds of lives before humanity as a whole has reached the status of a Buddha or a Christ. The latter teacher gave us specific instructions to begin: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your father, which is in heaven is perfect" (*Matt. V, 48*). Not one of us has the conceit to imagine that this can be accomplished before we die — say to-morrow or in fifty years.

And when we do reach what to us now would seem perfection, we shall find that we are only entering into a larger and more advanced existence. Our earth-lives are only one step on the ladder, and when we have united ourselves with the highest that we can conceive of, then

will begin our evolution on a grander scale. The entire universe is pursuing its own course of development, of which we are a part. Yet the universe in its turn is only a part of a greater hierarchy of lives. We are all too prone to think of the stars as mere shining globes placed in the sky for our delectation by some deity with a sense of their decorative value. That is of course absurd, and it is far more reasonable to suppose that they are animate entities in various stages of evolutionary progress. This, incidentally, was an accepted teaching in the Christian church at the time of the church-father Origen, until, along with many other theosophical teachings, it was anathematized by the Home-Synod, which met at Constantinople in about 538 a.d., some three hundred years after Origen's death.

The stars then are living entities, and the beings inhabiting them form a part of their life, just as the characteristic denizens of our globe, mineral, vegetable, animal and human form a part of the earth and its life. In the same manner the atoms composing our physical bodies are a part of these. In this way we see all life as a system of hierarchies, where entities at different stages of evolution grow within their respective spheres.

In the human hierarchy, as in all others, there are beings very backward in development, such as savages, and others, who have reached far ahead of the average human being. These pioneers in spiritual development we call Mahatmans, a word meaning great soul, or Masters, for they have striven to reach the goal of human development in order to help the general run of mankind. From time to time such a Master will appear among men, teaching the truths of nature and giving a fresh impetus to the urge for spiritual advancement. Thank you.

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

[See Letters XXIIIa and XXIIIb, Question and Answer No. 8. — Eds]

ALL THINGS CONTRIBUTE TO ALL THINGS

It is the teaching of the God-Wisdom that every member of the Solar System is a living entity, a god imbodyed. Such is the sun, such is every planet, such is every comet. Furthermore, the Solar System itself as a whole is an entity, precisely as our human body is an entity as a whole, a unit, yet containing within itself different organs, each such organ itself being an individual, a unit, a living entity with a consciousness of its own kind.

Do you see what this means? That just as our body, an organic entity itself, is helped in being such by the different organs, the heart, the brain, the kidneys, the liver, the stomach, and so forth, so the Solar System, itself an organic entity, is aided in being such by all the organic units within it: the sun, the planets, the comets, and so forth. They all co-operate to produce a greater thing, i. e., the Solar Kingdom, with the sun as its king or chief.

What deduction must we draw from this? That, co-operating as all these units do towards a common end, nothing can be done properly in the Solar System if a single one of these bodies refuses co-operative action and union in effort; and "union" here does not mean two or three organs joining to oppose two or three other organs. It means all organic units without a single exception cooperating for the common universal good. If there is not this co-operation, if, for instance, one single organ were to die, then the whole organism dies, because the harmony and symmetry of the greater unit is interrupted, killed, stopped. It is just the same with the human body. Suppose my heart stopped working, died — my body would die. If my stomach disintegrated, my body would die; and similarly so with any other organ — even the skin or the tissues or the flesh or the bones: we need

all these different things to make a complete and rightly functioning human body. So it is with the Solar System.

Thus when we say that all things co-operate to produce all things, we may be referring to all things on this earth; but it may also mean that this earth in its turn co-operates with *every other* body in the Solar System to produce the proper effects on every other planet and on the sun. How about rain, for instance, and the other meteorological phenomena of this earth? How about storms of any kind: snow-storms, hail-storms, rain-storms, electric storms? Shall we say that only one thing in the Solar System produces these, whether it be sun-spots" or the planets, or perhaps one planet, as some astrologers quite wrongly say? No. All things work together to produce all things everywhere.

Thus, when we come to answering the question: Are the sun-spots the cause of the meteorological phenomena on this earth? the answer has to be no, because that would exclude all the other contributing causes and causers. The sun-spots play their appropriate part; so does every planet. But what is the most important factor, the greatest cause in the production of these things on our earth? It is the earth itself. But the earth itself could not produce them unless it had the help of all the other co-operating or consentient gods, as the Greeks and Romans phrased it; in other words of the sun, the planets, the comets.

What makes heat? What makes rain? What makes cold on this earth? Magnetism, to be sure; electricity, to be sure. But these are the forces. What makes these things fundamentally? The vitality of the earth co-operating with the vitality received from the other planets, and from the sun and the comets. *All things co-operate to make all things.* A key, a master-key.

Actually, if you want the mechanical cause, the immediate cause, that is, the cause just preceding the effect — not the first cause — it is the dilatation of the earth's atmosphere and its contraction. The atmosphere of the earth is one of the most marvelous organs of our Mother-Earth. Look upon the earth as a living being, or as the Latins would say, an animal (from the Latin word *anima*, meaning life).

Animal in Latin means a living being, a human or beast, for instance. Even a plant is an "animal" in this sense, only very feebly so; because *anima* meant, more particularly, what in Theosophy is called the animal soul — the *nepesh* of the Qabbalah.

The earth is constantly surcharged with vital power. There are times when it is almost bursting, and the inner power must have an escape: it must be discharged, because the pressure of the whole Solar System is behind it. Take the instance of earthquakes: they are my pet horror, they just turn my blood cold because I am always thinking of the damage to human beings, and the wretchedness that they can cause; yet they are one of the greatest blessings, for the earth is releasing energy which could otherwise become devastatingly explosive. Our earth would simply burst; it would blow up, if there were not these periodic discharges.

It is like the vitality that a human being is constantly throwing forth — by his walking, by his speaking, by his moving, by the circulation of his blood. Every time he lifts a finger he is throwing off energy. Suppose all the energy that the body produces could by some magic be clamped down and kept in the body, the body would explode, simply blow up; the tissues would be torn apart.

Of course there is the other side of the picture: if the expenditure of energy is too great, then you have the other extreme, and you have disease or death. But why does the human body do this? It is doing in its own small sphere, in its own small line, what the planets are doing, contributing its quota to the vitality of the earth; and this vitality comes into the human body from above, and from what passes in and out in the exchange of the life-atoms amongst us all. *All things contribute to all things*; they receive and give constantly. (1)

Do you realize that there is more vitality in the body in old age than there is in youth? Old age is not a cause of deprivation of vitality; it is a case of too much vitality. The body cannot build up fast enough. The intense life of the adult human being is slowly wrecking the body, causing it to age. The body cannot build fast enough. The life-pulsations

are quicker than the building power. Consequently you get the greying hair, the failing eyesight, the failing hearing, and all the phenomena that age brings. Health is simply balance; and the longer you can keep in health the longer you live — if you want to! If it is advisable! Some people seem to think that a long life is a mark of sanctity. It is very often not just so. Sometimes the grossest people are the longest-lived. There is an old Latin proverb which says: "The gods love those who die young," meaning the gods take those they love when they are young — not when the gods are young, but when those they take are young. The gods themselves are perennially young.

Now to return to the matter of the earth's atmosphere, which is continually dilating or expanding. We know that when this expansion occurs we have the dropping of the barometer, that sensitive instrument we have learned how to build which registers the air-pressure. It is a sign of rain. And we all know the chill in the air that follows a rain-storm even in the summer-time. We say "It cooled the air." The opposite effect, heat, is produced when the atmosphere condenses or contracts, and the greater pressure on the barometer causes it to go up. "Fair weather," we say, "and heat," — relative heat according to the season, of course.

What causes these contractions and dilatations of the earth's atmosphere? Mainly the periodic, vital pulsations in the earth itself. But these pulsations are intimately connected every instant of time, without a second's interruption, with all the other bodies of the Solar System. *All things contribute to all things.* The sun and all the planets are connected with the dilatations and contractions of the earth's atmosphere. Thus far the astrologers are perfectly right. But to say that it is the planets which make these things, that the planets are the sole cause, that is all wrong. All things contribute to all things: the sun and planets give me health; they give me disease. But so do I give myself both health and disease. *All things contribute to all things.* That is the master-key.

Now these contractions, or pressures as the modern scientific

phraseology has it, of the atmosphere, and these dilatations of the atmosphere, are mainly caused by the actual meteoric continent surrounding our globe like a thick shell. You will say, "But how can it be such a thick shell when we can see right through it; we can see the sun and the stars and the clouds?" Suppose instead of my present eye-sight I had an electric eye. Why then I could look right along a copper wire. Such things as copper and iron would be transparent to me. But with my present eye-sight I cannot see through a copper wire or along a 5000 mile stretch of copper wire because I have not the electric eye. On the other hand, with the electric eye I could not see things I now see. The fact is that our eye-sight has been evolved by Nature, or, if you like, evolved by Karman, so that we can look right through this meteoric mass surrounding our earth like a shell; and all we see of it is what we call the blue of the sky. That is the real explanation of the blue of the sky. The scientific theory that it is very fine dust mostly from earth which intercepts the blue rays of the solar spectrum, might be called a weak, partial explanation. I dare not omit even this, because if I did my explanation would be by so much imperfect. There is some truth in it, but to say that it is the cause of the blue of the sky is not true, because that excludes everything else.

All the other planets except Mars are likewise, each one, surrounded with its own meteoric continent. Science knows this and calls them the clouds of the different planets. Call them clouds if you want to. Say that they are clouds of cosmic dust and dust from the respective planets. All right: but they are actually mostly interstellar and interplanetary meteoric dust. Everyone of the planets in our Solar System except Mars, as I have said, is surrounded by such a continent of meteoric dust; and even Mars has a thin gauzy veil of meteoric matter surrounding it. Mars is different from the others because it is in obscurity at present; and on Globe D of the Martian Chain the forces of attraction holding the meteoric continent together have been relaxed, as it were. These magnetic and electric forces surrounding Mars are weak because the meteoric continent around Globe D of Mars has been more or less dissipated throughout space — not quite, but

almost. That is the reason we can catch just glimpses of the Martian Globe; but even those glimpses are still uncertain. Our astronomers are not sure that what some see others see. You know the interminable dispute aroused by the discovery of the so-called canals of Mars which Professor Lowell of Flagstaff, Arizona, and others have quite believed so long; and which others deny. Schiaparelli, the Italian astronomer, was the first to speak of these lines years and years ago, and as they seemed to him to resemble canals, he called them *canali*, the Italian word for canals or channels of any kind; and then people got the idea, because they took the word in the English sense of water-courses, that they must be water-courses. That is still not proved; it may be and it may not be. I do not care to say anything more about that.

Please remember this, Companions; The Solar System is a living being, of which the sun is both the brain and the heart. The different planets are the organs of this organic entity. Our earth is one. They all work together to produce the Solar System as an organism, or a group of organs. *All things contribute to all things*. Nothing happens on this earth, from the waving of a frond of fern in the wind to the most awful earthquake the world has ever known, except by such co-operating cosmic agency. All are produced mainly by the earth, but with the co-operation of the sun and moon, the planets and comets, for this organic entity moves in synchronous measures of destiny. *All things contribute to all things*. The birth of every baby is produced by the Solar System, by the earth, especially by the mother; yet all things contribute to produce that baby. The stars do have their effect upon us, most undoubtedly so; and the sun and planets and comets, because the Solar System is an organic living being, and therefore everything within it anywhere is affected by everything within it everywhere. Surely this is true; and it is a wonderful picture.

FOOTNOTE:

1. So strangely does the human mind wander into vagaries of imagination, that I find it needful to append this footnote lest the words in the text above be misunderstood by thoughtless or careless people as

a kind of indirect endorsement in our human life of the dissipation of vital human forces through immorality or in some other way.

Such misunderstanding of my meaning would be so utterly monstrous, so utterly contrary to every teaching of Theosophy and Occultism, that on no few occasions have I asked myself just how far I can go in stating even simple occult facts, when, as experience has shown me, one or two or more hearers might wrongly take the sense or the significance of what I was trying to say.

I state here without qualification, that any dissipation of the vital powers of the human body or mind in immorality of any form, immediately hastens the approaches of disease and old age, because wearing the body out, and because unnatural. Such dissipation of vitality would be a wilful waste of the life-forces, thus co-operating with the work of the Destroyers. Not only would such waste invite disease and premature senility, but even worse than this would be its effect on the moral stamina and ethical instinct of the human mind, and could in an extreme case result in moral and intellectual degeneration.

Let it be stated that self-control, strict moral conduct and self-forgetfulness are the path of Theosophical occultism, and this is stated without any qualifications whatsoever. Any misuse whatsoever or in any manner of vital power, even such as over-eating or gluttony, drunkenness, or anything along any line causing the body extra strain or depletion is a waste of vital power and therefore has a tendency to bring on disease, speedy old age, and as above hinted, even worse things in its train. ([return to text](#))

"THE HILL OF DISCERNMENT" — *G. de Purucker*

All truths are like diamonds. When cut and polished they have facets, each one such reflecting what is before it. For truth is comprehensive, not exclusive; it is a spiritual thing, and the spirit comprehendeth all. It is only the smaller things of us humans, and of beings lower than the great Cosmic Spirits, which are bounded by frontiers because of the imperfection of the evolutionary vehicles through which these great entities work. And we men should bear this fact in mind, for it makes us reverent, and humble in the nobler sense, when we realize that others than ourselves may have a vision sublime of Reality.

How great and how good and how noble a thing it is for men to dwell together in brotherhood. Each man is a revelation unto all of his fellow-men, for each one is a marvelous mystery, a child of Eternity and of the Infinite; and despite the imperfections of human evolutionary development, when we see the vision from the Hill of Discernment, we penetrate beneath the veils of the merely seemings into wonders ineffable which the human heart contains.

In my own life it was a revelation when this great truth came back into my human consciousness of this embodiment, and from that moment I looked upon my fellow human beings no longer just as men, but as wonder-beings from whom I could learn, learning from the least as from the greatest. And what I learned in brooding over this wonderful thought, taught me to seek truth everywhere: as much indeed, had we the eyes to see it, in the plant or in the stones or in the circling orbs of heaven, as when we look deep into the eyes of a fellow human being and see marvels there.

What is this Hill of Discernment? It is one of the oldest thoughts that human genius has ever given birth to. In all the great philosophies and religions of the past, you will always find this wondrous figure of speech, this trope, this metaphor, this climbing the hill of vision;

whether it be as the Jews had it, the hill of Zion, or after some other way of speech, the thought is the same. And the noblest expression that comes to my mind, the most graphic and the most profound, is that passage in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* that Dr. A. Trevor Barker published, in which the Mahatmic writer speaks of that Tower of Infinite Thought from which Truth is seen.

What, then, is this Hill of Discernment? Confessedly it is a metaphor; but what is it really so far as we human beings are concerned if not that wonderful organ within man's own constitution which we Theosophists call the Buddhi-principle, which is the organ of understanding, of discernment, of discrimination, of cognition of reality without argumentation. This organ of understanding for a man is that man himself in his highest, his link with the Divine. That is the hill of discernment within the man himself.

The burthen of all the teaching of the Archaic Wisdom is simply that: Recognise yourself as an instrument of Reality, as one of its vehicles; ascend out of the miasmas and the fogs and the clouds of these lower planes upwards and inwards to rejoin in consciousness the divinity within, or the Atma-Buddhi as we say; and then all knowledge will be yours, all vision of Reality is yours at will. For this is the organ clothed with no vehicle dimming its power. It sees Reality as it were face to face, because itself is the Reality. It is, as said, our link with Divinity, which is Reality; which is Truth, which is all Wisdom and all Love and all Knowledge-

So this Hill of Discernment is within man himself. And while it is the same for all of us, for each one it is in a sense different. It is like the pathway to Truth: one for all, and yet differentiated into the wayfarers on that Path, who are themselves both the wayfarer and the Path itself. Man has no other means of attaining Reality except through his own power, through his own organ, through his own being. He can and does receive help from outside, help which is wonderful; and it is our duty to give and receive help. But the receiving is merely as it were the outward stimuli to awaken the inner organ of the receiver. This inner

organ is not the deceptive organ of physical vision.

Remember the story told in the wondrous Hindu philosophy: A man returning home at night sees a serpent coiled in the path and jumps aside, and in the morning he sees it was but a coil of rope. So deceptive are all our physical sense-organs! The blind man cannot see the wonders of the dawning east. But even the blind man has an organ within him which if he can reach it needs not the deceptive organs of physical vision to see Reality.

This Buddhi principle which is in us and which we may use, if we will, knows no deceptions. It cannot be blinded; it cannot be deceived. Its vision is instant and direct; for it is on the same plane as Reality, and by opening up the intermediate channels between this our highest and our mere brain-mind, we inspire, breathe in, receive inspiration, and then we become like the gods.

That is the Hill of Discernment, of vision, and therefore of wisdom and knowledge and love, perhaps the three most glorious attributes of human consciousness: to be lost in cosmic love, to be lost in the vision sublime which is wisdom, to be lost in the higher interpretation of the vision which is knowledge: religion, philosophy, science, three in one and one in three; and this is not a theological trinity, but unitary Truth.

The Theosophical Forum

MY PERSONALITY — *J. B. Priestley*

What is called my personality, is, I know, a temporary affair. I am glad of it. I should hate an immortality of J. B. Priestley. I have only known him for 44 years, but I have had enough of him already. It is not for this bunch of habits and bag of tricks that I demand immortality.

But there is in me, as there is in everybody, something that a few years of this life cannot possibly satisfy, and this something is easily the most important part of me. Sometimes it takes the form of a vast and oddly impersonal curiosity. At others it is a deep feeling of admiration, well-wishing, love. At others it is a terrible hunger for more beauty.

And if I thought there was nothing in this universe that could respond to these needs, that all this was silly illusion, I would consider it a crime to have helped bring children into the world, would see in every birth the beginning of another hopeless tragedy.

I believe then that in dreams or in those waking reveries where we drift away from the Present, we are probably having a foretaste of our immortal life.

It seems muddled and confused to us because we have trained ourselves to concentrate on a very different kind of life, our ordinary existence in the physical world.

On the other hand I do not believe that our separate individuality, so marked in the physical world, where we are so many solid bodies, continues in this world-after-death, and I suspect that we gradually lose our individuality.

This will be no tragedy for even here and now we are never happy unless we are trying to transcend the bounds of personality. The times when we are most keenly aware of our own ego are those when we are most miserable.

Lastly, I suspect that the world we first experience after death will have been *largely made by ourselves*, just as the world we see in dreams is largely of our own making.

The greater the width of our sympathies, the more splendid our imagination, the deeper our love for our fellows, the richer our immortality.

The Theosophical Forum

ISIS UNVEILS SLOWLY — Gertrude W. van Pelt

This is inevitable. The human mind unfolds slowly. Even teaching on mundane affairs is graded, which is only simple common sense. But when it is a matter of esoteric instruction to be given, the pushing of teachings beyond the power of the human mind to assimilate and digest is not only unwise, it is disastrous. Witness the effect of misunderstood truths in the dogmas of the Christian Church.

Thus, in accordance with the time-honored rule, H. P. Blavatsky states in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxviii (1) that only "One turn of the key, and no more, was given in Isis," and she follows this with the assertions, (1), that much more is explained in the present volumes, (2), that "Once the door permitted to be kept a little ajar, it will be opened wider with every new century" (footnote), and (3), that in the XXth Century, a disciple, more informed than she was, may be sent to prove that there is a science of *Gupta-Vidya*.

On page xlii, I, she states again that *The Secret Doctrine* explains much that could not be given in *Isis Unveiled*, and in Vol. I, 299, she repeats

... a corner of the Veil of Isis had to be lifted; and now another and a larger rent is made.

However, quietly, unobtrusively, even in *Isis* she gives hints of deeper teachings, forecasting much that would be elaborated in *The Secret Doctrine*. For instance, in I, 231-2 (footnote), she says the seven principles of man and of our chain were hinted in *Isis*, and in II, 496, she answers again the criticism that so few of the doctrines taught in *The Secret Doctrine* were given in *Isis*. There is another hint of the caution used, expressing truths for the intuitive student, while concealing them for those not ready.

Notwithstanding all this, I remember hearing in the early days shallow criticisms intended to discredit H. P. B. by asserting, for instance, that

she contradicted herself in the two works, teaching in the earlier, a three principled man, and in the later, a seven principled, etc. In *Isis* the threefold constitution of man was emphasised, very naturally, as this was easier for a Christian nation to understand. Body, Soul, and Spirit, was familiar, and perfectly true; which does not preclude a more complete analysis. There are seven rays of the spectrum visible to man (and others invisible), but there are three primary colors.

And now the same method is used in *The Secret Doctrine*. H. P. B. stresses the seven principles, but she also hints of ten, referring to the 10 Sephiroth (I, 352). In I, 152, there is reference to seven planes: three the Archetypal, our manifest globes being on the four lower planes. And again, I, 199-200:

These seven *planes* correspond to the seven *states* of consciousness in man. It remains with him to attune the three higher states in himself to the three higher planes in Kosmos. But before he can attempt to attune, he must awaken the three "seats" to life and activity.

Unless, however, man had principles in his constitution corresponding to these higher planes, it would be impossible for him to reach that consciousness.

Again, although emphasis is placed on seven as being the number of globes in a planet, there is a very broad hint of 12 globes in Vol. I, 240, where our Earth or *Malkuth* is spoken of as both the *Seventh* and *Fourth* world, the former when counting from the first globe above, the latter if reckoned by the planes.

"*The One is not concerned with Man-bearing globes, but with the inner invisible Spheres,*" I, 216, seems to suggest that there are other Globes than the seven, concerned with the evolution of the human stage.

There are hints given, almost casually, of the after-death states, yet quite plain to one who knows the teaching. For instance:

It is on the Seven zones of *post mortem* ascent, in the Hermetic

writings, that the "mortal" leaves, on each, one of his "Souls" (or Principles); until arrived on the plane above all zones he remains as the great Formless Serpent of absolute wisdom — or the Deity itself. (I, 411)

And on I, 577, we read:

The Planetary origin of the Monad (Soul) and of its faculties was taught by the Gnostics. On its way to the Earth, as on its way back from the Earth, each soul born in, and from, the "Boundless Light," had to pass through the seven planetary regions both ways.

Again, H. P. B. refers to

the Platonic theory of the Soul's obtaining its respective faculties from the Planets in its downward progress through their Spheres. (II, 604)

The teaching regarding the *Avatar* is hinted in Vol. II, 483-4, and is quite clear to one who knows it.

There are also covered statements about 12 planets, though the emphasis in *The Secret Doctrine* is only on seven, which are called sacred to us. In I, 71 (footnote), it is stated that there are twelve Adityas. On page 99, Vol. I, the Adityas are called the planets. And on page 100, these Adityas are called the twelve great gods.

"The Seven allow the mortals to see their dwellings, but show themselves only to the Arhats," says an old proverb, "their dwellings" standing here for planets.

Again on I, 573 (footnote), we read:

There are only seven planets (*especially* connected with earth), and twelve houses, but the possible combinations of their aspects are countless. As each planet can stand to each of the others in twelve different aspects, their combinations must, therefore, be almost infinite; as infinite, in fact, as the spiritual,

psychic, mental, and physical capacities in the numberless varieties of the *genus homo*, each of which varieties is born under one of the seven planets and one of the said countless planetary combinations.

And further:

Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury, and Venus, the four exoteric planets, and the three others, which must remain unnamed, . . . (I, 575)

Then there is that famous answer of the Master to A. P. Sinnett's question about the Planets, viz.:

Neither A, B, nor YZ are known nor can they be seen through physical means however perfected. (I, 163)

There are many references in *The Secret Doctrine* to the effect that the ancients knew of very many planets unknown to the astronomers of today, but that is another story.

And here seems to be a hint of the "Universal Solar System":

In order to avoid creating new misconceptions, let it be stated that among the three *secret* orbs (or star-angels) neither Uranus nor Neptune entered; not only because they were unknown under these names to the ancient Sages, but because they, as all other planets, however many there may be, are the *gods* and guardians of other septenary chains of globes within our systems. (I, 575)

Finally, although the importance of the number 7, which belongs to the purely human stage of development, is constantly taught in *The Secret Doctrine*, it is plainly hinted that our Universe is built on the number 12; that Pythagoras was right in declaring that "The dodecahedron is a PERFECT number." (I, 649) Plato also taught that the Universe is built in the geometrical form of the Dodecahedron, (I, 340, 344). Again, H. P. B. quotes the Kabalists as saying, "The Dodecahedron lies concealed in the perfect Cube" (I, 450). This in connection with the diagram of the unfolded cube (II, 600, footnote) is suggestive.

Casually (I, 436), she refers to the seven, ten, and twelve orders of the Egyptians; and on II, 36, one finds very interesting symbology concerning the wonderful numbers, 7, 10, and 12.

Most striking evidence of the construction of the Universe is given in the following:

The hierarchy of Creative Powers is divided into seven (or 4 and 3) esoteric, within the twelve great Orders, recorded in the twelve signs of the Zodiac; . . . (See I, 213-22)

These are a few references illustrating the time-honored method of teaching, a method which we may expect to be followed when "the door. . . will be opened wider with every new century." No doubt earnest students will find many more in *The Secret Doctrine* and some of H. P. B.'s other works.

FOOTNOTE:

1. As all the references in this article are from *The Secret Doctrine*, only volume and page are given, to avoid repetition, on which pages also are found the pertinent *Isis Unveiled* references. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

"THE TOWER OF INFINITE THOUGHT"

For countless generations hath the adept builded a fane of imperishable rocks, a giant's Tower of INFINITE THOUGHT, wherein the Titan dwelt, and will yet, if need be, dwell alone, emerging from it but at the end of every cycle, to invite the elect of mankind to co-operate with him and help in his turn enlighten superstitious man. And we will go on in that periodical work of ours; we will not allow ourselves to be baffled in our philanthropic attempts until that day when the foundations of a new continent of thought are so firmly built that no amount of opposition and ignorant malice guided by the Brethren of the Shadow will be found to prevail. — *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, Letter IX, p. 51.

These are the words of a Master of Wisdom, and I want you to hearken to them and try to get the inner meaning of them, for they are really godlike. A great intellect composed them.

What is this Tower of Infinite Thought? It is the general Cosmic Intelligence, here particularized as the hierarchies of the Dhyanichohans, the Cosmic Spirits, the Lords of Meditation and Cosmic Wisdom. We call them the hierarchies of the Sons of Light, representing the consciousness-side of the universe. They are innumerable, extending from even below man up through countless hierarchies, stretching indeed to Infinity.

This is the Tower of Infinite Thought, in which the cosmic Titans dwell and think and live and plan. These cosmic Titans are the aggregate of the cosmic logoi, the cosmic spirits, an army of the suns of light and life. And from this inexhaustible fount of all Perfect wisdom and perfect love, from time to time there issue forth great souls who take imbodiment among men, and guide and lead and help and aid and

inspire, and raise not only us superstitious and fallible men, but all beings less than they, for Nature is one organic Unity. What is above in the highest is shadowed in the lowest, for there is but one cosmic law, because there is but one cosmic intelligence and one cosmic life; and therefore that law, that life, that intelligence, prevails throughout. So that, as you see, what is here below, is but a shadow or a copy from a pattern of what is above; and the whole secret of life, and the whole secret of living, is to become at one in consciousness and in feeling, in spirit and in soul, with that pattern of Infinite Thought.

No grander words I should think have ever issued from human lips. No more sublime conceptions have ever been penned, than those contained in the extracts from the Master's communication that have been read to you. They are a new gospel of thought and of love, a new dispensation of human effort; and a man must be blind who fails to sense and to feel the immense import, the grand content, enwrapped in these human words.

When the times are not propitious, or the times are not right, then the adepts — never indeed abandon mankind to its hopeless fate; there remain on earth at least the Brotherhood of the Mahatmans or Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. They inspire and instill intimations of wonder and of grandeur in sensitive and receptive human souls. But if the times are not right for a larger spreading of the Wisdom of the Gods, then for the time being they retire upwards and inwards into this Tower of Infinite Thought, and await there until the time is ripening once more so that they may once again work publicly, or semi-publicly, among us.

We too, even now in our smallness and weakness, inhabit this Tower of Infinite Thought. And precisely as the Masters do when the times are not propitious or not ripe for a new installment of the God-Wisdom of Infinitude, we too, although our hand is always outstretched ready to impart what little we ourselves have taken by strength of the Kingdom of Heaven, when the times are not ripe, precisely like our own Teachers, we retire into the higher consciousness, and to outward

appearance may seem to have retired into silence and quiet. But that is only so to the outer seeming.

The Masters of Wisdom, the Adepts, simply retire when the times are not ripe for them to do their greatest work among men. They do what they can, and what human karma or destiny will allow them to do; but to a certain extent, they ascend, vanish from the outer seeming, to become only the more active and the grander in works of beneficence on the inner planes. And when the times become ripe, when men through suffering and sorrow, pain and racking care, once more find their hearts yearning for a greater light, and for the comfort which is never gained by egoisms, but given only by the spirit — when men then make the inner call, soundless yet ringing unto the very spheres of light, then Those, hitherto silent but watching and waiting in the Tower of Infinite Thought, from their azure thrones, so to speak, bend a listening ear; and if the call is strong enough, if it be pure enough, impersonal enough, they leave the portals of the inner invisible realms to enter these portals of our universe, and appear amongst us and guide and teach and comfort and solace and bring peace.

How great is the inspiration to be derived from this teaching of the God-Wisdom we today call Theosophy: that the universe is not chaotic nor insane, but is an organism guided and controlled from within outwards, not only by infinite and omniscient cosmic intelligence — intelligences rather — but by cosmic love. For love is the cement of the universe and accounts for the orderliness of the universe, and its harmony and unity that every one who has the seeing eye may discern in all around him. Scientists speak of these orderlinesses as the laws of nature, as manifested in the cosmic bodies and their inhabitants, as manifested in their times and places and regularities.

How wonderful likewise is the feeling that the man who trains himself for it may enter into touch, into communication, with these grander ones in evolution above him, above him only now, because some day he shall evolve to become like unto them, divine as they are; and they themselves shall have passed upwards and onwards to divinities still

more remote to us. There is a path which is steep, which is thorny, but it leads to the very heart of the universe. Anyone, any child of nature, may climb this path. Anyone who ventures to try to find it may take the first steps upon it; and these first steps may be followed by others. What a blessing to know this! What an inspiration for the future that our destiny lies in our hands! Nought shall stay, nought can prevent, no outer god nor inner, can stem the inspiration welling up from the deepest resources of the human spirit, because that human spirit is but a spark of the cosmic divine.

How beautiful, how inspiring, how simply pregnant with as yet undisclosed significance, is this phrase: the Tower of Infinite Thought! It is a god-like phrase, and only a semi-god-man or a god-man could have so worded his sublime conceiving. What magic vistas of inner realms of faery, true faery, do these wonderful words suggest to reverent minds. This Tower of Infinite Thought, is likewise the Tower of Infinite Love, for it is infilled with love, and its inhabitants are the exponents of love. From time to time its portals open and Teachers from these inner realms come amongst us. Such was the Lord Gautama, the Buddha; such was the Avatara Jesus; such was Krishna; such were a multitude of others whose names are known even in the Occident to every educated man. No wonder a grateful humanity has called them Sons of God, or children of the gods — a phrase which I prefer; for such indeed they are, just as we humans likewise are offsprings of the gods, our forebears and forerunners on the evolutionary path, leading upwards and inwards forever to divinity.

These Teachers of men have themselves been worshipped as gods by men who forget the injunctions to take the message and worship it, but not to worship the bringer. Therein lies grandeur; for it is, after all, the thought of a man which is powerful, not the mouth through which the thought pours forth. It is the love in a man's heart which makes him sublime, not the mouth which declares it. I think that one of the proofs that these Great Ones who have lived amongst us and who will come again and again and again — I think one of the proofs of their divinity is precisely the fact that they accepted nought for themselves, but

called attention to their teachings only.

How beautiful to the hearts of men are they who come bringing tidings of great joy. Their faces are suffused with the dawn of a newer, a grander, a more beautiful, age. For they are its prophets and its heralds, harbingers of a new time to come, when instead of enlarging quarrel and war, men shall learn that the ways of peace are the ways of strength and of power and of wisdom and of plenty and of riches.

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: IV

The origin and true message of Easter is the subject of this fourth of a series of weekly quarter-hour broadcasts on Theosophy begun last Spring over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China. This talk was broadcast on April 13th by Miss Inga Sjostedt, President of the Shanghai Theosophical Lodge.

Good evening, Everybody: Today is Easter Sunday, a day celebrated by Christians all over the world, so this evening I would like to explain the esoteric or hidden meaning of what the majority of the Western nations erroneously suppose to be a purely Christian festival.

The celebration of Christmas, Easter, and other so-called Christian festivals dates back to pagan times and the sacred Mystery-Schools of the ancients. These Mystery-Schools were seats of learning to which only the elect were admitted, and in them were taught the then secret sciences, such as physiology, astronomy, astrology, occult philosophy, and also magic. Every founder of some great religion has had two teachings, one for the masses and one for the worthy disciples who were initiated into the deeper occult knowledge of the Teacher. Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster, and other great teachers of mankind were familiar with the secret sciences which the multitude knew nothing about, and to their worthy followers they imparted as much of this occult wisdom as the times permitted. The average modern Christian believes that the teaching of Christ was simple and equal for all, but some of the alleged sayings of Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, show just the contrary to have been the case. In the Gospel according to St. John, chapter 16, verse 25, Jesus says: "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father." In the Gospel according to St. Matthew, chapter 13, verses 34 and 35, we read: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them. That it might be fulfilled

which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." And here is one more quotation from 1st Corinthians, chapter 2, verse 17: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory." These verses from the New Testament show plainly that Jesus had one teaching for the simple multitude, and quite another, deeper teaching for his own disciples, which is in accordance with the tradition of every promulgator of the Secret Wisdom which we today call Theosophy, and which has been taught under various names in all ages. The Egyptians and Greeks had their Mystery-Schools where they taught the Secret Wisdom. The Chaldeans and Druids and the Jewish Kabbalists had *their* occult teachings which they carefully guarded from the uninitiated. Thus initiation from immemorial times has always been the way to obtain Truth.

Let us now consider the word Initiation. This word has the vaguest of meanings in the Western world. Initiation means the awakening of the dormant spiritual faculties in the human soul, the recognition and comprehension of the divine Self in man. This was the aim of the Mystery-Schools, and was attained through rigorous training and religious and philosophical teaching. Through countless initiations a man may attain to the spiritual grandeur of a Buddha, of a Christ. These initiations have taken place since the days of remotest antiquity, and continue even today in various parts of the world. No need to point out that these solemn events take place in the utmost secrecy and retirement, away from the distractions of public places.

Now, among the ancients such initiations were several in number and took place at certain times of the year, the most important being that of the Winter Solstice, on or about the date when we now celebrate Christmas. Another of these sacred seasons of initiation took place on or about the date of the Spring Equinox, that is near March 21st, and became first the pagan Spring festival and later the Christian Easter. The Christians have borrowed generously from the pagans, and nearly every symbol, every outstanding event in the life of Jesus is taken from

the ancient Mystery-schools. In fact, the entire story of the life of Jesus is the story of initiation.

Every nation had its own Mysteries; they varied in detail but were identical in essence. All of them taught about the "Mystical Death," that is the death of the personal life and the awakening of the Divine Self through initiation. There was always the "descent into Hades or Hell"; there was always the "resurrection," the Rising, usually after "three days"; and the "glorification" at the end of the trial — a complete picture of the supposed life of Jesus, and also a complete picture of the supposed lives of many other Saviors.

After successfully passing through the trials of initiation the candidate was called the "unconquered Sun." We think today that the ancients were sun-worshippers, that they worshiped the physical sun we see in the sky; but they did nothing of the sort. They worshiped the Spiritual Sun, the invisible, divine power which rules our Cosmos. It is quite likely that thousands of years hence the Christians of today will be called pagans because they symbolize Christ as the Lamb of God — which is as much a symbol as the Spiritual Sun of the ancients.

Even the early Christians identified Jesus with the Spiritual Sun. On a pillar of stone, which was found in Germany many years ago, was an inscription wherein the Sun was called the "Firstborn," the "Son of God," the "Word" or Logos — all of them names which the Christians later applied to their particular Savior, Jesus. In ancient Greece the sun was also frequently called "the only Begotten."

In the 5th century, Pope Leo the First wrote in one of his sermons that what made the Christmas festival so sacred was not so much the alleged birth of Jesus on that date but the return, or, as he expressed it, "the new birth" of the Sun. Cyprian and Ambrose, two orthodox saints of the Christian Church, referred to Christ as the "true sun" and "our new Sun" respectively.

We see thus that Christianity in its beginnings had more than a suspicious resemblance to Sun-worship. To the Christian layman today

this must seem rather shocking and pagan, but we must not forget the underlying meaning here. Just as the physical sun is the center of our planetary system, and therefore its Lord and Regent, just so the *spiritual* Sun stands for the Supreme Divine Monarch of our Cosmos — or, in other words, God. Even some of the early Christians believed that the physical planets and suns were merely the bodies of divine entities, and that, just as Theosophy teaches today, there is a center of divinity in all things whatsoever — planets, atoms and men. It is then not difficult to understand the deification of the sun, our physical life-giver and light-bringer.

Easter, as well as Christmas, is an important time of initiation. We must not think, however, that only great souls like Christ and Buddha are initiated during their life on earth. The path to God-hood is open to all, and there are many men and women today who are following that path. India and Tibet abound in tales about ascetics and yogis who live holy lives in retirement and solitude and whose aim it is to reach what to the average man would seem perfection. Those who have already attained spiritual mastery over their lower selves we call in Theosophy Masters of Wisdom, Adepts, or Initiates. They are not gods come to earth from a higher sphere: they are simply perfect men, who, like Gautama the Buddha, the Light of Asia, have accomplished a union with the god within them. Strange as this teaching must seem at first sight, it is not strange when we consider the seat of consciousness in living entities. For instance, the consciousness of a tree functions in its physical surroundings only: it is *alive*, it imbibes its vitality from the earth and the air, but it is not conscious in other ways, properly speaking. The seat of an animal's consciousness is in its instincts and desires. An animal can feel rage and maternal love, fear and shame, but it is not conscious on the mental plane as we understand it. Then think of a savage, a human being of low development. His consciousness is awake on the mental plane, but on the lower mental plane only. He is chiefly concerned with his daily life and his personal interests, and the impersonal abstract thinking of a philosopher is completely beyond him. Then, take a truly great man, a genius, an

artist, a philosopher or social reformer. A man like that directs his mental energy beyond his personal concerns. He has trained himself in abstract or impersonal thinking. His consciousness is active on a wider field than that of the average man. Then finally we have a Christ or a Buddha. Their consciousness. Penetrated even beyond abstract thinking and functioned on a *spiritual* plane from which they derived their super-human wisdom and greatness. Initiation trains a man to make his consciousness Christ-like or Buddha-like.

Just as an unselfish action on the part of a man can have beneficent consequences for several other individuals, so a successful major initiation must benefit all humanity, for a Master of Wisdom, on attaining Universal Consciousness, attains also Universal Compassion, and from then on becomes a worker for mankind — sometimes publicly like Jesus, but more often secretly and without the recognition of the world.

This is the true message of Easter: mental and spiritual purification for the ordinary man, and initiation for the Great Ones, the Masters of Life. The origin of Easter is ancient, pagan, and deeply mystical. (1)

FOOTNOTE:

1. Several passages in the above are taken from *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by G de Purucker. — I. S. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE REAL WORK OF THE T. S. — *G. de Purucker*

The Theosophist is often asked what practical good the Theosophical Society is doing in and for the world, and the answer is simple enough and direct to the point of the question. We work with ideas, and we try to show men that there is nothing more practical, stronger and more forceful than an idea. Ideas shake civilizations and overthrow them. Look what has happened in the past. What brought such changes about? Ideas. The ideas living in the minds of a few men — seeing ill or seeing good, is quite beside the point I am discussing. It is the ideas that I wish to stress, not who voiced them, or the consequences flowing from their enunciation to the world. The important thing is that ideas good or bad have tremendous power. And because these ideas and ideals were different from what was commonly accepted, they met at first with contempt and derision, later with study, and finally with acceptance; and structures toppled and there was much dust, and other structures rose and endured for centuries.

Show me something more practical than an idea. If ideas overthrow civilizations, they also build them up. The whole work of The Theosophical Society is to fill the minds and hearts of men with ideas of grandeur, inspiring them to ever nobler, more unselfish, and altruistic objectives; to give men and women thoughts that they can live and die by. Show me something more practical than this. This is our main work. True, we give from our slender means what we can and may when the calls come; but this is the least.

What ails the world today? Is it lack of riches? No. Is it lack of thought and good-will? The hearts of men vibrate with agony and pain at everything that goes on everywhere. But men and women are blind, they have no ideal, no solid, central spiritual idea around which men may collect. Religion has lost its grip on Western men. Science has become suspect even in the minds of its foremost proponents, so that they themselves are questioning whether their scientific discoveries

are good for the ethical stability of the human race, giving to men power to control their present evil passions and thoughts. Philosophy is today little short of a caricature and mimic of far older and truly grand philosophical systems known however to relatively few in the Occident.

What the world needs today is grand humanitarian ideals that they can believe in and follow in trust, ideals of a constructive character: something to give men hope, and a conviction that this world is run morally, i. e. morally inspired by the spiritual powers of nature, and is not a mere accident, originating in some far off time in cosmic space when by chance a nebula began spinning in empty space and finally after many aeons brought us forth, creatures of a day, finally to draw up our legs in bed and die into nothingness.

For fifty or sixty years Occidental science has been teaching us that men are but a higher kind of beast, soulless, irresponsible, answerable to none: a teaching flying in the face of every voice of Nature, of every being around us. For everywhere we see law and order and cause and effect, and that if you do certain things you will reap the penalty, or win the guerdon, the reward. These are facts. The others are evil dreams or devachanic illusions.

What, then, can we do? Teach men that this universe is essentially and fundamentally governed and controlled by irrefutable law and destiny, ethical, moral in its essence; and that it is not simply a crazy phantasmagoria, a *danse macabre*, without sense or purpose or reason. That is what too many tens of millions think in the Occident today, that is what they think they believe. Self-interest has become their sole guide in life. Result? Each man for himself, and the Devil take the weakest. There is where the trouble lies: false teachings, false convictions, stupidity, and the pathetic picture of noble human beings run away with by ideas and ideals indeed — but of what category? The pathos of it all is that men fail to discern in nature and in themselves nature's own categorical moral imperative, in which indeed most men no longer believe. Thus they fail to find the road to everlasting

happiness and peace and wisdom and unselfish love.

The greatest men in the world are they who have seen beyond the clouds, seen the stars of spiritual destiny and followed them. In other words they have followed that divine inner peace which all men vaguely sense, but which when recognized and followed gives us wisdom and knowledge and power to labor mightily for the common good of all men. But our civilization as a whole has lost that religious instinct of unity with inner guidance; it has lost belief in its science which has miseducated it; it has no philosophy; it is unguided, blinded, almost helpless, and yet it is pathetically crying and asking the cause like a child in the night, crying helplessly — an appeal to the powers that be. There is the picture.

The main work of the Theosophical Society seems to me to be the restoring to man of the self-conscious realization of his spiritual intuitions and of the belief in the innate morality welling through Nature's heart and recognizable when our own eyes, through the same moral urge, open to recognize it in others and everywhere. This is the main reason of its founding; this is the main reason why the Masters sent their first Envoy, H. P. Blavatsky: to restore to men the archaic heritage of the philosophy of life which is at once a religion and a science, which is founded on the spiritual heart of Almighty Mother Nature herself and on no man's say-so; which is provable by examination into Nature's secret places.

It is our work to change men's hearts by changing their thoughts; give them ideas and ideals for them to follow and live up to. And to work with malice towards none, with a yearning to do justice to all, even to those with whom we most disagree. The Theosophist will be successful just in so far as he can implant in the hearts of others who may see him and hear him the thoughts and ideas and ideals which he himself has sought and found and is blessed with. Little by little the thoughts of men will change, until a time will come when these Theosophic ideas will sweep like wildfire through the hearts and minds of men everywhere, permeating both mind and conscience, thus furnishing a

strong, a mighty, guide to all. The world will then be changed because men will begin to think new thoughts, see new ideas, realize their truth and immense import and value, and instinctively will follow them; and they will understand then that self-interest is the worst policy possible to follow, because the man who works for his fellows works likewise for the best for himself and wins friends everywhere. The man whose honor is unstained and whose heart beats with love for his fellows: he is the man who will be looked to for counsel, for all will instinctively feel the inner guidance that such a man follows, and will themselves seek the light that directs him.

If ideas can overthrow and work havoc, it is by this fact evident that ideas of another type can build and unite and save.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SCIENCE OF ENVIRONMENT — *W. Y. Evans-Wentz*

Over the plains of Hindustan, as over the Himalayas and their differentiated provinces of Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and Tibet, dwells the brooding presence of an ineffable greatness. During the course of millenniums the purifying thoughts of unnumbered generations of *Rishis* and *Yogins* have been poured out there until today these regions of the world are really holy, their rivers sacred, their trees and plants, their soil and rocks, and the very atmosphere enveloping them emanate a hidden glory; and he who can harmonize himself with this glory becomes transfigured.

All holy places, in varying degrees, have been made holy by that same occult power of mind to change the psychic character of the atom of matter; they are the ripened fruit of spirituality, the proof of thought's all-conquering and all-transforming supremacy. Thus, in every center of holiness the seer beholds in manifestation the magic of the Divine *Sakti*, which, when it shall have invaded and possessed every locality, will literally have made of this material plane of existence a terrestrial paradise. If through Ignorance man has lost Paradise, through Wisdom man can regain Paradise.

Indescribably, invisibly, immanent and transcendent beauty and peace sanctify every place of pilgrimage. As pure water cleanses the body so do places of sanctity cleanse the heart.

Wherever his own pilgrimages have led him, over continents and oceans, the writer has experienced this of which he bears witness. On the wondrous mountain trails of Kashmir, through meadows of Alpine blossoms, along the awesome shores of the glacier-fed Lake of the World-Serpent, over snow-fields and glaciers, to the Cave of Amarnath, 13,000 feet above sea-level, wherein Nature makes symbolically manifest the Destroyer *Siva* as a lingam of immaculate ice, he has felt the ecstatic joy there attained by the pilgrim. At Puri, on the Bay of

Bengal, where stands the Temple of Jagannath, Lord of the World," at Kedarnath, as at Badrinath, amid the ever-lasting snows whence issues Earth's holiest river, the Ganges, at the holy of holies of the *Avatara* Rama at Rameswaram, at the shrine of the Virgin Goddess on Cape Cormorin, at Benares, the *Anahata Chakra*, or Heart Center (1), at Sarnath, where the Buddha set in motion the Wheel of the *Dharma*, and at many a lesser goal of pilgrimage in Humanity's Holy Land, India, he has been vouchsafed the heart-cleansing.

Once the magical control of mind over matter has been successfully accomplished, the place so favored is, like radium, radio-active for ages afterward. Even now a spiritual essence enhaloes every crumbling fane of a long lost culture. It is present at Stonehenge and Avebury in England. It pulsates amid the Alignments of Carnac, in Brittany, as a direct inheritance from pre-historic days when Carnac was a far-famed place of pilgrimage for the Druid-led Gauls of Western Europe and perhaps of all of the Mediterranean basin. It lives in the ruined site of the Great Mysteries of Eleusis, in the deserted mountain-shadowed vale of the silent Delphic Oracle, and in Abydos and the other mighty temples on the Nile. Powerfully it radiates from the Black Stone in Mecca, whither there are sent daily and focussed the highest thoughts of the faithful millions of the whole of Islam. It is active in the Cathedral of Canterbury, in St. Peter's in Rome, as in St. Paul's, built upon the site of the ancient temple to the British god Lud, in London. It blesses the pilgrim in Jerusalem, in Bodh-Gaya, on Mt. Fujiyama in Japan, on St. Patrick's Holy Mountain in Ireland, or on Adam's Peak in Ceylon. It belongs to no race and to no religion.

One who is able to feel environment knows that there are places not only of positive holiness, but places of positive evil also. And each site of an ancient as of a modern city is enveloped in its own mind-woven aura of accumulated thought-forms. So, too, are the world's battlefields, where hatred and worldly ambition have had fruition, where the blood and flesh and bones of incalculable multitudes throughout the ages have mouldered into dust. The seeds of ancient sowings of good and evil ever await a chance to grow. In the same manner will the sowings

of this generation seek their own reproduction.

Oxford is Oxford, Paris is Paris, or Harvard is Harvard; and no school or college or famous seat of learning is or can become quite like any other because of the distinctive thought-forms bequeathed to it by its own teachers and students, day by day, year by year, century by century. Likewise, every household, though it be of the simplest Mexican peasant or Congo native, accumulates its own psychic character from the thoughts of those who dwell within it. Nor is this power of shaping environment man's prerogative alone; every thinking thing, visible and invisible, god or man or sub-human creature, or inhabitant of what the Rev. Mr. Kirk, the fairy-seer, called the Secret Commonwealth, exercises it.

No true practitioner of yoga in India or Tibet will go into residence anywhere until the place has been exorcised. One who is about to undergo yogic penance or to enter upon a fixed period of solitary meditation is directed by the *guru* to prepare, or shape, by mental processes, the environment chosen, be it that of a remote mountain cave or that of a monastic cell. In the Orient, psychic prophylaxis is considered to be far more essential than sewers and bath-tubs; and the failure of the occidental to purify and fashion environment is advanced as evidence of the inefficiency of his own Peculiar form of education, which is, unfortunately, confined almost wholly to the realm of external appearances.

The Wise Ones who bequeathed to us the *Maitri Upanishad* knew well the power of mind over environment; they knew, too, that as the sowing is so shall the harvest be for the individual, for the nation, for the human race. Their words of warning, which long ago should have been written in letters of gold over the portals of all the fanes and schools and homes of men, were these:

*"Nought else the whole world is than one's own thought.
With effort one should therefore cleanse the thought,
For what one thinketh that doth one become.
And this is the eternal mystery."*

If, then, consciousness, or mind, be, as the Great Teachers tell us, the one ever-enduring reality, and the architect of environments, of worlds, of universes, immeasurable and marvelous knowledge awaits men of science of the future when they turn to the study of environment in relation to mental activity. Every thought of man and of all thinking things has left its record in the secret archives of time; and through the doors of the womb there will come occidental scientists who will interpret the mind-moulded symbols, and, thereby, make unparalleled advance towards the mystery of being itself.

We await the awakening of all the races, of all the nations from the aeon-long sleep of Slothfulness and of Ignorance. We await the era of right education, when humanity will re-think and remake their world, when all places on the planet Earth, all the hills and mountains, all the rivers and lakes and seas, all the temples, all the cities, all the abodes will be holy, and divine at-one-ment will have been realized by man. Then only will there be fulfilled the prophetic vision of the poet wherein he beheld

"the battle-flags were furl'd

In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world."

FOOTNOTE:

1. In this article, emphasis is placed upon the intimate relationship between thought and environment rather than upon the existence of sacred spots on the Earth which may be said to be naturally sacred and more or less immune to man's shaping. Delphi was regarded by the ancient Greeks as such a naturally sacred spot, as Carnac, in Brittany, probably was by the builders of the Alignments, and as Benares, better known as Kashi, is today by Hindus. Brahmanical Scriptures enumerate seven places of pilgrimage in India which confer *Moksha*, or liberation from rebirth, and these are correlated with the seven occult centers, or *chakras*, of the human organism. ([return to text](#))

SOMETHING ABOUT PHILOSOPHY — *Abbott Clark*

DEDUCTION

The Deductive method, frequently called the Platonic method, of philosophical reasoning is *a priori, i. e.*, from known or assumed causes to effects; from fundamental principles to the logical or natural results; from universals to particulars.

This is the method of the Ancient Wisdom or Esoteric Philosophy and of all religions. All religions and esoteric philosophies begin from one fundamental principle which is perceived intuitively, assumed as a logical necessity, or accepted on authority, and all the rest of the philosophy or religion or system of thought is built upon, or hangs pendent therefrom. As we know, the Theosophical philosophy begins with one fundamental Reality, by whatsoever name it may be called, and all the rest is pendent therefrom.

The Platonic or deductive method is that of the Seers and Sages, of the intuitive and spiritually minded, of all ages and religions. It relies on the intuitive perception of fundamental principles and from them deduces the details of its philosophy. The details of the philosophy differ with the degree of the enlightenment and the intellectual capacity of the Philosopher or Teacher and the character and intelligence of the recipients thereof.

The fundamental principles perceived by spiritual intuition remain the same throughout the ages. The names, forms of thought, or theories, vary in value as they reveal or conceal the truth and conform to, or depart from, the facts and laws of nature.

INDUCTION

The Inductive, or Aristotelian, method of philosophical reasoning is *a posteriori, i. e.*, "from effects to causes, from a part to a whole, from particulars to generals, from the individual to the universal."

This is the method of modern scientists who base whatever conclusions they arrive at upon the evidence of discoveries or phenomena before them, quite oblivious of the transitory nature of the evidence and the incompleteness of the discoveries. No satisfactory and enduring philosophy can be founded on the progressively changing discoveries of modern science. Any philosophical system, any comprehensive explanation of the causes of and reasons for things as they are, based on "the solid rock of scientific realities" is liable to be reduced to a mere shifting sand dune or scrap of paper almost any day by some new and startling discovery.

Inductive philosophies are inherently unstable and transitory. H. P. Blavatsky has humorously called the modern inductive philosophers, "philosophicules."

Aristotle's method of accumulating vast numbers of facts laid the foundation for modern science and the scientific method of reasoning from accumulated facts to causes — that is, the Inductive method. Paradoxically, Aristotle's own philosophy is deductive. The explanation of this is that his philosophical ideas were largely drawn from his teacher, Plato.

"Induction can ordinarily give no more than a probable conclusion, because we can never be sure that we have collated all instances." — *Funk and Wagnalls' Practical Dictionary*

IDEALISM

Idealism is "any theory or philosophy which affirms the universe to be an embodiment of mind or denies the possibility of knowing aught save psychological reality." In philosophical literature the word spiritualism is sometimes used in connection with idealism for the specific purpose of denoting conceptions that are essentially spiritual. Later writers, in the same connection, use the term "philosophical spiritualism" to distinguish what they mean from the modern cult of that name. "Modern Spiritualism," properly so called, began in the United States in 1848 with the "Rochester rap-pings," and is

characterized by the belief that the spirits of the dead can communicate with the living in various ways, especially through mediums.

MATERIALISM

Materialism, philosophically speaking, is any theory that assumes to find in matter alone, or in the forces or qualities of matter, a sufficient explanation for the origin of life or the problems of existence. Any theory which denies or excludes the existence of god, soul, mind or spirit, except as products or phenomena of matter — opposed to Idealism.

OBJECTIVE IDEALISM

Theosophy, considered as a philosophy, is an Objective Idealism, because it postulates the Cosmos as the product of Cosmic Ideation and the imbodiment of consciousness. But not a pure Idealism, because it recognises the objective or phenomenal worlds as having a relative reality; being real and objective to all beings who themselves are a part of the objectivity.

The philosophers themselves and the universe about which they philosophize are all alike transitory and phenomenal and therefore unreal. But to themselves it is all very real. In the Theosophical philosophy all things and beings are the product of a Divine Reality which is both immanent and transcendent.

As an Objective Idealism, Theosophy is founded upon one limitless unqualified Reality of which boundless SPACE and eternal DURATION, considered as one, are the best symbols. This idea is adumbrated in Einstein's Time-Space-Continuum when used philosophically — a word or phrase which has another and very technical scientific use, however. This fundamental Principle, or One Reality, is beyond the range and reach of thought, but is perceivable by the highest intuition as the ONE REALITY. The whole objective universe is an emanational unfolding, an ever becoming, as H. P. Blavatsky says, yet its very objectivity, illusive and transitory as it is, is pervaded and sustained by

the ever present REALITY.

All the manifested universe is compact of hierarchical hosts of Monads, each and all being rooted in the Real and yet having objective existence and relations as long as the manifestation lasts. The Universe itself and all therein is an embodiment of consciousness centers, units of consciousness, or monads. All worlds, subjective and objective, inner and outer, spiritual and material, are compact of monads in varying states of evolution, of ever-Becoming, hence their state at any time is an illusory and transitory one.

Theosophy postulates both Cosmic Ideation and Cosmic Substance on or in which Cosmic Ideation works to produce an objective universe, cosmic substance being the basis of all objectivity. (In this philosophical sense all worlds, including the highest spiritual worlds, are worlds of objectivity or manifestation).

Within the realm of a manifested universe on which philosophical speculation is possible both cosmic Ideation and cosmic Substance are indispensable. One cannot exist without the other. Without Cosmic Ideation Cosmic Substance would remain a formless, lifeless, empty abstraction. Without cosmic Substance no objectivity, no manifestation, not even that of the gods, would be possible. There would be no delimitating factor by which gods, in the plural, could exist.

The Theosophical concept of objective idealism is similar to the Vedantic doctrine of Maya.

Man has within himself the Monadic stream which is rooted in the Real. It is important to understand this and that Reality is ever present here and now. In proportion as this is realized one acquires an inner strength and calm that nothing can disturb. The higher one raises his consciousness the more relativity, differentiation and illusion disappear. As the consciousness ascends towards its source it expands, increases in understanding, discrimination, wisdom, power and love.

In short, within the all encompassing and all comprehending philosophy of Theosophy induction and deduction, idealism and

materialism, all have their proper place and value.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL READING

One of the Theosophical classics which is very often overlooked in the wealth of other literature is W. Q. Judge's booklet "An Epitome of Theosophy." Perhaps it is mistaken for a mere primer, but it is only this in the sense that for a certain type of thoughtful mind it might well serve as a first approach to Theosophy.

Mr. Judge always writes with the simplicity of clear thinking and an obvious desire to meet the mind of the seeker for truth half way. But with all his simplicity he is profound, and what one has found to be lucid and interesting at the first reading, with deeper study is found to suggest at every turn lines of deep thought to be unfolded.

The "Epitome" might almost be said to contain in its thirty-five pages the whole Theosophical philosophy either expressed or implied. Many an older student may have overlooked in its pages certain statements about the astral light, elementals, thoughts, cycles, karman, the "moment of choice," etc., that give a rare slant on these teachings not to be found in the larger books.

Mr. Judge never loses the broad general picture, so necessary to prevent one from running off into side issues; but he has a way of linking up a generality with some detail of teaching that touches the flame to the inert candle of the mind. And then the student finds himself afire with the beauty and reality of some cosmic truth that previously had been to him just remote metaphysics.

His summing up of the process by which man's spiritual advancement is attained is masterly and is introduced in such a way as to show that, as far as man is concerned, it is the whole reason for a study of the philosophy. He writes:

As to the process of spiritual development, Theosophy teaches:

1. That the essence of the process lies in the securing of supremacy, to the highest, the spiritual, element of man's nature.

2. That this is attained along four lines, among others, —

(a) The entire eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of *broad, generous* sympathy in, and effort for the good of others.

(b) The absolute cultivation of the inner, spiritual man by meditation, by reaching to and communion with the Divine, and by exercise of the kind described by Patanjali, *i. e.*, incessant striving to an ideal end.

(c) The control of fleshly appetites and desires, all lower, material interests being deliberately subordinated to the behests of the spirit.

(d) The careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving results for Divine law.

3. That while the above is incumbent on and practicable by all religiously disposed men, a yet higher plane of spiritual attainment is conditioned upon a specific course of training, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, by which the internal faculties are first aroused and then developed.

4. That an extension of this process is reached in Adeptship, Mahatmaship, or the states of Rishis, Sages, and Dhyān-Chohans, which are all exalted stages, attained by laborious self-discipline and hardship, protracted through possibly many incarnations, and with many degrees of initiation and preferment, beyond which are yet other stages ever approaching the Divine."

The leaflet abridgment of the "Epitome" made by Mr. Judge himself is excellent to have on hand to show to an interested friend.

Among reviews of *The Hill of Discernment* we notice with particular pleasure one written by A. E. S. Smythe in *The Canadian Theosophist* for

January. Mr. Smythe's own evident appreciation is a guarantee that *The Hill of Discernment* will be recognised as a "treasure-book" all will delight to read, and "which will be placed on the special shelf by those who are accumulating a Theosophical library."

Mr. Smythe writes: "Mr. Barker is saturated with the doctrines of the Mahatmas and he has simplified much of this teaching by his own assimilation and by the experiences in which he has been able to apply their principles. He writes with courage and independence and looks to no authority. . . One can give this book to any open-minded enquirer and be sure that Trevor Barker will become one of his prophets. He does not minimize the difficulties so that the reader after pursuing the path for a little meets unexpected dangers and difficulties. No, the danger signals are all in place. But the way to meet them is made plain." — The Editors

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: V

In this broadcast further aspects are given of the esoteric symbolism of the Christ-story from the Theosophical viewpoint. This is the fifth of a series of weekly quarter-hour talks begun last spring over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China. It was presented on April 20th by Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist of the Shanghai Theosophical Lodge.

Good evening, everybody:

Last week, Easter Sunday, the President of the Lodge spoke on the meaning of Easter with as much detail as there was time to give to this most mystical subject. We were told that Easter is one of the four periods of the year when initiations take place — when human beings, who have devoted their lives and their very selves to the service of humanity, are initiated into that larger life, whence their ability to serve the human race is greatly enhanced by the spiritual powers that are their reward for lifetimes of selfless work.

Miss Sjostedt also mentioned that the New Testament story of the events in the life of the Syrian teacher Jesus the Christ is the story of initiation. This does not mean that Jesus did not exist. There was indeed such a man, but the life imputed to him is an allegory, which was told in almost identical form of many other saviors or masters. The main incidents in his life, as related in the Bible, have been told of many other World-Teachers.

For instance, the annunciation of an angel bearing flowers, the immaculate conception, the guiding star and the three wise men, the virgin birth at the time of the Winter Solstice, the performance of so-called miracles, the Last Supper, and the death on the cross, the descent into hell and the resurrection after three days — these are incidents common to legends attached to various great sages. It is too striking a coincidence to be taken as a literal account of the lives of these men,

but it furnishes proof of the identity of the procedure, which these various tales are intended to relate.

In the first chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, the genealogy of Jesus is traced from Abraham through David and through Joseph, the husband of Mary; and in the 22nd chapter of the Book of Revelations, verse 16, Jesus is reported as having said: "I am the root and the offspring of David and the bright and morning star." This star, by the way, is the light-bringer "Lucifer," who has since been demoted to represent the devil, curiously enough. This genealogy traced through Joseph is unreasonable unless the virgin birth be a mystical symbol — which Theosophy avers that it is, together with the other incidents just mentioned. It is the symbol of the initiation — that is, of the birth in man of his higher spiritual nature, the pure birth of his consciousness into spiritual realms and activity.

Again the crucifixion is by no means a merely Christian idea. We are told very little of the more occult teachings of the Mysteries, but we are told this: that the initiate was laid on a cruciform couch, where he lay as one dead for about three days and nights, while his mind of consciousness explored the deeper reaches of nature and he literally passed through the state called hell, where he must meet and overcome his lower personal self, and he was then confronted with his own divine nature. If he successfully sacrificed his personal self to the impersonal divinity, he in a manner died as a man and was reborn a Master, and his whole being was suffused with glory — that is, the spiritual light within him shone so strongly that for a time it became visible even to the physical eye as a halo or aureole. People who are psychic or clairvoyant can see around a person an aura of colored light, which colors are said to depict the person's thoughts or emotions. In the case of an initiate who has recently passed the final test and become conscious in his spiritual parts, this light is so vivid that it can be seen by even ordinary people. This explains the origin of the nimbus often seen on paintings of Christian saints and Greek and Roman divinities, and the flame on the heads of images of other religions.

It is curious to note that the original text of Jesus' cry on the cross, which has been translated: "God of me, God of me, why hast thou forsaken me?" was "Eloi, Eloi, lama shabakhthanei." This is Hebrew and also Chaldaic and the word "shabakh" used in the gospels according to both Mark and Matthew, means actually to "glorify" or "to give peace to." This should be contrasted with the passage in one of the psalms, where a different Hebrew text has been correctly translated to mean, "My god, my god why hast thou forsaken me?" The word here used is "azabthanei." "Azab" means to forsake or to abandon. There has apparently been some confusion by the translators of the words "shabakh" and "azab." Jesus' utterance correctly translated was therefore, "God of me, God of me, why givest thou me such peace?" or "why glorifiest thou me so greatly?" This puts an entirely different complexion on the story of the crucifixion.

The story of initiation is by no means unique — on the contrary, the events portrayed therein take place even today, and such men as Jesus exist in the world to inspire and enlighten mankind, whenever such inspiration or enlightenment is sincerely solicited with altruistic motives. We cannot find a Master by advertizing in the paper, but any human being who seeks to aid in the work of helping mankind and whose motive is entirely unselfish, can and will receive the guidance and inspiration of the Great Souls who have devoted their existence to helping the evolution of the human race toward the goal of perfection. Those of the Masters who have publicly lived among men all founded Mystery-Schools, where the deeper truths were taught and still are taught to those who have proved themselves worthy guardians of these truths. The general public, who could not be trusted not to abuse or misuse the deeper knowledge, had to be content with general ethical injunctions and truths half-veiled beneath parable and allegory. And so it is today: "Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you" — people are given just so much of knowledge as they are able and willing to digest and understand, no more, no less. The Theosophical Society as such was founded for the purpose of providing opportunity for study to those who desire to know the truth, at a time

when humanity as a whole was emerging from a cycle of crass materialism, during which very little of the Ancient Wisdom was given out, and was entering a cycle of philosophical speculation and of groping after a sane, scientific religion to replace outmoded and garbled dogmatic creeds.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHICAL PROPAGANDA — *Frank Watson*

Personal propaganda can be a very large field of Theosophical activity, and, indeed, it is worthy of great spiritual stature, since it is concerned with quickening the evolution of humanity as a whole. Being a field in which discretion and real wisdom is required, a consideration of some of its difficulties may be worth while.

Of course, the best medium for the propaganda of the ancient wisdom is the advanced human Ego, who radiantly illustrates the teachings by his very presence. But most of us are very much on the same evolutionary stage of earth life, and as regards the propagation of Theosophy, we have to rely on our presentation of the teachings, and the sincerity and warmth and conviction we can summon to our expressions. And it is a position of great responsibility, (possibly more so than we realize) to be the medium whereby a mind contacts these archaic truths, perhaps for the first time in such wealth of detail. Responsibility because, while untold good can be achieved by such contact, yet clumsy and unsuitable methods can certainly do harm. I have not witnessed very many first contacts with Theosophy, but I am sure of how extremely crucial this period is, during which great care and thoughtful handling is necessary. Admittedly, the Theosophist sometimes meets that type of mind which is very "ripe" for many of the teachings — a mind very easily convinced of their veracity because of its own proximity to them. Yet, while the Theosophical propagandist is particularly on the look out for such minds, they are a minority usually among the enquirers and people whom he contacts.

One of the main difficulties is to impart Theosophical thoughts without coloring them with any personal paint. It is of extreme importance that they should be given to the enquirer exactly as they had been previously received. An enquiring mind, rejecting a personal opinion or idea which he has been given as part of the Theosophical doctrines, may be repelled from Theosophy as a whole because of this

indigestible item. This is why it is so necessary to become as much as possible a living illustration of Theosophy. A wide discrepancy between the teachings and the personality explaining them can have a similar bad effect.

Another difficulty of equal importance arises from the inertia of thought in the human mind. The old phrase "casts of mind" expresses it admirably. It is when these "casts of mind" are concerned, that I think the greatest amount of wisdom and thought is required. They cannot ever be overcome by rough methods such as challenging them directly, but must be destroyed by softening the mind gradually to sensitiveness to new thoughts, all achieved with stepping as little as possible on mental toes. Perhaps I am not being explicit enough when I speak of not challenging these "casts of mind" directly. What I mean is that very rarely is it enough to say, in so many words "Here are the Theosophical teachings, you will have to scrap your previous views." This is also what I am thinking of when I speak of "stepping on mental toes." And it is not just silly sentimentality — very far from it. It is all because of what we call openmindedness, that attribute of the mind whereby it is more or less respondent, impressionable to new thought. To become most "open" the mind must have a certain sympathetic adjustment with another, adjustment never achieved by mere parrot fashion reiteration of Theosophical teachings. One of the main essentials of this adjustment is a great respect for the other's view, a respect, which, if amounting to an intimate realization of the other's general outlook, can be even more effective.

I think it is an Eastern method of teaching, in which the teacher, by asking a few questions, gains a fair idea of his student's own mental tendencies and opinions. Then, forgetting temporarily his own thoughts, he tunes his mind to that of his student, using his resources of imagination, and step by successive step he brings his student's mind to those thoughts he wished to impart, stopping at any ungrasped idea, and dwelling on it until it is understood before continuing Well, although there can never be hard and fast rules made, I think something of the sort is often needed in personal propaganda. The

Theosophical propagandist, who takes these traits of the human mind into consideration, is employing real wisdom in the job in hand.

The Theosophical Forum

PLANETARY CHAINS AND PRINCIPLES — *G. de Purucker*

For years really I have felt I ought to speak about a difficult matter of doctrine, to try to correct at least a few simple errors which some of our very best students have fallen into, I fear; I am not sure, but I have the impression that this is the case. It is with regard to the planetary chains, a very technical teaching, but a beautiful teaching, and most suggestive when properly understood, a teaching having a distinct moral value on human life because of the inferences that the student draws from this doctrine of the planetary chains.

Of course there are planetary chains of which we have no physical cognisance whatsoever, because their lowest or fourth globe — following H. P. B.'s septenary enumeration — their fourth respective globes are either above or below our plane of the solar universe. Therefore being outside of the sphere which our eyes can encompass, we do not see these other globes. Nevertheless these higher or lower planetary chains exist. So much for that point.

When the planetary-chain teaching was first given out by H. P. B, shortly before and at the time of and after the printing of her great work *The Secret Doctrine*, those students who thought they understood the teaching concerning the planetary chains, imagined that the other globes of a planetary chain, such as our own Earth Planetary Chain, were but different phases of each chain's fourth-plane globe, as for instance of our Globe Earth, our Globe D for our Chain — different levels of consciousness, as it were, of our Globe D, reaching from the grossest or our physical plane up to the spiritual. So strongly did this idea sink into the minds of students of those days, and such vogue did it get, that very unwittingly and utterly wrongly, students spoke of the other globes of our Planetary Chain, or of any other planetary chain, as being the *principles* of our Globe Earth or of some other fourth-plane globe, with respect to its chain, like Venus or Saturn or Mars or Jupiter. This is all wrong. The reason for such mistake was the very striking

and close analogy that exists between the globes of a planetary chain and certain aspects of the septenary human constitution little spoken of in those days, but in our day much more clearly understood, to wit, the monads in the human septenary constitution.

For many years over-emphasis has been given to this idea that I have just spoken of, that the other globes of our planetary chain were so to speak the principles of our Globe D, and for that reason I have taken especial pains to change that current of thought; until about a year ago I became suddenly conscious that the swing of thought had gone far too much, far too far, in the other direction; and that our members had lost sight of the very striking and close analogy between the monads in the human constitution and the globes of a planetary chain, and were beginning to look upon the globes of our planetary chain, or of any planetary chain, as almost unrelated individuals, unrelated globes, or at least held together only by delicate and subtil karmic bonds of destiny — a thought which is true enough, but not nearly close enough, or accurate enough.

If you can synthesize these two points of view, the older and this latter, fuse them into a new and more comprehensive conception, you probably will have the real facts. Let me try to illustrate: The monads in the human constitution — and I will use the septenary form that H. P. B. gave to us as it is somewhat easier than the duodenary — may be reckoned thus: the divine, the spiritual, the intellectual, the psychical, the animal, the astral-vital, and the vital-physical; for even the vital-physical human body, temporary and imperfect as it is, is nevertheless the expression of a monad working on this plane, whose seat (since your western minds always want very definite brain-mind locations), whose seat is in the human heart. The heart is likewise the seat of the spiritual monad working through this lower.

The globes of a planetary chain correspond almost term for term to these monads in the human constitution; and as you know, the human constitution being unitary, one, the principles and monads being in coadunition but not in consubstantiality, so likewise we may speak of

the globes of a planetary chain as being in coadunition but not in consubstantiality. Yet these other globes are not the other six principles of our Earth. They are fellow-globes, a septenate, of which our Earth is one. But a septenary unitary fact comes in what I have just told you; that the globes correspond in that chain to what the monads are in the human constitution, because each globe is itself the expression of what we may call a globe-monad.

Furthermore, just as the principles in the human constitution are as given from the very first, atman, buddhi, and so forth, down the scale, so the same cosmic principles, paramatman, maha-buddhi, mahat, etc., are the principles of a planetary chain. Thus you see right there there is the same distinction between globes and the principles of a chain, and the monads and the principles of the human constitution, item for item. Furthermore, just as there is in man a hierarch of his constitution, just exactly so in a planetary chain there is a hierarch of the entire planetary chain, the hierarch for all the seven or twelve globes of that chain, our chain as an example. And this hierarch, who really is a kind of person or individual god for the chain, our chain, is the highest spiritual planetary of our chain, or planetary spirit.

Remember that every globe of a chain has its own minor hierarchy of planetaries. You may call them Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, if you like. I am now using the typically Theosophical term, planetaries. But these combined planetaries of the chain simply make the families of the planetaries of the chain, the highest of such planetary being the hierarch of the hierarchy, the king. Furthermore, every such planetary considered as an individual, in some past cosmic age has been a man, or a being corresponding to a man; that is, the monad now a planetary, now blossomed out, evolved forth, into being a planetary, then was passing through the stage where spirit and matter meet, conjoin, and produce man, the midway stage. We in our turn, all of us, if we make the grade, shall some day be planetaries. Furthermore, note that in the human constitution, all the monads of a man's constitution are inseparably linked, which does not mean closely linked, but inseparably (which means cannot be separated, that is torn apart from

each other to become strangers unto each other), are inseparably linked for a galactic manvantara; after which evolution will have so parted them through increasing individualization that although they will still be karmically linked, they will no longer be condensed as it were into a relatively closely knit unit, as they are now in a man.

Precisely the same rule holds for a planetary chain; and remember that all that I am saying tonight is but brushing the outskirts, sketching an outline, of much deeper and important teaching that does not belong here.

All the globes of our planetary chain had a common origin, were born together so to speak, just as the monads in a man's constitution have a common origin and were born together so to speak. When they were thus born in past cosmic time they were much more closely in union, united, than now they are, evolution of each globe through the ages bringing about a stronger individualization of each globe, and for this reason we speak of these as being in coadunition; so that as the ages pass, they will have the tendency to separate, still remaining connected by spiritual and magnetic and all other kinds of bonds. The separation, as stated, comes through constantly increasing individualization. But as each globe becomes more strongly individualized, the constellation as it were of globes in a chain separates farther apart. Thus a child born in a family finds the time come some day when it leaves the family and enters the world to carve its own way, or to follow in the footsteps of the father, no longer as a child but as an individual, as a man "on his own," to use the slang expression.

Furthermore, every globe in a planetary chain, ours for instance, has its own septenary constitution. The Master in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, outlines what these principles are for our Earth-Globe, but the Master there gives only the septenate for the *physical* globe. You remember, every principle in a constitution is itself septenary, so that there is even an atman of the physical so to speak. Therefore, every globe not only has its own septenary principles, each principle a septenate itself; but you see this means that every globe therefore is a

fully equipped entity with divinity at its heart and manifesting in a gross physical vehicle, veil, frame, body, exactly as a man does. You know that even an atom in your body is a septenary entity. Its heart is divinity. Why should not a globe of a chain be exactly the same? It is. At the present time the globes of a planetary chain, ours for instance, are sufficiently conjoined or coadunated so that they move through space more or less together as a constellation, as it were; so that while they are not inside of each other, the more ethereal inside the more material — that is not so — while they are scattered about in space, but closely together; nevertheless they form a constellation as it were, if you take the twelve of them, or even the seven; and they pursue the same orbit about the sun that the earth does, not because the *earth* follows this orbit — it is only one of seven or twelve — but it happens to be the orbit that these seven, these twelve, all follow; so that when we move about the sun, we do so, and all the other globes do so, more or less as a constellation, each globe moving and rotating. Follow your thought now: so that actually every globe from this standpoint can be called a planet. It is in itself not only a septenary entity, but if you were on Globe E for instance, or F or G or A or B or C, you would not see the other globes around you. To you it would be an earth, following its orbit around the sun, as does each of the other globes. Therefore the globes from this standpoint can truly be called planets.

What has been said with regard to our earth applies equally well to all the other planetary chains, visible or invisible, of our Solar System. And there are scores of planetary chains. Our modern science knows of only a few planets — I think the total number at present is nine, including Pluto, and about these I have not the time nor is it the place to go into here.

I am debating now in my mind, and also trying to find words in which to speak of something else. These things are not easy to speak of. The teaching is difficult indeed, because it is so utterly apart from anything that our brain-mind knows. What I have said about planetary chains applies equally well to the Solar Chain, or indeed to any stellar chain, the chain of any star. Furthermore, remember that every planetary

chain is headed by its hierarch, which is the chiefest planetary spirit of that chain, the highest; and therefore that planetary spirit is for its chain what we in the West I suppose would call a "personal god." Now this teaching is a very ancient one, and in its popularization a very exoteric one. It has been known since immemorial time, and was the basis of what the ancients called astrolatry or star-worship. They did not worship the physical globe, they worshiped the life, the light, the intellect, the manifestation of order and beauty and harmony, for which the planet was the symbol and expression. They worshiped, in other words, the regent of the planetary chain. And furthermore, just as a chain has its own chief planetary or hierarch, so every globe has its own subordinate smaller hierarchy of planetaries with its hierarch or chief minor planetary, our Earth as an example; only these are globe-planetaries — at least those on our Earth are. Nevertheless, they are higher than we men, spiritually and intellectually.

Thus you see, "to come back to our sheep" as the French say, we must not look upon a planetary chain as an indissoluble single body or globe, of which what we call the other globes are merely finer planes. In other words, the other globes are not merely finer planes of our own Globe-Earth that we know. Our own globe that we know is only one of seven or twelve, and in some ways the least important of all, because the lowest. Nor should we again on the other hand look upon the planetary chain as composed of a number of globes, whether we reckon on the seven or twelve, which are merely held together in a kind of feeble union, unconnected in origin with each other, which is quite wrong, because they are very closely connected in origin with each other, and they shall be connected thus closely until the end of the Galactic Manvantara; and then when the new Galactic Manvantara opens, they will still be connected, but much less so than at present, obviously, because of what I pointed out a little while ago: that age, evolutionary progress, gives to each globe an increasing increment of individuality. It becomes more independent in spirit, as it were, just as we find among men. It is a very curious paradox that the lowest things are the most closely united, the least individualized, as we see in the unism of

the rocks. As we follow the ladder of life upwards, we find that the component parts slowly seem to separate and become more individualized, until we reach men. And here, strangely enough, although it is among men that the sense of disunion is very strong, it is likewise among men that begins to come to birth again, in men's souls, the feeling of their oneness, the *ekatwa* or *ekatd* in Sanskrit, their oneness with the Divine. Isn't that a marvelous paradox? Unism at the lowest, but unconscious unism as in the rocks, and in the atoms. Unity in the highest, but self-conscious unity with the Divine.

Try then to understand, to fuse these two thoughts together. The globes of a planetary chain are in coadunition, but not in consubstantiality, which means that they are karmically united as a unitary group at the present time, closely so, but are not consubstantial. That is, the stuff of which the individual globes are builded differs from one to the other.

And now, finally, do not for an instant take the metaphorical symbol used by H. P. B. of the necklace of globes as being a graph, a photograph, as it were, of the actual positions of the globes in space, for that is all wrong. The globes are scattered about the heart of the chain as it were from the central pillar of light, so to speak. And you could write a metaphorical graph of the seven globes, no longer what H. P. Blavatsky on page 92 of her *Letters to A. P. Sinnett* called a necklace of sausages and protested against it as being a wrong conception; but you could write the way the globes are located towards each other on an ascending line, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7. That would be just as accurate as the necklace of sausages; but that straight-line graph has not the advantage of suggesting the descent into matter until the bottom is reached and the rise again, which the necklace of globes does. The straight-line way of describing the positions of the globes however has one enormous advantage. It shows that every globe of the seven or twelve is on a different plane; and that no two, despite the graph in *The Secret Doctrine*, are on exactly the same sub-plane. Those are metaphors, that is, diagrams. They suggest things, and the suggestion you must try to understand; and do not take pictures, those metaphorical suggestions, as photographs of the positions of the globes.

Now it is true, and I have emphasized this point myself, that precisely because the globes are scattered about in space, although each one is on a different plane, there comes a time when they come opposite each other in their evolution. I wonder now if you catch that thought? So that it is possible, for instance, for an observer on Globe E at a certain instant in time to catch a glimpse of Globe C, the reason being that the two globes are for the instant in vibratory synchrony. That instant actually may be a million or tens of millions of years. But the globes are in movement. We are speaking now of super-geologic time; but compared with the life of a planetary chain, it is, relatively speaking, an instant.

It is in exactly the same way, or a very similar way, that H. P. B. tries to describe the outbreak of psychic disturbances in our time, foreseen and foretold by the Masters. Do you remember in some of her earlier writings she points out that the world is entering upon a period when the plane on which we live and the plane on which the kama-rupas of kama-loka mostly are, come close together, the partition becomes thin, and there is an inrush of kama-rupic spooks into our thought-atmosphere, and into our world. It is, as it were, as if two planes came close to each other. I wonder if I make my thought clear. If you get the idea, that is the main thing.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME AND SPACE — *H. T. Edge*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Looking into the sky at night, we may think of the vast distances which, as we are told, separate the celestial bodies from us: a light year, a hundred, a thousand; nay, one has recently heard of super-galaxies one hundred million light-years away. But we are apt to forget that these bodies are not merely spread out in space, but in time also. If a body is 100 light-years distant, it means that what I see is not what is there now, but what *was* there a century ago; and for aught I know, it may have ceased to exist for a century. And what of the super-galaxy? What we see there through our large telescope is what existed in one of the earlier Root-Races of mankind! Truly I may say that I am not looking into space, but into history.

It is impossible, by any means now known to us, to view the heavens as they are at any one given time; every body that we see is at a different epoch in time. And yet, if I am not careful, I may find myself speculating and making calculations about the transference of energy between these bodies, as though they all existed together at one time.

How can I measure the distance between the earth and Sirius? To speak of this distance is like speaking of the distance between me at Point Loma and Socrates in Athens. I can only measure from where I am *now* to where the star was *then*. What am I measuring? Space or time; or space-time? This may help us to understand what Einstein and others are engaged with — trying to find formulas that will mean something when applied to problems of interstellar space.

The velocity of light is so great that we can afford to ignore it for terrestrial purposes. But suppose that the velocity of light were diminished proportionately. If I saw you in the distance, it would be no

use shouting to you, because I could only see you in the place where you were a minute before I shouted. It would be futile to shoot at any moving object, for there would be no means of knowing where it was at the time of shooting. This gives some idea of the hash we may make if we try to apply terrestrial notions to celestial affairs.

But this is no reason for despair. We are on the threshold of an advance like that inaugurated by Galileo and Newton, and it is producing much the same kind of consternation. Before those pioneers, nobody had any conception of gravitation or of many other mechanical principles now familiar to all. Einstein and the others are pioneering; for some time there will be perplexity and confusion, mistakes and corrections; but it will settle down into a new formulation; and in time the masses will become conscious of it.

It does not seem wonderful that the Theosophical teachings should contain many things hard to explain; they have to be translated into terms familiar to us, and in the translation they are of course deformed. When H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* was written, these ideas about space and time were not in the air. But read *The Esoteric Tradition*, (1) pages 388-9, where the ideas are given full credit.

Space and time do not seem so different from each other. The distance between objects is generally considered as spatial; that between events, as temporal distance. But, as has been shown, these two kinds of distance seem strangely interblended when we are dealing with the heavenly bodies. If we settle on a ratio between spatial and temporal quantities — in this case the velocity of light — we can equally well express the distance of a star in years or in miles. The sun is 93,000,000 miles away, or eight seconds away.

If we regard the earth as still — which it is often convenient to do — we are able to rest still in one place for an hour, a day. But if we are to take into account the motion of the earth round the sun, the motion of the sun round some other body, and so on indefinitely, it is clear that we can never remain in one place for even the smallest fraction of a second. Nor can we ever come back again to the same place (unless

indeed it be at the completion of some vast cyclic period). In a word, we are eternally shifting, in space or in time, whichever you like. It is thoughts like these which urge us to realize our entry upon a revolution similar to that ushered in by the heliocentric theory. We cannot afford to be geocentric or flat-earthist, or we shall be left behind in the march of thought.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Esoteric Tradition*, by G. de Purucker, Theosophical University Press. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ACTIVE PATIENCE — *Martyn Witter*

The ascetic cultivates patience for he has the wisdom to understand Nature's Law of Adjustment. The Eternal Mother works in her own slow but wondrous ways. She will neither rush nor linger but walks with a stately step throughout all duration. The sages are able to calculate cycles because of this measured tread.

The disciple is able to draw courage and comfort in his darkest moments of trial, for Nature will clear his pathway if he but have confidence and remain true to her operations. The darkest clouds pass and sunlight takes their place. Thus there follows throughout all being the operations of action and reaction. The farmer who sows seeds must wait until the fall before he can reap his harvest. The disciple may wait many lives before his seeds of thought and action send him soaring into the spaces upon wings of thought. Thus the Great Mother teaches patience to her children. If the disciple becomes impatient and pits his will against the slow but healthy processes of growth in an attempt to rush to the goal, he may indeed fail. He who would pluck the blossom before it has ripened into the fruit is both rash and selfish. Rash because he is attempting to harvest his seed before it is ready. Selfish because he has his gaze upon the reward.

There is both a negative and positive type of patience. He who follows the negative type lets life batter him without ever raising his will into an effort to better his condition. He who follows the positive type of patience is intensely active while he endures. He is the one who accomplishes action while to all appearances he is inactive.

Imagine the patience required of the teacher who waits throughout the ages for the day when infant humanity will send out a call to him. His range of vision sweeps the centuries while ours covers the minutes.

THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS — *P. A. Malpas*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

RIDING INTO JERUSALEM

The 21st chapter of Matthew — the Greek pseudo-Matthew which we have, and not the real or original Matthew, which has always been a secret book — commences with a somewhat curious incident.

And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them. And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

And Jesus went into the Temple of God and cast out all them that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the

money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

Chapter II of Mark gives the same story, but omits to mention the mother-ass and only refers to the colt.

In the 19th chapter of Luke we have the same story. The detail is given that the colt is one "whereon yet never man sat," and when the disciples take and loose the colt they are to say, and do say, as their justification, "The Lord hath need of him," (as in Matthew).

The same story occurs in the 12th chapter of John, which Gospel was published as late as 180 a. d. and may have been written only a short time before that. The cry of the palm-bearers is, "Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."

At one time there was a perfect mania — not without a deep purpose — for making everything possible in the Gospel relate to some Old Testament, that is, purely Jewish, "prophecy," as being the fulfilment of that prophecy. So we find that all this happens as the fulfilment of a prophecy in Zachariah, (Chapter 9, verse 9.)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation: lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

All this about a carpenter who had the amazing effrontery to ride on a donkey in semi-royal state into Jerusalem, as if he were other than a mere lunatic, has led some writers to declare that he *was* a lunatic. The other alternative is to become a lunatic oneself and imagine that the Jews or Romans would have permitted such an extraordinary demonstration for a single moment, if it were really *history*. Others have, quite legitimately, though not with any reverence for the Gospel narratives, asked why it was necessary to perform such a curious circus trick as riding on two donkeys at once, to show that the rider was the son of David or King of Israel, or whatever it might be.

Let us look at the story a little more closely. John goes on to give what, if we follow a suggestion made by H. P. Blavatsky, looks very like a significant hint to search for the secret meaning of it all.

These things understood not his disciples at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

The disciples' failure to understand these things at first is an open hint that we are likely to be in the same case, and that if we dig deeper we shall find something interesting, providing we know how to recognise it when we see it.

For obviously, there is some quite important meaning in the incident, which bears the look of a symbolical initiation ceremony in some secret lodge of mystics. Again and again do we find in writings of the day and of later times that this story is so prominent that one may suspect the possibility of its being the most important thing in the whole Gospel. It is "the narratives that are as a cloak," to use the graphic phrase of a learned Hebrew mystic — they are not the Gospel itself.

We can find several ways of tackling this curious problem in the ritual stories of an early secret society, without even having to go so far as to find out if that society, or any remnant of it, still exists with knowledge of its symbolism.

One thing is to remember that very important fact that our Gospel is not, and never was, the real Gospel, the original Gospel, but that the original was Hebrew. Official theologians twist and prove and argue and assert that the Gospel was Greek, that Jesus talked in Greek, that it ought to and must have been Greek. They always try to make the facts fit their desire that it should have been Greek. Then you have the curious fact that the Gospels are written in such bad Greek that there were five hundred words that the philologists could not account for as decent Greek. But now we are told that they are hugely delighted at finding a number of papyri and fragmentary documents inside crocodile mummies of the earlier centuries of the common era, documents which use about four hundred and fifty of these words. Oh yes, it is jargon, of course, but it was the language of the common people, and Jesus was talking to the common people. He was a workman, a laborer, and they were laborers, and everything is as it should be, if not more so. He simply talked what we should call Yiddish if we were Jews referring to Hebrew; or Cockney if we are to think in terms of modern London; or a sort of Chinook, or gipsy language, perhaps; certainly not pure Greek. In plain language, they will have it that the gospels are written in a very common low-class Greek about equivalent to the language of a not-too-well-educated ranter in Hyde Park.

Plainly, it will not do. Initiates do not write such careless stuff. So let us suppose that our Greek Gospel is really a hash-up, to use a vulgar but expressive word, of the Hebrew original. There will be some words we can identify with some degree of probability.

The *Lord* in Greek is simply *Kyrios*. This word, in some such way as we are now considering, is twisted to mean *Cyrus* in the Old Testament, a couple of hundred years before Cyrus lived, so we have a good precedent. But in Hebrew it is *Adonai*. In Greek it might be called *Adonis*, the beautiful Syrian God, or in Egyptian, perhaps *Aton*.

Now the word for *ass* in Hebrew tells us little. But if you insist that it is a female ass you get, curiously enough, a distinct reference to the word

Adon. We may say that in symbolism it is quite a good disguise to describe the God of the Jews as an Ass. Lest any should think this too much of a shock to ingrained ideas, let us say at once that the secret Hebrew God *was* an ass — a red one. He is the rejected Typhon of Egypt, the ass God. Whether the Jews ever came out of the geographical Egypt or not, they certainly were adherents of the old rejected god of Egypt that became with others a devil, and Satan, and the opponent of the good god Osiris. And this fact, and the word itself, link up the secret Jewish God with many a despised heathen God who is identical with him. You will even see the ass on the front page of the English comic weekly *Punch*. It is precisely the same thing, and has the caricature of the God on its back. There is obviously nothing more absurd in the Jewish God being a donkey than there is in the Christian God being a lamb or sheep. It is all a matter of the way the symbolism is understood.

In the Talmud Jesus is frequently referred to, and also Paul, but never by those names. The Talmud is the Hebrew Bible in its originally unwritten portion. It is now written, but is a huge mass of legend and teaching utterly incomprehensible to the outsider. Here Jesus is referred to as "That man," and Paul as "The other man." But another name for Jesus is Balaam. The origin of the name is obvious — he is the man who rode on an ass.

It is H. P. Blavatsky who tells us that Jesus in its secret meaning is simply *man*, in one of his principles. It is easy enough to see it when once we are told, because the Hebrew lettering, when read Kabbalistically, does mean "man," just as it does, with hardly a change in the word, in ordinary, everyday Hebrew. She goes farther and gives us another clue. She says that Jerusalem is the symbol for the body.

To cut the story short, this absurd tale, as it seems to be in a historical sense, turns out to be a most wonderful symbolism of man, each one of us, you and me and everyone else, conquering the red ass that is our lower, obstinate, dull, self-willed, positive, personal, undivine self — the self that always wants its own way, always wants to dictate, to talk,

to be "intellectual," to enjoy itself, to think of what "I" have done and am doing and am going to do. Who does not know the million and one tricks of that desire-self?

But the Christ in each of us, the struggling Manas with the potency of Divinity, at last wins the battle. It does not *kill* the ass of its lower nature, but conquers it and rides on it into the kingdom of true life as a divine being. It is a glorious story.

Of course there was another meaning; there are always many meanings to every true symbol. (1) And one such meaning is that the Jews, the secret Jews, knew well enough that the mission of the reformed Judaism which later came to be called Christianity was to "ride upon the ass" of Judaism and transform it into a living religion, no longer the crystallized, material, dead-letter preserve of the Jewish priesthood.

The "Jesus riding into Jerusalem on an ass" meant, politically, that their occupation would have gone. No wonder they were up in arms against "Jesus" whether as man or symbol. They moved heaven and earth to recapture the Reformed Judaism for the Old Judaism. And whether they succeeded or not, we can soon discover if we ask ourselves the question, "Did they succeed in reimposing the Old Testament on Christianity or did they not? Do we or do we not today look upon the Old Testament as part of the Christian scriptures?"

However it may be with that political aspect, to the Theosophist the esoteric meaning of the "Jesus riding on the ass" is plain. *We* are the Jesus, each one of us, and we have to ride our red donkey and not let it ride us. One might go so far as to ask pertinently, "Is not the whole aim and end of Theosophy in practice, the conquest of the selfish Self and the enthronement of the Divine, Impersonal, Silent, Unselfish self?"

Supposing Christianity had limited itself to this one teaching *as a thing to be carried out in daily life* — not talked of, not mixed up with theology, not lost in a maze of dogma and sectarianism — the world would be a paradise today. You could call it Christianity — why not?

But it would be Theosophy, all the same. For it cannot be repeated too often — *original* Christianity, if not the whole of Theosophy, was pure Theosophy and nothing else.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Cf. what Dr. G. de Purucker says on this particular subject in *The Esoteric Tradition*, Vol II, pp 1083-4 *et seq*: "It is to be noted carefully that in the Oriental Mystical Cycle of the Hither East, or what is now called Asia Minor, the Planet Saturn was frequently mystically called and figured under the form of an "ass" — or rather the ass represented that planet in mystical symbolology. In equivalently mystical symbolology the "foal of an ass" was this Earth, because the ancient seers taught that this physical globe Earth was under the direct formative influence of the planet Saturn.

". . . The Spiritual Soul, the inner Christos, rides into "Jerusalem" — material existence on Earth — on an ass, meaning Saturn, and the foal of an ass, meaning this Earth, and the Monad, the Christ-Spirit, descending into matter thus, is crucified on the cross of matter "

See also in this same work the interesting footnote, No 458, which follows the above quotation. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

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LIVING ON A STAR — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

G. K. Chesterton once wrote: "Among all the strange things that men have forgotten, the most universal lapse of memory is that by which they have forgotten they are living on a star."

Verily a key to the Cosmic Philosophy, Theosophy, which teaches that Earth is the most material plane of one of the most material planets in the Solar System. It is the point on this planet where involution and evolution interchange, where matter and spirit equilibrate, where the duality of manifestation is most marked, hence the extremes in conditions of life.

Earth is the focal-point for all the forces of the Solar System, a vital life-atom in the body of a Solar System which is in its turn a solar-atom in a Galaxy.

A child of the planetary Moon, it is the sphere where man expresses his egoity as a complete septenary, where he has the power to attain the sublimest goal or, because of the lure of materiality, to do the greatest mischief. Here man came as an unconscious god-spark; here he received self-consciousness; here he has consorted with Buddhas and Christs, and will again consort; here man may, if he will, attain self-conscious Godhood himself. That is what living on a star means.

A GREAT PRINCIPLE OF SUCCESS — *G. de Purucker*

When a man is in difficulties, the thing he must do is to act, to move. Attack is the secret of victory, whether it is a commercial matter, or propagating a philosophy, or answering questions, or whatever else it may be. In anything a man does he has chances of success if he moves, goes out, acts.

The great principle of success in anything is to go after your objective, to take the kingdom of heaven with strength, and then the gods are with you. It is really a wonderful psychological secret; and it is better to move and to act, even if you make mistakes, than it is to sit still. You will discover your mistakes as you go along, if you have ordinary prudence, and can modify and change from step to step. Keep pushing forward, instead of remaining always quiet and allowing things to rest — which last all too often degenerates into dormancy.

I believe that generally our speakers on the public platform might adopt this principle more than they do, just in a little thing like answering questions from the audience. If they would drop the defensive attitude which some have, and cease imagining that the man on the floor is trying to trip them or to trick them, and would simply attack the question, go right at it, answer it positively, in other words *guide* the thought, then all Theosophical meetings, interesting as they are, would be much more interesting. This is the way by which to make a meeting really lively and really interesting; and if you combine it with constant courtesy and a little humor, you become almost irresistible.

THE MYSTERY OF PERSONALITY — *H. Percy Leonard*

Although undivided It appeareth as divided among creatures
— *Bhagavad-Gita*, chap xiii

The strong illusion of the separated self casts its illusive glamor even upon the deepest students of their own nature. It is comparatively easy with the intellect to grasp the thought of Universal Life concealed in stones, in plants and animals and filling those apparently void spaces that extend between the starry population of Immensity; but to apply this theory as a rule of practice in our daily life, we sometimes think it difficult. This much at all events is plain, that just so far as we concern ourselves with bodily sensations and material things, so does the selfish thought of separated life fasten its grip upon our minds, while in proportion as the senses are ignored and sympathy wells up and overflows to forms of life outside ourselves, do those confining walls expand and set us free.

The masses of humanity are so enamoured of that pole of feeling known as "pleasure" that they spend their days in madly plunging in life's stormy waters in its vain pursuit. Time after time experience proves that every vivid pleasure draws its reaction in its train, as every wave on which the swimmer mounts, inevitably lets him fall into the following trough; but yet the fatal glamor is so strong that till the winter of old age abates desire, they lavish all their energies upon the chase. Some keen observers have declared that pain as well as pleasure has a fascination for deluded man. To throw a light on this strange doctrine one may observe his mind in leisure moments and take note how the poor fool drags out some long-forgotten grievance from its lurking-place and revels in the misery its memory recalls. Not till the final bitter drop is drained with eager thirst, is the stale sorrow cast aside, and even then the mind is just as much disposed to choose some other cause of pain, as to select a pleasant subject for its contemplation. The tactful compliment, the acrimonious attack, the lively hope of

personal ambition and the dread of disappointment, our likings and disliking, *both* the pairs of opposites are brought to mind, for both serve to preoccupy the mind with thoughts of self and both are equally of value to contract the consciousness upon the point of personality, and check that yearning for expansion that would set us free. It seems in fact that just as prisoners long-confined are said to cling with strange affection to the old familiar cell, so do we crouch within the personality and oscillate alternately between the poles of pleasure and of pain. We hide within our prison walls and fear to venture on the larger world outside ourselves. The poet Wordsworth, it is said, when as a boy he walked along the road to school, was sometimes overpowered with such a sense of vastness and expansion that he would touch the nearest wall or tree in order that the shock of contact with material things might call him back to his lost sense of personality.

Most people who have wandered lonely among natural scenes of an unusual grandeur and sublimity have had to some degree a kindred feeling, and the alacrity with which they mingle with society on their return is often prompted by no higher motive than to recover by association with their fellows the sharp outlines of their own familiar egotism which had become a little blurred and faded by the solitude.

Some characters on reaching to a certain point in their development are strong enough to seize and grapple with their lower natures and by determined effort once for all rob them of independent life and place them in their true position — that of obedient servants for the soul's use in daily life. This is the method of self-conquest by a slow starvation. The personality is stunted by degrees and not permitted to absorb such large supplies as formerly of mental substance and of vital force, for its unbalanced and luxuriant growth. For as the personality is made the subject of our constant thought so does it fatten and grow strong; but as we cease to feed it and engage the mind in wider fields, its independent life begins to weaken and its fierce insistent self-assertion to decline.

Silence has always been commended by the sages as a specific agent

for dissolving the hard crust in which the selfish ego is confined. But silence from the theosophic point of view means vastly more than simply to refrain from uttered speech, which can avail but little if the mind is not restrained as well. Silence of voice may co-exist with great activity of mind which may exhaust itself in weaving pictured webs of thought in which our virtues and accomplishments stand out in brilliant coloring against a somber background of the failings of our neighbors. But to control all lower forms of thought, to still the vehemence of our desires, and by the effort of a steady will to rise into the outer quiet where all mental agitation dies — this is an enterprise that calls for men. In the deep peace of the eternal silence our encrusting shell disintegrates. There the harsh voice of criticism never comes to drive us back into our citadel and strengthen our defenses in reply to the attack. There no impinging wave of love or hate reminds us of our boundary line, and thus insensibly it melts away and sets the captive free — a pure impersonal force in Nature which has found its home at last.

Christians who long to enter Heaven should bear in mind that those celestial fields, however wide their bounds, must still be looked upon as a locality with limits and a line of demarcation fencing it from Hell. The "place" sought after by theosophists is nothing less than the Infinitude itself, the freedom to its ample spaces being gained by the mere breaking loose from those enclosing walls in which we find ourselves confined — in fact, by living from day to day, faithful to duty and following conscientiously the path of unselfishness.

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: VI

Over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China, last spring, a series of fifteen minute expositions of the main doctrines of Theosophy was given by Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist and Miss Inga Sjostedt. This present broadcast, given by Miss Sjostedt on April 27th, gives an historical outline of one of the most important Theosophical teachings — the doctrine of Reincarnation.

Good Evening, everybody:

Last Sunday the speaker elaborated the fascinating theme of initiation and its universal symbology, and explained such symbols as the Crucifixion and the Resurrection — both of them actual occurrences in the solemn rites of true initiation.

Initiation means the making of perfected men, of Masters of Life, human beings who work with Nature and understand her occult laws, men who have achieved union with their Divine Ego — that same Divine Ego which lies dormant in the average man and gleams but fitfully through the mind of a genius.

The obvious objection to the teaching about Initiation from one who is not familiar with Theosophy would be: "How can the average man even dare to think of perfection as he lives his average life and neither rises to sublime heights nor dares to descend to sublime depths?" The answer would be that we live not one life on earth, but countless lives, and each time we return to the earth to pick up the threads of our half-completed destiny we learn something more from our experiences, and build into the fabric of our being more sympathy for suffering, greater intellectual powers and an increasing understanding of life in all its aspects — physical, mental and spiritual. In this way, coming back to earth in life after life, we can ultimately reach comparative perfection.

The teaching of Reincarnation is as old as the hills and has always

existed in all great religions. At times when conditions were intellectually and spiritually degenerate, this teaching has been withheld from general knowledge and taught only in secret. Even the early Christians believed in the rebirth on earth of the human ego, and no wonder, for early Christianity was a mixture of ancient Hebrew and Chaldean thought — which was reincarnationist — and of Greek Mystery teachings, which were also based on the doctrine of Reincarnation. It is only in later centuries that *modern* Christianity evolved its present-day beliefs of one sole life on earth and a state of eternal, changeless felicity or suffering after death.

The following is a quotation from Origen, an early Christian Church Father:

Every soul comes into the world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of the previous life.

How many Christians today would accept such a statement from an authority of their own Church! Yet Origen, together with Clement of Alexandria, formulated the theology of the Christian religion. His doctrines were later anathematized by the Church, but that only happened some time after his death when the Church was already changing its basic attitude. We have forgotten the past, and instead of investigating the sources of present-day Christianity, content ourselves with accepting the modern interpretations.

The Jewish historian, Josephus, who lived in the first century a. d., and who was a Reincarnationist like the majority of the Jews of his time, writes the following:

Do you not know that those who depart out of this life. . . and pay the debt which was received from God. . . obtain the most holy place in Heaven, from whence, in the revolution of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies?

And here is a quotation from Philo Judaeus, the Jewish philosopher and historian, who was a contemporary of Jesus in Alexandria:

Of these [souls], those which are influenced by a desire for mortal life, and which have been familiarized to it, are again reborn to it.

Now, it is an interesting fact that Josephus was a Pharisee and that as such he was a firm believer in Reincarnation. If we remember that Christianity largely derives from the Jewish scriptures, and that Christ came to teach the Jews; if we also realize that the majority of the Jews were Pharisees — just as today the Western nations are mainly Christian — and that the Pharisees were Reincarnationists, it seems almost incredible that we have lost this teaching so completely.

Even in the New Testament there are definite traces of a belief in Reincarnation, though no doubt the compilers and translators of the four Gospels — whoever they were — tried to change the text to suit their personal opinions. In several places it is mentioned that the people thought that John the Baptist was Elias returned to earth again. In fact Jesus himself is quoted as saying that John the Baptist was indeed Elias. There is a passage from the Gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 9, verses 7 and 8, which refers to Jesus and the opinion the people held about him. Here it is:

Now Herod. . . heard of all that was done by him. and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead; And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

This passage cannot possibly be misunderstood. It is quite clear that the people believed that Jesus was a reincarnated Elias, John the Baptist resurrected, or one of the old prophets reborn. The fact that they believed this possible shows that they were more than familiar with the belief in Reincarnation and that it was by no means an uncommon belief among the Jews. Even Josephus, the Jewish historian referred to before, says in one of his books that some thought that Jesus was Moses, their first legislator, come to life again.

The belief in Reincarnation was so current among the Jews at the time

of Jesus that this teaching is mentioned very casually by the thinkers of that era — not elaborately, as if trying to convince an incredulous people, but carelessly, as though taking it for granted that nobody would question such a belief.

The Greek philosophers who were initiated into the Mysteries of their sacred Colleges, were Reincarnationists. Such were Plato, Pythagoras, and many others equally famous. An interesting point when studying Christian origins is that almost all Christian symbols are taken from so-called pagan sources and the Greek Mysteries. H. P. Blavatsky, the great Theosophist, tells us that some of the early Popes were initiates, but that the inner knowledge was lost in later times, and the later Popes had lost the true meaning of Christian symbols and the esoteric teachings of the Church.

Here is one more quotation from the New Testament which is a most interesting one and deserves a close scrutiny. It is from the Gospel according to St. John, chapter 9, verses 1 and 2:

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

The answer that Jesus gave need not concern us. He replied that the man was born blind so that the glory of God should be made evident in him. This can be interpreted in many ways, to suit different beliefs. But here is the point: the disciples of Jesus must have known better than anybody else what Jesus taught and believed, and these disciples asked him whether a man born blind, *born* blind, please note, was so born because of his own sin or that of his parents! Obviously a man cannot be born blind because of his sin unless he has lived and sinned before! What is more, if Jesus had been against Reincarnation he would surely have rebuked his disciples for asking such a question, whereas his answer showed neither anger nor astonishment.

Two of the oldest nations, the Egyptians and the Hindus, have a wealth of allegorical teaching among their sacred traditions, the most

important among which is the teaching of rebirth. The ancient Hindu system of Yoga is nothing but a means of training the body and mind through which a man attains union with his divine Self and so escapes the round of rebirths which the average man has to pass through; and as the Yogi trains himself in spiritual perception he begins to remember his past lives, first in flashes, as it were, and later in fuller detail. We have proof of Reincarnation everywhere; in analogy, in religious history, and through personal testimony, and it is time that the nations of the West should begin to revive this ancient doctrine which alone can give a logical and philosophical background to human life.

We have sketched this evening a historical outline of the doctrine of Reincarnation as a universally diffused doctrine. Next Sunday we will give a philosophical description of the doctrine itself.

The Theosophical Forum

ONE LIFE — ONE LAW — *G. de Purucker*

How marvelously does our Theosophy, the ancient God-Wisdom of mankind, reduce all the phenomena of Nature to a majestic generalization, so that all things fall within the compass of a single law understandable to human beings: for our God-Wisdom shows us that just as we are born and live our little sphere of life and die, so do the worlds likewise, and the suns in those worlds, and the planets and the various kingdoms of the different suns, and the atoms which compose all things, and the electrons in the atoms. All are periodic, not only in the sense of being cyclic but in the sense of having periods: beginnings, culminations, endings, and, rounding out the cycle of the worlds invisible, beginning a new beginning, a second culmination, a subsequent passing merely to vanish again into the worlds invisible, there to experience new and vastly greater adventures than those that our smaller solar system can give to us.

All things function alike because Nature has one Law, one fundamental law which is at its source, a divine source, all energy; and habits, courses, procedures, all are governed by the same cosmic powers and intelligence, which simply means that all things follow these same fundamental laws in similar manners, all under the governance of the cosmic life, ringing all the possible changes that Nature so lavishly provides for our admiration and utmost reverence. For while all things, all beings, follow the same fundamental laws and courses; every unit, precisely because it is a unit and an individual, has its own modicum of will — call it free will if you wish — and therefore can more or less change, modify, its own courses, but always within the encompassing energy of the universe.

This means that while all beings follow these general rules, or what we Theosophists call analogical procedures — analogy being therefore the master key of life — yet all beings, precisely because they are beings, by their own innate power drawn from the cosmic source, more or less

modify the details of the procedures and movements. Thus the sun is born as a child is born, but the details are different. Details are not so important as the main fact. The birth, the growth, the death, the invisible worlds, the new adventures, the coming again to a new embodiment, a new culmination on a plane somewhat higher, a new death to be succeeded by the same round on the wheel of life — but always advancing, always growing, always enlarging. Step by step all things progress.

Thus actually, as our occultism, our God-Wisdom, points out, if you wish to know the destiny, the birth, the origin, and the temporary ending of a sun, study a man from birth to death. And if you can, study him after death in his adventures, and you will see what the solar divinity undergoes, but of course on enlarged and higher planes in the worlds invisible. Why, this visible world of ours is but a shell, is but the body, the exterior carapace, the skin of things. The life, the individuality, the power, the will, the thought, the real entity, is not this outer shell. Whether a man, or sun, or solar system, or galaxy, or an entire universe: the reality is within. And the body more or less expresses, although feebly expresses, what the inner powers produce on this outer plane.

Those of you who have followed the experiments undertaken in scientific ways will understand this more clearly than those who have not studied them. But all of you, if you think a moment, will know that you shed your strength from hour to hour, physical strength and mental strength. The man who produces a great thought shakes the foundations of civilization. The man who produces a majestic system of cosmic philosophy and definitely guides mankind — does not his vitality move men? These are facts. The only difference between a sun and a man is in the details, some of them majestic, very admittedly majestic; but it is only in the details that the procedure differs. The main principle of fundamental law is the same for all. Every man in fact is but an embryo sun, a sun in the making for the distant future — not his body, for that is not the man. His body is but the skin of him, the clothing of skins spoken of in the Genesis of the Hebrew Bible. A man is

the power within, the spirit or the monad; and it is this energy or power which makes the man be the same from birth till death, which makes the sun retain its form and follow its functions from its birth to its death. An atom, a flower, a tree, or a beast — all are subject to the same cosmic law of similarities if not positive identities. It is but the detail that changes.

The wisest and greatest men of antiquity pointed out that Father Sun was indeed Father Sun, but likewise our elder brother; our parent and yet our brother. The beast and the plant are in a sense our children because they look up to us as we look up to the Gods. They are, in a sense, our children and they follow in our footsteps towards mankind, towards the status and stature of humanity. The beasts are slowly crawling up towards us, as we look unto the Gods, our parents and grandparents; and when we find our souls infilled and inspirited with their life-force and a spark of their shining intelligence, then we become on this earth like God-men, because our thoughts are godlike, and our feelings are godlike, and our actions following our thoughts and feelings become godlike too.

Thus the atoms of the body and the molecules and protons and electrons that make up the physical stuff of the body, are in a sense its children, and they feel the impact of our thought and of our feeling. They suffer for our sins in proportion, and they are raised by our virtues, so closely are all things knitted together, a web of life of which each strand is a production of spiritual magic.

I tell you that we are responsible for the very atoms which compose our bodies, whether we dirty their faces or cleanse them. Some day, if we dirty the faces of the atoms composing us, they will return to us to be washed, washed clean of the sin we put upon them. And so with all the interior realms of man's constitution, the vehicles of his mind and of his feeling and of his thought.

Birth and death: what are these changes? A birth in the body is a death to the soul, for it leaves its own inner spheres, its own inner arrangements of its life there, and as it were descends or falls like a

star to earth, and is born in the physical body of a helpless human babe, tasting for the time being the karmic retribution for all its past. And when we die, aye, when we die, then are we released, then we spring forth and upwards and onwards on the wings of our soul, those strong pinions carrying us through all the planetary habitations to the very throne of Father Sun. It is rebirth to the soul, as rebirth on this earth is death to the soul. So with the sun, so with the worlds which are born and which die. The sun when he imbodyes on this plane is shorn of greatly much of his splendor. When the sun's hour shall strike and he passes from this plane, he springs like a divine thought right into the invisible realms, taking off into grandeurs only very dimly imagined by us. The flower expressing its soul in scent and beauty but repeats the same cosmic law in its birth from the seed. Little brothers of men are the flowers. Some of them are to us venomous. In some way in past time we envenomed them. Now in karmic retribution they envenom us.

The birth of a man from ordinary manhood into mahatmahood is an interior birth. The growth of the mahatman into Buddhahood or Bodhisattvahood, or as the Vedantists say, the becoming one with the Atman: this growth is in your hands to achieve, and in the hands of none else. You have it in your power to become god-men on this earth; or you have it in your power, every one of us has it in his power, so to ruin and blast his life that he shall become like the fury-driven victim of Greek legendary story, driven by unspeakable remorse and haunted by the feeling: I have played my play and I have lost. Too late, it is too late! But Theosophy says: Never too late. If you have played your game awry, re-assemble your cards and play like a man, play with the devil for the salvation of your own soul, the devil of your lower self, and win! If you win, divinity lies ahead of you. Over the peaks of that mystic East, the East in the heart of every human being, dawns the sun of truth which carries healing in its bosom. The truth shall make you free!

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN: I — H. P. Blavatsky

This instalment of H. P. Blavatsky's brilliant article concludes the series which was begun last July. In this issue, starting with the profoundest metaphysics and an exposition of the "God Nothing," the Unnamable Deity, and pointing to the Truth which is behind all religions, she brings her series to a close by an almost prophetic vision of the times in which we now live. What role does the Theosophical Society play in this tremendous drama? Her paragraphs in answer to this question show the importance of the Movement with which all true Theosophists have linked their destinies. Originally published in the French magazine, *La Revue Theosophique*, 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu," the article first appeared serially in translation in *The Theosophist*, Volume X.

It is written in an old book on the Occult Sciences: "Gupta Vidya (Secret Science) is an attractive sea, but stormy and full of rocks. The navigator who risks himself thereon, if he be not wise and full of experience, (1) will be swallowed up, wrecked upon one of the thousand submerged reefs. Great billows, in color like sapphires, rubies and emeralds, billows full of beauty and mystery, will overtake him, ready to bear the voyager away towards other and numberless lights that burn in every direction. But these are will-o'-the-wisps, lighted by the sons of Kaliya (2) for the destruction of those who thirst for life. Happy are they who remain blind to these false deceivers; more happy still those who never turn their eyes from the only true Beacon-light, whose eternal flame burns in solitude in the depths of the waters of the Sacred Science. Numberless are the pilgrims who desire to enter those waters; very few are the strong swimmers who reach the Light. He who gets there must have ceased to be a number, and have become *all numbers*. He must have forgotten the illusion of separation, and have accepted only the truth of collective individuality (3). He must see with the ears, hear

with the eyes, (4) understand the language of the rainbow, and have concentrated his six senses in his seventh sense." (5)

The Beacon-light of Truth is Nature without the veil of the senses. It can be reached only when the adept has become absolute master of his personal self, able to control all his physical and psychic senses by the aid of his "seventh sense," through which he is gifted also with the true wisdom of the gods — *Theo-sophia*.

Needless to say, the profane — the non-initiated, those *outside the temple* or *pro-fanes* — judge of the "lights" and the "Light" above mentioned in a reversed sense. For them it is the Beacon-light of occult truth which is the *ignus fatuus*, the great will-o'-the-wisp of human illusion and folly, and they regard all the others as marking beneficent sand-banks, which stop in time those who are excitedly sailing on the sea of folly and superstition.

"Is it not enough," say our kind critics, "that the world by dint of "isms" has arrived at *Theosophism*, which is nothing but transcendental humbuggery [*fumisterie*], without the latter's offering us further a *rechauffee* of mediaeval magic, with its grand Sabbath and chronic hysteria?"

Stop, stop, gentlemen. Do you know, when you talk like that, what *true* magic is, or the Occult Sciences? In your schools you have allowed yourselves to be stuffed full of the "diabolical sorcery" of Simon the magician, and his disciple Menander, according to the good Father Irenaeus, the too zealous Theodoret, and the unknown author of *Philosophumena*. You have permitted yourselves to be told on the one hand that this magic came from the devil; and on the other hand that it was the result of imposture and fraud. Very well. But what do you know of the true nature of the system followed by Apollonius of Tyana, Iamblichus and other *magi*? And what is your opinion about the identity of the theurgy of Iamblichus with the "magic" of the Simons and the Menanders? Its true character is only half revealed by the author of the book *de Mysteriis*. (6) Nevertheless, his explanations sufficed to convert Porphyry, Plotinus, and others, who from enemies

of the *esoteric theory* became its most fervent adherents. The reason is extremely simple.

True Magic, the theurgy of Iamblichus, is in its turn identical with the *Gnosis* of Pythagoras, the *science of things as they are*, and with the divine ecstasy of the Philaletheans, "the lovers of Truth." But one can judge of the tree only by its fruits. Who are those who have witnessed to the divine character and the reality of that ecstasy which is called *Samadhi* in India? (7)

A long series of men, who, had they been Christians, would have been canonized — not by the decision of the Church, which has its partialities and predilections, but by that of whole nations, and by the *vox populi*, which is hardly ever wrong in its judgments. There is, for instance, Ammonius Saccas, called the *Theodidaktos*, "God-instructed," the great master whose life was so chaste and so pure, that Plotinus, his pupil, had not the slightest hope of ever seeing any mortal comparable to him. Then there is Plotinus himself, who was for Ammonius what Plato was for Socrates — a disciple worthy of his illustrious master. Then there is Porphyry, the pupil of Plotinus, (8) the author of the biography of Pythagoras. Under the shadow of this divine *Gnosis*, whose beneficent influence has extended to our own days, all the celebrated mystics of the later centuries have been developed, such as Jacob Boehme, Emanuel Swedenborg, and so many others. Madame Guyon is the feminine counterpart of Iamblichus. The Christian Quietists, the Mussulman Sufis, the Rosicrucians of all countries, drink the waters of that inexhaustible fountain — the Theosophy of the Neo-Platonists of the first centuries of the Christian Era. The *Gnosis* preceded that era, for it was the direct continuation of the *Gupta-Vidya* and of the *Brahma-Vidya* ("secret knowledge" and "knowledge of Brahma") of ancient India, transmitted through Egypt; just as the theurgy of the Philaletheans was the continuation of the Egyptian mysteries. In any case, the point from which this "*diabolic*" magic starts, is the Supreme Divinity; its end and aim, the union of the divine spark which animates man with the parent-flame, which is the Divine ALL.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Acquired under a Guru. ([return to text](#))
2. The great serpent conquered by Krishna and driven from the River Yanuma into the sea, where he took for a wife a kind of siren, by whom he had a numerous family. ([return to text](#))
3. The illusion of the personality of the Ego, placed by our egotism in the first rank. In a word, it is necessary to assimilate the whole of humanity, live by it, for it, and in it, in other terms, cease to be "one," and become "all" or the total. ([return to text](#))
4. A Vedic expression. The senses, counting in the two mystic senses, are seven in Occultism, but an Initiate does not separate these senses from each other, any more than he separates his unity from Humanity. Every sense contains all the others. ([return to text](#))
5. Symbology of colors. The language of the prism, of which "the seven mother-colors have each seven sons," that is to say, forty-nine shades or "sons" between the seven, which graduated tints are so many letters or alphabetical characters. The language of colors has, therefore, fifty six letters for the Initiate. Of these letters each septenary is absorbed by the mother color, as each of the seven mother-colors is absorbed finally in the white ray, Divine Unity, symbolized by these colors. ([return to text](#))
6. By Iamblichus, who used the name of his master, the Egyptian priest Abammon as a pseudonym. ([return to text](#))
7. *Samddhi* is a state of abstract contemplation, defined in Sanskrit terms each of which would require a whole sentence to explain. It is a mental, or rather, spiritual state, which is not dependent upon any perceptible object, and during which the *subject*, absorbed in the region of pure spirit, lives *in Divinity*. ([return to text](#))
8. He lived in Rome for 28 years, and was so virtuous a man that it was considered an honor to have him as guardian for the orphans of the

highest patricians. He died without having made an enemy during these 28 years. ([return to text](#))

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THE SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF CELESTIAL BODIES
ON EARTH-LIFE AND HUMAN AFFAIRS — *H. Groot*

In our day of scientific-technical production the statement "not strictly scientific" is more or less equivalent to a *testimonium paupertatis*, signifying spiritual poverty. It is a pity indeed that outsiders tend to label Theosophy too as being unscientific. Is there any sound argument for this accusation?

If one makes oneself acquainted with Theosophical literature, one finds it often and again emphasized that science, philosophy, and religion are indivisibly ONE — each being but one aspect of the sublime Reality. Then there is no room for doubt whether the Old Wisdom, nowadays called Theosophy, may claim or even of necessity *must* claim itself to be scientific as well. But at the same time it will be clear just why "outsiders" incline to label Theosophy as being unscientific. It is because, except in Theosophy, science, philosophy, and religion are considered to be three separate, independent departments of human thought. "A thing is accepted as scientific only in so far as it is not influenced by philosophic ideas or religious sentiments," it is said.

But Theosophy is of a distinctly different opinion. According to its views the scientific pattern cannot and may not be disconnected from the philosophic and religious warp and woof. This intermingling of science, philosophy, and religion, which is an essential of the Theosophical trend of thought, is seen by the outsider as a state of confusion and lack of clearness. That is why he sticks his label "not strictly scientific" on to Theosophy.

It is rather of some importance for Theosophy to exculpate itself. Not that this imputation will do it any harm in the eyes of its followers, who know better indeed, but the reputation of not being scientific certainly does hinder its propagation, especially among its most science-minded investigators.

In my opinion this charge is most effectively refuted by pointing to the fact that Theosophy acknowledges the discoveries of science, and indicates how these discoveries more and more accurately support the teachings of the Old Wisdom. And is there a more convincing proof to be found in favor of the scientific purport of those teachings than the fact that time and again the most modern scientific discoveries prove to be in agreement with the statements of the Old Wisdom, as far as these can be separated from the closely related philosophic and religious truths?

Now the Old Wisdom comprises a number of statements concerning the influence of the Cosmos on earth-life and human affairs. As yet the main part of these statements cannot be given out in clear, direct terms, as these influences involve hidden causes. But even exoteric literature contains a number of indications on this subject. Therefore it is of no small importance to compare these hints and indications with the explanations given by modern science.

It was not so very long ago that science did not see any reason to bother itself about such influences. When Herschel, one of the most intuitive minds in the field of astronomy, ventured to surmise that a number of events on earth, like food shortage, failure of crops, famines, and the like, perhaps are connected with the frequency and number of sunspots, one of his critics remarked that "since the publication of Gulliver's travels the world had not been offered a more perfectly ridiculous idea than this one!"

Gradually Herschel has been put in the right, after his seemingly unbelievable statement was carefully compared with the facts. In our day nobody hesitates to accept the close relationship between the period of sunspots and the most divergent events on the earth. Not only do they show identical periods of 11 or 12 years, but also reflect with greatest accuracy all details of each such particular period.

Nowadays we know with unshakable and mathematical certainty that there exists an immediate connection between the period of 11 or 12 years of the sun's activity — making itself known in the frequency of

sunspots — and vegetation. This appears, among others, in the width of the annual rings of trees. In one and the same cycle of sunspots they appear periodically in different widths. It has been stated that in the case of fossil tree-stumps this connection between sunspots and vegetation existed long before the ice-age.

The same cycle which has been detected in magnetic influences and disturbances, and in the frequency of polar lights on earth. In fact there exists so intimate a connection between these phenomena that the appearance of a particularly large sunspot enables us to announce beforehand the occurrence of a magnetic disturbance or of strong polar lights. However, not only is the magnetic field of our earth proved to be in close relationship with the solar activity, but almost all earthly manifestation as well. Science even suspects this relation in meteorological phenomena, although it has not yet succeeded in detecting clearly the connection spoken of above. From all this, science infers the existence of a very powerful Cosmic influence on earth-life — emanating from the sun.

How do astronomers explain this influence? They have discovered that sunspots are sources of strong electro-magnetic powers. From these sunspots emanate mighty bundles of lines of force, to different parts of space.

Some have compared the sun to a pulsating heart, the period of solar activity corresponding with the duration of contraction and dilation of this solar heart. If pictured in this way, the bundles of lines of force represent the veins and arteries that spring from this heart, and the electrical particles in their course along these lines of force can be compared to the blood corpuscles pushed through the organism by the pulsation of the heart.

This metaphor, which is entirely correct scientifically, emphasizes a number of particulars which must especially strike those who are acquainted with the latest discoveries of science. The polarity of the sunspots justifies the use of the words *veins* and *arteries*, for in some cases the lines of force are directed to the exterior; in other cases they

are directed to the interior of the sun. Hence there must exist an outflowing as well as an inflowing of electrical particles, although the latter has not been observed as yet. Just as the human heart beats on an average of 72 times per minute, so a beat of the solar heart averages 11 or 12 years — although both may show considerable deviation from these figures.

The electro-magnetic forces residing in the sunspots, and the polarity of the spots, and the influence of the sunspots on our earth — all these are scientific facts which were entirely unknown in H. P. Blavatsky's time. But although today science has a better knowledge of the mechanism of these phenomena, yet it fails entirely in giving an explanation of the periodicity of the sun's activity, as is emphatically admitted by the most prominent investigators.

The Old Wisdom, however, can explain, because — where we are concerned with a matter of insight — it is able to free itself from the merely materialistic views of present-day science, while the latter, however effective on its own plane, is positively hampered in its philosophic and religious outlook on account of its one-sidedness. This one-sidedness, this restriction to merely materialistic phenomena, constitutes its proper force if it comes to tracing new *facts*. But it is decidedly its weakest point as soon as it is no longer a matter of stressing the causal connection between facts, but of penetrating to a deeper understanding of the spiritual background manifesting itself in those facts. Theosophically speaking, the latter is the proper attitude in which to approach and study natural phenomena.

Let us hear what H. P. B. says concerning the sunspots. In *The Secret Doctrine* we read:

"The Sun is the heart of the Solar World (System) and its brain is hidden behind the (visible) Sun. From thence, sensation is radiated into every nerve-centre of the great body, and waves of the life-essence flow into each artery and vein. . . . The planets are its limbs and pulses. . ." — I, 541-2

And further:

Thus, there is a regular circulation of the vital fluid throughout our solar system, of which the Sun is the heart — the same as the circulation of the blood in the human body — during the manvantaric solar period, or life; the Sun contracting as rhythmically at every return of it, as the human heart does. Only, instead of performing the round in a second or so, it takes the solar blood ten of its years, and a whole year to pass through its *auricles* and *ventricles* before it washes the *lungs* and passes thence to the great veins and arteries of the system. — *Ibid*

So in the periodical increase and decrease of the number of sunspots the sun's "*breathing*," the "*pulsation of the heart of the Universe*" is clearly manifested.

A little farther we read:

It [that is to say the sunspot period] is similar to the regular and healthy pulsation of the heart, as the fluid passes through its hollow muscles. Could the human heart be made luminous, and the living and throbbing organ be made visible, so as to have it reflected upon a screen, such as used by the astronomers in their lectures — say for the moon — then everyone would see the Sunspot phenomenon repeated every second — due to its contraction and the rushing of the blood.

Now, one may shrug one's shoulders and qualify such a vision as being unscientific, but while science itself confirms our metaphor with each new discovery made, one feels compelled to ask whether the reason why this metaphor reflects the observed facts with such exactitude is not simply this: *that what is called a metaphor may be Reality itself*. And this is precisely what the Old Wisdom teaches.

The reason why we have dwelt somewhat elaborately upon the subject of the mighty influence caused by the cycle of solar activity on earth-life, is that after a long period of scepticism science now accepts and even explains in detail this influence of our sun, at least its influence on the

material Universe.

The mighty forces which govern the astral, mental, and spiritual Universe, originating in the sun's activity — science cannot dream of them before it has left the path of one-sided study of material facts. If it were the proper time to do so the Old Wisdom could reveal great truths concerning these aspects of the Universe. Then the sacred science of Astrology would rise again to that summit of reverence and holiness which it occupied in long aeons past. Science now scorns the thought that Astrology may embody any truth at all. If we observe what is nowadays offered under the name of astrology, we can well understand the attitude of science. For what is announced as astrology on closer investigation appears to be simply a means of gaining a livelihood, and has nothing whatever in common with the loftiest of all sciences: Astrology, the Science of the Gods.

Yet, again and again modern science discovers Cosmic influences formerly unknown to it. We especially call attention to the discovery of the ultra-violet radiations from the sun, and to the newly discovered electro-magnetic radiation of a particular frequency, having great influence on the transmission of radio-waves. We also see the endeavor made by science to detect a connection between the periodicity of sunspots and the time of revolution of the planets, particularly in the case of the planet Jupiter. Considering all this we wonder for just how long a time science will maintain its scorning attitude. We feel quite convinced that before long science cannot but grasp the deep significance of the fundamental truth of the Old Wisdom, which also underlies the sacred science of ancient Astrology: that everything is related to everything else; that the Cosmos is one great, living Entity; that the Cosmos is embodied Consciousness.

And as if to stress the scientific facts just mentioned, not so long ago science discovered Cosmic rays, originating in interstellar spaces, which with almost unbelievable intensity penetrate into the earth. This wondrous discovery should be a stimulus for science to ponder upon the possibility of earth-life being influenced by even the most distant

stars, which influence was formerly considered to be a silly nursery-tale. For most assuredly, in the discovery of the Cosmic Rays science may recognise a key to the true significance which ancient Astrology ascribed to the Zodiac. As yet, this key seems rusty, and science does not even know to what key-hole it should be applied! But if it continues its search, it may expect to disclose many a profound Cosmic mystery, even though it should confine itself to merely material phenomena.

Perhaps there are some among you who have expected me, in speaking about the scientific explanations of Cosmic influences, to mention also the influences that find their origin in the moon. I must disappoint you however. As yet exact science does not know of and does not admit any influences coming from the moon except those of ebb-tide and flood-tide, which the moon originates in co-operation with the sun.

Theosophists will not be astonished at this attitude, since the influences of the moon are more particularly situated on the astral plane, which science is entirely unacquainted with.

Summarizing the above, we see that — as contrasted with the decennia lying not far behind us — science has met with influences originating in the celestial bodies. More especially the cycle of solar activity has its full attention and interest. Naturally, its explanations relate to the mechanical side of things only. Of the spiritual side of Nature science is entirely ignorant as yet. Still, as a consequence of its strenuous and sincere efforts to find the relationship between the facts observed, it approaches more and more to the insight that matter and spirit are two aspects of the ONE fundamental Reality.

As soon as science has actually attained to this stupendous insight — which will be the noblest achievement possible — it will free itself from its "splendid isolation" and re-establish its links with philosophy and religion.

Then, and not earlier, will the men of science understand and realize the full significance of the influence of the celestial bodies on earth-life. They will no longer call themselves scientists, or philosophers, or theologians, but students of the Old Wisdom. Because all the science that

it can ever discover has already been known from time immemorial to the Guardians of the Gupta-Vidya.

May our evolutionary pathway soon reach these glorious heights of Knowledge, when the Higher Manas will blossom out into full consciousness, and man, the eternal Pilgrim, will fully recognise his inborn Divinity, and live up to it.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AND DAILY LIFE — *Carrie C. Coates*

I am very glad of this opportunity at least to touch the fringe of Universal Truth — Theosophy, *the* explanation of the Universe. In the East they are more reverent than we Westerners, some of whom try to define God. In the Orient they speak of That. It is impossible to conceive of the beginning of Life; the mind immediately goes beyond any such conception. A beginning of manifestation there must be, but something cannot evolve out of nothing; and so Sir Edwin Arnold beautifully sings:

Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit
forever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it
seems!

The next thing that occurs to me to accentuate is that Universal Brotherhood is not a *dream* of the future, but a fact in Nature. We are all indissolubly bound together, not only we humans, but the whole universe which is teeming with Life, most of it invisible to us. It is a wonderful thought that there exists not only the Infinitely Great but also the Infinitely Small. When this is borne in mind it carries us far beyond the ordinary idea of Brotherhood. It makes life intensely interesting to know that there is no such thing as dead matter; and what a responsibility it casts upon us when we realize that we cannot move hand or foot without radiating an influence for good or bad. An example of this occurs to me in a story told by a rather matter-of-fact person. He was playing a solitary round of golf one day when he became aware of a disturbing feeling, as if some unusual intensity had developed in the atmosphere. This continued until he had finished his game, when, on mentioning it to the golf keeper he learned that Mr. Lloyd George had been playing on the links at the same time, though

beyond his range of vision. Though opinions may differ as to the ultimate verdict of history on Mr. Lloyd George, all can agree as to his intensity and forcefulness; and the prosaic man was convinced that the Welsh statesman was the disturbing cause on that occasion. The same law operates through all the kingdoms of Nature — the action of a magnet and the perfume of a flower are both familiar instances but perhaps the most striking examples of its operation. H. P. Blavatsky once said that from the Theosophist must radiate those higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow men.

This knowledge that we are all members of the Great Universal Life makes us realize that no one can be *only* his own enemy, as is so often mistakenly said by unthinking people. As the Irish poet A. E. said to me in one of his letters:

If I raise myself I raise the rest of the world so much, and if I fail
I drag others down also. When this is once realized, when we
know that in the inner world nothing but a verity convinces,
nothing but an actual reality has force, we learn to cut away all
that is superfluous, all minor interests.

Every unit of Life is a power-house energizing all around it, ever creating or destroying. Has not this been voiced again and again? "Give me the bards and I care not who makes the laws," or, as Tennyson says: "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." That is such prayer as we believe in: aspiration for Truth, Light, Wisdom.

I think it is always a relief if we find that perhaps we ourselves are partly to blame for things; it may be we have unconsciously irritated the other person who is secretly suffering. I often think how true are the words that one half of the world does not know how the other half lives. And if we *are* treated unjustly, is it not the duty of a Theosophist to bear injustice with equanimity? *All* the planes of our being need exercise, just as well as our bodies; and I think it is a splendid spiritual exercise to have the door either figuratively or literally closed in our face. As Browning says: "Welcome each rebuff that makes earth's smoothness rough." And does not the sense of humor come to our aid?

For instance when we are filled to the brim with what seems to us a wonderful thought, and in an unguarded moment give expression to it, it is excellent discipline to be given a hint that we are not at a revival meeting! As we become more impersonal, less completely absorbed in our own sensations, we become more tactful, more discriminating, and we learn when to speak and when to be silent.

Again, when we look at the matter Theosophically, we shall remember that justice rules the universe. What happens to us, whether for good or ill, has been brought about by our own action, if not in this life then in some past existence. We are only getting our own back, or as the old saw says: Chickens come home to roost. The symbolic picture of Christ that portrays him as a heart pierced by daggers seems to me to assume a negative aspect of that Great Being. He came not to bear our sins, but to show us how to bear our own sins, that is, our own Karma: "Rejoice we are allied to that which doth provide, and not partake, effect and not receive" (Browning).

Furthermore, we have been taught that what *seems* bad Karma is perhaps something that our own Higher Self has chosen for our own self-development, and that when so-called misfortune comes our way, if we determine not to allow it to hinder us in our work in life, nor yet to glorify ourselves as martyrs, it cannot overwhelm us. Self-appointed martyrdom is a weapon successfully used against our true progress. What harmful sympathy has not been lavished on and received by the misunderstood man or woman! We may find that our trouble, its task fulfilled, has disappeared. What matter if we are misunderstood! Such things seem small when we are face to face with the Great Realities! Let us again remind ourselves that we are only getting our own back, and that we are here not to look for love and sympathy, but to give them — to give them in full measure, pressed down and running over.

Acceptance of the principle of Universal Brotherhood is the only prerequisite to fellowship in the Theosophical Society; but when we accept that in all its heights and depths, I think we shall find the other great Theosophical truths permeating our being.

As evolution is now generally accepted by all, is it not only commonsense to believe that there are Those who, though they cannot alter our Karman, can yet point the way they themselves have trod, can show us how to modify our karman and how to avoid making further evil karman? It has been said that the law of Karman is one of the most difficult of the Theosophical teachings to understand; but if we live up to the light we have, more light will dawn upon us.

The Law of Karman, that is of Cause and Effect, also shows us the fallacy of the "forgiveness of sins," that teaching which has been dinned into our ears for ages past and which with its corollary doctrine that we are miserable sinners has perhaps done more than anything else to rob us of our real manhood, our real womanhood. "Give a dog a bad name. . ." What a different bearing we unconsciously assume when we are taught that the Ray of Divinity, however hidden, is in every one of us, is, in fact, the real man. As Christ said: "The Kingdom of God is within."

As for Reincarnation, Karman's twin sister, it is impossible to understand life without a knowledge of these two great Laws. How otherwise understand that *seemingly* most unjust saying about "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children"? How otherwise understand the seeming injustice of poor creatures born in the slums, both material and spiritual, if we do not acknowledge that we have made our present by our past, and that as we sow so shall we reap? I know that some believe in a progressive Heaven, but if we use our commonsense we shall remember that wherever we sow the seed, there we shall reap it. Indeed I often think that Theosophy should be called Commonsense. If people only realized these two great Laws we should have fewer suicides, less railing against fate or against the supposed decrees of an impossible "personal" God. There is no outside to the Universe. No wonder poor Dean Inge had to take refuge in the idea which he puts into the mouth of a Scottish clergyman, that the Deity in his official capacity is compelled to do things that are — well, not in keeping with our conception of Him!

When Theosophy is made a living power in our lives it enters into our whole daily existence. It is literally the Way, the Truth, and the Life. By its teachings the *seemingly* useless daily round, the trivial task, become full of meaning, and we recognise the Great Truth that "Nature exists for the soul's experience."

The Theosophical Forum

THE YOGA OF DHARANA — *Martyn Witter*

Dharana is a Sanskrit word coming from the verb-root *dhri* — meaning to maintain, direct and resolve. Hence the term implies a purposive directing of the mind towards some one goal or state of consciousness. What a vast field of interesting thought this simple word opens up to us. Let us follow a few of these bypaths.

Man is constantly giving off energy as does all Life. There is heat from the body; a more subtil energy that goes forth in the breath and emotions. Then come the children of the mind, and so on up to the pinnacle of our sevenfold constitution. Every part of our constitution is giving off its particular type of life. Now what has Dharana to do with these obvious facts?

Every type of energy composed of lesser lives has its appropriate channel in our being. Direct your mind upon a certain line of thought for a while and a corresponding type of energy will flow through you. It is thus that geniuses produce their great monuments of art and literature. Their work is constantly before their mind's eye — even during sleep. Consequently the flow of inspiration is constant and all of the other types of energy in the constitution co-operate. The physical body, the emotions, the desires standing of course behind will, and the inspirations from the Buddhi-atman respond in a co-operative manner in accordance with the degree of one-pointedness of the mind. Thus, like attracts like. However there is also a reaction between opposites. For example, all of us have noticed that when we aspire deeply to break the fetters of illusion our faults are magnified and rise, as from the ashes, to challenge us. Thus the man who practises Dharana can expect obstacles at every turn, but if he is one who can laugh at himself, he need not be discouraged.

There is an occult rule which states the fact that one should never scatter his attention and energies if he wishes to achieve to the fullest

extent of his ability. H. P. Blavatsky gave a good example of following this law especially while writing *The Secret Doctrine*. It is said that she could hardly be persuaded to take much needed drives in the open air. Even while in the process of moving her establishment she continued her writing, often asking for manuscripts that were already packed. This shows the intensity of her one-pointedness of mind. She declared at the time that if she stopped work for a while the current would stop and it would take months before she could re-establish it.

Dharana has its important place in the conquering and raising of the personal man. There are some who, because they lack one-pointedness of mind, find themselves torn between the different parts of their constitution. There is a lack of harmony and coordination between the different flows of energy. If such an individual is truly trying to aspire upon the Path he may, in desperation, blame the lower types of energy such as greed, selfishness, etc., as being the cause of his trouble, and hence he may try to kill and suppress his personality. By doing this he is conquering nothing, but is merely killing and blocking the very forces that would give him drive and will if he were practising Dharana. It is the one-pointedness of mind that gives co-operation among the various parts of our constitution. The fault does not lie with the innocent forces of our animal body but in our inability constantly to direct our minds towards that part of our nature which will respond by sending purifying and strengthening influences.

Forget the body and the personality and direct the mind along spiritual channels *and keep it there*. If this is done, all the rest will harmoniously fall in line and lend the best they have to offer. Thus by practising Dharana the lower is not killed but is uplifted and purified. It is our duty so to direct our mind that the personality becomes a friend and helper. One need not sit in a forest but can practise Dharana while eating, working, and even while at play.

INDIAN YOGA AND THE MODERN WORLD — *Charles J. Ryan*

In one of Dr. Paul Brunton's earlier works, *A Search in Secret India*, he says that although Yoga "is one of the most valuable inheritances India has received from her ancient sages," if it is "to remain the hobby of a few hermits the modern world will have no use for it and the last traces of the sacred science will disappear." The West will ignore it and the new India will abandon it. Readers of that widely read study of Indian yogis will remember that the author was profoundly impressed at first by the mental peace shown by the Maharishi of Arunchala, "a saintly yogi who had perfected himself in indifference to worldly attractions and in the control of the restless mind." But after further experience he has concluded that the effort to attain such a goal was not a justifiable one if it led to nothing of practical benefit to humanity at large.

Dr. Brunton's latest book, *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*, is the result of long experience in theoretical observation of Indian yoga and in its actual practice, and his previous works must be regarded as descriptions or expressions of the stages through which he has traveled in reaching a higher altitude. Its title conveys the realization that humanity can reach a far more all-round development than the limited outlook offered by the yogis. It is surely the most important contribution the author has yet made to occult literature and to the cause of social welfare, and we are glad that a further development will follow in a second volume. It is both critical and constructive in showing that certain mental disciplines of Indian yoga might be extremely useful when the terrible conditions now prevailing have passed and men of good-will are called upon to redeem the world from the nightmare of materialistic thought and action we have brought upon ourselves. For any artificial culture of psychic powers, sometimes mistaken for yoga, a terrible menace in this hotbed of passion and emotion, Dr. Brunton has of course no sympathy, and his presentation

of yoga has no element which could appeal to the curiosity-seeker or the psychic researcher. He broadly defines yoga as "a Sanskrit word which appertains to various techniques of self-discipline involving mental concentration and leading to mystic experiences or intuitions," but he emphasizes the warning that though these experiences may help to thin the veil between the ordinary consciousness and its profounder reaches they are certain to mislead unless strictly controlled and checked by the discriminating analysis of a mind trained by the methods of certain great Sages of old, and by practical experience and service in the world of men. The visions of "yogis," whether in the Orient or among the Christian saints, or among certain Western seers or "sensitives" or even those of so-called "primitive" races, are rarely balanced by logical thinking, with the result that so many differences of opinion prevail about their correct interpretation. The Mahatman K. H. strongly emphasizes this in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 276. The need for the scientific and philosophical teaching of the Sages which we call "technical" Theosophy is apparent.

The author's final conclusion, after years of personal experience of yoga-states and wide acquaintance with genuine yogis, is that while there is much to say for a disciplined yoga training, freed from emotionalism, curiosity hunting, superstition, and "the miraculous," its real usefulness lies in its practical methods of mind concentration, the control of the restlessness of the mind which is our greatest hindrance in hearing the Inner Voice. He does not disguise the danger of yoga becoming a mere personal gratification and a turning into ashes in the mouth, "a shriveling complacency accompanied by an open disdain for life's practical fulfilment in disinterested service of others." He repeats the old teaching that the withdrawal from the pleasures of the senses to the more subtil enjoyments of self-centered isolation is no self-abnegation at all. He quotes the well-known and cultured yogi, Sri Aurobindo: "Trance is a way of escape — the body is made quiet, the physical mind is in a state of torpor. . . [but] . . . The disadvantage is that trance becomes indispensable and that the problem of waking consciousness is not solved; it remains imperfect."

Speaking from the logic of critical reflexion and somewhat painful experience, he writes:

I became acutely aware that mysticism was not enough *by itself* to transform or even discipline human character or to exalt its ethical standards towards a satisfactory ideal. It was unable to link itself thoroughly to life in the external world! . . . Even the emotional exaltations of mystical ecstasy — wonderfully satisfying though they be — were fleeting both in experience and effect and have proved insufficient to ennoble men permanently. The disdain for practical action and the disinclination to accept personal responsibility which marked the character of real mystics prevented them from testing the truth of their knowledge as well as the worth of their attainments and left them suspended in mid-air, as it were. Without the healthy opposition of active participation in the world's affairs, they had no means of knowing whether they were living in a realm of sterilized self-hallucination or not . . . The true sage could be no anemic dreamer but would incessantly transform the seeds of his wisdom into visible and tangible plants of acts well done. — p. 25

The latter, of course, is the essential teaching of the true "Raja Yogis," the Masters of Wisdom, and Compassion, who established the Theosophical Movement and its humble instrument, the Theosophical Society, to bring "Truth, Light and Liberation" to a world in sore need of them.

We have always admired the Zen system of Buddhism, and it is gratifying to find that Dr. Brunton accepts the Japanese Zen as a sensible and beneficial system free from the objections that apply to much of the Indian yoga. In Zen the students are given active duties as well as discipline in meditation, and after a period of training they are returned in most cases to the outside world, equipped with the power of sustained concentration and a desirable balance of the inner and the outer faculties that make them successful and respected citizens. A few

adopt the monastic life but all made spiritual contacts by which their lives are permanently enriched.

What, then, is the balancing philosophy which is needed if Eastern Yoga training in concentration of mind, etc., is to be any use in the daily life of the world? "Disenchanted," as the author says, "by long experience of certain ashrams and ascetics," and no longer "confusing yogis with sages — as most of us do," he was led, largely by the help and example of a truly great and spiritual philosopher-ruler, the late Maharaja of Mysore, to such ancient teachings as the Mandukya Upanishad, the Bhagavad-Gita, the Ashtavakra Samhita, Sankaracharya's writings, etc., which contain what he calls "The Hidden Teachings Beyond Yoga," the teaching of "the yoga of philosophic discernment" . . . "philosophic disciplines using the intense concentration generated by yoga practice but directed toward freeing the mind of its innate ignorance and habitual error": in short to develop the fullest powers of *insight*. He says he is not writing for cloistered pedants of academic metaphysics but for the intelligent "man in the street" who is taking thought for the meaning of life; and therefore he has avoided technical language as far as possible, without sacrificing accuracy or depth — an example many writers on philosophy would do well to follow.

The great Hindu scriptures mentioned as of such transcendent importance by Dr. Brunton are not unfamiliar to Theosophists. The Bhagavad-Gita., for instance, has been the subject of almost universal and intensive study since the early days of the Theosophical Society. The teaching that is "Beyond Yoga," but for which yoga concentration of mind is no doubt a good preparation, is not a new revelation, as Dr. Brunton says, for it is enshrined in the works mentioned, but unfortunately its meaning has not been properly understood by Western scholars and still less by the general reader unless enlightened by the teachings of Theosophy. If we understand Dr. Brunton correctly, the Theosophical discipline and outlook is practically the same as his "yoga of philosophical discernment" adapted to the comprehension of the Western mind. We are, however, looking forward with interest to

the second volume of this study, where more complete interpretation is promised.

After a careful consideration of the modern developments in science, education, transport facilities, inventions, etc., which have transformed our social conditions and mental outlook, and especially the widespread increase, under the baleful influence of materialism, of the despairing feeling that there is no purpose in human life, the author declares that this is the time when the ancient "Aryan" knowledge must be brought to the West "to help the better cultured classes act more wisely than something nobler may emerge . . . toward a finer human world." This is true indeed, but it is not exactly new, for the Theosophical Movement was started in 1875 to promote human welfare on "Aryan" lines of thought, spiritual, intellectual and practical. At that time only a minute coterie of scholars in the West knew anything about these principles, and few regarded them as anything more than an abstruse field of linguistic and ethnological research. The Theosophical activities called popular attention to the Wisdom of the East, and in the few years that have elapsed since H. P. Blavatsky brought her message it has produced far-reaching results by giving hope and encouragement to an immense number of discouraged people as well as by powerfully affecting the religious, scientific, and social ideas of our age. The Theosophical Movement was established by Hindu Sages, not "hibernating hermits," but philanthropists of the highest compassion and wisdom, whose aims and ideals are universal in scope and application. These Masters of Life "have made the age-old cause of all mankind their own" and are not "ascetically indifferent" to the social welfare and evolution of the world in its common everyday experiences and tribulations. According to Dr. Brunton, this can hardly be said of many of the self-centered and self-sufficient Hindu yogis, pure-minded and mystically inclined though they may be, and untainted by the selfish desire to be revered for their possession of strange powers.

In the last chapter, "The Philosophic Life," the author discusses the woes of the world and its crying need for a true and dynamic

philosophy of life, one which would be recognised and accepted by men of action and leadership. But, as he writes, the ground for such a world-philosophy must be prepared by a voluntary clearance on the part of the organized religions of their labyrinth of traditional rubbish and a complete reorganization of their methods. The Unity of the Universe must be recognised, and this implies the divinity of man because he is an integral part of it — some would say of God, but the author prefers a term he has suggested, the Overself. He insists that the laws of Cause and Effect, Perfect Justice — Karman — and Reincarnation must be understood and lived up to. Fully to accept the law of Karman — you reap what you sow, and nothing else — is of the utmost importance for it is a natural and inescapable fact from which we shall suffer and suffer until we recognise it. Every day we are shaping our future conditions and history by our thoughts and deeds — fortunate if they are good, unhappy if they are selfish. The only way to change one's life for the better is to take the bull by the horns and change one's way of thinking, as he says. All this is good sound Theosophy, though Dr. Brunton does not use the word even though its antecedents in classical thought are excellent and expressive of his views. We notice that he avoids any reference to or consideration of the seven (or four) *kosas* or "principles" of man's complex nature as given in Oriental philosophy, which have been found so illuminating by Theosophists in their study of the subtleties of human psychology and universal consciousness.

Dr. Brunton strikes a profound Theosophical keynote of action when he says that the key to happiness is *forgetting oneself*. He sums up his ethical position in the words: "It is the duty of the strong to assist the weak, of the advanced to help the backward, of the saintly to guide the sinful, of the wealthy to enlighten the ignorant. And because ignorance is the root of all other troubles, therefore the Buddha pointed out that, "explaining and spreading the truth is above all charities." " This, of course, is the "practical charity" which is the Theosophical ideal, the most effective way to bring about a permanent condition of universal brotherhood. The reason why the Theosophical Society as a

philanthropic *organization* is more concerned in spreading the light of Theosophy in this Dark Age than in extending material assistance is that the latter can only be a temporary alleviation or "appeasement," to use a popular expression, so long as human ignorance and selfishness remain unchanged. *Members* of Theosophical societies, as *individuals*, may and do help in any charitable work they prefer, for as H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Voice of the Silence*, "Inaction in a deed of mercy is action in a deadly sin."

Dr. Brunton calls for a remedy for "the malady of human suffering," and he clearly indicates that the remedy lies in the active participation of men of "goodwill" and wisdom in the work of redemption. For instance, he writes:

The sages who have gone looked within self in the quest of abiding reality rather than fitful experience, of final truth rather than emotional satisfaction . . . hence they alone found the genuine goal. And because they did not flee as did mystics from the vexing problem of the world, they solved that too at the same startling moment that the self was understood. . . . Thenceforth they made the age-old cause of all mankind their own.

This is excellent so far as it goes, and knowledge of the Self, even in part, is essential for a true Teacher. We must remember, however, that such an understanding is not gained by merely intellectual processes, nor can the search be entered upon without a higher inspiration if it is to succeed. According to the teaching and example of the Great Ones, the Buddhas and the Christs, the first and most important qualification for discipleship in "the age-old cause of all mankind" is to "love thy neighbor as thyself," or, in Buddhism, to obey the highest of its rules of conduct or *Paramitas*, "Dana, the key of charity and love immortal," and as H. P. Blavatsky gives it in *The Voice of the Silence*, "To live to benefit mankind is the first step," and "Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?" "

We hope that in his forthcoming volume Dr. Brunton will emphasize this fundamental teaching of all the Saviors of humanity without which the candidate for even the highest psycho-intellectual states of consciousness is always in danger of being led into unproductive bypaths toward what is called the *pratyeka* condition. Dr. Brunton has certainly deserved gratitude and has done excellent service in this volume by courageously presenting the matured judgment of an expert in Hindu Yoga at the risk of inevitable misunderstanding, as he tells us. By his frankly critical but constructive and not unfriendly analysis he has cleared up many obscurities and helped greatly in exposing the false and fantastic notions about yoga so prevalent in the west.

Amid the wreckage of outworn forms of thought the world is blindly reaching for a nobler philosophy of life. If it would realize the admirable principles so skilfully and earnestly put forward here, which are practically those of Theosophy, *and put them into practice*, we should indeed begin to see the "Promised Land"!

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: VII

One of the great Theosophical teachings, that of Reincarnation, is here explained. The speaker is Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist, who on May 4th last year gave this broadcast as the seventh of a series of fifteen minute expositions of Theosophical doctrine by herself and Miss Inga Sjostedt, over radio station XQHB, Shanghai, China.

Good evening, everybody:

The speaker last Sunday gave an outline of the history of the doctrine of reincarnation. This evening an attempt will be made to demonstrate the logic and philosophic plausibility of this belief, which has formed an integral part of the pure religions of all times.

Those who are unfamiliar with the doctrine of reincarnation may tend to recoil from the word with the thought that it is a heathen idea and means that human beings come back as animals. If we give the matter a little thought, however, it will become clear that, although pagan, the belief is supported by a firm ground-work of common sense, and it must not be confused with transmigration, which in some of its aspects teaches a return to animal bodies. Natural evolution goes always forward — a lesson learnt cannot be unlearnt, though it can be forgotten. Similarly a being having reached manhood cannot go back to animality, though he can forget his manhood and behave like an animal — but he remains a man.

It has been mentioned before that all natural evolution proceeds in a series of cycles — the cycles of life and death being among them. Reincarnation then, or re-infleshment, is one phase of the greater cycle of reimbodiment, which applies to all the realms of universal nature. We see the evidence of this cyclic process all round us — Nature's annual revival every spring is so familiar a fact that its significance often goes unnoticed.

First of all, if we admit the immortality of the essential man, let us see for a moment where this leads us. Immortality means deathlessness or eternal life. If we believe in eternal life after the death of the physical body, we must of necessity believe also in a pre-existence before the birth of the body, otherwise we should have eternity stretching in one direction only, which is a philosophical absurdity — like having boundless space with one boundary. Therefore we reach the conclusion that we have existed before and shall continue to exist after the shedding of our physical and lower emotional garments, these being the vehicles we build for ourselves in order to function on the earth where we live.

We cannot hope during one short life to attain to the state of perfection which is our goal, neither can we garner all the experience which earth-life has to offer. In fact the thought of one single life on earth is as unsatisfactory as the idea of attending school for one lesson. There is so much to be learnt and there are so many contacts to be made, so many circumstances to be met and responsibilities to be shouldered that one earth-life is ludicrously inadequate. This would seem to be the reason why the believers in the one-life theory are almost invariably displeased at the thought of death, and even frightened, no matter what rewards are offered them thereafter.

If we look at life today from a practical point of view, we see around us innumerable instances of the most flagrant injustice — apparent injustice from the view-point of the theosophist. It is unnecessary to enumerate any examples — they are only too obvious, and who has not at one time or another been astonished and distressed by the staggering contrasts prevalent in the social order? It is impossible to reconcile these incongruities with the order and harmony ruling the universe in general, unless we realize that what we see is but a fraction of the whole — that, could we review the entire vista of all our past lives on earth, then each and every circumstance we meet would fall into its place as the natural outcome of our former deeds — and is our self-created destiny.

We build into ourselves at every moment the thoughts and ideas we harbor in our minds, and we are at any given moment the products of our former thoughts and deeds. To those who like to push the responsibility for their weakness on to a god who created them such, and who want leisure to sin as much as they please in the certainty of being forgiven anyhow, this doctrine is an unwelcome thought, for it brings home to us the tremendous responsibility we carry in creating ourselves and our destiny.

One question is often asked: "Why don't we remember our past lives?" Just think back for a moment — Can any of us remember every lesson we learnt at school? Of course not. Yet we are the same people who then underwent the agonies of learning many things that have long since slipped our memories. The general outlines of our schooldays remain with us and form as a whole what we are pleased to term our education. In the same way we have forgotten the incidents which composed our former existences, although the aggregated results thereof combine to form what we are pleased to call our characters. There is however a difference. In our schooldays we had the same physical brain as we have today, the same thought-instrument, whereas in our former lives we had bodies and brains that died a long time ago. Incidentally, in a few rare instances people have been known to remember their past lives and to describe circumstances thereof, which could be verified, but such cases are exceptional.

Theosophy teaches that when a man dies, his physical body is the first to lose its vitality, or the vital essence, which animates it during life — although the brain remains active for an hour or more after the heart has stopped beating. This fact has but recently been corroborated by medical science. During this hour or so the dead man re-lives his past life in a series of vivid pictures, omitting no detail. In a few cases of almost complete death by drowning or freezing, or other slow death, people have been resuscitated even after this process has commenced and have lived to tell the tale. When this is over, the physical body commences to disintegrate and to release the astral or model-body of semi-physical matter. This astral matter is not far removed from the

physical that we can see, and can occasionally under abnormal circumstances become visible. These astral shells it is that have given rise to various ghost stories and it is such beings that are attracted to spiritualistic seances. The astral body of the dead man combined with his lower desires and emotions continues to exist as a coherent whole until it has exhausted the vitality or impulse, which the man during life gave to that part of his nature. In the case of a gross and brutish man this is naturally a slow and painful process, whereas in the case of a man whose impulses were centered in the higher parts of his constitution, it is almost unnoticeable and very much quicker. From this teaching has sprung the Catholic doctrine of purgatory. The spiritual ego of the man then garners from his intermediate nature or soul, all that was fine and spiritual and proceeds to what we could call a heaven-world of his own making, where he exists with all his noblest aspirations and emotions in a beautiful dream, until the energy he had given during life to the higher part of his nature has been exhausted. Then the ego begins to yearn towards earth-life and, passing through the realms where the component parts of his lower nature are dispersed, he re-collects his tendencies and aptitudes and is born again, with certain definite characteristics, acquired through many earlier lives. This accounts for the appearance of such people as infant prodigies and geniuses. Many lifetimes of training in a subject may produce an expert of that subject at a very tender age. It accounts also for certain family and national characteristics, for we are naturally attracted to the surroundings and people with which we are familiar and with whom we have formed links of affection or similarity — individuals with whom we have something in common.

Death is an adventure very similar to sleep. It is in fact an exact analogy. Each night in sleep the ego passes through vivid experiences in dreams, which are colored by the general experiences of the previous day. Except in cases of prophetic dreams or nightmares engendered by physical discomfort our dream-life corresponds to the state of mind in which we have passed the day. Exactly the same is the case in death, with the difference only that then we leave our bodies

behind completely, whereas in sleep we still keep in touch with them and can return to them and waking life at any moment. Sleep is an imperfect death — death a perfect sleep.

The doctrine of reincarnation or reimpodiment is intimately connected with the doctrine of Karman, the law of cause and effect. Every action causes a reaction, which in its turn becomes the cause of a new effect. In our relations with other human beings we are therefore inextricably woven into a web of causes and effects, some set in motion many lives ago. If we realize the extent of this most complex thought, we understand why many lives are necessary to readjust the balance of actions and pick up the loose threads of former lives, before at length the entire human race shall have run its course on our earth and become ready for the next step in evolution.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN: II — *H. P. Blavatsky*

This series originally appeared in the French magazine *La Revue Theosophique*, May 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu." One of H. P. Blavatsky's most brilliant articles, it presents a clear statement of the meaning of true Theosophy in theory and in practice. It shows the striking contrast between the aims and methods of those who retire to the jungle or to the desert with the sole idea of saving their own souls, indifferent to the woes of humanity, and the true disciple who is trained to give up thought of self and "live to benefit mankind." It first appeared in translation from the original French in *The Theosophist*, Volume X.

After all, critics who judge only by appearances are not altogether wrong. There is Theosophy and Theosophy: the true Theosophy of the *Theosophist*, and the Theosophy of a Fellow of the Society of that name. What does the world know of true Theosophy? How can it distinguish between that of a Plotinus, and that of the false brothers? And of the latter the Society possesses more than its share. The egoism, vanity and self-sufficiency of the majority of mortals is incredible. There are some for whom their little personality constitutes the whole universe, beyond which there is no salvation. Suggest to one of these that the *alpha* and *omega* of wisdom are not limited by the circumference of his or her head, that his or her judgment could not be considered quite equal to that of Solomon, and straight away he or she accuses you of anti-theosophy. You have been guilty of blasphemy against the spirit, which will not be pardoned in this century, nor in the next. These people say, "I am Theosophy," as Louis XIV said "I am the State." They speak of fraternity and of altruism and care in reality only for that for which no one else cares — themselves — in other words their little "me." Their egoism makes them fancy that it is they only who represent the temple of Theosophy, and that in proclaiming themselves to the

world they are proclaiming Theosophy. Alas! the doors and windows of that "temple" are no better than so many channels through which enter, but very seldom depart, the vices and illusions characteristic of egoistical mediocrities.

These people are the white ants of the Theosophical Society, which eat away its foundations, and are a perpetual menace to it. It is only when they leave it that it is possible to breathe freely.

It is not such as these that can ever give a correct idea of practical Theosophy, still less of the transcendental Theosophy which occupies the minds of a little group of the elect. Every one of us possesses the faculty, the interior sense, that is known by the name of *intuition*, but how rare are those who know how to develop it! It is, however, only by the aid of this faculty that men can ever see things in their true colors. It is an *instinct of the soul*, which grows in us in proportion to the employment we give it, and which helps us to perceive and understand the realities of things with far more certainty than can the simple use of our senses and the exercise of our reason. What are called good sense and logic enable us to see only the appearance of things, that which is evident to everyone. The *instinct* of which I speak, being a projection of our perceptive consciousness, a projection which acts from the subjective to the objective, and not *vice versa*, awakens in us the spiritual senses and power to act; these senses assimilate to themselves the essence of the object or of the action under examination, and represent it to us as it really is, not as it appears to our physical senses and to our cold reason. "We begin with *instinct*, we end with omniscience," says Professor A. Wilder, our oldest colleague. Iamblichus has described this faculty, and certain Theosophists have been able to appreciate the truth of his description.

"There exists," he says, "a faculty in the human mind which is immeasurably superior to all those which are grafted or engendered in us. By it we can attain to union with superior intelligences, finding ourselves raised above the scenes of this earthly life, and partaking of the higher existence and superhuman powers of the inhabitants of the

celestial spheres. By this faculty we find ourselves liberated finally from the dominion of destiny (Karma), and we become, as it were, the arbiters of our own fates. For when the most excellent parts in us find themselves filled with energy; and when our soul is lifted up towards essences higher than science, it can separate itself from the conditions which hold it in the bondage of every-day life; it exchanges its ordinary existence for another one, it renounces the conventional habits which belong to the external order of things, to give itself up to and mix itself with another order of things which reigns in that most elevated state of existence."

Plato expressed the same idea in these lines: "The light and spirit of the Divinity are the wings of the soul. They raise it to communion with the gods, above this earth, with which the spirit of man is too ready to soil itself. . . To become like the gods is to become holy, just and wise. That is the end for which man was created, and that ought to be his aim in the acquisition of knowledge."

This is true Theosophy, inner Theosophy, that of the soul. But followed with a selfish aim Theosophy changes its nature and becomes *demonosophy*. That is why Oriental wisdom teaches us that the Hindu *Yogi* who isolates himself in an impenetrable forest, like the Christian hermit who, as was common in former times, retires to the desert, are both of them nothing but accomplished egoists. The one acts with the sole idea of finding a nirvanic refuge against reincarnation; the other acts with the unique idea of saving his soul — both of them think only of themselves. Their motive is altogether personal; for, even supposing they attain their end, are they not like cowardly soldiers, who desert their regiment when it is going into action, in order to keep out of the way of the bullets?

In isolating themselves as they do, neither the *Yogi* nor the "Saint" helps anyone but himself; on the contrary, both show themselves profoundly indifferent to the fate of mankind, whom they fly from and desert. Mount Athos (1) contains, perhaps, a few sincere fanatics; nevertheless, even these have without knowing it got off the only track

that leads to the truth — the path of Calvary, on which each one voluntarily bears the cross of humanity, and for humanity. In reality it is a nest of the coarsest kind of selfishness; and it is to such places that Adam's remark on monasteries applies: "There are solitary creatures there who seem to have fled from the rest of mankind for the sole pleasure of communing with the Devil *tete-a-tete*."

Gautama, the Buddha, only remained in solitude long enough to enable him to arrive at the truth, which he devoted himself from that time on to promulgate, begging his bread, and living for humanity. Jesus retired to the desert for only forty days, and died for this same humanity. Apollonius of Tyana, Plotinus, Iamblichus, while leading lives of singular abstinence, almost of asceticism, lived in the world and *for* the world. The greatest ascetics and *saints* of our days are not those who retire into inaccessible places, but those who pass their lives in traveling from place to place, doing good and trying to raise mankind; although, indeed, they may avoid Europe, and those civilized countries where no one has any eyes or ears except for himself, countries divided into two camps — Cains and Abels.

Those who regard the human soul as an emanation of the Deity, as a particle or ray of the universal and Absolute soul, understand the parable of the *Talents* better than do the Christians. He who hides in the earth the *talent* which has been given him by his "Lord" will lose that talent, as the ascetic loses it, who takes it into his head to "save his soul" in egoistical solitude. The "good and faithful servant" who doubles his capital, by harvesting for *him who has not sown* because he had not the means of doing so, and who reaps for the poor who have not scattered the grain, acts like a true altruist. He will receive his recompense, just because he has worked for another, without any idea of remuneration or reward. That man is the altruistic Theosophist, while the other is an egoist and a coward.

The Beacon-light upon which the eyes of all real Theosophists are fixed is the same towards which in all ages the imprisoned human soul has struggled. This Beacon, whose light shines upon no earthly seas, but

which has mirrored itself in the sombre depths of the primordial waters of infinite space, is called by us, as by the earliest Theosophists, "Divine Wisdom." That is the last word of the esoteric doctrine; and in antiquity, where was the country, having the right to call itself civilized, that did not possess a double system of Wisdom, of which one part was for the masses, and the other for the few — the exoteric and the esoteric? This name, Wisdom, or as we say sometimes, the "Wisdom Religion" or *Theosophy*, is as old as the human mind. The title of *Sages* — the priests of this worship of truth — was its first derivative. These names were afterwards transformed into *philosophy* and *philosophers* — the "lovers of science" or of wisdom. It is to Pythagoras that we owe that name, as also that of *Gnosis*, the system of "the knowledge of things as they are," or of the essence that is hidden beneath the external appearance. Under that name, so noble and so correct in its definition, all the masters of antiquity designated the aggregate of our knowledge of things human and divine. The sages and Brahmanas of India, the magi of Chaldea and Persia, the hierophants of Egypt and Arabia, the prophets of *Nabi* of Judea and of Israel, as well as the philosophers of Greece and Rome, have always classified that science in two divisions — the *esoteric*, or the true, and the *exoteric*, disguised in symbols. To this day the Jewish Rabbis give the name of *Mercabah* to the body or vehicle of their religious system, that which contains within it the higher knowledge, accessible only to the Initiates, and of which higher knowledge it is only the husk.

We are accused of mystery, and we are reproached with making a secret of the higher Theosophy. We confess that the doctrine which we call *gupta vidya* (secret science) is only for the few. But where were the masters in ancient times who did not keep their teachings secret, for fear they would be profaned? From Orpheus and Zoroaster, Pythagoras and Plato, down to the Rosicrucians and to the more modern Freemasons, it has been the invariable rule that the disciple must gain the confidence of the master before receiving from him the supreme and final word. The most ancient religions have always had their greater and lesser mysteries. The neophytes and catechumens took an

inviolable oath before they were accepted. The Essenes of Judea and Mount Carmel required the same thing. The *Nabi* and the *Nazars* (the "separated ones" of Israel), like the lay *Chelas* and the *Brahmacharins* of India, differed greatly from each other. The former could, and can, be married and remain in the world, while they are studying the sacred writings up to a certain point; the latter, the Nazars and the Brahmacharins, have always been entirely vowed to the mysteries of initiation. The great schools of Esotericism were international, although exclusive, as is proved by the fact that Plato, Herodotus, and others, went to Egypt to be initiated; while Pythagoras, after visiting the Brahmins of India, stopped at an Egyptian sanctuary, and finally was received, according to Iamblichus, at Mount Carmel. Jesus followed the traditional custom, and justified his reticence by quoting the well known precept:

Give not the sacred things to the dogs,
Cast not your pearls before the swine,
Lest these tread them under their feet,
And lest the dogs turn and rend you.

Certain ancient writings — known, for that matter, to the bibliophiles — personify Wisdom; which they represent as emanating from *Ain-Soph*, the Parabrahm of the Jewish Kabbalists, and make it the associate and companion of the manifested Deity. Thence its sacred character with every people. Wisdom is inseparable from divinity. Thus we have the Vedas coming from the mouth of the Hindu "Brahma" (the *logos*); the name Buddha comes from Budha, "Wisdom," divine intelligence; the Babylonian *Nebo*, *Thoth* of Memphis, *Hermes* of the Greeks, were all gods of esoteric wisdom.

The Greek Athena, Metis and Neith of the Egyptians, are the prototypes of Sophia-Achamoth, the feminine wisdom of the Gnostics. The Samaritan *Pentateuch* calls the book of Genesis *Akamauth*, or "Wisdom," as also two fragments of very ancient manuscripts, "the Wisdom of Solomon," and "the Wisdom of Iasous (Jesus)." The book called *Mashalim* or "Sayings and Proverbs of Solomon," personifies

Wisdom by calling it "the helper of the (Logos) creator," in the following terms, (literally translated):

I (a) H V (e) H possessed me from the beginning.
But the first emanation in the eternities,
I appeared from all antiquity, the primordial. —
From the first day of the earth;
I was born before the great abyss.
And when there were neither springs nor waters,
When he traced the circle on the face of the deep,
I was with him Amun.
I was his delight, day by day.

This is exoteric, like all that has reference to the personal gods of the nations. The Infinite cannot be known to our reason, which can only distinguish and define; but we can always conceive the abstract idea thereof, thanks to that faculty higher than our reason — *intuition*, or the spiritual instinct of which I have spoken. Only the great Initiates, who have the rare power of throwing themselves into the state of *Samadhi* — which can be but imperfectly translated by the word *ecstasy*, a state in which one ceases to be the conditioned and personal "I," and becomes one with the All — only these can boast of having been in contact with the *infinite*: but no more than other mortals can they describe that state in words.

These few characteristics of *true* theosophy and its practice have been sketched for the small number of our readers who are gifted with the desired intuition.

FOOTNOTE:

1. A celebrated Grecian monastery. ([return to text](#))

EVOLUTION — *Boris de Zirkoff*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

How Worlds Are Born and Reborn (1)

Analogy is the great mystic and scientific key to the understanding of the structure of the Universe in which we live, and of which we are an integral and inseparable part. What is below, in the small and the infinitesimal, is also above, in the great and the cosmic. There is but One Law, One Pattern, One Universal Plan, underlying everything that is, guiding everything that unfolds and grows, and the same universal urge, impelling all growth and unfoldment, stimulates from within every evolving entity in the boundless infinitudes of Nature.

From Atom to Cosmos everything in Nature is for ever indissolubly bound together, holds together, evolves together, marches together along the silent paths of cosmic evolution. From Atom to Cosmos everything in Nature is endowed with a consciousness of its own, with a life of its own, and unfolds with a spiritual purpose, under the universal and ever-present sequence of Cause and Effect. This is a fundamental teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy. In this the student of Ancient Wisdom is in perfect accord with the most progressive scientists of the day. Sir James Jeans has said:

I incline to the idealistic theory that consciousness is fundamental, and that the material universe is derived from consciousness, not consciousness from the material universe. . . . The universe seems to me to be nearer to a great thought than to a great machine. It may well be, it seems to me, that each individual consciousness ought to be compared to a brain-cell in a universal mind. . . . — *The Observer*, January 4, 1931

Max Planck has said:

I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness. — *The Observer*, January 25, 1931

Thomas A. Edison has said:

I do not believe that Matter is inert, acted upon by an outside force. To me it seems that every atom is possessed by a certain amount of primitive intelligence.

This is the ground upon which Modern Science and the Ancient Wisdom meet and shake hands in a warm hand-clasp.

SEVENFOLD STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSE

The evolutionary development of Worlds or Systems of Worlds, such as our Solar System or the Galaxy to which it belongs, can be understood only against the background of the ancient teaching about the nature and structure of the inner or invisible Universe, of which the physical universe is but the outward shell, as it were. According to this ancient teaching, Nature is *Tenfold*. There are in it *Ten* distinct yet correlated planes, or spheres, or realms of substance and consciousness. Of these the uppermost Three are at present entirely beyond our comprehension; they pertain to the very roots of things that are; they are what is known in technical language as the *unmanifested* Planes of Being. The lower *Seven* planes, however, *can* be understood as to their nature and function; they are termed the *manifested* planes of the Universe.

Of these Planes only the Physical Plane, and this one only in its lowest levels, can be perceived with the aid of so-called physical senses of perception. What we see and know of the physical development of the Universe — let us say, of our Solar System, or of our Galaxy — pertains, therefore, to this one Plane only, while the Causes and the Spiritual

Impulses behind all evolutionary urge lie hidden away in the superior Planes, and *flow out*, one might say, into material or physical form, in due course of time.

Everything comes out of the Spiritual Realms of Being, everything journeys through the evolutionary pilgrimage, cycling from one plane to the other, on its downward spiral of involution; everything re-ascends again, on its upward path of evolutionary unfoldment, and, at the end or consummation of the pilgrimage through the material spheres, is re-absorbed once more into the Spiritual Spheres of Being, where the Consciousness of the Universe dwells until the dawn of a new cycle of universal manifestation — the *Re-imbodiment* of Itself. It is so with Planets; it is equally so with Solar Systems; it is so with Galaxies; it is the same with a human being who is born, lives, dies, rests for awhile, and is born anew; and it is equally so with the world of the infinitesimally small, as already hinted at by Science.

REIMBODIMENT OF A UNIVERSE

Every Planet, every Sun — which means every star we see in the deeps of the night sky — every solar system, every group of systems, every galaxy, and beyond — *is the reimbodiment of a former Cosmic Entity*, the reimbodiment of its own former Self, just as man is but the reincarnation of his own self, the same soul or ego come back for another series of experiences, building for itself a new form in which to manifest on the plane of physical life. So it is with a Cosmic Entity, the Spiritual Intelligence and Consciousness which inhabits a World and manifests through its complex structure as a system in evolution. Analogy, as said before, is the key to every mystery of Nature.

This view is corroborated by the famous Swedish astronomer Dr. Knut Lundmark, who recently wrote:

. . . We only understand a very, very tiny bit of what really happens when a star explodes. . . . Perhaps the stars are ensouled Super-Beings, whose soul-life we cannot even imagine. With our gross senses and our imperfect instruments we can

only try to follow the external physical processes in that tremendous laboratory which the universe must be. In the hand of what Being or Beings does it lie? — *Goteborgs Handels och Sjöfarts Tidning*, October, 1936

After the dissolution of a World, or of a Solar System, the highest spiritual principles of that World retire into a supreme spiritual Nirvana, for a period of rest, just as a human being enters after physical death into a condition of spiritual sleep, and the assimilation of the experience gained in the life just past; only that in the case of a Cosmic Entity these states are immensely superior to those of the human soul. Meanwhile, the *cosmic dust*, we might call it, resulting from the dissolution of that world, remains as it were in a state of quiescence, of slumber, scattered far and wide through the various planes formerly occupied by the World that was. The same takes place with the hosts of life-atoms of any one human being, after the final dissolution we call physical death. The *dark nebulae* of modern astronomical research are a stage towards this condition of atomic dissociation. (2)

Very little is known at this time about the nature of these dark areas, as far as astronomy is concerned; but let me venture the thought that one of these days, through researches already on their way, Science will find out that the matter composing these dark nebulae is not matter as we know it here on earth. It obstructs the light coming from behind it, it is true, and yet it is not matter in our physical sense of the word. There are substances in Nature which pertain to other planes of being, to other rates of vibration, as it were, and Science is well on its way to the discovery of such superior grades of matter.

The "Cosmic Soul" of a Universe or World, of any one of the myriads of Worlds scattered through Space, remains in its high state of Nirvanic rest until the *Divine Thirst* for active life re-arises in the Consciousness of that Cosmic Being; this urge for dynamic evolutionary experience is a cyclic process in itself and brings Cosmic Entities into manifestation again, just as it does the human soul, life after life, on our small scale of

earthly experiences. Analogy once more! On this ground again Theosophy and Science meet as friends and collaborators. Professor E. A. Milne, the well-known scientist of Oxford, has said:

Our Universe is no passing thing. Creation was once, is always. Once started, the system goes on forever. Each constituent has a temporal existence, but the world as a whole knows no time history. . . . The World sows ever at its own frontier the seeds of its own future. Each individual nebula reaps the harvest of its own experiences, and passes to the winter of its decay. But . . . at the confines of the visible universe, at the world's inaccessible edge, the music of the spheres is the song of a new dawn, the dawn of the world's perpetual birthday.

The "Soul" of a World or of a System is often spoken of in Theosophy as a *Cosmic Monad*; we might call it a god, one of the numberless gods or godlike Beings who are the indwelling Spiritual Intelligences of any one World or Solar System — the Cosmic Mind suspected these days by outstanding scientists, such as Stromberg, Moulton, Swann, Eddington, Jeans, Lundmark and others. When its cyclic time has come, this Cosmic Intelligence or Being, through a gradual process of re-embodiment, similar, as to pattern, to the reincarnation of a human ego, cycles downward, as it were, through the various planes below it, till it reaches the physical plane of the sevenfold structure of Nature. As it passes through these planes, slowly, through ages upon ages, it reassembles and reintegrates the widely scattered life-atoms which went to build its former structure. This process we might term an electro-magnetic one. Similarly does the human soul gather in reincarnation its former life-atoms. The Cosmic Monad or Soul awakens once more into action this sleeping, slumbering, quiescent matter in its state of atomic dissociation; it revivifies these life-atoms, recalls them into being out of a deep sleep, *re-illuminates them from within*, infuses into them its own spiritual life and light — and finally assumes the appearance of a Cosmic Nebula, a Galaxy. (3)

In this connection Sir James Jeans upholds one of the basic teachings of

the Ancient Wisdom, when he writes:

The type of conjecture which presents itself, somewhat insistently, is that the centres of the nebulae are of the nature of "singular points" at which matter is poured into our universe from some other, and entirely extraneous, spatial dimension, so that, to a denizen of our universe, they appear as points at which matter is being continuously created.

This is a scientific presentation of the Theosophical doctrine regarding *Laya-centers*, which are focal points through which spiritual energies are flowing into the physical plane, and through which they are again reabsorbed into the planes of spiritual life, at the end of cosmic manifestation.

When this Nebula attains the point of unfoldment or *involution* downwards into manifestation where the re embodying Soul of the former World that *was* has sufficiently entered into it, it begins to rotate by an energy inherent in itself, similar to electro-magnetism and flowing forth from the invisible spheres of being, it becomes endowed with motion, both circular motion and motion through space. (4)

The Nebula drifts from the place where at first it became endowed with motion, the guiding impulse of its own Karma directing it here and there towards its appropriate place in the cosmic spaces, until it finds its cosmic "home," as it were. Through the cycling ages it gradually gives rise within its very substance to the individual suns and systems of suns, each one of which goes through a similar process — as to the general pattern of it — except that it is on a smaller scale; suns being cosmic intelligences, or Spiritual Entities of a smaller degree as compared with the Cosmic Being inhabiting a Galaxy as such. Thus it would be necessary to discriminate between a Nebula giving rise to a whole Home-Universe or Galaxy, and a Nebula giving rise but to one Solar System, out of the billions which form a Galaxy. The general pattern is the same; the scales of magnitude differ. Many Galaxies assemble in groups, forming Super-Galaxies. Can this process extend still further? Why not?

In this again the Esoteric Philosophy meets Modern Science. In the words of Dr. Forest Ray Moulton, the permanent secretary of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in his remarkable work *Consider the Heavens* (pp. 300, 330):

The essential units of which we are composed are molecules and chains of molecules. Our life processes are expressed in terms of their properties, our thoughts are conditioned by their interactions. But perhaps in the infinite series of cosmic units there are others which play the role of molecules, in living organisms. Sub-electrons of the hundredth order may be the molecules, so to speak, of conscious beings which live through a million generations in what to us is a second of time. And super galaxies of the hundredth order may similarly be the molecules of conscious beings whose life-cycles consume unimaginable intervals of time. . . . Let us, therefore, once more assume the existence of intelligent beings whose constituent elements — whose atoms, so to speak — are galaxies or super-galaxies of stars. Their life-cycles are measured in millions of billions of years, for such periods of time are required for important transformations of super-galaxies of the higher order, which are for these beings only the cells in their bodies or the corpuscles of the blood which circulates in their veins. . . . For these beings the galaxies which we know are only electrons or protons whose gravitational expansions and contractions and whose oscillations in form are expressed vaguely in wave packets. . . . For them the galaxies are the primary elementary units in a chaos out of which by statistical averages a considerable degree of order emerges in the super-galaxies.

Is this scientific imagination? No. It is a statement of actual esoteric reality, and merely voices in scientific terminology an age-old teaching of the Ancient Wisdom.

COMETS

What about comets? (5) Comets play a very important part in the Universe, a part hardly suspected by Science. They are worlds in the making, planets in the making; one of the first stages in their evolution or re-embodiment. More accurately, some comets are planets in the making, and some others are solar systems in the making. Comets, after passing through many and various stages and grades of evolutionary growth in constantly increasing materiality, ultimately become the globes that fill the stellar spaces, suns and planets.

First a nebula appears — we are speaking now of the formation of a solar system or of a planet of a solar system, not of the nebula out of which a whole galaxy with billions of solar systems is formed — then this nebula begins to whirl, similarly to the nebulae which give rise to whole galaxies; ultimately this primary condensation of extremely ethereal substance rushes into the cosmic deeps, seeking its former home. It is attracted by one or another part of a galaxy, such as our galaxy, magnetically drawn to this or another sun, its former chief in a preceding embodiment.

Once caught in the gravitational field of the sun to which it karmically belongs, it gradually settles into a more or less regular orbital motion around it. Its developing vital fires act upon the cosmic dust — the darker matter — in that locality of cosmic space, aggregating it together, vitalizing it anew. The comet then passes through another state of nebular evolution. (6)

As the ages roll by, out of this nebular phase arises either the central Sun of a solar system with its planetary bodies, or a group of solar systems, according to the scale we may be considering. It will be seen, therefore, that while the Esoteric Philosophy agrees with much that modern astronomical research has established through painstaking labor, it nevertheless does not look upon the planets as having been thrown off by the condensing Sun, or as having been produced by accidental collisions or close approach of two stars; nor does it recognise the theory that the suns, stars, and certain nebulae are centers of tremendous heat, in our sense of this word. It looks upon all

the processes of "creation" as taking place with grades of matter extremely more ethereal than anything we know of on Earth, involving electro-magnetic phenomena on a cosmic scale, which produce certain visual appearances to the observing eye.

It is thus, according to the ancient teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy, that great aggregations of solar systems are born, evolved through untold ages out of an original nebula which is but the initial stage in the process of re-imbodiment of a Cosmic Entity. Myriads of solar systems, hosts of suns are evolved from the Cosmic Matrix of Being. (7)

And let us remember that each Sun, each Star, is but a cell — perhaps only an atom — in the complex structure of the Cosmic Organism to which it belongs. This thought alone establishes the infinite unity and correlation of everything that is, from the infinitesimally small to the infinitely great, from the electron to the galaxy and beyond.

FINAL DISSOLUTION OF A WORLD

And now there remain a few words to say regarding the final dissolution of a Sun or of a Solar System. The end of its evolutionary cycle of life is a moment when, its purpose and mission having been accomplished, its psycho-magnetic and spiritual energies are released, and its essence is withdrawn into the Cosmic Monad or Soul. Such is the end of man's incarnation at the moment of physical death. Such is also the end of a cosmic system at the moment of its physical dissolution.

It is the teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy that what is known to modern astronomy as a "Nova" — a star that suddenly flares up, reaches an apex of intense brilliancy, and gradually fades away, either entirely or partially — is the final explosion, we might say, of a cosmic system, at the end of its career on this physical plane of manifestation. Sometimes this process is sudden, sometimes more or less gradual. This teaching is well illustrated by successive pictures of the expanding nebulous ring around the "Nova" of 1918 in the constellation of *Aquila*. It shows the gradual resolving of a cosmic system, undoubtedly with

planets of its own, into a nebulous mass which resembles the stages through which a system passes in the period of its gradual birth. It is also very remarkably illustrated by the famous "Crab" nebula in *Taurus*; this nebula has been identified with a "Nova" noticed by Chinese astronomers as far back as 1054 a. d.; since that time it has been expanding at a considerable rate forming a widely spread nebulosity still in a process of expansion and diffusion.

We have also a large variety of so-called Planetary Nebulae which show a central star with a vast spherical luminous atmosphere surrounding it. The latter is supposed to have expanded to its present size, according to present-day views. Among these are the Planetary Nebula in *Andromeda* and the Ring Nebula in *Lyra*, which has certain peculiarities of its own. However, it is more than probable from the standpoint of the Esoteric Philosophy that the famous Planetary Nebulae, at least a few of them, might be stages in the gradual formation of a solar system, instead of stages of dissolution. Both possibilities should be kept in mind until more definite knowledge is at hand.

According to the ancient teachings, exploding stars are thus but a stage in the gradual re-absorption of a system into the inner spheres of being, the superior planes of that universe — in other words, the *disembodiment of a Cosmic Entity*, leaving behind it a mere physical structure in gradual disintegration, minus the spiritual invigorating Fires of its "Soul," that structure then returning into the state of undifferentiated matter, from which we started the outline of these teachings.

From Atom to Cosmos, from the world of the sub-atomic to the super-galaxies and beyond, the Universe is an endless Ladder of evolving Life. Everything unfolds, everything grows, everything changes constantly, cycling through the portals of renewed birth, and into the portals of seeming death, which is but a sleep and a rejuvenation. There is no Death, for Life is Universal and ever-enduring, and what men call Birth and Death, from an atom to a cosmos, are but two

phases of Cosmic Being, tides which come and go on the shores of Cosmic Life.

As written by Dr. G. de Purucker, Leader of the Theosophical Society, in his important work *The Esoteric Tradition* (pp. 156-7):

. . . our physical World, including stars, suns, planets, etc., is but the outer shell or garment or veil of an inner, vital, intelligent aggregate of causes, which in their collectivity form or rather are the Kosmic Life. . . . The Kosmic Life is in very truth the Ineffable Reality behind all that is, within all beings and things that are. . . . The World Universal, Space Universal, is full of gods, "sparks of eternity," links in an endless causative chain of cosmic intelligences that live and move and have their being in the vast spaces of Infinitude, precisely as we do in our own Home-Universe on our own smaller scale.

Everything that is, lives in something greater than itself; and in its turn is the enfolding structure of smaller lives which make it up. The electron lives in the atom; the atom lives in the molecule; the molecule lives in the cell; the cell is but an integral part of the organ it helps to build; the organ lives in the body corporate of the evolving organism; the organism is but a part of the kingdom to which it belongs; the kingdom, such as the human kingdom, for instance, is an integral part of the planet upon which it lives; the planet is a member of a large family of planets and lives in the Solar System to which it belongs; and the Solar System is but one of a group of such systems; and the group is but a fraction of the Galaxy wherein it lives. Millions of galaxies form some still greater system, beyond the comprehension of even the greatest minds among men. And each unit, from the atom to the cosmos, is a conscious unit, evolving within the consciousness and the vital streams of the greater unit of which it is a part. And through this beginningless and endless hierarchical gradation of evolving Life there flows but One Cosmic Consciousness, there beats but One Cosmic Heart of Being. Man has within himself a droplet of that Cosmic Consciousness, and his heart beats in unison with the Heart of the

Universe. The Fire of Cosmic Life courses through his being, and the music of the spheres resounds in the depths of his spiritual soul. Ally yourself in the silence with your spiritual self, the Starry Spirit dwelling in your heart of hearts; seek it — bring it out, and in due course of time, when awakened into fulness of manifestation, your consciousness and your understanding will outreach the most distant galaxies in the deeps of Space.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Lecture delivered at Channing Hall, Los Angeles, Calif., on March 15, 1940; illustrated with astronomical lantern-slides loaned by Mount Wilson Observatory. ([return to text](#))

2. The following astronomical objects illustrate this point: (a) the dark S-shaped nebula, Barnard 72, in *Ophiuchus*; (b) the dark nebula, Barnard 86, in *Sagittarius*; (c) the dark nebula, Barnard 92, in *Sagittarius*; (d) the dark nebula, Barnard 133, in *Aquila*; (e) the famous "Horse-head" dark nebula in *Orion*. ([return to text](#))

3. This is well illustrated by the following astronomical objects: (a) spiral nebula on edge, NGC 4594, in *Virgo*; (b) spiral nebula on edge in *Coma Berenices*; (c) spiral nebula on edge in *Andromeda*; (d) spiral nebula on edge, NGC 5746, in *Virgo*. The first of these objects shows very plainly a ring of dark matter around it. This dark line is in the understanding of the student of the Ancient Wisdom some of the undifferentiated matter which has not yet awakened into renewed manifestation and vital activity. ([return to text](#))

4. In this connection we have for our study a large number of extragalactic nebulae in various stages of evolutionary unfoldment; their increasing rotation is evidenced by the progressively more and more flattened appearance of such nebulae, which gradually, from a spherical shape, assume the final shape of a lens with a thick middle portion tapering off at the edges.

The following sequence of astronomical objects illustrates some of the successive stages in the formation of a galaxy out of the primordial

nebula, (a) Great Spiral Nebula, M 31, in *Andromeda*; (b) Spiral Nebula, M 94, in *Canes Venatici*; (c) Spiral Nebula in *Hercules*; (d) Spiral Nebula, M 63, in *Canes Venatici*; (e) Spiral Nebula, M 81, in *Ursa Major*; (f) Spiral Nebula, NGC 4536, in *Virgo*; (g) Spiral Nebula, M 99, in *Virgo*; (h) Spiral Nebula, NGC 5247; (i) the famous "Whirlpool" Nebula, M 51, in *Canes Venatici*; (j) Spiral Nebula, M 33, in *Triangulum*; (k) Spiral Nebula, M 101, in *Ursa Major*. ([return to text](#))

5. Illustrated by any of the well-known photographs of comets, heads of comets, etc., made at the famous observatories throughout the world, particularly the fine pictures of Halley's comet of 1910. ([return to text](#))

6. This stage in the formation of solar systems out of a nebula which itself is the resolving of a cosmic comet into nebular matter, is well illustrated by the nebulosities in the constellation of the *Pleiades*, and the Great Nebula in *Orion*. ([return to text](#))

7. This stage is illustrated by galaxies such as our own and by the magnificent pictures of the so-called globular clusters on the outskirts of our Home Universe or galaxy, which gives an idea of the immense number of individual systems which are born and developed from the original nebula. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

EMERSON, THE SAGE — *John P. Van Mater*

The enumerating of Emerson's views of life as set forth in his essays might be compared to the setting forth of a whole philosophy. It is quite a task. For not only are his essays numerous, but they contain in almost every line of every page, ideas so conducive to long and thoughtful meditation, thoughts so cosmic in their scope, that indeed a complete carrying out of their chain of reasoning would be endless. Scattered throughout all his essays are those fundamental truths which underlie both Universe and Man, and which in any true philosophy form its background and at the same time its source of inspiration. It is a question of "Seek and ye shall find"; but this for the sincere student constitutes his true delight. Here in this limited space we can merely point to some of Emerson's fundamental thoughts. These, it is hoped, will entice the interested reader to pursue the inquiry further.

Predominant in all his essays stands out the principle of essential unity. "Each particle is a microcosm, and faithfully renders the likeness of the world." (1) Man "learns that going down into the secrets of his own mind, he has descended into the secrets of all minds." (2) ". . . the Deity in me and in them derides and cancels the thick walls of individual character, relation, age, sex, circumstance, at which he usually connives, and now makes many one." (3) To Emerson, as to every true Theosophist of any era, Brotherhood was a fact and not a belief. And this principle of Brotherhood was universal, extending throughout all, unifying everything whether great or small. For the Universe, and Nature, and Man, are of spiritual origin, and the divine manifests in each part, no matter how minute.

Because man is of divine origin, he is given a promise of new hopes, a new destiny. "Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet, for God is here within." (4) "Life is a progress, and not a station." (5) "Once inhale the upper air, being admitted to behold the absolute natures of justice and truth, and we learn that man has access to the entire mind

of the Creator, is himself the creator in the finite." (6) Think of the infinite possibilities Emerson puts within the reach of man in the above quotations, when he states that the only real gain, the only real compensation in life, is an ever expanding consciousness. Think of the clearness of his vision of each part of the Universe, which yet perceives further the fundamental concept of the unity of all into a great organism, each part acting upon and felt by the whole, but still retaining its own individuality as a self-evolving entity.

And to Emerson each entity was not a tool with which the Almighty plays as he sees fit; but each one possesses within himself the power of expanding through the use of his will and through the operation of the law of Cause and Effect. "Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance." (7) "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles." (8) And how did Emerson explain the source of the divine in each of us? "There seems to be a necessity in spirit to manifest itself in material forms:" (9) Hence, "Being passes into Appearance and Unity into Variety." (10)

To the average reader, the ideas expressed above are bewildering in their vast scope and revolutionary content. For Emerson was a cogent thinker, deeply mystical, and to one with no knowledge of occult truths it is necessary to use spiritual insight if he would penetrate to the heart of these teachings. But it is unfair to say that to the average reader he is incomprehensible. For Emerson himself has told of "the transcendental simplicity and energy of the Highest Law." (11) "Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shalt reproduce the Foreworld again." (12) For intellectual attainment is not the primary object to be considered. The first and foremost thing is to live just as much of the Law as you understand. Therefore, it is the duty of those understanding more, to practice living to the full extent of their knowledge. Anyone then of a serious and unprejudiced mind may read Emerson, fill his cup of understanding to the brim; and if he lives up to the ideals he has gleaned, still more understanding will be his.

The distance between Emerson's thought and that of most men of his time laid him open to charges of infidelity and obscurity; and his plea for the individual consciousness as against all historical creeds, bibles, and churches, brought about much controversy. But there was one stumbling block for all those taking opposition against him. This was the character and life of the man himself. Even those differing with his views, agreed on the point that in Emerson was a pure and lofty spiritual nature. Here was a man who practised what he preached, and no one was able to find fault with him in this respect. And inasmuch as his writings were concerned, Emerson was not given to defending his statements. He always remained serene and remote and never was drawn into discussion, thereby winning over many friends from the ranks of the opposition.

And what was there aside from his philosophy that could turn people against him? His character was fine and noble; he was everybody's friend and adviser, and he did not attempt to force his teachings on anyone, but merely made them accessible to all those wishing to partake of them. But there was this that was a source of irritation to many: his statements were piercing, and when, for example, he opposed the Church by taking its teachings at their true value Orthodoxy was disturbed. "No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature." (13) "I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions." (14) "All men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect." (15) Emerson wanted men to think, and not to accept blindly traditional truths just because their forefathers had done so. He did not want the young American scholar to become a "bookworm," reading, and accepting what he read merely because it was stated to be true. "Books are the best of things, well used; abused, among the worst." (16) Not that he wished men to become absolute non-conformists, but he wished each one to apply all of his faculties towards perceiving the truth before accepting any statement.

"The great difficulty is that men do not think enough of themselves, do not consider what it is that they are sacrificing when they follow in a

herd, or when they cater for their establishment. They know not how divine is a Man. I know you say such a man thinks too much of himself. Alas! he is wholly ignorant. He yet wanders in the outer darkness, in the skirts and shadows of himself, and has not seen his inner light." (17)

The above is the pith and marrow of his essay on "Self-Reliance." It is because Emerson recognised the possibilities of the inquisitive American mind, and voiced his support of their individuality in his oration, "The American Scholar," that he is said to have uttered "our intellectual Declaration of Independence." (18)

Truly, Emerson was a sage and a seer, and one who not only expounded universal truths, but lived them. To interpret Nature, not by the analysis of phenomena, but by detecting the higher, spiritual quality present in all physical things, was his keynote. His confidence in the "Oversoul," or the divine within every person, as a unifying agent, and his total magnanimity and trust of all those he knew, is proof that he put his teachings into practice. Many were the devoted friends of his life, and numerous have been the attributes ascribed to him. Let us, therefore, hark to his words:

"A life in harmony with Nature, the love of truth and of virtue, will purge the eyes to understand her text." (19) "When in fortunate hours we ponder this miracle, the wise man doubts if at all other times he is not blind and deaf; for the universe becomes transparent, and the light of higher laws than its own shines through it." (20) "Let us be silent — so we may hear the whisper of the gods." (21)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Nature*, Part 5, "Discipline" ([return to text](#))
2. *The American Scholar* ([return to text](#))
3. *Friendship* ([return to text](#))
4. *Self-reliance* ([return to text](#))
5. *Compensation* ([return to text](#))

6. *Nature*, Part 7, "Spirit" ([return to text](#))
7. *Self-Reliance* ([return to text](#))
8. Op. cit. ([return to text](#))
9. *Nature*, Part 4, "Languages" ([return to text](#))
10. *The Poet* ([return to text](#))
11. *The Over-Soul* ([return to text](#))
12. *Self-Reliance* ([return to text](#))
13. Op. cit. ([return to text](#))
14. Op. cit. ([return to text](#))
15. Op. cit. ([return to text](#))
16. *The American Scholar* ([return to text](#))
17. *Journals* ([return to text](#))
18. *Comment on Emerson* by Oliver Wendell Holmes ([return to text](#))
19. *Nature*, Part 4, "Language" ([return to text](#))
20. Op. cit. ([return to text](#))
21. *Friendship* ([return to text](#))

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

AVALOKITESVARA — THE DIVINE PRESENCE

(See Letter No. LIX, pages 343-345)

Mahayana Buddhism, which is mainly the form studied in Tibet today, as it has been for centuries past, recognises three distinct entities or hierarchical Logoi in the Buddhists' hierarchy of spirit. They are the Buddha Amitabha or the Buddha of Boundless Light, then Alaya, then Avalokitesvara. Alaya means the spirit-source of all, the garment or clothing of the boundless light; matter cosmic or infinitesimal in nature. Out of it spring the multitudinous rays, as rays of light leave the sun for instance; and each ray is itself a being.

Avalokitesvara does not mean "the Lord looking down," as Rhys Davids translates it, in direct violation of the elementary rules of Sanskrit grammar. *Ava* means "down," *lokita* is the past participle passive of the Sanskrit verbal root *lok*, "to see," hence meaning "seen." *Iswara* means "Lord." So Avalokitesvara means, paraphrased somewhat, "the Lord who is beheld everywhere," the cosmic light, the cosmic spirit, in which we live and move and have our being, whose very essence, whose very light, thrills and burns in every human soul, the spark within every human being. It is the immanence or the constant presence of divinity around us, in everything, seen down here in all its works, pre-eminently for humans in man, the most evolved vehicle of this divine presence.

Compare this wonderful Buddhist triad of Tibet, which is likewise our own, with the Christian trinity, degenerated and grossly transmogrified as this latter is through centuries of theologic and scholastic mishandling because of misunderstanding. We find that Amitabha, the Boundless Light, corresponds to the Father in the Christian Trinity, the Cosmic Father or Abstract Spirit, the Pythagorean monad of monads, the source — in silence to us, and darkness to us — of all the monads

emanating from it, streaming from it, born from it through the second logos, Alaya, the Spirit, which in original Christian teaching was feminine, the productive and generative power in nature, in spiritual matters as well as material, the mother of all, the fosterer of all, the preserver of all. And Avalokitesvara corresponds to the original third Person of the Christian Trinity, the Son, the cosmic or Third Logos. In Brahmanism the triad runs: Parabrahman or Brahman, Pradhana or Mulaprakriti, Mahat. When manifesting in individual monads such as a human being, the trinity is Amitabha, Atman; Alaya or Mahakasa, Buddhi; Avalokitesvara, Manas; for Manas is a direct ray from the cosmic Alaya, and our Atman, a direct ray from the Paramatman, the cosmic Atman, or Brahman or Parabrahman, or the Father.

Thus we have Father, Spirit or Holy Ghost, and Son — the original Christian trinity which the Latin Church finally succeeded in turning around into Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, making the Son or Logos precede the Mother from which it is born!

So, as the Masters pointed out in the last part of the letter we have been studying, Avalokitesvara has its temple in the Universe around us. It is the creative Logos, the Third Logos, the one closest to us as it were, from which we all spring as rays from a cosmic sun, which is the divine presence in nature, which is the divine presence in the human manasic part, emanating of course from Atman or Amitabha; for the Son, is he not the Son of his Father? Is not Manas through Buddhi the offspring of Atman? Is not Mahat through Alaya or Mahakasa or Pradhana — all names for the same thing — the offspring of Adi-Buddha, or if you wish Paramatman or Brahman or Parabrahman?

So Avalokitesvara is the divine presence around us everywhere, which every sensitive human soul can feel continuously, day and night, even when we are in dreamland or when imbodyed on Earth. And that same divine presence is in the human breast, because the human breast, even the human body, is a microcosmical representation on this plane of the universe. No wonder the ancients had their Holy of Holies in every temple — originally a beautiful metaphor and a suggestive one

when understood by those who came to the temple to worship the divine in purity of heart and with utmost reverence — wherein as in the universe, the divine presence dwells. It was a symbol; so that when one approached the Holy of Holies, shoes were cast from the feet, the garments were wiped, the heart was raised, the mind was elevated; for the worshipers in their reverent raising of their own spirits upwards entered into the Presence, even the Presence Divine.

That Presence is Avalokitesvara; and its ray in us through the Atman is the Higher Manas, illuminated by Buddhi, Buddhi in its turn infilled with the divine light of Atman. For the Father dwelleth in the Mother, and the Mother giveth birth to the Holy Son, and the three are one and yet three, each distinct from the other. Very simple to understand, but amazingly difficult to attain a deeper realization of that marvel! Yet it is wonderful to know and to strive upwards towards. Would that every man and woman realized that every human breast is such a Holy of Holies; for when the man, through his own self-discipline and cultivation of the highest within him by forgetting himself in service to all others, thus sinking the unit into the all, thus becoming even then relatively divine, becomes so overpowerfully strong that nothing less than It will ever satisfy, then he yearns upward, he opens the portals of his holier being, and the light streams in and fills the Holy of Holies within his breast. Then the man is transfigured, he is a Christ, he is a Bodhisattva, for the time being.

That was the effect of successful initiation, just that. Sometimes the aura of the event remained with the man for days, it may be weeks, and his very body at the time was surrounded with light. He was spoken of as being clothed with the solar splendor, the sun being a symbol of Atman, as he is in his kingdom; and our own inner God being the sun, the inner God of our own divinity, our Father in Heaven, that ray from the cosmic Avalokitesvara.

I think it is just here that we find the reason why the Tibetan esoterics and mystics, Initiates, and the common people — by that I mean the mass of the people, the hard working, kindly, good-natured, loving,

aspiring men of the multitude — why they all look upon the Bodhisattvas with deeper reverence and a more fervent love than they do even upon the Buddhas. For the Buddhas have achieved, they have left these spheres. Behind them remains their glory as a spiritual influence. But the Bodhisattvas are still men, not yet Buddhas, men whose life is consecrated to making Avalokitesvara a living power in the world through themselves. This is why it is the Bodhisattvas that the multitudes love. They deeply revere the Buddhas as having gone on and shown the way, but they love with an exalted human devotion the Bodhisattvas who remain behind with arms outstretched to help in pity. No wonder they love the Bodhisattvas, for he who brings Avalokitesvara to live in this Holy of Holies in the human breast, becomes more than man. No wonder he is loved and revered and trusted. I think these thoughts are beautiful beyond description. Their sublimity does not blind us, for it is like divinity clothing itself in human habiliments, in human apparel, and therefore becoming understandable to us humans. It is like seeing humanity clothed with divinity. The Bodhisattvas are not so abstract, so seemingly far away, as are the Buddhas.

So true is this psychology that to it is due, to it alone I believe, all the success of early Christianity, that it taught the very ancient doctrine which had become almost forgotten in the so-called pagan world, and it was this: that a man lived who had been infilled with divinity, and that he came amongst us and taught and showed the way and loved us all so greatly that he laid down his life and all that was in him so that others seeing might follow on the path — the typical Bodhisattva, the typical Christ. I think *that* one thing alone captured for Christianity those who joined the Christian Church.

But how very old is this doctrine of beauty and inspiration! The Christians received it from the Orient. It is far older than the so-called enduring mountains, for when they were still sea-slime, not yet having been raised, these doctrines were taught among men in other continents, in other ages, in other Root-Races, these same wondrous teachings of cosmic origin.

See the difference between the Christian theological idea of Avalokitesvara as wrongly translated by Rhys Davids and others as being the "Lord who looks down," something "up there" and apart and away, as compared with the real meaning: The Lord here amongst us, the Lord of pity, human and yet divine, the Divine Presence surrounding us everywhere, which makes the human breast recognising this the human Holy of Holies.

Christians too have that intuition. Let me close with a poem that illustrates the point and which I learned when I was a boy. I have several times recited it here. It was written many years ago by a Christian clergyman, and I think I quote accurately:

A Parish priest of austerity
Climbed up in a high church steeple
To be nearer God, so that he might
Hand down God's word to his people.
In sermon script he daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven;
And he cast this down on his peoples' heads
Twice one day in seven.
In his age God cried: "Come down and die."
And he cried out from the steeple,
"Where art thou, Lord?" And the Lord replied,
"Down here among my people."

The Theosophical Forum

"THE SKIN OF THE EARTH" — *Martyn Witter*

As one looks back to the theosophical literature of the latter part of the nineteenth century one finds often very stimulating articles. One such appeared in *The Path* of October, 1889. It was called "The Skin of the Earth." (1) Its author without question must have seen the things he writes of, for his descriptions are too exact and philosophically accurate to be otherwise. In articles of such a character the author often revealed truths of his inner experiences that would never have appeared in such a dramatic form in mere articles on philosophy.

The manner and setting by which the author introduces his subject is unimportant and may be even fictional. However the philosophical implications contained in his description of the Earth are most revealing.

As the story runs, he was gazing upon the revolving mass of the earth as from a distance. This globe in miniature was covered with hosts of small creatures whose encircling movements caused the sphere to revolve. Thus the author was evidently seeing the entities composing the life force of the earth, i. e. the pranic force of the earth. With the eye of a seer he could see that the whole globe was filled with these same creatures who were constantly coming from the surface and moving to the center along well-defined magnetic lines of force. No description of the actual direction and location of these lines was given, for this is reserved for esotericists. The beings which moved in these magnetic lines of force were of every color and form; some were like star-blossoms of the sea while others appeared to be similar to man himself. They all throbbed with an interior pulse of light while their pure tints waxed and waned. Here we see that they were developed entities with well-defined cycles in their auras. In their real essence they were centers of energy around which light condensed. Indeed, they were vehicles for the energy of the sun. There was a constant progression of type and form. Some were very primitive while others

were well progressed and on the very verge of self-consciousness. The more progressed ones had larger orbits and many satellites circling about them.

Let us look for analogies in our own solar system. These systems all owed obedience to an interior Power which expressed itself by shedding rays upon all. Each of the systems composed of these little creatures existed for the service of the rest, thus complementing and sustaining each other as they worked in their labors of love and devotion. As mentioned before, they assisted the earth in its revolutions upon its axis, and in addition they guided it in its orbit. Also as they grew they stimulated the latent spark in the metals and assisted all the underworld growth as the flame awakens other flames.

The author goes on to say that the orbit of these docile and beautiful creatures made a passage to and fro through the Mystic Wall of the earth. Thus their duties were *upon* the earth as well as *beneath* its surface, and in reward for the faithful fulfilment of their functions they were lifted continually into higher service and form.

Now not all was well with the beautiful workings of these faithful beings. There were other beings on this globe who built cities and waged wars. The thoughts of the two-legged creatures seemed for the most part like a dark mist full of noxious vapor which deadened while it chilled. *Verbum sapienti!* Many of our faithful beings were paralyzed and some even became servants of this baleful mist formed from the thoughts of men. This created a disturbance that checked the orbital revolutions but still the whole throng held together as some huge iridescent heart that went on throbbing in the gloom.

Certain locations upon the earth were worse than others. Where too many servants of the Law were stamped with the evil of men's minds they were no longer harmonious and became like an avenging host bringing plague and suffering to those responsible. Where whole continents became wicked the effect was so great that the circling globe was disturbed in its movement and moved off its axis. Then great sections of the earth were flooded and cleaned of their burdens. Sweet

and fresh lands were left bare for those who were servants of the Law. Turbulent waters and sinking lands were left for those who had struggled, with their magic, to be little rulers of the Universe. This is the reward of those who strive to serve Nature and those who would be little rulers. No puny man can pit his will against the surges of Nature and long endure. Those beautiful rivers of lives, that so faithfully pass from the inner to the outer skin of the earth and back again in their whirling cycles, cannot for long be burdened by man. Let man sow seeds of hatred and strife for a long enough period and the surging lives of the invisible worlds will prove to be faithful guardians whose duties are to devour that which stands in their way. At such times, it is too late for men to fall to their knees and cry to the Gods for aid. Indeed, they who dare sow a whirlwind among the peaceful creatures of the Great Mother must reap the same.

FOOTNOTE:

1. One of W. Q. Judge's stories written under the pseudonym Bryan Kinnavan. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: VIII

A synopsis of the Theosophical teaching of Karman, the Doctrine of Consequences: that man is responsible for what he is and for what comes to him. This was given by Miss Inga Sjostedt last May 11th in the series of weekly Theosophical talks sponsored by herself and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist, over station XQHB, Shanghai, China

Good evening, everybody:

Last Sunday the speaker explained the teaching of Reincarnation as it has been taught from immemorial times by our Elder Brothers, the Adepts, spiritual Teachers, or Initiates. This evening we must examine its twin-doctrine, Karman. As the speaker said last Sunday, Karman is the law of cause and effect, of action and reaction. The word "karman" is Sanskrit and means action, literally, but it is action which returns in the form of results to the actor. It is therefore the law of retribution, for Nature is essentially harmonious, and any disturbance of its equilibrium must be adjusted sooner or later. Therefore a man must always reap what he has sown, whether he like the harvest or not. According to the occult wisdom of the ages, nothing we think or do, nothing we feel or say, is lost, but forms the material out of which we build our future lives. The doctrine of Karman is a key to happiness, success and achievement. It gives us far greater responsibility than the Western idea of forgiveness of sins through prayer and repentance, which latter throws all responsibility on God — an illogical doctrine, if we give it any thought, for if a man, for instance, maims another man for life, or ruins him financially, or through some deliberate course of action causes him to commit suicide, not all the repentance in the world or the assumed forgiveness of God can undo these things. They have happened; they cannot be changed. Nature's law of harmony has been violated, and according to the Secret Doctrine the man responsible must restore the equilibrium in this or another life on

earth.

Karman explains the seeming inequalities of life. We are born poor or rich, according to our merits — in a favored or suppressed nation, as we deserve and whither our affinities draw us. We are born into the family, race, locality and age, to which we are psycho-magnetically attracted through our sins and virtues of many previous lives. Every thought we think today affects our future incarnation, because thoughts are energies, and no energy can be lost in the spaces of the universe — it must go somewhere — and where more naturally than back to ourselves who first sent it forth?

The doctrine of Karman has been wrongly understood by many superficial students of Theosophy. Some people, for instance, say: "If all that happens to an individual is just, and all his sufferings and misfortunes are his own doing, I need not help those who are in distress, because it is, after all, the just laws of Nature working." Such a heartless attitude is unforgivable and also reveals an ignorance of natural law, because compassion is a divine attribute and permeates all nature, and also because all living creatures are interdependent. No creature can live by itself and unto itself alone. Man depends for his life on the different elements — air, water, earth, etc. He derives his nourishment from the earth, and all the comforts and conveniences of life are created by communities of men like himself, who build cities and ply different trades so that the members of the community must depend on each other. If, then, life depends on a constant give and take among all the different creatures and elements that make up the world, how wrong it is to say that human suffering should not concern us because it affects strangers and because it is the law of justice in operation! Each time we help someone in distress, each time we improve unfortunate conditions in the lives of people less fortunate than ourselves — our personal Karman adds to its store of good things for the future; but lest anyone think that there is merit in mere conventional duty, let me add that the most important element in a charitable act is the motive. As said before, thoughts are energies, and therefore motives are energies also, and as such they color our actions,

making them noble and unselfish or cold and indifferent. Many a helpful gesture loses its potency for good because the motive is selfish and calculating — not generous and kind. The motive is of prime importance, and Karman acts accordingly.

Karman is not a special law governing human affairs only: it affects all creatures — atoms, elements, plants, animals, men, planets, gods, and supergods — all according to their various development and state of consciousness. Even the life of a man is governed by different kinds of karman. For instance, a man may suffer evil physical karman because he abused his body in his former life; he may be afflicted with an unfortunate psychic karman because he did not attempt to control his passions and impulses in his former life; he may be quick-tempered and psychically unbalanced, always torn by conflicting emotions and moods, and we are told about such a man that he was born "with an unfortunate character" — only the Theosophist would add, "with an unfortunate *self-created* character." At the same time such a man may have an excellent mental karman, because in his previous incarnations he applied his intellectual powers to deep studies and was eager for knowledge. In the present life, therefore, this man would have an exceptional mind and be given many opportunities to use it for some useful purpose, such as science, literature or mathematics.

Karman acts on different ranges. There is such a thing as individual karman — that is, each individual is affected by his former thoughts and deeds in a purely personal way. Then there is family karman, where a certain group of individuals is brought together through affinity and former bonds, and these individuals are all affected by the karman of the family to which they belong. There is the karman of a city or a village; there is also national karman which affects the group of people which constitute a nation, and finally there is the karman of all humanity, which no man can escape as long as he forms part of our earth-humanity.

National karman is effected when the same individuals who lived in the same nation thousands of years ago are reborn together, and

through certain characteristics in common form the so-called national or racial idiosyncracies. Others, who were not of the same race in their former life, may be reborn into the new race because their natural tendencies and character are like those of the new race. And so, because of what a nation as a unit does in one life, that race must atone for or be rewarded for the next time the identical individuals are reborn together. This constitutes national karman, and so wars, revolutions, famines, conquests and successes in legislation are but the results of that nation's former activities. A soldier dying in the field of battle may not have a personal karman which pre-destined him to die before his time, but it was through his personal karman that he was born into the nation which was involved in a war, and because he formed part of this nation, his personal karman was overshadowed by the national karman which brought about his untimely death. And so it is with famines, commerce, different forms of government, and other things that affect a country, and through the country its individual inhabitants. Therefore, not only the thoughts of the individual, but the collective thoughts of a nation result in peace or war, wealth or poverty, for the country.

The doctrine of karman must not be mistaken for fatalism. There are certain things which are brought to us through our past actions, but we can neutralize evil karman through personal effort and by changing our attitude.

An understanding of this doctrine, while loading a greater responsibility on the individual than the dogma of repentance and forgiveness of sins, at the same time opens up to our inner vision a vista of possibilities ordinarily undreamed of, for we can make ourselves what we will — beings of spiritual power and wisdom, conquerors of circumstances and personal weaknesses, or, if we so will, we can degrade ourselves to the level of the beasts. Because there is a center of divinity in us, no heights are unreachable, and because we live not one life but hundreds of lives in human form, karman is the doctrine of "another chance."

WHO ARE THE GODS? — *Leoline L. Wright*

A friend who recently attended an open forum meeting in the Temple at Point Loma said to me afterwards: "I noticed that your speakers referred several times to what they called "the gods." It astonished me. What did they refer to? Surely Theophists can't believe in Jupiter and his company of Olympic pagan deities?"

In giving an answer to this question one sees perhaps for the first time just how alien to the average Western mentality may be this idea of the beings who in the Ancient Wisdom are known as gods, or cosmic divinities. To many at first sight the idea may seem decidedly strange.

Yet there is little doubt that of all our teachings this of the existence of inner divine planes, builded of hierarchies or graded hosts of sublime spiritual beings, is one of the most beautiful and consoling. Because we are assured that our own inner spiritual natures are actually offsprings of these cosmic divinities. This is our spiritual heredity, in contrast to a so-called animal descent. Man is himself a god. He enshrines within himself a divine being who overshadows and guides and inspires its own child, the struggling developing human soul. And we, these human souls, when we shall have evolved out those divine powers and attributes now latent within us, shall then ourselves be full-fledged gods. It will become our privilege to shine upon and urge forward our own animal souls, which are our children and dependents.

After saying this, it is perhaps needless to add that these cosmic divinities of the Ancient Wisdom are not in any way to be confused with the popular conception of the Greek and Roman deities. These were originally but the personified forces of Nature, corrupted in time as are all spiritual ideas by the vagaries of mass psychology.

The Cosmic Divinities of the Ancient Wisdom are of varied ranges of being and power. There are the regents or guiding spirits of the stars and planets. Other grades in the divine hierarchy comprise the

architects of our universe, and those grand celestial beings whose nature is to embody and cyclically to set in motion the spiritual potencies and karmic trends which hold our universe in harmonious coherence as it swings endlessly through the illimitable spaces of space.

We are told that our visible sun is the luminous body of a god. And through this thought we can picture what is, from our human viewpoint, the essential nature of a cosmic divinity. It is a being which like the sun gives itself inexhaustibly throughout the cosmic manvantara so that every creature, great and small, within the cosmic body, may be infilled and nourished, protected and urged forever forward on its evolutionary path.

Another characteristic of a cosmic divinity, such as those which are embodied in the suns, is that it has the power of self-renewal at the inner fount of its own being, where it contacts higher and deeper and more universal sources of life even than its own.

Naturally, as with all our sublime teachings, the aspect that interests us particularly is their relation to ourselves and our daily problems. If a man or woman can feel that in obeying the behest of his own karman, however difficult, he is in his humble way working hand in hand with the cosmic divinities, his daily existence will be lifted at once to a higher and serener plane. How different the morning to one whose day is thus inspired and sanctified. Petty drudgeries or monotonous routines take on gradually the tempo of the universal rhythm. As time goes on the soul moves confidently forward in unconscious harmony with the music of the spheres.

In the midst of change and turmoil let us often recall the shining Presences of the over-leaning gods. Let us lift up our hearts and minds daily to those deep inner spaces from which we may draw the breath of impersonal love, and thus become links between suffering humanity and the divine vitality of supernal order and peace.

ESOTERIC HINTS ON CYCLES — *G. de Purucker*

Some days ago it was brought to my attention that a comment had been made by a new member of the T. S., to the effect that he could not easily understand from whom came our sacred rules of calculating cycles and time-periods, as for instance, the well-known and very difficult time-periods used by the Brahmanas of India, and which are likewise ours.

So intricate is what I have to say that I hesitate, and yet will do my best. Intricate because of the manifold ramifications into which Nature herself runs or is divided; although her heart is simple, and the rules upon which these very ancient calculations are based are likewise simple.

KEY-NUMBERS OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

These calculations upon which the Theosophical seer or prophet, as the ancients would have called him, may see the future if he is skilled and clever enough to do so, are not arbitrary. They were invented by nobody. They are based on Nature herself, and mostly on cosmical movements, specifically those of the planets. Here is the key which I will now give you, and attempt to explain in some detail. The secret numbers of these Hindu Yugas, which have puzzled the brains especially of so many mathematical Theosophists lie in a combination of the year of Saturn and the year of Jupiter expressed in Earth-years. There is your key.

The mistake constantly has been made by Theosophists of attempting to divide these numbers of the yugas by 7, and that is not possible, because the number 7 does not go into any of these key-numbers without leaving a remainder. 7 is the key-note of our Earth; 10 of the Solar System, and 12 of our Galaxy, which of course includes our Solar System, and the latter includes our Earth.

The key-numbers are these: The year of Jupiter expressed in Earth-years is 12, i. e., 12 of our years make one year of the planet Jupiter. The Saturn-year expressed in Earth-years, or our years, is approximately 30. There are your two key-numbers: 12 and 30. Multiply these by each other, you have 360. $30 \times 12 = 360$.

I want to call your attention to one important fact of Nature, suspected by the most intuitive astronomers, but none as yet has succeeded in proving his intuition. It is that our Solar System is an organic entity, an organism, in other words an individual, as much an organism as is a man's body. All the planets of the Solar System, with the sun and our moon and other moons, are enmeshed as it were, forming a celestial machine so that they move in rhythmical or harmonic sequences. It is obvious that if this were not so, there would be no sympathy and no symphony, no harmony, in the movements of the bodies of our Solar System; but these bodies would be moving helter skelter, hither and yon; and we know perfectly well that they are not.

Our Theosophical mathematicians who have not yet been given this key have all been thrown off the track because of the fact that while the years of every one of the planets of the Solar System clearly prove that all these planets move synchronously together, as if they were enmeshed, wheels in a machine; yet the orbit of every one of these planets is not a multiple of some other lower orbital revolution or year. In other words, there is always, as it were, a libration, or as the astronomers put it — and this will illustrate — the year of Jupiter is really 11 and I think $88/100$ of our Earth-years, not quite 12. (You can see all these figures in any book on astronomy.) The year of Mars is not exactly two Earth-years, but 1.88, as I remember. (I may be a little off on these fractions but they are unimportant to the point we are going to discuss.)

Now here is what I want to point out: It is these fractions putting the orbital times of the planets off any exact accordance with each other, which is a proof of the theory; because this shows that while all the planets are enmeshed together as it were, working synchronously and

harmonically as a machine does with wheels interlocked, yet each planet itself is an individual, and has a certain liberty of movement. Keeping in mind this essential liberty or freedom we can more clearly grasp the following points: first, that the Solar System is an animate organism guided by intelligence; and yet, second, that each one of the planets, although working together with all the others in harmonic rhythms and in co-ordinate times, has just a little movement of its own, as it were edging each year a little farther on; so that as time goes on, the pattern of the planets changes; and this introduces the varied fortunes and destinies not only of mankind and of the inhabitants of the other planets, but also brings about the karmic changes and modifications of the Solar System. I weigh heavily on this point, because it is most important.

I want to call your attention to a few facts to show you what I mean about the rhythms, to prove that all the planets by their annual orbital motions — in other words the lengths of the planetary years expressed in Earth-years — are organically connected together.

Let us take the Year of Jupiter: Jupiter-year = 12 Earth-years approximately. Now mark: the Planet Mercury in one Jupiter-year has 48 of its own years, approximately, of course. 48 is 4×12 . You get your 12 coming in here again. You remember that I spoke of the key-numbers as being 12 and 30 — or 6, if you like. (1)

Now Venus has 20 years (approximately) to one Jupiter-year. This 20 is not divisible by 12, but if you will take a longer cycle, say the cycle of 360 (18×20) years, then 12 goes into that 30 times, doesn't it? Yes. Note that 18 equals $12 + 6$ or half of 36, which is 3×12 , and 36 is $1/10$ of 360. I want you to see how these key-figures keep coming back, coming back. Every calculation you make in these interlocked planetary movements is divisible by 6 or 12, or 60 or 30 as factors.

The Earth of course has 12 of its years while Jupiter has one. The year of Saturn is 30 of our years. Now 12 goes into 30 $2\frac{1}{2}$ times. But that is not a very good figure, and we therefore see on working the thing out that we must take the larger cycle which includes both the Saturn-year

and the Jupiter-year. This is the famous 60-year cycle known all over China, Mongolia, Tibet, Asia — all of Asia and of ancient Europe. What is this 60-year cycle? 5 years of Jupiter expressed in Earth-years. 5×12 is 60. Saturn-year, being 30 of our years, goes into 60 twice. So we then see that Jupiter makes 5 of its years while Saturn is making 2 of its years. The proportion or relation is 5 to 2, i. e., both enter 60 without leaving a remainder.

THE IMPORTANT 5040 CYCLE

Now then, we come to "a very difficult point," as some of our friends are always saying! The ancients in my judgment knew of the planets Uranus and Neptune, but they did not include them in their astronomical works. We Theosophists know why. It would be extremely interesting, but it would take me a week to explain this why. I will merely add that all these astronomical ages — which is what these Hindu yugas are — all these astronomical cycles and key-figures, are based on the calculated key-numbers of Jupiter and Saturn, 12 and 30, as factors. Yet a very interesting fact comes forth. How many Jupiter-years does the planet Uranus contain? I mean, one year of Uranus comprehends or includes how many Jupiter-years? 7, practically exactly. How many Jupiter-years does the planet Neptune contain, in other words one Neptune-year? 14 Jupiter-years. If you are following these thoughts carefully, the conviction will grow upon you that the periodic times of all the planets are time-connected, connected by time-periods; and my own conviction is, although I never have had time to work this thing out, that some Theosophical mathematical sharp could go ahead and even find that the planets Uranus and Neptune would be included in still larger time-cycles.

One of the most important cycles mentioned even by Plato in his Dialog called *The Laws* is 5040 years. This figure is remarkable for several features, amongst which is that it is divisible by 54 different divisors among which are the key-numbers I have been speaking of this evening, to wit 5, 6, 12, 30, 60, and of course 36, 72, and 360; but what is noteworthy about this cycle of 5040 is that it is likewise

divisible by 7, giving us the quotient 720 — in which we see the key-number 72 again, x 10.

Furthermore, this figure of 5040 is arrived at by multiplying by each other the simple arithmetical series of the first seven digits taken in order, to wit: $1 \times 2 \times 3 \times 4 \times 5 \times 6 \times 7 = 5040$. This remarkable number or cycle, so specifically mentioned by Plato in another connexion, was of course known to the ancient astronomers, astrologers, and mathematicians; and by using this figure or cycle, we find that the year-period of every planet, whether the sacred planets known to the ancients, or those including the others supposedly unknown to the ancients, to wit, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, used as a divisor will divide into 5040 without remainder. In other words, 5040 is a cycle which contains the planetary years of all the planets in the Solar System, and thus links them up through having as one of its factors the number 7 — a most interesting fact, and one worthy of study.

THE FAMOUS BABYLONIAN CYCLE

I wish to call your attention once more to this 60. Remember that it is 5 times the Jupiter-year, Jupiter-year being 12 of our years, and two times the Saturn-year, the Saturn-year being 30 of our years approximately. It is $\frac{1}{10}$ of the Babylonian Neros of 600 years; and take the square of 60 and you will have the famous Chaldean or Babylonian Saros, 3,600 years. This cycle of 60 years is of course the root-figure of the famous so-called Babylonian sexagesimal method of reckoning, to wit reckoning by 60s; but as we know from Berosus, as he is called by certain Greek writers who have written about him and who have left us fragments of these Chaldean writings, the sexagesimal system of reckoning or of counting was an integral part of the same system that we know to have been common in Hindusthan since immemorial time. Berosus in the fragments left to us likewise informs us that the famous Hindu Yuga-figures, based on 4 3 2, were likewise as well known in Babylonia as in India. The sexagesimal root-figure of 60 is of course a factor of 4320 with various ciphers added according to the length of the cycle. One of the commonest time-periods known in Chinese writings is

the mention of the cycle of 60 years: so many cycles of 60 years, and so-and-so lived and taught.

In connection with the number 5, I would also remind you that the Latin lustrum was a period of 5 years observed by the Roman State and held very sacred indeed. They also knew of the cycle of 60 years, i. e., one Jupiter year times five.

Furthermore, in India, the cycle of 60 years is constantly used in mathematical, astronomical, astrological and other computations, as they also use 6 and 12.

When you look into these matters, the facts are so numerous, so scattered all over the face of the earth, and among all races of people and in all times, that finally as you study you are brought to the conviction that what we Theosophists teach is true, that there was once a Universal Wisdom-Religion of mankind which was universal over the earth.

THE CIRCLE OF 360°

It is from Babylonia, but originally from India, that we of the West got our manner of dividing the circle into 360° — each degree consisting of 60', the latter of 60". Does anyone know the reason why the Babylonians chose the number 360? Why didn't they choose some other number? I will tell you: The number 360 arises from an old Theosophical teaching of the ancient God-Wisdom of mankind, to the effect that the true number of days in a year is 360, the cycle of the seasons. But as the ages passed, and due to the fact that the Earth is an individual with a will of its own, it does things at times, not exactly disobeying the mandates of the system in which it is enmeshed, not disobeying Father-Sun as the Lord and King of his realm, but determined, as are the other planets, to move a little on its own. So that as the ages pass along, the mean of 360 days in a year for our Earth, the daily rotation of the Earth making the day and night, quickens a little bit for a while, and the days become 361, and then 362, in a year, and then 363, 364, and now at the present time our year consists of 365 days

and a fraction, $\frac{1}{4}$. Then this libration returns to the normal 360 days in a year; and then the Earth slows down its rotational period, so that for ages — how many ages is a question that does not enter into the picture here — any one of our Earth-years is less than 360 days: 359, 358, 357, 356, until it reaches the end of that libratory cycle. Then it begins to swing back; and thus the Earth continues to follow this libration.

That is why the Babylonian initiates, getting their ancient wisdom originally from India, divided the circle into 360 points or degrees; because in their Temple-crypts and Initiation-chambers they were taught that the true Earth-year consists of 360 units or days — and it actually does. Thus the circle became adopted in mathematics as divided into 360 points, cogs, degrees — call them what you like. It is a wheel, a wheel of time, but applied to the Earth as it does actually.

DAWNS AND TWILIGHTS

But notice how the Earth-year divided into days is enmeshed again with the other planetary cycles: Jupiter-year 12 of our years Saturn-year 30 of our years. 30×12 is 360. Marvelous that the number of days in our year is exactly the same as the Saturn-year and the Jupiter-year multiplied by each other. You know in the Jewish Bible there is a passage saying: "And thy year shall be threescore and ten" — 70. Well, actually this is an Oriental way — Jews were Orientals — of using a round figure for 72. You know how they make 72 out of 60, which is 5 Jupiter-years and two Saturn-years? What is $\frac{1}{10}$ of 60? 6. Put down 6 for the Dawn, another $\frac{1}{10}$ for the Twilight: $6 + 60 + 6 = 72$. In the same way you will see in the Diagram that there is a Dawn and a Twilight for every cosmic period; and the dawn and the twilight are in all cases of relative equal length, and in all cases are $\frac{1}{10}$ of the cycle period. $\frac{1}{10}$ of 4000 is 400 — the Dawn; $\frac{1}{10}$ of 4000 is 400 — the Twilight. In the Treta-Yuga there are 3000 *Divine* Years, please, not our Solar years: $\frac{1}{10}$ of 3000 is 300 — the Dawn; $\frac{1}{10}$ of 3000 is 300 — the Twilight. The next is Dwapara-Yuga. It is 2000 *Divine* Years; $\frac{1}{10}$ of that is 200; $\frac{1}{10}$ of 2000 again is 200 — the Twilight. And so for the last of the Yugas, the Kali-Yuga, 1000 *Divine* Years in length; $\frac{1}{10}$ of it, 100 — the Dawn;

another 1/10 — 100, the Twilight. A shorter way, of course, is to take 2/10 or 1/5 to find the combined length of the Dawn and Twilight.

YUGAS	DIVINE YEARS	SOLAR YEARS
Dawn	400	144,000
Kṛita-Yuga	4000	1,440,000
Twilight	400	144,000
	4800	1,728,000
Dawn	300	108,000
Tretâ-Yuga	3000	1,080,000
Twilight	300	108,000
	3600	1,296,000
Dawn	200	72,000
Dwâpara-Yuga	2000	720,000
Twilight	200	72,000
	2400	864,000
Dawn	100	36,000
Kali-Yuga	1000	360,000
Twilight	100	36,000
	1200	432,000

DIVINE YEARS: 12,000; SOLAR YEARS: 4,320,000

OTHER INTERESTING FACTORS

Now a further interesting thing about this 72: a human being is a child of the Universe, and being its child, its laws are his. Its life is his. Its pulsations are his. The rhythmic periods in Nature must therefore work through man. One of the greatest rhythmic pulsations in man is the pulse-beat. Do you know what the average pulse-beat for a human being is? 72. 72 beats of the human pulse every minute, or if you like, it is 60 pulse-beats plus the increment of beginning plus the increment of lapsing into the next pulse-beat. 60 plus 12; $5 \times 12 + 12$. You see how

these numbers recur? 72 is twice 36. Well, now you remember 360 there, and 36 is 6×6 . You notice how the numbers thus keep coming, whatever you do. 6 goes 12 times into 72 human pulse-beats in a minute. 6×12 is 72.

Here is a very interesting factor. In enumerating the years of the different planets I intentionally did not speak of the Moon, for your minds are so enwrapped with the astronomical teachings of the West in which the Moon is not considered a true planet, that I did not want to confuse you. Yet so thoroughly does Nature work throughout, after the same laws, the same rhythms, the same principles, the same pulsing, that do you realize that what the astronomers call the minor Saros, that is the eclipse-cycles, the cycle of years in which the eclipses begin again and repeat themselves nearly as they were before, is 18 years and some 10 or 11 days? We can here drop the days. 18 years: 6×3 , 12 plus 6, $\frac{1}{2}$ of 36. I want to call your attention to these key-figures, which keep coming to the fore. Furthermore, this is not all. Do you know how many is the average number of eclipses in this minor Saros of 18 years — Solar eclipses and the eclipses of the moon? The average number is 72.

Here is a very interesting fact. The sun-spots, according to modern astronomy, come, or the maximum is reached, every 11 years and a fraction, 11 and $\frac{1}{3}$ or something like that. But here again we must allow for librations; and taking everything together, all factors included, and the way the Solar System has all its bodies enmeshed together like the cogs of wheels, yet each having a little independent movement of its own, which in time changes the pattern — a very interesting fact is that the sunspots coincide with the perihelion of Jupiter. Now explain that if you like. In other words, Jupiter like all the other planets makes its annual tour or orbit of revolution around the sun, completing it in 12 of our years. But in doing so at one point of its orbit it is closer to the sun, closer than it is at any other point of its orbit. That is what they call perihelion, close to the sun. When the perihelion of Jupiter takes place, the sunspots reach their maximum, roughly every 12 years, between 11 and 12 years. And it is a

remarkable thing — I would wager almost anything upon it — that if we could collect the statistical data we would find that outbreaks of disease and other afflictions of mankind will coincide with these 12-year periods, sun-spot maxima or minima. I saw a calculation of that kind some time ago in which it was shown that epidemics of spinal meningitis broke out at every sunspot maximum. In other words when the planet Jupiter was closest to the sun, every 12 years or so.

Do you know in modern Western astrology it has been customary to speak of the planet Jupiter as the great benefic, and the planet Saturn as the great malefic. But I think that this is pretty near to being nonsense. I will give you one instance showing how this idea is a distortion of facts. I read some time ago a very interesting statistical discovery made by a French writer who showed that whenever the planet Jupiter was in its nodes as the astronomer phrases it, crimes of violence increased enormously. Whenever the planet Saturn was in its nodes, crimes of violence were noticeably few. Now that is easily explained. Jupiter excites, urges people to do and to move. Saturn calms, brings balance and steadiness, the truth being that every planet has its good side and its bad, every planet can be a benefic or a malefic, according to its action. This is true astrology, and all that we have been talking about is true archaic astrology or Theosophical astrology.

THE DIVINE YEAR AND THE YUGAS

I want to call your attention to the Diagram again: a Divine year is the name given according to this system of archaic calculating of time-periods to 360 of our years or Solar years. Therefore 12,000 Divine years in Solar years are 4,320,000. Made up thus: the Krita-Yuga of 4000 Divine years — 1,440,000 Solar years, with the Dawn and Twilight thereof — a Krita-Yuga is 1,728,000, (and isn't 1728, the cube of 12?). The Treta-Yuga is 3000 Divine years. Multiply this by 360 to turn it into our ordinary Solar years, and you get 1,080,000 years. Add on the 2/10, the Dawn and Twilight, and you get 1,296,000 years.

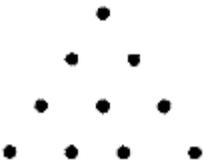
Here on the Diagram you get this series of 144, (the square of 12). Isn't it in *Revelation* of the Christian New Testament that it is said that the

sealed unto the Lord, or the saved, shall be 144,000 in number? You see here again the mystical figure, 144, that is the main point. You can add and take off ciphers according to the time-period or cycle you are discussing. It is the head of the series of figures that is important — 144. The square of 12, twice 72, 4×36 , and so forth. So we go down to the Dwapara-Yuga: turn it into Solar Years, with a Dawn and a Twilight, and you have 864,000; then Kali-Yuga, the age we are in now called the Iron Age, adding to it its $2/10$ for Dawn and Twilight, you have 432,000 years. This system, or mathematical calculation of adding an opening and a closing of every age-period or cycle which the Hindus call the Dawn and Twilight, is an extremely archaic method of calculating based on Nature herself, for she always introduces everything she does with a preparatory period, whether of time or phenomena, or both, or whatever you may be dealing with. All diseases come with the Dawn of preparation. Then there is the disease. Then there is the Twilight of the disease as it fades out. So to get the full time-period of the cycle you must know not only the length of the cycle itself, but its Dawn and its Twilight, its beginning and its end.

You see, Companions, there are just simply so many sides to a study like this, you could go on interminably talking just as long as your recollection will bring back to you facts which you have garnered from Nature.

THE PYTHAGOREAN TETRAKTYS

I want to point out to you what is called the Pythagorean Tetraktys. It was so holy amongst the ancient Pythagoreans that they swore oaths by it, and a Pythagorean would no more violate an oath sworn by the Holy Tetraktys than he would — it was an oath that simply could not be violated. Why did they think it so holy? They gave the answer: because it adds up to 10. It was $4 \text{ plus } 3 \text{ plus } 2 \text{ plus } 1 = 10$. What is $1/10$ of 10? 1. Add 1 as a Dawn; add another $1/10$ of 10 as a Twilight, and you will have 12. They sometimes figured the Pythagorean Tetraktys as thus, one sphere, then two spheres, then three spheres, then four spheres.



1 plus 2 = 3, + 3 = 6 + 4 = 10. Don't you see the Pythagorean Tetraktys, 4, 3, 2, 1, in the Yugas in their numerical order of the cycles? The same figures, the same system of counting, the same fundamental idea. No wonder the Pythagorean philosopher swore by the Holy Tetraktys, because it was equivalent to saying, "I swear by Holy Zeus," as if he had said, "Father and Lord of Life, of whom my own life is a spark, truth of truth, and life of life, real of real," — it was an oath that no Pythagorean ever dared to violate. It was like swearing by one's own Higher Self.

OTHER CYCLES

Now, here is another thought. Have you been examining the night-sky for the last year or so? If so, you will have noticed that the planets Saturn and Jupiter have been in near conjunction for some time, and will soon begin to separate. (2) It was the conjunctions of Jupiter and Saturn which the ancients taught always began notable changes and events on our earth. (Elsewhere in the Solar System too, but we are more naturally interested in what is taking place on our Earth). Just when such a happening will come again, with the other planets as now they are, i. e., as they will be on May 11th, of this year 1941, would require intricate calculations. It may be thousands and thousands of years before the planets all return to the positions they *now* hold in the sky; but the two planets, Saturn and Jupiter, because 5 years of Jupiter equal 2 years of Saturn, will be, so far as those two planets are concerned, again passing each other in the same Zodiacal House, or in conjunction there, in 60 years: 5 years of Jupiter = 2 of Saturn: think it over, do not forget these key-numbers.

There are almost innumerable cycles of varying lengths, and of greatly differing importance, which were known to the ancients as well as to the few moderns acquainted with esoteric chronology and cyclical

computation. As for instance, there is the cycle well-known in modern astronomy called the Precessional cycle of 25,920 years, divisible by many if not all of the factors or keys already alluded to, and which in its influence on the destiny of mankind is one of the most important.

Then, there is the so-called great Orphic cycle of 120,000 years, which of course is obviously 1/3 of the still greater and immensely important cycle, because dealing with racial periods, to wit, 360,000.

THE KEY-NUMBER 72

With reference to the key-number 72, which itself of course is a cycle of varying length depending upon the ciphers added to it, the following series contains cycles, every item of which on the list is important and well worthy of study by those interested in chronological or cyclical matters:

$$72 \times 10 = 720$$

$$720 \times 2 = 1440$$

$720 \times 3 = 2160$ — an extremely important cycle this because entering into the computations of the precessional cycle mentioned above, for there are 12 such cycles of 2160 in the Precessional cycle of 25,920.

$$720 \times 4 = 2880$$

$720 \times 5 = 3600$ — a cycle well known to historians and chronologers as the famous Babylonian Saros, which again multiplied by 100 or 10^2 equals the racial cycle mentioned above of 360,000.

$720 \times 6 = 4320$ — again a most famous cyclical key-number, well known in ancient Hindusthan and in Babylonia and in the esoteric or occult schools of virtually all Asia and ancient Europe, a cycle which with zeros added is an even more important human racial cycle than is the 360,000 above mentioned.

$720 \times 7 = 5040$ — another extremely useful, interesting, and important cyclical period, with or without extra ciphers to define shorter or longer periods, and mentioned even by Plato in his *Laws*, as

already stated.

The ancient initiate-astrologer-astronomers rarely failed in their prophecies, for it was a relatively perfect knowledge of the interrelations of planetary movements and of other cosmic time-periods, both great and small, which enabled them to predict with an accuracy of Nature herself events which they knew would take place because of their knowledge of what had taken place in other preceding cycles of time; and all cycles are repetitive, bringing more or less the same train of events or sequences as happened before, when these cycles begin anew. It should be noted that this is in no sense fatalism; for every cycle, although repeating itself constantly in time, due to what modern astronomy calls the irregularities in planetary and other celestial movements, is never precisely or exactly what the preceding cycle was; for every such cycle beginning anew its course always differs in less or greater degree from its former courses.

FOOTNOTE:

1. "In all the old Sanskrit works — Vedic and Tantrik — you find the number 6 mentioned more often than the 7 — this last figure, the central point being implied, for it is the germ of the six and their matrix." — *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 345. ([return to text](#))

2. Actual conjunction was on May 8-11, 1941. Note that this talk was given in March, 1941. Saturn and Jupiter are now, August, 1942, rather more than one sign apart. Saturn and Uranus are now in conjunction — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

RESPONSIBILITY AND KARMAN — *H. T. Edge*

It is not so easy to change the habits of thought in which we have grown up; and if you adopt the Theosophical teachings in a short time, it may take longer before you can get rid of these old habits of thought. You may unconsciously keep the old ideas and simply change their names. Thus some people speak of the law of Karman as though it were a supernatural agency which intervenes among the workings of natural law, in the same way as Providence was supposed to intervene by miraculous aid or special grace. You may hear people wondering whether a particular illness was due to heredity or errors in living or Karman. This seems to show that they regard Karman as a sort of supernatural influence which comes into play whenever natural influences are found insufficient. But *all* influences are karmic, whether or not we can point to proximate causes for the happenings; a disease may be due to intemperance, but all the same it is karmic.

Karman is a general law which acts through many lesser agencies; it may act through bad habits or through heredity or any other of various proximate causes. It has been wisely said that acts build habits, habits build character, and character makes destiny. Here we see the links in the chain. People often confine the use of the word Karman to those effects which they cannot trace to any cause; but there must always be a chain of causation leading from act to consequence, whether we can trace this chain or not. Doctors say that a person may carry about with him for most of his life the germs of tuberculosis, encysted and so made harmless; and that the cysts may burst late in life and bring on the disease. Is not this a good illustration of karmic action?

This error as to the meaning of Karman turns about the word "responsibility." Shall we try to evade our responsibility by shifting the burden onto some outside power — some Providence, some Chance, some Fate, some law of Karman? There are actually people who seem to think that the law of Karman excuses us, or even prevents us, from

fulfilling the promptings of love and sympathy towards our fellows, or from discharging the duties and services which we owe them. The fact that what they suffer is due to their own Karman is no concern of ours, and does not modify our duty towards them in the least; nor would anyone with a truly sympathetic heart stop to think about the matter at all. Besides, whether you help a fellow or abstain from helping him, you are equally engaging in action towards him; and if the law of Karman has any say in the matter, it is difficult to see why it should favor the one mode of conduct rather than the other. "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."

The various philosophies and sciences have so accustomed us to believe in mysterious "laws," — laws of nature, laws of economics, laws of social evolution, and laws of this and that — that we have got into the habit of waiting passively for something to move us, instead of getting to work and acting on our own responsibility. If we could think less of the effect of our surroundings on our own fate, and more of the effect of our own actions on our surroundings, we should make a first step in learning the lesson of individual responsibility which Karman teaches.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN: III — H. P. Blavatsky

This series originally appeared in the French magazine *La Revue Theosophique*, 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu." One of H. P. Blavatsky's most brilliant articles, it presents a clear statement of the meaning of true Theosophy in theory and in practice. In this number the author shows her ability to cope with the many detractors of Theosophy existing in her day. Here we have H. P. B. not as the amanuensis of one of the Mahatmans, but wielding her lively pen in her own right as a recognised literary artist, with all the skilled sword-play in which she delighted — so long as it was in defense of her beloved Theosophy. This series first appeared in translation in *The Theosophist*, Volume X.

Do our amiable critics always know what it is they ridicule? Have they the least idea of the work that is being carried on in the world, and the mental changes that are being brought about by that Theosophy at which they smile? The progress already due to our literature is evident, and thanks to the untiring labors of a certain number of Theosophists, it is becoming recognised even by the blindest. There are not a few who are persuaded that Theosophy will be the philosophy and the law, if not the religion, of the future. The reactionaries, captivated by the *dolce far niente* of conservatism, feel all this, and from them come the hatred and persecution which call in criticism to their aid. But criticism has fallen away from its original standard as inaugurated by Aristotle. The ancient philosophers, those sublime ignoramuses according to modern civilization, when they criticised a system or a work, did so with impartiality, and with the sole object of bettering and making more perfect that which they were critically examining. First they studied the subject, and then they analysed it. This was a service rendered, and was recognised and accepted as such by both parties. Does modern criticism always conform to that golden rule? It is very evident that it

does not.

Our judges of today are far below the level even of the philosophical criticism of Kant. Criticism based on unpopularity and prejudice has replaced that of "pure reason," and the result is that the critic tears to pieces everything he does not understand, and above all those things that he is not willing to understand. In the last century — the golden age of the goose quill — criticism was biting enough sometimes, but only in rendering justice. Caesar's wife might be suspected, but she was never condemned without being heard. In our century we give Montyon (1) prizes and erect public statues to him who invents the most murderous engine of war; today when the steel pen has replaced its more humble predecessor, the fangs of the Bengal tiger or the teeth of the terrible saurian of the Nile would make wounds less cruel and less deep than does the steel nib (*bec*) of the modern critic, who is almost always absolutely ignorant of that which he so savagely tears to shreds!

It is perhaps some consolation to know that the majority of our literary critics, trans-atlantic and continental, are ex-scribblers who have made a fiasco in literature and are revenging themselves now for their mediocrity upon everything they come across. Cheap, insipid and adulterated wine often turns into excellent vinegar. Unfortunately the press reporters in general — poor hungry devils whom we would be sorry to grudge the little they make, even at our own expense — are not our only or our most dangerous critics. The bigots and the materialists — the sheep and goats of religion — having placed us in turn in their *index expurgatorius*, our books are banished from their libraries, our journals are boycotted, and ourselves subjected to the most complete ostracism. One pious soul, who accepts literally the miracles of the Bible, following with emotion the ichthyographical investigations of Jonas in the whale's belly, or the trans-ethereal journey of Elijah flying like a salamander in his chariot of fire, nevertheless regards the Theosophists as wonder-mongers and cheats. Another, the devotee of Haeckel, while he displays a credulity as blind as that of the bigot in his belief in the evolution of man and the gorilla from a common ancestor

(considering the total absence of every trace in nature of any connecting link, nearly dies with laughter when he finds that his neighbor believes in occult phenomena and psychic manifestations. And yet for all that, neither the bigot nor the man of science, nor even the academician who has been admitted to the number of the "Immortals," can explain to us the smallest problem of existence. The metaphysicians who for centuries have studied the phenomena of Being in their first principles, and who smile pityingly when they listen to the wanderings of Theosophy, would be greatly embarrassed to explain to us the philosophy or even the cause of dreams. Which of them can tell us why all the mental operations — except reasoning, which faculty alone is suspended and paralysed — go on while we dream with as much activity and energy as when we are awake? The disciple of Herbert Spencer would send anyone who asks him the direct question, to the biologist. But he cannot satisfy us at all; for him digestion is the *alpha* and *omega* of every dream — just as hysteria, that great Proteus of a thousand forms, is the actor in every psychic phenomenon. Indigestion and hysteria are, in fact, twin sisters, two goddesses, to whom the modern psychologist has raised an altar at which he himself is the officiating priest. But that is entirely his own affair so long as he does not meddle with the gods of his neighbors.

From all this it follows that, since the Christian characterizes Theosophy as the "accursed science" and forbidden fruit; since the man of science sees nothing in metaphysics but "the domain of the crazy poet" (Tyndall); since the reporter touches it only with poisoned forceps; since the missionaries associate it with idolatry and "the benighted Hindu" — it follows, we say, that poor *Theosophia* is as shamefully treated as she was when the ancients called her TRUTH and at the same time relegated her to the bottom of the well. Even the "Christian" Kabbalists, who love so much to mirror themselves in the dark waters of this deep well, although they see nothing there but the reflexion of their own faces, which they mistake for that of Truth — even the Kabbalists make war upon us. Nevertheless, all this is no reason why Theosophy should not speak in its own defense; that it

should cease to assert its right to be listened to, and that its faithful and loyal servants should neglect their duty and declare themselves beaten. "The accursed science," you say, good Ultramontanes? You forget though, that the tree of knowledge is grafted on the tree of life; that the fruit which you declare "forbidden," and which you have proclaimed for sixteen centuries to be the cause of the original sin that brought death into the world — that this fruit, whose flower blossoms on an immortal stem, was nourished by that same trunk, and that therefore it is the only fruit which can insure us immortality. You also, good Kabbalists, ignore, or wish to ignore, the fact that the allegory of the earthly paradise is as old as the world, and that the tree, the fruit and the sin had once a far profounder and more philosophic significance than they have today when the secrets of initiation are lost.

Protestantism and Ultramontanism are opposed to Theosophy because they are opposed to everything not emanating from themselves; as Calvin opposed the replacing of its two fetishes, the Jewish Bible and the Sabbath, by the Gospel and the Christian Sunday; as Rome opposed secular education and Freemasonry. However, the Dead-letter and Theocracy have had their day. The world must move and advance under penalty of stagnation and death. Mental evolution progresses *pari passu* with physical evolution, and both advance towards the One Truth — which is the heart of the human system as evolution is the blood. Let the circulation stop for one moment and the heart cease also, and what becomes of the human machine!

And these are the servants of Christ who would kill or at least paralyse the Truth with blows from that club called: "*the letter that killeth!*" But their end is nigh. That which Coleridge said of political despotism applies also to religious. The Church, unless she withdraws her heavy hand, which weighs like a nightmare on the oppressed bosom of millions of believers — believers *nolens volens* — whose reason remains paralysed in the clutch of superstition, the ritualistic Church is sentenced to yield its place to religion — and perish. Soon she will have but one choice. Because, once the people become enlightened concerning the truth which she hides with so much care, one of two

things will happen: the Church will either perish *by* the people; or else, if the masses are left in ignorance and in slavery to the dead letter, she will perish *with* the people. Will the servants of eternal Truth — out of which Truth they have made a squirrel turning in an ecclesiastical wheel — will they show themselves sufficiently *altruistic* to choose the first of these alternative necessities? Who knows?

I say it again: it is only Theosophy, well understood, that can save the world from despair, by reproducing the social and religious reforms once accomplished in history by Gautama the Buddha: a peaceful reform, without one drop of blood spilt, each one remaining in the faith of his fathers if he chose. To do this nothing is necessary but to reject the parasitical growths that have choked every religion and sect in the world. Let him accept but the essence, which is the same in all: that is to say, the spirit which gives life to man in whom it resides and renders him immortal. Let each man who is inclined towards well-doing find his ideal — a star before him to guide him. Let him follow it, without ever deviating from his path; and he is almost certain to reach the beacon-light of life — TRUTH: no matter whether he seeks for it in a manger or at the bottom of a well.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Prizes instituted in France during the last century by the Baron de Montyon for those who benefited others in various ways. — Ed ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

EXPERIMENT IN TELEPATHY — *Charles J. Ryan*

At last we are given a detailed and fully documented account of an experiment in telepathy of the highest evidential value and of a unique character, whose publication in book form has been eagerly awaited.

(1) The standing and reputation of the persons concerned and the unusual nature of the case prohibit any suggestion of exaggeration or collusion, and "accidental" coincidence cannot possibly be strained to cover the mass of documented facts presented.

Sir Hubert Wilkins is the well known aviator and Arctic and Antarctic explorer who has taken part in ten Polar expeditions, commanding six of them; he holds the Military Cross of the British Empire and has been honored by leading scientific societies throughout the world. Mr. Harold M. Sherman is a successful author and scenario writer, now living at Hollywood. Both have long been interested in the possibilities of telepathy as a human faculty which might be developed in qualified persons and employed for human welfare.

Sir Hubert volunteered to conduct the perilous search by airplane during the winter of 1937-8 for the Russian aviators who were lost in their attempt to fly from Moscow to the United States across the Arctic Ocean. The story of his adventurous flights makes thrilling reading, but the main object of his portion of the book is to relate with scientific precision his efforts during the six months spent in the Arctic to report his doings by thought-transference to Mr. Sherman in New York. Mr. Sherman describes his experiences at the receiving end of the thought line, and the result is truly remarkable. A regular hour was set, three times a week, for Mr. Sherman to receive the communications, and it was religiously adhered to by him in spite of almost overwhelming difficulties, including severe sickness at times. Communication with Sir Hubert was kept up by mail when possible, but Mr. Sherman very rarely knew by that method in what part of the immense Arctic territory Sir Hubert might be exploring, though he was usually able to

follow his movements day by day through the telepathic communications.

Thoughts Through Space is divided into three parts, the first being by Sir Hubert Wilkins, introducing the subject and presenting his side of the telepathic experiment to prove the possibility of regular communication between two persons at great distances. His descriptions of the preparations in Alaska for the search and of the flights themselves are so detailed that the reader can see for himself that Mr. Sherman could not normally have guessed the minute technical details which he saw at times telepathically, still less the exact times when various events took place; he has never been to the Arctic and is not technically familiar with airplanes.

The second part of the book contains Mr. Sherman's story as receiver of the communications, and his profound analysis of telepathy in general and of his own experiences. The third part is a complete record in parallel columns of the messages and thoughts as sent by Sir Hubert and as received by Mr. Sherman.

Immediately upon receipt of a telepathic impression, Mr. Sherman mailed a record to Mr. Samuel Emery of the City Club of New York, and another to Dr. Gardner Murphy, psychologist of Columbia University, who filed them for future comparison with Sir Hubert's notes and recollections, each with its postmark.

Sir Hubert had arranged to communicate by radio with the *New York Times*, but as Mr. Reginald Iversen, chief operator for that paper, writes, from October 1937 to March 1938 the intended schedule was almost completely disrupted by magnetic and sun-spot disturbances, and "Mr. Sherman had actually more accurate telepathic knowledge of what was happening to Wilkins in his search for the Russian fliers than I was able to gain in my ineffective attempts to keep in touch by short-wave radio." Only 13 successful radio contacts with the Arctic were made and Mr. Sherman did not hear of these until he had received and recorded his telepathic communications which always came first. We can leave it to the readers to study the detailed record with the

assurance that they will agree that telepathy is the only sensible way to explain the facts.

Mr. Sherman's comments are worth careful reading. At first he had healthy doubts about success, but being determined to put the matter to the most complete test he wrote down all the impressions, mental or pictorial, that he received, quite improbable as some of them seemed. This was fortunate, for otherwise much valuable evidence would have been lost.

When the first receptions were found by Sir Hubert to be accurate in the main, Mr. Sherman was puzzled by finding that he had not only received communications consciously directed to him from the Arctic but also information about other events that had happened to Sir Hubert during the day, and even the intensive thoughts "about plans which only Sir Hubert knew. Writing to Mr. Sherman about this Sir Hubert says: ". . . You evidently have picked up quite a lot of *thought forms*. Strong thoughts emitted during the day, and some of which I would, if I had had time, have tried to pass on to you at night. . . . for I believe that the thought form does not necessarily fade with its first "spread," but keeps revolving in our atmosphere so that a sensitive mind may pick up the form some hours or even years after it has been emitted."

This is precisely the explanation that H. P. Blavatsky gives of certain communications received or images seen (but not all) apparently coming from the spirits of the departed, but which are really "hangovers" from strong thoughts or wishes thrown out *before* death. In connexion with the undirected thoughts received by Mr. Sherman he found that those with a strong emotional content were more likely to carry than cold-blooded numbers or symbols such as Dr. Rhine used in his experiments at Duke University, in which the preponderance of successes over failures was small, though sufficient to eliminate chance coincidence. Once when Sir Hubert Wilkins was flying under great tension Mr. Sherman actually *saw* an immense "lead" in the ice field which the aviator was carefully studying because it was quite

unexpected. At the moment when a house was burning at Point Barrow he received a vivid impression of the event, and on another occasion when Sir Hubert was having trouble with one of the propellers he recorded that there was a difference between the pitch of the new propeller and that of the other though they ought to be the same. Sir Hubert remarks: "He saw the propeller in his mind's eye, and he might have recorded that fact alone — which in itself would have been remarkable — but he could not have seen the difference in the pitch of the propeller, because it was so slight that it could not have been noticed by the keenest eyesight. The difference in the pitch of the propellers could not be proved except by a delicate instrument or by a comparison of the fine markings on each, which were concealed beneath the hub. So to have known of my concern and discussion with the engineers about the pitch of the propellers, Sherman must have responded to the stimuli of either my thought or of our expressed words."

And Mr. Sherman was in New York while his friend was anxiously considering how to synchronize the motors of his two propellers at Atvalik, Alaska!

Still more paradoxical was the fact that on some occasions, again under conditions of anxiety or strain with Sir Hubert, Mr. Sherman had a "preview" or prevision of an accident which was hanging over but had not yet been precipitated. On January 27th, 1938 he recorded an impression that a bad accident had happened to the crankcase of the plane. Sir Hubert reported later that on February 6th he had serious trouble with the crankcase, "main bearing of one engine ground to powder that day." On March 7th and 8th Mr. Sherman saw an accident to the tail of the plane when landing on a sharp ridge of hard snow, the detail being exactly *what was to occur several thousand miles away three days later* on March 11! Such incidents as these aroused many speculations about Time and the nature of human consciousness, and he asks if we can learn to contact marvelous realms of intelligence of which our normal consciousness is ignorant. Theosophy would certainly answer, yes, but as Mr. Sherman himself says only "after we

learn how to delve into the almost frightening and certainly awe-inspiring depths of our own selves." He believes, truly, that this knowledge of man's inner self "will do more eventually to bring about the centuries-old dream of universal brotherhood than any other intelligent force." His telepathic experiences convinced him that man possesses at least two forms of consciousness which he calls the "conscious" and the "subconscious" and that to obtain the best results the recipient must liberate the "subconscious" (which conveys the information to the "conscious mind") from extraneous impressions from the conscious mind. He must above all be free from hates, prejudices, fears and worries; and this applies to far higher matters than mere telepathic messages from another person. He speaks of "reinforcements" of strength and self-control arising from "the creative power within" when the destructive emotions have been overcome. He feels convinced that we are constantly creating our own future by the nature and character of our thought, projecting the inner self ahead of the conscious outer self, and attracting experiences which have lain in wait in response to our strong desires, ambitions or fears, and which transform themselves from a future possibility to a present fact. We might take this as a distinct reference to the law of karma under which we build the conditions of our future incarnations. On page 208 he speaks of the mind creating "in some mysterious way, the conditions and events with which the physical self is to become associated on this earthly plane, in future moments of time."

The addition of the strenuous work of controlling the restless mind to receive the communications — a technique he devised for himself — to the constant strain of an extremely active life with many anxieties, undermined Mr. Sherman's health so seriously that his life was threatened, and he warns all who do not possess a well-balanced nervous system against extensive experimentation in telepathy. He also mentions a peculiar and rather startling affection of his breathing during one of his reception periods which may serve as a corroboration of the warnings given to unprepared dabblers in the occult. All genuine Occult Teachers agree that ignorant interference

with the subtil currents of *prana* in the body by means of breath control is very dangerous and is not countenanced in the higher yoga, or spiritual discipline. In regard to the facility with which telepathic communication is conducted between an adept and his chelas we must not forget that the latter have to pass through a severe training under a spiritual Teacher to become worthy of such an attainment.

But it is a different matter to study the cases of spontaneous telepathy which occur both in sleeping and waking, usually in regard to deaths or accidents. Thousands of records are available and nearly everyone has had a personal experience or knows some one who has. We can very profitably employ this weapon for breaking down the barriers which mechanistic science has raised against anything savoring of the occult. Telepathy is free from many of the objections brought against other forms of psychic research and a book like *Thoughts Through Space* is admirably qualified to attract the attention of critical minds. Researchers in the better-known fields of psychic phenomena such as clairvoyance, materialization and alleged communication with spirits, have been sickened by a mass of charlatanry and vulgar fraud that obscures the small nucleus of truth, but telepathy is by its very nature difficult to imitate and offers no financial reward to impostors. Judging by the animated controversy aroused by Dr. Rhine's academic experiments in telepathy at Duke University it may be that a sufficient number of scientists will insist before long that the official philosophers, psychologists, and physiologists in the universities take up its study as a duty, for they can hardly deny that an excellent *prima facie* case has been made out for it. Here is the open door into a field of study that may — the Theosophist would say, *will* — revolutionize the whole science of man, by proving the existence of uncharted human powers, astonishing in themselves and still more important because of the boundless prospect of spiritual evolution which they suggest. Dr. Rhine lately warned his scientific colleagues that telepathy must be faced as a fact in nature even though the (accepted scientific) heavens fall. His experiments (and of course thousands of observations by other persons) show that it obeys laws which are utterly unfamiliar and

apparently impossible from our standpoint: perhaps we might say they border on the "spiritual" to use an ambiguous term in default of a better. For instance, ordinary radiation like that of light from a source, spreads out and weakens in intensity as its distance increases according to the well known law of inverse squares. But Dr. Rhine's laboratory experiments and the experiences of thousands of persons who have had telepathic communication by vision, or verbally, from friends about the time of death, show that the telepathic impressions are just as clear and strong at a thousand miles as they are at ten feet! Mr. Sherman saw many of the Alaskan events as vividly as though he were physically present, though only in flashes as a rule. In radio we use an amplifier to render the message audible, but it is not necessary in telepathy.

All this, of course, suggests that telepathy is on the borderland of subtil planes or states of being which we may properly call "occult," or inaccessible to normal sense perception; not "supernatural," which is a word without meaning. The occult has been accepted by the commonsense of the majority of mankind for thousands of years, but in modern times the scientists, believed by so many to be the arbiters of knowledge, have contemptuously ignored or condemned it without adequate study. On physical lines they gladly follow the smallest hint of new knowledge *within their self-drawn boundary*, and with incredible labor and marvelous devotion make world-shaking discoveries, but there they insist upon halting, oblivious of the fact that just beyond that borderline far more significant worlds are waiting to be conquered. Perhaps they feel a vague, indefinable dread that to win onward in that great quest they must "delve into the almost [?] frightening and certainly awe-inspiring depths of our own selves" as Mr. Sherman admirably expresses one of the profoundest teachings of the ancient God-Wisdom, Theosophy.

However that may be, this book, a dignified and sober presentation of a tentative approach toward things unseen but enduring, is well qualified to render first aid in serious cases of crude materialism.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Thoughts Through Space*. By Sir Hubert Wilkins and Harold M. Sherman. Creative Age Press, New York. pp. 421. \$4.50. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

MAN IN A JUST AND ORDERED UNIVERSE — *G. de Purucker*

There is no chance anywhere in Infinitude. Now just apply your reasoning faculty to that statement, and see how far afield it will carry you. The first deduction is this: There being no chance anywhere, therefore no fortuity, everything that happens is a link in a chain of causation — cause, effect — the effect immediately becoming a new cause, producing its effect, which in turn becomes a new cause, producing its effect. This is what we call Karman.

Everything that happens is therefore caused by law, which is just another word for cosmic vitality plus intelligence, plus what we call the ethical instinct, order; and these things are precisely what our studies of the universe show that it exhibits to our inquiring gaze. Everywhere we see order, law, procedures acting according to causational and effectual relations. If there were chance in but one atom of Infinitude, there would be chance throughout, for then Infinitude were not Infinitude, but an atom short of Infinitude, which is an absurdity.

Now with all you know of the teaching of modern science, and all you know of our beloved God-wisdom, carry your thought on logically a step farther: since whatever happens is causative and effectual, it is therefore justified in Infinitude.

We discern, in our investigations or researches into Nature, two things: an all-embracing, all-encompassing orderliness, or what we call the laws of Nature; and within this, embraced by this universal law, an infinitude of individuals or individualities, each one an entity, working under the mandate, as it were, of cosmic law — no entity can do otherwise. We have therefore unity, divine unity, working through virtually infinite multiplicity. Among these multiplicities are we human beings. There are also the gods, angels or Dhyani-Chohans, the plants, the animals, the atoms, etc., etc. They are all individuals working in and under, and as it were, subject to the mandate of this fundamental

background of cosmic orderliness. You see how these thoughts are rigidly logical, carrying us step by step from point to point, until we reach not only new conclusions, but conclusions that are always in accord with everything that we know of universal nature. The point is to apply these to our lives, which means likewise to our thoughts and our feelings.

When a man realizes that there is no chance in the universe, that he is but one unit in a hierarchy and that these hierarchies are virtually infinite in number, and that so far as we human beings know they are endless, like the bodies in space, children of the Infinite Life as we are — when a man realizes all this, several things happen to him. When he thinks these thoughts and becomes through reflexion upon them convinced of their inevitable force, first he loses all fear of death. He realizes secondly that he is responsible for what he does, which means for what he thinks and for what he feels, and that there is no escape from the result of his thinking and feeling and acting; and that just in that impossibility of escaping the retribution or the reward of cosmic law lies mankind's highest and noblest hope.

To phrase the thought popularly, in the old-fashioned language of the Christian, he can escape neither heaven nor hell. He cannot escape reward, that will come unto him somewhen, somewhere, for the good that he has done in the world. It will seek him out wherever he may be, and brighten and cheer his life and give him renewed hope and renewed courage. And for the evil that he has wrought, the injustices, the crimes, the unfairnesses that he has committed, equally will these consequences in the chain of causation seek him out; and though he hide in the cleft of the mountain or the deep of the bottomless abyss, he cannot escape a just retribution, for eternal and universal nature is on his track.

There is no chance in Infinitude. See the immense weight of these thoughts as moral motors upon us. We see the reason for all the ethical, all the moral teaching of the greatest sages that the human race has ever produced, and we see the reason why their teaching is the greatest

hope that mankind has.

And a third reflexion: We on this little earth of ours, so big to us, so small when compared with the giants of even our own solar system, should remember that each one of us, as an inseparable part of the cosmic structure, is equally weighty in importance to the cosmic law, so to speak, as is the mightiest giant of the stellar host. The Christian New Testament alludes to this in its teaching, strange to so many: Know ye not that the hairs of your head are counted? And that no sparrow droppeth unless it be in accordance with Divine Law? There is the same thought: that we are not merely the children of the gods, but embryo-gods ourselves, for we are the very offsprings of the divine life, the divine stuff in the universe. Otherwise what are we? Can you deny it, and say, "We are not; we don't belong to the universe, we are not in it; we don't come forth from it"? That is absurd.

And our divine origin makes us kin with every thing and every being that is. For not only are all mankind kin, but all beings and things that are, are our other selves. All spring from the same universal ocean which holds us around forever — the Mother Eternal, the Father-Mother. It is a wonderful thought.

The next time you pluck a flower, remember you are touching a younger brother; and that perhaps in the way we look upon these buds of beauty, young embryo-souls as it were, or monads in a young state on this plane, expressing their life and beauty and fragrance to us, so do the higher gods look upon us. I have often wondered how often do the gods pluck us because mayhap in their spheres we shed beauty and fragrance and they love us: Those whom the gods love die young. A whole mystery lies just behind that one thought. Death is no accident. Birth none. And yet never think for a moment that this chain of causation is the old scientific dead soulless determinism of the days of our grandfathers, when the idea was that everything moved just like a soulless machine, and never stopped. Did they not forget that to have a machine there had to be a machinist to build it and run it? They just used words then and were happy. It is not of that soulless determinism

that I speak. But it is the structure of the universe arising in imbodyed hierarchies of consciousnesses providing the cosmic variety, and the innumerable families of beings, and all enclosed in the encompassing, sheltering, protecting, aye, guiding and guarding, vastly great Hierarch, of whom we in common with all other things are the children — that Hierarch, which is not different from our inner self, but we, as it were sparks from it, the Central Flame of our Universe.

The Theosophical Forum

PROGRESSIVE INCARNATION — *Helen Savage*

Birth is the beginning of the process of incarnation — but *only* the beginning. Incarnation continues through the entire length of a human life, through birth, childhood, adolescence, full manhood, ripe maturity and on into old age. This is a revolutionary idea, running counter to present scientific theory, but on the basis of the Ancient Wisdom-Teaching we say that it is the missing key in the science of psychology. This is not an empty assertion. It can be tested. Study any course of descriptive psychology and then apply, as an interpretation of the mass of factual material gathered, the principle that there is an inner source of energy, the motivating, selecting, building factor working from within outwards, pushing towards outer expression in the body and the brain, in successive tides of ever increasing power. The student who is willing to follow this theme through in a logical course of study will no longer be content with anything less to explain the mystery of the physical, mental and moral growth of a tiny human seed into a man who towers above the mere animal world.

Leaving aside entirely the biologic view that the body is the man, and that psychological growth to adulthood is merely a building up of continually more complex reflexes — leaving this fantastic view aside, we still find unsatisfactory the generally accepted idea that a soul, God-given and newly made, enters the body at birth or at some vague point thereafter. What is this soul they speak of? What relation has it, if any, to the psychological and so-called hereditary traits that so soon begin to manifest in the child? Does this soul play a major or only a minor part in the formation of character? How is its influence exerted throughout the life? The student of true psychology will want answers to these questions. He does not want to abandon the idea of a soul in man, but he asks that its nature and functions be consistent with the observed phenomena of the various stages of human life. He would be even better pleased if he found that the existence of this soul explained more

reasonably than any other theory these same observed facts.

Now the Theosophical philosophy, far from denying the existence of a soul in man, says that there is not only one but many. It describes man as a sevenfold being, his many parts ranging from pure spirit to physical matter. H. P. Blavatsky's *Key to Theosophy* (pp. 90-92) gives an excellent explanatory Table of what is known in Theosophy as the seven principles in man; and with a preliminary study of this Table the diagram used by Dr. de Purucker in his *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, ch. xviii, will be intelligible. The author here shows that each consciousness-center can be divided into an ego-aspect and a soul-aspect, the soul in each case being the carrier of its corresponding ego-self.

Below is appended a simplified Table listing these egos and souls. It is drawn from the more complicated diagram in *Fundamentals*, but it should not be taken dogmatically, since no diagram tells all the truth but rather suggests some viewpoint to be studied. It is introduced here because useful to illustrate the present theme.

Divine Ego	Divine Soul or Monadic Envelope
Spiritual Ego	Spiritual Soul, Buddhi Fruit and Seed of Manas
Human Ego	Higher Human Soul Lower Buddhi and Higher Manas
Personal Ego	Human Soul or Man Manas, Kama, and Prana
Beast Ego	Vital Astral Soul Kama and Prana
Body	Physical Soul or Body Sthula-sarira and Prana and Linga-sarira

Now it is obvious, if we accept the doctrine of reincarnation, that all these ego-souls have been associated in a previous earth-existence. Death is a dissolution of these factors. Reincarnation is the process of

their reassembling. Is it any wonder then that the new-born infant is unable immediately to entertain this august assemblage in its entirety? Is it any wonder that Incarnation must be progressive, each ego awaiting its appointed time to manifest its powers in the growing child?

But here we cannot help but ask the question: Is man then one or many? The answer is, He is both, just as the solar universe is one and yet many. The Divine Self is a central sun that gives light and life to his whole kingdom, this light shining progressively less and less brightly as we come down the scale of "selves" to the physical body. This is not to say that the lowest in the scale are heavier with "sin" or are of their inherent nature evil. It indicates rather a logical provision of nature, namely that Divinity can contact the outer world of matter only by means of a ladder of life, each rung of this ladder being composed of living creatures in a descending scale. Thus these ladders are all channels of communication. Man is such a ladder of life, and it is by means of this descending or ascending scale that he is able to touch the fringe of divine things. Ultimately also it will be the means by which the spirit can become incarnate here on earth.

Now I have spoken of reincarnation as a reassembling; but it would be more accurate to say, following the idea set forth in our Table, that reincarnation is a reissuing of a chain of selves, each of which builds its own soul-vehicle by a process of *reassembling* that vehicle's former life-atoms; and death is then the ingathering of this chain of selves and a *dissolution* of the life-atoms which formed their bodies. The self in each case is the center or knot of consciousness, and an indivisible; the soul or carrier is in each case a composite, its atoms stamped with the attributes, high or low, that formed the character of the individual in his former life. These attributes are not dimmed nor worn away by death. Each atom bears its indelible stamp like an imprint in stone.

When the child's body is born we can say that the first step of incarnation has been taken, the first step in the "enfleshing" of an invisible entity. To be sure the body is not an ego, but it is listed on the

ego-side in our Table because the diffuse life of its purely physical atoms cohere about some vague center which suggests the first glimmer of a consciousness-center. Is it then merely this vague body-ego — a congeries of conscious and cohering atoms — which takes the first step in incarnation? In one sense, perhaps, yes. But it must be remembered that there is, running through and threading together all these selves of man, what is sometimes called the Sutratman or Thread-Self. It is this Ray from the Divine Self which energises all the centers and marshalls them into co-ordinating activity in earth-life, so that even in the new-born body, gasping to catch its first breath of life, there is the finger of Divinity.

One often feels around very small children an impalpable radiance. It is the light from the Divine Ray; for heaven does lie about us in our infancy. Traherne, the mystic of the seventeenth century, even recalls that as he lay in his cradle he seemed to himself to be "an inward sphere of light, a vital sun." He tells us how he lost all memory of this during his childhood and youth, but found it again as a young man when in a state of rapt meditation.

However, this radiance from above-within is more like a reflexion in the child than as yet an actuality. Shades of the prison-house begin to close only too soon; and the actual incarnation of this Divine Ray comes only as the consummation of a fully developed human life.

Almost immediately, albeit imperceptibly as day follows day, we see before our eyes the marvel of the growing infant-body. But it is more than a body, for already from within a second center is stirring — the Beast-Ego we must call it if we are to follow our Table above. It is in any case an elemental being that has been ushered in, a being which knows with unerring instinct how to build with symmetry and beauty. Unless stamped too heavily with an unfortunate past physical karma, it exhibits the charm and comeliness of all Nature's new-born creatures.

The small child, let us say until the age of seven, entertaining as yet only this elemental Beast-Ego, nevertheless shadows forth the

possibilities of the egoic center next higher in the scale. Yet so far its reactions are chiefly instinctual, as are those of an animal. While it does not as yet show forth some of the less noble traits that the personal ego later brings in, when its time to incarnate comes (bringing with it its karmic load from the past), neither, on the other hand, does it yet exhibit deep intellectual power, altruistic impulses, profound emotions, compassion and pity. It is artless, trusting, guileless, without thought or care; its troubles are soon forgotten; its emotions but of the moment.

The reactions of the small child have been studied exhaustively by the psychologist, who often bases the entire superstructure of the unfolding life upon these first years, considering them of vital importance, since they determine, he thinks, almost entirely the trends and biases, the habits and inhibitions of the mature man.

The Theosophist also considers these years important, but for a very different reason. He does not ignore the antics, pretty or otherwise, of this elemental being, and he recognises how deeply impressions may be stamped into its plastic soul-substance. But more than this, he recognises these early years as a time of preparation in which a vessel is in building ready to receive the Personal and later the Higher Human Ego. He knows that as each Ego works through the one below it in the scale, any harms done, any habits formed of an unfortunate nature, will inhibit the action of the next incarnating entity. But however many impediments are put in the way, it is also the teaching, and one which psychologists would find useful, that the Ego can override these stumbling blocks and often does, through the power of the spiritual will; for that will is always there to be called upon, an inexhaustible reservoir of strength and power.

It is obvious that the earliest years of the child's life are the easiest to understand. Differentiation and complexity belong to a later period. Aldous Huxley remarks in his *Ends and Means* that there has been evolved during the past twenty-five years an excellent system of nursery training, but that the educational methods beyond the nursery

have not followed suit. This suggests that the psychologist and child-trainer have mastered the technique of handling the elemental child, but have not yet the clue to the mystery of a further step in incarnation, when the Personal Ego, overshadowed by the true Human Ego, and laden with its freightage of past lives, begins to take possession of the inner citadel.

The Personal Ego, we learn, is dissolved at death; that is, its soul-aspect is dissipated into its component atomic particles, all of which are stamped with their own particular characteristics, called skandhas. The kernel of the egoic center itself is indrawn at death into its parent, the Higher Human Ego. Now at that point in the reincarnation when the body is sufficiently developed for the incoming of this Personal Ego, there are drawn to this focal point of energy all the skandhas of the last life, or possibly lives. Little by little these are inbuilt into the invisible center, like living building bricks gradually shaping as the lower psychological nature. It is usually between the ages of seven and fourteen that we see traits of character suggested — at least those lesser traits that characterize what we often speak of as "just human nature." To the Theosophist these years are of great importance, since it is at this time that a first check can be put upon those tendencies and weaknesses of character which, if allowed to wax too strong and take too great a hold of the inner constitution, can become a dominant factor in a man's life.

The Personal Ego is not in itself evil, but it is primarily self-centered, and out of its interest in self are likely to arise all the faults which are so unreservedly recognised as undesirable: self-indulgence, deceit, hatred, anger, jealousy, and the like. It is no wonder that the adolescent is not understood today. The child himself does not know whence comes flooding in upon him this new tide of temporarily unassimilable forces. He does not know that he inherits *from himself*, and that the things he finds cropping up in his nature at this time, that seem to invade his inner stronghold like unbidden guests, are actually members of his own household perhaps returning from some long forgotten past. Unfortunately, too, his parents are no more aware than

he is of what is taking place in their child. How often one hears parents speak almost in awe of the masterful creature, who but recently they had known as their "little son," now passing entirely out of their limited range of understanding — theirs no longer.

Behind the Personal Ego is the Human Ego, as said. With its incoming are ushered in the first higher mental faculties which bring in their wake responsibility, the power of choice, the will to create, and all the concomitant dangers, joys and sorrows. It is often said that this Self begins to incarnate at about the fourteenth year. But here one must again emphasise the word *begin*. Each step in incarnation is progressively more complex than the last. The body is most easily brought into being because the physical plane is its natural home; but the invisible entities in man have each to provide for themselves channels of communication with the outer world. They are not native here. They must send out tentacles, as it were, to make contact with a plane more material than their natural habitat. Time is needed in the process. So the incarnation of the Human Ego is a gradual process which continues — or should continue — through the remainder of the life. And rarely, even when the full span of life is run, is this wholly successful.

It is with the ushering in of the Human Ego that the truly higher human qualities begin to manifest. Chief among these is altruism. And though it is the mark of the highest type of mature human being, it is not too soon to begin to stimulate an admiration and love for this quality in the young person just growing out of adolescence. To speak of it as merely "enlightened selfishness" is to deny, or at least to confess one's ignorance of, the existence of a spiritual nature in man. Perhaps the most alarming result of the last century of materialistic thinking is this pernicious teaching, in which altruism is explained as having its first beginnings in the pleasant physical sensations of the babe-in-arms, who wants to bring about or prolong such pleasurable moments. Step by step, however, as he grows he is supposed to learn by a series of associative experiences that sometimes temporary sacrifice of a wished-for thing is desirable, so that, thereby gaining the good will of

others, in the long run he may obtain their favors. (1) Ostensibly, they say, he learns to look for no immediate reward for his good works, but tucked away in his "subconscious" is the awareness that he is really bettering himself!

The fact is there is no relation at all between the gratifications of sensations of the small child and the selfless actions of the mature man who brings happiness and peace to others regardless of the suffering it may cause himself. Evolution, whether of the race or of the individual, follows one law: It proceeds, not from below up, nor yet simply from above downwards. It is a twofold process. Involution and evolution take place co-incidentally. We see the body building up from below, to be sure; but it can only do this because invisible spiritual factors are involving in matter at the same time. The body would not exist were it not for those same inner powers. These misconceptions as to the nature of altruism and the like all spring from a training in materialistic evolution which looks for the origin of all things ultimately in the mire.

In the normal human being the Human Ego should have relatively fully evolved by the time one reaches the prime of life. The higher skandhas should by this time have been drawn back magnetically to their originator, holding within themselves what might be called residual experience — all that was implicit in them from former lives. One reaches the peak of attainment at this time. His character is established, his capacities have flowered. It is almost as though up to this time had been a sort of recapitulation of the achievements of the past, and that from now on new ground must be broken. It is a time when men ask: What next? I have arrived. Is there anything further? Theosophy answers: What about the Spiritual Ego?

It has often been said that the latter half of life is the richer half; that here we have ripened judgment, a seasoned sympathy for the frailties of human character, a benignity and a serenity as though, having pierced life's illusions and found them bubbles, we have arrived at a juster sense of values. But how seldom is this the case! As the powers of the physical and lower personal man begin to wane, as the flesh

becomes more refined and the clamor for sensation is stilled, often there is an emptiness and a sense of futility, and at best man finds himself slipping into a sort of automatic repetition of what he already has done and been, and as the years pass he sees this mechanism imperceptibly slackening until by the age of three score years and ten he becomes but a feeble echo of his former self. At worst he finds this sense of futility too much for him and he simply "cracks up". (2)

But middle life need not be an *impasse*. The spiritual resources as yet hardly tapped are inexhaustible. Physical energy has to be replaced by the energy of the spiritual will. More truly than at any other time may we say that all the life up to this point has been a preparation. The ideal state is where the body, emotions and mind have been trained in a healthy discipline, having been recognised as handmaidens of the spirit. In proportion as this has been done, to that extent is the way open for the incarnation of the Spiritual Ego. This is the supreme goal of our humanhood. We are, as a matter of fact, not yet fully humanized. But we cannot expect to accomplish this complete humanization in a few short lives nor yet in many. Probably some of our reincarnations are merely times when we automatically go through the round of birth, growth, maturity, old age and death, carried along in the grooves of a long-established habit, little realizing that our purpose is to prepare for the incarnation of a god, the god within our own being. It is not enough that this god is free and active on its own high plane. Of what avail is that to the lower struggling elements in the human constitution? Here on this earth the Incarnation must take place, and not until the race as a whole has accomplished this, will our perpetual round of earth-lives cease. So we can count as lost that imbodiment that does not leave a record of some effort made to prepare for this sublime event.

We cannot always judge where the leap ahead is being taken. A man of successful well-balanced life that flowers to his complete satisfaction in middle age may not have gone as far as one who has seen the god-like vision within, and leaping too high in trying to make it his own has failed and suffered defeat. His effort is not lost and will return in another life as a larger increment of the will to succeed, while the

former successful one may find himself saddled in another life with a strange inertia which he cannot shake off.

It would be a study in itself to discuss how this effort can be made. The Wise Ones of all lands have shown us the way, but their words often seem too simple to bother with. They are the pioneers of the race who will not let humanity rest until it awakens to a realization of its inevitable divine destiny.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See, for instance, *The Psychology of Abnormal People*, by John J. B. Morgan, Ph. D., Longmans, Green and Co., 1937, pp. 252-4. ([return to text](#))

2. Gerald Heard quotes Jung in his *Man the Master* who states that a large number of his patients are drawn from men over forty, who are restless and dissatisfied in spite of their achievements. These he calls second adolescents who, if they are able to attain a second adulthood, will emerge as a new type whose greater evolutionary growth will mark them as natural leaders of the race. ([return to text](#))

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN: IV — *H. P. Blavatsky*

This series of articles is one of H. P. Blavatsky's most brilliant writings, presenting a clear statement of the meaning of true Theosophy in theory and in practice. In this fourth number the author continues, with her own consummate skill, her championing of the cause of the universal Wisdom-Religion — that Truth which can be found by the earnest seeker under a thousand guises, hidden in a thousand symbols and under many names. H. P. B. in her trenchant writing is herself like a beacon lighting the way of discovery. The series originally appeared in the French magazine *La Revue Theosophique*, 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu." Its translation was first published in *The Theosophist*, Volume X.

Laugh, then, at the science of sciences without knowing the first word of it! We will be told, perhaps, that such is the literary right of our critics. By all means. If people always talked about what they understood, they would tell nothing but the truth, and that would not always be so pleasant. When I read the criticisms now written on Theosophy, the platitudes and the stupid ridicule employed against the most grandiose and sublime philosophy in the world, of which only one aspect is found in the noble ethics of the Philalethes, I ask myself whether the Academies of any country have understood the Theosophy of the Alexandrian philosophers any better than they understand us now. What do they know, what can they know, of Universal Theosophy, without having studied under the Masters of Wisdom? And understanding so little of Iamblichus, Plotinus, and even Proclus, i. e., of the Theosophy of the third and fourth centuries, they yet pride themselves on delivering judgment on the New Theosophy of the nineteenth.

Theosophy, we say, comes to us from the extreme East, as did the Theosophy of Plotinus and Iamblichus and even the mysteries of

ancient Egypt. Do not Homer and Herodotus practically tell us that the ancient Egyptians were the "Ethiopians of the East," who, according to their descriptions, came from Lanka or Ceylon? For it is generally acknowledged that the people whom these two classical writers call *Ethiopians of the East* were but a colony of very dark skinned Aryans, the Dravidians of Southern India, who took an already-existing civilization with them to Egypt. This migration occurred during the prehistoric ages which Baron Bunsen calls pre-Menite (before Menes), but which have a history of their own in the ancient annals of Kaluka-Batta. Besides, apart from the esoteric teachings which are not divulged to a mocking public, the historical researches of Colonel Vans Kennedy, the great rival of Dr. Wilson as a Sanskritist in India, show us that pre-Assyrian Babylonia was the home of Brahmanism, and of Sanskrit as the sacerdotal language. We know also, if *Exodus* is to be believed, that long before the time of Moses — i. e., before the XIX Dynasty — Egypt had its diviners, its hierophants and its magicians. Finally, Brugsch Bey sees in many of the gods of Egypt, immigrants from beyond the Red Sea and the great waters of the Indian Ocean.

Whether all this be so or not, Theosophy descends in a direct line from the universal GNOSIS, a tree whose luxuriant branches, spreading over the earth like a great canopy, gave shelter to all the temples and to all the nations of the earth at an epoch which Biblical chronology is pleased to call "antediluvian." That *Gnosis* represents the aggregate of all the sciences, the accumulated wisdom of all the gods and demi-gods incarnated in former times upon the earth. There are some who would like to see in these beings fallen angels and the enemy of mankind: sons of God who, seeing that the daughters of men were beautiful, took them for wives, and imparted to them all the secrets of heaven and earth. Let them think as they please. We believe in Avatars and in divine dynasties, in the age when there really were "giants upon the earth," and we absolutely repudiate the idea of "fallen angels" and of Satan and his army.

"What then is your religion or belief?" we are asked. "What is your favorite study?"

"The TRUTH," we reply. The truth wherever we can find it; for like Ammonius Saccas, our greatest ambition is to reconcile the different religious systems, to help each one to find the truth in his own belief and at the same time oblige him to recognise it in the belief of his neighbor. What does the name matter if the thing itself is essentially the same? Plotinus, Iamblichus and Apollonius of Tyana had, all three, it is said, the wonderful gifts of prophecy, of clairvoyance, and of healing, although they belonged to three different schools. Prophecy was an art that was cultivated equally by the Essenes and the *B'ni Nebin* among the Jews, as by the priests of the pagan oracles. The disciples of Plotinus attributed miraculous powers to him; Philostratus has claimed the same for Apollonius, while Iamblichus had the reputation of surpassing all the other Eclectics in Theosophic theurgy. Ammonius declared that all moral and practical WISDOM was contained in the books of Thoth or Hermes Trismegistus. But Thoth means a "college," school or assembly, and the works of that name, according to *Theo-didaktos*, were identical with the doctrines of the sages of the extreme East. If Pythagoras acquired his knowledge in India (where even today he is mentioned in old manuscripts under the name of Yavanacharya, (1) the Greek Master), Plato gained his learning from the books of Thoth-Hermes. How it happened that the younger Hermes, the god of the shepherds, surnamed "the good shepherd," who presided over divination and clairvoyance, became identical with Thoth (or Thot), the deified sage and the author of the *Book of the Dead*, only the esoteric doctrine can reveal to the Orientalists. Every country has had its saviors. He who dissipates the darkness of ignorance by the help of the torch of science, thus revealing to us the truth, deserves that title as a mark of our gratitude quite as much as he who saves us from death by healing our bodies. Such a one awakens in our benumbed souls the faculty of distinguishing the true from the false, by kindling a divine flame hitherto absent, and he has the right to our grateful worship, for he has become our creator. What matters the name or the symbol that personifies the abstract idea, if that idea is always the same and is true? Whether the concrete symbol bears one title or another, whether

the savior in whom we believe has for an earthly name Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, or Aesculapius, surnamed "the Savior God," we have but to remember one thing: symbols of divine truths were not invented for the amusement of the ignorant; they are the *alpha* and *omega* of philosophic thought.

As Theosophy is the way that leads to Truth, in every religion as in every science, so occultism, so to say, is the touchstone and universal solvent. It is the Ariadne's thread given by the master to the disciple who ventures into the labyrinth of the mysteries of being; the torch that lights him through the dangerous maze of life, for ever the enigma of the Sphinx. But the light thrown by this torch can be discerned only by the eye of the awakened soul — by our spiritual senses; it blinds the eye of the materialists as the sun blinds that of the owl.

Having neither dogma nor ritual — these two being but the fetters, the material form which stifles the soul — we do not employ the "ceremonial magic" of the Western Kabbalists; we know its dangers too well to have anything to do with it. In the T. S. every fellow is free to study what he pleases, provided he does not venture into unknown paths which would of a certainty lead him to *black magic*, the sorcery against which Eliphas Levi so openly warned the public. The occult sciences are dangerous for him who understands them imperfectly. Those who devote themselves alone to their practice, run the risk of becoming insane; and those who study them would do well to unite in little groups of from three to seven. These groups ought to be uneven in numbers in order to have more power; a group, however little cohesion it possesses at first, by forming a single united body, whereby the senses and perceptions of those who work together complement and mutually help each other, one member supplying to another the quality in which he is wanting — such a group will always end by becoming a perfect and invincible body. "Union is strength." The moral of the fable of the old man bequeathing to his sons a bundle of sticks which were never to be separated is a truth which will forever remain axiomatic.

FOOTNOTE:

1. A term which comes from the words *Yavana* or "the Ionian," and *acharya*, "professor or master." ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

PRISONER OF THE CLOUDS — *G. Cardinal LeGros*

Within the deep eternal sweep
Of mountain-peaks and sky,
I stand alone with wind and stone
And watch the clouds rush by.
The morning light is wild and bright
With Autumn-flame uncurled
And all my dreams, like mountain-streams,
Cascading down the world!

It is said that men who dwell for long on high mountain-ranges suffer great discomfort in acclimating themselves to lower altitudes. The mystic who has learned to live in the higher aspects of his being likewise suffers if he permits his center of active self-consciousness to descend into those lower aspects of life which he has resolved to abandon. The life above the world's life is forever sweet and clean: the winds of eternity blow there, and multitudinous clouds of iridescent hue weave the poetry of paradise.

But the true mystic is not one lost in a selfish dream. Always upon him is the pressure of a great duty: that of striving to acquaint all men with the knowledge of a grander world: where truth abides in fulness, and compassion reigns, and the unfolding perfection of all things is a constant reality. But to fulfill his duty he must breathe that larger air; he must hear the symphonies of heaven while he teaches; his heart must beat in harmony with the divine heart. He dares not forsake the higher altitudes of consciousness which, once attained, make him alien to the life below.

How grave and solemn are the steps by which we climb from the desert to the mountain-peak. How bitterly die our human dreams when once the ascent is begun. How desperate and cunningly beseeching are the myriad voices of the world's life around us when we mount. But what

are they all compared to the Voice of Splendor speaking from the mountain-top? — "Lo! I have prepared a place for you where you will be with Me forever." Only we who forsake the world's life are happy! Only we who are prisoners of the clouds are free!

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

(See Letter No. XV, pages 97-9)

ELEMENTALS AND ELEMENTARIES

I would like to make a comment upon the statement quoted from *The Mahatma Letters* concerning the Teacher's observation that there are elementals which never become men. This tells us two things: (1) that elementals become men, and (2), that there is a certain class of elementals in our manvantara which will not have the time to become men during the remainder of the course of this manvantara. They won't have the time to run up the ladder of evolution through the different kingdoms until the human kingdom is reached. They will become men in the next manvantara or perhaps in the manvantara after that. Sometime they will be men. All elementals become men. Man as a kingdom is a goal which all kingdoms below the human look up to and aspire toward; and during the course of evolution every monad beneath the human stage is aspiring to evolve, is unfolding itself finally to become a human.

In connection with this I want to issue a word of warning; it may have struck most of you, perhaps not all. It is with regard to the word elementary and the apparent almost identity of meaning which H. P. B. or the Masters occasionally give to the two words "elemental" and "elementary." The reason was this: in the early days — and remember we are going back now to the very early days of the Theosophical Society — our vocabulary had not yet been sufficiently defined nor was it sufficiently extensive. During those early days words were used which were later dropped, such as the word "rings" in connection with the rounds and races. The word "rings" finally passed out of theosophical use.

Now the word "elementary" was taken in those early days by our theosophical writers, the Masters and H. P. B. pre-eminently, from the

writings of the Kabbalists and also from the imperfect writings of Eliphas Levi, the French Abbe and Kabbalist. These Kabbalists meant by "elementary" several things, but generally what we Theosophists now today call "elemental." An elemental soul they called an elementary soul, or simply elementary for short. So therefore you will sometimes find the two words used indiscriminately. Words which were then used almost synonymously we nowadays do not use in that way.

Later on, I think it was mainly due to H. P. B.'s work, "elementary" was set aside and given a specific technical meaning of its own which we now all understand. There is a peculiar meaning which we could even yet use in the word elementary — and by the way, in H. P. B.'s *Theosophical Glossary* if you will look under this word you will see what she has to say about just this point — there is a certain deeply significant and occult meaning which we could give to "elementary" quite apart from its technical meaning that we now give to it as a rule. We have to go back to the early Fire Philosophers who said that the elements of nature were filled with inhabitants. In other words, to phrase it as we would today, every cosmic plane has its own inhabitants fit for that cosmic plane, utterly unfit for any other cosmic plane; precisely as we men could not live under water as the fishes do or as the whale does. We are not fit for that milieu, that medium, that cosmic plane so to say.

So by going back to this original meaning of the Fire Philosophers, which is quite a true meaning, we still today could say that an elementary in this other sense means an elemental soul, thus specifically described because defining it as climbing up the rungs of the ladder of life step by step upwards. At every step upwards it is a master, relatively at least, of what it has left below it, an elementary as to what is above it. That was really the way the Kabbalists and Eliphas Levi and the original Fire Philosophers spoke of what we now call the elementals or the beings or creatures or inhabitants of the seven fundamental cosmic elements, all of them on their way to become men, on their way as we are now to become super-men, and then gods, and

then higher still. In this sense we are elementaries so far as the gods are concerned. They are elementaries so far as the super-gods are concerned.

A great deal of confusion has arisen, I think, in the minds of some readers of this wonderful book that we are studying here, from not remembering these little facts of history, and that in those days the distinctions we now give to those two words, "elementals" and "elementaries," had not yet been established.

KAMA-RUPAS — THEIR FUTURE

If you contrast the kama-rupa, which is our astral body after death, with our physical body, which is our physical body during this earth-life, you will realize that both are vehicles, both are enlivened by monads, or a center of consciousness, both disintegrate shortly after death. But the group of qualities which make my body, my physical me, are my physical skandhas. So my skandhas physically are my physical body as that body is. Just so with regard to the skandhas of the kama-rupa. The kama-rupa is its own skandhas. Subtract those skandhas, which means qualities, attributes, the life-atoms thereof, and what have you? You have not anything. It is the grouping together of these skandhas and the life-atoms through which they work, which form on the one hand the physical body in life or the corpse after death; and similarly the astral skandhas and others which inhere in the kama-rupa after death, form the kama-rupa.

Now then, is it not obvious that just as the life-atoms which made our physical bodies in a former life will return to us when we return to physical embodiment, similarly and perhaps exactly is it with the kama-rupa. The Dweller on the Threshold is a kama-rupa so dense and heavy with matter that it lasts from one death over to the next rebirth of the entity coming back, and haunts the new, new-old man, the ego coming back to earth. That is an extreme case. But outside of extreme cases the life-atoms which form the kama-rupa are picked up by the human ego or monad as it approaches our earth, and the family into which it is to be born; and those kama-rupa life-atoms are gradually ingathered by

the attraction of the ego over them, and them over it, until finally at some indefinite time, it may be in boyhood, it may not be until the boy becomes a man, it may not be even until quite late in life, the old kama-rupa life-atoms, and therefore the skandhas, have been re-absorbed by the new body, the new kama-rupa of the ego after it has come back after death.

If you will reflect, you must realize that even our physical body — and the same goes for the kama-rupa — could not hold together as a unit, in other words it could not be an entity, unless there were some holding power there. In other words there is even a monad of the physical body, and exactly so there is a monad of the kama-rupa. Remember, the kama-rupa is not a shell until it becomes a shell. Very shortly after death, the kama-rupa which has been built up during the life-time of the man, separates from the dead physical, and thereafter it begins its course in the astral light or in the kama-loka. And the monad is in that kama-rupa until the second death. Then the kama-rupa begins to fall apart because the soul so to speak has withdrawn itself, as the physical body begins to decay from the moment of physical death. And as long as the monad is in the physical body the latter is not a corpse.

THE DEATH OF A SUN

The Sun, or rather the period of its life referred to by the speaker quoting from the book, refers to the end of a Solar manvantara, or the opening drama of the Solar pralaya or dissolution time. After premonitory symptoms of decay which the Sun and those planets still surviving will experience, symptoms which it would be easy enough to describe to a certain extent if it were worth while — after certain premonitory symptoms of decay which may last for millions of years, the time will come when the Sun has reached its last instant of life. And then, like a shadow passing over the wall, like a flick of an eye-lid, the extinction of an electric light, the Sun is dead.

In exactly the same way a man dies. He may be slowly dying for years before he actually dies, but the moment of death is instant, quick as a snap of the fingers. The man may be on a sick bed for forty years, he

may be dying during the last two or three years.

Premonitory symptoms are there that any capable doctor can recognize. But when death comes — gone! It is the same with the globe, or in fact anything as far as I know. It is a very wise and pitiful provision of our great Parent, because dying is a very solemn thing, and by solemn I do not mean anything arousing a sense of the ludicrous in us. It is a very important thing, so important that a weighty warning is issued by one of the Masters somewhere, I do not remember just at the moment where he tells us: (1) in a chamber of death to be as quiet as possible, for the mind of the dying man is collecting its consciousness, is passing inwards from all over the body, the brain and the heart and other organs, and that process should not be interrupted by noise. No weeping, no moving if possible, the utmost reverence and quiet. Death itself is peaceful. But of an evil person one cannot say the same; death can be hard to one whose whole affection, interest, love and yearning have been knitted into the physical life. And it is hard then simply because the snapping of the psychic bonds of attachment takes time and causes psychic and mental pain. But even then, death comes quickly when it does come.

So it is with the Sun, although the premonitory symptoms may last for millions of years. Furthermore in this same wonderful book, (2) the Master K. H. also answers in reply to the same question: Do the planets enter the Sun at the end of the Solar manvantara? He side-steps a bit because that is an esoteric doctrine which cannot be told openly, but says this: Yes, you may call the Sun the vertex of all the planets if you wish. The meaning is very clear.

The point is here that the Sun, being as it is not only the heart but the mind of the Solar System as long as this Solar System remains a coherent unity, is therefore the governor of all the life-forces in that Solar-System — governor and controller, as well as source and final focus. Now as long as the Solar System lasts, the various planetary chains in the Solar System live and die, and are disimbodyed and have their Nirvanic rest and then come back again for a new term, and do

this several times; but their dead bodies remain for a while as moons in the Solar spaces, each moon really following its former orbit, although a dead chain; but when the Sun reaches its final term in the Saurya or Solar manvantara, then the Sun draws into itself all the members of the Solar System, i. e., the various planetary chains, which however, before they enter the Sun, have died. The process is an analog of the manner in which a dying man for instance gathers together all the vital forces inwards and upwards before the moment of physical death supervenes and it is this ingathering of all the vital forces which brings about the phenomenon which we may call the death of our bodies.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 171. ([return to text](#))
2. *Op. cit.*, pp. 148, 176. ([return to text](#))

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: IX

From Shanghai, China, over station XQHB, a series of Theosophical radio broadcasts was given last year by Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist and Miss Inga Sjostedt, in which they outlined the fundamental tenets of Theosophy. This talk, given last May 18th by Miss Bergqvist, deals with the subject of Swabhava, the essential characteristic of a thing.

Good evening, everybody:

The speaker last week gave an explanation of the doctrine of Karman, Nature's law of perpetual readjustment of harmony wherever this has been in any way disturbed. It is a habit of Nature, which amounts to a natural law, because it never fails to balance causes and effects with perfect exactness.

But Karman is more than this. In a perfectly true sense we are our own Karman. It is not something that happens to us independently of ourselves, but rather is it the qualities in ourselves that attract the circumstances from which we derive joy or sorrow. To illustrate this, may I point out that people in favorable circumstances are often not as happy as some less fortunate people who yet retain a serene contentment in the face of great difficulties. The important thing is not so much what fate has in store for us, but rather what qualities we have acquired to deal with that fate. At each moment we change these qualities, and so our lives and fates are perpetually changing. Nothing in the universe ever stands still, for life is synonymous with change. For anything ever to remain the same for even an instant of time is incompatible with life, and as everything is alive, it is an inconceivable abstraction. We change all the time, and at any given moment we are not the same as we were the previous moment in mind or body. Our thoughts change and with them the qualities that compose our minds and characters. Through all these changes we are nevertheless

conscious of being one and the same entity. That is, our individuality does not perceptibly alter, but little by little we grow by adding to our egoic center those qualities of our lower nature which by our efforts we have raised to the level of our higher selves. This is a slow process of development, and we may live thousands of lives on earth before our personal lower nature has become fully absorbed into the divine center within us, and we shall function consciously on the spiritual planes, just as now we function in the emotional and lower mental states of consciousness. It is this petty emotional everyday nature, which has little by little to raise itself to the level of our Spirit and in so doing to become absorbed in the Spirit — that is to say in our true self.

As we know, there are no two things exactly alike, no two leaves, as the saying goes, with identical markings, and this holds true of all the spheres of nature. There are no two people with the same qualities in equal proportion. As we grow and evolve we are continually altering all the complex parts of our constitution, incorporating in ourselves attributes and thoughts that we contact, and exchanging with other entities the atoms of our physical, mental, vital and emotional vehicles. We develop in ourselves those qualities with which we are most closely related. Just as a child will try to emulate the object of his hero-worship, we all seek to acquire the qualities we admire in others. As we continually give and take thought-entities and develop the attributes that appeal to us, so we change ourselves and our attitude to our surroundings. The circumstances we encounter are to us either pleasant or unpleasant according to the reaction of our own natures, and so it is that each of us is his own Karman, for it is the self-developed qualities in each man that determine his attitude to the trials and triumphs he meets, and whether he profit or lose by his experiences on the earth.

It is also these qualities, which the Theosophist would call collectively by the Sanskrit word Swabhava, meaning innate characteristics. It is the swabhava then, or the collection of peculiar characteristics of an entity, that determine his Karman. As all entities are at different points on the ladder of evolution, they all have different lessons to learn,

different experiences to pass through, and the unerring justice of Karman places them in the setting perfectly adapted to the gaining of the experience necessary for the next step. For instance, it is the swabhava of a man that causes him to be a man, for with his particular qualities he could be nothing else, just as it is the swabhava of a rose to be a rose. It could not be any other entity, for its peculiarities are those which go to make up a rose. If you planted an acorn, you would not expect to see a maple tree grow, neither would a sheep be expected to produce kittens. Each entity embodies in the form suited to its inner qualities, which is the same as saying to its state of development. These facts quoted from nature are so obvious and we have been accustomed to take them so much for granted, yet it would be well to consider for awhile, why it is that a seed — take for instance a strawberry achene, which itself bears no resemblance to the finished plant, would invariably produce a strawberry plant, even though it be planted in a bed of nasturtiums or cauliflowers. There is something in that achene which is typical. It contains latent in itself the potentialities of a strawberry plant, but not anything else, yet there is no visible indication of what it will produce.

As an entity progresses and garners experience, its swabhava constantly changes and grows better or worse, and when the entity by means of accumulated experience and consequent change of qualities, has exhausted the stock of knowledge to be gained in one bodily form, then that entity will incorporate in, assume the body of, a more highly evolved form of life. This does not mean that the physical forms change for that reason — they do, as a result of climatic and other changes — but rather that the soul inhabiting a form of life is promoted to inhabit a body more suited to its growing capacities for self-expression. We could not as human beings find sufficient freedom to express our abilities in any form lower than the human. Neither are we sufficiently wise and experienced to embody in the form of for instance a planet. Our swabhavas are those of men and women, and these characteristics are changing all the time. We possess in our will and mind the ability to make of ourselves anything we wish, and it is our immediate duty to

grow into conscious spiritual entities, for which fitting vehicles will be furnished when we have attained to our goal, as perfected humanity.

Now please remember that we are constantly changing, that our thoughts and emotions are in a constant state of flux, and that we are continually weaving into the fabric of our being new qualities, and it is the aggregate of our characteristics at any given moment which is this same swabhava. Our swabhava, therefore, is never the same from one instant to the next, because as the atoms composing our minds and bodies change, so the aggregate, of which they are the component parts, changes in proportion, and it is this aggregate which at any particular instant is our swabhava or character or state of evolution. Evolution means the unfolding or bringing forth of that which is within. Man, as an integral part of the Universe, contains within himself in latency all that the universe contains, and can unfold whatever qualities he desires from within himself. Our swabhava, therefore, is the sum-total of what we have to date evolved from our innate potentialities through the experiences encountered during our many lives on earth.

At the beginning of this talk, I mentioned that the Higher Self or individuality, as distinct from the lower personality, does not perceptibly alter, and then proceeded to explain how everything in the universe is constantly changing. Lest anyone should have found these statements contradictory, it would be as well to explain more fully. The individuality, or Higher Self or Reincarnating Ego, does not perceptibly alter — perceptibly to us, that is, because our perception does not function on its plane. It is our higher mind and Spirit which are meant, and these parts of us are unfortunately not much in evidence in our everyday lives. We live for the most part in the personal, emotional, selfish principles of our nature and take but little heed of the still, small voice of our Higher Self. This Higher Self is a ray emanating direct from our Universal Spirit, the *to us* highest conceivable Divinity, and could we but communicate with this Divine Center in us we should see the higher egos as growing evolving entities, but on a higher rung of the evolutionary ladder than the personalities we inhabit for a life.

It is our aim and the Karmic law that we shall help evolve the personalities and incorporate into our individualities all that can be garnered from the chaff of these evanescent forms. For our emotions and lower mental qualities are, as said in a former talk, merely the garments of the true self, and disintegrate on the death of the physical vehicle, while the ego passes through the experiences it has prepared for itself during life and in due course of time returns to earth, where it gathers up the fruits of which its former personality contained the seeds to build itself a new personality for the future life on earth. We are thus responsible for every one of our qualities of character. We have builded for ourselves the residences of our egos, and if these be not to our liking it is entirely our own fault.

The Theosophical Forum

AHAM ASMI PARABRAHMA — G. de Purucker

Dr. de Purucker's last public address given in the Temple at the International Theosophical Headquarters, Covina, California, on September 20, 1942, at the time of the Autumnal Equinox, known to Theosophists as the sacred season of the Great Passing.

Brilliance like the almighty wings of love knows no barriers, and can and does penetrate everywhere; and this thought was born in my mind this afternoon as I hearkened to our speaker giving us excerpts of great beauty, of great depth, from the archaic Wisdom-teachings of mankind, teachings which belong to no race, to no age, and which, since they are essential truth, must be taught in spheres not earthly but divine, as they are taught here on earth to us men. For it struck me that the burthen of his brilliant address was this: that we men, we human beings, as indeed all other things and entities everywhere, are but parts of one vast cosmic whole, intimately united together, despite our failings and our stumblings, in the working out of our common destiny. And therefore in proportion to our own individual understandings, we respond to that cosmic source which the Christian calls God, and which I prefer to call the Divine, from which we came, inseparable from which we are and always shall be, and into which again we are now returning on our ages" long pilgrimage. Oh, just that one thought, if we men could keep it alive in our hearts and allow it to stimulate our minds from day to day, how would it not soften the asperities of human life, how would it not teach us men to treat our brothers like brothers instead of bitter foes!

Don't you see, Brothers and Friends, that this teaching is brilliant because it is a teaching of a genius? It contains everything within it, all the Law and all the Prophets. And what is this teaching? Succinctly phrased it is simply this: that the cosmic life is a cosmic drama in which each entity, be it super-god or god, or demi-god, or man, or beast, or monad or atom, plays his or its proportionate part; and that all these

dramatic presentations are welded together, leading up to one vast cosmic climax — to which, by the way, there is no anticlimax. So that with every even human day we are coming closer to that time in the immensely distant future when we all shall, once more re-united, enter into the deep womb of utter cosmic being — call it God, call it Divinity, call it Spirit, call it what you wish. The drama then will have ended. The curtain will fall, and what we Theosophists call Pralaya will begin, the rest-period. But just as in human affairs, when night is over there comes the day, so when the night of pralaya ends, the manvantara, the cosmic day, dawns again. The curtain on the cosmic stage once more rises. Each entity, each being, then begins its cosmic play, its role, exactly at the metaphysical and mathematical point where it stopped when the bells of pralaya rang down that cosmic curtain on the manvantara or world-period just ended. Everything begins anew precisely like a clock or watch, which, when it has stopped and is rewound, begins to run again at the exact point at which the fingers themselves stopped.

Why, this single conception of human identity with the cosmos, together with all the religious and philosophical and scientific and moral implications which it embodies, is older than thinking man. We are one and yet we know it not, we recognise it not; so that in the drama of life we commit all the follies on the stage, and tragedy becomes comedy and comedy, alas, through our own fault becomes tragedy.

I want to quote to you something that I love and have loved from boyhood. I learned it when I was a child and found it again once more in *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. B., when in after life as a young man I joined the T. S. It is this: the picture is that of the Hindu guru or teacher. A pupil stands or sits before him, and he is testing the knowledge of this pupil regarding the teaching that this pupil has received, and he says: "Chela, Child, dost thou discern in the lives of those around thee anything different from the life that runs in thy veins?" "There is no difference, O Gurudeva. Their life is the same as my life." "O Child, raise thy head and look at the violet dome of night. Consider those

wonderful stars, those beings radiating, irradiating, from the cosmic splendor above our heads. Seest thou that cosmic fire which burns in all things, and shines supremely bright in this and that and that and that yonder brilliant orb? Child, dost thou discern any difference in that cosmic light, in that cosmic life, from that which shines forth from our own day-star, or from that which burns in thine own heart both day and night?" And the child says, "O Gurudeva, I see no difference between life and life, and light and light, and power and power, and mind and mind, except in degrees. The light that burns in my heart is the same as the light that burns in the hearts of all others." "Thou seest well, Child. Now listen to the heart of all this teaching: AHAM ASMI PARABRAHMA." And the child, who has been taught Sanskrit, the Vedic Sanskrit, understands and bows his head, "*Pranjali*." The meaning is: "I am the Boundless, I myself am Parabrahma, for the life that pulses in me and gives me existence is the life of the divinest of the divine." No wonder the child has understood. Am I a child of God? Essentially it is the only thing I am, and if I fail to realize it, it is not the Divine's fault but mine.

I believe, Friends and Brothers, that you will find this sublime teaching with its innumerable deductions — and you will feel bound logically to make deductions for yourselves as you understand it — I believe that you will find this teaching of Divinity in every one of the great systems to which the genius of mankind has given birth. Religion is it; Philosophy was born from it; Science is now aspiring towards it, and is beginning to get feeble adumbrations of what it means. Think even in our own small human affairs — small when compared with the vast cosmic majesty which holds us around in its sheltering care — think, if every man and woman on earth were thoroughly convinced of the utter reality of this cosmic truth! Never again would the hand of man be raised against man. Always it would be the extended hands of succor and brotherhood. For I am my brother — in our inmost we are one. And if we are separate it is because of the smallnesses that make us each one an atom as it were, instead of the spiritual monad which for each one of us is our source. That monad is of the very stuff of

divinity. As Jesus the Avatara phrased it in his wonderful saying, "I and my Father are one" — the Father and the divine spark, the spark of divinity which is identic with the cosmic life, with the universal ocean of life, to use another metaphor. This idea of the cosmic ocean of life, of which we are all droplets in our inmost and in our highest, was in the mind of Gautama the Lord Buddha when he spoke of that ultimate end of all beings and things; for, as he said, all beings and things are in their essence Buddha, and some day shall become Buddha themselves, when, as phrased so beautifully by Edwin Arnold, the dewdrop slips into the Shining Sea. CONSUMMATUM EST.

The Theosophical Forum

G. DE PURUCKER: LEADER AND TEACHER — W. E. S.

IN MEMORIAM

G. de Purucker, Leader of the Theosophical Society, Editor of this magazine, and Teacher and Friend to thousands scattered over this globe, died very suddenly Sunday morning, September 27th, shortly before nine o'clock. A letter printed in this issue from his private secretary, Miss Elsie V. Savage, gives more intimate details of his passing; and the short biography at the end of the magazine sketches his life, outwardly on the whole so quiet, yet inwardly, so full, every moment of which was crowded with study and labor that would redound to the security and future welfare of the Theosophical Movement.

Dr. de Purucker believed so truly in the beauty of death, in the further adventures it brings to the pilgrim-soul of man as it journeys from planet to planet in that true rebirth which follows when the travail of earth-life is over, that he would not have our thoughts marred by personal lamentation or grief. In this, we know, all his students concur. And the public likewise will respect the attitude of Theosophists toward death, and later perhaps come to understand it, when they see, as many have already seen, how the knowledge of its majestic processes brightens and strengthens their lives and gives them power that will sustain in sorrow, support in difficulty, and inspire in daily living.



DR. G. DE PURUCKER

WHEN HE ASSUMED THE LEADERSHIP OF THE T. S., JULY, 1929

Nobly to live, grandly to die! I recall the words — often on his lips when speaking of the ancients and their conception of life and death. But eulogy would be abhorrent to Dr. de Purucker in these pages, and we shall make none. But let these two main facts be stated. They rush to meet us as we look back on the life just ended. G. de P. took office as Leader of the T. S. in 1929 at a critical time. The Society needed

revitalizing. He revitalized it. It needed new blood. He gave it new blood. And it was literally this transfusion of energy from himself as the intellectual-spiritual channel for the Masters into the bloodstream of the T. S. that saved the T. S.; and he continued pumping this stream of psycho-intellectual-spiritual force into it until the very last moment of his life. He poured out teaching. He elucidated H.P.B.'s abstruse *Secret Doctrine*. He added to it, and much of what he gave, as he occasionally reminded his hearers, had not for thousands of years left the sanctuaries of the Mysteries. The time was ripe for him to teach, and he taught. It is stating the truth with reserve when we say that through his extensive lectures and numerous writings he made what he always liked to call "technical" Theosophy understandable for hundreds, and in so doing wonderfully transformed their lives. That is the first point: recognition of the wealth he gave of spiritual instruction, coupled with his utter fidelity to the Masters and to H. P. B. in doing this. And the second point — almost as remarkable to those who throughout the years personally witnessed its gradual accomplishment — is that by almost superhuman efforts, along material and organizational lines, he succeeded in freeing the Society from debt, so that for the first time perhaps in its history it stands today on a firm foundation of financial security. And coupled with this, as his last act, he moved the Headquarters from Point Loma and the uncertain conditions prevailing there, owing to its geographical situation and the present war, to the safer and more practical environment of Covina, in Los Angeles County, where, being nearer to the great metropolitan areas of the southwest, greater opportunity is offered for the practical work of disseminating the teachings of Theosophy.

Very heavy are the duties of Theosophical leadership. Few would wish to bear them. They were indeed very heavy for Dr. de Purucker. But as we all look back on his thirteen years of leadership, can anyone of us doubt but that his labors were crowned with success — success in spiritual accomplishment, success in material achievement?

For the rest, turn to his writings. There, if you wish, you will find the

story of a life wholly dedicated to Truth, to its dissemination and — as a particular trust to be fulfilled in this incarnation, coming first and foremost — utter devotion to the welfare of the T. S. as its loyal Servant and Leader.

To his own words then the Editors have turned in preparing this special memorial issue, and with care have chosen from unpublished letters, talks, and lectures, teaching which shows the strength, the majesty, the beauty, and the appealing commonsense of Theosophy, and reveals the remarkable range and genius of G. de P.'s exposition, pointing as ever it does to the existence of that central source and storehouse of Ancient Wisdom from which all the illuminated draw.

Your particular attention is called to the opening article, "Aham Asmi Parabrahma," an almost prophetic utterance, read in the light of his death so soon afterwards. There in simple understandable English we have a summary of the Secret Doctrine, the fundamental propositions of the Ancient Wisdom. It is a condensation in living, forceful form of all our many Theosophical doctrines, for all aspects of the Ancient Wisdom are but a ringing of the changes on the one sublime idea of Universal Brotherhood as a fact of Nature. And the facts of Nature are revealed to us through the Theosophical teachings of Hierarchies, of Inner Rounds and Outer Rounds, of Karman and Reimbodiment, of the genesis of Solar Systems and Universal Solar Systems. The more we learn of the carpentry and geography of universal being, and indeed of the mysteries of our inner nature, the more we find that the essence and root of all teaching is that we and all beings and things — ALL BEINGS AND THINGS — are rooted in the Kosmic Heart, the Divine. How truly and beautifully is this expressed in G. de P.'s last public message above referred to! *Aham Asmi Parabrahma. I am the Boundless, the Divine.*

On other pages of this issue you will also note with particular care, no doubt, the letter from the Cabinet of the T. S., as well as the interview given to a reporter from the *Covina Citizen* by Mr. Iverson L. Harris, Chairman of the Cabinet. By this you will know that the work of the T. S. is protected; that the Leader of the T. S. in his passing left no details

uncared for; that the Cabinet stands united in the carrying out of his instructions, and counts on the strength and loyalty of each and all F. T. S.

In the December FORUM cables conveying sympathy and loyal support to the Cabinet from England, Sweden, South Africa, Australia, together with messages from all over the United States and from Canada, will be recorded, showing the present unanimity of feeling throughout the length and breadth of the Society. And in that issue the Editors plan to include articles describing G. de P.'s literary output, his work for fraternization among Theosophists, his European lecture-tours, and perhaps giving other intimate glimpses of his years of leadership of the T. S.

But for this issue we have his own words. Let them speak. In them let us hear his resonant and inspiring voice again. Let us meditate on them in the spirit of high impersonal love he urged us so continually to strive for. Of the one who died, so often we heard him say: *Gaudet in astris, dormit in pace*. Now it is he who has left us. And now we say — with what inner meaning! — he sleeps in peace; he rejoices in the stars. But his message, and the eternal message of Truth from the living Lodge of Light, the message of H. P. B. and all great Teachers of Humanity, lives. We pledge our selves to our Inner Selves that that truth shall not die.

The Theosophical Forum

THE T. S. AND THE LOST CAUSE OF MATERIALISM — G. de Purucker

Last words of Dr. de Purucker to the members of the International Headquarters Lodge, spoken at the close of their regular study-meeting, held September 13, 1942.

The origin of the Theosophical Movement began not in arbitrary decisions by the powers that be, but because of conditions of cyclic necessity. Thus, when H. P. B. came, she came because of a need to keep alive in men their spiritual intuitions, and by so keeping them alive, prevent men from falling under the sway of a world ruled by brute force, in which might was considered right and in which the only justice was the booty of the strongest. She knew that the will of brutal power would govern mankind unless checked and stayed by those innate rules of right residing in the souls of men.

How came about this situation in our world? Because of two things: A religion which had become thoroughly materialistic, thoroughly; so much so that men no longer believed that this universe was run by spiritual powers enforcing the rule of right; and therefore that men could act pretty much as they pleased if they but rendered lip-homage to an ecclesiastical set-up. This idea coming from the religious side of man's knowledge, education, and social contacts, was more than strengthened by an equivalently evil power emanating from the ranks of modern scientists. And this latter power had incomparably more influence on men's minds than the dicta of the Church and its Hierarchy. Why? Because men had begun to believe that the noble research into nature undertaken by science gave us truth; and men were justified in so believing, for that is the real work of scientists: the investigation of facts and the collating of them into a comprehensive philosophic mold. And a great many scientists do work most earnestly and with energy and most praiseworthy perseverance to that noble end. But it is a very different thing when men who themselves had already lost all belief in a spiritual control of the universe, began to

theorize and lay down laws of theoretic speculation regarding the origin of the universe and the origin of man, the working of the universe and the continuation of man therein, and the future of the universe and man's future in it. These were not scientific facts discovered by research. They were theories only, speculations only, hypotheses only, derived from the imagination of men who had lost a belief in a spiritual control of the universe. Sincere efforts these were, of course, but they were based on no spiritual belief, and therefore these scientists could not render into a comprehensive whole, a philosophic whole, the facts in nature which they had discovered.

Thus, examine those early days of complete materialism beginning about the time of Voltaire and others. I use Voltaire as an example, not because he was the originator of this era; but he was one of its earliest products and one of its noblest. He was a fighter against dogmatism of any kind. More glory to him! But his work likewise destroyed belief in a spiritual universe.

Thus, then, what were these scientific theories on the one hand and religious theories on the other hand? That this universe runs itself, that there is no spiritual power in it controlling it or guiding it, and that things happen by chance not by law. This was uttered out of one side of the mouth and out of the other side of the mouth of scientists came the equally fervent statement: the universe is caused by the laws of nature. With one side of the mouth they preached fortuity and chance and with the other side they preached laws. It never seemed to strike them that these two preachments were mutually destructive.

What were, then, the factors that Darwin stated made evolution, or what were the conditions under which evolution took place, or again what caused evolution? — phrase it as you wish. It was a struggle — it was a struggle in which the fittest survived, not the best, not the noblest, but the strongest. This was thought of as a law of nature. There was not a word in Darwin or in Lamarck or in Haeckel or in Huxley, or in any of these great men so called, of fifty or eighty years ago, about this world's being ruled by intrinsic moral sanctions, not a hint of it. It

was a rule of brute force in which the strongest survived, a struggle in which the fittest survived, and the fittest meant the most brutally strong, not the best. Thus, as I have often pointed out, a man and a shark in the ocean — which is the more fit to survive in case a conflict should arise between them? The shark will survive because it is in its element. He is the fitter in that element and he will kill the man. Yet the man is the nobler creature, the better, the more evolved.

That is what Darwinism is: chance action by nature in a desperate struggle to survive, in which the weak are eaten or go to the wall and brutal strength only is the cause of victory. These ideas are destructive of the soul-life of mankind, whether they are born from theology or science. Get these facts clear, and examine, as we Theosophists have for all these years, the lapses from logic in our scientific works, the lapses in the reasoning of our scientists.

It was into a world governed by a belief in brutality as nature's sole way of functioning that came the God-Wisdom through H. P. B., and, as she proclaimed, her first work was to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions, so that he would react against this "rule" so called and mis-called, this "accident" in nature, this rule of brutal force. Look at the actions of the peoples of the earth during the last hundred years or more — no, the last three or four hundred years. Look at the world today. The result of soul-loss, of the stifling of the spiritual instincts of the human being. Indeed we Theosophists have reacted with power against these teachings, whether from the theologic or the scientific side. We have faced the scorn and the ridicule of a day when even to speak of the human soul meant loss of caste.

Look what H. P. B. did. Almost alone and single-handed she challenged the thought-life of the world and brought about by her courage and her teachings the founding of the Theosophical Society, proclaiming aloud and to all and sundry that the world was ruled by moral law and that he who infringed that law whether under the hypocritical guise of virtue or whether openly and desperately as the criminal does — *that he who breaks that law shall pay*. Today the world no longer believes

that. It believes that the only way to make what they think is a criminal pay is to use greater brutal power than anyone else does. They no longer believe in the rule of spiritual law. They no longer believe that this universe of ours is governed by moral sanctions. They take the law into their own hands.

Is this the truth? Is this religion? Is this philosophy? Is this science? It is not religion, it is not philosophy, it is not science. All these three in their essence proclaim the rule of law in nature; that this law is spiritual and therefore moral; that there is cause and there is effect emanating from that cause, and that these effects are ineluctable and cannot ever be avoided: they should, can, and will haunt your footsteps as the cart follows the foot of the ox which draws it — a magnificent old Buddhist statement of the *Dhamma-pada* written in a day when men believed that the universe was ruled by spiritual and moral sanctions.

Do an evil deed and, sure as the cart follows the foot of the ox which draws it, that evil deed will haunt you and find you out in this life or in a future one. This is religion, this is philosophy, this is science; especially science, teaching as this last does its doctrine of cause and effect, its doctrine that effect follows cause and is alike unto its parent cause. The world no longer believes in these things. The peoples no longer believe in them. Only those fine spirits whose intuition flames brighter than in the majority of our fellow human beings have disbelief in these teachings of materialism now dying: dying in religion, dying in philosophy, dying in science, but whose maleficent consequences afflict us like Atlantean karman even today weighing heavily upon us.

So it is important to support in the science of our time all those elements which uphold the belief in a spiritual governance of the world. It is important for us as Theosophists to support in philosophy those elements, those philosophic elements, which teach that the universe is controlled by intrinsically moral sanctions. It is important for us Theosophists to support with deepest sympathy and understanding those elements in religion which, casting aside the materialism of the last 1800 years more or less, teach that divinity

fillet all vessels, whether vessels of honor or vessels of dishonor; for to divinity neither the one nor the other is dishonorable. That divinity is the spirit universal out of the womb of which come all beings and things, and back into which celestial haven in due course of the revolving ages all things and all beings shall one day return.

I think, dear Brothers and Companions, that the most needed thing today for us Theosophists is this: to do our utmost to bring about a renaissance, a rebirth, in the minds of men of the truth that this universe of ours is under the most strict cosmical moral law, in other words of harmony; for what in the universe is harmony, in the human soul we call the ethical instinct. Remember that the man who is sincerely convinced that his thoughts and feelings are going to result in action and that he is responsible for this action, will take thought and long and searching thought before he acts. There you are. There is the secret of the whole thing. Just that simple law, a belief by us men that this universe of ours is not the product of chance; that it is infilled with moral power and that this moral force resides in the human soul and that this moral force in the human soul should be our guide in our daily conduct. If men followed just that simple rule our life here on earth would be a heaven when compared with what it now is. All too long has thinking man been under the illusion of maya, that he could take nature's laws into his own hands and in his feeble manner with his weak and shaky intellect attempt to administer cosmic justice.

How the gods must laugh at us! And if they weep, as some say they do, how at times their celestial eyes must be filled with the tears of divine pity for man!

STRENGTH AND BALANCE IN OCCULTISM — G. de Purucker

Short address given to his students by G. de P., June 13, 1937, in the Temple, at Point Loma, California, at the conclusion of the usual lodge study-program.

The holy mysteries are never publicized: never, never, never. You have to earn them and fit yourselves for them. It is obvious that if you are not fit to receive them, they never come to you. It would be a crime to attempt to do otherwise. It is the easiest thing in the world for a man or a woman to incur loss of the soul by following any other method of occult training than that of the Masters, taught as they themselves in their turn are by the Dhyani-Chohans, the bright and blessed gods. I mean it. If you want truth you must come to the Temple for it, and you must come in the proper spirit; you must work upon yourself so that you will train yourself to be fit to learn, to be receptive. Otherwise you just can't receive it. You won't take it in. You can't take it in until you make an opening in which to put it — to use very plain, simple language. If your mind is set against it, like a closed door, it does not open to receive. You must train yourselves first. But if you do train yourselves, and, as we say, live the life, there is absolutely no barrier which can or will prevent your going indefinitely forwards. It is exactly like a growing child. He cannot take in the world's wisdom even, even the wisdom of this world, until his mind has developed to the point where it can receive it and retain it; until it is trained to do it. Simple! It is exactly the same thing with occultism, with esotericism, with the mysteries. They are indeed in the Theosophical Movement, both the Greater and the Less. They can be had by anyone, but such a one must prepare himself, train himself, must be in deadly earnest. Then he can receive them.

The chief or fundamental rule of this training or discipline is the becoming receptive to the inner and higher part of one's own constitution, whose whisperings of truth and intimations of cosmic

verities find no lodgment in minds wilfully or ignorantly closed against their entrance. There is the whole, or at least the fundamental, rule of occult teaching and learning in a nutshell, and the reason for all the safeguards that have been thrown around it. I have myself known hapless students of Theosophy who have literally gone crazy, temporarily at least, but nevertheless have gone crazy, have been crazed, from an unwise and unguided study of some of the more recondite teachings. It is pathetic; for the pathos lies in their yearning to learn and to become greater than their lower selves. The pathos likewise lies in the fact that they tried to scale the peaks before they had disciplined themselves to traverse the foothills of morals, of learning and self-control. It is one of the perils that the Masters and H. P. B. and the Theosophical Leaders have had to watch out for, and to contend with. It is a very difficult situation. I have known men and women barely escaping the loss of health in merely brain-mind overstudy without the healing, saving power of selfless devotion: a most beautiful thing in a way; one's heart warms to them in admiration for their courage, for their insistence on getting truth; but it has been unwisely done. That is why we insist upon the all-round, balanced growth, a wise, shapely growing into knowledge and wisdom, instead of the distortions and ungainly malformations, mentally and even psychically, that come from unwise study of occult things.

It is for this reason that in our own T. S. the inner, the secret, the occult, the esoteric, is so very carefully guarded and watched over and *never* publicized. Our Masters have no desire to have their students incur risks of soul-loss, or mind-loss, or even of physical deterioration, or any other human tragedy. But otherwise, having stated these things, just remember how beautiful and simple the rules of occultism are. Nothing in our deeper and more occult studies will ever interfere with your family duties, never; for those duties are duties; and it is one of the first obligations of a Theosophist to fulfil every duty. He is no occultist if he neglects one, no matter what his temptations are. No matter if he tries to grasp the sun, if he neglects a duty he is a coward by that much. Being a coward and a weakling, he is no occultist. No

injury should ever be done to another. If you do it you are beginning to descend, and you may walk into black magic. But there is a way and a chance to rescue yourself and to return to the strait and beautiful path. For it is a truly glorious path, and it brings a sense of the realization that man is akin to the gods and that the gods are present amongst us. Yes, I mean it: the gods even now walk the earth. But few are the sons of men who have trained themselves to realize it.

Now, the gods will associate with us, self-consciously to us, when we shall have learned first to know that they are there; then to make their approach to us mutually desirable. Let it, however, suffice for the main thought to carry home that the gods walk amongst us even now, as they did in far past ages, in the childhood of man, when he was still innocent and not so sophisticated that he thought he contained all the knowledge of the universe in his puny, little brain.

Let us, then, make ourselves presentable, and let us make our lives so attractive and interesting to the divinities, that they in their turn may be glad and happy to associate with us, self-consciously. I will go this far and then stop: There is a place, a geographical place on this earth, where not only is it common for the highest men that the race has produced to associate with the gods companionably, freely, friendly; but where the same relations of teachers and taught exist between gods and men, that exist today in our schools of learning. I wonder if you grasp what that means.

And at the heart — like this omphalos, or navel, or center, in the Temple, this little pillar in the center of this auditorium — in the holiest place there, what we call the *sanctum sanctorum*, there is an invisible presence, the highest spiritual presence of this earth. Make of it what you can.

OUR WORK IN THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE — G. de Purucker

During the thirteen years of Dr. de Purucker's leadership of the T. S. an enormous mass of correspondence passed through his office. Perhaps it is not so well known throughout our Society, however, how much of important instruction, practical and helpful in daily living and organizational conduct, was given out in this way to students and T. S. officials in all parts of the world. With this thought in mind the Editors have asked Miss Elsie V. Savage, G. de P.'s private secretary since 1929, to select from such letters and instructions a few extracts which stress more significantly some of the duties and needs that lie before us today. These excerpts follow.

Ways of Disseminating Theosophy

I know there are many ways of disseminating Theosophy, of casting forth the holy seed into the minds and hearts of men. To me all ways are good *if they are successful*, but in each we must be able to find the God-Wisdom which we are here to teach. If we do not teach it we are negligent of our holiest trust. Greater than showing people how broadminded Theosophists are, greater far than this, although that is most excellent and good in its way, greater still is to give men hope, to instill comfort into weary hearts, courage into their lives, and to give them vision. "Without a vision the people perish," and if it is not a good vision, so great is the hunger of human hearts for reality, alas, all too often it is replaced by an evil vision. Evil takes the place of good. And yet so wonderful is the web of nature, and so mighty the power of the spirit, that even in an evil web we will find woven through the mesh like golden threads the light of the spirit.

No, while all ways of disseminating seeds of truth are excellent, *provided the seeds be disseminated or sown*, I myself can find no grander way than that of following the traditional Theosophical habits

of thought and of teaching and of living which are, first: the setting the example in your own Self of the truth that is living and burning within you; next, calling our brothers ignorant of Theosophy to the spiritual and intellectual banquet. Those who are searching for light and know not whither to turn, call them to the Master's table! And the food is set forth in our standard Theosophical books, and in all the great literatures of all the ages.

I think our best way of teaching our own God-Wisdom — I say "ours"; it is ours only because we are blessed in having received it, it is not ours in any other sense, it is humanity's priceless heritage — the best way is to show its existence in all the ages in the great books that have come down to us, in our standard Theosophical books, and by teaching it technically; for there is no other way of teaching it properly.

Learn to Think in Centuries

I look to the future, and as dear H. P. B. used to say, a phrase often humorously quoted by K. T.: "I sit by the sea and watch the future through the weather." We must learn to think in centuries, not merely in lustra of five years each; for in this way we obtain a mundial or world-picture, and build intelligently for the future, instead of having our attention absorbed by merely the present or immediately coming events. Don't allow all your thought to be swallowed up in the events and problems of the immediate present. I think it is imperatively necessary to learn to think in centuries. It is likewise extremely comforting and absolutely kills all such things as discouragement, downheartedness, pessimism, etc., etc. Indeed we have much, very much, to be thankful for, and I bless the Masters and the gods for that immensely strong yet always outwardly invisible help which daily I can feel or sense or intuit, and which will be ours as long as we prove worthy, and therefore receptive vessels of its benign influence.

Guard your Thought – Processes

I have observed my own processes of thought many and many a time, and I notice that many and many a time I have been saved from

drawing a false conclusion by being reluctant to accept that conclusion until I have examined it. That is an excellent rule that we all try to follow. But I likewise have observed that if I am cowardly or lazy, and refuse to face a thought or a problem squarely, nobody suffers but me. I am the loser. So I have learned to think, and try to think clearly, to be afraid of thinking no thought whatsoever, but always to strive to see that the thoughts that pass through my mind as the instruments of cogitation shall be high ones; not to give in to snap-judgments, not led astray by emotional volcanic outpourings, nor what is worse I think, led into judging others with injustice. This is an exercise the Hindus would call Yoga. It is an exercise I recommend to anyone who wants to improve himself. Watch your thoughts. Watch your processes as you think those thoughts. Discard the thoughts you do not like. But be careful in so doing lest you refuse to receive a divinity knocking at the door of your heart when you are at first too blind to perceive its divine character.

The Injunction of Pythagoras

Do you remember the rule laid down by Pythagoras, a very beautiful one I think. It runs something as follows, often quoted by me; but it is worth quoting again and again. It loses none of its beauty and profundity by repetition:

"Let not the setting sun reach the western horizon, nor close thine eyes in sleep, before thou hast gone over all the events of the day just past, and hast asked thyself this question: What have I done today that has been done amiss? What have I done today that has been done aright? Have I injured anyone? Have I failed in my duty? Let not the setting sun reach the western rim of space, nor let thine eyelids close in sleep ere thou hast asked thyself these questions."

If only men and women would follow that simple rule, ninety percent of the world's trouble, heartache, sin, anxiety, would be nonexistent, would never happen. And the reason is simple. The world's troubles are from our weaknesses, not from our strength; and if we can increase our strength, do away with our weaknesses, every human being

thereafter in proportion to his inner evolution or growth would become a power for good in the world. And you see what that would mean. It cuts at the tap-root of most of the thoughts and feelings and acts that bring misery amongst us.

Our Work in the Present and the Future

In these exceedingly difficult times for all men, one's heart of necessity often aches for the common sorrow and grief, and for the heavy burthen that so many are now carrying; so there is a certain gravity or sobriety of spirit that must of necessity weigh upon us Theosophists also. Yet it is one of our first, indeed one of our elementary Theosophical tenets that it is precisely in times of difficulty and stress that men's hearts open perhaps more than ever before to the reception of spiritual ideas; and it is by means of our Theosophical gatherings, whether great or small, that we can bring a large measure of hope and comfort to weary and stricken souls. You will feel yourselves as members of a great body-corporate of other men and women the world over, who are all united, spiritually and intellectually as well as by the impulses of the heart, in our blessed Theosophic propaganda-work, in order that the Masters' teachings may reach an ever-widening circle of hungry hearts and eager minds, seeking for comfort and the sense that the great realities of life govern men and are behind all things, in spite of the turbulence and storm of human existence.

Let us never forget that mighty and strong minds are behind the spiritual government of our world, indeed of our globe; and that sooner or later karma adjusts all things to its majestic purposes, and in the spirit of universal brotherhood, peace on earth, and good will to all men.

I repeat, that in my judgment it is precisely in times of difficulty and stress, as has indeed been said by the Masters is the case of kali-yuga, that spiritual progress is more easy to achieve than in other and more quiet times; and a spiritual effort such as that in which the Theosophical Society is engaged is far more likely to be received by human minds and hearts now than in other days when the steady

comforts of life and the sense of regular security, fine as these are, often blind men's minds to the reception of higher things.

Continue, then, your noble Theosophical Work with unfailing courage, and with the assurance that not only G. de P., but thousands of members all over the world, are with you in spirit; for amongst us Theosophists, national or even local, Theosophical efforts have back of them the tremendous force of united minds, strong intellects, and devoted hearts.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL — *G. de Purucker*

One of the last addresses given by Dr. de Purucker in the Temple at Point Loma, shortly before removal of the Headquarters to Covina, California.

I ask your very reverent attention to a profound and beautiful fact of nature. To me this thought is one of the most beautiful of our Theosophical doctrines. It is that of the "angels" guarding us, or what the Christians call the "Guardian Angels"; but this wonderful doctrine, which is such a comfort and help to men in time of stress and trouble, is no longer understood by the Christians of this day, because they have lost the original meaning of it. They seem to think that it is an angel outside of oneself deputed by Almighty God to be a kind of protecting parent over the child; and some Christians seem to think that when the child attains adulthood the Guardian Angel departs. This doctrine of protective and guiding spiritual influences in the world is a very old doctrine of the Wisdom-Religion. It was taught in Persia, India, Egypt, amongst the Druids, in fact, as far as I know, everywhere.

It is simply this: that there is in and over man a spirit or power guiding him, instilling hope and comfort and peace and righteousness into his mind and heart; and that he who is ready to receive this and does receive it will guide himself by the inner mandates, and do so openly. He will be more or less conscious of the companionship of the Guardian Angel, be conscious of this companionship as a helper, with him day and night, never failing, always guiding, teaching him to save himself. But the mind and heart must be ready to receive, otherwise the brain does not catch the guidance and the inspiration.

What is this Guardian Angel? You may call it a Dhyani-Chohan. Our own particular technical name for it is the Sanskrit word: Chitkara: thought-worker. You remember it was stated of the great Greek philosopher, Socrates, that he was guided by his inner daimon, his

constant companion, which in his case strangely enough never told him what to do, but always warned him what not to do. It is stated of him frequently when he was undecided as to what course to pursue, he would go apart and close his eyes and remain quiet, trying to free his mind from all the debris, claptrap, and noise and hurly burly of tramping thought, in other words cleansing and emptying the brain so that the Guardian Angel inside could penetrate into the brain-stuff. Such in his case was the Guardian Angel.

Now what is this Guardian Angel? Is it outside of man? It is a part of man's spirit, pertinent to his pneumatology; not the human part but a part of his spiritual being. You can call it the Higher Self, but I prefer to call it the Spiritual Self, because the phrase "Higher Self in Theosophy" has a meaning containing certain restricted ideas. Thus, man's inmost entity, the Guardian Angel, this spiritual self, is like a god compared with the man of flesh, the man of this brain. Compared with his knowledge it has omniscience; compared with his vision it has vision of the past, the present and the future, which three really are but one eternal NOW in the ever present.

This Guardian Angel will always strive and is incessantly striving to guide its wilful errant child, the man of flesh. There is the whole thing in a nutshell, and if you can make your mind pervious to this inner monitor, and follow its mandates, your life will be safe and happy and prosperous. Of course, you have to go through whatever your karma has for you, that is, whatever you have wrought in the past; it will have to work itself out. If you put your finger in the fire, it will be burned. If you catch your foot in the machine it will be crushed. But the inner warrior, the Guardian Angel, once you come into its fellowship, in time will prevent your putting your finger into the fire, or placing your foot where it could be crushed. As for myself, my own life has been saved six times by this, and I know whereof I speak. And I only blame myself for not having begun sooner as a younger man to try to cultivate and to try to bring about an even closer consciousness or self-realization of this wonderful guide, this divine spark, this spiritual self in me: the very stuff of divinity. Compared to me my Guardian is an angel, a god.

The only difference between the ordinary man on the one hand and the Christ-man and the Buddha-man on the other is this: that we ordinary men have not succeeded in becoming absolutely at one with the Guardian Angel within, and the Buddhas and the Christs have. The Buddha or Christ is one who has made himself, his whole being, his heart, so pervious to the entrance of the Guardian Angel within him that that Guardian Angel within him has actually imbodyed himself, so that the lower man is scarcely any longer there: it is then the Guardian Angel that speaks with the lips of flesh, it is the Bodhisattva, the inner Christ.

These are some of the forgotten values in human life, and I know no values greater than these two things. First: you are one with the universe, one with divinity, inseparable from it. Then it does not much matter what happens to you. Whatever comes is a part of the universal destiny. You become filled with courage and hope and peace. And the other forgotten value is what I have just called the Chitkara. Let that Guardian Angel live in you, and speak through you, and as soon as may be. I speak what I know, not only with regard to saving from trouble and from peril, but from dangers of all kinds. It will instil peace and comfort and happiness and wisdom and love, for all these are its nature. These things are especially needed in the world today by poor mankind, most of humanity feeling today that all the trouble in the world has happened by chance, that there is no way out except by a lucky fluke of fate. That is all tommyrot. This world is a world of law and order, and if we break these rules of law and order we suffer.

Oh, that man would realize these simple verities of Universal Nature! They are so helpful. They give meaning to life and inject a marvelous purpose into it. They give incentive to do our jobs and to do them like men. They make us love our fellow-men, and that is ennobling for us, an ennobling feeling in anyone; for it is obvious that the man who loves none but himself is constricting his consciousness into a little knot, and there is no expansion or grandeur in him; whereas the man who loves his fellowmen and thereby begins to love all things, both

great and small — his consciousness goes out, begins to embrace, comprehend, to take in all. It becomes finally universal feeling, universal sympathy, universal understanding. This is grand, and this is godlike.

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

The following very important contribution to this series of Studies in THE MAHATMA LETTERS has been chosen from among several as yet unpublished comments made by Dr. de Purucker at the close of the Sunday evening Lodge programs. On this occasion, the meeting of September 28, 1941, he opened his remarks with some very interesting teaching about the polar magnetism of the earth; but as including this would make the present article too long, the Editors have reserved that portion of the talk for a future issue. The following remarks cover a discussion of Questions 11 and 12, page 146 of THE MAHATMA LETTERS and the Master's comments thereon to be found on pages 167-8. It is significant perhaps that this address fell on the Sunday evening exactly a year before Dr. de Purucker's passing. This and subsequent numbers of this series which may appear in the future in the FORUM had not been edited by Dr. de Purucker.

Unfortunately this question about Jupiter and the Raja-Sun is not one that can be answered outside of esoteric teachings, and I am being perfectly frank about it. I think it would be a shame to deceive any honest and thoughtful student by sidestepping. The explanation of this matter is esoteric and wholly so. Therefore it cannot be touched upon in a gathering of this kind.

Let us continue then to the subject of heat and cold on Jupiter. If our dear people would use the vast Theosophical learning which they have — and I am not speaking sarcastically — and apply it to this matter of planetary heat and cold, there would be no question or difficulty about it. They would not question, for instance, whether Jupiter is hotter than the earth or colder. Actually it is enormously hotter than our earth, and the modern scientific theory of its being a thousand or several thousand miles of block ice is simply based on the theory that, being so much farther from the sun than the earth is, it gets a great deal less heat from the sun and therefore *de facto* must be in a state of arctic

chill. But you see our teaching is that the planets do not get their heat from the sun, or very little indeed.

The sun is the great beating heart and brain of our system, the ultimate fountain and source of all the energy in the solar system as a whole. But with regard to this particular matter of heat and cold, it is the planets which keep themselves warm by their own vitality just as the human body does. It is not the sun which gives me my vital heat. The body creates its own vital heat. Of course if I go out in the sun and I feel the sun's rays pouring on my bare head, my head will be heated just as a plant will or a stone or anything else that is exposed to the sun's rays. But this is not heat coming from the sun, or very little in any case, perhaps twenty-five percent.

What is actually taking place is that an enormous efflux of electric and magnetic power flows from the sun and sets in vibration whatever this electric power falls upon. It is just exactly as every electrician knows: if you pass an electric current through a length of wire filament you create an ohmage, that is a resistance, which makes the particles in the wire through which the electric current passes, and which possesses this high resisting power, to glow with heat. It is not the electricity which carries heat and deposits it there. Electricity is neither hot nor cold. It is the power of the electricity meeting this resistance, which throws the molecules and atoms of this resisting medium into intense vibration, more rapid than that of billions and quadrillions of vibrations in a human second, and therefore heats it. Electricity is not itself hot. Just so with the sun. The sun is neither hot nor cold as we understand heat and cold. It is an enormous body of force, forces, which include electricity and magnetism and consciousness and life and intelligence and other things.

No, what makes Jupiter so hot is its own vital power. What produces this vital power in a heated body? You could ask the same question about our earth. What makes the earth warm or cold? The vital power of the earth — call it magnetism if you wish — interacting and reacting with the magnetic continent above our heads: give and take, electric,

electro-magnetic or magnetic action and interaction. Just so does my own vital heat make my own body warm. If we had to trust to exterior heat to keep us alive and had no interior natural native vital heat of our own, if we went twenty feet from a fire we would freeze up in half an hour or in quarter of an hour. But such things do not occur.

So it is with Jupiter. When planets are young, very young, they are enormously hotter than when they grow old. So it is even with the human being in a small degree. The hottest little dynamo that I have ever known is a baby. When boyhood is reached, your heat diminishes. When you reach manhood it grows still less: you are not then burning up in a constant fevered heat as a baby is. The teaching in the book shows us clearly. The Master says: Imagine if all our oceans were turned into ice and all our atmospheric fluids were turned into liquids; then, he says, just imagine the reverse process, and you will have some idea of what it is like on Jupiter, which means, so hot there that what would be our oceans are turned to gases and what we call metals, stones and such things are turned to fluids. Just the reverse process. And it is strange enough that that was originally the idea of science.

The part played by the meteoric veils over every continent which is not in obscurity, as Mars is in obscurity — the part played by these meteoric continents is enormous. Some people don't like to accept this idea, although it is true, because they think it diminishes the dignity of our glorious Father Sun. It does not diminish his dignity. Because I have some vital heat of my own, that does not diminish the dignity of my teacher. Why should he be blamed or praised because I was born with vital heat? It is not a derogation of the dignity of the sun to say that the planets are living bodies also, living organisms.

Now Mars is in obscurity, consequently the meteoric veil surrounding Globe D of the Mars-chain is very thin. When the life-waves begin to come into Mars again, as they will before many millions of years have passed, Mars also will begin again to be re-covered with what scientists call heavy clouds, which are really veils of meteoric dust. Attracted psycho-vital-magnetically by the tremendously vital

power of the planets which they surround, these meteoric continents perform somewhat the same function with regard to the planets that the human aura does for us. The meteoric veils are composed of dust, the effluvia rising up from the earth partly, but mainly and more largely from interplanetary and interstellar cosmic dust: the refuse, the sweat, the detritus, of other manvantaras, karmically drawn back, as life-atoms are drawn back to the reincarnating man.

Then there is the matter of the sun's north and south poles spoken of in this letter. Now there is one point here that needs clearing. I do not remember the Master's exact words, but it is much to the effect that the sun does not take anything from anything else, nor does it give away anything of its own. A perfectly true statement when it is understood. But do not forget this other perfectly true statement, infinitely more important: that nothing exists unto itself alone. Everything helps everything else. Everything lives for everything else. No accident anywhere. And this is a cosmic statement of what we Theosophists call our beautiful doctrine of Universal Brotherhood. The Master means this: that the sun is not vampirized — in the sense that the word vampirize has. Nor is it a spendthrift, wasting and dissipating its vital power by pouring it out needlessly through ages, as our modern science teaches it does, to be wasted in the abysmal deeps of pluperfectly frigid spaces.

The solar system is a closed system in the sense that a human body is a closed system. Agreed that every human body is builded by life-atoms from all other human bodies; but so far as itself goes it is an entity, an individual with its own vital power, feeding itself, having naught to spare to give of vital power to other bodies unless given as a gift. And likewise not vampirizing, in the normal cases, other bodies.

Vampirizing and giving of gifts happen, but these are not the normal state of things. Every atom is a closed system in that sense. Yet every atom is connected with every other atom in infinite space, feeding infinite space and infinite space feeding it.

So then, the sun does not vampirize other suns, nor has it any vitality to

spare for other suns. It has all it can do to feed its own orbs, the planets and other bodies within its kingdom. Just so my heart feeds my body and its organs and its molecules. It has nothing to spare for feeding other bodies — unless giving as a gift. Nor does my body vampirize other bodies. It does not steal vitality from other bodies, although in abnormal cases any human body can become vampirized; but we are not talking of exceptions and special cases; we are talking of the norm, the rule.

Therefore, what happens is this: the sun follows the same cosmic law that every planet does. It is the heart of its kingdom and likewise the brain of its kingdom. If you look upon it as the heart for an instant, it receives the influxes of the rivers of lives, the circulations of the solar system, in its north pole. They pass through the heart of the sun, are cleansed and washed and leave at the south pole of the sun. Precisely as our earth and every other planet have each its receptor at the north pole, and its ejector or vent at the south pole.

Why, even the ancient Greeks taught this. Do you remember Eolus and the cave of the winds? The cave of the winds was the earth, and the winds were the winds of the spirit, the circulations of the universe figured as winds: a cave of which the north gate was made of horn through which the gods descend — and through which they ascend also, but mainly descend. And the south gate of the earth, or of the cave of the winds, was made of ivory, signifying the elephants of the south, as the horn does the tusks of the animals of the north. And out of the south gate go the hoards of men. So said the ancients. Why, the occult teaching is simply expressed here without a veil.

In other words, the earth feeds itself physically, magnetically, psychically, spiritually, through the north pole. The currents sweep through the earth — every word here is worth a volume — and leave by the south pole. So it is with the sun. That is the way the sun feeds its family: just as the heart feeds the body. It sends out its blood through the south pole, as it were, and after the circulation around the body has taken place, it receives it in again at the north pole. Fascinating subject!

So be careful how you read and construe. Don't let a single statement given by the Master as an answer to a very limited and specific question cover all the horizon of your thought regarding other things. In other words use your common sense.

So now, Companions, let me close my own remarks on an expression of pleasure that I always feel after hearkening to the words of those who make really wonderful addresses from the platform and the equally wonderful contributions from the auditorium. It just warms every cockle of my heart to see the progress that you dear fellow-students have made. I think it is beautiful, and it fills me with reverence. I think you deserve to know what I feel about these things.

Remember this, and then I go: All the laws of nature, so called, are but the play of conscious and semi-conscious forces. Therefore by their utter consistency and invariability they are called by us the laws of nature. These forces of nature are fluids emanating from great cosmic hearts beating, hearts sending the life blood, each one of its own especial and particular essence, force, spirit, to the farthest reaches that it can contain. We live not only in the presence of divinities, but are in very truth their children. We are builded of them and from them. Human parents are away, far away and distant when compared with the utterly infinite, infinitely intimate because identical relations and ties that exist between these great parents and us their children. Electricity, or magnetism, its alter ego, for instance, is but the fluid efflux from a cosmic entity, a being — of our own solar system in our case, because we are in this solar system. Heat likewise; all the real forces of nature are such. What is gravity? Just the same. We call it love. Some day when science will have learned that gravity is bi-polar as electricity and magnetism are, we may perhaps see returning the wisdom of the old Greek Empedocles who taught in his day that the universe is held in its courses and in its plans of beauty and harmony because of the two great cosmic powers, love and hate as they translate it. It is not a good translation. Attraction and repulsion: better but not good. You might perhaps say love and repulsion; hate is not a good word. Marvelous thoughts! — Good night, Companions!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS — G. de Purucker

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Types of Devachans

In *The Key to Theosophy* H. P. B. says that after death the Methodist will be a Methodist, the Mohammedan a Mohammedan, at least for some time, in a perfect fool's Paradise of each man's creation and making. Will this be in Kama-loka or Devachan? I say the latter, as there is no consciousness in the Kama-loka, and H. P. B. herself has described Devachan as a fool's Paradise. *The Mahatma Letters* (page 103) speaks of "the pleasures realized by a Red Indian in his "happy hunting grounds" in that Land of Dreams." — M. J.

G. de P. — The answer to this question is in general a Yes, an affirmative. H. P. B. certainly meant mainly the devachan, since it is a mere reflexion of the spiritual vision, imperfect and poor as it is, of the man who has just died; whatever that man was in a spiritual way he will continue to be in the devachan afterwards. Thus the imperfect vision, when compared with a Buddha, for instance, of a Methodist or a Roman Catholic or a Mohammedan, being a lack of *complete* inner vision, inner spiritual growth, will continue in the devachan in a sublimated sort of way in the "fool's Paradise," so that the Methodist will be a Methodist, but an improved Methodist, the Roman Catholic ditto, the Mohammedan ditto, and so forth. So much for this part of the question.

Yet it is obvious that the kama-loka, being the stage preceding the devachan, will not change the character of the man who has just died; and if he has died filled with the thoughts of Mohammedanism, or of Methodism, or of the Baptist, or of the Roman Catholic, he will still be

this or that in the quasi-consciousness of the kama-loka. So we can say he will still remain a Methodist, or a Roman Catholic, or a Mohammedan, through the purging process of the kama-loka; and then the finest part of the man will enter the devachan, the "fool's Paradise," in which he will still have his dreams of a glorified Methodism or Roman Catholicism or Mohammedanism, or Judaism, or whatever his quasi-spiritual thoughts on earth were. So there is a certain truth, when this is understood, in the other statement also, that even in the kama-loka the man's character is not changed. Looking over the above, I might add that of course an ego is not cleared of *all impurities* thus becoming perfect before entering the devachan, as he would then be of the status of a Buddha. Nor do I mean that it is necessarily an "impurity to be cleared away" to be a Methodist or any other religionist. Of course when a man becomes through evolution so spiritually evolved that he is a Bodhisattva on earth, or a Buddha, then he will just pass through the kama-loka and devachanic states almost unconsciously, for the man is above them, and he enters a lower or higher Nirvana according to his development. And Nirvana means a vision of Reality.

Can We Help the Kama-lokic Entity?

Is it possible for the living to give help to the human kama-lokic entity in its struggle to free itself at the time of the second death? Would a living person be likely to feel the influence from that struggle on the part of one who in life had been closely connected with him, especially on inner lines? — N. N.

G. de P. — Nature is too merciful to allow but the merest fragments of psychic or emotional contact between the living and those in kama-loka. If it were otherwise, our lives would be a hell.

The entities in kama-loka as a rule are semi-conscious or unconscious. It is only the very evil sorcerers, black magicians, or the grossest kind of beings while in body, who have a consciousness which we would call awake-consciousness when they reach the kama-loka. Consequently, all the kama-lokic processes, except in the cases of the few mentioned above, take place automatically and as it were unconsciously or as in a

dream, perhaps a nightmare, perhaps perfect unconsciousness in the case of the average person; but a real hell of feeling in the cases of the sorcerer and the tremendously heavily gross person. But, after all, these last are few.

It is of course true that a spiritual love on the part of the survivors can reach even to the devachan after the kama-loka is ended; yes, and even as it were help the interim Bardo-period in the kama-loka. But it must be a spiritual love, and the effect itself is to bring an atmosphere of more peace to the kama-rupas in kama-loka; and the same thing after those in kama-loka have shaken off the kama-rupa and have entered the devachan state. Yes, a spiritual love, not an emotional one, does help the entities in kama-loka to a certain degree, especially if those entities are nice clean decent average people, and are not sorcerers or gross materialists.

The main point to remember is that those in kama-loka should be left absolutely alone. Nature is infinitely the kindest. The kama-loka experiences for average people are dreamlike or even pure unconsciousness. They are just as it were in unconscious sleep; and any attempt to touch them, even with emotional love or emotional thought, can at times, if the thought and magnetic impulse is strong enough, give them a fictitious temporary awakening, and then they feel unhappy, for they are half awake and surrounded by atmospheres they do not understand, and they feel as if they were in a bad dream.

So it is much better to leave the kama-loka entities strictly alone, even if they are our dearest friends. Of course a gentle warm current of impersonal friendship does no harm, and as explained above, may even do a little good in helping to purify the atmosphere around the kama-lokis, if I may invent a term.

Cataclysms as Ways of Establishing Balance

In *The Secret Doctrine, Volume II*, at the end of the first part, H. P. Blavatsky gives us a description of the terrible catastrophes which will take place during the transition-period from the Fifth

to the Sixth Root-Races It seems to me that Nature works in a rather hard way. Is it not possible for the great spiritual Leaders of evolution on this planet — if not to prevent — at any rate to mitigate the effects of these terrible disasters, during which millions of human beings and animals perish? Is this due not only to cosmic but also to individual karman? — P. R.

G. de P. — Yes, to both, to both kinds of karman; and also to racial karman, and planetary karman. The questioner is a highly intelligent man, but there lurks throughout his question the old feeling that "Nature is not just as I think she ought to be." Presumably the idea is that if someone else had had the shaping or founding of natural law, of natural being, it would have been more shapely and kindly done. I wonder! Nature's heart is compassion absolute, because that compassion is absolute harmony. Nature moves on a cosmic scale, and in comparison therewith our ordinary brain-minds are microcosmic, with small reaches of understanding of the great cosmic issues involved, and, so far as the racial karman is concerned, of any Root-Race or Sub-Race, with small understanding of her sweeping away in catastrophic or cataclysmic activities millions of animals and millions of men.

How about the millions of men and millions of animals that die daily, and, yea, that are sometimes, perhaps not in their millions, but in their hundreds and thousands, killed, murdered, wantonly slaughtered? All these things, all these catastrophes and cataclysms, are one of Nature's ways of re-establishing balance, equilibrium; just as disease in a human body is a purgation, a purging the system of poison. Just so, Nature's ways in its own purgations are these cataclysms and catastrophes.

The so-called "Leaders of evolution," of which this querent writes, do indeed strive continuously through the ages to mitigate the sorrow and pain, to stem the heavy hand of destiny, if it is possible, or at least as much as it is possible to stem the tide of intellectual and psychical disintegration. But they never work contrary to Nature's laws. They

cannot. They are in very truth the servants of the Law, and therein lies their enormous power.

Cataclysms and catastrophes are occurring constantly. How about this horrible war? How many millions have perished so far from direct or indirect causes? Look at the beasts who die daily in almost countless numbers all over the earth — some of them wantonly slain; others slain by accident.

The world is full of misery and pain brought about by ignorance and by distorted mental views and by unbridled passion; and the time finally comes when these accumulate so greatly that Nature can tolerate no more; and then the crash comes. Is it not so all through natural being? A human body will stand so much abuse, so much strain, and then it gives way. Nature acts likewise on the greater scales. All of it is karmic. Yet the entities which are swept off the face of the earth, so to speak, which pass out, within an hour, or a day, or a week, or a month, or a thousand years, or ten thousand years, learn by it — learn the karmic lessons.

Then pause and look at the other side of the picture. Look at the beauty, look at the sublimity, of the Sons of Light who work through the ages and whose strong hands hold back the accumulated karman from its crushing humanity at one blow; they form the "Guardian Wall" around humanity. Consider that carefully.

Consider the light side of Nature as well as its automatic retributive or so-called dark side. Nature is divided into two parts, into two phases, so to say, and these two phases or parts are filled on the one hand with the Sons of Light, and on the other hand with the Brothers of the Shadow: one is the realms of spirit, and the other is the realms of matter.

Our Relation to Our Atoms

How is it possible that we, who were rulers of a solar system, i.e., in the time when the atoms were our dwelling houses, cannot rule the composing beings of our body today? We are developed

from the atoms and we will rule a solar system in the macrocosmos in the future. Is our state of consciousness lower now than in the time of our atom-life? — W. K.

G. de P. — The reason that we human beings find it difficult in this stage of our evolutionary pilgrimage to control the lower elements, including the atoms, electrons, etc., of our bodies, is that we are at the mid-point in our evolutionary journey, because we are sunken in the material worlds, although we are now beginning to rise towards Spirit again. This situation means that the matter-parts of our being, including the atoms, of course, are more in their own sphere, and therefore have greater individual power than they have in the higher spheres; and consequently they act more strongly in their own individual ways than they do when they are again in Spirit, or in the spiritual worlds, and more under the divine influence of being in the spiritual worlds. Thus the sun, the divinity in and behind the sun, can control the lower elements and lower atoms much better than we can, because this divinity, being so much ahead of us, attracts more spiritual types of atoms than we do, because we are naturally much less spiritually evolved than is the solar divinity.

Thus it is that in the future we shall be able to control perfectly not only our own matter-elements, but the very atoms, etc., which compose these matter-elements of us, because we shall in time gain in spiritual power; and even these matter-elements of us will have risen more towards Spirit, and we and our companion lower elements and atoms then will have become more alike, both more spiritual, than now we are. Hence there will be more harmony, greater ease, in what we may call brotherly co-operation, in our journey back to Spirit.

I hope this answer gives the gist of what I desire to say. The main idea can be grasped by stating that the Mahatmans can control their lower elements and atoms much more easily than we can, and this is because of the two main reasons I have just stated: In evolution the Mahatmans are beyond us, and therefore stronger than we are; and they attract to themselves for their bodies, etc., more spiritualized atoms than we do.

Hence there is greater harmony there between the higher and the lower than there is with us.

Karman and Idiocy

Would it be possible for an average man to be "punished" by an incarnation as a complete idiot, and in the following life to take up afresh from the status he had before the "idiotic" life?

In *The Esoteric Tradition* (p. 974) a footnote states that there may be cases of a lesion or injury, before birth or after, which may cause this state of idiocy. Even in this case his condition must be the result of karman, or it could not have happened? One would think that if a man is his karman such an entity must have had an attraction downwards, from which he will have to work upwards again, or go still farther down and become a lost soul. Is it possible for one who had been very cruel to an idiot to be punished by experiencing that condition himself? Hardly, I imagine, as his intermediate nature being absent, no impression could be made on it, and that life would be punishment pure and simple, and not a lesson learned. — M. J.

G. de P. — Certainly the result of karman in all cases. Furthermore, while it is abstractly possible for a thoroughly normal human being to have to undergo an unpaid karmic debt such as idiocy in the next following life, it is so extremely unlikely that the degree of improbability almost reaches certainty.

The reasoning is this: that karman is not haphazard on the one hand, nor are its parts divorced from the general karmic frame or set-up; so that an idiotic incarnation almost certainly is preceded by shadows casting their images before, a general weakness of character, a more or less obvious degeneration, producing finally its culmination in the idiotic state. But of course, while this is logically the rule, and is clearly seen to be such by any thinking person, I would not go so far as to say that a thoroughly normal person could not possibly have a karman, as yet unworked-out from some distant life, which would produce relative

simple-mindedness or idiocy. It is possible, but so extremely unlikely that it is almost a certainty that normality is not followed by abnormality. The whole situation depends on the fact that a man is his karman, as the questioner states.

As regards the latter part of the question: If I understand the question correctly I would answer in this wise: We must remember that karman is not just brute mechanics. The moral principles back of karman are essentially spiritual. Keeping this in mind we can see how karman might work in the case of one who is cruel to animals, who are relatively mindless when compared with men (which does not mean that they have no mind, however), or in the case of a man who is cruel to an idiot because he despises the poor idiot's lack of mind. We can see that with the spiritual and moral causes of karman back of and working in the constitution of the cruel individual, this very cruelty will *slowly* close the gates of intellectual and spiritual inspiration in that cruel man; so that little by little the very fact of his having lack of sympathy for the beasts or for the idiot, will tend to make the cruel man himself slowly through incarnations become less and less "minded" as it were, having less and less of the seeing, penetrating manasic faculty. Thus in a sense a man is punished by the way he injures or is cruel to others. But these things do not come suddenly. They are a process of degeneration. Cruelty continued through a life, or two or three, is a degenerative process, a breaking down of the moral fiber, and of spiritual and intellectual insight. And what does this mean but a slow and gradual loss of the mind through indulging in persistent cruelty?

So reasoning thus, we can say that after a long time — two, four, six lives, heaven knows how many — one who despises another for being an idiot, or who is cruel to the relatively mindless beasts, slowly brings about incipient idiocy in himself; and we are thus punished by the backwash of the very energies we originally set in motion. This is what is meant by the saying that the man who takes up the sword will perish by the sword. The man who is cruel will perish by his own cruelty, and others will be cruel to him. The learning of the lesson takes place

during the process. Of course it is obvious that a complete idiot cannot learn lessons as a man endowed with mind can. But the process of approaching idiocy enables the soul to gather the lessons of suffering and repentance, which may even save the man from final idiocy, if he is sufficiently evolved to take warning in time. Then if he changes his cruelty to kindness and gentleness, and opens the channels above once more, his suffering and the danger he sees ahead of him, will have been his karmic retribution, what the questioner calls the "punishment," and he may suffer horribly during this process, bringing about a moral and intellectual regeneration.

The Theosophical Forum

THE LUMINOUS PORTAL OF DEATH

There is no death, if by that term we mean a perfect and complete, an utter and absolute, cessation of all that is. Death is change, even as birth through reincarnation which is death to the soul, is change; there is no difference between death, so-called, and life, so-called, for they are one. The change is into another *phase of life*. Death is a phase of life even as life is a phase of death. It is not something to be feared. . . .

Death is as natural, death is as simple, death itself is as painless, death itself is as beautiful, as the growth of a lovely flower. It is the portal through which the pilgrim enters the stage higher.

— G. de Purucker, *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN: V — *H. P. Blavatsky*

With our next issue this series demonstrating H. P. Blavatsky's brilliant sword-play in defence of Theosophy comes to an end. In the present number she shows how Theosophy towers above physical science, and yet is not mere metaphysics, but a universal transcendentalism which rejects any testimony not based on the evidence of the highest principles in man — the sixth and seventh. Originally appearing in the French magazine, *La Revue Theosophique*, 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu," the series was first published in translation in *The Theosophist*, Volume X.

The disciples (lanoos) of the law of the Diamond Heart (magic) will always help each other in their studies. The grammarian will be at the service of him who looks for the soul of the metals (chemist). — *Catechism of the Gupta-Vidya*

The profane would smile if we told them that in the occult sciences the alchemist could be of use to the philologist, and *vice versa*. They would understand better perhaps, if they were told that by this word grammarian or philologist we mean one who makes a study of the universal language of corresponding symbols; although only the members of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society can understand clearly what the term "philologist" means in this sense. All things in nature have correspondences and are mutually interdependent. In its abstract sense Theosophy is the white ray from which are born the seven colors of the solar spectrum, each human being assimilating one of these rays to a greater degree than the other six. It follows, then, that seven persons, each imbued with his special ray, can help each other mutually. Having at their service the septenary sheaf of rays, they have the seven forces of nature at their command. But it follows also that, to reach that end, the choosing of the seven persons who are to form a group, should be left to an expert — to

an initiate in the science of occult rays. But we are here upon dangerous ground, where the Sphinx of Esotericism risks being accused of mystification. Yet official Science itself furnishes us the proof of what we say, and we find corroboration in physical and materialistic astronomy. The sun is one; its light shines for all the world; it warms the ignorant as well as the astronomical adept. As to the hypotheses concerning our day-star, its constitution and nature — their name is legion. Not one of these hypotheses contains the whole truth, or even an approximation to it. Frequently they are only fictions soon to be replaced by others. For it is to scientific theories more than to anything else in this world here below that the lines of Malherbe apply:

. . . . Et Rose, elle a vecu ce que vivent les roses,
L'espace d'un matin.

Nevertheless, whether or not they adorn the altar of Science, each of these theories may contain a fragment of truth. Tested, compared, analysed, pieced together, these hypotheses may one day supply an astronomical axiom, a fact in nature, instead of a chimera in the scientific brain.

This does not mean at all that we accept as a portion of truth every axiom recognized as such by the Academies. For instance, in the evolution and phantasmagorical transformations of the sun-spots — Nasmyth's theory of the moment — Sir William Herschel began by seeing in them the inhabitants of the sun, beautiful and gigantic angels. Sir John Herschel, observing a prudent silence concerning these celestial salamanders, shared the opinion of the elder Herschel that the solar globe was nothing but a beautiful metaphor, a *maya* — thus announcing an occult axiom. The Sun-spots have found a Darwin in the person of every astronomer of any eminence. They have been taken successively for planetary spirits, solar mortals, columns of volcanic smoke (probably issuing from their own academic brains!), opaque clouds, and finally for shadows in the form of willow leaves. At the present time the god Sol is degraded. It is said to be nothing more than

a gigantic coal, still glowing, but quite prepared to be extinguished upon the hearth of our little system.

Then there are speculations put forward by some of the members of the Theosophical Society, who, although belonging to the Society have never studied the esoteric teachings. These speculations can never be other than hypotheses, no more than colored with a ray of truth; enveloped in a chaos of fancy and often of unreason. By selecting them from the heap and placing them side by side, one succeeds, nevertheless, in extracting some philosophic truth from these ideas. For, let it be well understood, Theosophy has this in common with ordinary science, that it examines the reverse side of every apparent truth. It tests and analyses every fact put forward by physical science, looking only for the essence and the ultimate and occult constitution in every cosmical or physical manifestation, whether in the domain of ethics, intellect, or matter. In a word, Theosophy begins its researches where the materialists finish theirs.

"Then it is metaphysics you offer us? Why did you not say so before?" object the critics.

No, it is not metaphysics, as that term is generally understood, although it plays a part sometimes. The speculations of Kant, of Leibnitz, and of Schopenhauer belong to the domain of metaphysics, as also those of Herbert Spencer. Still, when one studies the latter, one cannot help but think that Dame Metaphysics is introducing herself at the masked ball of the Academic Sciences adorned with a false nose! The metaphysics of Kant and of Leibnitz — as proved by his Monads — is as far above the metaphysics of our days, as a balloon in the clouds is above a pumpkin in the field below. Nevertheless the balloon, however much better it may be than the pumpkin, is too artificial to serve as the vehicle for the truth of the occult sciences. The latter is a goddess perhaps a little too *decolletee* to suit the taste of our extremely modest scientists. The metaphysics of Kant taught its author, without the help of the present methods or perfected instruments, the identity of the constitution and essence of the sun and the planets; and Kant *affirmed*,

when the best astronomers, even during the first half of this century, still *denied*. But this same metaphysics did not succeed in proving to him the true nature of that essence, any more than it has helped modern physics, notwithstanding its noisy hypotheses, to discover the true nature of that essence.

Theosophy, therefore, or rather the occult sciences it studies, is something more than simple metaphysics. It is, if I may be allowed to use the double terms, meta-metaphysics, meta-geometry, etc. — a universal transcendentalism. Theosophy utterly rejects the testimony of the physical senses, if the latter have not spiritual and psychic perception as a basis. Even in the case of the most highly developed clairvoyance and clairaudience, the *final* testimony of both must be rejected, unless by those terms is meant the *photos* of Iamblichus, or the *ecstatic illumination* of Plotinus and of Porphyry. The same holds good for the physical sciences; the evidence of reason on the terrestrial plane like that of our five senses should receive the imprimatur of the sixth and seventh senses of the divine ego before a fact can be accepted by the true occultist.

Official Science hears what we say and laughs. We read its reports, we behold the apotheoses of its *soi-disant* progress, its great discoveries — of which more than one, enriching the wealthy few, has plunged millions of the poor into still more horrible misery — and we leave it to its own devices. But, finding that physical science has not made a step towards the knowledge of the real nature and constitution of matter since the days of Anaximenes and the Ionian School, we laugh in our turn.

In that direction the best work has been done and the most valuable scientific discoveries of this century have, without a doubt, been made by the great chemist William Crookes. (1) In this particular case a remarkable intuition of occult truth has been of more service to him than all his great knowledge of physical science. It is certain that neither scientific methods, nor official routine have helped him much in his discovery of radiant matter, or in his researches into *protyle* or

primordial matter. (2)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Member of the Executive Council of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society. ([return to text](#))

2. The homogeneous element, non-differentiated, called *meta-element*. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

TRUTH AND SYMBOL IN THE CHRISTMAS STORY (1) — *John Gayner Banks*

What we call the Festival of Christmas or the Nativity of Jesus the Christ is not merely a date in history — actually an historical event — but it is also a Symbol of profound Reality and the focal point of a sublime truth, significant to all mankind.

A symbol has a chief meaning, and then various subsidiary meanings. For instance, the Sun is the symbol of the Logos; that is its chief or primary significance. But it is also an objective fact in the external world, capable of scientific observation and deduction by so-called Physical Science. It also stands for an incarnation of the Logos, or for any of the great Messengers who represent Him for the time, as an ambassador represents his King. High Initiates who are sent on special missions to incarnate among men and live with them for a time as Rulers or Teachers, would be designated by the symbol of the sun; for though it is not their symbol in an individual sense, it is theirs in virtue of their office.

The Sun is the physical shadow, or body, as it may be called, of the Logos; hence its yearly course in nature reflects His activity, in the partial way in which a shadow represents the activity of the object that casts it. The Logos, "the Son of God," descending into matter, has as shadow the annual course of the sun, and the Sun-Myth tells it. Hence, again, an incarnation of the Logos, or one of his high ambassadors, will also represent that activity, shadow-like, in His body as a man. Christmas, properly understood, is such a manifestation — both exoterically and esoterically. It is our privilege and duty to understand both these aspects. The Christian Sacred Writings in the New Testament give us the exoteric story and some slight indication of the esoteric meaning.

Alfred de Vigny has said that legend is frequently more true than history, because legend recounts not acts which are often incomplete

and abortive, but the genius itself of great men and great nations. It is pre-eminently to the Gospel that this beautiful thought is applicable, for the Gospel is not merely the narration of what has been; it is the sublime narration of what is and what always will be. Ever will the Savior of the world be adored by kings of intelligence, represented by the Magi; ever will He multiply the eucharistic Bread to nourish and comfort our souls; ever, when we invoke him in the night and the tempest, will He come to us walking on the waters, will He stretch forth His hand and make us pass over the crests of the billows; ever will He cure our distempers and give back light to our eyes; ever will He appear to His faithful, luminous and transfigured upon Mount Tabor, interpreting the Law of Moses and moderating the zeal of Elijah. (2)

This deep insight of the meaning of Christian symbols is reflected in some of our greatest poets. Many examples may be found in the *Oxford Book of English Mystical Verse* (published by the Oxford University Press, New York). Francis Thompson's "The Kingdom of God" is an exceptionally fine sample.

The broad outlines of the story of the Sun-God are very clear and agree in essential detail with the story of the coming of Jesus as a baby at the first Christmas. He is always born at the winter solstice, after the shortest day in the year, at the midnight of the 24th of December, when the constellation Virgo is rising; born as this constellation is rising, he is born always of a Virgin, and she remains a virgin after she has given birth to the Sun-Child, as the celestial Virgo remains unchanged and unsullied when the Sun comes forth from her in the heavens. Weak, feeble as an infant is he, born when the days are shortest and the nights are longest, surrounded with perils in his infancy. But He lives through all the threatening dangers, and the day lengthens towards the spring equinox, till the time comes for the crossing over, the crucifixion, the date varying with each year.

Isis of Egypt like Mary of Bethlehem was our Immaculate Lady, Star of the Sea (Stella Maris), Queen of Heaven, Mother of God. We see her in pictures standing on the crescent moon, star-crowned; she nurses her

child Horus, and the cross appears on the back of the seat in which he sits on his mother's knee. The Virgo of the Zodiac is represented in ancient drawings as a woman suckling a child — a type of all future Madonnas with their Divine Babes, showing the origin of the symbol.

The relation of the winter solstice to Jesus is also significant. The birth of Mithras was celebrated in the winter solstice with great rejoicings, and Horus was also then born.

His birth is one of the greatest mysteries of the Egyptian religion. Pictures representing it appeared on the walls of the temples. He was the child of Deity. At Christmas time, or that answering to our festival, his image was brought out of the sanctuary with peculiar ceremonies, as the image of the infant Bambino is still brought out and exhibited at Rome. (3)

On the fixing of the 25th of December as the birthday of Jesus, Williamson gives us the following data: All Christians know that the 25th of December is *now* the recognised festival of the Birth of Jesus, but few are aware that this has not always been so. There have been, it is said, 136 different dates fixed on by different sects. Lightfoot gives it as 15th September, others as in February or August. Epiphanius mentioned two sects, one celebrating it in June, the other in July. The matter was finally settled by Pope Julius I, in 337 a. d., and St. Chrysostom, writing in 390 says: "On this day (i. e. 25th Dec.) also the birth of Christ was lately fixed at Rome, in order that while the heathen were busy with their ceremonies the Christians might perform their rites undisturbed." Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* writes: "The (Christian) Romans, as ignorant as their brethren of the real date of Christ's birth, fixed the solemn festival to the 25th December, the Brumalia or winter solstice, when the Pagans annually celebrated the birth of the Sun." King, in his work, *Gnostics and their Remains*, also says: "The ancient festival held on the 25th of December in honor of the birthday of the Invincible One (Natalis Solis Invicti — the birthday of the Invincible Sun), and celebrated by the great games at Circus, was afterwards transferred to the commemoration of the

birth of Christ, the precise date of which many of the Fathers confess was then unknown." Even Dean Farrar (author of the celebrated *Life of Christ*) writes that "all attempts to discover the month and day of the nativity are useless. No data whatever exist to enable us to determine them with even approximate accuracy." From the foregoing it is apparent that the great festival of the winter solstice has been celebrated during past ages, and in widely separated lands, in honor of the birth of a God, who is almost invariably alluded to as a "Savior," and whose mother is referred to as a pure virgin. To quote Annie Besant in *Esoteric Christianity*:

Rightly considered, the Christmas festival should take on new elements of rejoicing and of sacredness, when the lovers of Christ see in it the repetition of an ancient solemnity, see it stretching all the world over, and far, far back into dim antiquity; so that the Christmas bells are ringing throughout human history, and musically out of the far-off night of time.

Christ came then to His own flesh and blood because the world of men drew Him and the love of the Father impelled Him. He came to give to life a purpose and fulfilment, and to indicate to us The Way: He came to give to us an example, so that we could be galvanized by the hope that "maketh not ashamed" (*Romans*, v, 5), to press toward the mark for "the prize of our high calling." (*Phil*, iii, 14). The words of Phillips Brooks, express this idea most clearly. Let me quote from his book *The Light of the World*:

Christ when he comes, finds the soul of the world really existent, really having within itself its holiest capabilities, really moving, though dimly and darkly, in spite of all its hindrances, in its true direction. And what he does for it is to quicken it through and through; to sound the bugle of its true life in its ears; to make it feel the nobleness of movements which have seemed to it ignoble, the hopefulness of impulses which have seemed hopeless, to bid it be itself. . . The worthless becomes full of worth, the insignificant becomes full of meaning. . . They faintly

catch the feeble reflection of His life Who is the true Light of the World, the real illumination and inspiration of humanity. . . The truth is that every higher life to which man comes, and especially the highest life in Christ, is in the true line of man's humanity. There is the quickening and fulfilling of what man, by the very essence of his nature, is. The more man becomes irradiated with Divinity the more, not the less, truly he is man.

We are told in the Gospel story that the Virgin Mary, with her husband Joseph and bearing within herself the Christ Child, went up from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem. Sometimes, through a study of the significance of the names in the Bible and in tradition, we can throw much light on the episode itself and unveil some of its hidden meaning. Thus we find that Nazareth means "that which is consecrated" or set apart. "Galilee" means "the turning of the wheel," the wheel of life and death which turns continuously, carrying us with it and keeping us upon the "wheel of existence" as the Buddhists call it, until we have learned life's lessons.

The long journey of existence lies behind the Christ, and He with his Mother, journeys the last part of the way. Consecrated from past aeons to this very work of world salvation, He has first of all to submit Himself to the ordinary processes of birth and childhood. Christ came forth from Nazareth, the place of consecration, and went up to Bethlehem, the House of Bread, where in a peculiar way He Himself was to become "The Bread of Life" to a hungry world. He was set apart, or set Himself apart (as do all awakened sons of God) for the work of redemption. He came to feed the hungry, and in this connexion two verses in the Bible convey light upon His task in its preparation. Isaiah tells us that "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (*John*, xii, 24). This was the destiny awaiting Him when He came to the Birth in Bethlehem. Then he entered upon the career which eventually "bruised" Him and led Him to His death.

The name Mary (according to Cruden's Concordance) means "the

exalted of the Lord" (See her Magnificat — especially *Luke*, i, 52).

Joseph's name means "he who shall add"; he was a builder, a carpenter, a worker in the building trade, one who adds stone to stone, or beam to beam. He is the symbol of the building-creative aspect of God the Father. In these three people, Joseph, the infant Jesus, and Mary, we have the divine Triplicity symbolized and represented — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, or matter informed by Deity, and therefore typified for us in the Virgin Mary.

Today the masses are on a journey. Today the teaching of the Path and of the Way to God is engrossing the attention of the aspirants in the world. We are on the Path of return to the individual and to the racial Bethlehem. We are now on the point of entering the Cave wherein the new birth can take place, and therefore one stage of life's long journey is nearly completed. This symbolism is truer perhaps, than we care to think it is. The world problem today is *bread*, and our anxieties, our bewilderments, our wars and our struggles are based upon the economic problems of how to feed the peoples. Because most of us here in these United States are reasonably well fed, we hardly realize how urgent and pathetic is the need for bread (for food) in the greater part of the world outside of this continent. Today the whole world is occupied with the Bethlehem idea, with bread. In this subtle implication there surely comes to us a guarantee that as He came before to the House of Bread so will He again fulfill His word and fulfill Himself and return. The cave, a place of darkness and of discomfort, was for Mary the place of pain and weariness. This cave or stable story of the New Testament is perhaps as full of symbolism as any to be found in the Bible. The long and trying journey ended in the dark cave. The long and weary journey of humanity has brought us today to just such a hard and uninviting place. The life of the individual disciple, prior to taking initiation and passing through the experience of the New Birth, is ever one of the utmost difficulty and hardness. But in the dark, and through difficulty, Christ is to be found, the Christ life can flower forth and we can stand face to face before Him as the Initiator.

The Scottish poet, George Macdonald, sensed this when he wrote the

beautiful words which have brought comfort to so many:

Challenge the darkness, whatsoe'er it be,
Sorrow's thick darkness, or strange mystery
Of prayer or providence Persist intent,
And thou shalt find love's veiled sacrament.
Some secret revelation, sweetness, light,
Waits to waylay the wrestler in the night.
In the thick darkness, at its very heart,
Christ meets, transfigured, souls He calls apart.

In this cave of initiation, all the four kingdoms of nature can be seen unmistakably symbolized for us. In the rocky structure of the cave the mineral kingdom appears. The fodder and the hay, naturally there, symbolize the vegetable kingdom. The ox and the ass represent the animal nature, but they represent also far more than that. The ox stood for that form of worship which should have been passing off the earth at the time Christ came. There were still many to be found who worshipped the bull, which was the worship prevalent in the age when our Sun was passing through the sign of Taurus, the Bull, and which was preserved at that time in the mysteries of Mithras and Egypt. The sign immediately preceding the Christian era was that of Aries, the Ram or Lamb, and this is symbolized for us in the sheepfolds which surrounded Bethlehem — also in the prophecy that the Messiah was to be "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

We find the human kingdom represented in Mary and Joseph, with the human unity plus the duality which are so essential to existence itself. In the newborn Babe divinity expresses itself. St. Luke describes the Babe (in its divine aspect) as through the words of an Angel:

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that *Holy Thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (*Luke*, i, 35)

Thus in that little cave the whole cosmos is represented.

Regenerated men and women claim to share this Divine Sonship with Jesus the Christ. The expression of our divinity will bring to an end the hatred rampant on earth and break down all the separating walls which divide man from man, group from group, nation from nation, religion from religion. Where there is good will there must be peace; there must be organized activity and a recognition of the Divine Plan, for that Plan is synthesis, that Plan is fusion; that Plan is unity and at-one-ment. Thus Christ will be all in all and the Father will be glorified. The *Purpose*, the *Plan* and the *Power* are all there. But we must appreciate them; otherwise this Christmas will mean very little to us — as the first Christmas meant very little to the men and women of the First Century.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Condensed from the fourth of a series of lectures delivered by Dr. Banks at Theosophical University, during 1941-2, under the general title "Studies in the Life of Jesus Christ." Dr. Banks is Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, San Diego, California, and is also an active Fellow of the Theosophical Society. ([return to text](#))
2. See *The Mysteries of Magic*, by Eliphas Levi, p. 48. ([return to text](#))
3. Bonwick, *Egyptian Belief* — quoted in *The Great Law* by Williamson, p. 26. ([return to text](#))

STUDIES IN "THE MAHATMA LETTERS" — *G. de Purucker*

This series of talks was given by Dr. de Purucker at the close of the Lodge meetings, mainly in 1941, when Headquarters Lodge was studying *The Mahatma Letters*. Stenographic reports of several more of these are in the hands of the editors and will be transcribed and published in issues of the FORUM early in 1943.

COMETS AND METEORS

I would never state that meteorites are fragments of disintegrated comets, nor indeed that they are cometary material at all. When you reflect that comets or cometary material are but one stage or degree less ethereal than is a nebula, you will realize that the fundamental idea here is wrong. It is perfectly true, however, that comets gather unto themselves in their peregrinations through cosmic and solar space, the waste-material of the universe. They accrete these to themselves by attraction, and often lose them because when they pass by a sun, the solar attraction for such material things is heavy, much stronger than the very weak attraction that the comets exercise.

Reflect that any comet, even the largest known comets, are composed of material so exceedingly fine, so ethereal, that Halley's comet, for instance, one of the largest ever known perhaps, could be packed in a hand-bag and the hand-bag would not be filled; and yet some of these comets stretch for millions and millions and millions of miles, if you include the head and the tail.

Returning to meteorites: what then are these bodies? They are the waste-material, the ejecta, of former suns; and hereby hangs another wonderful tale which would take me several hours even to sketch if it were only to make that statement fully comprehensible. Perhaps I should remark that while a sun in its life-time is extremely ethereal, at its heart even spiritual, as it approaches its end, it becomes much more concrete, thick, heavy, dense, and as we Theosophists say, material,

until, just before the last flicker of solar life passes out, and the sun dies or becomes extinct, all that remains is a relatively heavy body. Then with the last flicker of the solar life it passes like a shadow over a sunlighted wall, and the living center is dead: "The Sun is dead. Long live the Sun!" At death it leaves behind a body which immediately bursts into innumerable fragments, some atomic and some much larger; and these ejecta are scattered through solar and stellar space to be swept up in later aeons not only by the reïmbodiment of the sun which has just died, but by other suns, and even other planets, as well as occasionally by comets. These meteorites contain many materials found also in our earth: iron, nickel, traces of copper, carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and what not.

You will remember that H. P. B. has a passage not only in her beautiful *Voice of the Silence*, but in one of her wonderful articles, stating that every planet was once a glorious sun which became a planet in due course of time; and that before it dies this planet once a sun will become a sun again. You have a key here to a wonderful teaching. I wish I could say more about this, but I have neither the time nor is this the place — except indeed to add that every planetary nebula becoming a planetary comet passes through a sun-phase before becoming sufficiently materialized to be a planet or planetary chain. In other words I mean to say that every planet is for a time a small sun when, just before leaving the cometary stage, it passes through a temporary sun-phase before materialized enough or concreted or gross enough to be a planet. Again, I may add that each reïmbodiment of a planet or rather of a planetary chain passes again or anew through these various phases, to wit: planetary nebula, planetary comet, planetary sun, and planet.

What we call the Milky Way is already prepared world-stuff, both the luminous nebulae as well as the dark: different phases of already prepared world-stuff. You have an analogy in the human body, but of course this is not a lecture-hall on physiology, so I cannot go into that very easily.

Now then, when the time comes for a solar system to re embody itself in the same way as a man reincarnates, a certain portion of this world-stuff which has ended its pralaya, or rather the pralaya of the former sun, detaches itself from the Milky Way and begins to pursue at first a slow and later a rapid peregrination as a comet into many portions of the galaxy, finally to reach its own destined home in space. Always keep in mind that it does this because drawn by attractions, which is really gravitation: psychic, spiritual, intellectual attractions. This nebula moves slowly at first, but gathers speed. It picks up material as it wanders through the galaxy, traversing the different solar systems: and if it is fortunate and escapes being drawn into the stomach of one or another of the always very hungry suns (strange way to speak of im bodied divinities!) then it finds its place in space, and its movement of translation stops. It has other movements in common with all galactic bodies; but its cometary wanderings, the cometary wanderings of the "long-haired radical" as H. P. B. calls the comet, stops because it has found its home, its locus. It then settles and is now much more concrete, much less spiritual, much less astral, as we say, than it was as a nebula, because time has passed, ages have passed during which it was a comet: and furthermore it has been gathering material, the "refuse of the mother," the detritus of the cosmic dust, her breath, her refuse, which it has been feeding on and taking into itself. Strange paradox that in all the rupa-worlds entities feed — not so in the arupa. There their food is intellectual ambrosia or nectar, as the Greeks said of their Olympian divinities.

Now when it has thus settled in the place which is the locus of the solar system re embodied, the solar system that was, and more or less in that same place (karman you see), the nebula or comet has become a vast lens or disk-shaped body of astral stuff — call it nebular matter, call it cometary matter if you will — with laya-centers here and there scattered through it, like organs in a body. We may call these laya-centers by the more common name in science and say that they are the nuclei. In the center is the largest such nucleus which grows or develops or evolves into becoming a sun. The smaller nuclei around it

in this nebular comet or cometary nebula grow to be the beginnings of the planets, and this is the beginning of the solar system. In the commencement of its beginning, as it were, the sun is voracious and attempts to swallow his younger brothers the planets, until the laws of nature come into operation, and attraction and repulsion come into play, of which science today knows only one: attraction, and calls it gravity or gravitation, although it seems to me repulsion is just as active in the universe as gravity. To me this gravity-theory is one-sided. If you will consider the behavior of the comets which come into the solar system, and how the tail of the comet always points away from the sun, you will see repulsion at work. Scientists think the repulsion is due to the action of light on the very small particles of molecules in the cometary tail. If you like. It is repulsion. As the comet approaches the sun, the head goes first, and tail afterwards; then as it sweeps around, the tail is always heading away from the sun, and when it leaves the sun after circuiting it, the tail precedes and the head follows.

Now the solar system is thus brought into being and finally becomes that solar system as we see it with our eyes. That means a lot, that phrase, *with our eyes*; and soon the solar system begins its career as a now formed entity. The planets slowly become more material and less ethereal. The divine laws of the celestial mechanism we call the solar system are established as now we see them working.

Now we pass over ages and we come to the ending of the life of the sun, which means the ending of the life of the solar system, for the sun is King in his kingdom. The sun feeds on the refuse of inter-planetary and inter-solar stuffs which it sucks in with its immense force and rejects as we humans do. This is the body of the sun I am talking about. This refuse, this matter in cosmic space, is the detritus of former dead suns, as you will see in a moment. Now we are approaching the end of the life of the sun. The sun's powers begin to weaken. Actually what is happening is that his manvantara is ending, his pralaya is almost beginning. His life on inner planes is opening, and that takes vitality from this plane. Therefore we say the sun is weakening in his power. That is all it means, and that is all death is: the transference from this

plane to interior planes of a large part of the vitality existing on this plane when the body is at full strength.

Finally the sun dies. But long before this all the planets have died and have disappeared. I cannot tell you where here, it would take too long. Sufficient to say that the sun knows. The sun when the moment of its death comes bursts, explodes, into simply innumerable fragments of various sizes, sun-stuff, which originally were almost as ethereal as spirit; but as the sun grew older became more and more compacted, more and more materialized, concreted, until when the sun is dying, practically dead, it is not a solid body yet but on the way to becoming solid. But it explodes; there is a tremendous — words just lack to explain this — not flash, a tremendous volume or outburst of light and power spreading throughout our solar system, and far beyond its confines. Every now and then astronomers today will discover what they call novae, a Latin word meaning "new stars." But what they see is just the opposite: a death of a star; and they will see some of these novae expand and then actually dim, some very quickly, some requiring years and years.

Now then, all these fragments which were once sun-stuff grow constantly more material. Finally they become the meteors and meteorites of interstellar spaces. Originally spirit-stuff, Mulaprakriti, they are now some of the most solid portions of prakriti, iron, nickel, carbon, and all the other things that our scientists have found in the meteorites which have reached this earth. These meteorites wander through space for ages and ages until the imbodiment of the solar system comes again. Thus the cometary nebula picks up uncounted numbers of these meteorites, thus bringing back as it were its life-atoms of the former body of the solar system into its new body, just as we humans do. But it takes ages and ages for the solar system to gather up all these meteorites; and as a matter of fact all the meteorites that traverse our solar system are not due to the explosion of our former sun. Multitudes and multitudes of them are, but multitudes are not, but are the explosions of other suns in interstellar space which have wandered far and have become caught by our sun in its former state,

or by our planets in their former state.

And one final thing: We have thus seen what a sun-comet is, or a comet which becomes a sun in the solar system. But a comet may be the pre-birth state either of a sun or of a planet. During the lifetime of a solar system, every one of our planetary chains has its periods of manvantara and pralaya, in other words every planetary chain dies and is imbodyed again, and dies and is imbodyed again in our system before the solar system and the sun in that system reach the time of their pralaya. In other words, our planetary chains reimbody themselves many many times during the lifetime or manvantara of our solar system. How is this done? The chains die, their inner principles begin their peregrinations along the circulations of the universe, exactly as a man's ego dies and returns. Remember I am just giving the barest outline, just a touch here and a touch there, leaving out 99 percent of what should and could be said. How does each such planetary chain-ego, as it were, come back to our solar system? By detaching itself where it was resting as part of the already prepared world-stuff of the Milky Way exactly as the sun-comet or cometary sun did when the solar system was reimbodying. In this instance the comet is a planetary comet which wanders through space, comes back to our solar system, is attracted here, becomes a small sun, and dying of this state because of materializing, becomes a full planetary chain, settles in life as what we call the planet and begins its new Day of Brahma.

The Theosophical Forum

BIRTH INTO A GREATER LIFE

Every new spiritual birth takes place through the pangs of coming into a new type of life; and these new births of the chela, of the disciple, take place at constantly recurring and indeed at cyclical intervals. The disciple is a fore runner of the race; he is a pioneer and hews his way through the jungle of human life, making a Way not for himself alone — although indeed his own face is set towards those mountains of the Mystic East — but for the poor and for the less strong who follow after him. Verily, of such stuff are disciples made; and as the chela hews his way along his own self-chosen path, the time comes when he finally achieves the grade or status of spiritual mastery, and then he becomes a Master of Life and of Wisdom. The glory of the Hierarchy of Compassion begins to pour through his being and even shows itself in his body, so that his very presence among his fellows is like a benediction, and brings quiet and peace, and evokes wisdom and love. — G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 1075

UNIVERSALITY AND THE ESOTERIC TRADITION — G. de Purucker

H. P. B. wrote grandly of the Secret Doctrine of the ages, and she pointed out that this Secret Doctrine has come down to us from time immemorial in the guardianship of our great Teachers, in all their various grades. She showed that this Wisdom of the Gods was originally handed to the first human protoplasts by beings from other spheres, by spiritual beings from other planes, to use the argot which we have popularized. But it seemed to me that with all the grandeur of her teaching and the high plane of thought to which she led us, there still remained something to be given which should guard the student against the intrusion into his mind of false ideas, false teachings, doctrines leading him away from the Central Fire. In other words men lacked, Theosophists lacked, a standard, a teststone, against which they could lay a teaching presented to them and find out whether the teaching were pure gold or only tinsel, brass.

What is this really infallible touchstone, this instrument which you can use if you recognise it? It is universality. Any teaching presented to you which cannot stand that test, which can be shown to be only a purported communication from other spheres, and which has no basis in the great philosophies and religions and sciences of the past given to mankind by Masters of Wisdom — any such teaching is fraudulent and has no right, no place, in court, in the court of our conscience. The gods taught men in the beginning, man in his childhood, and led him on, and bred him up, enlightened his mind, so that it could receive and understand and pass on *in secret and open tradition* the archaic God-Wisdom, our god-teachings, the Secret Doctrine.

In getting this idea, this conception that truth, reality, has been communicated to mankind, that it is now on earth ready for us when we prove ourselves ready for it and worthy of it, we understand that it is traditional, that it has been given forth in larger or smaller measure and in varying manners from age to age by the greatest men, the titan

intellects, of the human race; and therefore that this tradition, this Qabalah, this Brahma-Vidya, can be found in all the great religions and philosophies of the ages.

In accepting this view, you lose sight of the mere author of whatever book may be in your hands. You forget the personality, the individuality, of the Teacher, and you look to what he brings. *If he is genuine* you find, not the vague frontiers upon which structures of falsity may be erected by scheming minds; but you understand that here is a glorious and mighty Tradition coming down to us from the Universe, from the heart of Divinity, and that its appearances as communicated to men are in the great religions and philosophies of the ages.

It is this Tradition, this Secret Doctrine, which gave to H. P. B the title of her masterpiece; and it was for this same reason that I chose these actual words, *The Esoteric Tradition* (1) as the title of my latest book. It is esoteric because few have as yet understood it. It is traditional because it has been handed down from immemorial time. Thus *The Esoteric Tradition* is an attempt, feeble it may be, but very honest and sincere, to do what our Teachers are trying to do with us: to instill into our hearts and minds a reverence for and a worship of the truth before us; to awaken in our hearts the divine Fire of love for all that is, which becomes constricted and restricted and usually degraded when it is fastened solely on an individual accepted as a Teacher.

The suggestion in the title of this book is that a Teacher should receive reverence, but only in so far as his teaching is truth. In losing sight of the man, you see the Message. Was there not need, is there not need, of just this touchstone, particularly in the Theosophical Movement today? Is it not absolutely accordant with all that dear H P. B taught us: to look within, to look up, to forget yet to revere the hand which gives; to take the Message? Inspect it. Take from it what you find good; reject the balance if you wish. You may make a mistake in so doing, but you are exercising your prerogative of choice, of discrimination, of intuition. And by so exercising it you give it strength, and as time passes it will

grow very powerful, and you will then take back the cornerstone which you rejected, and in so doing you will receive the Teacher with the teaching in your hearts, and in the proper way.

One lesson I have learned: that it is the teaching and its magic working upon me which counts; for when the teaching enters my heart my reverence for the communicator grows. Is not your reverence for our Masters infinitely greater when you realize that they awaken in us the noblest and best? It is just this noblest and best in us which, when awakened, enables us to see them. And that is what they want: not to have us see them, but to have us awake, our hearts beating in steady rhythm with the heart-beat of the universal heart, and our minds fired with the truth which they communicate to us and which we value precisely in proportion as it is impersonal.

I think the Theosophical Movement will suffer from no more fakers, no more false teachers, now or in the future, provided we can remember that the touchstone of anything that may be offered to us for a teaching is universality, and the appeal to the conscience, the appeal to the voice within.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Esoteric Tradition*, published 1935 by Theosophical University Press. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE BATTLEFIELD OF MIND — *Lydia Ross*

At present, man is the human battlefield of his own dual mind which is fighting for selfish, personal ambitions and desires on the one hand, and for spiritual thought and impersonal feeling on the other. . . . Our dual impulses both use the brain-mind to "make out a case" for right and wrong in the inner struggles between conscience and desire. When we decide aright, our lower nature loses the strength that is gained by our better side. In recognising this power of creating a noble character, step by step, we find opportunities of winning point by point in meeting the routine affairs of daily life. These seemingly small victories unite their force and make us equal to the larger issues which try our souls severely. Even the failure to win, at times may count as success, for the man who keeps on trying builds up his moral strength, and diffuses something helpful into the very air around him.

Every day is a new beginning for all, no matter what the past has been. To unfold, to advance, to "become" is the natural and vital impulse of every thing and every being. The most dreary and difficult life outwardly, may be a cycle of opportunity for the inner man to show his heroic courage and impersonal power. — *The Doctrine of Cycles*, pp. 149-50

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN – VI — H. P. Blavatsky

The present number of this series demonstrates how the Mystery-language, the language of symbol and allegory, if studied with a competent Teacher, will reveal under the exoteric forms of all religions and philosophies the one Universal Truth, the Gupta-Vidya. One of H. P. Blavatsky's most brilliant writings, it appeared originally in the French magazine, *La Revue Theosophique*, 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu" and was first published in translation in *The Theosophist*, Volume X. The editors had hoped to combine numbers VI and VII in the present issue of the FORUM, thus closing the series. For lack of space, however, the seventh and last instalment will have to be held over until February.

That which the Theosophists who hold to orthodox and official science try to accomplish in their own domain, the Occultists or the Theosophists of the "inner group" study according to the method of the esoteric school. If up to the present this method has demonstrated its superiority only to its students, i. e., to those who have pledged themselves by oath not to reveal it, that circumstance proves nothing against it. Not only have the terms *magic* and *theurgy* never been even approximately understood, but even the name *Theosophy* has been disfigured. The definitions thereof which are given in dictionaries and encyclopedias are as absurd as they are grotesque. Webster, for instance, in explanation of the word Theosophy assures his readers that it is "a direct connexion or communication with God and superior spirits"; and, further on, that it is "the attainment of *superhuman* and *supernatural* knowledge and powers by *physical processes* (!?) as by the theurgic operations of some ancient Platonists, or by the chemical processes of the German fire philosophers." This is nonsensical verbiage. It is precisely as if we were to say that it is possible to transform a crazy brain into one of the caliber of Newton's, and

develop in it a genius for mathematics by riding five miles every day on a wooden horse. Theosophy is synonymous with the *Jnana-Vidya*, and with the *Brahma-Vidya* (1) of the Hindus, and again with the *Dzyan* of the trans-Himalayan adepts, the science of the *true* Raj-Yogis, who are much more accessible than one thinks. This science has many schools in the East. But its offshoots are still more numerous, each one having ended by separating itself from the parent stem — the true Archaic Wisdom — and changing its form.

But while these forms varied, departing further with each generation from the light of truth, the basis of initiatory truths remained always the same. The symbols used to express the same ideas may differ; but in their hidden sense they always do express the same idea. Ragon, the most erudite Mason of all the "Widow's sons," has said the same. There exists a sacerdotal language, the "mystery language," and unless one knows it well, he cannot go far in the occult sciences. According to Ragon, "to build or found a town" meant the same thing as to "found a religion"; therefore, that phrase when it occurs in Homer is equivalent to the expression of the Brahmins, to distribute the "Soma Juice." It means, "to found an esoteric school," not "a religion," as Ragon pretends. Was he mistaken? We do not think so. But just as a Theosophist belonging to the esoteric section dare not tell to an ordinary member of the Theosophical Society the things about which he has promised to keep silent, so Ragon found himself obliged to divulge merely relative truths to his pupils. Still, it is certain that he had made at least an elementary study of THE MYSTERY LANGUAGE.

How can one learn this language? we may be asked. We reply: Study all religions and compare them with one another. To learn thoroughly requires a teacher, a *guru*; to succeed by oneself needs more than genius: it demands inspiration like that of Ammonius Saccas. Encouraged in the Church by Clement of Alexandria and by Athenagoras, protected by the Gentiles, "he learned the *language* of the mysteries by teaching the common origin of all religions, and a common religion." To do this he had only to teach according to the ancient canons of Hermes which Plato and Pythagoras had studied so

well, and from which they drew their respective philosophies. Can we be surprised if, finding in the first verses of the Gospel according to St. John the same doctrines that are contained in the three systems of philosophy above mentioned, he concluded with every show of reason that the intention of the great Nazarene was to restore the sublime science of ancient wisdom in all its primitive integrity? We think as did Ammonius. The biblical narrations and the histories of the gods have only two possible explanations: either they are great and profound allegories, illustrating universal truths, or else they are fables of no use but to put the ignorant to sleep.

Therefore the allegories — Jewish as well as Pagan — contain all the truths that can only be understood by him who knows the mystic language of antiquity. Let us quote what is said on this subject by one of our most distinguished Theosophists, Professor Alexander Wilder (2) of New York, a fervent Platonist and a Hebraist, who knows his Greek and Latin like his mother tongue:

The root-idea of the Neo-Platonists was the existence of one only and supreme Essence. This was the *Din*, or "Lord of the Heavens" of the Aryan nations, identical with the *Iao* of the Chaldeans and Hebrews, the *Iabe* of the Samaritans, the *Tiu* or *Tuiseo* of the Norwegians, the *Duw* of the ancient tribes of Britain, the *Zeus* of the tribes of Thrace, and the *Jupiter* of the Romans. It was the *Being* (non-Being), the *Facit*, one and supreme. It is from it that all other beings proceeded *by emanation*. The moderns have, it seems, substituted for this their theory of *evolution*. Perchance some day wiser men than they will combine these systems in a single one. The names of these different divinities seem often to have been invented with little or no regard to their etymological meaning, but chiefly on account of some particular mystical signification attached to the numerical value of the letters employed in their orthography.

This numerical signification is one of the branches of the *mystery language*, or the ancient sacerdotal language. It was taught in the

"Lesser Mysteries," but the language itself was reserved for the high initiates alone. The candidate must have come victorious out of the terrible trials of the Greater Mysteries before receiving instruction in it. That is why Ammonius Saccas, like Pythagoras, obliged his disciples to take an oath never to divulge the higher doctrines to any one to whom the preliminary ones had not yet already been imparted, and who, therefore, was not ready for initiation. Another sage, who preceded him by three centuries, did the same by his disciples when he said to them that he spoke "in similes [or parables] because to you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given. . . because in seeing they see not, and in hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." Therefore the "similes" employed by Jesus were part of the "language of the mysteries," the sacerdotal tongue of the initiates. Rome has lost the key to it: by rejecting Theosophy and pronouncing her anathema against the occult sciences — she loses it forever.

FOOTNOTES:

1. The meaning of the word *Vidya* can only be rendered by the Greek term *Gnosis*, the knowledge of hidden and spiritual things; or again, the knowledgge of Brahm, i. e., of the God that contains all the gods.

[\(return to text\)](#)

2. The first Vice-President of the T. S. at the time of its founding. [\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE HEADQUARTERS LODGE — XXVI — *G. de Purucker*

Studies in "The Mahatma Letters"

This number of the present series opens with the remarks by Dr. de Purucker on the polar magnetism of the earth which were crowded out of the November issue. They refer to Question 13, page 146, of *The Mahatma Letters*, and the Master's comments thereon to be found on pages 168-9. Then follows a valuable hint or two on the meaning of the "777 incarnations" discussed on pages 82-3 of *The Mahatma Letters*. Before speaking of the "777 incarnations," Dr. de Purucker made the following comment which will be of interest: "Sometimes a little confusion was caused in the minds of earlier readers of *The Mahatma Letters* through lack of knowing all the facts. For instance they did not know that the two Mahatmans, M. and K. H., took, each one, a different side of the teaching of the rounds and the globes. I think it was K. H. who took care of the instruction to be conveyed in what we call the Inner Rounds; and M., as I recollect, took charge of the teaching concerning the Outer Rounds. As analogy rules throughout the universe, the greater teaching contains the smaller teaching in miniature; and the smaller teaching contains within its heart the reflexion of the greater. Thus what either Master gave could, by making appropriate changes, apply to what the other Master taught, but there are certain things you have to know about this in order to discern just where the reference is to Outer Rounds and where to Inner Rounds."

As stated in the November FORUM this and subsequent numbers of this series to appear in the future had not been edited by Dr. de Purucker. Dr. Henry T. Edge, one of the few surviving pupils of H. P. Blavatsky, has kindly added an explanatory note, of interest to scientific students, concerning the magnetic poles of

the earth. — Eds.

THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC POLES

I do not blame anyone for feeling confused about the apparently paradoxical comments of the Masters regarding magnetism and the poles of the earth. For as has been pointed out by all the speakers tonight, the subject is thorny, thorny mainly because of erroneous scientific teaching of the past and present — and by that I mean teaching erroneous in deductions. As long as the scientists stick to the facts of nature we have no quarrel with them but look upon them as our best friends. As soon as they begin to theorize, their theories are just the ideas of each theorizer and no more; and you can accept them or reject them just as you please. And if you do reject the scientific theorizers' views, the circumstances of the future may show that you may have been right and the scientific "sharps" wrong.

I would like to point out this: Don't confuse the two magnetisms in the two poles of a magnet with the earth's magnetism; although the earth is likewise a magnet. Its north polar magnetism we call the north polar magnet because that magnetism has its fountain at the north pole, or close to it. Similarly so with the south polar magnetism diametrically opposite. Therefore when we Theosophists say that the type of magnetism of a magnetic instrument, of a compass for instance — when we say that the north pole of that compass is the end which points to the north, we mean just that. In other words, the north pole of the compass is the north pole of the compass. Its south pole is its south pole. Now if you pause and think a moment, you will realize that that compass needle does not point as through a magnetic vacuum to the north pole of the earth; but that the north point of the needle has to work towards the north pole through all the thousands of miles of intermediary magnets naturally. Do you see what I am trying to say?

Thus, the north pole of the needle being the actual positive pole, as scientific convention calls it, this "north" pole, when it is taken up to Boothia, where the north magnetic pole of the earth is, points downwards; but if the earth at that place were the actual north

magnetic pole, it would not point downwards but would point upwards, the two like poles repelling each other. What does this mean? It means that that point in the earth *to which* the true north point of the needle attracts itself is, in that small locality, a *south* pole. *Above* the earth is the true north pole of the earth. These like poles repelling each other, repel the genuine north pole of the needle to the earth which is likewise attracted at the south pole of that point on the earth. This is simple enough.

And now we will speak in a very, very scientific way, allowing the scientific imagination full and free play, that scientific imagination which the scientists like Huxley and Tyndall and others say scientists must use. Quite so, but let them use it in accordance with the facts of nature, not to establish theories. Suppose we had twenty magnetic needles and we set them all in a row, every magnet with its north point of the needle point to the north. Then the south pole of each magnet, would be pointing to the north pole of the magnet just following it. They would attract each other. Do you get it? North pole, south pole; north pole, south pole; and so on. Now instead of twenty such magnets, such magnetic needles, imagine an uninterrupted series of such, from the magnetic needle I am holding in the laboratory up to the north pole. You see now why the actual north pole of the needle points to the north: because it is attracted by the south pole of the magnet immediately to the north of it; and so on, as I have just pointed out with the illustration of the twenty magnetized needles. It must be so. Therefore that end of the magnetic needle which points to the north is the true north pole of that particular magnetic needle. And this is what Jenkins taught: a very intuitive man by the way, of whom we never hear much because he was too intuitive for his time. He was just ignored and sat upon.

Thus the true magnetic pole of the earth is not actually in the rocks of the earth but above the earth. And I think it was Professor Ryan who said that this true magnetic pole is believed to make a circle around the geographical north pole in about 600 years. That is close enough; and of course the south magnetic pole makes a similar turn, being just the

other end of the magnet. Now I think that covers the point of magnetism.

[*Note by H. T. Edge:* A brief summary of the point contended for in this article may facilitate its understanding by the reader. Scientists contend that what is called the north pole of a magnet is really a south pole, inasmuch as this so-called north pole is attracted, and not repelled, by the north pole of the earth. Some actually call it a south pole, others call it the north-seeking pole. But this article, following the statements in *The Mahatma Letters*, declares that the earth's north pole is situated in space above the earth, and not in the ground below the surface. Scientific support for this view is adduced from Fleeming Jenkin, Halley, and Christopher Hansteen. In accordance with this view, the so-called north pole of a magnet is actually a north pole, and the reason why it points downward at Boothia Felix is that its south pole points up wards towards the real north pole of the earth in the space above. Until such facts as the irregularity of the isogonic lines of dip, and the continual fluctuation of the angle of dip, have been explained, science has no sufficient ground for rejecting the views set forth in this article.]

"THE 777 IMBODIMENTS"

Now with regard to the matter of the 777 or the 777 imbodiments, I would like to point this out: The number 777 does not refer to the actual number of incarnations that souls have. Unfortunately in the days when the *Mahatma Letters* were written, there was no clearly defined terminology as we now have evolved it, and they used "incarnations" in the way we all did when we were boys, say thirty or forty years ago. We talked about an incarnation of the mineral kingdom, and an incarnation of the sun; which of course is a ridiculous way of speaking, because incarnation means infleshing. The proper word would have been imbodiment.

Now here is my point. The references here are not to what we now call incarnations of the human ego, but refer to the monads; and this was hinted at by more than a few of the speakers tonight. It refers to the

imbodiments, or passings if you wish, of the families of monads through the kingdoms of nature on this earth, Globe D, and during the seven root-races. Try to figure that out. You will find it as difficult as the other conception, in a way, but there is the key.

Thus, one incarnation in every root-race. You see, you have the key right there. Every root-race demonstrates a power and a substance in cosmic planes, not fully but relatively. So, so far as our own globe is concerned — and our Master was speaking of our Globe and the monads of our Globe now — the reference is, as I have just stated, to the passings or traversings of the different families of monads through the different kingdoms of nature, or if you like, through the different cosmic planes.

Now what does this mean? It means that for every kingdom of nature, or for every cosmic plane, such a monad has to build for itself a general subtil vehicle which will be permanent for that kingdom or for that cosmic plane. Do you follow that? When that kingdom or that cosmic plane is abandoned or left, and the monad passes on through the next succeeding kingdom or cosmic plane, that particular integument or vehicle builded for that cosmic plane or world is shed or dropped because no longer adequate for the monad; and an integument is built up fitted to allow the monad to express itself in the succeeding cosmic plane or world or kingdom. So there is an assuming of such an integument for every cosmic plane, one for every root-race, one for every great sub-race, and one such integument for every sub-sub-race; and so on down, if you wish, to a single imbodiment.

Now, counting these integuments — well, I am saying too much! But there is your key; and you will find it as a teaching identical with the teaching of the medieval Fire Philosophers when they spoke of souls manifesting as salamanders, as sylphs, as undines, as gnomes; because in those days they openly or publicly spoke of only four. You can add the three more that we teach.

"A NEW EARTH AND A NEW HUMANITY" (1) — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

Dr. Reiser views the present time as a creative stage in the history of the human race, a period of unequalled opportunity, when we are experiencing the collapse of one civilization and deciding the character and beginning the building of the new one. Inventions have now removed barriers of physical distance, events have faced humanity with the fact that survival necessitates united effort, the "phantom of isolation" has been dispelled. He holds that the new "togetherness" renders possible the idea of "global democracy," with a non-supernaturalistic religion as the basis for the intellectual and social unification of the peoples of the world; and points to the necessity for a social super-organism, to centralize and unify the complex problems that have arisen with the crash of old conditions and the coming of a new age in world-history. He visions super-national institutions that shall be to the new social organism what the central nervous system, the cerebro-spinal axis, is to the physical organism, and he foresees the evolution of a world-sensorium for the social organism, a center of intellectual-social control analogous to the cerebral cortex in the individual. And, in this forward step on the ladder of human-evolution, it is his conviction that America must provide the ideology for the new age, must "dare and imagine the blueprints of the structure of a planetary abode fit for the children of all men, Oriental and Occidental, European, and American," a pattern of international living, "a planned society of universal ends."

Face to face with a new era, we must orientate ourselves to a universe of dynamic processes, must cease to function on outworn principles and ideas and advance into the new system, the non-Aristotelian-non-Euclidian-non-Newtonian system made possible by the discoveries of relativity physics, quantum theory, etc., of recent years, which have added to our knowledge of what is fundamental in processes and relations in nature. Dr. Reiser holds, with Alfred Korzybski, the author

of *The Manhood of Humanity* and *Science and Sanity*, that this newer system has one underlying structure and metaphysics giving a sound basis for a coherent theory of nature as the universal matrix of cosmic facts and relationships, a theory consonant with the facts as science now presents them, a theory, moreover, which shows man's relation to the whole of which he is a part and his interrelations with the other parts. He holds that this new system, applied to social science and policy can lift the science of relations and ethics to the level reached by technological advance, can remove the reproach now justly laid upon our civilization, that invention has outstripped ethical progress. Ethics, say the advocates of the new system, must be on a scientific basis, to show that selfishness is self-defeating. This, says Dr. Reiser, supported by the new theory of nature and metaphysics and by up-to-date biological discovery, is the remedy for the ills of society as we know them.

The mental reorientation that must be accomplished before change in any social program for human life can be effected includes understanding and acceptance of the fact that modern civilization is electro-dynamic; that none of the triumphs of electrical engineering could have been achieved had there not been developments in mathematical theory which broke with the principles of the Aristotelian-Euclidian system. Dr. Reiser aptly remarks that you cannot run a motor-car on those outmoded principles. It remains for us to humanize the new science, to apply its discoveries to ethico-social problems, and bring human relations abreast of what is now held of organism, of the inter-relations of parts of wholes to one another, of the relation of parts to wholes, of wholes to greater wholes, in successively higher integrations. Dr. Reiser perceives the analogy between geometry and ethics — the Pythagorean key to structure — and suggests that the next step in evolution involves global thinking, thinking in terms of curvature, instead of the old planal thinking. We live on a round earth; the consequences of what we do eventually return to us. Dr. Reiser stresses this "social karma," which he mentions as the equivalent of the ancient oriental teaching of *samsara*. Global thinking might well be

found to revolutionize ideas of social responsibility on the large scale in world affairs. He also recalls the argument put forward by Sir Arthur Eddington years ago apropos of the interdependence of the parts of an organism: that of the electron taken alone nothing whatever could be said; and the statement in Eddington's last book that "the only property possessed by the elementary particle is its relation to the whole structure of existence, and the particle is independent because it has contributed its quota to the universal framework of relations." Thus vitally interwoven are the destinies of the entities that compose an organism, microcosmic or macrocosmic.

Dynamic humanism, the new world-religion visioned by Dr. Reiser, is intended to give man a view of nature in harmony with the latest findings of science — he states that the whole trend in physics and biology is toward the acceptance of the concept of properties and parts within organized wholes, while in mathematics, logic, and psychology the same tendency may be marked. And dynamic humanism is to include with these views of Occidental science the mysticism of the Orient. Divinity in the new system is presented as the striving of the part, the human being, towards the completeness of the universal organism, the finite aspiring to the "As-Yet-Unknown." A hint is given as to the emergence of a consciousness of inner oneness equivalent to a "fellowship of the spirit"; and a synthesis of instinct and reason in a higher mode of apprehension akin to the sporadic "hunches" now experienced, which would bring fellow-beings into direct inner contact with one another and with reality.

A New Earth and a New Humanity presents an arraignment of the old assumptions concerning the nature of our world, and marshals evidence showing that though scientific advance has made these no longer tenable, they remain as misapprehensions and misinterpretations of truth which can be dislodged in favor of a newer system only by study and hard thinking. This book gives a most readable summary of just how the newer science differs from the older in regard to time and space, force and matter, geometry, mathematics, logic, causality, in the universe; and, in addition, contains intuitive

forward-looking concepts pointing to further scientific developments in a way that removes the dread of just another dogmatic system like the old theology or science. Dr. Reiser's charge of inadequacy is applied to the very language we use to transmit what we believe to be the truth about the universe; and he introduces readers to the new science of semantics, which aims to bring our words and symbols into accord with facts about the structure of the world we live in.

It is to an improved system of education that Dr. Reiser looks as the means of gradually passing on the cultural ideals and practices desirable in the new age — education freed from the present limitations due to subservience to the methods of "big business" and propaganda. He looks on education as "a socially accepted (conventionalized) philosophy in action," and would have educational systems given breadth and depth by the inclusive study of the religions and philosophies of the world as well as of up-to-date science.

Voluntary co-operation in such synthesis on the part of the nations would stimulate men to avail themselves more fully and with added creative power, of the essentially human time-binding faculty, which enables men to collect knowledge of and generalize upon past human experience and achievement, and become builders of progressively higher civilizations. Destroyers of civilizations, as we are learning at present, ignore and scorn this human faculty. Dr. Reiser evidently expects, in this proposed synthesis of religions and philosophies, that the Orient has much of value to contribute.

Is Dr. Reiser aware of what the wisdom of the East has already contributed to the revitalizing of Western culture? More than 50 years ago, in 1888, in anticipation of and preparation for the demand for a reorientation to philosophy, religion, and science based on the structure of the universe, *The Secret Doctrine* by H. P. Blavatsky, the Founder of the Theosophical Movement, had for its sub-title, "The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy."

In two large volumes, dealing respectively with Cosmology and Anthropology, it presents a system inclusive of these three "offsprings

of the spirit of man," that meets the requirements of the world today. The new cycle then about to open upon the upward arc of spiritual evolution for the human race warranted the renaissance of that most ancient wisdom-science — the source of all the wisdom and science that reached Europe and came to the West by way of Greece. The ancient wisdom and science, however, were free from, were unadulterated by, the dogmatic distortions and misinterpretations later to be undergone during a period favorable to the observation and study of the physical, vehicular side of nature, but less favorable to the understanding of the Divinity and Intelligence which are the consciousness aspects of the Great Being whose physical form is the external universe studied by the scientists.

It is interesting to note that this most ancient science is in close accord with the most recent scientific discoveries of our day. In his book, *Man in Evolution*, Dr. G. de Purucker, the late Leader of the Theosophical Society, gives a list of theories concerning force, matter, modes of motion, radio-activity, the descent of man, electro-magnetic phenomena, similarity of large- and small-scale systems, etc., showing how the ancient teachings are a forecast of the modern findings; and he devotes several chapters to enlarging upon this subject. Scores of other examples of this agreement of the most ancient and the most modern theories have been recorded by students of Theosophy in Theosophical books and magazines.

Any comprehensive survey of science must include recapitulation of these early theories, which are not only abreast of what scientists have discovered today but also point the way to further knowledge of processes in the universe which have not yielded their secret to analytical scientific methods.

Theosophy presents a theory of Nature as a complete organism, an inner, invisible Nature as well as a physical form. Each infinitesimal life in that cosmic organism partakes of everything that is in the greater life in which it lives, and has the ultimate possibility of evolving from within itself, in an ascending scale during vast cycles of growth

and expansion, the spiritual consciousness, the high intelligence of the great whole. Man is in his inmost a spark of universal divinity, man's intelligence is a part of cosmic mind. Man came into manifestation with the universe; his destiny is indissolubly linked with it, as is that of every part, and as is every part with every other part. There is "an open future" for the human race in future cycles during which the human spiritual and intellectual faculties will have their fruition. Theosophy presents the cosmology which includes increasingly greater whole systems in which planetary and solar systems are to the higher organisms as the atom is to the physical body of man. The correspondence between large-and small-scale systems holds throughout. There is one cosmic law, one pattern of structure for all life.

"There must be an intelligent entity to act upon environment," writes Dr. G. de Purucker in his *Man in Evolution*. Man is the entity which can act consciously upon his environment. It is human destiny to contribute "the human quota" to "the universal framework of relations"; and this consists in becoming aware of his higher faculties and consciously exercising them in conformity with the cosmic laws and patterns of life. It is the performance of this function that makes of man an individual in the truest sense of the word. It is the presence in the human constitution of a ray of the cosmic mind that enables man to seek to know and to understand the structure of the universe.

Dr. Reiser has a happy faculty of bringing to light intuitive statements made by writers on science. He quotes from the works of Mary Everest Boole, the wife of the pioneer exponent of the new mathematics, and his co-worker, her belief in "the Ancient Secret that mathematical notation is not a mere mechanism for calculating numbers, but the supporting framework of the same organic relations of man's mind to the As-Yet-Unknown of which religions are various outward expressions." This explains the ability of the intuitive scientist to predict the evidence of the theory he holds, and rediscover in the external world the proof of the processes which he has intuited. The age-old injunction, Man, Know Thyself, implied as much for scientific

as for ethical knowledge and advance.

The Secret Doctrine presents also a comprehensive study of the mythologies and religions of the world, showing conclusively that the source of all of them is one original wisdom-teaching that combines religion and science. The symbols common to them all, now in many cases sadly distorted and degraded in meaning, originally gave the story in "super-verbal" form of the processes in the evolution of man and of the universe. They have ever been the shorthand record of the science of the invisible and the visible, decipherable only to those whose inner faculties have been awakened. For those who can thus read there have never been barriers of ignorance and prejudice dividing human beings of different faiths. When humanity develops these inner faculties, when there is a revival of the true "geometric instinct," when the false theories of man and nature have been thrown aside in the coming reorientation to Truth, once more there need be no conflict between religion and science. The Theosophical teaching concerning the complete constitution of man offers a convincing explanation also of that inner conflict which marks individual experience but which is destined to result in the triumph of the upper triad of the principles which make up human nature.

With a theory of nature in agreement with the discoveries of science, with a conception of man's destiny as part of universal destiny, a conception consonant with man's highest aspirations and his human dignity, with a science of invisible as well as of visible Nature, with its teaching of a common source for the great religions which would give a new motivation to universal ethics, the Theosophical synthesis, accepted by intellectually and spiritually alert thinkers in groups throughout the world, is a strong factor in promoting the unification of the peoples of the world. The Theosophical Movement is in fact a significant influence in the direction of the humanization of science, of social integration, and a powerful stimulus to that inner process of reorientation to universal truth which must precede any change in the institutions of mankind. Out of the Ancient East came to man in his need, this noble heritage from the past.

The signal merit of Dr. Reiser's book is the clear presentation of the necessity and the reasons for reorientation on the part of the human race, and his excellent summary of the trend in various departments of thought in the direction of what could verily be "A New Earth and a New Humanity."

FOOTNOTE:

1. *A New Earth and a New Humanity* by Oliver L. Reiser, Associate Professor of Philosophy in the University of Pittsburgh. Creative Age Press, Inc. 1942. \$2.50. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

PERSONALIZED KARMAN — *H. T. Edge*

In pondering over the workings of Karman in our own destiny, we must not become so interested in our own fate as to overlook the consequences of what we have done to other people. It is pointed out by H. P. Blavatsky in "The Beacon of the Unknown," in the October number of this magazine, that to have one's own sins forgiven does not undo the wrong we may have done to other people. In Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, Mrs. Clennam, a sombre type-figure of extreme Calvinism, has committed a grave wrong against others. But, instead of making the reparation, easily within her power, but involving self-sacrifice, she considers that her own protracted sufferings from paralysis have sufficiently expiated her guilt. Dickens is of course indignant at this selfish keeping of a personal balance-sheet with the Almighty, regardless of the interests of injured parties. If I have caused much mischief and suffering among other people by my misdeeds, does it set matters right, or ease my feelings, if I am made to undergo the same sufferings in my own person?

What we can glean about Karman from competent teachers is that by it we are all linked together; and it would seem that to dwell too exclusively on the personal aspect of the question is to reintroduce the old evil which so often attaches to the idea of vicarious atonement.

We are taught that the first step to knowledge is to overcome the sense of personal separateness, and to give up making self-interest the mainspring of our life. It may well be that failure to make enough progress in this first step is at the root of our failure to understand Karman. And so we call it abstruse and contradictory; and well it may seem so, to such distorted vision. But the universe is not constructed on any such plan; and what seems so mysterious when we try to fit it into our own scheme, may appear in its grand simplicity when viewed in the clear light of an unobstructed vision.

FEAR, THE GREAT DESTROYER — *G. de Purucker*

The Great Destroyer is fear, horror, apprehension of what is going to happen to *me*. Fear is destructive because it is based on egoism. Think how true this is. If a man utterly forgets himself, fear vanishes because he no longer thinks of the effect that anything may have upon himself. Fear is a concentration of attention upon oneself in an expectancy of disaster happening to one. Lose track of yourself, forget yourself, and fear will vanish.

Fear is often said to be a protection, but a protection only to the weak whose second nature is to fear; it is never a protection to the strong. It is horribly destructive. Of what? Of self-composure, self-confidence. It undermines will. It often makes one cruel in one's treatment of others. Fear is crippling. It stops the life-forces: it makes one shrink and tremble, for, harboring it, one no longer has the daring, the vigor, the strength and the power to go forth. Yet the timid man is always in far greater danger than the man who has no fear. Fear actually attracts danger. Your chances of safety are infinitely greater if you have no fear. Think it over.

Who would like to live in fear of his life, fearing everything that is going to happen, always slinking around the corner and running into cellars, and trying to go up and yet afraid to go up for fear he will fall? All his life would be a continuous horror. Whereas the man who has love in his heart, who recks not of what is going to happen to himself, how happy and joyful he is; and he is strong and affects others with his self-confidence. If fear ever comes into his soul, it is because for the time being he has forgotten.

Forget yourself, and fear will vanish. Do you know the royal way to the forgetting of the self — utterly losing track of the thought of self in your life? It is to love all things both great and small; for perfect love casteth out all fear. Do you fear the things you love? Never. You want them,

you long for them, you yearn for them.

Learn therefore to love, and fear will go; and you become strong; for love is a mighty power enchained in the human breast.

Why is love so great a protection, outside of the fact that it casts out fear? Because its vibrations are infinitely harmonious; and fear is always shaken, distorted vibrations. The Divine is perfect harmony, and all beneath it can arise to that. But fear is inharmony, trembling, shattering, undermining vitality. Look at the picture of a thoroughly frightened beast or man. You say to yourself: Where is the love in that man's heart which would give him peace, strength and utter composure? He has lost it, he has forgotten it; if it were there, there would be no fear. And what is this perfect love which casteth out all fear? Why, it is simply living in that part of our own self which is universal. It is becoming allied with the Divine. Therein lies perfect peace, perfect harmony.

The Theosophical Forum

PRAYER AND ASPIRATION — *G. de Purucker*

When we are asked the question "Do Theosophists pray?" I for one answer Yes and No; it depends upon what the questioner means by prayer. If he means getting down on bended knee and addressing a petition to a god outside of himself, purely imaginary, which the intellect has enormous labor in attempting to conceive of, and therefore which is not instinctive in the human heart as a reality, then we must answer: No, not prayer of that type. That is an abdication of the god within the individual denying its own rights and appealing for help outside itself. That is mere supplication, mere petitioning, a mere begging for benefits. It is purely exoteric.

True prayer is the rich, deep, spiritual humility of the human self envisioning the ineffably grand. It is a yearning to become like the heavenly Father, as Jesus phrased it: yearning to become a son of the Divine. It is almost a command of the man to himself to arise and pass on to higher things, upwards towards the Divine, of which a spark pulsates in every human soul. When we come into sympathetic relationship, into identic vibrational frequency, with this inner heart-beat, this pulsing of the divine, then our lives are made over, we are completely reformed, we become no longer mere men begging for favors, and thereby weakening ourselves. We begin to recognise our identity with the Divine. Dignity steals over us and enfolds us like a garment. And what prayer is nobler than this for the son to yearn to become like unto its divine parent?

This is the kind of prayer Theosophists love. I, for my own part, never sleep at night, never arise from my bed in the morning, until at least once. I have raised myself and attained the experience. And prayer of this kind is not merely an attitude of mind. It is a way of life, a way of living, clothing him who falls in love with it and follows it, with dignity, enriching his mind with understanding, making him sympathetic to all else that lives.

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small.

Yes, for this is a becoming at one with all around us. It simply means progressively making your consciousness greater, expanding every day a little more, to include a little more, to encompass, to embrace a little more of the world around us. Our consciousness, after this way of prayer, of living, of thinking, of feeling, grows ever larger, until finally some day we shall be in our thoughts and feelings able to encompass the universe. Then no longer shall we be merely men, we shall be god-men, and after we die we shall take our place with the gods, the cosmic spirits, archangels, angels, powers — if you like the Christian phrase.

What is the difference between the ordinary man and the genius? The ordinary man is one who lives in the small, circumscribed, shell of personal consciousness; he cannot go beyond it. He has no intuition, no inspirations. The man of genius is the man who has broken this shell. He wanders out in consciousness and feeling to the surrounding universe. He vibrates in synchronous frequency with the universe around him, and then comes inspiration and marvelous ideas. He sees, he feels — and men say, "A genius has arisen."

This then is the prayer that we love. It puts us in touch with all things. It gives us qualities that have been latent in us before but now have an opportunity *to* come out, *to evolve*, *to* unroll, *to* expand. And by true prayer we mean not only enlarging the personal consciousness towards becoming at one with the universal consciousness, but putting this experience into practice. And this is a pleasure just as exquisite: to practice what we preach. Otherwise we are but as tinkling cymbals and the rolling bellow of empty drums — *Vox et praeterea nihil*, a voice and nothing more. But when you *practice* prayer, then you reinforce your own powers by exercise. What you have yourself felt, you begin to practice. You see the light of understanding flash in the eyes of other men, a new and secret sympathy springing up between man and man. It is a new life-force. Thus this kind of prayer is likewise a way of life. It is likewise science; it is philosophy; it is religion. That kind of prayer

we do believe in, and some of us practice it constantly.

We are children of the Infinite, of the Divine. Our Deity is intra-cosmic and yet transcendent, just exactly in the same way as a man is not only his physical body, and not only his mind or his spirit. He is body and feelings and emotions and mind and soul; but above these he is transcendent; there is something in him which is greater than all this. That is the spark of the Divine, the spark by which man is linked with the Invisible, with Divinity. That spark is the most important, the most powerful element in us. It is the predominating and governing factor in our destiny, and if we want to grow grander and greater and nobler and higher, we have to raise ourselves up towards that spark, we have to raise ourselves by living what we know. And then our life will become grand. And finally, when practice has become relatively perfect, the vision of genius will steal into the mind. For genius is cosmic wisdom. With genius, understanding grows and grows, and finally we begin to realize that we are not merely a man with perhaps a post-mortem life in heaven or hell, but that our destiny is the destiny of the infinite all: that we are endless, co-eval with duration, with cosmic time, that the boundless universe is our home; that we are here on earth merely for a day-night; that this is just a phase in our evolutionary journey upwards and onwards.

This is what we aspire towards, this is what we pray for: an ever-enlarging consciousness by aspiration, by study, by living the life we profess — an ever enlarging consciousness towards that Ultimate, a unity with the Divine. We pass through all the kingdoms of nature, grow from being a man to becoming a super-man; from a super-man becoming a demi-god; from demi-godhood to god-hood, to super-godhood, and so on and up the endless ladders of life. What a marvel! What a conception!

That divine spirit of which we speak so glibly — because it does represent an intuition, an answer to that yearning, that ineffable hunger within every normal man — we realize that that divinity was but our human conception of something still more wonderful, vaster,

that we can never reach an end, that it is growth and advance and enlarging genius of consciousness for ever and ever and forever.

Do Theosophists pray? In that way we try to make our daily lives a prayer in action. We have the Ariadne's thread, we have the key, and we are trying to use it. And do you know what this key is? It is our own god-wisdom. And do you know what the lock is? It is man himself, taking this key. Inserting it into our own consciousness, turning it however slightly, magic streams forth from the slightly open door, from the ineffable mysteries hidden within, drawn from the cosmic font. No man can ever name it. It is nameless. Names but degrade it. Aspiration towards it always and forever — that is prayer. By living it we grow. What hope and what peace! What increase of understanding comes to the man who from within himself, from his own consciousness, has got the end of the Ariadne's thread. This, in its steadily progressing stages of experience and growth is what we call Initiation. He who hath ears to hear, let him hear!

Dr. de Purucker often spoke on the subject of Prayer and its Theosophical interpretation, and from among articles of this nature the Editors have chosen the above, which was given as a talk in the Temple at Point Loma some years ago.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BEACON OF THE UNKNOWN — VII — H. P. Blavatsky

This instalment of H. P. Blavatsky's brilliant article concludes the series which was begun last July. In this issue, starting with the profoundest metaphysics and an exposition of the "God Nothing," the Unnamable Deity, and pointing to the Truth which is behind all religions, she brings her series to a close by an almost prophetic vision of the times in which we now live. What role does the Theosophical Society play in this tremendous drama? Her paragraphs in answer to this question show the importance of the Movement with which all true Theosophists have linked their destinies. Originally published in the French magazine, *La Revue Theosophique*, 1889, under the title "Le Phare de L'Inconnu," the article first appeared serially in translation in *The Theosophist*, Volume X.

We hope that we have by this time sufficiently refuted in these pages several grave misconceptions of our doctrine and beliefs; that amongst others which insists in regarding Theosophists — those at least who have founded the Society — as polytheists or atheists. We are neither the one nor the other, any more than certain Gnostics were, who, while believing in the existence of planetary, solar and lunar gods, offered no prayers to them nor dedicated any altars. Not believing in a personal god, *outside of man who is the temple thereof* according to Paul and other Initiates, we believe in an impersonal and absolute Principle (1) so far beyond human conception, that we see nothing less than a blasphemer and presumptuous madman in anyone who tries to define that great universal Mystery. All that has been taught us about this eternal and unique Spirit, is that it is neither spirit nor matter nor substance, nor thought, but is *the container of all these things, the absolute container*. In a word, it is the "God nothing" of Basilides, so little understood even by the learned and ingenious annalists of the Musee Guimet (Vol. XIV), who define the term somewhat satirically as

this "god nothing, who has ordained and foreseen everything, although he has neither reason nor will."

Yes, truly, and this "god nothing," being identical with the Parabrahm of the Vedantins — the grandest as well as the most philosophical of conceptions — is identical also with the *Ain-Soph* of the Jewish Kabalists. The latter is also "the god who is not," "Ain" signifying *non-being* or: the Absolute, the *Nothing* or Τὸ οὐδὲν ἕν of Basilides: that is to say, the human intelligence, being limited on this material plane, cannot conceive anything that *is*, which does not exist under any form. Since our idea of a *being* is limited to *something* which exists, either in substance — actual or potential — or in the nature of things, or only in our ideas, that which cannot be perceived by the senses, or conceived by our intellect which conditions everything, does not exist for us.

"Where, then, do you locate Nirvana, O great Arhat?" asked a king of a venerable Buddhist ascetic whom he was questioning about the Good Law.

"Nowhere, O great king," was the reply.

"Nirvana, then, does not exist?" said the king.

"Nirvana, *is*, but does not exist," answered the ascetic. The same is true of the God "who is not," a faulty *literal* translation, for one ought to read esoterically "*the god who does not exist but who is.*" For the masculine of οὐδέν is οὐδ-εἷς and means "and not somebody," which signifies that that which is spoken of is not a *person* or any *thing*, but a negative of both (οὐδέν, neuter, is employed as an adverb; "in nothing"). Therefore the *to ouden hen* of Basilides is absolutely identical with the *En* or "Ain-Soph" of the Kabalists. In the religious metaphysics of the Hebrews, the Absolute is an abstraction, "without form or existence," "without any likeness to anything else" (Franck, *Le Kabbale*, p. 153, 596). "God therefore is NOTHING, nameless, and without qualities; that is why it is called AIN-SOPH, for the word AIN signifies *nothing*." (*Ibid.*)

It is not from this immutable and absolute principle, which is only *in*

posse (2) that the gods, or active principles of the manifested universe emanate. The Absolute neither having, nor being able to have, any relation with the conditioned or the limited, that from which the emanations proceed is the "God that speaks" of Basilides: that is to say, the *Logos*, which Philo calls "the second God," and the creator of forms. "The second God is the Wisdom of God One" (*Quaest. et Solut.*). "But is this *Logos*, this "Wisdom," always an emanation?" it will be asked, "for to make *something* emanate from *Nothing* is an absurdity." Not in the least. In the first place, this "nothing" is a *nothing* because it is the *Absolute*, and consequently the Whole. In the next place, this "second God" is no more an emanation than the shadow that our body casts upon a white wall is an emanation of that body. At all events this God is not the effect of a cause or an act that is reasoned, or of conscious and deliberate will. It is the periodical effect (3) of an eternal and immutable law, independent of time and space, and of which the *Logos* or creative intelligence is the *shadow* or the *reflexion*.

"But that idea is ridiculous!" we fancy we hear the believers of a personal and anthropomorphic God declare. "Of the two — man and his shadow — it is the latter which is *nothing*, an optical illusion; and the man who projects it is the intelligence, although passive in this case!"

Quite so, but that is true only upon our plane, where all is but illusion; where everything is reversed, like things seen in a mirror. For, since the domain of the real is for us, whose perceptions are falsified by matter, the unreal; and, since, from the point of view of the Absolute Reality, the universe with all its conscious and intelligent inhabitants is but a poor phantasmagoria, it follows that it is a shadow of the Real, upon the plane of this latter, that is endowed with intelligence and attributes; while the Absolute, from our point of view, is deprived of all conditioned qualities, *by the very fact that it is the absolute*. One need not be versed in Oriental metaphysics to understand all that; and it is not necessary to be a distinguished palaeographer or palaeologist to see that the system of Basilides is that of the Vedantins, however twisted and disfigured it may be by the author of *Philosophumena*. That

it is so is conclusively proved even by the fragmentary resume of the Gnostic systems which that work gives us. It is only the esoteric doctrine that can explain what is incomprehensible and chaotic in the little understood system of Basilides, as it has been transmitted to us by the Fathers of the Church, those executioners of *Heresies*. The *Pater innatus* or God not begotten, the great Archon, and the two Demiurgoi, even the three hundred and sixty-five heavens, the number contained in the name of Abraxas, their ruler — all this was derived from the Indian systems. But this is denied by our pessimistic century, in which everything goes by steam, even human life; in which nothing that is abstract — which only is eternal — interests anyone but a handful of eccentrics; and in which man dies without having lived for one moment in the presence of his own soul — swept away as he is by the whirlwind of egoistic and mundane affairs.

Apart from metaphysics, however, each person who enters the Theosophical Society can find therein a science and an occupation to his taste. An astronomer could make more scientific discoveries by studying the allegories and symbols relating to each star (4) in the old Sanskrit books, than he could ever make by the aid only of Academies. A doctor who had intuition would learn more from the works of Charaka, (5) translated into Arabic in the 8th century, or in the dusty manuscripts to be found in the Adyar Library — not understood like all the rest — than in modern works on physiology. Theosophists interested in medicine, or *the art of healing*, might do worse than consult the legends and symbols revealed and explained through Asclepios or Aesculapius. For just as Hippocrates consulted the votive tablets at the temple of Epidaurus (surnamed the Tholos) at Cos, (6) so could they find therein prescriptions for compounding remedies unknown to the modern pharmacopeia. (7) From thenceforth they might perhaps cure, instead of killing.

Let us repeat for the hundredth time: The Truth is one! but the moment it is presented, not under all its aspects, but according to the thousand and one opinions which its servants form about it, it is no longer the divine Truth, but the confused echo of human voices. Where can one

look for it as a whole, even approximately? Is it among the Christian Kabalists, or the modern European Occultists? Or among the Spiritists of today, or the early spiritualists?

A friend said to me one day, "In France there are as many systems as there are Kabalists. Here they all pretend to be Christians. There are some of them who are all for the Pope, to the point of dreaming about a universal crown for him — that of a Pontiff Caesar. Others are against the papacy, but in favor of a Christ, not indeed the historical Christ, but one created by their imagination, an *intriguing* and anti-Caesarian Christ, and so forth. Every Kabalist believes that he has rediscovered the lost Truth. It is always his own science that is the eternal Truth, and every other nothing but a mirage; and he is always ready to support or defend it with the point of his pen."

"But the Jewish Kabalists," I asked, "are they also in favor of Christ?"

"Well, they have their own Messiah. It is only a question of dates."

There can, indeed, be no anachronisms in Eternity. The only thing is, that since all these variations of terms and systems, all these contradictory teachings, cannot contain the true Truth, I do not see how our friends, the French Kabalists, can pretend to a knowledge of the Occult Sciences. They have the Kabala of Moses de Leon, (8) compiled in the 13th century; but his *Zohar*, compared with the "Book of Numbers" of the Chaldeans, represents the work of the Rabbi Simeon Ben Iochai, about as much as the *Pimander* of the Greek Christians represents the true Egyptian Book of Thoth. The ease with which the Kabal of Rosenroth and its medieval Latin Manuscripts, when read by the *system of Notation*, transform themselves into Christian and Trinitarian texts, is like an effect in a fairy scene. Between the Marquis de Mirville and his friend the Chevalier Drach, a converted Rabbi, the "good Kabala" has become a catechism of the Church of Rome. The Kabalists may be satisfied therewith if they like; we prefer to stick to the Kabal of the Chaldeans, the "Book of Numbers."

Whoever is satisfied with the dead letter, may wrap himself up in the

mantle of the Tanaim (the ancient initiates of Israel); in the eyes of the experienced occultist he will never be anything but the wolf disguised in the nightcap of Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother. But the wolf will not gobble up occultism as he does Little Red Riding Hood, symbol of the profane outsider athirst after mysticism. It is the "wolf" more likely who will perish, by falling into his own trap.

Like the Bible, the Kabalistic books have their dead letter, the exoteric sense, and their true or esoteric meaning. The key to the true symbolism, which is that also of the Hindu systems, is hidden to-day beyond the gigantic peaks of the Himalayas. No other key can open the sepulchres where, interred thousands of years ago, lie the intellectual treasures which were deposited there by the primitive interpreters of the divine Wisdom. But the great cycle, the first of the Kali Yuga, is at an end; the day of resurrection for all these dead cannot be far away. The great Swedish seer, Emmanuel Swedenborg, said "Look for the lost word among the hierophants of Great Tartary and Tibet."

However much appearances may be against the Theosophical Society, however unpopular it may be among those who hold all *innovation* in horror, one thing is certain. *That which our enemies look upon as an invention of the 19th century, is as old as the world.*

Our Society is the tree of Brotherhood sprung from a seed planted in the world by the angel of Charity and of Justice, on the day when the first Cain killed the first Abel. During the long centuries of the slavery of woman and the misery of the poor, this seed was watered by all the bitter tears shed by the weak and the oppressed. Blessed hands have replanted the seed in one corner of the earth and another, and in different climes, and at epochs far apart. "Do not to another the thing thou wouldst not he should do to thee," said Confucius to his disciples. "Love one another, and love every living creature," preached the Lord Buddha to his Arhats. "Love one another," was repeated like a faithful echo in the streets of Jerusalem. To the Christian nation belongs the honor of having obeyed this supreme commandment of their master, in a particularly paradoxical fashion! Caligula, the *pagan*, wished that

mankind had only one head that he might cut it off with a single blow. The *Christian* powers have improved upon this idea, which remained only in theory, by seeking for, and at last finding a means to put it in practice. Let them make ready to cut each other's throats; let them continue to exterminate in one day in their wars more men than the Caesars killed in a year; let them depopulate whole countries and provinces in the name of their paradoxical religion, and let those who kill with the sword perish by the sword themselves. What have we to do with all that?

Theosophists are powerless to stop them. Be it so. But it is their business to save as many of the survivors as possible. As a nucleus of true Brotherhood, it depends upon them to make their Society a bridge destined in the near future to carry the humanity of the new cycle beyond the muddy waters of the deluge of hopeless materialism. These waters rise continuously, and at this moment are inundating all civilized countries. Shall we leave the good to perish with the bad, terrified by the clamor and mocking cries of the latter, whether against the Theosophical Society or ourselves? Shall we watch them perish one after the other — this one of lassitude, that one unable to obtain a ray of the sun that shines for everyone — without stretching to them a plank of safety? Never!

It may be that the beautiful Utopia, the dream of the philanthropist who sees as in a vision the accomplishment of the triple desire of the Theosophical Society, may be far off. Full and entire liberty of conscience allowed to all, fraternity reigning between the rich and the poor, equality recognised in theory and practice between the aristocrat and the plebeian — are still so many castles in the air and for a good reason. All this must come about naturally and voluntarily on both sides, but the time has not yet arrived for the lion and the lamb to lie down together. The great reform must take place without any social shocks, without a drop of blood being spilled; which can happen in no other way than by the recognition of the axiomatic truth of Oriental Philosophy, which teaches us that the great diversity of fortune, of social rank and of intellect, is due but to the personal Karma of each

human being. We reap only what we have sown. If the *personality* of each physical man differs from that of every other, the immortal *individuality*, or immaterial being in him, emanated from the same divine essence as does that of his neighbors. He who is thoroughly impressed with the philosophic truth that every Ego begins and ends by being the indivisible Whole, cannot love his neighbor less than he does himself. But, until this becomes a religious truth, no such reform can take place. The egoistical proverb: "Charity begins at home," or that other one: "Everyone for himself and God for us all," will always impel "superior" and *Christian* races to oppose the practical realization of this beautiful pagan saying: "The poor man is the son of the rich one," and still more that which tells us, "Give to eat first to him that is hungry, and take that which remains for thyself."

But the time is coming when this "barbarian" wisdom of the "inferior" races will be better appreciated. What we must try to do in the meantime is to bring a little peace into the world, in the hearts of those who suffer, by raising for them a corner of the veil which hides the divine truth. Let those who are strongest show the road to those who are weaker, and help them to climb the steep hill of life; and let them teach these to fix their eyes on the Beacon which shines on the horizon like a new star of Bethlehem beyond the mysterious and unknown sea of the Theosophical Sciences — and let the disinherited ones of life recover hope.

The End

FOOTNOTES:

1. This belief only concerns those who think as I do. Every Fellow has the right to believe what he likes, and how he likes. As we have said elsewhere, the Theosophical Society is "the Republic of the Conscience." ([return to text](#))

2. "Qui n'est qu'en puissance d'etre." ([return to text](#))

3. For him at least who believes in an uninterrupted succession of "creations" which we call "the days and nights of Brahma," or the

Manvantaras and the *Pralayas* (dissolutions). ([return to text](#))

4. Every god or goddess of the 333,000,000 that compose the Hindu Pantheon is represented by a star. As the number of the stars and constellations known to astronomers hardly reach that figure, one might suspect that the ancient Hindus knew more stars than the moderns. ([return to text](#))

5. Charaka was a physician of the Vedic period. A legend represents him as the incarnation of the Serpent of Vishnu, under the name of Secha, who reigned in Patala (the infernal regions) ([return to text](#))

6. Strabo, XIV, 2, 19. See also Pausan., II, 27. ([return to text](#))

7. It is known that those who were cured in the Asclepica left pious memorials in the temples; that they had the names of their maladies and of the medicines that cured them engraved upon plates. A number of these tablets have lately been dug up in the Acropolis. See *L'Asdepicion d'Athens*, M. P. Girard, Paris, Thorin, 1881. ([return to text](#))

8. The same who compiled the *Zohar* of Simeon ben Iochai, the originals dating from the first centuries having been lost. He has been falsely accused of inventing what he has written. He collated all he could find, but he supplemented from his own resources where passages were wanting, with the help of the Christian Gnostics of Chaldea and Syria. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

A NOTE OF CHEER FOR THE FUTURE (1) — *G. de Purucker*

Our Work, the offspring of the Gods in their starry dwellings, continues in beauty and in inner peace. Spread the word wherever you may or can, that now we have a greater chance to do our work than ever before — a strange paradox. The reason is that while all the governments have their hands full, restrictions of all kinds are numerous and the penalties for their violation are heavy, yet the hearts of men, precisely because they bleed and ache, are more ready than during the sunny days of peace and prosperity to hearken to the God-Wisdom which blesses us. The very uncertainties of life make this so in whatever country, with friends or so-called enemies, for they are all human beings, and we have brothers in the so-called enemy-countries, whose hearts ache like ours ache, and whose hearts bleed as ours bleed. They do their duty as we do ours, and for that they should have the respect which we ask to be given unto us. I cannot say much, but I know this: that I do not think we have lost one single Fellow through the abandoning of his belief, his convictions, or his Theosophical duty; although in many countries now his work is confined to his own fireside, or, if he be solitary, to his own study. I know this: that wherever they may be, in any part of the world and speaking any language, our Theosophists are looking forward to what they know will some day come — to peace and an enlargement of the spirit, and to a rebinding of the old ties of fellowship amongst us all.

Beautiful indeed and wonderful is it that the things of the spirit override and rise above the things of the mind and of the body. What would Theosophy be if it could be overthrown in a man's heart by any calamity or catastrophe whatsoever? It would not be worth a snap of the fingers! There is where we are invincible — in the fire of the spirit and in the flame of that fire which burns in all our hearts. No matter what a man's belief may be, no matter what his brain-mind thinking or convictions may be, within, as the inmost part of himself, there burns

forever that soul-light of union with the Divine, which means union with our brothers, all brothers of the human race. And it is good that this should be so; for this holy light never tells a man to neglect a duty he owes to his own country. It tells him to do his duty and to do it manfully, but to do it in the light of the Divine.

Remember this: all clouds one day shall roll away and the blessed golden sunlight shall bathe us all once again, a sunlight which is inner as well as outer; and I mean by that the sunlight of vision and of conviction and of hope and of what the early Christians called *pistis* or faith, which is the essence of things unseen but known; and the things of the body are what we owe to Caesar. Render unto Caesar the things which are his and unto the Spirit Divine all other that is Its.

Do you realize, Companions, that these simple, fundamental Theosophic thoughts, easy of comprehension even by a child but full of profoundest meaning and reality to the grown man or woman, live in the minds of all our Theosophists everywhere? Keep this thought in your hearts: Russian or German or Briton or Italian or American or Chinese or Japanese, it matters not: wherever Theosophy sheds its light there burns this inner fire; and if the time shall ever come, as we believe it will in the future when all men shall be so regenerated by our God-Wisdom that reality to them will be higher than ambition or profit or anything else, tragedies like the present will never, never come again.

A man is great in proportion to his thinking, and by naught else. Shall I add, his feeling? It may not be required, because deep thought is likewise deep feeling.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Spoken at the meeting of the Headquarters Lodge, Point Loma, March 29, 1942. ([return to text](#))

RETURN TO A PHILOSOPHIC SCIENCE — *Helen Savage*

There must be something very wrong with our educational systems when our youth grow up without any philosophical standard by which life-in-the-living may be measured and evaluated. Because they lack this standard, a great many young people, observing the chaotic state of the world, imagine that chaos must be, *de facto*, a fundamental characteristic of nature, and that lawlessness and irresponsibility are therefore justified or at least to be accepted as a natural part of human life. On the other hand, because youth is naturally idealistic, there are thousands who still look for meaning and purpose in the turmoil of present-day living, many who are demanding that they be given a philosophy that will reawaken their faith in life, their faith in the soundness of ethics, and their enthusiasm for the infinite possibilities of the future.

It has become customary to blame science for the present deplorable outlook; to declare that science has elbowed out religion and has put a taboo on anything smacking of mysticism or metaphysics. Perhaps our scientific researchers will have to take some of the blame. They have, indeed, lost sight of the pattern of the whole in their attempt to understand the parts. Each researcher, wearing the blinkers of the purely analytical mind, has traveled down his own bypath, gathering about him such a bewildering mass of facts that Truth herself has been barricaded out. And Truth *is* the mighty whole. The part reveals truth only as it is related to that whole. Of what value is a knowledge of the structure and workings of the atom except as that atom is a building brick in a grand cosmic edifice?

This point is of first importance, because without the principle of wholeness the universe becomes meaningless and human life too loses its meaning; it becomes a sort of crazy nightmare where each unit must struggle with and overthrow its fellow units in order to survive. Such is actually the attitude abroad in the world today. Are the scientists

entirely to blame?

There are those in the scientific world who realize that science has taken the wrong tack. They recognise that specialization has gone too far. They see the necessity of pooling all available knowledges in order that, correlated and interpreted, these may provide a consistent picture of universal and human life. The very pressure of the present-day turmoil is forcing to a quick birth a new era of synthesis. There is again dawning a belief in the ancient idea of the "wholeness" of the universe, a conviction that, more basic than an analysis of the minutiae of the parts, is an understanding of the relationship of part to part and of all the parts to the whole. What that "whole" is — whether just a gigantic machine, a living organism, or merely a metaphysical concept which gives psychological weight to man's ethical instinct — many are not prepared to say. It would of course be unscientific to probe into such matters!

A few, however, are somewhat bolder; and such a one is Professor Frederic Wood Jones. At present professor of Anatomy at the University of Manchester, Wood Jones has behind him many rich years of teaching experience, and as a scholar and man of wide and varied culture, he far outruns what might be considered the limits of his special line as an anatomist. His latest book, *Design and Purpose* (1) is a lecture given by him at Trinity College, Dublin, in December, 1941, and at the suggestion of appreciative friends later somewhat enlarged for publication. What he sets forth in this slim volume are "the convictions at which he arrived at the end of an extended period of dealing with the problems of human life and living and with the recurrent questings of the successive generations of students that have come to him, passed through his theatres and laboratories, and gone on into their destined spheres of utility and service to mankind." Convictions born of such experience are bound to bear the stamp of something more vital and genuine than any mere theorizing; for youth always challenges its teachers, and if the teachers through an eagerness to educate rather than to merely instruct can build up the necessary "electrical potential," there follows the lightning flash of truth.

Wood Jones declares, from his experience in meeting the perplexities of modern youth, that what they lack is a comprehensive outlook on life and its place in the cosmic order. This, he admits, is due in part to the tendency to scientific specialization, already mentioned, which has obscured the significance of life as a whole. He is not content, however, with immediate causes only, but traces the long chain of cause and effect back many centuries and shows how and when the ancient belief in a universal scheme, in which man held his proper and purposive place, was undermined. It is true that his sketch of the development of religious thought is based on the accepted lines which begin man in a state of savagery, pass him through phases of primitive animism, then on through the pantheistic stage, and thence to the monotheistic. In spite of the fact that, for the Theosophist, this puts rather the wrong slant on man's beginnings, we still can agree with the author that it was the development of monotheism in the countries adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea which had a large part in distorting man's universal viewpoint. From that "restless ancestral centre" the stultification and crippling of man's conception of the nature of Deity took place *pari passu* with the development of western thought, gaining a stronghold upon the plastic mind of the then young western nations and basically affecting western psychological reactions. Instead of the many gods, who, according to the esoteric tradition, emanated from an immutable and unnamable central source, there was now the One God, the God of Abraham — "personal, anthropomorphic, domestic." The impersonal, unintellectualized Tao of Lao-Tzu, even the All-wise Creator of Plato, had been whittled down into a cramped and narrow image of God patterned after man himself.

With this monotheistic conception, man's idea as to his own place in nature became utterly changed. Now he thought of himself as a special creation of the Deity, who, in fact, had built the universe about man for the latter's particular delectation and edification. Man no longer saw himself as in and of nature, one with her other folk, partaking of that same stream of life which informed the whole organism, but as something special, set against nature, separate, superior, and

intrinsically different from his environment. And so, says Wood Jones, beginning with the reawakening of Europe, as western scientific knowledge progressively expanded, their god failed to expand with it; the religious framework proved too cramped to comprehend the new knowledge.

Of course there have been enlightened minds through the centuries who never worshiped an anthropomorphic god; and attempts have been made by lesser minds to reconcile the supposed disparity between man and nature, and between scientific facts and theological dogma. Wood Jones cites, for instance, the work of the Rev. William Paley (1743-1805), who in his *Natural Theology* made a noteworthy compromise between the noble conceptions of the older philosophers and the orthodox theology of his time. His work, and that of his followers who expanded Paley's thesis and gave to it the imprimatur of the science of their day, became by the middle of the 19th century the bulwark of all intellectual minds, who saw in this conciliation between religion and science a happy solution to long perplexing difficulties and "a most satisfying and spiritually comfortable conception of the universe."

It was Darwin, with his theory of the evolution of living forms, who upset this tidy applecart: or perhaps it would be more correct to say that Darwin's contemporaries, Thomas Henry Huxley and Ernst Haeckel, with their partisan pleadings were responsible. It was in 1859 that Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared. Immediately there was a definite and uncompromising face-about in the scientific and then in the public mind. Darwinism took Europe by storm. Deity was jettisoned. If living forms were evolved through gradual stages by means of Natural Selection, i. e., by pure chance, how could God have had anything to do with it? Obviously he could not. What place would he have in a nature "red in tooth and claw," where the rule of might was supreme? It was natural, then, that the very words, god, soul, spirit, should be peremptorily discarded from the scientific world; and the rent between religion and science, so skilfully patched by Paley and his followers, became an irreparable rift. Man, then, more than ever

before became alien to his environment.

It is interesting to note in passing Prof. Wood Jones' assertion of his belief that there was sufficient in the theories of Darwin himself to have turned the tide of thought in a far happier direction. He quotes, and very justly, Darwin's comment in regard to his use of the phrase, the Survival of the Fittest: "I use the term in a large and metaphysical sense including the *dependence* of one being on another." Darwin was, as a matter of fact, far more speculative than dogmatic. Not so Huxley and Haeckel. They fanned the flame of materialism. By their eloquent and energetic lecturing they pressed upon a gullible public a picture of relentless competition in nature, of bloody strife, of ceaseless struggle. One wonders if it may have been that a cycle of materialism was karmically due and its pendulum-like force could have swung almost any theory along with it.

Not only was no deity possible in the picture they presented. There was no place in the new set-up for design and purpose in life. "The search was no longer for beautiful adaptations, for harmonies and for purposeful meaning, but for misfits, maladjustments and disharmony, wrought by blind chaos." Even man, in the words of one writer, was but "a kind of miscarriage of an ape."

To say, as the author does, that there have been few signs of intellectual revolt against this soulless theory, and these only "on sentimental, metaphysical or theological grounds" would seem to relegate the work of the Theosophical Movement to some distant plateau of metaphysical speculation. Yet will it not one day be discovered that the thunder of H. P. Blavatsky's tremendous protest has reverberated in the minds and souls of many scientific thinkers? Her protest was not merely a literary explosion of strong feeling. She presented the noble principles of a grand philosophic science, a science of cosmic proportions which included the invisible *causal* factors that give meaning and unity to the varied phenomena of our physical world. Her teaching, far from being contradictory to modern research and discovery, is the very goal toward which the restless, eager,

upward-looking scientist of today is inevitably tending. In fact, much that she taught in her monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*, is now commonplace scientific knowledge. (2)

In this age of science anything approaching metaphysics has been for a long time suspect — only to be tolerated by courtesy and given no place in the categories of factual knowledge. And so it is with exemplary caution, but nevertheless with many a darting forward along the forbidden way, that Prof. Wood Jones proceeds to develop the main theme of his book: a confession of his conviction that there has been enough discovered in the world about us — a world whose limits have been far extended by the aid of scientific invention — to prove the universe to be a cohering whole, "a series of harmonies in which living things play mutually dependent parts." And what is more important still, he is convinced that this view of the cosmos is what the world needs today to bring back ethical sanity into human life.

He speaks of "living things"; but what, he asks, is living, and what is non-living? How can we bridge the gap between organic and inorganic matter? The way in which he answers this question is a significant contribution to a progressive and enlightened view of the universe. He notes, for instance, the status of the virus, which, hanging in that shadowland of doubt between two worlds, is believed by some to be living and by others not to be living. (3) And he adduces other facts to show that "no-life" grades into "life" by imperceptible stages in such a remarkable way that he is convinced — he does not quite dare to say there is but the One Life, but at least that there is evidence of the unity of design in the whole: in the cosmos and therefore in human life.

Further, he frankly admits that, whereas we know a good deal about the modes and means of evolution, we do not know its *cause*. If, he says, "we are brave enough to make this confession, it leaves us free to speculate as to the possibility of evolution having occurred in the realm of the non-living." Here he brings forward the behavior of chemical substances and the striking resemblance between Mendeleeff's table of elements and Huxley's selected zoological types, showing that there is

something akin to orders, families, genera and species in the mineral world. Then he takes up the matter of the similarity of structure between the atom and the solar system, and the evidence that the atom of matter is no matter at all but only energy. And if one is not prepared to call this energy "life," at least it is "the only immortal thing we know."

Here the author confesses to a harking back to the "cosmic dream of pagan philosophers." For he finds the teaching of Democritus, that there is nothing but atoms (energy) and space, wholly conformable with modern theory. Even the fact that Democritus arrives at his idea by means of "pure thought and unsupported by any factual knowledge derived from actual ascertained scientific data," does not perturb him because, as he says, "there are times when the man who sets his faith solely upon facts hard won in the laboratory is in danger of missing something that maybe philosophers and poets, ignorant of scalpel and forceps, have already realized."

This is a generous admission for one trained in scientific thinking. And it contains more in it than probably even the author himself suspected. For the "pure thought" of the ancient philosopher was based, not on speculation, not even on what is modernly called a "hunch," but on what may be described as a *direct perception of truth*, a quality not vouchsafed the ordinary man but which, when present is surer than any scalpel or forceps, than any spectroscope or test-tube experiment — and far more scientific. It is a means of obtaining relatively infallible knowledge.

In her article, "The Beacon of the Unknown," (4) speaking of the true scientific basis of knowledge, H. P. Blavatsky says:

For let it be well understood, Theosophy has this in common with ordinary science, that it examines the reverse side of every apparent truth. It tests and analyses every fact put forward by physical science, looking only for the essence and the ultimate and the occult constitution in every cosmical or physical manifestation, whether in the domain of ethics, intellect, or

matter. In a word, Theosophy begins its researches where the materialists finish theirs. . . . Theosophy utterly rejects the testimony of the physical senses, if the latter have not spiritual and psychic perception as a basis. . . the evidence of reason on the terrestrial plane like that of our five senses must receive the imprimatur of the sixth and seventh senses of the divine ego before a fact can be accepted by the true occultist.

Finding, then, that there is unity of design in the whole cosmos, and noting purpose in so many of its parts, it is a natural step for the author to declare that it is difficult to rule out the idea of *purpose* also in the whole. And behind this purpose — dare he postulate a Cosmic Mind? If he dare he admits he is going back to Plato, only this time it must be added "guided by the hand of accepted scientific findings." Yes, he says, to some this suggestion will seem an "unwarranted impertinence" and will receive condemnation as harking back to the outworn theory (?) of teleology; but we have a writer here who is courageous enough to press forward toward an investigation of the *implications* of factual knowledge; and he believes that that undesirable thing, mysticism, only creeps in because there are gaps in that knowledge. This is just another way of phrasing that oft-repeated statement of the Theosophists that there is nothing supernatural in the cosmos: what we call supernatural merely indicates hiatuses in our knowledge of its workings and properties.

But it would not be fair, with a book so short, to discuss its every point and thus perhaps spoil for the reader his first impressions of the author's logical, vigorous, and thoroughly charming presentation. One feels that there are dreams the author shares with the ancient philosophers, with Lao-Tzu, with the Buddha, with Plato — dreams he can only hint at to his circumspect scientific confreres; but one also feels that these same dreams he may be able to pass on to some of the young medical students whom he contacts daily, those fresh young minds who are ready to wrest from the universe any and all of its secrets, and who demand that they be given a philosophic science which will restore to them their faith in life through a belief in its

intrinsic purposefulness and wholeness.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Design and Purpose* by Frederic Wood Jones, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., London. 82 pp. Ss. ([return to text](#))
2. THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM has published several series of articles along this line. See, for instance, "H. P. Blavatsky and Modern Science" by H. T. Edge and others, May-December, 1941; and "Modern Science and the Message of H. P. Blavatsky" by H. Groot, D. Sc, F. T. S., January-October, 1939. See also G. de Purucker's *Man in Evolution*, especially Chapter 3, "Trends of Modern Science." ([return to text](#))
3. In this connection, the article by Dr. A. A. Beale, "Where Life Begins," THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM June, 1937, is interesting. ([return to text](#))
4. THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM December, 1942. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE GREAT MOMENT — *Leoline L. Wright*

... in order to become a divine, fully conscious god — aye, even the highest — the Spiritual primeval INTELLIGENCES must pass through the human stage. And when we say human, this does not apply merely to our terrestrial humanity, but to mortals that inhabit any world, *i. e.*, to those Intelligences that have reached the appropriate equilibrium between matter and spirit, as *we* have now, since the middle point of the Fourth Root-Race of the Fourth Round was passed. Each Entity must have won for itself the right of becoming divine, through self-experience. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 106

The above passage contains in brief compass the whole meaning of evolution as it applies to the human race. And it throws, does it not, a new emphasis upon ourselves. It illumines for us with a divine dignity this erring, bewildered, selfish and yet aspiring creature we call Man. And at the same time it gives us a new interest in ourselves and in this difficult life we are trying to live today.

If it were not for men and women — for us, in fact — there would be no gods. Wonderful thought! Something to lift up our hearts. Something to urge us to renewed efforts to be the kind of human beings from which gods can be developed. The daily task takes on a kind of humble splendor. The small conquests of self that make our halting steps on the path of Occultism are golden milestones on that invisible cosmic highway which all mankind are unconsciously, and some of us indeed consciously, pursuing.

Here too is a perfect definition of what it means to be human — "to have reached the appropriate equilibrium between matter and spirit." This brings out a point which we do not perhaps often enough consider. It is the matter of *choice*. Do we choose here and now to impel the scales upward or downward? Are we alive to the fact that almost

every moment of our lives is such a moment of choice?

Many of us may think of this moment of choice as something to be met only at the middle of the Fifth Round. Then human beings will reach the point when they are strong and pure enough to continue upward along the Ladder of Life, or must fail to make the grade for this chain manvantara. But in so thinking we forget that our power successfully to face the Great Choice will rest upon the innumerable small decisions which confront us *now*. It is the cumulative power of these daily conquests or failures which will be the deciding factor *then*. Tomorrow, today perhaps, we are thinking and saying and doing the kind of things that will have a vital influence in helping us to drop out of the picture when the supreme moment comes. Is not this a thought to carry always with us?

The Theosophical Forum

MAN, KNOW THYSELF — *Clifton Meek*

Judge Light's excellent letter on "Social Behavior" prompts me to express a few theosophical thoughts on the subject. "Why do people behave as they do?" he asks. I think the answer can be epitomized into the simple following statement: Man, in his present state, is but partially, and hence, imperfectly evolved.

Out of this arises the difficulties which so relentlessly pursue mankind, and which will continue to do so until we intelligently go about the task, as individual creators, of improving our spiritual, moral and ethical status. We are free agents, the creators of good or evil, as we will. When our thoughts and actions are not in accordance, but at variance with, the immutable laws of universal nature, which, for the sake of convenience and the conservation of mental energy on the part of the mass of mankind are called God, a reaction occurs as nature restores the equilibrium which has been upset, thus causing pain and suffering to mankind.

In Oriental religion and philosophy this is called Karman, or Karma. It is an action of nature as inevitable and impersonal as the burning of the hand which is foolishly put into the fire. There is individual, national, racial and world Karman; nature is a universal brotherhood, and the Karman of every entity is linked with that of every other entity, and when the collective evil Karman of groups becomes overwhelming, catastrophes such as war occur.

Someone has said that the proper study of mankind is man, yet it is probably the one study that men understand least. Judge Light strikes a vital keynote when he cites the injunction of ancient mystery schools — "Man, know thyself" — which was inscribed above the entrance to one of the celebrated seats of learning of ancient Greece. Nature insists that every human soul must grow for itself, spiritually, morally and intellectually, make its own mistakes if necessary, and suffer the

consequences, for only in that way can it evolve its potential possibilities. The great difficulty of course, lies in the fact, that at our present stage of evolution, which is a very materialistic one, too few have little or any interest in things of the spirit, or in developing their spiritual intuitions. They are content to drift along with the slow moving tide of evolution, satisfied with a "bread and circus" philosophy of life, learning the hard, slow way, reluctant to take their destiny in their own hands. Even many of those with spiritual aspirations are often under the self-imposed handicap of leaning too heavily on theological crutches instead of learning to walk on their own feet. The great truths regarding their own divine natures and their spiritual relationships with the larger pattern of life, as it was taught in the ancient mystery-schools, and as it still is in their present day counterpart, have been so thickly veiled with religious allegory, symbol and ritual, as to be practically lost to their view and understanding. Orthodox religion has attempted to cram divine intelligence into a "personality," making of God an exterior being rather than the central spiritual fire of man himself, thus necessitating an agent or intermediary through which, or whom, all spiritual traffic must be conducted. It is my belief, after years of observation and thought, that this purely human and materialistic concept has done more to retard the spiritual advancement of the race than any other single factor. Religious ceremonial, originally intended, and having its proper place as an aid and stimulus, has become a glittering distraction.

Such a system precludes the possibility of any further enlightenment or understanding on the part of man regarding the so-called mystery of life and his own being, discourages any exploration into the strata of his own divine nature, and too often discourages the idea that he possesses such a nature.

Ages ago, before the race had sunk to the level of materialism we now know, but from which we will again emerge, the spiritual Titans and teachers of nascent humanity explored the primeval strata of man's being, and nature itself, preserving their knowledge and wisdom under the seal of the mystery schools while civilizations rose and fell, giving

out from time to time as conditions warranted and the spiritual intuitions of men were able to receive and understand it, the primeval truth regarding man and nature.

It was in these basic teachings that the world's great exoteric religions had their origin, each revamping its teachings to suit the particular, but not too ethical requirements, of various theological systems.

Man's evolution pursues a parallel and concurrent development on three planes — spiritual, intellectual and physical. The ancient system was, and still is, a synthesis of religion, philosophy and science, in contradistinction to the absurd and unnatural modern system (?) of three separate and often contradictory schools of thought. Men speak of the conflict between science and religion. There can be no conflict between a religious truth and scientific fact. The contradictions lie in the dogmas and theories which men have presented under the guise of religion and science.

I cannot agree with my friend, however, that the answer to the problem of social behavior is to be found in the teachings of modern day psychiatry or psychology, for as these terms indicate, they deal merely with the psychic, or intermediate nature of man, and do not go to the spiritual roots of his being. Dabbling with the vital psychic forces of human nature, without an understanding of their relationship to the whole, can work incalculable harm. Like many modern day cults which are based upon half truths they can be dangerous instruments in inexperienced hands.

The Theosophical Forum

TRANSACTIONS OF THE HEADQUARTERS LODGE — XXVII — *G. de Purucker*

Studies in "The Mahatma Letters"

The present article closes this series of studies by Dr de Purucker. It is in answer to the following question which has puzzled not only beginners but also many older students of Theosophy: "In *The Mahatma Letters*, pp 94-5, it is explained how the different Kingdoms gradually come on the Planetary Chain. first the Elementals, then the Mineral, the Vegetable, the Animal, and then the Human. It is also stated somewhere else that Man is the oldest of the Kingdoms on this earth, and the channel or vehicle through which the other Kingdoms came into being. How can you put these two statements together to satisfy the minds of beginners?" Other series of comment and teaching left by Dr de Purucker will be given in future issues of the FORUM.

THE BUILDING OF THE GLOBES

To ask for a brief answer to the whole complex subject of the evolution of the ten classes of Monads, and the development of the Planetary Chain — for this is what it amounts to — is to ask for a tremendous lot! The subject if properly treated would require one hundred books, each one devoted to one aspect.

Nevertheless, everything can be boiled down or generalized to a statement, and I will try to do it as follows: There are ten or even twelve classes of Monads, which means re embodying entities in different evolutionary grades; and evolution, remember, means growth from within outwards, not the Darwinian theory of haphazard, chancy additions upon additions.

Now then: During the first Round, all the ten or twelve Kingdoms combine to build the globes of a chain, or rather rebuild them from their past imbodyments. This is the first Round; and while of course

there is distinct order amongst them in their work of doing this, it is extremely complicated. But get the main idea, that all the classes of monads, ten or twelve or seven, however you choose to count them, all co-operate during the First Round. It is like the picture of a wealthy man going to build a house. He and his architects and his contractors, and his foreman, all get together and lay the plans, and then they collect the workers and all the materials, and all co-operate together to build the house.

I hope I make my idea clear. Once the house is builded, then everything falls into regular order of day-to-day life, as soon as the owner and his family — and to carry on our analogy we will have to say the architects and contractors belonging to the family — all come in together and live in this huge house.

Beginning with the Second Round the different classes of Monads sort themselves out, because now the lines have been laid, the different houses or globes of the chain have been constructed in at least elementary fashion, and sorting themselves out the different classes of monads thereafter come in serially one after the other, each class following its own path of evolutionary karma or karmic evolution.

But it is always the more evolved which set the pace and give the plan and make the pathways for the least evolved to follow on after. Thus it is that man, not counting now the dhyan-chohanic monadic classes above the human, but counting only the human and the other six classes below the human — the human, I say, sets the pace and lays the pathways for the other monadic classes beneath the human; and thus it is that the human is really the repository or evolutionary and originating storehouse of the other classes of monads seeking imbodiment, I mean those under the human monadic class; and this is the meaning of the statement which is very true, that from the beginning of the Second Round, continuing during the Third, and even up to the Fourth Round where now we are, the human monads or the human stock were the storehouse out of which the animals sprang during the Third Round, out of which the vegetables sprang during the

Second Round, and out of which the minerals sprang even during the First Round, when they all were co-operating together. There is the whole thing on your thumb-nail, if you get it.

To recapitulate: During the First Round, when everything is still in the elementary stage, all the classes of monads co-operate to lay the foundations of the globes, and build them up to the point where the classes, beginning with the Second Round can, each class, follow its own line of evolution upon this groundwork laid by all the classes during the First Round.

The First Round therefore is like the embryonic stage in human birth in the womb of nature. The Second Round so to speak begins with the birth of the child, or the birth of the animal, or the birth of the plant or the seed; and thereafter each class of monads, or family or kingdom, having been separated out, follows its own special destiny along the lines laid down by the higher classes: the human for all classes beneath the human; the dhyan-chohanic monads or classes for all beneath them, including the human of course.

The seven classes or ten may be reckoned as follows: three classes of elementals or three kingdoms of elementals; the mineral class or kingdom; the vegetable class or kingdom; the animal class or kingdom; the human class or kingdom; and then above the human, three dhyan-chohanic classes or kingdoms, of which the highest is, according to the rule just laid down, the chiefest and the main repository or originating storehouse or governing group of minds of all the lower classes.

Just as we humans follow in the footsteps of the dhyan-chohans who help us and from whom we sprang in a sense, so the animals and the vegetables and the minerals, each slowly follows in the footsteps of the kingdom above itself. Thus it is that the animal kingdom actually sprang mainly during the Third Round from the human stock, not according to the Darwinian sense; but the human stock threw off germs or monads — not human germs or monads, but animal germs or monads carried by the human as sleeping monads. But when these were thrown off, and no longer under the human control, then they

formed a class of their own called the animal class of monads, and thereafter began to evolve each along its own line; and the specializations in evolution since the Third Round, which were repeated during this Fourth Round — these specializations have been enormous: such as the quadrupeds developing four legs, or the fishes developing fins, or the birds developing wings and legs; or again the whale, which is distinctly an animal mammal, and not a fish, taking to the water and looking like a fish; or a bat which is a mammal and not a bird, nevertheless taking to the air and looking like a bird. All these are what are called specializations, and they have greatly confused the evolutionist-scientists who cannot make head or tail out of the immensely complex problem because they have not the esoteric keys. Yet all these monads were originally thrown off as germs, life-germs, from the human kingdom; and once thrown off, no longer under human control, as stated above, they began to evolve on their own and to specialize.

Thus the highest class of dhyan-chohanic monads guides and helps the second or lower class of dhyan-chohanic monads. The second or lower class of dhyan-chohanic monads guides or helps the third or still lower class of dhyan-chohanic monads. These last guide or help the human monads. The human monads guide and help the animal monads. The animal monads unconsciously guide and help the vegetable monads. The vegetable monads unconsciously guide and help the mineral monads; and these last help the three kingdoms of elemental monads, in the same order.

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HYMN TO THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD

FROM THE RIG-VEDA X, 129

There was indeed then, neither Being nor Non-Being;
Neither was there air nor even the heaven beyond.
What was concealing? Where was it? And in whose shelter?
Was it the spacial Waters Divine, a depth profound?

Nor had there come to be either death or deathlessness;
There was no perception either of night or of day.
Breathed without wind by its own self-power that Only One;
For indeed, other than That, was there nothing beyond.

In the beginning darkness was hidden by darkness;
An imperceptible surging, indeed, was this All.
That One, coming into being, was veiled by a void.
Through the might of a deep meditation was it born.

That Desire which first was pulsing throughout it so strong,
Was the primordial offspring of the Kosmic Mind.
Those gifted with insight, sacrificing with wisdom,
Found in their hearts the bond of Being in Non-Being.

Their splendor was diffused from one side to the other.
Was there a below, do you think? Or was there an above?
There were the producers; there also were the powers.
There was nature below; above, the intent divine.

Who is there who has truly known? Who will here proclaim –
Whence is this creation? Whence was it ever produced?
The gods came hither with its springing into being.
Who then can possibly know whence it has arisen?

This great creation, whence has it come into being?
Whether He founded it truly or founded it not,

Its Overseer who lives in the highest heaven,
He only knows it — or perchance even He knows it not.

— *Translated from the Sanskrit by Judith Tyberg*

The Theosophical Forum

ELEMENTALS — *H. T. Edge*

In the Theosophical teachings there is a sevenfold classification of the animate kingdoms of Nature into Human, Beast, Plant, Mineral, and three Elemental kingdoms. If we regard the scientific view of Nature as complete, we shall necessarily regard these Elementals as a kind of addition to Nature, a kind of detached beings hovering around and interfering. But a true man of science knows how incomplete is the explanation of Nature which science has been able to supply; how full of gaps it is; how many assumptions have to be made as groundwork for the superstructure of scientific theory. To such people the existence of Elementals will seem rather to fill an unoccupied space; these beings might even be regarded as a necessary hypothesis. The scientific formulas are devised for practical purposes, in which they are very efficient. But such formulations are built upon certain data — things which are said to be "given." In geometry, for instance, we must assume such things as space, extension, and enumerate a list of axioms and postulates; after which we may proceed logically with our theorems and problems. But no attempt is made to prove these assumptions (at least within the limits of the system for which they were assumed). So in physics we assume attraction, motion, and various other things, undefined, or perhaps mutually defined in terms of each other. A workable universe can be built on matter and motion, but these two all-important things have to be assumed and left unexplained. In a word, science shows us how the universe (the physical universe, at least) works, but cannot explain how this universe comes to be alive and intelligent — which it obviously is.

Thus there is plenty of room for Elementals to fill this tremendous gap; and so far from being superfluous they are things we cannot do without. (1) The movements seen in matter have to be accepted without explanation of their cause; but after that they can be studied and their consequences formulated. Take for instance the movements of the

molecules in a gas. From these can be deduced general laws relating to diffusion and pressure. But there is no explanation of why the particles should move. Again, while we can calculate the laws of magnetic attraction, we find no explanation of the cause of that attraction; and the same with gravitation. Attempts to explain attraction by some theory of pressures in a hypothetical fluid (or ether) are illogical, since they seek to explain the postulates in terms of the propositions deduced therefrom. Such an attempt merely confronts us with the original problem over again. Thus science has been obliged to use words as counters, standing for unrealized values; and they sometimes forget the entirely provisional nature of these assumptions — a mistake much more often committed by uninstructed people who attribute to scientists more wisdom than the scientists themselves claim.

There is no final escape from the conclusion that living beings are responsible for Nature's activity; nor yet from the conclusion that all life implies intelligence in greater or less degree. Evasions of this conclusion are merely temporary. The electron cannot be analyzed into anything but a living entity; we may say that it obeys "laws," but it is simpler to endow it with a modicum of intelligence and purpose, however lowly and instinctive.

It may be asked, Why do we not see the elementals? or alternatively, Do we see them? But after all it is merely the physical embodiment of beings that we see — that part of them which is correlated to our bodily senses. We cannot truly say that we see the animal or the plant, but only their physical encasement. As to the mineral kingdom, when scientists probe into its depths, they pass the confines of visibility. All that our physical senses can show us of the elementals is comprised or summed up in the visible forms of the beings, animal, plant, or mineral, into which they enter as constituents. Can we see what science calls a "force"? Or is it not rather the *effects* of force that we see?

Many things, well known to experience, but usually scoffed at, or met with an indulgent laugh, as superstitions, are explained when we take elementals into account. Some people seem to have a touch which

benefits plants; other people seem to kill the flowers they handle. Workers may have quarrels with their tools, find a particular tool more responsive than another tool, object to letting other hands use their tools. Our typewriter, our razor, what not? may seem to have a sympathy with their owner. Similar instances will occur to the mind of the reader. These elemental creatures must needs be amenable to the superior influence of the human mind and feeling. The generality of us blunder blindly among these beings, creating unknown confusion. But the adept may learn how to handle them, as men can learn how to handle other laws of Nature, without violating those laws. Thus are produced "phenomena," sometimes wrongly called miracles or interferences with the laws of Nature.

FOOTNOTE:

1. In *Isis Unveiled* we read that Professor Le Conte specifies four kingdoms of Nature: Animal Kingdom, Vegetable Kingdom, Mineral Kingdom, Elements (I, 329). The *Bhagavad-Gita* says: "For the accomplishment of every work five agents are necessary, as is declared. These are the substratum, the agent, the various sorts of organs, the various and distinct movements, and with these, as fifth, the presiding deities." (Chapter xviii). ([return to text](#))

OCCULTISM and the philosophy of the East, whether true absolutely, or relatively, are teachings coming to us from an immense antiquity: and since — whether in the writings and traditions of the East; in the numberless Fragments, and MSS. left to us by the Neo-Platonic Theosophists; in the life-observations of such philosophers as Porphyry and Iamblichus; in those of the medieval Theosophists and so on, *ad infinitum*; — since we find in all these, the same identical testimony as to the extremely various, and often dangerous nature of all those Genii, Demons, Gods, Lares, and "Elementaries," now all confused into one heap under the name of "Spirits"; we cannot fail to recognise in all this something "enduring the test of

universal experience" and "coming unchanged" out of every possible form of observation and experience. — H. P. Blavatsky: "Thoughts on the Elementals," *Lucifer*, 1890.

The Theosophical Forum

MEDITATION AND TECHNICAL THEOSOPHY — *Leoline L. Wright*

Not all the work for Theosophy is done through our books and public speaking, as every Theosophist knows. The Theosophical Society is a body of thinkers. Should it not also be, more importantly, a body of *meditators* — people who carry in their minds and hearts as they go about their daily tasks the great ideas which are imbodyed in technical Theosophy? For it is these awakening truths which alone can form the basis of a new world order. Unless our world order is founded upon cosmic law how can it endure?

This daily meditation of hundreds of convinced people can be powerful above all human influences. Like an inundation of invisible rainbow light it can penetrate the hearts of discouraged men and women everywhere. It will arouse in them something new. It will invoke in their inmost souls such a vision of human possibilities as the world we live in has never known.

To consider only one of these great ideas which carry healing and constructive power — the existence of the Hierarchy of Compassion. How little the world in general suspects:

That its welfare is in the keeping, so far as humanity will make it possible, of a great organization of perfected beings;

That these beings are agents of beneficent cosmic law;

That the atoms of our stubborn brains are forever penetrated by the divine akaia;

That this akasa is the living essence of a celestial Hierarch — a sustaining nourishment and an abiding inspiration for our better natures;

That we have only to realize it, to live in it, to breathe it in mentally and spiritually to become gradually transmitted into godhood?

We can so fill the mental atmosphere of our unhappy world with these convictions, even if they be unconscious ones, that it will help to counteract in the most powerful way all those dark forces of hate and cruelty which threaten to overwhelm it.

And let us remember always those pregnant words of Katherine Tingley from *Theosophy: The Path of the Mystic*: "The forces of Light are already victorious." The confusion and misery that surround us are due in large measure, we are told, to the inevitable world catastrophes which always precede the dawn of a new cycle. So even here we can see a great promise which should spur us to united action.

There are many others of these grand cosmic themes for daily meditation. The works of G. de Purucker teem with their beauty and richness. In *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* and *The Esoteric Tradition* we can find glimpses into the realms of cosmic grandeur which if dwelt upon faithfully can spread healing and peace abroad in the hearts of men.

Is it too much to say that each one of us can be a powerful and active agent of the Brotherhood of Compassion, a co-worker in the cosmic beneficence? For that is what we are if we will but persist throughout our waking lives in confident and devoted meditation upon any one of the magnificent and consoling truths of our sacred technical teachings.

The Theosophical Forum

DR. DE PURUCKER ANSWERS QUESTIONS

INACTION IN DEEDS OF MERCY

Question: To what extent should help and healing be rendered another suffering soul without interfering with the necessary experience of that soul? — the one who receives help?

G. de P. — It seems to me that your question takes it for granted that it is wrong to come to the aid of one who needs help because he is undergoing a karmic experience which he has brought upon himself, and therefore is learning a lesson that is needed! Now that idea of inaction in deeds of mercy is a false idea. In following a line of thought like that we become hard-hearted. We say, or we would say: "What does it matter to me? He is simply learning the experiences that he has brought upon himself. Let him learn them, and the sooner he has learned the lesson the better for him." Ah! but that is not the real teaching. The teaching is love and compassion, that it is our bounden duty to help each other, and that you cannot grow or evolve yourself without exercising the powers of love and compassion and wisdom that you have innate within you. Hatred gives them no exercise. Indifference gives them no exercise.

We never *interfere* with the karman of another when we help him. Never! We are simply making good karman for ourselves; and furthermore when we help a man it is obviously his karman to be helped by us. Actions in deeds of mercy do not change Nature's majestic forces of readjustment, because these forces are fundamentally based on harmony and sympathy, which are the very elements of what manifests in man as brotherly love. If you help your brother, it is obviously his karman to have you help him. If the opportunity is offered to you, it is your karman and also his karman, that the help is proffered and given and received.

Remember that whatever is, is karman. Whatever is, is karmic

consequences. It is a part of the chain of causation, one of the links in the chain of causation, that brought the timely help and the supporting hand. In either case, the man who refrains from giving help, or the man who rushes to aid, is acting karmically; and the one who refrains, brings upon himself the consequences of his selfish evil-doing; for inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin, because mercy is ethical, it is equitable, it is harmonious, it restores equilibrium, it makes for peace. Injustice and cruelty are inharmonious. They make for disharmony. New and bad karma is thereby made. Remember the law: Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.

DID JESUS "SUFFER"?

Question: When Jesus suffered, does it mean that he had violated some fundamental law?

G. de P. — No, I would not say that. You have touched upon a very esoteric topic of thought. If you only knew what we Theosophists have to say about the Avatara Jesus and his life and teaching, you would not have thought it necessary to ask me this question. In the first place — and I hope that I will not tread upon any sensitive corns here — we Theosophists don't believe that Jesus suffered in the manner that the legend relates. The story of Jesus as told in the Christian Gospels is a mystery-tale, a tale setting forth, with Jesus as the type-figure around which the mystic lessons were woven, certain experiences in the initiation-chambers.

Let me try to illustrate what I mean. One of the grades of initiation was called Theopathy, from two Greek words *theos*, "god," and *pathein* "to sorrow," "to suffer." It means the "suffering" or "bearing" of a god — not that it is a god which suffers, but an entity which suffers the entrance into himself of a divine influence. He supports the god in his being, he becomes the vehicle of the god and carries the god, resigns his own individual identity or character for the time being in order to become a manifestation, an Avatara so to say, of the god. He suffers the god to work through him. Thus did Jesus.

It is our teaching, furthermore, that Jesus called the Christ never was crucified, never suffered on the Cross, in the manner outlined in the legend. The entire story of Jesus as we have it in the Christian *New Testament* is a story of the Mysteries. An initiation-mythos was written around the exquisite figure of a great Sage and Seer called Jesus, the Avatara. Around the individuality of that great and noble Sage and Seer was woven a series of tales and legends portraying in mystical, and as it were, esoteric and secret, form, a part of what takes place in the initiation-chambers.

PLATO'S TEACHING OF TWO "SOULS"

Question: Would you be good enough to explain what Plato meant by the much disputed passage in the *Laws*, in which he refers to two world-souls, one the author of good, the other of evil. The passage is as follows:

Athenian: And as the soul orders and inhabits all things that move, however moving, must we not say that she orders also the heavens?

Clenias: Of course.

Athenian: One soul or more? More than one — I will answer for you; at any rate we must not suppose that there are less than two, one the author of good, the other of evil " — *Laws*, X, 896

G. de P. — May I point out, first, that in this passage the Athenian speaker not only refers to one soul, but refers to "one soul or more," and also goes on to say: "At any rate, we must not suppose that there are less than two, one the author of good, the other of evil." Taken in conjunction with the remainder of the Platonic philosophy and its constant reference to divine beings in the Universe, the explanation or answer becomes immediately clear enough: i. e., that there is a spiritual Universe as well as what we moderns call a material universe, the two of course working together and under the general governance or superiority of the World-Spirit which moves to and works for

"good," while the other is that part of the world or universe composed of inferior or less evolved beings, which therefore by comparison with the superior World-Soul can be called collectively the author of imperfection, or what men today call "evil."

The Universe is a vast aggregate Hierarchy or Cosmic Family composed of beings in all grades or stages of evolution, from the Hierarch or topmost point of divinity of the Hierarchy, down to the most material beings composing the Hierarchy; and these latter are of course the least evolved of all the entities in the Hierarchy, and therefore form the material world. The Hierarch or spiritual entity of the Hierarchy is therefore the source of all law, order, love, peace, harmony, beauty, compassion, pity, and active intelligence in the Hierarchy; and all the inferior beings in this Hierarchy derive what they have of harmony and beauty and peace, etc., from their supreme Chief, the Hierarch.

Thus you see there are what Plato, in order to save words, very briefly calls two "souls" — one the author of good, and one the author of evil; i. e., one the source of law and beauty and harmony, and the other the great material aspect of life, which, because it is material, is imperfectly evolved, and therefore can abstractly be called the "author of evil."

But now, mark you, any such Hierarchy is but one of countless multitudes of other similar Hierarchies alike unto it, scattered through the infinite fields of Boundless Being; so that, therefore, "World-Souls" are literally infinite in number. I point this last fact out with some particularity so that my answer will not seem to contain the "Supreme Personal God" idea.

This, therefore, is the real meaning of Plato in the passage which you quote, and which Christians find it extremely difficult to understand, because of their education and mental bias along Christian lines. Plato of course was a Polytheist, or a believer in a Universe filled full with divinities and beings less than divinity, forming a Cosmic Family, just as we Theosophists teach. In fact, Plato was a Theosophist. In my *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, this very side of our ancient

Wisdom-Teaching is more or less carefully dealt with in various places, although I admit that these various places would require joining up by research.

The Theosophical Forum

A KNOWLEDGE OF UNIVERSAL LAWS — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

"To diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe"

This has been the service of the gods during all time. At certain cyclic seasons especially their agents descend among men and scatter the seeds of truth, without which the people would perish. How else should men, mental babes in their beginnings, have gained a knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe? This do the gods until enough seeds have rooted in many minds, after which they withdraw, leaving their children to grow in strength and spread still further the seeds already planted. Then, as the need or the hunger for more truth awakens on earth, again those Great Ones move among men or send their disciples to stimulate human sympathies, awaken the hearts of men, and scatter those precious seeds, by means of which all truly great civilizations have been born, and without which there is such confusion, disorder, and suffering. These laws are based on the all-inclusive fact that the Universe is, as its name implies, one vast being, of which all units — from gods down to men, to beasts and plants, through suns, planets, and the minerals which compose them — have a common origin and a common destiny; that every portion, down to the last atom is an essential part of the whole, sharing, and a necessary factor, in the common destiny.

The gods, through their agents, control the higher kingdoms, all of which serve every other, but men must learn to guide themselves and consciously climb the ladder of life. Every normal man feels this relationship in some way, as is evidenced by natural human sympathy, self-sacrifice, or even the recognition that self-interest lies in the direction of service to others. One quite callous to the needs or suffering of his fellow-men is sub-human. And even without a mental comprehension of the laws inherent in the Universe, this awakening of the higher human nature has given us some most inspiring examples

during all ages, of men whose influence has warmed the hearts of thousands and aroused to service many who might otherwise have slept in the lonely chains of selfishness. Yet if also the mind is awakened and has a clear vision of basic truths; if, for instance, the races of men could clearly perceive that Brotherhood is a *fact* in nature, that all men are inescapably tied together, that it is as disastrous for one body to rise against another as it would be for two organs in a human body to work at cross purposes; if this were realized but imperfectly, could such conditions as now exist in our world ever have been born? There would still be attractions and repulsions as exist in the atoms, but there would also be a desire for justice and well-being for all in their various spheres. What the heart knows would be plain to the mind and explain *why* a denial of this fact in thought and action is so disastrous, so fraught with confusion and pain.

An understanding of these laws is brought to earth by men more highly evolved than are our present races; men whose teachings, if understood and followed would bring order out of chaos, and it thus becomes the primal duty of those who have had the privilege to hear and, at least, partially understand these teachings, to become the channels, as best they can, in their various capacities, to help "to diffuse among men a knowledge of the laws inherent in the Universe."

In our very complicated social structure, men inevitably follow the pattern of nature and group themselves to accomplish their purposes, gradually feeling and finding their way to enlightenment. There is room and necessity for all, intellectual and mechanical workers, philanthropists, and statesmen. Practical philanthropy is the duty of all, but, as an organization, it must be the absorbing and sacred duty of those who have been taught the basic unity of all life, to do their full part toward charging the atmosphere with thoughts based on the facts of being, and thus in making them a conscious factor in human life.

This is the answer of the Theosophical Movement to those who ask why Theosophists do not devote their whole energies in these days of agony, to relief of physical suffering. Thought seeds must be planted in time

for the new harvest. For it is *ideas* that rule the world.

The Theosophical Forum

HOW EASTER BECAME A CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL — *G. de Purucker*

What is Easter, this age-old festival-time? To us Theosophists it is one of the four main Holy Seasons of the year. We recognise Easter as a very holy time indeed. The word Easter is not only used in English but is in use in other languages. It was taken over originally from the Anglo-Saxons and was adopted by the English folk. In other countries they used a word derived from the Greek, or rather through the Greek from the ancient Hebrew. The Greek was *πάσχος*, and the Hebrew *pesahh*, meaning "to step over," "to jump over," and hence "to pass over"; from the ancient Jewish Biblical story that when the Lord God led the children of Israel out of Bondage in Egypt, on the night before they began their journey, the exterminating Angel of Jehovah passed over Egypt slaying all of the first-born of the Egyptians, and skipping over, passing over, the houses of the Jews, because they had been instructed by Jehovah to put a smear of the blood of a lamb on the door. A quaint old tale, and it was accepted, as it happens by most Jews and Christians literally, and is very calculated indeed to induce disrespect if not contempt for what ought to be a truly beautiful and holy tale.

The Passover was adopted by the Christians from the Jews. The Christians, while adopting this Jewish festival celebrated by the Jews at a certain date, did not like to have it exactly as the Jews had it. Being Christians and borrowing a great deal from the Jews, they liked to have things a little their own way, these new Christians; so they changed the date somewhat. They accepted, took over, the Jewish Passover Festival, but gave it Christian coloring and a Christian twist. Thus the Jews celebrated their Passover on the 14th day or the full moon day of their month *Nisan*, originally called *Abib*, when Spring begins to come to fruitful earth, when the buds and the trees begin to burgeon. *Abib* and *Nisan* meant the first month of Spring so to speak — Spring meant the beginning.

Now the Jews, as I stated, celebrated their Passover on the full moon

day of the month of Nisan, that is, 14 days after the new moon. So did the Christians. But they wanted a distinction from the day the Jews had it; and perhaps from ignorance, perhaps from other reasons, and after disputes lasting for centuries — and very bitter indeed in the second, third and fourth centuries — they finally decided upon this rule: Easter, the time of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ shall hereafter fall upon the first Sunday following the full moon after the Spring Equinox. Note the entrance of an archaic cosmic thought there. First find the spring equinox, then find the first full moon after that, then find the first Sunday after the full moon, and that is Easter. But the original Jewish way and Pagan way was to celebrate their whole festival of Passover on the full moon day of the Spring, of Abib or Nisan.

I call your attention to this: Easter is not a local festival, or rather a Christian festival alone. It is a festival of cosmic significance, depending upon the seasons and mainly upon the date upon which the Spring Equinox falls. There is the key to the original holy festival. It had not anything to do whatsoever with Jesus Christ. But they chose it as the date of his so-called resurrection for an excellent reason. They knew something of what took place in the adytum of the sanctuary. They knew something about the four sacred seasons of the year, which, as the great Pagan philosopher Plato pointed out, make a cross in nature, the two solstices opposite each other, the two equinoxes opposite each other; the so-called Greek cross; and during all initiations the candidate was laid upon this cruciform couch or bed, a bed in the form of a cross, and there he passed his trance.

Now then, this lying down, this beginning of the torture, of the trial, of the test, of the struggle, was on the new moon day in every one of the four sacred seasons. The beginning was always at the new moon time; and when the new moon coincided with the equinox or solstice, it was considered, and indeed was, especially holy.

Do you know that there is a Christian fact, known by a few, ignored by most of the Christian clergy, and it is that Passion Sunday, considered

to be the beginning of the Passion or agony of their Lord Jesus, is the 14th day before Easter?

Why did Jesus as a type, this holy Teacher, Avatara, become connected with the lamb, as undoubtedly connected with the teaching concerning the Zodiac? For this reason: that the Christians in every way wanted to connect their Teacher with the promised Messiah of the Jews. They could only succeed in doing so, with even a coloring of truth, by adopting the old Jewish stories. The Jews celebrated their Passover by eating a meal of lamb killed and baked in an oven on the day of their Passover. They were making a ritual, a ceremonial, as all the other ancient nations did, caught by the esoteric wisdom of what were in Nature herself cosmic laws and cosmic events.

In the above I have given out a few hints as to why we Theosophists look upon Easter as one of the four Holy Days of the year.

Good Will in the Cosmos

Man, the Thinker . . . is making urgent inquiry as to what part he is consciously to play in the vast systems of worlds that he is able with his intellect to contemplate. Can he discover and emulate in his human associations on Earth the principles of co-operation, the laws of life, according to which order and safety in solar systems and galaxies are maintained during the aeons of time it takes for the cosmic purpose to be consummated?

Theosophy answers, Man is of the stuff of stars and suns, both in his outer and his inner nature. One Hierarchy of his progenitors, the Builders, have directed the evolution of form, body, vehicle, for Man the offspring of Divinity. Another Hierarchy, that of Compassion, has in charge the advance of the inner man, whose ancestry is akin to the invisible Beings who use for body the great celestial sun and star systems. They have in hand the guidance and direction of that part of human destiny still to be unfolded, when man, abandoning "uncharted freedom," will become conscious of and obedient to, that infinite duty,

which the poets intuit.

The most precious gift offered to the human race is the knowledge of that glorious destiny. Nightly the stars look down with their message of assurance that we have our home in a friendly universe, that we too, like the Great Beings whose visible forms are those "diamonds in the sky," may become conscious collaborators in *Cosmic Purpose and Cosmic Good Will*. — M. M. Tyberg

The Theosophical Forum

THE CHANGING SCENE IN THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY — *E. V. Savage*

A careful study or reading of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, and its companion Volume, *The H. P. B. Letters*, using Margaret Conger's valuable chronology as a guide to the sequence of the Letters, makes the Theosophical student realize that a great debt of gratitude is owed to Mrs. Conger for the illumination brought to these Letters by her work of arranging them in the two books in chronological order. It enables the student to get a much clearer picture of the unfolding scene in those early days of the starting of the Theosophical Movement, which form a background making much that has happened since more understandable.

In those days the Masters had to start "from scratch" as it were, as regards calling upon trained workers for their Cause. As they themselves tell us in one of their Letters:

After nearly a century of fruitless search, our chiefs had to avail themselves of the only opportunity to send out a European *body* upon European soil to serve as a connecting link between that country and our own. — *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 203

Bringing H. P. B. into acquaintance and association with Colonel H. S. Olcott, they then had to begin seeking among those whose minds were turned towards occultism for fit material from which to start the Theosophical Movement and to spread its doctrines.

The reading of these Letters shows how, among the many contacted, A. P. Sinnett and A. O. Hume, especially the former, stood out for a time as among the most active and intelligent workers, who received, principally through the channel afforded by H. P. B., more or less direct communication with the Masters. As the picture revealed by the Letters unfolds, one's sympathy and understanding for the position of these two men and other Theosophists of that time, become greater; and far from judging them harshly for their mistakes and failures, one

inevitably puts oneself in their place, realizing first of all that anyone who is brought within the radius of the brightness of superior men, such as the Masters, will almost certainly have his faults and shortcomings brought almost painfully into the focus of public view. This is a fact often not understood by those who have not themselves gone through the experience of close association with a Teacher, and they are thereby sometimes led to harsh and unfair judgments. Each student, too, is naturally tested not where his strength lies, but where his weakest point is, and "one man's strength may be another's weakness."

As a matter of fact, the Theosophical world and all readers of *The Mahatma Letters* should be grateful to Sinnett and Hume for being just what they were, uninitiated but sincere and aspiring students. If they had been of the status of H. P. B., for instance, they would not have needed to contact the Masters through correspondence, and we would never have had these Letters. Their failures and problems then, are our failures and problems now, fitted into changing circumstances; and as each new difficulty comes along, we can apply the lessons there given to our own lives and characters.

But the outstanding lesson of these Letters is, I think, the following:

1. Two conditions must be in existence when teaching is to be given: there must be a Teacher prepared and trained to give; and there must be students who are ready and efficient recipients of what the Teacher gives. Though it is an occult law that to a spiritual Teacher the giving out of knowledge is death, it would be far worse for the Teacher were he unable to fulfil his mission of giving out his teaching because of lack of students to receive.

2. There was a great lack in those days, even among the best of those associated with H. P. B. and the Masters, of trained students of Occultism, people who knew what it means in their individual lives to subordinate their own ambitions and desires, even when these were worthy and unselfish, to the greater good of the Cause for which they were working. They failed to realize their place in the larger scheme,

that they were merely parts of a greater whole; they had absolutely no knowledge of what discipleship means, what following a Teacher or Leader means. (This is evidenced in several instances where direct, frank, but kindly letters from Master M. were looked upon by Sinnett as severe criticism and resented by him.)

(It is interesting, by the way, to note, in view of how much we have heard about the superiority and fitness of the Oriental over Western students for appreciating these things, that some of the Oriental chelas apparently gave fully as much trouble in those early days as any of the Occidentals.)

During this testing and sifting process, as one by one, in spite of much magnificent work done, various students failed in a basic understanding of what the Masters were working for, and of what may be summed up by the word "chelaship," the scene gradually changed. The Mother Society naturally broke up into its various Sections; all immediate contact between the Masters and individual members was withdrawn; and through the years, ever since the passing of H. P. B., students have been given a chance, instead of working more or less independently as it were, to learn the lesson of working in close association with others towards a common goal, and have been shown, as Dr. de Purucker more than once pointed out, that the Theosophical Society was started primarily for bringing to the world again a restatement of the truths of the Ancient Wisdom, and only secondarily for aiding the individual development and evolution of students.

Another lesson which had to be learned was that however great one's devotion to the Teacher might be, greater still should be one's devotion and dedication to the Cause. Why was it that many who gave devotion and allegiance to H. P. B. drifted away after her death, lost interest in her Work, and in many cases threw over their belief in Theosophy for more "attractive" roads? This is not necessarily meant as a criticism of such people. They often afterwards led lives of unselfishness and service; but as regards the Cause which the Teacher to whom they had given allegiance represented, it seemed no longer to exist for them.

Of course where a student can identify absolutely his Teacher with the Cause (and all true Teachers are so identified), so much the better for him and for his own future progress; but it is often difficult to keep one's love for and devotion to a Teacher so impersonal and lofty that the withdrawal of the physical presence of the Teacher does not alter the student's work at all. Often it is as though with the passing of the Teacher, a prop on which the student unconsciously was leaning, also was withdrawn.

One aspect of the situation that a reading of these Letters brings forcibly to the mind, is the heavy load carried by the Teacher, and above him, by the Masters. They have to reap to the full *all* the karmic results, both good and bad, put in motion by their starting such work as the Theosophical Movement, and this is well illustrated in a letter from H. P. B. to Mr. Sinnett in the *H. P. B. Letters* where she is pointing out the consequences of the many mistakes made. She says:

. . . it is Mahatma K. H.'s *Karma*. If you have never given a thought to what may be His suffering during the *human* intervals of His Mahatmaship — then you have something yet to learn. "You were warned" — says His Chohan — and He answers — "I was." Still He says He is glad He is yet no Mejnour, no dried up plant, and that had He to suffer over and over again — He would still do the same for He knows that real good for humanity has come out from all this suffering. . . . — *Letters From H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*

At the present day we can look back over a period of some seventy years, a period full of interest, with much progress made, with many failures recorded, and many changes in the Theosophic scene. We can ask ourselves how many are now trained students, with a relative appreciation of what chelaship means, seeing in its true proportion their place in the vast scheme, with an appreciation of the Teachers which is not marred by the personal element, and above all with a knowledge of what it means to follow unwaveringly the Representative of the Masters among us?

I believe there are thousands who have profited by the lessons of the past. And now the question is, Is there a further lesson to be learned? Does a time come in the student's development when, after learning how to follow a Leader, he must learn to stand on his own feet, alone, discerning for himself the Path that has been pointed out for him for so long? As the Masters have said:

The sun of Theosophy must shine for all, not for a part. There is more of this movement than you have yet had an inkling of, and the work of the T. S. is linked in with similar work that is secretly going on in all parts of the world. — *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 271

And elsewhere K. H. says:

You see then, that we have weightier matters than small societies to think about; yet, the T. S. must not be neglected. — *Op. cit.*, p. 11

Has perhaps a time come when some of this weightier work the Masters have in charge demands all the trained occultists that they can summon to their aid from the outer scene? And that the enduring work of protection of Humanity by the Guardian Wall is going on behind the scenes perhaps with increased vigor in these perilous times?

But through all the years that have passed, and those that are to follow, during the times when the Master by one means or another contacted individual students; during the time when the different Societies in the Theosophical Movement were working more or less as integral units, with a Representative of the Masters among them; and now while perhaps the digesting and fruition time needs not the personal presence of a Teacher: of one thing we may be certain: The Movement which the Masters started will not be deserted by Them, for their Work is still alive and flourishing; and as H. P. B. said: "Well — keep courage and go on. If we remain *ten* persons in the Society united strongly — it *cannot* die. . . ."

REINCARNATION: A FORGOTTEN CHRISTIAN TEACHING (1) — S. H. Frank

When H. P. Blavatsky started the Theosophical Society in 1875 the doctrine of Reincarnation was so little known in the West that the idea that we come back to earth for rebirth was laughed at. Today many thinking people accept it, while many others at least do not reject it. However, the great majority of orthodox Christians have no idea that during the early centuries of the Christian era it was a doctrine held by many devoted Christians, including some of the greatest Christian Fathers.

Doubtless one of the reasons why present-day Christians have no suspicion that it was an early teaching in their Church is that in the New Testament there is little direct reference to it. It is not specifically taught. So the doubter may well ask, "How is it that a doctrine of such importance should be referred to at best in an incidental way instead of being dealt with explicitly?" It is a fair question, but instead of being a poser the answer is quite simple. In *Matthew*, xv, 24, we read, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Reincarnation was the general belief of the Jews at the time that Jesus came to them; it was the accepted belief of the Pharisees, by far the largest and most influential sect. So if Jesus considered his mission to be to influence Israel, what need to specialize on a teaching already believed in by them, any more than argue to convince them of the existence of a God in whom they already believed?

Further, Reincarnation was a common belief among the peoples in the surrounding countries. It was believed in by the Manicheans, who were not Christians but whose teachings had great influence with the followers of Christ; by the Gnostics, and by a Christian sect significantly known as the Pre-Existants. Origen and Clement of Alexandria, two of the most respected Christian Fathers of the First Century, plainly taught it. Josephus in the First Century speaks of it as the belief of the influential Pharisees. Philo Judaeus, a Platonizing Jew and

contemporary of Josephus, taught Reincarnation.

So, if in the early days of the Church the doctrine was so well known, and if it has since disappeared, on whom properly rests the burden of proof — on those followers of Jesus (including his own disciples) who believed in Reincarnation; or on those followers who centuries later have forgotten what their predecessors believed in?

But how could so important a teaching be so almost completely forgotten? The answer is *to be found* in an historical fact which likewise has been forgotten: namely, that at the Council of Constantinople held 553 a. d. it was anathematized. So it was forgotten under compulsion.

In *Psalms*, lxxxii, 5-6-7, we read:

They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you children of the most High. But ye shall die like men.

Here we are told that we are gods, that we all are *Children of the Most High*, but that we shall die like men. The fact that *as men* we die cannot take away the imperishableness of godhood. Gods are supposed to have eternal life, so if we are gods, then, logically we must have lived before, and no matter how often we may die as men, we should continue to be eternal. The same is repeated in *Isaiah*, xli, 23, "That we may know that ye are gods."

Then in *John*, x, 34, Jesus himself endorses it thus:

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, "I said Ye are gods?"

As subsequent verses indicate, his object in reminding the Jews that according to their own scriptures they were gods, was to answer the charge of blasphemy levelled against him by the Pharisees for saying: "I call myself the Son of God." This is interesting in view of the fact that the present-day orthodox teaching is that Jesus was the *only* Son of God.

Solomon must have believed in pre-existence, for in *Proverbs*, viii, 22-31, we read:

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way . . . when he prepared the heavens I was there . . . rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.

He must have pre-existed to have been there when the Lord prepared the heavens, and he speaks of delights with the sons of men before being born as Solomon.

In *Matthew*, xi, 14, we read:

And if ye will receive it, this [John the Baptist] is Elias, which was for to come.

This clearly enough is a declaration that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias.

In *Matthew*, xvii, 12-13, we read:

But I say unto you, that Elias is come already and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. . . . Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

Here Jesus specifically recognises the doctrine of reincarnation, his question, in effect, being, "Whom do they think I am the reincarnation of?"

The same incident is repeated in *Matthew*, xvi, 13-14, as follows:

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

Supposedly the same question was asked on two different occasions. The second involves a point of additional interest in that he calls himself the *Son of man* instead of the Son of God. This harmonizes with

Solomon, who after declaring that he was with the Lord at the beginning of Creation, likewise became a "Son of man."

In passing it is worth noting that while the orthodox Christian believes that everything in the Bible is the *word of God*, and hence that everything is to be taken literally without question, here we have one inconsistency: that the same Matthew is translated in one place as rendering "Elijah" and "Jeremiah," while in another, "Elias" and "Jeremias."

In *John*, ix, 1-2-3, we read:

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

From this it seems clear that the disciples must have believed in Reincarnation, else how could they have asked whether the man had been *born blind for sins of his own*? And although Jesus in his reply says nothing bearing upon Reincarnation, why, if he disapproved, did he not express surprise that his disciples should imagine such a thing as that a person who never lived before could have committed sin before being born? Would he allow his disciples to hold to a mistaken belief of such importance without a word of correction?

The present writer once quoted this text to a devout Christian to support the contention that Reincarnation was a forgotten Christian teaching. The Christian in reply made the point that Jesus did not commit himself in any way. That is true, but if we read a little farther we learn that after Jesus had rubbed the eyes of the man and restored his sight, the disciples spread the news of the wonder abroad, but the Pharisees when they heard of it refused to believe it, declaring that no man who refused to accept the Sabbath could perform a miracle. From this it can be inferred that Jesus performed the wonder for the express purpose of making an impression on the skeptical Pharisees, and that

what he meant by his answer was that in this particular case the man had been born blind in order in later years to serve as an instrument for the furtherance of the work of Jesus.

In *Mark*, vi, 14-15-16, we read:

And King Herod heard of him; and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, . . . Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead.

This confirms that there must have been a common belief that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of some previous teacher, and that King Herod was among those who were believers in Reincarnation. And bear in mind that a King would not be likely to go on record as believing in Reincarnation if it were a doctrine so strange that he might make himself ridiculous by confessing a belief in it.

In *Revelation*, iii, 12, we read:

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.

From the viewpoint that Heaven is eternal the foregoing can have no meaning, but from the standpoint of Reincarnation the meaning logically is that the soul that has become perfect does not have to continue to revolve on the wheel of rebirth. The Hindu *Bhagavad-Gita* expresses the same idea and clearly links it with freedom from rebirth.

In the foregoing paragraphs an endeavor has been made to establish that Christianity had its beginnings in surroundings where prevailed a belief in Reincarnation, and extracts given from the Old and New Testaments evidence that the teaching, at least by implication, is to be found there.

Reincarnation was taught by Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato and Virgil, and was the keynote of the Platonic philosophy. It was believed in by the Persian Magi, and in Egypt, in Greece, by the ancient Peruvians,

ancient Mexicans, the Arabs, Gauls, Druids and Celts.

Among modern philosophers, writers, poets, etc., who have taught Reincarnation directly or indirectly are: Dr. Henry More, Kant, Schelling, Leibnitz, Schopenhauer, Bruno, Lessing, Goethe, Flammarion, Emerson, Whittier, Bayard Taylor, Whitman, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Schiller and Milton.

Henry Ford has stated in the public press that he has been a believer in Reincarnation since his 26th year. It is a coincidence that Thomas A. Edison, who was a great friend of Ford, joined the Theosophical Society in the days of W. Q. Judge, although never active as a member.

Reincarnation in one form or another is believed in today by about 750,000,000 Asiatics.

In his Memoirs of Napoleon, Prince Talleyrand records that one day the Emperor was pacing back and forth before his tent and was overheard muttering, "I am Charlemagne, I am Charlemagne."

Whether or not he knew of the doctrine or believed in it, Mozart logically should have lived before, for he was able to compose difficult music when 8 years of age.

Still more logically Blind Tom must have pre-existed, for, born of ignorant negro parents, he could play the piano the first time he touched one, and instantly could play any tune upon hearing it whistled or played a single time.

Even from the standpoint of materialistic science Reincarnation may logically be deduced. According to science the body undergoes a complete change in a period of seven years; that is to say, that at the age of 14 there is not in the body a single atom that was there when the person was 7 years old. A man 49 years old, for example, has changed bodies seven times, and yet remained the same individual during those changes. This at least establishes an enduring individuality, and adding to that enduring individuality the fact that many historical persons have at an early age possessed talents which they could not have

inherited from their parents, and which they had no opportunity in this life to develop prior to the time of manifesting those talents, we have pre-existence as the only logical explanation.

Another support is the testimony of many who while in the state of drowning have seen pass before them a photographic review of apparently all the incidents of their life up to that moment. This while not necessarily a proof of pre-existence, at least again supports the idea that man has a permanent individuality, distinct from the changing body.

A further support along this line is that when the body goes to sleep at night the individuality may in a dream go to the stars — a thing the physical body surely could not do — and when morning comes the individuality which has been absent all night returns to physical consciousness and begins where it left off the night before, sleep having had no effect of making a break in identity.

And without Reincarnation how could we ever reap what we sow?

The *Bhagavad-Gita*, the pearl of the Scriptures of India, says: "As the lord of this mortal frame experiences therein infancy, youth and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same." And again: "As a man throweth away old garments and putteth on new, even so the dweller in the body, having quitted its old mortal frames, entereth into others which are new." And again: "Death is certain to all things which are born, and rebirth to all mortals."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Indebtedness for considerable of the data contained in this article is acknowledged to the excellent work by E. D. Walker, *Reincarnation: a Study of Forgotten Truth*. This book was originally published about 1883, eight years after the founding of the Theosophical Society by H. P. Blavatsky, and it is still one of the valuable books listed in Theosophical University Press catalog for which there is still a constant demand.

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PREDESTINATION — *G. de Purucker*

Do Theosophists have any doctrine similar to the Christian theological doctrine of predestination? Do we say as the Calvinist Christians, and as many Romanist theologians believe in their hearts, that the Divine foreknew everything before it came into being, and predestinated all and each and every thing before it happened? My answer is this:

The Divine Ideation of the Monas Monadum, of the Monad of Monads, let us say the Hierarch of our Solar System, or if you wish the Hierarch of our galaxy: the Divine Ideation foresaw, foreknew, knew before, knew ahead, the ways of the working of karman for the Manvantara to begin, to unfold. But this was the knowledge not of an extra-cosmic God creating things and stamping upon these entities and things an irrevocable decree of fate, but merely the forevision of divinity of what the multitudes of monads forming the hierarchies within that universe would, each individual in its own measure of free will, do in the manvantara beginning to unroll. In the same way, perhaps as a parent or as a Master, might do: the parent for its little child, knowing the child's character, will say: I must watch out for this, this tendency or bias. Or as a Master may say of his disciple, I see in him this leaning. I will be more watchful and helpful in that direction.

The Divine Ideation saw all that would happen; all that was present in the Divine Mind, all that would happen during the forthcoming Manvantara, all that its children would do, how every one of those children would act according to its free will, and according to the divine urge or karman which it itself had effected in the preceding cosmic manvantara. In fact, Divine Ideation has not merely foreknowledge of macrocosmic and microcosmic events to be unfolded in accordance with that very Divine Ideation itself, which is the supreme law of the universe to come into being; but that Divine Ideation was (is), as it were, the very Architect's Plan (1) of the future universe to be, and of all in it up to the end of that universe; albeit each

monad of the multitudes to spring into activity when manvantara opens, being in its essence a part of the Divine Life, and therefore an instrument of the Divine Ideation, acts according to its own inmost impulses, in the last analysis, through all the evolutionary pilgrimage in the University of Life. Hence drawing its own free will from the Divine life, its own proportion thereof (and when all is said, acting in accordance with the Divine Ideation, because acting contrary to it is impossible) we see therefore that there is no fatalism in this, and no predestined fate, i. e., the mandate of a power superior to the evolving Hosts of Monads. Each monad, in other words, acts out its own destiny in accordance with its own inmost swabhava or character; but nevertheless must obey the Architectural Plan of the Divine Ideation itself. Being, however, a spark of the Divine Life of which the Divine Ideation itself is but a manifestation, we have a picture, immensely grandiose and sublime, of all monads actually becoming co-operators in the divine plan, and acting contrary thereto only at their cost in suffering and misery. There is absolutely in this no blind destiny, no infallible Kismet, no inescapable Fate. Do you follow?

All monads when a manvantara ends, end as it were with a trial balance. As the Mohammedans phrase it rather poetically, a man's destiny is written in the Book of Destiny. His future is written in the Book by his own previous lives. And the Divine Ideation knew all this because that Divine Ideation — what is it? — is the All-comprehending Hierarchy, of whom we are sparks.

Thus we teach no predestination in the Christian theological sense, but we most emphatically teach destiny which each man is weaving for himself by his intelligence, and his will, from life to life, aye — from year to year, from day to day, with every thought, with every feeling, registering itself not only in his character and changing it, but in the Astral Light where molds are left, photographs are made.

As a spider weaves its web, so does a man weave around himself his own web of destiny. Often and often we human beings suffer for things for which we ourselves are not fully responsible. Think! Are you, am I,

responsible for the wars that take place throughout the whole world? In one sense we are, as being part of the human race. Our thoughts in the past have helped to build up the astral molds in the Astral Light, but as individuals none of us made the bold strokes that lead nations into war. Yet these wars react on us, react on the unhappy peoples today living in fear and sadness. It was their karma themselves. They wove it in past lives to be in the midst of things. But as individuals not one of them is wholly responsible. This sounds subtil; it is really simple if we follow it. A war, so closely is mankind knitted together, in any part of the world affects the whole world today. Prices rise, expenses rise, foods, luxuries are perhaps beyond the means of the majority or are prohibited. Positions are lost, anxiety, fear, rule everywhere. Did I do it, because I suffer from it? No; did my Karma put me here by my own acts? Yes, and hence to some extent I am responsible. There are a great many things happening to us that we ourselves as men living in our quaternary — the lower part of us, the earth-child, the human soul — are not fully karmically responsible for. Yet there is a part of us that is responsible, and this is the Dhyana-Chohan within us, the Reincarnating Ego. So there is no essential injustice in this.

In other words, I will try to phrase it in this way. The spiritual part of us is wholly responsible for all that happens to us, for everything that happens to us, for it is the Reimbodying Ego, and has lived thousands of lives; but this human ego, this earth-child, the ordinary human soul, is not responsible for many things that the spiritual ego makes it suffer; and therefore so far as it is concerned undergoes unmerited suffering. Strange paradox! I call the attention of readers to H. P. B.'s own words on this matter of unmerited suffering which will be found in her *The Key to Theosophy*, original edition, republished at Point Loma in 1939, on pages 161-162 — especially perhaps page 162. It is in these two pages that H. P. B. in her incomparable style points out that while the Reincarnating Ego is responsible for all that happens to a man, good, bad and indifferent, the earth-child or the merely reembodying man, often undergoes what to him is unmerited suffering; but as H. P. B. points out on page 162, at the moment of death for a short moment the

personal man becomes one with the spiritual *individuality*, sees and understands himself as he is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception.

He reads his life, remaining as a spectator looking down into the arena he is quitting; he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him.

Thus, while the personal man, the earth-child, the lower quaternary, does indeed undergo unmerited sufferings in this life, for causes sown in previous lives, and thus gets its recompense in the bliss of devachan, yet the Reincarnating Ego or the true Actor in Life's drama, *is* responsible because the carrier of karman; and thus when the *personal* man is united at the moment of death with the reincarnating spiritual ego, even the personal man then sees the perfect justice of all that has happened — suffering unmerited by the man of this life, but karmically the consequence of the actions of the ego in past lives.

So you see, one part of us is responsible for what the lower innocent part is not responsible for. And it is this lower part of us that after death gets its recompense in the Devachan for all the unmerited sufferings and sadnesses and sorrows and hurts that it has had, or experienced, in life; in other words, the things that it itself in that life had not willingly brought about, but were brought upon it because the Reincarnating Ego unlike its child, the lower man, *is* responsible.

No wonder the Masters tell us that one of the greatest things in human life is the cultivation of the spirit of compassion, of pity, of sympathy, sympathy for the souls of men. When we have it we rise out of our earth-child soul still higher. And if I dared I would even go this far, although it is not a teaching that I should mention in public here, but I can hint at it. The spiritual part of us sometimes leads us into sorrow and suffering and trouble for our own good. It itself becomes responsible. So I say to you, Companions, do not be so ready to blame others, do not be so ready to say, Oh, it is his karman! Precisely that is just your chance to give a helping hand. Inactive in a deed of mercy, you become active in a cardinal sin, as H. P. B. so nobly declares. And you will be held to account. And this lesson does not mean doing things

blindly and rushing around in a wild emotion of compassion. It means using your brains. There are plenty of crooks in the world, and they are making a terrible karman in the world. But when one does know that someone needs the helping hand, it is a criminal act if we withhold it, and we shall suffer karmic retribution for our inaction. Think what it means to us when we in desperate need feel the warm clasp of a helping hand. The courage that flows back to us, the feeling that we are not alone in the world; that there is at least one person who has given us a kindly thought. One touch of the divine heals and strengthens the whole world.

So in answer to the question, Does Theosophy teach Predestination? The answer is an emphatic negative. No. But we do indeed teach destiny, which every man weaves for himself, around himself, and from which there is no escape, for it is the fruiting of the seeds sown by our own volition or choice. We do teach the doctrine, sublime and grand, as already stated, of man's free will, relatively so at least, dependent upon his evolutionary status, and of the inescapable Destiny that dogs the footsteps of the evil-doer, and showers blessings upon the doer of good. The one, retribution, is as inescapable as the other, compensation for the good that we have sown.

It is a marvelous thought to reflect that the Divine Ideation at the opening of the manvantara has, as it were, a Plan of all the future time of that manvantara, predestinating nothing, reprobating nothing, but, as the Silent Watcher sees it in his glorious wisdom, what its children in that Manvantara will unroll from themselves: the destiny woven in the past. It is very largely in order to carry out the Plan immanent in the Divine Ideation that the Avatars of the gods from time to time come amongst us to direct our vision towards the Laws of Being, and in doing so to guide as well as comfort and aid us human pilgrims.

The above article on Predestination, and the first article on Easter, are both transcriptions of comments by Dr. de Pumcker at public meetings, neither of which had been corrected by him.

FOOTNOTE:

1. "Plan" in the sense that the Great Breath which will build the universe is guided and controlled in all its structural or building-activity by the ideal outline contained in the Cosmic Ideation. This Divine or Cosmic Ideation, philosophically speaking, is at once the Past, the Present, and the Future, in the sense of an Eternal now. The futurity of the universe, as well of course as its past, is therefore present in the Divine Ideation, and unrolls itself at the beginning of a manvantara along the lines of karman, guided by the Lipikas working under the ideal compulsion of the Cosmic Ideation. This last of course containing all futurity, by the fact contains everything that ever shall be in the universe presently to come into being, from the beat of a mosquito's wing to the coming of the pralaya of a Solar System. Thus while our destiny is indeed written for us not only in the stars, but likewise in the Cosmic Mind, seeing past, present, and future; yet every monad being a child of that Cosmic Mind, a portion of its own essence, has its corresponding portion of free will, and uses it. The misuse thereof instantly awakens the retributive action of karman; the co-operative use thereof instantly awakens the compensatory blessings of karman. "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance." — *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 14, orig. ed.

Thus while there is destiny, there is no fate, for every monad at its heart contains its portion as its own of the divine Will and Intelligence, and is free to use these as it pleases. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

WE ARE SEVEN — *Hannah Berman*

One of the fundamental propositions of the Theosophical teachings is the oneness of all things, large and small. That is to say, the identity of all, the similarity of character and function, and the fact that each and all have a common origin and a common destiny.

To understand the natural and fundamental workings of a universe seems a tremendously difficult thing; but if this fundamental proposition is used in the understanding, the whole plan works itself out before the eyes as simply and beautifully as a country landscape unfolds itself to the traveler who looks down into a valley from the top of a mountain side.

"In order *to* become the knower of ALL SELF, thou hast first of SELF to be the knower." This quotation from *The Voice of the Silence* furnishes the clue to the riddle. Man himself is a composite being; the universe, of which he is a part, is likewise composite. If we can arrive at some understanding of what composes man, then we will be on the highroad to a comprehension of all things greater and smaller than man.

Theosophy postulates the Seven Principles, dividing them into a higher triad and a lower quaternary: pure spirit, spiritual soul, and human soul for the former, and animal soul, vitality, astral body, and physical body, composing the latter.

Our passions, desires and material and selfish yearnings all of course reside in our lower principles. We do not have to be magicians to see these different principles at work in man. We know instinctively when his spiritual self or principles are in control and working through him, and when they are overlaid and crushed almost out of existence. We know, too, very easily when his animal self is superimposed and has taken possession, and so on. The value of this knowledge is this: that it gives us an understanding and sympathy and a hope, a tremendous hope. The understanding lies in the knowledge that however badly an

individual behaves, there is somewhere in his makeup something better, that given suitable conditions might be stimulated into life; and the understanding comes from the fact that in all of us lie the potentialities for good and ill, for spiritual and unselfish actions, and also for the display of passion, desire, greed, lust and so on.

Now, to refer again to our fundamental proposition. If these principles exist in individuals as individuals, then we can look for their counterpart in society, that is to say in man as a family — the human family. We can readily trace the seven principles in humanity if we can look upon humanity as a giant individual or entity.

The best and noblest ideals that are the expressions of different peoples, never mind what race or nationality, can be regarded as the spiritual and divine principles working their way through. The lower principles manifest themselves in those classes of society which typify the clever people (purely brainy people), and those in whom greed for power and for money and possessions are the most vital characteristics; also those in whom lust and passion and cruelty and selfishness hold their sway; and then lowest in this scale come those who are held in total bondage by material things and whose higher selves are almost obliterated.

There is this to be considered: that while man himself as an individual (multiplied some millions of times) possesses these principles, all portrayed and manifesting themselves so completely, then just so long will society, all society, share these characteristics and manifest them in this way.

In *Letters that Have Helped Me*, W. Q. Judge says:

I am not separate from anything. . . . I am my friends, . . . I am my enemies; . . . I am the poor and the wicked; I am the ignorant. . . . All this in my nation. But there are many nations, . . . I feel and I am them all, with what they hold of superstition or of wisdom or evil. All, all is myself.

And so it is that the cumulative aggregated different principles

manifesting themselves in individuals, form these powerful forces which we see actually working through different sections of peoples. To put it crudely and to take a specific example: Why have we always with us a criminal community? The answer according to the Theosophical teachings is that while we each, as individuals, have any tendency, however small, towards greed, selfishness, intolerance, jealousy, etc., then we are bound to find this tendency working itself out *per se* and as an evil force in society — that is to say, in a portion of the community in whom these principles happen to be predominant.

But this is what we must remember and take to heart: that it is just an extension of ourselves, and we each and all are partly to blame, and are responsible for it. Not until we have eradicated these tendencies from our own natures will these undesirable conditions vanish from our midst. We can all help, providing we banish selfishness and intolerance and fear from our makeup. The true lesson to be learned is that we must first put "our own house in order," and the rest will surely and inevitably follow.

Let us aim at perfection and we may get a glimpse of the real joy of spiritual life, and say with Thoreau:

The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little Stardust caught, a segment of the rainbow, which I have clutched.

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: X

This series of Theosophical radio broadcasts from Shanghai, China, was given over station XQHB during 1941 by Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist. The first nine of these appeared in 1942 in the *FORUM*, and we now continue the series. The present one by Inga Sjostedt deals with the very important subject of the after-death states.

Good evening, everybody:

We have spoken a good deal about the different phases of life, personal and impersonal, and in order to complete the teaching it is necessary to describe also that state of life which we call Death.

Materialists of all denominations say boldly that there is no such thing as life after death. They say that such a belief is unscientific, because science has not yet produced for public inspection the atoms and molecules of an immortal soul. They say also, more or less, that we human beings are physical machines, held together by the principle of life, presumably, and that when we die this machine breaks up and disintegrates into its component physical elements. Now, during life this physical machine transmits thoughts and emotions, acts, and impulses, ideas that sometimes shake the world: and we *must* ask ourselves, Where do all these invisible energies, mental, psychical and spiritual, go when we die? It is not enough to say that they die with the body. Nothing in the universe can ever be lost; all things go *somewhere*. The body, for instance, disintegrates after death, but it does not vanish. It only changes. Therefore our thoughts, feelings, passions, dreams, ideals, intellectual inspiration, must also go somewhere. They cannot vanish into nothing, and logic itself thus points to a survival of the invisible man after death.

Then we have the belief which is based on blind, unreasoning faith, which is that the soul goes into a state of eternal, changeless bliss, or

eternal, changeless misery after death. If we look at any living entity, however small or immense, we see at once that the outstanding thing about Life is the principle of movement or motion — and therefore change.

How, then, when all the world is continually changing every second of time, can we suppose that an entity after death can remain in a perpetual state that never changes throughout eternity? A heaven of this kind would be both depressing and monotonous. However good and virtuous a man may be, he nevertheless knows that he is a long way from perfection, and if we died today and were transferred to a region of perpetual bliss, our natural instinct would be to perfect ourselves, to learn more of the conditions there, and to evolve our capacities, to grow spiritually. Therefore, the teaching about a final heaven or hell is not logical or satisfying to thoughtful minds.

And now let us contrast the two beliefs I have briefly outlined with the teaching of the Esoteric Wisdom. First of all, we should not really speak of life and death as two opposites. It would be more correct to say that *birth* and *death* are the two phases of life, two natural events which take place *in* life. We should no more shrink with horror when we speak of death than we do when we speak of a birth. Death, according to the occultists, is the birth of the soul into spiritual regions, and is therefore a beautiful and inspiring adventure for the ego which has lived a decent and unselfish life on earth.

According to the Archaic Wisdom death is to the physical life what sleep is to the waking state. Death is a perfect sleep: sleep an imperfect death. Our dreams, when we are asleep, are colored by the thoughts, emotions, memories and actions of our waking life; and our death-state is identically colored by our state of consciousness as it had been during life. Nothing comes from without ourselves — only from within, from the depths of our individual consciousness. If our waking life is full of anxieties, unsolved problems, acts and thoughts that are unworthy of our better selves, our dreams are troubled, unhappy, and sometimes frightful. If our waking existence is peaceful and

harmonious, unselfish and courageous, our dreams are beautiful and peaceful. The science of psychoanalysis, although it deals only with the lower mind, knows very well that a man's dreams reveal his inner life. On a bigger scale, it is the same with life and death. As we live, so must our state after death be. The evil man suffers when he dies, because of all his unsatisfied passions, his selfishness, and meanness; the average man suffers a little at first, until he has exhausted the evil in his nature, and then experiences just such happy dreams as his earth-life has merited. The noble, unselfish and truly great man leads an after-death existence which is as sublime and beautiful as his own consciousness can comprehend. The average man could not enjoy a truly noble heaven-state as it would be completely beyond him; nor could the evil man. It would be like taking an uneducated man to a library of poetical and philosophical books, or to a concert of classical music, or to a picture gallery of famous paintings. He would not appreciate these things, because such appreciation would not be in him.

According to the Theosophical teachings the after-death experiences of a man are really different states of consciousness, dreams, if you like, and not realities; but just as the dreams we dream at night seem utterly real to us, so do these dreams after death seem completely real to the dreamer. We build up a "heaven-state" in which we see and are together with the people we loved most on earth, and realize our frustrated aspirations and ideals, but they are only real to our own imagination, for the people we imagine we are with, may not be dead at the time when we are, and therefore cannot be with us.

When a man dies he first of all discards the lowest of his vehicles, the physical body. He is then a complete man, with all his good and bad impulses, habits and characteristics, minus the physical envelope. He then proceeds to exhaust the lower emotional and mental energy which he has acquired during life. It is a process of discarding, of purification, and it is this ancient mystical teaching which has given rise to the Roman Catholic teaching of Purgatory — an intermediate state between heaven and hell. This state is not a pleasant one, as it means the free expression of all one's lower instincts, selfish impulses

and weaknesses of character. When the energy of this lower personality is exhausted then there occurs the so-called "second death," when the ego frees itself from its lower personality, discards it like an old unwanted garment, and then, purified and spiritual, enters the state of felicity, or heaven as a Christian would say. This state is the dream-world of the happy ego, where all the highest and noblest impulses and aspirations, the unselfish love, compassion and impersonal ideals of the former man, find expression. All that the ego wanted in life and could not attain, is realized at last — but, as said before, this "heaven" is spun out of the ego's own consciousness and is merely a state, not a locality in space.

Some modern spiritualists believe that a departed ego can watch over those it left behind on earth, but Theosophy says that this is contradictory to proved fact, as the seers and adepts of all ages have testified after personal experience. Just as, when we dream, we are not conscious of our waking life, in the same way we cannot be conscious of earth-life when we are dead. Among other things, it would be a veritable hell for a watching spirit to see those it loved on earth going through experiences of suffering and misery, and making human mistakes with unfortunate consequences.

That which the spiritualists suppose to be the soul of their "dear departed" is only the discarded lower mental and emotional shell of the ego after the Second Death. It is an automaton, a psychic gramophone record of thoughts and feelings and memories of the dead man. The real ego is enjoying its spiritual rest and is totally unconscious of the earth. Or it sometimes happens that the spirit of an evil and earth-bound man, which cannot rise above the pull of the earth, drifts into a seance-room and finds vicarious life through the medium and the sitters. No pure human spirit will descend from its heaven-world. It very rarely happens that a pure and spiritual medium rises to the sphere of the departed soul.

Unfortunately it sometimes happens that a man is so evil and materialistic that he has not accumulated a store of spiritual

experiences when he dies. Such a man spends his after-death state in the region nearest to the earth, that which corresponds to the purgatory of Christianity, and after an unhappy and intensely restless existence there, he is reborn much more quickly than a spiritually developed ego. He has only himself to blame. Heaven and hell are within us, and it is only natural attraction which draws us to the one or the other state.

The average ego, after its state of felicity in its imaginary heaven, which lasts sometimes for thousands of years; after exhausting its store of ideal and beautiful spiritual energy, is automatically attracted to the earth again. It passes through all the different planes of being, gradually reassembling its different characteristics, mental, psychical and even physical, and, strengthened and refreshed, it is reborn on earth, where it continues to weave its web of destiny in the circumstances best suited to its tendencies and urges. An old soul has come back to earth in a new body.

The Theosophical Forum

HEALING AND DISEASE — *Reata V. H. Pedersen*

A Thought from a Student's Notebook

Over a period of twelve years the writer has followed a thought through several phases of development until it has at last become, for her, a manifested, and continually manifesting, truth about Theosophy. The thought in its incipiency was in the form of a question: Can the knowledge gained through the study of Theosophy bring about the healing of physical ills?

We, who are students of the Wisdom-Religion, have been told by all our teachers down through the ages that we are able to form a question *because the answer is known to us*. We form the question from out our experiences, from out our knowledge — the experience and knowledge gained in other incarnations as well as in this one. We form the questions from the truths that we have builded into ourselves; we demand of ourselves the answers.

Our present teacher has advised us to brood over the thoughts and questions and ideas which stir our minds as we study the deeper teachings. We find that in the bibles — the scriptures of the Egyptians, of the Christians — the self-same teaching is given. "Ponder these things in your hearts" said the Teacher, Jesus, "that ye may know them of yourselves."

It is only at the end of twelve years of study that the writer offers to others the answer to the question she put to herself shortly after becoming a member of the student groups at Point Loma. The question cannot have occurred to her alone. The answer from her heart-mind and the experiences of the last several years noted by her brain-mind may be of service to companion-students. For, of herself, the writer has come to know that physical healing may be one of the fruits of the Tree of Knowledge.

Let it not be thought, however, that a *cure* is promised, or that the writer is advocating the refusal to use medicines when prescribed by a qualified physician, or suggesting the denial of the existence of pain, or the blinding of oneself to such conditions as broken bones and wounds. Above all do not read into any sentence written here the meaning that cure or palliation can be experienced in a given time or, indeed, that these can be secured at all *if cure or palliation alone is sought*. On the contrary to embrace Theosophy, to study the Wisdom-Religion for personal gain, is to deny oneself the power to understand what one studies; it is to make it impossible to *be* a Theosophist in the full meaning of that word.

No; cure or palliation comes about not as a goal to be reached but as a natural growth from the seeds of study, from the growing of implanted thought, from the maturing of the seedling-idea, as any fruit comes *naturally* to ripened glory from seed or planting or seedling-tree. *Cure of physical ills is a definite growth in knowledge when growth alone is the goal sought*.

Put on the armor of the gods — that is the course to follow. And think you that we can fit that armor and remain as we are? *Dwell with the gods* — that is the course to follow. And think you that we can pull the Gods to our plane of consciousness and thus dwell with them? Work to show forth impersonal love of the being who suffers the physical ill wrenching at our hearts. Work to free mankind from the downward pull of coarse ideas and uncontrolled action. Work without ceasing to follow the small old path, and turn ever and always to help others along the Way.

Give of yourself; stop the idle word; hush the bitter whisper; see your suffering, your sorrow, as the knife that frees the juices from the imprisoning skin of the fruit, as the heel of those who, in the wine-press, free the wine from the purpling grape.

It would be quite possible for the writer to show the inter-relation between The Way and the welfare of the Wayfarer, for in her notebook there could have been set down a number of names and the apparent

healings resulting from the loving interest shown by herself and other students toward the ailing friend. But the writer has never understood the teachings of Theosophy to mean that one should prate of benefits received but only that one should be happy in the knowledge that the teachings bring enlightenment on all planes of consciousness. As the Teacher Jesus bade: Go thou, and tell no one. That seems the course to follow in this matter.

It is not the intention of this student to class Theosophy as a cure-all for *dis-ease*, nor to class those students who together with herself have sought knowledge of this matter, as having Power to bring about healing. Rather the object of the writer is to hearten those who aspire to the Kingdom That Is Within by offering them yet one more key to still another Mansion in The Father's House.

The Theosophical Forum

DR. DE PURUCKER ANSWERS QUESTIONS

THE "TEMPTATION" OF JESUS

I thought that it was only before we had entirely learnt something that we had to struggle with ourselves about it, but that when we, in previous lives, had quite overcome some special temptation, this temptation never occurred to us again, and we did not even get the idea of its possibility. I thought this was the way by which we have to win the different virtues one by one. Will you please explain why Christ should have felt any temptation to be relieved from his great task. Why should he have said, "Remove this cup from me," and have to pray in anguish in order to be victorious over temptation? I think that he should by then have got over this stage. — G. S.

G. de P. — This question takes it for granted that the legend told of Jesus in the New Testament of the Christians is an actual history. It is *not*; the "Gospel" story is merely an idealized fiction, written by Christian mystics in imitation of esoteric mysteries of the "Pagans," showing the initiation trials and tests of the candidate for initiation; and it is not very well done, there being much error and many mistakes in the "Gospels."

A man called Jesus — the Hebrew name being Jeshua or Joshua — really lived, who was a great and good man; also an initiate into the secret doctrine of his period; and around him, after his death grew up many legends and tales, which were woven in later days — say a century after his death — into the so-called "Gospels."

Yes, the questioner is right in saying that once we have fully conquered a temptation, we are safe from future attacks of it, but only provided we are *watchful and on guard eternally*.

LOOKING WITHIN

You continually advise us to look within. In what way does the Theosophical "looking within" compare with the psychologists' introspection? — H. G. N.

G. de P. — It seems to me that the psychologists have seized a part of a truth; but the teaching of Theosophic introspection goes far beyond that. Too often the introspection, if I may use this word, of modern psychology is a pondering and a brooding upon the vagrant and flitting thoughts of the lower brain-mind, upon one's wishes and hopes and petty loves and hates — a morbid self-examination of the lower parts and faculties of us; and I think that it is very unwholesome. There is altogether too much of that.

What we need to do is to *free* ourselves from the lower part of us, to lift our eyes to the spiritual Olympus, to rise out of the murk and the mire and the mud and the dirt, to strike the shackles from our limbs and to wing our ways into the inner states of the spirit. Does modern psychology tell us that we must devote ourselves to the inspirations of almighty wisdom, and of impersonal spiritual love? Never! It does not know enough; but it thinks it knows quite enough to teach what are in many cases downright perversions of reality. Some aspects of modern psychology will tell us that if a naughty child does certain naughty things, it is because of an unexpressed sex-complex! I think that the instilling of ideas like this into the mind of any innocent child is a moral crime, because it is a suggesting to a child to do what perhaps never occurred to it to do. It is monstrous.

But teach a child to be self-forgetful, to introspect in the higher way, to examine its motives, to look carefully into its yearnings and to rule them, and you will help it and guide its feet. This is the psychology of the archaic school, which is ours, which is Theosophy. Psychology really means what the word itself actually says: the study of the *soul* of man, instead of the study, as it is in modern psychological schools, mostly patterned after the doctrines of Freud of Vienna, a study of the physiological-mental reactions of the body.

Children are responsive to thoughts put into their minds, and the only

right way of bringing up a child is to surround it with the thoughts and influences, and if you can the environment, of harmony and beauty and peace and love, teaching it lessons of kindness and self-forgetfulness, instead of teaching it to concentrate all its thoughts upon the beastly impulses of the animal man; and this latter is what most, if not all, of the modern psychological schools actually succeed in doing.

QABBALISTIC AND THEOSOPHIC PRINCIPLES

I notice in Chapter Two of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, that man is divided into four parts: (a) Neshamah, (b) Ruahh, (3) Nefesh, and (4) Guf. Over all these four principles, there is the Ineffable, the Boundless, called En Soph. Would the author of *Fundamentals* kindly give me his opinion about the correspondences or the differences between these four principles and the Qabbalistic triad consisting of the three highest Sephiroth: (a) Khether (the Crown), (b) Chochmah (Wisdom), and (c) Binah (Intellect) — all emanations of En Soph, the Boundless. — K. F. G.

G. de P. — This thoughtful question contains profound suggestions; and the mere fact that the questioner seeks for correspondences or differences between the Qabbalistic Quaternary as given in *Fundamentals*, and the Qabbalistic highest Cosmic Triad of Sephiroth, shows that he himself has actually answered his own question, but probably is not fully aware of it.

The four human principles as given by me in *Fundamentals*, are reflexions or "projections," as it were, of all the nine Sephiroth of the Qabbalistic Cosmic Tree of Life; and the differences in manner of enumerating or of expressing the Cosmic Principles and the human principles depend upon the fact that the human principles are reflexions or "projections" as above said, of the Cosmic Sephiroth. The three highest Sephiroth, as given, and properly given, in the question, are the originals or correspondences of what in man in the Theosophical philosophy are called Atman, Buddhi, Manas; Khether corresponds to Atman, Chochmah corresponds to Buddhi, and Binah

corresponds to Manas.

In another sense, Neshamah corresponds to the Divine Monad, Atma-Buddhi; Ruahh corresponds to the Spiritual Monad, Buddhi-Manas; and Nefesh corresponds to the Human-Astral Monad, or Kama-Manas-Prana. Guf is in either case, whether cosmic or human, the mere vehicle of all the other higher principles, and in the case of man corresponds to the physical-astral body.

All the Cosmic Sephiroth are born from the bosom of En Suf, or the Boundless, and hang as it were like a pendant therefrom; very much as the three highest principles in man, Atman, Buddhi, Manas, are born from the bosom of the Boundless, and are eternally therein, hanging like a pendant therefrom; the lower four principles of man hanging like a second pendant from these higher, just as the lower six Sephiroth hang as a pendant from the three highest Sephiroth.

We thus see that the correspondences are very close, when properly understood, as I have endeavored briefly to outline them in the preceding paragraphs.

THE DESTINY OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

Re the animal kingdom: Many species are dying out today. Some day — the life-wave having moved on to Globe E — Globe D will have merely *sishtas* left on it. Will there be any animals in the Fifth Round? Many students are mixed up on this; so am I. If there will be animals in the Fifth Round, will that mean the animal kingdom as we know it today (but more highly developed), or only some of the highest species? — R. E.

G. de P. — When a life-wave, any life-wave: human, animal, vegetable, mineral, elemental, or dhyān-chohanic: moves from our Globe D on to Globe E, it leaves *sishtas* behind on this Globe D. What are these *sishtas*? They are waiting for the same life-wave which will have passed through the globes on the ascending arc, to come down the globes on the descending arc in Round Five; and when they reach Globe D, our earth, these *sishtas* will begin to increase in number

because of the incoming monads from the life-wave, and the same life-wave — in the case of your question the animal life-wave with its subordinate life-waves or orders and varieties and genera, etc. — will begin to tend to expand. Consequently there will be animals in the next round.

But here is a very interesting point: the animals will tend steadily to pass into Nirvanic rest, I mean their monads will from now to the end of our chain-manvantara. Every round will show fewer animals, the reason being that as time goes on and as the steps up the ascending arc are passed one by one, fewer and fewer animals will be able to make the grade upwards. The calls of matter will be too strong. Thus at the end of the fifth round on Globe D the sishtas of such animal life-waves will be much fewer than in the preceding round on this globe, because the monads will be entering their Nirvana for the reasons above stated. Otherwise stated, the individuals of those animal life-waves will have largely died out from this plane because the monads will have gone into Nirvana; and during the sixth round the animals, although much more progressed than now they are, will be extremely few; and before the sixth round is ended will have died out entirely, with the exception of the anthropoid apes and possibly some of the higher monkeys. The anthropoid apes will have become then no longer anthropoid apes really, although their more evolved bodies will still continue, but they will be very, very low humans in quasi-anthropoid bodies, nevertheless humans of low grade. During the seventh round even these will have disappeared, but their monads during the next chain manvantara will be low humans in appropriate bodies then.

Thus generally speaking, animal monads tend more and more on the upward arc to go into Nirvana. Their bodies, there being no monads to incarnate, will tend to die out; and towards the end of the fifth round there will be very few animals, and probably all gone in the sixth, except the anthropoids, etc., as explained.

As stated, the cause of this is that the door into the human kingdom, (which means self-consciousness,) closed in the middle of the fourth

round; and the animals now are just hanging on as it were because of the impetus or momentum they got in coming down the descending arc. This momentum has carried them up to the present, will carry them onward even into the fifth round where, as stated before, they will mostly die out because they cannot climb higher. The spiritual self-conscious nature has not evolved forth from their monads; and consequently there is no sufficient attraction upwards in them, and thus they fall back behind the procession, and die out. What little attraction upwards they may have now will grow less and less during the fifth round, until no attraction upwards at all exists.

In other words the animals will no longer reproduce themselves. The monads of many animals have already entered their Nirvana even during this fourth round — the grossest of their kinds. Some of them, those with us, still remain even now, persisting mainly by the momentum and because of dawning mind in them which still keeps them here.

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION INTO THE HUMAN KINGDOM: I — *G. de Purucker*

There are two questions that have been asked of me: "You have told us, G. de P., that in the human constitution there is an animal monad which in the next chain-imbodiment will become a "human being. You have likewise told us that the animals on, say, our globe of this chain, on our globe, will be humans in the next chain-imbodiment. Question: How do you make this out? Where stand the humans-to-be who are now the animal monads in man? Where will they be when compared with the future humans on the next chain-imbodiment who are now here our beasts?"

The other question is this: You stated some little time ago, that from the very beginning of this present chain-imbodiment, we who are now humans as monads have always been humans. How then do you account for the other teaching regarding the door into the human kingdom which closed at the middle point of the Fourth Round, in other words during the Atlantean race?

There are the two questions. As a matter of fact, Companions, the answers to these questions, to both of them, may be found in our books and in my own books. I have spoken of them, giving answers to each one, I think a dozen times from this platform.

What I said a moment ago is true. It is our teaching that the present human monads have been human monads from the beginning of this chain-imbodiment; and please remember we are speaking of monads now. I have likewise stated that there is in man an animal monad which in the next chain-imbodiment will be human. Now I will take the first question first: The answer is this: Those animals which are now called animal monads and which are the animal parts of us men — I do not mean the physical body, that is the physical part of men, but the animal part, in other words our animal, the human animal of us, the instincts, the thoughts, the motives, the attributes, the qualities that

make the human animal, and of which the body is merely an expression, the open door — these will be the humans in the human kingdom in the next chain-imbodiment; and our present animals will then be the lower and lowest units of the human kingdom in the next chain-imbodiment.

To make this more comprehensible let us reverse the process. Instead of looking ahead, we will go back to the moon, the moon-chain, the time when we were all on the moon. We then, we higher humans now in this chain-imbodiment, were on the moon the individual animal monads in the then humans of the moon-chain. Do you understand me? In other words the men on the moon-chain had, as we now have, animal monads as part of their constitution. When the moon-chain finished its manvantaric evolution and died as a chain, giving birth to this chain, the moon-humans then had become Dhyan-Chohans, had entered the dhyan-chohanic kingdom. Their animal monads had then become human, each going up a step.

Now then, what were the humans on the moon were the lowest of the Dhyan-Chohans in this imbodiment. What were the animal monads in the moon-men are now the humans in this chain-imbodiment. Is that thought clear? Again, what the animals are now, as I have already stated, on this earth or in this chain-imbodiment, will be the lower and lowest humans in the next chain-imbodiment. Reverse the process on the moon. What the moon-animals were when the moon ended its Seventh Round, then became human, not the high humans, but they entered the human kingdom. They were men, but the lower part of what we now call the human kingdom. Is that thought clear? Very good.

So we have the animals on the moon become the lower humans here. These lower humans as well as the higher humans when this earth-chain ends its Seventh Round will be Dhyan-Chohans; and our present human animal monads will be then the higher humans of the next chain-to-be, the child of this chain; and our animals now, i. e., those who make the grade, on this earth when the Seventh Round ends, will

be the lower and lowest humans in the next chain-imbodiment. So you see we have thus: animal entering the human kingdom, not the bodies, the monads. That is where your constant confusion comes in. You keep thinking of bodies. I am talking of monads. What are now the monads manifesting through the animals, when the Seventh Round of this chain is ended, will have evolved, which means developed, unfolded — the monads will have unfolded to become human, so that in the next chain-imbodiment the animals will then be human. What kind of humans? The highest? No, we have already stated the higher will be what are now the animal monads in us men, as we were on the moon the animal monads in the moon-men. And the animals on the moon reached humanity, the human stage, at the end of the Seventh Moon-Round, i. e., those who made the grade, so that they could then become men in the human kingdom, and are amongst us now on this earth as the lower and lowest humans.

It is an old, simple teaching that every Theosophist knows, that not only are there 7, 10, 12 classes of monads, but that each such class or family (kingdom is another good word) has its own special divisions, so that our human kingdom has its special divisions; the Masters and the Buddhas at one end, the almost animal humans at the other end, like the Veddahs of Ceylon, the Andaman Islanders and so on. Between these two classes of men there is an enormous psychological, spiritual, and intellectual range. But they are all men, they all belong to the human kingdom, because all have attained conscious self-consciousness.

Now there you have the answer to the first question and I hope you have understood it. You will realize that this matter has been explained and this question has been answered on many occasions in the past.

The other question is this, and it leads right on from this first one. I will repeat the question: "G. de P., you stated some time ago that we human monads have been human from the beginning of this chain-imbodiment. How is this reconciled with the other statement made by H. P. B. and you that the door into the human kingdom closed at the

middle point of our Fourth Round, in other words during the Atlantean race? There seems a contradiction here." From what has been stated, you see clearly that there is no contradiction because the answer to the first question shows that the human monads were humans from the very beginning of our chain-imbodiment, because they attained humanity at the end of the Seventh Moon-Round.

What then is the meaning of this phrase, "door into the human kingdom closing at the middle point of the Fourth Round"? It means this: That all those entities coming from the moon-pitris, lunar pitris, which we can use now as a very general term meaning all monads coming from the moon — there are lunar human pitris, lunar animal pitris, lunar plant pitris, lunar mineral pitris, lunar dhyan-chohonic pitris — it means that all these were the fathers of everything, that is of our own chain now, the lunar fathers of all the kingdoms.

I will make a short excursus now before continuing my answer, because it may make the answer clearer. You remember that H. P. B. and others have written of families or classes of monads, in other words these are the different kingdoms of nature. H. P. B. counts them as 7, because the septenary classification is easier, and she wrote to make things easier. A more complete classification is that of 10, 10 kingdoms, 10 classes of monads. The most complete is that of 12.

Now H. P. B.'s 7 kingdoms or classes of monads were the following, counting from the highest down: 3 classes of Dhyan-Chohans, the human kingdom, the beast kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the mineral kingdom, seven. She merely mentioned but did not include 3 more lower than the mineral, the elemental kingdoms, three in number thus making 10 — 10 kingdoms of nature. What then are the other two kingdoms of nature to make the complete number 12, corresponding by the way to the 12 globes of the chain, to the 12 Houses of the Zodiac, or the 12 Logoi of the sun? They are these: No. 1, and the first and the lowest, if you wish, counting upwards now, is the root-manu; the 12th is the seed-manu, using the terms employed by H. P. B.; and thus you have your 12. You see therefore that the kingdom of

the Manus is higher than the highest kingdom of the Dhyān-Chohans, and it is practically a divine kingdom, if we speak of the dhyān-chohanic threefold kingdom as being spiritual.

Now then, I return to my answer to the question: The door into the human kingdom means that after 3 rounds have taken place, and the Fourth Round which was the lowest and most material is over, ended, there comes a point in time and in natural functions where the descent on the downward arc stops, and from that moment begins the climb on the upward arc. The downward arc is the arc of shadows, so-called. The upward arc is the luminous arc. The reason for these names is the following: The downward arc is the evolution of matter. Matter comes forth in all its myriad multiform shapes, going with the corresponding involution or recession of spirit. The luminous arc is the reverse of this. The evolution of spirit corresponding to an involution of matter. Matter is ingathered. Spirit expands on the upward arc.

Now then, only those beings can climb the upward arc which have the germs of self-consciousness within them, because it is the arc of the opening of spirit. Do you catch that thought? Now on the downward arc, the law of acceleration came into operation for the lower kingdoms of nature. The law of retardation on the downward arc was in force where the spiritual monads were concerned, for they did not want to drop into matter, they ran down reluctantly and slowly; whereas the material entities, the lower beings expressing themselves in the lower kingdoms, had a tremendous pull down, and rushed down. So we see the lower kingdoms were under the law of acceleration on the downward arc. The spiritual kingdoms were under the law of retardation. On the upward arc that is reversed. The spiritual beings as they began to attain the luminous arc felt the attraction of spirit more and more, as their feet became freed from the mire of matter they began to feel the law of acceleration, they began to reach up.

But the creatures more heavy with matter, feeling the attraction of matter downwards, began to lag behind, the law of retardation began to work on them. They are less attracted to the spirit and they are

pulled downwards by matter.

Now at this point, so far as the human kingdom is concerned, where the lowest of the downward arc is, is what we call the door into the human kingdom. All those entities whatsoever which have not reached self-consciousness, do not enter that door which will enable them to go upwards to the Seventh Round. I wonder if I have made my meaning clear. Such a simple thought and yet a subtil one. For instance, the door into the human kingdom does not concern the dhyan-chohanic kingdoms; they are above the human. It concerns the human kingdoms and the kingdoms below the humans. All the monads therefore which were human before reaching the midpoint of the Fourth Round passed as it were naturally and simply through the door into the human kingdom which was already open, and they kept right on their way; whereas the monads, like the monads of the animals, which had not achieved humanity yet during the previous three rounds, when they came to this lowest point were so to speak challenged by nature. The ancient religions such as the Egyptians expressed it by the Guardian at the Gate. Who comes here? Who art thou? as the Sanskritists had it. The Book of the Dead speaks of these challenges at the various gates. Now anyone who could give the passwords passed on through; and remember that giving the password was not any password, the door into the human kingdom is not any door. It merely means Nature's laws beginning to operate at a certain evolutionary point. This point is the middle, the lowest point of all the seven rounds — the middle of the Fourth in the middle of the Atlantean race. All the monads therefore which have been rushing onwards in the downward arc through the three rounds had now come to the Fourth. Those who could pass on passed naturally and began the upward arc: the Manava kingdom, the 3 dhyan-chohanic kingdoms, and the human kingdom. When it came to the animals, the door closed. They could not pass. In other words they could not enter the human kingdom because they were not yet human.

Now another question! Why are the beasts still with us? As I have already explained, they have not passed the human kingdom; they are feeling strongly the attraction of matter. As each million years goes by,

as each thousand years goes by, their pace becomes slower and slower, they cannot make the grade. After a while they stop, die out, and enter into the Nirvana. This is the meaning of the statement you have heard in our books that with a very few exceptions the animal kingdom will not reach to the Seventh Round. Why? They cannot make the grade upwards. The attraction is below. They will enter into their Nirvana and wait till the next chain-imbodiment. Then they will attain humanity. That will be their reward in a chain somewhat superior to this.

And now comes a paradox, a very strange paradox. Some of the monads which have reached in their unwrapping evolution as far as the animal kingdom, will even make it up to the Seventh Round where they will become men. In other words they will then have reached self-consciousness, and then they will be the lower humans of the next chain-round. The animal monad in us at the end of the Seventh Round will be the human monad and will be the higher humans in the next chain-imbodiment.

You may wonder about the apes. Where do they come in the scale of things? Have they entered the human kingdom? No. They are more animal than human. They still belong to the animal kingdom. But there is a touch in the apes — mind you, I am not speaking of the monkeys, I mean the apes — there is in the apes just enough human blood, through us, to enable them in the next chain to be the spiritual and intellectual leaders of the animals who will then form in the next chain-imbodiment the lower and lowest men. The beast will be the highest of this branch of the then human kingdom.

So then we really have the human kingdom, the apes an intermediate stage, the beasts; and the beasts themselves are in many sub-branches — the highest, the intermediate, and the lowest. There is an enormous difference among the beasts, between the ape and the insect, or between a horse and any other creature, a squirrel, a racoon, or what not. Such distances are enormous even among men.

And now, dear Companions, with all that I have said, I have been

talking of monads, and in this connexion you may ask yourselves: Doesn't evolution affect bodies also? The answer is yes. But you see, scientists do not know anything about spiritual evolution except in a very small way. Their idea of evolution is a betterment of the physical body through the slow ages. True, the physical body has progressed through ages; we do not deny it, but it is the forces working from within upon the body, refining it, refining its organs, refining its flesh that brings about this physical evolution. But among the scientists evolution is chance, haphazard, Darwinism. To us the door into the human kingdom has nothing to do with the shape of bodies, of beings, it has solely to do with the inner parts, monadic parts, spiritual, intellectual, psychical, and astral, and when these change, the bodies change. So that I can tell you, Companions, even in a small degree the flesh of the truly good man is finer than the flesh of a man who leads a gross life. And that is why it is a true statement when the Buddhists say that the Buddha was a marvel of manly beauty, that even his body seemed to be translucent with spiritual life, something about him was not like the ordinary. It is true. There was a fire of the spirit within him working through his blood and his nerves and the very tissues of his flesh and his bones, making the vehicle more refined in every way. Actually there is a difference between the flesh of a man and the flesh of beasts. I do not say chemists can find it — they may some day. But there is; even the very smell shows it.

The above article deals with one of the most complicated subjects of Theosophy — an explanation of how the monads pass from the animal kingdom into the human kingdom, and the relation of the Moon-chain life-waves to the reimpodified life-waves of the Earth-chain. This particular article was a talk given on July 30, 1939, at the close of a meeting of the Headquarters Lodge, Point Loma, California. Further teaching on this same subject was given by Dr. de Purucker at later meetings of the Lodge, and a verbatim transcription of these will be printed in immediately following issues of the FORUM.

WHERE ARE YOUR HAUNTS OF CONSCIOUSNESS? — *Judith Tyberg*

How vast are the fields of consciousness in which man may roam! They range from sensations resulting merely from the activity of the physical senses to those glorious realizations of universal truths resulting from profound penetrations into "the heart-home of one's being. The first of these — mere elemental expressions of consciousness — come from a turning of the powers of the senses outwards into the physical world, the sphere of limitation, truly, but also the outermost garment worn by a living god. The second comes from a turning of all those sense-powers inwards to their primal and powerful source because of a divine delving into the mysteries of Brahmapura, the abode of Brahman, that Universal Self which every man is somewhere in those as yet undiscovered realms of his nature.

During one 24-hour period of a day and night we actually wander between these extremes of awareness; that is, some part of our composite make-up does. We can in time identify ourselves with those parts of our being undergoing experiences of a lofty type, if we will but tune in aright, live the golden precepts of all true religions, as they were lived by the Christ and the Buddha. Then we become fully awake, fully human, at home in any of the delightful nooks in the wondrous stream of human consciousness.

Consciousness does not refer only to the faculty of perception in this physical world. There is a distinct set of faculties and senses for each plane or world of beings entered into during waking life, sleep, or death. When we say that we lose consciousness on falling asleep or at the time of death we mean that the human thinking Ego has ceased to function on this physical plane and has entered a world to which it is not yet trained or universal enough to sense; in other words, a world too vast for our Ego with its at present limited development to understand. How much more keenly aware of color and light and shadow and form is an artist as he wanders through a forest than is the ordinary man! So it is with a spiritual adept. The adventures undergone in sleep and death are rich experiences for him, because he has awakened powers of his higher nature that are still dormant in the common man.

There are those higher parts of any man's being, just as alive as you and I, that continue a conscious life when we are asleep or what the world calls dead. Sleep and death are simply a passing from one sphere to another, a passing from lower spheres to higher or inner realms of this universe. What did the Druid ask of his truth-seeker: "Knowest thou what thou art in the hour of sleep? — a secret retreat of light!"

Occultly speaking, sleep, and on a greater scale, death, are the result of the higher parts of us coming into a full vigor and life and thus overwhelming us for a time by

their great power. Dr. de Purucker tells us:

. . . even physical death is in large part brought about by the fact that the unfolding field of consciousness, even in the course of one whole Earth-life, spreads beyond the capacity of the physical body to contain it, which, feeling the strains thus put upon it, gradually deteriorates, glides into senescence, and finally is cast off, or "dies," when it has become a tool no longer easily or profitably usable by the Master Workman — the egoic consciousness. — *The Theosophical Path*, April, 1935, p. 428

The conqueror of sleep and death is one who has become equal in spiritual splendor to those high beings whose home is surrounded by the glorious and divine things of this universe. Such a goal is one of gradual attainment but can be hastened by those who are willing to undergo the severe discipline necessary to still the activities of the lower, less evolved parts of man's nature that becloud the finer mysteries of spirit. Such training is and has always been given in Mystery-Schools, and in India is known as chela-training. We shall be fully alive and conscious throughout this whole universe when we have opened all the portals of our inner being, when we have fully bloomed. Then we shall be recognised as the fine flowers of the human race, and sleep and death will hold no mysteries for us, for there will be no lapses of consciousness.

The following table, and its sub-tables with fuller explanations, will open the way to a better grasp of this subject of consciousness:

Atman	Atman (Sakshin)	Turiya-Samadhi	Divine Worlds
Buddhi / <i>Higher Manas</i>	Karanopadhi (Bija)	Sushupti	Akasic Realms (Spiritual)
<i>Lower Manas</i> / Kama	Sukshmopadhi	Svapna	Astral World
Prana / Linga-sarira / Sthula-sarira	Sthulopadhi	Jagrat	Earth

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES

Atman — the Divine Self

Buddhi — the Spiritual Self

Manas — the Higher and Lower Thinking Principle

Kama — the Desire Principle

Prana — the Vital Principle

Linga-sarira — the Astral Body

Sthula-sarira — the Physical Body

ATMAN AND THE THREE UPADHIS

Atman — The Self, the Witness or Sakshin, whose life and divineness pulsate through every element of the human constitution.

Karanopadhi — The Causal Base, a combination of Buddhi and Higher Manas, wherein lies the mystic Bija or seed or life-germ which gives the impulse to the Reincarnating Ego to be reborn on earth, in order to lead it on to a fuller expression of its own innate powers.

Sukshmopadhi — the Subtil Base, a combination of Lower Manas and Kama, the abode of the rulers of the senses and the lower mind, of the organs of action and the five vital life currents that flow through man's body.

Sthulopadhi — the Gross or Heavy Base, a combination of the three lower principles of Prana, Linga- and Sthula-sarira.

Though there are seven principles in man, there are but three distinct Upadhis (bases), in each of which his Atma may work independently of the rest. These three Upadhis can be separated by an Adept without killing himself. He cannot separate the seven principles from each other without destroying his constitution. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 158

THE FOUR STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In the beautiful Theosophical philosophy of the Upanishads we find human consciousness divided into four main states:

Jagrat — the waking state or condition of external perception during a man's waking hours.

Svapna — the dreaming sleep state or condition of clairvoyance on the astral plane.

Sushupti — the deep dreamless state for the ordinary man, an absence of any perception on the physical or astral planes, but a conscious life and ecstasy for the Guardian Angel in man, the Higher Manas.

Turiya-Samadhi — the high spiritual self-conscious state which vibrates in unison with the Cosmic Divinity, Brahman. This "state of faultless vision" is experienced by those Mahatmans wise in spiritual things.

Thus we can sum up man in the 24-hour period: He is in the Jagrat state while awake in his physical body (Sthulopadhi). When he falls asleep he passes into the Svapna state in the astral realms, and stays there for a while in his subtil body (Sukshmopadhi). His human Ego then passes into unconsciousness, into the Sushupti clothed in its causal body (Karanopadhi) and there enjoys a wondrous rest while his higher mind is fully conscious in the Akasa or spiritual realms; and his radiant divinity or Atman returns to its starry home enjoying the Turiya-Samadhi.

On our way back to waking life once more we retrace our steps, following the pathways of the cosmos, from the divine to the spiritual, then to the astral, and then to this physical earth, and we awaken refreshed. Why cannot we remember these experiences? Why are only some of our journeyings recorded in dreams of all kinds?

To answer the first question: Most of the nightly adventures of the Higher Ego are too intense for us to understand because of our unawakened finer senses. They are too exalted, are tuned to a harmony too grand for the material brain-mind and psychological nature to record, unless indeed, one has so raised the quality of his thought and acts that they have refined not only the fabric of his mind but of his whole intermediate nature. We may feel the results of these higher activities through our guiding conscience if we accustom ourselves to heed its ever purifying messages and warnings. Aspiration and altruism are like keys to the higher pathways of life. Our daily affairs however are usually too materialistic, too focused on affairs of no lasting worth or spiritual import, so that we have made no grooves, no channels in any part of our nature for receiving the nightly inspirations from on high. Those who receive help or direct messages through dreams or intuitions on awakening are those who have laid the lines of communication by a higher life during their waking hours.

To answer the second question: Most dreams are impressions made upon the brain-mind of experiences undergone in the astral realms, low and high, that is, in the Kama-loka or "desire world," and the Devachan or state of blissful dreams wherein higher longings are fulfilled. The pathways of sleep and death are the same. When a man dies he wanders in the "desire realms" of the astral light, drawn whither his inner attractions or characteristics lead him. If there is nothing of a low type of desire or tendency in his nature he is drawn upwards to the Devachan where he enjoys a peaceful rest colored by happy dreams. So it is in sleep; when we first fall asleep or just before awakening we are passing through those same astral realms on our way from and to this physical world. We go in sleep to the same haunts we have visited with our senses, our desires, our minds, and hearts during the day. In other words, our dreams evil or good, are of our own making. We can learn to understand our own states of consciousness, begin to realize just what we truly are, by studying our dreams and our reactions to our nightly adventures. If our dreams are bad, maybe some bodily disturbance is making it difficult for the inner man to free itself for higher places; or, it may be that the attractions to different parts of the unwholesome region of Kama-loka are due to impurities in one's own psychological nature. We may fool others as to our standards of life, but every night is an honest testing period where no favoritism is shown. Like attracts like. The highest types of dreams bespeak a life of higher living. This highest aspect of Svapna blends imperceptibly into the Sushupti state.

The three higher states of consciousness, the dreaming sleep state, the deep sleep or

higher manasic state, and the spiritually divine state, can be experienced by men while in the physical body and yet not asleep. Some old people when the time is drawing near for the greater life beyond often live in the Svapna. They are conscious in the astral worlds. A spiritual adept, however, never dreams either in the physical body or in sleep or death. He must conquer this state. He must so live that all the lower elements of his being are trained and purified and subordinated to the power of his will. Having nothing left in his nature to hold him in these astral realms he is free to enter the Sushupti state. The degree of an adept is determined by the number of principles over which he has control.

The state of higher manasic activity, the Sushupti, is often attained by poets and visionaries and inspired philosophers in their moments of inspiration. A highly evolved human often enters this state when he has absolutely silenced the personality. He then receives visions of truth. As he advances on the upward path he can lengthen the period spent in this condition which attunes him with his Higher Self. Then, as this wise Seer becomes more universal in heart and understanding and in his very living, he reaches the divine state of Samadhi, wherein his whole being is in harmony with the Universe. All his faculties are awakened; the microcosm is in tune with the macrocosm; he is omniscient. To be able to pass consciously into this glorious state is to master the portals of death. It is the perfect Self-realization attained through spiritual Initiation, or what is mystically described in the beautiful writings of Buddhism as the Divine Enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree.

"THEOSOPHY: WHAT IT IS" (1)—*Albert E. S. Smythe*

A pamphlet with this title has been issued by the Methodist Church, the author being Rev. H. W. Crews, M. A., D. D. He might have consulted one of the local Theosophists before rushing into print, but we admit that this might have appeared to him to be a dangerous proceeding. And safety first is the general attitude of both Church and State in all circumstances. He begins modestly enough as his first paragraph will indicate.

"The writer," he says, "realizes that he is up against a big proposition in dealing with a subject like this. If he does not succeed in making it understood he will not be altogether to blame, for the advocates of Theosophy (Divine Wisdom) themselves are not any too well agreed as to its essential features. If some words are used, the meaning of which is unknown to the reader, the responsibility for this must rest with the mysterious cult which makes frequent use of such terms and apparently takes advantage of them in order to veil its vagaries."

None of these words are beyond the power of an M. A. or a D. D. to look up in the dictionary and explain to his readers, and for the mysterious cultists, they have to do this for themselves till they become familiar with them as they have to do with chromosomes, protons, ergs, ions, genes and other terms frequently and familiarly used in the mysterious cults of physics, chemistry and biology. Religious prejudice does not prevent the D. D.'S from looking up the meaning of these words, and if people are really in earnest in the search for truth they will not hesitate about consulting a dictionary.

The use of "strange" words is largely due to the failure of the translators to supply synonyms for the Greek words in the New Testament, which they fail to present in their true meaning, so that often the same English word is used to represent several Greek words, thus veiling the sense. Mind, for example, is used to stand for Greek

words as varied and different in meaning as *gnome*, *dianoia*, *ennoia*, *noema*, *phronema*, *psyche*. No wonder the preachers ignorant of Greek fight over their theologies and split up into sects. Theosophists have tried to clear up this confusion and to show that *psyche* and *nous* and *phronema* are very different things and not all to be called "mind."

To abuse us for using "strange" words, is like a theologian. Theosophy itself is not a strange word nor should it be. St. Paul uses it to explain his idea of Christ in I Corinthians i. 24, where he says that Christ is Theosophy, *theou sophia*, divine wisdom, and the power of God, *theou dunamis*. But Wisdom and Power cannot be said to be persons, since they are principles, and the theologians prefer to "veil" the meaning.

Dr. Crews next declares that Theosophy came from the East. The Theosophical Society began its career in New York in 1875. Christianity began in the East, but Methodism began in England. It is nothing the worse for that. In India Theosophy has been known through the ages as Brahma Vidya, just the same as the Greek and the English, Divine Wisdom. The Theosophical Society commends the study of ancient and modern religions to its members, hence they became familiar with the terms used in various religions to denote ideas which they all hold in common. These ideas are primeval. They began when the consciousness of man was able to understand what the Gods or Higher Powers sought to communicate to them. This idea of a primal revelation is also common to the various religions. Some think it came by one God, others by many Gods or Angels or other powers for which there are many names. The name in Hebrew is plural, *Elohim*, but Christians always make the Seven Elohim into One, and El, Adonai, Sabaoth, Shaddai and others corresponding to the seven days of the week and the corresponding deities of the Norsemen, of Greece and of Rome, were made subservient to Jehovah or Saturn to whom Saturday was made sacred, the seventh day. For the Theosophist as for St. Paul, there may be Lords many and Gods many but only one God and one Lord supreme above all the rest; but that one was not Jehovah nor any of the Seven Elohim.

Dr. Crews affects to think that Madame Blavatsky invented all this. All she did was to gather into her books the Wisdom of the Ages so that her own and later generations might know the truth of it. Dr. Crews should have known all this and been glad to spread such information, but he prefers to pretend that Madame Blavatsky was a spiritualistic medium, which she certainly was not, as any spiritualist could have told him, as she won the enmity of all spiritualists by explaining the means by which genuine phenomena were produced. Nor was she ever shown to be concerned with fraudulent proceedings as Dr. Crews alleges. People who spend their lives in the investigation of spiritual and religious truth and in writing books about such things are not capable of fraudulence as Dr. Crews asserts. He should have a higher opinion of the effect of religious study. But he transfers his attention to Mrs. Besant and admits the influence she exerted in India.

He is led to state that Theosophy disparages Christianity. In this he is mistaken. Christianity as at present understood is not the system taught by Jesus or Paul or John or James in the New Testament. Our "Churchianity" as Laurence Oliphant termed it, is vastly different from the Sermon on the Mount or the First Epistle of St. John. Theosophy, he says, repudiates the Personality of God. That is a matter of opinion. Personality implies limitation. We do not think that the Divine can be limited. Deity is Absolute, if anything. Even Athanasius believes in One Incomprehensible. That is not, as some ignorant people think, something that cannot be understood, but something that cannot be enclosed or confined. Personality both encloses and confines.

Perhaps a better word could be devised to represent the Absolute. The God of Jesus was impartial, insusceptible to favourites or enmities. He sends his rain on the evil and the good, his sun to shine on the just and the unjust alike. Perhaps Dr. Crews does not like that sort of God, but prefers one who would be moved by prayers and offerings, who sometimes got furious and was subsequently sorry for it and repented. But this does not consort with the idea of Absolute Justice, Absolute Truth and Absolute Love. God cannot favour one at the expense of another. Dr. Crews will find it difficult to reconcile Absoluteness with

Personality.

It is not a Theosophic problem but distinctly a Christian one, or I should say a Church one. It is true that this problem involves the consideration of prayer. Jesus gave us a model prayer which was not for one but for all; for all in its petitions as well as for all who used it. It does not ask anything for one person alone. Even in asking forgiveness it bargains that the other party to the offence should not be left out of account. "As we forgive our Debtors!" We think it inadvisable to instruct the Divine as to what it should do according to our ignorance and considering its Omniscience. We are so confident of its Justice and its Love that we rely upon that and choose rather to try to measure up to our responsibilities than to waste our time in asking favours from the All-Knowing.

"Your Heavenly Father knoweth what things you need;" was the intelligent way in which Jesus dealt with the matter. We are not afraid to credit the All-Knowing with Intelligence. But the priests have had an ancient yearning to act as go-betweens and gain authority from the official position. Dr. Crews got into deep water when he took up the question of the Seven Planets, one of which he calls Devachan. That term corresponds to some extent with the idea of heaven as modern Christians understand it, heaven being a word to represent the Greek word *ouranos*, the Over-World, as opposed to this earth, the Underworld, or what we usually call Hell. It opens up a wonderful number of explanations to know that the Earth is Hell, the place of outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. You can ask the Germans, or the Poles, or most anybody.

Dr. Crews finds a characteristic feature of this "strange system" to be a belief in reincarnation, which he says comes from India. He might as well have said it came from Judea. The Greek word *palingenesia*, being born again, is used by Jesus, but the translators were afraid to use such a strange word in the New Testament. So when Jesus said the disciples would be born again and sit on thrones (*Matthew* xix. 23) it was the word "regeneration" that was used instead of reincarnation which was

not supposed to be an orthodox word, although the Christian Church taught the doctrine for over 500 years till a small council, the Second of Constantinople, decided to bar the teaching. The world has been in a sad mess ever since.

Palingenesia is used by St. Paul in his epistle to Titus (iii. 5) which is translated in "The New Testament in Basic English" as "he gave us salvation through the washing of the new birth," which is as direct a meaning of the original as one might desire. A more frequent word than *palingenesia* is *anastasis* which is usually translated "resurrection" but really means "standing up again from the dead." Every birth of a new baby is the resurrection from a former life of an old soul coming again once more to seek its perfection or salvation, by renewed efforts in a new body, having, as St. Peter reminds us (II Peter i. 9), "forgotten our old sins."

St. Peter uses the old Greek term "drank of Lethe," but that too is unorthodox in flavour and would not appeal to Dr. Crews.

The Cosmological scheme outlined by Theosophy is no more confusing than the various sevenfold presentations in the Book of Revelation. They all have to do with states of consciousness, of which three at least are not strange to ordinary people. They are the waking, the sleeping and the dreaming states. One cannot have a state of consciousness without a body or vehicle of sensation corresponding to that state. St. Paul tells of these when he says there is a body of flesh and blood, a psychic body, which Dr. Crews and his fellow theologians insist upon calling a "natural" body, so that people think it means the flesh and blood body, which it does not, for when Paul means flesh and blood he says so. (See I *Corinthians* xv. 50).

There is also a pneumatic body translated "Spiritual" body. It ought to be Breath body being the body of the Holy Breath or Holy Ghost as it is usually spoken of. The strange words that Dr. Crews speaks of as having been found in Theosophical literature are the equivalents of these Greek terms used by Jesus and Paul, for which our theologians have failed to furnish us with English substitutes, apparently because

they did not know what they meant. Did Dr. Crews know that he had a psychic body as well as one of flesh and blood? If he did he differs from most ministers.

Dr. Crews concluded his pamphlet with a reference to an Indian author who points out that the East pays attention to the Inner, the West to the Outer life. The Theosophist would have people pay attention to both as required. To spend all one's life in meditation will attain due results, as due results are attained by those who pay attention altogether to business or work on the physical plane. Jesus was very practical and taught us to do whatever our hands found to do, and to do it with all our might. The same applies to meditation, which is really a form of prayer in the true sense, communion with the Higher Self, one's own Godlike nature.

Intensification is the one word we need in both cases. The Kingdom of Heaven is taken by violence, or as Patanjali says, with ardent impetuosity. This cannot be achieved without the co-operation of all our powers, physical, psychic and spiritual, and their consecration to the one great service of Man. We are here because we are Sons of God. Our Mission is the redemption of the Human Race. "God so loved the world."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from The Canadian Theosophist, September, 1942. Mr. Smythe is General Secretary of the T. S. (Adyar) in Canada, and is known for his consistent and vigorous support of the Theosophy enunciated by H. P. Blavatsky. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

DR. DE PURUCKER ANSWERS QUESTIONS

Some of the most important and interesting teaching on Theosophical subjects which might not otherwise have been touched upon in formal exposition were given by Dr. de Purucker in answer to direct questions sent to him from various parts of the world; and it is these that are included in this present series, which the Editors plan to run for several issues. It may be interesting to readers to know that these answers were often dictated the first thing in the morning while the Leader was having his breakfast.

WAS CHRISTIANITY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DARK AGES?

Question — Some people say, I fear after but a superficial study of the matter, that Christianity is responsible for the Dark Ages in Europe which so quickly followed the establishment of Christianity as a State religion. They also quote H. P. Blavatsky to this effect. Is this the recognised Theosophical viewpoint?

G. de P. — The statement that came from H. P. B. I think was that the downward cycle to which the questioner refers began some five hundred years before the Christian era, and that is true. But you must not suppose from this that it was Christianity, or the beginning of the Christian era, that was solely responsible for the Dark Ages then to come, for this is unjust, it is untrue. It is true, however — and I trust any Christian friends will forgive me for this plain speaking — that had Christianity remained utter true to the teachings of its grand Master, the work that Christianity set out to do would have been far better done, and the Dark Ages might have never come upon the West as actually took place.

The truth was this: that a descending cycle began some few hundred years before what is now called the beginning of the Christian era. It was a cycle going downward, what Plato would have called a beginning of a Cycle of Spiritual Barrenness: and the Christian movement, then a

Theosophical movement of its time in the countries around the Mediterranean, was begun in an effort to stem the horrors that were bound to come, to throw a new wave of spirituality into the thought-life of men in the Occident. The Orient needed it not, but the Occident did. And for hundreds of years it did act as a brake, a brake on the charge of human life which was running downhill. And in ways it did good. But oh, how more blessed might have been the results if their great Master's life and teachings had been the example of his followers as their conduct in their own lives. It was a spiritual movement started in order to help mankind on a cycle running downwards before it began to reascend.

It is quite wrong and unjust, nevertheless, as some people have done, namely men whose hearts have been hurt by what they have seen of the wrong-doings of the Christian Church in the past — it has been unjust to that Church and Christianity as Christianity to blame it wholly for the Dark Ages. There were great and good men among the primitive Christians and they labored nobly. The pity of it is there were not more who labored to lift men during that cycle which a few of them at least knew was a cycle running downwards.

We Theosophists today have a similar work to do but on differing lines: a cycle beginning its rise commenced some time before H. P. B. came to the Western world; and a rising cycle, very slow now, but it will be constantly rising for a while, has set in. And the dangers here in their way are just as serious, perhaps more subtil, difficult to deal with, than are the dangers afflicting men or menacing men when the cycle runs downward. Perhaps the greatest danger facing us today in this era of universal change and overturnings generally due to cosmic causes, is the increasing outbreak of psychic eruptions from the astral light, something foretold by the Masters, about which H. P. B. warned us. We have just to look around the world to see, seeing to understand.

For my part, I would we had the backing of a great enlightened Christian organization, filled with the spirit of their Avatara-Master, which with our own organization could see and understand the

dangers that menace men. With its power and wealth, and presumably accepted order and perhaps interior discipline, if it could only be fired unto a new vision of the spirit of their Master Jesus, then these Christians of the type of their Master would be working with us hand in hand, for our movements really would be one. But where, alas, alas, may we Theosophists find such a devoted organization of what I may call primitive Christians, infilled with the spirit of their great Master?

THE TEN AVATARAS OF VISHNU

Question — I have been puzzling over a list of the ten avataras of Vishnu, as given in the Brahmanical scriptures, and wondering if there is not some connexion between them and the scientific conception of evolution, Would you throw any light on this? The list follows: 1. Matsya, the Fish; 2. Kurma, the Tortoise; 3. Varaha, the Boar; 4. Narasimha, the Man-lion; 5. Vamana, the Dwarf; 6. Parasu-Rama, Rama with the Ax; 7. Rama, hero of the Ramayana; 8. Krishna, the spiritual instructor of Arjuna; 9. Buddha; 10. Kalki, the White Horse.

G. de P. — This line of avataric descents really is in the evolutionary line of progressive growth, even as European science teaches it. You have, first, the Fish, the Reptile, the Mammal, the beginnings of the humanity, young Humanity called the Boar Humanity, as such more or less developed but unspiritual; then Rama of the Moon, Chandra, showing the beginnings of the workings of mind, and then Krishna; the avataric initiate Gautama the Buddha, and finally the Kalki-Avatar, the summit or highest of all. I might add that all these names do not imply and were never intended to imply that Brahmanical esotericism taught the descent of divinities into the respective animate beings named here. These names of different animals and men are technical, and like all zoologic mythology were chosen because of certain attributes that these various animate beings have.

Now, these avataric descents do not appertain solely to a race or a root-race, nor to a globe, nor to a chain, nor to a solar-system alone. But because Nature repeats herself by analogy, for the simple reason that

the little must have in it and reproduce whatever its parent the whole contains, therefore the same line of enlarging understanding, of evolutionary development, takes place in all the spheres *mutatis mutandis*. So that these avataric descents we can ascribe or allocate to the solar system, to the planetary chain as a whole, to a round, to a globe, to a root-race, to a sub-race therein.

It is very interesting too, that although this line of ten items, ten avataric descents, is typically Hindu, nevertheless the same scheme, suggesting growth in knowledge and wisdom and power, with all consequent spiritual and other attributes and faculties attending thereupon, were and still are found in systems of religio-philosophical and mystical thought other than the Hindu, as for instance, in Mithraism. The Mithraists had seven degrees — actually ten or twelve — seven degrees of advancing knowledge and growth in understanding. We would say seven esoteric degrees in the esoteric cycle, beginning with the lowest and rising through various degrees to the highest therein. Thus, for instance, they taught that the neophyte began his course of experience, and he was given a name, the name of a bird as I recollect. I do not remember them all in the Mithraic system, but one grade was called Corax, the crow or the raven, and the neophyte who successfully passed that grade was called technically a crow. It did not mean that he was a crow. It was a technical word (the raven in Mithraic mythology was the servant of the Sun) marking his stage of evolutionary growth, development. Just as in the avataric list the evolutionary growth is indicated from the less to the greater, from the fish through the reptile, through the mammal, headed by man, etc., etc.

The second grade in the hierarchy of the Mithraists was Cryphius, Occult, higher than the crow. The third grade was that of the soldier. The fourth grade was that of the lion; and so forth up to the highest, which was Pater, the Father or hierophant. These were technical terms marking the advancing degrees of initiation. And to show a still greater similarity to this scheme, the Mithraists said that these same seven or ten grades of growth or advancement mark the stages of the after-

death journey of the incarnate being through the planets — their ladder of life, each one a stage.

Somewhat the same thing was found in Christianity. Christian neophytes were called fishes, so that they even said of themselves: "We are little fishes. Our great Fish is our Master Jesus." Why did they choose such a curious little animal to designate themselves by? For certain reasons of their own which we can easily imagine. Fishes could swim in water, and are perpetually hungry, and are going through the water, which is the astral light, signifying the material world and its temptations, and all that kind of thing; hungering for light all the time. If you catch the thought, you will see the reason why the earliest Christians called themselves little fishes.

I might add that in connexion with the highest of these avataric grades, that of the Kalki Avatara, marked by the white horse, riding the white horse: the horse is a symbol of the Sun; the bull or cow is a symbol of the moon; and you may remember how in Egypt and Persia, India, Babylonia, and other places, these animals were used as symbolic suggestions. Pictures of Egyptian buildings, temples, shrines, and those of other peoples, show the sacred cow, the sacred bull, the sacred horse, and so forth. As the horse stood for the sun, so the tenth Avatara here would be an Avatara of Vishnu or Maha-Vishnu, of the Sun.

What do we learn from this? This scheme, in addition to being the names given by human beings to the Avataras, from the first to the tenth, represents likewise the technical names given to neophytes in esoteric schools. The lowest chela was called a fish, just as in Mithraism he was called by the name of a bird. The chela who had taken the second degree successfully was called a tortoise. When he took the third successfully, he was called a boar; and the highest of all was called an incarnation of the Sun, a Son of the Sun technically, called a white horse, or a brilliant horse, a dazzling horse.

You know, we can glean something else from this line of avataric descents. If you examine this carefully, you will see in time, that these different items in the ascending list from one to ten represent the ten

sub-races in any one root-race, commonly enumerated as seven.
Actually there are twelve.

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION INTO THE HUMAN KINGDOM: II — *G. de Purucker*

I have found that some themes we have been studying are still somewhat obscure in the minds of many here, and elsewhere. I doubt not The particular themes I have in mind are evolution, the imbodying of the monads, and what we humans were on the moon-chain, what the animals were, etc. In the first place I am sure that many students of Theosophy have often asked themselves the following question: Given Nature and her laws and the different classes of the families of monads, could these monads by passing through the lower kingdoms of Nature, unaided, without help from above, gradually through learning, through experience, through evolution, rise higher from kingdom to kingdom, so that the mineral would become the vegetable, and later a beast, the beast a man, the man a god? — following the well-known statement in the Kabbala.

Now without mincing words my answer is Yes. It is possible, and in fact would happen if that were the way Nature worked. But she does not work that way, and I will explain why. Furthermore, such slow, slow, slow evolution through the kingdoms of Nature of the monads upwards would take an incredibly long time. Instead of, for instance, the monad of an elemental becoming a man in six or seven imbodiments of our chain, which is something like 60 billions of years, the monads unaided would take six or seven solar manvantaras merely to pass from one kingdom to the next higher. In other words, theoretically the monads can rise without help from the kingdom above into those higher kingdoms if they take time enough for the process. But it would take a quasi-eternity to do it; but the important thing is that *Nature is not working that way*. Her law is that all lives for all, which means that every entity, wittingly or unwitting, helps every other entity. It means that every superior kingdom is not only a guide to the kingdom next below itself, but an enormous attraction upwards to itself upon the lower kingdom.

Thus to illustrate: Take the human kingdom: It is the goal of the beast-kingdom, and mark you, in Theosophy we place humans in a kingdom separate from the animals. In the same way the vegetables aspire upwards towards the animal kingdom, and the animal kingdom draws them up. So it is with all kingdoms. But in addition to these things, there is an interchange of — how may I phrase it? — an interchange of help between every two contingent kingdoms: as for instance between the human and the animal, between the dhyan-chohanic and the human, between the second and first dhyan-chohanic, and between the third and the second. In other words what we call in our own human case the descent of the manasaputras and their lighting of the fires of mind in the then mindless humanity, takes place *mutatis mutandis*, which means with the necessary changes of circumstances and kingdom, between every two adjacent kingdoms. So just as the lower dhyan-chohanic kingdom, the lower manasaputras, inflamed our own minds to become awakened unto thinking for themselves — what we call the descent of the manasaputras — so does the human kingdom inflame the very latent intelligence of the animals. And the animals in their turn are, as it were, manasaputric beings to the kingdom below, by an interchange of life-atoms and by the conjoining bonds of the two kingdoms, where there are creatures who may at one time be called low animals or very high plants.

Now with those points established, let us examine two questions. 1. What were we humans now in this Earth-chain, what were we on the Moon-chain, the parent of this Earth-chain? Remember the moon is just a dead chain, from which all life has fled, except what we may call the life of a corpse, a chemical and quasi-physiological activity of the molecules. What were we present humans on the Moon-chain? We were the animal monads in the moon-men, in the humanity of the moon, or what, if you wish, we could call the animal moon-men, just as here on earth we speak of ourselves as thinking humans and animal humans, referring to different parts of our constitution — facts which you all know. When I say we, I mean we of the higher class of human beings.

Question 2. What were the low class of human beings on earth today, and the lowest class of human beings, the savages today — which according to the anthropologists can scarcely count to more than 10, that is can scarcely have a clear idea of what more than 10 things mean, such as the Veddahs of Ceylon and the Andaman Islanders and some peoples in the South Seas and some of the tribes in Africa, etc., etc. — what were these lower men on the Moon-chain? They were the moon-animals. Then you will immediately say: "Then we are a whole kingdom higher than these others of the human family." No. You have the explanation at the ends of your fingers. The animals of the Moon-chain before the moon's Seventh or last Round took place, according to the process which I have just tried to illustrate a few moments ago, so to speak were manasaputrizied by the moon-men, the moon-humanity. So that before those animals reached the moon's Seventh Round, they had thus been enlightened and raised to the human status, but a low human status.

So these lower human beings among us today, those in whom the spark of mind now burns not too brightly, were once animals on the moon, then were manasaputrizied into humanity before the moon's Seventh Round ended. Thus then, when these monads at the end of the Seventh moon-round, after the long pralaya, came to our earth, they came already as humanized entities, as humans.

Now what on the Moon-chain were our present animals? They were the lowest animals on the moon, the very lowest, those which had not emanated from out of themselves the powers to allow themselves to be manasaputrizied; just as on earth we have insects and flying things and creeping things and the lower forms of life of various kinds; because the animal kingdom contains many classes, from its highest representatives the apes, running through all the grades of the quadrupeds, through the birds and fishes down to the insects, etc.

Similarly now, instead of looking backwards let us look forwards. We humans, that is we higher humans, in the next chain-imbodiment will be the lowest dhyān-chohanic kingdom there. The animal human parts

of us, what we call the animal man or the animal monad, will at the end of the Seventh Round on our present chain have become fully humanized or man. And we, what we call ourselves now, will then have become dhyan-chohanized or the lowest class of Dhyan-Chohans. We shall then have Dhyan-Chohans working through humans who themselves again have animal monads. The lower humans on our earth today, at the end of the Seventh Round will form the average or higher men on the next chain. And our present animal monads will then have become humanized and will form the highest type. In other words, no animal can become a man until it has been manasaputrized.

Remember I am not talking of bodies now. I am talking of true evolution, the inner forces and powers which distinguish a thinking man from the relatively unthinking animal. That has not anything to do with bodies. I am talking of monads, of the real man, of the real beasts, of the inner being. And our highest animals at the end of our Seventh Round, provided that they make the grade upward by the last three Rounds, will be humans when this Earth-chain comes to its end and dies. Similarly for other kingdoms in nature at the end of the Seventh Round, if its representatives have succeeded in making the grade upwards, each such kingdom will have gone up a step higher. Those that make the grade among the animals will have become men. The men who make the grade amongst us will become Dhyan-Chohans.

Now then, who were the Dhyan-Chohans who manasaputrized the moon-beings of the Third Root-Race? Our own human ancestors. They were the average or higher men of the moon, moon-men, now to become Dhyan-Chohans, called manasaputras, sons of mind, i. e., Dhyanins, because their function is, so far as we are concerned, to awaken thought, to awaken mind in us. The beast, for instance, has as much latent mind as any man has, but it has not been manasaputrized, awakened, stimulated, lifted, brought into self-conscious activity.

Take the case of a little child, a human child. Why doesn't it think as we do? Why doesn't it write books, why doesn't it speak on Theosophy? Why doesn't it study science? Because it is too young. Of course. But the

real answer is because its mind has not yet been emanated from within itself. The parents of the child act as the manasaputras to a certain extent. They teach it, they watch. Little by little the child begins to observe, to take note of things, begins to think, its faculties develop, and before you realize it, the child begins to say nice things, and you are proud of your offspring. What has happened? Simply that its mind has begun to open, to function. But if that child in childhood were carried to a desert island and lived there alone, provided it could live, provided it survived, it would not learn speech. Its mind moves very slowly; it would take note of what is going on around, but it would be in a worse state than a grown savage like the Andaman Islander. It would be little more than a semi-thinking human animal, because its mind would not yet have awakened, opened, developed, emanated, evolved.

For instance, when we see a child grown into a thinking man, we don't say that is a haphazard work of thinking Nature, fortuitous, chance. We say: there is law behind there, something called mind has evolved out of that entity. Something already in there has simply flowered out. In other words evolution or emanation is simply growth. Those three words are practically interchangeable: growth, emanation, evolution: because growth, as a plant from a seed, consists in the unfolding or flowing forth of what that seed contained.

Now H. P. B. in her wonderful work, *The Secret Doctrine*, divides the monads into 7, and I think even 10 classes. As a matter of fact there are 12. These 7 or 10 or 12 monadic classes in another place she divides into 3 families, 3 divisions. The first and highest are all those monads above the human. An intermediate family or division is the human and all connected with the human — and remember how many varieties of human and sub-human beings there are. The third and lowest class are all the entities below the very lowest entity which by any stretch of fact could be called human, such as the beasts and the vegetables and the minerals and the elementals. She points out that of these 3 divisions the highest are not only the forerunners in coming over from the moon who guided the elementals in the building of our new Earth-chain, but

also were the instructors and guides of the next class, or division rather, which came following after. We were this next class which came following after; and they and we thereupon became the guides, the helpers, the instructors, of the lowest class which followed after us, just exactly as we see in Nature among us today.

One thing more about the manasaputras, and it will explain what may seem like a contradiction to you if you have read *The Secret Doctrine* without care. The manasaputras who as a body were the particular awakeners of us from non-thinking human bodies or quasi-animal bodies into thinking human beings, were the lowest class of the Dhyan-Chohans who were average or higher men on the moon, who had attained dhyan-chohanship at the end of the Seventh Round of the moon. But these, while they enlightened us, speaking now in classes, were themselves guided and helped by the two higher dhyan-chohanic classes, a few representatives of which during the early races of this Fourth Round of our globe came amongst men as gods and demi-gods. and guided them; and these are they who are referred to in the exoteric religions of antiquity under such names as Osiris, Isis, Ahura-Mazda, in other words the gods and god-men of the ancient peoples. They were the Dhyan-Chohans, some of them I should say, of the highest and second classes, who even before the manasaputras came and awakened our mind, were already at their work of teaching. Because mark you: even in the first race of Globe A, the first globe of our chain, beginning with the Second Round, there were already men, that is to say thinking, self-conscious, cogitating, feeling, loving human beings. Those were they who have now become what we now call the Mahatmans, the Masters, their highest chelas, lower chelas, and the leaders of men, simply because they are more highly evolved than the rest of us men. They were men. And these few men, relatively speaking, (by few I don't mean 3 or 4; perhaps a million or two, it is just guess work) even in the first race on Globe A, were taught by the Dhyan-Chohans of the highest and Second Race. The latter helped to awaken those earliest men, awaken them as a parent will awaken the mind of her child, helping to do so, teaching and guiding and instructing and

lifting up and showing the path, giving ideals, sounding keynotes of truth.

For instance, we humans, looking before us into the future, shall reach the end of the Seventh Round of our chain. We humans then, those of us who shall have made the grade, will develop into Dhyan-Chohans of the third class, the lowest, the kingdom above the human kingdom — call them the angels if you like — angels of the third or lowest grade. The better name is Dhyan-Chohans, because angel in the Christian teachings is a vague term. The Masters and their highest chelas will then have become Dhyan-Chohans of the second or next to the highest dhyan-chohanic class; and every one of the dhyan-chohanic kingdoms will, each in its turn, have moved up a step, a kingdom. Our animals, those who make the grade, will become men of a low type at the end of the Seventh Round. Which animals will these be? The apes, the monkeys, possibly some of the quadrupeds. The beasts below these — I doubt if any of them will reach to the human stage even at the end of the Seventh Round. They are still too crude, too low, unprepared. But they will become men during the next chain, except the very lowest of our animals who will be the higher animals on the next chain.

Another thought in connexion with these ideas. I stated that I was not speaking of bodies when mentioning evolution, and I have not been. I have been speaking of monads, egos, souls, call them what you will, in other words the consciousness-center within an entity, that which makes him what he is as a conscious being, a thinker, a feeler, one with judgment and discrimination, one who feels love, compassion, pity, sympathy, all these lovely human qualities which are truly human as well as humane.

But now, to speak for a moment about bodies: you will find in my book *Theosophy and Modern Science*, [*Man in Evolution*] how hard I tried to show that all evolution is from within outwards, that nothing can evolve or unfold into something greater unless it had not only the power and capacity inside to do so, but had already within itself what is going to come forth. If you turn the spigot, the faucet, the water won't

run out of it unless there is water there to run out of it; and no man will manifest or bring forth into his life, into his actions, into his thoughts, what he has not awakened within himself. But, while all evolution is therefore from within, while all growth is from within, yet, as the ages slowly go by, even the physical bodies feel the vibration, the impetus, continually impinging upon them, and feel also the quality of those impulses as unfolding or evolution becomes constantly greater; so that even the physical bodies become more refined and slowly change. Yet there seems to be a law in Nature that no strain of physical bodies can endure after a certain period. For some reason, interesting, fascinating, Nature seems to call forth as it were, and says to any physical body-strain — thus far and no farther. It would seem as if that type of structure could not evolve properly, efficiently. Then those bodies slowly die out, and the monads which gave them life, after their rest in the Devachan or Nirvana come back and find new robes or bodies waiting for them of quite another kind.

There you have the process of evolution on a thumb-nail. That is why the enormous reptiles of the Mesozoic day vanished; and as modern biologists and geologists examine the records of the rocks and fossils, you will find them all expressing their amazement that these strains, these families of creatures, seem to die out suddenly. As I remember, one geologist expressed it by saying it looked as if a pestilence had fallen upon them, and in a short time, geologically speaking, they had gone. Science is utterly unable to explain why, except by guesses, some of them very silly, like the one I read some time ago, that the reason the reptiles died out was because they grew so big they could not carry themselves and died of starvation. That to me is the most grotesque theory I have ever heard. Nature doesn't build up a big body if she cannot get food to make up a big body. It was just guess-work. Far more reasonable was the suggestion I read in a geological book that the reason the reptiles died out was because they were smitten by some universal pest which wiped them out, perhaps a new kind of germ, new to these creatures. Maybe!

Isn't it a blessing that these physical bodies do in time die out!

CAN WE CONTROL OUR FATE? — *Hugh Percy Leonard*

Man can modify his future within certain limits. That is obvious to all. A simple, virtuous life ensures a hale and dignified old age: faithful discharge of duty wins esteem and confidence, while self-forgetting efforts for the public good bring their return of grateful recognition from the masses whom we serve.

Most people live for sensation and oscillate unceasingly between the two opposing poles of pleasure and of pain, and if our future were infallibly in our control, pleasure would be our constant guest while its unwelcome twin would find our door for ever closed. Fortunately for us such an arrangement is impossible. We sometimes plan a day of pure and unalloyed enjoyment consisting of a continuous succession of agreeable events; but the attempt is seldom very successful. All possible devices for producing and prolonging pleasure are exploited to the utmost; but the high tide of gaiety is bound to ebb before long; the capacity for enjoyment becomes jaded, overstimulation is followed by reaction, and the day after the picnic is one of dullness and depression.

Although man has it partly in his power to plan his future as he will, there is a seemingly relentless fate whose rulings he is powerless to resist. Man has a dual nature, and while one aspect seeks to follow its allotted destiny careless alike of pleasure and of pain, the lower or material self incessantly pursues enjoyment and endeavors to avoid all contact with its disagreeable opposite. But all such efforts are foredoomed to failure, for moral growth is quite impossible so long as life is like a happy holiday; the will can never rise to its full power without the stimulus of opposition, while the rare flower of sympathy can only bloom under the leaden skies of suffering and of pain. The classic writers frequently refer to an inexorable fate which runs its course in spite of human tears and protestations, and that there is an unavoidable necessity in human life is very clear. However virtuous our lives may be, old age and death come creeping on with steady pace.

Right living may postpone and mitigate the disabilities of age; but the slow waning of the faculties is just as much a part of Nature's plan as the expanding powers of youth. There is nothing hostile to our welfare in this over-ruling destiny, though to the pleasure-loving lower self its slow but unavoidable approach may be regarded with dismay. The ebbing of the flood of manly strength, and the relaxing of the grip of personal desire allows the more unhindered play of subtler, spiritual powers just as the sinking of the blazing sun reveals the milder radiance of the stars in the dark sky of night.

There is in man a natural tendency to shirk his proper contribution towards the turning of the wheel of social life. By methods often perfectly legitimate, a man may so possess himself of wealth and power as to command the services of others to an almost limitless degree; he thus avoids the dusty march of toilers and proceeds upon his way borne on the shoulders of the marching crowd. He cannot finally escape however the needful discipline of steady labor, nor deprive himself of that growth of character that comes from duty faithfully performed. "A shroud," they say, "has no pockets," and nothing of our present wealth can we carry over the gulf of death into our next rebirth. The Law of Compensation will not let us shirk our proper share of service to our fellow-men, and thus it happens that the leisured trifler of today becomes the humble laborer in a subsequent rebirth and will discover that his debt of service must be paid in full. Such purifying discipline is cheerfully accepted by the silent soul within, that part of us which is at one with destiny and has no other aim than to co-operate with universal law.

But let us consider in the light of reincarnation to what extent we can control our future course and reach our destination by our own persistent will. What can be more perplexing to the trustful optimist than the spectacle of a passionate lover of music, born in a family where there is no musical heredity and where he lacks the slightest opportunity of developing his latent musical talent? His life is passed in hopeless longing and he dies at last discouraged by the thought of being thwarted by unkindly Fate. But Theosophy, lifting the veil that

shrouds futurity, reveals the picture of a newborn child which has just entered a family of musicians. "There is no new thing under the sun" and the baby is by no means new, but a very old ego in a new robe of flesh. What directed the ego to this particular family? The theologian might reply: "The inscrutable will of God who has graciously endowed the newly created soul with musical ability and likewise provided it with all the advantages of a musical environment." The theosophical answer would be that a love for music fostered in spite of great discouragements drew the soul by natural affinity to parents likeminded with himself. And now the tender, plastic mind is bathed in music all the day. The brain and nervous system are refined by their environment, so that both mind and body are combined to form an instrument for musical expression by the all-dominating will. With ample opportunities at his command, all the seeds of music so assiduously nursed under the cold, gray skies of long ago, now germinate and spring to vigorous life. In ignorance and sadness, often in despair, he persevered but as it seemed in vain. Dimly he must have felt that his superb reliance on the Law would open up a way at last, and so he gains his heart's desire because he boldly claimed his kinship with his great Original, that hidden source of all that lives, which dowers its offspring with the power to mould their future destiny according to their will.

As has already been explained, the lower or material self swayed by its personal preferences is fortunately powerless to avoid its self-made destiny. It frequently occurs that one particular individual arouses us to the most violent antipathy, and every meeting develops into an encounter resulting in exchanges of a mutual ill-will. In order to avoid such disagreeable incidents we contrive to meet him as little as possible. Perhaps we have done him an injury in some past life and instinctively dread reprisals on his part, or it may be that a strongly pronounced fault in his nature awakes a corresponding weakness in ourselves. But over-ruling destiny which always works for our advancement and indeed only carries out our instructions, will not excuse us from the duty of restoring the broken harmony. For bygone

injury a compensation must be made, or if it is an uncorrected weakness in our nature, better far that we should be forced to face and conquer it at once than that it should retire into an ambush and attack us later on. And thus perhaps at some remote rebirth we find ourselves with brother, sister, parent or companion with whom we are perpetually at strife. This is an opportunity and not a misfortune, and if we rightly grasp and use it the ancient wrong may be atoned for, the weak place in our character strengthened, and one more jarring discord in the music of the spheres resolved into the primal harmony.

Christ must have had this idea in his mind when he commanded us to love our enemies. Aside from Karma and Reincarnation there is no obvious reason why we should love a person who calls up the strongest feelings of antipathy. But when we consider that the brother who offends us now may be our victim of a long forgotten past who still carries about with him the scars we have inflicted, is it not reasonable that we should go out of our way to serve him? Theosophists, always looking for causes when they see effects, account for such inborn antipathies by assuming wrongs done in past lives. They cannot believe that a loving Creator who is said to produce new souls for every birth, would deliberately implant a gratuitous hate in the mind of the newborn child. It may be objected that hate must always operate to keep us apart from the object of our aversion; but there is such a thing as "attraction by repulsion." We must all have noticed that if we have any particular dread or dislike, by a strange perversity of the mind that is the very subject most frequently dwelt upon. Theosophy teaches that if any nation, person, or environment is peculiarly distasteful to us, we shall sooner or later be drawn to it by the same law, and shall be unable to disengage ourselves until we are able to contemplate it with dispassion and equanimity.

Almost everybody would like to be the recipient of a stream of the good things of life and wishing to secure the certainty of future affluence we cling with desperation to whatever wealth we have and try to add to our accumulation. Such tactics may secure us the desired prosperity for this our present life; but their effect in later lives will have the very

opposite result to that which was intended. Does it not seem reasonable that in a subsequent rebirth such a personality will manifest a miserly disposition from the very cradle, and the infection of his character will affect all with whom he comes in contact so that even the habitually generous will be frozen to unwonted parsimony in his company? But on the other hand, your royal giver is in a fair way of entering his next rebirth with a temperament which radiates generosity and almost compels tight-fisted avarice to liberality by his very presence. The grasping, greedy individual does control his future; but not at all in the way that he desired.

There are many whose occupation is a cause of constant complaint, and much they wish that they possessed the power to change their lot. Here again destiny is seen at work. The reluctant worker assuredly needs precisely the discipline he is groaning under. Let him cheerfully confront his daily duty and discharge it to the height of his ability. Striving for excellence, interest will spring up; efficiency will then develop, and after that follows success. The intelligent Law of Adjustment, satisfied that the lesson has been learned, proceeds to conduct him to another school to learn another lesson. So long as he rebelliously endeavored to control his destiny, he was powerless; but as soon as he submitted to the inevitable, and cooperated with the great law that governs all, then spiritual forces came into play and his entanglements were severed as if cut with a sharp sword.

Humanity as a whole determines its future as well as individual men, and the present social chaos is the direct result of the past mental chaos of mankind. What but mad chaos can be looked for while through the ages everyone has set his mind on selfish schemes which can only be realized by subjecting weaker wills to his own? If self-regarding, independent action unregulated by any reference to the welfare of the whole has produced the existing state of the world, what may we not expect when universal brotherhood is taken as the guide in life; when public service and not private gain is uppermost in every mind, and when men look with scorn on any use of talent or of power save such as is intended for the general elevation of the race?

A widely spread conviction that our future reaping will depend upon our present sowing; that men will live again in other lives on earth; that destiny is only stern and painful as we make it so; and that we can arrange our future as we choose within the limits of the Law of universal harmony, will bring about such betterment in human life that earth will be transformed to what men have imagined heaven.

The Theosophical Forum

THE UNIVERSAL SOLAR SYSTEM — *L. Gordon Plummer*

Who is not thrilled at sight of Venus, the morning star, or of Saturn with his rings, or of Jupiter with his moons? Who fails to respond to the colors at sunrise? And yet these are but physical phenomena, veiling, it is true, deep mysteries. Had we the vision of the seer, and could we behold these mysteries, we should see not eight or nine planets wheeling around Father Sun, but myriads of planets. We should see not one Sun, but a dozen, perhaps, with their planets, all confined within the limits of our Solar System.

Now, we have to introduce a technical term here, the Universal Solar System, and its meaning should be clearly understood. It signifies all the planets and worlds, visible or invisible, that comprise the Egg of Brahma. Thus, except that our Egg of Brahma is a part of the Galaxy, as are the billions of other "Eggs," the term does not relate to our Galaxy, or universe. It is a term used to distinguish between the solar system that we see, to wit: composed of one sun, and the nine visible planets, and the greater Solar System the greater part of which we do not see, our visible solar system being but a very small part of it.

The teachings about the Universal Solar System are part of a greater teaching under the general heading of the Doctrine of the Spheres. All aspects of this Doctrine are very sacred indeed, and belong to the teachings of the Mystery-Schools, and some of the phases of the teachings are not divulged to the uninitiated under any conditions. Briefly the Doctrine of the Spheres is divided into four parts which go by these names:

The Universal Solar System

The Globe Chains

The Seven Sacred Planets

The Occult relationship existing between the Earth and the Sacred Planets.

This last phase of the teaching is the most secretly guarded, and as said in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 163-4:

As to Mars, Mercury and "the four other planets," they bear a relation to Earth of which no Master or High Occultist will ever speak, much less explain the nature.

Then there is a twin doctrine, and one which is the most sacred of all, known as the Circulations of the Kosmos. This deals with the ceaseless flowing of the rivers of lives between planet and planet and between planet and sun and back again. This doctrine bears intimately upon the mysteries of death and of Initiation, for in our cosmic journeyings we sail these great rivers of space.

Now, the purpose of this article is to explain to a degree at least, the nature of the Universal Solar System, and we can approach it from two aspects. One, the vehicular, will be the first we shall embark upon, and the second, that relating to the consciousness working through the worlds comprising the Universal Solar System will be taken up afterwards as it presents a more complete picture.

It is interesting that for a time the analogy between an atom and the solar system was stressed by modern science, but the tendency seems to swing away from that at present because the electrons and the protons (the nuclei) are no longer considered to be solid particles, but rather they are considered to be units of electrical energy. Thus, the atom has come to be virtually a mathematical concept, rather than a physical actuality, and in this, a great advance has been made. The tendency away from the Solar System analogy is to be explained on the grounds that in the case of the atom, we have broken away from a purely physical concept, whereas in our observations of the solar system, we are still confined to physical phenomena studied with the aid of physical instruments.

A significant step in the direction pointed out by the Ancient Wisdom has been taken by Mr. Cornelius O'Connor of Burlingame, California, and his findings have been very favorably received by astronomers. He

has demonstrated that the planetary distances, periods of rotation, and times of revolution around the sun, are in strict accord with electromagnetic laws. In THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for March, 1939, there appeared an article by Mr. O'Connor in which he discusses the concentric electromagnetic "shells" surrounding a wire carrying an electric current, and the concentric electromagnetic "shells" around the sun in which the planets are moving in their correct positions according to these electromagnetic phenomena. It may be safe to say that in the orbital concept of the structure of the atom, these orbits are really electromagnetic "shells" in which the electrons are whirling at great speed. Thus we may find that just as the Solar System once provided a good analogy for explaining the nature of the atom, the latter may now serve as an excellent analogy for studying the true nature of the Solar System. We can do this, however, only when we are willing to accept the doctrine of the Ancient Wisdom which teaches that the physical globes that we can see are but the outer veils enshrouding invisible *beings* which are the worlds themselves, though they have donned mayavic robes which render them visible.

Following this preamble, let us now set before you the teachings concerning the Universal Solar System. Think first of our Sun with its family of planets as being representative of the manner in which all suns and planets function, and that they simply provide an instance of cosmic family life. We may study the universe as a sevenfold or a tenfold or a twelve-fold organism. For many reasons it is easiest to study the twelve-fold plan, and let us do so now. A study of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by G. de Purucker will reveal that the planetary chains are composed of twelve globes each, of which seven are manifested, and five, unmanifested or formless. Their true nature can be understood by trained initiates only, yet we are assured that they are as real as is the visible planet that we see. They are inhabited, and in our age-long peregrinations we shall traverse them in proper order. Now, just as every planet is really twelve-fold, so is the sun composed of twelve solar globes. Suppose then that we were endowed with the vision of a seer, we should behold not one Mars, but twelve; not one

Venus, but twelve, not one Saturn, but twelve, and in the daytime, not one sun, but twelve bright shining orbs. What a magnificent sight that would be! Yet even if that were so, we should not have stepped outside the realm of our own family, the sun and the well-known planets. In order to comprehend the Universal Solar System our vision should have to extend even farther, and then we should behold not one solar chain, but twelve solar chains; not nine planetary chains, but myriads of planetary chains, each group circling around its own central luminary. Our first vision of the globes would then pale into insignificance, for instead of apparently twelve suns, we should see what would seem to be one hundred and forty-four suns, for there are actually twelve solar chains, each with its twelve solar globes!

We have now to undertake a study of the Universal Solar System as a living, evolving entity, a God. Imagine the vastness of its thoughts and life! Imagine the stupendous growth and development that causes it to embody itself as a great cluster of suns and worlds! Think of that Divine Being as focusing its energies throughout the entire Universal Solar System, from its highest Spiritual-Divine reaches, down to its most physical planes. This God, hierarchically constructed, sends forth twelve rays, parts of itself, which are Divine Beings in their own right, though of a somewhat less lofty caliber. These Divine Rays are the Gods that manifest through the twelve Solar Chains within our Universal Solar System. Eleven of these suns are invisible to us, the twelfth — our own — being visible; and of its Chain of globes one globe only can we see, the lowest; that which corresponds to our own Globe D of Earth.

Now, each of these Solar Rays, or Solar Logoi as they are also called, sends forth its own particular family of twelve rays, which again are Gods in their own right, though of still lesser grade than the Solar Logoi. These Lesser Gods are the Adi-Buddhas, the beings that embody themselves as the several planetary chains comprising the families of the twelve Suns. In our own case, we see many of the planets belonging to our Sun, though there are indeed a few that we do not see, yet they belong to our own little Solar System. With one or two exceptions, all the planetary chains that belong to other Suns in our Universal Solar

System are invisible to us.

Now, each of these Adi-Buddhas, or Planetary Spirits sends forth its own family of Spiritual-Divine Rays, and these are the Dhyani-Buddhas who watch over the rounds of the several planetary chains. These again send forth their rays, who are the Dhyani-Bodhisattvas, who watch over the globes of the chain during the particular round that is watched over by their "sire." And these in their turn send forth their rays, who are the Manushya-Buddhas, who watch over the root-races on the various globes of the chain. So the Lord Gautama Buddha is the Manushya Buddha who watches over this fifth root-race. He is a child or ray of the Dhyani-Bodhisattva who watches over our fourth globe during this fourth Round. Therefore, this Dhyani-Bodhisattva is a ray or child of the fourth Round Dhyani-Buddha, and he in turn is the ray or child of the Adi-Buddha who watches over this entire planetary chain during all seven rounds, and this last Divine Being is a ray of the Solar Logos who manifests to us through our Sun. This Solar Logos is a ray of the supreme Divinity who embodies itself as our entire Universal Solar System.

Thus we have set before you very briefly and without elaboration the hierarchical structure of our Universal Solar System. It is not unlike the House that Jack Built, wherein "This is the priest all shaven and shorn who married the man all tattered and torn who kissed the maiden all forlorn who milked the cow with the crumpled horn that tossed the dog that worried the cat that killed the rat that ate the malt that lay in the house that Jack built." Sometimes there is great wisdom concealed within the nonsense rhymes!

The Theosophical Forum

DR. DE PURUCKER ANSWERS QUESTIONS

WHERE AM "I"?

Question — Where on earth am I in this wilderness of swabhavas and individualities and I's and inner gods? Who am I and where am I? I am sevenfold, I have seven atmans or divinities cooperating to make me what I am, as chemical elements co-operate to make an entity; but which parts of this compound are that part of me which co-operate to say "I", that little unimportant part of me which is so aggressive? What part of me is I, and what part is not?

G. de P. — Man is all his sevenfold being, from the divine downwards through all intermediate stages, even to the body. All is the individual, so to speak. We may express it perhaps to our minds as a pillar of glory, a column of light extending from divinity to the physical man. Now, where our center of consciousness at any one time may be, I take it that is the part we for that time speak of as our I. The beast has it down here; we humans have it a bit higher; the Masters have it somewhat higher still; the Buddhas and Christs still higher, the divinities on a still higher stage of the scale. All the sevenfold being is himself, so to speak, and his I is that point upon which he dwells in conscious selfhood at the time.

Of course this does not change the other fact that just because there are several monads in man, so there are several actual monadic I's or egos. But this is another story.

ABOUT NIRVANA

Question — I have found a great deal of misunderstanding about the Theosophical and indeed the Buddhist teaching of Nirvana. Could you please state something rather direct about your view of Nirvana that I could show my friends?

G. de P. — Yes, the Occident is full of misunderstandings about this subject of Nirvana. They think it is simply the idea that after all beings have evolved through a manvantara and have individually attained Nirvana, they as beings, and therefore *ex hypothesi* all Nature, then sink back into a dead uniform identity of consciousness.

This is absolutely and wholly wrong. One might as well ask oneself: What is the use of all the evolutionary effort of the Universe, and of its enormous multitudes of individuals, if they merely issue from homogeneity to fall back into it again? Nirvana is not one uniform thing or state for every monad. Nirvana means a state in which all the lower is washed out, or rather risen above, by the evolving armies of monads; but each monad, because it has gained individuality, reaches the Nirvanic condition of cosmic freedom as a god-entity, and every monad from the standpoint of individuality is therefore more strongly individualized than it was in the beginning of its cosmic evolution as an un-self-conscious god-spark, although of course Nirvana as a generalizing term means the attainment of the spiritual condition by all.

Take Devachan as an instance. Devachan does not mean that every excarnate monad has the same, the identical same, the absolutely identic, visions and dreams. Not at all! And just so is it with Nirvana. Nirvana means the washing out, or rather the rising above, all the differentiated and therefore crippling elements of the lower spheres. The *process* is the same for all; but the Nirvana is unique for each Jivanmukta or freed monad.

ANDROGYNOUS AND HERMAPHRODITE

Question — My study of *The Secret Doctrine* and other of H. P. Blavatsky's writings leads me to infer that her use of the words "androgynous" and "hermaphrodite" has reference more to the duality of spirit and matter in the universe, rather than to a duality of sexes, masculine and feminine. Is this right?

G. de P. — Yes, quite right. Used by Theosophy, and as a rule by H. P. B.,

the word "androgynous" does not mean "double-sexed," except when very distinctly imbodyed beings are referred to. When it is used of entities of spirit, things obviously, entities obviously, which have no sex — for sex is but a passing phase of our earth evolution, for us and the beasts and the plants — it is used only to signify what in philosophy is called duality, the dual characteristic of manifested nature. This is sometimes called the positive and negative, sometimes the feminine and masculine, these latter two words being borrowed from human life, not meaning that one side of the universe is actually male and the other actually female, which would be utterly ludicrous, but merely meaning that at a certain point, at manifestation in fact, duality supervenes. That is all it means.

Of course when we refer to imbodyed beings, then it is perfectly proper to speak of mankind as androgynous, double-sexed, of which the as yet vestigial organs remaining in the physical frame are remnants out of that hoary past. So *androgynous*, when used of the Universe, signifies only the duality of spirit and matter, consciousness and vehicle, spirit and substance — using any pairs of words you like. And this androgynous or dual character of all the manifested worlds began indeed with Cosmic Buddhi or Maha-Buddhi; but actually only began to show itself on the plane where Fohat especially works, which is the plane of Cosmic Kama. Above that the two rays from the one ascend to reunite; and you have an example in yourselves: the individual ego, or the individual spirit, during its imbodyments breaks up into the septenary constitution, one side of which you may call spirit, and the other side, the vehicular; one side consciousness and the other side vehicle; one side you may call will and the other side consciousness. It does not matter what you call them: duality is there.

But duality springs forth from the Atman, the fundamental basic egoity or Monad in the human being, and the human being simply copies in his constitution and structure what the universe is. According to the axiom of Hermes: "As it is above, so is it here below." Study here below what you see, thereby gaining a key to knowing the Divine. The Divine reflects itself in its distant offsprings in its distant vehicles — the

imbodied Universe as in man. The Atman reflects itself in the man feebly because of our imperfectly evolved vehicles; and evolution consists not in a growth of these spiritual realities to something greater, so much as a perfecting of the vehicles, such as mind, through which the divine ray passes so that these vehicles may continuously, as evolution proceeds in its refining and unfolding powers — so that the divine ray may ever shine forth in larger and greater splendor. That is what all evolution means: from within outwards. Just as the seed brings forth the plant, the plant the bud, the bud the flower, and the flower the seed: the seed, the plant, the bud, the flower, the seed, the plant, the bud, the flower. Nature repeats herself ceaselessly. She reimbodies, reimbodies, reimbodies.

The Theosophical Forum

PROOFS OF THE HIDDEN SELF — *William Q. Judge*

Through Dreams

The dream state is common to all people. Some persons say they never dream, but upon examination it will be found they have had one or two dreams and that they meant only to say their dreams were few. It is doubtful whether the person exists who never has had a dream. But it is said that dreams are not of importance; that they are due to blood pressure, or to indigestion, or to disease, or to various causes. They are supposed to be unimportant because, looking at them from the utilitarian view-point, no great use is seen to follow. Yet there are many who always make use of their dreams, and history, both secular and religious, is not without records of benefit, of warning, of instruction from the dream. The well-known case of Pharaoh's dream of lean and fat kine which enabled Joseph as interpreter to foresee and provide against a famine represents a class of dream not at all uncommon. But the utilitarian view is only one of many.

Dreams show conclusively that although the body and brain are asleep — for sleep begins primarily in the brain and is governed by it — there is still active a recollector and perceiver who watches the introspective experience of dreaming. Sorrow, joy, fear, anger, ambition, love, hate, and all possible emotions are felt and perceived in dreams. The utility of all this on the waking plane has nothing to do with the fact of perception. Time is measured therein, not according to solar division but in respect to the effect produced upon the dreamer. And as the counting of this time is done at a vastly quicker rate than is possible for the brain, it follows that some person is counting. In all these dreams there is a recollection of the events perceived, and the memory of it is carried into the waking state. Reason and all the powers of intelligent waking man are used in dreams; and as emotion, reasoning, perception, and memory are all found to be even more active in dreams than in waking life, it must follow that the Hidden Self is the

one who has and does all this.

The fanciful portion of dreams does not invalidate the position. Fancy is not peculiar to dreaming; it is also present in waking consciousness. In many people fancy is quite as usual and vivid as with any dreamer. And we know that children have a strong development of fancy. Its presence in dream simply means that the thinker, being liberated temporarily from the body and the set forms or grooves of the brain, expands that ordinary faculty. But passing beyond fancy we have the fact that dreams have prophecy of events not yet come. This could not be unless there exists the inner Hidden Self who sees plainly the future and the past in an ever present.

In Clairvoyance

Waking clairvoyance cannot now be denied. Students of Theosophy know it to be a faculty of man, and in America its prevalence is such as to call for no great proof. There is the clairvoyance of events past, of those to come, and of those taking place.

To perceive events that have taken place in which the clairvoyant had no part nor was informed about, means that some other instrument than the brain is used. This must be the Hidden Self. Seeing and reporting events that subsequently transpire gives the same conclusion. If the brain is the mind, it must have had a part in a past event which it now reports, either as actor or as hearer from another who was present, but as in the cases cited it had no such connection as actor, then it follows that it has received the report from some other perceiver. This other one is the Hidden Self, because the true clairvoyant case excludes any report by an eye-witness.

Then again, when the clairvoyant is dealing with an event presently proceeding at a distance, it is necessary that a perceiver who recollects must be present in order to make report. For the brain and its organs of sight and hearing are too far off. But as the clairvoyant does report correctly what is going on, it is the other Hidden Self who sees the event, bridges the gap between it and the brain, and impresses the

picture upon the bodily organs.

The Feeling of Identity

If recollection is the basis for the feeling of identity continuous throughout life, and if brain is the only instrument for perception, then there is an inexplicable series of gaps to be accounted for or bridged over, but admitting the Hidden Self no gaps exist.

We are born feeling that we are ourself, without a name, but using a name for convenience later on. We reply to challenge by saying "It is I" — the name following only for convenience to the other person. This personal identity remains although we fall asleep each night and thus far become unconscious. And we know that even when a long period is blotted out of memory by fall, blow, or other accidental injury, the same feeling of identity crosses that gap and continues the same identical "I" to where memory again acts. And although years of life with all their multiplicity of events and experience have passed, leaving but a small amount of recollection, we yet know ourselves as that unnamed person who came to life so many years before. We do not remember our birth nor our naming, and if we are but a bundle of material experience, a mere product of brain and recollection, then we should have no identity but constant confusion. The contrary being the case, and continuous personal identity being felt and perceived, the inevitable conclusion is that we are the Hidden Self and that Self is above and beyond both body and brain.

FROM COPERNICUS TO EINSTEIN (1) — *H. T. Edge*

This book deals with the problems of space, time, and motion; which, as the author says, are not merely academic questions, but interesting to man as contributing to an understanding of his place in the universe. He remarks, as others have done, that the work of Einstein marks a revolution in ideas similar to that brought about by Copernicus. And we would add here that it is possible that people are a bit one-sided in their criticism of the opponents of Copernicus, Galileo, and others. Ideas which are so familiar to us that we take them for granted, came upon the contemporaries of Copernicus like a vast earthquake, overwhelming not merely their ideas of celestial mechanics (a matter of little or no concern to the majority), but their entire outlook upon human life; uprooting every holdfast, and providing nothing instead except what looked like shifting sand. No wonder there was resistance; and, as to the form it took, those were rough days; when they roasted and pricked people they did it in gross physical form, not in subtle genteel refinement, as we do today.

The world picture which had existed for so many centuries before Copernicus and his compeers, was not so wrong as we are accustomed to think, says Mr. Reichenbach; for both pictures are but convenient representations of unattained realities; and the new views now being developed under the guidance of Einstein will make us hesitate before pronouncing Ptolemy wrong and Copernicus right. Rather we shall vision a pair of alternative theories superseded, and therein reconciled, by the new and more inclusive theory of Einstein, which shows the advantages of both the old theories. The Ptolemaic system, though kinematically workable, was not so simple as the Copernican; but the chief objection was the alleged dynamical inadequacy of the former. This objection, however, as we shall see later, has now been overruled by Einstein.

The first part of this book deals with the Copernican view of the world;

and though this subject may seem trite to some readers, yet, in view of prevailing ignorance among the many, it is by no means superfluous. It is so well and clearly expounded, that it will doubtless serve to provide for such readers a clearer idea of "what it is all about" than they have previously had. With Copernicus go Tycho, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton, each one contributing some element to the development of the theory. It would serve no useful purpose for us to linger over this branch of the subject, as we should merely be offering an inadequate summary in place of what is much better done in the book itself; to which accordingly readers are hereby referred. Of special interest is the section on the newest theories. This begins with a chapter on the (alleged?) Ether.

The theory of relativity, we are here told, has sprung from ideas of motion and gravitation; but also from ideas of electricity and light. The attempt to make light a mechanical phenomenon has failed: instead of explaining light by mechanics, we find that mechanics have to be explained by optics. Exposition of the work of Roemer and others, as to the velocity of light, follows; as also Newton's emission theory, and the wave theory of Huyghens and others. The phenomena of interference are explained, and adduced in support of the wave theory. But what is so strongly insisted on here is that we must not transfer familiar physical experience to regions where it does not necessarily apply. Our notion of a wave is founded on our experience of various kinds of waves on the physical plane, such as water waves, and sound waves in air or denser bodies. This makes us imagine that a wave must necessitate a "medium." But can there be a wave without a medium? We may find a better answer to this question if we call the wave something else. We may call it an alternation, an oscillation, a rapid and incessant change of polarity. And after all that is all that optical phenomena justify us in assuming. Light has been first suspected and then proved to be an electrical phenomenon; and electricity is characterized by these changes of polarity. Thus we do not really need any ether; and in fact we have already replaced the words "medium" or "matter" or "fluid" by the word "field." A field is considered as the

arena of forces, not as a container of physical substances: thus we speak of the magnetic field around a magnet, and the field of wireless waves spreading at right angles to the direction of a current. Two electrical fields can occupy the same space at the same time, points out the writer, as an instance of the fact that the properties of fields are not necessarily those of physical spaces or bodies. Electrical waves, he adds, are advancing fields, which should not be regarded as bound to a material medium. Light is only a small fraction of the total radiation of electricity from the sun. Light is not related to water waves or sound waves; the process is an electrical rather than a mechanical one.

The often quoted Michelson experiment, devised to detect, by observing interference, any relative motion between the earth and the (alleged) ether, is here described at length. Its negative result has been explained away by various devices; but Einstein's simple and direct inference is that there is no such thing as the ether; leastways, there is no fixed framework out in space, to which motions may be referred. Newton had assumed such a fixity as a basis for his mechanical system; wherefore he could speak of absolute motion. But in its absence all motion becomes relative, and we can only speak of bodies as moving relatively to each other. This always gives us a choice of two alternative explanations of a phenomenon, according as we may choose to regard either one of the two bodies as fixed, and the other as moving. The importance of this will appear in connexion with the relativity of force.

Another conception of Einstein's is the relativity of simultaneity. In order to determine the simultaneity of events separated by a distance, we must know a velocity (that of light); and in order to measure this velocity, we must be able to judge the simultaneity of events separated by a distance. So we move in a vicious circle; we must assume one thing in order to determine the other. We have alternative explanations, both equally valid. Simultaneity is relative. Light may be used as a measurement of time, and even of space; a geometry of light may be constructed.

As to the relativity of the force concept, Ernst Mach is quoted. When we

ride in a merry-go-round, the room seems to revolve, while we seem to be at rest. Yet we feel the effect of centrifugal force, pressing us against the outer arm of the seat. Newton had used this as a proof of his doctrine of absolute motion; for, said he, the centrifugal effect shows that it is the merry-go-round which is in motion, and not the room. But Mach showed that the two cases are not opposite; for, if they are opposite, we must regard not merely the room but the whole earth and even the stars as revolving around us. In this case the centrifugal force might just as well be attributed to a gravitational force. So that gravitation and centrifugal force are seen to be alternative explanations. What appears as the effect of inertia when we conceive the machine as rotating, becomes the action of gravitation when we conceive the machine as resting while the earth rotates around it.

What is known as Einstein's "box experiment" is described; by means of this he showed that a particular effect may be equally well explained as due to accelerated motion or to gravitation. It had been shown that curvature of light rays occurs in a case of accelerated motion; hence we must infer that such curvature would occur in a gravitational field.

One important point is here stressed: the misunderstanding which many people, without scientific training, have as regards the time dimension. They imagine it to be a sort of fourth dimension of spatial extension, and worry themselves in striving to achieve an impossible visualization of such a thing. But the time dimension is still time, not space; it is not interchangeable with the three spatial dimensions. All that is meant is that, in order to fully specify an event, we must know its position in space and also its position in time.

In speaking of alternative explanations of certain phenomena, we do not mean to suggest that it is immaterial which we adopt. And it is common knowledge that Einstein's way of interpreting Nature has proved its pre-eminent value, not only by explaining things that older views could not explain, but also by enabling him to predict things which have since been verified by observation. As the writer says, Einstein, by pointing out arbitrary additions made by us in our

description of Nature, has made objective truth stand out more clearly than ever. Instead of confusing he has clarified the situation. But it will take us some time to grow accustomed. Views of Nature have always to be based on certain postulates assumed as foundation for the erection of workable theories. When scientific investigation reaches a point where these postulates are no longer found adequate, we must dig deeper and assume a new set of postulates. We must strive to realize that the former familiar postulates were not universal laws, but only temporary conveniences. We must be ready to admit that customary ideas about space, time, matter, motion, etc., do not necessarily apply to those regions of the very great and the very small into which the scientific eye has penetrated. Experiment has proved that they do not, and all attempts to explain the phenomena by the old postulates result in what we call "paradoxes." We can recommend this book to the attention of those wishing to clear up their ideas as to celestial mechanics and Einstein's work in particular.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *From Copernicus to Einstein*. By Hans Reichenbach. New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1942. \$2.00. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION INTO THE HUMAN KINGDOM: III – G. de Purucker

I have been asked to speak again on the subject of how the monads pass from the animal kingdom to the human kingdom. The question is in general: Please again state just exactly the difference between the animal monads in the animals, and the animal monads in men. Well, really, I brought this upon myself, and I am undergoing the justly earned karma, because in my great desire to give to you something of what I have studied and learned, I made the statement long ago, both in speech and in one or more of my talks, that what the animals were on the Moon-chain became the humans on this chain, and that what our animals now on earth are, will become the humans in the re-embodiment of this our Earth-chain. Well, that started a lot of things! Very rightly so. I was very glad these discussions and talks did begin. I succeeded in helping to wake up the minds of some of our students. They were taking too many things for granted too easily. They want to examine them, study them. But evidently a great many do not understand, and I do not blame them a particle. It is not an easy point of the doctrine. I meant to bring this subject out because some of our Theosophists in the world today who do not belong to our Society, have been taught or have accepted the teaching that we humans were the apes on the Moon-chain, and this is all wrong. There were apes or beings equivalent to apes on the moon, when the Moon-chain arrived at its end, before our Earth-chain came into being, but those apes, as you will see in a moment, became human.

I fully expected these discussions to take place. I foresaw . I welcomed them. And whenever I was asked to explain, as some-one told me, during nine years past I have just looked wise with a wooden face, and said, "Isn't that interesting! You keep on studying, and you will find out." Because I wanted you to get the answers yourselves, as I knew perfectly well you will never understand anything, make it a part of your intellect, a part of yourself, unless you work out the answer yourself. What you are merely told is like what a child learns in school.

If it is not especially interested, it will not remember. But I have been keeping tab on how these discussions on the animal souls in the two kingdoms have been going, and I have reached a point now where I think there has been sufficient honest-to-goodness hard work to entitle those who have worked hard to an answer, and these will be the only ones who will understand the doctrine.

Now then, the difficulty in understanding this thing, which is not difficult at all, but extremely simple, has been the fact, the common human failing (I have it, we all have it), that we have persistently confused monads with rupas, forms, bodies, so that when we speak of animals we immediately figurate sheep, elephants, horses, cats, dogs, or what not, forgetting that the real animal is the monad; and you know that I never said that the *animals* on the moon became the humans on the earth, unless I had preceded it with the explanation or statement: the animal *monads* on the moon become the humans on the earth. But which animal monads? The animal monads in the moon-men, or the animal monads of the animals on the moon?

Now for instance, we on this earth, each one of us, has an animal monad as part of his constitution. What difference is there between this human animal monad, and the animal monad of an elephant or a dog? What is the difference, the distinction, between the two? I will try to explain. In the first place, one kingdom does not turn into the next higher kingdom through evolution. When we speak of kingdoms, we mean kingdoms; and in Theosophy we have 10 kingdoms of beings, otherwise 10 classes of monads, otherwise again 10 life-waves. What are they? We count them in this manner: 3 of the Elementals, the Mineral, Vegetable, Animal, the Human — seven; and the three dhyan-chohonic kingdoms — making 10 classes of monads in all, 10 kingdoms, 10 different life-waves.

Not one of these kingdoms ever passes, through evolution or development or unfolding, into the next higher kingdom, never, because these kingdoms refer to the rupas which shelter the monads, embody them, enclose them, are the vehicles of the monads. For

instance, the human kingdom is not actually formed of my body and yours, of all the human bodies on the earth. The human kingdom is formed of the monads. But it is these bodies of ours — do you understand me? — which in order to make a distinction we speak of as the rupa-kingdoms housing the 10 classes of monads. I wonder if that thought is clear? Not one of these kingdoms passes over into or becomes or evolves into the next higher. For instance, the animal kingdom never becomes a human kingdom. The vegetable kingdom never becomes an animal kingdom. The mineral kingdom never becomes a plant kingdom. The human kingdom never becomes the lowest of the three dhyan-chohanic kingdoms. What happens? It is the monads as individuals which evolve, each one in its own kingdom until it learns all that kingdom can teach it. When as an individual monad it has become animalized or humanized or dhyan-chohanized to the next higher, then at its next incarnation or imbodiment it enters into the very lowest realm of the next higher kingdom as an individual monad. Is that clear? *But the KINGDOMS never as kingdoms become higher kingdoms.*

You will see the point of this, or at least I will try to make it clear. Every kingdom below the human is striving to become — no, pardon me, every monad in every kingdom below the human kingdom is striving upwards towards the human kingdom. The human kingdom is its objective or goal, their objective, their goal; just as our goal as humans is to strive to become a member of the lowest of the three dhyan-chohanic kingdoms just above the human. But the human kingdom as such never *becomes* that lowest dhyan-chohanic kingdom. Why? Because Nature needs these kingdoms where she has them. They are as it were houses of life for the peregrinating, evolving monads to live in, to pass through, to graduate from and enter the next house of life or kingdom. Is that thought clear? Nature needs these through eternity. That is why long after we human monads shall have left the human kingdom and evolved up to become Dhyan-Chohans of the lowest dhyan-chohanic kingdom, the human kingdom will still remain containing monads or individuals then using the bodies kept alive by

those new incoming individuals from what is now the animal kingdom. Don't you see? If the human kingdom all evolved to become Dhyan-Chohans, there would be a gap between the Dhyan-Chohans and the beast. The monads go up step by step, kingdom after kingdom.

What makes these kingdoms in nature? The records in the astral light. There is a very important contributory thought, and it explains a lot of questions I am going to discuss here. From immemorial eternity, as far as I know, there have always been, at least in our solar system and probably in our galaxy, 7 or 10 or 12 classes of monads or kingdoms or life-waves for our chain; and they have been kept going as these kingdoms because of new monads coming in from the lower kingdom, graduating into our kingdom, and human monads graduating out from our human kingdom into the dhyan-chohanic kingdom. So the kingdoms remain because the 10 classes of monads remain through eternity. It is the monads which evolve.

The question comes in — and this is incidental — don't the bodies of the monads in which the monads live when they embody in the bodies also improve? They do but with almost excessive slowness. Why? Because the astral molds in the astral light have been improved from aeons and aeons in the past. I have no idea how far past — you might say from eternity. With each cosmic manvantara those astral molds in the astral light are slowly changing and improving. So that the kingdoms themselves, although remaining always the same kingdoms, are through the eternities themselves slowly rising, but with immense slowness; whereas the monads evolve much faster.

Now, don't confuse another thought here. There are certain rapid variations in the kingdoms themselves which are not permanent however. As for instance, take a human frame today. It is a far cry in its present relative grace and symmetry and dignified carriage to the first human beings of the Third Round or even the human beings of the Third Root-Race in this Round. If you saw them today you would say: Well, what ape-like bodies those are, they are positively ape-like. But there is not a drop of ape-blood in them. Don't get that idea. We use the

term ape-like because the apes have a certain amount of human blood in them from that time; and evolving very slowly, not as fast as we humans have in shape and symmetry and beauty of form, they still contain what we call, just to give it a word, an ape-like picture of their human part-parents.

But mark you, the humans on the Moon-chain at about the same period where we are now, looked pretty much like what we now look like, and they had a time when they were rather ape-like in appearance, but with not a particle of ape-blood in them. I do hope I make this clear, because it has taken fifty years for Theosophists to understand the distinction.

Now what does this mean? It means that because the rupa-kingdoms evolve to betterment with such exceeding slowness, they nevertheless have spurts, upshootings, of great improvement which cannot hold. They drop back, they degenerate and go back. I am talking of kingdoms now, not the monads which incarnate in those kingdoms. I am talking of the rupa-kingdoms. Why? I told you. The fluid stuff forming our bodies, is compelled by nature to follow a certain line of development partly from inherent swabhava, but partly because of the mold in the astral light.

Now then, what possibility is there of reconciling what I just told you with the statement I made, and which you will find in H. P. B., that the animals on the moon became the humans on this chain? That our animals with us now will be the humans in the next Earth-chain, the child of this chain? The reconciliation lies in the fact that when you hear a statement of this kind, you should bring to its examination all your studies of Theosophy. If you had brought together other things that H. P. B. and I have stated, you would not have been bothered.

I will try to explain from some other angle. The human constitution — and indeed the constitution of an entity imbodyed in any kingdom, the animal kingdom let us say, or in the dhyan-chohanic kingdom above ours, every such entity — is sevenfold. But of the seven principles or monads from any such constitution like our human, some are

expressed with relative fulness and others are as yet largely unexpressed; and it is this difference which makes the kingdoms. Intricate? Fascinating to those who have got the key. Thus the animals have everything in them that a man has. They have a divine monad, a spiritual monad, and a human monad and an animal monad and an astral-vital monad and even what I have called the physical monad; but the monads in the animal kingdom have thus far evolved only up to the animal monad. That is why they are in the animal kingdom; they are at home there. When in the future the monads in the animal kingdom, the highest amongst them, shall have begun to yearn upwards towards the human monad, in other words begun to be humanized, the human capacities, elements, qualities, swabhava, in the animal, will have begun slowly to show themselves. The animals will begin to feel no longer at home in the animal kingdom, in these lower rupas; and as the process of slow humanizing continues, as the animal monads rise through experience; they will leave the animal kingdom and be attracted, psycho-magnetically, to the very lowest bodies in the human kingdom just above on the scale of life.

What happens? These monads formerly manifesting in the animal kingdom, in animal bodies, are now sufficiently humanized to enter into the lowest human bodies of savage barbarians, or, especially in the beginning of this Round on this Globe D, of beings who are far lower than the lowest savage we have today — but human nevertheless. What happens? They enter these human bodies as the animal monads there. There is your answer, there is your key. Similarly when a human being aspiring up to the dhayan-chohanic monad, to the spiritual monad, has reached a point where he is almost above humanity, growing out of it, when his yearnings are of spirit, higher, higher, there comes a time when incarnation among humans no longer is adequate. He is dhyanizing himself, this monad, and the attraction to the human kingdom will some day stop. There will be no further pull of incarnation in bodies of human beings. The next will be in the lowest of the dhyan-chohanic kingdoms. Is that thought clear?

So then, what is the difference or distinction between the animal

monads in animals and the animal monads in men? I have told you. When the animal monad in the animal kingdom has humanized itself through evolution sufficiently no longer to feel attracted in incarnation to the animal kingdom, it will seek imbodiment psycho-magnetically in the very lowest specimens of men, and become the animal monad in men. Thus you see the unity of universal nature and her marvelous variety.

Now we will take the specific aspect of the moon-men and the moon-animals. You have been told many times that all kingdoms lower than the human will show a tendency to die out as round the 4th becomes round the 5th; still more tendency to die out as round the fifth becomes round the 6th; so that by the time the 7th and highest and last round is reached, the animals will have practically died out, the reason being that they cannot make the grade up the ascending arc. Their monads gradually die out and go into Nirvana, where they will wait until the next chain-imbodiment, and during the Round 1, 2 and 3 of that next chain-imbodiment. Thus the animals who could not make the grade up the Sixth and Seventh Rounds will have a chance again. Then they will come in as animals again. Nature will prepare the way through the elementals and the architects. Bodies will be there for them. They themselves will help to form the bodies in the animal kingdom. These are the animals who could not make the grade.

Now the same thing happened on the moon. Yet during the Seventh Round, whether on the moon in the past or in our own Seventh Round in the future, there will be exceptions in the animal kingdom. What are these exceptions? The apes, possibly the very highest of some of the simian monkeys too. The apes at the end of the Seventh Round will just have touched the human stage. The same thing happened on the moon. There the animals died out before the lunar Seventh Round was reached, except a few who just reached the human stage, just ready to enter the human kingdom when the Seventh Round was closing. There were millions of them, but compared with the billions and billions of the life-wave for the kingdom, it is a mere handful. Yes, these animals on the moon could make the grade and did. They just reached the

lowest bottom of the next kingdom when the Seventh Round was reached, and became the lowest human beings on this new chain. How about the human animal monads in the Moon-chain? These were growing all the time more and more humanized and at the end of the Seventh Round on the Moon-chain they had become men; and the lunar men, the Moon-men at the end of the Seventh Round had become Dhyan-Chohans of the lowest dhyan-chohanic kingdom. Who were these moon animal monads? We were they. And that is what I meant when I said the animal monads which reached the tip of the human kingdom on the Moon-chain became the humans on this chain. Do you see? The kingdoms do not rise. Nature keeps them there, each on its own level, for the monads coming up from below, as monads, reaching up to the spirit lunar chain as it were. Spirit yearns to help earth, earth yearns upward to spirit.

So you see, marvelous picture, although the kingdoms remain the same, as it were retain the same place on nature's Ladder of Life, the monads come down through them and then on the upward arc sweep up through the kingdoms. Thus with us. Our animal monads are the monads from the animal kingdom which had become sufficiently humanized no longer to be animal animal monads but human animal monads. So when our Seventh Round shall have come, the animal monads in us will be the humans of the next imbodiment of the the chain. We humans by the end of the Seventh Round, those of us who make the grade, will have become dhyanized, chohanized if you wish, and shall have become Dhyan-Chohans at the end of the Seventh Round.

Now then, next thought. What were the manasaputras in this our present chain-imbodiment who incarnated in us human beings in the Third Root-Race on this Globe during this Fourth Round and made us thinking men? We were in the human kingdom as bodies, but I am now talking of monads. Who were the manasaputras who awaked us intellectually? They were those who had attained Dhyan-Chohan-ship on the moon at the end of the Seventh Round, and we were then their animal monads. They found us out again, they sought us out again, our

higher selves as it were waiting for them, waiting until our bodies were ready, until the human rupas were sufficiently subtil, flexible, to receive the intellectual fire. Then they incarnated in us. If you have read H. P. B.'s *Secret Doctrine*, you will now see why these manasaputras could not incarnate before that time. No fit bodies for us. *They were ready. The bodies were not ready.* No fit rupas, no fit bodies, for us, they said. Those bodies had to become more subtil, more delicate, refined, more proper to receive the holy intellect of the manasaputras enlightening the latent mind of these humans, of us. Then when the time came, there came the "descent" as we call it, the descent of the manasaputras. Men began to think. And just let me add here, there was another class of manasaputras far higher than anything we as individuals have been connected with, who started this wonderful work of putting the flame of mind in those early human races. They were even Dhyan-Chohans on the Moon-chain. Marvelous picture!

So when the manasaputras gave us mind, it was merely our own Dhyan-Chohans, the moon-men become Dhyan-Chohans, and we their animal monads now become humans. It was their duty to enlighten us again, to give us back our mind, to awaken it. So shall we at the end of our Seventh Round become Dhyan-Chohans and be the manasaputras to the humanity of the next round who are now our human animal monads. Have I made the thought clear?

And now I have almost closed. You have heard of moments or times of choice when the great decisions must be made. One took place at the middle of the Fourth Round. Do you realize what happened then, when the moment came, when the monads were tested to see if they could pass? It was easy enough to run downhill, but could they pass that dangerous point and begin the upward arc? Millions, hundreds of millions, billions, succeeded in our human kingdom, in the animal kingdom. There was enough in them of upward aspiration to take them past the danger-point of the bottommost line and to start them going upwards. But do you know that hundreds of millions of monads could not pass over the danger-point? They were what H. P. B. called "lost

monads." They perished for the remainder of this manvantara. This merely means that they could not make the grade, had not evolved sufficiently, and went into Nirvana. Out of it they will not reawaken until the psycho-magnetic call comes to them in the next chain to come into imbodied life. The animal kingdom will be then waiting for them, and the monads will come into this animal kingdom. The animal kingdom does not move up except with almost infinite slowness, gradually improving; but the monads are always there.

There will be another grave moment of choice at the middle of the Fifth Round, and that for us humans will be our great transition. In the middle of the Fifth Round will you and I be sufficiently dhyvanized to be able to move up towards the beginning of the Sixth Round? Those who are becoming universal enough to become attracted to Dhyan-Chohanhood will make the grade. Those of us who will not have become sufficiently universalized to join the kingdom of the Dhyan-Chohans will perish for the remainder of this manvantara, in other words go into a Nirvana and lose billions of years. That is what it means, the losing of billions of years.

Think what it means for these millions of monads who perish then. Look at the time they lose. Two billion years before our Seventh Round is ended. More than 4 or 5 billion years more before our new chain-imbodiment begins. Between 6 and 7 billion years, precious time lost. That is why the Masters are pressing all the time. Now is your opportunity to become universal in your sympathies. Do anything you can do to be more spiritually human. Aspire upwards no matter what the attractions are here below. That does not mean lose your human sympathies. You will be standing in your own way if you think that, because your human sympathies are lofty; but it means to make them less selfish, more spiritual, raised, so that when the danger-point comes, you will pass up.

OUR MYSTERY-SELVES — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The world today is full of men and women who, often in the midst of starvation and ruin, endure the maximum sorrow and suffering. How do they endure it? Have they tapped some little understood source of strength and comfort in themselves? Are they conscious of a presence, protective and guiding, and ever near? Or do they in bewilderment and despair wonder Why? What? How? At such times, being bereft of all else, we come face to face with ourselves and the realities of our humanhood. It is then that we become aware of the forces at work in us, of the wonder that is man!

It is, generally speaking, the temptations and delinquencies of our natures that claim our attention most; nevertheless, that there is a source of protection, of guidance, active in our lives, most people are ready to admit. The case-records are too numerous to be refuted. These show that in moments of crisis or extreme danger, individual men and women have been influenced, aroused, and even instructed so that they have been able to save not only themselves but entire groups. Premonitory warnings so powerful that they cause the cancellation of carefully made plans and arrangements, such as railway journeys, are quite ordinary incidents. For every group destined for violent death in an outbreak of panic, there is a plain man or woman who, guided by some inspired inner direction, proves himself or herself heroic. There is no denying that we are all — some more than others — influenced either by a Guardian Angel or an Evil Genius: and what do we really know about either?

Psychology has told us much about the effect of mind upon body and body upon mind; of inhibitions that are as varied as they are

numerous; of behaviorism, in short. But this science of the soul of man is based almost entirely on a study of the ailing, the mentally unbalanced, and the physically subnormal individual. Hence even psychology's description of man's evil genius is distorted, and lacks the subtilty to tempt any but the unhappy. The study of psychology is valuable to the extent that it treats of the intermediate nature of man, that part which is the pilgrim-soul of Earth, learning and developing through active existence here. It tells us somewhat of the personalized and localized expression of spirit in the psycho-vital-physical realms. But that is far from being the entire picture.

Modern psychology will take its rightful place when it recognizes the Soul of man as a potentially divine offspring of his Spirit that, wandering far from its divine source, has become chilled — the actual meaning of the Greek root from which the word psyche derives — chilled by attraction to and eventual absorption in the relatively unevolved matter of the astral and physical planes. (1) Psychology will become a vital force when it teaches that stronger than the thralldom of the psycho-physical is the nostalgia of the soul for its spiritual home, and that the majority of psychological ills arise in the conflict between the two. The conflict has been diagnosed by psychoanalysts, but only the most advanced men recognise its cause and few even of these have the requisite knowledge to help their patients make the necessary adjustment.

Today members of the Christian ministry are adding psychological healing to their work. This would seem a step in the right direction, the direction that logically should lead to pneumatology or the study of the whole man — the sevenfold expression of divinity in the healthy, happy, intelligent human being. And this is where the Theosophical teachings are of supreme importance.

Man, according to the age-old teachings promulgated by Theosophy, is a composite being. He is a ray of divinity seeking self-conscious expression in the material worlds. The divine ray accomplishes this by focusing or stepping down its force through seven principles on four

planes of manifestation, i. e., the divine-spiritual, mental, vital-astral, and physical, or that of Atman-Buddhi, Manas-Kama, Prana- Linga-sarira, and Sthula-sarira. The seven principles are conjoined, in the paradigm on the following page, to correspond to the more familiar threefold division of St. Paul.

This tabulation of the constitution of man is adapted from the one used by G. de Purucker in *The Esoteric Tradition*, (pp. 958-9), and deserves thoughtful consideration.

	<i>Higher Duad</i>	
Atman	The Self	Spirit
Buddhi	The Spiritual Ego	
	<i>Intermediate Duad</i>	
Manas	Mind	Soul
Kama	Desire	
	<i>Lower Triad</i>	
Prana	Vitality	Body
Linga-sarira	Astral Body	
Sthula-sarira	Physical Body	

The Higher Duad is the divine-spiritual man. It consists of Atman, the indivisible divine flame or spark, the focus of universal consciousness for man, which manifests through its vehicle, Buddhi. Buddhi is the discriminating principle, the seat of inspired judgment, of intuitive understanding and compassion. It is inseparable from and the radiant vehicle of The Self, and it becomes the source of that spiritualized individuality which association with aspiring mind brings to it.

Without mind, desire, vitality, and some form of body, there can be no manifested being: in the case of man, no vital-physical entity or pilgrim-soul evolving in an Earth-cycle of life. So the radiance of the Higher Duad projects itself in manifestation through the Intermediate Duad to the Lower Triad.

The mental plane is the realm of marked duality, for mind either turns toward the spiritual to become aspiring mind or Buddhi-Manas, or contrariwise, lured by the lower psychic forces, and the attraction of the material, the Intermediate Duad sinks to the state of a desire-deluded human animal. This condition is that of Kama-Manas. Thus we have another division, viz.:

Atman	The Self	The Guardian Angel
Buddhi-Manas	Aspiring Mind	
	or	
Kama-Manas	Deluded Mind	The Evil Genius
Prana-Linga-sarira	Vital Astral Body	

The physical body is the container of the five-principled man and the relatively responsive instrument through which either the angel or the evil genius expresses itself. Furthermore, this division is interesting because the line separating aspiring mind from its deluded counterpart marks the distinction between good and evil for the human kingdom. Good, for man, is all that measures up to the standard of our aspiring intellect, our impersonal interests and yearnings, our creative dreams, our dignity as citizens of the world and sons of the Divine. On the other hand, all that is tinged with personality, self-seeking, and self-centeredness, all that isolates and demeans our status is evil for man. One way leads to inspiration, nobility, kinship with the gods; the other, to degradation of consciousness and misery.

As we continue our consideration of composite man, our perspective of the seven principles takes on breadth when we realize that each of the principles is itself a seven, composed of all the other elements with its own element dominantly and ascendantly active.

Desire and Vitality can readily be perceived as active in every principle, for we are just as conscious of distinctly spiritual, mental, psychic, and physical desires as we are of energy as it works through our entire constitution. It is a little more difficult, however, to cognise body as other than physical, and yet all manifested things must possess a body of some kind. Is not a star the luminous body of a spiritual

entity? And how about ideas and thoughts? Surely they find imbodiment in the words that grouped together form a sentence. These are examples of divine-spiritual and intellectual bodies. Then there are the psychic imbodiments of desire, the Kama-rupa, and that of the degraded mind combining with intense physical craving to form the spook, or elementary. If we acknowledge them, are we not also prepared to accept the presence within our very selves of an angelic Being?

Buddhi-Manas, radiant with the glow of Atman, is just such an angelic presence, the Spiritual Self of us. It is also the Reincarnating Ego, the carrier of Karman, and the storehouse of all individualized knowledge possible to us. Dr. de Purucker calls this Guardian Angel within us, Chitkara — a Sanskrit word meaning Thought-Worker. He classified it as a Dhyani-Chohan, one of the host of Lords of Meditation, a denizen of the mystic *chidagnikunda* or hearth-fire of thought lying neglected within us.

The consciousness of Buddhi-Manas, and therefore the scope of its activity in us, ranges from the inspiration of the great poets, philosophers, and men of genius and the intuitions of fine men and women, to the selfless compassion of those who form the Guardian Wall protecting humanity from cosmic evils, and beyond.

The Guardian Angel in our constitution is a mystery-self only because for ages its presence has been ignored or repudiated. In very truth it is closer than clumsy hands, untrained minds, and unruly tongues. Its voice is the soundless inner direction deserving of our wholehearted allegiance; and yet, often it is only when we know the pangs of conscience for some thoughtless act that we realize one part of us was wiser and stronger and knew better — or else, were there no higher standard inherent in us, why the remorse?

Therefore the problem for all earnest men and women is how to know the Spiritual Self within them, how to associate themselves with it so that hourly and daily they may know its intimacy and feel its beneficent influence. How can this be achieved?

To begin with we should try to cultivate the attitude of perfect confidence in the law of our own being as it flows forth from the Universal Heart of Being through the Spiritual Self of us into our everyday existence. In this way we attune our understanding to the impersonal center of choice in us, the center that decrees its destiny for the human soul. This is the way of self-fulfilment. It is also the way to peace and health, for to such understanding there can be no sense of frustration, or conflict, no inexplicable antagonisms. By it we have the vision that explains the suffering we feel to be unmerited, and discriminates between the wrong done and the one involved in the doing. This attitude can be brought about when we believe that whatever is in our lives, from greatest to least event, is best for us. Then we are associating our human judgment with the illumined discrimination of Buddhi-Manas as it partakes of the omniscience of the Divine Self. Thus we shall be ready to meet with eager anticipation all the experiences of our lives; we shall have cleared our vision and prepared ourselves to accept the challenge or to benefit by the opportunity destiny holds out to us.

Vanity, discouragement, despair, exile us from guidance and protection just as much as pride, a sense of superiority, and all the other forms of selfishness. The vaunted sophistication of our age must give place to recognition of and adherence to the unerring laws of the Universe. This is no negative state of acquiescence or line of least resistance, but a determined effort toward self-improvement which W. Q. Judge expressed so well when he wrote:

"Be what you love. Strive after what you find beautiful and high, and let the rest go! Harmony, sacrifice, devotion; take these as keynotes. Express them everywhere and in the highest possible way."

FOOTNOTE:

1. See *The Esoteric Tradition* by G. de Purucker, p. 964, footnote. ([return to text](#))

"NEVER MORE ALONE" — *J. M. Prentice*

It is a commonplace in the lives of those who are seeking the life of service, who are training themselves to tread the Chela path, that there come days and weeks when the light dies away, when a sense of isolation and loneliness wells up, even to the point of despair. Life seems emptied out of all inspiration; duties that were once gladly performed become tasks that demand every ounce of endeavor, every bit of driving force that can be mustered; when a sense of incompleteness pervades every unfinished undertaking. The disciple is overwhelmed with frustration:

*Amid the ruins of this thing undone
I sit and say CUI BONO till the sun
Sets, and a bat flits past the sun.*

In such a period there is only one thing to do, one possible course to follow — to hold on, recognising that the experience is temporal, that for the time being the disciple has ceased to live consciously in the Eternal. Being temporal it will pass, as it must, and the inner light will return, the old joy in service will once more gladden the heart.

This "Dark Night of the Soul" has been recognised by mystics and occultists throughout the ages. It is referred to in many scriptures. Some teachers have suggested a subtle correspondence between it and the rise and fall of the sap in plant life, or the ebb and flow of the ceaselessly moving sea. Others have hinted that it is a prophecy of the much greater experience that pertains to Initiation, when everything that is individual and which has been built up over ages of physical time must be abandoned — when even the Karana-Sarira is renounced and only the Divinity that is the innermost core of being remains. Emerging from it the disciple can say with truth:

*Never more
Alone upon the threshold of my door*

Of individual life shall I command

The uses of my soul. . . .

Actually, in the lives we live, it is an indication that the disciple is still under the sway of the "Pairs of Opposites." When the taking of joy in service obtrudes upon the Mind the person concerned should take himself to task and enquire if he be not extracting a *personal* pleasure in giving himself to such service. Is the joy in the work? or in the doing of it — *by himself*? Equally when the dark night seems to be impending or has descended it should be remembered that it is a natural reaction, and comfort extracted from the thought, or better still — the knowledge that it is a period in which real inner growth can be attained, if the disciple will continue with his outer work quite unconcerned, while at the same time utilising every spare moment for the contemplation of things already accomplished both by himself and his predecessors on the same narrow way, of triumphs that have been snatched from defeats, of routs that have been turned into victories — and impersonally endeavor to assimilate these things into himself, so that both he and they may be dedicated to further service in the future, dwelling on the thought: "Wonder of Saints that are; splendour of Saints to be!"

Let any such who may be afflicted try to emulate that spirit which is so magnificently shadowed forth in the final clauses of the Dedication which William Q. Judge wrote when he had completed his recension of the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali. The writer of these lines, a very slow traveller on the Narrow Way, who is often weary of well doing, whose work brings him into touch with many seamy sides of life, even to the very verge of despair, gladly admits drawing from it new courage and a fresh inspiration, not once but many times.

One other thought suggests itself: there are many other travellers on this same Path, could we but recognise them, who would gladly share with us what they have garnered in the fields of the Spirit. It is tragic that we are not able to display some banner whereby we might be recognised by them. Equally they may be in the throes and at a time

when our experience might be just what they require to nerve them in the fresh endeavor. Let us keep our spiritual eyes open for all such fellow travellers, because in their company we forget the temporal, personal dimension and in sharing what we have with them the world becomes an Emmaus and the bread which is broken is a symbol of those who are *renatus in Eternum*, reborn into Eternity.

The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT AND THE T. S. — *Abbott Clark*

We are all familiar with the words "The Theosophical Society is an integral part of a movement which has been active, whether publicly known or unrecognised, in all ages and in all countries." This Movement, I take it, is the active expression on our plane of the Solar Logos. It is the divine-spiritual Word (Logos) which ever seeks to become flesh, that is, to embody itself as the living spiritual power in the lives of men. The hierarchy of the Masters of Wisdom is its living embodiment and the transmitters of the light of the Logos to the hearts and minds of men. It is both immanent and transcendent.

Transcendent because, like the Monad in its parent Star, it remains eternally in its place, while its radiance is immanent in all living things; and without this immanence all manifested things would vanish away.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chapter IV, Krishna, who represents the Logos, says:

Even though myself unborn, of changeless essence, and the lord of all existence, yet in presiding over nature — which is mine — I am born but through my own *maya*, the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind. I produce myself among creatures. . . whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.

How well this describes the Theosophical Movement and its vehicle for this age, the Theosophical Society. As long as the members remain true and loyal to the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion who presided at the Society's birth and the Leaders who were their Messengers, the animating spiritual power of the Movement will vitalize the Society.

In H. P. Blavatsky's day and ever since, this immanence has often been

called "the Lodge Force" because it is the ever-nourishing and inspiring Something which gives vitality to all Theosophical literature and all sincere Theosophical work. It is the sustaining power in the heart of every sincere Theosophist.

As the Monad embodies itself from age to age so the Theosophical Movement seeks embodiment, under cyclic law, in the hearts, minds and lives of men. Thus we have the various religions and spiritual philosophies. These embodiments have different names and characteristics, use different forms for expressing eternal truths, each form suited to the psychology of the age and people among whom it seeks expression. The different World Teachers were not supernatural but were highly evolved men — men in whom the spiritual faculties, more or less latent in us all, were developed to the full so that they could say, as Jesus did, "I and my Father are one," *i. e.*, He had become one with his Monad, his Inner-god.

Suppose a party of us toured the grand scenes of the state of California and each kept a diary. The diaries when read would be very different, yet anyone knowing the State would recognise all the places. So, one who has the Theosophical key to their meaning recognises the same fundamental Truths underlying the different faiths of men. Basic to and immanent in every form is a fundamental REALITY. Something as true and as real as air and sunshine. Hero-tales, mythologies, religions and the great spiritual philosophies, are different ways of telling it. In this age of scientific regnance and spiritual dormancy the same ageless Truths are given in a semi-scientific form suited to the mind of the age and best calculated to keep alive in men their spiritual intuitions and to arouse their higher faculties.

In these trying times let us remember that convulsions, whether in human life or in nature, are abnormal conditions that pass away leaving the convalescent patient in need of nourishment. Theosophy is that nourishment which prostrate humanity in its extremity needs. But Theosophy without living Theosophists to give it voice and concrete expression is like currency in bank vaults but not in circulation. To use

another illustration: Theosophy is like the snow on the mountains. It slowly melts and the water sinks away leaving dry sandy river beds while the plains and valleys dry up like parched deserts. So it was in Southern California seventy-five years ago. Then the pioneers built diverting dams and reservoirs and from these vast irrigation systems carried the life-giving waters to orange orchards and rose gardens. Now there are beautiful homes and happy people where once only sheep and cattle browsed throughout the long dry summers.

Theosophists are the pioneers, and the Headquarters and the Societies throughout the world are the reservoirs, while the members are the zanjeros — the men who keep the pipes and ditches in order and the life-giving waters flowing so that the seeds of truth and beauty our Teachers have sown may grow, blossom and bear fruit in the lives of men. Such is the Movement, the T. S. and our responsibility.

The Theosophical Forum

MEMORY IN THE DYING (1) — H. P. Blavatsky

We find in a very old letter from a MASTER, written years ago to a member of the Theosophical Society, the following suggestive lines on the mental state of a dying man: —

"At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong supreme impulse; and memory restores faithfully every impression that has been entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest, naturally becomes the most vivid, and survives, so to say, all the rest, which now vanish and disappear for ever, but to reappear in Devachan. No man dies insane or unconscious, as some physiologists assert. Even a madman or one in a fit of *delirium tremens* will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, *the brain thinks* and the Ego lives, in these few brief seconds, his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye who assist at the death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have ye to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the veil of the Future. . . ."

The above statement has been more than once strenuously opposed by materialists; Biology and (Scientific) Psychology, it was urged were both against the idea, and while the latter had no well demonstrated data to go upon in such a *hypothesis*, the former dismissed the idea as an empty "superstition." Meanwhile, even biology is bound to progress, and this is what we learn of its latest achievements. Dr. Ferre has

communicated quite recently to the Biological Society of Paris a very curious note on the mental state of the dying, which corroborates marvelously the above lines. For, it is to the special phenomenon of life-remiscences, and that sudden re-emerging on the blank walls of memory, from all its long neglected and forgotten "nooks and corners," of "picture after picture" that Dr. Ferre draws the special attention of biologists.

We need notice but two among the numerous instances given by this Scientist in his *Rapport*, to show how scientifically correct are the teachings we receive from our Eastern Masters.

The first instance is that of a moribund consumptive whose disease was developed in consequence of a spinal affection. Already consciousness had left the man, when, recalled to life by two successive injections of a gramme of ether, the patient slightly lifted his head and began talking rapidly in Flemish, a language no one around him, nor yet himself, understood. Offered a pencil and a piece of white cardboard, he wrote with great rapidity several lines in that language — very correctly, as was ascertained later on — fell back and died. When translated — the writing was found to refer to a very prosaic affair. He had suddenly recollected, he wrote, that he owed a certain man a sum of fifteen francs since 1868 — hence more than twenty years — and desired it to be paid.

But why write his last wish in Flemish? The defunct was a native of Antwerp, but had left his country in childhood, without ever knowing the language, and having passed all his life in Paris, could speak and write only in French. Evidently his returning consciousness, that last flash of memory that displayed before him, as in a retrospective panorama, all his life, even to the trifling fact of his having borrowed twenty years back a few francs from a friend, did not emanate from his *physical* brain alone, but rather from his spiritual memory, that of the *Higher Ego* (Manas or the re-incarnating individuality). The fact of his speaking and writing Flemish, a language that he had heard at a time of life when he could not yet speak himself, is an additional proof. *The*

Ego is almost omniscient in its immortal nature. For indeed matter is nothing more than "the last degree and as the shadow of existence," as Ravaisson, member of the French Institute, tells us.

But to our second case.

Another patient, dying of pulmonary consumption and likewise reanimated by an injection of ether, turned his head towards his wife and rapidly said to her: "You cannot find that pin now; all the floor has been renewed since then." This was in reference to the loss of a scarf-pin eighteen years before, a fact so trifling that it had almost been forgotten, but which had not failed to be revived in the last thought of the dying man, who having expressed what he saw in words, suddenly stopped and breathed his last. Thus any one of the thousand little daily events, and accidents of a long life would seem capable of being called to the flickering consciousness, at the supreme moment of dissolution. A long life, perhaps, lived over again in the space of one short second!

A third case may be noticed, which corroborates still more strongly that assertion of Occultism which traces all such remembrances to the thought-power of the *individual*, instead of to that of the personal (lower) Ego. A young girl, who had been a sleep-walker up to her twenty-second year, performed during her hours of somnambulant sleep the most varied functions of domestic life, of which she had no remembrance upon awakening.

Among other psychic impulses that manifested themselves only during her sleep, was a secretive tendency quite alien to her waking state. During the latter she was open and frank to a degree, and very careless of her personal property; but in the somnambulant state she would take articles belonging to herself or within her reach and hide them away with ingenious cunning. This habit being known to her friends and relatives, and two nurses, having been in attendance to watch her actions during her night rambles for years, nothing disappeared but what could be easily restored to its usual place. But on one sultry night, the nurse falling asleep, the young girl got up and went to her father's study. The latter, a notary of fame, had been working till a late hour

that night. It was during a momentary absence from his room that the somnambule entered, and deliberately possessed herself of a will left open upon the desk, as also of a sum of several thousand pounds in bonds and notes. These she proceeded to hide in the hollow of two dummy pillars set up in the library to match the solid ones, and stealing from the room before her father's return, she regained her chamber and bed without awakening the nurse who was still asleep in the armchair.

The result was, that, as the nurse stoutly denied that her young mistress had left the room, suspicion was diverted from the real culprit and the money could not be recovered. The loss of the will involved a law-suit which almost beggared her father and entirely ruined his reputation, and the family were reduced to great straits. About nine years later the young girl who, during the previous seven years had not been somnambule, fell into a consumption of which she ultimately died. Upon her death-bed, the veil which had hung before her physical memory was raised; her divine insight awakened; the pictures of her life came streaming back before her inner eye; and among others she saw the scene of her somnambule robbery. Suddenly arousing herself from the lethargy in which she had lain for several hours, her face showed signs of some terrible emotion working within, and she cried out "Ah! what have I done? . . . It was I who took the will and the money. . . . Go search the dummy pillars in the library. I have . . ." She never finished her sentence for her very emotion killed her. But the search was made and the will and money found within the oaken pillars as she had said. What makes the case more strange is, that these pillars were so high, that even by standing upon a chair and with plenty of time at her disposal instead of only a few moments, the somnambulist could not have reached up and dropped the objects into the hollow columns. It is to be noted, however, that ecstasies and convulsionists (*Vide the Convulsionnaires de St. Medard et de Morzine*) seem to possess an abnormal facility for climbing blank walls and leaping even to the tops of trees.

Taking the facts as stated, would they not induce one to believe that the

somnambulant personage possesses an intelligence and memory of its own apart from the physical memory of the waking lower Self; and that it is the former which remembers *in articulo mortis*, the body and physical senses in the latter case ceasing to function, and the intelligence gradually making its final escape through the avenue of psychic, and last of all of spiritual consciousness? And why not? Even materialistic science begins now to concede to psychology more than one fact that would have vainly begged of it recognition twenty years ago. "The real existence" Ravaisson tells us, "the life of which every other life is but an imperfect outline, a faint sketch, is that of the Soul." That which the public in general calls "soul," we speak of as the "reincarnating Ego." "To be, is to live, and to live is to will and think," says the French Scientist. (2) But, if indeed the physical brain is of only a limited area, the field for the containment of rapid flashes of unlimited and infinite thought, neither will nor thought can be said to be generated *within* it, even according to materialistic Science, the impassable chasm between matter and mind having been confessed both by Tyndall and many others. The fact is that the human brain is simply the canal between two planes — the psycho-spiritual and the material — through which every abstract and metaphysical idea filters from the Manasic down to the lower human consciousness. Therefore, the ideas about the infinite and the absolute are not, nor can they be, within *our* brain capacities. They can be faithfully mirrored only by our Spiritual consciousness, thence to be more or less faintly projected on to the tables of our perception on this plane. Thus while the records of even important events are often obliterated from our memory, not the most trifling action of our lives can disappear from the "Soul's" memory, because it is NO MEMORY for it, but an ever present reality on the plane which lies outside our conceptions of space and time. "Man is the measure of all things," said Aristotle; and surely he did not mean by man, the form of flesh, bones and muscles!

Of all the deep thinkers Edgar Quinet, the author of "Creation," expressed this idea the best. Speaking of man, full of feelings and thoughts of which he has either no consciousness at all, or which he

feels only as dim and hazy impressions, he shows that man realizes quite a small portion only of his moral being. "The thoughts we think, but are unable to define and formulate, once repelled, seek refuge in the very root of our being." . . . When chased by the persistent efforts of our will "they retreat before it, still further, still deeper into — who know what — fibres, but wherein they remain to reign and impress us unbidden and unknown to ourselves. . . ."

Yes; they become as imperceptible and as unreachable as the vibrations of sound and colour when these surpass the normal range. Unseen and eluding grasp, they yet work, and thus lay the foundations of our future actions and thoughts, and obtain mastery over us, though we may never think of them and are often ignorant of their very being and presence. Nowhere does Quinet, the great student of Nature, seem more right in his observations than when speaking of the mysteries with which we are all surrounded: "The mysteries of neither earth nor heaven but those present in the marrow of our bones, in our brain cells, our nerves and fibres. No need," he adds, "in order to search for the unknown, to lose ourselves in the realm of the stars, when here, near us and *in us*, rests the unreachable. As our world is mostly formed of imperceptible beings which are the real constructors of its continents, so likewise is man."

Verily so; since man is a bundle of obscure, and to himself unconscious perceptions, of indefinite feelings and misunderstood emotions, of ever-forgotten memories and knowledge that becomes on the surface of his plane — *ignorance*. Yet, while physical memory in a healthy living man is often obscured, one fact crowding out another weaker one, at the moment of the great change that man calls death — that which we call "memory" seems to return to us in all its vigour and freshness.

May this not be due as just said, simply to the fact that, for a few seconds at least, our two memories (or rather the two states, the highest and the lowest state, of consciousness) blend together, thus forming one, and that the dying being finds himself on a plane wherein

there is neither past nor future, but all is one present? Memory, as we all know, is strongest with regard to its early associations, then when the future man is only a child, and more of a soul than of a body; and if memory is a part of our Soul, then, as Thackeray has somewhere said, it must be of necessity eternal. Scientists deny this; we, Theosophists, affirm that it is so. They have for what they hold but negative proofs; we have, to support us, innumerable facts of the kind just instanced, in the three cases described by us. The links of the chain of cause and effect with relation to mind are, and must ever remain a *terra-incognita* to the materialist. For if they have already acquired a deep conviction that as Pope says —

Lulled in the countless chambers of the brain
Our thoughts are link'd by many a *hidden* chain. . . .

— and that they are still unable to discover these chains, how can they hope to unravel the mysteries of the higher, Spiritual, Mind! — "H. P. B."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Reprinted from *Lucifer*, Vol. V., October, 1889. ([return to text](#))
2. *Rapport sur la Philosophie en France au XIXme. Siecle.* ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

"PHILOSOPHY IN A NEW KEY" (1) — H. T. Edge

The meaning to be attached to the word "philosophy" is changing; it is sheering away from the older sense of a dry and formal speculation — what one critic has called "philosophical engineering"(2) — and veering towards a meaning that embraces art and a more truly practical bearing upon life as life is lived. The present volume is a case in point.

Theosophists claim that the influence of Theosophical thought upon the world is not only direct, through the channels of voice and pen, but also indirect through the scattering of seed in the world-atmosphere or cosmic mind. And their claim is justified, for it cannot reasonably be held that great movements in thought arise spontaneously, by "chance"; on the contrary, such movements must have an adequate cause, and the cause is the impact of minds, like leaven quickening the mass. And do we not see the germination of such seeds in the flood of books from all quarters, dealing with every phase of mental activity, and one and all aspiring to a new world-view based on a retreat from the old formalism and mechanicalism, and an approach to the due recognition of the "intangibles" which after all constitute the major part of our life?

This author speaks of a *new key* and a philosophical reorientation which cuts across familiar lines of cleavage and changes the questions of philosophy. She treats of the meaning of symbols and symbolism, and of the relation of *art* to epistemology. Such a reorientation, she holds, occurs in every age; every age has its particular genius or common factor, which so characterizes it as to color its views in every department of inquiry, thus making the special character of separate inquiries a matter of minor import. A philosophy is distinguished more by the formulation of its problems than by the solutions offered for them. Whitehead is quoted to the effect that, in criticizing philosophies, we should not attend to the intellectual positions they defend so much as the preliminary assumptions which they unconsciously presuppose. The reactions of Congo negroes and Esquimaux towards the Christian

gospel are entirely different: what happens is more due to the national intellectual horizon than to the subject-matter of the Gospel. The Ionian philosophers were interested in matter; but Socrates introduced the idea of purpose and the "Why"?

The Christian gospel eventually runs to seed in an era of logic-chopping, and is succeeded by the Renaissance. Our traditional epistemology is now based on the dichotomy of subject and object, the division of reality into inner experience and the outer world. But the springs of philosophic thought have once more run dry. We are at the end of an epoch. Once more we have arrived at the counsels of despair. Again we seek a reasoned faith. The age of science and technology fails us. A naive confidence in sense impressions furnished science with "facts" for conviction to rest on; there was passion for observation rather than disputation; the experimental technique had the floor.

Yet, says the author, behind all lay a universal key, that of mathematics — a key-science. Number and geometrical relationships are *not* known by induction from observation; mathematics, though so applicable to physics, can be applied to anything else. Mathematical constructions are only symbols; they have meaning in terms of relationships, not of substances. Science works abstractly in mathematics, and *then* seeks experimental verification.

The point we wish to emphasize here is that the author decries, underlying all the changing swings of thought, a single invariable factor, seen as form, number, relationship, symbolism. The vaunted inductive method is but a passing over-emphasis of one aspect of inquiry. It was preceded, and is being succeeded, by other phases. But, mark well, these successive changes are not mere replacements, they are transformations. Transformations of what? Of something that is permanent throughout. Now, in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, what can be more predominant than her insistence on Number, Form, and Symbol, as the golden keys that unlock the mysteries of universal Law? Perhaps, says the author, the philosophic study of symbols holds the seed of a new intellectual harvest, to be reaped in the next season of

the human understanding. The new epistemology is no longer satisfied to rest on *sensa*, but demands a recognition of symbols to attain and organize belief; our interest has shifted from the acquisition of sensory experience to the uses thereof.

A large section of this book deals with "semantics" or the science of "meaning"; a subject which, having a special terminology, may be found somewhat difficult to grasp for those not familiar with it. It represents an important and significant movement towards a due recognition of the meanings behind words; and it would seem that many people who have been accustomed to think in words rather than in ideas have seen the error of their ways. Emphasis is laid upon the relation of all kinds of *forms*, whether words or otherwise, and the *ideas* or meanings of which they are the expression; and the author quotes copiously from an extensive literature, both recent and older, upon these topics. All this is part of the characteristic trend of these times away from mechanism toward the forces that move it, away from matter to spirit, from a temporary and assumed reality to a truer reality of which the former is the mere shadow.

Anthropology also occupies considerable space; and we note here likewise an advance upon views recently held on that subject. The myths, customs, and legends of earlier and presumably more primitive humanity are not regarded here as the mere feeble attempts of an infantile mind to understand things, but as a different way of formulating ideas, which way is peculiar to people who translate their ideas into pictures rather than into language. Image-making was the mode of our untutored thinking, and stones are its earliest product.

The reader will find much interesting matter concerning ritual ceremonies, cults, rites, animal symbols, myths, fairy-tales, legends, epics, etc., and the distinctions to be drawn between them: fairytales, a form of wishful thinking — molding the world closer to the heart's desire; myths showing a more closely woven fabric and forming cycles; myth as primitive philosophy, legend as primitive history, fairy-tale as simply entertainment. The moon is cited as an instance of a "condensed

symbol expressing the whole mystery of womankind." Great epics and national poems have enshrined in fixed form the fables and mythologies. When we begin to inquire into the literal truth of a myth, we pass from poetic thinking to discursive thinking. Nevertheless emotional attitudes still persist: the vital ideas embodied in myth cannot be repudiated because someone discovers it is not a "fact." The epic is the first flower of a new symbolic mode, the mode of *art*. It is not merely a receptacle of old symbols, but a new symbolic form, ready to express ideas that have had no vehicle before. Take for instance musical significance (which has a chapter to itself).

Theosophists, in their labors to spread Theosophical ideas in the world, need the co-operation of ripe scholars in the various departments of thought. Both groups may regard themselves as working from different starting-points towards a common goal of convergence, each supplying the deficiencies of the other. Theosophy is able to supply keys and symbols of a most universal and comprehensive character, the use of which, if applied at the outset of an inquiry, would save much labor, just as a map will shorten the wanderings of a journey. On the other hand scholars can furnish that special knowledge in particular fields with which no Theosophist short of an Admirable Crichton would be expected to possess. We may therefore fitly conclude this notice by extending the hand of fellowship to a co-worker whose work we would gladly have reviewed, had it been possible, at greater length.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*. By Susanne K. Langer. Harvard University Press. 1942. \$3.50.

[\(return to text\)](#)

2. See *The Theosophical Forum*, Feb. 1942, p. 87. [\(return to text\)](#)

DR. DE PURUCKER ANSWERS QUESTIONS

COSMIC RAYS: WHAT REALLY ARE THEY?

Question — What is the real function of Cosmic Rays — I mean from the occult or theosophical standpoint?

G. de P. — With regard to this question: What are the Cosmic Rays, where do they come from, where do they go, what is their function? Do you know, modern science today, and daily more and more so, is using the word "radiation," "radiations" — more and more so, I repeat, with virtually the same significance and purport, with virtually the same attempt to describe facts, that the ancient theologians of pre-Christian days in Greece and Rome, Egypt, Persia and Babylon, and equivalently in other parts of the earth made in using the word "emanation," "emanations." As light radiates or flows forth from a center of energy, a sun, or an electric globe, as it radiates forth, we can replace this word "radiates" with "emanates." Out of a central core flows forth light, call it radiation, call it emanation, it is the same. When you understand something of what the finest thinkers of ultra-modern science mean to say when they use the term "radiation," when you understand something of what they have in mind and attempt to express by that word, you will begin to understand what the ancient theologians of pre-Christian times meant when they used the word "emanation," flowing forth.

Thus a human being, as an instance, radiates or emanates vitality. Constantly radiating, it flows forth from him, and flowing forth from him shows that it is a thing, and this thing is a fluid. Light is a fluid, all these various kinds of rays are fluidic in character; but being fluidic in character this merely means that they are aggregates or concretions of entities, emanated entities, call them monads, call them life-atoms if you will. I wonder if that thought is clear.

Before I go on farther, let me try to illustrate what I think we should

understand by the modern scientific effort to designate something which is at one and the same time a wave and a particle. If you follow in thought a bullet from a rifle you will realize that it is at once a particle so to speak, and at the same time accompanied with waves, these waves being the phenomena of its passage through the air. Now imagine a life-atom discharged from an entity. It passes with the speed of light, some atoms with a speed far exceeding that of light, and obviously their passage through substance is accompanied with intense disturbance along the track that the particle follows. Follow my thought? Thus the wave and the particle must accompany each other. The particle produces the wave; without the particle the wave would not be.

Now these Cosmic Rays we can call life-atoms if we wish. In fact, they are that, the life-atoms of the Universe but on a low, because a physical and even inferior to physical, plane. This is shown by their intensely rapid movement; and even the scientists are beginning to recognise this, as they speak of them as "hard" rays: they move so fast that their effect is like that of a projectile. They are "hard," very material.

And again: Where do they come from — these life-atoms of space that are streaming all through interstellar space, and, in so far as our own universe is concerned, throughout our solar universe — streaming through it? Mainly from the active, superlatively active, stomachs of the various suns, pouring forth from the suns of Space in inconceivable floods, or in inconceivable numbers. They make their peregrinations hither and yon as life-atoms of a type or kind, always coming back ultimately, sometime, someway, somewhere, to their father-substance; and meanwhile passing through all other entities as they peregrinate (transmigrate was the old word), wander hither and yon, back and forth.

Indeed, it is thus that the suns feed themselves. Our own sun feeds its own store of vitality from these floods of life-atoms reaching it from outer space, drawn into its own stomach and expelled again through the sun-spots. Why, you remember that even in *The Secret Doctrine*, H.

P. B. openly there speaks of the fact, quoting one of the old records, that the sun was feeding on the refuse of space. Do you remember? As a matter of fact, our own bodies do that — physical body, astral body, mental body, interior sheath of consciousness — they all do just the same thing. They emanate floods of life-atoms, radiate them away and suck in, attract in, those of others. This is just what the sun does; so that these cosmic atoms, or cosmic rays — which are merely names which the scientists have given to them because they do not understand them very well yet, and they seem to be like rays, and they seem to be like particles, but are simply the life-atoms that have flowed forth from the suns of space, and happen to reach us, passing through us — sometime they will leave us and go elsewhere. Just in the same way our globe Earth is being fed and its vitality kept up, its energy sustained, electrical, psychic, physical, and what not, from what it sucks in from outer space, and it in turn emanates forth its own light and fluids. We call them Cosmic Rays, if you wish life-atoms; and thus we see a cosmic give and take, give and take.

But these are not the only life-atoms that there are. There are many, many families of life-atoms that no physical scientific instrument will ever succeed in perceiving, or even apperceiving. They are above, outside, our plane entirely; as for instance, there are purely astral life-atoms, mental life-atoms, spiritual, and divine. But these Cosmic Rays that scientists are now just beginning to gain some knowledge of are cosmic life-atoms of a low, that is of a type even inferior to the physical in the hierarchical sense; very "hard"; "hard rays" they call them, and therefore very dangerous to things that they strike, were they to strike at least in condensed form — such as the X-rays are. But the cosmic rays are even "harder."

Now when I say that our sun (as well as other suns), feeds itself on the refuse and "sweat" of space, on these flowing streams of life-atoms, oceans of them — for space is filled, incomprehensibly full with them, it is an ocean of life — I don't mean that the sun feeds on them to the exclusion of other life-atoms. The sun attracts to itself life-atoms on all planes, some far higher than the physical. But I want to add this. Call it

an interesting theory if you like. There is an old, old, and to me very fascinating, legend which has been current in the Orient from time out of mind. It is couched in this form: the gods feed on men. Now I do not mean to frighten anyone here, or to have you think that when your day of dying comes it is going to be that some god is going to make a meal of you! I do not mean anything like that. But why should human beings be the only exceptions to the universal rule? Man feeds on other things. You know, as a matter of fact, we feed on each other. Every time a group of people sits like this, close together, as you all do, you are feeding each other, changing and exchanging life-atoms, just as we think, changing and exchanging thoughts, and thus it is that arises a phenomenon which every one of us notices, I doubt not, and it is that people who live a great deal together, like husband and wife, grow to resemble each other; and I have even seen that with pets who are with human beings. A master or mistress actually begins to look like the pet. It is the change of life-atoms, and it is not always good either. It is not good for the pet, and it is not good for the human being; and there are other reasons, though of course I know among some dear people here it would be my death-sentence to say anything against pets! These would not understand me: "Why, that's horrid, G. de P. What a perfectly horrid man!"

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: XI

This series of Theosophical radio broadcasts from Shanghai, China, was given over station XQHB during 1941 by Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist. In the present talk Miss Bergqvist covers the teaching of the sevenfold nature of man and relates it to the simpler threefold division of spirit-soul-body as used by St Paul in the New Testament

Good evening, everybody:

Last Sunday the speaker gave an account of the Theosophic conception of Death and remarked that the word "death" should be opposed not to "life" but to "birth," as these are the names given to our entrances into and exits from this earth-life, which itself is only one side of our life. The other side being the periods between incarnations.

The materialists, who hold the idea that our bodies are ourselves and that thought is merely a result of chemical changes taking place in the brain, ask us to believe that we don't exist apart from our physical bodies. This theory is moribund if not dead, however, and fails to account for so many things: memory, for instance, that great stumbling-block of materialistic science. We can hold thoughts and ideas locked up in our minds for years, and can at any moment relive scenes that were familiar to us long ago, despite the fact that our brain-cells have been continually changing ever since. Dreams are another unexplained phenomenon. During sleep we live as completely and consciously as when we are awake. When our physical bodies are inactive we still see, hear and smell, taste and touch more vividly even than when we are hampered by our material envelope. We are complete human beings even when we do not inhabit our bodies. Therefore the real man, the human ego, is not the body — it is indeed independent of the body.

We like our friends not for their physical perfections alone, but for the

characteristics in their personalities that appeal to us. Kindness and unselfishness, charm and so forth, are qualities that may endear to us even people who are physically ugly. We can be extremely good friends with people we have never even seen, through for instance, correspondence alone — yet it's not the typewritten sheets of paper that convey the personality of the writer. We can therefore safely conclude that it is not the physical body which is the real person.

In the Christian New Testament we find Paul the apostle and initiate referring to man as composed of spirit, soul and body. The same threefold classification is found everywhere. Unfortunately in modern times the majority of people in the West have lost the meaning of this true classification, and modern Christians don't as a rule differentiate between spirit and soul. There are many even, who believe these two to mean the same thing. It is one of the important points that has got lost in the course of time. Yet the difference between these two terms is very great. In Theosophy the same classification is used, and the three parts, spirit, soul and body, are further subdivided to total seven human principles, each one emanating from the next above it, and all of them merging into one another and forming a complete ladder from the central Divine spark down to the lowest or rather the outermost physical covering.

Starting with the part called spirit, this spirit emanates from the central spark of Divine fire and is its vehicle or covering. These two, Divinity and its first garment, together with that part of the mind which is pure and impersonal and which takes its impulse from the spirit, form what is called by Paul the Spirit. The soul is composed of the lower mind and the emotions, that is, the personality of the individual. These are the principles in which we generally function. The mind, as you notice, is dual and can be made to conform with either the soul or the spirit, depending on whether it takes its impulse from the spirit or the personal selfish emotions. Our consciousness is centered in the mind, and the mind is therefore the real man. It then depends on us whether we allow our minds to be influenced by our personal emotions or our impersonal spirit. The spirit, or first veil over pure Divinity, is called in

Sanskrit the Buddhi. One who has raised his consciousness, his self, or if you like, his mind to the buddhic principle is called a Buddha. As a contrast, an animal has its consciousness or mind controlled entirely by its emotional principle. An ordinary man has his mind divided between allegiance to the spirit and to the emotions and his mind is therefore dual, on the one side influenced by spirit, on the other by his emotions. We live mostly in our lower minds, but at times, if we are working for impersonal aims or are engaged in some unselfish task, our consciousness is centered in the higher mind, which is illumined by the light of the buddhic principle.

The lowest division, the body, is composed firstly of the vitality, which animates the bodies during life and which is withdrawn on the death of the physical vehicle. Secondly the astral or model body on which is builded atom for atom, molecule for molecule, cell for cell, the outer visible and tangible envelope. Through all these principles runs our will, which in itself is merely an impersonal force, which can be put to any use we desire. In itself it is colorless and does not partake of any qualities, but as we use it, it becomes colored with our impulse, whether this be good, bad or indifferent. It can be a tremendously strong power for either good or evil, if it is trained and firmly directed. Fundamentally a divine power, the driving force of the universe, we have it developed in proportion as we ally ourselves with the spiritual life-force in nature through the link formed by our own divine center.

Even this sevenfold classification, though it may seem complicated at first sight, is a very simple way of demonstrating the very complex nature of the human constitution, and in order to understand it properly, we must realize that these principles are not separate and independent parts like slices of a cake, but interpenetrate and merge into one another. The surface of the globe is not divided into longitudinal and latitudinal lines, though these are marked on the maps to show hypothetical divisions, which in reality do not exist. If we think of the complexity of our minds, we see that even this sevenfold classification is a mere outline of the truth. A man can for instance drive a car, light a pipe, converse with a passenger and think of

something else — all at the same time. This shows that he is conscious in several parts of his mind at once, and it requires an explanation involving layer upon layer of mind to account for this plurality of consciousness. In order to make this more clear we may say that just as all the principles of the human constitution are fundamentally emanations from the central divinity, so each principle partakes of some qualities of all the other principles and contains latent or active all the seven principles.

To return to the original division — spirit, soul and body. Of these, the spirit alone is unconditionally immortal. It is most closely related to the divine essence and partakes of the qualities of pure divinity, from which it is inseparable. The body on the other hand is unconditionally mortal. It pertains to the matter-side of our nature and as an entity exists only so long as it is held together by the incarnate spirit. It is a composite entity, although the component parts of it are of course intrinsically divine and therefore intrinsically immortal. But as a whole, the body composed of the physical and astral vehicles, is not immortal because on the withdrawal of the spirit it disintegrates into its component parts and ceases to be an entity. The vitality or vital essence, which animated it during life, returns into the earth's reservoir of vitality, of which it is at all times a part.

The soul is conditionally immortal, or conditionally mortal: it can unite either with the immortal spirit and become a part of this spirit, in which case it partakes of the qualities of the spirit and becomes one with it, or it can unite with the mortal, physical vehicle, in which case it disintegrates with the body on the departure of the reincarnating ego. During man's repeated incarnations on earth, his spirit continually garners from the soul into itself all that is fine and noble and truly spiritual, while the remainder disintegrates in the astral realms of the earth's atmosphere, while the component lives or atomic entities of the lower personality await the ego's return to earth and form the seeds of the new personality through which this ego will again manifest itself. This means that when the ego returns to earth-life and assumes its new personality — the result of its former lower self — it has to contend

with those lower attributes generated during its former existence or existences. Thus, when a man suffers from an unfortunate temper he cannot control, or some other fault of a similar nature, it is merely the direct result of his weakness in a former life in giving way to those tendencies, which in time become a ruling power in his life. In the case of a human being who is completely under the sway of his lower emotional nature — one in whom not a spark remains that is fine and spiritual and who has completely severed himself from his higher self by functioning entirely in the lowest part of his constitution — this human being loses all contact with the spirit, which on withdrawing at the death of the body has no use for any part of his mind and therefore leaves behind all of it to disintegrate. Such cases are extremely rare, fortunately, for it involves the complete destruction of the ego or consciousness-center of the individual involved.

The average man, who is neither very good, nor very bad, has always something to offer to the spiritual nature, and in due course reincarnates to take up his work of evolution, where he last left off.

The Theosophical Forum

MEMORIES OF H. P. BLAVATSKY — *Henry T. Edge*

May 8th was White Lotus Day, which is celebrated annually by Theosophists in commemoration of the death of H. P. Blavatsky; and this anniversary, the 52nd, was thought a suitable occasion for an address in the Temple at Headquarters by the only surviving member of the Theosophical Society (Covina) who was a personal pupil of our great Founder. It was further requested that this address, in an expanded form, should be prepared for publication in this magazine, and what follows is the outcome of the author's response. Though he has treated the subject before (*The Theosophical Path*, February, 1930, March, 1931; *THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM*, March, 1938), it is felt that such a record means much to members, many of whom are new, and the older articles being difficult of access or unprocurable. This is sufficient excuse for many repetitions which must necessarily occur. The very nature of the subject, the reason for writing such memoirs at all, requires that matters personal to the writer should be touched upon. But this, for the sake both of readers and writer, shall be limited to as much as may be necessary to give composition and background to the picture which he must try to present.

I may describe myself as an individual with a mental temperament, born in a quiet country parsonage. The ancient church dating back to Norman times, where my father officiated, imbued my sensitive mind with an atmosphere of religion in its mellower and less exacting form, such as is inspired by stately Gothic cathedrals and sublime church music; so that Christianity meant for me far more than the harsh dogmatic formalism met in some quarters, and which Theosophists sometimes assail under the impression that they are impugning Christianity. Besides this foundation of aspiration towards the sublime, I had from early years a great interest in science and preferred scientific books to any other. It was such a man as this who found himself in 1887 studying science at the University of Cambridge. But

already before this date my mind had acquired a bent towards the mystical and occult in Nature. I had read, among other books, *The Night-Side of Nature*, by Catherine Crowe, a book in which that able writer has brought together a collection of testimony to the reality of ghosts, apparitions, and other related phenomena, from all countries and ages. To a mind sufficiently unprejudiced to be able to form a just estimate of the value of evidence, such a record was convincing; and I naturally sought further information from any available source. Bulwer Lytton's occult novels were among the number, and I dabbled in Swedenborgianism, Psychic Research, and other matters.

A trouble at this stage was due to the fact that Bulwer Lytton's magicians belong to the dark side of Nature, or are unattractive in other ways; so that a conflict was set up in me between the aspiration for knowledge and power on the one hand, and the voice of conscience and lofty feelings on the other. Here my words will surely find an echo in the hearts of many readers who have had inner conflicts of one kind or another. That this conflict was soon destined to be resolved by Theosophy, with its presentation of Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, will appear in what follows.

The year 1887, then, found me studying science at Cambridge University, and the date August 15 is a memorable landmark; for it was on that day that a chance meeting with a friend, who mentioned Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism*, sent me to the University Library to study the very few Theosophical books then available, such as *The Occult World*, *Light on the Path*, *Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky*, books by Eliphas Levi and Franz Hartmann, *Theosophy, Religion, and Occult Science*, by Olcott. Thus I discovered the existence of White Magicians, the conflict above mentioned was resolved, and I had found an ideal which did not run counter to my feelings of rectitude.

On the other hand, being a member of the Psychological Research Society, which had an important center in Cambridge, and where I met F. W. H. Myers and Professor Henry Sidgwick, I had read the Society's alleged exposure of Madame Blavatsky; and having no means of knowing its

falsity, I was troubled in my mind. It is however to be observed that this circumstance did not in the least discourage me in my determination to pursue Theosophy. Having written to the then Headquarters, and obtained an introduction to a lady member residing near Cambridge, my doubts about the Psychical Research were speedily removed: and indeed Madame Blavatsky's real character stood revealed in her works — and the same may be said of Myers, Sidgwick, and Co.

It was at the close of 1887 that, taking advantage of the ending of the autumn term at Cambridge, I found my way to London to visit H. P. Blavatsky for the first time. It will easily be understood how every detail of the circumstances connected with that momentous expedition has impressed itself indelibly on my mind and lingers fondly in my memory throughout the years that have passed; such associations are familiar to us all. Those were the days of the smoky Underground Railway and the horse omnibuses with the "knife board" on the top, and where you might get a seat beside a purple-faced driver in the style of Mr. Tony Weller. The now ubiquitous tea shop was then totally non-existent, nor had the cheap popular daily paper and the weekly scrap magazine as yet begun to spread their influence on the public mind. This London has vanished into Limbo, and it is likely that a visit to the actual localities might result in disillusionment, as usually happens when we vainly seek to reconstitute experiences which live only in our memory.

Madame Blavatsky at that time was living in the house of Bertram Keightley and his nephew Archibald Keightley, two young men of nearly the same age, who have earned lasting merit by the generous hospitality which they accorded her. It was a semi-detached residence, standing in small grounds, and situated in a residential neighborhood between the West-End proper and the western suburbs, and just north of the great east-west artery in the part where it is known as the Bayswater Road. I arrived just before the time for the evening meal, and, after being received by Bertram Keightley, we went down to the dining-room, which was in the rear and connected with H. P.

Blavatsky's reception room in front by folding doors. Soon the wonderful personage whom I was so eager to see made her appearance, and I must try to convey a picture of my first impressions.

In person she was rather short, and, as is visible in many of her portraits, she was at this time corpulent, owing to maladies caused by her labors and sufferings; the effect being enhanced by the need for loose and easy apparel. It may be added parenthetically that her physician had found her blood in a state which ordinarily would be inconsistent with continued life: a proof of the mighty will and devotion which kept her at her labors in spite of such appalling obstacles. My first impression was that of a perfectly natural person, free from all affectations, artificialities, and formal disguises, such as we all habitually wear in deference to social convention and to hide from each other our nakedness. She talked easily, passing from subject to subject, in much the same way as a child might talk, though of course with the knowledge of a much traveled and experienced observer. Her ease of manner evoked a sympathetic response in the listener. For a most eloquent portrayal of her character and bearing, reference may be made to the article by "Saladin" (W. Stewart Ross), editor of *The Agnostic Journal*, printed in *Lucifer*, June, 1891. It is much too long to reproduce here, but two sentences may be quoted:

She was simply an upright and romantically honest giantess.

"Impostor" indeed! She was almost the only mortal I have ever met who was *not* an impostor.

I cannot give anything like a diary or chronological record, as the details are blurred and form a general picture interspersed with isolated incidents. As I did not live in London, my meetings with H. P. B. were confined to transient visits, when I might either be passing through London or on a short stay with some friend. She used to sit in the front room in the evenings, in a large armchair, and receive any visitors who might call. Among members of what might be called the household staff, I recall, besides the two Keightleys, the Countess Wachtmeister, whose name occupies a notable place in the pages of

early Theosophical history; Mr. George Mead, H. P. B.'s secretary; Mr. Claude Wright; Mrs. Cooper-Oakley and her sister Laura Cooper; Miss Kislingbury; Charles Johnston, Sanskrit scholar, who married Vera Jelihovsky, H. P. Blavatsky's niece; Mr. Richard Harte, American. Other notable names not included among resident members, are Herbert Burrows, leading Socialist; Dr. Franz Hartmann, well-known writer on occult subjects; Mrs. Alice Gordon, long resident in India and mentioned in early Theosophical annals; William Kingsland, who recently visited Egypt and wrote a book on the measurements of the Great Pyramid, then a young electrical engineer; Colonel Olcott. Among Hindus may be mentioned U. L. Desai and Rai Baroda K. Laheri. Another personality mentioned in the early annals was Dr. Charles Carter Blake, who had had a prominent career as a member of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in which he figured as a zoologist, following the school of Richard Owen in opposition to Huxley, who advocated evolution by natural selection. Dr. Carter Blake had great erudition, owing to a photographic memory, but was not able to turn it to much account.

While receiving visitors or sitting with members of the household, H. P. B. used to smoke, rolling cigarettes of the finest Turkish tobacco, and ready to make one for anybody who might ask. She also generally played "patience," or solitaire as it is called in the United States. These occupations did not interfere in the least with her ability to engage in conversation. Mrs. Campbell Praed, in her novel, *Affinities*, which contains a vivid and sympathetic portrait of H. P. B., speaks of her as being able to carry on an animated discussion in English and turn suddenly to interject words into a conversation in French going on behind her. The same writer discusses the remarkable features of H. P. B. — the unusually large light-gray eyes, contradicted by the small alert nose, and this contradicted again by the massive lower part of the face: all this indicative of the remarkable character and attainments. But in estimating the character and conduct of such a being, we must bear in mind the very difficult, the well-nigh impossible task which she had to accomplish — that of living in two very different worlds at once. For, as

a messenger of the Lodge of Masters of Wisdom, she must keep in touch therewith; while at the same time she must accommodate herself to the world around her. And what a world was this to her sight, to whom conventional screens were transparencies, who read people for what they were at a glance? This alone is enough to account for eccentricities of demeanor which ordinary critics, ignorant of the real reason, would attribute to reasons within the limits of their own comprehension. What produced more impression on me than any one thing may here be mentioned. Standing on an easel in one corner of the sitting-room was a framed portrait in oils of H. P. B.'s Master, "M." This was no imaginary picture, but a genuine portrait of a real man. It must be understood that, the effect produced being the paramount concern, questions as to how this portrait was made were of quite secondary interest and unable *to* influence *my* judgment. Rather than estimate the authenticity of the portrait in terms of available evidence as to its production, I should reverse the reasoning and infer the means of production from the result achieved. So I am only too ready to accept the statement that the artist, (Schmiechen) was caused by H. P. B. to see a visual image of the Master. However this may be, I seemed to have now become aware of the reality of such a being, and my life was thereupon and ever since inspired by the presence of an *ideal* that was no mental abstraction or reasoned construct, but something *actual*.

On my second visit to H. P. B. she spoke of a visit which she said I had made before my first visit, and in which I had told her about myself. The things which she reported me as having said tallied with fact and could not have been got from anyone but myself. On my inquiry as to whether it was in my astral form that I had come, she replied, No, he was just as he is now. She described my dress and the description was verified by a friend who was with me as being one which I had actually worn. I cannot give the explanation, for the simple reason that I do not know it; so readers may exercise their own wits upon it.

She also said at one time that, when she first saw me, she said to herself: "Here is a young man who has an eventful occult life before him. He has two paths before him: in one of them he will be happy; in

the other miserable. I wonder which he will take."

It was at this time that *Lucifer* began to be published; and the Esoteric Section, for more advanced students, was founded. In this connexion it will be understood that the more important things are precisely those about which the most reserve must be kept. I was brought into intimate relationship with H. P. B. the Teacher. (Does she not endorse one of her books: "dedicated by H. P. B. to H. P. Blavatsky, with no thanks"?) I then knew that she could see into the depths of my being, responding to a sincere knock, showing me my faults and advising as to overcoming them. And thus I acquired unshakeable evidence that she was what she was. I dedicated my life to the cause for which she had sacrificed so much; and found the anchorage which has never failed to keep me safe through many trials, many successes.

On one occasion she put into my hands the MS. of the forthcoming *Voice of the Silence* and sent me to another room to read it. As illustrating the difficulties of carrying on work in those times, it may be mentioned that, as the private pupils did not include any printers, it was necessary for private instructions to be written out in copying ink and reproduced, page by page, by the old-fashioned gelatine graph, the pages being afterwards collected and stitched. This says much for the industry and devotion of the volunteer workers on this task.

Such are a few scattered details of my recollections; it may be that others might be given, but they do not all recur to the memory at one time; or they are too fragmentary, too much involved in the context to be of any significance when isolated therefrom; or they are such as might be found in H. P. B.'s writings and thus do not come within the sphere of my special subject. It remains to offer a few concluding remarks. Truly, as I often think, this meeting with H. P. B. was a most marvelous adventure. In the heart of the teeming life of that vast metropolis of the materialistic nineteenth century, to encounter face to face, at the dawn of one's manhood, a real — ! But why use a word as counter for an abstract idea, when, as we all know, the living individual is the complete summation and full embodiment of all that

our thoughts and feelings can dimly foreshow. One of the writers whose impressions are recorded in *Lucifer* for 1891 says that he felt for the first time that he was in the presence of a Reality. He was one who beheld the Truth before him and did not need to go through the tedious and often vain process of discovering the truth by first eliminating every possible (and impossible) source of error. Perhaps it may here be well to bring to a close these personal reminiscences; for the life and teachings of H. P. Blavatsky will be found adequately treated elsewhere.

The Theosophical Forum

WHERE ARE THE SAGES AND SEERS? — *G. de Purucker*

The great sages and seers, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, belong to no race, and especially to no creed. They are the children of the spirit, awakened men, whose familiar thought is truth itself; and hence their sympathies are universal. They need no frontiers of race, of caste, of creed, of color. They are truth-seekers, truth-teachers, and their instrument, the Theosophical Society, was founded by them to promulgate the truth; the cosmic wisdom, the cosmic philosophy, that existed before the foundations of the mighty mountains were laid, ay, even before the Sons of Morning began to sing, to chant their hymns celestial. For Truth has no age. It never was born, it never has not been. It is timeless because universal. Its appeal is to the hearts and minds of all men. It matters not a whit from what part of the world a beautiful truth may be drawn; and in consequence whenever any human has so attuned the seven-stringed lyre of Apollo — which is his heart or his seven principles — to whisper and ring like an aeolian harp when the winds of heaven blow upon it, then, for the time being and as long as he can hold this plane of consciousness, he is one of the sages and seers, whether his fellow-men recognise him or not; and this means you and me and all men, at least any one of us who may have attained thus much.

And mark you the promise in this statement: that precisely because we are children of infinitude, not merely sons of the gods but the very offsprings of the celestial spaces, there is that within us which is attuned with them, and which therefore is timeless, which therefore is infinite, which therefore is eternal.

How true that old statement in the Christian New Testament is which you so often hear me quote, because so lost sight of by Christians in these days! I link two such statements together: "Know ye not that ye are gods and that the spirit of the eternal liveth within you?"

Where are the sages and seers? Where they have always been. The question at first blush may strike a Theosophist as being foolish but I suppose it arises in the desire to explain to people why the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion do not take the human race in hand, and oblige it, force it, to be decent. But a Theosophist simply looks up in wonder and says: Why, what good would that do? How may you convince men by compulsion that this, that, or some other thing is true? Isn't it obvious that men only believe what their own hearts teach them? And that no matter what they hear or are taught, if there is not an answering response in the human heart, and an instant answer in the human intellect, there is no acceptance, but a worse than steel wall raised?

Truth is eternal. Truth is always with us, and the devotees of truth are always with us and always have been and always will be; and it is we in our folly and ignorance and blindness who refuse to accept them. Open your hearts and open your minds, and the light will come pouring in. There is the promise of all the sages and of all the Masters the human race has ever given birth to. The Teachers are always ready when the pupil is ready. If we see no evidence of the Masters in the world today, it is partly because we we have forgotten the god-wisdom in the world, and partly because we won't hearken.

Yes, the truth has been laid down by the titan intellects of the human race; and if men do not accept it, whose fault is it? Not that of the Teachers. If I prefer strife and wretchedness and crime and horror, why shall I say to the deaf heavens: "Where art thou, O God?" Of all the agonies of stupidity, we see here just one more evidence of man's attempt at self-justification of his own folly and ignorance. You might as well say, where are the laws of nature? What has become of them? Why don't they take the human race in hand? A nice spirit! Even ordinary human parents know better than that. Ordinarily a father or mother would not attempt to interfere with the growth of a child by force. It never worked and never will. You cannot cause a leopard to change its spots until that leopard has evolved, and no amount of starving or chastisement or so-called vengeful punishment will ever

make a leopard anything but a leopard.

Do you want truth? You can have it whenever you want it. The world is full of it. The great teachings of the ages are full of it. What prevents our seeing it? Is there any man so blind as he who won't look? Is there any man so deaf as he who refuses to hear? These are some of the simple truths known to every child; yet we prefer hypocrisy and cant and self-justification, to righting the wrongs we ourselves wreak on others, and then raise a clamor to the immortal gods for help when we ourselves begin to suffer from our folly. Yes, we choose hypocrisy; and how many of us sitting in this auditorium can say before the tribunal divine within our own hearts: "I am not a hypocrite. I am pure." Just ask yourselves! Pharisees and hypocrites! "Oh, how I thank God that I am not as other men are!" Now honestly, brothers and friends, hasn't that ever occurred to your hearts and minds? And don't you see that that is the first shackle you yourself have placed on your limbs as a pilgrim: self-justification and self-righteousness? Don't you see that by so doing you blind your own eyes?

How true it is that truth is not popular, that truth is not welcome, that people do not like it. Why? Because it means change. It means an evolution of feeling and thinking. It means a revolution of the moral instincts to become alive and vigorous again. I tell you again that to become acquainted with, to have first-hand individual knowledge of, the great Teachers, the first step is to become as far as we may and can, alike unto them. There is no other way. The heart must be consecrated to truth at any cost. Are you strong enough? If you are, you are ready for chelaship, as we say, for discipleship; and you will be a disciple before this life for you is ended, ay, perhaps before tomorrow's even sees the setting of our day-star.

The Masters, the great Sages and Seers are ready for you always. There is no barrier to them whatsoever except yourself, absolutely none; and if you don't attain chelaship in this life or in the next or in the following one, blame none but yourself. You see the reason why. It is so simple a child may understand. How can you become a disciple or a chela

before you are ready for it, before you have become it? How can you see the light before you have eyes with which to see it? How can you appreciate beauty or get a touch of beauty anywhere, until beauty already is taking birth within your soul, so that the beauty within you can sense beauty without? How can you recognise a great man until some grandeur at least is born within yourself to enable you to recognise grandeur? If you are paltry and small and mean, how can you recognise the opposites of these?

It is like the men who go through the world incognisant, blind and deaf to the divine beauty in their own fellow human beings. One of the easiest ways to find beauty, to find truth, and more quickly to come into instant magnetic sympathy with your fellow human beings is by becoming yourself sympathetic and seeing. Don't you see? If a man has no sympathy in his soul, how can he sense the sympathy in the souls of others? If he has no beauty in his heart, how can he see beauty anywhere, or as the English playwright Shakespeare phrases it:

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.

Don't you see you will never see the Master-self until you have become masterlike within yourself? Because you won't recognise him or them. It would be impossible. You have not developed the vision inside, the faculties inside; but those faculties are there.

And now a final word: These sages and seers exist today; they take pupils, to use the ordinary phrase. Indeed more, they pass through the world hunting, searching, seeking, not so much like Diogenes for an honest man, but like Masters of Wisdom as they are, searching everywhere for good material, sensitive human souls, or, as I phrase it, looking wherever they may see, however dim it may be, a touch of the Buddhist splendor in a human being's heart; and when they see that, instantly their attention is attracted. They feel the impact instantly in their own hearts. They approach, they aid, they inspire, they do everything they can to foster the trembling flame of vision and of

feeling. They foster it and feed it, until the flame finally burns strong, and the man is reborn, no longer born of the flesh, but reborn of the spirit, of the inspiration from within and from the Teacher without.

And above and beyond and back of these sages and seers there is their own great Chief. What a marvelous figure of celestial wisdom and beauty, utterly dedicated to the spirit and to the world and all that is in it irrespective of race, nation, creed, caste, color, or sex! This being is a God. We Theosophists speak of it in reverence and awe as the Silent Watcher. He is the chief Master of the Masters. He is one of us, our own brilliant guide, Teacher, friend, brother, the source so far as men are concerned of all enlightenment and wisdom and beauty and love. So that in the deeper reaches of our blessed Theosophical teachings we may say with great reverence, yet with all truth, that back of all our labor however imperfectly we human beings may be doing, back of it as its origin and inspiration is this grand Divinity.

What a hope! What a wonder to look forward to for all us men, Theosophists or non-Theosophists. For indeed if the truth were told, I think that there are millions and tens of millions and hundreds of millions of men and women in this world today who are Theosophists in everything except that they have not as yet received the teachings of our blessed God-Wisdom. But in everything else: in readiness, in yearning, in reverence, in universal love, and in desire to advance upwards and onwards forever, these fellow human beings are as good Theosophists as we are. Oh, that we might collect them all together into one band of impersonal workers! What a power in the world we would then be! No longer would problems vex man's intelligence, problems born of his selfishness. No longer then would the human race be afflicted with poverty, misery, and with most of the sin that now exists, and the dreadful, appalling wretchedness. I sometimes think that the most heart-touching, the most heart-rending story in the world amongst our brother fellow human beings is that story which is not heard, which is carried in the dumb agony of the silence. Oh, how human beings suffer so needlessly!

I know of no loftier title, Brothers and Friends, than that which I love to give to our great Teachers: Friends of mankind and of all that lives! —
Address given in March, 1941, Point Loma, California

The Theosophical Forum

FROM H.P.B.'S "KEY TO THEOSOPHY"

The month of August, 1831, marked the birth of that extraordinary character known to the world as H. P. Blavatsky; by some called impostor, charlatan, fraud, by others "the greatest figure of her age"; and by Theosophists recognised as the chosen Messenger of the Mahatmans for the nineteenth century to give a new re-statement of the truths of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion to the world. No judgment, however, is complete, unless weighed in the light of the immense learning contained in her books, and as long as critics ignore these they may be considered to have "no case," and their attacks ruled merely as the expression of uninformed, prejudiced and often fanatical minds.

Better than biographical sketch, the following excerpts from H. P. B.'s *Key to Theosophy* (published in London, in 1889), selected for the Editors by M. W. S., reveal something of the grandeur of her message and its nobility of exposition, and it is not difficult to perceive from a careful reading of them how it is that her teaching gave such dynamic beginning to the Society she founded, and how profoundly has Theosophic thought affected the world since that day. — Eds.

As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one — infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature — nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. — p. 41

Make men feel and recognize in their innermost hearts what is their real, true duty to all men, and every old abuse of power, every iniquitous law in the national policy, based on human, social or political selfishness, will disappear of itself. — p. 231

Selfishness, indifference, and brutality can never be the normal state of

the race — to believe so would be to despair of humanity. . . . — p. 235

We maintain that all pain and suffering are results of want of Harmony, and that the one terrible and only cause of the disturbance of Harmony is *selfishness* in some form or another. — p. 207

The power of mental inertia is great in anything that does not promise immediate benefit and reward. Our age is preeminently unspiritual and matter of fact. — p. 37

But there are no *free-thinking* boys and girls, and generally early training will leave its mark behind in the shape of a cramped and distorted mind. A proper and sane system of education should produce the most vigorous and liberal mind, strictly trained in logical and accurate thought, and not in blind faith. — p. 270

What kind of Satanic pride must be ours if we place our infinitesimally small consciousness and individuality higher than the universal and infinite consciousness! — p. 219

If this life were all, then in many respects it would indeed be poor and mean; but regarded as a preparation for the next sphere of existence, it may be used as the golden gate through which we may pass, not selfishly and alone, but in company with our fellows, to the palaces which lie beyond. —p. 237

Belief in Karma is the highest reason for reconciliation to one's lot in this life, and the very strongest incentive towards effort to better the succeeding re-birth. — p. 216

We describe Karma as the Law of re-adjustment which ever tends to restore disturbed equilibrium in the physical, and broken harmony in the moral world. We say that Karma does not act in this or that particular way always: but that it always *does* act so as to restore Harmony and preserve the balance of equilibrium, in virtue of which the Universe exists. — p. 205

It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of

which he is an integral part. — p. 203

But true or false, no accusation against another person should ever be spread abroad. If true, and the fault hurts no one but the sinner, then leave him to his Karma. If false, then you will have avoided adding to the injustice in the world. — p. 255

Nature may err, and often does, in its details and the external manifestations of its materials, never in its inner causes and results. — p. 221

The law of Karma is inextricably interwoven with that of reincarnation. . . . It is only this doctrine that can explain to us the mysterious problem of good and evil, and reconcile man to the terrible and apparent injustice of life. — p. 211

The spiritual Ego of man moves in eternity like a pendulum between the hours of birth and death. — p. 167

To get convinced of the fact of reincarnation and past lives, one must put oneself in *rapport* with one's real permanent Ego, not with one's evanescent memory. — p. 128

We call *reminiscence* the *memory of the soul*. — p.125

An "entity" is immortal, but is so only in its ultimate essence, not in its individual form. — p. 107

Reincarnation means that this Ego will be furnished with a *new* body, a *new* brain, and a *new* memory. — p. 128

I have given you once already a familiar illustration by comparing the *Ego*, or the *individuality*, to an actor, and its numerous and various incarnations to the parts it plays. Will you call these parts or their costumes the actor himself? Like that actor, the Ego is forced to play during the cycle of necessity, up to the very threshold of *Paranirvana*, many parts such as may be unpleasant to it. But as the bee collects its honey from every flower, leaving the rest as food for the earthly worms, so does our spiritual individuality, whether we call it Sutratma

or Ego. Collecting from every terrestrial personality, into which Karma forces it to incarnate, the nectar alone of the spiritual qualities and self-consciousness, it unites all these into one whole and emerges from its chrysalis as the glorified Dhyan Chohan. — p. 168

Duty is that which *is due* to Humanity, to our fellow-men, neighbours, family, and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves. This is a debt which, if left unpaid during life, leaves us spiritually insolvent and moral bankrupts in our next incarnation. Theosophy is the quintessence of *duty*. — p. 229

Happiness, or rather contentment, may indeed follow the performance of duty, but is not and must not be the motive for it. — p. 228

Theosophy teaches self-abnegation, but does not teach rash and useless self-sacrifice, nor does it justify fanaticism. — p. 240

Self-sacrifice has to be performed with discrimination; and such a self-abandonment, if made without justice, or blindly, regardless of subsequent results, may often prove not only made in vain, but harmful. — p. 238

A man has no right to starve himself *to death* that another man may have food, unless the life of that man is obviously more useful to the many than is his own life. — p. 239

Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend. — p. 161

The Ego receives always according to its deserts. After the dissolution of the body, there commences for it a period of full awakened consciousness, or a state of chaotic dreams, or an utterly dreamless sleep. . . If our physiologists find the cause of dreams and visions in an unconscious preparation for them during the waking hours, why cannot the same be admitted for the *post-mortem* dreams? I repeat it: death is sleep. — p. 165

. . . . the Devachanic state is not one of omniscience, but a

transcendental continuation of the personal life just terminated. It is the rest of the soul from the toils of life. — p. 156

At the solemn moment of death every man, even when death is sudden, sees the whole of his past life marshalled before him, in its minutest details. For one short instant the *personal* becomes one with the *individual* and all-knowing *Ego*. But this instant is enough to show to him the whole chain of causes which have been at work during his life. He sees and now understands himself as he is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception. He reads his life, remaining as a spectator looking down into the arena he is quitting; he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him. — p. 162

As to the ordinary mortal, his bliss in it [Devachan] is complete. It is an *absolute* oblivion of all that gave it pain or sorrow in the past incarnation, and even oblivion of the fact that such things as pain or sorrow exist at all. The *Devachanee* lives its intermediate cycle between two incarnations surrounded by everything it had aspired to in vain, and in the companionship of everyone it loved on earth. It has reached the fulfilment of all its soul-yearnings. And thus it lives throughout long centuries an existence of *unalloyed* happiness, which is the reward for its sufferings in earth-life. In short, it bathes in a sea of uninterrupted felicity spanned only by events of still greater felicity in degree. — p. 148

We say that the bliss of the *Devachanee* consists in its complete conviction that it has never left the earth, and that there is no such thing as death at all. . . . — p. 146

For pure divine love is not merely the blossom of a human heart, but has its roots in eternity. Spiritual holy love is immortal, and Karma brings sooner or later all those who loved each other with such a spiritual affection to incarnate once more in the same family group. — p. 150

Love is a strong shield, and is not limited by space or time. — p. 150

And what may be the duty of the Theosophist to himself?

To control and conquer, *through the Higher, the lower self*. To purify himself inwardly and morally; to fear no one, and naught, save the tribunal of his own conscience. Never to do a thing by halves; *i. e.*, if he thinks it the right thing to do, let him do it openly and boldly, and if wrong never touch it at all. — p. 241

The world in which blossom the transitory and evanescent flowers of personal lives is not the real permanent world; but that one in which we find the root of consciousness, that root which is beyond illusion and dwells in the eternity. — p. 180

It was a mystic belief — practically proved by initiated adepts and priests — that, by making oneself as pure as the incorporeal beings *i.e.*, by returning to one's pristine purity of nature — man could move the gods to impart to him Divine mysteries, and even cause them to become occasionally visible, either subjectively or objectively. — p. 2, footnote

We believe that every human being is the bearer, or Vehicle, of an Ego coeval with every other Ego; because all Egos are *of the same essence* and belong to the primeval emanation from one universal infinite Ego. Plato calls the latter the logos. . . and we, the manifested divine principle, which is one with the Universal Mind or Soul. — p. 110

. . . the *root* of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible and invisible, *is, was and ever will be* one absolute essence, from which all starts, and into which everything returns. This is Aryan philosophy, fully represented only by the Vedantins, and the Buddhist system, — p. 43

We find. . . two distinct beings in man; the spiritual and the physical, the man who thinks, and the man who records as much of these thoughts as he is able to assimilate. — p. 90

That alone which is eternal is *real*. . . As fleeting personalities, today one person, tomorrow another — we are [illusions]. Would you call the sudden flashes of the *Aurora borealis*, the Northern lights, a "reality,"

though it is as real as can be while you look at it? Certainly not; it is the cause that produces it, if permanent and eternal, which is the only reality, while the effect is but a passing illusion. — pp. 84-5

The Spiritual "I" in man is omniscient and has every knowledge innate in it; while the personal self is the creature of its environment and the slave of the physical memory. Could the former manifest itself uninterruptedly, and without impediment, there would be no longer men on earth, but we should all be gods. — p. 131

There is but one *real* man, enduring through the cycle of life and immortal in essence, if not in form, and this is *Manas*, the Mind-man or embodied Consciousness. — p. 100

That which displays activity, while the body is asleep or paralysed, is the higher consciousness, our memory registering but feebly and inaccurately — because automatically — such experiences, and often failing to be even slightly impressed by them. — p. 180

Spiritual and divine powers lie dormant in every human Being; and the wider the sweep of his spiritual vision the mightier will be the God within him. — p. 181

When two minds are sympathetically related, and the instruments through which they function are tuned to respond magnetically and electrically to one another, there is nothing which will prevent the transmission of thoughts from one to the other, at will; for since the mind is not of a tangible nature, that distance can divide it from the subject of its contemplation, it follows that the only difference that can exist between two minds is a difference of *STATE*. So if this latter hindrance is overcome, where is the "miracle" of *thought transference*, at whatever distance? — p. 291

[Karma is] the *Ultimate Law* of the Universe, the source, origin and fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature. Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause, on the physical, mental and spiritual planes of being. As no cause remains without its due effect from greatest to least, from a cosmic disturbance down to the

movement of your hand, and as like produces like, *Karma* is that unseen and unknown law *which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably* each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer. Though itself *unknowable*, its action is perceivable. . . Though we do not know what *Karma* is *per se*, and in its essence, we *do* know *how* it works, and we can define and describe its mode of action with accuracy. We only do *not* know its ultimate *Cause*, just as modern philosophy universally admits that the *ultimate Cause* of anything is "unknowable." — p. 201

. . . . for logic, consistency, profound philosophy, divine mercy and equity, this doctrine of Reincarnation has not its equal on earth. It is a belief in a perpetual progress for each incarnating Ego, or divine soul, in an evolution from the outward into the inward, from the material to the Spiritual, arriving at the end of each stage at absolute unity with the divine Principle. From strength to strength, from the beauty and perfection of one plane to the greater beauty and perfection of another, with accessions of new glory, of fresh knowledge and power in each cycle, such is the destiny of every Ego, which thus becomes its own Saviour in each world and incarnation. — p. 154-5

The Theosophical Forum

OPPORTUNITY IN OLD AGE — *Abbott Clark*

To understand old age and evaluate it properly one has to understand the nature of man and the purpose of life here on earth. Man is essentially a soul, an immortal intellectual, moral and spiritual being. He is not an animal.

The object of life on earth is the evolution and perfection of the soul. The earth is the sphere of that evolution, and life on earth with all its efforts and experiences, failures and successes, thought and learning, is the way the soul grows. It learns by contrasts, by experiencing "the pairs of opposites." The process of evolution is one of drawing out and giving expression to the almost infinite capacities locked up within the soul and then learning from experience the lessons life has to give. This process of unfolding or coming out into activity of the higher nature and its intellectual, moral and spiritual faculties is, or should be, continuous and progressive throughout life.

In infancy the newly incarnated soul is very busy learning to handle the most perfect and complicated of all instruments, the human body and its faculties. Youth is the time when one equips one's self for the battle of life. In maturity one gives expression to what is within him; makes his conquests and failures. At about fifty when the exterior energies begin to slow down the spiritual man should begin to escape from the thralldom of the senses and to live more and more on its own plane and engage more and more in its own native concerns, that is in intellectual moral and spiritual thoughts, studies and activities. All regrets for the past should be put aside and all past experiences considered and used as lessons from which to learn to begin to really live.

At a time when all attention was being given to heroic youth going over the top, Henry Ford threw a bombshell into contemporary thought by declaring that if it were not for men of fifty and over, organized

civilization would go to pieces for lack of wise and competent managerial ability. The idea was that too much attention was being given to mere activity when in truth and reality the more important factor in any man's life and in civilization as a whole is the part that intellectual ability, wisdom and judgment play in world affairs. It is for lack of wisdom that the world has now gone mad. But storms in nature and fits and convulsions in man are not normal; they pass away, giving place to normalcy and leaving the man or the civilization sadder but wiser.

In a conversation with my brothers and myself Mme. Tingley quoted Henry Ford, as above, and strongly endorsed his position. She then added that the best part of one's life should begin at about fifty when a man begins to transfer from exterior to interior activities. Then the real life of man as an intellectual, moral and spiritual being begins to flower and become dominant, if the previous life has been lived aright, no matter how feeble the body may become.

When the life has been lived mostly in the physical with strong desires and attachments and with little spirituality, old age may be a pitiful state even in the case of quite intellectual but materialistic people. It is a growing inclination towards spiritual things that frees the consciousness, the mind and thought, from slavery to the distressing physical conditions of old age.

In a cycle like the present where actual spiritual knowledge is rare and religious belief is only held as *faith* the average man thinks only of his personal self and its concerns. In such cases the man is riveted to the body and his happiness depends upon its conditions. Such cases are pitiful.

We all know, and especially every nurse knows, that there are people who go through the greatest degrees of privation, pain and suffering and remain cheerful, kind, thoughtful for others and happy clear up to the hour when peaceful death brings well-deserved relief.

The Theosophist knows from his studies what I have herein before

tried to write. He therefore deliberately tries to govern his life accordingly and to live in a world of beautiful and ennobling thought and so far as possible to forget himself in the cheerful performance of daily duties and the love of other things than himself. That is the secret — forget yourself. Live in a world of impersonal love and thoughtfulness for others with the mind and consciousness absorbed in high ideals, cheerfulness and love. Then age and death are as a peaceful sunset for the body and a glorious sunrise for the soul.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GENIUS OF WILLIAM BLAKE — *Madeline Clark*

*The Angel that presided o'er my birth
Said, "Little creature formed of Joy and Mirth,
Go love without the help of any Thing on Earth."*

— William Blake in MS. Notebook.

And so was born William Blake, who became known to the world certainly as artist, poet, and prophet, but who was vaguely conceived by his generation to be a madman for all that. Whether it was he or his generation that merited the title, remains still to be seen. Those who knew him not, but knew of him, were the ones who shared in this opinion. Certain it is that his life is coming to be studied more and more widely, more and more intently, not for the mere scrutiny of details but for an understanding of those implications of spiritual greatness that are found at every turn in any study of Blake.

This is the magic of Biography: it gives the picture of a life from birth to death, but all through the narrative there are hints of something greater that is unexpressed, an unseen background, the field of play of a Personage far lordlier than the humble individual whose story we have followed through one brief chapter of experience.

Our first thanks for this book (1) go to the Editor, Mr. Ruthven Todd, for a new edition of the famous *Life of Blake* by Alexander Gilchrist, published in 1863. The book is really a composite, and is Gilchrist's only in part, for he died in 1861, leaving the work only two-thirds completed. His wife then took up the thread and spun it out to the end, assisted by several writers of the day, among them the brothers Dante Gabriel and William Michael Rossetti, who of course left their unmistakable stamp upon it. Nevertheless, through its pages shines like a benignant sun the kindly and appreciative understanding of Alexander Gilchrist for his then hardly known and still less understood subject. He perceived the shining track of genius in the pattern of this

obscure life, and consequently wrote as one friendly and favorable.

In the present Edition, Mr. Todd has drawn largely from subsequent research to make emendations and corrections which of course add greatly to the value of the whole. Within the compass of an Everyman volume he has given us the connected story of Blake's outer life: his inspired and prophetic boyhood, when the early lyrics were composed; his years of apprenticeship with Basire the engraver, when Blake acquired a medium or vehicle both for his subsequent livelihood and for the expression of his genius; his marriage to the untaught girl who became his perfect companion, formed by him; his brief emergence into polite society, followed again by the years of poverty and unremitting labor while reproducing his own and others' designs; the tardy recognition of his genius by a few — a very few — friends and young ardent disciples; his friendships; his visions, and his achievement in his chosen art. This was the outer life: the inner life illumined it but existed apart, not cramped by poverty, nor troubled by lack of recognition.

To go back to Gilchrist for a moment: perhaps he is happiest in his descriptions of Blake's designs, which he was able to speak of with the discerning and appreciative judgment of the real critic of art. The book is full of these happy descriptions, which actually teach the layman what to look for in the designs, interpret their meanings and point out their beauties, at least to a limited degree. Gilchrist's interpretations have been greatly amplified by the hundreds of critiques of Blake's art which have appeared since his day, during which time there has been a general and almost revolutionary development in comprehension, in taste, in appreciation of symbolism; and this has been a tremendous factor in Blake appreciation, both as regards the designs and the texts of the prophetic books.

The direct stamp of genius is in all his art — it carries the fire and supernal energy of something more than human. Like Albrecht Durer and the early masters, his "aim was to give ideas, not pretty language," to make men conscious of the spiritual invisible powers guiding and

supporting the visible universe. "Blake's art," remarks Elisabeth Luther Gary, "has made abstract ideas and emotions take on a visible aspect," and in this respect, in this spiritual quality of direct symbolism, it far outstrips much of the technically perfect art of his time which was more nearly concerned with faithful portrayal of the material form, or of some agreeable human emotion.

We have to think of Blake in various aspects: as the author of the lovely early lyrics, and the Songs of Innocence and of Experience, some of these approaching Shakespeare's themselves in spontaneity and purity of literary form; as the Revolutionary, friend of Thomas Paine; as the creator of the thunderous Prophetic Books; as the incredibly industrious engraver; as the originator of a unique method of reproduction which he used in bringing out many of his own works; and lastly, as the spiritual mystic who had insight into the inner worlds.

It is in this last aspect, perhaps, that Blake will be most interesting to Theosophists. There are evidences which suggest that Blake was intuitively conscious of his life's inner pattern and purpose, and that he remained true to that purpose — which was, as far as a mere sympathetic student is qualified to express it, to continue to give forth his own peculiar message through his art, and not to digress into pleasant by-paths. The one episode in his life when he came nearest to such a digression occurred towards the end of the pleasant years at Felpham, whither he had been brought from London by William Hayley, "a literary country gentleman, an amateur, whose words flowed a thousand times faster than his thoughts." Blake with his wife and sister was settled in a cottage in the lovely little seaside village. Blake was to be engraver, designer, and general associate in a series of literary projects which Hayley's lively brain had conceived. The association prospered, the schemes went forward, but when Blake found himself being introduced to half the neighboring gentry, and in a fair way to being launched on a career of (to him) cheap popularity as a painter of fashionable miniatures, the warning note was sounded in his inner consciousness. He broke off the contract and went back to

London, to his engraver's bench and penury — but peace of mind. On another occasion (Arthur Symons' Blake) he declined an invitation to become art instructor to the Royal Family, ". . . for that I cannot live without doing my duty to lay up treasure in heaven is Certain and Determined," as he wrote to his friend Mr. Butts. "The Thing I have most at Heart — more than life, or all that seems to make life comfortable without — Is the Interest of True Religion and Science, and whenever any thing appears to affect that Interest (Especially if I myself omit any duty to my Station as a Soldier of Christ) It gives me the greatest of torments."

Years of "deepening neglect" were to follow, but Blake's inner serenity was never shaken. "Grim poverty had throughout life, stared him in the face," says Gilchrist. "Throughout life he had calmly looked back into her eyes." He had always believed — and his belief was borne out — that if he did his part he would have all he needed. Thus he was supremely free from the tyranny of objective things. As one of his intimates said of him in later years: "I never look upon him as an unfortunate man of genius. He knew every great man of his day, and had enough." And Arthur Symons says: "He lived in poverty because he did not need riches, but he died without leaving a debt."

"Go love, without the help of any Thing on Earth," had said his Guardian Angel. And in the undoubted neglect that was his lot during the greater part of his life, and in his manner of meeting it, there are intimations that this quaint jotting of his expressed the inmost purpose of that incarnation — something that every esotericist will recognise as a feat to be accomplished if he would attain the power to help his fellows. "Give light to all, but take from none," is the beautiful passage in *The Voice of the Silence* that expresses much the same ideal.

At last, towards the end, came those few years of greater outward tranquility and comfort, made possible through the noble friendship of John Linnell, at that time a rising young artist. Then it was that a few disciples, young men of character and aspiration, "fresh-hearted youths," sought Blake out, and listened with a sort of reverence to his

discourse — their whole subsequent lives influenced for good by that brief association.

There is the impression, too, that Blake had intuitive knowledge of certain truths and rules of living that will be curiously familiar to some of our readers who have worked under a Theosophical Teacher.

"He whose face gives no light, shall never become a star," is one of his aphorisms from "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell." He must have been unique among his contemporaries in believing the Sun to be the dwelling of a god. (See "The Little Black Boy" in his *Songs of Innocence*.) He told a friend that he conversed with the Spiritual Sun on Primrose Hill. In talking with Crabb Robinson (that curiosity-seeker in the realms of humankind) Blake remarked that it was not Jehovah, but the Elohim who created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, and went on to expound the doctrine of the Gnostics with great consistency. When Crabb Robinson asked him:

Now what affinity or resemblance do you suppose was there between the *Genius* which inspired Socrates, and your *Spirits*? [i.e., the inner voices which Blake maintained guided his life] he paused and replied: "I was Socrates" — and then as if he had gone too far in that — "or a sort of brother. I must have had conversations with him. . ." — Crabb Robinson's *Reminiscences*.

Blake's criticism of Swedenborg is interesting: he thought him a great Seer indeed, and that he had done, and would do, much good, but remarked that "he did wrong in endeavoring to explain to the *reason* what it could not comprehend." Jacob Boehme "he placed among the divinely inspired men." A familiar teaching in everyday occultism will be recognised in his remark that he could not "previously describe in words" what he meant to design, for fear that he should "evaporate the spirit" of his invention.

From all this it may be seen that Blake lived in an entirely different world from that of most of his contemporaries. These thoughts were habitual with him, and he expressed them in the most casual manner.

No wonder then that most of those who heard him went away tapping their foreheads. Yet it has been well attested that in all the transactions of ordinary life Blake showed an adequate, indeed, a rare, sense of responsibility, and was particular to discharge all obligations promptly and completely — which is more than can be said of some of those with whom he had business dealings.

He continued to grow in power and faculty to the end. In his last illness, (1827) propped up in bed, he was working on his designs to Dante's "Divina Commedia" almost to the last day.

A word about the strange Prophetic Books and poems. As in the case of the drawings, these grand poems have to be considered in the mood of interpretation, as generating in their thunderous lines a sense of the immensity of things, of the play of cosmic forces, titanic and dread and impersonal — the handiwork of the Divine. Those who look for a coherent and logical sense in these writings are non-plussed; Swinburne saw and pointed out their real character, and called "The Four Zoas" "a storehouse of ideas." "The Four Zoas," which was never published, even in the way that any of Blake's poems were published, namely, by his own handiwork, exists in 70 sheets of manuscript. It embodies Blake's philosophy of the emanational progress of the stream of entities in a Universe, from the bosom of the Supreme, down into "individuality," as he expressed it, and back again into Unity, or union with the Divine.

This Edition of the "Life" is illustrated by reproductions of the set of wood-cuts (the only ones he ever did) that Blake made for Thornton's "Vergil" — seventeen luminous pastorals, enchanting with their "mystic and dreamy glimmer" of sunset light and moonrise - — so true to the mood of the archaic inspired by the poems.

Mr. Ruthven Todd could not have been more thorough in his scholarly job of research. Painstaking and thorough to the last, he has provided us with copious Notes, a good Index, and a Bibliographical list of every one of Blake's own works, when and how produced; of all works illustrated by Blake, or with illustrations of his engraving, or his own

designs engraved by others, and so on, including the various editions; and lastly, a list of Books about Blake, numbering seventy-odd, by all the great Blake scholars.

William Blake's other-worldly genius has hitherto been the study of the few; Mr. Todd has here enabled the many to become familiar with his extraordinary life-story and achievement — which they will do to their very great advantage.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Life of William Blake*. By Alexander Gilchrist, Edited by Ruthven Todd. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1942. Price 3s. 420 pp. No. 971 of Everyman's Library. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

CHELAS AND LAY CHELAS (1) — H. P. Blavatsky

As the word *Chela* has, among others, been introduced by Theosophy into the nomenclature of Western metaphysics, and the circulation of our magazine is constantly widening, it will be as well if some more definite explanation than heretofore is given with respect to the meaning of this term and the rules of Chelaship, for the benefit of our European if not Eastern members. A "Chela" then, is one who has offered himself or herself as a pupil to learn practically the "hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man." The spiritual teacher to whom he proposes his candidature is called in India a *Guru*; and the real Guru is always an Adept in the Occult Science. A man of profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter; and one who has brought his carnal nature under subjection of the WILL; who has developed in himself both the power (*Siddhi*) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being: — this is the real Guru.

To offer oneself as a candidate for Chelaship is easy enough, to develop into an Adept the most difficult task any man could possibly undertake. There are scores of "natural-born" poets, mathematicians, mechanics, statesmen, etc., but a natural-born Adept is something practically impossible. For, though we do hear at very rare intervals of one who has an extraordinary innate capacity for the acquisition of occult knowledge and power, yet even he has to pass the self-same tests and probations, and go through the same self-training as any less endowed fellow aspirant. In this matter it is most true that there is no royal road by which favorites may travel.

For centuries the selection of Chelas — outside the hereditary group within the *gon-pa* (temple) — has been made by the Himalayan Mahatmas themselves from among the class — in Tibet, a considerable one as to number — of natural mystics. The only exceptions have been

in the cases of Western men like Fludd, Thomas Vaughan, Paracelsus, Pico di Mirandola, Count St. Germain, etc., whose temperamental affinity to this celestial science more or less forced the distant Adepts to come into personal relations with them, and enabled them to get such small (or large) proportion of the whole truth as was possible under their social surroundings. From Book IV of Kiu-te, Chapter on "the Laws of Upasans," we learn that the qualifications expected in a Chela were:

1. Perfect physical health;
2. Absolute mental and physical purity;
3. Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings;
4. Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the law of Karma, independent of any power in nature that could interfere: a law whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies;
5. A courage undaunted in every emergency, even by peril to life;
6. An intuitional perception of one's being the vehicle of the manifested Avalokitesvara or Divine Atman (Spirit);
7. Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world, in its relation with, and to, the invisible regions.

Such, at the least, must have been the recommendations of one aspiring to perfect Chelaship. With the sole exception of the 1st, which in rare and exceptional cases might have been modified, each one of these points has been invariably insisted upon, and all must have been more or less developed in the inner nature by the Chela's UNHELPED EXERTIONS, before he could be actually "put to the test."

When the self-evolving ascetic — whether in, or outside the active world — had placed himself, according to his natural capacity, above, hence made himself master of, his (1) *Sarira* — body; (2) *Indriya* — senses; (3) *Dosha* — faults; (4) *Dukkha* — pain; and is ready to become one with his *Manas* — mind; *Buddhi* — intellection, or spiritual

intelligence; and *Atma* — highest soul, *i. e.*, spirit. When he is ready for this, and, further, to recognise in *Atma* the highest ruler in the world of perceptions, and in the will, the highest executive energy (power), then may he, under the time-honored rules, be taken in hand by one of the Initiates. He may then be shown the mysterious path at whose thither end the Chela is taught the unerring discernment of *Phala*, or the fruits of causes produced, and given the means of reaching *Apavarga* — emancipation, from the misery of repeated births (in whose determination the ignorant has no hand), and thus of avoiding *Pretya-bhava* — transmigration.

But since the advent of the Theosophical Society, one of whose arduous tasks it was to reawaken in the Aryan mind the dormant memory of the existence of this science and of those transcendent human capabilities, the rules of Chela-selection have become slightly relaxed in one respect. Many members of the Society becoming convinced by practical proof upon the above points, and rightly enough thinking that if other men had hitherto reached the goal, they too if inherently fitted, might reach it by following the same path, pressed to be taken as candidates. And as it would be an interference with Karma to deny them the chance of at least beginning — since they were so importunate, they were given it.

The results have been far from encouraging so far, and it is to show these unfortunates the cause of their failure as much as to warn others against rushing heedlessly upon a similar fate, that the writing of the present article has been ordered.

The candidates in question, though plainly warned against it in advance, began wrong by selfishly looking to the future and losing sight of the past. They forgot that they had done nothing to deserve the rare honor of selection, nothing which warranted their expecting such a privilege; that they could boast of none of the above enumerated merits. As men of the selfish, sensual world, whether married or single, merchants, civilian or military employees, or members of the learned professions, they had been to a school most calculated to assimilate

them to the animal nature, least so to develop their spiritual potentialities. Yet each and all had vanity enough to suppose that their case would be made an exception to the law of countless centuries" establishment as though, indeed, in their person had been born to the world a new *Avatar*! All expected to have hidden things taught, extraordinary powers given them because — well, because they had joined the Theosophical Society. Some had sincerely resolved to amend their lives, and give up their evil courses: we must do them that justice, at all events.

All were refused at first, Colonel Olcott, the President, himself, to begin with: and as to the latter gentleman there is now no harm in saying that he was not formally accepted as a Chela until he had proved by more than a year's devoted labors and by a determination which brooked no denial, that he might safely be tested. Then from all sides came complaints — from Hindus, who ought to have known better, as well as from Europeans who, of course, were not in a condition to know anything at all about the rules. The cry was that unless at least a few Theosophists were given the chance to try, the Society could not endure. Every other noble and unselfish feature of our program was ignored — a man's duty to his neighbor, to his country, his duty to help, enlighten, encourage and elevate those weaker and less favored than he; all were trampled out of sight in the insane rush for adeptship. The call for phenomena, phenomena, phenomena, resounded in every quarter, and the Founders were impeded in their real work and teased importunately to intercede with the Mahatmas, against whom the real grievance lay, though their poor agents had to take all the buffets.

At last, the word came from the higher authorities that a few of the most urgent candidates should be taken at their word. The result of the experiment would perhaps show better than any amount of preaching what Chelaship meant, and what are the consequences of selfishness and temerity. Each candidate was warned that he must wait for years in any event, before his fitness could be proven, and that he must pass through a series of tests that would bring out all there was in him, whether bad or good. They were nearly all married men and hence

were designated "Lay Chelas" — a term new in English, but having long had its equivalent in Asiatic tongues.

A Lay Chela is but a man of the world who affirms his desire to become wise in spiritual things. Virtually, every member of the Theosophical Society who subscribes to the second of our three "Declared Objects" is such; for though not of the number of true Chelas, he has yet the possibility of becoming one, for he has stepped across the boundary-line which separated him from the Mahatmas, and has brought himself, as it were, under their notice. In joining the Society and binding himself to help along its work, he has pledged himself to act in some degree in concert with those Mahatmas, at whose behest the Society was organized, and under whose conditional protection it remains. The joining is then, the introduction; all the rest depends entirely upon the member himself, and he need never expect the most distant approach to the "favor" of one of our Mahatmas, or any other Mahatmas in the world — should the latter consent to become known — that has not been fully earned by personal merit.

The Mahatmas are the servants, not the arbiters of the Law of Karma.
LAY-CHELASHIP CONFERS NO PRIVILEGE UPON ANY ONE EXCEPT THAT OF WORKING FOR MERIT UNDER THE OBSERVATION OF A MASTER. And whether that Master be or be not seen by the Chela makes no difference whatever as to the result: his good thought, words and deeds will bear their fruits, his evil ones, theirs. To boast of Lay Chelaship or make a parade of it, is the surest way to reduce the relationship with the Guru to a mere empty name, for it would be *prima facie* evidence of vanity and unfitness for farther progress. And for years we have been teaching everywhere the maxim "First deserve, then desire" intimacy with the Mahatmas.

Now there is a terrible law operative in nature, one which cannot be altered, and whose operation clears up the apparent mystery of the selection of certain "Chelas" who have turned out sorry specimens of morality, these few years past. Does the reader recall the old proverb, "Let sleeping dogs lie"? There is a world of occult meaning in it. No man or woman knows his or her moral strength until it is *tried*. Thousands

go through life very respectably, because they were never put to the pinch. This is a truism doubtless, but it is most pertinent to the present case. One who undertakes to try for Chelaship by that very act rouses and lashes to desperation every sleeping passion of his animal nature. For this is the commencement of a struggle for the mastery in which quarter is neither to be given nor taken. It is, once for all, "To be, or Not to be"; to conquer, means ADEPTSHIP; to fail, an ignoble Martyrdom; for to fall victim to lust, pride, avarice, vanity, selfishness, cowardice, or any other of the lower propensities, is indeed ignoble, if measured by the standard of true manhood.

The Chela is not only called to face all the latent evil propensities of his nature, but, in addition, the whole volume of maleficent power accumulated by the community and nation to which he belongs. For he is an integral part of those aggregates, and what affects either the individual man, or the group (town or nation) reacts upon the other. And in this instance his struggle for goodness jars upon the whole body of badness in his environment, and draws its fury upon him. If he is content to go along with his neighbors and be almost as they are — perhaps a little better or somewhat worse than the average — no one may give him a thought. But let it be known that he has been able to detect the hollow mockery of social life, its hypocrisy, selfishness, sensuality, cupidity and other bad features, and has determined to lift himself up to a higher level, at once he is hated, and every bad, or bigoted, or malicious nature sends at him a current of opposing will power.

If he is innately strong he shakes it off, as the powerful swimmer dashes through the current that would bear a weaker one away. But in this moral battle, if the Chela has one single hidden blemish — do what he may, it *shall* and *will* be brought to light. The varnish of conventionalities which "civilization" overlays us all with must come off to the last coat, and the Inner Self, naked and without the slightest veil to conceal its reality, is exposed. The habits of society which hold men to a certain degree under moral restraint, and compel them to pay tribute to virtue by seeming to be good whether they are so or not,

these habits are apt to be all forgotten, these restraints to be all broken through under the strain of chelaship. He is now in an atmosphere of illusions — *Maya*. Vice puts on its most alluring face, and the tempting passions try to lure the inexperienced aspirant to the depths of psychic debasement.

This is not a case like that depicted by a great artist, where Satan is seen playing a game of chess with a man upon the stake of his soul, while the latter's good angel stands beside him to counsel and assist. For the strife is in this instance between the Chela's Will and his carnal nature, and Karma forbids that any angel or Guru should interfere until the result is known. With the vividness of poetic fancy Bulwer Lytton has idealised it for us in his *Zanoni*, a work which will ever be prized by the occultist; while in his *Strange Story* he has with equal power shown the black side of occult research and its deadly perils.

Chelaship was defined, the other day, by a Mahatma as a "psychic resolvent, which eats away all dross and leaves only the pure gold behind." If the candidate has the latent lust for money, or political chicanery, or materialistic scepticism, or vain display, or false speaking, or cruelty, or sensual gratification of any kind, the germ is almost sure to sprout; and so, on the other hand, as regards the noble qualities of human nature. The real man comes out. Is it not the height of folly, then, for any one to leave the smooth path of common-place life to scale the crags of chelaship without some reasonable feeling of certainty that he has the right stuff in him? Well says the Bible: "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall" — a text that would-be Chelas should consider well before they rush headlong into the fray!

It would have been well for some of our Lay-Chelas if they had thought twice before defying the tests. *We call to mind several sad failures within a twelvemonth.* . . . All these were apparently sincere searchers after truth, and passed in the world for respectable persons. Externally, they were fairly eligible as candidates for Chelaship, as appearances go; but "within all was rottenness and dead men's bones." The world's varnish was so thick as to hide the absence of the true gold

underneath; and the "resolvent" doing its work, the candidate proved in each instance but a gilded figure of moral dross, from circumference to core.

In what precedes we have, of course, dealt but with the failures among Lay-Chelas; there have been partial successes too, and these are passing gradually through the first stages of their probation. Some are making themselves useful to the Society and to the world in general by good example and precept. If they persist, well for them, well for us all: the odds are fearfully against them, but still "there is no Impossibility to him who *WILLS*." The difficulties in Chelaship will never be less until human nature changes and a new sort is evolved. St. Paul (*Rom. vii, 18, 19*) might have had a Chela in mind when he said "to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." And in the wise Kirat-arjuniya of Bharavi it is written:

The enemies which rise within the body,
Hard to be overcome — the evil passions —
Should manfully be fought; he *who conquers these*
Is equal to the conqueror of worlds. — xi, 32

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, IV, Supplement, July, 1883. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: XII

This is the twelfth of a series of radio talks on Theosophical subjects, given over station XQHB, Shanghai, China, during 1941 by Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist and Miss Inga Sjostedt. In this article Miss Sjostedt explains the theosophical doctrine of Hierarchies: of how the different units in Nature are composed of smaller units and form the parts of larger units in infinite extension through universal being.

Good evening, everybody:

One of the most important and interesting of the Theosophical teachings is that of hierarchies. If we look up the word "hierarchy" in a dictionary, it gives us this, among many explanations: "organization in grades or orders." We wrongly associate the word only with ecclesiastical government in ascending grades of superiority, with the highest representative of a church as the Hierarch or supreme head. This is a limited conception. Man-made laws and organizations are, at best, an imperfect copy of nature, and the occult student knows that the universe itself is built up of hierarchies in an endless succession, reaching from the lowest and most minute to the highest and most spiritual.

The speaker last Sunday gave us a clear picture of one type of hierarchy: Man himself. A man is made up of different centers of consciousness, for instance the physical, the instinctual, the emotional, the mental, and the spiritual or devotional. All these together constitute a hierarchy, a collection of inferior and superior forces and impulses. The Hierarch is the inner god, the divine entity which emanates all the lower portions of man's psychological and physical nature.

On the earth we see the different kingdoms built up in hierarchies. There is the world of the elements, the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, and a vast

aggregate of super-human, spiritual and divine entities above us. The first thought that strikes us is that all these different forms of life are dependent on one another, and that no entity, however insignificant, can live by itself and for itself alone. Human beings depend on each other in every way, and the least progressed look up to and learn from the more advanced and civilized. In a cultured nation the average man looks up to and is ruled by the great men, the geniuses, the leaders in religion, government and science.

Among the Oriental peoples special reverence has always been shown for old people, because they had seen life and could instruct the young; and also for teachers. They were considered the heads of their respective hierarchies, the school or the home. In the world today, as in the days when Man first became a self-conscious, responsible being, we have a still more inspiring summit of the human hierarchy — the White Lodge or the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion. In the quiet places of the world, in the deserts and secluded mountains, live these wonderful men who have overcome the pull of the lower human nature and who live in the pure regions of their spiritual selves — just as most of us live in our lower mental and instinctual natures. From time to time a Messenger is sent out into the world from this White Brotherhood of Adepts and Initiates, and these Messengers remain great and unforgettable figures in the pages of history — as did Jesus, Gautama the Buddha. Except for these few grand Messengers, the Masters live in seclusion, away from the prying eyes of mediocre men, and only those who live for Truth and for mankind contact them, even today, and become their disciples. This White Lodge is the summit of our human hierarchy on earth, but it is only the beginning of a still greater hierarchy which reaches from the earth and its concerns to the spiritual regions of divine beings, or gods. These spiritual beings who in past ages had been men and who have now advanced beyond our form of life counsel and inspire the Buddhas and Christs among men. They are the "powers," "thrones," and "principalities" of the Jewish scriptures, the "seraphim" and "cherubim," and so on. The Hindus call these semi-divine entities "devas"; the ancient Greeks and Romans

called them gods. Throughout every religion we thus see an endless ladder of life, without beginning or end.

On a bigger scale we have the planetary hierarchies of the universe. Our planet, earth, is a member of the solar family, together with the other planets that form part of our particular solar system, and this solar system constitutes one hierarchy. Only a thorough materialist would deny the possibility of life on the other planets. The esoteric teaching is that every other planet in space contains its particular form of life, and that there are various humanities on different planets, but each living in bodies and using sense-organs appropriate to the conditions on those planets. Scientists have argued that our earth-humanity could not possibly live on the other planets because conditions of climate and atmosphere are quite different there; but this is a very short-sighted theory. Even on our earth there are different forms of life. For instance there are the inhabitants of the sea. We, human beings, could not live in water, nor could they live above water, but each lives in the surroundings and under the conditions which are suitable. Therefore, there are undoubtedly beings living on Saturn and Mars and the other planets which revolve about our sun, but they would not be able to live on our planet, nor we on theirs. The notion that God created the sun and moon and all the stars and planets in space just to give us something pretty to look at in the darkness of night is, incredibly enough, still held by many educated people, but such narrow-minded conceit is fortunately disappearing, and even Science is nowadays speculating about the possibilities of life on other planets.

We have, then, the solar or planetary hierarchy of our solar system, the Hierarchy or summit being the central sun. However, there are innumerable suns scattered throughout space, and therefore, there are many such hierarchies. These together form the greater hierarchy of the Galaxy, or all that is encompassed by the Milky Way, and, of course, there are countless such galaxies in the Cosmos, galaxies that we are not even aware of because they are so immense and so distant. The mind reels at the thought of anything even greater than a galaxy, but no doubt there is a super-galaxy which embraces our own together

with many others.

It is always easier to picture the immense if we compare it with the minute. Take our own body. That is also a hierarchy, for it is builded of infinitesimal entities, cells and atoms, and the atoms are made up of protons and electrons — just like miniature solar systems, for the electrons of an atom rotate around the central proton, or sun, just as our planets do around the sun. If we can imagine a tiny creature living on an electron and compare it to a man living on the earth, we realize at once how vast our physical body must seem to such a creature. A cell, which is composed of atoms, is probably a galaxy in miniature to such an entity, and we can imagine how many cells there are in a human body! The human personality is, in this case, the Hierarchy of the bodily cosmos, the super-god, and just as we are unaware of the separate functions of all our bodily atoms, so the super-divinity which rules our galactic universe cannot be aware of the separate personal needs of men. Yet the Divine energy permeates the universe, unconsciously filling it with its essence, exactly as the human personality unconsciously permeates the entire physical body during the life of a man. We can always, in some degree, understand the great by analogy, for the small is a copy of the great. A famous Hermetic saying is: "As above, so below; as below, so above" — meaning that the great is always reflected in the small. Perhaps this will make clear the Theosophical belief in an *impersonal* Divinity and the rejection of a personal god. When God is made in man's image, he is no longer God, because he is limited. If he is a Person, he cannot be Infinite, eternal, and truly Divine. The gods of the ancients, even the highest of them, were never meant to portray the ultimate, eternal Spirit from which sprang life in all its manifold forms. The gods of mythology are merely the various forces and intelligences of Nature, the Builders of the physical universe, the spiritual entities controlling the movement of the suns and planets; they are beings that are higher, more evolved than Man.

Such is the picture presented by the Theosophical teaching of hierarchies. From atom to man; from man to the planets; from the

planets to the pervading Spirit which men call God, and which is impersonal, formless, and incomprehensible, but which, nevertheless, is the center of all living things. All the forms of life are interblended, linked to each other, and all the energies and habits of the different hierarchies make up the so-called laws of nature. By understanding this teaching it becomes evident that there can be no limits to our advancement, for we climb from one hierarchy to the one above it, and when we reach the summit of that one, find that it is but the beginning of a still higher one. There never was and never will be any beginning or end to advancement and evolution, because the main attribute of Life is constant, never-ending motion.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RISE AND FALL OF NATIONS — *Kenneth Morris*

The title of this lecture is taken from a saying of perhaps the very greatest of Chinese Emperors, T'ang Taitson, who was not only a great ruler and a very great gentleman, but also a very wise thinker. He put his father on the throne in 618, and succeeded in 627; and the saying of his I quote from is this: "Just as by looking in a mirror I can see to adjust my crown, so by looking into history I can see to foretell the Rise and Fall of Nations." He didn't say crown really, because they didn't wear crowns; what he said was imperial headdress, but crown sounds better so I put it that way.

Now he was right. By looking into history you can see to foretell the rise and fall of nations. But you have to look intelligently, and to look into History and not the history of one or two nations, or even the history of one continent. I know a professor of history at one of the English Colleges who, I declare to you, I believe could tell you pretty much what was happening in any village in England on, say, January 14th, 1154, or any other date you may like to mention; and yet he knows nothing about History at all. History has been going on, what we can know of it, for about five thousand years, more than five thousand in some parts. English history, strictly speaking, has been going on since — 1066 if you like. If you have a mole's-eye view of English history you learn nothing, but crowd your mind with a lot of useless stuff, you must, to know history and to learn what it can teach you — among other things to foretell the rise and fall of nations — you must have a bird's-eye view of the world during those five thousand years.

When I went to school in England I gained the impression from the history I learned there that England was the only country that mattered in the world, that English soldiers had never been and could never be defeated. Later I found that French boys acquired just the same view, but with France in the limelight instead of England, so did German boys, but with Germany as the superior race; so did Italians

with Italy; Americans with America, and so on. Even when they grow out of that foolish view, most people who think about history at all think that it concerns only the white peoples. They have a notion that civilization has been a steadily growing stream among the whites with Greece and Rome at the start, and then Europe of the Dark and Middle Ages, and Europe and America since. Asia, they think, has counted for nothing at all; has had a kind of stagnant unprogressive civilization which gave the world nothing. That's all pure ignorance. That kind of history teaching is what leads to ill-feeling between nations, envy, hatred and all uncharitableness — and war. There is no kind of truth in it. There is only one Superior Race, and it is Humanity; there is only one Chosen People — mankind.

Let us take Europe, and see how much of the five thousand years it has filled with its greatness. Greece for a couple of centuries was extraordinarily illumined. Rome for a century or so had great civilization, great writers, for a few centuries wielded great political power. Modern Europe began to leave barbarism in the eleventh or twelfth century, and seems to be sinking back to barbarism now. But when did modern Europe become greater than Asia? Up to about 1560 a European army could no more face a Turkish army with hope of success than a black African army could face an English, French, or German army now; with less success, in fact, because the Zulus did out-general and defeat white (English) troops at Isandlana. We cite Hannibal's, Charlemagne's, and Napoleon's crossing the Alps as great feats of military genius, but now I'll tell you of an Asiatic feat.

In 1792 the Ghoorkas invaded Tibet. Everyone knows that the Ghoorkas are tremendous fighters, a foe not to be despised by anyone. Twenty years later they fought the English with considerable success, Sir David Auchterlony fought two difficult campaigns against them. Everyone knows likewise that the Chinese now, and at any time in the last century, have been very easily defeated — a foe not to be feared by anyone. And everyone knows that compared to the Alps the Himalayas are Mountains and the Alps molehills. Well, the Ghoorkas invaded Tibet, and the Emperor Chienlung sent an army to meet them. And

there in the high Himalayas among the crests of Everest and Kunchinjinga, the Chinese met those mountain fighters and whipped them; met them again and whipped them again, whipped them down to India, and there took their submission. "You are subjects now of the Son of Heaven at Peking." "Yes," said the Ghoorkas, "we are subjects of the Son of Heaven at Peking and proud to be his subjects." "And you shall pay tribute yearly to the Son of Heaven at Peking." "Yes," said the Ghoorkas, "we shall proudly pay tribute to so mighty a potentate, who could whip fighting mountaineers like ourselves down out of our own mountains." And they paid that tribute year after year long after China had become too weak to make anyone pay tribute; they stopped paying tribute only in 1910, when the revolution did away with the Chinese Empire and put a republic — what Ku Hung-ming, a Chinese author, recently dead, called a "Rob-public" in its place. Well, in time Sir David Auchterlony had a conversation with the Ghoorkas. "Now we have defeated you," said he, "you are subjects of the King of England." "Nothing doing," said the Ghoorkas, "we have the honor to be subjects of the Son of Heaven at Peking. Come on, we'll fight again if you don't believe it." But Sir David didn't want to fight again. "But you must pay tribute to the King of England." "Tribute we pay to our Lord the Son of Heaven at Peking. If you want to change that, come on, we'll fight some more." "Oh well," said Sir David, "we'll waive that. But you must fight in the King of England's armies." "Oh sure," said the Ghoorkas, "fighting is our business, and it isn't likely that the Son of Heaven would want us to fight for him. He has better fighters than we, so we'll be only too glad to fight for the King of England." And that's how they arranged it: remaining Chinese subjects, proud of the fact, and paying the tribute till the Chinese Empire fell.

That is to say, the military superiority of Europeans over Asiatics is only about 130 years old; and then I'm leaving out of account the Russo-Japanese War of 1904.

Now look at Chinese History. About 600 b. c. China began producing great men, writers, thinkers, philosophers; and went on doing so till about 1300: eighteen or nineteen centuries of progressiveness, of

fertility, in first rate genius, as against our white Europe's three centuries, say, of Greece and Rome, and say seven of Christendom.

Go back to the world in 1200, and what do you find? Christendom in appalling barbarism, in a condition like Afghanistan or Abyssinia today. Asiatic (Arabic) civilization, on the other hand, very brilliant, very scientific, stretching from the borders of India and Turkestan to Spain. Chinese civilization, very old but very beautiful — not like ours which is very ugly (if you don't believe me go up to the Rhondda) — still highly and wonderfully productive. So things had been for centuries; ever since, in Europe, the fall of Rome, say in 400; ever since, among the Mohammedans, about 650; ever since, in China about 800 b. c. and we don't know how much earlier. We know, in these modern times, that Africa does not produce first class genius and that Europe does. People knew in those times that Asia did produce first class genius and that Europe did not.

Then in the thirteenth century a portentous happening occurred. Genghis Khan arose among the Mongols, a tremendous military genius among a nomad barbarous people, and learned in Chinese military science. He and his successors fell upon Asiatic civilization and broke it. He conquered half of China, his grandson Kublai conquered the rest. Various of his generals smashed Persia and depopulated it; destroyed million-peopled city after city and killed all their inhabitants, and where they marched is now a desert. They conquered Russia, took a look at Europe and decided it wasn't worth their conquering, or nothing could have prevented them reigning in Germany, France, and England. They broke Asiatic civilization, Kublai completing the Conquest of China in 1268. Wonderful was the Chinese resistance. Emperor after emperor, members of the Imperial family, had fallen; Chinese resistance at last was confined to a fleet on the Yangtse, surrounded by Mongol fleets; the last of the Imperial family was a baby in arms on that fleet. Ship after Chinese ship was taken, fighting to the last man. On the last ship stood the Prime Minister with the baby in his arms, and when the last Chinese was killed fighting, the Prime Minister with the baby Son of Heaven leaped overboard. China never recovered.

No more first-rate genius was born.

Nor any more in Persia. Moslem Spain went down before the Christians, much as if England were now conquered by an Abyssinian army. Asia went to sleep, became utterly unproductive of genius. No more great books were written, no more great pictures painted. That brings us to 1268. And in 1274 the first fruit of European genius, first-rate genius, was born in Italy: Dante Alighieri. And ever since, till our own time, Europe has been productive, Asia sterile. Till our own time? Well, till Japan appeared as the conqueror of Russia, perhaps. For since the War [1914-1918] Europe has seemed to many to be going down, to be becoming less fertile of genius; and in Asia you have had some striking figures.

Now watch how European civilization was born. In 1100 or 1200 Europe was barbarous; no genius, no amenities of life; just like Afghanistan or Abyssinia. But there had been civilization in Europe before. Roman civilization, covering England, France, Spain Italy. That civilization grew old and died. Barbarians from the north — Saxons in England, Franks in France, Goths and Suevi in Spain, Lombards in Italy — poured down and smashed it. The barbarians mixed with the peoples they conquered. And eight hundred years passed.

By that time a very high civilization had arisen next door to Europe: the Mohammedan. Mohammed, an illiterate Arab, had inspired his people with the idea that they had a mission. Of course you know the religious part of it: that there was One God; that the Christians in making Jesus god were idolators; and so forth. That part of it is unimportant, but he thundered two ideas that were important. One was that expressed in the text, "There shall be no compulsion in religion." They were to be tolerant, especially of Jews and Christians; were never to force people to become Moslems; he said a great deal on this point. The other was a perfectly extraordinary one for an ignorant Arab to have: he expressed it in the text, "The ink of the doctors, professors, and scientists is more precious in God's sight than the blood of the martyrs. Blessed is he that goeth on the road of learning; angels

sweetly hover over him until his return home." Among the results of these teachings was that only one Mohammedan sovereign persecuted the Christians, and that was al-Hakim Biamrillah, Caliph of Egypt at the end of the tenth century. His persecutions however brought about the Crusades, and — al-Azhar University in Cairo. Now supposing you were a Welshman in the year 1100, and got the desire to be learned, to get a higher education than you get in Christendom — by the way, it is probable that at that time you could get a better education right here in Wales than you could elsewhere in Christendom, except maybe Ireland. Well, you had heard of the great learning of the Paynims; perhaps you had been on a Crusade and noticed that the people you fought against were a deal more civilized than your own side. Anyhow you made your way, begged your way, to Egypt. And knocked at the door of al-Azhar. "Who comes?" "A Pilgrim on the Road of Learning." And the door was opened to you. None asked your religion; you came on the Road of Learning, and the angels were sweetly hovering above your head. You came without money; never mind, the Egyptian Government would attend to that. It would lodge you, feed you, clothe you and educate you; I am not a bit sure it wouldn't provide you with pocketmoney as well! Now I ask you: Have we any institution of learning, any college or University, in Christendom, quite as civilized as that? They were Mohammedans, and you were a Christian; it made no difference, they cared for you while you were there. You mixed there with students from all countries, of all religions. Egypt was taking care of them all on the same terms: fed them all, clothed them all, housed them all, educated them all; and probably introduced them all to the use of soap!

As was Moslem Egypt, so was North Africa, so was Moslem Spain. Abderrahman II, Caliph of Cordova, received more in tribute than all the Christian kings of Europe combined.

So you see, barbarous Europe had next door to it highly civilized Islammiyeh, the Mohammedan world, as we say Christendom, the Christian world. And just as Japan in 1871 began learning western civilization from America and Europe, just as I have taught Japanese

students in an American university, so Europe began sending pupils to al-Azhar and other Moslem seats of learning; began presently to start universities in imitation of the Moslem ones. The professors gave their lectures as a matter of course in Arab costume. You know the gown the college professors wear? Mohammed when he went into the mihrab or pulpit of his mosque at Medina used to put a loose shawl over his shoulders, to be impressive, I suppose. His successor followed his example. When the universities started in Islammiyeh, the professors regarding themselves as preachers, regarding all learning as sacred, wore it too. Japanese professors at Tokyo and other universities always lecture in European costume. Our professors lecture in Mohammed's shawl!

Now in Europe the old remains of Latin learning, the desiccated remnant of Roman culture, remained, but utterly sterile, in the monasteries. This new learning came in from the Mohammedans and united itself therewith. Result, a new impulse to culture in Christendom. Then, when the Mongols had broken Asia, Europe started on the path of progress, the road of learning. Perhaps the angels are sweetly hovering over her head still!

Now you know that for any human being or animal to be born, to start its life on earth, two elements have to unite: an element from the father called the sperm, and an element from the mother called the ovum. Now see how that took place in Western Europe or Christian civilization: in two ways, materially and culturally. Materially, the ovum, the race-ovum, was supplied by the peoples of the Roman Empire; the race-sperm by the barbarians who poured down and conquered them. Culturally, the race-culture-ovum was supplied by memories of Roman literature; the race-culture-sperm by the Mohammedan learning that poured into Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Now look at England in the second century a. d. It was highly civilized; plenty of prosperous towns, elegant villas dotted about the countryside; schools where you could get a good education. You could travel from

York to Baghdad in safety (there wasn't any Baghdad really, but to Ctesiphon, say, not far off) or to the cataracts of the Nile, or Constantinople — Byzantium, that is; and never need to change your money. Your house had a good sewerage system, water-flushed and so on; you bathed daily; you were a civilized man. The children in Baghdad, Constantinople, or the Nile Cataracts were taught all about Britain in their schools; as your children were taught all about those other places. You spoke a language, Latin, that would carry you all over that huge stretch of territory.

A few centuries pass. Gone are the houses with water-flushed sewerage; gone everything else. The children at Constantinople, the most civilized place now in Europe, are taught that Britain is a fabulous island in the west to which the souls of the dead are ferried nightly by invisible ferrymen.

So you see, civilizations fall as well as rise; they fall and disappear, and then after centuries begin to grow up again. I suppose it was not until Victoria's reign that England reached the point, in domestic sanitation, that it had reached under the Romans.

Nations, civilizations, are born as men are born: from the union of a race-sperm and a race-ovum, a race-culture-sperm and a race-culture-ovum. And they live out their span of life as we do, and then die.

That accounts for the fact that at any period in history there are two kinds of peoples on earth: one that is awake, fertile in genius, progressive; and one that is asleep, sterile of genius, unprogressive. The awake and fertile and progressive peoples always think they are racially superior to the others. They hold for the time being the leadership or hegemony as it is called of the world; but in every century or two that hegemony changes. No one holds it long. In the European cycle, from 1200 till now, it is interesting to note how one after another of the European nations has held the hegemony; how one after another has been the nation most fertile in genius. Not always, but very often, the one richest in genius has been the one with most material and military power. But this is certain: the countries and

peoples that are awake and hold the hegemony now will in their time go down into sleep, rest, or death; and the peoples that are asleep or dead or resting now will in their time rise and hold the hegemony. There is but one Superior Race, Humanity: but one Chosen People, the People of the earth.

What happens to a people when it is dying? It loses its coherence, its power to meet new conditions — what we call progressiveness, its power to produce first rate genius. If there is an awake people nearby, it may be conquered and held together, somnolent but in outward good order, by that awake people; otherwise it falls from civilization to barbarism. Wales is an example of the first kind of fate; Afghanistan of the second. Oh yes, Afghanistan, or again Morocco, were in their time highly civilized and progressive, and doubtless will be again. At a certain stage in its life-growth, a nation becomes an empire. It conquers and swallows up the nations around it that have lived out their life-period and are ready to die. From these dying peoples something we may call the soul has departed their nationals, the atoms of which the body of a nation is composed, become atoms now in the body of the empire. Centuries of rest and unprogressiveness pass; the shadow of the empire is over them and keeps them in order; they become patriotic subjects of the empire.

Then the empire itself has run its course and is ready to die, and meanwhile the subject race is getting ready to re-awake or be reborn. Thus we see the Turkish empire beginning to grow about 1300. The Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars, etc., are conquered and become subjects of the Sultan. While Turkey was strong, these people became largely patriotic subjects of the Sultan who governed them rather well and protected their religion. Wherever the Turkish armies came, the Christian peasants flocked to submit to them, knowing that Turkish rule was a great deal better than the rule of their own kings. Then Turkey declined, and had no longer the strength to protect its Serbian, Greek, and Bulgar subjects. And they began to remember that they had once been free and strong peoples; nationalism arose in them, and they fought and regained their independence. In the proper time they will

become progressive and fertile in genius. You come to your prime a long time after you are born, as a rule.

Now let us consider the very country in which we find ourselves: Wales. When I was a boy at school in England, I was taught that the one fortunate thing that ever happened to Wales happened in 1282 when Edward I conquered it. But when I came to study history in order to fill my duties as Professor of History at Theosophical University at Point Loma, I found that there was much more to be said about it than that. I came to regard it as neither fortunate nor unfortunate, but simply something that occurred in the way of Nature, something that occurs to every people in its time; just as birth and death are things that occur to every human being. It was just the death of that race or civilization; and death, being an inevitable thing, is not an unfortunate thing by any means.

Wales had been living its life since the Romans went there in 410; then after a long life of 870 years it died in 1282, and its atoms, the Welsh people, became atoms in the body of England, or of France, for many of the Welsh went over to the French and went on fighting England in the French armies and navies. Owen Lawgoch, for example, won so many sea victories for France that the English finally sent a man to assassinate him. Something we may call the "soul" had gone; just as the sap goes down into the roots of the trees in autumn, and in winter the tree is "dead," unproductive, puts forth no burgeoning of greenness.

But have you ever thought that there are but three books which were written in this island before the conquest of Wales that are read for pleasure now? All three are in the Everyman edition, and they are all Welsh: *The Mabinogion*, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and Gerald the Welshman's *Itinerary through Wales*. Geoffrey of Monmouth's book he claims he translated in his youth from Latin to Welsh, and in his age from Welsh back to Latin; it became the source of a tremendous literature in many languages; all the stories of King Arthur originate in it. That is, all three books came from Wales; none at all from England or Scotland; or, with hesitation, I may say

from the rest of Europe. Again, have you ever read the standard History of the Vikings? If you have you will have read that there were only two peoples in Western Europe who were successful in their dealing with those pirates, and those two were the highly civilized and highly organized Spanish Arabs and — the Welsh. Both peoples, and they only, were too much for the Danes and the Norse Sea-Rovers who smashed every other country in Western Christendom. Fact. Just as that other about the three books is fact. And doesn't it suggest to you that there were greater material and military, and even cultural, energies in that old Welsh civilization that lasted from 410 to 1282, than in the sleeping countries of the then Europe?

Now look elsewhere again: Europe, western, had been civilized under Rome; and then it died and lay dormant for eight centuries or so, and then was born again. Persia under the Achaemenian dynasty, Cyrus, Darius and Co., had been a mighty empire; then came Alexander, and Persia died. Centuries of subjection ensued under the Macedonian and then the Parthian Kings of Turkish race; then in 220 a.d. Persia was reborn. Artakshatr, son of Papak, son of Sasan, rose and drove out the Parthians; and then under the Sassanian Kings Persia became rather more than equal to Rome — born again, a mighty empire and civilization. Then came death with the Arab conquest about 650, and quiescence, rest, then rebirth again to be the Persia of the Poets, and to die destroyed by the Mongols.

Look at Greece: 500 to 300 b.c., a beacon to the world, marvelously productive of genius; then dying, conquered by Rome; born again at Constantinople under the Greek emperors; dying when Constantinople fell before the Turks in 1453; born again as the modern state in Byron's time. Look where you will, you see life and death alternating. Every time a people is reborn, the new race is the old one mixed with the blood of its conquerors, ovum and sperm; and the inspiration that brings it to birth culturally comes of the union of the nation-culture-ovum, what learning or tradition of learning comes down from its last life period, with a new cultural inspiration from somewhere else — not by any means necessarily from its conquerors.

India was never a nation. Nationalism was utterly unknown in Asia till Japan took fire with it from Perry's American men-of-war. The world had never heard of India, in historical times, till the reign of Edward I in England. English nationalists conquer India and live there, and infect the country with Nationalism; but as it is born in India, it is Indian Nationalism. When what we may call the Soul of India, which had departed from this world long since, begins to near this world on its approach again, Nationalism in India, caught from the English nationalists, becomes Indian Nationalism.

I have nothing to say about the political side as concerns my own country, Wales; but I have, and am deeply interested, in the cultural side. The race-culture-ovum is here in plenty in Welsh literature — now what is to be the race-culture-sperm that will unite with it and produce a glorious new birth?

For Europe it was first Arab culture in the thirteenth century, and then Greek culture which flooded Europe in 1453 when the Turks took Constantinople and the Greek scholars came west from there. Because of the effect of Greek and Latin culture in the Renaissance time, and its ability to quicken and set on fire the minds of Europeans, it was thought for centuries that Greek and Latin were the only things worth teaching in schools. It was so in my school when I was there. But Greek and Latin have ceased long since to inspire.

Now will you get an effective cultural inspiration or race-culture-sperm from Europe? Because we are of the European Race, there is not sufficient difference. But — I was in Ireland when the great Irish literary Renaissance had its beginning. It produced from the nineties on the most brilliant literature in the English language; and I saw how it arose. It was born in the Dublin Theosophical Society. They were on fire with Irish nationalism, not particularly political, but cultural. George Russell, A. E., the central figure of it, painted huge pictures of the ancient Irish gods on the walls of his rooms. I don't know how many of them were gifted to see the Irish fairies. I myself, Welshman as I was, was caught into the belief that the Irish would save the world

and civilize it. We knew the old heroes of the Irish sagas, Cuculain, Conall Carnach, Finn Maccool, better than we knew each other. And into this ovum-atmosphere came the high philosophy of India, of the Upanishads and of the Bhagavad-Gita. Sperm and ovum united, and the Irish literary renaissance was the child born.

Something of the kind is bound to happen in Wales; I don't know when, except that it will be soon. The ovum we have; the sperm must be the high and noble Thought of the Indian or the Chinese Philosophers. China, culturally, was only discovered this century. There is more Chinese literature than there is European and American, ancient and modern. The Inspiration, the Message, of both India and China, though differently colored, are essentially the same. They go in the west by the name of Theosophy.

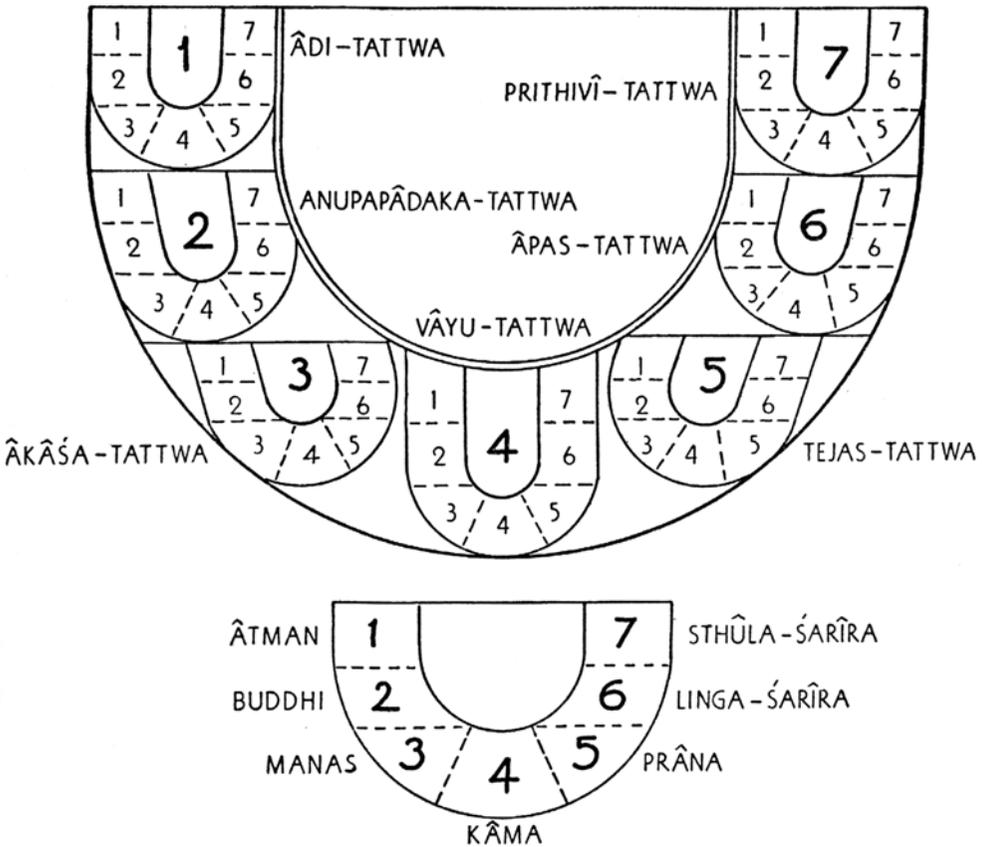
— Lecture given at the Headquarters of the Welsh Section, T. S., Gwalia House Fitzalan Road, Cardiff, Wales, some time in the early 1930s. Dr Morris's study over a period of many years early convinced him of the great importance of the role that Chinese and Indian thought would play in the new awakening in the west. He was a strong and ardent propagandist of this idea, which, though today appealing to an increasing number of minds was then, some ten years ago, scarcely recognized as worthy of serious consideration Kenneth Morris, who died in April, 1937, is known for his books on Celtic mystical folklore and its interpretation, his *Book of the Three Dragons* (Longmans, Green, & Co, Chicago) having been a selection of the Junior Literary Guild.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MAN'S PRINCIPLES IN THE ROUNDS — *G. de Purucker*

The matter which I am going to speak to you about tonight I approach with the utmost reluctance. It is thorny and difficult and is so entangled with other teachings that I almost despair of giving even a relatively clear picture of it. I despair, I say, of doing so without betraying the Mysteries more than I have any right to. For the full understanding of what I am this evening going to try to lay before you very simply, as far as I dare, the whole, the last word, is given only to those who have passed their Third Degree. Get that clear.

No wonder H. P. B. passed over it with scarcely more than a mere pointing of the finger. These are matters dealing with the Rounds and Races, and the globes of the planetary chain, and they may seem to you to be very simple and easy, matters which anybody has a right to know. But in fact it is all very difficult. Anybody has a right to know who has proved that right. Any human being who has made himself worthy has a right. But it is not for me, in the position I hold, to judge anybody.

So this evening I will go as far as I dare go. There is a great deal that I shall not even point to; so don't think that what I am going to say tonight covers the whole question. It does not. I will merely try to give you a brief picture, some few hints. That is the best I can do.



Now we have here a diagram which should be helpful for our discussion this evening. It is one that I imagined out myself. But remember that diagrams, though helpful, can also be very misleading. They give hints which the mind itself thereafter should pursue; but they are not *pictures* of what they represent; they are not photographs, they are not paintings. The usual diagram of the seven principles, as given by H. P. B., is merely intended to show that the most high and the most glorious is Atman (at the top of the diagram); and that the principles then "descend" in a decreasing scale of importance, power, and worth. It is not intended to convey the idea that the principles are one on top of another like the layers of a cake. And the only value that this present diagram has is to give the elements or principles in the order of their involved evolution from beginning to end; and to show that the fourth is the critical element or tattwa, the one at which the downward arc stops and the upward begins. That is practically the only value of this diagram, but it is very important to get that one idea clear.

Do you know the diagram of the seven globes as H. P. B. gives them in *The Secret Doctrine*? You can consider that that diagram also represents the cosmic elements or tattwas on the four rupa planes of the cosmos; and just as there are two globes

represented on the highest rupa plane, two globes on the next counting downwards, two on the next, and one on the lowest, so in like manner may the tattwas be arranged, as you see in the present diagram. Nature is all builded on one plan. And because this is so we can see, as this diagram shows, that any one of the planes of nature, or any one of the elements of nature, which includes the elements of man, whether it be high, as we say, or intermediate, or low, itself consists of seven subordinate or sub-planes.

Roughly the tattwas here enumerated have the following meanings: Adi-tattwa is the primordial or first tattwa; anupapadaka: that which is born from its own essence; akasa might be called "space"; vayu-tattwa, according to the elements of the ancients was called "wind" or "spirit." You may be interested to know that the Latin word "spiritus," our word "spirit," originally meant "wind" among the ancients, and in Greece *anemos* was "wind," but it originally meant "spirit" also. Tejas-tattwa, the fifth cosmic element, means "fire," the brilliant, the glowing, the burning, the dazzling fire. Apas means "water"; prithivi means "earth." But mind you, these lower four cosmic elements are not the air that we breathe, nor the fire that cooks our food, nor the water that we drink and bathe in, nor the earth upon which we walk. It is the relatively spiritual elements of the universe that are given these names.

Now in this diagram I have attempted, in the enlargement of No. 4, which could equally have been an enlargement of any one of these cosmic tattwas, to correlate them with the human principles; for instance adi-tattwa with atman, man's essential self, the root of all his being, and the source and root of the other six principles. Anupapadaka-tattwa corresponds with buddhi; akasa-tattwa with manas or mind; vayu-tattwa with kama; tejas-tattwa with prana; apas-tattwa with linga-sarira; and prithivi-tattwa with sthula-sarira. Its great value is to show, both in the cosmos and in man, the importance of four as the turning-point, where the bottom is reached and things go swinging up again. As for instance here in these globes: both globes and life-waves begin at the top and gradually sink downwards, so that after round one comes round two, then round three; and then round four which is the very lowest, kama. And then the opposite process begins. When kama has been evolved in the life-waves, you get a balance between spirit and matter. Why is it that from this globe D, during the fourth round where we are now, there should have begun in the fourth root-race the beginning of the rise of the luminous arc? Because spirit and matter are then practically balanced, and for millions of years after that balance had been reached between spirit and matter, spirit continuously evolving forth more and more began to grow a little stronger, and there was a rise, very slow but progressive and continuous. During the Atlantean root-race, the fourth, the one that preceded ours, the bottom point of evolution was reached. Spirit then balanced matter, and from that moment all things which previously had been slowly sinking into matter, stopped, the balance had been reached, equilibrium; and from then onwards things

are rising; so that we in our fifth race, as we are, are just a little higher than were the Atlanteans, for we are 9 million years to the good, towards the spiritualizing effect. The pull of spirit is stronger and will grow constantly stronger as our fifth root-race gives place to the sixth, and that to the seventh, and even more so when our life-wave leaves this earth, globe D, and begins to ascend the arc to globes E, F, and G.

I might add here that while human flesh is fourth round stuff, because we are in our fifth root-race during this fourth round, human flesh is somewhat more spiritual than the flesh of beasts is. When we shall have reached our sixth root-race on globe D, human flesh will be still tenderer, because more refined, more etherealized. When we reach the last race of this globe D during this round, the seventh race, human flesh will be still finer. It will be almost translucent, but not quite. It will be cloudy. And as the life-wave rises along the ascending arc, when they reach globe G, the bodies of the inhabitants of globe G will be bodies which will be self-luminous, and by the end of that round they will be bodies of light. From now on, all the globes and all the life-waves which up to the present have shown a tendency to sink into matter, now having reached their balance, will hereafter show a tendency to become more ethereal. The very earth we live on, as the ages pass, will show a tendency to etherealize itself, spiritualize itself; and I may point out that the discoveries in radioactivity, such as that of uranium, and certain other heavy chemical elements so-called, are merely examples of the steady disintegration of the grossest chemical elements known, the heaviest. They would naturally be the first to etherealize.

Now then, how do the human principles, as given here, come into evolutionary activity during the course of their rounds around the seven globes? This is very complicated, simply because there are so many things to think of. We are now, let us suppose for purposes of exposition, at the very beginning of the first round. None of these globes is yet formed. There is just an astral nebula. But the globes are just forming, because of the work of the three elemental kingdoms. We will call globe A the beginning of the manifestation of atman; we will take our human life-wave as an instance of all the other nine life-waves. But what part of atman, which itself is sevenfold (I have tried to show it on the diagram) is manifesting during the beginning of the first round on globe A? It is the sthula-sarira of atman. But here comes in something else. In the atman, the atman-atman comes on quickly, the buddhi-atman comes on quickly, so with all of them down till the bottom is reached, because of the pull of matter, the sinking tendency that I spoke of. So all the sub-principles of atman are gone through, the higher six are very rapidly descended through until we reach the bottom of atman, the body of atman, the sthula-sarira; and that is the first principle of the human life-wave on globe A.

When this has been done, in other words when the seven root-races have been run through globe A, the sthula-sarira of atman remains here; but the surplus of life from

atman overflows downwards into globe B, or rather the surplus of lives, because this surplus of lives are the outer life-waves.

What happens on globe B? On globe B all the atman principles are run through till it comes down here to the sthula-sarira of buddhi. In other words all the seven root-races are run through there, and the sthula-sarira, the last and most evolved on this first round, remains; and the surplus of lives from B passes down to C. The same process takes place there, and the surplus of lives passes down to D, and so on through all the globes. We will use seven globes. That is the first round. We may call it, if you please, the atman round. But atman is not fully developed. This is just the first round, and the lowest part of the atman.

What happens during the second round? We will call it the buddhi-round, when buddhi is evolved forth or emanated. The life-wave on globe A specializes, and it runs through all, till it stops at the linga-sarira; and as this is its main point during the second round in globe A, the surplus of life very quickly passes through the previously developed atman-sthula-sarira, gives the buddhi touch to it, and passes down to it, through the second round, to the linga-sarira of buddhi, and then goes on. Next, the surplus of life passes down to globe C, and the linga principle of the buddhi is developed in the life-wave, finishing its evolution in C; and the same thing happens, the surplus of lives passes down to D, and then upwards.

So thus far we have evolved the atman principle during the first round, the buddhi principle very imperfectly during the second round, and from below upwards. The first round brought forth the sthula-sarira of atman; the second round brought forth the linga-sarira of buddhi; the third round will bring forth the prana of manas in exactly the same way. The fourth round will bring forth the kama of kama. The fifth round, next one, will bring forth the manas of prana. Mark you, all through the globes. The sixth round will bring forth the buddhi of the linga-sarira in all the globes and the life-waves; and the seventh round — and isn't this remarkable? — will bring forth the atman of the sthula-sarira.

This means that at the end of the seventh round, take our human life-wave as an example, all the individuals of the human life-wave will be fully developed seven-principled beings, every one of the principles fully developed for our manvantara, our chain during this Day of Brahma.

Why was it that during the third root-race the manasaputras at first refused to embody and give mind to the undeveloped humans of that time? Because the vehicles were not ready. There were no proper mental vehicles to contain them, to contain the mind of the manasaputras. I wonder if you are any the wiser!

So now the evolution begins with atman and ends with atman. The developmental process is from the bottom going up one stage or sub-stage with each round; so that

while we begin with atman, having no proper vehicle to work through in the first round, we reach the seventh round with all the human principles fully developed, and even the body exists in its atman state.

Round one develops the lowest part of atman on all the globes, you have the lowest part right down the scale, what in modern science would be called the elements, the chemical part. Remember it began with atman — spirit. The next round we might call the buddhi round, and that develops the next from the bottom of all of them. Then the third round you might call the manasic round, just as it was in the third root-race on our globe that mind came to man.

When all the seven rounds have been run, when every principle of man has been fully developed in him, he is a god, he has the spirit working in him, the buddhi working in him, he has the mind working in him, he has the desire — and desire in the ascending arc becomes what we call aspiration, desire upwards instead of desire downwards. He has the prana spiritualized to become an actual individualized force in him. For instance, a seventh round man can then call upon his prana if he wants to, to shoot out a bolt of electricity by his will, if he wanted to work a little magic, crush a rock or disintegrate a tree, because his prana then is fully developed and under the power of his mind and his will. Likewise the linga-sarira will no longer be a rather shadowy, half-developed, inchoate body of man that now it is, but it will be a marvelous instrument, attuned to the harmonies of nature, individualized, man himself. It will be like a sounding-board catching every vibration; and his body will be a body of light, actually glittering just like the light of the sun. Why is it that the sun has the body it has? What we see is the sthula-sarira or body, it is a body of light. A man will be that way during the seventh round, a shining globe, and what his inner principles will be of course are beyond description!

And now let me recapitulate the main ideas I have given you. The key-thought is this: there are two lines of evolution, the spiritual and the material, beginning respectively with the summit of the atman and with the elementals, the lowest of the material; and as the rounds progress these two lines approach each other, the former working downward and the latter working upward; they pass each other so to speak in the fourth round, and at the end of the seventh round in a sense their positions are reversed; that is to say that at the end of the seventh round the atmic part is in the highest part of the material or prithivi, having run all down the sevenfold scale; and the material part has reached up as high as it can go into the atmic part of the material again; and this produces fully evolved *vehicles*. Here is the key-note to the whole process of evolution through the rounds: the evolving of fit vehicles to express the spiritual and intellectual faculties, monads.

Remember also, that the first round is the outlining round, striking the pathways according to past karman for all the succeeding rounds. The very first entities that

appear on the scene to build up the globes are the high entities (which I vaguely call the atman in my explanation) from the past incarnation of the chain, commingling immediately with the elementals; and thus we have the highest beginning at the top of the atman, and the elementals beginning at the bottom of the sthula or prithivi, and then, as stated above, through the remaining six rounds they work towards each other, pass each other, if we want to make a picture in our minds, in the fourth round, and then each line continues upwards or downwards respectively as far as each can go.

This means, therefore, that the monads or spiritual entities will have incarnated, or rather imbodyed, themselves fully at the end of the seventh round, producing god-men or equivalent beings in the other kingdoms, and the vehicles or sheaths or bodies will have through the seven rounds raised themselves up or evolved or developed as high as they can go to be fit vehicles for these now fully imbodyed monads.

Another point: If we take the vehicles for a moment and consider them alone: the fourth round brings out the desire-principle, with both its upper and its lower aspects. Then in the fifth round the *vehicles* are raised to the manasic plane on their respective positions in the scale of life; in the sixth round the *vehicles* evolve capacity to transmit buddhi; they become buddhic; and in the seventh or last round, the *vehicles* have gone upwards as far as they can in delicacy and unfolding power, and are then ready to carry the atmic ray.

But this is only as regards the vehicles on the several planes of man's constitution. As regards the spiritual entities or rays: they lean down to meet the upward rising vehicles all through the rounds, and thus, although they are always transcendent, in other words themselves always on their own planes, because of leaning down they seem to descend, as it were, and approach their rising vehicles until the junction is made in the fourth round, when, taking the human kingdom, man really becomes truly man, child of spirit and child of prithivi or earth — halfway up and halfway down, so to speak. — Address to the Headquarters Lodge, Point Loma, California, April 14, 1940.

HERE IS ONE ANSWER — *Leoline L. Wright*

Someone said to me the other day, "Theosophy is just another phase of the literature of escape. You people sit around and read and lecture about these grandiose cosmic ideas while all the time the world is going to the dogs around you. There's nothing really living and creative about Theosophy."

I then called his attention to the following statement of Sir William Henry Beveridge in connexion with his plan for the abolishment of poverty in Great Britain:

This planet is full of cruelty and oppression, of unexpected savagery, senseless injustice, killings of the body and killings of the spirit which one can do nothing to help — which one feels ought to rouse the conscience of humanity.

Beveridge said this in admitting that his plan would not make the world over. In fact he seems to doubt, as in this statement, that the world can be made over.

In quoting the above in response to my friend's objection I pointed out that here in the presentment of conditions which "we can do nothing about," is just where Theosophy comes in. Because it is so long range in its vision and methods of cure Theosophy seems to many at first sight both cold and unpractical. But one of the sound things about the Wisdom-Religion is that it has no *immediate* panacea for human ills. If it offered a quick, universal solution it might well be suspect. But its goal is the reform of the individual. When enough individuals become convinced of the truth of Reincarnation and Karma; that man is an imperfectly evolved god struggling with a selfish animal nature which he inherits from his own past; when the majority have learned to understand the roots of their own psychology, and that they have a divine as well as an animal heredity — when enough individuals are convinced of these things, then the race will be well on its way out of

the dangers from "unexpected savagery, senseless injustice" and the other things that seem to Beveridge to be incurable.

That this goal is a distant one, no one denies. It is true that if we could sweep the world with a belief in Theosophy a miracle of social reformation could easily result. But no Theosophist is foolish enough to expect such easy and quick results. Growth is a gradual and laborious process. Reformations founded simply upon emotional reactions are generally transient. It is only when beliefs are rooted in knowledge and tested by experience that emotional conviction has any value. Only such a process brought about by toil both of mind and heart can result in growth.

He who becomes a real Theosophist undergoes of his own volition such a "cure." No mere study of our teachings will make a Theosophist of him, the kind that becomes a creative power in his own world. He must become a moral, or better, a spiritual scientist, making of himself and his daily life a laboratory of spiritual research, experiment and eventual verification.

Even then he will rarely succeed without a Teacher. Of course it is barely possible to succeed without one. As a man *might* become a great scientist unaided by the work and the discoveries of colleagues and teachers. But no student, say of chemistry or biology, would today attempt such a wasteful and senseless independence.

So the wise student of Theosophy seeks a Teacher. He allies himself with colleagues and gets the benefits of association and exchange of ideas and methods. In doing this he obtains the guidance and the knowledge for his individual research in the laboratory of his own being. He will then discover the real meaning of that tenet of the Buddhist religion: "I take my refuge in the congregation."

The word "congregation" in its true esoteric sense as here used does not refer to a mere collection of men with the same ideas. Dr. de Purucker's interpretation is: "I go to the Order of Holy Ones as my refuge." The word covers thus the whole congregation of Teachers — Adepts,

Mahatmans and Bodhisattwas — who have preceded us on the pathway of liberation.

When a man allies himself with the Theosophical Society, founded under the auspices of the Mahatmans, and especially with its more esoteric work, he becomes an integral part of that Order. It is an organization of beings which we call the Brotherhood of Compassion. In a strict sense all humanity belongs to that Brotherhood, whose work consists largely in laboring incessantly for the salvation of the world. But between a genuine Theosophist and a non-Theosophist there is this difference: the Theosophist is a self-conscious, growing and developing member of that Brotherhood, a working partner. He is on the way to becoming himself a Savior of humanity. The other is like a minor shareholder who benefits in an unconscious way without knowledge or power to share in the advantages of active responsibility and co-operation.

Is not just the sense of such privileged co-operation in itself a mighty inspiration?

As for proof of all this — well, let anyone try living for six months the life outlined by Theosophy. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." Let a man start reforming himself in the light of Theosophy and the evidence for its truth soon becomes overwhelming.

Yes, in one sense Theosophy *is* the "literature of escape" — escape from the tyranny of our animal selves, and escape for the world from ignorance, and from the cruelty and selfishness which spring from these factors. The only thing needed is to get busy and test Theosophy out for one's self.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FORK OF THE ROAD — *Henry T. Edge*

How often in life's journey do we come to points where ways diverge, and we stand in indecision as to which course to pursue. There is nothing to determine our election. One road presents as much or as little attraction as the other. Yet an election must be made, and eventually we discover that the whole turn of our after-life depended on the selection — a selection made with eyes blinded to the consequences. — S. Baring-Gould in *The Queen of Love*

The person here referred to comes to a fork in the road and stands hesitating as to which route to take, finally selecting one almost at random, and goes — to her death. The question here is, What determines our choice? We know that the outcome is the result of causes generated in the past, and this we term an operation of the law of Karma. But this Karmic action works through a chain of many links, and here we find a link to which it is usual to apply the word "chance." But chance is only a counter used to denote some unknown cause; to say that any action of ours is casual is simply to confess that we cannot explain why we do it. A competent astrologer (if such there be) might have predicted which fork she would choose; a clairvoyant or some kind of diviner might have foretold the issue. For these prophets would have been able to contact some of the hidden links in the chain. They would have seen that the person *could not* have chosen otherwise than she did. Yet this last statement must be qualified; for, if she had previously undergone a change of heart, then the destiny might have been changed, so that she would have selected the other path.

We learn from this and from innumerable cases of which it is an instance, that our slightest movements must be controlled by momentous causes, and that there is a vast machinery of Karmic links beyond our normal ken. We also learn the vast importance of our every thought and emotion as determining factors in our destiny, in

our luck and ill-luck. Finally we can understand that divinatory arts depend on a power to discern some of these hidden links and interpret them, and on a knowledge of the correspondences between apparently casual events, such as the fall of the cards or the marks made by a geomancer, and the equally "casual" happenings of daily life.

The Theosophical Forum

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: XIII

The next number concludes this series of radio talks on Theosophical subjects given over Station XQHB, Shanghai, China, during 1941, by Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist. In this article Miss Bergqvist shows the fallacy of the argument held by some that Karman is a cruel doctrine, and quotes from the Book of Golden Precepts: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."

Good evening, everybody:

Last week the speaker explained the Theosophical doctrine of hierarchies, of how the different units in nature are composed of smaller units and form the parts of larger units in infinite extension in all directions.

This week I want to clear up a misapprehension that has been brought to my notice. It seems that there are people unacquainted with the Theosophical teachings, who have received the impression through a casual acquaintance with only one aspect of Theosophy, that Theosophy is a cruel doctrine.

It would appear that the teaching which has given rise to this wholly erroneous idea is the doctrine of Karman in one of its aspects. Karman, if you remember, is the name given to the law of harmony in nature, which is perpetually readjusting the balance of events, which renders suffering and joy as the just result of thoughts and deeds. It is Karman, even, which gives us the capacity to enjoy or to suffer, for it is in ourselves and our reactions to surrounding circumstances that lies the cause of our joy or sorrow.

On the strength of this, some people who have given but superficial attention to the doctrine would tend to pass by suffering with a shrug of the shoulders and the casual thought that it's the sufferer's Karman;

and it is here that has arisen the said misunderstanding and the accusation of cruelty. This is entirely wrong. The following much-quoted saying of our Society's Founder and first Leader proves this beyond doubt: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin." Any thoughtful person will realize the truth of this. When we see suffering which we have the power to alleviate, how can we know that we are not face to face with an opportunity of paying off an old debt incurred in some previous life? We may even be responsible for the suffering that we see. In fact, a deeper study of Theosophy and logical speculation along these lines will show us that we are to a very great extent our brothers keepers. It is our simple duty to help others in every way we can, and to waste an opportunity of doing good is a sin — to ourselves as well as to the sufferer, whom we decline to help. It is a very shallow viewpoint to say: "Let him suffer, he has deserved it." It may be the sufferer's Karma to be helped by you, and if you refuse your help, Nature's law of compensation will adjust the balance in his favor, while your callous indifference will also bring its own result. Thus it is strictly true that inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.

The Theosophical doctrines are based on the fundamental postulate of the brotherhood of man, and the only prerequisite to membership in the Theosophical Society is a sincere acceptance of this postulate. This is no mere Utopian imagery though it requires a little thought to fathom. As before explained, it is the logical outcome of the realization of our common divine root. It has been said before, but it will bear repetition, that Divinity to be divine must be infinite and eternal, wherefore everything that is must contain its own spark of divine fire, from which it sprang and into which it will return. We heard last week how the speaker classified the various hierarchies of Nature, and we were shown humanity as one such hierarchy. Therefore each human being is a unit of that hierarchy and each unit is inseparable from the whole. Humanity as a whole is only a unit in a still greater hierarchy. As human beings we are all dependent on one another and no man can live for or by himself alone. We share the same qualities that mark us

as human and depend on one another in every way, physically, mentally and morally. According to the ancient teachings there is only one heresy, the heresy of separateness, and from this spring all human mistakes. The belief that each man can live for his own selfish aims and ambitions is an offshoot of this. Selfishness lies at the root of all human troubles. There is not one sin or one sorrow that cannot be traced back to the selfishness that arises from the belief in our separateness. In a world where each man lived not for himself but for the community, there could be no suffering and no sin. Selfishness is at the bottom of all wrongs. There is individual selfishness, giving rise to greed and personal ambition. There is national selfishness, producing the same faults on a larger scale. There is even racial selfishness. All these forms of selfishness arise out of the mistake of believing ourselves separate from the humanity of which we are the parts, and so long as we persist in this belief and in acting in accordance with it, there will continue to be suffering and misery among the individual members of the community, among the nations and among the races.

When we see poverty and misery on all hands and the faults in the social order that are their immediate cause, we can do much to alleviate the suffering and poverty, but as long as our social order is based on individual gain and selfish ambition, these things will continue to crop up. It is not enough to alleviate the suffering — that is necessary too and a sacred duty; but we must go deeper than that and eliminate it by searching out the cause of it and destroying that cause. The keynote of the Theosophical teachings is unselfishness, and Theosophical students all over the world try to the best of their individual ability to live up to the high standards of these teachings. If we fail as individuals, it is not the teachings that are at fault, but the imperfect human beings who fail to live up to them. Unselfishness based on the rational and philosophical concept of human brotherhood is surely the last thing in the world that can be called cruel; and those who on a superficial acquaintance with one tenet of the Theosophical teachings, believe them cruel, should make a deeper study of the subject and — judge for themselves.

The great Teachers of Theosophy, those who worked publicly like Christ and Buddha, and those who work silently and in seclusion, are shining examples of unselfishness of the highest degree. Those who try to follow in their footsteps and who enter the path of training and initiation, even today, for the purpose of helping humanity in its evolutionary course toward spiritual perfection, leave behind them all thoughts of self, for in their training it is not only impossible but dangerous to try to achieve wisdom unless every selfish thought has been permanently banished from their minds. Such men exist today, but they wouldn't come and tell you about it, for every trace of personal ambition is excluded from their make-up, and so we know next to nothing about them; but humanity has good reason to be grateful to those who give up their personal lives entirely in order to enlighten and inspire anyone who sincerely aspires to wisdom and truth without selfish motives.

We have often mentioned the Masters before. People sometimes think that they are some fabulous creatures from another world; others don't believe in their existence. As they don't advertise themselves, this latter is the more common view. There isn't anything fantastic about them really. They are human beings, who have made the most of their experiences on earth during many lives and who have directed all their energies toward the goal of truth and perfection, instead of vacillating and wasting time as most of us do, and whose efforts have been crowned with success. They know the laws that govern our world and work consciously in harmony with these laws. As the laws of Nature involve altruism and compassion, they exert these qualities to the utmost and — because of their infinite compassion — remain on earth to help humanity rather than proceed with their own evolution on higher planes. In case any one should wonder why they don't interfere when the world is in a state of political upheaval, it would be as well to mention that they cannot and will not hinder the workings of Karma, which is a natural law, but they continually help and inspire those whose motives are pure and unselfish, and thus they help to prevent much of the evil that would arise in the future from present mistakes.

In conclusion I should like to quote another of H. P. Blavatsky's sayings. This is what she says: "It is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the metaphysical; of pure, unselfish life, who finds more joy in helping his neighbor than in receiving help himself; one who is ever ready to sacrifice his own pleasure for the sake of other people; and who loves Truth, Goodness and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer — is a Theosophist." With this high ideal before us we readily see that Theosophy teaches — not cruelty but compassion — and more compassion.

The Theosophical Forum

JUSTICE THROUGH REINCARNATION — *Helen Savage*

Theosophists, in explaining the doctrine of Reincarnation, often state that man merely does what the whole universe does; and that as the universe is subject to periods of alternate rest and activity, so is man. But this should not imply, as it might to the untrained mind, that man is carried on an ever-whirling wheel which automatically brings him in and takes him out of incarnation by turn. Rather is it that he adapts the universal process to his own inherent needs and urges. Just as the universe is born and dies and is born again through *self-generated* power, so man is impelled into repeated earth-existences by forces generated within himself.

Now it is obviously not the personality of man that generates this power, for the personality has no persistent life; it is dissipated at the close of each earth-period. But there is a Self in man that persists; it carries over from life to life, consciously following the wheel of karmic law, linking up cause in one life with effect in another, and working unwaveringly towards a definite end. Yet seldom are we, as human personalities, aware of this. Seldom do we feel, except perhaps as a vague and unaccountable uneasiness that will not quite let us alone, the pressure of the inner Ego impelling us onward.

Hidden deep within this Self of every man is a sense of the fitness of things: a sense of harmony, balance and justice, which is reflected in our human consciousness. Our very rebellion against injustice is a proof that the concept of justice is natural to us, that it appeals to us as inherently sound. We rebel because we recognise injustice as a departure from the ideal right, an infringement of a universal law, a violation of our deepest intuitions.

This sense of justice is one of the great forces impelling us to reincarnate. How so? Are we not forever committing acts of injustice, wronging others, incurring moral and psychological debts? We are.

And the Self takes note. Not one act escapes its vigilant eye. It recognises, though "we" do not, that accounts must be squared soon or late, that if we wrong someone in this life, we have to right that wrong, and that no amount of "forgetting," concealing, or delaying will suffice in the end to keep us from paying to the full. Thus the urge to adjust, to redeem, to make restitution, comes from within ourselves, not from outside. Karma is no outside avenging fury. It is our inner Self, that will not allow us to go "scot free." By some occultists it is even believed that this Self provides, or helps to provide, the opportunity in each new life for the fulfilment of our obligations. Sometimes such opportunity is veiled, to be sure. Often those things we least like in our life and that we consider our stumbling blocks to happiness and freedom are in reality our opportunities. Until we recognise this, they bar our path and we rebel. But when they are reviewed as representing obligations unfulfilled, old karmic debts which hold us back, we are ready to prepare ourselves to pay these debts, and then the way is clear.

No one life can be taken as an isolated thing. In the unfinished story of a single incarnation, there often is no justice at all, because the chain of cause and effect extends both ways, into the past and into the future. Ignorance of this one principle, *i. e.*, of justice worked out through reincarnation, is a great handicap to writers of fiction, it would seem. They cannot work out a life-story in its complete pattern, so they stop short and leave the reader with a sense of unfulfilment. Their tale is only a fragment, and sometimes a meaningless one. A hundred threads are broken off, which lead — where? The great writers suggest a sequel or manage to work out the fulfilment in the one life. But only too often the ending itself precludes the only possible just conclusion.

An instance of this is the story, told in Dostoievsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, of a man who in his youth had murdered the woman he loved through jealousy of a rival lover. By a series of amazing circumstances his crime was undiscovered and, since his life thereafter was most exemplary, not the slightest suspicion attached itself to him. Even the memory of it seemed to have completely left him. He later married, was the center of a happy family, held a high position in the

town in which he lived, and was looked upon with respect and esteem. He was very generous too: not only did he subscribe large sums to the almshouse and orphan asylum, but he often gave secretly to the needy.

Then one day, in the midst of this virtue and security, he met a holy man in whose presence the picture of the crime he had committed came back to him in vivid horror. First he felt himself impelled to tell the holy man everything, and gradually it came to him that in order to expiate his sin he must make a public confession.

No writer knows better than Dostoievsky how to describe such mental torture as this man endured as his nature swung from indecision to fixed purpose; from loathing of the holy man who had awakened his conscience, to loathing of himself who had allowed that conscience to sleep for so long; from fear of laying bare his past, to fear of the spiritual consequences of not confessing. At last his conscience wins. He makes a public declaration of his guilt at a fine birthday party held in his honor, and — heaven is assured to him. His death soon follows as the result of the terrific strain, and, fortunately for him, his family and friends all feel that he has been the victim of some lesion of the brain.

Magnificent as the story is from the standpoint of the art of narration, it leaves one unsatisfied. Not a word is said for the woman whom he had murdered, nor for those whose lives were perhaps ruined because of the act. To whatever state of bliss his soul may have gone, would it never be haunted by the face of the murdered one? Has his responsibility to her ceased because of his confession and death? How, even in a mystical sense, could his confession help the lot of his victim? Was her soul automatically saved also? Apparently he did not think of the fate of her soul. In his soliloquies and prayers, he never asks divine grace for her.

There is a similar episode — yet in actuality a very different one — told in Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Jean Valjean, the convict, has become the respected, indeed revered, Monsieur Madeleine, Mayor of a small French town. Buried in the past is his crime of theft and his years as a galley-slave. It will be remembered that by a sudden awakening after a

revulsion of feeling following upon a second theft, he rises out of his old self of ignorance, bitterness against social injustices, rebellion and slavery, to assume the proportions of a man transfigured. His whole life-energy is focussed in a succession of deeds of mercy and benevolence. But Jean Valjean, the convict and thief, is still being sought by the representative of the law, Javert. It had seemed that he was unassailable and inaccessible in this obscure little town. All he longed for was to conceal his name and sanctify his life. Having supposed he had done both successfully, he was to find that, as for the first, the law could still overtake him; and as to the second, that he who seeks purification is tested for the sincerity of his desire with the implacability of apparently inexorable fate.

The story is well known: a half-wit is spotted by Javert and is arrested as the missing Jean Valjean. How simple a thing it will be to let this poor misfit slip quietly out of life. Forever after, his (the real Valjean's) identity would be safe. Everything is working in his favor. Even a group of convicts assert that they recognise in the poor broken fool their fellow-in-chains. Is not Monsieur Madeleine's life of greater value than this one's? Is not his past all behind him? Is he not a changed man? Who can compel him to give himself up? — Thus he struggles with himself. *Who can compel him?* His own inner Self *does* compel him. That inner voice of justice will not be stilled. It follows him everywhere. Locked doors cannot keep it out. It keeps vigil with him in the night and will not let him sleep. And in the end it prevails. He declares his identity; proves it conclusively when at first none would believe him; and the wretch who had been mistakenly apprehended is allowed to go free. All this may seem foolhardy to those who believe that to throw away one's chances of happiness in this life is to lose them forever. *But to* those who understand something of the working of the laws of reincarnation and karma, this was no melodramatic gesture. His act carries over nothing to be undone in another life, no restitution to be made. He resists the temptation to steal the poor wretch's right to liberty. He accepts, nay more, he seizes, the karma of his own past, embraces it, and by means of it is liberated. He is

liberated out of the narrow circle of mere earthly security into the free land of the spirit. Such acts are the essence of liberation. Paying one's debts to the full leads one gradually from life to life out of the "tangled net of sorrow" that we all knot about ourselves, into a state where the karma of pain, bereavement and agony for oneself are no longer known.

Dostoievsky's hero, on the other hand, for all his noble confession, must come back into life with the burden of a karmic debt to pay. We do not say that his change of heart is of no avail. May it not be that this transformation in him, this breaking down of the barriers behind which he has hidden his guilt, and his utter surrender of his name and fame and all he holds dear — may it not be that all this will tend to remove the act of restitution from the plane of punishment to that of a splendid opportunity to do benign service to the one he had formerly wronged? And is not this a saner way of viewing this aspect of karma than thinking of the one wronged as being the agent of punishment in another life? The doctrine of karma, we are told, is a very difficult and obscure one in its details, but we shall find it more appealing to people generally if we can see in it not an avenger but a healer of woes, and that we ourselves gladly, in our inmost nature, bear the responsibility of righting the wrongs we have inflicted on others.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEVENFOLD SEVEN PRINCIPLES — *G. de Purucker*

It is one of the glorious Theosophical teachings that worlds, just like men, die and vanish into the invisible. After a period of rest they come forth again and manifest in the visible spheres: appearance and disappearance, the rhythmic pendulum beats of the heart of eternity. Worlds — manvantara; rest — pralaya. Then the same worlds reappear, run through their phases, die, and enter the unknown spaces of space, just as man who is born a little child, lives his life, pursues his karmic destiny, dies, vanishes from earth, and comes back again.

So what I am now going to point out would serve equally well for a galaxy, a solar system, a planet in a solar system, or a human being, or indeed an animal or a plant: any individual entity. Let us imagine, then, this cosmic space when all the worlds, solar systems, clusters of stars and what not, have been swept away during the pralaya or death-period of our galaxy. There remains naught but what science calls empty space. Literally it is the lowest plane of spirit, but to us, to our eyes, to scientific instruments, because we cannot see any glittering orbs, we call it empty space. Mother Nature has slept for seven eternities in utter peace. Naught is, that we sense.

Now mark: the time comes when a galaxy or a solar system is to make its manifestation after this maha-kalpa or great world-period. Somewhere, anywhere, there appears first a focus of life; let us call it the monad. It does not appear on the physical plane. It is awakening from its long para-nirvana; and it is coming into manifestation in the invisible deeps, the inner worlds of cosmic space. It surrounds itself with a nebula. Now this nebula is called in Sanskrit — and remember we are now talking of monads and not of celestial bodies — this nebula is called a Pradhana, and the monad is called Brahman. In the case of a human being, the monad would be called Atman, and the nebulous vehicle around it, which is not a nebula so much as a veil of living stuff, is called the Buddhi. But in either case, the full birth of the entity

proceeds in the same way: by the unrolling of each part or element from the one next above it, until we have the complete sevenfold entity. Nature has one law. She cannot have different, contrary laws working against each other.

The following diagram represents the unfolding of the sevenfold entity from the highest, or pure spirit. In the case of either a universe or a human being the other six principles arise from the first and hang like pendant jewels from the first. In other words, out of the divine or out of spirit is born all that is, in a galaxy, in a solar system, in a planet, in a man.



Death, speaking in general terms, and applying both in the great and in the small, is the reverse process. What was on the lowest rung or plane is drawn up into the next higher. It disappears. What was in the two lowest is drawn up into the next, and that finally disappears. What was in these three lowest is finally drawn up into the fourth, and that in its turn disappears. All the four lowest are finally drawn up into the fifth and in its turn that disappears. The same process with the sixth; until there remains but the pure monad.

The whole of a human being, then, manifesting on this earth, is ultimately from this monad. From atman, the fundamental everlasting monad, eternally a droplet of the Infinite, so to speak, is born buddhi its vehicle; and yet buddhi, although a vehicle, is itself conscious living matter, conscious living stuff. It is spirit-stuff, just as atman is the heart

of spirit. Then is born from these two what we call manas, mind, the intellectual power, the root of mentation. From these three is born kama, the principle which impels us to action, the urge to do things, commonly called desire; and it can have a very holy and beautiful aspect as well as a low one. Every man knows that. He has desires in his heart which can be sublime, divine, and desires in him which are sometimes grosser even than those that the beasts show. Then (note the plural) come the pranas, the vitality; that comes from the four above. From all these comes the model body of the physical, the astral body, commonly called the pattern-body on which the gross physical body is builded; and the astral body produces the physical body.

To repeat: from atman is born its child buddhi. From atman and buddhi are born their child manas: Father, Holy Ghost, Son. From atman and buddhi and manas taken together and often called the reincarnating monad, springs forth, from their interaction in the manifested world, the principle of desire, the urge to be and to do, to become. And from these four again, from within them, comes the vitality. And from these again is born the astral, model body; and out of all these is the last child, the reflexion on earth of the divinity, of the atman, *i. e.*, the physical monad, which should be an imbodyed god, and could be for he has it in him. This is shown by the following diagram. It is useful for showing this and other aspects of man's nature. But if you have studied it for awhile, do not form a picture in your mind of what you have seen here, and imagine that the principles of man are on top of each other like a stair, or a pile of books. The fact is that they absolutely penetrate each other; so that sthula-sarira, as said in the Christian New Testament, actually is the Temple of the Living God, or it should be. The Christians have a marvelous story about the Avatara Jesus going into the temple and driving out the money changers with a whip, because they were degrading the use of the temple. The money changers are our evil thoughts and evil emotions, our evil passions; and the presence of the Christ, the Buddhi, drives them out.

	Ātman	Buddhi	Manas	Kâma	Prâna	Linga-śarîra	Sthûla-śarîra
Ātman	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
Buddhi	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
Manas	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
Kâma	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
Prâna	○	○	○	○	●	○	○
Linga-śarîra	○	○	○	○	○	●	○
Sthûla-śarîra	○	○	○	○	○	○	●

All the principles interpenetrate each other. I have tried to show that also in this diagram, as well as the descent of power and faculty decreasing from the top downward. You see then the reason why even the physical man of flesh not only is helped by having within him as it were a reflexion, a radiance from the atman in his heart, but this physical man likewise, because his principles interpenetrate each other, can affect them by running up the scale as it were. You know you can affect your character by your thoughts, your feelings, whether you give way to them or master them; whether you determine to live a life which is grand or one which is the reverse. You affect your whole character thereby, and thus you affect your destiny. You make records running up, as it were, in an inverse direction along these pathways, running right up to the very spiritual heart.

Now there is another thing I have tried to show in this diagram: Every one of the seven principles of man is itself septenary. Why? Because it is nature's law that what she does in one place she will do everywhere. Nature is unitary, she has one soul and the action of that soul is uniform. Thus the buddhi-principle in man has seven sub-buddhis. The topmost is a reflexion from the atman. Thus, following along the second column on the diagram, marked BUDDHI, we have first the atman-buddhi; then comes the characteristic of this plane, the buddhi-buddhi;

then there is the manas-buddhi, the kama-buddhi, and the prana-buddhi and the linga-sarira-buddhi; and the very lowest of this column is the sthula-sarira-buddhi, yet to us practically pure spirit.

Here I want to point out a very important thing. Take the kama, the principle commonly called the principle of desire. Now according to my statement above, there is an atman-kama, a buddhi-kama, a manas-kama, a kama-kama, *the* particular specialized color or quality or characteristic of that plane, and then the prana-kama — and so on down the scale. Now what does that mean? It means that even the principle of desire has its atman. You may remember reading in the old Hindu scriptures in the Veda: "Desire first arose in the bosom of IT," speaking of the universal, cosmic desire to be, to manifest. What kind of desire is that? It is atman-kama.

And here is another point: It is because the atman is sevenfold that it can unfold itself into the sevenfold constitution of man. The atman, having the buddhi within it, drops a reflexion of its buddhi below, and that becomes the main buddhi. From the atman and buddhi, the buddhi having a manas in itself drops a reflexion of its manas, overenlightened by the atman, and that becomes manas-proper. The manas in its turn, having a kama-manas, or rather a manas-kama, drops a reflexion of it, overenlightened by the atman of buddhi above itself, and you get the kama-proper. And from the kama in the same way comes the prana. And prana is sevenfold. Just as in the man's body there is the life of every cell, the cells of his brain and the cells of his bones and the cells of his blood, which all build one life which penetrates the whole body, so there is the life which penetrates man's whole constitution. There is the life in him which stimulates love. There is the life in him which stimulates devotion, the desire, the yearning to help. There is the life in him which has the kama-principle or desire-principle for lower things, the lowest part of the kama. All these are in man, all interpenetrating.

So you see how the atman can unfold or unroll like a scroll and produce a world, a galaxy, a solar system, a planet or a man. This is the

picture the Christians gave, taking a statement from the sanctuary, when they said that at the end of the manvantara the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll. What does this mean? It means that the body will be the first to die and vanish; its component atoms will disappear into their electrons and protons and what not. What is carriable upward will be carried up to the linga-sarira. (In the universe it would be the astral light.) And then this will be the next to die or disintegrate, and what was best in it, including what was best in the one below it, will be carried up to the next higher principle. The scroll is slowly rolling itself up, every principle in turn vanishing, being carried up into the next higher, until finally you have only the last three or the last two, depending upon the kind of pralaya.

When a man dies it is the four *lowest* principles which disappear, disintegrate, break up into their component life-atoms but all that was best in him is attracted up into the manas by the atman and the buddhi. The man, from being sevenfold has become a triad, a threefold being. This is what happens when we men die. But what happens when a planet, the one in which we now live for instance, has its turn to die? Its own manvantara or period of manifestation ends, and its pralaya or rest-time comes. Then what will be left of man is merely the two highest principles; what was in the manas and all the four lower principles will be carried up into the buddhi.

Again, what happens when the solar system disappears, its turn having come to die, to go into pralaya? What will then remain either of the solar system or of any man who is in it? Just the pure monad, pure spirit; all the rest has been rolled up as a scroll and gathered into the atman.

Now then, to come back to what I first stated: a galaxy, a solar system, a planet, a man, all follow the same pattern. Let us consider a galaxy. The brahman or the paramatman of a solar system or of a galaxy, which has disappeared, because of having rolled up like a scroll all that was below in its preceding life, contains within itself all the karmic seeds of that past manifested period: all the seeds, the thought-deposits, the

spiritual energies in their nirvana, the bosom of the atman. Now comes the time for manifestation again. A point appears in imbodyed space — the inside worlds of "empty" space please. What rolls out of the paramatman in the unfolding scroll of the new manvantara is called in Sanskrit Maha-buddhi, which contains the secret things which have been in the past and are now resting as seeds, to produce the future worlds. They begin to unroll themselves and become the mahabhutas or the great cosmic elements. Isn't this exactly the same that happens to a man after his devachan? After he has died and has had a period of rest in the devachan, the monad in the bosom of atman slowly begins to unfold. It is like an unrolling scroll expressing what karman has written on that scroll, expressing what the man has within himself. He begins to reproduce *himself*, as he leaves the devachan and descends into imbodiment. He unrolls himself into a seven-numbered constitution; and when this has reached the linga-sarira the infant's conception has taken place. When the child is born, then you have the sthula-sarira; and you have a seven-principled human being.

Rebirth is the coming out of latency into activity of what has been laid up in the higher principles when the last death took place. Death is the passing away of these temporary lower things, the rising of all that was best and noblest in them into dormancy or sleep or peaceful dreaming, into the triune monad. Rebirth, as stated, is the reverse process, the unrolling, the three becoming the seven. At death the seven rebecomes the three.

— Address to the Headquarters Lodge, Point Loma, California, April 7, 1940.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME THE CHILD OF ETERNITY — *H. T. Edge*

You are in a square room with a high ceiling, and from the middle of the ceiling hangs a wire with a heavy ball at its lower end, so as to make a sort of pendulum. Only, instead of swinging to and fro in a straight line, the ball moves round and round in a circle. On one wall of the room a bright light throws a shadow of the wire and ball; and this shadow represents exactly the motion of an ordinary pendulum swinging to and fro in simple harmonic motion. Now, if you are a being who lives in shadow-land, you will say that this represents alternation, cyclic ebb and flow, the perpetual vibration between pleasure and pain, good fortune and ill, that constitutes the drama of human life. And truly it is a symbol of the course of Nature in general on the lower planes of manifestation. Yet, look at the real pendulum itself: there is no alternation there, no periodicity. The motion of the ball is uniform and invariable, it is the same at every part, every moment, of its path. Considered apart from its surroundings, there is no point which can be called a beginning, no point which can be called an end; so that no question of period can be raised.

Here we have an illustration of time and that which is beyond time. Some call the latter duration, others may prefer to call it eternity. Time, as we know it, is divided; divided into periods which have definite relative lengths. But that which is beyond time is not divided. Yet our illustration shows that the undivided duration is parent to the divided time. The latter is produced from the former by a shadow on a wall; it is the material world which splits up infinitude into finitude. The motion of the circular pendulum is uniform and invariable; the motion of its shadow is alternately accelerated and retarded; there are points where it comes to a stop and turns back.

This kind of illustration is not fanciful but real; for it means "as above, so below." Doubtless an indefinite number of other illustrations of this same principle could be found in the physical world. Periodicity born

out of invariability, multiplicity out of unity. We see that temporal life, instead of being comprehended in a single and whole view, is spread out in a long series of successive scenes. Perhaps the life-view experienced at critical moments of death or birth is rather a single entire vision than a succession of glimpses. Other thoughts will be suggested, but we should beware of pushing an analogy too far; because any one analogy illustrates some one particular aspect of the question, and if we forget other analogies which illustrate other aspects, we shall land in absurdities. There are not simply two planes in Nature, one right and the other wrong: there are many planes, and the terms "real" and "unreal" must be used relatively. Neglect of this precaution is mainly responsible for our difficulty in reconciling prevision with freewill.

The Theosophical Forum

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS

What is the use of emanations from the divine?

We must assume the "That," the underlying principle H. P. B. describes as beyond human conception, to be perfection; therefore "That" cannot become more perfect by the issuing forth from Itself of numberless universes. What therefore is the use of manifestations from "That"? Why are we here?

John P. Van Mater — A fundamental point to remember is that "Tat" or "That" is *no thing* at all. It is. It is all things manifest and unmanifest, and on all planes. It is all that *is*, but it is also that which to us *is not*. Saying Tat is perfect makes of Tat something to be perfect therefore *some thing*, therefore finite. Tat is beyond all human comprehension. It is the infinite, and therefore includes the finite as well. It is the Boundless All. It is not perfection because perfection applies to things, and the Boundless is *no thing*. It is perfection and imperfection, as well as being that which is neither.

Why then do universes periodically appear and disappear? This question resolves itself into a second question: Why are we here? Life is infinite, manifesting throughout infinities of both time and space. It is logical, then, that some of its basic purposes cannot be comprehended by finite minds. But there are one or two things we can say to start ourselves thinking in the right direction.

One of the purposes of life seems to be that of growth or evolution. The spirit within us gains experience through manifesting in material worlds, and its vehicles on all planes from the spiritual-ethereal to the physical evolve through this process. Each one of us is composed of lesser lives — the atoms, molecules, cells, etc., of our body — indeed of all our bodies, astral, physical, emotional, mental, etc. These lesser lives are growing and expanding through evolutionary experience. We are responsible for those lesser lives that belong to us. Therefore another

reason why we are here is because the growth of lives less evolved than ourselves depends upon our leadership and successful running of the race of life. Each one of us is a part of the Universe, a lesser life thereof, and has his (or its) part to play in that life. G. de P. has said that if one atom were destroyed, the Universe itself would crumble into nothingness. Therefore every atom and electron and each one of us is important, indeed vital to the working of the grand Whole. Another reason, then, why we are here is because we are inextricably linked with Nature and are essential to the purposes of all life.

We are here because:

1. Being here is essential to the growth and expansion of ourselves as individuals.
2. By being here in the manifested worlds we aid in raising all that is below us, the lesser lives of the Universe.
3. We are inseparable parts of the Universe, without which the Universe could not function, for we collectively are the Universe.
4. What is said above applies to all things great and small, universes as well as atoms.

But if we ask further: Why are we growing? What is the purpose of all life? Why do we exist at all? We find ourselves faced with a mystery. The very fact that we do not know a complete answer to the question is the reason why we *are* here. If we knew all the purposes of life, then life would hold nothing more for us in experience, in knowledge, in opportunities for self-expression, and we would have passed through it, graduated from it, because we would have learned all that it has to offer. The fact that we are here is strong evidence that we are as yet imperfect and unlearned in those things which life here teaches us.

If we ask: Why is the Divine within us here? Why need the perfect manifest at all? We again touch a mystery that can only be explained by saying that if we knew the reason why spirit or Divinity seeks manifestation, then we would be as great as or greater than Divinity itself, and not the imperfect humans that we are. When we know why

we are here as humans, then we shall have become greater than human — gods, let us say; and as gods, no doubt, will be propounding the same question to ourselves. The complete answer lies infinitely away deep within the Boundless. Perhaps the reason for life is so that every living being, every spark of divinity, may in increasing degree understand the purposes of life which are infinite; and therefore the Ladder of Life is infinite. And because the Masters and the Gods above us increase in all those grand qualities the human heart reveres, in compassion, in majesty, in spiritual strength and grandeur, we can dwell in our hearts upon the fact that Life's purposes are unspeakably sublime, even though incomprehensible to us.

It is true we have difficulty in grasping even our portion of the All, but as Katherine Tingley says:

Thinking towards the unthinkable is a wonderful, spiritualizing force; one cannot think towards it without a disposition either to think more, or feel more — without opening up the inner consciousness of man. And when that inner consciousness is awakened, the soul finds itself closer to the infinite laws, closer to That, or that Great Center that no words can express.

What of Purgatives, Cathartics?

" ancients made use of catharms or purgations . . . for as this earthly body is washed by water, so is that spiritous body cleansed by cathartic vapours — some of these vapours being nutritive, others purgative." (Quoted from Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, by G. R S. Mead in *Extracts from the Vahan*, page 74).

In what way do purgatives, laxatives, etc, affect the astral? What, for instance, is the effect of castor oil on the astral? Is it good? — E. S. W.

H. T. Edge — Sthula-sarira, linga-sarira, prana, form a triad of which the parts are so closely interwoven that it seems difficult, for such a purpose as the present, to separate them, or to think of one being

influenced apart from the others. I would say that a drug like castor oil affects the whole system. Yet we may classify such purifiers according to their degree of grossness or subtlety. A gas, like sulphur fumes, is subtler, and reaches the blood stream quickly through the lungs; homeopathic remedies are still more subtle, and probably act directly on the *linga-sarira*; or, to put it more in the language of science, on a finer order of atoms than the physical atoms. All of these means purify the physical system; but that alone is not sufficient to cleanse the intermediate nature. For this the use of the will is necessary.

Nevertheless physical means are valuable so long as we bear in mind that they are only used as aids to moral force. It is of no use to cleanse the outer vestures, if this is merely to give us a new lease for self-indulgence. In antiquity we shall doubtless find drugs and fumigants used for purely medical purposes, as with us today; but in the preparation of candidates for initiation it is likely that these physical means were used as accessory to the inner training undergone by the pupil. The astral body stands between the physical and the mental, and is affected by both; consequently it must be purified from above and from below, both. It is true that a clean mind makes a clean body; but much time and energy can be wasted in struggling against handicaps due to bad habits, faulty regimen, or curable illness. Drugs soon lose their effect, and become our masters instead of our servants, if habitually used. But if kept for emergencies only, and under the advice of a physician, they may prove valuable aids.

Conscience and the laws of one's country

It is understood that Theosophists as a matter of course will obey the laws of their country. What should one do, however, if any one of these laws goes against one's conscience? — C. C.

L. L. Wright — We must always remember that Theosophy lays down for our guidance only the broad principles of ethics and brotherhood. It does not — it cannot, if it is consistent with itself — dictate to any individual how that man or woman shall apply those principles to his own situation. To do so would be to interfere with individual free will,

one of the most sacred attributes of the human soul. To go into any country and to declare which of its laws are "right" and which are "wrong" would introduce an element of dictation, which is contrary to the very nature of Theosophy.

Another point. How could anyone evolve as a self-directed individual if he were told how to think and feel and act at every difficulty or crisis of his career? It is only by learning to meet these in the light of our own experience, intuition, and wisdom that our highest spiritual qualities can be developed. While it is undoubtedly the broad axiom of Theosophy that a man or woman should obey the laws of his country, every individual has the Karmic right and responsibility to make his own decisions as to how he can best obey them.

Panoramic Vision After Death

Many people have probably gone through a great deal in their lives which they would not care to experience again. It must be pretty hard to have to go through it all again at the time of death as I believe is your Theosophical teaching.

Abbott Clark — There is a misconception of the teachings shown in the question. There is no suffering in the automatic yet solemn spiritual process of death nor of this panoramic vision. It is a wise provision of beneficent mother Nature. This review of the life's events enables the soul to get a comprehensive and just evaluation of the lifetime just drawing or drawn to a close and to distil whatever amount of wisdom may have been acquired thereby. This distillation is a permanent acquisition of the soul and appears in the next rebirth in such forms as talents and aptitudes, innate ideas and inherent character. It is in this way that innate conceptions of morality are incorporated into the very substance of the soul and show forth as character in future lives on earth. It is the personality of a man that has emotions and suffers. The mere personality sinks into abeyance in the process of death while the karmic record indelibly photographed in the akasic aura of the brain passes in review before the departing soul's eye. It is the Individuality or Reincarnating Ego which is the onlooker. The process is not an

emotional one but solemnly spiritual.

The teaching referred to by the questioner is that every thought, emotion and event throughout one's entire life is indelibly recorded on the tablets of memory in the substance of the soul and that in the solemn moment of the process of death this photographic record or visualized memory passes in review before the mind's eye. From the dawn of consciousness in infancy to the moment of death, the record is seen in the minutest detail. This occurs in all cases no matter what the cause, condition or manner of the death. It occurs just after the last breath or heart beat. It is said in the teaching that no one dies or goes through the complete process of death unconsciously or insane. In unusual cases such as death by violence or accident this process occurs after the pain or shock to the body and brain are over. The freeing of the soul from a pain-racked body is a process of escape or liberation not of fear or dread. The time-consciousness is absent and the process may be very short or instantaneous.

During this review the man sees and faces every thought and act of the life just passed and realizes exactly what it was worth, good, bad or indifferent. There is neither fear nor favor, neither excuse nor self-justification. In this hour the lessons of a lifetime are synthesized and distilled and carried forward into the devachanic state where they are elaborated and assimilated and finally assist in guiding the ego to the proper environment for its reincarnation.

In some cases of death and resuscitation the panoramic vision above described is vividly recalled and remembered on recovery. I have met several such cases, among them my own father. When a young man in the State of Maine he was drowned and resuscitated. I have often heard him recount the experience. He said: "You all know how painful it is to strangle. But after that struggle was over I sank on the mossy bottom of the lake as easily and gently as lying down on a grassy bank. Then followed a flash more vivid than any dream — a memory or vision of my life in its minutest detail. While this was going on it was as if I sat back on the judgment-seat of my own soul and viewed, without fear or

favor, the right and wrong, the good and bad, of every thought and act of my entire life. As I passed into unconsciousness at the end of this vision I rose into a state of consciousness which I can only describe as more real and divine than anything experienced on earth."

This remained the most vivid experience of his life. Thereafter religious forms had no interest for him. He said: "Some day we may wake up spiritually and realize that this world is as unreal as a dream."

The Theosophical Forum

TEMPUS FUGIT — *Hannah Berman*

Time is one of the most perplexing illusions that tantalizes poor bewildered mankind. For it is an illusion — a perfect illusion. What is time? In a sense, it has no existence per se, any more than has space. Like space again, it has existence only when marked by boundaries.

It is a very interesting problem, and intriguing to the thinking mind. The pilot of an airplane thinks of visibility of space in minutes or hours of flying time. This appears to make time and space synchronize.

On the other hand, one might say that time is a personal thing since it appears differently to every individual, and that even the attitude of any individual towards an appreciation of time varies so much according to conditions, environment, state of mind, state of health, and so on. To one, for instance, with a deep love and appreciation of music, an evening passed in listening to a symphony concert might go in the "twinkling of an eye," so to speak; while to another the time spent in this way might seem an interminable age of intolerable boredom.

Yet it is the same time and the same condition which apply to both. So this proves that the crux of the matter lies in the individual and not so much in the outer conditions. In "As You Like It," Rosalind gives a beautiful dissertation on the subject. She works out time's gait with different people. She says:

Time travels in divers paces with divers persons. I'll tell you who time ambles withal, who time trots withal, who time gallops withal and who he stands still withal.

In childhood, days seem long and periods of time unending: a year is a decade, and longer periods are quite outside the understanding and comprehension of the child mind. As we grow older, time seems to hurry, we cannot "catch up"; we think ahead all the while, looking

forward and backward, and never pausing to grasp the present, until we gasp for breath and implore: "Time, you old gypsy man, will you not stay?"

The capacity of children to live in and make the fullest use of the present is one of the most beautiful and healthful aspects of childhood. Alas! that this faculty should fade with advancing years, when with Burns:

We look before and after
And pine for what is not.

The plan should be to make the most of every moment of our time, and then the aggregate is bound to be worth while. A day well spent gives a satisfaction which is deep.

If one can, before closing one's eyes at night, look back upon the events of the day just passed and examine how the hours have been spent, where more and better use could have been made of time, where an action here and there could have been improved, where a sin of inaction has been committed, and so on, the analysis can be an enormous help to future conduct. It is a good habit and once formed easy and increasingly interesting to follow through. Moreover it gives the individual the opportunity and practice of criticising his own conduct, of looking at his actions impersonally, and of understanding his own nature and his impulses.

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.

— Tennyson

OUR PAST LIVES — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

Why do we not remember our past lives? This is the question an average person of the West asks on first hearing of the archaic teaching of Reincarnation. In the East, where is included the majority of souls on our globe, it is accepted as one of the simple facts of nature. But for this civilization, minus the growing number of intuitive exceptions, this loss of physical memory settles the question in the negative. How shall we answer this natural inquiry?

First, the miracle indeed, would be, if we *could*, in the ordinary way, remember a past life. Can we, even now, recall at night every act and thought of the day just past? How much can we remember of last year, twenty years ago, or even last month? And as these years pass and we reach old age, forgetfulness is proverbial.

These questions recall to mind a series of articles entitled *Reincarnation and Memory* which appear in *The Path*, Vol. IV, written by "Harij." On page 342, we find:

All that we know of the brain shows it to be the organ of physical memory, and shows, moreover, that any change of its structure or perversion of its function impairs or obliterates memory. Cases of disease have been known from which individuals have recovered with complete oblivion of nearly all the past. Adults previously well-educated have forgotten even how to read, and have had to begin all over again like children.

All this may happen in any one life, while we have the same brain, but at physical death this brain, as a combination of elements, is destroyed forever. Further, it is part of the archaic teaching that life in the unseen world, or world of effects, is, on an average, one hundred times as long as earth life. And although when the same ego returns to earth, the atoms of his old brain will seek their old attractions, they will have been changed and rearranged, so that practically the brain in the next

life is a new creation. How then, could this ordinary brain memory be possible?

On page 246-7 from the article above referred to, Harij writes of the after death state as follows:

The ego now enters on a new phase of existence, in the world of causes, but where it has to work out, or "experience," the effects of its recent life on earth. When these have run their course and become exhausted, let us say that it returns to life on earth. Nothing remains of its former life save only precipitated results. The former body is destroyed, and the senses of its former life changed beyond recognition. In other words, nothing remains of the former personality. The precipitated results as impulses to new activities belong to the individual life, or to the real ego. Thus the personal and the individual memory differ as do the elements of a compound from the precipitated result in life's alembic.

Thus the link between incarnations exists in the higher, more permanent and real nature of man, in his Ego, his essential being, his character. Throughout eternity, in no two moments of time is a man *exactly* the same. Every thought, every emotion, every act or experience alters him, infinitesimal or great as the change may be. It is a solemn fact that every day finds him a little advanced on his eternal journey, or a little behind, perhaps on the edge of dangerous pitfalls. At any period, a man is an epitome of all his past. He is himself his own creator.

Quoting again from the same article on page 272:

Reminiscence as compared with physical memory is in no sense a loss, but a far higher result. No knowledge that could possibly be derived from the study of the uncombined elements oxygen and hydrogen could ever pre-suppose water, and nothing short of analysis would show that water is a union of these two substances. Oxygen and hydrogen seem to have disappeared

altogether, and something entirely different to have taken their place. . . . Even so are memory and reminiscence related. The details of experience as the result of sensation and consciousness, when precipitated as resultants, become motives, causes, instead of results, and so color all future experiences. These having become part of the ego, are carried along with it; not as accretions, but as essences. Here is the logical basis of intuition, as rational as anything we know of physical memory. In the long journey of the soul, even during one incarnation, it is not lumbered up and loaded down with the accretions of memory. In place of the carloads of ore we have the portable ingots of bright metal. We learn by experience; not by the mere record of its facts, but by the potency of its results. If the record were all, it would soon become, indeed, a lost record of a dead language, a shadow upon the wall, leaving its own trace, but presently so overlaid by other shadows, so confused and blended, as to be past all recovery. Reminiscence is to memory what the spirit is to the physical body, — that which alone gives it life and renders it immortal.

However there is somewhere in the higher nature a scroll of time, which one who lives in this higher nature consciously may learn to read. It is said the Masters can unroll this scroll, but they seldom care to do this. It is too painful. Do we, even in this one life find it pleasant to recall our mistakes, perhaps our cruelties, our neglect of golden opportunities? (1)

Reincarnation is a noble, inspiring teaching, embodying justice, incentive to action in the right direction, evoking courage. If this archaic teaching is ignored, what other theory can answer the eternal question: how did I come here? The theory of special creation besides outraging our inherent sense of justice is absurd, explains nothing and is contrary to all we know of nature's ways.

In H. P. Blavatsky's *Lucifer* is a suggestive article on this subject entitled, *Memory in the Dying*, (2) wherein it is likewise emphasized

that the brain is the organ of memory only on this earth plane and that therefore permanent memory really inheres in the Reincarnating Ego. She writes:

Not the most trifling action of our lives can disappear from the "Soul's" (3) memory, because it is no MEMORY for it, but an ever present reality on the plane which lies outside our conceptions of space and time. — Vol. V., p. 128.

And again:

The fact is that the human brain is simply the canal between two planes — the psycho-spiritual and the material — through which every abstract and metaphysical idea filters from the Manasic down to the lower human consciousness. — *Ibid.*

And then referring to the teaching that immediately after physical death the whole of the past life passes in review before the consciousness, she says:

May this not be due . . . simply to the fact that, for a few seconds at least, our two memories (or rather the two states, the highest and the lowest state, of consciousness) blend together, thus forming one, and that the dying being finds himself on a plane wherein there is neither past nor future, but all is one present?

FOOTNOTES:

1. See also *Questions We All Ask* by G. de Purucker, 1st Series, pp. 724-5. ([return to text](#))
2. Republished in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, July, 1943. ([return to text](#))
3. The Soul is here used to mean the Reincarnating Ego. — G. v. P. ([return to text](#))

BROADCASTS FROM SHANGHAI: XIV

In January 1942 THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM began this series of radio talks given over station XQHB, Shanghai, China, by Miss Inga Sjostedt and Miss Elsa-Brita Bergqvist. In these 14 talks the main teachings of Theosophy have been covered in direct and thorough presentation, and this article, which warns against the danger of developing haphazardly the psychic powers, concludes the series.

Good evening, everybody:

One of the classified objects of the Theosophical Society is to investigate the powers innate in man. It is a very interesting one, and it opens up all sorts of possibilities, for when we come to think of it, most of us know little or nothing about the powers innate in man. Engraved on the entrance of a Greek Mystery-School was this injunction: "Man, know thyself," and this was a key to all future studies in the School, for in knowing himself and learning to understand his own intricate nature, man would understand Nature and the complex structure of the Universe; for we, human beings, are the reflexion of the Cosmos, miniature copies of the Infinite. Every power of the universe lies latent in us, and we are, in fact, undeveloped gods and will some day evolve ourselves until we express our divine and spiritual energies consciously and fully, just as the gods or entities above us express their faculties at the present moment.

The materialist says that man is a physical body, a bundle of matter, nerves and sinews and a physical brain, all of which are composed of physical atoms that, somehow, manage to express not only physical impulses, but also mental powers, devotional aspirations, and immortal thoughts.

Another school of thought says that man consists of a soul and a body, and that while the body is mortal, the soul is immortal. In other words,

the entire man, minus the physical body, will live on forever in happiness or misery, just as he is, with all his failings and imperfections, his meanness and ignorance — a horrible thought! Imagine living on throughout eternity as we are, without changing or improving ourselves!

The Theosophist believes that man is neither a bundle of merely physical energies, nor a dual creature with one soul and one body, but a most complex entity with untold impulses and energies, mental, spiritual and divine. Everything that the universe is, that man is also in his inmost self, just as a drop of water is identical with the ocean from which it originated. We have nearly all experienced at one time or another an impulse or inspiration that came, not from our everyday selves, but from a deeper self, a self of which we are ordinarily unaware; yet in rare moments of inspiration this wonderful, hidden self reveals itself for an instant, and we feel that we have been in contact with something superhuman or divine. Some men never experience this contact with their higher self, and that is their own fault, for their habits, desires and mode of life pull them down to the earth so much that they have neither time nor inclination for spiritual things. A genius, on the contrary, is a person who listens to the counsel and inspiration of his higher ego more often and more willingly than ordinary men, and the result is that a genius has universal ideas, impersonal thoughts and humanitarian interests to a far greater extent than an average man.

Modern psychology has made many remarkable discoveries about the inner life of the soul, but psychology is nevertheless a physical science, for it concerns itself only with the lower human mind and ignores the spiritual soul. Even so, a psychologist knows that there are unprobed depths in a human mind, and that the simplest thought can have a deep and unsuspected source. How much more is there not to study in human nature when we start to investigate the higher mental, spiritual and divine sources in man! A Yogi who devotes his life to the purification of his human soul and the union between his lower mind and the divine ego, knows that inexpressible power, wisdom and

beauty are to be found by him who studies his own nature. The word "yoga" means union, and a devotee of yoga, or a yogi, strives to attain union with his immortal self, his inner god. All the so-called miracles performed by a yogi, which astound the scientific investigator, are merely a manifestation of a knowledge of the hidden laws of nature which anyone who takes the trouble and leads the appropriate life can learn for himself.

Even in the West we hear a good deal about psychic powers these days. We have mediums and psychics, psychometers and mind-readers, hypnotists and mesmerists galore, who all help to bring to the notice of the world depths of man's nature which we scoffed at some fifty or more years ago. Many modern physicians resort to hypnotism or suggestion in treating nervous patients, with remarkable results. Hypnotism is a little-understood power, and unfortunately it is sometimes used for base and selfish purposes. It is a dangerous power too, and a student of occultism would not dare use it, for he knows that no man has the right to seek to control another man's mind or will-power. Among many reasons why hypnotism is dangerous and unethical is the fact that the hypnotized person weakens his own will-power when he allows another man to control his mind. However, whether good or bad, hypnotism is one of the psychic powers which we are beginning to hear more and more about and to study scientifically. As time passes, and materialism will give way more and more to metaphysical and philosophical thought, we shall find that there are many more wonderful and noble powers latent in man, powers which we are today pleased to call superstitions.

Those who have some knowledge of mediumship know also that this state often brings with it certain psychic powers, not of a very high kind, but powers which are certainly interesting to the student of occult phenomena. One of such powers is clairaudience, or the ability to hear sounds and voices which average people are totally unaware of, as also the ability to hear across great distance; for instance, a clairaudient person may hear something from another continent — just like a radio-set. Then there is clairvoyance or "second sight," the

ability to see objects and entities which the physical eye cannot see, or else the ability to see across a great distance. For instance, Swedenborg, the Swedish mystic and seer, once saw a city in Sweden burning when he was in another part of the country; he did not see this with his physical eyes but with his inner vision. A medium who has these two powers is not able to control them. They come and go without the medium's volition, but these same powers, when consciously developed by an Adept are in his full control and can be used when and where desired. In the distant future all mankind will acquire these powers, just as naturally as we now use our five senses for their appropriate functions. Even today we sometimes speak of a sixth sense, meaning that faculty of instinct or intuition which warns us or tells us that such and such a thing is about to happen, and which has nothing to do with our mind and reasoning.

All these psychic powers are, in the eyes of real Occultists, mere child's play, and unimportant really, because they are not truly spiritual or uplifting. A far more important power is that of the imagination. We misuse our imagination, not realizing what a tremendous strength it can be. Whatever object a man ponders upon, that object he is drawn to magnetically, and in our daily lives, whatever we usually imagine, whether good or bad, that we invariably attract. There is a great difference between aimless daydreaming and constructive imagining. Day-dreaming without a purpose is the outlet of the weak and fear-filled mind, whereas imagination used constructively, with a purpose, is the greatest strength of the powerful mind. Whenever we imagine ourselves doing great and wonderful deeds, or meeting difficult situations courageously, or achieving victories, we are forming a mental habit which will eventually lead us to act as we think if the occasion should arise. If, on the contrary, we always say "I cannot; I dare not, and I will not," we imagine ourselves as weaklings, inefficient and cowardly, and the result is that we shall never rise above the mediocre. The power of the imagination is without limits. All great deeds must first arise in the mind; they must be planned, painted like a picture on the mental canvas, and after the imagination has paved the

way for action, a man is ready to carry out his purpose. Not only in the sense of aiding action is imagination a powerful ally. It also helps to make or break character. We can let our imagination dwell on our weaknesses and psychological complexes and exaggerate them, or we can imagine ourselves possessing the qualities we admire but lack in our make-up, until one fine day we shall find that through our imagination we have overcome mental barriers and woven into our characters those identical qualities which we needed. If we aspire to and imagine the divine qualities which our higher nature hides from our human selves, sooner or later we must realize that these divine qualities are ours, and that they are not as unattainable as we at first imagined. One of Plato's famous sayings is that ideas rule the world. If this is so, then, when we can honestly say that we rule our ideas, through our constructive imagination, we shall find ourselves gods indeed, all-powerful and undaunted by the passing events of human life.

To awaken all these latent powers within us we must study ourselves, study our dreams, our thought-life, our failings and idiosyncrasies, and we shall find that in learning to understand our own nature, we also, most surprisingly, learn to understand others.

(Conclusion)

The Theosophical Forum

THE WEIGHING OF THE HEART — *G. de Purucker*

Our lives, our human destinies, are not the flotsam and jetsam of an arbitrary fate, but as symbolized in the wonderful Egyptian ceremony or rite of the Weighing of the Heart of the Defunct, all that we think and all that we feel and all that we do is weighed in the scales of destiny, and these scales weigh two things, as this wonderful Egyptian ritual so ably demonstrates: In one pan of the balance is the life-center, the human heart of the man who lived but now is dead, and in the other pan of the balance is the Feather of Truth, of Reality, that naught can bribe, that naught can sway, that naught may persuade or induce. We therefore see in this symbolic ritual a wonderful exemplification of what we Theosophists call the doctrine of karman, inescapable destiny which none and naught in infinity may change, for it is divine law itself, which we call retribution when our evil-doings receive it, and compensation when our goodness or good works receive it. But under the majestic atmosphere around all this ritual, the man attends no judge or sentence nor is there any pardon. He depends on naught but the very laws of beings themselves. Utter true the balance weighs, naught sways it, naught causes it to rise, naught to fall. He is weighed — think now — he is weighed against Truth itself; and have you ever heard of Truth being bribed or swayed or persuaded or changed or modified or influenced? This is our Theosophical doctrine of compensation and of retribution which we call karman: that what a man sows, that he reaps, not something else; and he cannot escape the reaping of it, for he himself, symbolized by his heart in the pan of the scales, is weighed against Truth. And when the heart and the feather of Truth have an even balance, the heart is of the lightness and spirituality of truth itself, akin to truth. But when the heart is weighed down by evil-doing and attraction to the lower things of earth, it falls; and the rising feather in the other scale is the witness, the testimony, against the earth-charged heart which cannot rise to make an even balance.

There is something truly majestic about this symbolic ritual. It is filled with wonderful meanings, and I think the noblest is this: its effect on us as human beings in our daily lives. What ye sow, that shall ye reap.

There is not a word about pardon, and if there were any pardon in the Universe, the Universe itself would be thrown out of the gear of infinite justice. No mere man can commit an infinite sin, for neither his spirit nor his soul nor again his strength is infinite in compass. His sins are human and therefore the weighing in the balance is human; and the retribution is human in magnitude and the compensation is likewise human in magnitude. This is the infinite justice of Mother Nature, Nature which is Spirit, which is Divinity, and the nature around us, for they are one.

When a man is persuaded of this greatest of facts in human life, his whole life as a man is thereafter changed. He begins to feel concern for his acts, he begins to feel concern as to what his thoughts may be. He feels concern as to how he allow his feelings to run; for he, before his passing and what men call death, is himself the holder of the scales, the balance; and into his heart by his thoughts, and into his heart by his feelings, and into his heart by the action, by the consequent actions, following upon thought and feeling, he burthens his heart with these weights. And after death he is weighed in the scales, not by any theatrical weighing such as is given in the symbolic picture, but weighed in the scales of destiny, those very same scales which bring me or you into this body or that, into this country or into this land or that, strictly according to what each man in former lives has built into himself in thought and feeling and aspiration and all the other human feelings and emotions. These things are not chance or haphazard.

Now then, is it not clear that when a man realizes these things, and they begin to flow into his heart and work upon him, his conduct thereby is of necessity changed? Precisely as the child who puts in his infantile innocence the finger into the candle flame — does it not learn? It has learned. See the immense moral import of this wonderful symbolic representation of a man's heart, which is his selfhood, being

weighed in the scales of cosmic justice, which no prayers can sway, which is utterly true, for the Feather of Truth is in the other pan of the balance. No man is unjustly condemned ever, nor suffers a hair-weight which he himself has not merited; and no man is ever unduly compensated for what he has not earned, for this would be ridiculous; and the universe is incomparably sane and beautiful.

The weighing of the heart, which is the man's own self, in the scale of destiny likewise shows us that we build our lives to grandeur or to debasement strictly in accordance with our own wish and will and aspiration. Our destiny lies in our own hands. One man is not credited with the x power to succeed and the next man credited with a y power to fail. We are all sparks of the divine Heart, we all have an equal chance, and eternally have an equal chance; and if we fail it is we who fail and pay the penalty; but once the penalty is paid, we begin anew with a new hope, another chance: I have paid my debt, I am now free, I begin again. What encouragement it gives to us. It is a doctrine of hope, for there is no human destiny so low or so base which cannot from this instant of beginning be altered marvelously for the better, if you will; for the heart, when you wish to order for the better, begins to work and to work upon you, and to fill your mind with ideas nobler than those which have lived there, and feelings which are higher and sweeter and purer by far than those we have passed through.

This is a wonderful symbolic picture of reality. And what are these scales, and how does Nature do her work? Why, we see it around us all the time. How did I come into this body and incarnation? Through many chambers of the Father, as the Avatara Jesus would phrase it. I came from the heaven-world, from the devachan, into this world through many planes of being, dropping downwards to this material world because I am attracted here. Who is the guide and the leader? Horus, the divine Spirit, the chief guide of my footsteps, when I allow it — following the Egyptian ritual. And it is all done as it were by the same forces which prevail in these material spheres: which cause the suns to radiate and the celestial orbs like our earth to rotate, and which cause all with confluent motion to pass from one sphere of the cosmic

planes of destiny to some other plane. It all happens because it is all within the law of Nature, the laws of Nature.

Thus, how do I find my way through this life? By attraction. What I have made myself to be. I am attracted here, and that attraction won't allow me to go elsewhere. I myself have carved my own destiny, and I am carving it now, and in the next life I shall carve it anew; and let us hope more symmetrically than in this last life I carved this one.

What are these halls or chambers through which Anu, Everyman, of the Egyptian ritual, has to pass before his heart is weighed against the Feather of Truth? Light as a feather, yet holding the universe in bonds that are never broken. What are these chambers and halls through which the divine soul passes? They are the various planes, the various worlds through which men after death find their way. How does the defunct soul, when it comes to a portal and knocks for entrance, know the proper word? By exactly the same instinctive knowledge and attraction that the incarnate soul coming from the devachan finds its way into its present family and into its present body. It cannot lose its way. And what is represented by the knock of the defunct — a beautiful symbol again? It is simply, as it were, its approach to a new plane, a new world, a new stage of its way on its peregrinational pilgrimage, and it knows instinctively how to approach it, how to enter, according to the Egyptian ritual, how to say the words of power. They are in the soul itself. It is experience, intuition, knowledge, the same thing we are using here now and understanding each other, and speaking to each other and reading together and studying together. We understand each other; but to one who did not understand what understanding is, how could you explain understanding? When I say words that knock at your mind, when a speaker knocks at your heart, it is done with a thought, it is done with feeling, it is done with knowledge; and the portals of understanding fly open wide, and ideas and thoughts enter into your minds, into your souls. The right knock has been given.

That is what is meant by the chambers or halls through which the soul passes and comes to the different portals, and gives the knock of

power; and when challenged gives the words of power which allow him to pass. When you have built these words of power into yourself, you pass unchallenged. If you have not evolved to the point, or are unworthy, if you have not built them into your soul, you are challenged, and stopped, and back you go.

It is an old truism of our god-wisdom that from the human heart come all the greatest issues of the world. They do not reside in the brain-mind, for the brain-mind is the great separator of men, the great deceiver. It is the heart that is the unifier of men. And the reason? Because the heart speaks a universal language which needs no words. But the brain-mind speaks a language of words which have to be interpreted from mind to mind. Therefore is the heart so much the greater. You all know this as well as I do. Out of the heart come the great issues of life, for in the heart are love and intuition and discrimination and understanding and self-sacrifice and pity and compassion and purity and goodness and truth and troth and honor; and out of the mind of man come disputes and wranglings and quarrelings, disinclination to understand the other man, hatreds and all the other foul brood of man's lower nature, because it is about things out of the brain that men are continually quarreling. They never quarrel about the issues of the heart, for they are things of our common humanity.

Example: I love truth, so does every human being in this room. That is a statement directly from the heart. The mind immediately says: Well, what kind of truth, what do you mean by truth? Tim's truth, or Charles' truth? You see, it flops right down and begins to argue and quarrel and spread around and to dispute about mere details; but the heart simply says: I worship truth, and every other human heart in the audience understands. The heart says: I love it. The brain-mind immediately begins to argue about it, and all kinds of men and all kinds of women have different ideas about what love is and how far you should go and how far you should not go, how much you should trust and how much you should not trust, what kind of person I love and what kind I do not love. The heart is infinitely beyond this. It simply says, I love. It is a

universal language every human being understands. You don't need to argue about it. You accept it. The brain-mind is the former of arguments. The heart says truth is one of the most beautiful of actions in human conduct, to be full of truth. Where do we love this and admire it? With what part of us do we give allegiance, pay homage? With the heart. It speaks a tongue universal; therefore we say, out of the human heart come all the great issues in human life.

I will go a little farther. I will tell you that the human heart is the temple or dwelling or tabernacle of a divinity; it is the dwelling of Horus, to follow the Egyptian ritual. Let me tell you something: Every time a man gives you his word and keeps it, especially at loss to himself, that man is by so much acting as an ensouled man. Every time a man gives you his word and breaks it because it is convenient to him to break it, that man for the time being is unensouled. His soul is asleep. Every time a man takes advantage of a fellow human being, by so much his soul is asleep within him, it is not working. He is not ensouled. Every time a man does some deed or thinks some grand thought which is of help to others, he is a man, for he is ensouled. And when a man is fully ensouled, as all men on this earth shall some day be, when a man is free of soul we no longer have a man, we have a god living amongst us. I think the most beautiful sight that we human beings can perceive ever is the light of ensoulment that dawns in the eyes of a fellow human being. If you have never seen that and never understood it, it is because your own soul is asleep, for in these things spirit calls to spirit, the spirit recognises spirit, divinity recognises divinity, the man in me recognises the man in you, and this is ensouling. Oh that all men and all women so lived that they might manifest the divinity within them, and by so doing acknowledge the divine source of their own inner light!

— Talk given at Point Loma, California, March 15, 1942, at the close of a public meeting.

WHERE ARE THE MISSING "MISSING LINKS"? — *Clarence Q. Wesner*

"Where are the missing links?" This is the question that harrassed Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel & Co., and has been tactfully sidestepped by their followers for the last three quarters of a century. From the Theosophical standpoint, this question — if it be a question — requires but a short answer. The "missing links" are missing because there are no "missing links." What are the links that are missing? While any gap in a series may be called a missing link, we are using the word to describe a hypothetical species of creatures higher than the apes but lower than man; in other words, a link between the human and the animal kingdom.

We are living in an age when any theory, reasonable or not, if it be labeled "scientific," will be unquestioningly believed by a large portion of mankind. When science speaks of "missing links," the truth of their existence is practically taken for granted. When the Theosophist denies the existence of such he at once meets the demand, "Prove it!" Negative proof is less spectacular, but any reasoning man can soon see that Darwinism is far from being a proved theory. At best, science can offer only a multitude of facts in nature (which *facts* no one denies) and speculations and deductions drawn from these facts. As most of these deductions are based on a thoroughly materialistic concept of nature, modern scientific *theories* are largely unacceptable to a Theosophist.

Darwin, in his first great work, *The Origin of Species*, postulated an "end-on" linear development of one type of living organism into a higher type of organism. The development of man from the simian stock is not mentioned in this work. Huxley developed the theory of an end-on progression to include the human stock; and in his second great work, *The Descent of Man*, Darwin carried his theory to its logical conclusion. He postulated an end-on line of development from the lowest form of life to the highest, man.

This development of a lower form of life into a higher comes about, according to Darwin, through the struggle of the creature with its environment. By some mysterious process some types are better able than others to adjust themselves to changes in their environment and thus are able to survive. Other types, not so adjusting themselves, become extinct. It is this weeding-out process that is called "natural selection." The details of "natural selection," "struggle for existence," "survival of the fittest," etc., form a most complicated system of philosophy, and Darwin was honest to admit that while certain transformations of body and body structure are easily discernible, the causes of multitudes of such changes are as great mysteries as the origin of life, mind, and the spiritual instincts in man. Darwin denied that he was offering any explanation of the causes of these transformations or variations of bodies. Modern geneticists, however, say that they are due to the crossing and union of chromosomes — of which Darwin knew nothing. But by ascribing these crossings and unions to chance we merely put ignorance one step farther back. Theosophy teaches that variations of chromosomes take place in accordance with the urge of the spiritual being which is building an appropriate vehicle of physical matter for self-expression on this plane.

Although the theories of Lamarck, Darwin, Haeckel, and Huxley are commonly known as theories of evolution, a thorough reading of their works shows that evolution in the original meaning of the word is seldom, if ever, referred to. Their theories state that lower entities, through natural selection, struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest, are *transformed* into higher types of entities. In other words, forms of life are improved as a result of the action of conditions external to the entity itself. While modern biological theories state that there is also an internal cause of transformation, the idea of chance and accident still persists. That such improvement does take place is not denied, but it is not evolution; the French name this process Transformism, which exactly describes the process — transform-ism.

Evolution, on the other hand, is the unfolding, unwrapping of powers, faculties, which are infolded, inwrapped, potential within the entity.

Dr. de Purucker defines evolution thus:

Evolution is not merely an automatic response to external stimuli, but it is first of all action from within, unceasing attempts in self-expression; and each response to the external stimuli, which natural environment provides, gives opportunity for a larger and fuller measure of self-expression than before existed. (1)

Here we have a key to what to the materialist is a mystery: — forms (bodies) improve, faculties and organs are developed, or atrophy, to meet the demand of the inner life-consciousness mentor, the monad, for tools and vehicles to express itself to the fullest on this material plane. It is only through this fullest possible expression of its existing powers and faculties that it can develop, evolve its latent powers and faculties from potentialities into fully manifested actualities. But it must not be forgotten that bodies evolve and change to accommodate the "soul," and not to take the "easiest way" in a "struggle with a hostile environment."

The truth of this has been realized by some of the greatest thinkers of all ages. Patanjali says:

The Universe including the visible and the invisible, the essential nature of which is compounded of purity, action, and rest, and which consists of the elements and the organs of action, exists for the sake of the soul's experience and emancipation. (2)

Goethe expresses the same thought:

The whole progress of the world seems to be to provide a physical basis for the growth of the spirit.

That the scientific theories of "evolution" do not describe processes of evolution, using that word in its true sense, is admitted. Herbert Spencer, when criticised for his use of the word evolution, defends its use thus:

Now this criticism would have been very much to the point did the word Evolution truly express the process it names. If this process, as scientifically defined, really involved that conception which the word Evolution was *originally* designed to convey, the implications would be those alleged. But, unfortunately, the word, having been in possession of the field before the process was understood, has been adopted because displacing it by another word seems impracticable.

He believes the word Involution would better describe the process, but this, we think, would be merely the substitution of one unsuitable word for another.

It is admitted that the scientists of the past and present are the keenest observers of the phenomena of nature, both microcosmic and macrocosmic. But it is also to be borne in mind that their observations are of bodies only and their deductions and theories are based upon a completely materialistic concept of the universe. They observe the machine, but refuse to see that back of every machine is the machinist, the intelligence that designed and built it and keeps it running. Their concept is analogous to heaping up a certain amount of iron, tin, rubber, copper, gasoline and oil, etc., and expecting this heap to transform itself into an automobile which will travel and guide itself through traffic and perform all the functions of an automobile *with no guiding intelligence at the wheel*. The universe is not so constructed. First, there are the architects, who develop the idea and lay out the plan; second, the builders, who collect the materials and fashion them according to plan; and finally, the product, which is kept in repair and functioning by these same architects and builders. This by no means is merely a restatement of the idea of a "creation" through primary and secondary laws, which postulates that instead of creating the world and its creatures instantaneously, God established certain laws; that it is through these laws that the world came into being, and all living things have reached their present status. But space does not permit the discussion of the birth of worlds at the present time.

The details of scientific theories are not always logical deductions from their basic premises; sometimes the reverse is true. For example the premise that all forms which survive in the struggle with their hostile and changing environment are evolving from the lower to the higher may be considered as a fundamental of Darwinism. If this be true, some notable exceptions will have to be explained. The lowest forms of life and the highest show no fundamental development of form from the earliest geologic ages to the present. Writing on this point, H. P. Blavatsky states, giving her authority, that

There is no evidence of any fundamental modification or advance in the Foraminiferous type from the palaeozoic period to the present time. . . . (3)

The foraminifera are protozoa of the lowest type of life, mouthless and eyeless. Man, the highest visible form of life on the globe, she says, "has remained stationary in his human specialization ever since his fossil is found in the oldest strata. . . ." The lowest and the highest types of bodies have not fundamentally changed or transformed in geologic times!

There is a tendency among certain archaeologists quietly to lay aside any discoveries of human skeletal remains or artifacts, the publication of which would upset or discredit some of their pet theories concerning early humanity. Dr. Robert Broom, F. R. S., the world-famous anthropologist has said:

In the past, anthropologists have not been entirely free from blame. They have assumed, without any satisfactory evidence, that a skull with a large brain and a pointed chin is not likely to be old, and almost invariably when such a skull has been found, even though its credentials seemed to be thoroughly satisfactory, the anthropologists would have none of it. In 1863 a pointed jaw was got at Moulin Quignon, in France. It was associated with mammoth teeth and old stone axes, and is now forgotten. Sixty years ago the famous Collyer jaw was got in a very old deposit in Norfolk. It was examined by all the eminent

scientists of the day, but, as it was not of a typical monkey type and had a pointed chin, Science threw it in the waste-paper basket. The Galley Hill skull seemed quite certainly to be of great antiquity; but alas! it had a large brain and a pointed chin. So to-day anthropologists regard it with suspicion. (4)

When unbridgeable gaps are found to exist in the fossil evidence necessary to support a theory, creatures are invented to fill the gaps. Of course, the trained scientist realizes that these invented creatures are mere stop-gaps, but the public, seeing the pictures in our books and magazines and the statues in our museums, is allowed to take it for granted that all the mythical creatures depicted there have actually been discovered during the course of scientific research. Brutish looking men did exist, and still exist today. But the line of figures beginning with a small monkey and ending with modern man, professing to show in detail the steps by which the monkey has become the man, is pure fiction. No scientist would dare to declare otherwise.

Haeckel, in his division of the evolutionary history of man into twenty-six stages, is forced to invent the twentieth stage, the *Lemuri vidae*. This he freely admitted, but said as it *must* have existed, he felt justified in inserting this mythical creature into man's hypothetical family tree. Dr. de Purucker says:

It was the old, old story, both in Huxley's case and in Haeckel's; what was good for their theories was accepted and pressed home to the limit; and what was contrary to their theories was ignored or slurred over." (5)

In an article on evolution, G. Elliot Smith, M. A., LITT. D., M. D., F.R. C. P., F. R. S., Professor of Anatomy, University of London, writes:

"The ancestors of the human family are, of course, all extinct; but once the hypothetical pedigree is restored, it becomes possible. . . etc., etc." (6)

The word "hypothetical" is our key to the judging of the real value of most of these theories; for the dictionary defines Hypothesis as "A

supposition; a judgment concerning an imaginary state of things. . . . An ill-supported theory; a proposition not believed, but whose consequences it is thought desirable to compare with facts." Taking this definition literally, it is well to remember that the system of thought commonly called Darwinism is nothing more than a well ordered series of hypotheses built upon a false original premise, that of the materialistic concept of Nature.

Although many of the conclusions of Darwin, Haeckel, and Huxley are not accepted by the scientists of today, they, the scientists, still teach that man, in common with the primates, is derived from a now extinct pre-simian stock. This makes man a cousin of the apes instead of their direct descendant, but the idea has not changed — that man is derived from a stock belonging to the animal kingdom. The following are some current opinions on the subject. Robert W. Hegner in his *College Zoology* places man at the beginning of the primates. Professor Frederic Wood Jones states:

We may say that not only is Man more primitive than the monkeys and apes, having become differentiated specifically in an extremely remote past, but also that he has been a creature which walked upright on his two feet for an astonishingly long period. (7)

Professor Boule, of Paris, reaches this conclusion:

[Man has] been derived neither from the Anthropoid stem, nor from any other group, but from a very ancient Primate stock that separated from the main line even before the giving off of the Lemuroids. (8)

In comment on the above quotations it may be stated that no skeletal remains have ever been found to substantiate the statement that man ever was a quadruped. The earliest human remains indicate that man has always walked upright on his two feet. The statement of H. P. Blavatsky that "Man has been man from the beginning of this Round" cannot be contradicted by any evidence produced by the

anthropologists. We cannot entirely agree with the statement of Professor Boule that man is "derived from a very ancient Primate stock that separated from the main line. . . ." MAN is the main line from which all other stocks departed. The human body is more primitive, less specialized, than the body of any other animal. By specialization is meant the departure from the primitive physical type, producing a body structurally adapted to the performance of a particular function or environment. A well known example will illustrate the point. Man, the whale, and the bat are all mammals. The whale took to the water and now looks and acts like a fish; the bat took to the air, where it surpasses most birds in ease of flight. The less evolved creatures, being derived from the then human stock in past geologic ages, have specialized, each according to its swabhava; and specialization must not be mistaken for evolution — in fact, the greater the specialization, the less evolutionary advancement. Man, the most evolved of the visible beings of earth, has specialized less than any of his younger brothers. For a more comprehensive analysis of the proofs of man's primitive origin, the reader is referred to Dr. de Purucker's *Man in Evolution*, chapter VIII.

While not denying that man did not always express himself in exactly the same kind of a body he now uses, and that during the earlier races of this Round his body might be described as 'ape-like', the idea that man is simply an evolved ape is denied point-blank by Theosophy. And now we are using the word "man" in a more technical sense. Man is not his body. Neither is he simply a bundle of energies that cause the body to function. Man *per se* is the thinker; not the brain, which some materialistic schools picture as a sort of chemical retort, out of which, through complex chemical reactions involving cells, fluids, etc., comes thought and reasoning, and the qualities and attributes which make man MAN. Man is the thinker, the spiritual-divine entity, which at his present stage of evolution is using the brain and body as instruments, vehicles of manifestation on this physical plane.

This question is sometimes asked: what harm is there in teaching that we are derived from apes? Should we not feel a sense of gratification

that we have evolved from such a low type into our present human stage? No harm probably would be done were it not for that aspect of Darwinism which teaches that evolution comes through a struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest; in other words, the law of fang and claw. When this kind of philosophy is applied to social, economic, and political systems the results are disastrous. Huxley, the greatest proponent of the ape-to-man theory, himself is quoted as follows:

Whatever difference of opinions may exist among experts, there is a general consensus that the ape and tiger methods of the struggle for existence are not reconcilable with sound ethical principles. The practices which promote the best interests of society and mankind repudiate ruthless self-assertion and the gladiatorial theory of existence.

The degree to which the teachings of Darwin, Huxley, and Haeckel may influence the most brilliant minds is instanced by the following quotations from Nietzsche, that strange, erratic, self-contradictory genius. At his best he reaches a state of spirituality and beauty not easily understood; at his worst he wrote as follows:

Here is the new law, O my brethren, which I promulgate unto you. Become hard; for creative spirits are hard. You must find a supreme blessedness in imposing the mark of your hand, in inscribing your will, upon thousands and thousands, as on soft wax. (9)

And again in the same work:

Such ideas as mercy, and pity, and charity are pernicious, for they mean a transference of power from the strong to the weak, whose proper business it is to serve the strong. Remember that self-sacrifice and brotherliness and love are not real moral instincts at all, but merely manufactured compunctions to keep you from being your true self. Remember that man is essentially selfish.

This is simply carrying the implications of Darwinism to their logical

conclusion.

Nevertheless, Darwin cannot be blamed for the destructive philosophies which have been drawn from his writings and which are loosely called Darwinism. He saw in every act of nature a step toward the improvement of all beings. What a pity that Darwin was not a little more of a philosopher! On the final page of *The Origin of Species* he writes:

When I view all beings not as special creations, but as the lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Cambrian system was deposited, they seem to me to be ennobled. . . . There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, while this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved.

Darwinism has focused our attention on bodies; bodies are important, of course, as our chief vehicles of expression on this physical plane. But man, let us repeat, is not his body. Man is — not *has* — but is — a spark of the Divine, traveling the path — often stumbling — that leads to the heart of the Universe, which is himself.

Let us return to the word Evolution. Dr. de Purucker's definition has been given above. Martineau defines it thus:

It means to unfold from within; and it is taken from the history of the seed or embryo of living natures. And what is the seed but a casket of prearranged futurities, with its whole contents prospective, settled to be what they are by reference to ends still in the distance?

Evolution does not mean that through the fuller expression of innate powers and faculties an entity grows into some other higher entity; through the unfolding of inwrapped, infolded qualities the entity grows into a higher form of itself. This may be illustrated by a familiar

example: the horse of today is derived from the tiny creature, now extinct, known as the eohippus. Now these two animals are not different and distinct creatures; the horse may be called a highly evolved eohippus, or the eohippus may be called the primitive horse. They are one and the same type of specialization reaching a final point through different stages of physical evolution.

In discussing the Theosophical statement of true evolution, the reader is asked to accept two fundamental postulates. These are not contrary to the findings of modern science — in fact they are accepted by some of the leading scientists of today. The only quarrel between the Theosophist and the scientist is that the former cannot see why the latter will not carry the teachings of modern science to their logical conclusion. If this were honestly done many of the mysteries of science would cease to exist.

The first postulate is this: *All is life*, not life as an abstract quality or attribute, but a universe consisting of living beings. There is no such thing as dead matter. Everything in or making up the physical universe is alive; the atom, the cell, the man, the stone, the earth, the solar system, the galaxies, all are living beings. Our feeble senses of report cognize only the types of life manifest in plants, beasts, and men. But there are infinite reaches of life above and below these, just as there are infinite ranges of color above and below the visible spectrum, just as there are octaves of tone above and below that narrow band of tone audible to the human ear. It is extremely illogical and unscientific to deny the existence of something, simply because it is not appreciable to the ordinary five human senses; we may some day discover that we have senses that cognize ranges of tone and color and life above and below those now recognized by modern scientists!

Secondly: *Everything is evolving*. Every living being in kosmos, from the lowest to the highest, is growing, evolving, seeking ever to express more and more of the inherent, inwrapped, latent, powers and faculties which lie within its heart. For the heart of every entity, low or high, small or large, is one with the heart of the Universe, one with the

Heart of the All, the Boundless.

But the evolution of, the improvement of bodies, and in the case of man, the development of mind, is all that is recognized by scientists. Theosophy teaches that these are only the outward phenomena, and therefore of secondary importance. The important part of man's evolution is that of man himself, the thinker, the human monad. This human monad is the machinist behind the visible machine. While it is true that man's body is also pursuing its own course of evolution, as are also the cells and atoms composing the body, we will consider now only the evolution of the human monad; for the evolution of any entity in boundless space, visible or invisible, is an example of the evolution of all. Throughout eternity the monads which have now become the human monads have been evolving through timeless duration and the spaces of space. At last their pilgrimage brings them to this earth. At the beginning of their evolution here their bodies were not of physical flesh; they were of astral substance, as was the earth itself at that time. Slowly through the ages the earth and all the beings became more dense and physical. At the middle of the Atlantean Race the densest point of materiality was reached, and we are now on the upward arc; matter is again becoming less dense, more ethereal.

This etherealizing of matter will continue throughout the remainder of the duration of this planetary chain. Then, when the Day of Brahma is finished, the globes and all their inhabitants will sleep till the dawn of another Day.

Evolution is eternal. Never will any being in the Boundless All reach a point beyond which no progress is possible. With each new Day new vistas challenge us. We find new worlds to conquer, new heights of the Spirit to be attained.

For this let us be duly thankful!

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Man in Evolution*, p. 205. ([return to text](#))

2. *Yoga Aphorisms*, Bk. II, Aph. 18. ([return to text](#))
 3. *S. D.* II, 254 *et seq.* ([return to text](#))
 4. *The Illustrated London News*, March 18, 1929. ([return to text](#))
 5. *Man in Evolution*, p. 111. ([return to text](#))
 6. *Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, chapter "Anthropology."
([return to text](#))
 7. *The Problem of Man's Ancestry* ([return to text](#))
 8. *Ann. de Paleontologie*, 1912. ([return to text](#))
 9. *Also sprach Zarathustra*. ([return to text](#))
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The Theosophical Forum

A CONTINUOUS REVELATION — *Leoline L. Wright*

I wonder how many of our members have studied carefully the articles by G. de P. in the May, June and July issues of *The Theosophical Forum*. It is seldom, it seems to me, that so much material on a given point of our teachings has been brought together consecutively and elaborated with such detail. The very repetitions help towards clearness in one of the most difficult aspects of technical Theosophy.

The existence of a definite monad at the core of each of our principles, while of course implicit in *The Secret Doctrine*, is a point of knowledge we owe to G. de P. It is one of the keys which, without his help, the majority of us would have been unable to find. And it has cleared up for us some of the occult processes of evolution that would otherwise have remained obscure.

It is what grows out of these articles that is most illuminating and helpful to me. It places universal brotherhood as a fact in nature on a much firmer basis. Consider what it means in this connection that *our* animal souls will be the higher humanity of the next Globe-chain. Also that we will then be the Manasaputras who will awaken in that humanity the light of Manas or self-consciousness. Here is how G. de P. puts the matter:

Who were the manasaputras who awaked us intellectually? They were those who had attained Dhyan-Chohanship on the moon at the end of the Seventh Round, and we were then their animal monads. They found us out again, they sought us out again, our higher selves as it were waiting for them, waiting until our bodies were ready, until the human rupas were sufficiently subtil, flexible, to receive the intellectual fire . . . So shall we at the end of our Seventh Round become Dhyan-Chohans and be the manasaputras to the humanity of the next round who are now our human animal monads. (July issue, pp.

Here, too, is further evidence as to how practical are these deeper teachings of technical Theosophy. For are we not now suffering many things because of the mistakes and failures of the moon-men whose animal souls we were? This is part of our unfortunate karmic heritage from the moon.

So then, what of ourselves? What are our present faults and failures impressing upon our animal souls that they will have to struggle against in the next chain? Does this not place upon us a more compelling moral responsibility than just that of our own karmic salvation? If we are true students of Occultism this thought should give us an added motive for self-mastery.

Everyone who is a responsible human being feels an instinct to protect and help the animals below us. We have humane societies all over the world to protect them. And nothing arouses the detestation of decent men and women more than cruelty to an animal.

Yet how cruel we are most of the time to these developing animal souls within us. Cruel in the sense that we should call it cruelty to see a parent indulging a child in every form of self-indulgence, bad temper and meanness. When we are selfish or cruel or mean we impress upon the life-atoms of our animal souls just these qualities. They are qualities which when *they* become men will help to retard their spiritual evolution. And at the same time this will hold us back from our own path of progress in the future.

This does indeed give us something worth while both to think about and to act upon. The karmic implications of this teaching offer a manifold field for thought and study. And we are led afresh through these articles to realize how endless are the fresh lines of discovery and self-knowledge and self-directed evolution which open out of a study of Theosophy. It is indeed a continuous revelation.

"OUTSIDE THE WALLS" — *J. M. Prentice*

Many years ago, during a cycle of Evangelism that in some now inconceivable way wove itself into and intermingled with a quite definitely Catholic background in which it had no place, my voice might have been heard raised in the hymn.

*"There is a green hill far away,
Without a city wall. . . ."*

It is one of the idiosyncrasies of our speech that the word "without" can be used in a double sense; i.e. *minus* or *lacking*, and *outside*. It is in the latter sense, of course, that it is used in that old hymn. Nevertheless it always conjured up in my youthful mind a picture of a hill unwalled, so that, however lustily I sang, a sort of doubt always remained as to the necessity or even the desirability of a hill being enclosed by a wall that might ordinarily be found protecting a city. Perhaps it was this childish doubt that was the root from which a luxuriant foliage of agnosticism grew later. It is unprofitable to debate this now.

Some years later, in a more Catholic atmosphere again, I encountered, in some tome on Divinity, the Latin phrase *Extra Muros* and some deep but hidden association of ideas called up extra consideration for it, beyond its bare but theological significance. It also can be translated as "Without the Walls" — in the sense of being beyond, of course. It applies to those who are without knowledge of, or belief in the Faith, so often spoken of as that once delivered to the Saints. . . .

To me it is a phrase that has lingered through the years. From time to time it recurs and always produces a mental picture of those unhappy people who lack faith and who, almost willing to be convinced, remain outside the fold, conscious of something that either they lack or have missed, desirous of the safety that comes from being with the protection, yet never quite achieving this objective.

So today, as a Theosophist — without quite feeling myself worthy of such a proclamation — I find that there are many people who stand at the threshold of the Theosophical Society and who are unable to find the portal; who look longingly at the security of faith and morals that Theosophy over everything else has to offer and who still do not join in with us. Nor do they always stand: for many it is their unhappy fate

*"To be imprisoned in the viewless winds
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendant world. . . ."*

These people are indeed *extra muros*, and I ask myself why. What is there lacking in our presentation of the Ancient Wisdom that they cannot instantly respond to its gracious and comforting, all-encompassing beauty? So vast is its all-embracingness that there is no reason why anyone should be excluded; so ample and generous is its protection that none should feel that it is not for him. There is no questioning of heart or mind to which Theosophy has not the answer, although it is not given to all Theosophists to supply it at the healing moment, or in the right tone and terms. Let it be fully accepted, then, that it is not the Esoteric Philosophy that is at fault. Does it not follow, therefore, that it is the exponents who are missing some golden opportunity? In many if not in all cases I think it is.

It is the nice balance between technical knowledge of Theosophy and the living of the Theosophical life that is required above all else. Many people have a wide grasp of the mental concepts of Theosophy and can expound them in the most admirable way. To hypothetical questions answers can be given that are academically perfect, but the heart is not touched nor comforted when the same question is met with in the mundane life of everyday affairs. Was it not St. James who said "Faith without works is dead"; he was an eminently practical saint, although perchance he never experienced the ecstasy of the beatific vision. Hence it is, to me at any rate, that it is the living of the life that counts; "the standard that a great man setteth up, by that do the people judge" (*Bhagavad-Gita*). Any, not only the great.

Every effort should be made to draw inside those who look over our Theosophical wall, and who can thereby be expected to see us happy within its shelter. We must never be exclusive. Yet numbers in the Theosophical Society are not everything. Valuable as the organisation is, mere membership does not suddenly or instantly confer an accolade. Yet none who approaches should go hungry away; no matter how much mental or spiritual help is given the reservoir is not lowered, for it is inexhaustible. By all means let us have lodges and study-groups in which membership and participation may have fixed limits, but never let it be said that any one came to our doors and was turned away.

Recently there were three books published simultaneously in England, dealing with post-war problems. Written by men of high authority all were agreed on this — that a recognition of spiritual values, of a spiritual basis for man and the universe, was necessary if any lasting good was to be gained. Yet all three felt in some way that the orthodox faith lacked that subtle something that would make for self-discipline, a willingness to self-sacrifice, that would fire a generation with new ambitions and show new sources of inspiration. It was in my heart to wish that each of these writers had had a knowledge of Theosophy. Therein would have been found the necessary stimulus.

It seems to me that the world today needs the cement of Theosophy, both nationally and internationally, as never before. Hence we should be doing everything to expand our public work. In the new age that is emerging Theosophy is the *only* faith, philosophy or science that can provide everything that is required. For it includes all these in its generous comprehensiveness.

Let us so live the Theosophic life that all who come in contact with us will be drawn to us, naturally and easily. We should be centers of inner peace in a world of storms. Let us study the magnificent teachings that are our legacy from four great and spiritually illumined Leaders. Study them so that we can supply on the instant and in the most helpful way the answers to problems — personal or national. Yet withal modestly,

giving all the credit to Theosophy and seeking no special recognition for ourselves.

All so very easy to write, someone says; all so very difficult to practice. But whoever said that the Theosophic life is easy? It is not — yet the reward for living such a life — as has been so eloquently pointed out by the greatest of all Theosophists — is the power to heal and bless Humanity. Never was such power so needed. Should we not all pledge ourselves to do all in our power to achieve such an end?

The Theosophical Forum

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM — *Grace Frances Knoche*

"The Lord is my Shepherd, my Friend and Companion, I shall not grow less" — what more beautiful and strengthening thought than that the Self in man is one's Guardian, Friend and constant Companion through all the trials and sorrows of earthly life.

This Twenty-third Psalm when translated with words as grammatically accurate as the King James Version, but with an eye to freeing the spirit to perceive what the original Hebrew Song meant, is seen clearly as the story of the soul's birth in Godhood through initiatory trial.

The very beauty of the words used in the orthodox version can be a danger, however, for worship of form rather than reverence for the vital truth behind that form may lead to the closing of the Open Eye of the Seer which each one of us is in our inmost. In order more easily to discern the occult significance, therefore, of this psalm as contained in the Hebrew we have made our own translation with no attempt to compete with the literary excellence of the King James Version, which itself is a masterpiece of English prose, but rather, as stated, in order by the use of words carefully chosen for verbal as well as esoteric accuracy to release more fully its essential message. For ease of comparison and comment, on the left is the King James Version, and on the right our rendition:

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| 1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. | 1. The Self is my Guardian, I shall not grow less. |
| 2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. | 2. In open places of virgin growth he causes me to take birth; unto waters of repose he leads me. |
| 3. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. | 3. He leads back my soul; he guides me in paths of strength for the sake of his essence. |
| 4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff | 4. Yes, verily, although I press forward into the valley of the image of death I fear not evil, for thou art with me. Thy scepter and |

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| <p>they comfort me.</p> <p>5. Thou prepares a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup overflows.</p> <p>6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.</p> | <p>thy staff, they sustain me.</p> <p>5. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of those who bind me; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.</p> <p>6. Assuredly, splendor and compassion will follow after me all the days of my lives, and I shall endure in the temple of the Self to the utmost extent of my days.</p> |
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Verse 1: The Lord or Self in the Hebrew is *Yehowah*, because Jehovah to the Jewish people represented their God, which the Theosophist in this instance may interpret as signifying man's inner divinity or Highest Self, the Lord or Immanent Christ. The Self or the Lord, therefore, is my Guardian, *ro'eh*, meaning shepherd, also guardian, friend, companion, helper, to that human self which cannot "want," i.e., grow less or decrease, in power once the link is made with the Self, and as long as it wills to keep the links of such companionship unbroken.

Verse 2: Bine'oth deshe" yarbitseni — translated by King James as "green pastures," correctly enough, but likewise as accurately rendered, and we believe more suggestively, by "open places of virgin growth." *Ne'oth*, plural of *na'dh*, meaning "dwelling, habitation, likewise an unprotected open place"; *deshe'*, "field, tender grass, young herbiage," i.e. virgin growth; a phrase which immediately suggests those ever virgin fields of the spirit where the soul seeks refreshment and renewed life. *Yarbitseni*, causative form of verbal root *rabats*, translated by Fuerst "to lie, lie down, especially of animals; of men, to settle down calmly, securely; and of birds to hatch." What objection then to using the idea of hatching, whether of birds or human souls, for did not the Egyptians depict both the human soul, *ba*, and the spiritual intelligence or Self, *khu* or *akh*, in their hieroglyphics as birds? Thus, "in open places of virgin growth he (the Self) causes me (the human soul) to take birth," or "to rest securely" if we prefer, in the fields of Spirit, beside the waters of inner quiet.

Verse 3: My soul the Self of me leads back to its source; My Self guides me in paths of strength: *tsedeq*, meaning "power, strength, victory"; for the "sake of

his essence" — *shemo* from *shem*, a word having a number of meanings, among them "sign, memorial, monument and name," but also signifying, according to Fuerst, "the internal essence," *i.e.*, the monadic source.

These three verses thus portray, in the language of the Mystery-chamber, the trials and discipline undergone in the preliminary degrees of the Initiatory cycle: the *katharsis* or soul-purification coupled with wise instruction in and of the "open places of the spirit," *i. e.* the development of the spiritual and intellectual fiber of the constitution through correct knowledge *pari passu* with uninterrupted aspiration and self-imposed discipline.

Verse 4: In these lines is the story of the travail of the soul in the Fourth degree of Initiation: the dread journey "in the valley of the image of death," the Underworld, whither the soul must, not walk, but press forward without aid, without guidance, from above. Note the phrase "image of death," not the ordinary death of the physical body when the soul is released into the care of its Higher Self, but "image" or "phantom" of Death where the body is laid on a cruciform couch and kept alive through the agency of the Great Ones, while the soul, naked and bereft of outer help, travels self-consciously the paths of death: fearless of evil because "thou art with me," the "thou" being the self-developed spiritual integrity which must now prove itself adamant against the seductive regions of Hell.

"Thy rod and thy staff": this word "rod" in the orthodox version is perfectly correct, but it has bothered a number of earnest Christians, laymen and theologians alike; access to the Hebrew, however, solves the difficulty at once: the rod is *shebet*, which means "stick," "rod," but also "scepter," derived from the verb-root *shabat*, "to strike, to beat out, to card," but likewise "to be firm, durable, to make strong." Thus *shebet* is that scepter of power which is derived only from and through the *disciplina arcana*, lives of it, guided by aspiration, for what else will make a man's soul durable, strong, diamond-hard against the "delights" of matter? *Mish'eneth*: "staff" or "support," that sustaining help that comes when most needed, and indeed when least expected, *as long as the links are kept firm with the Self*.

Verse 5: Another phase of the *muesis* or initiation: the meeting of one's past: "mine enemies" as King James translated *tsorerai*, but equally correctly rendered as "those who oppress and bind me": that foul brood of weak and evil thoughts engendered in ages past, but which have not only left their heavy deposits in the fabric of the soul, but likewise in the record of

surrounding Nature, the Astral Light, and which, at the moment of supreme trial, return as evil beings come to slay the aspirant, or themselves be vanquished by the neophyte triumphant in test.

And after the temptation, Success and the *Summum Bonum*: "thou anointest my head with oil" — mystery-language pointing to one of the most beautiful and sacred of ancient rites: the crowning of the head with oil of purification, the making the man a *Christos*, a *Mashiahh* (Messiah) — an "anointed" one, i.e. an Initiate.

"My cup overflows" — so grand and potent is the wine of Life that pours into the chalice of the soul from the Spiritual Sun through the Self in this final solar rite, that it overflows into the entire nature, and the neophyte, now initiate, is literally, as Dr. de Purucker has taught us, bathed in solar glory, because he has become in his own right a "Son of the Sun."

Verse 6: Here is epitomized the boon of the final *epopteia* or "revelation" which follows as the natural sequence upon the successful passing of the *katharsis* and *muesis*, previously described: from now on *tob wahhesed*, "goodness, also beauty and splendor, and compassion" will follow me all the days of my *lives* (note the plural), for my soul henceforth is anchored in the temple of the Self unto the farthest extent of time. The Solar Initiation complete, the chela has become Adept, and another member is added to the Brotherhood.

Surely in this Hebrew Song is to be found a gem of profound beauty and esoteric worth, priceless beyond measure, for it is the song of the birth of the self in the Self, the human in the Divine.

The Theosophical Forum

SEND IN YOUR QUESTIONS

The sevenfold seven principles

We have not yet fully understood the idea of there being a sevenfold nature for each of the seven principles. For example we find it difficult to define Buddhi-Sthula-sarira, Kama-Prana, etc. Again, is Atman-Sthula-sarira the same as Atman-Linga-sarira, *i.e.*, is the Atmic division of each principle the same for all? Perhaps you could give us some references on this difficulty.

— F. W. and J. E. L.

H. T. Edge — I think the difficulty arises from taking too mechanical a view, and in forgetting that diagrams are symbolic — not pictorial. The septenary principle runs throughout nature. A supreme Logos emits seven rays, and each ray, penetrating a particular plane of substantiality, becomes itself a logos and emits its own seven rays. We must not think of the seven principles and their subdivisions as if they were seven strings of beads with seven beads on each string. This is a purely physical conception. If we speak of Buddhi as having a seventh principle corresponding to the seventh principle in man — the physical body, this does not mean that Buddhi has anything like a physical body. It means that Buddhi has its rupa aspect, its lowest vehicle, which is *analogous* to our physical body, but not *similar* to it. Every one of the seven principles has its own quintessence — its Atma; and its outermost vehicle — its body, so to say; and so on with the other members of the septenate. Thus we might speak of the Kama aspect of Atma as being that aspect which causes it to desire to infuse its essence into things. Again, the Kamic principle is neither good nor bad; it is in its highest aspect Divine Love; its grossest aspect is physical desire; and so we can say that it has seven aspects. It is like taking the seven colors of the rainbow and dividing each into seven shades, so as to enumerate a red red, a yellow red, a green red, and so on.

It is important to try to find out the meaning of this teaching by relating it to your own experience, rather than by memorizing it out of a text-book. I heard a member say that she had found this teaching of the compound nature of the seven principles to be one of the most illuminating keys to the understanding of character that she had ever found. The physical body has various centers, such as heart, brain, navel, etc., which correspond to the seven principles; so we can see for ourselves that the physical body is septenary. It must be the same with the *linga-sarira*. The *mayavi-rupa* in which a *nirmanakaya* moves, is a sort of body, but yet it is not a physical body.

Definition of Truth

Some time ago I read *Generation of Vipers*, which is a terrific indictment of pretty nearly everybody and everything. The writer states, with some logic I think, that there are plenty of good people and good things in the world, but that the bad people and bad things should be pulled out from under the covers and given a good going over — which he does.

He makes a point which interests me deeply. He has a definition of "Truth," and "Truth," as he understands it, is the one thing which will set the world free and establish among men that relationship which some would call "Brotherhood," and which is spoken of by Christ as "The Kingdom of Heaven."

Now, the "Truth," as he defines it, is not an abstract quality; it is a very real and concrete thing, dealing with man's knowledge of himself, and the man who has found that truth has found all that he needs to know to make his life complete, but until such knowledge becomes universal, there will be wars and other corruptions to plague the world.

Christ said it: "Know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free"; you people say it: "There is no religion higher than Truth." Have you a definition of that Truth? I should very much like to have it, for I see there something, not religious in the ordinary sense,

but very practical and sensible and a guide to the proper technique of living. — E. N.

H. T. Edge — In common usage the word Truth denotes an abstraction; our reasoning powers can grasp it in no other way. Nevertheless Truth is a Reality; it is the ultimate Reality — that which *is*. But let us for the present leave abstract philosophy alone, and come to the practical point. This universal Essence lies at the inmost heart of every living being, and it is the essence of man himself. It seeks to manifest itself through man, and man in turn must continually pursue it until he finds it. He inevitably makes it the touchstone of all his values, his ultimate court of appeal.

But on the long road to the attainment of truth there are many stages, many goals of relative truth to be attained one by one; for man climbs step by step.

Truth cannot be had for the mere asking or bought over the counter by the average citizen, however proud he may be of himself. It is the ultimate reward of a long and arduous struggle. *Per ardua ad astra*. It is the goal of the disciple who has entered the Path that leads to wisdom and emancipation. Jesus, in the quotation given, says, "If ye continue in my word," then you shall find the truth which shall make you free. If we fail to find the truth, let us put the blame where it belongs — on our own incapacity. The exposing of shams is a worthy work and a necessary item in the business of enlightening mankind. Yet the warrior will find himself better equipped if he prepares himself by cleansing his own house. The Kingdom of God is within you. We must strive to achieve perfect sincerity in our own inside: clear out all delusions of vanity, self-love, egoism, self-justification, etc.; and be perfectly candid and honest with ourselves. To see straight, we must clean our spectacles. This will provide enough to occupy us for a considerable time. Then, with our vision cleared, we shall be enabled to see the good in other people, where formerly we saw only the faults. Thus we shall attain a sympathetic attitude, and be able to help others by bringing out the innate truth in them, rather than by running atilt at

the shams.

There may be teachers, religions, societies, claiming to have the truth; but in every case the ultimate touchstone is our own innate sense of what is right. What other court of appeal can there be? Real Teachers never ask acceptance of a statement on their authority, but insist that the disciple shall verify it for himself; otherwise he has no knowledge, but only belief or faith. Yet any reasonable pupil will accept statements provisionally, through well-founded confidence in his Teacher and a conviction that he will later attain confirmation by his own experience. No specific prescription can be given, but we may advise that true self-reliance should be cultivated, which is a very different thing from self-importance.

We hope the questioner will not think that we are reflecting upon him, for this is far from being the case; as we are only trying to help him in the problem as to which he asks our assistance. And we believe that what has been said reflects his own ideas on the subject.

The Length of the Period between Earth-Lives

On first hearing of the doctrine of Reincarnation I was greatly attracted to it because it gives man an opportunity to work out on earth many phases of his character, and I was also taken with the thought that one could return to earth quickly in order to resume the thread of endeavor which had been snapped at death. But I was somewhat taken aback when I discovered that one does not return to earth quickly but only after a very long time: for if 1500 years is the average period for the Devachanic rest, that is certainly a long time. However, could you tell me whether H. P. Blavatsky has written anything definite on this latter theme? — A. E. I.

G. A. Barborka — Yes, 1500 years is certainly a long time, but the teaching is consistent throughout our literature. In *The Key to Theosophy* there is a definite question and answer on this subject: The inquirer asks: "How long does the incarnating *Ego* remain in the

Devachanic state?" To this question the reply is given: "This, we are taught, depends on the degree of spirituality and the merit or demerit of the last incarnation. The average time is from ten to fifteen centuries, as I already told you." (p. 145) In common speech it is customary to regard the number "ten" or "fifteen" as a few centuries, so that it is often said that the period between earth lives is of a few centuries in duration.

Let us place beside this statement another made by H. P. Blavatsky, in *The Secret Doctrine*, as follows: "Save in the case of young children, and of individuals whose lives were violently cut off by some accident, no Spiritual Entity can re-incarnate before a period of many centuries has elapsed." (Vol. II, p. 303)

In this connexion it would be well to bear in mind the following passage from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, which was given in reply to a question dealing with the length of the period between earth-lives: "The individual units of mankind remain 100 times longer in the transitory spheres of *effects* than on the globes"; (p. 177). By other passages in this book it is quite clear that the phrase "spheres of *effects*" refers to the after-death states of man, while the "sphere of causes" pertains to our globe (Globe D). Therefore it would be logical to assume that if a man's life on earth endured for a period of sixty years, his after-death states would require a period of sixty hundred years. This tallies with the "many centuries" written by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*.

From the Known to the Unknown

How can you get over to the lay mind the truth of the divinity of man?

Abbott Clark — The same way that you would convince the lay mind of any unfamiliar or profound truth. By appealing to him through something which he already knows and then expanding the idea from the known to the unknown. Every man knows that he has an inherent moral sense and a conscience. Show him that these are, so far as they

go, of a spiritual or divine nature. Practically every man has some experience of an intuitional nature in which the consciousness or mind grasps a truth or an idea in a second of time, like a flash of light in the mind. He can hardly deny that this is far beyond any ordinary mental process. You can affirm, what our Teachers say, that this is a spiritual faculty. Then it is simply a matter of logic, of good sense, that these faculties have a divine source, and that like all other faculties of man, they can be cultivated, extended, developed. If he is still skeptical challenge him to think it over on that line and leave him to the thought. Experience proves that proceeding on this line — from the known to the unknown, *i. e.*, from what the inquirer knows to the larger, more reasonable and nobler concepts of Theosophy, will bring success in almost any field of Theosophical teaching, especially if accompanied by the spirit of non-dogmatic and fraternal sympathy of the kindly understanding heart.

The Theosophical Forum

FULFILMENT IN DEATH — *G. de Purucker*

A human spirit is a deathless entity; it is a part of the very fabric of the Life Universal in its inmost parts; and this spirit of man, this inner being, this spiritual soul, is pursuing an eternal pilgrimage in space, infinite in space and eternal in time. It passes from mansion to mansion of life . . . not only in this cross-section of the physical universe which our imperfect eyes can see, but most especially in the invisible realms: in what men call the spiritual worlds. . . .

But this god within, an eternal pilgrim, learns eternally, going higher and higher and higher; and like human races on earth which, after reaching their culmination of splendor in civilizations, fall to rise again, so does the Monad, the god, the spiritual soul, pass from the spiritual worlds down into ethereal matter, learning in each, and rising again out of each in order to reach a still higher peak of destiny; then down into the ethereal material realms again: then another rise to something still more lofty and sublime — and so on forever. . . . — pp. 77-8

After death, the nobler, brighter, purer, sweeter, seeds of character, the fruitage, the consequence, of our yearnings for beauty and for harmony and for peace, carry us into the realms where harmony and beauty and peace abide. And these realms are spheres just as earth is, but far more ethereal and far more beautiful: for the veils of matter are thinner, the sheaths of material substance there are not so thick as here. The eye of the spirit sees more clearly. Death releases us from one world, and we pass through the portals of change into another world, precisely as the inverse takes place when the incarnating soul leaves the realms of finer ether to come down to our own grosser and material earth-life into the heavy body of physical matter. . . . — p. 65

Death is an absolute sleep, a perfect sleep, a perfect rest; sleep is an incomplete death, an imperfect death. . . .

In going to your bed and in lying down and in losing consciousness, have you ever feared? No. It is so natural; it is so happy an occurrence; it is so restful. Nature rests and the tired brain reposes; and the inner constitution, the "soul" if you like so to call it, is temporarily withdrawn during the sleeping period into the higher consciousness of the human being — the ray, so to speak, is absorbed back into the inner spiritual sun.

Just exactly the same thing takes place at death; but in death the worn-out garment is cast aside; the repose also is long, utterly beautiful, utterly blissful, filled with glorious and magnificent dreams, and with hopes unrealized which now are realized in the consciousness of the spiritual being. This dreaming condition is a panorama of the fulfilment of all our noblest hopes and of all our dreams of unrealized spiritual yearnings. It is a fulfilment of them all in glory and bliss and perfect completion and plenitude. — pp. 55-57

Death is birth, *birth*; and instead of the wrench that there actually is in the case of youth when death comes, death to our old ones comes in peace and quiet, stealing like an angel of mercy into their being, releasing the bonds binding the soul to its vehicle of flesh; and the passage is as quiet and gentle as the coming of the twilight preceding night, and it is a blessed sleep. — p. 30

Love is the most beautiful, the holiest, thing known to human beings. It gives to man hope; it holds his heart in aspiration; it stimulates the noblest qualities of the human being, such as the sacrifice of self for others; it brings about self-forgetfulness; it brings also peace and joy that know no bounds. Love shows the Way and lights the Path; Love is the flowing forth of the permeant light, the Buddhic Splendor — the Christ-light — at the heart of the Universe: that love which, working in gods and men, teaches us to know beauty when we see it, especially inner beauty, to recognise greatness and splendor in others, from knowing the greatness and splendor in our own inmost being.

Love holds all things in place and in eternal keeping; its very nature is celestial Peace, its very characteristic is cosmic Harmony, permeating

all things, boundless, deathless, infinite, eternal. — pp. 107-8

Selections from G. de Purucker's *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*:
a reading given at the memorial service for Captain John R.
Beaver, late General Manager of Theosophical Headquarters,
May 23, 1943, and reprinted by special request.

The Theosophical Forum

THE VIRGIN BIRTH — *G. de Purucker*

The Christmas festival, and the teachings which have gone with it from early Christian days, are not at all Christian in origin. They never were invented by early Christian theologians or by Christian devotees, but were all based upon current Pagan ideas of the sanctuary. And this, very far from being an unusual event in Christian history, was a very common thing, for the Christians took over from the very philosophies and religions of the day which later they scorned and rejected, the great bulk of the ideas that in later times became what was known as Christian theology.

The early Christians were brought up in the Pagan world where it was an acknowledged fact that there was an exoteric religion or series of such religions, and a secret teaching kept only for those who had proved themselves to be fit and worthy to receive the teachings of the Mystery-Schools, the secret things of the Divine. All the exoteric faiths hid something wonderful, sublimely majestic, taught within the sanctuary. Get this fact clear, because it is history; and early Christian historians always blurred over or forgot or passed by that idea, without even a mere hint, and yet that is the atmosphere in which Christianity was born. If you get this key and hold it in your mind, you will have something by which you may unlock what has been so difficult even to Christian theologians themselves not merely to understand but to explain.

As regards the Virgin Birth, this is not anything original with Christianity. The conception has been common over the face of the earth from immemorial time. Many peoples in the archaic days taught of virgins giving birth to great sages and seers, and you may read this same story of Jesus the Avatara in other tongues and after other ways, but having essentially the same fundamental truth of a great man achieving manly divinity by a new birth. So common was this idea that it was even popular exoteric language of the streets and of the mart.

The Hindus spoke of a *dwija*, a twice-born, the idea being that of physical birth, born of the mother, as all sons of men are, but when ready after training, receiving inner birth, inner enlightenment, which was the second birth of the man, a new birth into the light of the spirit. You see how grand this thing is once we throw the light of Theosophy upon it. Yet it becomes no longer Christian but universal, and see how it appeals to the human heart and to the human mind. How grand indeed shines the light of truth upon the face of the man whose heart is enlightened by the sense of his oneness with all; and what pathos there is when the sense of separateness drives him away from his oneness with other men.

What did this teaching mean in the early days of Christianity? Precisely what it meant in all the other great Pagan countries. It represented scenes passed in the sanctuary where the neophyte or disciple after long training had so developed his inner being, his inner perceptions, that he was on the verge of becoming Christos, a Christ, or as the wonderful Mahayana Buddhism has it, a Bodhisattva. The next step would be that of Buddhahood. Even in exoteric writings this wonderful truth from the sanctuary was spoken of as virgin birth, a second birth; and all the saviors of man in whatever country, of whatever clime, and of whatever day, all the great ones, the sages and seers, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of highest rank, the greatest, were all born of the Mother, the holy spirit within. How beautiful, how true! It appeals to us instantly, and it is in strict accord with even the little that modern scientific research is beginning to tell us of what they call psychology. We all recognise it when a man's life is improved and raised by his own efforts and strivings to become greater. It is the first faint dawn in the mystic east, the beginning as it were of the holy birth pangs whereby a man becomes super-man. In time he becomes an incarnate god, the god within, and he thereafter manifests through the Christ-child, and the man of flesh becomes responsive to the inner flame, the inner light, the inner fire. See you not what dignity this lends to us human beings? What hope for the future for those who dare, who strive, who keep silent!

Here is a very significant thing in early Christian writings. If Mary were virgin, how could she give birth to children? In early Christian scripture there occurs a remarkable passage in the Greek Christian writings, and rendered into English it means: My Mother, the Holy Spirit — for the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, amongst primitive Christians was always feminine, never masculine as it became afterwards — my Mother, the Holy Spirit, took me by the hair of my head and brought me to the holy Mount Athor. Do you get it? Here is the spirit in me, the Holy Spirit, my Mother from whom I was born, born anew, no longer born of the flesh but born of the spirit: born first of water according to the flesh, then born of fire according to the spirit: the first birth and the second birth. This is indeed the virgin birth; for the spirit of man, a ray from the divine, from the ineffable, is eternally virgin, and yet eternally fecund, eternally productive. The cosmic Christ is born of the cosmic Spirit, feminine also in ancient time, and in the same way is the spiritual man feminine, and in the holiness of achievement gives birth to the Bodhisattva, the Christ-child, and from then on the man is infilled with the holiness of the spirit pouring through him from the source divine.

What connexion has all this with the Sun? From immemorial time, Father Sun was looked upon with reverence: not necessarily the physical globe clothed with beauty and light and splendor and vital energy, the giver of light unto his own kingdom, but the divinity within and above and behind that sun as of all other stars. Our sun was an emblem of the cosmic spirit, for through that sun poured these floods of vital splendor and life and light: light for the mind and love for the heart, without which no man is man.

Even the Christians used to sing hymns to the sun, record of which is still extant, outside of other references, in a communication by Pliny, governor of Bithynia and Pontus, to the Emperor Trajan in Rome. He said that in his jurisdiction the Christians seemed to be innocent and harmless folk, for they assembled every morning at rise of the sun and sang hymns to that divinity. And in a collection of old Christian hymns

we have one of those hymns to the sun still extant, something I have often quoted from this platform. In English it is: "O thou true sun, shine on forever, glittering with perpetual light. (Now hearken to this:) Image of the holy spirit (not merely a creation of holy spirit but its image), image of the holy spirit, infill us full." No Parsi or so-called Sun worshiper ever created a more typical hymn to the sun than these early Christians did. These earliest Christians knew what they meant; they did not worship the physical sun, it was the divine light, teaching what the sun stood for. The sun was the emblem, the image, of the Cosmic Christ, not a creation of god, but the image of the Divine. O thou true sun — and the most common expression among the Christians was to liken their Savior Jesus the Avatara to the Sun.

I would that I had the time and could tell you more of the recondite mysteries of this teaching, but I will merely say this: that in man's constitution there is a solar element. Could it be otherwise? There is a lunar element, and an element derivative from every one of the planets. Even modern science tells us today that we not merely share in the cosmic light, and as they say the cosmic heat, that reaches us from Father Sun, but that the very heat we get from the coal which we burn or the wood which we burn, originally came from the sun, that the atoms which compose it are the same which passed through us, that the solar body reaches not merely the earth but all the other planets. Of course there is a solar element in us and a lunar element and an element from each one of the planets. Otherwise we should be incomplete. Man has everything within himself that the Universe has!

I will just close with this thought: Even though I have all knowledge and have not love in my heart, it profiteth me nothing; for it is simply a declaration that the man is incomplete, unevolved, because, being a part of the Universe, he does not show forth or manifest all that is in the Universe, everything that the whole has. I might have all the truth in the world, but I cannot understand it properly. I can reason and think about it, but I do not get the coherency of the reality because the heart is not yet awake within me. The magic key of love flames not yet in my breast.

Just ask yourself this question: Two men you know. One has all the knowledge in the world, but he is heartless; and the other is a simple-minded man, is not sophisticated, but his heart is great with love's universal, all-comprehensive sympathy. Which of the twain would you choose for a companion, and one to whom you can turn in time of trouble? — A Very Happy Christmas to you all!

— Informal talk at a public meeting, Point Loma, California,
December 22, 1940.

The Theosophical Forum

CO-OPERATING WITH KARMA — *H. T. Edge*

The doctrine of reincarnation, and its twin doctrine of the workings of Karma from one incarnation to another, are of course truths, and there is always need to know of them and to appreciate them. Nevertheless it remains true that ulterior causes operate through proximate causes: fire will not bake our bread without the assistance of the baker, nor can Hercules lift the wagon out of the rut unless the wagoner puts his own shoulder to the wheel. So we must be careful not to slip into the habit of thinking of Karma as though it were an extraneous and alternative cause disputing the responsibility with minor causes, and invoked as an explanation in cases where we fail to discern the proximate cause. Again, it would be wrong to imagine that, when a more familiar explanation of an occurrence or experience is suggested, the operation of Karmic law is thereby depreciated; on the contrary such an explanation supports faith in Karma by showing us some of its ways of working.

If the experiences of people's lives were examined with a more seeing eye, it might become more evident that such experiences were the natural and inevitable result of their conduct and character in the present life. Thus, if a person who has so far led a life of ease and comfort should suddenly be plunged into privation, it is not necessary to call in, by way of explanation, some avenging or chastening deity or power. For such a result may be attributed to the effects of satiety. The individual himself, in his inner nature, actually craves such a change: he has disturbed the natural and all-pervading law of harmony by going to excess in one direction, and senses the need of an adjustment. And, since this deeper nature of his has the power to bring about results, the said results are thereupon brought about. The outer or lower nature, not understanding what has happened, complains, and casts about for some other explanation of what seems to it unjust and arbitrary. It is well for us that our lives are not confided to the

unchecked guidance of our shortsighted and fatuous lower minds; and that there is within us a wiser vision and a surer hand to direct our feet on the path which we secretly know we ought to follow if we are to reap the full fruition of our experiences and to round out our character on a less petty scale. The chastening hand of affliction has often brought people to a thankful recognition of its beneficent effect; it has taught them to feel for others rather than to be so engrossed in self.

Again take the so-called "good" people, of whom we read in first-class romances. Even though the author of such a romance may fail to see the point, it may become clear to the reader that the so-called "good" person is in reality selfish and self-indulgent; and there is such a thing as moral self-indulgence and self-satisfaction. The villain of the story, on the other hand, may have the virtues lacking in the hero or heroine. He is more sincere and honest; he is not a humbug. This probably explains the sympathy we so often feel for him, and our comparatively weak respect for the hero. The reverse of fortune which comes down on the good person is felt to be a necessary lesson, needed to get him out of his comfortable and self-approving rut.

In short, we know so little of people's real characters (including our own), that our failure to discern the justice of an event or experience may be due mostly to our ignorance in that respect. We know there is an immutable law of readjustment, but, as said, this law must act through secondary causes, and it is interesting and helpful to examine into these. It might perhaps be as well to say here, in order to meet probable objections, that neither the present remarks nor any other reasonable explanations of Karmic law deprives anybody of the privilege of feeling sympathy and exercising compassion, if so minded. For if on the one hand it is impossible to interfere with Karma, there is no more to be said; and if, on the other hand, we *can* interfere with Karma, then we do it equally whether we withhold our help or afford it. "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin."

To believe in Karma does not prevent us from trying to understand its workings. We do not need to make it into a personal God, which

"moves in a mysterious way, its wonders to perform," or "hides a smiling providence behind a frowning face." We shall better co-operate with it when we understand it better.

The Theosophical Forum

KARMA AND REINCARNATION — *William Q. Judge*

The doctrine of Karma cannot be considered properly without keeping Reincarnation in view, for Karma could not have its proper place and operation unless reincarnations furnished the material for it to show itself in. Reincarnation is, indeed, itself a part of, and is as well a cause of Karma, because the reincarnated man, struggling with fate, ignorance, and desires, generates constantly new causes that may result in further reincarnations.

The meaning of the word Karma must be inquired into. It really means *action*. It is the action of the Divine, or God, or the unmanifested, or Brahma, and also of every sentient being. All worlds are subject to it, as is declared in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, where it says: "All worlds up to that of Brahma are subject to Karma." Hence it is found operating in all planes. It is Karma that brought us here, that will take us to Devachan, and afterwards bring us out of that condition. For if Karma does not act superiorly to Devachan, then we could never emerge from the latter; but the moment "the reward is exhausted in the heavens of Indra" — which is a description of Devachan — Karma seizes upon the ego and draws it into another body, there to begin again the adjustment of the scales.

The Buddhists did not lose time in wandering about, lost in illogical doctrines of salvation and favor from a jealous god, but considered the problem presented by the vicissitudes of life, in the extraordinary fact that the just man often receives no reward nor the wicked one punishment. Finding an explanation needed, they hit upon the word Karma, or Kamma as they call it in Ceylon. This is briefly stated by Rev. P. T. Terunnanse, F. T. S. of Ceylon. "Kamma when viewed thus is good or bad deeds of sentient beings, by the infallible influence or efficiency of which the said beings are met with due rewards or punishments, according as they deserve, in any state of life. And we must remember that the world has no being, in the essential sense, but is subject to an

alternating process of destruction and renovation."

This leads us to consider the erroneous views of some as to what Karma is. Some think it an evil influence that stands ready to strike a man at the first favorable moment, and I have met more of those who looked at it thus than as being also the good results and compensations of life. It cannot be properly called "the law of ethical causation" only, for if it applies "to all worlds up to Brahma," it must be more than this.

It is the great law which operates also through a manvantara, and which — considering a manvantara as a great Being made up of all beings included therein — causes each manvantara to be the exact resultant of the one which preceded it.

Nor should we make the error of applying it only to ourselves as a great whole, for it affects every atom in our bodies. As we are in fact made up of a *mass of lives*, our thoughts and acts affect these atoms or lives and impress them with a Karma of their own. This again rebounds on us as well as on all other atoms or lives.

Karma is a great benefactor, for it never fails to mete out all compensation, and that demands that the smallest good act or thought should bring what we call reward. Now as we have been reincarnated over and over again, we have met each other in previous lives. The laws of affinity and harmony require that those who are now together must have been with each other before. So the acts of charity and kindness we perform now will compel similar acts to be done for us in other lives; and is bringing about such in this life because we did those of like nature in another life. As the *Voice of the Silence* says, "Help them today and they will help you tomorrow." So I believe that I am working now to help you and you me, because there still exists a reciprocal obligation.

The causes of reincarnation are desire and ignorance. We have what we term "will," but our will is moved into action by desire, and our acts spring from the desire to bring about pleasure or to avoid pain. As long as we are ignorant we constantly fix our desires upon enjoyment or the

avoidance of pain, and thus lay the ground for the operation of Karma in another body.

In each life all previous Karma is not exhausted, because the desires and old meditations are not able to manifest themselves unless the apparatus or sort of body is provided which will permit the bringing up to the surface of the old impressions. This is clearly set forth in Patanjali's *Yoga Philosophy*. Thus by means of inheritance of bodily frames of various sorts, the ego may exhaust by degrees its Karma, and this explains the differences in men. The man who has a great wide brain takes hold of old Karma which that apparatus may exhaust.

And at this point ignorance shows its power. As, ignorant of the law we sin against it, we receive the result, or, acting in accord with it, another result; in the one case sorrow, in the other, happiness. So we must beware, having become acquainted with the law, that we do not continue as trespassers, for in the present life we settle the opportunities for the next and determine whether we shall in that succeeding reincarnation have opportunity to live with good men, helped by them, or among the vile, ever pushed toward evil.

Of the more recondite mysteries of Reincarnation I will not speak, since those are more or less speculative, but will divide it thus:

- a. Reincarnation in good surroundings and in a good body, and
- b. Reincarnation in the opposite sort of body and in an evil family.

Karma as affecting us we may for the present analyse thus:

- a. That sort which is now operating in our present life and body;
- b. That which is held over and will operate in other lives or in a later period of this one;
- c. That which we are making for other lives to come.

The fields in which Karma may operate are:

- a. In the body only, or the mere circumstances of life;
- b. In the mental plane when trials of the mind are felt;

c. In the psychological nature.

The spiritual plane is not affected by Karma at any time.

Karmic causes may interfere with each other and produce a result in our life which, while similar to neither cause, will be the proper resultant of both. It may also be exhausted by two opposite Karmic causes meeting each other and thus destroying the effect of each. Its effect is also varied to our sight by the apparatus or body and mind through which it works, in this, that instead of such and such a Karmic cause producing an instantaneous result, it may be spread out over many years in a series of misfortunes, the sum total of which might in some other person appear in one single disaster or favorable turn of fortune.

Jesus of the Christians uses the words of occultism and describes Karma in this language:

Judge not that ye be not judged: for with what judgment ye judge so shall ye be judged, and with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you again; and as ye sow so shall ye reap.

This is a restatement of the great law as declared by the Brahmins who taught Gautama Buddha, and by Buddha himself, and those great sages said that none other than ourselves forged the chains that bind us, and no other hand but our own smites us.

The road up which we must climb to rise above Karma and thus be able to help our fellow men with conscious power well directed, is that one which is marked with the signs Charity and Love.

The Theosophical Forum

THE COMING OF THE MAGI — *Leoline L. Wright*

Hermias, from a seat outside the entrance to his cave, looked out across the rockbound valley. The slight eminence where he sat brought out sharply against the horizon the splendor of an ancient city. While his thoughts mused over the familiar vision, what looked like a bright ribbon burst from the city walls and began to unwind itself in his direction.

"A good thing I happened to be on the lookout," he congratulated himself. "I shall certainly need all my firmness this time."

There was anxiety but no fear in his eyes as the rapidly moving ribbon resolved itself into a multicolored cavalcade of court nobles and their outriders. The staccato rhythm of galloping horses with the jingle of their trappings came at last to his ears. It emphasized for him the grim purpose which brought this martial column straight to his solitary and remote dwelling.

The cavalcade dashed up, deployed briefly, and formed into two lines fronted by its leader on a magnificent black horse. This man, dark in visage and haughty in mien, dismounted with deliberation and stalked up the rough pathway at the top of which Hermias had risen to await his coming.

For a moment the two stood confronted. The contrast between them was striking. Hermias, clad in a crude belted garment of coarse gray cloth that fell in folds to his bare feet; the other in all the panoply of jewelled accouterments and the opulence of court apparel. Hermias had hair of pale gold and his tranquil mien was deepened by the beauty of gray eyes and the benignant purity of serenely folded lips. The courtier was a smouldering, evilly controlled flame.

Hermias was the first to speak. "Greetings, most illustrious Lord of Zaffiri," he said in his gentle and pleasant voice.

The other's only response was an insolent stare. But Hermias was to be neither forced nor intimidated into discourtesy. He met the arrogance of the courtier with a level and placid gaze.

The aristocrat was compelled at last to speak. "I am here only at the command of our imperial Master." He spat the words like bullets into the young man's face. As the response of Hermias was simply a grave bow, the messenger continued: "Your contumacy in remaining here has been noted with amazement and displeasure by his sovereign Majesty. He had expected you long since to obey his benevolent command to attend the Presence in the imperial city. Your gifts," and the voice was a silken jibe, "should be at the disposal of the royal pleasure."

He paused expectantly, but Hermias said nothing. The dark face sharpened with disdain as he went on: "And our imperial Master bade me command you — this time on pain of death — to abandon your degrading ministrations to those vile hordes of the starving and diseased who flock here from the city. You are herewith once more summoned to place your powers exclusively at the service of our sovereign Liege."

As Hermias for his only answer looked mildly at him, the Lord of Zaffiri broke out: "What! Can it be possible? Yet I admit it does not surprise me in one of your peculiar tastes. You actually prefer your swinish rabble to the service of the magnificent and great?"

Hermias merely bowed in admission of the other's contemptuous charge.

The Lord of Zaffiri then shifted his ground to suavity and began once more. "But our munificent Sovereign is prepared to be generous. Should you obey his command, not only riches and honor, but fame await you. You are to found a great college of healing and research in the imperial city. To this school students of princely degree will flock from every land. . . ."

"Enough!" commandingly interrupted Hermias. Power flashed from his eyes. "Go hence, O Lord of Zaffiri, to our august Sovereign. Say to him

faithfully these words: "When he shall have cleansed yonder afflicted city of the unholy forces now holding it in thrall; when he shall give ear and succor to the destitute and suffering which swarm within its gates — then gladly will Hermias dedicate his poor gifts to the imperial service. But without honor, be it understood, and without price." "

Hermias ceased. He met the hot rage in the courtier's eyes with a look of inexorable resolution. For a moment silence throbbed between them.

"So! You are, after all, the fool you look." Wrath had cooled to glinting malice as the Lord of Zaffiri spoke. "Have no anxiety on the score of your message. It shall be most expeditiously and accurately conveyed. But, as such an answer has been anticipated, I have one last word to say." Here he made a pause of deliberate solemnity. "Our illustrious Sovereign," he then continued, "is determined to be merciful. He gives you still a fortnight to reconsider. Nay, to savor fully what your refusal will mean. Your only alternative is death. And not only death, my friend." He broke off carelessly to readjust his sword. "No doubt you have heard of the sinister dungeons beneath the castle?" and looking into the man's eyes, he smiled.

"You have had my answer."

"Nevertheless, I am instructed to give you the fortnight's grace. If you are wise . . ." he finished with a shrug as he turned and swung abruptly away. Hermias resumed his seat as the cavalcade reformed, wheeled, and clattered away across the valley.

It was some hours after the Lord of Zaffiri had departed that twilight fell over the valley. Hermias, in honor of the holy season of the winter solstice, had preserved for three days a rigid fast and long periods of intense meditation. Now, seated again outside his cave for a breathing-spell, he noted how Hesper, the evening star, and the slender young moon drew together in mystical communion. He was thinking with joy that the sacred hours of initiation were drawing near for the candidates who had been successful in their long preparation. His

heart brooded over the fearful hazards which confronted them. Presently he returned within the cave where he planned to spend the remainder of the night in meditation. He had dedicated to them the passing hours — to their safe voyaging along the perilous airways and to the secret places of the cosmos.

The cave was engulfed in shadow. Not long had he been rapt away from his surroundings when something new and strange penetrated the atmosphere about him. When he finally unsealed his eyes the whole cave glowed with luminous sapphire. Within this heavenly radiance he beheld a wondrous apparition — three mighty figures pulsating with glory, who regarded him with looks of deep benignity.

A voice like the silver cymbals of the Dhyanis breathed upon the silence. "Hail, child of the Midnight Sun! The inevitable hour, so long unconsciously prepared for by lives of selfless devotion to your fellow men, at last approaches. Arise, then, O accepted of the august Ones. Call upon your spiritual prowess and take the sacred pathway of initiation."

The shock of this electrifying summons brought Hermias to his feet. In the same moment these luminous figures revealed themselves to his spiritual clairvoyance as the three mysterious Magi, the holy Initiators. Awe and reverence exalted his heart. Their celestial presence diffused in him a sense of power and confidence. No hesitation and no doubt assailed him. With the instant obedience to spiritual law which guided all his thoughts and actions, he called upon his long dedicated, impersonal will. His being was sustained by its own unassailable purity. He stood ready.

One of the majestic figures now advanced to the waiting Hermias. The Great One's face expressed a dark serene power. Flowing violet shadow shrouded his form.

"I am Soma, Regent of the Moon. Before the guardian of my dread portal your spirit-soul is commanded to bear swiftly its credentials. Abandon, then, your mortal tabernacle here."

In obedience to his gesture, Hermias stretched himself upon the stone

platform where he habitually slept. He composed his limbs peacefully. Peacefully he closed his eyes. Almost at once his physical vesture dropped away beneath him. Then — freedom, instant and glorious! Like a shooting star he sped along the trajectory of his liberated will. At once, far ahead across the shadowy spaces of space he descried the menace of a yawning portal. And there, awaiting the approach of the neophyte, loomed a figure of malignant challenge.

Fourteen days and nights flowed over the valley. Still Hermias lay as one dead upon his couch of stone. Still hovered above him the supernal Magi, bearing watch and ward over the neophyte-body, awaiting for him the judgment of destiny, the outcome for the candidate of victory or doom.

The afternoon of the fourteenth day was drawing on towards night when a disturbance arose outside the cave. There sounded the rude clatter of military footsteps crowding up the short declivity. At the same moment the marble figure on the couch flushed with returning life. As Hermias awakened his whole body began to glow, until when he stood upon his feet he seemed a pillar of aureate splendor. And just then the figure of the Lord of Zaffiri, backed by two mailclad followers, appeared in the entrance to the cave.

"Beware, O child of darkness! Place not thine impious foot upon this hallowed ground." Thus spoke Soma, Regent of the Moon, in solemn warning to the bold intruder upon the transactions of the gods.

The far-off, unearthly cadence of that warning fell upon the courtier's ears like the voice of doom. His gaze widened in amazement and a look of awful horror dawned in his eyes. For one moment he stood paralyzed. But the instinct of that haughty and fearless heart forbade retreat. Mustering his faculties into fierce resistance he took a firm step over the threshold. And instantly, with a groan, the Lord of Zaffiri fell dead at the feet of Hermias.

The gray light of dawn was spreading over the valley. A small caravan of pilgrims, mounted upon swift desert camels, drew up in silence

before the cave of Hermias. The initiate, his face still shining with the divine aureole beneath the hooded cloak which shrouded his form, descended to meet them. The leader of the caravan left his kneeling camel and advanced to give Hermias a gesture and glance of wordless greeting. In silence the pair mounted. The caravan turned, passing like a shadow toward the mountains in the east.

Hermias cast one look back over his shoulder towards the sleeping city, now shining with a fabulous beauty in the glory of the rising sun. But there was no grief in the heart of Hermias. For his prophetic vision assured him of the time to come. He would return in that happier day to free its courts and temples and palaces, its noisome byways and hovels from the thralldom of evil, and lead its benighted people into the light.

The Theosophical Forum

ADVENTURE IN LEARNING — *M. G. Gowsell*

One of the most serious drawbacks in the way of learning anything, as far as grown-ups are concerned, is inattentiveness. This may, in some cases, be due to insincerity, but more commonly to wool-gathering, as we called it at school. It is a condition which is all too prevalent, not so much in the school room, as elsewhere most of the waking hours. So apparent is this that the several witnesses to any given event will seldom if ever agree in their testimony as to what actually took place at the moment. That this can be so common an occurrence is evidence of our absent-mindedness. It is this very thing which makes it more than probable that, should one desire to get by with something on the q. t., that is, without calling attention to what is being done, the chances are in favor of its being entirely unnoticed, albeit performed under the very noses of the usual run of witnesses. Hence any accurate, detailed, agreed-upon observation will be exceptional.

All of this stands in the way of one of the most interesting and intimate adventures in learning possible to mortals, for it prevents the thinning away of the partition between the higher and the lower mind. Of course there are those so-called "gifted" individuals who seem to possess what we call photographic memories, or rather should we say, the power to recollect impressions, however fleeting or faint such may have been. This unusual faculty will of course be due to training, a matter of self-discipline, either in this or in past lives. The human mind is naturally inconstant, restless, fugitive and diffusive. Discipline is needed that it may become an efficient instrument. "To whatever object the inconstant mind goeth out, he should subdue it, bring it back, and place it upon the Spirit," said Krishna to Arjuna. Change the word "spirit," which the average mortal knows little or nothing about, to "the job in hand," and you have a piece of practical advice the value of which cannot be overestimated. This would be concentration of mind. An occultist or real mystic will, as an almost inflexible rule, never allow

himself to do anything absent-mindedly. He would not even wash his hands and allow himself to be thinking of something else at the same time. But should he be so inadvertent at any time as to do so, he would go right back and do whatever it was over again, keeping his mind on it.

Now this is quite of a piece with memory training. It is a practice that is within the province of anyone who desires to grow, one which, if faithfully followed, would bring one ever nearer the goal. It is the linking of the purely personal consciousness with the *individual* consciousness, thereby ultimately accentuating the latter a thousandfold. Herein too is the gateway to intuition, and to the child-state of awareness, before the link becomes fractured or completely broken: a gateway to many things, not least of which would be to a definite realization that man is composite in his make-up: that he is a congeries or collection of entities, each one of which is evolving upon its own plane of being. Thus Man, as a collective aggregate, is said to be a stream or river of consciousness.

Under certain conditions, a linking or raising of the purely personal, brain-mind, normal consciousness of the human being to that of the *individual* or higher-mind consciousness may take place temporarily, and become a real adventure. But only occasionally. With some people, perhaps only once or twice in a lifetime. These experiences would occur during rare circumstances, at rare moments in life, at some outstandingly crucial parting of the ways: some event where one's life, or whole future destiny, might be in jeopardy. It would be at such times that every smallest detail, of even one's material surroundings, might become so indelibly registered, so etched into the consciousness, as never to be effaced.

It is at such signal moments that a higher part of man's composite nature and consciousness is activated and made to function on this plane as an intense awareness, a god-like presence of mind. The bodily or brain-mind apparatus, what is referred to by H. P. B. in *The Voice of the Silence*, as the "lunar form," will have been slain, put out of action

for the time, a feat which, with a certain spiritual faculty gained, may be accomplished at will, we are told, but under ordinary circumstances is always more or less involuntary. In any one of the instances referred to we have unimpeachable testimony, real evidence, of the nearness and availability of the purely manasic, or what is usually called the higher-mind part of man's constitution.

This momentary apotheosis of consciousness may be in the nature of a true apocalypse, a revelation and a warning to one as some desperate parting of the ways, where the moral fate might be at hazard. It should not be inferred, however, that this activation of a higher part of the inner constitution is evoked only during moments of dire peril. It is more readily available to those who have, perhaps but for a moment, set their feet upon the borders of the supernal, which would only be effected through the region of the higher mind. One who has had this experience is nevermore the same. There will have been an awakening. He will never lapse again so deeply into his former slumber. An analogy will be found in ordinary life, where every now and again a man's mind is stretched by some new idea or understanding, never to go back to its former dimensions.

The Theosophical Forum

UNLIMITED HORIZONS IN THEOSOPHY — *L. Gordon Plummer*

One day I heard someone say that he wished he could go away out there in space where the stars are. An interesting idea — but he had overlooked one thing. The planet on which he stood was away out there in space. That was months ago, and think how far the earth has traveled since then; probably you could set the figure at a hundred million miles.

Compare this picture of the mighty sweep of the Earth's orbit with the limited idea once held of the flatness of the earth, with the sun, moon, planets and stars as being movable lights set in the inside surface of a great covering dome. That outmoded view of Nature was quite in keeping with the old idea of the Creator, and if Nature were no more than that one could quite easily imagine a being with the necessary ability to construct the Earth and the firmament in six days. After Columbus had established the roundness of the Earth, and after the work of Copernicus and Galileo in the 16th and 17th centuries, the world underwent a great reconstruction of thought and tremendous strides were taken in the right direction. Unfortunately, however, religious reconstruction did not keep pace with scientific progress, and that is why there seems to be a conflict between the two. Now that we know that there are galaxies, many of them like our own, to be counted by the millions, we see that the Universe is of such proportions that no "Creator" could have made it without help, no matter how long he might take over it. Yet religious teachings of the day did not provide an adequate explanation of the nature and work of God in His relation to the myriads of stars supposed to be under His sway.

The coming of H. P. Blavatsky with the Ancient Wisdom-Religion was a boon to humanity which at best we can but dimly appreciate. Here at last was the opportunity to study things as they are, without the incumbrances of theory, speculation, prejudice or argument. Fundamentally her teachings are very simple, for after all the universe

is the only way that it could be. It is only in the multiplicity of detail that the teachings become involved. Details are important and they must be mastered, but the correct approach to Theosophy is first of all to get the broad outline of the teachings. Once we grasp the general plan we discover that the details fit themselves into the picture, and little by little we gather more and more knowledge until the universe becomes a living wonder before our eyes. We stand in silent awe before the holy presence of Truth.

Theosophy, then, is a study of things as they are. It is a study of life on all the planes of being. Essentially, it is a cosmology and an anthropology, a study of the Universe and Man. It is the synthesis of Religion, Philosophy and Science. Now, just what do we mean by this?

To analyze Science first: Science is a study of the phenomenal universe. It deals entirely with the universe of effects. Its province is to tabulate and to collect facts. It arrives at its conclusions by experiment, and forms hypotheses in an effort to interpret its findings. In brief, Science tells us how things behave; it deals with effects.

Philosophy, on the other hand, studies the universe of causes and ideas. Is this a purely imaginary universe, no more than the fabrication of the minds of scholars and philosophers? It is not. It is a universe more real than the universe we see, because upon it depends our visible, tangible universe. Here is an illustration to show the relation between the two. What is a phonograph record? It is a disc of an appropriate compound of vulcanite suitable for holding sound impressions cut into the spiral curve. When a needle follows the groove an orchestra is reproduced, exactly as played, with all the overtones and shadings of expression to be conveyed to the listener. This record that we can handle and place upon the turntable represents the visible universe, because it is a thing of effects. The composition itself, an intangible thing until written down on paper and played by an orchestra, is the real cause for the production of the disc. It represents the universe of causes, and a scientific explanation of the inspiration of the composer is no explanation at all. Philosophy alone could tell you what mighty

impulses moved Beethoven to write the Moonlight Sonata. And yet that inspiration is the real thing, and can only be followed slavishly by the needle as it vibrates to the variations in the groove.

To restate our premise, Science deals with the universe of effects, and Philosophy interprets the universe of causes. What then is the province of Religion? Religion is man's personal approach to the Universe. It is what each man thinks and feels about his relation to Nature and to the Deity whose robes are the countless stars. Religion per se is not dependent upon ceremony, scripture, and creed; these are but the accouterments suitable for some people, and they fill a need. True religion is the motion of a man's heart toward the Divine.

To be adequate, any religion must be built around a philosophy of life. That, indeed, must form its foundation, for unless Religion can answer the burning questions about life and death, man's place in Nature, the origin and destiny of the human soul, the life pulsating throughout all Nature, in fact all the questions that it is possible for the mind of man to frame, it must fail in its ultimate objective, which is the reorientation of the Human Soul toward the pathway to the Gods.

True religious life as offered by Theosophy is a thing which grows upon a man as he progresses in devotion and understanding. As the devotee progresses he finds that for him the religious life is an unfolding of his inner faculties and a broadening of his horizons, so that he begins to understand his relation to the Universe. Certain teachings will be made known to the student, and by these teachings his own position in relation to Nature will be clarified for him. Eventually he finds that much he has learned is a symbolic or quasi-dramatic representation of certain truths which may become realities for him. It all depends upon his own inner growth.

And so the time comes at last when he is a Candidate for Initiation. Actually, Initiation is a beginning for him. It is the opening of the inner eye, so that he begins to see for himself and to learn by individual observation. In Initiation the great Mysteries of Life and Death are made known to him, and from that moment he is qualified to teach

with authority, and then only can he set aside the ancient mystical preamble: "Iti maya. srutam," "Thus have I heard." Yet even these great adventures are but a beginning for him, and as such they are an extension of the religious pathway that he has trodden for so long, and which he will continue to tread until it leads him to the very Heart of Being.

And here we have the reason for saying that Theosophy is the greatest boon that Humanity has ever known. It gives man infinite hope and promise. It gives him the assurance which he needs to carry him through the intricate maze of earth-life. It gives him a scientific-philosophical understanding of life, and points the way to a religious fulfilment of the aspirations of his heart.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY? — S. H. Wylde

The naturalist, W. H. Hudson, was remarkable for what is called a photographic memory. As a boy he had lived on an estancia in the wild pampas country of the Argentine, but most of his life was spent in England, and in his extreme old age, nearly seventy years after his boyhood experiences, he was able to recall with the scientist's aptitude for vivid detail, peculiarities of flowers, birds, strange light effects, gestures, touches of character, oddities of behavior, and a thousand incidents, both trivial and important, as though he had witnessed them yesterday. In his book *Far Away and Long Ago* he says that he could "hear" the songs, call-notes, and alarms of one hundred and fifty-four species of American birds, in his sequestered English village, as vividly as if they had been perched outside his window.

This photographic memory is something that puzzles the psychologist. The Theosophist says that only the universal prevalence of astral substance can explain it. Man's organism shares in this astral medium. The substantial aspect of his mind is composed of it, and upon this sensitive film are impressed permanent and accurate records of all that impinges upon our senses. Our power to recall these pictures at will depends on the control we have of Mind. As a rule our minds are wayward and untrained; they fly from object to object, or remain inert. But if our consciousness works through mind to fix the point of attention, then the "snapshot" is not relegated to the limbo of the subconscious, as the case of the hypnotic subject will show, but remains instantly available at any time. Modern man knows little of the mysteries of mind. It is a generator of tremendous creative force. Its powers of memory are the least of its capacities, for the Adept can use it to mold astral substance at will.

SHAKESPEARE'S STUDY OF EVOLVING MAN — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

Professor Spencer's book (1) is an example of the power of constructive literary criticism to present the universal truth concerning the nature of man which supreme literary genius has embodied in a work of art. It is an interpretation of the Shakespearean drama so profound as to serve as a revelation of the recurrent periods of mighty conflict through which human beings must pass, and of the peak of attainment to be reached by human striving. It also clearly indicates that Shakespeare intuited a labor for the human spirit which as yet transcends present human aspiration towards the highest possibilities of mankind. This book has distinct relevance to the present crisis, when man is being catapulted into a kind of physical universality, a global awareness, and is being compelled to undergo reorientation to the forces and relations governing life on this planet. The appeal of this work is great because of the writer's knowledge not only of literary art but of the art of living.

It is now recognized that American scholars, who in many fields of English scholarship are easily first, are pre-eminently first in the field of Elizabethan studies; and Professor Spencer's comprehensive survey of the books available in the sixteenth century enables us to reconstruct the patterns of thought and feeling which prevailed in that century in England, and to trace the striking changes inevitably a result of the startling theories of the universe, the state, and man, which were brought forward between 1543 and 1600.

What had been long accepted was a pattern woven from Platonic, Aristotelian, Neo-Platonic, and Christian elements, the idea of an ordered universe, a hierarchical system extending from the throne of God to the dust of the earth, the earth which had been created by God about the time of the autumnal equinox 5000 and some odd years before and which was stated to be the center of the whole celestial system, with man, the microcosm, endowed with understanding that

made him the natural ruler of the world, "the perfection and end of all the creatures." All parts of this world-structure, including man, were interdependent; the harmony and safety of all depended upon the performance of the duty assigned to each; any overstepping of this ordered course could wreck the whole. With Adam's fall this calamity had occurred. Evil had entered the world, man had lost his destiny, had lost even the knowledge that he had a destiny. But God had mercy and gave man the hope of salvation through Christ. The Pope of Rome was the vicar of Christ on earth, the priests were the intermediaries between God and man, and the Church of Rome was the stronghold of revealed truth. How all these foundations were rudely shaken, and a state of doubt and confusion of thought brought about that created the very atmosphere of tragedy, is told in this book and is an aid to understanding Shakespearean drama.

While the full significance of the heliocentric theory had not yet been grasped at this time, many learned and popular writings dealing with it were current in England. By the time Shakespeare had reached London in the 1580's, Giordano Bruno, that fiery enthusiast for the theory, had spent two years in England, had lectured at Oxford on the Doctrine of the Spheres, and had held many conversations with Sir Philip Sidney and other thinkers; so that the new ideas were abroad to spread wonder, excitement, and also fear.

At that time, too, the unique role of man in the universe sustained a shock. Daring thinkers claimed that the accepted notion concerning man's place in nature was no more correct than the Ptolemaic cosmology had been found to be. The book which rated man as only another animal "without any real and essential pre-rogative and pre-eminence," was the *Essays* of Montaigne, published in 1580, widely read, and said to have been diligently read by Shakespeare. Reading again these *Essays*, especially the *Apology*, one wonders why in the nineteenth century any one should have been utterly shocked by a theory of man's descent from the apes, when Montaigne 300 years before had so cleverly intimated that in some respects man is inferior to animals. Another book, published in English in 1534, and much read

and quoted, was *The Prince*, by Machiavelli, which proclaimed the view that man is naturally evil, that morals have no connection with affairs of state, that rulers must "Know well how to use both the beast and the man and be ever ready to control the vicious nature of their subjects by force."

So, by the latter end of the sixteenth century, the inherited ideas of the cosmos, the state, and man's place in nature, had all been under attack; and the religious situation was no more stable. By 1543, the date of the death of Copernicus and of the publication of his work, King Henry VIII had severed connection with Rome and proclaimed himself supreme head of the church and the clergy in England; and there was danger and difficulty until Protestantism was firmly established. Where now could the people look for stability, with the authority of Rome defied? Even the political situation was disturbed, for the Queen was old and the succession to the throne seemed uncertain. The optimism and idealism of the 1580's gave way to skepticism, satire, even melancholy, among the writers. Professor Spencer quotes the poet John Donne's lament: " 'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone."

In this atmosphere the great tragedies of Shakespeare were written. He had by this time mastered the drama as a vehicle of expression. His own increasing awareness of the presence and the power of evil in the world and in human nature is shown in *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure*, and this may have been further quickened by an intense personal experience. However this may be, Shakespeare's intellectual faculties had been sharpened to the piercing point where he saw that the field of conflict in human life is not between man and the stars in their courses, not between man and circumstances or events, but in man's own nature. He drew from human experience of doubt, defeat, despair and death, his enduring message to mankind. With glowing spiritual insight he reached the certainty of the *something beyond that makes man man*, which warrants the belief that man is the essential link between the material and the spiritual worlds — the view of man that restores human dignity. Professor Spencer's interpretation of the tragedies inspires readers to turn again to the

tragedies themselves and the last plays for the assurance that human beings are disciplined by their failures through self-deception, passion, and despair, and through heart-sorrow pass from purgation to pure insight. Hamlet, Othello, and Lear are shown not to have died in vain.

In his tragedies Shakespeare is concerned with the presence of evil in human nature and the havoc wrought when the evil lurking behind a fair outward is forced upon man's consciousness, and, also the inner havoc which results when the darker and more violent elements of man's nature overwhelm reason and take control. In *Hamlet* we see the wreck made in an optimistic idealist by the discovery of lust and cruelty in those whom he would naturally love and honor; but the intensity of his suffering brings Hamlet to the realization that this is not only *his* problem but that of human kind, and he dies with wider sympathies and a vision that the problem will be solved, though not by himself. In the case of Troilus, a less evolved man than Hamlet, the discovery of Cressida's treachery plunges him in misery not deep enough to kill, and he lives on after all he cherished is lost. Othello, a man of noble nature, basely deceived by one given over to the love of evil, accepts the *appearance* of evil in one pure and innocent, and only when all is ruin and death awakens to what led to his downfall. But he *does* awaken. Macbeth, trafficking with anything visible or invisible that will further his ends, experiences no transformation: he is an indication of possible growth downwards for man. In *King Lear* the havoc is tremendous: a mighty king, but not a thinker, by his impetuous unwisdom brings upon himself grievous loss and suffering. But, as is now pointed out by profound students, King Lear was not destroyed by his grief; he dies of joy, realizing that *life*, not evil, is the reality. *He also* learns through suffering to *think of others*.

In thus pressing to the depths and heights of human failure and anguish, with ever an intuition of the something beyond still to be reached in the nature of man, Shakespeare experienced an illumination. Henceforth, though his last dramas show the conflict between man as he is and man as he is destined to be, continued, though jealousy, rage, egotistic blindness, and foul evil are directed

against the innocent in *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter's Tale*, though Marina, Imogen, Hermione, and Perdita are subjected to exile, desperate danger, vile suspicion, and persecution, new elements have entered into the picture.

In these last plays by Shakespeare, through the discipline of loss and sorrow the guilty are brought face to face with themselves, and even if after many years — sixteen in the case of Leontes — they accomplish their own redemption and are reborn while yet alive. Innocence, constant love, freedom from resentment of wrongs, spiritual womanliness, the powers of non-violence, are placed before us in characters and poetry of immortal beauty. In the tragedies the appearance may be fair but the reality — the treachery of Cressida, the hypocrisy of Regan and Goneril, the cruel ambition of Macbeth, pride, jealousy, lust, misanthropy, in others — are all evil. In the last plays, the appearance may be dark, but the reality is fair. Marina is not dead, Imogen is faithful, Hermione and Perdita are restored, and Miranda's view of mankind is the very opposite of a misanthropist's. Shakespeare's later vision is glorified by supreme insight into human possibilities. Hermione and Gonzalo, in wonder and reverence beholding the transformation, invoke the gods to add their blessing upon the triumph thus revealed in the individual life by the conquest of evil.

In Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*, he presents a conception of the nature of man that as far transcends the one commonly held in our time as in Shakespeare's own day. H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* states that "Aeschylus, like Shakespeare, was and ever will remain the intellectual "Sphinx" of the ages." William Q. Judge told us that Shakespeare was under the guidance of one of the Hierarchy of Compassion, those Sages and Seers who have knowledge of the complete cycle of human destiny. Giordano Bruno, an exponent of the Ancient Wisdom, while in England, wrote a book which he dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney and in which he demonstrated that through discipline the affections become purified, the will strengthened, and man overcomes the conflicting powers and fatal impulses in his nature.

Shakespeare himself in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* long before this had written

. . . . As imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes.

There was vibrating in the thought of the time this message for the intuitive poet to pass on to future ages — that the man who is lord of himself is lord of all the kingdoms, visible and invisible, which are less evolved than himself, and he can wield even the elements for purposes which are beneficent. This was a foregleam of the far future, but a future in accord with the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom concerning the destiny of man while yet living upon Earth.

Prospero, plotted against by his brother, cast off in a boat with his baby daughter and his books, creates his own little kingdom on an isle, where Caliban, a brute, and Ariel, purified and disciplined, are his servants. Here is no Puck to play tricks and exclaim "What fools these mortals be!", no Nick Bottom translated into an ass, no witches to abet man's evil desire. Here all is under control by a White Magician. Prospero's enemies are put under a spell, their "brains boiled in their skulls" for an interval, and when they are restored they see themselves — the less evolved outwitted, the more evolved regenerated. Thunder and wind and rain thus used would be more merciful and less costly than the means used in warfare today in the conflict with evil. Prospero, having restored harmonious and just relations, and discovering that he can participate with wisdom and power and insight in the work of the program for life on this globe, returns to Milan, to manifest, as its ruler, the beneficence of fully evolved humanity in a normal life among his fellows.

In this way Shakespeare, as so nobly interpreted by Professor Spencer, restores the lost dignity of man; and, be it noted, without benefit of creed or clergy or Church. Any human being can appreciate this wisdom. While Aeschylus two thousand years before brought the Gods down to Earth to transform the Furies, Shakespeare brings forth from

within man the godlike power required to establish the dominion of his spiritual nature.

The poet Keats, as Professor Spencer notes, said, "Shakespeare led a life of allegory; his works are the comment on it." The high merit of Professor Spencer's book lies in the masterly way in which he has enlarged upon this statement and shown that Shakespeare, "in his own work more richly than any other writer" has "illustrated that rhythm, that sequence, that vision, which all human beings must recognise and accept as fundamental to the nature of man."

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man* by Theodore Spencer. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1943. \$2.75. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE DANGERS OF PRANAYAMA — *Martyn Witter*

The spreading of the age-old sciences of the Orient through our Western civilization brings with it dangers as well as blessings. The ancient art of pranayama is attracting much attention with disastrous results in many cases.

Roughly speaking pranayama is the science of breath control. It comes from two Sanskrit words: a compound of *prana*, breath or vital air; and *ayama*, restraint. As a word of warning we could say that it is in some cases the death of the breaths.

It is being recognized in the west today that the rhythm of breathing has an effect upon the health of the body. As the years go by this fact will be experimented with and brought more and more to the attention of the public. It would be far better if it could be kept within experimental circles. However some one is sure to see its sensational possibilities and announce that he is a master of the art and for a price will teach it to those who are qualified and worthy.

The yogin of the Orient is able to do many interesting things through the control of breath. However his training is usually supervised by one who really knows the art to perfection and thus the dangers are reduced to the minimum. But even so the yogin of the Orient is tampering with the very delicate and natural balances of forces and perhaps he too shall some day have to pay the price. He is wasting valuable time in the development of physical and psychical powers that could be spent in those things that bring *real soul growth*. The really worthwhile powers are those of forgiveness, impersonal love, and deep compassion for all that breathes and lives. It is these that bring real wisdom and nourishment to the soul.

Let us give a brief survey of the different breaths in man as discovered by the Oriental investigators. Five are usually given but there are really two more. These breaths are commonly correlated with the chakras,

centers of force, and with the principles and senses of man. We are in the fifth root race with five senses developed, so it is natural that five vital airs should be mentioned and not seven.

Usually it is the physiological functions of these breaths which are dealt with. This is unfortunate in that it places too much attention upon the personality and the acquirement of psychical development. H. P. Blavatsky hints in more than one place that the adepts consider the intellectual aspect of these breaths to be far more important than their physiological function.

PRANA the breath that *breathes forth*, from *pra*, forth, and the verb-root *an*, to breathe. In our physical body it controls the breathing. Its spiritual function for man, let us say, would be the breathing forth of the higher mind in meditation. In our planetary chain its analogy would be the breathing forth of the seeds of manifestation in preparation for the re-embodiment of the globes.

APANA the breath that *breathes away*, from *apa*, away, and the verb-root *an*, to breathe. In our physical body it controls the casting out of waste materials. H. P. B. hints that it is the inspirational breath which changes the intelligence that does not understand Speech or Words into an awakening of the mind wherein they are understood. Its spiritual function for man would be the breathing down into physical mind the seeds of meditation. In our planetary chain the analogy would be the descent on the downward arc of the life waves and the casting off of the grosser influences on the upward arc.

SAMANA the breath that breathes together, or "breathes with," from *sam*, together, and the verb-root *an*, to breathe. In our physical body it controls the digestion, assimilation and hence the chemical processes of physical nourishment. Its spiritual function for man would be the assimilation by the human mind of the seeds of meditation. In our planetary chain the analogy would be the blending of the spiritual essence of the life waves with the material vehicles which are descending more and more into physical manifestation. On the upward arc the analogy would be the blending of the life waves with more and

more spiritual vehicles.

VYANA this could be called the diffused breath, from *vi*, apart, *a*, towards, and *an*, to breathe. In the physical body it controls the circulation and the balancing of the forces. Hence it has an equalizing and sustaining function. Its spiritual function for man would be the harmonizing influence of the seeds of meditation upon the human man, whereby the illusion of the duality of opposites is being overcome and the senses are being brought into the middle path. In our planetary chain the analogy would be the equalization of the spiritual forces and the material forces upon Globe D. Of course when analogies are made they never imply identities.

UDANA the breath that breathes upward, from *ud*, up, and *an*, to breathe. In the physical body it directs the vital currents upward. Thus prana, apana, samana, and vyana would each have its udana aspect. Its spiritual function for man would be the raising of all that is good in man upwards, and upwards to the God within. The seeds of meditation have been sown in the fertile fields of human aspirations and have flowered into the fruits of evolution. The yogins would probably speak of this fruitage as being the rising of the electric, fiery, or Fohatic power of Kundalini. In other words, the flowering of the best in man awakens the fiery power of the Buddhi-principle. Those who practice the science of pranayama sometimes try to arouse this power artificially. They try to *steal* the nectar of the Gods before they have earned it by the *natural* processes of evolution. At best, they can awaken only the lower physical aspect of this fiery power. It is the thirst for personal power that usually promotes such dangerous undertakings. Theosophists know better, but there are people who do not realize what they are doing and innocently believe that they are awakening spiritual forces that will enable them to hear, feel, and see with the eye of the Gods. Sometimes the Oriental yogin can escape the consequences of these practices *for a time*, but the day of reckoning will come. The novice in the West is usually stricken soon with insanity, death, or prolonged sufferings.

The rhythm of the breaths is a reflexion of the rhythm of forces traveling in the solar universe. As above, so below. Perfect health is the natural rhythm of the breaths in man. By inharmonious thoughts and actions man brings about a disturbance of the rhythm of the breaths with resulting disease. It would be putting the cart before the horse if one would try to cure the disease by tampering with the breaths. It can be temporarily done, but the risks outweigh by far the benefits. Right thoughts, bodily exercise, good food, will hasten the cure of disease in a natural manner, although the cure of a disease may take several lives. Tampering with the breaths will either make it worse or dam it back until another incarnation.

Sometimes advanced people upon the path undergo much suffering from disease caused by past karma in other lives. Instead of damming it back they let it take its natural course so as to be free from it in lives to come. Of course surgery and medicine do much in releasing the sufferer from pain and preventing an untimely death.

The true yogin and adept lets the breaths of his body alone and works only with their spiritual essence. He deals with the spiritual breaths of compassion, impersonal love, and holy aspiration. The yogin of yogins loses sight of personal ambition, desires, selfishness, and lives in the spirit of the stars.

ANTIPODAL POWERS OF MANAS (1)

FAITH-BELIEF

Study of the twin powers of the human mind is far more subtle and difficult than study of what is familiarly known as the "pairs of opposites." Even the weakest of thinkers will have little trouble discerning love from hate, or pleasure from pain. But where is the man who has mastered the relation of those two-fold powers of soul, which, though to all outward appearances the same, are yet separated by a line which makes them either infernal or divine? Where is the man who knows the shading of difference between aspiration and ambition, imagination and fancy, faith and belief? No one but recognizes the life-giving force of enthusiasm, but where draw the line between enthusiasm and fanaticism? Do we possess such insight into our own minds that, faced with the necessity of decision, we readily discern between wisdom and head-learning? Caught in the web of human relationships, are we able to distinguish love from infatuation before a lifetime wrong is done? The antithetical nature of the "opposites" is obvious. It is the seeming identity of mind powers, and man's inability to discern between them, that is the cause of all the world's delusions. Says Wm. Q. Judge:

Manas, or the Thinker is the reincarnating being, the immortal who carries the results and values of all the different lives lived on earth or elsewhere. Its nature becomes dual as soon as it is attached to a body.

This, says H. P. Blavatsky, is the key to the whole mystery of man's inner nature. Because mind is dual during the period of incarnation, every one of its powers presents a two-fold aspect, one bearing kinship for the god above, the other showing traits of the inconstant personality. But as the English language has been evolved by people unskilled in philosophic thought, its terms, even where they exist, are

vague and ambiguous. Dictionaries do not link such words with either aspect of the dual man, the result being that when one says "my friend has great imagination" or "he is a man of strong will" — both, creative powers of the Higher Mind — in all probability the faculties at work are mere fancy or desire, faint expressions of the lower self.

Faith, like all powers of the human soul, is two-fold in its nature. The higher, having its roots in the Immortal Self, is pure, holy and divine, and consequently has naught to do with the reasoning of the brain mind. Fed from above by the fire of knowledge, it makes no mistakes, for it looks directly to the heart of things. It is true wisdom or enlightenment, no nobler quality existing in the whole makeup of the inner man. But alas, what passes for that term today! Man's divinest faculty, with potent creative power, lowered to the level of blind belief — a mere nothingness based on ignorance and fear. Better by far the word faith had never been heard, for then at least no one would glory in the possession of ignorance, nor could priests and preachers convince their followers that there is virtue in blindness. Identical though they seem to the average man, faith and belief are an infinity apart, separated by an abyss to be spanned only by him who *wills* to know.

Man's feeling of Deity, that there is something behind all that is, behind his feelings of justice and immortality, is a perception common to the whole human race. It springs from knowledge impacted in the imperishable center of his nature — and is true faith. But how is the man strong in such convictions ever to learn that though the feelings are true, his ideas regarding these truths are false, that the church dogmas of god, miracle and vicarious atonement are mere belief? How is he to understand that the impulse to a higher life, that feelings of charity, love and compassion, felt strongly in his soul, come from inner faith and not from outer belief? To separate the two is as difficult for the average man as to realize that within his human frame are two minds. For this reason true teachers ever warn against proselyting, against making any attempt to unsettle those fast fixed in their beliefs, lest the serenity of their faith be disturbed or destroyed, lest they be

caused to relax in their duty to that which they see to be right.

The dogmas and beliefs which encumber men's souls, ruinous though they be to the inner faith, are not to be stripped off from the outside by some ambitious converter. They must be shed from within by the awakening Higher Mind. As the new-born shoot, making room for next year's growth, pushes old leaves from off the twig, so the evolving spirit of man, in the course of cyclic rise, breaks through the limiting walls of creed. What is given us in Theosophy, says Robert Crosbie, "is for the purpose of arousing the attention of that Center within us which can see, which can know, which can do, when It resumes its own nature and status."

"With faith all things are possible," say the ancient sages. For faith is that great engine of the occult cosmos which sets the Will in motion. Through it man links himself with his ideal, encompasses within his sphere the whole structure of that upon which his heart is set. Working upon the extremely tenuous matter of the invisible universe, faith surrounds any project with a living substance, making of it a unified whole capable of co-ordinated action among all its parts. By virtue of what else may anything be said to live, except it possess a circulatory system linking each part with every other part, except a common impulse permeate the whole? It is through this subtle medium that the will and conviction of the crusader carries through and touches the hearts of his supporters. Through it men in business reach their employees and inspire their work with the fire of enthusiasm. On the inner framework of faith and confidence one can help his fellows build a higher life, for devotion to the ideal in another brings out all that the ideal holds.

Man's ignorance of the workings of such inner dynamics is no proof against the fact of their existence. For where is the man who understands perfectly the machinery even of the digestive system in its work of transforming food into flesh, or of the eye in seeing, or the brain and vocal chords in changing idea into sound? These do their work whether we be ignorant or wise. So works the machinery of the

occult cosmos. By means of faith all men accomplish unknowingly great things. But once one's faith is lost, whether in a business, cause, or private undertaking, that thing is dead, the only remaining witness to its ever having existed being the physical shell, empty and soulless, left to disintegrate on the material plane. Faith is the cohesive power of nature by virtue of which even the seven principles of man remain intact. Lost or destroyed, death ensues.

If this be true of worldly undertakings, how much more true must it be of a high and noble Cause, having for its aim the welfare of the human race! The ideal of the Theosophical Movement is a universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color. That ideal is kept in being by the Faith, the Will, of its great Founders. The aim and objective of Theosophists is work upon that ideal, the erection invisibly of a strong bond of comradeship, the nucleus from which all else may flow. But can this be done without faith in the ideal and in humanity? Can it be done without faith in each other, in those of our fellow companions who, like ourselves, are striving toward the same end? Not by doubt or intellectual argument can this purpose be achieved. Not by belief, which at best is skin deep, nor any other of the powers of the lower mind. It is by Faith alone — that creative faculty of the Higher Mind by which we envision the ideal and see reflected in the present the promise of what must be. To "keep the faith" means to hold the vision, to steadfastly act on the basis of it alone.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Theosophy*, October, 1943, with permission of the publishers, The Theosophy Company, Los Angeles, California. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *Kenneth Morris*

If the spiritual climate of Earth is to change from the old storminess of War to sunlit serenities of Peace, a change must come in fundamental ideas; we must see into the heart, and not be fobbed off with the husks, of Religion.

The generations of our fathers nourished their inner life upon the Bible. From the time of the Protestant Reformation until the beginnings of our own day, that was the source to which they went for all certainty, for illumination, for the assurance of truth. It was a word from beyond the world, a revelation: the Dictate of Deity: to be searched, but not critically; never to be questioned. It was the reservoir of comfort, the one place from which sure comfort might be drawn.

But time makes away with all his children; and time in these last decades has laid rough hands on the Bible. Men of research arose, who discovered fact incompatible with the supposed revelation — more and more of fact — and confronted believing Christendom therewith; so that men were given choice which they should discard, which cleave to: palpable fact to which their own seven senses could testify, or the Book their predecessors had adored. It was fact being stubbornly incontrovertible. Individual men could hold out in belief, but generations could not. A leak was in the dike, and the fields doomed to submersion. One flaw being discovered, the imperishable rock of Holy Scripture was crumbling, and Christendom, "the People of a Book," in Mohammed's phrase, was threatened with shelterless booklessness, and adrift in a cold unspiritual universe. So the sterile ugly materialism of the last century rose up, blighting, because allowing no place for, the beautiful side of life.

And then came a Prophet with a new revelation. Then came H. P. Blavatsky with the New Book, *The Secret Doctrine*, not to destroy but to fulfil, the work and mission of the Bible. Behold, there was truth in the

Old Book after all. It was not to be discarded. It was not the mere ignorant guesses and forgeries of an ignorant age. It was, at the root, the wisdom of men whose wisdom was real, and much greater than scientific materialism, couched by them in such limitations of form and ideas as could help the mentality of a limited age. But here, now — now that knowledge has flooded in, and conceptions must grow and have new food or starve — here now was the Book of Explanations, the larger more imperial revelation. Here was assertion of spirituality that could meet scientific materialism in the field and overthrow it; that could take account of every fact telescope and microscope and crucible might reveal, and show it in its own place in the robe and external manifestation of the spirit. Here was the vindication of all true religion, infallible comfort for the secretest noble cravings in the heart of man. The human spirit, inexhaustible in its demand for generosity and mystery and beauty, need fear no more the cold barren abominations of Gradgrindism; the noblest teachings that had been heard on earth were, all simply, the truest. Here was the great Book of the future ages, *The Secret Doctrine*, to prove it.

It was a challenge to all the provinces of the Universe; it was a bugle blown against the Jerichoes of desolating selfishness; a tiger-roar loosed against materialism; it was the opening up of vistas inimitably beautiful for the spirit; a new planet that had swum into the ken of humanity. With the publishing of that Book, a new Age of Faith, more splendid than any of the old ones, was ushered in.

A new Age of Faith; for here, in *The Secret Doctrine*, with what a new bearing, very royal and warrior-like, Faith appears! It is no longer a thing to be praised as unshakable; it is no longer a thing on its defense. It wields swords of lightnings now, and crouches behind no timorous shield and buckler. Its war-cry is that it will have a royal world of this world; the Kingdom and the glory established upon earth; the beautiful dignity of Eternity here upon this bank and shoal of time. Not after death, nor afar beyond the starry constellations, shall that splendor be manifest; but here and now Man is the Soul, his divinity discoverable now; his immortality an inheritance to be entered upon momentarily and

daily. Instead of the lure of some diviner drink to fill the cup when we are crumbled into dust, we are offered this universe brimming now with strangest beauty, and every day a divine adventure. Godhead is not remote or tyrannical, but a star in the inmost heart of every man, a potentiality developable in every life. Will you have Golconda? Will you have the wealth of the fabulous Indies: the gold of Ophir, the peacocks and the ivory? They are within and able to be discovered there, says *The Secret Doctrine*; and challenges the human spirit itself to prove that it is true; leading you to the great heights and the treasuries of existence from the next moment and the next incident in your daily duty; indicating riches within yourself more incalculable than the numbers of the stars. Will you walk in the universal Eden, yourself a God? This may be, says *The Secret Doctrine*; and with fire from heaven kindles you into vision that, since you are human, the ordainment of it is within your power. A golden inspiration is here; means illimitable for quickening the spirit. For this Book shows a man as he knows himself now, to be but a tiny fragment and inconsiderable planet in the vast system of his greater self: this of you that was born and shall die but the one corner or the shadow of that of you, the Reality, which was before the stars were set flaming, and shall be after the freezing of the sun.

Life and every day of it is a divine adventure. I put myself into the mind of the miserable on earth: of the workless man who, loaded with anxiety, has to grapple naked with that most dreadful of adversaries, time: I ask myself what it is that *The Secret Doctrine* has for him. Well, it has the armor and the weapons that can bring him through. He is no longer to suppose that some cold paternal deity on high is tormenting him for no purpose or for purposes he cannot understand. He is no longer to see himself under the cat-claws of a senseless unconscious fate or chance. He is reminded instead of his own Godhead; which all life's business is, to bring out from its obscurity. All life's business; and therefore that of the very slings and arrows of outrageous fortune that oppress him. The hideous anxiety that he faces, inexorable time itself, are only there waiting to be faced without fear, with a certain

gaiety of trust proper to Godhead. He has but to bring against them that weapon out of his own sweet armory; and he must bring it. They stand there, time and anxiety, in reality beseeching him: Find the way into the place where your Godhead is, into the beautiful armories of the Soul; confront us with what we desire to see, your Divinity; there is no quieting us else! So hell itself evokes heaven; and *The Secret Doctrine* reveals that heaven is there, right within a man's own being; the last highest possibilities are there. You have to pray to nothing afar and whose attention is probably wandering. Against ill fortune, temporary and limited, however appalling it may seem, you have it in your power to put up an endurance limitless and eternal. A man may always be greater than any possible ill that comes against him. In the fight and jungle of this disaster-haunted world, all that the wild beasts are roaring at him is this: Trust, you fool! and you are our master.

And he may; because being in essence Godhead, it is his nature to be evoked by misfortune; to bring out unsusceptible strength at last to oppose what oppresses him. What we suffer is the result of what we have done: with age-long foolish action we have hidden our divinity away. With sharp pangs now we must be driven to rediscover it. But in all this universe there is none that punishes and no idea of punishment; our own Godhead ordains, for our own dignity's sake, that we shall undo our own undoing with these pains. So hell comes auxiliary to heaven; we are not called on to endure more than armed with confidence we can endure. Karma, which is the innate property of existence by which existence adjusts itself and maintains its harmony, is in its nature absolute mercy. It takes the shortest paths and the effectual means to its ends; and marshals life and time and circumstance before the Soul of man just to tempt and lure the hidden beauty of the Soul into manifestation. Here then is what breeds infinite courage; and this is the new self of you that *The Secret Doctrine* introduces to you: a being of such dignity that the only comfort acceptable to him is courage. And this is the new mission of which it convicts him: to make the world a better heaven than any of the New Jerusalems of the creeds; and this is the time it gives him in which to

accomplish the work: Now — the limitless now that this instant is offering itself to him and will be through all the ages to come.

The Theosophical Forum

THE RACES OF MAN — *Arthur A. Beale* (1)

"The child is father of the man."

"As if our whole vocation were endless initiation."

As a traveler to some unknown height stays to review the long path upwards he has climbed, so let us contemplate the vast stretches of the human pilgrimage to the gods from our infant humanity on this globe in its incipency to our present day.

We must remember that such a picture, in our opinion the most important and critical in the journey, is only a portion of the whole, for we are only half way through this globe, one of seven. These seven globes we have already traversed three and one half times, and have yet to travel three and one half times more before we are released from our obligations here, and seek rest, peace and liberation in our eternal home.

Now it is a general principle of our philosophy that each time we circle these globes we leave something to the world and gain something for ourselves; and that at each repetition of the round-journey we have to traverse in recapitulation the details of all we have done in the past, and this as a necessary preparation for the present round-journey. Our particular work in this round was to complete a vehicle or soul ready to receive the blessing and endowment of intellect, self-consciousness and spiritual enlightenment, for without these we cannot graduate as gods — our final destiny. We have to learn to become similar to our Father Monad, who from his own high realm sits and surveys, and in a sense conducts all the various changes in this building of the celestial temple for a god.

The objective of this journey of seven rounds is itself sevenfold:

1. A new set of human entities must be evolved, moving from the state of the beast monad to that of perfect humanhood.

2. A vehicle must be evolved by which human entities already human, may complete their destiny which was left imperfect in our ancestral planet, the moon, so that they may graduate as gods.
3. A complete new outfit of psycho-mental apparatuses must be evolved in preparation for the growing need of infant egos to come.
4. Opportunity must be provided so that the reincarnating egos that now exist may proceed towards spiritual monadship.
5. These spiritual monads must themselves benefit in their march towards freedom, and at the same time
6. A pathway must be made by which the material units, life-atoms, in all their composite relationships may progress, step by step, by their association with all the grades of evolving consciousness, out of darkness into light.
7. Through all this, the ends of cosmic nature will be fulfilled.

Why, it may be asked, has it taken us already three and one half rounds to arrive even at the relatively unevolved point we are now at? What have we been doing during all this long past? The answer to the question is told in the past history of evolution as taught by the Theosophical Teachers. First there had to be the gradual preparation of the earth-chain, step by step from pure spiritual consciousness, through a gradual advance in organization, in concretion of matter, and in conscious elaboration of detail until in this round vehicles were evolved ready to receive self-conscious, intelligent entities. This important event, the incarnation of mind-entities, was reserved for this round, and the human race today holds the honorable position midway between the already evolved hierarchy of self-conscious beings above, and the unselfconscious entities below. As a race we might be said to be the feet of self-consciousness and the head of unself-consciousness.

The story of the evolution of these vehicles is the one we wish to enlarge on. It is all a part of man's journey on this globe in this present round, and would seem to be the most important cyclic period in the

history of the world.

To understand the remarkable sequences of events in this journey, does it not seem a fundamental principle that in every new venture, in every essay from the unmanifest to the manifest, we have to repeat the selfsame process of our evolution from the subjective to fully evolved objectiveness? Thus in our individual incarnation, we epitomize in a short space of a few months all the complicated changes from the simple "laya center" to the full blown human child. In this small drama there is evidence of all those racial types that we have already passed through, that is, up to the middle of the Fifth Root Race. And we must not forget that these changes are vehicular, the controlling architect, the Monad, remaining in his own realm at all times, directing the changes. The same principle pertains in the globe- and round-evolution, with corresponding changes in length of time-periods in the process, but always with each step a corresponding move upwards, towards the hierarchical perfection.

Our ancestral selves of the First Race are represented as enormous cells, balls of mist, moving about by rolling over and over; 173 feet high like mighty snowballs, or as they have facetiously been described, "pudding bags," naturally with the pudding inside — this inside pudding having its vital septenary attributes, however little manifest at first.

These semi-astral cells had the elementary electro-magnetic attributes of the present-day human cell. They were especially active at the time of their multiplication by cell division or fission, at which time each division assumed the magnitude and general character of the parent, the latter continuing its own life. In their internal activities they showed mineral, vegetable and animal or beast properties, especially in their attractions and repulsions, in their granular dispositions as in a cell, in their metabolism of environmental substance. Inferentially it is conceivable that they were isometric to the ocean mineral composition on the astral plane, just as our blood and other bodily fluids are today. And is it not fair to assume that their connexion with their divine

Monads was maintained by something corresponding with the nucleus and nucleoli of our cells which in those far-gone days would represent the mind-part of these snow-mist entities? It is a tempting suggestion that this tiny nucleus evolves into that wonderful organ of union with the inner god which today we call the pineal gland.

This astral race must have existed in our earliest geologic periods, in that part of the earth we call the North Pole. We are told that they were moon-colored, speechless, and whilst mindless, were highly spiritual. They were called the "Sacred Race" and we are told they never "died," but by slow degrees their forms became more concrete and they took on silvery shapes of a more ovoid character, thus slipping imperceptibly into what we call the Second Race.

Some of the activities of this Second Race were very startling. Their method of procreation was similar to that of some of our water animalcula or protozoa of today; that is, they gave off little buds, like the beads of sweat that issue from our skin today, just breaking off small elements of their substance, without any sexual process, and these then grew up into beings similar to their parents. They had no physical organs beyond the protoplasmic, and lived by osmosis (absorption or permeation of outside elements). As said, they were more solid than their ancestral First Race and consequently more shrunken in size but still enormous. We are told they were about 120 feet in height.

They persisted for millions of years in that part of the world now occupied by Greenland, Sweden, and Siberia, a region called by some the Hyperborean continent — the name being derived from the Greek idea "beyond the north wind." From there there was a gradual descent south. Their speech, if it could be called such, was a sort of chant-like series of sounds with vowel dominants.

These ancestral entities gradually changed their shapes, substance, characters and activities, and evolved into the most epochal, the most historic and significant and cyclicly critical of all our ancestral races: the Third Race. In this race everything was speeded up. Commencing as

practically shapeless, mindless, sexless entities, they passed through many mutations and reached their climax as complex, fully formed entities, almost identical in general physical characteristics with our own.

They assumed a golden color. From a semi-liquid state they evolved into first a gelatinous consistency and ultimately became semi-cartilaginous, dwarfing in size to 75 feet and 60 feet. Their method of propagation evolved from budding to that of casting forth spores or seeds, and ultimately they became egg-bearing.

Then the sex-instinct evolved from within, producing androgynous characters, viz., where both sex-characters exist, but not manifest until later when hermaphroditic forms were produced, having both male and female qualities in one form. (There are occasionally hermaphroditic children born now — a throw-back to that long past historical event.) Towards the end of the Race their children showed definite male and female forms, these becoming perfected in the Fourth Race.

They lived, we are told, in the middle of the Mesozoic period, according to geologic nomenclature. Now the Mesozoic period lasted 36,800,000 years. By further calculation add 18,400,000 to the 7,360,000, the estimated period of the Tertiary, and to this add 1,600,000, the estimated Quaternary period. This gives us 27,360,000 years. Dr. de Purucker gives the figure as about 25,300,000 years ago; so that our figure seems near enough. This environs them with the coal ferns or forests, the time when there were already fish in the oceans, enormous reptiles on the land, myriads of crustaceans, lobsters, crabs, prawns, and birds in the early stages; but there were no mammals till the middle period of their evolution. Mammals appeared before the coming of mind, probably in the spore-bearing stage of the Race, the mammals being thrown off unconsciously from the main stock. They lived in a vast continent farther south than the Hyperborean, which included what is now enormous areas of the Pacific Ocean, of which the Polynesian Islands, Australia, Malay Archipelago, Ceylon — which

was afterwards part of Atlantis — and Madagascar are relics.

It was 18,000,000 years ago that this Third Race acquired, by their contact with divine beings called the Manasaputras, the endowment of mind, self-consciousness and intellect. Contemporaneously, the separation of the sexes occurred, naturally by a slow process. First there were separate examples which must have been taken for sports or monstrosities; then more and more instances occurred, until the two sexes became the rule, and this state was fairly well established by the coming of the Fourth Race.

There were concurrent events which marked the evolution of the Third Race other than those mentioned, previous to the coming of mind, intellect and self-consciousness. During the time that these entities were shaping out, one of their outstanding features was the evolution and organizing of the Cyclopean Eye, a protrusion from the primitive brain, resulting in an external organ of sight, which also acted as a medium of communication with their divine preceptors that watched over them. Being spiritual entities, their means of communication with these exalted Guardians was a sort of instinctive intuition. Also they developed first the vowel chants, these evolving gradually into more definite nature sounds, and finally a sort of primitive language.

But after the great mind-illumination, many things were changed; first and foremost there was a large development of brain, and an expansion of the soft cranium to accommodate it. There was the enormous emergence of cerebral hemispheres, first as vesicles, then as semi-material convolutions which by pressure upwards and outwards swamped by slow degrees the one eye. At the same time there appeared the two optics, first as vesicles, then, by co-operation of certain changes in the skin of the face, the outward production of two eyes, so that for a long time there must have been three eyes: a time spoken of in Greek legends when there were giant Cyclopes. But by slow degrees, with the development of the brain, the "Third Eye" disappeared from the exterior of the cranium. Thus man became endowed with two eyes (intellectual organs), two sexes, and two minds.

After these remarkable changes man settled into his paces and acquired a stable form which with minor changes marked a type that persisted through the next race and is today extant, although there was a gradual dwarfing of size both in height and width. But with this stabilization of form came a natural advance in functional acumen.

The Fourth Race, by common consent now denoted by the name Atlantean, is a race not known to modern science and only casually hinted at in sundry references by ancient historians, but by the grace of the Trustees of the Archaic Lore, described for us as human entities of complete anatomy (though hermaphrodites persisted in the early part) with keen intellects far surpassing the ordinary intelligence today.

These men and women were still enormous beings, twenty to thirty feet tall, with developed bones and hard horny skins, red to brown in color. (2) They occupied a period indicated by modern science as the Tertiary and representing an age somewhere between 8,900,000 and 7,360,000 years.

They passed through many stages of culture, branching out from a primitive language to many races having many languages — the origin of the story of the Tower of Babel. Occupying in human evolution the kamic period, their minds were a low grade of kamic intelligence, materialistic, selfish, cruel, revengeful and at their height they developed a great deal of sorcery and black magic.

But of course there was a corresponding modicum of divine teachers and benevolent adepts. "Many a green isle needs must be in the deep wide sea of misery," as Shelley wrote. It was a time when humanity was evolving its lower mind, its psychic-mental apparatus, and wonderful civilizations developed, enormous edifices rose, profound knowledge and science flowered, producing weird inventions. There are even hints of such things as airplanes, propelled by means suggestive of the Keely motor. (3)

This Fourth Race occupied a large continent, and part of the earth's surface now covered by the Atlantic Ocean; also part of Europe, Africa

and the East as far as India, including Ceylon (the old island of Lanka), and part of America. The last Race, our own Fifth, was the child of Atlantis. It had its early civilizations in the region of the Desert of Gobi. Its units gradually dwindled in size to 7 and 5 feet. They were softer in structure, and up to the present time have existed over a period of 1,000,000 years. To know what they really look like study the looking glass!

FOOTNOTE:

1. Author of *The Evolution of Man's Mind*. Dr. Beale who died January, 1943, was a valued contributor to Theosophical periodicals for almost fifty years. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

2. The Mayas and Quiches of ancient America, and perhaps the modern North American Indians may be considered as relics of these ancient Atlanteans. ([return to text](#))

3. See the stories told by William Q. Judge, writing under the pseudonym of Bryan Kinnavan. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE RELIGION OF CHINA (1) — *Christmas Humphreys*

The Chinese have the oldest and the finest civilisation extant, not excepting that of India. Compared with them we in the West are in many ways, as they were wont to describe us, ignorant barbarians. They have produced the greatest art in history, not excepting that of Greece. To-day, reluctantly, and only in defence of their very right to exist, they have produced an army which is unbeaten and may prove invincible. After the war, they will form one of the four Great Powers responsible for the re-organisation of mankind. What, then, is the fount of life from which have sprung this civilisation, this exquisite art and this unconquerable spirit on the field of war?

The answer is a religion-philosophy unique in its complexity, its range and in what, for want of a better term, I call its "infusion" in the national life. It is composed of three of the seven great religions of mankind, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, and three of the other four have played their part in its creation. Hinduism has influenced the Chinese through Mahayana Buddhism; Christianity, of the Nestorian variety, was widespread in the vital period of the T'ang Dynasty, and there are millions of Chinese converts to Islam. It is true that the outward forms of all these faiths have suffered at the hands of time, but the spirit of Confucius is at the heart of the Chinese army's morale; if Taoism has to some extent degenerated into necromancy and traffic with the spirit world it has nevertheless provided the soil in which the seed of Buddhism has flowered into Zen, that mysticism of the will which is the bravest path to Reality yet used by man; and if Chinese Buddhism has too far become a series of "services" appropriate at birth, marriage and death, yet there is in progress a widespread revival of true Buddhism fostered by the mighty figure of the Ven. Tai Hsiu.

These three ingredients of the religion of China are not merely mixed but complementary. All men need a philosophy, secondly, a way of life, and that indefinable third factor, wings, that lifting power of the

mystic's vision, the joy of expansion which comes, paradoxically enough, in self-surrender, and which manifests alike in the quiet humility by which alone we possess everything, and in the spontaneity and laughter of the child. And these requirements are to be found in what the Chinese themselves have called the Tripod, a religion standing on three legs. Ancient tablets show the figures of the three Founders side by side; modern societies study the three philosophies dispassionately, and have even attempted to formulate, in the doctrine of the "triple ego," a set of principles acceptable to all. Nor do the Chinese choose or let their parents choose to which of the three religions they shall belong exclusively. One Chinese student, when I asked him to which religion he belonged, replied: "All three," and added: "And in my private shrine I have a crucifix as well." Why not? All men are different, and "the ways to the One are as many as the lives of men." Though the great religions have all built highways to Reality, every man must some day make a path for himself and tread it to the end.

Before we can understand the compound religion of China we must understand the Chinese character. The Chinese, like ourselves, are intensely practical, and therefore suspicious of all abstractions and abstract ways of thought. They are, like ourselves, extremely individual following the Buddha's dying exhortation — "Work out your own salvation with diligence." They are experts in relationship, content with their own station in life whatever it may be, and insistent on observing the right relationship with all above and below them. As such they are a religious-minded people, for religion is the adjustment of the particular to the universal, the living of the right relationship between man, nature and THAT. If, on the other hand, by religion be meant the worship in collective form of a personal God, then the Chinese are no more religious than the English, of whom, so the Bishop of Durham says, "only 5 per cent, have any connection with organized religion."

The Chinese are artists all, lovers of the beautiful in all its forms, perhaps the only nation since the Greeks who have made of beauty a religion in itself. They are a friendly, simple people, ever in love with

life. In the terms of modern psychology they have learnt in the passing of unnumbered centuries to "sit loose to life," at terms with the unconscious. Hence, moving on the rhythm of life, as a people they know not death. Always they follow a Golden Mean, despising all extremes, with what may be described as a short swing of the pendulum between the "opposites." As Confucians, their creed is "Do as you would be done by"; as Taoists, "Be humble and you remain entire"; as Buddhists they are followers of the Middle Way which leads to the heart's enlightenment.

In England we are apt to date our history from the time of Christ. In China there was a well-developed monotheism and a high degree of art and culture by at least 2000 b. c. As the representative on earth of Tai, the Supreme Ruler, there was a Priest-King, who was the "Son of Heaven." Below him came the feudal lords, and then the countless heads of families, who looked to their sons to afford them the same reverence and respect which they afforded to their fathers, their lords, their king and so the Heaven of which he was but regent upon earth. Thus there was a continuum of creation, revered as such, which, far from "ancestor worship" in the popular sense of the term, is another example of the Chinese love of right relationship.

By the 6th century b. c. the country was torn with civil war, and men were already dreaming of the "Golden Age" of the first Emperors when at least a man might sleep in his home without fear for the morrow. At such a crisis there appeared in China two of the greatest men the world has produced, Confucius and Lao-Tzu. At the same time there appeared in India Gotama the Buddha, whose teaching was to reach China in the first century a. d. and blend with the existing two religions as never before or since have three religions blended into one. Further West, Plato was teaching in Greece, and part of his philosophy concerned the Good, the True and the Beautiful. In China, Confucius taught the Good Life; Taoism and Buddhism told men of the True, but China needed no one to teach the religion of the Beautiful. The Chinese sense of values has always been in favor of the aesthetic rather than the utilitarian, stressing the value of creativeness over the thing created. In

Confucianism, for example, the emphasis is on being and doing good; in Taoism on seeking and realizing Tao; in Buddhism on the actual treading of the Middle Way. Once more it is the right adjustment or the sense of right relationship which has religious value. The thing created or the act done is of comparative unimportance. The Chinese approach to life, in other words, is largely subjective; hence the saying, "Fulfilment is deception." The Western approach is objective; hence the proverb, "the end justifies the means." It follows that anything is important to the Chinese mind which is itself creative, its importance lying in its creativeness. Thus ceremonial is valued not for what it produces but what it is. Courtesy is itself an expression of the creativeness of the individual mind. Right conduct to one's neighbor is an end in itself, and even drinking tea may become a ceremony expressing the same spirit of creation as in other lands may manifest in using a machine. In no way is this better shown than in the Chinese attitude to war. War is a struggle for results which, however obtained, justify the effort expended on obtaining them. But results, say the Chinese, are never worth fighting for. Why fight for land and booty? When won, they have no abiding value to the individual, and the very men you fight may be your allies in some political reshuffle in a few years" time!

Such were the main ingredients of the Chinese character even in the 6th century b. c. when, in a country torn with civil war, there appeared Confucius (Kung Fu-Tze), the greatest name in China. Yet the Master Kung was not a pioneer of thought, not, in the ordinary sense a religious man, and certainly not a World Teacher as were the Buddha and the Christ. He was, on the other hand, the first Chinese of whom we have knowledge to found a school of thought, and he certainly codified a great deal of the literature and traditions of the past into a noble system of social reform through the example of right living. Fearless in the pursuit of truth, utterly sincere with himself and all men, loyal to all, his teaching roused the best in the Chinese character. First, he said, reform yourself. "The Master said: The man of honour makes demands on himself; the man without a sense of honour makes demands on

others." For him the reform of the country — the "new order" as we should say, to follow the years of bitter fighting — depended on the reform by himself of the individual. To this end, he insisted, first gain knowledge as handed down by the great minds of the past, but regulate the use of this knowledge by the inner rule of *li*, good form, and common sense. Then, and the order must be noted, acquire some measure of self-control and self-discipline. Only then should the self-trained "gentleman" apply his mind and energies to the "social service" of his fellow men. In this way, all teaching and ultimately all government was a matter of "gentlemen," in the sense of trained and disciplined individuals, setting an example to those they taught or governed, and thus in the end to all men.

Hence the great stress on ethics, the science of social relationships, and indeed the teaching of Confucius has been described as a code of ethics raised to the status of a religion. Loyalty to oneself and goodwill to one's neighbours were the two basic principles of the teaching, sometimes summed up in the word "reciprocity," though I prefer the far more graceful, "Do as you would be done by."

Such a teaching had an instant appeal to the Chinese mind. Here were no metaphysics, no abstract, far ideals. Develop your own character, and practice right relations with your family, your neighbours and the state. Here was a tangible philosophy which summarised their own convictions. But is it a religion? If by religion be meant the worship of a God, the answer is "No." But Confucius, like his greater contemporary, the Buddha, was silent on ultimates. He built a framework of right living, and it is not his fault that the Chinese later made this framework into a cage. The Master emphasised the Golden Mean in all behaviour, the practice of a right adjustment, hence harmonious relationship to the father of one's family, one's overlord, one's Emperor and so to Heaven. This is a way in the world and not a way of escape from the world. As the Master said: "The way is not far removed from men. If a man pursues a way which removes him from men, he cannot be in the Way."

The Way is a way of commonsense, of compromise when necessary. Hence the delicious doctrine of "saving face" by which all parties may withdraw from an embarrassing situation without loss of dignity. All things are regarded as of equal value in the sense that to the superior man what matters is the handling of and attitude to facts rather than the facts themselves. All ritual and courtesy, and the Master's life was full of both, were methods of handling facts and circumstances, so that their significance and not their nature might be emphasised. Facts and circumstances are of little value; what matters is their significance. Hence the delighted observation of a Chinese gentleman to Mrs. Adams Beck, the well-known author of *The Story of Oriental Philosophy*. "In the West you think it important to reach a place in sixty minutes rather than in sixty hours. In China we consider that what matters is what you do when you get there."

Mencius, the most famous follower of Confucius, had less, perhaps, of his nobility and his profound humility, but he had more "human-heartedness," more love of the common people, and he certainly developed the doctrine of right for right's sake, without thought of a reward, here or hereafter. But even a developed and expanded Confucianism could only satisfy half the Chinese mind, and it is one of the remarkable coincidences, if there be such a thing, of the history of religion that there should have appeared in China, contemporary with Confucius, another Sage whose teaching was an exact antithesis.

Lao-Tze was also a transmitter, but whereas Confucius had concentrated on the Tao of man, his older contemporary was primarily concerned with the Tao of Heaven. As we shall see, it was left for Buddhism to provide the necessary link between the two.

Compared with the teaching of the Master Kung, the song of Lao-Tze was as a bird singing in the misty first half-light of dawn compared with the tramp of weary feet upon a long high road. Taoism, the philosophy-religion compiled from the teaching of Lao-Tze, rests on three fundamental principles or concepts, Tao, Teh and Wu-wei, all of which are untranslatable. Of Tao, the Taoist conception of the Absolute,

nothing can be truly said. For "the Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao." Yet only in India did the intellect climb higher in its flight to the Absolute, and only in Zen Buddhism has the mind of man discovered and blazed a Way which goes "beyond the intellect" to the final Namelessness.

"As a fish wants water, man wants Tao." Yet Tao is not God, not a spiritual essence, not anything which words or even thought can in any way describe. Tao is not this or that, or this *and* that; it IS. Seek and you will not find it, for it is the boots on the feet of the seeker, the eyes with which he seeks. As is written in the classic of Taoism, the *Tao-Teh King*, "There is a thing inherent and natural which existed before heaven and earth. Motionless and fathomless it stands alone, and never changes. It pervades everywhere and never becomes exhausted. It may be regarded as the Mother of the Universe. I do not know its name. If I am forced to give it a name I call it Tao. . . . When one looks at it one cannot see it; when one listens to it one cannot hear it. But when one uses it, it is inexhaustible."

The second Taoist term which must be understood is Teh, as untranslatable as Tao. It is not "virtue," but a way of life lived in the rhythm of Tao, Tao in action, as it were. It calls for a genuine humility of mind — "be humble, and you will remain entire"; for a mental and if possible a physical simplicity of life, for riches, power and position can never add to Tao; for a corresponding poverty of desire, for a man's true wealth is measured by the absence of his personal desire. The genuine Taoist has no personal ambition, and, "because the Sage does not compete no one competes with him"! These qualities lead to a still keener love of life, a love of beauty — "the face of Tao," and a love of nature — "the manifestation of Tao," which is almost unique in the field of religion. To the Taoist Chinese, nature is a fellow pilgrim on the Way. As the famous Chinese poet, Li-Po, exclaimed, "We never grow weary of each other, the mountain and I." And the pilgrimage of life, of every form of life, is a way of return — for "Returning is the motion of Tao," returning home.

Wu-wei, which may be described as the technique of Tao, can no more bear translation than Tao or Teh. It is not a quietism, nor the doctrine of laissez faire; still less is it doing nothing. It is a fluid attitude of mind incapable of snaring in a net of words. It has been said, "Man stands in his own shadow and complains of the lack of light." If that means nothing to you, let me put it another way. Get rid of the self and the Tao can enter in. Men build windows in a wall, but it is the hole in the wall which is of value; they make bowls and pots, but the value of the pot is the space in the middle. Hence the doctrine of the "Void," which applies these analogies to the mind of man. When the mind is a vacuum of self, the Tao flows in; when filled with his own importance man is empty indeed. "The soft and the weak overcome the hard and the strong," a spiritual principle which is the basis of the science of Judo, or Ju-jitsu. Just as in this form of wrestling the winner uses his opponent's force to defeat him, so the same science of winning by giving way may be applied to the mind. The Taoist never gets in another's way, nor even in his own. When the force of circumstance, or time, or another's enmity assails him, he is just not there! For "Tao is ever inactive, and yet there is nothing that it cannot do." In this subtle use of force to its undoing there is an element of using time, of timing every act with a sixth sense of its own. From this point of view it is "the doctrine of the right opportunity, of acting on the inevitable hour." It is in one way the "action in inaction" of the *Bhagavad Gita*, or more accurately action *by* inaction, a motion of will applied to circumstance in which the act is as nearly possible motiveless. Where there is no self in the act there is no recoil, that is to say, no need for Karma, the law of moral cause and effect, to produce a reaction on the doer as an effect of the deed he does. Hence the saying, "the perfect act has no result." In brief, nature abhors a vacuum, and where the self is emptied out, the Tao flows in. "To him that hath not shall be given. . . . Die, if you would live!"

Lao-Tze's most famous follower was the philosopher-wit, Chu-ang-Tze, whose elaborations and commentaries on the *Tao Teh King* have made him virtually the founder of Taoism as a religion-philosophy. Much of his brilliant writing is spent in satires on the teachings of Confucius

from his own Master's point of view, and he was quite determined to avoid the cage of convention in which he regarded all Confucians as having locked themselves. When a deputation arrived to invite him to be Prime Minister of the state of Chu, he is said to have asked, "I hear that in your Prince's private shrine there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead three thousand years. Do you suppose that it prefers to be venerated in death, or would it rather be wagging its tail in the mud alive?" "Surely the latter," was the polite reply. "Then away with you," said Chuang-Tze, "and leave me to wag mine!"

This great philosopher and writer expanded the teachings of his Master, and illustrated them with a wealth of delightful stories and analogies, many of which hinted at the One beyond the "opposites." To him the "opposites," the countless antitheses of life, were only relatively real, and equally unreal. Why, then, fight about them? One of his most famous stories was of a keeper of monkeys who was wont to feed them four nuts in the morning and three at night. At this they violently objected. Wherefore he changed the order and gave them three in the morning and four at night. With this the monkeys were well content!

Chuang-Tze attacked Confucius' axiom of charity and duty to one's neighbour. Charity, he pointed out, begins when Tao is lost, and deliberately to cultivate a virtue is to arouse its opposite. Where there is love there must in a relative world be hate. Why, then, choose *one* of the pairs of opposites? Moving in the rhythm of Tao, learn to be right and you will unfailingly do right. Don't strive to be good. Let Tao, which orders all things, occupy your heart and you will be good naturally. In other words, cease interfering with the rhythm of nature by the efforts of your personal self, and Tao will take command.

From this it will be seen that though not always complimentary to each other, Confucianism and Taoism were remarkably complementary. Obvious comparisons of Stoic and Epicurean, Puritan and Cavalier, Classic and Romantic spring to the mind, and though analogies are never safe to press too far, the complementary nature of these pairs of

opposites applies. Confucius cultivated, note that word, respectability and propriety. Lao-Tze was spontaneous and irrational. The former's ideals were precise and attainable; the latter's vague and all but unattainable. Mr. Lin Yutang has compared the relative points of view in terms of modern life. "A modern Confucian would take the city-licensed, pasteurized grade-A milk: a Taoist would take fresh milk from the milkman's pail. For while your health officers can protect your milk from typhoid germs they cannot protect it from the rats of civilization!"

Of course, the two had much in common. Both sought Tao, but whereas the Master Kung was mainly concerned with the Tao of man, Lao-Tze followed the Tao of Heaven. Both sought Tao by adjustment through behaviour, but the former looked to the right behaviour of man to man and the latter of man to nature and to Heaven. Yet here again is another of the pairs of opposites, and the Chinese genius has learnt to unite them in a higher third. Surely Tao is for the inner, and the ethics of Confucius for the outer man?

For a thousand years these two great Teachers were revered, and their teachings studied and applied through the length and breadth of China, until, in the first century a. d. there arrived as a potential rival the teaching of Gotama, the Buddha. At first the Chinese were suspicious of such metaphysical doctrines, and still more of an Order which, with its rule of celibacy, struck at the root of their family life. But Confucian scholars soon learnt to appreciate the scholarship of the Indian visitors, and used their methods to improve their own presentation of Confucian ideals. Taoists seem to have welcomed the new teaching as an improvement on their own philosophy, and to a large extent were later absorbed by Buddhism.

The relationship of Buddhism to the two indigenous teachings seems to lie in the fact that Buddhism provided three factors needed by but largely absent from the other two. In the first place it provided a link between the moral code of Confucius and the spiritual heights of Taoism, a ladder as it were from earth to Heaven, at once a sanction for the Confucian self-discipline and an application of Taoist ideals. In

other words it served as a Middle Way between the two existing philosophies of life. Secondly, by introducing the twin doctrine of Karma and Rebirth, the individual was seen as a pilgrim coming from a distant past and moving by his own initiative towards a distant but definite goal. Hence a practical guide to the Way, with knowledge of its nature, purpose, and its goal. Thirdly, and perhaps arising from the other two, there was more light thrown on the nature of life after death, the interim period between two lives, and of the nature of the enlightenment, the fruit of self-reliance and self-discipline, which awaits each pilgrim at the journey's end.

The Buddhist viewpoint stimulated Chinese art to new activity, and it is agreed that Buddhism has been the greatest single factor in producing the incomparable art of China and Japan. The Buddhist teaching "Look within — thou *art* Buddha!" applied to all living things, implies that man and nature and Heaven are in essence One, and this sense of mystical unity affected not only art. It served to improve the position in society of Chinese women, assuaged to some extent the element of cruelty which is a defect in the Chinese character and, with its element of devotion, produced for the first time what might be called a religion in the ordinary sense of the term.

The Chinese appreciated Buddhist tolerance of conflicting points of view. For if all phenomena are viewed as illusion, of only comparative reality, it is clearly foolish to fight about opinions, or even to argue that any point of view is absolutely right or wrong. Hence the thousand "devices" used by the different sects of Buddhism to arouse in the individual his dormant enlightenment. *All* symbols, argues the Buddhist, ever inclined to be over-tolerant, and *all* Ways to enlightenment are admissible if they are of help to someone. For knowledge on earth is at the best comparative, and only in true enlightenment can any man be said to *know* the Truth, as distinct from knowing "about it and about."

This attitude of mind alone explains the enormous range of Mahayana Buddhism, the "greater vehicle" of salvation, as distinct from Hinayana,

the teaching of the Buddha as handed down in the Southern School. It is certainly difficult to understand how doctrines as different as those of the Pure Land sects on the one hand, and of Ch'an or Zen Buddhism on the other can spring from a common stem. Yet the Mahayana is like a wheel. From a central hub have radiated spokes in all directions, each developing some aspect of the Message of the All-Enlightened One. It follows that spokes of development that have moved in opposite directions have little in common by the time they have reached the vast circumference, but of all the schools of Buddhism there is none greater than the Dhyana in China known as Ch'an, and in Japan by the term best known to the Western world, Zen. The Ch'an, or "Sudden" school of Buddhism in China was founded by Bodhidharma, who came to China from India in 520 a. d. The legend runs that the secret of Zen was taught by the Buddha to his nearest disciples, and handed on by them from Patriarch to Patriarch until Bodhidharma brought it to China, and thus became the first Chinese Patriarch. However that may be, it soon became the leading Buddhist School, and uses what is at once the most earthly or human and the most exalted or god-like method of attaining enlightenment. Its approach is violent, strenuous and unique. First train the intellect to carry consciousness as high as the intellect can go. Then, having reached the limit of the thinking mind, standing upon the utmost pinnacle of human thought, leap into the unknown, thrusting away irrevocably the ladder of thought by which you climbed. Till now the mind has learnt increasingly "about it and about." Now for the first time it must have the courage to KNOW.

How? There are no words in answer. "Lead the life if ye would know the doctrine." Even "Buddhas do but point the Way." C. G. Jung, the leader of Western psychologists, has written of religion as a protection from religious experience, as a sometimes necessary screen between the aspiring mind and the direct knowledge of truth which it is not yet strong enough to stand. He who would know, who *must* know even if he forfeit life for it, must develop the strength to face the naked truth without the robes of ritual and symbol that hide the flame from his enquiring eyes. Destroy *all* symbols, cry the Masters of Zen, smash the

screen which hides the flame! Yet waste no time in seeking the flame. "The Light is within thee," said the Egyptian Hierophants, "Let the Light shine!" Don't study music — sing! Don't study ways of living — LIVE! A Zen Master said to a pupil, "You say "I live." I say "I live," but when you say "I live" there is still a distinction between the "I" and the "live." I live!" Don't stop to argue, still less to understand. Don't stop for anything. Walk on!

So fettered are we in the West with the clumsy process of conceptual thought that we laugh at the strange, exotic methods of the Zen Masters. Yet they have one aim in view, to break into the cage of the disciple's mind and free the joy of life, the love and the light of enlightenment which dwell within. Anything is used which tends to that utterly desirable and yet elusive end. One means is the *koan*, the word or phrase whose meaning can never be found by the intellect yet which, as a pebble in the mouth, is carried about in the mind by day and night until, in a deathless moment, a flash of enlightenment comes, and the first step on the final path is attained. Sometimes the *mundo*, a form of question and answer, nonsense to the uninitiated listener, is used by the Master. And nonsense it is, non-sense because beyond the feeble substitute for knowledge we here call sense. Sometimes a physical blow will shatter the mental barrier, sometimes a shout, or a joke — or silence! For words, which can never describe Tao, can never speak of true enlightenment. Most of what can be said has been said by Dr. Suzuki in his various volumes on Zen, but all of this is only a "finger pointing the Way." The rest is silence, for it has been said, and truly said, that "Zen has nothing to say!"

So much for a lightning survey of a vast subject, the religion of China, one of the greatest nations on this earth to-day. From one point of view it is complete in itself; from another, it is the religion of the East as distinct from that of the West. But East and West are only another of the pairs of opposites. The antithesis is partly that between depth and breadth, a striving to allign oneself with the powers of nature and heaven, or the will to dominate the powers and forms of nature till they bow to the human will. But these are complementary ways of the

Way, the narrow Way that leads in the end to the heart's enlightenment. And even as none can truly find enlightenment for himself "until the last blade of grass has entered into Buddhahood," so there is no nation that is complete unto itself. In brief, "only the world entire can save the world entire."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Middle Way*, July-August, 1943. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

COPERNICUS, FOUNDER OF MODERN ASTRONOMY — *Charles J. Ryan*

This authoritative and fascinating account of the life and work of the famous Polish astronomer, Mikolaj Kopernik, generally known by the Latinized form of his name, Copernicus, has twenty-five well selected illustrations and an explanatory Foreword by Sir Arthur Eddington. (1) The translation is very good.

Born at Torun, Copernicus studied at the university of Cracow, the capital of Poland, which was then a great State. His interests covered many branches of learning and the arts, but astronomy was his favorite subject. He was a successful medical practitioner, and his knowledge of financial matters was so deep that he was appointed expert adviser to the Polish legislature when a great currency reform was instituted. He traveled and studied in Italy; and when he returned to Poland he played a leading part in political affairs as Canon of the cathedral of Warmia. He was a great defender of liberty against the rapacity of the famous (or infamous) Teutonic Knights, who were finally suppressed in Germany by Napoleon. The last forty years of his life were devoted to the shaping and testing of his revolutionary cosmogony. Personally, his life was stainless; he did all the good he could, and served his country with self-sacrificing devotion. His work in astronomy is a perfect example of the modern "scientific method," a very unusual thing in the Middle Ages; for he never accepted authority without question but gathered all the evidence possible before coming to a conclusion.

The "merest schoolboy" is supposed to know that Copernicus destroyed the doctrine that the earth is the center of the system of sun and planets, by demonstrating that the sun is the true center, and that all the planets, including the earth, revolve around it. This fundamental change of view enabled him to explain many hitherto obscure phenomena, such as the true cause of the seasons, and to determine the inclination of the earth's axis almost exactly, an extremely difficult

problem.

But the effect of his work reached much farther than the domain of physical astronomy. It gradually undermined the popular belief that as the earth was the center of the universe everything must have been designed for man, its most intelligent inhabitant. Man's immense importance was demonstrated by the tremendous fact that the Second Person of the Trinity was sent down from heaven for his benefit! But under the logic of Copernicus the conventional explanations of natural phenomena arising from the belief in a personal, anthropomorphic God were seriously shaken, though he probably did not realize what a tremendous storm his great work *On the Revolutions of the Celestial Orbs* would arouse. His famous successors, Galileo, Kepler, and Newton, were, like himself, all devout men — the two latter were strongly inclined toward the mystical interpretation of the universe — yet it was chiefly because of the work of these four outstanding geniuses that for several centuries materialistic views have so largely prevailed in science.

It may be, however, that the mechanistic trend has been useful in clearing away many absurd superstitions in beliefs and methods in preparation for the coming synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy, the ideal of Theosophy, which will include a harmonious working between logical reasoning and spiritual intuition. But there is much to say for the anxiety of the learned university professors whose equanimity was disturbed by the Copernican Theory and the later discoveries of Galileo. Not only were their views on the physical structure and laws of the universe — based mostly on erroneous teachings of Aristotle — being undermined, but the very principle of the transcendental or spiritual interpretation of Nature was in danger. How could the new mechanistic physical teachings supported by mathematics, the exact science, be accepted without losing faith in the Divine Government of the universe? Hitherto undisputed teachings of the Church such as that of Joshua stopping the sun in midheaven, taken literally, were no less essential parts of Christian teaching than the Sermon on the Mount. During the Middle Ages the Ancient Wisdom-

Teaching which sees the Cosmos as a whole whose parts were intimately interrelated with Divinity, or which was neither more nor less than an expression of the Divine, was never quite lost although obscured by dogmatic theology. Man, the Microcosm or little world, was an image of the Macrocosm, the great universe, "God." His bodily organs were presided over by the corresponding stars, and so even the most incomplete relic of the ancient astrological knowledge was credited in spite of the errors of the exponents.

That man and the universe are fundamentally one and that the physical body of man and the visible universe are only temporary appearances of the Real Man and the Real Universe is the basic principle of the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophy, "the Oriental Tradition," as some have called it. In so far as the new scientific learning with its triumphs in the physical world flung aside the good as well as the foolish aspects of medievalism, it became culturally limited. To its credit it broke down the superstitious belief in authority and corrected the habit of fine-spun speculation without first ascertaining the actual existence of the matter being discussed!

However, man cannot live on husks forever, and we may safely feel that the later misuse of the scientific discoveries of the great pioneers of modern astronomy has only been a temporary hindrance to a higher interpretation of Nature when we observe the recent change in the outlook of some of our most brilliant exponents of astronomy. Sir Arthur Eddington claims that consciousness is the foundation of the universe and not, as so long believed, a by-product; Sir James Jeans writes:

Today there is a wide measure of agreement, which on the physical side approaches almost to unanimity, that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality; the universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter: we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of

matter. . .

In regard to the recent discoveries in astronomy of Cosmic Rhythms, periods of manifestation and quiescence on the largest as well as the smallest scale, and the revelation in physics that matter is only a *maya*, an aspect of "radiation," whatever that may be, and so forth, an editorial writer in *The New York Times* recently remarked that "Western Science is being converted to the teachings of the Himalayan Sages" (!) and it is no longer a wild and unscientific proceeding to believe that the universe is made of life abundant, life in innumerable degrees of consciousness. So perhaps if Copernicus could look down from the astronomers' heaven he would rejoice to see that the Ancient Tradition, shorn of its weak points and crudities, is returning to the West.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Nicholas Copernicus, 1473-1543*. By Dr. Jozef Rudnicki. The Copernicus Quadricentenary Celebration Committee, London. 53 pages. 10s. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ON BEING OF GOOD COURAGE — *Mary W. Peyton*

We need no dictionary to define the derivation of the word "Courage." That it springs from the Latin *cor* we are aware instinctively: our own hearts tell us that courage has its lodging there, in the very core of our being.

Nor is it necessary to search for synonyms. The glowing significance of bravery, dauntlessness, gallantry, intrepidity, valor, heroism, is well known to all of us. Do we not honor greatly — perhaps envy — that one who possesses a stout heart?

Once upon a time courage connoted desire, will, intention. "I'd such a courage to do him good," wrote Shakespeare. In every untoward circumstance or situation that makes us faint of heart, it is clearly imperative to summon desire, will, intention — and quickly — in order to substitute pluck for weakness. Sometimes for very survival, if not for the body then the soul.

There are no statistics on the subject, but there must be few in any race of men who do not esteem and applaud courage, who do not shrink from being branded as cowards. There are innumerable instances of men in battle who might well be faint of heart — and *are*, by their own admission — yet rally to acquit themselves nobly. It is cynical and ungenerous to believe that they are spurred on merely by the shame of appearing as weaklings before their comrades. The valor of most men surely springs from a deeper source, where the pure waters of the spirit cleanse them of self-interest, self-protection, and charge their souls as well as their bodies with intrepid courage. Again, it is shameful to narrow down heroism to a mere action of the adrenal glands. The sudden discharge of sugar into the blood-stream is but a small part of a much greater whole. The Whole of Man is something vaster than chemical action and reaction; contained therein are such potentialities of greatness and exercise of nobility that we may well bow before them

in reverence and awe.

It is natural to think of bravery in its physical aspect now that millions are demonstrating this quality as actual participants in warfare — but what of moral and spiritual courage? Not often conspicuous or loudly heralded, they may be of such high order as to merit the most glorious of accolades. Triumph of the spirit over adversity and calamity, peril and tragedy — how deeply does this move us!

On the other hand, we are prone to have small patience, even condemnation, for those who continue to groan under afflictions. Our first pity is soon mingled with contempt if they sink in the morass of self-pity, if they "can't take it," except supinely. We abhor cowardice, the pusillanimous and the weak-spirited. Who knows but what this very scorn is unconsciously directed to the thin, sleezy spots in the fabric of our own character? Within us may sound an uneasy whisper: "Could I take it? Be of stronger courage in the face of bereavement and betrayal, loneliness and homelessness?" Pertinent questions if we ask and answer them honestly, leading to farther reaches of understanding and sympathy.

Who has not an Achilles heel? A certain man who achieved renown for exceptional bravery in battle is craven before the very thought of old age. Then there is the woman valiant in the defense of the weak, who works unceasingly for the establishment of justice and good-will among men — but quails miserably at the idea, quite remote, of poverty overtaking her. The heel of Achilles. There are those who keep cool heads and stout hearts in fire and flood, typhoon and earthquake and other so-called "acts of God," yet cannot speak the brave word in defense of the unjustly accused. Timorous and dry of mouth, they remain silent when finding themselves of the minority opinion, the unpopular. The list of weak tendons is, unhappily, a very long one. We all know the vulnerable points in others, but do we recognize our own? And if we do, and have the will, desire, and intention to rid ourselves of such obstacles to healthy growth, how do we go about it? How acquire true courage?

Not by living and thinking in the first person singular. Positively, as Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick phrases it, a man must get himself off his hands: must change the mirrors of his room, in which he sees only the reflection of himself, to windows through which he can look out upon objective objects. Theosophy gives a name to this exchange of mirrors to windows, and it is Impersonality.

The weapons of the spirit are the old fundamental values, truth, honesty, integrity, selflessness. By the exercise of these virtues we learn to be of good courage. Like Bunyan's Christian, we may be "hard put to it" at times, but we can everlastingly *try* — and who wants to be a miserable Faint Heart in his own Pilgrim's Progress?

To admire and honor the courage of another is a step that leads toward emulation. Youth is fired by the very name of Richard, the Lion-Hearted. The adult heart must be flimsy and apathetic indeed not to be stirred by the same appellation given so rightly to H. P. Blavatsky: stirred and moved forward by the power of her example.

Every book of Scriptures has its counsel of perfection for the nurture and maintenance of courage. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage and he shall strengthen thy heart." Or this: "If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not courage; fight on, and to the charge return again and yet again."

There is strength for the sinews of mind and heart in the words of Katherine Tingley: "There is no nobility in fear; it is a thing born wholly in the realm of personality, smallness, and selfishness, and has nothing to do at all with the Higher Self which is the Hero in man."

THE HERITAGE OF MAN IS MAN HIMSELF — *G. de Purucker*

The heritage of man is man himself. Each man is the builder of himself, and the destroyer maybe. Each man is his own regenerator and savior, and each man undoes the work upon himself which mayhap for aeons in the past he had been building. This statement may sound recondite, difficult to understand, a dark saying; and yet I wonder that anyone could or might doubt so self-evident a truth. Is it not clear enough that what a man is, he is; and that what he is, is the result of his former lives, the resultant of his thoughts and his feelings, the resultant of his previous willings and thinking and feeling? We make ourselves, we fashion our own characters.

This is one of the commonplaces of human experience. But just think what it means to grasp it in fulness. We make our lives shapely from day to day and year to year and from life to life; or we make them very ugly; and no one is to blame on the one hand, and no one is to be praised on the other hand, except the worker himself, the man himself. Just think how just this is. We have nobody, nought outside ourselves, to blame if we have made ourselves unshapely and ugly and full of sorrow and pain, save we ourselves; and there is none to be praised when our lives become shapely and beautiful in symmetry through our own efforts, save we ourselves. A man by thinking may change his character, which means changing his soul, which means changing his destiny, which means changing everything that he is or becomes in the present and in the future. Why blame the blameless gods for our own faults, for molding us in the patterns that we ourselves have shaped? It is the old idea of "passing the buck" — slang, but oh how expressive! throwing the blame on someone else. This is the surest way to go down instead of going up; for the recognition of truth and the recognition of justice and the cognisance of responsibility in a man, by a man of himself, is the first step to climbing the path higher; and what hope there is in this. Think of the mistakes we have made in the past, the

wrongs that we have wrought on others and on ourselves. Only half the story is told when we say that we have made ourselves and that we are responsible for ourselves. The other half of the story is what we have done upon others: how we have helped to shape their lives in beauty, or to misshape their lives in ugliness.

This recognition of man's responsibility not only to himself, but to others, is the lost keynote of modern civilization, which seems to be infatuated with the idea that things will run themselves, and that all men have to do is to get what they can from the surrounding atmosphere. I think that is a hellish doctrine, and can but produce its harvest of misery. Let a man realize that he is a man and that what he sows he shall reap, and that what he is reaping he himself has sown, and see how the face of the world will be changed. Each man will become enormously observant not only of his acts which are the proofs of his thoughts and his feelings, firstly upon himself, but perhaps more important, what impact he makes upon others. I think it is the lack of this feeling of individual responsibility and mass responsibility in the world today which is the cause of the many, many horrors which are growing worse instead of better. It fosters the belief that violence can right a wrong. It never can. Violence never has perished by adding violence unto it. No problem ever has been solved after that manner. It is against the laws of being, against the laws of things as they are. Think it out, and you will see it yourself.

What is a man's heritage? I say again, it is man himself. I am myself because I made me in other lives. And how ashamed I am of myself at times that I have not made me wiser and better and higher and nobler in every way; and how I bless the whispering intimations of divinity within my heart that I can say I am not worse than I am! You see, this is the first realization of my responsibility to all — and the all includes me. And here is a wonder-thought: when a man does right, no matter at what cost to himself, he strengthens himself and he strengthens all others. It is a work of wonderful magic. And when a man does evil, is it not obvious that he weakens himself? First there is the weakening of his will, then the soiling of his thoughts, and then the lessening of the

strength of his genuine inner feelings. The very contact with such a man, provided he follow the downward path long enough, causes the self to be soiled. Even as one rotten apple, they say, will ruin a whole barrelful of sound fruit, so will an evil character adversely and evilly affect not only himself, but all unfortunates who may be near him.

We can save ourselves from this very easily, because there are few things so revealing as evil. It has naught to stand upon except illusion. Leave it alone and it will vanish like a mist. Do not strengthen it with pouring more evil into the illusion from your own energy. If it has naught to stand upon, no source of vital activity within itself, it falls, it goes to pieces. How different is good, which is health-giving and strengthening and cleansing. Such simple truths, and so profound! I suppose the most simple things are the most beautiful and the most profound.

So this doctrine of the heritage of a man which is himself is simply the doctrine of another chance for the man whose life has been spoiled by himself. No other man can spoil you unless you yourself co-operate in the spoiling. None other can make you evil unless you conjoin in the suggestion or in the doing. Blame not the other for your fall. It is yourself who falls, and you will never fall, you would never have fallen, unless you had preferred that which brought about the fall. Such simple truths, and yet they comprise a code of divine conduct for us men on this earth. A child may understand these things because they are so clear, they are so obvious.

The doctrine of another chance! Think of the man — any one of us — who has made a mess of his life and wonders why ill fortune and misfortune and unhappiness and misery and other terrible things come upon him, until sometimes in the agony of self-reproach he cries, "Lord, deliver me from this hell." It is the old weak appeal to something where no help lies; for help is here within; the divinity lies in your breast, the source of all strength and grandeur; and the more you appeal to it the more you exercise it, the more you strengthen your own self, advance in truth and wisdom, rise above all the planes of

weakness and sorrow and pain brought about by evil-doing.

So you have made yourself; and in your next life you will be just what you are now making yourself to be. You will be your own heritage. You are now writing, as it were, your last will and testament for yourself. When a man realizes this wonderful fact, he no longer blames others, no longer sits in judgment upon his brothers. He no longer says: I am holier than thou — an attitude which is the sure mark of the weak and of the poor in spiritual life.

There is a wonderful French proverb which runs thus: *Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*: To understand everything is to forgive all. To understand all the hid causes, the results, the past destiny, the present strength, the temptation, the virtue, whatever it may be — to understand all this is to have divine knowledge, and it means to forgive. It is a wonderful proverb and must have been uttered, I venture to say, first by some human being who had a touch of illumination. I know myself by my own experience that when I have been hurt, or am hurt and think I am unjustly treated, I say to myself, even when it seems to me that the wrong doing unto myself is obvious: If I could read the heart of my brother who has wronged me, read back into the distant past and see what mayhap I did to him to wrong him, perhaps I would realize that he now is as unconscious of the wrong he does me as I was then of the wrong I did to him. I shall not increase the treasury of virtue and happiness and peace in this world by taking up the gauge of battle and injecting more fury and hatred into a hatred-ridden world. But I can do my part in strengthening myself, do my part in getting some illumination from above-within, from the god within me, by doing what I myself have taught: *practising what I preach*. Peace and happiness come from this, and the sense of increased self-respect and the growth of pity.

Do you know, I sometimes think that pity or compassion is one of the most celestial visitors to the temple of the human heart. The old sages used to say that nought but the gods really pay men exact justice, or what they think is justice and flatter themselves that they are right. The

gods upon their azure seats hear all, see all, feel all, understand all, and are filled with pity. Think, if any one of us human beings were weighed in the strictest scales of karmic justice untempered by pity and wisdom, what chance do you think any one of us would have to escape condemnation? Does any one of you think that you are so spotless in virtue and holy strength that the scales would not fall against you? If so, you are very, very happy — or very, very blind! I think that if such spotless purity of past karman were yours, you would not be here as a man on this earth working out your own heritage — yourself.

True it is that in the future all the human race are going to be gods, and there is no reason on earth why we should not begin in the present instant of time to grow towards godhood. You win all, you gain all, you lose naught. From driven slave of past karman you become the orderer in time of your own destiny, for you are your own heritage. What a doctrine of comfort! What light it bestows on us!

The Theosophical Forum

FRIENDS OR ENEMIES IN THE FUTURE — *William Q. Judge*

The fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life. To the extent to which this application goes they become living truths, quite different from intellectual expressions of doctrine. The mere intellectual grasp may result in spiritual pride, while the living doctrine becomes an entity through the mystic power of the human soul. Many great minds have dwelt on this. Saint Paul wrote:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

The Voice of the Silence, expressing the views of the highest schools of occultism, asks us to step out of the sunlight into the shade so as to make more room for others, and declares that those whom we help in this life will help us in our next one.

Buttresses to these are the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. The first shows that we must reap what we sow, and the second that we come back in the company of those with whom we lived and acted in other lives. St. Paul was in complete accord with all other occultists, and his expressions above given must be viewed in the light Theosophy throws on all similar writings. Contrasted with charity, which is love of our fellows, are all the possible virtues and acquirements. These are all nothing if charity be absent. Why? Because they die with the death of the uncharitable person; their value is naught, and that being is reborn without friend and without capacity.

This is of the highest importance to the earnest Theosophist, who may be making the mistake of obtaining intellectual benefits but remains uncharitable. The fact that we are now working in the Theosophical movement means that we did so in other lives, must do so again, and, still more important, that those who are now with us will be reincarnated in our company on our next rebirth.

Shall those whom we now know or whom we are destined to know before this life ends be our friends or enemies, our aiders or obstructors, in that coming life? And what will make them hostile or friendly to us then? Not what we shall say or do to and for them in the future life. For no man becomes your friend in a present life by reason of present acts alone. He was your friend, or you his, before in a previous life. Your present acts but revive the old friendship, renew the ancient obligation.

Was he your enemy before, he will be now, even though you do him service now, for these tendencies last always more than three lives. They will be more and still more our aids if we increase the bond of friendship of today by charity. Their tendency to enmity will be one-third lessened in every life if we persist in kindness, in love, in charity now. And that charity is not a gift of money, but charitable thought for every weakness, to every failure.

Our future friends or enemies, then, are those who are with us and to be with us in the present. If they are those who now seem inimical, we make a grave mistake and only put off the day of reconciliation three more lives if we allow ourselves today to be deficient in charity for them. We are annoyed and hindered by those who actively oppose as well as others whose mere looks, temperament, and unconscious action fret and disturb us. Our code of justice to ourselves, often but petty personality, incites us to rebuke them, to criticise, to attack. It is a mistake for us to so act. Could we but glance ahead to next life, we would see these for whom we now have but scant charity crossing the plain of that life with ourselves and ever in our way, always hiding the light from us. But change our present attitude, and that new life to

come would show these bores and partial enemies and obstructors helping us, aiding our every effort. For Karma may give them then greater opportunities than ourselves and better capacity.

Is any Theosophist who reflects on this so foolish as to continue now, if he has the power to alter himself, a course that will breed a crop of thorns for his next life's reaping? We should continue our charity and kindnesses to our friends whom it is easy to wish to help, but for those whom we naturally dislike, who are our bores now, we ought to take especial pains to aid and carefully toward them cultivate a feeling of love and charity. This adds interest to our Karmic investment. The opposite course, as surely as sun rises and water runs down hill, strikes interest from the account and enters a heavy item on the wrong side of life's ledger.

And especially should the whole Theosophical organization act on lines laid down by St. Paul and *The Voice of the Silence*. For Karmic tendency is an unswerving law. It compels us to go on in this movement of thought and doctrine; it will bring back to reincarnation all in it now. Sentiment cannot move the law one inch; and though that emotion might seek to rid us of the presence of these men and women we presently do not fancy or approve — and there are many such in our ranks for everyone — the law will place us again in company with friendly tendency increased or hostile feeling diminished, just as we now create the one or prevent the other.

What will you have? In the future life — enemies or friends?

The Theosophical Forum

EARLY AMERICA AND HINDU CULTURE — *Charles J. Ryan*

Many students of Theosophy have desired more information about the connection between ancient India and ancient America than is given by H. P. Blavatsky in the few references she makes to the subject. We are glad to find that a learned Hindu scholar, Mr. Chaman Lal, has at last taken it up and presented a mass of evidence in his deeply interesting volume of 247 pages entitled *Hindu America*, published by the New Book Co., Hornby Road, Bombay, in 1940. We are indebted to Dr. W. Y. Evans-Wentz for drawing our attention to this valuable corroboration of H. P. Blavatsky's claim of an intimate connection between America and India some thousands of years before either the Norse or the Columbian rediscovery of the New World.

Mr. Chaman Lal's evidence for the similarity of the ancient Hindu and the native American religions and cultures, as well as for the historicity of the traditions in both the Old and the New Worlds wherein the voyages and connecting links between them are recorded under more or less allegorical forms or even in plain language, is strong and well-selected, though we regret the inclusion of a citation from Churchward among those from serious and recognised scholars.

Most Western writers have ignored the possibility of pre-Columbian travel between India and America by civilized expeditions by either the western or the eastern sea route or by both, but have concentrated attention on the possible emigration of early savage tribes from northern Asia across the Bering Straits perhaps more than 30,000 years ago. H. P. Blavatsky, however, and the ancient traditions mentioned, indicate that highly civilized persons came over to America from India at a later date, some even as recently as 5,000 years ago.

Mr. Chaman Lal's evidence includes the sculptural and pictorial representations in America of the *Indian* elephant with their unmistakably Hindu artistic "feeling." These elephants do not resemble

the prehistoric American types. The American god Tlaloc was elephant-headed, as was the Hindu Ganesha, a derivative of Indra, and both were rain-gods. The author gives a large number of quotations from various sources illustrating the close resemblance between American and Indian cultures and ideas, such as religious traditions and myths, cosmical concepts, the knowledge of the four Yugas and of the races preceding the present Fifth Race, identical social systems and customs, and yoga meditation methods. He discusses the use of the zero in mathematics among the Mayas, unknown elsewhere in the ancient world except in India; the symbols common to India and America such as the cross, the swastika, the thunder-bird (the latter being stylized at Ocosingo in Mexico so as to be practically identical with the Egyptian Winged Globe) and the traces of food-plants being transported across the Pacific, etc. He mentions the recent discovery of stone wheels at Tiahuan-aco in Bolivia, but does not refer to the unexpected revelation that America knew the principle of the true arch. These examples of Old World culture in ancient America were unknown till quite recently.

Mr. Chaman Lal pays considerable attention to the curious identity between certain Indian and American games, but he does not mention the fact that when the Spaniards arrived in Arizona they found the Pima Indians playing a game which required a pattern exactly duplicating the elaborate plan of the Labyrinth of ancient Crete as shown on the Cretan coins! This pattern is so uniquely specialized that it seems impossible for it to have been independently invented in places so remote as Crete and our Southwestern States; but Mr. Chaman Lal traces a powerful Hindu influence in Greece and the Mediterranean and quotes significant evidence about the extensive maritime trade carried on by India with foreign countries.

Many pages are devoted to the Snake or Dragon (Naga) Cult of Hinduism and its close resemblance to the widespread Snake Cult of ancient America, which is still extant in places, even in the United States. Students of Theosophy know the importance that is attached to the snake as a symbol of Wisdom and of the Initiate, which is found in

every ancient religion, even in Christianity, for Jesus uses the word when sending forth his twelve trained apostles: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Moses healed the people by setting up the Brazen Serpent under direction from his God. How different the story of the European penetration into and domination of America might have been if the pure teachings of Jesus had been followed by the professed Christians!

The Theosophical student feels that Mr. Chaman Lal is right in his insistence upon the importance of the similarity between the ancient Hindu and American religious philosophies, and in doing so he is supporting a fundamental teaching of *The Secret Doctrine*, i. e., the former existence of a universal "Wisdom-Religion," Theo-sophy as we now call it, widely diffused over the earth, the origin and fountain of the partial presentations of the One Truth which have arisen as specialized religions, and which have mostly become more or less degenerated or superstitious. This, however, is no obstacle to the probability that the Hindu "colonists" to America brought many new ideas and methods which were engrafted into the prevailing forms of belief.

In explaining that many of the difficulties in tracing the religious practices of ancient America arise from the almost complete destruction of records by fanatical bigots, Mr. Chaman Lal speaks plainly of the horrifying cruelties perpetrated on the American tribes by the so-called "Christians," but he firmly believes that "the culture of the Indian will revive again and will redeem America. There are already clear signs to that effect. The most advanced and scientifically brought up Americans are already . . . looking for a philosophy that will "save their souls." " In this he would sympathize with Dr. Gregory Mason, Americanist, who in his recent *South of Yesterday* asks if we, modern Americans of all types, shall not carry on the *American* tradition that has come down from antiquity and build a real civilization in all respects suitable to Western conditions, and in which we shall no longer depend upon European culture.

The following quotations from H. P. Blavatsky will suffice to prove that Mr. Chaman Lal's main principle is well-founded. Speaking of the Chaldean, Assyrian and Indian "Nargals" or chiefs of the Magi, and the Hindu "Nagas" or "Wise Men," she writes:

Such similarity cannot be attributed to *coincidence*. A new world is discovered, and we find that, for our forefathers of the Fourth Race, it was already an old one. That Arjuna, Krishna's companion and *chela*, is said to have descended into *Patala*, the "antipodes," and therein married *Ulupi*, a Naga (or Nagini rather), the daughter of a king of the Nagas, Kauravya. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 213-4 (Also see footnotes 406, 407)

In H. P. Blavatsky's *Theosophical Glossary* we read:

ULUPI (*Sk.*) A daughter of Kauravya, King of the *Nagas* in *Patala* (the nether world, or more correctly, the Antipodes, America). Exoterically, she was the daughter of a king or chief of an aboriginal tribe of the Nagas, or Nagals (ancient adepts) in pre-historic America — Mexico most likely, or Uruguay. She was married to Arjuna, the disciple of Krishna, whom every tradition, oral and written, shows travelling five thousand years ago to *Patala* (the Antipodes). The Puranic tale is based on a historical fact. Moreover, *Ulupi*, as a name, has a Mexican ring in it, like "Atlan," "Aclo," etc.

And again in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Exoterically, the *Nagas* are semi-divine beings. . . . Yet there was a race of *Nagas*, said to be a thousand in number only, born or rather sprung from Kadra, Kasyapa's wife, for *the purpose of peopling Patala*, which is undeniably America. ... — II, 132.

There is no doubt that America is that "far distant land into which pious men and heavy storms had transferred the sacred doctrine" . . . the *Secret Doctrine* of the land which was the cradle of physical man, and of the Fifth Race, had found its way into the so-called *New World* ages and ages before the "Sacred

HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM — *Judith Tyberg*

When an open-minded scholar has an opportunity, because of a very wide and rich education, to study not only one great religion right from its original scriptures and sources but many such religions, it is inevitable that the spiritual tenets of one will be found to complement favorably and even to increase the value of similar tenets in those other religions, because Truth is One. Is not this even so with the individual expression of different human hearts, for are not hearts the fountains of Reality, of infinite wisdom? This is beautifully expressed by the poet Lysaght as follows:

For the meaning that dwells in all things,
The story of every heart,
Is the same — the infinite story of all
Whereof each telleth a part: —
Tidings mightier, graver.
Than a single voice can utter,
Too deep and solemn a secret
To sleep in a single breast,
But the voice of each makes truer
The voices of all the rest;
And each repeats of the story
The part that it loves the best.

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy has proved to be just such a scholar, and in his book *Hinduism and Buddhism* (1) we have some of the fruits of his vast field of study and knowledge. Herein we find religious concepts of ancient India, supported by others from China, Egypt, Greece and Rome, and of the Christian world — all reiterating fundamental beliefs and ideals. Herein he has proved that Hinduism is one of the facets of the *Philosophia Perennis*, and that its essential truths are therefore in accord with those of other great religions. Due to a lack of a true understanding of the religious concepts of ancient India there have

grown up many false suppositions and interpretations which have unfortunately been accepted by many philosophical students trained in Western methods of thought.

The author, in a most scholarly way, with detailed references, has resurrected the fundamental truths of Hinduism, thus making this work a valuable reference-book for serious students of Sanskrit texts. From the Vedic Suktas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads, and from the Bhagavad-Gita, he has culled jewels of wisdom, those truths that will ever inspire, and that will enable the perceiver of their profundity to recognise that same heart-life in other great religions. Truths that never grow old, but which are not often fully realized by either Orientalists or modern Hindus are brought to light, and fallacies and misunderstandings are cleared up. In the notes that are appended to the text similar ideas to be found in Greek, Roman, and Christian philosophy are cited. This adds highly to the value of the book.

In the first half of this work which is devoted to Hinduism we find that the ever recurring myth is spoken of as "a penultimate truth," as a symbolic expression of universal experiences that are timeless, and therefore applicable to all beings, to worlds or men, to their birth, growth, struggles, conquests, and final reabsorption. In other words, the myth is shown to be an embodiment of eternal truths, not the result of childish fancy, as many think.

Wisdom-teachings such as the following are excellently portrayed here with their Hindu poetic figures and charm: the unity behind polarity; the god-essence latent in everything; how the One manifests itself through the Many; the hierarchical wheels within wheels, all with the same infinite center; Karma as the character inherent in everything; *Agni* as the divine guest in every form, the radiant source of life; the Adversary but our personal self or the Outer Man; altruism as the key to becoming SELF; the surrender of the personal self makes the man whole; self-control is the submission of the Outer to the Inner Man; to know one's SELF is to become ALL; the soul's journey through the Seven Worlds to the Sun; and that beautiful answer, so well known to deeper

students of Theosophy, to the question asked at the Sun-door, "Who art thou?"

Sacrifice in its original sense is grandly portrayed: to sacrifice is to act sacredly, is to give oneself to the Imperishable God. "God gives as much as we can take of him, and that depends on how much of "ourselves" we have given up." . . . "Whatever is done perfectly must have been done lovingly, and whatever ill done, done carelessly." True sacrifice is silent and invisible, it takes place within. The great sacrifice is a conscious dying, the "final katharsis." The Soma-sacrifice is explained in its true meaning. King Soma is shown to be the moon-element or body-aspect of our being, which must be purified and its evil cast off before we find the sun-part of ourselves. This devouring of the Moon by the Sun outwardly or inwardly is depicted as the "Divine Marriage." The Soma juice, that elixir of life, quaffed only by god-men is given its original mystic representation. Somapas or Soma-drinkers are those who are infilled with the essence of the divinity within, illuminated.

In a chapter on "The Social Order," ethical living is shown to depend on awareness, on a conscious obedience to the laws of nature. Yoga is here succinctly defined as "skill in works." The author uniquely depicts the caste system of India as patterned after the hierarchical system of man's own nature: the spiritual or sacerdotal, the royal, the administrative, and the physical. And just as the higher must be master in the sacrificial life so must it follow in the hierarchy of a worldly kingdom.

Furthermore the value of the system of the Four Stages in Hindu life is clearly brought out. The chance for a higher realization of what life is for, an opportunity of living in a higher state nearer to the source of All, of changing one's attention from the outer to the inner, was offered to any Hindu, whatever his caste, in the last two stages of his life.

Annihilation is shown as impossible. Coomaraswamy writes:

We are told that the perfected self becomes a ray of the Sun, and a mover-at-will up and down these worlds, assuming what

shape and eating what food he will; just as in John, the saved "shall go in and out, and find pasture."

How the "dew-drop slips into the shining sea" of infinitude, and yet continues to be, is compared to what is meant by Master Eckhart's phrase "fused but not confused." When the dewdrop or ray reappears in the world we have one of those grand Avatars. To quote the author:

There is then a "descent" (*avatarana*) of the Light of Lights as a Light, but not as "another" light. Such a "descent" as that of Krishna or Rama differs essentially from the fatally determined incarnations of mortal natures that have forgotten Who they are; it is, indeed, *their* need that now determines the descent, and not any lack on his part who descends.

This section of the book closes with that lofty Wisdom-Key of the Upanishads: "THAT art thou."

The second section is devoted to Buddhism. The author points out from the start that a profound study of both Brahmanism and Buddhism reveals them as one in their religious content, and that Buddha was a reformer only in the sense of restoring an older form of truth — Brahmanism — to its purity, and that he declared what he taught was the "Ancient Way" followed by all "Knowers of Brahman." Buddha, of the royal caste, did not oppose true Brahmanism or a true "Brahmana," but only the degraded ritualistic and corrupted forms of Brahmanism and the self-seeking so-called Brahmanas of his day.

The life of the Buddha is portrayed as another of those eternal myths; in this case representing the Solar divinity in its heavenly descent, as well as that wondrous awakening of the Solar Self in man that has occurred continuously from the beginning of time. The ethical precepts of the Buddha are compared with those of the Upanishads, and also with Platonic teachings. For instance the Buddhist injunction "to be ever mindful of every act" is the Platonic way of saying "to be aware, to be a Master of self," and the Upanishadic teaching "to recover one's latent omniscience."

All philosophic mysticism presents the idea that to be truly born in the spirit, in the Kingdom of God, the mortal man must die; the little self, the soul must give itself up to the Great Self, the One in All Things. The Brahmanical doctrine teaches that *Brahman* is the God within all beings, the only reality. The lesser self corresponds to the chariot or the raft which carries a man to his destination. The Buddhist doctrine of the Anatman (non-self) refers to this unreal personality, not to the Maha-Atman or Great Self to which the Buddha refers when he says "Take refuge in the Self!"

Though men are the heirs of their acts, Buddhism declares that they are not the very same persons when experiencing the fruits of good or evil actions, for they are ever changing, never the same from one moment to another. However, their continuity may be recognised in the same way that we may discern the same person going through childhood, youth, and old age, and yet how very different the old man is from the baby boy. Though a being may continue to *be* into eternity, he will never be the self-same entity through any period of time. As the Bhagavad-Gita (II, 22, 23) states:

Verily never was I not, nor thou, nor these rulers of men;
Nor shall any of us ever hereafter cease to be.
As the embodied one experienceth in the body childhood, youth
and old age,
So are there other body-gettings, therefore one who is wise is
not disturbed.

The Buddhist ethics and teachings as presented in this book are from the Pali texts of the Hinayana or the Lesser Vehicle. Therefore we find Nirvana given here as the final goal. The deeper teachings of the Mahayana or the Greater Vehicle concerning the call of compassion which leads to the great sacrifice of Nirvana in order to help unenlightened humanity are not treated herein.

The Buddha is shown as endeavoring to free men from that non-wisdom (avidya) which causes misery, from identifying themselves with the transient parts of their natures which lead them astray, and

which turn them away from the One Self. This transient Self, the personality, the Buddha compared to a chariot, a temporary vehicle, while the Atman or True Self is the charioteer. This very same simile we find in the Upanishads.

Why not call that Inner ONE Buddha, or Brahman, Christ, or Agni? These names and the myths surrounding them imply the same divine experience, that of Divine Awareness or At-one-ment. Is not universality one of the tests of Truth?

Hinduism and Buddhism is a book to be highly commended to all students of comparative religion. Is it not significant that it should be an Oriental scholar who has performed this service for the world? It is a pointing to the rich harvest that may come from the fusing of the best in the East with the best in the West.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Philosophical Library*, New York. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE TIBETAN DOCTRINE OF TULKU — *G. de Purucker*

I want to make a few brief remarks on an important point and a very beautiful one. It has to do with the teaching of the Mahayana Buddhism of Tibet, which is also exactly our own teaching, hinted at by our beloved H. P. B., but not explained because the times were not ripe for explanation when she wrote.

It is a very difficult, highly mystical and subtil doctrine and for that reason filled full with beauty and richness. It is the doctrine of what the Tibetans call Tulku, and is believed in by every Tibetan whether educated or not. Madame David-Neel, a convert to the Mahayana Buddhism of Tibet, speaks of tulkus and tries with great earnestness and sincerity to explain just what they are; but she has not got the key, the heart of it. She says a Tulku is an apparition, that it is a kind of spiritual appearance which sometimes makes its manifestation among men; but it is evident that she does not get the real idea. When I recently read *Peaks and Lamas* by Marco Pallis, it pleased me so greatly because the author tries so hard to understand this Tibetan teaching, and speaks of it much more accurately, saying that a Tulku is an incarnation. This is closer to the truth.

Now what is a Tulku? Tulkus can be of many kinds, according to Tibetan teaching. The Tulku-doctrine is in fact a generalized statement of our doctrine of Avatars. For instance there are the so-called living Buddhas in Tibet. The Tibetans do not call them that; that is what Europeans call them; but the Tibetans say that there is the transmission of a spiritual power or energy from one grand abbot of a Tibetan monastery when he dies to a child successor or an adult successor. Now if this transmission is successful, the one who receives the transmission is tulku. He is the avatara of the spiritual essence or ego or ray from the previous grand abbot of the monastery. That is one kind of tulku.

Another kind of tulku is an instance where a human Mahatman or great Adept will send a ray from himself, or send a part of himself, to take incarnation or imbodiment, it may be only temporary, it may be almost for a lifetime, in an envoy that this Mahatman is sending out into the world to teach. H. P. B. was such a tulku; she imbodyed frequently the very life and egoity of her own Teacher. While this incarnation of the Teacher's higher essence lasted, she was tulku. When the influence from the ray was withdrawn, tulku stopped.

Some time ago, I think it was two or four weeks ago, I made a statement in answer to a question asked of me, that H. P. B. had not incarnated, and I repeat that now. She has left the devachan, but has not incarnated. But in another place — and I was delighted to get this information from one who had heard the statement, showing how carefully our teachings are studied — in another place about 1930 I stated that H. P. B. had left her short devachan and was then in body; but I very pointedly remarked, whether a child's body or an adult body it is not for me here to say. I was asked to explain this apparent contradiction.

Now this was my meaning, and I had better explain it as I did to the one who asked the question. H. P. B. has not incarnated, that is, she has not incarnated as you have. She has not yet been born as a child. But she has at certain times, and for one certain individual, with that individual's consent, organized as it were tulku for that individual. Do you understand what I am trying to say? So for the time being we can say that H. P. B. is imbodyed, or partially imbodyed, in that chosen individual's being for the purpose of special transmission. That is another kind of tulku.

I have thus given you examples of three kinds of tulku. You notice in all cases they are incarnations or appearances. If H. P. B. for instance were to — well, take the Chairman here [turning to the presiding officer], make a tulku of him for a month or a year, for the time being he would be tulku; but when that particular work was done, the influence would be withdrawn, tulku would stop. It is a kind of avatara, a kind of

incarnation. You may think this is very mysterious and very wonderful, but to people who know about these things it is all very reasonable. Do you realize that every clever hypnotist makes a tulku of his victim in a black magic sense? When a hypnotist puts an idea into the brain of his victim that one week from now, at three o'clock in the afternoon the subject is going to commit murder, or going to jump off a cliff, or going into the Jones's house to steal a Christmas pudding in the larder, for the time being that hypnotist is working a black magic tulku on that victim, and every psychologist hypnotist today knows this. Yet speak to him of tulku and he will laugh. He is ignorant. The wise man has learned not to laugh until he knows.

But I want to point out as my final word before I close, that this doctrine of the tulku has a side to it which is extremely sublime and beautiful, outside of the practical issues concerned. For instance, Jesus the Avatara was a life-long tulku, a ray from the divinity, a tulku of that divinity so far as that ray goes, an incarnation of that divinity. The Buddha himself — Sakyamuni Siddhartha often called the Buddha Gautama — was also a tulku, but a tulku of his own inner god. The average man is merely overshadowed occasionally; the light gets through if he really aspires, and he gets a touch of the divine flame. But when Gautama, later called the Buddha, attained Buddhahood, he was infilled with his own god, *he was that god's human tulku*. That was for him Nirvana. To speak very technically, he entered Dharmakaya, and was known of men no more. In other words he was a man become divinized, made divine. Your own reading will give you instances of other cases of tulku.

So you see what a tulku is. It is, as Madame David-Neel said, an apparition, yes, appearance yes; but these words are not sufficiently descriptive. It is an imbodiment of a spirit or spiritual being or spiritual ray from a spiritual being in some other human being or entity, for a specific or general objective. A good example of black magic tulku was what the medieval Europeans used to call were-wolves or men-wolves, and thereby hangeth a wondrous tale. But that was black magic.

HEROES OF THE TRANSITION — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

The world picture is so blurred and so bloody, waiting hearts are so heavy with grief or so strained by suspense, that it is only by an effort of will that many people can vision a future that human beings can endure to contemplate. It is not only our own sorrows that afflict us. Always there have been some of our fellow men who were suffering almost unbelievably from war or famine or other disaster, but distance and unfamiliarity obscured the full horror of such conditions. Now, distance has vanished, we know everything almost as soon as it has happened anywhere on earth. No longer is any horror unbelievable. We know now what it means to live in the Kali-yuga, the age when destructive agencies are rampant, when what it has taken centuries to build is being ruthlessly torn down, when human lives are blotted out by thousands overnight, when cruelty and inhumanity shock us into a dull wonder as to the fate of the human race. What can we make of all this? One answer is that while there must be heroes who fight and fall in the world conflict, there must also be heroes of the transition who face and understand these conditions and preserve a thread of continuity between the best that has been and the better that yet shall be.

The world is old — millions of years old. As far back as records go war has been waged by men, with great armies on both sides using every known means of killing off their fellow men. Who were waging those wars? We have all lived many lives on earth. Is it possible that any of us is free from karmic responsibility in connexion with war? Karmic causes can remain unfruitful of results for long periods, but they are there and in certain cycles come occasions for them to work out to a finish on a large scale. If we could have a picture of all those we have slain in battles long ago, the horror would be as great as that we now feel when we read the casualty lists. The time has come to face the full implication of the teachings of Karman and Reincarnation. There must

be a heroism of insight and intelligence to recognise and understand the present widespread squaring of accounts that is going on in the world.

What is needed is a stretching of the mental grasp to include the long cycle of man's destiny — the vast periods of the evolution of humanity in successive rounds and races on the globes of a planetary chain like that of our earth; a view of innumerable lifetimes when human beings sowed and reaped, were parted only to meet and love again. Why doubt this? In the present life neither oceans nor continents separated those whose karma it was to meet and love, or for that matter, to hate and kill. Once visualize this continuance and recurrence and it is never quite easy to fit human life into the old limited frame-work of existence. The more comprehensive picture, which shows the present as only *one* part of *one* cycle of human experience when the new must be born from the old in bitter pangs of birth, brings heartening and healing. There is strenuous mental and physical training to prepare one for heroism in battle. There is purification by sorrow and pain to free the valor that endures the surgical opening of the mind to cosmic ideas of truth and law and compassion.

Those who suffer and survive and *do* think, learn that their power to think reaches a new level, unbounded by old horizons. They have gleams of a wisdom that dissolves suffering in compassion. Loss and separation lose their torturing edge. The inner I learns to look with understanding at what the more familiar I is undergoing. Insight brings the assurance that "Sorrow is a lamp which illumines life."

One harrowing picture in these terrible days is that of the brave and beautiful young lives cut off in battle. We know that their bodies will be reverently returned to earth, but where are they? Let us not think of them as dazed or fearful. They are enduring Egos who, before taking birth saw and chose what in life should befall, and at the time of passing, reviewed it all and knew that it was just. Let us face the fact that for many this last fight may be the means of wiping out an old karmic debt, leaving the Ego now free as it could never be until that

debt was paid — a victory for the Self. Let us be brave enough to speed them on their way to a new birth. Let us not picture them faring into the Unknown untended. The truer picture is of the universe, invisible as well as visible, as a well-ordered home, in which some hard lessons have to be learned, but in which there are those who watch and wait with loving care at every gateway of experience to guide the new-born, even as we do here. Why doubt this? Would *you* not gladly serve thus?

The wise ancient psychologist Patanjali taught that there is power in "the mental calling up of the opposite" When the old and familiar and seemingly safe is perishing before our eyes, with Kali-yuga full upon us and a universal katharsis in process, the faculty of visualization wavers unless there is knowledge of what the succeeding luminous arc of the cycle holds for humanity. This knowledge Theosophy offers in the teaching of the intellectual and spiritual principles of the human constitution which shall have fuller expression as the wave of human Egos traverses the luminous arc. The conceptions of man's nature and destiny are the material for visualizing life on the higher level, when we have turned to round out the cycle of evolution on earth. We are taught that the life still to be on earth — the life of reincarnated Egos returning for further experience, will be as unbelievably beautiful as life at present is unfortunately believably sad.

With the restoration of the teachings of Theosophy, words of wonderful potency and meaning have come into use. The study of such expressions as "the Silent Watcher," Vajradhara, Avatara, the Hierarchy of Compassion, opens up sublime cosmic conceptions for contemplation. These words have power to invoke in us trust in the heart of the Universe in which every heart can find peace and renewed will. Renewed will for spiritual venture, for conquest of wider fields for heart energies and for human intelligence to expand in, stimulus for creative imagination in its work of building the inner world that shall be embodied in the new life for humanity All these are available for heroes of the transition who obey the call sounded by the Theosophical Teachers in preparation for the days now upon us.

THREE STAGES OF VISIONING TRUTH — *G. de Purucker*

The psychological opening of the human being to truth, to the ingress of our God-Wisdom, in other words the training that every true Theosophist undergoes, begins once he is touched and his heart is opened — begins even though he knows it not. This opening of the heart may be divided into three stages. We are familiar with these in that form of Buddhism which originated in China coming from India. In Sanskrit it is called the Dhyani-form, and in Japan it is known as the Zen-form of Buddhist thought. It is expressed somewhat as follows, and it applies equally well to Theosophy because the Zen- or the Dhyani-form of Buddhism is but a branch of Theosophic thought.

The student in entering the pronaos of the temple of wisdom, and later in entering the temple itself, goes through three phases of inner opening — that is the word they use. Thus, in the first phase, the mountains and the waters of the earth are mountains and waters, and they are recognised as worthy of study and of research, and their wonder is seen and sensed; but they are only mountains and only waters.

But by study and aspiration after truth, finally comes the second psychological opening of his character, of his understanding, of his being. He realizes that the mountains and the waters, however beautiful they may be and wondrous for study, are after all but aspects, appearances, phenomena of noumena behind, the effects of invisible and secret causes; and he realizes in this second phase of the opening of his being that if he wants truth he must go deeper and study the science of the mountains and of the waters of the earth. He must investigate the causes which bring them into being, the inner causes and energies which produced the mountains and the waters. He realizes that the mountains and the waters, because they are effects, phenomena, appearances, however relatively real they may be, are but illusion, maya, because the real truth is within and behind them. And

his whole being is enwrapped in the thought of this wonder.

Then gradually he begins to sense the profound wisdom of the old saying that the entire universe is a phenomenon and therefore illusory, but illusory only because we do not understand it aright. It does not mean that the universe does not exist. That is absurd and a wrong construction. He realizes that we do not understand it aright, that we must see behind and within. The visible should portray the invisible, the effect should teach us the underlying causes. In this phase he begins to sense his oneness — and this is the finest part of the second phase of the psychological unveiling of this system of training which the Theosophist undergoes and loves so well — he begins to sense his true oneness with all that is, for he realizes that, as physical man, he is but a phenomenon, an effect; that he is in fact the product of secret and invisible causes; that behind the phenomenon of the physical man, is the human spiritual noumenon. And he grows very reverent and a great sense of sympathetic beauty enters into his heart because he realizes that he is but one of all beings and entities and creatures which infill the universe. And he begins to sense from this moment that ethics are no mere human convention; morals are rooted in the very fabric and stuff of universal nature herself. He feels immensely his oneness with all that is. "I and my Father are One."

And this leads to the third step of psychological opening, and in this third step he realizes the wonderful paradox of all that he knew before in the two earlier states. In this third step he learns that inwards and upwards, expansively upwards, yet ever inwards, the mountains after all are the real, and the waters are after all real in a certain wondrous sense, for illusory though they may be to our relatively imperfectly evolved human understanding, nevertheless it is fundamental reality which has produced them forth, just as we as phenomena are brought forth.

So then we see at one and the same time that the only reality is the divine, and yet that this divine because it is the utterly real, makes real in a certain sense even the illusory appearance of cosmic phenomena.

And applying this to ourselves, we sense that the only real part of man is the divine within him; and yet precisely because this divine is reality, that very physical phenomenon which we call the physical man is in a certain marvelous sense real also. We have come back, the circle has re-entered itself. We come back to the point of starting. First, there were just mountains and waters which were the only real things; and then the mountains and waters were seen to be but the garments, the clothing of secret, invisible, realities; and then the next step brought us to the realization that precisely because these are real things they could not produce essential unrealities; so that the very mountains and waters, strange paradox, are both real and unreal. Happy the man who can understand this third step.

The key to this understanding is another thought which I will again take from Dhyani-Buddhism, because it is fairly well known in the West mainly through the Zen Buddhist writings of Professor Suzuki of Japan (from whom, by the way, I did not take this extract). This is the Zen thought. Hearken carefully, please, because the significance is so slippery. "In the wind of the mountains and the sun of the lowlands, in the fall of night and the mists of dawn, it is cried aloud That alone was, is, abides."

The whole universe is That, and all its phenomena are the productions of divine noumena, or divine thought; so that all are essentially unified in a divine oneness. In a rather pragmatical way we can bring down this thought and say that all men are brothers, that every one is his brother's keeper. You see the path of conduct? Any violation of this path, means setting yourself in opposition to all universal nature herself.

There is a way to peace and happiness and wisdom and power. For once a man realizes that he is one with Nature, and Nature is one with him, his consciousness becomes, vibratorily speaking, co-rhythmic with the pulsings of the cosmic heart; and that is why the great sages and seers can work marvels in the world: heal and raise; retain consciousness after death; transport the thinking ego to distant fields

and be there in self-conscious thought and see all that passes around them; and many things more. For the Universe and we are one. There is but one life and this life is also cosmic thought.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME — WHAT IS IT? — J. W. A. Croiset van Uchelen

"The Present," we read in *The Secret Doctrine*, "is the Child of the past; the future, the begotten of the present. And yet, O present moment! Knowest thou not that thou hast no parent, nor canst thou have a child; that thou art ever begetting but thyself? Before thou hast even begun to say "I am the progeny of the departed moment, the child of the past," thou hast become that past itself. Before thou utterest the last syllable, behold! Thou art no more the present, but verily the future. Thus, are the past, the present and the future, the ever-living trinity in One — the Mahamaya of the Absolute IS." (Vol. II, p. 446)

How often do we stop to consider the significance of this statement declaring the illusion of time? Many striking examples may illustrate the phantasmal nature of time. Imagine an observer with unlimited vision on a far distant star. Based on the speed with which light travels, this observer, let us say, would see the earth as it was at the time of the Egyptians. Then imagine this observer traveling towards the earth at a speed which, within one hour, would bring him to within a distance from where he would see the earth as it was eight minutes ago. This would be a distance of a hundred million miles, or from here to the sun. Thus, in the space of one hour, the entire history of the world from the time of the Egyptians up to the present would have unrolled before the vision of this observer. It makes little difference whether we imagine this moment to be an hour, or a second; beginning and end may coalesce but still enclose everything intermediate.

Analogically does not the panorama of an entire life unroll before the vision of the dying in but a fragment of time? Time is but a man-made mode of measuring. And in physics it has been found that methods may be greatly simplified if phenomena are referred to a set of four co-ordinates, three of space and one of time; four dimensions equipotent and inter-changeable. Time then becomes space, and space a mathematical abstraction where relationships may exist by virtue of

the mind. The past is a dream of memory, the future a vision of a dream, while the present, declares *The Secret Doctrine* "is only a mathematical dividing line." This makes the present a laya-center of which we seemingly dispose. Paradoxically, however, the Now is eternal and ever present. We cannot contact the external world except in the present and it is only in the present that we actually have experience. The past re-collected, the future envisioned, are focussed in the Now. Therefore the present alone is ever existent, the eternal Now in which both past and future are absorbed. Then what is it that gives time its sense of reality? Is not this sense of necessity the result from the incessant movement of mind? For the sense of time and of motion are inseparable. Perhaps we might say that the intellect works like some machine which constantly dissevers our awareness into an unending series of separate thoughts and sensations. Or again as *The Secret Doctrine* says:

The sensation we have of the actuality of the division of "time" . . . comes from the blurring of that momentary glimpse ... of things that our senses give us. (Vol. I, p. 37)

Thus the intellect splits up, as it were, our interior sense of being, into comparatively minute measurements of years, months, days, etc. Therefore whatever the brain-mind comprehends, is grasped under this limitation and through this instrumentality of time. It is this which renders us prisoners of time, where in reality we are children of Eternity! For in reality, the disintegrated fragments must be wholly contained within the Self.

All sages and seers have stressed the illusory aspect of time. The Initiate in the Book of the Dead affirmed: "I am yesterday, today and tomorrow." "There shall be time no longer," the descending Angel in the tenth book of Revelation declares. And St. Augustine in his Confessions postulates that creation began not *in* time, but *with* time.

When time turns inward, like the snake upon itself, it becomes eternity. This is an ancient symbol. Is it not that when consciousness shall have turned backward upon itself, the divine, we shall have conquered the

illusion of time?

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WISDOM OF THE OVERSELF — *Charles J. Ryan*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

A large and intelligent audience has followed with sympathy and interest Dr. Brunton's pilgrimage toward philosophical and mystical insight as displayed in the nine volumes which have already come from his pen. This one, *The Wisdom of the Overself*, (1) completes the exposition given in his earlier volume, *The Hidden Teachings Beyond Yoga*, and represents the culmination of many years of research, study and self-discipline. He says it is a re-statement or living reconstruction of the "Ancient Wisdom" (which we know also as "Theosophy") of the Orient, "whose basic essentials are indeed impregnable and will remain untouched for all time," presented in a form adapted to the present conditions in the West and including time-honored disciplines of a mental and spiritual nature suited to the conditions of Western life. This book, of course, does not cover the whole field but is chiefly concerned with mind and consciousness in the universe and in man. The author writes:

The two volumes now lay before readers a teaching which constitutes an endeavor to acquaint this epoch with the fundamental meaning of existence and which, in such explicit fullness, is for the first time written down in a Western language. An exposition in such an ultra-modern form was until now quite non-existent. . . . Readers may begin to understand better why the earlier volumes had to clear up the intellectual foreground and leave hidden in the background the real goal of all this effort, the Overself.

The Overself is the author's term for the "higher individuality" in man which is a phase of the "World-Mind." It is "that fragment of God which

dwells in man."

The reader will find in this book a rich store of stimulating ideas to ponder over and perhaps to put into practice. Although the main principles are not unfamiliar to well-informed students of Theosophy, this reviewer believes that Dr. Brunton's careful analysis of the Mind calls for close study, especially by those who are preparing to discuss with professional psychologists, few of whom possess correct knowledge of the profound psychology of the Ancient Wisdom.

Dr. Brunton unequivocally repudiates all pandering to the vulgar craving for psychic powers and other perversions of Occultism so rampant in this maladjusted age. He claims no authority, saying that the spirit behind his attempt is a humble one though the effort is bold. He professes to be no more than a fellow-student who has had special opportunities to explore and study the scattered and broken fragments of Sanskrit literature which are hidden in Chinese, Tokhari, and Tibetan translations. But he adds "for the encouragement of aspirants" that some of his statements are not only the outcome of his re-interpretations but of "present-day experience," presumably meaning his meditations and application thereof. He pays high tribute to an Asiatic philosopher or teacher he met in the deserted temples of Cambodia and above all to the late Maharaja of Mysore for light on difficult problems. Neither of these, he says, were emotional mystics or mere intellectualist metaphysicians.

He writes for all whose pained observation of, or sharing in, the awful experiences of this war-mangled era and whose desire no longer to suffer blindly have aroused an inner prompting to seek for practical help. He says, "it is the inescapable duty of whoever knows that a higher Hope exists for mankind to speak the lost Word for the sake of those who will listen." But "these leaves are sent out across the window without adolescent illusions about their reception and if a few of them shall flutter down to rest awhile beside a friend or two and remind him of his divine origin and destiny it shall surely be enough."

H. P. Blavatsky must have felt the same when she dedicated her *The*

Voice of the Silence to "the Few", and advised the study of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and *Light on the Path*; but owing to the spread of the Theosophical Movement a great increase has taken place in the number of students who can appreciate such teachings. In this volume Dr. Brunton quotes with understanding from *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path*, and here and in his *Hidden Teachings Beyond Yoga* he pays a very high tribute to the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

So many topics are discussed in this remarkable work that it is impossible to do it justice in the limited space at disposal, but the most important chapters on the philosophic side are those which demonstrate that Ideas not only rule the world but that the universe is *made of* as well as *made by* Ideation, an uncompromising presenta-of the Theosophical principle of "Objective Idealism," which Dr. Brunton says has been only half adopted by many Eastern and Western idealists. He calls his doctrine "Mentalism," the antithesis to Materialism, interpreting it as "the fundamental principle that in the last analysis Mind is the one reality, the only substance, the only existence," and that "this entire panorama of universal existence is nothing but a mental experience and not merely a mental *representation* of a separate material existence." He shows how to "arrive at such conclusions not only by a straight-line sequence of reasoned thinking but also by a re-orientation of consciousness during advanced mystical meditation." According to the mentalist point of view, consciousness itself is an aspect of Mind, and Mind reaches to the highest plane, to the divine, or as we might say, to Parabrahm.

Subsidiary topics discussed in relation to Mentalism include Evil and Suffering; Karma and Reincarnation; War conditions and causes; Death, Sleep and Dreams; Time; After Death states, and others. The state of Devachan is interpreted with profound understanding, and Spiritualism is treated without offence but with well-informed discrimination. "The Mystical Phenomena of Meditation" (which does not mean psychic phenomena) commands an important section of a work like this which is devoted to the demonstration that man is an integral part of a Living, Conscious Universe.

Dr. Brunton introduces his analysis of Mentalism by a study of the extraordinary image-making power of the mind in dreams, which duplicates on a small scale the infinitely greater power of the World-Mind in shaping the Cosmos by Divine Imagination, "God-dreaming," he calls it. In our dreams some unfamiliar part of the mind beyond the ordinary consciousness creates apparently independent beings and dramatises them into living and acting personalities who even argue among themselves. The dreamer accepts such vivid dream appearances as perfectly real and natural, yet they are only mental constructions lasting as long as the Hidden Artificer holds them in his mind! So by analogy we may dimly understand that our waking experience, nay the manifested Universe itself, is the reflexion or activity of a transcendent and eternal Mind. It is only ephemeral in the sense that it is ever-changing. Can we get to know the Hidden Artificer of our dreams, and in that way approach the Overself? Dr. Brunton thinks we can.

Dr. Brunton's methods of self-study and self-discipline have none of the dangers or abnormal practices of so much that passes in the West under the alluring title of Indian Yoga. He takes it for granted that the aspirant for self-knowledge is inspired by unselfish motives, the betterment of his neighbor as much as of himself. The methods are whole-heartedly directed toward wide, universal and impersonal horizons and away from the limitations of the personality, the "under-self" as Dr. Brunton labels it. His technique, if it may be so-called, is aimed to help the student to rise above the need of techniques or any help that does not come from within; and the result in no way impoverishes a life of attainment in the wholesome activities of the outer world. On the contrary, success in this endeavor brings the wonder and glory of the transcendental consciousness into all the doings of this workaday space-time existence.

The acquisition of even a high degree of mystical vision must not be regarded as an end in itself. This mistake has often been made by many who have made some progress behind the veil; and in regard to

"heavenly visions" of saints and yogis it is well known that some celebrated mystics had none and yet were more advanced in spirituality than others who had plenty. Many of the latter, Eastern as well as Western, suffered from the extremes of rapturous ecstasy and dreary dryness. The author remarks that "an unbroken serene assurance of the divine ever-presence is immeasurably better." Nature hurls the self-absorbed mystic back to the world every time he tries to disregard it and remain permanently in his trance, for we are here "in the flesh for instructive experience, not for stultifying desertion," and it is "only in the *fully-awakened* state that the widest consciousness of reality is attained." The mental blank that is associated with much of trance-yoga (such as that of the Indian yogis who allow themselves to be buried alive for months) is valueless. As Dr. Brunton says, "they leave the idiot in full possession of his idiocy, the self-deceived in undisturbed proprietorship of his illusions," and he shows that while a well-considered system of thought and meditation leads through "authority, logic, pseudo-intuition and mystical experience," the latter must always be checked by "reason" which he defines as "the active functioning of human intelligence stretching from the practical-scientific pole to the abstract metaphysical one." Otherwise it will prove sterile and lead to no worthy purpose. The right combination provides a trustworthy spiritual background to rest on in daily life, and especially in unselfish, impersonal service to others. He says, "In striving for the triumph of Good instead of letting contemplation die with itself he must let it fertilize his deeds," and when he aptly quotes from *Light on the Path*, "Seek the way by retreating within," he immediately adds the balancing precept, "Seek the way by advancing boldly without."

The author criticizes those who regard waking life as an evil or an illusion, declaring that it is only in embodiment that achievement of our highest destiny is possible, even though it take many incarnations, for "The Spirit of Heaven must descend to earth and enter through the door of the body and be a welcomed guest whilst we are fully awake." The descent of the higher consciousness, the "Over-self," into the

personality is not an emotional disturbance but is quiet and untheatrical. The Power which is behind the universal life can only inspire the personal life of man if he obeys the ancient teaching "Thy will be done," and in order to enter the sacred union with the Cosmic or Divine Will "every illumined religious, mystic, and philosophical teacher has voiced the need of self-surrender." All this is, of course, good Theosophical doctrine.

Instructive and interesting chapters in this book deal with a knowledge of the deeper reaches of consciousness which can be studied through control of the mind in sleep and dream. Have we not all wondered why we must spend nearly one third of our brief lives in an unconscious state? But it would seem that it is our own fault. During sleep we can if we will take a wonderful journey *within* ourselves. When the writer of *Job* said that "in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men ... he openeth the ears of men and sealet their instructions," (33, 15) he was repeating what the wise have always known; but not all have been able to interpret the saying. Dr. Brunton follows the mind as it penetrates in sleep to states of consciousness unknown to the waking personality but which need not remain unknown to the earnest student. The training is of course all done by the student himself; all that another person can do is to give a few simple directions and warnings. Dr. Brunton quotes from the Sanskrit *Tripura*: "Unbroken supreme awareness even in dream is the mark of the highest order of sages," but he encourages those who are not of that class but who are only beginners in self-training and self-discipline by saying that flashes of insight may come at any time if they are sincere and hold to the highest ideals of morality. In this connexion he adds that "the real altruist who does not primarily seek his own happiness finds it, while the intense egotist who is always seeking it, never finds it." And in regard to the higher knowledge and wisdom obtained in sleep he says:

Thus the sleep state, which is so devoid of light and significance during the present psychological state of mankind, becomes full of both for the developed man.

In many places in his *The Esoteric Tradition* Dr. de Purucker discusses the subject of sleep and dream, chiefly in connexion with his profound analysis of the Theosophical teaching that the universe is in all its reaches strictly a manifestation of Mind, "embodied Thought." (p. 180, etc.) In an unpublished lecture by Dr. de Purucker given on July 28, 1940, he said that in order to speed up his evolution by more fully understanding the nature of his own being man must learn to be fully conscious during sleep, and ultimately through the change we call death. I quote from my own notes: "We men are not truly alert to what is in us and what we can do. ... First learn to be fully awake when you are in the *Jagrat* state — the state we are in now, physical wakefulness. . . . Then learn to carry that self-conscious state of awakening with you when you are asleep. Thirdly, and highest, learn to be self-consciously awake after death. . . . Consciousness is a continuity, but we have not taught ourselves to be self-consciously awake when we sleep, or self-consciously awake when we die. But it is in you; it is in you for the asking." Dr. Brunton's teaching of the close resemblance between sleep and death is in perfect accord with that of Theosophy, so often emphasized by Dr. de Purucker because of its great importance.

In his chapters on methods of meditation in waking and in preparing for mind control in sleep, Dr. Brunton quotes the Buddha's teaching about making the mind "flexible" through exercise; and the exercises he recommends are perfectly natural and sensible and have no resemblance whatever to the dangerous breath-control, hypnotic, or other psychic methods unfortunately associated with the word "yoga" because of the perversions spread so widely in the West by charlatans and money-makers. It is no crime to wish to prove for oneself the existence of other planes of being or of the psychic faculties in man. The effort, however, forcibly to crash the gate into the astral world, to gratify "occult" curiosity by getting out of the physical body and traveling around, and so forth, shows an entire misapprehension of the kind of knowledge which is desirable. It likewise reveals an absolute ignorance, however well meaning, of the unhappy possibilities which lie in wait for the rash invader who crosses the threshold without the

protection which surrounds those who have proved their *right to enter and who have necessary business* in the unwholesome regions of the lower astral light.

In his instructions to the beginner in meditation Dr. Brunton warns the aspirant not to be carried away by various wonders that may occur, for they are only incidentals, fugitive and fragmentary. "The Ultimate has no shape, size, color, or voice whatever." This is well known to students of true occultism. More than sixty years ago William Q. Judge in his *Letters That Have Helped Me* warned the devotional members of the Theosophical Society of these "lures," as he called them, saying:

There are so many, many of these things. Often they result from extraordinary tension or vibration in the aura of an aspirant of pure devotion. They are himself, and he should be on his guard against taking them for wonders. . . . They are like new lights and sights to a mariner on an unknown coast. They will go on and alter or stop. You are only to carefully note them, and "do not wonder or form association."

The Wisdom of the Overself closes with a noble chapter on the practical aspect of the philosophy and the need of attaining some measure of self-knowledge. Dr. Brunton claims that there is a master plan behind the universe, and that in the present death pangs of the old order, when we are striving for higher values, a nobler conception of life can be found if men will only grasp the opportunity. In regard to what he calls "insight," a word he uses to designate the highest faculty of the mind, higher even than intuition, he writes in eloquent terms:

Whoever believes that the awakening of insight is something which affects the intelligence only, believes wrongly. For with it there is a simultaneous awakening of the finest qualities of the heart. Indeed, in this transcendent sphere to which the philosopher penetrates, thought and feeling are inseparable. Compassion is released automatically *along with* the mental insight itself. One and the same Mind is the inner nature of all men. This is why he who realises it for himself throws down the

hard barrier which isolates the "I" from the "you."

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Wisdom of the Overself*. By Paul Brunton. E. P. Dutton, New York. 463 pages. \$3.75. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

CONSCIENCE AND INTUITION — *G. de Purucker*

I do not know — and yet I am glad to see that the fact I speak of is so — why people are so much interested in knowing what conscience is and where it is located in the human constitution and how you can make it function. We know that while man is a stream of consciousness, he is a septenary stream, and each aspect of the septenate again has its divisions, which is one reason why men differ amongst themselves so greatly and so widely; and it is a pity that this is not better understood. Men would differ more but quarrel less. Quarrels are stupid; kindly "scraps" make firm friends — if they are kindly!

Now, as I understand the matter, our conscience to which we all too infrequently pay heed, to our loss, is that friendly, warm-hearted whispering from above, which we feel as showing us the right and the wrong, and it comes from the stored up ethical wisdom in our being. It is not in the disputatious brain-mind: it is in the heart. It is the highest part of the human ego, the treasury of ethical experience, the accumulated wisdom of past lives, garnered and treasured in our higher parts; and as far as it goes its voice is infallible and powerful; but it does not go far enough to make its voice in our soul an infallible guide, because we have not had past human lives throughout eternity and we are not infinite beings, humanly speaking.

One man's conscience is strong; another man's conscience is weaker. Two reasons why: the one may be more evolved and may have learned to hearken more attentively to the inner monitor.

Therefore its voice is familiar, strong, and steady, and as we say, warm and sweet. We love that, and one reason why we love it is because it is so personal to ourselves. It is the highest part of each one of us as a human being, whispering to us admonitions of right, and denying to us the ways of wrong-doing. It is the buddhi-manas part of the human being, garnering experience of past ages of births and rebirths, the

echo of past sufferings and heart-aches from which we have gleaned wisdom and treasured it on the tablets of the Self. That is the conscience.

But higher than conscience is intuition: Intuition is infallible. Its voice is immeasurably infallible, because it is the whispering within us as it were of the truths of the Cosmic Spirit. It is a ray direct from the Divine Spirit in our hearts. Our conscience won't tell us the truth about a fact of Nature, nor whisper into our minds guidance along the paths of scientific or religious or philosophical discovery, because it is the garnered ethical wisdom familiar to the soul of each one of us. But the intuition will tell us instantly, it has instant vision of truth. Its voice is neither familiar nor unfamiliar. It is utterly impersonal. Its atmosphere is neither "hot" nor "cold." It is neutral in this respect; and it is the voice of the Atma-buddhi-manas within us, the Monad as H. P. B. called it.

Do you get the distinction? The conscience is our own treasury of spiritual-ethical wisdom. It is infallible as far as it goes, as far as we can hear its voice; and we can hear it ever more by practice, by training, by hearkening to it, by just recognising it and following it. But because it is only our own gathered treasury, it is not infinite, and therefore not in the true sense always infallible. But so far as concerns each one of you as individuals, when your conscience whispers to you, follow it, because it will whisper only when you are in danger, or when you are seeking to do aright: whereas the voice of the intuition is the voice of the Spirit within us, and it is infallible. It has no frontiers. It is, so to speak, a ray direct from the Maha-buddhi of the Universe; and we can allow intuition to become ever stronger within us, enlightening our minds and opening our hearts, by not being afraid of it, afraid of having hunches, by not being afraid of following our conscience, and our intuitions when they come to us. They are coming to us all the time.

Most men are ashamed to act intuitively. They don't want to make mistakes. Prudential, yes! But it is only prudence, and uncommendable, cowardly and weak, and small, if it is merely because you don't want to begin to make a fool of yourself until you have learned more. The

strong man is not afraid of making a fool of himself occasionally, because he knows that that very fact will stimulate him, awaken him, make him think; and after awhile he will not make a fool of himself. He will learn to trust his inner powers. That is the way to cultivate the intuition, by cultivating it; not being afraid of what is within you. Suppose you do make mistakes — what of it? By practice in its exercise the mistakes will grow fewer and fewer.

Make a companion of your conscience. The man or woman who has not heard the voice of conscience whispering in his soul, who has never felt its presence, is not truly human. You know what I mean by that companionship: we call it a voice which whispers to us, it is a light which lives within you always and which tells you what is right — to follow it, and what is wrong — to abandon it. Make a companion of your conscience, stimulate it, open your hearts and your minds to it. Your lives will be beautified, strengthened, made happier than now they are, because you will be following the voice within which is the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages.

Furthermore, just in proportion as you learn to know your conscience which is your own self, the higher part of you, and trust it and follow it, the more will intuition brighten your lives, bringing you knowledge direct, knowledge infallible.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ASTRAL LIGHT — *Major J. T. Arneson*

In all the fields of metaphysical research and study there is no subject more fascinating than the Astral Light, or as the Orientals call it, the *Akasa*. Before having given any particular thought to this matter I had my own pet theory about it. I reasoned that the light which shines on the earth carries out into space the events it mirrors. It is common knowledge that light travels through space at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. Therefore if one could project his vision out into space far enough he could reproduce any given event in history. According to this theory the picture of Washington crossing the Delaware still lives in space and could be visioned again if we could but catch up to the fleeting light rays.

But the matter is not quite as simple as that. My theory was all right as far as it went but it didn't go far enough, for the Astral Light not only reflects events but thoughts as well. To call it "light" is misleading; it is not light at all as we know it. It is a tenuous, imponderable medium which interpenetrates every atom of the earth, making impressions of the deeds and thoughts of men in indelible record.

In the Orient there is wide knowledge and acceptance of this doctrine. It is the earth's picture gallery in which the Masters of life, the Adepts, read the events of the past and of the future. It was by using its properties that many of the miracles of Jesus were performed. The great astronomer, Camille Flammarion, speaking of the Astral Light says:

The light emanating from all these suns that people immensity, the light reflected through space by all these worlds lighted by these suns, *photographs* throughout boundless heaven the centuries, the days, the moments as they pass. . . . From this it results that the histories of all the worlds are travelling through space without dispersing altogether, and that all the events of

the past are present and live evermore in the bosom of the infinite.

It is difficult to explain the workings of this "light." Students of the occult do not fully understand it, and it is wholly unrecognised by science. No doubt it originates in the stars and permeates every molecule of the globe. Its properties might be likened to the photographer's film. To the ancient Egyptians it was known as the "Recorder," and it is the Recording Angel of the Christian.

"As ye sow that also shall ye reap." So it comes about that our deeds as impressed into the Astral Light will return to us, to help us or to confound us according to what we have sown. This explains why "history always repeats itself." It frequently happens that pictures are projected out of the Astral into the minds of living men, and this accounts for much of our "inspired" literature.

Shakespeare said: "The evil that men do lives after them," and it is through the pictures of an evil past that the world of today is being influenced, for surely *we are influenced* by these pictures. And, by the same token, deeds of kindness done today, will, when reflected into the Astral Light, result in a better world for the future.

Some of the material used in this article is taken from the writings of W. Q. Judge, celebrated occultist. — J. T. A.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THE TRUE PATH? — William Q. Judge

The following paragraphs constitute the main body of the editorial with which W Q Judge launched his magazine *The Path* in April 1886. He there stated that his aim in this periodical would be to point out to its readers a true pathway in life, "and to investigate all systems of ethics and philosophy claiming to lead directly to such a path " As this was timely in the closing years of last century so will the reader today find it fitting and of pointed interest. Then as now all steps must lead to one goal, and that goal is not psychism, not practice in magic not the attaining of powers but simply "to apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood " — Eds

The solution of the problem, "What and Where is the Path to Happiness," has been discovered by those of old time. They thought it was in the pursuit of Raja Yoga, which is the highest science and the highest religion — a union of both. In elaborating this, they wrote much more than we can hope to master in the lifetime of this journal, and they have had many kinds of followers, many devotees, who, while earnestly desiring to arrive at truth, have erred in favor of the letter of the teachings. Such are some of the mendicants of Hindoostan who insist upon the verbal repetition of OM for thousands of times, or upon the practice of postures and breathing alone, forgetting that over all stands the real man, at once the spectator of and sufferer by these mistakes. *This is not the path.*

At the same time we do not intend to slight the results arrived at by others who lived within our own era. They shall receive attention, for it may be that the mind of the race has changed so as to make it necessary now to present truths in a garb which in former times was of no utility. Whatever the outer veil, the truth remains ever the same.

The study of what is now called "practical occultism" has some interest

for us, and will receive the attention it may merit, but is not *the* object of this journal. We regard it as incidental to the journey along the path. The traveler, in going from one city to another, has, perhaps, to cross several rivers; may be his conveyance fails him and he is obliged to swim, or he must, in order to pass a great mountain, know engineering in order to tunnel through it, or is compelled to exercise the art of locating his exact position by observation of the sun; but all that is only incidental to his main object of reaching his destination. We admit the existence of hidden, powerful forces in nature, and believe that every day greater progress is made toward an understanding of them. Astral body formation, clairvoyance, looking into the astral light, and controlling elementals, are all possible, but not all profitable. The electrical current, which, when resisted in the carbon, produces intense light, may be brought into existence by any ignoramus who has the key to the engine room and can turn the crank that starts the dynamo, but is unable to prevent his fellow man or himself from being instantly killed, should that current accidentally be diverted through his body. The control of these hidden forces is not easily obtained, nor can phenomena be produced without danger, and in our view the attainment of true wisdom is not by means of phenomena, but through the development which begins within. Besides that, mankind in the mass are not able to reach to phenomena, while every one can understand right thought, right speech, and right action.

True occultism is clearly set forth in the *Bhagavat-Gita* and *Light on the Path*, where sufficient stress is laid upon practical occultism, but after all, Krishna says, the kingly science and the kingly mystery is devotion to and study of the light which comes from within. The very first step in true mysticism and true occultism is to try to apprehend the meaning of Universal Brotherhood without which the very highest progress in the practice of magic turns to ashes in the mouth.

We appeal, therefore, to all who wish to raise themselves and their fellow creatures — man and beast — out of the thoughtless jog trot of selfish everyday life. It is not thought that Utopia can be established in a day; but through the spreading of the idea of Universal Brotherhood,

the truth in all things may be discovered. Certainly, if we all say that it is useless, that such highly-strung, sentimental notions cannot obtain currency, nothing will ever be done. A beginning must be made, and it has been by the Theosophical Society. Although philanthropic institutions and schemes are constantly being brought forward by good and noble men and women, vice, selfishness, brutality, and the resulting misery, seem to grow no less. Riches are accumulating in the hands of the few, while the poor are ground harder every day as they increase in number. Prisons, asylums for the outcast and the magdalen, can be filled much faster than it is possible to erect them. All this points unerringly to the existence of a vital error somewhere. It shows that merely healing the outside by hanging a murderer or providing asylums and prisons will never reduce the number of criminals nor the hordes of children born and growing up in hot-beds of vice. What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny. This is offered to a reasonable certainty in the Aryan literature, and those who must begin the reform are those who are so fortunate as to be placed in the world where they can see and think out the problems all are endeavoring to solve, even if they know that the great day may not come until after their death. Such a study leads us to accept the utterance of Prajapati to his sons: "Be restrained, be liberal, be merciful"; it is the death of selfishness.

The Theosophical Forum

HOW THE HUMAN SOUL RETURNS TO EARTH — *G. de Purucker*

Talk given at the close of a study-meeting of the Headquarters Lodge, Point Loma, California, September 10, 1939. This talk taken in shorthand was not transcribed until after Dr. de Purucker's death.

I have listened with deepest sympathy to the generosity towards each other's views which you have all shown in your study this evening. All of us remember that knowledge is marked by modesty, because knowledge knows its own limitations, and therefore is never dogmatic. I have noticed also that you are patient with each other for using words in different ways. Your minds are not water-tight compartments which would not hold ideas of other people.

Now in regard to this matter of "rays" or "waves." We Theosophists of many, many years" study have developed a terminology of our own which younger students do not yet fully grasp. When they do grasp it they will see that it is good. We speak of a "ray" from the sun. The sun has been emanating countless rays through the aeons, and each such ray is a wave, an energy if you want to use the language of modern science, a language which will be changed in thirty years from now when scientists know more. This is one of the difficulties that a Theosophist has to contend with, to remember that he himself is using a highly technical series of terms which he and others like him understand, but which the non-Theosophist who has not studied Theosophy does not grasp; and therefore does not understand what the Theosophical speaker is talking about half the time. We should never forget that; and consequently when you people differ, it is not really about ideas that your minds are at variance. I would wager almost anything that ninety-nine times out of a hundred it is about words.

Now I want to say, Companions, that I desire brief speech with you upon two thoughts. The first is about these life-atoms and reproductive

germs and so forth. I do not think it is good to think too much about these things and talk about them too much, and I am always amazed to see the intense concentrated attention with which an audience listens to them. They may interest doctors; it is their job; but there are so many more and vastly more interesting things to study.

Now in the first place, reimpodiment is not a haphazard thing, as of course every one of you understands. It is all done by the laws of nature, and by nature I do not mean physical nature, I mean it in the old occult way of speech. So that the impodiment, the reimpodiment, of an ego takes place strictly according to karmic law, and karman means cause and effect, cause and consequences, the y following the x. If you do something, nature will react upon you for that act. That is karman. You may react in a billion ways. That action and reaction may take a billion years to run itself out. The reaction may come at once, or it may be thinly spread over millions of years. Who can say? It depends upon the originating cause.

So that the reimpodiment of an ego is just as much a fact of nature's laws and nature's actions and reactions as is the physical birth. Now the ego in the devachan lives in an auric sphere as it were, an ethereal rupa. Its size may be anything. It may be co-extensive with the solar system. The probability is that it is, as far as mere physical extension goes, infinitesimal, for magnitude has nothing to do with consciousness. Magnitude is a maya. of our plane and of our brain-minds.

However, the ego in its devachan enjoys blissful dreams. Then there comes a time at the end of long centuries, or long periods of scores of years, when the forces which had brought about this sleep and rest to the devachanic entity begin to weaken, to work themselves out. The devachanic sleep and bliss is fading gradually. But what is taking place coincidentally? There is taking place a slow awakening to a sense of consciousness of the old human earth-attractions. These enter the dream-state of the devachani as dream-recollections of what it had been, and what it had seen and heard and thought and felt — beautiful

things, however, because it is still in the devachan. Now these are the recrudescences into the consciousness of the ego of the tanhic elementals held in the ether-body of the ego. Hitherto the dreams of the devachani have been too high or too spiritual for these rather earthly things to have any effect on the ego. But as the devachanic dreams begin to fade, die out, grow darker as it were, these tanhic, these trishnic elementals begin to grow in activity in the ether-body of the ego, as I have already said. What does this mean? It means a thickening or a coarsening of that auric body, that higher ether-body; and slowly as it were the entity drops, is attracted because of his materialized body, downwards towards this sphere. It may take centuries for this to happen, or a few score years, according to the individual karmic case.

Now then, to phrase it otherwise, there arises in the ether-body of the devachani a growth in memory of earthly things. Its own past life comes back into its recollection, very feebly at first, stronger as time goes on. In other words there is a thickening, as I have stated, a coarsening, materializing of this vehicle. This is the beginning of the growth of what we call the linga-sarira, the pattern-body around which our gross sthula-sarira, the physical, is builded atom for atom. Thus does the man reproduce himself from the last life — consequences, karman.

I have already said that magnitude has nothing to do with it. Let us suppose that the ether-body when this takes place is the size of an apple. After all, how large is a human life germ? But in this beginning of the linga-sarira there resides a growth potency — supply your own term if you do not like that, we won't quarrel about words — a growth potency, the same kind of swabhava, as we call it, which makes an apple seed produce an apple and not a rose or a strawberry or a banana or something else; that makes a plum seed always reproduce a plum and not some other kind of plant. In other words there is in this linga-sarira the capacity to develop along its own karmic laws into the linga-sarira and the physical body of the man, the child to be born.

But before this stage is reached, on account of the attractions of this ray

descending from the auric body — call it a ray, call it a wave — on account of the attractions of this back to its familiar fields of life on earth, as it were a magnetic or electric contact is established in exactly the same way in which the thunderbolt will strike this tree and not that one. There is a reason for this. Everything in the universe works by law. There is no chance. The same principle of selective choice works in the case of the thunderbolt and in the case of the human ego selecting its own mother; not consciously in the way we might think it is done, but by a conscious human electricity as it were, sympathy, synchrony of akasic vibration. We call this a projection of the ray; and that is what I have alluded to in *The Esoteric Tradition*.

Now here comes the point: In any human being there are innumerable multitudes of life-atoms which are strictly his own atoms of life, life-atoms, jivas, originating in his own vital font or fountain, and looking upon him as their parent. Suppose we say, just as a speculation, because no one could say how many life-atoms the human body contains — I doubt if the gods could — but suppose that we say a human body contains of these particular life-atoms a hundred billion. And after his death these become distributed among the two billion or so inhabitants of earth; so that when a re embodying ego thus seeks its physical house or sthula-sarira for its next im-bodiment it is sure to find sympathetic attraction to and therefore lodgment in any human body. This contact of the ray from the ego with the life-germ — germ if you please in the body of the two parents — is a contact with life-atoms that that ego used in its former body on earth. The thing seems complicate simply because it is new to most folk. And by the way, this is one of the reasons that explains what we call the fertility of races and the ability of some stocks of beings to cross, miscegenate, and others not.

Now of course it is obvious that some family milieu, some families, would give an ego a happier home and a happier physical body than other human couples would. You can understand that, and it is the automatic endeavor, run by nature's laws, of a re embodying ego always to seek the happiest home it can find. It has the instinct to do so. It does

not do it self-consciously. It is nature that does these things, for such happiest home is for the re embodying ego the line of least resistance. Remember, it is still in the devachan, and its spirit is not in full control. This is the reason why also — and this is a delicate subject, I hope you will forgive it — this is the reason for the moral weight of the teachings given to men and women to be careful in their relations with each other, for egos are attracted to both men and women in the manner that I have endeavored to describe, and they are attracted with tenfold force when a man and a woman feel affection for each other, if that affection be real. In fact a mere flirtation you can see to be wrong, because that sets up a kind of synchrony of vibration between the couple. I wonder if you see what I am trying to drive at.

It is the damnable, abominable materialistic science of the last hundred years which has wrought such mischief in the world, and has brought about the conditions that exist in the world today everywhere, teaching men that they are no better than beasts, apes, of a slightly higher kind, and that therefore it matters not what they do, that the thing to do is to get and to hold. That is a doctrine out of hell. Once the moral law is lost from the conscience of man, civilization is doomed.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AN OBJECTIVE IDEALISM — *Abbott Clark*

Among philosophies Theosophy is an Objective Idealism. This subject takes us into the profoundest thought to which philosophy or religion has soared. With individuals, and nations, races or ages the highest conception which they can reach they call God. To the more philosophical, metaphysical and spiritual minds in any age the average or orthodox conception of God will appear as but a caricature of the Infinite, Eternal and Absolute.

Two of the most profound conceptions in human thought are symbolized under the word Parabrahman of Brahmanical thought and the word SPACE as used in Theosophy. Brahman stands for the most metaphysical and abstract conception of god, while the Sanskrit word *para* means beyond. So Parabrahman stands for That which is beyond all the gods and therefore beyond all the utmost reaches of human thought. Space as used in Theosophy is that abstract and boundless principle.

Theosophy is called an Objective Idealism because it recognises, with all religions and the more spiritual philosophies, that the fundamental Reality of the universe is ideal, divine and spiritual. And that all manifested worlds from the highest spiritual to the most material are but phenomenal, relative and transitory manifestations of divine life and thought, yet they all appear as real to the intelligent beings enmeshed in them.

Let us illustrate this by beginning with ourselves on the most material plane. To the unthinking man who lives mostly in his senses, gratifications and disappointments, the pleasures and pains and accompanying sensations and emotions, constitute the real world. But to the more intelligent man they constitute only the external and transitory part of his life. His real world is one of thought, of hope, aspirations and ideals. He clothes himself with atmosphere of thought

which is the world in which he lives and moves and has his being. This thought-life may be said to be midday between the material and the spiritual, deriving its inspiration from contacts at one time from the material and at another from the spiritual. As a man advances on the return journey from the material to the spiritual his thought life becomes more and more enlightened by spiritual intuitions. He does not lose what other men possess, but gains knowledge and wisdom, judgment and discretion. His mind and consciousness expand and they grasp and live more and more in the truth and beauty of the larger and higher life. In proportion as he becomes in consciousness at one with the immanent and transcendent divinity, just to that degree does a man become consciously immortal though living in transitory bodies of short duration. Such a man has returned, or can return at will, to the ideal source of his being. He emanated from the divine as an unself-conscious god-spark — a monad or ray or stream of divine life and energy — and returns from the long "Cycle of Necessity" as a self-conscious god, a cosmic creator. This age-long cosmic process is analogous to that of a little child who begins as an innocent and ignorant babe and finally in maturity becomes a wise and benevolent statesman able to guide the destiny of a nation.

The Theosophical Forum

THE PROBLEM OF GOD AND EVIL — *Henry T. Edge*

Theosophists with a message for the world must know what that world is thinking and saying; else there can be no point of contact, and Theosophists may fail to command attention. So this magazine fulfils an important function in reviewing current literature on topics interesting to Theosophists; and we accordingly welcome this book by so competent a pen as that of the well-known philosopher, Professor Joad. He reviews, at considerable length and with much perspicacity and masterly sorting and arrangement of topics and headings, the question of religion in its relation to the life of today; giving special attention to the problem of evil in a world supposed to be ruled by a beneficent deity. Present stress has forced most people, including Professor Joad himself, to take stock with a view to recasting their ideals: evil is so conspicuous that we cannot afford to explain it away and put the problem on a high shelf. Though the author has marshalled a vast array of opinions and -isms and -ologies, he admits that he has not covered as much ground as might have been possible, had he taken more account, for instance of Oriental philosophies. Such a limitation of field is however in accordance with his main purpose of giving a picture of what the Occidental world is thinking today.

In his introductory remarks he makes an important distinction between the meaning of knowledge as viewed respectively by religion and by reason — the contrast between faith and reason, or between intuition and intellect. The latter insists on the separation of Knower and Known, or Subject and Object; the former merges this distinction by the declaration that in real knowledge the Knower becomes identified with the thing Known. A dialectical treatment of the subject, like the present one, must necessarily take the rational view, albeit it may recognise the existence and value of the religious viewpoint. The latter would have given us a book of sermons or an *IMITATIO CHRISTI*.

But the religious way of life cannot be lived without assistance; we are

inherently sinful (says religion), and therefore need the help of divine grace, which is evoked by prayer. This view has been fortified of late by our inability any longer to interpret evil as a byproduct of circumstance; it must be endemic in the heart of man.

The truths of religion, he finds, are not self-evident; for in reading "The World's Bible," a large book containing lengthy extracts from most of the world's sacred books, he finds that there is no consensus as to whether God created the world, or whether existence or non-existence came first. A great deal is said as to the numerous theories about evil; by-products of free-will (but pain exists among the insects); that good and evil are opposites (but then are they "logical opposites," such as the outside and inside of a basin, the one of which entails the other; or opposites in the sense of wet and dry, either of which can exist apart?). He decides that they are not logical opposites; if they differ only in virtue of their mutual contrast, why prefer the one to the other? Since men do not pursue evil just because it is evil, but for some expected benefit, it would seem that good is independent, just as a light may exist without a shadow. Evil does not answer an end in itself, but good does. But those who wish to travel in this maze of speculation must read the book for themselves.

As to the supposed need of a God to account for a universe, he points out that we have only shoved the difficulty a step farther; for how account for God? We may just as well accept the mystery of a universe without God as accept the mystery of God. Then comes the question whether God is within or without the chain of causation. If he is without, how did the chain originate? If within, what becomes of his absoluteness? This leads to discussion as to views that have been held, and views which are now held, as to the nature of Cause. The last century view was inconsistent in itself: matter was conceived as made of separate units; how then could cause and effect operate between them? And the same in philosophy, as regards events: if they are separate, where is the causal nexus? And Hume's opinion on that subject is cited. But today, both in science and in philosophy, we recognise that there is no such separation: atomism has been replaced

by continuity, whether it is particles or events that we are considering.

Such a full and detailed survey as we have here does not lend itself readily to a brief review, but the author is considerate enough to provide us with a short summary, which we must in our turn attempt to summarize. The balance of logical argument is against the view that the universe is the creation of an omnipotent benevolent God. But argument must be supplemented by data from other realms of experience, aesthetic and moral. We must take into account "values," here regarded as outside the evolutionary process of change. The claim of mystics may thus be allowed; and though their findings differ, the balance seems to favor those who assert a "personal" deity, as against a universal impersonal consciousness. The impersonal God obviates the objections as to omnipotence and benevolence, but affords no firm foundation for the significance of moral experience. The Christian claims as to the uniqueness of Christ and original sin and redemption are implausible. God did not create evil, nor is it wholly due to man's misuse of freewill: the principle of evil is probably independent of God. This is the dualistic view. Finally, the author judges in favor of a religious view of the world, and his agnosticism has now inclined toward the positive side of agnosticism. This means that the universe has a purpose, this life is not all; otherwise this life is a cruel and incomprehensible joke.

Coming now to a few comments on the above topics, as seen from a Theosophical viewpoint, we must mention first the Esoteric Tradition, or Wisdom-Religion, the common parent of all faiths and great philosophies. Though the tenets of this parent religion can be discerned in each of its children, and thus the existence of a uniform foundation can be proved, yet religions in their present form are found to be obscured by overgrowths and corruptions which have rendered their differences more apparent than their unity. Nevertheless there do still exist, in many cases if not all, schools of esoteric teaching behind the outer veil of these faiths; and this is particularly the case with Oriental religions. To take an instance, Professor Joad refers to Persian dualism, and though allowing that such a duality implies a synthesizing or

primal unity, does not give sufficient weight to this circumstance. The conception of unity in duality was an essential part of the original Magian doctrine, and we must draw a distinction between esoteric teaching and exoteric, as also between the original teaching and its later degenerated forms. Ormuzd and Ahriman are emanations from Zerouana Akarana or Boundless Time, which latter itself issued from the Supreme and Unknowable Principle. Thus we have not only a One behind the Two, but another One behind the first mentioned: the analysis carries us two stages farther. This teaching is confirmed by reference to other ancient systems, and is thus identified as a cardinal tenet of the Esoteric Philosophy. Ormuzd and Ahriman represent Good and Evil Thought. Further, it is necessary to take into account Cosmic Evolution, for the appearance of this duality represents a particular stage in such evolution. We see from this that what appear to be contradictory or alternative hypotheses may really be supplementary, each giving a view of the Universe at a different stage of evolution, and neither view complete without the others.

The problem of Good and Evil fits in well here, since this contrast arose at the stage when the One became Two, when there set in that duality which is the inalienable characteristic of the whole manifested universe. Neither quality can be predicated of the One. There is no such thing as Evil in itself, no personal Devil or evil power. Good is harmony, wholeness; and Evil, like a shadow, is revealed as a contrast, discord, incompleteness. Moreover the two terms are relative to each other and thus variable in their meaning. The existence of strife and pain in the lower kingdoms is a concomitant of the stage of cosmic evolution in which we are at present. Man must encounter evil, but should not will it: this is a mystical as well as a Biblical injunction. More might be said on this subject, but we may conclude it with the remark that our author would certainly agree that, if we could only define the words Good and Evil satisfactorily, there would probably be no problem left to solve. As to the practical or pragmatic aspect, is it not that man must cease to importune the heavens and must pull himself out of his scrapes by the use of his own innate divinity?

Another important point, which makes a vast difference in our views on every subject, is that the universe is not static but is ever-becoming. Science today is giving up the idea of examining a stationary world, and is recognising that "everything flows." We live in a four-dimensional world, but have not yet acquired free movement in the time dimension, so that we can only see the universe in slices. We thus get a distorted view, or rather, many distorted views, like the attempts to draw a plane chart of a spherical globe — a set of compromises, disagreeing with each other, but all blending into one truth when we survey the globe itself. Unless we keep this in mind we shall fall into error by assuming that conditions which are merely local and temporary are universal both in time and space.

The term "God" stands for a variety of conceptions, which should be regarded as complementary rather than alternative. Platonism and Neo-Platonism postulated a Demiourgos or workman as the builder of this world, but did not confuse him with the Supreme Deity. The existence of imperfection is thus accounted for without impugning the benevolence and omnipotence of the All-Wise; for this Demiourgos was but a minor power in a hierarchy of powers. Moreover this world is but one of a number of worlds preceding it and following it both in space and in time. It may be sufficient and prudent, when restricting our inquiries to regions which more immediately concern us, to ignore these other worlds and the whole subject of cosmic evolution; but if we "presume God to scan," we must be prepared to find that we cannot measure his mighty works by our own local foot-rules. In Christian theology we find that lesser creative Gods have been confused with the Supreme Deity, thus giving rise to the vexed problems alluded to above.

The above may be summed up by saying that the difficulties are due to taking a too limited view. For practical purposes it is convenient to take such a limited view; only in that case we must be content with suitable assumptions without probing into their essential validity or their mutual consistency.

WEBS OF DESTINY — *Ila Barborka*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Webs of Destiny — fashioned by our thoughts and actions throughout countless incarnations! How we have become enmeshed in the folds of our own weaving; and, indeed, are hampered, or mayhap speeded, in our progress along life's journey from day to day by these webs of our own making.

Many people are confused in their outlook upon life: it is because they think in terms of one life: they become bewildered and discouraged by life as they see it today — with its tragedies, its suffering, its cruelty and apparent injustices. They ask, why? — Why do these things come to me? The answer to the question lies in a knowledge of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. As a soothing draught to parched lips comes the message: think in centuries — not in terms of one life only. Do not regard the events of this life as the be-all and end-all, but view this life as but one in a long succession of lives — stretching back into the very dawn of time and out into a future of limitless horizons of consciousness.

Let us go back in thought to the very fountain of Truth itself, expressed, as it has been, in the fundamental propositions of the Ancient Wisdom. A belief in, and an understanding of, these fundamental propositions gives us the explanation of our subject — The Webs of Destiny. Let us review them briefly, as stated by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*.

First: An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle — Parabrahman, the Boundless. To attempt to define this is but to limit it, yet it envelops us, and we are in it, for it is the Source of All.

Second: the Eternity of the Universe. The eternal unbreakable stream

of consciousness of all beings: life-consciousness eternally manifesting itself in periods of activity to be followed by periods of rest: an appearance followed by a disappearance. Here we have the teaching of reïmbodiment: a universal cosmic law which all things must follow — the law of periodicity, action and repose, day and night, waking and sleeping: expressed in the East by the Day of Brahma and the Night of Brahma.

Third: the fundamental identity of all souls with the Universal Over-Soul, and the obligatory pilgrimage for every soul through the cycle of incarnation, in accordance with cyclic and karmic Law. In this third fundamental proposition of the Secret Doctrine we find the essence of our subject — Webs of Destiny: the Oneness of all Life, springing from a Central Source of Life; and the Pilgrimage of all souls on the Cycle of Incarnation, and the cyclic and karmic Law.

To fully understand the law of Karman, we must study it with its twin-doctrine of Reïmbodiment: we cannot understand one without the other. Let us remember then that we are all one in essence, parts of one great whole, and whatever affects one part affects the whole, however infinitesimal. "You cannot touch a flower without troubling a star," said the poet, expressing the same idea.

Coming under karmic law — which has been popularly called the law of cause and effect — our thoughts, our feelings, and our actions are the producers of causes which will one day come back to us as effects; and because we are all linked together by our common divine origin, our thoughts and actions act and react not only upon ourselves but upon others. We are linked together, and our individual webs of destiny are inextricably woven with the webs of destiny of every other living entity. In *The Key to Theosophy* H. P. Blavatsky has this to say upon this theme:

the interdependence of Humanity is the cause of what is called Distributive Karma, and it is this law which affords the solution to the great question of collective suffering and its relief. It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his

individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality, there is no such thing as "Separateness." — p. 203

As we live we can raise the whole level of the world's consciousness: we can add our efforts to the forces of Light, or by sinning we lower the whole level. What a sense of responsibility this gives us!

Karman is the great law of readjustment: it tends to restore disturbed equilibrium and restore harmony: for there is a cosmic law of harmony and our actions produce effects which disturb this law of harmony and equilibrium. Consequently man's acts react upon himself and will do so until he learns to live in such a way that he no longer breaks this universal law. Pain and suffering and tragedy are the results of a want of harmony. The greatest disturber of harmony is selfishness in some form or other.

There is a very simple rule for curing this: Think of the other fellow; share with him when you can; learn to understand; to forgive; to sympathize. Be considerate, for he, like you, is a pilgrim on the path, with his problems, similar to yours or maybe quite different. He too is working out his web of destiny, which may or may not be interlinked with yours. But he is your brother, nevertheless.

With the Ancient Wisdom there is no outside influence or deity that rewards and punishes. There is justice in the thought that the things which are ours, the things which belong to us, shall come to us, good or ill. If we truly believe this then we can accept *all things*, feeling that all is just. Upon this concept then, we may weave the pattern of our lives, weave for ourselves our web of destiny: that web, fashioned from the threads of action woven not only in this life but through the countless lives preceding this present incarnation; and because of the interaction and interdependence of all beings, our webs of destiny are united with the webs of destiny of all our fellow-pilgrims on the evolutionary pathway.

Nothing happens by chance in this world; every event in our lives is the result of preceding causes, and as said in *The Esoteric Tradition*:

what men popularly call chance or hazard or even fortuity, is merely what knowledge or research or investigation has not yet brought sufficiently to light as being a link or links in the chain of universal causation. — p. 471

I have always found this idea of the webs of destiny a very fascinating and extremely interesting topic; for it touches us all so closely in our daily lives: in our relations to events, individual and national; our associations with people, whether intimately in the family relation or in a wider more general association, in the municipality, state or nation. For in this particular aspect of the ancient Wisdom, in this facet of the jewel of truth, lies the answer to the many problems which perplex and puzzle so many, many people. Why are we here? What is the purpose of life? Why do we suffer? Why must such horrible catastrophes affect mankind? Why must my son die while others live? Why am I poor when others are rich? And why all the apparent injustices we meet with everywhere? All answers to these questions are summed up in the words: Webs of Destiny.

Nothing happens by chance in the world. Is it by chance that we are here, at this particular time in the world today — engulfed as it is by a world catastrophe? No! We so acted in some other nation in the past that today we reap the harvest of the seed sown in those far past ages. We *were* that nation. For remember that nations as nations disappear, but the entities composing that nation reappear as other nations. Let us not ask ourselves: Was it in Babylon, in Assyria, in Egypt, in Rome, in Greece? — that does not matter. What does matter and what brings us together today at this time is that we are all drawn back by karmic ties to the nation and with the people who formed that particular nation in the past: here to work out in suffering and sorrow, in joy and happiness, the result of our deeds, our thoughts and our feelings in those far past ages.

Karman is not fate; man is not the will-less victim of an inscrutable

fate. It is the teaching of the Ancient Wisdom that "Man is a *willing* agent throughout his beginningless and endless course of destiny — in other words, he constantly exercises his modicum of Free Will" . . . —
The Esoteric Tradition, p. 472

The Theosophical Forum

DEATH AND IMMORTALITY IN LITERATURE — *Stanley Zurek*

It is said that we fear that which we do not understand. The man in the street, for instance, fears death for the simple reason that he does not understand it, much like a child on the threshold of a dark room. The child fears to enter the room because it does not know what therein lies ready to spring upon it. But flood the room with light, and the child's fears disappear instantly, and he enters with calm assurance and perhaps even wondering at his earlier unwarranted fears.

So it is with death — men fear it because they do not understand it. In fact, some think it is utter annihilation, utter extinction of the man or woman they had been, and are thus afraid of destruction. But show them, explain to them, flood with the light of knowledge, the mysteries of death, prove to them that they are immortal, and their fear is gone.

One way, I feel, to prove to men, or, if not prove, at least to set them thinking that man is immortal, is to quote from ancient and modern literature on this subject. People like references to works they are familiar with, and their belief and confidence in a thing is greatly strengthened if they discover that the great writers, philosophers and religious teachers of ancient and modern times believed in the particular doctrine we are expounding.

It might not be amiss to relate here a personal experience to prove this point. Some years ago I had occasion to speak to a divinity student from Harvard, who was sitting beside me on a trip from Boston to New York, reading Plato. During the course of our conversation on Theosophy I mentioned Oliver Wendell Holmes' *The Chambered Nautilus*, as a reference to Reincarnation. The student's eyes lighted up, for it was one of his favorite poems and he knew it by heart, and he immediately recited it for me. It is certain that I made more of an impression right there to further my point — by referring him to something he was familiar with and loved — than I did by mentioning works he was not

familiar with, all important and absolutely necessary though these latter are for further study.

From this it occurs to me to suggest that it might be well, when dealing with inquirers, to pepper well our "sales talk," as it were, with quotations from the ancient and modern classics to bolster up our arguments. Much the same principle, I believe, as explaining to people the inner significance of the familiar fairy tales of our childhood. People are more fascinated with the thought that there is something deeper behind these *familiar* tales of their childhood, than they are in an explanation of the inner meaning of stories entirely *unfamiliar* to them.

What, then, are some of these references to death and immortality which we can mention? We will take a few in chronological order.

INDIA

First of all, let us take the great epic poem of India, the *Mahabhdrata*, and especially that portion of it so readily available in Europe and America, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Therein, as all Theosophists and students of the Eastern literatures know, the Spirit in man, Krishna, the Inner God, states unequivocally, that man is immortal: "Those who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the dead nor for the living. I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be." — Chap. II

The *Bhagavad-Gita* is today a standard literary classic, and, as such, will not be unknown to well-read people. Emerson had it on his desk at all times, we are told, and mentions it in his essays on *Literature* and on *Books*. Henry Thoreau, who was, incidentally, Emerson's best friend, also was a student of it, and it is to be found in volume 45 of the famous Harvard Classics, in the Sir Edwin Arnold translation. It is likewise included in two of the recent best-selling anthologies — in its entirety in Lin Yutang's *The Wisdom of China and India*, and extracts from all of the eighteen chapters in Robert O. Ballou's *The Bible of the World*. Likewise, together with H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*, Sir

Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia*, and Mabel Collins' *Light on the Path*, it is included among standard classics in the series entitled *Pocket Classics* published by David McKay of Philadelphia. This house, incidentally, also publishes beautiful illustrated gift editions of *Song Celestial (The Bhagavad-Gita)* and *The Light of Asia*.

EGYPT

Egypt has bequeathed to us the *Book of the Dead*, wherein are depicted the adventures of the soul after death, thereby attesting belief in the immortality of the soul. H. P. Blavatsky, in her *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, pages 517-18, quotes Professor Carpenter to the effect that the passages from the *Book of the Dead* engraved on the old monuments, relating to the ancient belief in the immortality of the soul, are not only identical in thought, but in language, to that to be found in the Christian *New Testament*. On page 548 of volume II she quotes a few parallel passages from the *Book of the Dead* and *Matthew*.

GREECE

In Greece we have the *Odyssey*, in the 11th book of which Homer describes the visit of Odysseus to the Underworld, and the converse he held there with the souls of men and women recently dead, and those who had passed away in earlier times; thus, here again, showing the existence of souls after death. An interesting example of the symbology used, and of the veils hiding yet revealing the truth to intuitive minds, is the fact that only those souls which Odysseus allowed to drink of the dark blood of the sheep he had sacrificed and bled into the pit he had dug, knew him and volunteered to tell him the truth of what he wished to know, his own departed mother included. This is an interesting point for Theosophical students to speculate upon and endeavor to fathom its real significance. Shall we say that perhaps only those of the souls of the departed deigned to speak to Odysseus whom he, through his own efforts, had given the vitality or ability, as symbolized by the sacrifice, to do so? In other words, we are enabled to communicate with the departed by rising to *their* planes, as in sleep, by our own efforts, whereas the departed are not able to come down to our plane, as is

pointed out in *The Key to Theosophy*, page 30.

Then there is the great Plato, who in his *Dialogues* also speaks of the immortality of the soul. In his *Phaedrus*, for instance, he speaks of the soul in relation to material life and the necessity of reincarnation before souls can reach the stature of gods. And in his 10th book of the *Republic*, he gives his famous Vision of Er, the Pamphylian, who, after ten days on the battlefield, was taken for dead, and removed to the funeral pile, where, however, he came to life again and described what he had seen in the Underworld, and of the souls he had seen of those who had but recently died, and those that were coming back into incarnation on earth.

ROME

In the 6th book of the *Aeneid* of Vergil, the Roman poet and Initiate, we have Aeneas descending into the Underworld, where he converses with his departed father, and where he likewise sees not only the souls of the recently departed, but also those on their way to earth for incarnation anew. Among the latter is his son-to-be, Silvius. One cannot help but note the similarity of the respective narratives of Plato and Vergil, both Initiates, regarding the incoming and outgoing souls.

The Latin philosopher Apuleius, in the 4th, 5th, and 6th books of his *Metamorphoses*, or, as it is more commonly known, *The Golden Ass*, relates the famous fable of Cupid and Psyche, wherein Psyche, in one of the tasks imposed upon her by Venus, descends into the Underworld, the abode of the souls of the dead. Thus, here again, is shown the existence of the soul after death of the physical body on earth.

And in his 11th book of the same work, Apuleius speaks of his own initiation into the Mysteries of Isis, and says that he "approached the confines of death" and "trod the threshold of Proserpine," meaning his descent into the Underworld — again, the abode of the souls of the dead.

These are just a few specific instances of classical writers who speak of the immortality of the soul. And here I should like to add, that, as the

immortality of the soul is so closely tied up with the doctrine of Reincarnation in our philosophy, the volume *Reincarnation, A Study of Forgotten Truth*, by E. D. Walker, is a storehouse of references to standard works, ancient and modern, wherein Reincarnation, which, of course, implies immortality, is referred to. Numerous references to immortality, of course, may be found in the Bible, but from a Theosophical speaker's and writer's standpoint, it would be well to connect these with the Biblical passages referring to Reincarnation, thus making the picture complete.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA

In coming to more modern times, we might mention, Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, Shakespeare, and Milton's *Comus* and *On the the Death of a Fair Infant*, where he speaks of Reincarnation. Other references, as mentioned, are to be found in Walker's *Reincarnation*.

Finally, we now come to two great names in American literature: Longfellow and Emerson, who were contemporaries. Longfellow, for instance, says in *Psalm of Life*:

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul.

And, in conclusion, let us take Emerson, who has been called the Plato of the 19th century. Besides other references in his writings, he has written a complete essay entitled *Immortality*, and I believe that I can do no better than quote a few outstanding passages from this intuitive essay, with the observation that the beauty of quoting from Emerson is that akin to quoting from Plutarch — we not only quote Plutarch and Emerson, but likewise the words of the numerous great minds whom *they* quote, thus broadening and opening up new approaches to and giving us further references to our subject.

Emerson says, in his essay on *Immortality*:

There never was a time when the doctrine of a future life was not held.

Plutarch, in Greece, has a deep faith that the doctrine of the Divine Providence and that of the immortality of the soul rest on one and the same basis.

Nature does not, like the Empress Anne of Russia, call together all the architectural genius of the Empire to build and finish and furnish a palace of snow, to melt again to water in the first thaw.

Franklin said, "Life is rather a state of embryo, a preparation for life. A man is not completely born until he has passed through death."

"To me," said Goethe, "the eternal existence of my soul is proved from my idea of activity. If I work incessantly till my death, Nature is bound to give me another form of existence, when the present can no longer sustain my spirit."

I am a better believer, and all serious souls are better believers in the immortality, than we can give grounds for. The real evidence is too subtle, or is higher than we can write down in propositions, and therefore Wordsworth's Ode is the best modern essay on the subject.

And in his narration of the legend of Yama, the Lord of Death, and Nachiketas, taken from the *Katha Upanishad*, with which Emerson ends this essay, he quotes Yama as saying:

"The soul is not born; it does not die; it was not produced from any one. Nor was any produced from it. Unborn, eternal, it is not slain, though the body is slain, subtler than what is subtle, greater than what is great, sitting it goes far, sleeping it goes everywhere. Thinking the soul as unbodily among bodies, firm among fleeting things, the wise man casts off all grief."

TRANSFORMISM IS NOT EVOLUTION — *Charles J. Ryan*

A few years ago the French journal *L'Ami du Peuple* published reviews of two books on Evolution which are even more significant today than ever. In the first, Professor L. Vialleton, distinguished embryologist of Montpellier, discusses "Transformism" as opposed to "Evolution," in almost perfect consonance with the Theosophical point of view. The reviewer quotes Cyrano de Bergerac:

An hour after death the soul vanishes to
re-become what it was an hour before birth,

and asks "what was that? Did it exist in the infinitude, in "the States of the Sun and of the Moon" which Cyrano is said to have journeyed in?" Perhaps. Turning from that profound mystery to the more practical subject of the origin of species the reviewer speaks of the struggles between "the more or less damaged theories of theology and science," showing that there is an increasing approach between them, the former becoming freer and the latter less materialistic.

A significant remark of Prof. J. S. Haldane's comes to mind:

Materialism, once a scientific theory, is now the fatalistic creed of thousands, but materialism is nothing better than a superstition on the same level as belief in witches and devils.

Prof. Vialleton's book is a demonstration that transformism as the *reason* for the various species of living forms is a pure illusion, and his arguments are derived from the most recent researches in embryology. He shows that the "missing link" between the various species is everywhere lacking. Species do not fit into one another like the ingenious Chinese boxes, he says; or, as others have also said, "end-on" evolution is not found in nature. Prof. Vialleton claims that biology proves that the laws of heredity are carried on solely *within the limits of specific types*, and that structures belonging to each type are not

reproduced outside its limits. This is perfectly in harmony with the outline of the evolution of types given in *The Secret Doctrine* where it is shown that the fundamental types of animals and plants — archetypes, they may be called — originated in a superior plane of Intelligent Causes. When these generalized planes were "precipitated," as it were, into physical activity, minor modifications of great variety appeared by so-called "natural" means and formed the species which are contained in the larger outlines.

Prof. Vialleton examines, in this connexion, the fossil remains of ancient man and concludes that the "human type is a highly particular and widespread form in the mammalian kingdom." His close analysis of the character of human and ape structures supports Dr. H. F. Osborn's declaration of their essential differences.

Transformism is commonly and wrongly thought by those who have a superficial knowledge of biology to be the same thing as Evolution. In English the words are used with little discrimination, but the French writers recognise the distinction. Theosophy takes Evolution as the continuous growth of an inner being or spirit through numerous experiences to a goal. Transformism is meaningless, and Dr. de Purucker in his *Man in Evolution* defines it as "the doctrine that things grow into other things unguided by either innate purpose or inner urge." Professor Vialleton's definition of the difference between the materialistic and the true point of view are well-considered. He says:

Transformism is a mechanistic doctrine which explains the appearance of living beings by the sole action of natural causes, working without any kind of direction, and without any end in view. The word Evolution implies a determined direction, an order or system that realizes higher results than those that could be expected from Transformism.

He points out that Transformism, in which are included the "survival of the fittest," the brutal "struggle for existence" and blind "natural selection" (a curious misnomer, as the word "selection" implies thought and will), has never explained the ascent of life, still less the higher

faculties of man. He boldly declares:

The word Creation, which has been banished from the biological vocabulary, must be replaced, at least so far as to show that the world as presented to us is a co-ordinated Whole, and therefore the product of Will.

This is good Theosophy, so far as it goes. To complete it, only the idea of conscious guiding Hierarchies behind (or within) the "world as presented" is lacking.

The same reviewer in discussing another new work on biology concludes his remarks in a paragraph which is worth translating in its entirety:

But, when we have finished reading these scientific works, and return to our own thoughts, the same old question presents itself, the insoluble problem: — What, then, is man? What does it signify at bottom as to where he originates, and where he is going? He has built cities, invented railways and radio, yes, but for what? Still better, he has conceived an idea of the universe, has calculated the thousands of light-years that separate the constellations of Orion from Cassiopeia, but what does even that lead to? What place does he hold in Infinity? Science cannot answer, and human intelligence recoils appalled before the great mystery of the Beyond.

True; the intelligence of the ordinary man, however learned and brilliant, has not raised the Veil of Isis, but there exist a certain few, even on this earth, who have stepped out into a wider consciousness and who have penetrated deeply into the mystery of man's true place in nature. These Masters of Wisdom, at present limited in number, have reached by intensive training the knowledge and power that the majority of mankind will possess in far distant ages as the capacities of the divinity within are brought forth. From time to time they have given out as much of their wisdom as conditions permitted; and it is our privilege and our duty to study and present it to the world.

H. P. BLAVATSKY'S WORK IN THE WORLD — *Henry T. Edge*

In considering H. P. Blavatsky's work in the world we must first ask what was the condition of that world in her time. It is customary to depict it as in an altogether deplorable condition, but I propose to paint a somewhat different picture. We must bear in mind that the Victorian era in England was one in which shone brilliant minds in many departments of thought and endeavor; an era of unexampled progress; an era of emancipation of thought from old grooves and of venturing forth into new and brighter prospects. Art, literature, philosophy, science, flourished and I need not pause to enumerate the great pioneers of these several departments. But more than all the era was one of moral and spiritual advancement, distinguished by noble philanthropy, social and political reform. Yet the same cyclic wave of energy which had fostered so much fine growth had also brought forth many harmful weeds. Moreover its force was becoming spent and hardening and restrictive influences were supervening. In particular the true progress of mankind was threatened by the growth of scientific materialism or mechanicalism; matter was threatening to drive out mind; automatism, to oust purpose from life. It was therefore to steer humanity round a dangerous corner, to check the downward and backward ebb by a forceful tide in a new direction, that H. P. B.'s work was directed. She came to wage war against materialism, and that not only in science but in religion, in politics, in social theories as well.

Her work was many-sided, not confined to any one particular point; so many-sided was it that it is difficult to comprehend it under one word or phrase. She had to lay new foundations, to strike a new fundamental tone. Thus she found herself at loggerheads with everybody who had any vested interest in the preservation of things as they were. The familiar strife between religion and science was lost sight of in the common war against materialism and dogmatism in both. She brought

down upon her head priestcraft both Oriental and Occidental, scientific dogmatism, sundry occult and psychic movements whose foundations she threatened to undermine. There existed a comfortably settled intellectual culture, represented by scholars in various fields; and the foundations of this were menaced. In a word, people were *scared*. It was not because they believed her false, but because they knew she was true. And, finding themselves unable to refute her they had resort to the invariable substitute — defamation. But such is the fate which every reformer must necessarily encounter; has he a right to expect anything else? Yet where there is no resistance there can be no victory; the greater the resistance the greater the victory when it is overcome.

And so it required one of titanic energy and perfect self-dedication to accomplish the work. At first the world had to be *startled*. Hence the phenomena; permitted for the special purpose in exception to the general rule; bringing upon their performer results foreseen but bravely accepted. Attention being thus attracted, the teaching began.

First in America, where the work was organized and incorporated and a seed sown which yielded the future growth. Here she works among the *Spiritualists*, descrying there an influence away from materialism, but trying to lead them on above their low level to what was better. Later in India she strives to arouse the people to a new sense of the essentials of their own religions and philosophies. But for the great literary work in view, England was seen to be at the time the best harbor. Accordingly it was in London that she wrote that marvelous work *The Secret Doctrine*, which bears its own internal testimony to the greatness of its author. Not even the most jealous and vindictive critics have been able to dispose of it, and have been obliged to let it alone or dismiss it with a simple falsehood. The question as to *who* was the author is one which, as it seems to me, cannot be answered on ordinary lines. It is easy to understand that Madame Blavatsky herself, speaking of her mere personality (despised by herself, as we know), might indulge in a modest and candid disclaimer; and point our eyes to those Teachers whom she so much revered. Yet let us not forget the distinction she herself made between H. P. Blavatsky and H. P. B. In a

word, when the illusion of personality has been overcome, such questions of authorship take on quite a different aspect; there is no longer such a thing as your mind and my mind, but a great ocean of mind to which all may have access.

It has often occurred to me that, since the Wisdom Religion is universal and of all lands and peoples, it must always require translation, so to speak, into the mental language of particular peoples-and the S. D. is a truly marvelous instance of how it has been translated into terms of Occidental thought. The author or authors show an intimate acquaintance with the whole field of scholarly, scientific religious, archaeological, etc., thought; evincing a mind at once comprehensive and detailed. The S. D. is in its single self a phenomenon worth a million buried teacups or precipitated letters. Her assistants, secretaries, were kept busy going to the British Museum Library to verify the numerous quotations which she made. The declared object of this work was (1) to state the outlines of the Secret Doctrine (2) to show its existence in the records of all ancient faiths (3) to contrast its teachings with those of modern science, religion, and thought in general. Also, there were at that time many imperfect forms of occultism, on the wrong tack, which needed correcting by the exposition of the true teachings thereon.

The Voice of the Silence performed a like function with regard to the more ethical and mystical teachings; for it enunciates the doctrine of the purest Buddhism, the right-hand path, the path of renunciation; thereby laying the true foundations and correcting all the harmful and erroneous cults. Thus her work in the world was to strike keynotes everywhere, to lay foundations; and this was done with Titanic energy, such as she alone was capable of wielding.

Isis Unveiled, as her first work, exercised enormous influence and is still in great demand with the public. Its defects in composition can serve only to give a handle to those interested in depreciating her, and are no obstacle for earnest truthseekers who are in search of the gold wherever they can find it. If we are able in this day to handle the churches and sciences in a gentler way, it is only because H. P. B. knew

how they needed to be handled in her day. Before reconstruction could begin there was dynamiting to be done.

And today we see wherever we cast our eyes the harvest of all that seed-sowing, the result of that ground-clearing and reconstruction. As said before, amid the crops grew up many tares; and to deal with these was the arduous work of later Leaders and their faithful followers. We see the same mixture around us today; and our duty is to keep the flame of the pure doctrine bright and clear, so that a greater power and permanence shall eventually win through and outshine and outlive all imperfections and shams. May we not already say that this is being accomplished? Do we not see on every side hands stretched out for aid, in the churches, in science, philosophy, social planning, everything? Hands stretched out for the help which true Theosophy alone can give. But if we have cause for rejoicing, let us beware of resting on our oars. Let success be not a sedative but a stimulant to ever-continued endeavor.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THE CRITERION OF THEOSOPHY?

This is a question and Answer reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum*, December, 1895. The date of the publication of this statement is of no particular significance, but the answer by W. Q. Judge, second Leader of the Theosophical Society, is something that all generations of Theosophists should study and, in the light of its generous and far sighted expression, measure to what extent they themselves approach this standard.

— Eds.

Question — The fundamental question, "What is the criterion of Theosophy?" calls for an answer. Has Theosophy the power of growth, progress and advancement in line with all new expositions of truth? In the minds of many the writings of H. P. B. are regarded as the infallible oracles of Theosophy. But in time criticism is sure to do its work. Consequently it is necessary soon to give out a definition of it much broader, simpler, and more unequivocal than any heretofore offered.

W. Q. Judge — This is in fact a request to formulate and promulgate a dogmatic statement of Theosophy as we understand it. That is, to go completely back on the genius of the Theosophical movement, which is for the destruction of dogmatism. The strength of Theosophy lies in the fact that it is not to be defined. It is the wisdom of the gods, or of nature. This means that evolution, slowly progressing, will bring out new truths and new aspects of old truths, thus absolutely preventing any dogmas or "unequivocal definitions." Were we to make and declare a definition of Theosophy it would be only the words of those who participated in drawing it up, and not acceptable to all. And were it possible that all would accept, then would be sounded the doom of the movement. Hence the reply to the question, "What is the criterion of Theosophy?" is that it is found in each man's perception of the Truth: therefore there is no single criterion.

If any persons regard H. P. B.'s writings as the infallible oracles of Theosophy, they go directly against her own words and the works themselves; they must be people who do not indulge in original thinking and cannot make much impression on the times.

As for the Theosophical Society, the moment it makes a hard and fast definition of Theosophy it will mark the first hour of its decay.

Inasmuch as Theosophy is the whole body of truth about man and nature, either known now or hereafter to be discovered, it has the "power of growth, progress and advancement," since every new truth makes it clearer. But among the truths will not be reckoned at any time the definitions, dogmas, creeds or beliefs laid down by man.

The Theosophical Forum

A LETTER FROM H. P. BLAVATSKY

EXPLANATIONS CONCERNING THE CONTROVERSY ON OCCULTISM

[This is a translation from the French, copied from H. P. B.'s *Scrapbook*, Vol. XVII, pp. 125-29, by courtesy of the Theosophical Society, Adyar. The original appeared in *Bulletin Mensuel de la Societe Scientifique d'Etudes Psychologiques* (Paris), 15 juin, 1883. The Editor of the *Bulletin* evidently published only a few extracts from a letter he had received from H. P. Blavatsky. — Eds.]

Extracts from a Letter of Madame Blavatsky

Madras, 17 May, 1883.

To Mr. Fauvety, President of the Scientific Society for Psychological Studies.

Mr. President:

The monthly *Bulletin* of the Society of which you are president, issue for April, 1883, has been read and translated to our members of the Occult branch of the Theosophical Society, and it is in the name of that branch, and of the entire Society which seems to have been confounded with that branch by the Spiritualists in a very unexpected manner, that I come to you to ask for justice. This letter will be followed by a formal reply, which, we earnestly hope, you will have the kindness to publish in your *Bulletin*.

It is impossible for me, in the limited space of an official letter, to enumerate all the *errors* and false interpretations which abound in the addresses delivered at the meetings of the 6th and 21st of March. It should suffice if I assure you that those persons who have accused us of such absurdities as I have found in "the refutations" have never read *The Theosophist*. . .

While waiting for our *Refutation* of the "Refutations of the Spiritualists" which will reach you by the next mail, I have the honor to beg you to make in our name the following declaration to your esteemed Society:

1. It is not true that the Theosophical Occultists of the Orient have ever preached or preach ANNIHILATION.
2. It is entirely false to say or to suggest, as Mr. T. . . . has done, that we, the Founders of the Society, or any of the members of the Occult branch, have ever declared that the basis on which you (Spiritualists) rest your inferences — "that of the immortality of the conscious (Spiritual) Ego is fundamentally false. . ." I can indicate places in *The Theosophist*, as well as in writings signed by Occultists, where it is affirmed in the clearest manner that the 7th, the 6th principles, the Divine Monad and its vehicle, the *spiritual soul* (which make a unity) are immortal, indestructible and *infinite*. Believing in the innumerable reincarnations of the "spiritual Ego," the only "*conscious Self*" in Eternity, not one of us, Occultists, could ever say that the individual consciousness was annihilated or that the "spiritual Ego" could fall back into the world of cosmic, primal matter. . .

Finally, let it be understood! The Society preaches universal brotherhood based on equality, charity, tolerance and mutual love. It accepts all beliefs because it does not admit infallibility (its own any more than that of others), and, in not admitting that, it observes, studies, compares, and takes note of everything without declaring anything as final. As to its branches, so long as they practice brotherhood, each branch can believe whatever it likes, because in matters of religion and belief, a Hottentot knows as much as a Fenelon. The fine speeches and assertions of a Tyndall are as worth-while as those of his housemaid, and the Society accepts nothing but FACTS.

Now, facts cannot be accepted as such on the evidence of one or a hundred thousand persons, but only on personal evidence appropriate to each individual. It goes without saying that I am speaking now of psychological and purely subjective facts, and not of physical facts. Hence the universal tolerance among Theosophists, one of the rules

most positively enjoined. . . .

I offer you my apologies, Mr. President, for not being able to express my ideas more clearly. It is ten or eleven years since I have had occasion to speak or write in French, and I have therefore begun to forget it. But I have confidence in your intuition and above all in your deep sense of justice. As I have already had the honor of writing to you, we never attack anyone, but it is surely permissible for us to defend ourselves when we are attacked, and so unjustly at that. Mr. X. has been pleased. ... to present us as charlatans preaching a false science, and it has pleased you to publish that accusation. You will allow us then to answer these accusations with the proofs in our hands, etc. . . . Meanwhile, please accept, etc. . . .

(Signed) H. P. Blavatsky,
Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society,
Adyar, Madras.

The Theosophical Forum

PSYCHIC POWERS — Lydia Ross and C. J. Ryan

What does Theosophy say about the psychic faculties and powers that are advertised so widely?

The words "psychic" and "psychism" are used to cover a variety of unusual or so-called "occult" matters, not generally understood. These include clairvoyance, telepathy, divination, hypnotism, mediumship, automatic writing, crystal-gazing, psychometry, second sight, astral voyaging, mental and magnetic healing, *tantric* magic, fortune-telling, "magnetic personality," and many other things which science does not fully explain. The psychic faculties and powers, which are latent in all men, are gradually becoming more active today.

I hear that Theosophists are opposed to the cultivation of these powers. Should not everything in Nature be studied?

Certainly; and also everything in human nature, for man should "know himself." But most persons are more eager to get hold of these powers for personal ends than to get an understanding of just what they are and how to use them safely and wisely.

How, then, do you Theosophists begin to study psychic matters?

First of all, by studying the teachings of H. P. Blavatsky, who gave the world what she was taught by the Masters of Wisdom, Compassion, and Peace. We repudiate the methods of all who misinterpret her teachings, or who commercialize truth and mislead by promises of forced psychic development. Her Theosophy goes to the root of the matter by explaining man's composite nature — the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual sides of his being, which, of course, include his psychic faculties, and the part they play.

What do you mean by man's composite nature?

Everyone knows of the familiar division of body, soul, and spirit,

though these three may be subdivided to make seven. Here on earth we live in a human-animal body; the opposite pole of our being is the spiritual or higher part of us, which makes itself known in the voice of conscience, in flashes of intuition, in unselfish heroism, and the like. Between these two poles is the intermediate part, commonly called the soul. This human soul is the everyday Mr. Smith or Mrs. Brown, who we too often think is our real self, while, in fact, it is only the temporary "personality" of the present life. The spiritual or enduring man is known in Theosophy as the "individuality" re embodying in changing personalities, life after life, until he makes himself a perfect man.

How do you know the difference between individuality and personality?

The personal side of our character acts in desires, curiosity, egoism, jealousy, animal instincts, lower human love, and other phases of self-interest, on the one hand. Yet, on the other, it responds at times to the spiritual call of heroism, self-sacrifice, and perfect love which belong to the higher nature — the "individuality," which would share its own richness, beauty, and spiritual vision with its lower personality. It is often very difficult to distinguish between our two natures, which pull in opposite directions; we are easily self-deceived by the cunning with which the lower desires use the mind to argue their case.

What part of us do the psychic powers belong to? Are they altogether bad?

Not at all. They are part of our whole nature, and are no better or worse than the strength in your arm with which you can help a friend or strike an enemy. But, as the majority of men are dominated by selfishness rather than by spirituality, the psychic powers are certain to be generally misused and then to recoil upon those who are unprepared and unworthy to use them.

Why not teach men to use them for good? Surely the world needs every kind of help?

Because men must first change their selfish minds and hearts, which are already working so much harm. Why give them new and strange

powers before they are ready to use what they now have for constructive and not for destructive purposes?

But the advertisements offer to make a man a great success, with a magnetic personality, so that he can control others and make them admire him, and so on. I'd be making quite a man of myself if I could do all that.

You would only be building up a personality of uncanny selfishness, adding no true manliness to your character, but losing ground instead of progressing. There are various psychic tricks that are easy to learn, but why waste time that way? Even animals have a certain degree of clairvoyance and prevision. Everyone knows that they often sense impending disaster on land or sea, and also see things invisible to man. A classic case was Balaam's ass seeing the angelic messenger before his master did. But spiritual clairvoyance, which man alone can develop, is very different, and is gained only by great purity and holiness of life and strict self-control. That is the true way "to make a man" of oneself. It is no sign of manhood to bid for admiration, or to scheme for success by subtil means.

Well, if these psychic powers are not worth bothering about, why study them at all?

Because they are one of the vital questions of the day. In this age of inquiry, many really spiritually-minded people are seeking to understand the mystical in man and the truly occult in Nature. They, like many others, have peculiar need of reliable knowledge, which only the Theosophical philosophy offers in fulness. Moreover, the craze for psychism shows that our latent psychic faculties are awakening, so that it is most important to understand them, since they must be reckoned with. "Sensitives" who are more or less clairvoyant, clairaudient, or unusually susceptible to vague impressions and impulses, are increasing. Having no knowledge of their own inner nature, many of them drift into Spiritualistic connexions and we find many good people vainly pursuing ghostly phantoms in the hope of gaining light on the mysteries of life and death. Others are attracted to all kinds of so-called

"mystical" cults by alluring notices proffering arcane knowledge and power.

In the midst of the above conditions, the majority are living mostly in the personal part of their nature, with its restless egoism and desires. The temptation to cultivate psychic powers for self-interest is great. If they are so misused, one is lured on into a form of astral intoxication most difficult to resist. Just as the drinker in *delirium tremens* loses sight of his ordinary senses and judgment and sees strange things and creatures, so the psychic habitue loses his normal poise on the physical plane and stumbles along after alluring astral phantasies and thrills.

What do you mean by astral?

Our world is enveloped by a realm of impalpable substance, more invisible and all-pervading than the air we breathe; this is called the Astral Light. It interpenetrates the solid earth and extends from low levels through grade after grade of ethereality, finally to merge into more spiritual realms. Its lower degree is the "ether" of some scientists, and this is the first remove beyond ordinary matter. This astral light pervades the "astral plane" of consciousness, which contains various forms of life in keeping with its peculiar nature, and has its own laws governing them.

We little realize how much our daily lives are affected by astral influences. Every thought and act impresses itself and is recorded upon the sensitized substance of the astral light. These living pictures are constantly reflected back upon all of us, with more or less damaging effects. The lower astral levels, nearest the Earth, reflect all that is worst in our selfish civilization. We literally live in a hypnotizing atmosphere.

What is our astral body?

It is the invisible model-body upon which the physical is built, cell for cell — an ethereal mold upon which, for example, the healing flesh restores the parts lost in wounds. It is the bridge between physical man and his thought and feeling. For us it is not natural, safe, or profitable

to try to dissociate these bodies which work together. The subtil bait boldly advertised by purveyors of so-called "occultism" in promising to teach all and sundry "how to travel out in the astral," etc., offers an unwholesome adventure, though it is often disguised in a fine philosophy. As a rule, no warning is given the unwary traveler of the many pitfalls along the way, nor of the real danger that he may not get back into his body wholly, if at all. Unhinged minds and wrecked lives only too often result from artificially dissociating the inner principles from the body. Theosophical students who know somewhat of man's inner nature often read between the lines recording unhuman, purposeless crimes, or strange suicides, the tragic story of those who have gone astray on some psychic bypath. Physicians in our overcrowded insane asylums report that many cases of disordered minds and perverted morals have followed the disintegrating strain connected with one or another popular mental or emotional cult.

But I know of people who have found out how to see wonderful scenes and even beings in visions?

Such things are not spiritual. When not imaginary they are evidences of the astral plane — sometimes they are reflected pictures of human thoughts; or they may be the work of certain Nature-spirits who, able to take on any form at will, delight in throwing a strange glamor over human beings. The majority of psychic venturers leave behind their ordinary senses, will, and intelligence, and they do not get above the ghostly and unwholesome levels, where they are helpless invaders and at the mercy of various unknown influences which are consciously active on their own ground. It is true that some mediumistic natures of clean life and good intentions report experiences of beauty and interest in certain astral levels. Nevertheless, once the door is opened into this region, hordes of evil influences have their chance to press through and to contact human life. Then again, how few psychics allow for the fact, or even know, that the astral light has the power to distort or to reverse images, events, the sequence of time, etc., thereby making everything they see unreliable? We get glimpses of this confusion in ordinary dreams, during which we are conscious on the astral plane. It

is proverbial that dreams go by contraries.

But there are many systems teaching Mind-control. Why study Theosophy?

Because these modern systems are incomplete without knowledge of man's whole nature and therefore are misleading. During the past half-century various "metaphysical" and healing cults have sprung up, and, by putting some incomplete philosophical ideas into plausible form having popular appeal have gained a wide following. Some of these, by methods of affirmation and denial, do provide, at times, the things desired for personal satisfaction — money, health, or whatever it may be. However, success thus gained by the psychic power of concentrated will is not an unmixed blessing. Occult powers used for self interest may bring something not rightly our own, or we may precipitate something out of its rightful time and place into our life. In either event we sow confusion in the field of events and, sooner or later, we shall have to reap the disordered results.

No true Theosophist would join a circle united in a "magic rite of concentration" to influence the life or acts of another person in any way, with or without his consent. The Masters of Wisdom, with all their superior knowledge and power, never interfere with the sacred rights of the human will.

But do not Theosophists approve of Hypnotism in very special cases?

Certainly not; that is another wrong done through the inner nature. This misuse of will-power for personal ends not only dominates our whole economic and public life by high-power "suggestion" in subtle forms, but hypnotism is also used without disguise. While the medical profession has abandoned its use in surgery, many practitioners use hypnotic treatment in mental and moral cases. Their success in dispersing the symptoms blinds both operator and subject to the fact that the real cause is untouched and will work itself out in some other way, in this or another life. The operator literally implants a portion of his own will in the subject, entangling both of them, on inner lines,

with the confused and unnatural results of this tampering with vital centers of being.

Physical ills should be treated by suitable physical means; in addition to this, the truly scientific physician will deal with mental and moral wrongs by arousing the positive willpower of his patients, whose greatest need is to use their own innate powers of wholeness and healing. A man can do for himself what no one else can do — if he is shown how.

The hypnotised subject, like the entranced medium, is crowded out, leaving his body and senses at the mercy of the dictating will of some alien influence. The victim of moral burglary, he awakes with weakened will, and his nature open to invasion by dangerous forces.

Hypnotism is advocated by many psycho-analysts, who utterly ignore man's spiritual nature in their moral vivisection of the lower mind and emotions. Prevalent ignorance of man's composite nature is shown in the fact that any medical circle should even consider a system of psychoanalysis based on the degrading fallacy that our whole human welfare is merely a matter of sex!

Widespread information of "how to hypnotise" is made to serve every kind of self-interest. Scoundrels and criminals use this weapon effectively in their evil work.

Do the Theosophical Masters advertise to teach the use of psychic powers?

No, indeed! though shameful misuse of their sacred names has misled many inquirers. Among the self-styled "teachers" of so-called "occultism" is a most insidious and sinister class who make artful appeals to curiosity and to the selfish and emotional desires of human nature. In the public press and in other ways they make glowing and suggestive offers of "secret instructions" for gaining "personal powers," a "magnetic personality," "success," "control over others," or "how to get out into the astral," "how to meet the Masters," "speedy initiation for \$2.00," etc. Some itinerant lecturers and their imitators are even

teaching the degraded and diabolical rites of the "Black Art." In some cases their victims are taught to open inner centers of vital force which are unknown to Western Science, but which are so powerful as to overwhelm the unprotected dabbler in psychism, who too often pays for his rashness with loss of health, moral balance, and even sanity. These teachers are themselves wanderers in the shadows of the astral world.

True teaching about the mysteries of both Man and Nature cannot be bought; no genuine occult Teacher will ever sell his sacred knowledge, nor can he be reached merely by forcing the petty, unreliable clairvoyance taught at so much per lesson. The World Teachers all down the ages have advised the cultivation of *spiritual* clairvoyance, never the psychic reflexion, which is so dangerous. Their pupils are subjected to severe training in self-discipline before being allowed to open any inner powers; they must prove their complete freedom from personal selfishness and their devotion to humanity. When obtained, their powers are regarded as a sacred trust never to be used for personal ends.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FOUR BEASTS OF THE CHRISTIAN APOCALYPSE — *G. de Purucker*

The question was asked the other evening: Just what is the meaning of the four beasts — the man, the lion, the bull, and the eagle — whether in the Christian Book of the Apocalypse or as used by early and medieval Christian artists? The question is not hard to answer. In the first place the Christian Book of Revelation was written by a Qabbalist, a student of the early, not the late, Qabbalah. (1) It was edited or touched up at a later date by a later Christian editor. No one knows what he took out, what he kept in. But it was touched up and given a more Christian coloring.

Now if you will read that chapter four of this Christian book called Revelation or the Apocalypse, you will see that it mentions these four beasts "full of eyes within," who proclaimed truths and unsealed seals, and they are stated to have encompassed the throne of the Hierarch.

Whether through this Qabbalistic book, or by early tradition now forgotten, or in some other way at present unknown to scholars, possibly through neo-Platonic sources, or neo-Pythagoric, the early Christians ascribed the same meaning to these four 'beasts' of the Apocalypse, and to the writers of the four Gospels, to wit, the man, the lion, the bull, and the eagle, that the Hindus ascribed to what they called their four Loka-palas, or guardians of the worlds, the four Maharajas if you like; albeit in simple justice be it said, the Hindu conception even today is incomparably vaster and more spiritually mystical than is the strongly anthropomorphic picture presented in the Christian book of Revelation. These four Maharajas, or four Loka-palas were by exoteric explanation, attributed severally and respectively to the North, the East, the South, and the West; and hence by those who did not understand the inner meaning, the Loka-palas were called the guardians of the four quarters. The public took the husk of the explanation and left the meat, the bread of the grain of truth.

Nature being spiritually generated and spiritually governed or controlled in so far as the divine law can have its way on this earth of matter, in the lower degrees of hierarchies where the conflict of wills rises daily and nightly in a hideous shriek to heaven — in so far as the divine law can control the affairs of men, it does so in four stages: the birth or the beginning technically called the North, the divine birth; adolescence or the sun-rise, technically called the East; full maturity of spirit and power in manhood, technically called the South, and governed by the Lord of Death, Yama; and the fourth, the West, the Land of Shades, the Land of the great Passing — so called by Egyptian, and Persian, and Babylonian, and Hindu, and Greek, and American Red Skin, in fact all over the world.

The ancients also celebrated four holy seasons in the wheeling of the year: the winter solstice and the spring equinox, and the summer solstice and the autumnal equinox. First comes the Great Birth, the winter — the birth of the sun when he first begins to reassume his powers of light, when his journey to the South is over, and he begins to retrace his journey back to the North. It is called the great birth. And then comes Adolescence at the spring equinox, when the laws of life and light begin magically to work on the earth. Trees burgeon, flowers spring forth, Nature begins to sing with the new elements of life coursing through her veins. And in the summertime comes the Great Temptation or the great trial which a man always undergoes in maturity and full power of his strength, determining whether he goes up or down; for in the summertime likewise the fruits are ready for the harvest. Grain has been cut and stored Nature is rich and powerful, overflowing with her exuberance of vitality. And then comes the fourth sacred season, that of the autumn equinox, when the sun, as it were, seems to take leave of the northern regions and pursues his journey southward The days shorten, the nights lengthen, chills come upon the earth, the leaves fall, the sap retreats from twig, leaf, branch, and stock, into the roots. Rest comes and peace. And this was called the season of the Great Passing.

Thus, the ancients taught that the spiritual life which governs our

world has its day of birth, has its day of adolescence, has its day of full material power and strength, has its day of passing, to begin anew the same cycle, let us hope on a somewhat higher plane. Year follows year and season follows season, the manvantaras come and the manvantaras go, the pralayas come and they go. But the divine endures forever.

These four Loka-palas or governors of the world are the four as it were karmic divinities, actually not so much single entities but hierarchies of divinities, each Loka-pala representing a hierarchy, one inaugurating the manvantara or the beginning of manifested life in our world. When its duty is done, then the second hierarchy takes up the task which is passed on to it. The second Loka-pala steps into the arena of action and carries the burden for a while, like the bearer of a torch in a torch-race running swiftly to the goal, and on reaching it, handing the torch on to the next runner to carry it on to the next goal.

Thus when the second Loka-pala has finished his work, the torch, the duty, is passed to the third; from it to the fourth, and the cycle is ended! Karman has been expended, new karman has been written in the Book of Life by the Lipikas, the divine recorders. And the next manvantara, the next period of manifestation, will see the Loka-pala springing anew into spiritual and intellectual activity.

This is a very abstract and truly divine conception, Companions, difficult for Occidentals who are not accustomed to this way of thinking. The early Christians were fascinated by it, which showed they had their modicum of the original god-wisdom of Theosophy. But they found it difficult to explain. And by and by, the inner meaning of the four beasts, the four Loka-pala representations, symbols of the divinities: the soaring eagle, the thinking man, the bull of strength, and the lion of courage, symbols of qualities: the symbolic concept was forgotten, and the four animals were simply painted by early medieval artists, Christian artists, as symbols of the four Evangelists who wrote the Gospels; because the early Church taught that in the four Gospels was the Word of God. The Word of God is the law of the universe, and in

these four Gospels are the four laws of being, the four divine laws. So therefore these beasts later came merely to symbolize these transcripts, these gospels of early Christian Theosophical teaching; and the original, almost the divine meaning was lost.

FOOTNOTE:

1. It is to be noted in passing, however, that the term Qabbalist as used in this connection and similarly often used by H. P. B., refers not so much specifically to the Jewish Qabbalah itself but to mystical and philosophical lines of thought having kinship with the inner meaning of the Jewish Qabbalah, but not specifically using the technical terms of the Jewish Qabbalah, although of course both the Jewish Qabbalah and these other systems of so-called Qabbalistic thought are in greater or less degree all based on archaic Theosophy. Thus when I say that the writer of the Christian Book of Revelations, called the Apocalypse, was a Qabbalist, as H. P. B. also calls him, I do not mean that necessarily he was a follower of the strictly Jewish Qabbalah, but rather that he employed similar, or parallel lines of expression and thinking, which by no means necessarily had a Jewish origin. In other words the Jewish Qabbalah was used as a sort of standard manner of expression and terminology, yet greatly modified by these other schools who refused to accept the Jewish Qabbalah as such, but nevertheless followed its type and even its lead in thought in more than one particular. The reason for this of course stands out clearly: that the Jewish Qabbalah as well as these other later systems and indeed all ancient mystical and religious Theosophical thought, were either original offsprings from the archaic Theosophy or descendants from earlier archaic Theosophic branches or stems thereof. ([return to text](#))

FALLACIES IN OUR THINKING — *Henry T. Edge*

The topics treated of in this book (1) may seem from the reviewer's point of view to be somewhat hackneyed, yet it is by constant repetition that new ideas of such importance seep into the public mind. The ground covered coincides largely with that covered in C. E. M. Joad's recent book on *God and Evil* reviewed in the June issue of *The Theosophical Forum*. The postulates and constructions used by the science of last century as a framework for physics no longer prove adequate for an interpretation of even the physical universe, and new ones have had to be sought in their place. While competent minds fully recognised that the system was merely temporary and provisional, yet this circumstance had been lost sight of; provisional hypotheses were mistaken for universal laws and became the basis for materialistic and mechanistic views of life in general. The consequence has been that the revolution in physics has meant a revolution in our general ideas and outlook, as has been the case with similar epochs in the past, such as those of Copernicus and Darwin. Sir James shows his usual perspicacity and ability to hold our interest, and has arranged his chapters so that both the expert and the layman may be catered for.

The book might well have been called a study of fallacies in our thinking, applicable not only to science but to everything else about which we speculate. Thus it deals largely with general principles, such as the relation of subject and object; the apparent antagonism of determinism and freedom; the difference between reality and appearance, or between an intelligent force and its physical manifestation; the war between atomism and continuity, whether in blocks of stone or in those other blocks which we carry on our shoulders; the relation of apprehension by the mind and perception by the senses; what knowledge, if any, is *a priori*, and what inferred; and the like. Science and philosophy are dancing coyly around each other like a pair of birds in the Spring: what they have in view seems to

demand their co-operation.

The failure of mechanical explanation is fully admitted: it is impossible to separate organic Nature from its physical manifestation, for each implies the other, and they are comprised in a unity. "Forces" have no objective existence and are mere mental constructs, differing with the observer (as Relativity shows). The difficulties of attempts to formulate the behavior of a quantum are due to the fact that *fundamental activities cannot be represented as occurring in time and space*. A mechanical explanation explains x in terms of y , giving us an indeterminate equation whose terms cannot be evaluated. Under the heading of epistemology we learn that knowledge can be attained only by establishing a relation between the inner and the outer. The mind apprehends of itself without the aid of senses, number, quantity, sameness and difference, etc. — Plato's innate ideas.

Science has to cope with three worlds: the man-size world, the infinitely great world, and the infinitely small world. Some may say that the same laws are not applicable to all; but this is a mistake, and we should find it hard to define the limits which mark off a change of laws. The same laws apply throughout, but different features of these laws predominate in different cases; and some such features, slight enough to be ignored in the man-size world, may loom portentously great in the other worlds. This fact, says Sir James, is of tremendous importance to philosophy as a whole, for it provides a test for claims made by rationalists as to alleged *a priori* knowledge. Knowledge found to be true in the man-size world may prove to be untrue in one or both of the other worlds:

The a priorists have told us that the Creator could not make a world in such and such a way; we study the world of the electron or nebula and find that He has done so already. Thus the alleged *a priori* knowledge can only be empirical knowledge of the man-sized world.

Thus the proposition that the sum of the angles of a triangle equals 180° is true of triangles in the man-size world, but is found unworkable

with triangles of astronomical size, so that this cannot be classed as a *priori* knowledge, apprehended by direct intuition.

Most controversy over Space and Time is due to overlooking the various senses in which these words can be used. The author enumerates conceptual space, perceptual space, physical space, absolute space; and the same with Time; and he defines each of these kinds. He goes on to speak of the Space-Time unity, and shows that while Space and Time taken separately are private and special to individual observers, the Space-Time unity, as conceived by Relativity, is public, common to all observers. An important point is the following:

Space and Time cannot contain the whole of reality, but only the messengers from reality to our senses.

To meet a possible objection from Theosophical students, we will observe here that it is physical Space and Time that are meant, so that there is no contradiction of any statement made by H. P. Blavatsky or others as to Space and Time used in other senses duly defined by the users.

Under the head of Relativity theory we find the usual statement as to the impossibility of synchronizing distant clocks. If I want to set my clock by a clock on Mars, I shall need to allow for the twelve minutes of time taken for light to travel before I can see the signal. But how do I know that twelve minutes must elapse? Because light travels 186,000 miles a second. How do I know that light travels 186,000 miles a second? Because I have estimated it *by means of light signals*. I have to assume what I am trying to prove; I am reasoning in a circle.

Philosophy, says the author, deals with qualities, science with quantities. This leads to conflicting conclusions from each: philosophy says heat and cold are incompatible; a body must be either hot or cold. Science says heat and cold are merely relative terms applied to a continuous scale of temperature. This instance illustrates the fallacy of thinking of the world as black and white without any half-tones; and the author proceeds to point out the logical fallacy of the "excluded

middle term." A man, says logic, is either old or young; he cannot be both at the same time. But common sense asks, Just when did he leave off being young and begin to be old? As the transition must take place at some point, the youth of a man must pass away in the twinkling of an eye. This kind of logic (or you may choose to call it philosophy) is atomistic, it thinks in separate parts. But practical experience recognises no such separations, and deals in all kinds of half-tones and compromises; and even physics has now spewed atomism out of its mouth. Formal syllogistic logic is not a safe guide for practical policy: the "either-or" technique is not satisfying; a little of both is better. Zeno and his arrow are of course mentioned. By applying the either-or method he demonstrated the impossibility of motion. When we carve up the universe and reduce it to a bundle of paradoxes, it may after all be our tools that are at fault.

The question of causality is involved in this strife between atomism and continuity. There is no scientific justification, says Sir James, for dividing occurrences into detached events: changes are too continuous and too interwoven. The cause and the effect are one and inseparable; every event is connected with every other event. This is of course fully in accord with what we have been taught by Dr. G. de Purucker, who, while necessarily using the terms "cause and effect," has been so careful to guard us against a too mechanical view, and has always insisted on this interdependence of every part of the universe. Man's individual Karma, for instance, is not the end product of a single chain of linked causes and effects, but is the resultant up to date of an incalculable number of causes. A complete action includes within itself both cause and effect, though on our plane of consciousness these two halves, though in essence inseparable, seem sundered in time and in space.

Connected with this is the problem of *actio in distans*, a problem in which reasoners have tried to solve a difficulty created by themselves. For the problem is based on the assumption that things are separated, an assumption which, as we have seen, is not valid. In a word, we have cut the Gordian knot by the simple process of abolishing *distans*; what

was never separated does not need to be reunited.

The question of Subject and Object, or of Perceiver and Perceived, is next brought up; and we see that it is impossible to set a boundary between the two: our senses can perceive objects; our minds can view our sense-perceptions; and we can use our mind to examine some of our mental processes. The two terms are relative to each other; the distinction is provisional and for convenience.

The destruction of scientific determinism does not overthrow science or the uniformity of Nature. Free-will is freedom to follow the laws of the universe of which we are an integral part. Einstein is quoted to the following effect:

Honestly I cannot understand what people mean when they talk about the freedom of the will. I feel that I will to light my pipe and I do it, but how can I connect this up with the idea of freedom? What is behind the act of willing to light the pipe? Another act of willing? Schopenhauer once said: Der Mensch kann was er will; er kann aber nicht wollen was er will. (Man can do what he wills; but he cannot will what he wills.)

The truth compels its own recognition, however long and winding the roads by which that recognition is reached. A universe is a living organism, comprising innumerable hosts of lesser organisms, each of which is a self-acting unit, living its own life in harmony with the general laws that direct the whole. Science has been studying the outside, but is learning that there can be no outside without an inside.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Physics and Philosophy*. By Sir James Jeans. Cambridge, at the University Press; New York, the Macmillan Company. 1943. \$2.75 ([return to text](#))

THE LAW OF OPULENCE — *Raymond Rugland*

To the man whose idea of "practical occultism" revolves around the desire for personal success, for acquiring an abundance of worldly goods and luxuries, for power and dominance among men, the Law of Opulence is a very attractive teaching. So attractive, indeed, that tens of thousands are engaged in the study of this "law," and actively engaged in bringing abundance into their lives, unaware that at the root of the attractive "flower" "lies a serpent coiled."

The Law of Opulence is also called the Law of Supply and Demand. By Affirmation, Mind-Prayer, Creative Concentration, we are told by the literatures of various organizations, that the cosmic machinery which provides personal abundance for a special "few" is set in motion. Why work at all when all that is needed is to picture in your mind's eye what you want! That is the claim. The privilege of controlling the levers of the cosmic machinery may be easily had. The only barrier to such instruction is one's pocketbook.

Here we may inquire as to the motives of such instruction. Are they ethical? True knowledge is universal; it is the exclusive property of no one, belonging to all. Every student of genuine occultism will bear witness to the examples of the great Teachers. Those who have rendered more than lip-service to humanity's welfare — the Buddha, Jesus, Confucius, to name a few — never measured their teachings in dollars and cents, nor did they deem it wise to sanction and give formulae for personal opulence to disciple and follower. Small wonder! How well they knew, as any earnest student can discern, that the capacity of Man requires a greater Goal than any earthly opulence can satisfy. Of the Law of Opulence they knew, but knew also that one attached to earthly things is by that attachment bound. Further growth is impossible. Whether man works for personal opulence on the physical plane or on the mental plane, he works selfishly and for himself alone. Working selfishly, he stifles the Spirit-urge which impels

to harmony, to fellow-feeling; he checks his growth from the impoverished personal self with its pains and pleasures, into identification and harmony with all that breathes!

A Theosophist inquiring into the philosophical background of organizations teaching, for a price, the Law of Opulence, finds the Universal organic texture lacking. Surely the Universe exists for a greater End than this supply and demand of human wants. Teaching of this nature, with its appeal to the personal man, aims merely to convince the student that he is justified in applying "cosmic law" to his own ends. And the student, concerned only with immediate results and tangible evidence, is satisfied to look no further.

The person who embarks on such a line of instruction is very much in the position of one learning to drive an automobile. It is simple to learn to pull "this" and step on "that" and go hurtling down the highway, but the driver unacquainted with the principles of automotive mechanics, is wiser to trust his life to the trolley-operator! The laws of Universal Mind are not embraced in a single principle or a few formulae.

Now wherein lies the danger of creating images of one hundred dollar bills, or picturing yourself sitting in the executive's seat? The Theosophist agrees that there is no evil in a hundred dollar bill, in itself, where no hungry human eyes exist to feast upon it. The evil lies in man's attachment to it — that is, in the power of material things to fasten themselves to human beings. The evil lies in the fact that a man will allow his mind to become divorced from its higher field of operation merely to satisfy physical comfort and the old itch for power.

The Theosophist does not suggest "sackcloth and ashes" — a means by which some humans attract pity, and gloat over their humility with another kind of vanity — but rather, the common-sense middle way. It is his aim to conserve his energy along the highest possible lines, recognising that one who lives "in the world" must consider its needs and fulfil the duties that the world asks of him. These duties are of wider range than the Success-school's appeals would indicate.

The Law of Opulence is no myth! It works, but its retroactive action is often overlooked. It is in fact a boomerang. Whatever cause is set in motion by the mind returns as the effect of that cause. "As ye sow, so shall ye reap." Karman is the name given by Theosophists to this doctrine of Cause and Effect. Its ethical implication is a powerful one, for it is Justice; it is the Scale by which universal harmony is maintained. One can no more dodge retribution for selfish manipulation of mental laws, than one can violate the laws of gravity and pressure with impunity.

The practitioner of mental "science" may pray, concentrate, visualize, and that which he wishes may come to him; but, when it comes he will regret — sooner or later. Wishing solely for pleasure, he gets pleasure and an equal amount of pain which he did not bargain for! Simply because his wish was a selfish one. Self-indulgence demands its price. Pleasure and pain are forever linked. Hence, he who directs the law of opulence for selfish ends merits the same karmic retribution as the ruthless climber who, desirous of wealth and prestige, rises to his coveted position of power on the shoulders of other people — other people, less shrewd and less selfish than he.

Let, then, the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event. Do not be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction. Firmly persisting in Yoga (equal-mindedness), perform thy duty, O Dhananjaya (despiser of wealth), and laying aside all desire for any benefit to thyself from action, make the event equal to thee, whether it be success or failure. — *Bhagavad-Gita*, Judge's Recension, p. 16-

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A SHIELD AGAINST DOGMATISM — *Helen Savage*

Those who have at heart the interests of the organization in which they work are alert to dangers which may beset that body; and they are fortunate indeed if they have been given certain guide-posts, and have been warned against certain pitfalls, by those whose breadth of vision and large wisdom entitles them to be heeded.

Theosophists who are familiar with the literature of the Society are aware that there is much in the writings of the Founders which bears on this subject of warnings. One of the dangers they consistently warn against is the possibility of dogmatism gradually vitiating the life of the work. H. P. Blavatsky's words in the concluding remarks of *The Key to Theosophy* are an instance in point. Again, there is W. Q. Judge's answer to a question in *The Theosophical Forum* for December, 1895, where he insists that to promulgate a dogmatic statement of Theosophy is "to go completely back on the genius of the Theosophical movement."

Such Teachers as these write as they do because they know what the history of religions has to show as the result of misguided loyalty and enthusiasm. They know the tendency of the human mind to "fix" ideas and then cling to them even when the ideas have fled and nothing but words remain. They know too well also the unholy "itch" some people have to impose their beliefs, views and opinions on others, and with what zeal such imposition can be made "in the name of the Cause." It is no wonder that H. P. Blavatsky says in the passage mentioned above from the *Key*, that every former attempt such as the present Theosophical Society has sooner or later "ended in failure because sooner or later it has degenerated into a sect, set up hard-and-fast dogmas of its own, and so lost by imperceptible degrees that vitality which living truth alone can impart."

What can the individual member do to keep ever on the alert against this danger? We do not want to lessen our enthusiasm in study, nor our

zeal in passing on the teaching to those who ask for help. It is equally deteriorating to swing to the extreme of opening our arms to every belief that happens to be floating about and to fail to use our discriminating faculty in determining what is false and what is true.

What then can we do to guard against dogmatism? Perhaps one key to the problem can be found in a passage in G. de Purucker's *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, page 202. He is speaking of *The Secret Doctrine* and how we can never say that we really have grasped all that is in that marvelous book. He writes:

I have found the value of the following rule: never take a single statement in it and allow your mind to mold itself around it, never let a single idea crystallize; break the molds, let in the light. It is an excellent rule. . . .

I have learned these lessons, and I speak as a witness. Every evening before I go to sleep, I go over the events of the day, and I try to find one or more things in which I have allowed my mind to crystallize around a thought or a fact; and I am merciless to myself if I catch it or them. Not a minute do I temporize. When I find molds of mind, I break them, for I know too well what they mean.

This whole matter thus becomes an individual problem. Dogmatism starts within the mind of the student. If it is not allowed to flourish there then it will not have a chance to spread and show its ugly nature in our spoken and written word, in our association with our fellow-students, in our attitude to other organizations.

We have to recognise that truth does not dwell in the mind. The mind is the channel, clear or muddy, through which truth may come. A well-stocked mind, full of facts, paradigms, correspondences, and the like, does not constitute an understanding of the teachings. The approach to truth is an *ever-living process*. Goethe's famous words about life and liberty might well be applied here, substituting for these the word "truth": "Only he merits liberty and life who conquers them daily."

What we acquired last year in the way of an understanding will not suffice now. Our conquest of yesterday becomes stale. We must conquer again today — and every day. This is to say that with every attempt at formulation of the teachings, we go not to the mind, but through the mind to that Source which is above. Each time truth must be recaptured.

Study in this way becomes a real devotion, the primal factor in which is a purification and preparation of the mind that it may receive "from above." I believe that this practice if carried out faithfully would absolutely safeguard each one of us from the fault of crystallization of ideas. And there can be no dogmatism where there is a fluidity of the mind, together with a generous sympathy towards the viewpoint of another. This practice, be it noted, would at the same time prevent a wandering away into unessential or even fantastic sidelines — another danger which we are warned against by the Teachers.

The Theosophical Forum

THE COMPLETE PSYCHOLOGY — *Florence Collisson*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Until somewhat more than a hundred years ago the study of mental processes and mental reactions was a part of the greater subject of philosophy, and was a matter of discussion in the days of Pythagoras, of Plato and Aristotle; while if we turn to the Orient we shall find that the study is as old as records can be found of thinking man.

The term psychology has now as many meanings as there are individuals who use it. To one it means the study of everyday behavior, to another, the study of mental processes, to another physical reactions to external stimuli, to yet another the study of the abnormal characteristics of people.

But what does psychology mean in reality? Psychology is defined as the "science of the nature, functions and phenomena of the human soul or mind." Or again, as the "science" of consciousness. We learn that a science systematises a subject and the phenomena belonging thereto. Hence if psychology is a science of consciousness, the field of psychology must consist in systematising the facts of consciousness. Here it is obvious that we meet a very real difficulty, for consciousness can only be studied by means of the mental workings of the conscious thinker. Modern research tends to approach this study through sensory impressions, and to ignore evidences of a higher mind, or of a Self within. Still less will it, generally, accept the idea of previous lives; of an incarnating entity, a soul entering again a life on earth, a sojourn of not only one but of many lives.

This is perhaps the fundamental difference between the Oriental and Occidental approach to the study of a conscious, thinking entity. The

Oriental looks upon man as an evolving being, upon life and death as but two aspects of the one great and all-enduring Life; while the Occidental regards a child as a newly-created soul entering life with a mind clean as a *tabula rasa* upon which is to be written the growing character, which character will be the result of its reactions to the stimuli of the events of the present life.

What then shall we understand by the title "The Complete Psychology"? It must be more comprehensive than a little classification and generalization. From the point of view of a Theosophical student the subject is very comprehensive indeed. As H. P. Blavatsky says, in *Isis Unveiled*, I, xxvii-xxviii, psychology is the "science of the soul, both as an entity distinct from the spirit and in its relations with spirit and body." Psychology so understood leads us to the questions, Who am I? Where did I come from? What is the Soul? In fact, it becomes the study of Man, Man as a Child of the Universe, inseparable from it, a child that always was, always will be. Will be, yes, but not always as he is today, but a being steadily growing ever greater and grander, ever more intelligent and intuitive; ever more spiritual and conscious, learning to work with the Universe, that Universe of which he is such an insignificant, yet supremely important part. How is this possible, the psychologists will ask. Prove it! Yes, prove it. Can you prove consciousness by means of test-tubes and scales? Can you measure love, kindness, compassion and truth by means of grams and atomic weights? Yet had we developed our spiritual eyes, our spiritual senses, we could then see the vibrations, shall we say, of consciousness, of love, and all the other virtues, as well as the vices of our composite natures. We certainly have no difficulty in seeing effects.

Yes man *is* one with the Universe, compounded of its elements, modelled upon it, built of the same atoms, infilled with the same consciousness, urged by the same divine currents. Man, then, even as the Universe, is compounded of something which can range vast spaces, which can pass through many experiences, which can grow, which can evolve; for Man in his essence is one with the unlimited Boundless All, the Nameless, THAT of the Hindu philosophy. Between

Man in his essence, and man here on earth there are many stages, even as with the ray of light from the sun to our earth. In its essence it is pure sunlight; on earth it needs the dust of earth to make it visible to our physical eyes. So with man. Rooted in the Spiritual Sun, he needs the dust of earth as a means of functioning here on earth; he needs a body. Thus it is that in Ancient Philosophy man is spoken of as a combination of three converging streams or bases of evolution, called by the Hindus, the Three Upadhis. The one divine, of cosmic reach; the second intuitional and intellectual, with solar reach; and the third the vital-astral-physical man, child of the earth. Paul would say: Spirit, Soul and Body. The idea is exactly the same.

The body is built up of the life-atoms belonging to *that* stage of evolution; the soul, of life-atoms appropriate to *its* stage; and spiritual life-atoms belonging to the Spiritual Man. Man himself, however, is *one* yet many, and the process of evolution brings about an unfolding of the composite parts of his constitution in such a way that he grows more and more at one with the Essence of himself, that is, with his own Higher Self. Psychology deals most particularly with that intermediate nature, which, using the above phraseology, is soul. It is the realm of the dual mind, the lower mind tending downwards towards the realm of the body, the higher mind reaching upward to the realm of spirit.

Theosophists for purposes of more intensive study will again subdivide spirit, soul and body into seven principles. But let it never be forgotten that these principles are not separate, but subdivisions, for man is in reality, a stream of consciousness. He can by the exercise of his will learn to function consciously in *any* part of his constitution. Indeed as complete man he will have actual knowledge of all the realms of Nature.

Believing as we do, that man lives many lives on earth, and that which happens to him now, is the result of that which he built up for himself in the past, and that the future is being built up *now*, it follows that the life-atoms composing the various aspects of himself will bear his stamp, and will be attracted psycho-astrally to him again and again.

These life-atoms will have a kind of memory, a kind of tendency. For instance, if the mind has dwelt upon high and lofty thoughts, the atoms of the brain, the vehicle or tool of the mind, will be stamped with a tendency to seek high and lofty strata. Similarly, evil and cruel thoughts will stamp evil and cruelty upon the life-atoms. Think of the impress we make, by ignorant or careless abuse, upon the physical life-atoms of our bodies. Thus it is we build up a group of atoms impressed by our own acts in the present, the immediate past, and far, far distant past. So some event occurs which stirs this tendency, low or high as the case may be, and we are influenced by the accumulation we have thus built up. This explains why unforeseen calamity will sometimes overwhelm us. This tendency or memory of the less evolved life-atoms, is, I believe, the sub-conscious self so often referred to by the psychoanalysts: for it is true that we can, almost unconsciously to our thinking selves, be influenced by our sub-conscious, that self below consciousness. But why add to its life by stimulation? Why not seek for our super-conscious self — that self in which is centered the higher segregation, in the aroma of noble thoughts and deeds of the present, the immediate past, and the far distant past.

I sent my soul thro' the Invisible,
Some letter of that After-life to spell:
And by and by my soul returned to me
And answered "I myself am Heav'n and Hell!"

sang the Sufis.

We thinking beings half-way between heaven and hell, with heaven and hell within our own souls, which path shall we follow — the pathway leading to the gods, or the one leading to the playground of our own concentrated evil and wrong-doing?

As Dr. de Purucker, the late Leader of the Theosophical Society, wrote so beautifully in his book *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 1007:

Let a man learn to grow towards this Divine within himself, and he will begin to *Know*. He becomes the understander then,

because his own understanding has been fired into awakening, has been stimulated to awakening under the touch of the divine Ray of his own inner god. He will indeed learn from the Universe outside: he will study the stars and the atoms; he will study with fascinated interest the world around him, the growing grass in the fields, and the budding flowers and the burgeoning trees, and all else. Everywhere he will learn lessons of invaluable worth for his growth. He will read the sacred literatures of the world and profit greatly by them. Yet despite all the knowledge that he will ingather from his studies of beings and things around him, one of his first discoveries will be that the greatest and holiest and dearest teacher is the Master within himself — his spiritual nature: deathless, undying, inexhaustible in its wisdom, for this his Spiritual Nature or Monad is in essence one with the Heart of the Universe.

The Theosophical Forum

THE CHILD MIRRORS THE RACE — *G. de Purucker*

There are literally innumerable evidences already known to scientific men of at least a large part of the past history of mankind; and as the greater part of mankind is his spirit and his mind, I include these also. But I refer now especially to the scientific evidences that man physically has passed in ages bygone through phases of his aeons-long evolutionary pilgrimage which have left their imprint upon him. And there are, as a matter of fact, a great many scientific facts which are not known.

I will refer here to one thing only, to a fact which used to have more scientific weight than it has today merely because the more modern scientific ideas are not so favorable to this fact; but I believe the scientists of the future will come back to the former ideas. It is called in embryology the theory of Recapitulation: that the human unborn child, the embryo, passes through in the small every phase of evolutionary development that the human race as a race has passed through in bygone times. Thus, is a child born today in full possession of mind, a thinking, reasoning entity? You all know the child is not. In the child's intra-uterine life we know it passes briefly through many evolutionary physical phases that the race as a whole passed through in bygone times; but it is not for years after the child is physically born that it begins to think, I mean to think self-consciously, to meditate thoughts of grandeur, to make decisions of great worth and value. These come with the growing lad advancing into manhood, for with manhood the greater powers of mind and intellect grow progressively, and also the spiritual and ethical faculties in man.

Now then, you have heard the phrase, "the descent of mind into the early Third Root-race of mankind." It was just that. Up to that time the race had developed bodies formed by evolution to meet the needs of their as yet unintellectual state, but you must not suppose that these unintellectual early men were absolutely without consciousness. Not at

all. No more so than an unthinking child is up to say five or six or seven years. Mind at that age is, in fact, already beginning to show itself; and the showing advances progressively as the child grows into boyhood, and from boyhood into manhood, and from manhood into mature years. Now the early races were just like that, like little children.

They had instinct, they had flashes of intuition, they had feeling, they had consciousness, the vague diffuse consciousness of the human child today, but they were not thinkers. The child today does not sit down at a desk and write a noble essay or plan out a campaign of thought which will help and enlighten mankind. Why? The mind has not yet fully expressed itself through the as yet infantile brain. The brain needs further hardening, forming, to carry the current from the mind within-above the man.

The early Third Root-race were just like children in that respect. They had consciousness. They had flashes of intuition; they had instinct highly developed. But the self-conscious thinking mind had not yet come to them. Then there happened one of the most marvelous events in all evolutionary history. We call it the "descent of the Manasaputras," the Sons of Mind, which took place not over night as it were, nor in an instant, nor through even a hundred thousand or several hundred thousand years. But it was a progressive process, exactly as on a small scale, the child does not wake up some morning and suddenly find itself in the possession of a mature mind. It is a matter of growth. Thus did the Manasputras gradually over-enlighten or overshadow the minds of the nascent mankind, permeating these brains, even their nervous systems with its divine fire of thought, until finally men thought, they were awakened. The mind had come into function. This was done by these Manasaputras, our own intellectual selves so to speak, incarnating through the ages for several hundred thousand years; and when it was ended, from the merely instinctual conscious but non-intellectual and as yet non-self-conscious early man, you have a race which thought, which could contemplate divinity; and this was possible because the link with the divine had been made. Mind was awakened.

And not only this: into a number of these prepared human beings, the most highly developed mankind of the time, there incarnated certain spiritual-intellectual entities, beings, highly evolved, who became the teachers and the guides of the then newly awakened mankind, who taught them, who showed them the ways of civilization, the mysteries, the secrets of science, the verities of philosophy. These were the days of the divine authority of our far past forefathers. It was they who founded the Mystery-Schools when they first began on this earth, and who lived and taught mankind, and were, as said, their guides, their teachers, their protectors, their instructors. And that same body, or their descendants if you wish, their successors, still remain on earth today as mankind's guides, illuminators, initiators, teachers, elder brothers, friends.

Thus does the child recapitulate in its own growth from infancy to manhood what the race has attained today. It is natural, it must be, because there is but one fundamental law in the universe, one fundamental course of action, which with its universally wide sweep touches all and everything with dynamic power. Thus we find today a key to understand those ancient and earliest thinking men: how they came to be born, how it came that the mind suddenly awaked so that they could contemplate the universe and understand it instead of being like children, or like the higher animals, instinctual, intuitionally conscious, but not self-conscious. It is a marvelous thing that happens to the little child: it grows from instinct and intuition to receive the entrance into itself, the infilling, of the inspiration from the inner god. The waiting brain, the nervous system, the body, are infilled and enlightened. Mysteries and marvels take place around us all the time!

Now, while it is very marvelous, very wonderful indeed, and fills us with great reverence for what is in the universe, to look back into the past along the annals of the race, and see the stages that our feet have trodden, yet do not forget the future. We are but at the middle point of our evolution on this earth. We must come back to earth again and again and again to repeat and to learn ever more and more perfectly

what we have already known, and to gain new wisdom. What, then, does the future hold? I will tell you. As our minds were awakened in the past by the manasaputric gods — for they are gods to men — so our minds themselves in the future shall be awakened by angels of the spirit. Even our minds which raise us from our unconsciousness to self-consciousness, and have brought us to the stage where we are now, so that we may contemplate the universe and sense divinity behind it, think grand and noble thoughts which raise our lives towards the gods — even our minds themselves need a higher inspiration, for our very minds can mislead us, lead us off the Path.

So just as in the past there took place the incarnation of the Manasaputras, the Sons of Mind, who gave us mind — so in the future, beginning now — it began already a million years back or more, and progressing with ever enlarging measure into the future — there will embody itself within us, in our minds and fill us with its own glory, the heavenly light from the god within each one of us. Thereafter our evolution will be safe and assured, with that celestial guidance enlightening our hearts and firing our brains. No more will our feet stumble on the path, for we shall enlighten our pathway as we march upwards and onwards, ever upwards, ever onwards, to heights at present inconceivable even to our minds. That is what lies before us. When we raise our inner eye, our inner face towards the god within us, there comes an eternal radiance, not from anything outside, but from the god within-above each one of us. Call it a Christ, the immanent Christ, call it the inner Buddha, call it by what name you will. The thing is to come to realize its holy presence. Then a man is indeed blessed.

DEATH AND AFTER — *Lydia Ross and C. J. Ryan*

Birth, Life and Death are but recurring events in the majestic drama of continued existence — here and in the world beyond. Birth and Death are only names for that mystic curtain that rises and falls as we come and go upon the visible stage of life. Our eyes can neither see, nor see through, this ethereal veil that separates the shifting scenes of this world from the greater realities of invisible realms beyond. For the parts we play here are at best only pale, distorted copies of the splendid experiences of the inner Self.

In very truth we are not less, but far more, consciously alive after the body dies. Then we are free to wing our way back again to our native home and to live there in an exalted sense of spiritual being. For every part of our composite nature has its own place somewhere in the boundless universe to which we human atoms belong.

The mystery of Life and the mystery of Death are but different parts of the same web of the soul's destiny. Life never ceases to ebb and to flow between the shores of the Here and the ethereal realms of the Hereafter.

Death is no more to be feared than sleep. "Sleep is an imperfect death; death is a perfect sleep." In sleep we are free to wander in the wonderland of dreams. Ordinary dreams mean that our natural withdrawal from the unconscious body is not complete enough to leave us free from its influences. When we are only partially withdrawn from its restless vibrations, our dreams are confused, strange, unhappy, or evil. If our withdrawal is still greater but not quite complete, we have happy, peaceful dreams. When wholly free, we retrace our way to inner homelands so distant that even the memory of them all is too vast for the brain to hold. In such magic hours of deep, deep dreamless sleep, the inner man is active and fully conscious in some native spiritual realm, renewing there the strength and courage

to meet whatever the coming day may bring.

In sleep the weary body assimilates the food it has taken in, and renews its worn-out cells, preparing for its daily activities. Thus each morning we reincarnate in a renewed and somewhat different body, and also we awake with fresh inner strength. It is all so natural an experience that we take it for granted; yet it repeats in kind and in brief what occurs in the Great Adventure of Death. Sleep and death are brothers. And as "the night-time of the body is the day-time of the soul," so the death of the body is rebirth for the soul.

When, at night, our loved ones are weary and ready for sleep, we do not selfishly arouse them by calling for personal attention. We should be doubly careful at the bedside of the dying and not disturb them by our selfish grief when they are passing into their "last long sleep." For as earthly scenes grow dim, the inner vision becomes clear and strong. However blindly we stumble along life's journey, we die at last with our eyes wide open. Death is a sacred initiation into mysteries of being. It is a solemn time, calling for quiet and silence, that the departing one may go in peace, infilled with the hidden *meaning* of the life now closing. For after the heart has ceased to beat, and all seems ended, the outgoing forces of life rush through the brain, and the man sees "the whole of his past life marshaled before him in its minutest details. For one short instant the *personal* becomes one with the individual and all-knowing Ego. But this instant is enough to show him the whole chain of causes which have been at work during his life. He sees and now understands himself as he is, unadorned by flattery or self-deception. He reads his life, remaining as a spectator looking down into the arena he is quitting; he feels and knows the justice of all the suffering that has overtaken him." (*H. P. Blavatsky*)

This inner vision always occurs, even in sudden death. Its reality is confirmed by many persons resuscitated from drowning. When all but gone, they saw the detailed panorama of their whole life flash before them. Thus they had actual evidence that *everything is recorded* on the invisible Screen of Time, and that the real Man does know the whole

record.

The Theosophical teachings are consistent with each other and with the facts in Nature. There is natural provision for everything that occurs to us in life and death, as these two states are natural parts of our existence. Man and the Universe are alike composite in their natures, and man has, in some degree, everything in the universal Scheme, from spirit to matter. Spiritual man, having descended, through increasingly material levels on his way to human incarnation, naturally retraces his way on the return journey after death.

The familiar division of man into "body, soul, and spirit" briefly refers to his sevenfold nature — that is to say, the elements which make up his being — which is divine, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, vital, astral and physical. These different parts of the human constitution naturally fall apart after death and each goes its own way. Thus when at last the vital forces — *prana* — leave the body, the physical atoms begin to return to their place in Nature — "dust to dust." The astral or model-body upon which the physical is built, cell for cell, is of an invisible, finer grade of matter. Its atoms also separate and they are diffused into various other astral forms in Nature. The individual stream of *pranic* life returns to the great ocean of life in which we move and live. Of the lower, personal man, the most persistent elements are his passions and desires, and these impulses and emotions, being earth-born, are earth-bound. Here, in the atmosphere of selfish desire, these disembodied emotions cohere into an ethereal form, to survive for a time as a *Kama-rupa*, *Kama* meaning *desire*, and *rupa*, *body*. From this human dross, everything worthy to survive is separated in a kind of purgatorial cleansing, after which comes the "second death." All the gleanings of good are added to the real inner Man, who is ever evolving through experiences in successive incarnations, and absorbing the essence of it all in the periods of refreshment between earth-lives. This spirit, now liberated from all things earthly, re-ascends to the finer airs of its own realms, there to remain until the hour strikes for another life on earth.

When the soul freed itself from the passions and desires, it left behind the Kama-rupa, the dregs of its former personality. Then the Kama-rupa, deprived of vital thought and conscience, fades away in due course of nature; unless as sometimes happens, this dangerous "shade" is drawn to and vitalized by mediumistic natures seeking to communicate with the dead.

"Is there no hope, then, of meeting those who have passed on?" is often asked. There is not only hope but certainty that those who truly love cannot be separated, for love is eternal. *Spiritual* communion can indeed take place between the departed and the living; but it is for the living to rise to the spiritual planes, either in deep, dreamless sleep or in rare moments of lofty thought and aspiration. Fortunately, in the very nature of things, we cannot drag the liberated soul down to earth's murky atmosphere, though the soulless Kama-rupa may appear in the seance-room. Those who truly love will surely meet again in other lives on earth, and will renew the old ties, though under new names and conditions. How else could we explain love and friendship at first sight?

Bereavement should bring home to us a larger sense of our responsibility, even to our beloved dead. They are resting in the keeping of the Great Law, and absorbing the meaning of their past experiences, and so becoming better prepared to put more of the ideal truth and beauty of their heavenly visions into their next life on earth. Their sacred silence is a challenge for us to do our part to start new and nobler currents of thought and action, while we are still in this world of causes.

Man is an intelligent and moral being because of *Manas*, "the mind." This is the dominating principle in his present stage of development — he is more than an animal and less than a god. His mind is dual: the higher mind working with his spiritual nature, the lower mind being used by his selfish, material nature. Thus man is the author of the greatest good and of the worst evil on earth. After death his purely intellectual nature unites with his spiritual or *Buddhic* principle, they

together being the Reincarnating Ego. This is the real man who enjoys the ideal thought-life and spiritual vision in *Devachan*, or what may be called the "heaven-world" or the world of the gods — *Deva* means god, and *chan* means realm, or world.

Devachan is a condition of spiritual life, with various degrees or grades of consciousness extending through realm after realm of beatitude. Though each man's inner treasures of thought and feeling — his noblest aspirations and beautiful ideals — ever elude his grasp when on earth, their realization makes up his soul-satisfying life of bliss and refreshment in Devachan. While this exalted state is, in one sense, like an exquisite dream, yet it is more illumined, more vivid and far more real than anything known on earth. Our spiritual existence is rich in harmony, beauty, and love; all the pain and suffering, all disappointment, privation, heart-ache and loss that were endured in the last life are forgotten.

Nothing, however, is lost of the purified *essence* of earthly experience, which is assimilated into man's expanding inner nature. Between lives he sees his perfected ideals clearly pictured in heavenly visions. These are impressed upon the reincarnating man as possibilities which he may work out into every-day realities in the conditions of earth-life — and only there. For the kingdom of heaven which is "within" can "come" on earth only when men bring into action their innate spiritual faculties and the creative powers of pure intellect.

When assimilation in Devachan is complete, the refreshed Ego feels the longing for old familiar scenes of activity; it desires to come back and take up its unfinished business with its former associates. Then it begins its return journey from more ethereal realms through the various grades of substance that finally merge into physical matter. At each stage it ingathers whatever of its make-up — the ethereal sheaths of the soul — it had left there in freeing itself for upward flight. At last it reaches earth's atmosphere.

Meantime, the Ego's earthly attributes and characteristics of *personality*, as well as the physical and astral atoms it had discarded at

death, begin to reassemble, feeling the urge for reunion with their own. Again the separated principles form the sevenfold composite being which has been drawn to the family and the conditions that are in keeping with its further growth. Then a baby is born — a little, helpless, unawakened being, but somehow bringing with it a refreshing air of purity and "otherworldliness."

Just before birth, the returning pilgrim sees in a flash of spiritual vision the chain of causes which led him to Devachan and back to the new life about to begin. Seeing the justice and meaning of it all, he accepts it with sublime courage. Then he drinks of the Waters of Oblivion — the "River of Lethe" — and passes through the mystic curtain of birth.

An exception to what usually happens after death occurs, as might be expected, in cases of self-destruction, for suicide is a violation of natural law. The suicide is not really dead though he has lost his physical body. He remains a *living man* in the lower astral levels close to the earth, and will linger there for the length of years he would have lived but for his rash act. In many cases this is a period of intense mental suffering, and many of these unfortunates are easily attracted to the seance-room, because of the cravings for the gratification of the appetites and desires which can be satisfied only by possessing the body of a living person. This unnatural and uncanny possession is dangerous for all concerned, not only in the immediate but in far-reaching results that may be spiritually disastrous.

For humanity at large, Death is a Wonderful Adventure which alternates with the soul's opportunity for unfolding its spiritual powers in life on earth; but it is only on our "good earth," where body, soul, and spirit working together provide the necessary conditions, that we can attain to complete and lasting Self-knowledge. This world is our school-house of experience. Here the god in man is destined to conquer his animal-nature in the fulness of time, and to move on to a more splendid destiny than our imagination can conceive. A few Great Men, the Masters of Wisdom, have traveled far on the way to perfection. They established the Theosophical Society to bring to their fellow-men

a knowledge of how they, too, may tread the same small, old Path to peace and power and vision.

The Theosophical Forum

FREEWILL AND ORDER — *Henry T. Edge*

The object of this article is to help those who may be laboring under the idea that the existence of order in the universe is somehow inconsistent with the freedom of the will. Such a notion is contrary to the teachings of the Theosophical Leaders and also to the views of the leading thinkers of today in the ranks of science. With such an array of authority against them, the holders of this view may feel that their belief is due to their not having considered the matter deeply enough.

WHAT THEOSOPHY TEACHES

That the universe is composed, not of a host of dead atoms, but of a host of living beings, monads, sparks of the universal Life-Consciousness. This makes all the difference in the world. For even the lowliest of these Beings must (by definition) be endowed with *some* degree, however limited, of consciousness and volition; while among the Beings higher in the scale we shall find greater degrees of consciousness and volition, greater degrees of freedom. Hence freewill must be, in this view, at every point in the universe. Yet this universal freedom does not mean chaos — and why? Because the universe has laws. Whence these laws? As far as our conduct is concerned, it may be enough that we should recognise their existence; but if we wish to dig deeper —

"First come the SELF-EXISTENT on this Earth. They are the "Spiritual Lives" projected by the absolute WILL and LAW, at the dawn of every rebirth of the worlds." — The Secret Doctrine, II, 164.

Man has relative freedom, according to his environment and the degree of his evolutionary attainment. As long as he is on the physical earth, he must recognise (at his peril) the laws of physical matter. But this does not prevent him utilizing those laws. As long as he dwells in the halls of illusion and follows personal desires, he will be more or

less the servant of lower influences. But he can emancipate himself; and the whole Path is a path of progressive self-emancipation, until the final freedom is achieved.

Tis from the bud of Renunciation of the Self that springeth
the sweet fruit of final Liberation.

The way to final freedom is within thy SELF.

— *The Voice of the Silence.*

We cannot set our own will against the laws of the universe, and against all other wills — unless we feel able to start a little universe of our own — which might be lonesome.

WHAT SCIENCE SAYS

Christopher Caudwell, in his recent book *The Crisis in Physics* (reviewed in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, April, 1940), has a chapter on "The Collapse of Determinism," on which the following remarks are largely based. Scientists have been forced to become philosophers and to question the very foundations of their world-view; the doctrine of Determinism is seen to require restatement. The problem of causality has to be reconsidered. In the 19th century the basis of determinism seemed to have been settled by 17th century philosophy; but this view is now becoming chaotic, and a principle of Indeterminism is taking its place.

Heisenberg established this principle when he found that it is impossible to ascertain both the position and the velocity of an intra-atomic particle; and, commenting on this, Caudwell says:

The importance of this principle is that it states an absolute or intrinsic uncertainty as a law of Nature. This has been interpreted by many well-known physicists as meaning that Indeterminism is a law of Nature.

It presumes a fundamental discontinuity in Nature, which had hitherto been supposed always continuous. It upsets the differential calculus; immutable laws have now become only high probabilities. We can

analyze masses into molecules, molecules into atoms, atoms into still smaller particles, but then we reach a point where we can no longer calculate. We have reached the confines of physics, and can no longer summon its laws to our help. It is important, however, to observe that this uncertainty does not apply only to the very small, but also to the very great; and that our calculations as to the workings of the stellar universe carry us equally beyond the sphere of terrestrial physics, so that we are confronted with incompatibilities and alternative theories.

Eddington points out that Causality and Determinism, so far from being equivalent are incompatible. That is to say that the sequence of Cause and Effect does not imply predetermination, but does imply freedom. This proposition is the opposite of that held by some people as mentioned at the beginning of this article. Yet it is justified by this eminent man of science, who shows that:

The relation of cause and effect involves a flow of power from the cause to the effect, and therefore a certain freedom on the part of the cause. But if every event is completely and necessarily determined, then how can any event be regarded as a cause, since it is absolutely determined from the start by prior events? It is not in that case the cause, but the cause is shifted back, and there is an infinite regress.

The following quotation from Caudwell is eminently in accord with what we have been so often told by Dr. de Purucker:

Into every effect all the previous events of the universe flow as a cause, and, lacking any one of them, the effect would be in some measures slightly different.

CONCLUSION

The essence of human nature, we are taught, is the Divine Monad, a spark of Cosmic Divinity; and this manifests itself through a series of vehicles, so that its presence and influence are always active in greater or less degree. Man's real will (and destiny, which is the same thing) is to fulfil the laws of the Universal Harmony, and he achieves the highest

freedom by self-identification with the SELF. Karmic law may determine our *experiences*, but cannot determine our *acts*, because at every moment we have this Divine source to draw upon. Every moment is a beginning. Karma is not a rigid chain, like that imagined by physicists or philosophers at one time; it is a chain of *cause and effect*; and, as we have seen, these two are not alike and interchangeable, but essentially different; for *Cause* implies volition. Let us throw off this nightmare of determinism and *act*.

The Theosophical Forum

A PHILOSOPHY OF STRENGTH (1) — *Elsie Benjamin*

"The Soul Sets to no Man a Greater Task than He Can Perform."

The Theosophical Philosophy is a philosophy of Strength, and the above quotation from William Quan Judge epitomizes this fact, showing the relationship between the life a man leads during any one existence on earth, and whatever faces him in that life, whether it be obstacles and difficulties or the more "fortunate" circumstances of existence. There is no place in our philosophy for unburdening ourselves of our karmic heritage and placing it on the shoulders of another. Nor is there any possibility of our evading what is our just due, whether good or bad.

Far from this being a discouraging teaching, it is one filled with great optimism. We realise, firstly, that we are going to get exactly what we deserve and nothing that we don't deserve — whatever we have sown whether good or bad. In other words we will have the opportunity to pay all our debts to life and reap all its rewards. Secondly we realise, that in any one life it is we ourselves, our Higher Selves, who have chosen just what we shall do or be. Thirdly, as said above, we realise that we have the strength innate within us to meet whatever life brings. Then we feel that we are the masters of our own lives, not driven hither and yon by some outside force, and that we can intelligently direct our own evolution towards the goal of greater achievement which in turn brings its reward of greater ability to help our fellowmen.

Let us see how this is brought about: In any one life we are continually sowing seeds of future karma, and some of these seeds take many incarnations to come to fruition. The result is that when we are on the threshold of any new life, there is a vast accumulation of "unexpended" karma, both good and bad, which faces us. The Higher Self of man has a chance at this time to pass in review this accumulation and to choose how much of it shall be reaped in the life just ahead A soul that has

great strength, that is urged by the longing to progress and help others likewise, will very probably want to clear away a great deal of this accumulation, and will choose an existence (always limited of course by its karmic heritage) which will give it the greatest opportunity to bring these things to fruition; while a soul which has not developed the innate strength earned through lives of suffering and endeavor, will probably choose an easy existence or a colorless one, devoid of obstacles and difficulties.

So naturally when that soul comes into incarnation again, what is it faced with? Firstly, nothing but what itself has sown in the past. Secondly, only that portion which it itself has chosen to meet, and thirdly, the knowledge, having made the choice itself, that it *can* meet what life offers it.

But why do we not remember this experience and realise that what comes to us is of our own making and choosing? It is because it is the *higher* part of us that sees this picture and makes this choice, and unfortunately all too few of us are able during life to live continuously in that higher part and to retain its consciousness. But the first step is taken if we know the teaching, just as on a strange journey with the path ahead entirely unknown to us, we can proceed intelligently if our course is mapped out in advance.

So when we come to times in life that are hard, when the way seems obscure and the going difficult or well nigh impossible, let us remember that there is something within us that knows the way, that has the strength to follow it, and that it is nothing more or less than what we have earned for ourselves.

This same teaching is also expressed in a beautiful quotation which appeared in Madame Blavatsky's magazine *Lucifer* shortly after her passing, which runs: —

There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer
There is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through
There is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount

For those who win onward, there is reward past all telling the power to bless and serve Humanity. For those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforum Theosoffaidd (The Welsh Theosophical Forum)*, March-April, 1944. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

WESTERN YOGA — *E. D. Wilcox*

In any outlook over history one will find definite cycles of alternate progress and quiescence. Some of these are swift moving changes, others arrive with quiet, even flow. In individual life this rule is equally true in regard to both physical and mental development. Here in our western world the past century has been markedly one of upheaval in both ways. In the thought life the first great stir spread when the "Ape" replaced "Adam" as our first human parent, and this naturally shifted man back to the animal realm with Nature as his creator instead of God, depriving him of inner spiritual selfhood. The second great stir was a bombshell of inner world phenomena for which, to men's minds, there was neither reason nor denial. The two lines of thought contradicted each other, and as one looks back in retrospect the controversy was bitter and irreconcilable when Madame Blavatsky reached New York, bringing the key to both these riddles: from whence came man, and the cause of the so-called spirit-phenomena.

To the world of Science H. P. Blavatsky taught that the physical body of man was built according to the same laws of Nature that plant and animal were, that is, by gradual evolution. Nature manifested her forms of life on many planes other than physical, to any one of which Man had the power of conscious access. We of the West are accustomed to think of man as threefold, body, soul and spirit. Of the body we are actively cognizant; the soul, we confuse with mind, while of the spirit we know nothing other than vague musings.

The eastern teaching is that man is sevenfold, and when we stop to analyse we find it easy to separate man into a number of selves. Outwardly we live in an emotional self, swayed by sense impressions; inwardly, what we call the psychic self, we fill with longings and desires. Intellect we think of as the mind, the self of reason and decision of will. Beyond all these we are aware by flashes of what we call intuition, of a deeper Self, of a real I, in whose consciousness the

other selves seem but passing phases, mere aspects of the real. For instance, involuntarily, we say: "I have a will, I have a mind! We even know that we *have* a soul, but we never say that "I have a spirit," because we intuitively recognise that back of and beyond all is Spirit of which we are an inherent part. Analyse, and we know that we can concentrate thought and act in any one of these selves to the exclusion of all the rest. Frequently we find someone wrapped in thought oblivious to sight or sound, and we say he is in a "brown study."

This power of the mind to focus its will or thought on a single idea within any of the planes of consciousness is called in the eastern teachings Yoga, a word meaning Union. We have no word in English to give the full meaning; the nearest is psychology, but that should rightly be restricted to psycho-mental processes. In fact, our western efforts to understand the different teachings and methods of yoga training has resulted in a veritable hodge-podge of mixed theories and practices. The eastern mind for centuries has wrapped itself in veils of inner worlds; the western mind fills itself with sense impressions from a physical world and translates all its thoughts into outer needs and utilities.

Methods of training in any of the forms of Yoga differ with the teachers, and in the Orient there are as many of them as there are of Christian sects here. A few of the rules are the same in all. The first step is to learn how to meditate, the aim of which is to so concentrate the thoughts within the mind upon the one desired idea or purpose that no entry or response may be made within the brain by sensation from without or varying thought within. In this effort the methods vary according to the plane of consciousness on which the training is placed, whether physical, psychic or mental.

Physical self-discipline has been often exhibited in instances of medieval ascetics with their forced postures and tortures such as that of Simon Stylites who spent most of his life seated cross-legged on the top of a pillar, but such devotees are rare among us nowadays.

The mainspring of yoga training for us is psychological, not to attain

the nirvana of self-abnegation but to strengthen the power of the will to gain its object on the plane of desire in the present life. The entire religion and philosophy of life of the East and the West are antipodal. We of the West are so imbued by the concept of a special creation at each one's birth, of a single period of a lifetime to be spent on Earth, and with no return to body existence, that the chief incentive of thought is concerning the body, its health, its attainments, its wealth of comfort and personal achievements. For the purpose of obtaining one or the other of these is the type of yoga training and practice taught by most of the professional teachers.

The prevailing idea among us is that health is the natural state of man and that lack of it is due to mental ignorance or error of act or thought. The main argument is that in the native animal life health reigns unbroken and, as child of nature, to Man belongs the same right. To claim it lies solely in the will. There is a partial truth in the argument but the conclusion is wrong. The animal world lives wholly and unconsciously under the laws of nature; Man self-consciously obeys or defies those same laws by his own will and choice.

One of the unvarying laws of Nature is that "to every event there is an antecedent cause," and "remove the cause and the effect will cease." The "cause" and "where it lies" sum up the fallacies of all the popular teachings of western methods to "reach perfection." Compare the psychology (the so-called yoga) of the western teaching with the true sacred yoga of the Secret Doctrine of the east.

We crave the pleasures of this one earthly life, and we demand a surcease of all the illnesses which oppress the body even when we know that we ourselves have caused them. We claim as our right, whether in merit or not, the riches of Earth; whether rightly or wrongly a continual race to emulate or gain precedence over friend and foe alike. To compete and to succeed is our watchword.

When the knowledge of Yoga came to us we welcomed it with open arms. We renamed it Psychology and gave it leadership in school and church, in business and sport, and above all in the search for health.

We have it down to the one lesson that the mind, single-pointed, can direct the will, can strike like an arrow, thought-barbed to its goal.

In the East they also seek surcease from all the woes of life. To them Yoga trains the mind to be impervious to sense impressions, to forcibly close the doorways of the body and thus seal the mind to their reception. Madame Blavatsky who brought the knowledge of true Yoga to the West, warns us that any of the physical methods of yoga training are ultimately injurious to the health of both body and mind and never contributory to attaining the higher spiritual yoga. She says in *The Secret Doctrine*: "Mind takes no cognizance of the senses in physical man." (I, 95)

Inculcated in the Oriental mind is the universal law of cause and effect (Karman) with its human field of action in a sequence of many lives preceding and following this present one — reincarnation. What we of the West have not been taught and will not face is this law that "Each man's life the outcome of his former living is," or as our own Bible puts it "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Were we to take into our consciousness this fact that we have lived many lives on Earth, in each of which whatever has come, good and bad alike, is the reaping of what we and none other have sown, we would not fall so ready a prey to untrue panaceas.

Promise of easy remedy of any kind, physical, psychic or mental, by forced suppression of symptoms whether by one's own will or that of another lowers the normal resisting power of the system. It dams back the disorder until it swells and bursts forth at some future time in greater violence. What are called hereditary or birth conditions are all karmic results. Nature plans every organism to harmonious interaction of its parts. The study of the human body proves this. Only conflict or interference disrupts it. Man's place in nature has given him the power to intensify that harmony or destroy it, and he more than nature gains or loses thereby.

Both the western psychology of domination and the negation of eastern yoga are barriers that prevent and even destroy the attainment of the

higher forms of yoga. What then is true yoga? The Great Teachers of every country have answered that question, but we "having eyes, see not, ears hear not, neither do we understand." "Raise the self by the Self," says one of the greatest of the printed books on Yoga, the Bhagavad-Gita; and in the Bible, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." How shall it be done?

The outer methods are the same. Meditation: how to train the personal to become the impersonal. Concentration: the tenacity of will that holds every thought and every act firm to the purpose the "greatest good to the greatest number."

The Theosophical Forum

THE WORK BEHIND THE SCENES — *L. Gordon Plummer*

Whoever joins the Theosophical Society finds an opportunity to learn something of the inner work that is being done for the spiritual welfare of mankind. Assuming that he is sincere in his desire for more light, the quickened tempo of his intuitions has led him to that body of men and women that has dedicated itself to practical Brotherhood, and for a time at least, he may become aware of the realities that work in and through the T. S.

In certain respects there seems to be a difference between our outlook and that held by some of the members in the earliest days of the Society. While the privilege of working with H. P. Blavatsky is one that we can never know, yet we hear that many joined because they wanted to be put into communication with the Masters, or wanted to learn practical occultism, and have special privileges conferred upon them. In part this was due to the necessity at that time of putting the Adepts before the public to a far greater extent than is done now, and to the need of demonstrating and explaining psychic Phenomena. Thus the cry was for more Adepts and bigger and better phenomena. A number of members at that time were fortunate enough to hear directly or indirectly from the Adepts themselves.

Since those days the Masters have apparently withdrawn, and phenomena have definitely subsided. One result is that in some ways we have grown more pragmatical in our approach to the T. S. Yet it can be said confidently that we also approach it with greater understanding of the worth of Theosophy and a greater willingness to work for it. This should be taken as an indication of genuine growth on the part of the T. S. as a whole, not in respect to numbers of members so much as in a maturity of outlook. When a child no longer cries for the moon he is old enough to understand something about what the moon really is.

The fact that the Theosophical Society devotes its full attention to the work of spreading the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, and directs its energies to the sole end that Universal Brotherhood may become a way of life, has made it no longer needful for the Adepts to pamper it along, and they are free to do the inner work that is the real force sustaining the Theosophical Movement. The implication is not made that they have become detached from the Society they inaugurated. This would be far from the truth. Events have shown that when our attention has been on the work to be done, there has been a guiding hand directing the outcome of the various problems that we have had to face. And this will continue as long as we do our part. Thus any member anywhere can become temporarily at least, a channel through which the Masters can work. And it is of secondary importance whether or not that member suspects that aid has been given. It is written in the Karmic records that the work has been accomplished, and that is enough.

All this points to the inner work of the T. S. Through adherence to the principles laid down by H. P. B. and reiterated by subsequent Leaders, something is being kept alive. Without this, the T. S. would be nothing. It is difficult to give it a name. We have learned to call it the Lodge Force. Think of it as living, vitalizing energy permeating the Headquarters, every National Section, every Lodge, and finally the heart of every individual member in the T. S. It is what makes the Theosophical work "the most serious movement of the ages." And it is also what makes it an ever increasing joy and a privilege to be a part of that Work.

No promise is made to a newcomer except the promise of greater responsibilities, and of greater opportunities for work. He is not told that in a few short years he will become an Adept. Nor is he led to believe that because he joins the Society he will become endowed with unusual psychical or spiritual powers. He is told that we are striving for the spiritual regeneration of mankind. We are becoming "fishers for the souls of men," seeking out those who are spiritually awakened so that they too may come into the work. And taking the broadest possible view, he learns that there will come a period in human

evolution when a great choice must be made; either to advance or to lag behind. Those who lag will have to go through the trials of earth life for ages to come, while those who advance will become the Guides and Helpers of races to follow. Theosophy gives definite teachings about the evolution of the human race, because sooner or later humanity must be spiritually aroused to action. For although the great choice is not at hand, nor will it come for millions of years, yet when it does come, it will be too momentous to be made in a brief moment of time. So far as any individual is concerned, it will be the result of ages of growth or lack of growth. In other words then, every moment of the day is a moment of choice, preparing us for future great events in the history of the Earth. Who will be the forerunners in those stirring times?

So while it is true that no promises are made, it is equally true that no barriers are ever put in the way of any individual who has the will to advance. There is unlimited opportunity for anyone who is willing to take the time and trouble. Thus spiritual growth is not a thing of which one can say: "That is so far beyond me that it will take lives before I can know anything about it. All I can do is to study and concentrate on my job." That is a negation of a fact of growth. How is discipleship reached except by study and concentration of the work in hand? I have heard it said — and I believe it to be true — that the T. S. as a whole may be thought of as a disciple or Chela of the Adepts. It is under their direct guidance, and because this is so of the group collectively, it brings every member under their influence, and each member is aware of it to the degree that he applies himself to the living of the life and the study of the teachings. Putting it in this way wards against a tendency of the personality to regard whatever illumination any individual may have as being a sign of special favors. Too often we see the tendency to turn these things to ourselves. Rather let us feel that we are all open to inspiration and illumination, and that whoever is experiencing it at any time is but taking part in the real work that is behind the outer activity of the T. S. Thus the advancement of any member or a group of members aids the T. S. because it raises the average standing of the group as a whole.

Thus we see the importance of the work behind the scenes. The Masters do their real work on inner planes. The life of the T. S. is the Lodge Force, intangible but none the less real. The inner life of the student is the thing that welds him to the core of the Work. And the T. S. is influencing the inner life of the world. The thoughts of men reflect the sublime ideas of the Ancient Wisdom, as witness the writings of our leading thinkers. Thus the accomplishment of the real work of the Theosophical Society is not to be judged so much by outward growth as by the degree to which the ideas are permeating the thought life of the world, which means the degree to which man is becoming spiritually awakened.

The Theosophical Forum

OPPORTUNITY IN KALI-YUGA — *G. de Purucker*

We live in a very interesting age, Companions, a time when history is in the making. I do not think that in the recorded annals that are open to us at the present time there has ever been an epoch when serious-minded students of the Ancient Wisdom, which we call Theosophy, have the opportunities that now *we* have. It is precisely the stress and the strain which are opening our hearts and tearing the veils away from our minds. It is the same thought that our Masters have told us applies to kali-yuga, the Iron Age, a hard, rigid age where everything moves intensely and intensively and where everything is difficult; but precisely the age in which spiritual and intellectual advancement can be made most quickly. There actually have been ages in the past when chelas or students have longed for conditions to be more difficult than they were, to give them the chance to advance faster.

In the Golden Age, which it is beautiful to dream about, in the so-called Age of Saturn, in the age of man's innocence, everything moved smoothly and beautifully and all surrounding being co-operated to make everything beautiful and pleasant; and there is something in our hearts that yearns to return to it; but it is not what the chela longs for. He longs for opportunity; he longs to climb; he longs to test what is in him, to grow from within.

Isn't it a strange paradox that the hardest, crudest, of all the yugas is precisely the one in which the quickest advancement can be gained? I think there is a world of wisdom in this thought; and I speak of it tonight because only a few days ago I received a most pathetic communication from one of "Ours" who wanted to know if there was not something good in the kali-yuga: if mankind had to go under without hope. Why it is the very time when the chances are the most frequent for progress! It is the opportunity-time.

THE CYCLES WE LIVE BY — *Mora Forbes*

If anyone should ask you for an answer to the riddle of this struggle for existence we find ourselves in today, you probably would not hesitate to answer that we are moving into a new time, a new cycle is being born, and in that new cycle we hope to find peace and brotherhood for all. Each nation has felt the stirrings of this new time, and felt the need for action; each felt new opportunities lay ahead, a broader, grander way of life; each felt the old must go and give place to the new, and so embarked upon the only way it understood. We all know to our sorrow what that way was.

Taking into consideration reincarnation, all our long past brought us to the nation in which we find ourselves, and so as a nation we must struggle and suffer in the ways that nation has chosen to follow. We and our forefathers brought that nation to birth, made it what it is, and have the power to make it what it will become.

Three distinct types are apparent in all life — the creators, the preservers, and the destroyers. Are we going to be among those who create and preserve evil and destroy good, or shall we create and preserve the good, and destroy the evil? I would like to suggest that the creators are those who hope, the preservers those who understand, and the destroyers those who achieve, break down in order to build up. New wine must not go into old bottles.

Speaking of this power of hope — in the dreary days of cloudy weather, we look forward to the cycle of sunshine and spring; in periods of intense activity and hard, grinding labor, we see ahead the rest and quiet of home; in times of stress, loss and pain, we think of the bright days that must come; in war and strife we build upon a future of peace and brotherhood; in this fast moving age when we are rushed along in the sweeping, whirling chain of circumstances, vainly clutching at the robes of time for a few extra moments to pause, to reflect, to think, we

are sustained by the certainty of quieter, more enduring times ahead. Death today, life — tomorrow. Hope creates in our minds the possibility of a glorious future.

As we move into this new cycle, the preservers are able to understand the idealists, the pioneers, the great leaders that rise in our midst, because they, the preservers, have preserved a knowledge of past courage and past mistakes. One of the main causes of the fall of any civilization is the failure of the people to listen to the voice of those who know how to lead. There are many minor leaders in the world today who proclaim brotherhood and equal opportunities for all as the only salvation of the world, and it is good to know that their words are not falling on deaf ears.

For the coming peace we must have understanding. We can think of cycles in terms of moments, years, centuries, ages. Each individual is living in his own cycle, but that cycle is influenced by the cycles of his immediate family, his nation, his race. When we fail to understand another it would be well to look back at the different phases of our own life, the characteristics of our ancestors, the history of our nation, and the evolution of our race. Probably all the faults we see in another have been experienced by us, individually or collectively at some time or other. It is very difficult to understand a cycle we are not living in, but it can be done if the experiences we are passing through at any time are really registered on our minds and souls, and they will be if we live consciously through all our experiences. This is the strength that turns the cycle.

So we come to the power of achievement, the destroyer of the old, the destroyer that has the power and the conviction to turn his face forward and not backward, break through all preconceived notions and ideas, strengthened by the hope that we have created, and the understanding that we have preserved. Every cycle of life is an opportunity, and the opportunities will never come in exactly the same way again. But we so often fail to understand them as such. Browning once wrote of the things we strive to do, agonize to do, and fail in

doing. Why must this be? Because we have constantly failed to make the best use of the cycle we are living in, or have failed to see that a new cycle has dawned, and been content to stay in a cycle that has passed, and so lived out of harmony with the forces of nature and the age in which we live. When we refuse to move into a new cycle, we come into a blind alley. The power to achievement is lost.

Hope, understanding, and the power of achievement are the three basic and moving factors in our lives. Without hope a man is as one dead. Without understanding he blocks the way to progress. And without achievement his whole life-span is useless. Hope leads to understanding, and understanding gives us the power to achieve.

It would be well to dwell a little on the power of achievement, for without that all our striving counts for so little, and before we know it stronger and more scheming minds than our own have led us into a vortex of horror and degradation. We were warned often in the last twenty years that when it came to an issue, it would be much harder, would demand more sacrifice and strength of character, to keep the peace than to go to war. This new cycle had to be born, the new time had to dawn, and there had to be upheaval, but it need not have been the way of war, if the whole pattern of our previous living had not made the present what it is.

Do we always, in our crucial moments have to remain blind and not see the help that is offered us, deaf and not hear the voice crying in the wilderness? In the prewar days, travelers, philosophers, poets, brought us news from other lands, tried to explain to us what other nations were attempting to do, and they told us that we must either help them and encourage them and open our hearts to them, or face another war.

Theosophy, the unfolded wisdom of the ages, gives us some definite knowledge about cycles, and how we can make use of them. Perhaps it would be well to present a panoramic view of this universe in which we live, in an attempt to make clear how the law of cycles functions so vitally in our lives. In her book, *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky lays open before us the workings of the cosmos in which we live — its birth,

its unfoldment, its rising and downfallings, and its destiny, and in the second volume she does the same for this earth and man. But before doing so, in her introduction to the book, she lays down three fundamental propositions, one of which is the law of cycles — "the absolute universality of that law of periodicity," as she expresses it. Take, for instance, one small portion of the cosmos — our solar system. Globes circling around globes, propelled and sustained by currents of energy weaving and interweaving along their own pathways which are always circular — there are no straight lines in nature. In a period of manifestation, spirit needs a vehicle, and on the plane of matter a material one, and wherever there is matter, there is force; indeed, life of any kind needs force, and force needs a channel, and if it does not find one, it makes one, and because this universe is filled full of countless energies they naturally curve in and out like the river in its bed. Take a globe, for example, seething with activity, hundreds and thousands, even millions, of lives, pursuing their own pathways of life, weaving in and out along many other pathways giving out energy and gathering in energy, evolving forth other forms, and such forms partaking of the characteristics of the time and place of their first evolvment. What happens to a circle when a line is drawn across it, making a segment? Part of it is cut off. That is what happens when we try to move in a straight line irrespective of surrounding influences. That is what each nation has been trying to do. We become part of the circle when we move along its pathways, which, to remain part of the circle, are circular. All are familiar with the idea of the cycle as portrayed by a design — a spiral — up and down and around and up. The difficulty comes when we are making the turn of the cycle. The pioneers have always turned it ahead of us, but we — we fail to understand the new times. We stand still and look back, and slip down the spiral of a smaller cycle waiting to engulf us in its backward trend.

Previously mentioned in this article was the fact that we gather up as we go, store into ourselves energies and forces that will strengthen our own energy, and if this has been done, we shall be able to make the turn of the larger cycle. In our everyday life this is accomplished by

seizing the opportunities that confront us, making use of the cycle we find ourselves in. As Katherine Tingley said, "The opportunities at hand will never come again, may you henceforth be able to make the best of them; may you find in utilizing every moment in right action that quality of strength that you need to help balance your lives and bring you to a fuller realization of what real duty is, not only to yourselves, but to your fellows."

So we have it — the hope of the tomorrow, part of the cycle of today; the understanding that comes through living in our own cycle grandly and well; and the power of achievement that comes because we have found the right channels and moved along them with knowledge gained and obstacles overcome. We have dared to be ourselves, our greater selves.

The Theosophical Forum

THE DOCTRINE OF CYCLES — *Lydia Ross and C. J. Ryan*

The doctrine of Cycles is emphasized in Theosophy, as it is so many-sided and so far-reaching in its application to all phases of life and to all conditions of matter. A cycle means a ring or "turning." It is not a closed ring; rather, it is a continuous rounding course, advancing on a rising level. Cycles may be likened to a circular stairway, where, in going up or down, we are always above or below the level of the preceding step or round. Another example of a cyclic course is seen in the thread of a screw, which winds around and upward from the point. A more typical form of the enlarging circle is found in the widening spiral of the common snail-shell. This type is symbolic of the evolutionary progress of all things; and not least of all, it symbolizes the natural expanding life-course of us human beings, as we return to Earth, again and again. We follow an absolutely universal

"law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe."

— *The Secret Doctrine*, 1,17

There are cycles within cycles. Man — both the individual and the race as a whole — though evidently rising and falling in lesser cycles, yet is ever becoming more aware of what is within his own nature as well as what is without him. While he is exploring widening fields of the material world and its forces, he is also becoming more at home in a grander range of humanhood.

The doctrine of Cycles was taught in one of the profoundest and at root oldest of all religions — Vedantism — and its importance was

recognised throughout the ancient world. The Greek philosophers also taught it in their time. But the West lost sight of it in the narrow, dogmatic teachings of later centuries. Now, however, in the wider range of scientific findings, the recurrence of events and of conditions stands out in bold outline. Leading minds are observing and analysing the statistics of wars, of business eras of activity and depression, of the appearance of great men, of the rise and fall of arts and sciences, of earthquakes, epidemics, wet and dry seasons, of the rise and fall of nations, of sun-spots, etc., etc.

H. P. Blavatsky states that of old the learned soothsayers and augurs held the same place now taken by historians, astronomers, and meteorologists. A true knowledge of the relation of cycles in the realm of Nature to periodic events in human affairs enabled them to forecast important events with certainty. She also points out, in *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, page 646, published in 1888 — when no one thought of a World War:

"It is neither *prevision*, nor *prophecy*; no more than is the signalling of a comet or star, several years before its appearance. It is simply knowledge and mathematically correct computations which enable the WISE MEN OF THE EAST to foretell, for instance, that . . . Europe in general [is] threatened with, or rather, on the eve of, a cataclysm, which her own cycle of racial *Karma* has led her to."

The Wise Men referred to here are a superior body of men, members of the great White Lodge, which has been active in all ages, and whose verified records of events and of human evolution go back to the night of time. These noble men are the Mahatmans or Masters of Wisdom whose training in true Occultism enables them, individually, to read in this racial history the larger truth that "that which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been." (*Eccles.*, iii, 15)

For centuries, the Masters have utilized the last quarter of the hundred-year cycle as a favorable time for making special efforts to awaken men to their own spiritual nature. Moreover, it was known,

that near the end of the nineteenth century, several important cycles would end and new ones begin. Then there would follow a period of change and transition in every line of thought and activity — the period we are now in. Evidently we are being challenged to understand the finer forces of our own nature, as the next step in human progress.

The Masters, always timing their work in harmony with natural law and with human conditions, sent their Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, to found the Theosophical Society, in 1875. She came to restore to the West the forgotten philosophy of life which, alone, could save our modern civilization from disaster. It is noteworthy that this work, starting with a new spiritual cycle, has succeeded, for the first time, in carrying an active, organized body of Theosophical students from one century into the next. The significant fact is that the Theosophical Movement has steadily grown in strength and influence, while the old order of things, in general, has been and is rapidly changing and passing away. The teachings of Karma, Reincarnation, Cycles, the Divinity of Man, etc., have permeated the thought-world and are common topics everywhere. Moreover, various intuitive scientists are openly recognising, in the truths of the Ancient Wisdom, the unifying link between man and the Universe, of which he is an inseparable part.

Cycles are so common that we take them as much for granted as we do the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the solid earth under our feet. Every heart-beat repeats a small cycle of activity and of rest, the rhythmic inflow and outgo of the blood-stream never ceasing while life lasts. In this momentary cycle, an incoming tide of vitality pauses at flood, only to surge out again. It is a miniature copy of the great cosmic sweep of worlds and of Universes, coming into being, reaching their apex of manifestation, and then dissolving in the ocean of Space, for a cosmic rest, and then another, grander round. The Ancients summed it up: "As above, so below."

Every tick of the clock rounds out a tiny cycle of seconds, which make up the minutes whose recurrence marks the hours, which, in turn, expand into the rhythmic tide of light and darkness in day and night —

wheels within wheels. The orderly round of days makes the weeks, which grow into the months and years and centuries. There is an endless succession of cycles within cycles of time, from the moment up to the majestic sweep of Universes coming and going in their cosmic "turning."

Nature continually repeats itself, and follows the lines of least resistance in doing things over and over in aiming at perfect work. The ocean tides ebb and flow with clock-like regularity. The birds time their migrations to and fro with the seasons. The sap in the orchard-trees rises for the annual growth of leaves and buds and flowers and fruit, and then goes down to rest again. Each year the returning seasons repeat the unfolding picture of winter's cold, of spring's awakening, of the summer's ripening growth; and then the harvest-home of autumn completes the yearly cycle of change, of progress. The return of New Year's day finds everything different — all men and things have moved more or less along the common pathway of Life. Our growth, our evolution, does not go forward like a train on a straight track. We progress along a spiral path, ever returning toward a past circuit of our experience, but always bounding the curve in another, broader sweep. Even our Earth, following the Sun in space, traces a spiral journey onward.

The mere infant creeps but slowly through his tiny daily cycle. But on the whole, he moves on, leaving the small circuit of infancy to merge into the larger course of childhood. The child's returning birthdays find him with a stronger body, a livelier mind, and a dawning moral sense. Thus the individual life-journey moves on and on through the varied "seven ages" which Shakespeare pictures. Helpless old age is but the twilight period of one earth-life. Meantime, the Inner Man, in gradually withdrawing from this plane, is preparing to emerge in the dawn of a new spiritual cycle in the invisible realms. For life itself is continuous; and the real Self, which shows forth on Earth when we are at our very best, is vividly conscious and at home during the after-death cycle of peace and bliss and rest. The deathless Self ever ingathers the *essence* and *meaning* of all our earthly experiences, and assimilates them

during the mystic journey after death. Thus with each "return" to Earth, we come enriched and enlarged by all we have gone through, both when imbodyed in flesh and when free to soar.

"Evolution is but another word for cyclic law." The opportunities of these continued turnings and re-turnings enable us to bring forth and express the intellectual and spiritual faculties which are wrapped up within us. In the millions of years since we had the gift of mind and had free will to act, we have gone up and down on an enlarging spiral pathway of experience in good and evil. The karmic result of all this is reflected in our character, in our conflicting aspirations and desires of today.

Habits make character; for each time we do a thing it makes a deeper impression, so that we instinctively repeat it over and over. Sometimes a weakness which seems to have been conquered, reappears in a different form. For instance, a harmful appetite may give way to some other indulgence, or it may appear as selfish ambition or as self-righteousness. Our habits return again and again, helping or hindering us up or down in our career. But the stumbling-blocks we have put in our own pathway can be turned into stepping-stones, when we *will* to use them in that way. Instead of vitalizing a weakness by fighting it, we may use mind and heart and hands in some noble substitute. The returning impulses of gloom or anger or jealousy, or what not, may be connected with and finally replaced by the opposite emotion. We can start a new cycle at any time, to overlap the old one, just as a new and wider horizon opens up before the mountain-climber as he ascends.

The present is a significant time for all of us, individually and collectively. A dawning spiritual cycle is already overlapping the passing darkness of crass materialism. We have the privilege and the responsibility of working with the rising tide of spiritual force to make real progress and to help others. In the ebb and flow of human affairs there are periods of advancement and of retardation. Knowledge of cycles and of self, enables one to work with the progressive forces, and to avoid wasting energy when things generally are at a standstill. Now

is a time to act nobly, courageously, and with trust in our own birthright of Divinity.

How often has archaeology uncovered evidences of mankind's return to locations where superimposed cities, each in its turn, had arisen, flourished, and were buried under ages of dust? Whole civilizations have also cycled through their rise, development, and decay. The classical story of "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome" tells of familiar examples. Furthermore, the archaic records tell of many others, prehistoric eras of great racial attainment and decay. Visible evidences of these unknown times are seen in the strange archaeological remains in Central and South America and elsewhere, and in those more recent finds in Central Asia, Crete, Egypt, etc., that speak of the mighty past. Theosophy adds that no historical civilization has yet attained to the splendor reached by the Atlanteans. However, the same Egos who lived and loved and wrought and suffered throughout forgotten ages are evidently reincarnating again today.

The rapidity with which the modern world is re-discovering and reinventing, along every material line, points to recovery of former knowledge by the incoming souls. The average children are born more conscious than were their forebears; and our modern youth takes to the unfolding marvels of aviation, radio, etc., as matters-of-course. The savage races are mostly the degenerate and dying remnants of great civilizations. They too, will disappear as races. But the reincarnating Egos who lived as different types of men during the various racial periods, will cycle back, each in a time and place karmically suited to his own further progress.

The Theosophical history of mankind places our present humanity in the Fifth Race, somewhat past the mid-point of the great cycle of our earthly existence. The four earlier Races rounded out their careers on different continents, each only gradually giving way during the ages in which the next one was forming, until the final cataclysm ended the closing cycle. The Bible pictures a closing scene in the story of Noah and the flood — an event in racial history which is repeated, under

various names, in the teachings of all great religions. A vague knowledge of the existence of the last two continents, Lemuria and Atlantis, survives in the myths and traditions of all peoples. Plato's story of "Atlantis" relates to one of the last great remnants of the submerged continent to which we give that name.

In line with the foregoing evidence of the rise and fall of continents, Science is proving that similar changes are even now going on. For instance, parts of the American coasts are slowly rising and other parts are going down; the Himalayas, and California mountains, etc., are steadily rising. Moreover, recent North Pacific soundings reveal, not a level ocean bed, but a striking area of mountains, valleys, plateaus and plains, not unlike our familiar continents. Geologists agree that practically all present land has been submerged at some time. As for the four great Ice Ages and other cyclic cataclysms, evidence of their recurrence is geologically recorded by the Earth itself.

That Races, civilizations, nations, and men have come and gone, again and again, in many lesser cycles within the greater round of continental spirals, is merely one example of the universal law of repeated imbodiments. This law of Cycles is interwoven and interactive with the laws of Karman and of Reimbodiment. Man is especially affected by the spiritual, psychic, and moral cycles, and these, collectively, make up the individual, national, and racial cycles. Thus, as there is a close relation between the affairs of men and the operations of Nature, we see why, in this modern world of unrest and all-around transition, there are corresponding cyclic upheavals and disturbances in the forces of Nature.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES — *G. de Purucker*

Between divinity and the manifested universe there must be intermediate links, because any thinking person can see that Divine Perfection cannot engage in efforts of imperfection. And consequently the sun itself, for example, consists of a fundamental Divine Being breaking up or radiating into the seven solar logoi. Each of these in its turn copies the example of its divine prototype. We see in this example, understandable by children, the reason for the vast and almost incomprehensible range of entities in the manifested universe and accounting for the progressively greater increase of imperfection as our thought ranges from Divinity on the one hand down to the lowest degrees of the manifested world. Now we break up this infinite variety into seven principles or logoi streaming from the Divine ONE, not one as a symbol of numeration because that springs from the zero, philosophically speaking the All, but ONE merely in the sense that it is incomprehensible Infinitude which our feeble human minds cannot easily expand to the point of grasping. From the Divine Unity springs forth the manifested world, the physical world of manifestation. And it is for these foregoing reasons that the Masters and H. P. B. insisted so strongly that for the proper comprehension of the Theosophical teachings we should know the seven principles of the universe and man.

Perfection does not produce imperfection. Therefore between the perfection of the Divine Unity and the imperfection of the manifested universe, that dark and somber place, there must be a virtually infinite range of intermediary stages running from Divinity to the utmost dregs of materiality. Thus we call these the seven principles in man from the Atman, corresponding to the Divine in the universe, to the physical body, corresponding to the lowest manifested plane. Man obviously is not divine, neither in devotion nor in thought nor in any characteristic, for if it were so men would be gods. But men are imperfect and it is this

range from the perfect to the imperfect in the universe that corresponds to the seven principles of man.

The Theosophical Forum

COURAGE TRIUMPHANT — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

From Greek drama and the tragic figure of King Oedipus in the masterpiece of Sophocles, to the diary of a New England invalid, seems a far cry indeed. But when Alice James, the beloved sister of the famous brothers, William and Henry, wrote "Ah! Those strange people who have the courage to be unhappy! Are they unhappy, by the way?", she recorded a glimpse of the same profound secret revealed long ago in the Greek drama at a time when the Mysteries were still being taught in Greece.

Alice James's intellect had been tempered by pain and frustration valiantly accepted. This enabled her to perceive the truth that, in the agonies undergone by human beings, causes set in motion in some forgotten past come full circle when they are expressed on the physical plane. There they expend their power to inflict suffering, only to release a *new* power, to initiate a spiritual experience — but *only* for those whose sharpened weapons of discernment have not been corroded by rust of resentment or fear. This experience may be a fleeting glimpse of the ineffable Law which restores harmony in the cosmos; it may be insight into the deepest significance of the Atonement. It may bring exalted peace, that peace with power to bless, which transcends happiness and radiates healing for human woe.

All this is set forth with magnificent artistry in the tragedies of Sophocles that deal with the working of Karma in the destiny of the royal house of Labdacus. Faced with bitter humiliation and disgrace, with the horrid agony of having brought misery to all he loved and wished to serve, and, moreover, all this utterly unexpected and seemingly undeserved, proud Oedipus in his despair tears out his eyes. But he recovers his sanity and heroically submits to his joyless destiny. He lives out his allotted span of life, demanding nothing, accepting the painful discipline his own forgotten acts and defects of character have precipitated, challenging it to purify and strengthen and do its blessing

to his people. The final message of *Oedipus at Colonus* is the assurance that heroism like that of Oedipus invokes the presence and the participation of the gods in the adjustment of human destiny.

One of the earliest reactions to severe sorrow and loss is the conviction that it is not to be endured. To the man who would become wise, Plotinus wrote:

As for violent personal sufferings he will carry them off as well as he can, if they overpass his endurance they carry him off. And so in all his pain he asks no pity, there is always the radiance in the inner soul of the man, untroubled like the light in the lantern when fierce gusts beat about it in a wild turmoil of wind and tempest.

Do we estimate justly the strength of the human heart? Even in those who are quite young it is frequently found. Katherine Mansfield, young, happy, greatly gifted, when she learned that she was ill unto death wrote:

One must submit. Do not resist. Take it. Accept it fully. Make it a part of life. Everything in life that we really accept undergoes a change. So suffering must become love. This is the mystery. This is what I must do. I must pass from personal love to greater love. I must give to the whole of life what I gave to one. The present agony will pass — if it doesn't kill. It won't last. Now I am like a man who has had his heart torn out — but bear it — bear it!

Triumphant courage is not achieved by denial of crushing realities. Today countless human beings have lost what brought them human happiness. Parents have lost that sustaining sense of continuance they found in the lives of their sons; wives have lost that other self that made their own lives complete; sweethearts have crushed hopes and fewer memories — and how can we bear to think of what war has done to children and the world they must grow up in!

What can this well nigh universal experience of suffering and loss yield for the human race? Theosophy teaches that this is the auspicious

moment for the expansion of personal horizons into cosmic horizons wide and deep enough to include the causes, obscure at present, of the disaster and sorrow that overtake human beings individually and in the mass. Horizons wide enough to include future lives on Earth in which knowledge of man's relation to the universe, to Divinity, knowledge of the purpose of it all, can be gained in ever-increasing measure, with power to co-operate with higher beings in periods of activity expressive of the nobler side of human nature. Truly has it been said "The human heart has not yet fully uttered itself." There is no more effectual method of arriving at deeper knowledge of this glorious future than courageous acceptance of crushing loss. It is, moreover, wasteful ignorance not to make such experience count for something in self-directed evolution.

After all, as the Ancient Wisdom — mercifully restored to give timely aid to humanity at this crisis — teaches, the planet Earth, on which humanity is functioning at present, and with whose destiny man's destiny is indissolubly linked, is passing through but *one* of the seven stages, the fourth, in *its* evolution. We and our home-planet have reached a point where a significant turn is made into what is known as the Luminous Arc. Globe D, as the present stage is named, may have many heavy clouds of the karman of past evil-doing to dispel, but *the turn has been made* and beyond the threshold of the ascending arc lie all the opportunities for fulfilment, for meeting and loving again, for self-development, for boundless joyous effort, for the "glory of going on" — and *on Earth*.

For back to Earth we come, until Earth's destiny and ours have been lived out. Nightly we sleep and our inner selves wing their way afar; death, "the perfect sleep," gives time and space for wider winging; but with birth and morning it is to Earth we return.

It is true that there are always laggards, those who whine and fail when tried by suffering. "Try again" is a maxim that obtains in the cosmos as well as in narrower fields. But the heroic bid sorrow and loss sharpen higher faculties of discernment; they behold and gather the

fruit of experience. They win insight into the vast framework of the destiny of Man and Earth. They gear their effort to the push and sweep of human and planetary evolution — and involution. Even voluntary faith in this wider outlook can "illumine the heart and fill the mind." It can fortify mankind for the spiritual adventure of the conscious leap, with Earth, into the Luminous Arc.

The Theosophical Forum

THE EUCHARIST — *G. de Purucker*

The sacrament of the Eucharist was originally a teaching of primitive Christianity about the way by which the human soul could achieve spiritual oneness with the Christ within — a ray, as it were from the Cosmic Christ — thereby becoming a god-man when this union or yoga was complete.

Other religions speak about the Buddha within, and the cosmic Buddha, not meaning Gautama, the Hindu teacher, but a Cosmic Buddha of which Gautama was a ray, as Jesus the Avatara was a ray of what the Christians call the cosmic Christ.

In a very short time, due to a number of converging causes, this beautiful and really holy Christian teaching of how to achieve this yoga or union became lost in the Christian Church, and was replaced by a ceremonial. In other words they substituted a ceremony, a ritual, a rite, to replace the occult esoteric teaching which had been forgotten except by the very few. These very few were attempting to hold back, as it were, or to restrain, the complete loss of the wonder out of the bosom of the Christian Church and from Christian thought. Many of them were originally pagans who were attracted to the new Theosophical Society — as earliest Christianity was — because they felt it had a new dispensation of spiritual power in it; and they took the Eucharist out of the ceremonies of the Mysteries of Dionysus. The Dionysiacs, the Dionysian Mysteries, had a communion in which the priests and the congregation together partook of the blood and of the flesh of their divinity Dionysus. The blood was wine, the flesh was the cereal, bread if you wish, or wheat.

Now the Christians took this over because they knew something of the inner meaning of this Dionysian symbol; and that is the origin of what the Christians even today, carrying on a tradition but forgetting the original verities, call the holiest mystery in the Christian Church — as it

originally was.

Why, even today we can say that the most sacred teaching we Theosophists have, our most sacred mystery, our most occult effort, is so to live and think and study and be trained, that the individual man may become at one with the divine. We are on the upward arc, so that now we can bring about this union — some individuals more than others. When the union is complete you have what we call a Buddha or a Christ. When the union is less complete, you have a Mahatman or one of the greatest chelas. When the union is still less complete, you have some of the great men of human history, mostly in the philosophic and religious lines: great thinkers and teachers such as Pythagoras, and Plato, and Empedocles and other sages from Egypt and Syria and in the Druidic lands of Germany and France and Britain; or again in Persia. Then on a still lower scale you have those men who have caught the gleams of the vision sublime and have been so enraptured by the picture of that glimpse that their whole life thereafter became consecrate to the glory. These are chelas and the great men of the human race. We can all become such, more or less.

Here is a final thought about this: When the Dionysiacs spoke of drinking the blood of their god in the wine and taking the flesh into themselves through the cereal, the wheat or the bread, they never intended it in the literal way in which it is now accepted in the old-fashioned orthodox Christianity. They intended it in a mystical sense which I will now proceed to explain. The blood of the god, in the ancient countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea always meant the cosmic vitality, what we call Jiva, the life, the Divine Life. Thus the blood of Christ, the cosmic Christ, did not mean literally blood, but the word was used as is found even in the Mosaic books of the Jews: "in the blood is the life." The blood became the symbol for the life of the Christ, the Christ's life, the Christ's vitality, the divine vitality in individual man which transformed him and raised him so as to become at one with the Christ or with the Buddha. In that sense, by training, by effort, by yearning, by study, the neophyte raised his own life to aspire upward, to become universal, to become one with the universal life.

And they called this union, or yoga, "communion": the man thereafter communed with the cosmic spirit. "I and my Father are one," said Jesus.

And the bread, the cereal, wheat, in ancient times always had the symbolic meaning of intellect, intellectual power. Here is where you get a very interesting side-line for those who are technical Theosophical students. The ancients said that wheat was originally brought to this earth from the planet Venus. Now the planet Venus in the cosmic scheme represents what we humans in the human constitution call the higher manas, in which the Christ in us, or the Buddha in us, works. The vine, said the Ancient Greeks and Latins, originally came from the planet Jupiter. The planet Jupiter, they said, is that which controls our vitality, or *anima*, or Jiva, our life. And Jiva is a direct efflux from Atman.

These many and converging and correlated lines of ancient Mediterranean thought the earliest Christians seized hold of and put together and welded fast into a lovely and marvelous teaching of union; and then later when the truth became lost, they collected the Dionysian thoughts, changed them slightly, gave them new names, and you have the Christian communion as a ceremonial rite in the Church, commemorating the process by which the sincere Christianos, or one "infilled with the Christos" becomes at one with the divine.

This very word "Christian" originally meant one who is filled with Christ, one who had evoked the Christ in himself by that union, that yoga, the communion, the very thought I am trying to bring forth. Originally Christians were not called Christians. They did not dare call themselves by the title of their great Avatara. It would be exactly as if we were to call ourselves Buddhas, if Buddha were our teacher. Christians originally called themselves "Brothers of Christoi," a Greek word which meant "worthy ones," or as we would phrase it today, students, learners, disciples of the Christ; and the Christians themselves tell us that they were first called Christians at Antioch in Syria; and heaven knows when that was! It may not have been until the third or fourth century.

CHRISTMAS THEN AND CHRISTMAS NOW (1) — H. P. Blavatsky

We are reaching the time of year when the whole Christian world is preparing to celebrate the most noted of its solemnities — the birth of the Founder of their religion. When this paper reaches its Western subscribers, there will be festivity and rejoicing in every house. In North-Western Europe and in America the holly and ivy will decorate each home, and the churches be decked with evergreens; a custom derived from the ancient practices of the pagan Druids "that sylvan spirits might flock to the evergreens, and remain unnipped by frost till a milder season." In Roman Catholic countries large crowds flock during the whole evening and night of "Christmas-eve" to the churches, to salute waxen images of the divine Infant, and his Virgin mother, in her garb of "Queen of Heaven." To an analytical mind, this bravery of rich gold and lace, pearl-broidered satin and velvet, and the bejewelled cradle do seem rather paradoxical. When one thinks of the poor worm-eaten, dirty manger of the Jewish country-inn, in which, if we must credit the Gospel, the future "Redeemer" was placed at his birth for lack of a better shelter, we cannot help suspecting that before the dazzled eyes of the unsophisticated devotee the Bethlehem stable vanishes altogether. To put it in the mildest terms, this gaudy display tallies ill with the democratic feelings and the truly divine contempt for riches of the "Son of Man," who had "not where to lay his head." It makes it all the harder for the average Christian to regard the explicit statement that — "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven," as anything more than a rhetorical threat. The Roman Church acted wisely in severely forbidding her parishioners to either read or interpret the Gospels for themselves, and leaving the Book, as long as it was possible, to proclaim its truths in Latin — "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." In that, she but followed the wisdom of the ages — the wisdom of the old Aryans, which is also "justified of her children"; for, as neither the modern Hindu devotee understands a word of Sanskrit,

nor the modern Parsi one syllable of the Zend, so for the average Roman Catholic the Latin is no better than Hieroglyphics. The result is that all the three — Brahmanical High Priest, Zoroastrian Mobed, and Roman Catholic Pontiff, are allowed unlimited opportunities for evolving new religious dogmas out of the depths of their own fancy, for the benefit of their respective churches.

To usher in this great day, the bells are set merrily ringing at midnight, throughout England and the Continent. In France and Italy, after the celebration of the Mass in churches magnificently decorated, "it is usual for the revellers to partake of a collation (*reveillon*) that *they may be better able to sustain the fatigues of the night*," saith a book treating upon Popish church ceremonials. This night of a Christian fasting reminds one of the *Sivaratree* of the followers of the god Siva, — the great day of gloom and fasting, in the eleventh month of the Hindu year. Only, with the latter, the night's long vigil is preceded and followed by a strict and rigid fasting. No *reveillons* or compromises for them. True, they are but wicked "heathens," and therefore their way to salvation must be tenfold harder.

Though now universally observed by Christian nations as the anniversary of the birth of Jesus, the 25th of December was not originally so accepted. The most movable of the Christian feast days, during the early centuries, Christmas was often confounded with the Epiphany, and celebrated in the months of April and May. As there never was any authentic record, or proof of its identification, whether in secular or ecclesiastical history, the selection of that day long remained optional; and it was only during the fourth century that, urged by Cyril of Jerusalem, the Pope (Julius I) ordered the bishops to make an investigation and come finally to *some* agreement as to the *presumable* date of the nativity of Christ. Their choice fell upon the 25th of December, — and a most unfortunate choice it has since proved! It was Dupuis, followed by Volney, who aimed the first shots at this natal anniversary. They proved that for incalculable periods before our era, upon very clear astronomical data, nearly all the ancient peoples had celebrated the births of their sun-gods on that very day. "Dupuis shows

that the celestial sign of the VIRGIN AND CHILD was in existence several thousand years before Christ" — remarks Higgins in his *Anacalypsis*. As Dupuis, Volney, and Higgins have all been passed over to posterity as infidels, and enemies of Christianity, it may be as well to quote in this relation, the confessions of the Christian Bishop of Ratisbone, "the most learned man that the Middle Ages produced." — the Dominican, Albertus Magnus. "The sign of the celestial Virgin rises above the horizon at the moment in *which we fix the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ*," he says, in the *Recherches historiques sur Falaise, par Langevin pretre*. So Adonis, Bacchus, Osiris, Apollo, etc., were all born on the 25th of December. Christmas comes just at the time of the winter solstice; the days then are shortest, and *Darkness* is more upon the face of the earth than ever. All the sun-gods were believed to be annually born at that epoch; for from this time its Light dispels more and more darkness with each succeeding day, and the power of the *Sun* begins to increase.

However it may be, the Christmas festivities that were held by the Christians for nearly fifteen centuries, were of a particularly pagan character. Nay, we are afraid that even the present ceremonies of the Church can hardly escape the reproach of being almost literally copied from the mysteries of Egypt and Greece, held in honour of Osiris and Horus, Apollo and Bacchus. Both Isis and Ceres were called "Holy Virgins," and a DIVINE BABE may be found in every "heathen" religion. We will now draw two pictures of the Merrie Christmas; one portraying the "good old times," and the other the present state of Christian worship. From the first days of its establishment as Christmas, the day was regarded in the double light of a holy commemoration and a most cheerful festivity: it was equally given up to devotion and insane merriment. "Among the revels of the Christmas season were the so-called feasts of fools and of asses, grotesque saturnalia, which were termed "December liberties," in which everything serious was burlesqued, the order of society reversed, and its decencies ridiculed" — says one compiler of old chronicles. "During the Middle Ages, it was celebrated by the gay fantastic spectacle of dramatic mysteries, performed by personages in grotesque masks and singular costumes.

The show usually represented an infant in a cradle, surrounded by the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, by bulls' heads, cherubs, Eastern Magi, (the Mobeds of old) and manifold ornaments." The custom of singing canticles at Christmas, called Carols, was to recall the songs of the shepherds at the Nativity. "The bishops and the clergy often joined with the populace in carolling, and songs were enlivened by dances and by the music of tambours, guitars, violins and organs. . . ." We may add that down to the present times, during the days preceding Christmas such mysteries are being enacted, with marionettes and dolls, in Southern Russia, Poland, and Galicia; and known as the *Kalidowki*. In Italy Calabrian minstrels descend from their mountains to Naples and Rome and crowd the shrines of the Virgin-Mother, cheering her with their wild music.

In England, the revels used to begin on Christmas-eve, and continue often till Candlemas (Feb. 2) every day being a holiday till Twelfth-night (Jan. 6). In the houses of great nobles a "lord of misrule," or "abbott of unreason" was appointed, whose duty it was to play the part of buffoon. "The larder was filled with capons, hens, turkeys, geese, ducks, beef, mutton, pork, pies, puddings, nuts, plums, sugar and honey." . . . "A glowing fire, made of great logs, the principal of which was called the "yule log," or Christmas block, which might be burnt till Candlemas eve, kept out the cold; and the abundance was shared by the lord's tenants amid music, conjuring, riddles, hot-cockles, fool-plough, snap-dragon, jokes, laughter, repartees, forfeits and dances."

In our modern times, the bishops and the clergy join no more with the populace in open carolling and dancing; and feasts of "fools and asses" are enacted more in sacred privacy than under the eyes of the dangerous, argus-eyed reporter. Yet the eating and drinking festivities are preserved throughout the Christian world; and, more sudden deaths are doubtless caused by gluttony and intemperance during the Christmas and Easter holidays, than at any other time of the year. Yet, Christian worship becomes every year more and more a false pretence. The heartlessness of this lip-service has been denounced innumerable times, but never, we think, with more affecting touch of realism than in

a charming dream-tale, which appeared in the *New York Herald* about last Christmas. An aged man, presiding at a public meeting, said he would avail himself of the opportunity to relate a vision he had witnessed on the previous night. "He thought he was standing in the pulpit of the most gorgeous and magnificent cathedral he had ever seen. Before him was the priest or pastor of the church, and beside him stood an angel with a tablet and pencil in hand, whose mission it was to make record of every act of worship or prayer that transpired in his presence and ascended as an acceptable offering to the throne of God. Every pew was filled with richly-attired worshippers of either sex. The most sublime music that ever fell on his enraptured ear filled the air with melody. All the beautiful ritualistic church services, including a surpassingly eloquent sermon from the gifted minister, had in turn transpired, and yet the recording angel made no entry in his tablet! The congregation were at length dismissed by the pastor with a lengthy and beautifully-worded prayer, followed by a benediction, and yet the angel made no sign!

"Attended still by the angel, the speaker left the door of the church in rear of the richly-attired congregation. A poor, tattered castaway stood in the gutter beside the curbstone, with her pale, famished hand extended, silently pleading for alms. As the richly-attired worshippers from the church passed by, they shrank from the poor Magdalen, the ladies withdrawing aside their silken, jewel-bedecked robes, lest they should be polluted by her touch.

"Just then an intoxicated sailor came reeling down the side-walk on the other side. When he got opposite the poor forsaken girl, he staggered across the street to where she stood, and, taking a few pennies from his pocket, he thrust them into her hand, accompanied with the adjuration, "Here, you poor forsaken cuss, take this!" A celestial radiance now lighted up the face of the recording angel, who instantly entered the sailor's act of sympathy and charity in his tablet, and departed with it as a sweet sacrifice to God."

A concretion, one might say, of the Biblical story of the judgment upon

the woman taken in adultery. Be it so; yet it portrays with a master hand the state of our Christian society.

According to tradition, on Christmas-eve, the oxen may always be found on their knees, as though in prayer and devotion; and, "there was a famous hawthorn in the churchyard of Glastonbury Abbey, which always budded on the 24th, and blossomed on the 25th of December"; which, considering that the day was chosen by the Fathers of the church at random, and that the calendar has been changed from the old to the new style, shows a remarkable perspicacity in both the animal and the vegetable! There is also a tradition of the church, preserved to us by Olaus, archbishop of Upsal, that, at the festival of Christmas, "the men, living in the cold Northern parts, are suddenly and strangely metamorphosed into wolves; and that a huge multitude of them meet together at an appointed place and rage so fiercely against mankind, that it suffers more from their attacks than ever they do from the natural wolves." Metaphorically viewed, this would seem to be more than ever the case with men, and particularly with Christian nations, now. There seems no need to wait for Christmas-eve to see whole nations changed into "wild beasts" — especially in time of war.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, Vol. I (No. 3), December, 1879, pp. 58-9. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE LIFE-PERIOD OF A PLANETARY CHAIN — *G. de Purucker*

The life-period of a planetary chain — and for the sake of simplicity we will dismiss from our minds the upper five globes, although they are the most important, and consider only the seven lower ones which H. P. B. speaks of — the life-period of a planetary chain, before it dies, is called a Day of Brahma and consists of 4,320,000,000 years. It is followed by an equal time-period called a Night; so that Day and Night together make 8,640,000,000 years. Then the chain re-embodies itself. This time-period you already know from H. P. B.

What is the length of what H. P. B. calls a Manvantara? Here we get into trouble at once, because there are at least ten and maybe twelve different kinds of manvantaras. H. P. B. calls a minor manvantara a passage of the seven root-races on any one globe. It does not matter what globe it is. She calls that a minor manvantara. She calls a major manvantara the passing of a life-wave around the chain of twelve globes. Why? Because a Manu opens a Round on Globe A — called the Root Manu — and closes it on Globe G — called the Seed Manu. Manvantara means Manu-period, or Manu-time, the essence of Manu, that which a Manu produces or brings forth, and this essence comes forth in the evolving life-waves passing among the globes. There is likewise a Manu opening a *globe* life-period, and a Manu closing it. All these things you will find in our Theosophical books.

But now let me ask: What is the length of a manvantara when H. P. B. used the words without any descriptive epithets? You have to search for what she means. Mostly she means this: The time it takes a life-wave, any life-wave, to pass from Globe A through Globe B, through Globe C, to the middle period of Globe D. She calls this the pre-septenary manvantara; I would phrase it the prior-septenary manvantara. The post-septenary manvantara would follow through the other half of the globe-chain. You will find this described in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol II.

Now what is the length of such a manvantara from A to the central time-period of Globe D? 306,720,000 years; and if you add the Dawn and the Twilight each of a Dvapara-Yuga, or 860,000 years, together forming a Satya-Yuga in length, you will get a time-period for a manvantara equalling 308,448,000 years, and that is the time-period from A to D. Here we reach the middle point. From D to the end of G is another manvantara, another half-round, 308,448,000 years. The whole round therefore is double that — something like 617 million years.

Where are we now? We are in the Fourth Round, and at the middle point of our lowest globe, Globe D. There is still half of this present Round Four to finish, and then Rounds Five, Six, and Seven, before our chain dies and goes into Nirvana, preparing itself there for its return as a new chain.

From what has been told you, you can get certain scientific facts in geology, for instance. How long has it been since sedimentation began on our earth D? Something like 320 million years; for you must count in the 308 — nearly 309 — million years for the various life-waves, ten in number, following each other in serial order, to come down from Globe A, run through its course there then through Globe B, run through its course on Globe B, and so on through Globes C and D. 308 million would take us to the middle of the Fourth Root-Race on Globe D. Again we have the critical fourth. Half of the round is then completed. But we are now in the Fifth Root-Race, about the middle point. How many years have lapsed since the middle of the Fourth Root-Race to our present middle of the Fifth? Nearly 9 million years. So to the 309 million of the prior-septenary manvantara, you must add this 9 million more or less — a little less — to bring our time-period to where we are now. 309 plus 9, in round figures, makes 318 million years. I said 320; that is just taking a round figure. So you now know how long ago it was that the Fourth Round began.

How long has our own human life-wave been on Globe D? That is a different question. Remember what these life-waves are. You see how these things are entangled. Every moment you meet with a dozen new

difficulties. The life-waves are these: First, Second and Third Kingdoms of Elementals; 4) Mineral Kingdom; 5) Vegetable Kingdom; 6) Animal Kingdom; 7) Human Kingdom; 8) Lowest Kingdom of Dhyan-Chohans; 9) Middle Kingdom of Dhyan-Cho-hans; 10) the Highest Kingdom of Dhyan-Chohans. Ten life waves; and they follow each other in serial order as rounds around the globes.

How long, then, has the human life-wave, our human kingdom in other words, been on Globe D? With certain modifications, the general rule is that each root-race on Globe D, our Earth, takes nearly nine million years from its very beginning to its very ending. 9 million years back brings us to the middle of the Fourth Root-Race. We are the Fifth; the Atlantean was the Fourth. 18 million years back brings us to the middle of the Third Root-Race, then man first became, because of the entrance into him of the manasaputras, a thinking, reasoning entity.

But here we come upon a difficulty that throws out of line this neat calculation. You notice I carefully limit my remarks to three Races only. These are Races 3rd, 4th, and 5th. I do not allude to Root-Races 1 and 2, and 6 and 7 still to come. Root-Races 3, 4 and 5 are pretty much the same length in years — around 9 million years each. But Root-Races 6 and 7 to come will be shorter, and Root-Races 1 and 2 were much longer. Why was this? It was because Root-Race 1 was practically purely astral, the individuals were intellectually unconscious, and they passed ages in a dreaming, intellectually unawakened state like little children today.

Root-Race 2 was still astral, although verging to the physical, and almost as intellectually asleep as Root-Race 1. Root-Race 3 in its beginning was still semi-astral, but became physical at about its middle point.

Why were Root-Races 1 and 2 so much longer in time-length than the following races? And here is the crux, the difficulty. It was because Root-Race 1, in the manner in which H. P. B. speaks of it, was not only astral but, as she describes it, really represented the sishtas from the preceding Round, the Third. This Root-Race 1, beginning with sishtas,

took ages before actually settling down into a root-race, that is, typically a root-race of the new round, no longer merely *sishtas*. The cause of the awakening and slow evolutionary processes was that the forerunners of the life-wave began coming in millions and millions of years before the First Root-Race as a race apart so to speak could be said actually to have begun.

Every life-wave, as you know, is preceded by its forerunners, sometimes millions of years ahead. Then come more forerunners in larger groups; and finally the life-wave as an aggregate body arrives. When the life-wave as an actual body arrives, then can be said to begin or to have begun the First Root-Race as an actual race *sui generis*. Previous to that time they were *sishtas* slowly being unfolded or affected or changed by the arriving forerunners of the life-wave. This whole process, astral in type on an almost physical globe, as I have said, took ages, before the First Root-Race came into being as a race *sui generis*. Then it lived its time — how long I would not venture to say: certainly 9 millions of years and perhaps a great deal more, when Root-Race 2 began slowly to come into being, but as yet hardly distinct from Root-Race 1. In fact, Root-Race 1 did not die out and give birth to Root-Race 2, as later root-races did; but Root-Race 1 can be said to have become swallowed up or merged into Root-Race 2, thus producing Root-Race 2. As H. P. B. phrased it, the old waters mixed with the new. A graphic explanation and very true.

There was no death in those early days of Root-Races 1 and 2. Thus Root-Race 2 is at the time I speak of on the scene distinct in notable particulars from the First Root-Race, yet still almost astral, more astral than physical. Towards the end of Root-Race 2 death began to appear but was still unusual, so that the bulk of the individuals of Root-Race 2 could be said to have shifted over gradually into Root-Race 3. With Root-Race 3 death of the individuals became the common order as we have it now. Do you see how difficult all this is to explain? To the best of scientists it would be looked upon as speculative, and by more materialistic scientists looked upon as theosophical dreaming, although there are examples of such procedures or events in the lower kingdoms

even on the earth today.

We are now at Root-Race 3 — ethereally physical but still physical and growing grosser all the time. Death has now arrived; the human shape is already common although of course there were no men and women then. The early Third Race was an androgynous race, changing over finally into the two sexes at about the middle point of the Third.

Now as to time-periods; and the relation between the Root-Races and the geological periods: It is difficult to unify our theosophical occult racial periods in their geologic eras with scientific time-periods, and it is this very difficulty which has caused these relations to be kept strictly hidden by the Teachers, as H. P. B. points out in *The Secret Doctrine*; hidden not because of any especial sacredness about them but rather passed over with just a hint or reference, because of the impossibility in her day, and even in ours, of ordinary untrained non-theosophic people understanding what it would be about.

Theosophical evolution is so utterly different from scientific conceptions of it, both as regards processes and time-periods, that the Theosophist, knowing the facts and attempting to explain, is confronted at each instance by a blank wall of non-comprehension on the part of his theosophically untrained auditors — or readers if he tries to write a book. The worst of these untrained people are the scientists themselves, because even among themselves their own views are recognised as being so uncertain and speculative. And even to trained Theosophical students the matter is not easy to elucidate.

I think it would be foolish to try to twist Theosophical doctrines into conformity with modern geologic time-periods or modern evolutionary ideas, because it simply can't be done, and one day writing of that kind will be bitterly regretted by the Theosophists who attempted it; because science is changing and growing; and it is much better to tell the truth as far as you know it in the best way you can, stating the difficulty and then going ahead. I have never believed in straddling these matters and trying to win adherents among the scientists when at every turn we could only do so (excepting among a few intuitive minds) by disloyalty

to our own consciences.

The remarks, then, that I shall make are based on H. P. B.'s geological figures in Vol. II of *The Secret Doctrine*, which I believe are those of Sir Charles Lyell's, the English geologist. Of course the figures of modern geology as regards time-periods have been enormously enlarged, even swollen beyond anything we Theosophists require; so that for instance what might now be called the Secondary Period would be much farther back in actual years or time than H. P. B.'s Secondary Period. Modern geology as you know, has given millions more years to nearly all the time-periods that H. P. B. adopted for illustration following Lyell. So I will use H. P. B.'s names.

The Fourth Root-Race reached its peak of development in H. P. B.'s Miocene, yes even in H. P. B.'s preceding Eocene. The Third Root-Race probably began in the Jurassic or even perhaps at the end of the Triassic and was certainly fleshing during H. P. B.'s Cretaceous, all of these belonging to H. P. B.'s Secondary Age. This places the Third Root-Race pretty well. The Second Root-Race still ran over into the Triassic, and perhaps can be said to be fleshed in the Triassic, ending in it probably, possibly itself beginning at the end of the Primary age of the Permian period. Whereas the First Root-Race was actually Pre-Secondary, therefore originating in the Primary (I personally think in the Carboniferous or Coal period) and perhaps could be said to have attained its peak and possibly its ending in the Permian period of the Primary age. This would take the First Race back many millions of years — how much, it would be guess-work to say. My own guess is that the First Root-Race probably originated in the Carboniferous or Coal period of the Primary age, and perhaps about 130 to 150 million years ago.

But in this connexion you must remember what I have said above about its astral character, the ages and ages of the sishas which H. P. B. evidently included in the beginning of the First Root-Race; and how long the First Root-Race actually existed as a race *sui generis* I would not care to speculate upon. It would require more knowledge of

geology and of zoology and of botany than I have any acquaintance with.

Thus it is clear that our Fifth Root-Race belongs to the Quaternary and originated in H. P. B.'s Tertiary; that the Fourth attained its peak of evolution in the early Tertiary and probably originated in the later Cretaceous of the Secondary; that the Third probably attained its peak of evolution in the Jurassic of the Secondary, and may have originated at the end of the Triassic of the Secondary. The Second probably attained its peak in H. P. B.'s Triassic of the Secondary, possibly originated at the beginning of the Triassic, possibly even at the very end of the Permian of the Primary Age. At any rate the Second Root-Race we can place more or less clearly around somewhere in the Permian of the Primary age, and the First Root-Race in the Carboniferous or the Coal period of the Primary. H. P. B. gives some of the best hints about these matters in her *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pages 711-16.

Now as regards the Root-Races 6 and 7 to come: these will be, as I said, shorter in actual length, and my own opinion is that the Sixth will be close to a Maha-Yuga and a half, say something over six million years; and the Seventh will be still shorter — how long, it would be just speculation to say.

Thus, you see, the life-waves evolve through the Maha-Yugas, but are not closely geared into the Maha-Yugas, for they overlap in both directions very considerably. Finally, while it is very tempting to try to collate the figures I have given about root-races and life-waves and to try to make these figures run with regularity through all the seven root-races, yet it just simply can't be done; and as said above I have carefully limited my own remarks to Root-Races 3, 4 and 5, because here *mind* had entered into humanity, things had become grossly material and therefore more or less mechanical, and Root-Races 1 and 2 were not so to speak inflexibly and mechanically geared to the yugas and Root-Races 3, 4 and 5 more or less were.

DO WE VIEW LIFE THROUGH A LOOKING GLASS? (1) — *Elsie Benjamin*

I wonder how many of the complexities and perplexities of life we are ourselves responsible for because we view things from the wrong end or angle. Many instances could be drawn from the ordinary outlook of the average human being; and they occur from one end of the scale to another, in children who have not attained to the wider perspective of adults; in men and women who view anything from this world-angle and the one life they are living here; or again by ordinary human beings who are not evolved to a higher status.

A child thinks it is a burden to go to school, until he approaches adulthood and learns the fascination of exploring new intellectual fields; and to most children the thought of going to bed is distasteful, but when they grow up a night's rest is rather alluring. An adult looks upon the hard experiences of life as things to be dreaded and avoided, not as opportunities for strengthening character and finally becoming of greater service to his fellowmen.

We so commonly talk about good and bad karma, when after all karma is really colorless or neutral, unless we consider it from the larger standpoint and realise that all karma is good because it is the paying off of debts. If we look at all karma that comes to us as coming from that great store which each person has accumulated from past lives, then when we meet some "fortunate" karma, we are lessening by so much the store of that kind of karma (until we make some more!; but when we have gone through trials and difficulties, we most certainly are putting that much of evil karma definitely behind us, and there is less for us to face in the future.

But after all, can we ever call karma bad? The clearing off of debts is always a welcome relief, and we have been told that pain and suffering are truly our greatest friends, and who has not found from actual experience that some seemingly unfortunate incident or the denial of

some wished-for thing has been the very means of opening a door or paving the way for some of the greatest good fortune that our lives have brought us. There has been more than one instance of a person being prevented from taking a very much longed-for ocean voyage (or other trip), and then the ship was wrecked on that particular trip. It just wasn't his "bad" karma to lose his life then; though at the time of his disappointment he thought it was bad karma that made him miss the trip.

What it all amounts to is that so much of life is viewed from our own small personal limited viewpoint, what is going to be of advantage or the reverse to *us*, entirely neglecting in our minds and consciousness to distinguish what is the real *Us*. But we don't need to go into metaphysical realms for instances of distorted vision. Take fire as an example. Fire is a natural phenomenon in Nature, neither good nor bad; but the man who comes into his home on a cold winter's evening and is greeted by a warm fire, thinks of it as a great benefactor to mankind; while the man who sees his home swept away in flames curses this evil destroyer.

Then there is the matter of death. Fortunately in these days people are beginning to comprehend the beneficence of death and to realise that it is not the antithesis of life, but merely of birth; and that death, which is one aspect of life, opens the door to fuller experiences for the inner and higher parts of man, experiences which man cannot undertake while he is chained *to* his physical body. On the other hand, neither should this physical life be looked upon as a necessary evil to be borne with fortitude. It is only by going through this phase of our evolutionary pilgrimage that we can finally raise these lower parts of ourselves to something higher.

But though we are gradually getting the right perspective on the periodic appearance and disappearance of man on earth, we still think of Nations or Races which have reached their summit of flowering and then their old age and decay, as facing a catastrophe, when they are only following the natural cyclic law of rest for a while, to recuperate

and store up vigor and energy for their new life

What it really means therefore is that the greater cosmic laws have their true reflexion down here on earth, and if we apply such teachings as the Law of Cycles, the Doctrine of Karma, the Evolutionary Pilgrimage of the Soul, and in fact everything that Theosophy teaches, to the life we are living right now, we must admit that *everything* that happens to us is for the best, each circumstance holds a lesson to be learned, and every step in life can lead us forward and nearer to the Goal. Even when the forces of destruction come into play, they are clearing the ground for something finer and nobler to be built up.

Perhaps by trying to readjust our viewpoint we will move one step nearer towards that "Indifference to pleasure and to pain" which we are told is a *sine qua non* of the disciple, and will bring more real happiness not only into our own lives, but add to the world's general share.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Welsh Theosophical Forum*, May-June, 1944.

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The Theosophical Forum

ARE THE BUDDHA'S PRINCIPLES PRACTICAL (1)

The Buddha built his system upon the civilization in which he lived, and adapted to that civilization the methods he perceived were necessary. He drew upon the heritage of centuries in building his presentation of the Truth he taught, as all Great Teachers, Seers, Prophets and Leaders of mankind should do, for a bridge must be constructed between the old and new. He led by a gentle incline from the Brahmanical system to his own. He discarded, as he built his own Path, very many by-paths of peculiar practices and extreme asceticism. This is well known from a study of his life.

He built upon an old and very well developed civilization, and took into his calculations the customs of the people — of whom he was one. This is to be considered carefully as a basis for the succeeding statements.

He drew upon the screen of Time a battle plan for the day in which he lived. The plan itself is Timeless, and has merit, divested of the special details which were designed to apply at the time of his teaching. Apart from its methods, the plan still stands in its severity and beauty. Apply it to the busy modern world, unencumbered by its Rules for the Bhikshus or ascetics, and we have the Rules for the Householder, or lay member of the Buddha's Dharma. Among the ranks of the Householders, Kings of India have been proud to serve, so no householder of the western world should consider that beneath him. It is in meeting one's destiny that the true Buddhist finds THE WAY to peace and high achievement.

Manifestly the Sangha could not be transplanted to another climate in its original costume, observing rules designed for a hot country. Something must be changed. The dress and rules were changed to suit a different climate in Tibet and northern China. Something must give way, if in another century an age-old custom is outworn, and there appears a better method. So in a changing world, we need not think

that there is necessity to retain the original form and fashion of the Sangha, outwardly.

So much for the exterior unessentials. The Doctrine, or the Law, remains. This can be taken by anyone, in any quarter of the world, to mind and heart, and built into the daily life little by little, changing the daily habits, until the householder is in line with all the Five Precepts prescribed for lay members. He need not lose his place in the community or be considered queer or useless in his day or generation. He can find useful occupation and fulfill his duty, be a valuable worker in the world, mingle with all sorts of men and women in his daily occupation. He need not take the solitary life or preach from village to village. He may be, and often is, incapable of such efforts. He may be better fitted for the quiet effort to live the Precepts, to find his own Way by his own effort, and if this is not practical in our century and times — what is practical?

The Bhikshu, however, must choose another path. He must find a center of the Brotherhood, and must journey to the East to find such a center. He may stay temporarily, or permanently. But this path is for the unencumbered, who have wealth and leisure, who are without dependents or obligations to others. It is for those who make the decision *to concentrate their effort*, even as the Bhikshus did in the days of the founding of the Order, and still do in Eastern lands. It should be remembered that even in the Buddha's day the Bhikshus were the exception, not the rule, compared to the vast majority who accepted the Vows of the Householder. The few take the path of the Bhikshu and the many take the path of the Householder, but this status of Householder is not without merit.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Golden Lotus*, May, 1944, Philadelphia, Penn.

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UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD — *Emily R. Plummer*

The first law of life is Co-operation, or Spiritual Unity. If this were realized by men of all nations, brotherhood would be universally applied, embracing all international relationships, for all men are included in the Divine Universal Oneness of all that is: governed by the self-same law. Man evolves, as does everything in the universe, from a Divine root. He is part of a Universal whole, just as the head, the hand, the foot, etc., are parts of the physical body of a man.

Another reasonable analogy: If Universal Brotherhood were actually realized and practiced by peoples of every country, no more would the different races attempt to destroy each other than would any sane man with his own hand purposely harm or cut off any part of his body. This is true; and what a different world would we be living in if the universal Cosmic order were clearly understood and believed in, its power influencing all nations. There would be no warring as there is today, to say nothing of the lesser but equally cruel evils constantly perpetrated among men.

The word brother, or brothers, generally means kinship, or family relationship only, but the suffix "hood," brotherhood — should bring out quite a different meaning, because it implies, as it were, a Divine Cover over mankind: an enveloping God-hood, producing an identical mirror-reflexion of Spiritual Unity of all that is. It is of course not to be expected that the lower or more primitive races or ranks of men, through their as yet undeveloped natures, could have an understanding and enlightenment equal to that possible among the higher classes. Through evolution and a constant effort for growth upwards, all humanity in course of time will bring forth the God within.

There never has been a country from antiquity down to the present day, in which there were not at certain times Great Teachers of

Religion, Science and Philosophy, and through their sacred teachings there is the practical counsel of Universal Brotherhood. Should we not then ever strive in this way to help our kin and countrymen, and whenever possible in warring nations seek to bring harmony where there is discord? There is a universal Karmic law, "As ye sow so shall ye reap," or in other words "Action causes re-action." Many of those who are ignorant of this immutable law, take refuge in their belief that they may ask forgiveness of God for their misdeeds. This brings only a self-hypnotic state of mind. If a man harms others in words or actions, then he must take the consequences brought about through "the processes of universal cosmic harmony seeking readjustments." This law operates throughout the universe or there would be universal chaos. Thus we must never forget that thoughts, words and deeds bring results of their own making.

There is a beautiful truth: Harmony is Nature's law; and if peace and brotherhood are ever to be established in families, communities and nations, each individual must hold in his mind and heart this truth always: that our "enemies" and ourselves have incarnated and lived together many times before this day on our Earth home, and, having set up causes in past lives, through unbrotherly actions, we are experiencing the Karmic results today.

If all nations learn from today's tragic experiences, and develop the consciousness of a Spiritual link between us all, then shall be planted seeds of Spiritual potency for peace and harmony to be harvested. Then will dawn the day when not a man on earth will desire or be compelled to take up arms against his fellowmen, as the knowledge of Spiritual relationship among all men will at last be felt, understood and lived.

SOME NOTES ON "THE SECRET DOCTRINE" — *Charles J. Ryan*

ESPECIALLY IN REGARD TO THE SO-CALLED "THIRD VOLUME"

The Secret Doctrine, H. P. Blavatsky's masterpiece, was begun in India in 1879 but owing to her pre-occupation with the activities connected with the establishing of Theosophy in that country, the editing and writing for her magazine *The Theosophist*, and her immense correspondence, little was done for several years. *The Secret Doctrine* was intended to be an enlarged and improved rendering of *Isis Unveiled* which, according to the Master K. H., writing in 1882, "really ought to be re-written for the sake of the family honour," and in which everything is "hardly sketched — nothing completed or fully revealed." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, 130, 131.) About 1884 she took up the task of re-writing *Isis* and a full page notice appeared in *The Theosophist* for February of that year with a proposed title page running as follows:

The Secret Doctrine, a new version of *Isis Unveiled* with a new arrangement of the matter, large and important additions, and copious notes and commentaries, by H. P. Blavatsky, Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society, assisted by T. Subba Row Garu, Councillor of the Theosophical Society."

Subba Row, however, gave little assistance and withdrew from the undertaking long before the book was published.

H. P. Blavatsky wrote a few chapters in India — a more or less preliminary Draft — but they were not included in the final publication in 1888. Many years after her death they were printed in *The Theosophist* for 1931-2-3. During her visit to Europe in 1884, William Q. Judge, her old friend and trusted disciple, spent some weeks with her in Paris and at the chateau of the Count d'Adhemar, at Enghien, and was able to give help in the preparation of *The Secret Doctrine* which she said was of the greatest use to her. In *Lucifer*, July, 1891, Mr. Judge

eloquently describes his experiences with H. P. Blavatsky during his stay at Enghien, and says:

It was with a feeling of some regret that we left this delightful place where such quiet reigned and where H. P. B. was able to work amid the beauty and the stillness of nature. It cannot be blotted from the memory, because there our friend and teacher was untroubled by the presence of curiosity seekers, and thus was free to present to us who believed in her a side of her many-sided nature which pleased, instructed and elevated us all.

It was very different, however, when she returned to India where the distressing condition of Theosophical affairs made any progress impossible. It was not until she settled in Wurzburg, Germany, that she could concentrate on *The Secret Doctrine*. The Countess Wachtmeister lived with her and gave her the most devoted care, attempting to shield her from intrusion, but this was not always possible and the work was several times delayed. *Reminiscences of H. P. Blavatsky and The Secret Doctrine* by the Countess, an enthralling narrative by a constant observer who was at her side for months at a time, describes the remarkable way the book was written and the active part the Masters took in providing the information contained. Many "phenomena" occurred in the most matter-of-fact way, as a part of the regular method of communication between the Master and his chela and not in the slightest degree for the edification of the inquisitive or the skeptical — who were not present!

The Countess Wachtmeister was greatly impressed by the enormous number of quotations from books — including many very rare ones — that H. P. B. introduced into her manuscripts of *The Secret Doctrine*. The number of books she could carry in her travels was very limited. How did she get the quotations? The Countess writes:

Her manuscripts were full to overflowing with references, quotations, allusions, from a mass of rare and recondite works on subjects of the most varied kind. Now she needed verification of a passage from some book only to be found in the Vatican,

and again from some document of which only the British Museum possessed a copy. Yet it was only verifications she needed. The matter she had.

In regard to the verification of one of these Vatican quotations, the Countess had to obtain the services of a friend who, in a roundabout way succeeded in having the original document examined. H. P. B.'s version was correct except in two words which in the original were so blurred as to be almost illegible. Furthermore, the Countess writes, in discussing the images which H. P. B. copied from the records in the *Astral Light*:

Such visions often present the image of the original reversed, as it might be seen in a looking-glass, and though words can, with a little practice, be read easily . . . it is much more difficult to avoid mistakes in figures. . . .

G. R. S. Mead relates many striking instances of H. P. B.'s employment of astral vision for similar purposes during the time he spent at her side as secretary; and Bertram Keightley independently corroborates the same in his account of the preparation of *The Secret Doctrine* in London after H. P. B. had left Wurzburg. He writes:

Quotations with full references, from books which were never in the house — quotations verified after hours of search, sometimes at the British Museum for a rare book — of such I saw and verified not a few.

He also, to his great inconvenience, found that "the numerical references were often reversed, e.g., p. 321 for 123, illustrating the reversal of objects when seen in the astral light."

During her long stay in Wurzburg H. P. B. was closely confined to her apartment owing to ill health and had no opportunity of visiting libraries, the Countess having to do all her errands. She was very poor at this time of crisis when some of the most violent attacks on her reputation were being made, but, knowing how much she had to do and how little time was left to her to write, she absolutely refused to

accept a large salary to write for the Russian journals. The Countess Wachtmeister suggested that she devote a part of the day to the Russian work, but she answered:

No — a thousand times no! To write such a work as *The Secret Doctrine* I must have all my thoughts turned in the direction of that current. It is difficult enough even now, hampered as I am with this sick and worn-out body, to get all I want, how much more difficult, then, if I am to be continually changing the currents into other directions.

H. P. B. told the Countess Wachtmeister that the four volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* "would give out to the world as much of the esoteric doctrine as was possible at the present stage of human evolution," but that "it will not be until the next century when men will begin to understand and discuss the book intelligently." Although the "next century" is not yet half through, the effect of H. P. Blavatsky's work is already becoming plainly evident in modern thought.

During the Wurzburg period H. P. B. corresponded with W. Q. Judge about the progress of *The Secret Doctrine*. In one letter, dated March 24, 1886, she writes:

I wish only you could spare two or three months and come to me at Ostende where I am emigrating again. . . . I want you badly for the arrangement of *Secret Doctrine*. Such facts, such facts, Judge, as Masters are giving out will rejoice your old heart. Oh, how I *do* want you. The thing is becoming enormous, a wealth of facts. . . .

Unfortunately, he was unable to leave America at that time.

In 1887 she moved to London, where two well-qualified and utterly devoted Theosophists, Dr. Archibald Keightley and Bertram Keightley, gave invaluable help in the preparation and publication of her greatest work, a tremendous task. They also provided much, perhaps most, of the financial backing necessary. Without their indefatigable energy and self-sacrifice the world would possibly have had to wait a long time

for *The Secret Doctrine*.

The first edition appeared in 1888 in two volumes, the publishers being The Theosophical Publishing Company, Limited, London; William Q. Judge, New York; and the Manager of *The Theosophist*, Madras. It was printed by Allen, Scott and Co., London.

The sales were so large that a second printing was soon called for. This has been strangely called the Second *Edition*, but it was only a reprint of the original with the words "Second Edition" stamped on it. In 1893 George R. S. Mead, well known as a classical scholar and a former secretary of H. P. B., and Mrs. Annie Besant edited and brought out a really new edition in two volumes. It was called the "Third and Revised Edition" though strictly speaking it was the second *edition*. The original text was considerably revised by the editors, and much criticism was aroused in certain quarters by many changes considered unnecessary and in some cases unjustifiable. However this may be, this edition cannot be called a *verbatim* or entirely faithful reproduction of the original as written and published by H. P. Blavatsky. In defence of the numerous alterations in the 1893 edition it has been said that H. P. B. was so anxious for accuracy that she corrected and added to the *paged proofs* of the original edition to the last minute even though it cost hundreds of pounds. These changes were, however, made by the author herself and were authoritative. It is quite a different matter when the author is dead. This widely circulated Third Edition was published by The Theosophical Publishing Society, London; *The Path* Office, New York; and *The Theosophist* Office, Adyar, and printed by the H. P. B. Press, London.

In 1895, a large and comprehensive Index to the "Third Edition" was published as a separate volume. As the paging had been changed from that of the original a key was included for the convenience of those who had the original edition. The publishers were The Theosophical Publishing Society, London; *The Path* Office, New York; The Theosophical Publishing Society, Benares; and *The Theosophist* Office, Adyar.

Until 1909 no other editions of Volumes I and II of *The Secret Doctrine* were produced, but in that year a new edition was published by the Aryan Theosophical Press, Point Loma, California (since then moved to Covina, California, and known as the Theosophical University Press) under the direction of Katherine Tingley. This is virtually a reprint of the original 1888 edition with a scholarly transliteration of Sanskrit words according to an accepted standard, some corrections of faulty Greek and Latin and of obvious typographical errors, and the occasional substitution of square brackets in place of parentheses for clearness. No changes were made in H. P. Blavatsky's language and no passages were eliminated. This is the standard edition still being published by the Theosophical University Press, Covina.

As the demand for H. P. Blavatsky's works increased, yet another edition of *The Secret Doctrine* appeared. This was in 1925 when The Theosophy Company of Los Angeles published a photographic *facsimile* of the two authentic volumes, bound in one volume. This excellent edition provided opportunity for the study of H. P. Blavatsky's masterpiece in exactly the way she left it, without change or correction, even though in this way many typographical errors are perpetuated.

As the demand continued to increase, new editions and new printings have been printed from time to time, but there is no reason to enumerate them here, and *The Secret Doctrine* has been translated into many foreign languages.

THE ENIGMA OF THE "THIRD VOLUME"

We must now consider the puzzling problem of the so-called "Third Volume" about which so much controversy has raged. Subtitled "Occultism," it was published in 1907 by The Theosophical Book Concern, Chicago; The Theosophical Publishing Society, London; and The Theosophical Publishing Society, Benares. It was compiled and edited by Mrs. Besant alone, from writings left by H. P. Blavatsky.

Is this "Third Volume" of *The Secret Doctrine*, properly so-called? Is it the one to which H. P. Blavatsky referred when she said that *a third*

and most of a fourth volume were written, or is it merely a compilation of more or less incomplete articles left by her, some of which she intended drastically to alter or re-write at some future time, presumably as part of the third or fourth volumes? After considerable research in the records at the Theosophical Headquarters at Covina, the following interesting information has been found which shows the conflicting nature of the evidence.

That, according to H. P. Blavatsky herself, a third volume and at least part of a fourth were written is supported by her own plain statements. In her letter to the American Convention of 1888 she writes:

Now with regard to the *Secret Doctrine*, the publication of which some of you urged so kindly upon me, and in such cordial terms a while ago, the MSS. of the first three volumes is now ready for the press; and its publication is only delayed by the difficulty which is experienced in finding the necessary funds.

On examining the original edition of *The Secret Doctrine* we find many corroborations of the definite statement just quoted.

(1) In the Preface of Volume I we read:

A large quantity of material has already been prepared, dealing with the history of occultism as contained in the lives of the great Adepts of the Aryan Race, and showing the bearing of occult philosophy upon the conduct of life, as it is and as it ought to be. Should the present volumes meet with a favorable reception, no effort will be spared to carry out the scheme of the work in its entirety. The third volume is entirely ready; the fourth almost so.

(2) Volume I, xl: "Such a point. . . . cannot be offered in these two volumes. But if the reader has patience. . . . then he will find all this in Volume III of this work."

(3) Volume II, 437: "In Volume III of this work (the said Volume and the IVth being almost ready) a brief history of all the great adepts. . . . will

be given. . . . Volume IV will be almost entirely devoted to Occult teachings."

(4) Volume II, 797, closing paragraph of the book:

These two volumes only constitute the work of a pioneer so that these two volumes should form for the student a fitting prelude for Volumes III and IV it entirely depends upon the reception with which Volumes I and II will meet at the hands of Theosophists and Mystics, whether these last two volumes will ever be published, though they are *almost* completed

(5) Volume II, 106:

There is no space to describe the fires . . . though we may attempt to do so if the third and fourth volumes of this work are ever published.

Observe that she says "if the third and fourth volumes are ever *published*," not "ever *written*." So, in addition to H. P. B.'s explicit statement to the American Convention of 1888, before the publication of the book, we have five equally clear statements given in *The Secret Doctrine* itself.

Before testimony confirming H. P. Blavatsky's statements about the actual existence of the third and part of the fourth volumes is offered, it is necessary to mention certain omissions and changes that Mrs Besant and G. R. S. Mead made in their 1893 edition of *The Secret Doctrine* in the passages just quoted.

(1) The sentence after the word "entirety" deleted.

(2) The words "Volume III of this work" deleted, and replaced by "a future volume of the present work."

(3) The entire paragraph deleted.

(4) The words "Volumes III and IV" deleted and replaced by "other works," and the last words "though they are *almost* completed" deleted.

(5) The words "third and fourth volumes" deleted and replaced by "the rest."

So it appears that the information given by H. P. Blavatsky in the original edition and several times repeated, regarding the third and fourth volumes was carefully removed in the 1893 edition. What can the reason have been?

Now for a few corroborations of H. P. B.'s statements that the third volume was ready and the fourth in preparation.

Dr Archibald Keightley, one of H. P. Blavatsky's closest friends, writes in a letter to *The New York Times* and quoted in *The Theosophist*, July 1889, describing her activities in London:

The third volume of *The Secret Doctrine* is in MS ready to be given to the printers. The fourth volume, which is to be largely hints on the subject of practical Occultism, has been outlined but not yet written . . . the actual work of writing will not be commenced until we are about ready to bring it forth.

It turned out, however, that although the third volume was written it had to be put aside for a while, for Claude Falls Wright, Mr. W. Q. Judge's secretary, writes in *The Path*, February 1891, that

H. P. B. has within the last week or two begun to get together the MSS (long ago written) for the Third Volume of the *Secret Doctrine*: it will, however take a good twelve months to prepare for publication.

Presumably when H. P. B looked over the manuscript she saw an opportunity for making changes and improvements such as she had made in the first two volumes up to the last moment.

In *The O. E. Library Critic*, April, 1927, the editor publishes the statement that the Angarika Dharmapala, the eminent Buddhist leader, friend and pupil of H P. B., said that G. R. S. Mead told him that the missing volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* had been written but had unaccountably disappeared. Mead was closely associated with H. P.

Blavatsky for some time before her death, but had no connection with the publication of the first two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*.

In regard to the existence of the MS of a third volume "ready for the printers," as Dr Keightley writes to the New York Times, evidence is at hand that no such considerable mass of material has ever been found, nor was such seen by the Keightleys, who had the greatest opportunity of knowing the facts of the case: a fourth volume is still more difficult to explain. For instance, we learn from Bertram Keightley that he and Dr Keightley went through the entire MS. of *The Secret Doctrine* and devised a plan for its arrangement in which H. P. B. fully concurred. The book was to be published in four volumes (1) The Evolution of Cosmos (2) The Evolution of Man (3) Lives of Great Occultists (4) Practical Occultism. The plan was never fully carried out for lack of material, we are told. Bertram Keightley writes in *The Theosophist* of September, 1931, in regard to the two completed volumes:

After this was done, there still remained a certain amount of matter over mostly unfinished fragments or "Appendices" or bits about symbolism, which could find no suitable place in the selected matter or — more frequently — were not in a condition or state for publication. Of course we asked H. P. B. about this matter as it was she herself — not Arch, or myself — who had set it aside for the time being. She put this left over matter in one of the drawers of her desk and said that "someday" she would make a Third Volume out of it. But this she never did, and after H. P. B.'s death, Mrs. Besant and Mr. Mead published *all* that could possibly be printed — without complete and extensive revision and re-writing — as part of Volume III in the revised edition.

We find no evidence here of a Third Volume, "ready for the printers."

The evidence of Mrs. Besant and Mr. Mead must also be examined. In the Preface to Volume III as published six years after H. P. Blavatsky's death, Mrs. Besant writes:

The task of preparing this volume for the press has been a most difficult and anxious one and it is necessary to state clearly what has been done. The papers given to me by H. P. B. were quite unarranged and had no obvious order. I have therefore taken each paper as a separate section, and have arranged them as sequentially as possible. . . . This volume completes the papers left by H. P. B. with the exception of a few scattered articles that still remain and that will be published in her own magazine *Lucifer*.

In the same Preface Mrs. Besant writes that the Buddha series (on pages 376 to 385) "were given into my hands to publish as part of the *Secret Doctrine*." In view of the above statements by Mrs. Besant that the papers generally were given to her by H. P. B., and that the Buddha pages were given into her hands, the following information is difficult to explain and only adds to the mystery of the original papers left by H. P. B.

A Mr. W. Mulliss of the *Hamilton Spectator*, Ontario, Canada, interviewed Mrs. Besant on October 6, 1926 at Los Angeles, California, on behalf of his own and several other newspapers. From the report in the *O. E. Library Critic* of June 1938 we quote:

Mr. Mulliss. Your critics have insisted that somebody or other has deliberately suppressed the Third and Fourth Volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* to which H. P. B. makes reference in the First Volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. What have you to say to this? Do you regard the Third Volume of your edition of *The Secret Doctrine* entitled "Occultism" as containing any of the matter intended for the Third and Fourth Volumes?

Mrs. Besant. I was appointed H. P. B.'s literary executor, and the matter from which I compiled the Third Volume of "Occultism" in *The Secret Doctrine* published under my direction was compiled from a mass of miscellaneous writings found in her desk after her death. These I took under my own charge.

Mr. M. Did Mead help you in the compilation of these articles?

Mrs. B. No. The papers came absolutely under my own hand and Mead had nothing to do with them.

Mr. M. Well what about the material for the Third and Fourth Volumes?

Mrs. B. I never saw them and do not know what became of them.

Obviously, from the above, Mrs. Besant, at the moment at least, did not claim her compilation called "Vol. III" to be the one mentioned by H. P. B.

When we turn to G. R. S. Mead's testimony we find it still more confusing. He writes in *Lucifer*, July 1897:

It is somewhat a novel form of experience for the present writer who has edited in one form or another almost all that H. P. B. has written in English, with the exception of *Isis Unveiled* to find himself turning over the leaves of *The Secret Doctrine* as one of the general public for with the exception of pp. 433-594 he has seen no word of it before. But other work has prevented his sharing in the labor of editing the MS., and the burden has fallen on the shoulders of Mrs. Besant.

The pages he mentions are the private Instructions given by H. P. B. to her pledged students. He continues:

The editor was bound to publish these [various writings] but we entirely share her private opinion, that it would have been better to have printed them as special articles in *LUCIFER* than to have included them as part of *The Secret Doctrine*.

However this may be, the reader will hardly be edified when he compares the above paragraphs by Mead with his considered statement made after he left the Theosophical Society and seemingly felt free to express opinions which are, to put it mildly, rather startling

when coming from a man who held a high character for sincerity when he was still working harmoniously with W. Q. Judge. He writes in *The Occult Review* for May 1927, as quoted in *The O. E. Critic*, June 1927:

Next, I come to Vol. III. With this I refused to have anything to do whatever. I judged the *disjecta* or *rejecta membra* from the manuscript or type-script of Vols. I and II not up to standard, and that it would in no way improve the work. They could, I thought, be printed preferably as fugitive articles in *Lucifer* but they could not possibly be made into a consistent whole. Mrs. Besant, who put a far higher value on everything H. P. B. had written than I did, persisted in her view and by herself edited the matter for publication, but even when every scrap that remained had been utilized, it made a very thin volume. I therefore persuaded her to add the so-called Instruction of what is known as the "Esoteric Section" or Eastern School; which had hitherto been secret documents. My argument was that the "occult teachings" as they were deemed by the faithful, were now in the hands of hundreds, scattered all over the world, some of whom were by no means trustworthy, and that it was highly probable that we should some day find them printed publicly by some unscrupulous individual or privately circulated illegitimately. Fortunately, Mrs. Besant agreed, and they were included in Vol. III, save certain matter dealing with sex questions. A load of anxiety was lifted off my mind. I thought that the making of these "Instructions" accessible to the general public might possibly put an end to this unhealthy inner secret school. But this hope, alas, was not to be fulfilled.

The reader will observe that in the quotations just given Mrs. Besant writes in the Preface to her Volume III that the writings of which it is composed were *given to her by H. P. B.*, and from this we are led to conclude that they were intended for the third volume. But in the interview with Mr. Mulliss Mrs. Besant says that this volume was compiled from miscellaneous writings *found in H. P. B.'s desk* after her death and that she (Mrs. Besant) never saw the material for the third

and fourth volumes and did not know what became of them!

Mead is still more confusing. He writes that he declined to have anything to do with the third volume *after judging the miscellaneous writings and finding them not up to standard*, yet in his original statement in 1897 he plainly says *he had never seen a word of the third volume* until it was in print except the strictly private part that he had "persuaded" Mrs. Besant to publish to all the world out of H. P. B.'s Instructions to her most trusted students!

Perhaps it is no wonder that the Masters of Wisdom refrain from giving out the *real secrets of occultism*, which, in the hands of the unfit and unworthy, however fair-seeming and intellectual, would produce disastrous effects.

As if some puckish sprite desired to make the puzzle of the third volume more difficult, others who claimed to be well informed offered different answers. For instance, Basil Crump, in *The O. E. Library Critic* for September, 1939, claims that though part of the MSS. of the third and perhaps the fourth volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* were destroyed by H. P. Blavatsky herself shortly before her death because it did not satisfy her, most of it was saved and taken to India where it is held in safekeeping until the time comes for its release.

In *The Canadian Theosophist*, April, 1939, Thomas Green, a Theosophist, is quoted as saying that he was employed by the H. P. B. Press in London to set up the type for the third and part of the fourth volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*, and that H. P. B. had the forms broken up just before they were about to be printed. James M. Pryse who was one time in charge of the press, denies that this was possible, but Mr. Pryse was not working there until eight months before H. P. Blavatsky's death. Almost incredible as the statements of Mr. Crump and Mr. Green appear they are given some plausibility by a remark in *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, 798, where H. P. B. writes:

Until the rubbish of the ages is cleared away from the minds of the Theosophists to whom these pages are dedicated, it is

impossible that the more practical teaching contained in the Third Volume should be understood. Consequently, it entirely depends upon the reception which Volumes I and II will meet at the hands of Theosophists and Mystics, whether the last two volumes will ever be published, though they are *almost* completed.

Is it impossible, then, that when she had completed the first two volumes she decided or was instructed by her Master to publish no more, and therefore had the MSS. of the third volume removed and the type broken up? In November 1889 she wrote to Judge N. D. Khandalavala in India that the rest of her life would be devoted to her trusted pupils, to the teaching of those whose confidence she retained and who were sincerely working for Theosophy. She added:

By leaving it [India] I have been able to write *The Secret Doctrine, Key to Theosophy, Voice of the Silence*, and to prepare two more volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* which I could never have done in the turbulent atmosphere of India.

Notice the words "two *more* volumes."

The theory that connects the disappearance of the true third volume with the orthodox Brahmans cannot be omitted. We know, from the storm aroused in those circles by the so-called "Prayag Letter" (See *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, page 461), and by the opposition shown by the learned Subba Row who finally refused to help in the production of *The Secret Doctrine*, that any further revelation of the deeper meanings of the Hindu Scriptures would have been extremely unpopular with the Brahmans. H. P. Blavatsky writes in *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, page 95:

"Such as Subba Row — uncompromising initiated Brahmans will never reveal — even that which they are permitted to. . . ." She then writes that Subba Row warned her that

you have been guilty of the most terrible of crimes. You have given out secrets of Occultism — the most sacred and the most

hidden. Rather that you should be sacrificed than that which was never meant for European minds.

Subba Row was a chela of H. P. B.'s Master, but for all that he was a thorough-paced Brahman, and it cut him to the quick to see some of the teachings so closely guarded within the exclusive portals of the Brahman caste being given to the profane, the *mlechchhas*. Though he died in 1890 there must have been many left who knew of H. P. B.'s work and who would have been glad to suppress the two last volumes of *The Secret Doctrine* in view of the possibility of what they might contain, especially the fourth which was to treat of occultism, as we know.

In conclusion, there can be no doubt that H. P. B. intended to write a third volume of her great work and probably a fourth, and that some reason exists to believe that the third and some preparation for the fourth was actually written though nothing was published of all this. The opening paragraphs or even the whole "Introduction" of Mrs. Besant's "Third Volume" may have been intended or even used for the real third volume. The closing words of the first paragraph are significant:

Outside the Theosophical circle, therefore, the present volume is certain to receive at the hands of the general public a still colder welcome than its predecessors have met with.

Although the so-called "Third Volume" contains brief references to some of the topics mentioned by H. P. B. as the main features of Volumes III and IV, it does not fulfill this promise. It has no resemblance to the important and profoundly instructive work which she obviously intended to produce. It is merely a compilation touched up by Mrs. Besant as she thought best.

Although the so-called third volume cannot be accepted as the authentic "Third Volume of *The Secret Doctrine*" that H. P. B. had in mind, and although most of the best "miscellaneous writings" were published in *Lucifer*, it is not just to call the volume "spurious" as some

over hasty critics have done. It contains much information and valuable teaching which is obviously authentic H. P. B. material, though it displays haste and incompleteness in many places.

Regardless of the problem of putting Mrs. Besant's "Third Volume" in its proper place among H. P. B.'s works, it is more than probable that the "miscellaneous writings" are by no means published just as H. P. B. left them. This conclusion is reached by an examination of the great number of alterations Mrs. Besant and Mead made in their 1893 edition of *The Secret Doctrine* which anyone can verify by a comparison with the original. Though most of these thousands of changes are of small importance, some are quite significant.

Strong evidence for *changes, additions and omissions* in the so-called Third Volume is provided by Mrs. Alice L. Cleather in *The Canadian Theosophist*, December 1937. Mrs. Cleather was one of H. P. Blavatsky's Inner Group of pledged students and she possessed a copy of the original report of the oral teachings received directly from H. P. B. These oral teachings form part of the private Instructions published in the "Third Volume" between pages 433 and 594, which Mead cynically said that he "persuaded" Annie Besant to insert *in order to fill it out*, and incidentally, as he hoped, to break up her Esoteric School. These Instructions had been entrusted to the recipients under the seal of strict secrecy — perhaps with the object of testing their worthiness!

Mrs. Cleather published a facsimile of page 559 in *The Canadian Theosophist* mentioned above, on which she marked the large number of alterations made on that single page. They consist of changes in arrangement, construction of sentences, capitalizing, the use of synonyms in place of original words, and above all of omissions and additions. One addition is significant as it seems to reflect psycho-occult teaching that Mrs. Besant is believed to have received from Brahmans after she threw off the restraining influence of William Q. Judge. This addition reads: "The head should not be covered in meditation. It is covered in Samadhi." Hardly one line on this page is left without some alteration.

On summing up all the information to hand on the subject of the so-called "Volume III" it is not easy to find any valid justification for calling this collection of miscellaneous writings by H. P. Blavatsky an integral part of *The Secret Doctrine* as conceived by H. P. B. and the Masters, although as said it contains most valuable and obviously authentic H. P. B. material. We are, however, in no position accurately to judge how seriously the matter has been revised and altered, or whether H. P. Blavatsky would have permitted much of it to be published without a great number of alterations and additions which she alone was qualified to make.

The Theosophical Forum

MOTION — WHAT IS IT? — *Henry T. Edge*

It isn't anything, because there isn't anything else for it to be. It is one of the primary postulates of philosophy and of the Secret Doctrine. Motion is motion, we may say; or we may say it *just is*, and that's all there is *to it*. To define a thing we must resolve it into simpler elements, but must eventually reach the end of our tether, and such is the case as regards motion. We cannot resolve it into anything more elementary, though we can produce synonyms and perchance fool ourselves in that way. We can say motion is change of position or the act of moving (as Noah Webster does); but where does that get us? Old Zeno proved that there was no such thing as motion, because his arrow must always be somewhere; he analysed motion into a number of successive positions but could not for the life of him explain how the arrow got from one position to the other. As Balzac says, speaking through the mouth of one of his characters:

Between each point of space occupied in succession by that ball there is an abyss confronting human reason.

Hobbes makes motion an attribute of "body," with a co-ordinate attribute called "spatialness." Descartes makes motion a form of extension. Leibnitz makes it a manifestation of force. And you, Reader, can make of these definitions anything you like. Continuing from Balzac:

Everything is movement, thought itself is a movement, upon movement nature is based. Death is a movement whose limitations are little known. If God is eternal, be sure he moves perpetually; perhaps God is movement.

Are we not told that "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform"? And cannot we also say that God moves not, for he *is* motion? "O Thou who changest not," as the hymn says. If motion denotes the beginning of manifestation, then beyond this, in the realms

of absolute Rest, we must place That which moveth not, for it is motion, or the root of motion.

That is why movement, like God, is inexplicable, unfathomable, unlimited, incomprehensible, intangible. Who has ever touched, comprehended, or measured movement? We feel its effects without seeing it; we cannot even deny them as we can deny the existence of a God. Where is it? Where is it not? Whence comes it? What is its source? What is its end? It surrounds us, it intrudes upon us, and yet escapes us. It is evident as a fact, obscure as an abstraction; it is at once effect and cause. It requires space, even as we, and what is space? Movement alone recalls it to us; without movement, space is but an empty meaningless word. Like space, like creation, like the infinite, movement is an insoluble problem which confronts human reason; man will never conceive it, whatever else he may be permitted to conceive. (1)

Physics defines velocity, space, and time by each other in accordance with the equation, $s = vt$ and its transformations; thus each of these three fundamentals may be expressed as a function of the other two. Oluf Tyberg in his *Science of Nature*, says, "Space or distance is not a magnitude but a function, the product of two magnitudes, $s = vt$." Time, Space, Motion; functions of each other. But is not Time itself a form of motion? Or again is it a kind of space? Many people use it in both senses without perceiving the difference; which results in endless perplexities, puns, paradoxes, etc.

We have to be satisfied that motion or change is inseparable from our conscious life on any possible plane we can reach — and let it go at that. Seek not to define the undefinable. "Who answers errs; say naught." But why should we want to define it; our life is mostly made up of things we cannot define. To define is to cut up and hence to devitalize, to label and shelve; not to *use*. Life is motion, rest would be annihilation. An idle man sitting in a bucket may imagine he is keeping still, but he is going down towards the bottom of the well. We may be

told to keep moving, but we cannot help it anyway; what matters is which way we are moving.

A vibrating particle changes its direction diametrically, hundreds of times a second; which implies an enormous acceleration, hence an enormous force. Try if you have enough muscular power to waggle your finger back and forth a hundred times a second. When we come to millions of times a second it gives us some idea of the force there is in vibratory motion, whether as cause or effect; some idea of the energy locked up in an atom. What was thought of as "mass" or indestructible matter, turns out to be congealed motion, infinite energy stored up. The seeming dead is very much alive. This idea about the atom makes us wonder if ceaseless motion and eternal rest are not the same thing after all. For what is an atom but a miniature copy of the primordial One? The word atom means an indivisible unit; in physics it is no longer that, but it still keeps the name given to it when it was thought to be indivisible.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Quotations from *The Wild Ass' Skin*, translated by Ellen Marriage for Gebbie Publishing Co.'s edition, 1897. [ne1[

The Theosophical Forum

SPIRITUALISM (1) — *Christmas Humphreys*

A recent trial at the Old Bailey has once more brought back into general conversation the periodic question, "Is it true that the "dear departed" communicate with the living through self-appointed mediums?" The answer, as to so many questions of this kind, is Yes and No. It all depends on what it is which manifests, for though there is a great deal of fraud in spiritualistic circles, there is a vast body of evidence that "ectoplasm" and various manifestations are genuine phenomena.

Of spiritualism in general two things at least must be pointed out, first that it is not in the least spiritual, secondly, that it is not new. It is in no sense a religion, contains nothing worthy to be called a philosophy, has no bearing on morality, and cannot ennoble its devotees. In the East it has long been scorned by educated people as "*bhuta* worship," the worship of *bhutas*, which the Sanskrit dictionary defines as ghosts or goblins, in the sense of "the gross elements of which the body is supposed to be composed and into which it is dissolved." To the Eastern mind such a practice is revolting, for it is akin to spending one's time amidst the decaying remnants of dead bodies, as indeed the appearances of the seance room most truly are, being only of one degree less density than the body which we far too often bury and far too rarely burn.

The exact nature of the "constituent" elements of the self which, while slowly dissolving, are available for temporary revivification by a medium is a matter of no doubt, so far as Eastern wisdom is concerned, but difficult to explain in Western terminology. Each world philosophy has its own description of the constituents of self, from the "body" to that undifferentiated Unity which is the property of no man, being the Noumenon behind all phenomena. The Buddhist classification into *skandhas* and various grades of *vinnana*, consciousness, though helpful to the student, may be no more acceptable to Western minds than the

"body, soul and spirit" of St. Paul. What matters is the nature of self, not the labels we apply to its manifold ingredients. But there are other reasons why the modern Buddhist, if he seeks to know more of spiritualism, must needs enquire beyond the Buddhist Canon, either of the Northern or Southern School. For that which is known already to his audience will never be the subject of a teacher's "talk" or sermon. Just as there is little in the Buddhist Canon about the doctrine of karman and rebirth, for all the Buddha's audience would know of it already, so there is little about such a loathsome habit as bhuta worship, or necromancy, the cult of oracular responses from the dead, for no man striving for deliverance from self would stoop to such degraded practices. We must therefore look elsewhere for details of entities which haunt the seance room, and find them best in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, who was trained by Buddhist Arhats in Tibet. These details will be found in her *Key to Theosophy*, by those who will take the trouble to read it, but those who get an emotional and psychic "kick" out of seance-room attendance will not wish to learn what happens in that twilight, wherein deliberate or unintended fraud is the keynote of the "mystery."

In brief, when a man dies his physical body, its life-breath or Prana, and the latter's vehicle, the astral double of the man, which is the Egyptian "ka," alike begin to dissolve, and leave the man forever. He is left with his three highest "principles" and the fourth, or the lower mind, which moves, according to the tenor of its desires, upward to the spiritual planes of consciousness, or downward to a self-created but temporary "hell" of suffering, when the desire exists but not the physical means for its satisfaction. In due course the higher trinity of principles, the Atma-Buddhi-Manas, pass into Devachan, the nearest truth to "heaven," to await rebirth when all the lessons of the last birth have been learned. The higher trinity do not here concern us, for Atma, the "Essence of Pure Mind," the property of no one vehicle of life, Buddhi, the vehicle "body" of Pure Mind, the highest human principle, and Manas, the higher part of "mind" are alike unreachable by man or medium, save on their own high plane, and never grace the seance-

room. What *does* appear, to the great excitement of beholders, if it is human at all and not some elemental sprite enjoying itself, is the dying *kama-rupa*, the lower desire-body, which, bereft of its own higher counterpart and all its spiritual side, is sometimes drawn into the magnetic field of a negative medium, and is disgustingly revived for a while. It cannot reason, can "communicate" nothing which the brain did not know in life, and is no more the name it is made to bear than the skin which the snake abandons is itself. But all this is well described in classical Theosophy, if one may call it so to distinguish it from the rubbish taught by many Theosophists today, and it is no part of Buddhism. Yet according to the press this cult of spiritualism is becoming daily more "respectable," and in countless minds is taking the place of religion and philosophy. If only those who go to seances could be made to understand how the medium is damaged by opening her bodies to such evil influences they would, on the score of compassion alone, avoid such injury. But ignorant they go and ignorant they still remain. The Buddhist pities them, offers them wisdom where it seems acceptable, and for the rest, "mind-ful and self-possessed," pursues the Middle Way.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Reprinted from *The Middle Way*, May-June, 1944. ([return to text](#))

TEACHER OR AUTHORITY (1)

The story is told of a famous Yogi whose disciple returned to civilization with reticent knowledge and much power, although the teacher spoke hardly a word, even of courtesy, to the disciple over a period of years. In the company of the Yogi, the pupil found himself in an abode of silent unconcern for all things material, including himself as a person. This trial brought humility, fortitude, the control of personal resentment; isolated him from idle chatter and meaningless activity; forced his thoughts inexorably within; and the rest followed. Upon learning that which was to be learned, the disciple bade farewell to him who, having become independent of all things and fit to give all, needed no thanks.

Such food for thought is for spiritual maturity, unpalatable to the mind of the Western peoples, which demands to be urged, flattered, and cajoled, and is ever sensitive to "neglect" or lack of "appreciation," easily discouraged by mental labor, and wont to regard philosophy as diversion rather than a way of life. Yet there is a median way of teaching that does not tend to keep the child forever in childhood. It is to be sought.

"To help and teach others" is the Theosophic aim of life, in exact opposition to that of many notable figures of the day. It is so obviously laudable as to be somewhat too disarming, perhaps, to self-examination.

Naturally, the project involves a conviction of one's ability to help and teach others. Often, this further involves a feeling of our own superiority, which can insensibly glide into (a) a conviction of our own superiority in all respects, and (b) a conviction of the inferiority of those to be helped and taught. This is a very real danger. Have we not seen devoted theosophists go about their work with an air — quite unconscious — of settled smugness well adapted to infuriate rather

than instruct the beneficiaries of their devotion?

In the world at large are discernible innumerable instances of material "help" through which the moral decay of the victims proceeded proportionately to the help extended. It has been seen on a large scale in recent years in the hands of those ignorant of the spiritual nature and responsibilities of man, but he is a fortunate theosophist who cannot regretfully recall similar errors in his own career. Sometimes the victims of overmuch help are really the subjects of a kind of benevolent cannibalism in which the ego — or the political fortune — of the "benefactor" swells apace with the drained spiritual vitality of the subject. Similar effects can be produced by methods or attitudes of teaching in which nothing is left to thought, and which paralyze the will by the restful panorama of all things made clear, simple, and final. This would not be good even were the understanding of the teacher as clear, simple, and final as he thinks it to be.

Not impossibly, that student who seems resistant to obvious truth may merely be reserving some corner of the universe to explore for himself, or mayhap he is suspicious of so much knowledge being so easily come by.

It is a common failing of Western teachers, including theosophists to tell all they know and often noticeably more. The method of the Mahatmas, on the other hand, is to arouse as intensely as possible the passion for knowledge, and then to desist from clogging the mind of the student with anything he may be able to find out for himself. Thus, the learner follows his own path, without at last encountering the necessity of coming all the way back from a blind alley on some one else's path in order finally to start his own.

How may one who essays to teach, avoid the creeping rot of superiority and authority? Simply by being *really* a teacher and nothing else. It does not occur to a teacher in a grade school to feel any lordliness over a child because the latter is six years old and the former thirty. He knows well that the child may be a renowned genius or head of the nation on a future day when he himself is withering away on a meagre

pension. There is no special merit in being born a decade or two sooner than someone else. It is also helpful to remember that none of this knowledge began with any one of us, and that our passing will leave its sum total undiminished. Nor is the Portion of it in our possession in any wise equal to that which is not. The Theosophic world, like the world at large, endured our absence with notable fortitude for many years before our arrival.

Above all, one who is not in the habit of thinking of himself is not in the habit of thinking about his superiorities, real or otherwise. Such a man places no obstacles between the seeker and the light.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Theosophy*, Los Angeles, December, 1944. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ELEMENTAL KINGDOMS AND COSMIC ELEMENTS— *G. de Purucker*

The question has been asked: Just what are the *Three Elemental Kingdoms* and have they any special relation to the *Cosmic Elements* of the Ancients?

Elemental Kingdoms, as all the others are, are aggregates or groups of evolving monads; whereas the so-called elements of the ancients, or the principles, were so phrased by them to describe more what we today would call the seven principles or elements of the universe, as a man has seven principles or elements. It is their way of describing it. The Hindus have the same way, only in that case the Sanskrit name is tattvas: prithivi-tattva, apas-tattva, vayu-tattva, taijasa-tattva, akasa-tattva, and so forth.

Now then, these groups or aggregates of monads, each group being a kingdom, or in their Rounds what we call a Life-wave — each such group of monads, which means all groups, live in and work through these tattvas or cosmic elements, which the Greeks and Romans called Earth, Water, Air, and Fire. Some, like the Pythagoreans, said there was a fifth, Aether, but actually in the occult schools the teaching was that there were seven, of which only four were popularly known, and the Pythagoreans and some others in Europe openly declared the existence of a fifth. The Greek aether or the Pythagoreans aether properly understood, was what the Hindus meant when they said akasa.

Thus then, these cosmic elements are the different stuffs of the universe, the different substances out of which the universe is builded. We can call them the various prakritis of the universe although of course each one of these different names has its own sub-line of thought connected with it. They are therefore not absolutely interchangeable. Consequently, the cosmic elements or these prakritis belong to all the kingdoms because all the kingdoms, as I have just stated, are living in and working through them.

What is the origin of these cosmic elements? They are the essence-stuffs or substances out of which grow the more developed planes of the universe. There being thus seven or twelve cosmic elements, when manvantara opens these seven cosmic elements begin from the top and unroll downwards, each one going down in its serial order, and each one giving birth to its first or essential stuff, its most spiritual aspects so to speak; and this last, its most spiritual aspect, is just what is meant by these cosmic elements. Then each such cosmic element as it unrolls on its own plane before it gives birth to the cosmic elements beneath it, unrolls from itself all its own seven sub-planes, or sub-cosmic elements, so that each such cosmic element contains in itself all the other cosmic elements, but in less degree. Thus the water cosmic element, to use Greek phrasing, has as its swabhava the water-element, but it likewise contains within itself the fire-element, the air-element, the earth-element, etc.

The kingdoms are aggregates or families or groups of monads. The cosmic elements are the essential stuffs in which they live and move and have their being and evolve.

Now then, one final thought will connect everything up, I hope. Spirit in its sevenfold aspects is the root of all these cosmic elements, or prakritis. Just as all the prakritis unroll from mulaprakriti which is the veil of Brahman or pure cosmic Spirit, so do all the cosmic elements unroll from the primal substantial veil around cosmic Spirit, corresponding to mulaprakriti. Thus out of Spirit comes everything, all the cosmic elements; and out of spirit likewise proceed the classes or families or groups or aggregates of monads forming the different kingdoms, from the Dhyani-chohans down to the elementals. And lastly, when we examine and penetrate to the very ultimate nature or stuff of the cosmic elements, we can see that every cosmic element is really a vast aggregate or group of monads or consciousness-centers not yet aroused into activity, and which are therefore dormant. It is just like all the earth around us, which, representing the lowest of the cosmic elements on this plane, is nevertheless composed of simply innumerable multitudes of dormant monads which have not yet

awakened to begin their evolutionary journeys and develop into self-conscious gods. Or again, as the flesh of a man is composed of molecules, these of atoms, and these of life-atoms, or life-points, which are the effect on this plane of monads on their own plane.

It is of course understood that a monad never leaves its own plane; so when we say that the earth-element is composed of concreted or dormant monads, we do not mean the spiritual monads themselves; we mean the life-atoms, each life-atom being the representative of a monad on this cosmic plane.

What relation, then, have the three elemental kingdoms, kingdoms of the elementals, to the cosmic elements? Now in the first place, I will say that this phrase "three elemental kingdoms" is an easy and graphic way of saying the seven kingdoms of the elementals, or the seven sub-kingdoms of the generalized kingdom of elementals; just as in a man we often generalize his constitution by saying spirit, soul, body, knowing all the time that the constitution is divisible into seven parts.

The three kingdoms of elementals in their first or original appearance in manifested manvantara, spring forth from the stuffs of the original cosmic elements; and therefore these baby-entities, which are as it were ensouling parts of life-atoms, are called elementals. This is the original and if you wish highest kingdom of the elementals, not highest here in the sense of evolution, but highest in schematic diagram. The so-called lower kingdoms of elementals are lower merely because they are farther from the spiritual part or nature of the cosmic elements, but being more evolved in that sense they stand higher. So that the lowest class of elementals, which is beneath the minerals, actually is the most evolved of all the elemental kingdoms. But they have not yet even reached the point where they can be classed as minerals or pass into the mineral kingdom.

Now the reason why there are really seven elemental sub-kingdoms, is because each such elemental kingdom springs from its own particular cosmic element. As there are seven cosmic elements, each cosmic element gives birth to its own elemental kingdom. Thus when all these

elemental kingdoms are classed together, we say seven elemental kingdoms, each one such coming from its own different cosmic element.

As a final thought, it is to be noted that in occult or esoteric phraseology, the elementals are so called because whatever their class and whatever the cosmic elements or tattva from which each elemental class springs, it springs directly from this tattva or cosmic element without intermediary. Thus, the elementals are, as it were, the denizens or inhabitants of the cosmic elements, because they spring forth immediately and without intermediary from the latter.

To those who are not more or less adept with Theosophical studies, it is important to point out that the elementals are not elementaries, this last term being adopted from medieval European quasi-occult or semi-occult Schools, such as the Fire-Philosophers. An elementary is a denizen of the astral light, and is, briefly speaking, the reliquiae or semi-conscious astral remnant of what was once an evil man on earth. In other words, and more briefly, an elementary is the semi-conscious kama-rupa or in the worst case almost wholly conscious kama-rupa, of what was when he lived on earth, a gross and evil man. These elementaries in the astral light are slowly decaying, but still filled with all the evil, gross, and often malignant impulses and proclivities, tendencies, and biases, that the said evil man showed when he was embodied in flesh.

The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY AND THE ANCIENT ARYAN CULTURE — G.

Frances Knoche

The modern revival of interest in the spiritual culture of Aryavarta, in ancient Sanskrit and Pali Manuscripts, their translation into English and other foreign tongues, received great impetus and support, history reveals, in the early efforts of the Theosophical Society after its chief founder had arrived in Bombay, India, in 1879, from the United States.

Being a philosophical, religious and scientific association of earnest men and women, guided by a profound spiritual impulse, the Society is strictly non-political and unsectarian, having nothing to do with prejudices of any sort, whether of race, caste or creed, its chief aim being the spiritualization of mankind, and the establishment among men of a nucleus of universal brotherhood. To this end the founders, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and Colonel Henry S. Olcott, soon after arrival in India, launched *The Theosophist*, a monthly magazine in which a series of valuable articles on the Sacred Scriptures of the East appeared, with particular stress on Vedic and Brahmanical writings, these latter being contributed by learned pandits, who, rallying to the cry of the Theosophists to reawaken India to her spiritual treasures, had joined the Society.

In Convention at Bombay, in February, 1880, the first of the four objects of the Theosophical Society as then formulated was: "To discover and make known to the world the truth about the Aryas, by studying their ancient literature, religions and sciences and the various branches that have sprung from that parent stock." A brief survey of the manner in which the Society has fulfilled this objective should be of genuine interest to all Hindus, whether Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya or Sudra.

In order to assist the Buddhists who at that period were subjected to numerous restrictions, Col. Olcott, having taken pansil in May, 1880,

collaborated with the High Priest H. Sumangala of Ceylon in compiling and publishing in 1881 a *Buddhist Catechism*. An edition in Sinhalese translation was soon exhausted and by 1891 the Colonel had succeeded with the aid of his Buddhist friends, in establishing forty-one Buddhist Schools in Ceylon, a work which continues today.

Parallel efforts among the Brahman pandits followed, so that in 1882 Theosophical branches in Amaravati, Madras, in Guntoor, in Bareilly, and in Nellore, started the first Sanskrit Schools which soon effected a tremendous influence in the revival of Aryan culture, being forerunners of the thousands of Sanskrit schools which have since been founded.

As witness of the newly awakened interest in ancient Sanskrit culture, we note Protap Chundra Roy's colossal undertaking to translate the *Mahabharata* into English prose, the first volume of which was "published and distributed gratis" in 1883. This independent effort of the "Datavya Bharat Karyalya" in Calcutta, was strongly supported by Theosophists, and as time and funds permitted, all eighteen Parvas finally saw the light.

By 1887, "The Theosophical Publication Fund" in Bombay had been established and was issuing numerous Sanskrit philosophical texts with English translations, chief among them being in 1887, Sankara's *Vivekachuddmani* (*Crest Jewel of Wisdom*); in 1888 T. Subba Row's *Discourses on the Bhagavad-Gita*; and in 1891 Dvidedi's translation of the "Twelve Principal Upanishads."

Interest in Sanskrit and the Aryan literature, however, was not confined to the Indian archipelago. So fired were the American Theosophists with the richness and beauty of Vedic thought that William Quan Judge, then General Secretary of the American Theosophical Society, himself published in 1889 an English translation with masterly interpretation of Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms*; and in 1890 a complete recension in collaboration with Connelly of Wilkins' edition of the *Bhagavad-Gita* appeared — two books which were to become standard Theosophical texts for the various Theosophical Societies all

over the world.

To meet the increasing demand for Sanskrit translations, in February, 1891, Mr. Judge founded the "Oriental Department", issuing monthly a paper devoted exclusively to the sacred scriptures of India, made possible by the combined efforts of Brahman pandits in India and Judge's skilful editorship. Under this department Charles Johnston, noted Sanskritist and Fellow of the Theosophical Society, inaugurated Sanskrit Correspondence Courses for the benefit of the American Theosophists.

Today, nearly seventy years since the foundation of the Theosophical Society in New York in 1875, investigation shows that the Theosophical Society with International Headquarters near Covina, California, has persistently sponsored this revival. The stimulus first given has continued, and in 1919 when Theosophical University was established by Katherine Tingley, then leader of the Society, a Chair of Sanskrit was included. Under the personal direction of Dr. Gottfried de Purucker, the Sanskrit Department flourished. One of his pupils, Judith Tyberg, Professor of Sanskrit and Indic Studies at Theosophical University, Covina, has the distinction of being a leading authority in the field of Sanskrit. Besides the regular courses in Sanskrit grammar, advanced courses in Upanishads, Brahmanas, the Bhagavad-Gita, as well as Vedic Sanskrit are given.

In 1936 Theosophical University Press, with the aid of Geoffrey A. Barborka, chief linotype operator, successfully collaborated with technical experts in the Mergenthaler Linotype Company to perfect a system of Sanskrit composition whereby the Devanagari characters could be set upon the linotype, an achievement which placed Theosophical University Press then as the only publishing house in the United States able to set up the Sanskrit characters on the linotype.

A year previously publication was begun of a "Simplified Sanskrit Course" by Dr. Grace Knoche, in serial form in *The Lotus Circle Messenger*, a Theosophical magazine for teachers and young folk, to interest them in the culture of India and in Sanskrit which H. P.

Blavatsky termed "the language of the gods." Its lessons are broadly cultural, the Devanagari text including passages from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Hitopadesa*, *Manavadharmasastra*, *Upanishads* and other classics.

Geoffrey A. Barborika's *Gods and Heroes of the Bhagavad-Gita* published in 1939, has now become a valued companion of all Gita lovers.

Sanskrit Keys to the Wisdom Religion — a digest of the profound philosophic and religious interpretation of the many Sanskrit terms used throughout Theosophical literature, by Judith Tyberg and published in 1940, is the result of ten years of teaching both in Europe and America. This, with the publication in 1941 of Ballantyne's *First Lessons in Sanskrit Grammar* revised by Lawrence A. Ware and Judith Tyberg, forms the basis of Sanskrit Correspondence Courses conducted from Theosophical University at Covina.

It is a source of interest to turn the pages of the many Theosophical journals and to note the large percentage of articles devoted to Orientalia. The present review columns of *The Theosophical Forum*, published monthly by the Covina Theosophical Society, show that the works of Coomaraswamy, Radhakrishnan, Sri Krishna Prem, and other eminent Oriental scholars, receive favorable and extensive review. Also of importance will be the forthcoming "Theosophical Encyclopedic Glossary," compiled by Theosophists and scholars of many years' standing, and revised and enlarged by its editor, Dr. Gottfried de Purucker, for it will contain over two thousand Sanskrit, Pali, Tibetan and other Oriental philosophical terms, Theosophically explained.

In conclusion, the fact that the Covina Theosophical Society as well as Theosophical University have taken such a vital interest in the revival of the philosophy of India should be challenge enough to the modern Hindu to awaken and search out for himself the profound beauties of his noble land, and to make available in European translations more and more of the now buried MSS., so that East and West may wholeheartedly join hands in following the age-old path to spiritual wisdom.

THE SYMBOL OF THE WINGED GLOBE — *G. de Purucker*

The symbol of the winged globe, the globe carried through time and space on the wings of spiritual force or of the spirit, is one of the most beautiful of ancient Egyptian symbols, because it combines both religion and philosophy. The globe is just one form of representing the golden germ, Hiranyagarbha in the Sanskrit, which in its movements through time and space is carried by the wings of the spirit on its evolutionary journey. This is the keynote of one of the thoughts of the winged globe.

Another thought about it, or aspect of it, is that the winged globe is the monad, which is in a sense practically the same as the cosmic germ or hiranyagarbha, and the wings there signify the same thing, conscious mind moving through space and time in the form of the monad and expressing its power in the movement of the wings, consciousness moving in the evolutionary journey upwards and upwards forever.

Still another way of interpreting it — all the same at bottom because of the law of analogy — is that the globe would represent a celestial orb, a sun or a planet, in its turn carried on the wings of its spirit along the evolutionary journey into the distant future, and out of the past.

With reference to its standing for the human soul or the reincarnating ego of a human being, it has its application there in just the same way, the monad, the golden germ, the ego, or if you wish the soul, represented by the sphere or globe, or the primordial point again from another standpoint.

There are really a thousand ways of interpreting it, or rather applying the interpretation to different aspects of our cosmic philosophy. Yet the interpretation is the same for all these different aspects, making only the adjustment according to whatever entity it is that is thus adventuring through the cosmic planes and through cosmic life and through cosmic time.

It is thus also a symbol, as it were a declaration, of spiritual individual hope for the future, a proclamation and symbol of the immortality of the spirit or of the monad, or of whatever entity it is that the symbol is applied to.

Then when we add the serpents, as is often done, one on each side of the globe with raised heads, yet with bodies or tails intertwined, this is but another graphic way of speaking of the dual serpents of Wisdom and Love, the two great dominant powers in the constitution of any entity, both shielding and protecting and inspiring, and yet carried along by the monad, of which both these faculties, wisdom and love, of the winged globe, are the symbols.

These are the general keys, and anyone can elaborate them, if he thinks carefully, almost indefinitely. It is a wonderful symbol.

The Theosophical Forum

WHO ARE THE MAHATMANS? — *Lydia Ross and C. J. Ryan*

Every inquirer wants to know what Theosophists mean by a Mahatman. This Sanskrit word explains itself: *Mahd* means great and *Atman* means soul. A Theosophical Mahatman is a great soul expressing itself in a human body. Theosophy teaches that at the center of every man's being he is a spark of divinity; and the real purpose of repeated earth-lives is to bring forth and express this inner Self, so that its light will illumine his whole being. Ordinary men express this but feebly as yet; but the Mahatmans are those in whom this divine flame shines forth. They are not "gods" or "saints" or anything supernatural, but are men who, by their own unremitting efforts during many lives, under the guidance of Initiate Teachers, have become supermen. They are the Elder Brothers of humanity, the "Fine Flowers" of human evolution, spiritually and intellectually.

Naturally, these Great Men are not all equally advanced; but the greatest of them have reached a stage which the mass of humanity will attain, at its ordinary rate of progress, only in far distant ages, after very many lives on earth. When that time comes, the present Adepts will have evolved beyond the highest human standard of perfection, and will have passed on, to continue growing in spiritual glory in the "land of the gods."

The Mahatmans belong to a Brotherhood which has been active in all ages. They possess immense stores of knowledge of the real nature of man, of his unknown racial history, and of the structure and operations of the Universe, visible and invisible. Their original body of teachings, sacredly preserved from age to age, has been passed on through a continuous chain of initiated Teachers and their pledged disciples. Each member of this Order, in turn, tests these teachings for himself, and confirms the truth of them. A portion of this knowledge, suitable for humanity at large, according to its varying stages of intelligence and spirituality, has been given out from time to time, and

in one country or another, by Messengers from the Great White Lodge, as it is called. Truth has always been in the world, even in the dark ages when its light was obscured and its Messengers were misunderstood and persecuted. Mankind as a whole has never been without its Elder Brothers, those Helpers whose beneficent work has never ceased, whether seen or unseen by men.

These Messengers were such great Sages and Seers as Jesus, the Buddha and Krishna of India, Confucius and Lao-Tse of China, Zoroaster of Persia, Plato and Pythagoras of Greece, Hermes of Egypt, Quetzalcoatl of Mexico, and many others more or less exalted, upon whose teachings great world-religions and philosophies were founded. This explains why the deeper, essential truths of all the great religions are the same, however much their outer forms and the sacred names and mystical symbology used varied in different countries and ages. Exhaustive evidence of this underlying unity of teachings is given by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*. She also explains that it was because the inner meaning of religion became gradually obscured by dogmas and intolerance that conflicting opinions led to bigotry and persecution.

Of the continued activities of the Great-Souled Ones in guiding and protecting mankind, the best known in modern times has the general term "the Theosophical Movement." This includes work done by the Theosophical Society and very much more. Their activities affect many in ways unknown to them, inspiring them with great thoughts and noble ideas which come they know not whence. From time to time the Great Lodge of Masters has established societies through which they could help the world. Some were unknown to all but their own members; others were made public. One of the latter is the Theosophical Society, which was founded under the direction of the Masters by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, in New York, in 1875. Its importance is proved by the fact that Theosophical teachings have profoundly affected the world of thought, and that the Movement as a whole has become more securely established during the last half-century, in which so many time-honored institutions and modes of

thought have been shaken to their foundations.

The work of this modern Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, was to restore long-forgotten truths to the world and to arouse the spirit of brotherhood in man. To do this she made known the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, once universal, and the only enduring basis upon which men can unite. She presented conclusive evidence of the single origin of all the great religions and philosophies, which alike taught a common birth-right of divinity for men and a common destiny. Their interests, spiritual and material, being identical, interdependent, and interwoven, from first to last, prove that brotherhood is a fact in Nature. This needs but to be recognised and acted upon to increase our welfare and happiness to a degree hitherto unknown. It is the magic word to make for ideal human relations — both between individuals and nations. The Theosophical Society, founded by the Masters, is unsectarian and non-political and is wholly free from the creeds and dogmas which hitherto have separated man from man. In such a Society whose chief aim is practical world betterment, the acceptance of the principle of Universal Brotherhood is naturally the only prerequisite to membership.

To the matter-of-fact Occidental mind the Theosophical Mahatmans often seem like unreal figures, because their existence was unheard-of in the West before H. P. Blavatsky announced that her Teachers were members of the Great Brotherhood. But in the East it is different. In modern India, for instance, though today it is suffering from superstitions resulting from degeneration of the ancient religions, yet the unbroken tradition of these great men has come down from remotest antiquity, and is common knowledge and belief. There the Mahatmans, or "Rishis" as they are generally called, are not looked upon as Saviors but as Guides and Teachers who help their younger brothers to bring forth their own inner divinity. These great men show by example what lies ahead on the Path for all men, even as the Nazarene said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." In fact, in the East, the relation of teacher and pupil is regarded as something sacred, for, indeed, the passing on of Light is a sort of intellectual and spiritual

parentage. Special deference is accorded even to the teacher of children.

To the introspective, devotional Orientals, the Mahatmans stand as examples of the highest living ideals. While the native mystical tendency to cultivate inner development appears in various crude and erratic forms among the fanatical yogis, yet the rare spiritual type of "holy men" is recognised and revered even by the royal Hindu rulers.

The Masters of Wisdom are not to be confused with the familiar type of yogis or sadhus or so-called "Mahatmas" of India. The word commonly spelled "Mahatma," is a title like "Mr." or "Sir," or "Baron," or "Count." It is a mere title, which a very old Indian custom still gives to anyone holding a public position of respect or veneration. The name implies certain special intellectual and spiritual attainments; but, as with any title of distinction, it may be held by those who do much, or those who do little honor to it.

The question is often asked: Where do the Mahatmans live? While their main seats are in Asia, they also have minor centers elsewhere, in quiet and secluded places where they can be undisturbed in their work, free from the unrest and confusion of crowded places, and surrounded by those who can understand their methods and aims and who are fitted to help. However, they are intensely active all the time, and they even travel to far countries when conditions require their presence. Mme. Blavatsky met her Teacher in London, in 1851; and another Master, "K. H.," with whose sister she lived for a time in Tibet, had been a student in European Universities. This Master, "K. H.," wrote most of the famous *Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, in which the reader may get interesting sidelights on their methods of work, and on the importance they gave to the future of the Theosophical Society.

Westerners often say: Why do the Mahatmans not come out in public and show themselves? Why should they show themselves? one may reply. They have nothing to gain by going on exhibition; it would be a waste of time and energy on their part, and it would serve no good

purpose to gratify public curiosity. To them, the world's prizes of fame, fortune, admiration, etc., matter not at all. Those things which appeal strongly to ordinary men they have discarded lives ago for the greater treasures of their own enlarged, enriched, and liberated nature. They are eager to give of their priceless knowledge to whomsoever is ready to open his mind and heart to receive it, and to step out on the path that they have trod. As to proof of their existence, we all know that there are men of outstanding ability in every department of life. It is only natural to suppose that a few have gone far ahead by lives of intensive spiritual and intellectual growth, and have thereby attained to what the majority will reach only in the far distant future.

The Masters regard the whole world as their country, and they are very much alive to its conditions and to its most vital problems. Most of their work is behind the scenes, nor will it ever be publicly known. Their freedom from all personal ambition and national bias gives them unusual insight into the motives of men and nations. Their superior knowledge, and their power to read the meaning, and to foresee the outcome, of unfolding world-events, enable them to work with equal wisdom and justice for the welfare of all. From them individually, and as an organized body, there constantly radiates a potent influence of hope, inspiration, and protection for humanity. This silent and invisible stimulus has even been the source of intuitive "hunches" on the part of some of our great modern scientists and inventors. Such practical help is attracted naturally by large-hearted men of genius whose work will help men to realize a more spiritual view of the Universe, and so make for more brotherly relations in human affairs.

The Masters are Teachers also, because as custodians of the ancient truths it is their duty to pass on the light they have received. They have become what they are because they have learned how to develop their innate spiritual and intellectual faculties and powers, which can be done safely only under the guidance of true Teachers. In turn, they become Teachers to their pupils, who are called *chelas* — the devoted few whose one desire is to become perfected helpers in the service of

humanity. Chelaship is training for Mastership. *It is the age-old method of speeding up individual evolution.* The chela is not only taught an all-around philosophy of life, but he is made to prove it for himself. In testing it by application to his own daily life, he learns many mysteries of his dual nature — higher and lower — and finds mighty, hidden meanings in his relation to others and to the world around him. He is not lured on by any promise of selfishly acquiring unusual knowledge and psychic powers. He learns that the deeper, hidden truths about man and the Universe are to be gained by great purity and holiness of life, and especially by an all-embracing love for mankind as a whole. Becoming spiritually-minded opens the nature to spiritual truths.

The chela's training begins with a system of self-discipline that calls for long and arduous tests of sincerity, determined will, and unselfish devotion to humanity. The true system has no place for ascetic abuse or torture of the body, which is held to be a sacred "temple of the living god" within. All the powers and faculties that make for enlightened, strong, and noble manhood are stimulated to rapid growth. The result is a balanced gain in physical, psychical, intellectual, and spiritual power. A Master of Life is one who has learned the laws of Nature and works with them.

Since the Theosophical Society made the existence of the Masters known in the West a number of would-be teachers have boldly advertised themselves as connected with the Great White Lodge of the East. They offer instructions for acquiring "personal powers," "vital force," "material success," "magnetic attraction," all this and more, to prospective followers or to anyone who will pay the price for lessons, regardless of their moral fitness. They appeal frankly — often with high-sounding sentiments — to the selfish side of human nature — to personal ambition, to mere intellectual curiosity, or to the sinister desire to get control over others. The venturesome Westerners, eager for any novel experience, little realize that the price too often paid for dabbling in strange, psychic forces is loss of health or sanity, if not of life itself. Moral fitness and self-control are the prerequisites for genuine Occultism.

H. P. Blavatsky saw that an increasing number of "sensitives" in the West were attracting attention by reporting their vague clairvoyant glimpses into the shadowy astral world. She explained the rationale of the strange phenomena which materialistic science said could not exist. But she knew too well the subtil, unknown dangers into which all those concerned were drifting, and she repeatedly warned against the perils of attempting to cultivate "psychic powers."

The question is often asked: How can I meet the Mahatmans? The surest way is to become like them. Obviously, then, the first thing to do is to answer their call for helpers in their work for humanity, whose sufferings mostly result from ignorance of its duality and of the laws of life and spiritual growth. This work is so world-wide and varied that there is room and a place for any and every one who is willing to sacrifice pet weaknesses, as the first step toward Mastership. Everyone can help spread these ancient teachings which, and which only, can change the minds and hearts of men, and so solve the menacing problems of modern civilization. The way to begin is to show the ennobling influence of Theosophical ideals in one's own everyday life: a living example is an unanswerable argument. People today demand something more than mere sermons and theories: they need practical demonstration of a working plan of life.

The organized work of the Theosophical Society offers special opportunities for its members to find their way, step by step, on the same path that the Mahatmans tread. The path to the heights calls for all our courage and determination; but it is one of ever-increasing peace of mind and spiritual power. As Dr. G. de Purucker says: "The way to forget one's own pains and sorrows is to help others. . . . In genuine spiritual service lies the only lasting happiness that man knows." The power to give, to help, increases by its use, just as a muscle or a faculty grows by exercise. The way to attainment for us in the matter-of-fact West is the path of practical mysticism — a working out, with unselfish motive and firm will, of whatever the day may bring. In this way, each one's inner powers of mind and soul come forth as

naturally as the flower opens to the sunlight; and one enters that spiritual current of life in which the Mahatmans live, work, and grow ever greater.

The Theosophical Forum

THOMAS TRAHERNE: A PRACTICAL MYSTIC — *Helen Savage*

Like a rich vein of gold that remains long untouched within the rock and then one day is laid bare and mined, so is the personality and work of the seventeenth century mystic, Thomas Traherne. Though of some distinction in his own day, for two and a quarter centuries after his death the world forgot him, was, in fact, completely unaware how rich a treasure lay in obscurity and threatened with utter obliteration. Today, of course, anyone at all interested in Christian mysticism or acquainted with the masters of English prose, knows of Traherne, and has heard the story of his re-discovery: how the chance finding of two manuscript volumes in a secondhand book-barrow in London in 1895 was the beginning of a long and exciting course of literary detection which resulted in the resuscitation of the work of this vivid and radiant human being.

Not a small part of this work of reconstruction has been done by Gladys I. Wade, editor of *The Poetical Works of Thomas Traherne* (Dobell, London, 1932). Miss Wade is an Australian scholar who had the good fortune to go to England on a research studentship to make a thorough study of all available Traherne material. The result of this labor is her recent work, a critical biography of Traherne (1) which is an invaluable contribution to the subject. With all her scholarship, there is nothing dry about the book; always is the picture of the man himself kept in clear focus, and she uses her wealth of fact but as means to give substance to the whole.

The outer events of Traherne's life are brief and soon told. (He died at the age of thirty-seven.) Miss Wade has followed every possible clue in telling the story. But what is important in this life is the record of an inner activity, the pushing forward and upward of a soul that had not drunk too heavily of the waters of Lethe before incarnation, and so had gone about life's business with a steady purpose, piercing through the veil of illusion which the world of sentient beings weaves about us, and

reaching to the wonder of the Reality within.

His own writings — those that have been preserved for us — give this record of a soul unfolding, a recording that would be natural to one who was at once a mystic, a metaphysical poet, and a philosopher. It is a proof of his degree of advancement that he could speak of this inner activity quite impersonally and objectively. Yet there is no suggestion in his works that he merely repeats from other men's experience. He is the traveler telling his own story.

Traherne came into this world with a sort of celestial memory. He was born with the Divine Light about him, through which he saw the world transfigured. He writes:

*How like an Angel came I down!
How bright are all Things here!
When first among his Works I did appear
O how their Glory me did Crown!
The World resembled his Eternitie
In which my Soul did Walk;
And every Thing that I did see,
Did with me talk.*

Inevitably this radiance was to fade; but not the memory of it. So that he was able almost consciously to watch the material life close about him. He went through the necessary "descent into matter," and in adolescence experienced that struggle that must come when the arc of descent is nearing its lowest point and the curve toward the luminous arc must be successfully turned. This was a time of confusion, skepticism, boredom, even of desolation at times — phases which if we only knew it are pointers to a soul-dissatisfaction at loitering in the dark valleys. Traherne recognised the signs and did not succumb.

When opportunity came for him to study at Oxford his natural intellectual eagerness came to the fore, and while his spiritual awakening was not until a later period, he revelled in the fields of knowledge that opened before him. "I saw there were things in this

world of which I never dreamed; glorious secrets, and glorious persons past imagination." He took delight in every subject that opened before him: logic, ethics, physics, metaphysics, geometry, astronomy, poesie, medicine, grammar, music and rhetoric, as he enumerates them. Everything became golden by the touch of his joyous imagination.

The renascence of learning in Europe was now in full swing, but Traherne discerned — though perhaps not fully in his undergraduate days — the one fault brought about by this inrush of immense ranges of scientific information. This fault was the tendency to put all branches of learning in separate compartments, all unrelated to the great whole. The relation of things to one another, and all as parts of a whole, a theme so earnestly discussed by the deepest thinkers of today, was something Traherne wrote passionately about over two and a half centuries ago. Except for the quaintness of language, how familiar sounding is the following from his *Christian Ethicks*:

He knoweth nothing he ought to know, who thinks he knoweth anything without seeing its Place, and the Manner how it relateth to God, Angels and Men, and to all the Creatures in Earth, Heaven, and Hell, Time and Eternity.

Skepticism of a kind was inevitable all during the University period. The character of each age is made by the type of egos that incarnate in it, and Traherne had, like so many of his contemporaries, the exploring mind of those who are scientifically alert. For him and others faith was not enough. What claimed to be truth must be capable of subjection to the searchlight of reason. The rites of Christian worship were meaningless to him. He was not willing to accept the Bible merely as traditional authority. Yet he saw revealed through the wealth of scientific fact of his day a Divine Power at work, a Designer. "The truth," says Miss Wade, "of revealed religion for Traherne is discovered by the beauty and glory of the greater pattern into which it and all truth fit."

It was a proof of the soundness and strength of his nature that he overthrew neither science nor religion, but sought by a union of reason

and faith to recognise the One Truth which to our complex consciousness shows many aspects. Nor was Traherne content merely to reason God into existence. His experience in infancy excluded that possibility; but what he had yet to achieve was awareness of Divinity as an active power in his adult life. Miss Wade, by an examination of the *Centuries of Meditation* and other writings of Traherne, follows sympathetically and with discernment his growth towards the illumination he sought. She shows that it did not come in a sudden burst, nor did he "drift into holiness." Each step on the way was taken with a resolute will.

After leaving Oxford he gave up the opportunity of a lucrative career, possibly that of law, to follow the path of mysticism. He considered this a crucial decision in his life. Worldly, and worthy, ambition made the former path very alluring; but a deeper truer self within him knew that honors, wealth and fame were not what he wanted. There was a struggle, but the outcome was successful. He was true to his inner calling.

At the same time he was seeking *inner* purity, recognising that all evil action is first existent in thought and feeling. He therefore attacked seriously but not morbidly the problem of "mending himself." Miss Wade gives his own enumeration of his faults which he worked at assiduously: "a hot tongue, impatience with stupidity, resentfulness of contradiction, covetousness of money, a tendency to compromise in order to win popularity, vacillations of moods, waverings on this hard path of self-imposed discipline."

As rector of the small parish of Credenhill he practised to curb his too proud spirit. While uncompromising with his own faults, he sought to look upon his parishioners who "sinned," as spiritually sick and himself as their healer. His ideal was to "treat every man in the person of Christ. That is both as if himself were Christ in the greatness of his Love, and also as if the man were Christ." And with all the practical work of his parish he did not neglect his devotions, the description of which remind one of the "mortifications" spoken of in *The Bhagavad-*

Gita — not the torture of the flesh, as the word often implies, but those "austerities" which teach our elemental nature its true position as servant not master.

In quite a different atmosphere from the narrow quiet world of Credenhill, he spent his last years in London as private chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Keeper of the Seal. Here he did the best of his writing; and here it is more than likely he met some of those Platonic philosophers who were important figures in the Platonist movement of the day: Henry More, Cudworth, Whichcote and others. Traherne had been a student of Plato and the Neo-Platonists since his days at Oxford. He also studied the writings of Hermes Trismegistus. The theory that these are not of earlier composition than the third or fourth century was already forming in Traherne's day. But he held to the opinion of the early Church Fathers and others who said that they were of hoary antiquity.

That these Hermetic writings so nearly paralleled the teachings of St. John and St. Paul delighted him, for he saw in this but another corroboration of the oneness of all truth. To him there was nothing odd or heretical in the idea that God might have given man a revelation of truth before the time of Moses. And that Plato's teaching also coincided with this Hermetic philosophy, in his eyes enhanced the value of Plato.

Perhaps the kernel of wisdom that Traherne chiefly gleaned from these ancient writings was the conception of man, not as a miserable sinner, but as of divine ancestry. In his *Christian Ethicks* he quotes long passages from *The Divine Pymander* of Hermes, which contain sentences such as: "Wherefore we must be bold to say, that an Earthly Man is a Mortal God, and a Heavenly God is an Immortal Man." This of course but corroborated what he already knew to be true; for from the first his faith in humanity was based on the principle of affinity: that what is intrinsically god-like finds its true level among divine things.

In some particulars the recital of Traherne's adventure in mysticism may not be so different from that of other mystics. But there is a stimulation received from a study of him that is like a clear fresh wind.

Whether he is chiding himself for his "fickle, staggering, paralytic piety," or exclaiming over the delicate sight of the corn "thick-bearded, and strong-headed" — in whatever mood, one feels in his writing that here was someone who knew what it was to be really alive, physically, mentally, and spiritually. He not only conceived Love as "the most Delightful and Natural Employment of the Soul of Man," but he was in large measure that love incarnate; and his was a love that excluded nothing. The magically intricate workings of the physical body were as much a source of wonder to him as the stars in the heavens. He seemed, in short, to have attained that third Way of visioning Truth which the Zen Buddhists teach: where Divinity shines through and illumines the world.

The present book under review is the first full-length biography and critical study of this seventeenth century mystic who sought and found the secret of spiritual joy. It is a work so finely executed that it leaves nothing to be asked for. The chapters on literary criticism are a delight; and throughout the whole work the author exhibits the enthusiasm that Traherne and his significant life have aroused in her.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Thomas Traherne: A Critical Biography*. By Gladys I. Wade. Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1944. \$3.00. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

HOW DOES THE BUDDHIST PRAY? (1)

He does not. This is a literal statement. The true philosophy of the Buddha precluded the dependence of the mind upon external props or propitiation of a superior force — in fact, it regarded such props simply as evidence of childish dependence.

Not that the Buddha denied the existence of forces in the Universe which are strong and mighty, or of forms of invisible life which may be regarded as equivalent to the 'gods,' or even of the Supreme Source or Cause of Being, which might be considered the equivalent of the present day conception of One God. *But*, the Buddha proclaimed the absolute necessity of conquering for oneself the lessons of life which came, and the foolishness of expecting an extraneous, though beneficent, power to intervene or interpose protection. He taught it by precept, discourse and example. He repeated it upon his death bed to his immediate followers. He taught the path of self-reliance, to do the right thing for the sake of right, not because of the belief in eternal punishment. He taught that cause produces effects, that effects can be calculated, and that the way to create the proper effects is by understanding and controlling causes. He taught the LAW, which is immutable in an unwavering and unbending expression all through the Cosmos.

He taught that Man is capable of self-directed effort; that his effort should be directed upon himself, not upon others; and that he should learn to follow LAW and thereby control the cause. He taught the way to break the hold of superstition upon the Mind, and that dependence upon prayer, appeal, favor or control of invisible help or guidance from superior forces or beings is an insidious superstition destined to weaken rather than to help the one who uses it.

He spoke of rites and ceremonies as unnecessary and inclined to deaden effort. He showed the futility of sacrifices, and the extreme

desirability of the high way of Mind. Yet this is little explanation to the people who have been taught from childhood to rely on prayer — which is a euphemism for cold, calculated demands upon a power considered inefficient enough to overlook, or the wrung heart's appeal in agony and trouble. The last is comprehensible, but the formal routine prayers are not logical or sensible. They do not leave much doubt in a reasoning mind about the conviction in the prayer's mind that it is necessary to remind a very remiss power of the problem of the moment. And so one wonders how the custom has existed for so many ages, and one can only say — it is a custom and is devised to satisfy the need of weak and unimaginative people.

The Buddha taught men of maturity to think, to reason, to apply the forces of the mind and body to the problem in hand — to the problem of self, in short — and to throw off Desire which creates the need for prayer.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Golden Lotus*, July, 1944. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

IS MAN BORN IN SIN? — *Henry T. Edge*

Religions have had their origin in that Ancient Wisdom which Man in ages long gone by inherited from his Divine Ancestry. This explains at once the uniformity and the diversity of religious systems, for they are alike in essence but different in external form. In each religion the fundamental truths have become obscured by man-made dogmas, and dogmatic ecclesiastical systems have been engendered. The story of Christianity illustrates this, and there are movements today towards a reconstitution of Christianity. Theosophy rightly claims to be the champion of Christianity, inasmuch as Theosophy points out the ancient and sublime truths which underlie the superincumbent mass of dogmas.

Our endeavor has been to uncover the ruin-encumbered universal foundation of religion. . . . To rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions. — H. P. Blavatsky

The most important of these archaic truths is that of the Divine origin of Man and his consequent ability to achieve his own salvation by invoking the Divine power which is incarnate in every man. This truth is taught in the Bible, for in *Genesis* we are told how Man was first created a living soul, and afterwards was created in the image of God; and in the Gospels Jesus exhorts his followers to become like unto himself. But in spite of this the truth has been perverted by a theological dogma that man was born in sin and can be saved only by a special intercession. It is supposed that Adam and Eve sinned by adopting physical procreation, and that every man born since has been under a curse in consequence. The effect of this teaching is to take away Man's confidence in his own Divinity and to render him dependent upon the services of ecclesiastical systems; and it has caused many intelligent and intuitive people to rebel against religion altogether. It is well to know that religion never taught anything of the

sort, and that our own Bible lends no support to the idea.

To understand our own religion aright, we ought to study other religions, because in this way we can discover those fundamental tenets which are common to all. And one such common tenet will be found in the doctrine that mankind was at first an innocent creature, devoid of the power of self-knowledge and freewill; and that after that stage had been passed he became awakened by Divine power communicated to him, and he left his state of ignorant bliss to enter upon a career wherein he had freewill, the knowledge of good and evil, and responsibility for his own actions. This doctrine is to be found in allegorical form in all great religions and many philosophical systems; and we find a version of it in the early chapters of our Bible, which was derived immediately from Chaldaea. Man is found dwelling in a Garden, which stands for his state of primitive irresponsibility. But there comes to him a Serpent, the wisest of all created beings, who persuades him to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, whereby his latent faculties become awakened, he loses his paradisiacal ignorance, and becomes like unto a God having freewill and responsibility. This power is at first abused, so that Man brings upon himself woe; but ultimately it will be his salvation, as he gradually learns how to deal with all the forces in his nature and to subordinate the evil ones to the good.

This Serpent, Man's great teacher, has been turned by theology into the Devil, Man's enemy and the enemy of God.

One form of this universal allegory is the myth of Prometheus, and what here follows is based on a chapter in H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, pp. 410 sqq. It is time, she says, to dispose of the pernicious dogma relating to the 'curse' under which mankind is alleged to have suffered since the supposed disobedience of Adam and Eve. The creative powers which Man acquired were the gift of Divine Wisdom, not the result of sin. There was nothing sinful in performing the functions of natural union; only a false hypocritical asceticism could make a sin out of that. It was not this natural act that brought

any curse on mankind. The 'curse,' if we must call it so, consisted in the trouble which Man brings on himself by his wrong use of his new power of freewill. But, as said above, this curse is only temporary, and is moreover accompanied by the priceless boon of freewill.

According to the myth of Prometheus, and its analogs in other mythologies, a Divine Being took pity on nascent humanity, shut up in a Paradisiacal prison where there was no prospect of progress; and brought down the Fire and Light from heaven to inspire Man. This he did at great sacrifice to himself, willingly made through his compassion. The natural program for Man was to go through a long and slow process of evolution; but this act of the Divine Messenger hastened that evolution, by bringing the Divine Fire to Man before he was ready to receive it. And yet, as we are told, this act by Prometheus, though in one sense a rebellion and interference, was nevertheless preordained, foreseen. This is a teaching which we may find hard to understand; but it is not harder than many doctrines which theologies require us to accept; and it does what they do not do — explains actual facts of life.

The holy mystery of procreation was turned into animal gratification; thus the Serpent 'bruised man's heel,' as the Bible tells us; man's nature was changed mentally, morally, and physically. So that now, in this Fifth Race of humanity, we suffer from the abuse, and Prometheus's gift may in this sense be described as a 'curse.' The Divine Titan, who brought the boon to mankind, took upon himself the retribution consequent thereon, and so is shown in the allegory as being chained to a rock and tortured. But Prometheus stands for mankind in general, so that his tortures represent the woes of mankind. At last, however, appears his deliverer, Herakles, typifying the Divine saving power in Man himself.

In the Bible allegory Adam and Eve are shown as disobeying the Lord God; and similarly in the legend of Prometheus, Zeus is disobeyed. The clue to this is to be found in the ancient Grecian Mysteries, wherein Zeus represents no higher principle than the lower aspect of human

intelligence. So this 'God,' against whom they rebelled, was not the omnipotent all-wise Deity, but simply the guardian of unawakened humanity. The rubric at the head of *Genesis*, iii, says, "The serpent deceives Eve"; which is a theological gloss, not warranted by the text. The Serpent tells Eve, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

The above will probably shock many Christians who cherish the familiar doctrines with deep-seated reverence; but others it may help over a difficulty. They will see that Christianity need not be thrown overboard; it only needs to be better understood. There has always been difficulty in reconciling the idea of a wise and beneficent Deity with the idea of anger and punishment and eternal damnation. This difficulty we have created for ourselves: the All-Wise never ordained any such thing. The will of God need not be altogether inscrutable; we have our own God-given intelligence to guide us to an understanding. Time-worn dogmas are a misfit in this age; the ancient teachings may prove better adapted.

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LIGHT FROM THE EAST — *G. de Purucker*

When the ancient founders of your philosophical schools came East, to acquire the lore of our predecessors, they filed no claims, except the single one of a sincere and *unselfish* hunger for the truth. If any now aspire to found new schools of science and philosophy the same plan will win — *if the seekers have in them the elements of success.* — *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 342

The reference by the Masters to Occidentals going to the Orient to get truth, to get initiation, does not refer to any one School nor to any particular School of any especial epoch exclusively. I believe this to be the real meaning behind the Master's words: When the Fifth Root-Race began to settle themselves, race on race began to settle on the then new lands that had risen above the surface of the Atlantic ocean, and which in our time we call Europe and Asia Minor and parts of Hither Asia. When these lands began to be settled, the holy land, the land of initiation and mystery, already existed; it had already been previously settled by the great Lodge even in Atlantean days. It was then, it has ever since been, and it still is and functions as, the Mother Lodge, the spiritual and intellectual and psychical center to which those who are fit and ready travel for further Light.

Ex Oriente Lux: Out of the East light, refers not only to the rising sun or to the present geographical countries of the east, but to the fact, intuitively known as it were by certain humans through all the ages, that in Sambhala, let us say in a tract of land in what is now the high plateau of Tibet, since immemorial times there has been the greatest School of the sages of all the ages, those whom we call the Mahatmans of Wisdom and love and peace. From Atlantis journeyed those who were eager for more light to this center, and either returned as neophytes to bring light to their fellow-men who were ready for it, or continued at that center to become others of the wondrous group of superhumans living there, and living there today.

Thus, ever since the Alps arose above the seas, probably in what in H. P. B.'s time were called the Miocene or even the Eocene periods, the newly settled lands of Europe bore their immigrant populations from the sinking Atlantean countries; and these, at least their own initiated leaders, knew where the greatest occult center on earth is located. So that when any particular one in these European Schools had reached a certain point of spiritual and intellectual and psychical development authorizing him, because he was ready for it, to receive more, he journeyed east as a pilgrim, with reverence and in the atmosphere of holiness. Some returned home to their own countries to give more light to the occult centers there. Those who were the greatest remained in the East, and increased the number of the Elder Brothers of mankind.

And so it was through all the ages down to our present time. The Celtic races through their Druids, the Scandinavians through their occult school, the Greeks and Romans, the Scythians and Shamans of Russia, and the wise men of what are now the plains of Hungary and the mountains of the Carpathians, wherever in the Occidental parts of Europe there were occult centers having links with the Mother School in the East — from all these and in all ages, neophytes were sent forth. These neophytes proved they were ready so to go. They were trained in these Occidental Schools to look to this great center in the land of the sunrise to them, the land of the rising sun. *Ex oriente lux. Light from the East.* They were trained with reverence to look upon this wonder-place; and from boyhood up through youth and adult manhood, even perhaps into age, those who were the attendants or disciples of the Occidental occult schools looked forwards some day to making this wondrous pilgrimage to this Mother, this spiritual Mother of earth's children. It was a wondrous thing all through those ages. It was held before the eastern neophytes as the greatest reward that they could possibly have. They were told Yes, here we give you light to a certain point. Beyond that we have not the power to give you more. But more is to be had. It is to be taken by strength, by power within yourself. Go east. And they did.

And as I said, some returned, like Pythagoras and Apollonius and others. A few did not return; they had passed higher, too high as it were to spend their time in the smaller work in the west. Their work had become mundial, world-wide instead of nation-wide. And do you know, Friends and Brothers, this same thing exactly exists today. The same grand hope is held out to our students today. The same possibilities exist for them today. But the wonder is that none can take this pilgrimage successfully until he is ready. Happy the man who succeeds. For him there is the light supernal. There is the freedom of confabulating with the divinities, the men-gods on this earth. For him there is the boundless knowledge, and for him, greatest treasure of all, there is the inestimable privilege of service, service guided by wisdom and love for all mankind, and indeed for all that is, without distinction of race, creed, caste, sex, or color. How wonderful it is!

The Theosophical Forum

THE LIFE-WAVE OF THE PLANT KINGDOM — *Allan J. Stover*

To the student of Theosophy the story of the living earth is no mere myth. A Theosophical study of Nature shows our planet to be a pulsing, living being, whereon lands slowly rise and lands slowly sink throughout the ages. Even the winds and currents of the sea have their ordered courses, which shift and change with the slow change of continents. The various classes of plant and animal life, as well as the Races and Sub-Races of man, move through their majestic cycles along with the lands upon which they live. All is part of one grand scheme, the rising to Godhood, and beyond, of all that lives.

To study the plant kingdom is to learn something of man. To study the history of man is to understand the living earth which is his home. "That which is above is as that which is below." "There is one law for all things, both the great and the small." How often we have heard these and similar words, and how seldom we have used them as keys to unlock the mysteries of Nature!

The story of plant life on this earth is the story of a race that is passing, a race that had its heyday millions of years ago, and is now slowly declining. In most cases our forests are composed of the relics of once world dominant species whose story is a dramatic one of changing climates, of the cyclic rise and fall of lands, of vast migrations occurring *pari passu* with the migration of the great animal stocks.

Yet it should be remembered in studying plant life on this earth that a "race" in the vegetable kingdom is not composed of individualized "lives" as we find in the human kingdom. A tree, for instance, is not a fixed, personal, self-conscious being; a tree lives in its descendants, passes on from plant to plant its identic life: reimbodies, one might say, at once. A tree is an exact instance of the Greek idea of *palingenesis*. So that when we speak of plant migrations, we should think of the life and consciousness composing the "life-wave" and not of the individualized

forms. Think of the tree as a continuing life-entity, older than the hills it grows upon.

Just as there are two lines of evolution in the development of the human race, i.e., a higher and a lower, so are there in the plant kingdom. The plant kingdom emanates or unfolds from "above" downwards, as does man; for it is spiritual in essence and has its origin in the invisible spiritual world. This is the higher evolution. But it also differentiates into myriads of forms, and this may be spoken of as the evolution from "below." Both lines of evolution have to be taken into account. The scientist gives his entire attention to the evolution of differentiation, being ignorant of any more fundamental causal factors.

There are some scientists, however, who are aware that there is more to evolution than the reaction of an organism to environment. Dr. Robert Broom, in his Presidential Address, July 1, 1933, before the South African Association of Science, said:

The origin of species and of much of evolution appears to be due to some organising and partly intelligent spiritual agency associated with the animal or plant, which controls its life processes and tends to keep the being more or less adapted to its environment. But in addition to this there seem to be other spiritual agencies of a much higher type which have been responsible for what may be called greater evolution — the evolution of vertebrates, the steady advance from fishes to amphibians, to mammals and ultimately to man. These spiritual agencies appear to have worked by directing from time to time the inferior agencies which are associated with the animals and plants.

H. P. Blavatsky, in her *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* gives a clear key to two types of evolution in the building of the plant kingdom:

Every form, we are told, is built in accordance with the model traced for it in the Eternity and reflected in the DIVINE MIND. There are hierarchies of "Builders of form," and series of forms

and degrees, from the highest to the lowest. While the former are shaped under the guidance of the "Builders," the gods, "Cosmocraiores," the latter are fashioned by the Elementals or Nature Spirits.

H. P. B. further likens the variations even within one class of plants to the ray of light broken into its prismatic colors.

The different variations of plants, &c., are the broken rays of one Ray. As the ray passes through the seven planes, it is broken on every plane into thousands and millions of rays down to the world of forms, every ray breaking into in intelligence on its own plane.

Thus she shows that even the lowest stages of form development are due to the inner intelligence, whatever the effect that outside forces may have upon it. She says further:

From the acorn will grow an oak, and this oak, as a tree, may have a thousand forms, (1) all of which vary the one from the other. All these forms are contained within the acorn, and though the form which the tree will take depends on extraneous circumstances, yet that, which Aristotle called the "privation of matter," exists beforehand, in the Astral waves. But the noumenal germ of the oak exists beyond the plane of the Astral Light, it is only the subjective picture of it that already exists in the Astral Light, and the development of the oak tree is the result of the developed prototype in the Astral Light, which development proceeds from higher to lower planes, until on the lowest plane it has its last consolidation and development of form.

In exactly the same way, we are taught, does invisible spiritual man work his way downwards into material form.

In the plant kingdom there is much to suggest the Root-Races and Sub-Races of man. The various classes — even the various orders — form distinct groups. Research reveals that each of the classes of the

vegetable kingdom is contemporaneous with one of the Root-Races of mankind, as though it slavishly followed the pattern of division and subdivision of the human species. For example, the sub-tropical coal forests existed during the time of the First and Second Root-Races. The Gymnosperms, or cone-bearing trees, originated and flourished during the Mesozoic Era, when the Third Root-Race of mankind was in its prime, and, finally, the Angiosperms came in with the Atlanteans, or Fourth Root-Race.

This parallelism, as said, is even carried out to the matter of sub-sub-races. Take as an example of a distinct stock of plant life, the great class of the Gymnosperms, which flourished in the Mesozoic Era. They are like a great Root-Race. Two species of Gymnosperm, the cycad and the ginkgo, are the earliest known representations of a type of plant growing over most of the land area of our earth during the greater part of the Mesozoic times. The following Gymnosperm types could be considered as minor, overlapping waves within the great wave of the Gymnosperms — as sub-sub-races within the Root-Race — each starting, generally, in the North, (2) as the races of man are said to have done, spreading rapidly, rising to its climax, slowly receding, to be followed by another and another wave, each wave dividing and subdividing as it progresses and develops.

First are the fleshy-cone trees, or Tecaceae, of which the podocarp pine is one of our few living representatives, so old it is called the living fossil. The earliest remains of this tree are found in Greenland, the few living relics in Tasmania, southeastern Africa and South America. Related to and springing from this branch is the yew tree.

Second, are the Taxodineae, or taxed leaved trees, of which the Sequoia is our best representative.

Third, the Araucarineae, or fleshy leaved trees. The Norfolk Island pine and the monkey puzzle tree are living examples of the trees dominant during the Jurassic Period, and form the bulk of the petrified wood of our southwestern deserts, being today only in the southern hemisphere.

Fourth, come the Cupressineae, or scaly-leaved trees, of which the cypress and juniper are the best known today.

Fifth, we have the needle-leaved trees, which include the firs, pines, cedars, spruce, etc., the most abundant and progressive of our evergreens today.

As a postscript we add the little, green leafless desert tea, Ephedra, the last of the Gymnosperm race to develop.

The life-wave of the Gymnosperms, with its many minor divisions, is a good example of a true evolutionary impulse coming down into the world of physical forms and passing through its life-cycle. Upon this vital current, the main evolutionary impulse, we find the forces of Nature acting, whether we call them "inherbalized" elementals and nature spirits, as does H. P. Blavatsky, or speak of the laws of survival and adaptation. These elemental forces tend to specialize and modify the basic type. The result is a central stream of evolution where vital forces run strong and true, with many over-specialized and egotistical little whirlpools and eddies shooting off from the main evolutionary course of the Builders, to stagnate and disappear. It has often been remarked that young, vigorous races of plants are more plastic, more adaptable to change, than old, worn-out ones.

In many instances, the offshoots from the main evolutionary current, drawn into their various side-streams through over-specialization along one line or another, have become so fixed in their predominant characteristics that they are incapable of change. Unable to adapt themselves to new conditions of environment, the vitality of such races is lowered, the rate of reproduction decreases, and extinction follows as a matter of course. Strains which have remained generalized in their evolution — that is, in which one or another organ or characteristic has not become over-developed or over specialized — still retain their vigor, although they may actually be older in point of time. Do we not find this the common plan in all the kingdoms?

In tracing the history of plant and animal life from early geologic ages,

it has been found that the primitive or generalized type persists the longest, and that the specialized offshoots tend to disappear, so that in time the remaining racial stock appears to return to the original type, although that original type has itself improved through the ages. For instance in the plant kingdom, those leaves with an undivided or entire margin are considered more primitive in form than the deeply incised or compound leaves, which are evidence of a departure from the original theme. As a parallel illustration from the animal kingdom, in sea shells an abnormal development of ornament, such as spines, tubercles, or unusual patterns of growth, indicates decadence and coming extinction. Such creatures are in a side-stream or eddy, the plaything of elemental forces. They have gone off on a side-line, specialized in one direction, and have paid the penalty by becoming fixed and incapable of further evolution.

Another similarity between the races of man and the classes of plant life is the overlapping of one class with another. Just as each new great Root-Race of the human stock springs from the central point of the previous one, so it can truly be said that at about the midpoint of one class in the plant "life-wave" the following class begins to rise.

The Theosophical Leaders have told us of the plan of man's evolution through Root-Races and Sub-Races, Family Races and Nations. They have told us also that there is one law for all things. Why not apply to the lower kingdoms what we have learned, remembering that the vegetable kingdom originated in very early times, and that our records — both fossil and living — are but scattered and broken fragments in the book of plant evolution.

FOOTNOTES:

1. It is interesting to note in connection with differentiation that there are within just the oak family at least 200 named species. The majority are trees, but some are low bushes. Some are deciduous, some evergreen. Some have lobed and divided leaves, others have small, entire leaves. These 200 species interblend and in many instances are very difficult to distinguish one from the other. — A. J. S. ([return to](#)

[text](#))

2. A survey of the plant life of the world shows that the oldest types have the fewest living examples and grow farthest south, while the youngest types have the greatest number of living examples and are restricted to the northern hemisphere. ([return to text](#))

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THE TREE OF LIFE — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

What can be the meaning of the universality of the Tree Symbol, found, as it is, in every country, though modified by national thought and customs? Conventionalized trees, generally guarded on the right and left by strange figures, are placed on sacred monuments or buildings of importance of all the old nations. On an Assyrian cylinder, for example, was found such a tree, surmounted by the winged disc and guarded by two winged figures with bird's heads. (1) From a capital of the Temple of Athena at Pryene is another, guarded by two animals, and again on a sculptured slab in the Treasury of St. Marks, Venice, is a tree guarded there by two huge birds. A tree symbol, similar in design to the ancient Chaldeans, has been found in Mexico, suggesting a pre-Columbian colonization of America. But the oldest examples of these designs come from Asia and the ancient countries. In India each Buddha had his own Bodhi-tree, and we are familiar with the story of Gautama Buddha gaining his enlightenment under the sacred Bodhi-tree, poetical reference to his initiation. Gautama's tree was the pippala or *Ficus religiosa*.

In the folklore of every old nation was the idea that in every tree dwelt its spirit, sometimes a god, or in some trees an evil demon, and these tree legends form a rich part of the folklore of European countries also. Some of the Druidic rites associated with the mistletoe are echoes of old tree-worship. Aside from and probably out of the religious idea of tree-worship have grown the ideas of tree-spirits, good and evil, who had to be propitiated or thanked by offerings or ceremonies. Certain trees became sacred to gods, as the laurel to Apollo, the olive to Athena, out of which grew the "Olive branch of Peace." In Persia it was the cypress, sacred tree of the god Mithra, and in Egypt, the tree of Osiris was the Acacia. Gifts were hung on these various sacred trees, or offering of fruits to the gods laid at their base. Wreaths were used in religious ceremonies in Greece and Rome from the tree of the god worshiped,

branches or garlands in the hands of a chorus of maidens. Even the persecuted were safe under the branches of a sacred tree.

The medieval history of which we have records is surrounded with a halo of charm and mystery by the folklore, fairy tales and myths, growing out of tree legends. Hamadryads and elves peopled the forests. Children lived in an atmosphere of other worlds. The woods were full of friendly nooks. Spirits were in the wind. Everything was alive.

There were many legends representing mankind as born from trees. Hesychius said the Greeks believed that mankind was the fruit of the Ash. Similar legends to the effect that the human race originally sprang from a tree, exist in the mythology of widely separated races. The Damaras of South Africa believe that the universal progenitor was a tree, out of which grew everything that lives. According to a legend of the Sioux Indians of the Upper Missouri, our first parents were two trees, rooted to the ground until a monster snake gnawed at the roots and gave them independent motion, thus destroying their harmony and mutual trust. There is also an Iranian account that our first parents issued from the ground as the rhubarb plant, which divided into two. Ormazd endowed each with a human soul and they became our first parents. According to the Prose or Younger Edda, Odin and his brothers saw two trees on the sea-shore, which they changed into two humans, male and female, which then became the parents of the human race. This idea of mankind issuing from two parents was also wide spread. Further there are many stories suggesting that heaven was in some way connected with trees. The Khasias of India have a legend that the stars are men who have climbed into heaven by a tree, and the Mbocobis of Paraguay believe that the souls of the dead go up "to the earth on high" by the tree which joins us to heaven. Here we have hints of the teaching on the after death journey of the human monad through the spheres, kept alive by myths. Such a hint is also given in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 411 and 577. Quoting from the latter reference: "On its way to the Earth, as on its way back from the Earth, each soul . . . had to pass through the seven planetary regions both ways" — a teaching which has been more fully elaborated by G. de Purucker in his

various writings.

When Zoroaster died, Ormazd had his soul translated into a lofty tree, and in his previous incarnations Gautama Buddha is said to have been a tree-spirit forty-three times. These few examples indicating the universality of the Tree Symbol are taken from the many to be found in an interesting, well illustrated volume, *The Sacred Tree*, by Mrs. J. H. Philpot.

What is the root basis behind all these tree legends? Plainly they have sprung from the teaching of "The Tree of Life," the mysterious and rich heritage of every race in every age. The frequent inclusion of two figures, one on each side of the tree, with the Serpent of Wisdom, suggests that this revealing symbol refers to the separation of the sexes and awakening of mind in the 3rd Root Race by the Dhyani-Chohans, symbolized by the serpent. (2) The Tree of the knowledge of good and evil, recorded in the Christian Scriptures familiar to the West is surrounded by a story which veils its meaning. (3) That found in the Norse Mythology is more revealing. Here all life is figured as a tree. (4) In *Norse Mythology* by Rasmus B. Anderson, pp. 205-9, is a description of Yggdrasil, The Tree of Life, extending its branches into the whole universe. It has its roots in the Kingdom of Hela or Death, where at its foot are the three Norns, past, present and future. Their decrees are inviolable destiny (Kar-man). It is the Tree of Existence. Its boughs are histories of nations, every leaf a biography. Beneath the root of Yggdrasil is *Mimer's Fountain*, in which wisdom and knowledge are concealed. (The Eternal Unknown Cause). This "Tree of the Norse Legend cannot wither and die until the last battle of life shall be fought, while its roots are gnawed all the time by the dragon Nidhogg." (S. D. I, 211) But "the Norns sprinkle it daily with the waters from the fountain of Urd, that it may not wither." (5)

We have a most perfect tree symbol in our oldest Aryan Race, viz. the Asvattha, referred to in Chapter XV of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, where the roots are said to be above and the branches below. (6) Vishnu is said to have been born under this tree. Then there is the Mexican tree whose

trunk is covered with ten fruits with a female figure on one side and a male on the other, while on the topmost branch is added a bird, signifying *Atman*. (7) Again in the Popul Vuh, the 3rd Race is represented by a tree. (8)

No known race is without this symbol. Certainly there can be no chance or accident in a teaching which is so universal. Indeed it is not difficult to see behind it the strong force of the Guides of the human races, keeping alive this symbol through the ages as a picture of reality. It has been stated that the Great Ones remain with an opening race until certain vital trends are established with sufficient force to run their courses, and one can imagine that this revealing picture of "The Tree of Life" may be one which has been painted on the screen of the Astral Light in unfading colors and with intent. Why this might have been so is clear in the light of the deeper teachings of the Ancient Wisdom as they have been explained in our present cycle. (9) We can see the Tree as a picture of the Universe itself, its roots buried in the depths of Space, the Reality, unknown, unfathomable, its branches spread into worlds within worlds. There too we see an exact picture of the teaching of "emanations." Every new branch establishes a new hierarchy, growing out of a higher one, yet all have their life-force from the same root. The framework of "The Tree of Life" is the *body* of the Universe in which exists all that is, from our atoms to the highest gods. "In IT we live and move and have our being" — a brotherhood which is all inclusive — *universal*. This symbol is so revealing that it might even be called a "Text-book of Life." Some legends hint that it may have been so used; for instance, those referring to men entering trees at death. It is also easy to see written in the structure of trees the teaching of the compound nature of man as united in consciousness with higher branching hierarchies, which we may call Manas, Buddhi, Atma, as well as with branches lower down. And further we can see how man, being a part of the whole and a free agent, may through effort climb in consciousness to higher levels in the hierarchy to which he belongs as man, thus enriching the life currents for all below him, or alas, through misuse of energies, generate poisons in his branch." The dominant

teaching in this symbol is that of the unity of all lives from gods to atoms and hence, that of ever-enduring and reciprocal responsibilities.

Beyond the "world of Brahma," i. e., beyond Brahman, there are realms of consciousness and being still higher than this "world of Brahma," in which reside the roots, so to speak, of the Cosmic Tree and therefore the Root of every human being, the offspring of such mystic Cosmic Tree. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 129

FOOTNOTES:

1. See *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 104. ([return to text](#))
2. See *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 97-8. ([return to text](#))
3. *Op. cit.*, 215-6, 354-5. ([return to text](#))
4. *Isis Unveiled*, I, 152; II, 412. ([return to text](#))
5. *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 520. ([return to text](#))
6. *Op. cit.*, I, 406. ([return to text](#))
7. *Op at*, II, 36. ([return to text](#))
8. *Op at*, II, 181, footnote. ([return to text](#))
9. *Op at*, I, 128, footnote. ([return to text](#))

REINCARNATION THE ETERNAL COSMIC LAW — *John H. Manas*

Reincarnation is neither a dogma nor a doctrine nor a theory, but a Cosmic Law. Reincarnation is one of the most important and deepest philosophical propositions, and it forms the foundation of all true philosophical systems in ancient as well as in modern times, in all lands and in all civilizations. However, reincarnation today is one of the most controversial questions between philosophy, science and the Church.

A Cosmic Law is a certain procedure in Nature which all things and beings are bound to follow. Thus we have the law of gravity, the law of nutrition, the law of falling asleep for a certain period of time and being awake at another period each day in our life. All these are laws of Nature and man cannot go against them. He cannot escape nor change them. He must obey them and comply with their dictates whether he likes it or not, if it pleases him or not. In the same way Reincarnation is a Cosmic Law, which operates on all Cosmic planes, and thus through this basic law the continuation of life, creation and evolution are made possible.

REINCARNATION IN NATURE

When the plant of wheat dies in the summer and ceases to exist visibly as such, and after several months, or even years, a grain of this wheat is planted in the ground and it again dies in the earth and a new plant of wheat, with the same qualities as the sown grain, grows up, what else is this phenomenon in Nature, known to all, than the workings of the law of reincarnation as the grain of wheat is concerned? The same law applies to all plants, animals and men, and in this way life in Nature is sustained and evolution is made possible.

However, as from a grain of wheat always grows a plant of wheat and never a banana, or a pumpkin, in the same way from the seed of a dog, a dog will always be born and never a whale, or a frog, and from the

seed of a man, only a man will always come into being, and never a horse, an elephant, or a bird. There is always a close relationship between the manifesting force, entity and soul and the physical forms through which they manifest. This is the law in Nature.

THE DENIAL OF A COSMIC LAW

The law of Reincarnation unfortunately is very little known among the masses; it is greatly misunderstood by many modern scientists and educated persons, and it is opposed by the Church as a dreadful and heretical theory. Man may become a mental giant by the accumulation of immense knowledge; however, a man grows to real knowledge always only by the expansion of the consciousness of his soul, and this Cosmic knowledge really counts. For this reason enlightenment is always found with the small minority. As the majority rules theirs is the general opinion and the minority is ridiculed. This happens with Reincarnation today.

This state of affairs is nothing new. Three hundred and twelve years ago the same thing happened to Galileo in Padua. Then, one of the most powerful Christian Churches, basing its great power and authority upon the dogma of infallibility, as well as the scientists of that day, taught that it was the sun and the stars that revolve around the earth. This was the prevailing knowledge of the time. Galileo, a renowned astronomer, physicist, and philosopher, dared to contradict them. For this crime, he was condemned to be burned at the stake as a heretic. Because he was a useful man to Society, the Church to save face, forced him to recant his theory. However, in spite of this denial and notwithstanding the application of all penalties, the existing Cosmic law of the revolution of the earth around the sun was not changed in the least. Fortunately, Cosmic Laws are beyond the reach of the ignorant and fanatical man, no matter how powerful he may be.

Time proved that that Church and those scientists were wrong. They just erred. This fact brings us to the logical conclusion that they may err again today where reincarnation is concerned, since they both erred many times in the past on many occasions.

They accuse us of teaching Transmigration of souls; the theory according to which a human soul incarnates in the physical body of an animal. There is no place in God's Universe for such a fantastic belief. The Cosmic law is that each soul always builds and animates a corresponding human physical form, according to the degree of its perfection. No human soul can ever incarnate in the physical body of an animal. The high mental vibrations of the human soul will break and destroy the animal form.

COSMIC LAW VERSUS MAN-MADE DOGMA

According to authentic historical sources, the law of Reincarnation was taught in the first Christian Churches to the inner circle of the brothers, since the first Christian communities were but an imitation of the ancient Pythagorean communities and schools and the continuation in a limited way of the ancient Greek, Egyptian and Mithraic mysteries. However, from the time the Christian Church under the Roman emperor Constantine decided to become a political organization, a drastic change should have been made and certain dogmas had to be formulated for the spiritual subjugation of the masses. These radical changes and dogmas were the following:

(1) The original sin. (2) Hell and paradise. (3) The forgiveness of individual sins by the clergy.

In order that these dogmas be established — which are in opposition to the Cosmic law of Reincarnation — the latter had to be thrown out of the teachings of the Bible and of the Church. In this way the new religion acquired numerous converts, but at the same time the darkness of ignorance, fear — the greatest enemy of man — superstition, religious fanaticism, the Roman Inquisition, and the black practices and events of the Middle Ages, until only a few decades ago, enshrouded the human mind, and civilization was moved back by two thousand years.

The elimination of the Cosmic Law of Reincarnation and the establishment of the new dogmas, brought up the following three great

logical questions, which the Church was never able and will never be able to answer.

(1) THE INEQUALITY OF MAN

If God is just and the source of all love and harmony, why then, has he created every human being different from the other without any equality whatsoever? "How can one account for the fact that one man is born poor and in spite of heroic effort remains poor all his life, whereas, another man is born into a rich family and has all the good things of life without effort on his part? Is this divine justice? Can one conceive of a just God who sends one man into this world to be a pauper all his life, whereas another man enjoys all the luxuries and pleasures of the same life? Why does one man have to die very young, and another live to a ripe old age? None of these questions can be logically answered without the operation of a law of eternal Justice and of Necessity, the Universal Law of Metempsychosis, or Reincarnation." (See our recent book, *Life's Riddle Solved*, pages 69-70)

(2) HELL AND PARADISE

Is it just and in agreement with the divine law of justice and of harmony, that if a man, according to the standards of society — and we have countless such standards — lived a good life for a few years on earth, after his death, he is going straight to paradise to live there in a supreme bliss through eternity? Is this just and logical? Where are then the workings of the laws of evolution and of progress?

Is it just and logical, if another man lived a wicked life — which according to the standards of another society might be a good life — after his death, his soul will go straight to hell to be tormented and tortured there for ever? If this is true, who does the torturing? What does this hell and this paradise of the Biblical story look like and feel like? What does hell mean and what really takes place in the after-death existence of the human soul?

(3) THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

No one can ever forgive the sins of another. This is against any law of Nature. It is the same thing as to satisfy one's hunger by having another person do the eating for him. In Nature everything works out its own salvation. The very moment some one else does things for us, our work, that very moment the basic law of evolution will come to an end, since evolution means and is the gradual progress of all things and of all beings in Nature through individual effort.

The Biblical passage in *Matthew* 18:18 "Whatever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," which the Church uses to establish her authority for the forgiveness of sins, if this statement was really made by Jesus, which is very doubtful, it has entirely a different meaning and not that of giving authority to any one man to forgive the sins of another man, or to change an existing Cosmic Law, which as such is immutable. (See *op. cit.*, page 118 for full explanation.)

"All these very important and serious questions have kept the human mind perplexed, guessing and in bondage to fear. These questions will continue to challenge his real knowledge and his wisdom until man is able to understand the Cosmic plan of Divinity which is carried out through the Cosmic laws of evolution and Reincarnation." (*Op. cit.*, page 91.)

THE LAW OF COSMIC JUSTICE, HARMONY AND LOVE

The above serious questions were never and they will never be adequately answered. Because, when any man, or any institution, proclaims himself, or itself infallible and denies the operation of a Cosmic Law of God, of course, it will never have an answer to give, except to present a man-made dogma as a subterfuge in the place of the suppressed Truth.

Through the operation of the Cosmic Law of Reincarnation all these great questions are answered once and for all. The human soul is a spark of Divinity. The Ego leaves the bosom of Its heavenly Father-God having in itself all the Divine qualities and potentialities of God in a

latent state. These the Ego transforms into individual consciousness by its pilgrimage through matter, in numerous incarnations, or rebirths in human bodies, through its own personal efforts and experiences. The total sum up of these conscious qualities, powers and capabilities of the Ego, constitutes the human soul. In each new incarnation the soul prepares a physical body in proportion to its strength, its perfection and the degree of its consciousness. This is justice, harmony and impersonal love of the Cosmic Law of equality for all. The soul in each of its many lives possesses and manifests through its physical body characteristics, qualities or faults, abilities or disabilities, weakness or strength, etc., according to its merits and demerits, no more no less.

After this long pilgrimage through matter, when the soul will have completely purified itself and its consciousness has become Divine, then, it will come back to the bosom of its Father-God as a real Son of God. Who that has ears to hear, let him hear and understand the workings of this basic Cosmic Law of Justice, of Harmony and of Love, the Law of Reincarnation.

The Theosophical Forum

TRUTH, LIGHT, AND LIBERATION FOR DISCOURAGED HUMANITY — *Kenneth Morris*

This is what Theosophy means and is. It came to us from the Masters of Wisdom, who have travelled the road of evolution to a point much farther than we have reached, and are much nearer than we to that Kingdom of Nature which is next above our human kingdom. They are the Guardians of Humanity; Their supreme interest is to aid in the evolution of mankind, to draw men upward, away from the ignorance and consequent selfishness and wrong-living that keep us in misery and make this planet and the life on it seem the bad joke of an omnipotent Caliban. There is a Divinity within us, They are men made One with that Divinity, and the allies of the Divinity in all men. The last thing They would wish would be to form a new orthodoxy, to found a church of the "saved," or a new religion for getting its faithful into its own particular brand of "heaven", or to start a School of Magic and teach people how to develop their "powers" or give them interesting teachings to amuse them and make them feel superior to their fellows. Their Theosophy — or Divine Wisdom — has nothing whatever to do with any of these things; if these are what you are after, don't join the Theosophical Society; you will never feel at home in it. Study the Masters' teachings, that you may get from them power to help your fellows; get them clear in your mind, and don't confuse them with the personal opinions of Tom, Dick and Harry posing as teachers at so much a lesson, because it is from the Masters' Theosophy you will get the power to help, however amusingly fantastic the views of these others may be; but shun like poison the mood of the creedmonger, the attitude that you know it all! For a creed is a dead thing, that you "believe in" and that's that; a kind of Micawberish writing I O U's for your debts and thanking God *that's* off your mind; it sets finality before you where you are; dopes you with the bluff that nothing is to be learned nor any road of growth to be travelled; no matter what clauses it might contain, it would still be a lie. For Truth is not a formula, but a

certain direction, and travelling in that direction; a growth; a progress, from gross to fine, from mean to noble, from limited to universal. Could truth be embodied in a creed — one tick of the clock and it would be a lie.

There is no way to come towards Truth except by cutting out one's limitations, universalizing oneself — which is as much as to say, deepening and widening one's sympathies. So that, to learn anything of truth, you must do the work the Masters desire done, learning in order that you may teach and living in the will to better the stuff of humanity. Why should you study what is taught about the Universe and Man, the Monads and Hierarchies, the Principles and the Atoms? — Why, just that you may get the keys to yourself and to the methods of things, and have entry into the treasure-chambers of wisdom, courage, compassion that are within you, and bring forth from them what shall sweeten the life of your valley and your town. That you may be able to re-create courage where it has fainted to extinction-point; to waken hope and manhood, and the knowledge that will sustain them, where before there was only despair; and all, that the stuff of humanity may be bettered. You can't get truth without becoming pervious to that within you which knows truth, the Higher Nature; and the higher the Higher Nature, the more universal it is, the more it is something that is in all mankind, in all life, equally; and therefore the more you live in your fellow men, in the will to help and serve and raise them up, the more you are That Which Knows Truth — or the more you know of Theosophy.

What has been written about, for instance, Karma, would fill volumes; one means, what has been given out from the Masters for the intellects of men to assimilate. But nothing that can be spoken or written or printed cannot be twisted into a lie. Thus, one has heard it argued that Karman means that a murderer should be hanged for his crime. But no one could think so who knew that Theosophy is Truth, Light and Liberation for Discouraged Humanity. A real knowledge of, or belief in, Karman, on the other hand, convinces us that punishment must be left to Karman, which is impersonal, automatic, and certain, and in which

there is no concept of punishment or revenge. Actually no human being can be just when he undertakes to punish another; we cannot know, ever, how much of guilt, of evil will, went to impel a criminal to his crime. We have no means of measuring how far the man was responsible, nor what degree of punishment putting him to death may be. But Universal Nature does know, because man is part of her; and she takes her steps, dealing out absolute justice; not to avenge, but to cure. — Or again, there is the old contention that to come to the assistance of one who is suffering is to interfere with his karman. But — Truth, Light and Liberation! — his karman and yours brought you there at the time with the ability to help him; and not to do so is to sin against the Oneness of Being, and to incur heavy karman by so flouting the Whole of which we are parts. — And then there are those who would make dogmas out of Karman, and a cause for division, hatred and attack; *homoousion-homiousionism* and hairsplitting; "Who doesn't believe about it as I do, or phrase the thing as I do, is a liar and deceiver, and probably a thief." Diach yr od! is there help for any man in such tomfoolery? If you want to know the truth about Karman, find a man who is in despair, and tell him what will bring the light of new courage into his eyes, what will take from him the bitter feeling that someone else is wronging him, and make him know that he, and he alone, is absolutely the Lord and Master of his own destiny; aye, and more, can enrol himself right now among the Helpers of Mankind; and you will have told him the truth about it. You will soon find out that half measures won't do; that sometimes-just-and-sometimes-unjust has no power to rouse the lion in the soul of him, that it is only H. P. B.'s teaching, Justice Absolute and Infallible, that can do that. And this is the real test; because Theosophy is Truth, Light and Liberation for discouraged humanity; and what is not compassion-lit is not Theosophy.

What's that you say? Any religion can comfort people in adversity? — Yes; the falsest of them all can dope a man into effortless drifting with the current, leaving it all to God or Church or priest — to anything outside himself. But the "Comfort" of Theosophy is to have him

swimming up-stream with strong strokes, knowing himself mightier than the current.

Nothing is really yours till you have given it away. To know Theosophy you must help people with it; you must show them how to meet their difficulties with it. When you have done that, the teachings you have read about, and have thus used, *become Theosophy in you*; Knowledge, Power, Peace; above all, a living Love.

— Reprinted from *The Welsh Theosophical Forum*, January-February, 1945

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THE PREHISTORIC ZODIAC AT GLASTONBURY — *Charles J. Ryan*

Everyone has heard of the Great Stone Monuments at Stonehenge and Avebury in England, but comparatively few know much about the prehistoric Sacred Center at Glastonbury in Somersetshire which is associated with the semi-mythical King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table and which, as Mrs. Maltwood remarks in *The Enchantments of Britain* (1) "constituted a laboratory of thought and mystery recognised by the races of Europe as unspeakably hallowed and inscrutable." Lewis Spence, in his *The Mysteries of Britain*, calls it "The Temple of the British Sacred Tradition." Mrs. Maltwood's twenty-five years of intensive research have, as she very reasonably considers, established in the vicinity of Glastonbury the existence of a hitherto unsuspected monument that greatly surpasses in interest and in size anything hitherto found in that ancient center of the Mysteries, or maybe in Western Europe. It consists of a representation of the Signs of the Zodiac whose components are delineated on the scale of miles, the entire circle of effigies being ten miles in diameter! This colossal Zodiac is outlined on the surface of the earth with great engineering skill by the adapted contours of streams, hills, forests, huge artificial earthworks, etc., and the labor of shaping them must have been great. Such an undertaking is enduring and the changes caused by farming operations have done little to obliterate the gigantic effigies since their creation about 2700 b.c. as calculated by Mrs. Maltwood from astronomical data. From an airplane the outlines are plainly seen, but otherwise they can only be properly traced on maps and airplane photographs. Mrs. Maltwood's discovery was made through her efforts to map out the quest of King Arthur's Knights whose holy isle of Avalon has been identified with Glastonbury. In her previous works, *A Guide to Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars*, and its *Air View Supplement*, the Zodiac — King Arthur's Round Table — is fully described and illustrated. This book has a few, but sufficient, illustrations.

Judging by the mass of corroborating evidence that the author produces as the result of profound scholarly research and of her own observations, it seems impossible to doubt that she has made an excellent case for both the actual existence and the origin of the amazing monument which so definitely sustains the claim of the Theosophical Teachers that prehistoric races had high intelligence and technical skill, and above all a unified system of thought which Theosophists call the ancient Wisdom-Religion, widely spread over the earth.

In regard to the method of preserving knowledge by indelibly carving it on the surface of the earth we have other examples in England in the great White Horse at Uffington, the Wilmington Giant, and others. Mrs. Maltwood quotes H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 750, where she refers to the records of Initiates from Egypt traveling *by land* — before the breaking through of the British Channel — to Britain and establishing "colossal Zodiacs," and above all the reference from the same source to the one-time gigantic Zodiac in what is now the Gobi or Shamo desert. H. P. B. writes:

As above so below. Sidereal phenomena and the behavior of the celestial bodies in the heavens, were taken as a model, and the plan was carried out below, on earth. . . . In the same manner and on the plan of the Zodiac in the *upper* Ocean or the heavens, a certain realm on Earth, an inland sea, was consecrated and called "the Abyss of Learning"; twelve centers on it in the shape of twelve small islands representing the Zodiacal signs — two of which remained for ages the "mystery signs" and were the abodes of twelve Hierophants and masters of wisdom. This "sea of knowledge" or learning remained for ages there, where now stretches the Shamo or Gobi desert. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II 502

Mrs. Maltwood points out that while the reference to "colossal Zodiacs" connects up with Egypt, the sentences just quoted above deal with Asia. She writes:

The latter exactly pictures "The Temple of the Stars," in England,

for the signs are set in what are called on the map, the Sea Moors. The low-lying land has now been more or less drained but in Winter time the little hills appear as islands emerging from the flooded Sea Moors. Probably the "Initiates" came via Egypt, to lay out this Zodiac.

Another reference to *The Secret Doctrine* by Mrs. Maltwood relates to the divine Flames or Fiery Lions "whose esotericism is securely hidden in the Zodiacal sign of Leo." (*S. D.*, I, 213) These red flames are ingeniously indicated at Glastonbury. Mrs. Maltwood writes:

In this Temple of the Stars the Lion's tongue composed of red clay is one of the most interesting modeled earthworks; it is extended intentionally to rest on and point out the central line of the Ecliptic. . . . I marveled at its life-like drawing expressed by the processional path that surrounds it. . . .

The author presents a striking array of traditions and ancient records from Asia, etc., collected with great industry from authentic sources, tending to demonstrate the origin of the Glastonbury Zodiac from Sumerian-Chaldean sources, probably toward the close of the time when Taurus was the dominant sign (roughly speaking 4800 B.C. to 2400 B.C.). The Sumerians probably derived their knowledge from the far older Gobi civilization described by H. P. Blavatsky.

Mrs. Maltwood has found that many of the names of places, farms, etc., in the area of the Zodiac bear close resemblances to Oriental ones. Glastonbury is located in the county of Somerset and the ancient county seat was Somerton, derived from the Sumerians. The name of the river Parutti, which guards the sacred area of the gods in the Babylonian legend of Gilgamesh is obviously, as she says:

. . . the Parrett River of Somerset, which outlines the "great dog" of this "Kingdom of Logres," is perhaps the oldest name in the British Isles, it was left by the Sumerian settlers, Somerset being "The Seat of the Sumers" or Cymry. So, close to the effigy that portrays the constellation Gemini, we find the ancient names for

the sun gods, Lug and Hu, in Lugshorn and Huish. . . .

The connexion between the Arthurian legend and the Zodiacal "Round Table" is clearly laid out in this fascinating study, but it is impossible to go into this in a brief review. We notice that only ten of the Zodiacal Signs are definitely represented or indicated on the Glastonbury Giant Zodiac, Cancer the Crab and Libra the Balance being omitted.

According to H. P. Blavatsky ten signs only were known to "the profane" until the Greeks added Libra, and Virgo-Scorpio was divided into two; though the initiates always had the twelve. This, however, does not explain the omission (if it is really omitted and not merely obscured) of Cancer in the Glastonbury Zodiac.

Glastonbury has always had a strong link with the Orient. It was not only a prehistoric spiritual center but a specially sacred locality to the Christian world with its traditions of the visit of Joseph of Arimathea and perhaps the youthful Jesus, and other associations which are not altogether forgotten.

In an environment like this where a devotional atmosphere has been maintained for several thousand years, it would be surprising if the partition between the material world and the unseen were not somewhat thinner than in the conditions of modern fretful city life. And, according to strong evidence, this was demonstrated in June 1910 when great interest was aroused by a report in the *Daily Chronicle*, a leading London paper, of unexplained happenings at Glastonbury and neighborhood consisting of manifestations of a powerful perfume of incense at various places. They occurred in an ancient Manor House outside the city and also within its precincts, in private houses as well as in the open air. The grounds of the famous ruined Abbey were the scene of strongly marked manifestations. The witnesses were numerous and no normal explanation was able to be found. The perfume appeared and disappeared suddenly and sometimes lasted for many minutes. Comparison with ordinary Western Church incense and experiments with gums and balsams indicated that it was of Oriental type. The correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* wrote:

Here we have phenomena occurring of a rare and beautiful nature, observed by a number of witnesses, and even now occurring in the most unexpected manner. And there is no place so admirably "staged" with its venerable history and associations as Glastonbury for the mysterious happenings. The story contains no element of the terrifying or the malignant, but rather is reminiscent of the gentle lives of devoted men. . . .

Many other unexplained phenomena of no low order are claimed to have occurred at Glastonbury in recent years, but as this review is not a discussion on psychical research we must say no more. Mrs. Maltwood's book is entirely devoted to a scholarly presentation of the scientific and historical demonstration of her "discovery, delineation and localization" of the colossal Zodiac, and the highly important conclusions to be drawn therefrom.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Enchantments of Britain*. By K. E. Maltwood, F. R. S. A. Publishers, The Victoria Printing and Publishing Co. Victoria, B. C, Canada. \$1.25.
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The Theosophical Forum

KARMAN, THE STRENGTH OF LIFE — *John Peck*

Inspiring all the great Theosophical doctrines is a Spirit which seems to be constantly congealing into the gem about which all the forms in the universe settle, in much the same way as frost outlines the structure of a plant, or as forms grow out of the photographic negative. On certain fine and beautiful evenings the air becomes live, silent and expectant as dew-point is reached, and in the same live and silent manner Spirit congeals. But it does not entirely congeal and become "fixed," for just as there can be dew in the air and no dew falling, so the spirit reaches the point of congealing and returns into itself. This ethereal form, or gem, then is constantly alive in motion, or being born, and it is really the motion of the spirit which makes the form. The great revolving wheel of a dynamo appears to be still, but it is not so, and it is revolving at high speed. Nor is a form fixed and static.

This form, or appearance, is supremely natural and is, as we have just seen, constantly being born and sustained. The taking of this form is Karman, and the form is Karman.

Now for the forms which grow around the gem of life and which are, indeed, the gem. Many of us have seen a yacht. Some yachts are very beautiful in their lines. They are beautiful because the intelligence of science and art has created an entity in whose form one reads the harmonized rhythm of wind and sea. The swiftness and grace of the yacht in action (with wind and sea and human intelligence) become an indissoluble unity alive with significance. Creative purpose working through an understanding of the inherent natures of wind and sea is Karman, and the action-form is Karman. Thus Karman is the harmony and harmoniser of Life, and it is Life.

A human being is at present a kind of murkiness irradiated with streams of fire. The fire cannot be compared with any ordinary kind of fire, for it neither burns nor dies. The fire glows with a radiance

inconceivably intense and fierce, yet it is soft and sweet. So deep and alive is it, that the most intense and shattering experience has no visible effect upon the intensity of the fiery radiance. At the edges of the fiery streams, irradiating the murkiness, are sorrow, vision, understanding, joy, love, pain, fortitude, striving. Here are ever being traced the lines of your forms — every curve declaring its aeonian history of life-experiences of action, thought, feeling, aspiration, striving. The tracing of those lines is Karman, and the lines are Karman into the depths of the forms. The pure natural light of health, of aspiration, and of wisdom is the radiance of Karman whom you are. Look upon another, into his eyes, and recognise his presence.

The living fire is sustained within itself. It is the most virile strength, and the softest tenderness. It is ever being born out of itself and there is no moment of time which can date its birth — so pure and ever-young is it. The sustaining of the living fire by itself is Karman, and it itself is Karman. The attaining of your cosmic purpose is Karman and you are Karman.

Your cosmic purpose knows you, and the knowing is Karman; and you are Karman also, for you are your cosmic purpose. To come to know this is Karman. You reveal yourself to other beings and they reveal themselves to you. You behold each other and you recognise each other's presences. The revealing, the seeing, and the recognising is Karman. Thus relationship is Karman and it is cosmic harmony.

Karman is called the "law of consequences," but that does not mean that there is an abstraction called "law" which binds results. It is often taken to mean that one can generate a "cause" which will produce desired results or conditions. Causes and effects are purely superficial and incidental. Causes cannot become causes until there is action, and immediately there is action there are results. Cause and effect are one unbroken continuity, called Activity. It is often attempted to separate cause from effect and to ignore the full consequence of activity. Activity is inseparable from the being. It is himself showing himself — his Karman which he is. The very life which he truly is, in the most real

sense, is ever actively tracing the intricate magnetic karmic lines which give space and body and means to further activity to his form and giving, with karmic precision, every subtlest variation to the outline of his form. Similarly there is not anything in the entire Cosmos which, by its own truest nature — its own unassailable ground of Being — is not also tracing its own indelible karmic lines of magnetism. Also, surely, there can be not the least activity unless there is present another being to be acted upon, that is to respond. It becomes vitally clear that for the full integral activity, or living, of any one single being, whatever it may be, there must be every finest variation of individuality in order that every single magnetic variation may find its "mate" at some point in the karmic rhythm of another being. Thus activity (besides affecting one's forms and faculties and scope for developing deeper activity) creates intricate magnetic patterns upon which, by magnetic affinity, settle the complex structure which we call the circumstances (the so-called good or bad karman) of our lives and our relations with others (human or otherwise). Is it not true also, then, that by consciously setting out to create for ourselves, or others, good or bad karman (so-called), we are indeed attempting to freeze a particular pattern to ourselves? This we cannot do without adversely affecting the lives of other beings, for Life is dynamic. The consequences would be to draw a pattern of retarding beings who would supply what we thought we wanted. That is, in reality, we should become more or less acutely conscious of weight, ineffectuality, or hindrance. This is the Law of Consequences and the Law is our sublimest Nature. It is against our Nature to set itself against itself. The Law cannot repeal itself, for it is the Law. The consequences shall be precisely as determined and, if knowingly determined, may be a hindrance, or evilly destructive, or an act of compassion. Consequences may, of course, be adjusted (but not avoided) by any being whose karmic rhythm or pulse is stronger than that of the pattern which encompasses him. There is no Human, therefore, who cannot rise above his Karman, for he is an integral cosmic being. There is no Human, therefore, who cannot turn his karmic hindrance into a life-long act of compassion. A human being is in danger only when he surrenders his integrity; and his integrity is

best maintained by acting always through the entire length of his being. The consequences of so acting can only be sustained and practical altruism. The consequences take care of themselves: they will be harmonious activity and graceful and shapely growth. There is henceforth no question of personal "karman" accruing. Once more we see the lovely gem of Life, with every structural and formal line or curve traced by our own karmic hand of Life. There is no rigid law, for the only Law is Karman. Seek to use it as a lifeless guide-rope and it will vanish utterly from sight and touch: seek deep within the heart and it will be seen shimmering silvery-golden from the heart of the atom to the heart of the loftiest Being, touching all with the radiance from the fire within them.

There is one unassailable point emerging. Karman will never break a human being. It is the strength and depth within his heart — not a formidable array of friends or enemies. The one essential is to remain a being who is human; that is, to remain undivided. Aspire and think intelligently. Remain unswervingly true and sincere to oneself, not only in thought and feeling, but in physical action. Never deny oneself the courage, strength and wisdom *to act*. Face beauty and ugliness, horror and loveliness squarely with balance and insight. To become undivided there must first be aspiration, action, and awareness in action. One will then become aware of that which may cause conflict within oneself. Real continued awareness will resolve the conflicts, through action, and will straighten the intelligence and strengthen the integrity. Such action, where there is conflict, will bring matters to a head in the form of a choice. Upon this choice will depend whether the action is liberating or not. Liberating action may often be accompanied by a sudden or periodic accession of mixed (and sometimes unusual) good and bad circumstances and influences, which sooner or later pass off; but throughout all these the power of decision will remain whole and clear. They help you to discern, to deepen your insight, and to understand. Straightness of vision and depth of insight and understanding will thus come into ever fuller play.

When action is liberating there grows gradually a fulness of heart (of

affection or being "at home'), stability or integrity of purpose, and the steady flame of wisdom. Thus with ever greater freedom from the laws of nature will come almost suddenly (seemingly) the realization that those laws were nothing but your own Cosmic Purpose, of Life, which you yourself conceived — and no other — and which with strong and tender patience, through endless infinitudes sought without pressure to make itself known to you. (Is it not clear why you alone must act from yourself alone, and not by the authority of another, however great and noble he may be?) All the paths of life will be found to be the true path and your heart will be full. You will discover a new sight, keen and penetrating, which can gaze into the unknown and trace new purposes. Such a cosmic Being are you. The loftiest Being awaits you, just as you may await those who follow. Karman is ever present and never failing — so we have found. Try and see?

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY IN GOLD COAST AFRICA — *G. Frances Knoche*

With amazement, and not without a sense of kinship, do we close J. B. Danquah's *The Akan Doctrine of God*, (1) for here is revealed the Akan (2) conception of Deity which squares with the profoundest reaches of Theosophy.

A native African by birth, son of Emmanuel Yao Boakye Dan-quah, Court-Drummer to the King of Akyem Abuakwa, that is "interpreter of the traditional history and poetry" of the Ashantis, the younger Danquah absorbed from infancy the wisdom of his people, and hence speaks with an authority and depth of perception that no outsider, however well versed in European anthropology or so-called "primitive" faith, could hope to equal, much less surpass. As the elder Danquah joined the Basel Missionary Society at the age of forty, his son received the benefits of a Western education as well, later successfully qualifying for entrance at the University of London, where he received the degrees of Doctor of Philosophy and Bachelor of Laws. Danquah likewise won a John Stuart Mill Scholarship in Philosophy of Mind and Logic at University College, London, and at present is Panel Lecturer in Twi at the London School of Oriental Studies.

The author's original intention was to publish a three-volume work of 640 pages, entitled: "Gold Coast Ethics and Religion," which

set forth the Akan idea of the good, or the supreme good, and examined for the purpose, all the anthropological evidence available: the Akan gods, the "fetishes," the customs, the maxims or proverbs (3,680 of them), the festivals, the religious observances, the calendars, folklore, the family system, the social and moral codes, racial history, racial fears and hopes (*i.e.*, the philosophy of their life). — p. ix

In view of the accurate exposition of theosophical doctrine contained in the one small volume before us, originally part three, one wonders

whether the "mysterious power" which Dr. Danquah is convinced *preserved* this third volume from destruction, did not also have a hand in *withdrawing* from the light, temporarily at least, the knowledge contained in the first two. Of this we may never know, but the fact remains that on January 29, 1941, while working on the bibliography of the entire work, surrounded by "ancient note-books and old rare books and the *two* MSS. volumes on the table of my study," Dr. Danquah went outside for a breath of air. In the twinkling of an eye, flames had consumed his house, burning to ashes its entire contents. The third volume, providentially in the hands of a friend, was saved, and became the present book.

A brilliant critique of the Akan doctrine of God as expounded by European scholars and anthropologists opens the book. For the magnificent researches of the Rev. J. G. Christaller, who was commissioned by the Basel Evangelical Missionary Society to "study the Akan language and translate the Bible and other religious books into the principal Gold Coast language," Danquah has the most generous praise, regarding his "Dictionary of the Asante and Fante Language called Tshi (Twi)," his collection of some 3,680 Maxims or Proverbs, and his Twi Bible, as classics, proving Christaller to have indeed been "as great a missionary as he was philologist, anthropologist, scientist, philosopher, moralist, and a man of genius." (p. 185)

About the work of other Europeans, such as Rattray and Westermann, the author is not enthusiastic, for dogmatic bias dims the luster of self-sacrificing and earnest labor. It is inconceivable to him, and quite naturally, that anthropologists and scholars who profess to search for truth without prejudice should be so influenced by the dominant conviction that their own religion, in this case the Christian, is God's one and only, and that all other beliefs, particularly that of the "primitive savage," are at best but gropings of the immature soul. Arrogance coupled with blindness is not a happy combination. Even when tempered with energetic and benevolent action fruiting itself in hospitals, schools, railroads and other engineering marvels, we find that the dominant urge during the last seventy years has not been

primarily to help the "heathen," but to "win for Jesus Christ the moral supremacy of the world" — to quote Edwin W. Smith, Gold Coast missionary, in *The Golden Stool*, 1926, p. 314.

Dr. Danquah's kindly yet penetrating diagnosis of the European attitude, his development of the Akan faith, his brilliant intellectual abilities, should convince us that the so-called "primitive belief is by no means inferior to the Christian, but in many respects leagues ahead of its *dogmatic interpretation*.

As the title indicates, the work centers around the Akan conception of God, a three-in-one, or one-in-three Divinity, not dissimilar to the Three Logoi of the Greek, called Onyame, Onyankopon, and Odomankoma. Section II merits careful study; but a few titles chosen at random will indicate the character of the threefold deity:

Onyame (also spelled *Nyame*) is the Shining Power, the Giver of Light or Sun, or Rain and Repletion; the universal power which is "behind or beneath things, the ultimate irreducible Godhead."

Onyankopon (also spelled *Nyankopon*) is the "Knowing Principle," the Greater Supreme Being; "he is there from ancient times," and that power that keeps the spiritual integrity of man and cosmos.

Odomankoma is the carver, originator, hewer of all beings; "infinitely manifolding," of an overwhelming intensity and depth; whose maxims are "many and everywhere visible." (p. 59) "He is God in you and in others . . . in the things you see — the shining firmament, the wide solid earth, the unfailing source of the waters"; likewise called the creator of the "Days of the Seven Eras," which comprehends a correlation with seven planets, seven days of the week, seven honorific names, and seven qualities or powers, (p. 47)

Section III, "Ethical Canons of the Doctrine," is a masterly unfolding of Akan-theosophical doctrines of Reincarnation and Karman in their relation to the moral progress of the race. The ideal of the family, the community, the one historic social race, with one blood flowing through all from the Hierarch or Nana down to the smallest insect, is

stressed: an ideal with which the modern Theosophist is in complete sympathy.

Sections IV and V, called respectively "The Eight Akan Postulates," and "Universal Utility of the Postulates," develop the relation of man's composite nature with the composite structure of the Universe. All beings have *Esu*, a physical basis of life, before mind becomes kindled; but men, not beasts, likewise have *Nkara* (or *Okara*), the "Chosen Soul," comparable to the Greek *Nous*, in which *karman*, called by the Akan the *Nkrabea* or *Hyebea*, inheres. This *Nkara* or *Okara*, two aspects of *Nous*, coming in contact with *Esu*, brings forth the *Sunsum* or "Experiencing Soul," the Greek *Psyche*, the personality, considered by the Akan as an "inadequate expression of the full capacities of the *Okara*." In the *Sunsum* evil exists, not foreordained, but as an undeveloped energy resident therein which delays the entry of the *Okara* into the *Sunsum*. (cf. pp. 87, 113)

Finally, *Honhom*, the Spirit, the Greek *Monad*, leads man to union with the *Honhom* of "purest perfection": *Onyame-Onyankopon-Odomankoma*. This union of *Sunsum* with *Okara*, of *Okara* with *Honhom*, is made possible through a succession of reincarnations, in which *Hyebea* or *Nkrabea* — fate, destiny, *karman* — is fulfilled. But this *Nkrabea* is not a punishment of sins, but the author emphasizes is "full of feeling," compassionately urging on the fulfilment of the soul's destiny which is union with *Honhom*.

Danquah is at a loss to understand why his people who have such beautiful and logical beliefs should be forced to embrace the teachings of original sin, eternal damnation and Divine Grace. He cannot see that such ideas are in anyway superior to the "heathen" faith. To say we fully sympathize with the author is hardly necessary.

The Ashanti conception of Death is interesting, and while we heartily agree that death is not the negation of life, nor its "destructive opposite," but rather an extended sleep, and the other pole of birth, we do not understand his statement that death itself is an unnatural phenomenon, and evidence that "something has gone wrong with some

part of the integrated organism." (p. 160) It is possible that we have not caught the author's original idea, or that poorly expressed the words mislead. We do agree with him that if all parts of the organism lived in perfect harmony with Honhom, death would be neither possible nor desirable. The fact of the matter is that the very force of evolution demands change, growth, development, hence death of bodies in order that the spirit within may have newer and better bodies to work through. We heartily concur in this statement: "Man, an incomplete god, has to die to discover his completeness in the undying god." (p. 161)

If the reader does nothing else, he should peruse carefully the 200-odd Maxims or Proverbs which form Appendix I, and observe for himself the marvelous reaches of philosophy contained in a few words. Appendix II, "Notes and Glossary of Akan Terms" will also be of great help in understanding the Akan philosophy.

Finally, our gratitude goes to the Lutterworth Library in London, for including as Number Four in their "Missionary Research Series" this contribution from the heart of Africa, for its publication not only evidences a recognition by the Christian West of its splendid worth, but likewise affords one more proof of the fact that the Archaic Wisdom of the Gods was *universally* diffused at the opening of the drama of human life, and that each race has partaken in some measure of the self-same Pierian Spring.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Akan Doctrine of God*. By J. B. Danquah, Lutterworth Press, London, 1944. 14s. 206 pp. ([return to text](#))
2. In explanation of the term Akan, we can do no better than to quote a few lines from the author's "Notes and Glossary".

"AKAN — One of the principal races in West Africa, inhabiting the Gold Coast, the Ivory Coast, some parts of French West Africa, up to the old Kingdom of Ghana (near present Timbuktu), and speaking the Twi (Twi) language. . . . The original form of the name, Akane or Akana,

led to its corruption by the early Arabs of the Sudan into Ghana and by early Europeans who visited the Coast of West Africa into Guinea " — p. 198. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE WORLD'S END — *L. W. Hart*

We may study the problem of the end of the world from three points of view. First, will the physical globe, our earth, end suddenly without warning? This has been frequently prophesied. Several years ago a so-called prophet in the eastern United States, I believe in Pennsylvania, convinced his followers that the world would end on a certain morning. They sold or gave away all their belongings and at the approach of the predicted hour, followed their prophet to the top of a hill and there awaited the coming of the end. The daily press blazoned this in headlines at the time. It must have been a fearful anticlimax for that little band when they had to march down the hill again, while the earth still proceeded on its accustomed course around the sun.

A study of what the cyclic law has brought about in the past would prevent a short-sighted misreading of visible signs and portents. It would include a very exact knowledge of time periods, coupled with the teaching that there are no "accidents"; but that all visible events, including disasters, are a part of the action of invisible intelligences acting through this visible world and consciously following the dictates of an even higher law. In other words there are no real accidents, and we may rest assured that our earth will be protected until its work of evolution is ended.

The second way in which the world may end is a personal or rather a psychological end. This is more prevalent than most of us may realize, particularly in our present days of trial when so many are faced with the loss of all that they hold dear. In the biblical story of Lot's wife we may read a hidden meaning which points toward such an end of the world. When Abraham and his nephew Lot parted company, Lot chose the plain near Sodom and Gomorrah as his portion. When Sodom was to be destroyed for its wickedness the Lord decided on account of Lot's righteousness to save him and all his family and followers, and he told them to go to another place. The Lord warned them, however, not to

look back at the destruction of the city. Only Lot's wife disobeyed and, looking back, was turned into a pillar of salt. Doubtless this story is susceptible of interpretation in various ways. It may, for example, point this warning: that if we cannot look ahead no matter what comes, if we insist on looking back and living in the past, we are enacting the role of Lot's wife, and whether we realize it or not we are no longer really living but merely existing.

Perhaps more people than we know of are psychologically disconnected to some degree and have not the resiliency, the inner power, to go forward. There are some who have never left a few blocks in a city which is home to them, or a town, or a circle of friends or relatives; there are some who have centered their whole world in one person, so that if deprived of their familiar environment or those they love, the joy of life is over and the world for them is at an end.

Isn't it quite evident that when human beings accept the fundamental truth of the cyclic progression which denies any real end, when they realize that life and change or motion — seemingly abstract teachings — are vital facts here on earth, and learn to direct their attention and center their hearts on that within them which is beyond space and time, yes, and even beyond motion or change — isn't it quite evident that then and then only will they reach out beyond cyclic ends and grasp the secret of ever-cycling onward LIFE?

The third way in which we may consider the end of the world, carries us into the intricacies of the teachings concerning Rounds and Races. We may consider the periods of evolution called Rounds as great cycles or vibrations or outbreathings within the Unknowable. These great cycles or rounds flow one into another on a grand scale, themselves built of minor cycles which we call Races, these made up of still smaller sub-cycles, until we reach the cycles which we call civilizations. The greatest civilizations we know of, the Egyptian, the Greek, the Roman, etc., history tells us have had their beginning, reached a culmination, and then declined. Why? A wit once said that as soon as we are born we begin to die. Civilizations carry their own decay within. If we bear

in mind that civilizations are made up of units or men, it becomes simple for us to understand that until men, who are vital centers, become more evolved or enlarge their consciousness, the civilizations which they build are bound to fall. A civilization, a Race, or a Round, while protected by and a part of greater beings, are not organic living centers in the same way that man is. Every unit or man making up a civilization is therefore vitally important, and any one of us, no matter how seemingly obscure, who keeps up the good fight, holds fast to what is good and refuses to recognise and give power to the selfish part of our human nature, is helping to leaven the whole mass of humanity.

The greatest example of an ending on a grand scale is the story given to us principally in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* of the great Atlantean Fourth Root-Race, which preceded our Aryan Fifth Race. Simultaneously with the decline of the race the earth itself changed or "ended," with the gradual sinking of coast lines and a change in great land masses, which culminated in the submerging over night of the Atlantean island of Poseidonis. But even here there was no finality. The progressed units of the last great race — each race takes approximately 9,000,000 years to run its course — are reborn into the new race. Those who drop behind become a part of the backward races which carry on the energies of the dying race, in this case the Atlantean, to its gradual end.

The continual activity of all life may be summed up in one line: *panta rhei, everything flows* — the famous saying of Heraclitus. Life and motion are synonymous, and the manner of this flowing life is not straight ahead forever but in a seemingly circular course of endlessly flowing open circles or spirals. Nothing is static, *everything flows* — this habit of nature brings about constant changes or endings, but there is never *an end*.

THE NATURE OF THE BUDDHIC PRINCIPLE — *G. de Purucker*

". . . Once separated from the common influences of Society, *nothing* draws us to any outsider save his evolving spirituality. He may be a Bacon or an Aristotle in knowledge, and still not even make his current felt a feather's weight by us, if his power is confined to the *Manas*. The supreme energy resides in the *Buddhi*; latent — when wedded to *Atman* alone, active and irresistible when galvanized by the *essence* of "Manas" and when none of the dross of the latter commingles with that pure essence to weigh it down by its finite nature. *Manas*, pure and simple, is of a lower degree, and of the earth earthly: and so your greatest men count but as nonentities in the arena where greatness is measured by the standard of spiritual development." — Letter LXI, p. 341

Passages out of these wonderful communications from our beloved Teachers are so filled with not only truth but beauty, that one's mind is held in the enchantment of the thoughts aroused by reading these communications or by hearing them summarized. It is amazing — and yet why should it be so, but it is to us inferior folk — to sense how the majesty of truth and the greatness of soul accompanying such majesty affect us so deeply as to move the inmost core of our being. And I for one know no experience more exalting, no experience more penetrating than this. How vain some of the things of the world when we discern the glory of Reality. I venture to say that no man or woman living, no matter how simple-minded he or she may be, is unsusceptible, is insensible, to such feelings — dare we call them that? — at any rate to such consequences of having received the touch of supernal beauty. It is an experience which in itself is worth lifetimes of ordinary garnering of life's impressions. I think that this spiritual and intellectual consequence of having these teachings in our inmost must be indeed almighty influences not only on our own characters, but on

our future destiny. I am assured from my own observation and from what I feel within myself, that a man's whole future lives can be changed, because of change occurring here and now within him.

We see the compelling power of the beauty born within us when studying these great Teachers' communications, for Truth indeed is thus compelling when its exposition is directed by Master Minds; and it is thus compelling not because it is enslaved, but because it gives us freedom, the freedom of brotherhood, the freedom of fellowship, fellowship in understanding, fellowship in fellow-feeling.

The statement has been made that buddhi is negative unless it has the manas or mind to work through, and of course this is true. But don't imagine for a moment that this means that the buddhi is negative on its own plane, quite the contrary. It is as active on its own plane as the supreme truth within us, the atman, is forever active on its own plane. The meaning is that the buddhi is negative on this our human plane of experience and action, without the transmitting principle to step it down to us, which is the mind and the psychical elements within us. Then, if the mind be pellucid as the mountain lake, crystal clear, so that it cannot transmit the non-divine, then we have indeed a man who for the time being is like unto a god, for he speaks with power, with the voice of authority; and none who listens unto him, in his heart can say Nay. Our minds are taken captive, mightily persuaded. And why? Because the buddhi in the Teacher speaks to the buddhi within us. Voice as it were calls to voice. Thought evokes correspondential thought. Truth awakens, by its impact on our minds, the spark of truth within us; and it compels us, compels us because our own best is awakened, and we know thereafter that that is freedom, that is truth, that is reality; and no man wants aught else than freedom, truth, love, reality. That is why truth is so compatible. That is why its authority over our hearts and minds is supreme, for it awakens within us itself. Strange paradox and yet so simple.

What is this Buddhist principle? It is so difficult in our awkward European tongues to give to this almost mystical Sanskrit word a

proper translation. It is discrimination. It is intuition, it is the organ of direct knowledge, it is the clothing of the divine spark within us which instantly not only knows truth but communicates it, if indeed the barriers be not too thick and heavy between it and our receptive minds. Ay, reception, that is the point. Can our minds receive? If not, it is our own fault for we have enshrouded ourselves with the veils of the lower selfhood so strongly that the light from above, or from the Master mind, cannot reach our own higher mind and descend into the physical brain and into the physical heart where truth abides for all. For mystical fact it is, that although we know it not, the truth is already within us, here in heart, and here in mind; and we are like those spoken of by the Avatara Jesus in the Christian Bible, having ears they hear not, having eyes they see not, having minds they apprehend and comprehend not.

I want to point out one more thought, that the inner God works within its own vehicle, and this vehicle is the buddhi principle, and it is just as easy to come into sympathetic relationship, into companionship with the buddhi as it is with the kama-manas within us. In other words, it is just as easy to yearn for the inspiration of the highest within you as it is to look for the heat and fevers of the lower part of our being.

Now whereas in the old religions and philosophies the God within has always been called a Divinity or God — masculine; the Consort, the Buddhi of the Atman, has always been looked upon as feminine. The German poet Goethe meant more than mere poetry when he uttered that remarkably telling phrase, *Das Ewig-Weibliche zieht uns hinan. The eternal feminine draweth us ever onward and inward.* It does not mean woman, it means that part of our natures to which and in which the god within works. Our own individual Buddhi is that which gives us intuition and insight and sensitiveness and delicacy and the ability in quick response to feel the suffering, the sorrow of others. It is the god within which does this, but it is what in common language we call the feminine side of us which receives it, the sensitized part of us, and carries the thought to the place where dwelleth the Atman. It has naught to do with physical woman or physical man. There is a great

and wonderful mystery here, and I may add in closing that one more small and minor phase of this mystery is alluded to by H. P. B. in *The Key to Theosophy* where she speaks of the buddhi as being the root and the key itself of individuality. There is the remote source why on this low physical plane some of our lifetimes are passed as men and some as women. By each we learn, if we have the wit. It always vexes me when I hear people talk, as I sometimes hear, about which is greater, man or woman. Which really is greater? It is the uttermost poppycock. Where would you be without your mothers? Where would you be without your fathers? Sex of course is but a passing phase. It did not exist some 18 or 19 million years ago, and some 8 million years from now it will again vanish. Its place will be taken by kriyasakti. But at present the most complete men are the men who have a healthy dash of the feminine in them; and the most perfect women are they who have a touch of the masculine. The most courageous man is always the man who feels the most tender towards the weak and helpless. If a man has not a touch of the mother-instinct in him, look out, you cannot trust him! If a woman has not a touch of the father-instinct in her, in my judgment she is incomplete.

The Theosophical Forum

CARLYLE ON KARMA — *Henry T. Edge*

The Beginning holds in it the End, and all that leads thereto, as the acorn does the oak and its fortunes. There thou canst begin, the Beginning is for thee, but where, and of what sort, and for whom will the end be? — Carlyle, *French Revolution*, III, 2

If you stand up a row of dominoes and push the end one, each one strikes the next until the whole row lies flat. That is one idea of Karma, and this kind of Karma has an irreconcilable quarrel with Freewill. But this is not the kind of Karma envisaged by the seer quoted above. For him every act and thought is a seed, which, beginning as a scarce visible speck, may spread to who knows what umbrageousness. Or it is a vibration which thrills forth into all immensities of time and space. Nor is the seer concerned as to whether or not the energy recoils on the original starter; nay, he would seem rather to be the more concerned that it may fall on somebody else. We know that in the long run our deeds recoil on the doer; but do we give sufficient thought to their effect on others? No doubt matters will in the long run be squared up for these others, but does that quiet our conscience or free us from responsibility? Read further in the same place:

The word that is spoken, as we know, flies irrevocable not less, but more, the action that is done. "The gods themselves," sings Pindar, "cannot annihilate the action that is done." No this, once done, is always done, cast forth into endless Time, and, long conspicuous or soon hidden, must verily work and grow forever there, an indestructible new element in the Infinite of Things. Or, indeed what is this Infinite of Things itself, which men name Universe, but an Action, a sum-total of Actions and Activities. The living ready-made sum-total of these three, — which Calculation cannot add, cannot bring on its tablets; yet the sum, we say, is written visible: All that has been done, All that is doing, All that will be done! Understand it well, the Thing thou

beholdest, that Thing is an Action, the product and expression of exerted Force: the All of Things is an infinite conjugation of the verb *To do*.

"An indestructible element"; man then is creator, one of the *architectones* of the universe; as traditional Wisdom assures us he is — by heritage. Great is his responsibility, great his power — for good, for ill. He can create little universes, sand-built; until they are swept away by the Laws of Nature or the Will of God — names for the working of other and better *architectones*, higher in the scale than mere man, nearer the throne of the Real, the True.

The Universe "an Action, a sum-total of Actions." And Karma, we say, means Action. Well, the Universe is doubtless Spirit energizing Matter, and Matter ensouled by Spirit and providing vehicles for Spirit's manifestation. But are we not also told that the communion of Spirit and Matter generates Action? Or is the idea changed if we choose to say Fohat or Cosmic Vitality? Technical terms are necessary, but, like other coinage or fiscal paper, liable to depreciation; so it refreshes the mind to have our cherished ideas expressed in other language. Man, in this case, is Action and a sum of Actions. No doubt some higher stereoscopic vision could present to our illumined eye man as a whole; but for the present we have to view him in sections ('aspects'). So he is now a string of Principles and anon a many-clothed Monad; give him another turn and we may see him as a bundle of actions. When anything ceases to act, it ceases to be.

"The sum, we say, is written visible." In the Astral Light? By the Lipikas, the Recording Angel? To each his word; the idea remains. We proclaim our doctrine of the divinity of man, but it is hard to shake off our leading-strings, to stop wondering what outside powers are going to do to us, whether of Saturn in the tenth or of a Karma that, like God, "moves in a mysterious way its wonders to perform." We fear the loss of our freewill and do not know what to do with what we've got.

It is a relief to hear our cherished beliefs from the mouth of a great thinker unfettered by formulas and whether overshadowed and

inspired by some august and invisible Presence or simply from his own Higher Self.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS DEATH? — *Mary Peyton*

When global war, the most widely destructive in recorded history, has so tragically bereft countless millions in every corner of the earth, solace may be found in the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom. These teachings have their origin in the very beginning of time: hence they have ever been and always shall be. They never differ in any age or country, whether enunciated by Gautama Buddha of India, Jesus of Syria, Lao-Tse of China. These great spiritual teachers and lesser ones know the true meaning of life and death — one Truth through all eternity. The bereaved and stricken human heart may discover consolation and encouragement and understanding in these echoes of the Ancient Wisdom. — M. P.

We grow toward knowledge that in the great economy of Nature a soul born here comes as a guest out of far realms in eternity: a guest of whose past we know nothing but that it has lived through the ages: and abides here for a while, and goes.

Whither? When we brood on that which is immortal in ourselves the answer comes back to us out of the Living Silence, and we know that life is eternal and death but a stepping forth into larger fields of life.

When one we love is so released we are given opportunity to realize the majesty of the Higher Law, whose manifestation then is so close to us; and deep in our hearts we know that we are deathless. From this heart-knowledge we know that the released one goes not unprotected, not without companionship; for it is the Knower, it is the Great Warrior, it is the Eternal Self that is there with him: and the Soul arises in the power of its divinity and knows no fear nor pain.

As Nature works in her unseen processes, so does the Soul set free. It seeks its own: not at some point in space, but in a condition in which, freed from the body, it may gain strength and knowledge. The great

onward march is before it; not what it knew here but greater. On its journey the Soul forges upward, advancing and expanding.

Only the mortal body dies. Man dies from one world and is born into another. It is not possible to separate death from birth; the two always occur together, like coming and going. A Celtic poet has written: "There is great serenity in the thought of death when it is known to be the Gate of Life."

The eternal, living, breathing, spiritual force out of the Supreme, out of the ages, lives on and on, carries the divine soul through different schools of experience to higher states of consciousness and service.

A human spirit is a deathless entity; it is part of the very fabric of the Life Universal in its inmost parts; and this spirit of man, this inner being, this spiritual soul, is pursuing an eternal pilgrimage in space, infinite in space and eternal in time. It passes from mansion to mansion of life, not only in this cross-section of the physical universe which our imperfect eyes can see, but most especially in the invisible realms, in the spiritual worlds. The spirit of man, an eternal pilgrim, learns eternally, going higher and higher and higher to something still more lofty and sublime.

Death is birth, *birth*. After death the nobler, brighter, purer seeds of character, the fruitage, the consequence, of our yearnings for beauty and for harmony and for peace, carry us into realms where harmony and beauty and peace abide. In death the worn-out garment of the body is cast aside, and the eternal pilgrim passes into a perfect sleep, a perfect rest. The repose is utterly beautiful, utterly blissful, filled with glorious and magnificent dreams, and with hopes which now are realized in the consciousness of the spiritual being. This dreaming condition is a panorama of the fulfilment of all our noblest hopes and of all our dreams of unrealized spiritual yearnings, a consummation of them in glory and bliss and perfect completion and plenitude.

Of a surety Nature is entirely beneficent and the Divine Law merciful. When overburdened with sorrow, we are often made aware of this

everlasting truth. In an ancient scripture it is written: "In the day of my trouble I will call upon Thee: for Thou wilt answer me." There is that within us which hears the answer: *we are bound eternally to those we truly love*. The dead are with us in a very real sense; they know our thoughts and feelings, and respond. In the silent places of our hearts where the deepest and tenderest memories abide, a real communication takes place. All that really belongs to us is ours forever; somewhere, somehow, someday, we shall again be with the absent ones we love.

For love is the holiest thing known to human beings. Love holds all things in place and in eternal keeping; its very nature is celestial Peace, its very characteristic is cosmic Harmony, permeating all things, boundless, deathless, infinite, eternal.

— Arranged from Theosophical sources by Mary Peyton

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

Extract from the *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies*, 1926, entitled "Theosophical Societies," General Statement, furnished by Col. William Oscar Gilbert, U. S. Army, retired.

The ultimate base of Theosophy is universal brotherhood. As a science, Theosophy declares universal brotherhood to be a fact in nature; as a philosophy, it begins all reasoning with, and relates all conclusions to, universal brotherhood; as a religion, it bases the social fabric upon, and deduces its code of ethics from, universal brotherhood.

But it uses the term "universal brotherhood" not in a sentimental sense, or as expressing a merely human relationship. On the contrary, the term is used to express the broadest possible relationship of everything that is to every other thing that is; as a picturesque assertion of the fact that each and every thing in the universe — in the all that is — is related to each and every other thing; indeed, is not only related, but proceeds from a common source — a common parent, so to speak. And this common source of all things and the things that proceed therefrom are, according to Theosophy, one and the same thing: The one absolute Essence — the God of the Bible who is All and in All; a Homogeneity during its Universal Night when every atom has been drawn back into itself and the biblical end of the world has arrived; a Heterogeneity during its Universal Day when by process of unfolding, or evolution, the objective world appears and the Creation of *Genesis* is accomplished. In this universe which is One, as in our body which is one, no single part is independent of any other part or unaffected by it. Relationship, or brotherhood, thus becomes a fact in nature and is universal.

To the question, Suppose universal brotherhood exists, what of it? Theosophy has a startling answer: Evolution is toward perfection. The soul, the Ego, is incarnated in a human body to gather experience and

forward its own evolution toward perfection. It must incarnate not once but reincarnate many times in order to become perfect. But evolution moves as a whole. Before the next great stage can be entered upon, the full processes upon this globe must be accomplished. Each and every soul must have reached this goal. Thus, those who are forward in the march must await the laggards' arrival. Theosophy leaves no doubt as to the answer to the question, Am I my brother's keeper?

Theosophy proclaims a Deific Absolute Essence, infinite and unconditioned and so without form, which it would not mind calling God were it not for the present anthropomorphic, personalizing concept of that word; and it teaches "that the *root* of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible and invisible, *is, was and ever will be*" this one Absolute Essence "from which all starts, and into which everything returns," just as all the waters throughout the land started — that is, were lifted by the sun's rays — from the ocean, and in due course will return thereto, each particle thereof still water and still retaining its differentiation from the mass.

Theosophy proclaims that man — not the body, but that which distinguishes the human from the brute — is a soul. It speaks not of the *Nephesh* of *Genesis*, translated as "living soul," but of the *Nous* of Plato and the *Logos* of St. John, "the word made flesh." This Soul, it teaches, is immortal. Says Mme. Blavatsky, in *Isis Unveiled*, "They [the sages of the Orient] showed us that by combining science with religion, the existence of God and immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid." In her mammoth work, *The Secret Doctrine*, this demonstration is to be found.

An important teaching of Theosophy is Reincarnation, the tenet that the Soul, or Ego (the real man), is the tenant of many different bodies in many different lives during its evolutionary course down the ages — a teaching that demonstrates Theosophy's idea of evolution to be fundamentally different from the evolution taught by science and

feared by the church, namely, the evolution solely of what we call the physical universe. Theosophy postulates a double evolution — one physical and one spiritual. Soul evolution can only be carried on, and Theosophy says it is carried on, by reincarnation. Through the experiences of its many incarnations, the soul is able to progress to the stature, nature, and dignity of Godhood and thus to emancipate itself from the necessity for further pilgrimage. The soul gets nothing by favor, but everything by merit. Literally it works out its "own salvation with fear and trembling." Reincarnation, too, is the doctrine of "another chance." A mistake means not eternal damnation, but a chance in other incarnations to make up for failure. And as a corollary it may be stated that "original sin" finds no place in Theosophy. Reincarnation must not be confused with transmigration. "Once a man always a man" is the saying in the Great Lodge. This doctrine of reincarnation which produces such a shock to the western world is not claimed by Theosophy as its peculiar property; for it points out that a full half of the world believes in it, that the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, is full of it, and that Jesus, if he did not teach it, at least assented to it.

Closely allied with reincarnation is the law of *Karma*, or cause and effect, whereby is struck a perfect balance for merit and demerit. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;" if not in the life in which the sowing took place, then in some future one; and thus Theosophy explains many seeming injustices and inequalities.

Theosophy combines the fields of science and religion; is a religious science and a scientific religion. It shows how the worlds have evolved, how man has reached his high estate, and what will be the future of the worlds and the future of man. It describes the septenary constitution of man, with its lower quaternary and its higher triad, thus demonstrating the duality of his make-up and elucidating the eternal struggle between the lower and the higher self. It explains the origin and nature of mind and opens a psychology (including that of the subconscious) whose borders otherwise have barely been touched. It admits the phenomena of the Spiritualists and the "miracles" of Jesus,

but denies the interposition of spirits in the one case and of the supernatural in the other, pointing out how each was accomplished by the exercise of natural laws; for psychic forces work according to laws as definite as those attaching in other realms, and neither set of laws can be antagonistic to the other; for throughout the universe the same laws prevail, being duplicated and re-duplicated on successive planes; "as in the macrocosm, so in the microcosm"; "as above, so below."

The foregoing is a most incomplete resume of a few of the teachings of Theosophy. Theosophy deals with manifold subjects new to western thought, has a new (yet old) interpretation for many things that are familiar in science and religion, and, with it all, is hampered by the failure of the English language to have developed, as yet, an ample vocabulary for the expression of the abstract or the description of the metaphysical. There is accessible, however, an extensive literature covering all the branches and aspects of the movement and its teachings.

The Theosophical Forum

A WORMS-EYE VIEW — J. T. Arneson

While walking along a country road recently I noticed a caterpillar crawling along in the wheel track. Very soon, if I did not intervene, his life would be crushed out by a passing car. Should not this tiny creature, so far down on life's evolutionary ladder, be spared? With my walking stick I gently boosted him off the right-of-way and out of danger, thereby setting in motion a sequence of events, the very least of which being that another gorgeous butterfly would one day brighten a summer's morn.

But instead of being grateful, he was angry. At this seemingly rude interruption of his progress he curled up and pouted. Of course he could not possibly know that my action had saved his life. He saw only that his course had been disturbed by some great force which he could not understand. Because his plans had been frustrated his little body fairly pulsed with vibrations of fear and rage.

Notwithstanding our superior intelligence, how often do we human beings act like the lowly caterpillar. We fuss and fume with anger when our plans are thwarted by forces over which we have no control. We call it a "bad break" or misfortune when our petty schemes misfire. We seldom think of the great chain of causes that may have been set in operation by the failure of our plans. For after all man has only a worm's-eye view of the Force called Destiny.

THE HEART OF THE SUN — *Martyn Witter*

The heart was universally thought of by the ancients as the most sacred of organs. Even today, in the common language of the people, the heart is given a special place. Even though it is a very fundamental organ it is not on this account alone that it is held to be sacred. There is a far deeper reason that touches some of the most sublime teachings of the Ancient Wisdom.

A quotation from *The Secret Doctrine* runs as follows:

The Sun is the heart of the Solar World (System) and its brain is hidden behind the (visible) sun. From thence sensation is radiated into every nerve-center of the great body, and the waves of the life-essence flow into each artery and vein. . . . The planets are its limbs and pulses . . . — I, 541

H. P. B. explains this Commentary on the Stanzas of Dzyan with the following:

Thus, there is a regular circulation of the vital fluid throughout our system, of which the Sun is the heart — the same as the circulation of the blood in the human body — during the manvantaric solar period, or life; the Sun contracting as rhythmically, at every return of it, as the human heart does. Only, instead of performing the round in a second or so, it takes the solar blood ten of its years, and a whole year to pass through its auricles and ventricles before it washes the lungs and passes thence to the great veins and arteries of the system.

We have here keys that will unlock many doors for us. What is this brain behind the Sun? What are the waves of vital essence and the nerve centers? What is the food that is carried by the blood of the Sun? These and many more questions spring to one's mind. We shall deal with only a few.

From the Chhandogya Upanishad (1) we have the following:

Now what is here in this city of Brahma (the body) is an abode, a small lotus-flower (the heart). Within that is a small space.

The Upanishad goes on to assert that this small space contains within itself, as a unity, all things which exist here in manifestation. The simple quotation taken from the Upanishad has a world of meaning within it if the symbols used are analysed. Thus when the Upanishad speaks of a small space within the body (of the sevenfold sun) it is hinting at a key which will unlock the meaning. Space is the symbol for a storehouse containing within its bosom everything that is contained in the systems that emanated from it. It pervades these systems and is their root-substance. Akasa is often associated with Space. It contains and includes the Seven Centers of Force, being itself really the seventh and synthesis of the other six. Akasa tattva is also called the force of the third Logos or the creative force in the already manifested Universe.

The seed of our Solar Universe is contained in the small space of the Lotus (heart) of the Sun. Now it is known that the Lotus is the universal symbol of the Kosmos as a totality. Within this flower is contained the seed of the Solar Universe. The seed contains the image of the flower to be. This is especially true of Lotus Seeds hence their selection as a symbol in the Upanishad.

Behind and in the heart stands the mind. Now Mahat is the positive aspect of Akasa and is to Akasa what manas is to Buddhi. However Akasa is not the sixth but the fifth universal principle. Akasa has seven degrees and it is in its lower reaches that occur the Aether of Space associated with manifested Mahat. From this brain behind our visible sun we receive a reflexion of abstract ideas, and the same patterns we find in physical nature are contained in our intellectual patterns of thought. But there are other forces besides the manasic principle which directs differentiation along ideational lines. The Seeds in the Lotus (heart) of the Sun may be said to contain the Ten Divinities which manifest as Forces. Three of these forces are contained in the seventh principle and the remaining seven forces are the seven Forces exuded

forth to the Rupa worlds. It seems to me that the seven principles of man are a true reflexion of these seven Solar Forces. Thus in addition to abstract ideas (Eternal Ideas of Plato) and the pranic energy (vital electricity), we have other forces that correspond to and feed the various principles of the entities in the Solar System.

To sum up, let us say that the Sun *in abscondito* is the storehouse of our little Kosmos and that it self-generates a vital fluid which it is ever receiving back again in amounts equal to that given forth. Thus we have the rivers of lives streaming from the Solar Divinity through certain channels and ever returning thereto as an instance of the rhythmic law of cycles. The exact knowledge of the channels through the different planetary systems of the seven-fold family of the Sun is kept very secret, and it is open to question as to whether such details will ever be printed in any book available to the public. However the Upanishads reveal much in heavily veiled allegory, and even from logic it can be seen that since the waves of the vital life-essences pulsate forth and likewise return, there must be openings. The Chhandogya Upanishad asserts that there are five openings for the Gods. It is known that the Hindus have long stressed the number five as a blind to the seven-fold nature of the manifested Universe. The Upanishad asserts that there is an eastern opening correlated with Prana; a southern opening correlated with Vyana partaking of the moon; a western opening correlated with Apana; the northern with Samana, and the upper opening with Udana partaking of *space*. This last one is extremely interesting for the Katha Upanishad asserts that the opening that goes up is one of immortality and the others are for departing in various directions. Imagine the glorious adventure awaiting the initiate who has gained the portals of the Sun. The Maitri Upanishad asserts that there are five doorkeepers for the five entrances. Entrance through any one requires certain qualifications.

The five breaths such as the apana, samana, etc., are mentioned above as correlated with the five openings of the Sun. However, there are really seven breaths, each one of which helps to build and sustain the seven principles of man's constitution. This is a reflection of the solar

process where each of the seven pathways is predominant in some particular one of the sacred planets. The full correlations between the breaths and the planets which serve as openings to the Portals of the Sun are of course kept secret because of the possibility of their misuse. Too much would be revealed which would be very useful in the hands of some clever person interested in magic. These different breaths are forces, and it is really only by the knowledge of the real nature of Akasa and other connected mysteries that a knowledge of forces can be obtained. In fact, I believe that if one were to become acquainted with Akasa he would have keys to the mysterious sixth principle of the Universe. But Occultism is not some intellectual game, and *for every step one takes in pursuit of the hidden knowledge one should take three in perfecting the character.*

Now the circulations of the solar system must carry food. The Taittiriya Upanishad asserts that from food creatures are produced and in food they live, and back into this source they finally pass. Food is both eaten and it also eats things. In my opinion, food has seven aspects — one for each of the seven principles in Nature and in Man. It is the Ideational food that is most interesting since it has to do with innate ideas. These patterns of thought are regulated by the various Silent Watchers who for a certain Yuga will strike the keynote determining the quality of innate ideas or "food" and also the cycles of these ideational patterns. These patterns regulate the patterns of the material world of a certain Loka and Tala as well as the intellectual qualities of self-conscious entities, as far as I can see. In fact the ideations play a very vital role in directing the differentiation of the worlds from the fountain-source of the Third Logos. Mahat is the first product of Pradhana or akasa and is no other than the positive and creative part of the Third Logos.

It is most fascinating to reflect upon the rivers of Ideas and inspiration transmitted to us by our teachers. (This river is represented by the sacred Ganga of India.) This is spiritual and intellectual "food" to us. As all food returns to the Solar Fountain so does also the food we receive from our teachers. We bear gifts garnered through self-experience. Those who bear no gifts return empty handed. Truly our highest

thoughts and noblest inspirations may be food for the Gods in return for having showered it upon us. The food we receive has been added to by our self-conscious experience. Here is one of the most vital thoughts that the study of the Solar Heart brings to our attention. No organism can maintain life without receiving from its lesser lives. We are the lesser lives to the Greater Ones, so while we receive we must give. We must see to it that we cultivate the noblest thoughts so that we may bear gifts to those who have given some of their life-essence to us. The circulations of the solar system from the heart and to the various organs and back again provide for the carrying of food (seven degrees for each principle). Food enters our minds and hearts, and if we are to contribute to the workings of Nature we must make the best use of this type of energy. Otherwise Nature will react upon us. As waste material is cast from our bodies so does nature cleanse her channels of useless material. The soul which can not give a drop of spirituality to his higher principles becomes as useless material and in time finds its way to the Planet of Death.

Each of us has a heart which contains a small space wherein the Lotus lives. Knowledge is of no avail if it does not inspire us to seek out that which resides there. If we expand in thought and love this Lotus will bloom and the burdens of Humanity will be lightened as far as our part weighed upon it. Seek the Lotus Flower of your own Heart and the Voice of the Silence from that small still space will speak.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Insertion of (the body) and (the heart) are mine taken from explanation in other part of text. Page 263, *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans, by Robert Ernest Hume (Second Edition Revised) Humphrey Milford. Oxford University Press. ([return to text](#))

THE MYSTERY OF BEING (1)

Gradually the Mind develops. This is perceptible to all people. Gradually it takes on the nature of the environment, and either grows or is retarded as it finds food for growth or lack of it. How this can be is not questioned — because it is accepted from *prima facie* evidence.

Yet it is denied or disbelieved that the Mind has root in another dimension, or in anything but the physical form. How the Mind can be already operating in the infant is a question ignored as one of life's mysteries. Where it goes at death is another mystery. There are no answers from the scientist as yet as to what constitutes the Mind, and the average clergyman is content to speak vaguely of the "soul" and begs the question.

Those who consider the theory of reincarnation reasonable, and those who accept it, have no difficulty with the question, for they perceive the periodical birth and death of a being is an answer to the problem. That an infant arrives in the new body with the undisclosed faculties which (sooner or later) he will express, given proper opportunity, is surely evidence of a pre-existence somewhere in which the Mind received experience or training, and is an explanation of the difference in people. That the Mind departs once more on its appointed pathway, only to reappear again, seems a most reasonable theory, since all Nature follows this cyclic law.

It should be evident that Mind must come from the root of Being, or very near it, it must express in some degree the unseen, unheard, untouched heart of Being, call it by whatever name one chooses. No matter where one may consider that the heart of Being resides, or calls itself at home, or from whence it sends an adventurous tentacle into the world of matter, it must be conceded that the Mind is all we know of it objectively. It, the Mind, is the Interpreter, the Translator, the Mediator, and the Channel, between the two worlds — to simplify the

Seven Dimensions for the time being.

We should regard the Mind, therefore, as the most important organ — though we cannot dissect or describe the organ, can only lay hands of exploration upon the brain, the nervous system, and the glands — which are the servants of the Mind itself. Mind can communicate through these channels, can control; but it, the Mind, is not the brain through which it manifests. Something intangible resides above and uses, speaks through, observes and experiences, by means of the physical senses.

This is the Mind, of which the East speaks, and which it calls *MANAS*. It is the enveloping cloud or concentrated sphere of higher dimensional energy which surrounds the physical body and which pours down into the brain its commands and experiences, through which the intangible something still higher which is called *ATMA* can contact the field of force we call the physical world.

Beyond the reach of proof or even of description, the Mind of man functions in its own dimension, and from that it descends into incarnation at intervals. It comes each time with some faint remembrance, which is usually dismissed as imagination by the time of maturity, so that it is the common impression that this life is the only one experienced. But this is not true — the Mind is merely concentrated upon the present, is concerned with the problems confronting it, and it has little time to remember other lessons. For this reason few people remember past lives; the exceptions have no credence in this age.

But there are lives behind and beyond. The Mind is deathless and eternal and immortal — growing through the ages into Wisdom and full Perfection.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Golden Lotus*, Vol. I, No 7. ([return to text](#))

INVISIBLE HELPERS — Hazel Boyer Braun

Perhaps every person here this afternoon has *some conception* of the beauty and profound spirituality of the Theosophical teachings. Intelligent, thinking men and women, everywhere are beginning to recognise that the serenity and inner joyousness of students of Theosophy is based on that fundamental teaching that we are all Divine Beings, that all that lives is rooted in Godhood, forming a vast universal unity which makes Brotherhood a logical fact beyond question.

Our subject this afternoon takes us into some of the deeper reaches of this teaching. If you can take it into your hearts and truly consider it, you will soon realize the reverence and the sense of sacredness with which Theosophists view Life. The perspective it unfolds reveals the necessity of concentrated direction of one's faculties through countless lives toward an ever wider expansion of consciousness, of understanding, as we grow into at-one-ment with the great souls who have gone before us in their own self-directed evolution.

These teachings have been formulated by Master Minds, by the Gods who descended at the opening of humanity's self-conscious drama. They taught the more advanced of humanity the Arts and Sciences and having laid the foundation for the grand ancient civilizations, they placed these teachings in the hands of the Flowers of humanity, the Masters who guard and watch over this heritage of all beings.

We are taught that we are linked through our own Divine, Spiritual nature with the chain of Great Teachers, and also with the Planetary, Solar and Galactic Beings which make up Manifested Universes. They are all titanic Spiritual Beings who have advanced from being men to become Gods with vastly enlarged responsibilities and, even then, a growing realization of Divine Reality.

Man, himself, is a Universe in Miniature. In order to live and learn on

this planet, he uses countless lesser evolving beings in the make-up of his various sheaths of consciousness. His body is fabricated of life atoms for which he is responsible; the vital life of the Universe that flows through him enlarges his strict accounting for the influences he emanates. The thoughts which he contributes to the World Thought are a sacred charge, and beyond, guarding and guiding his human self, is the much more advanced Being, his Spiritual, Divine, Monadic Self — which we cannot see with our eyes, but can sense with our intuition.

Love is the key-note of the whole hierarchical scheme — Love, compassion, sympathy and complete understanding, extended always to the lesser beings by those who have been through the tests and trials of lower spheres, and stand waiting on the threshold of a higher plane to help all below to move upward.

That is why Theosophy is a doctrine of such immense Hope and Beauty. We are growing toward ensoulment in our Greater Self, toward spiritual recognition of the marvelous manner in which we are rooted in the heart life of the successively grander beings.

The Buddhas who are a line of the Hierarchy of Compassion, serve higher Teachers as they take their duties on the millions of planets — in grades of responsibility. They inspire and urge forward the spiritual evolution of great cycles or rounds, of whole root-races of advancement. They appear and teach this doctrine, then continue to live after their visible cycle in a body appropriate to Man's higher faculties. They direct the Masters and their Messengers in a continuous silent protection of our chance to grow into true humanhood. They form a guardian-wall about us, keeping back cosmic forces that would annihilate us. They help us continuously and we never know it.

If we cherish every urge to unselfish living, to impersonal effort, we are recognising our kinship and our loving *Help* from this background of Love and Compassion which makes life so wonderful.

Each planet that appears visibly has more ethereal globes on inner planes where beings dwell in progressively more material vestures

until, in Nature's grand scheme, men are ready for the tests of the kind of gross planet we walk on now. But each globe is a living being, moving in obedience to Nature's Laws. Each has its invisible, spiritual, Divine Self. Each is the channel for Divine Life currents that sustain the beings that make up its body.

All sense of superficial thought about knowing what the Divine Reality is back of Universal Manifestation falls away when we try to imagine something of the Grandeur of the Wondrous Being that is the Higher Self of the entire constitution of even this Earth.

Reading from *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, by G de Purucker:

As the Summit of our Hierarchy is One, the Root of our *ens*, in which we "move and live and have our being," as the Christian Apostle Paul puts it; *so similarly in the spiritual-psychological Hierarchy there is a One in whom we are all rooted*, in whom *psychologically and mystically and religiously, yea and inspirationally, we live*. This One is the Great Initiator, the Great Sacrifice, the Wondrous Being referred to by H. P. Blavatsky; the Supreme Head of the Hierarchy of the Teachers. From it originally come our noblest impulses through our Higher Selves; from it come the life and aspiration we feel, stirring oft in our minds and hearts; from it, through our higher natures, come the urge to betterment, the sense of loyalty and troth, all the things which make life holy and bright and high and well worth living.
— p. 182

Now just stop and imagine yourself looking up at the evening sky — seeing the flowing river of Suns that we call the Milky Way. We cannot look up at the Radiant Beings that begem the sky without marvelling, if we know they are all gods in some stage of evolution.

What is the Sun? We see its radiant body — but do we stop to think that it is our giver of Life, our channel of the Divine Life of the Universe? It is the Heart and Brain of the whole Solar System. We could not live a

moment without it. We are rooted in its soul-life, from it we learn the spirit of giving, of serving in a grand scheme; for it is but a ray — a child of that Raja Sun which is the heart of the Galaxy — that Milky Way, made up of millions of such sun-children — each the channel for its solar family.

As far as we wish to extend this analogy, we can envision still grander millions of galaxies, making up the constitution of grander beings until we stop before the immensity of such Truth. Our faculties reach their limit, yet we are taught that the grandest entity we can conceive of is but a speck in the Boundless Life. The analogy is correct also in this respect, turning again to Dr. de Purucker's *Fundamentals*:

That if we made it universal, kosmic, we would say that that Inexpressible ONE, which is the Utmost of the Utmost, and the Inmost of the Inmost, *of our Kosmical Universe*, comprising the greatest boundaries of the Milky Way: corresponds to all within the Milky Way as our human ego corresponds to the infinitesimal atomic universes which compose its own physical body. The symbology is there: the correspondence is there; and it is by the correspondence that we are striving to explain somewhat of the Mystery, how the One becomes the Many; not because the One "descends into Matter" or becomes "many" materially and literally. Not at all. But in the same way that the sun is an immense and exhaustless reservoir of vital, psychic and spiritual rays, sending them out through billions of years, exhaustlessly; in the same way the Hierarchical Wondrous Being of Kosmic Magnitude, *through its inferior but high Wondrous Beings of various degrees*, enlightens us and uplifts us and inspires us, and leads us onward and upward towards immortality, for aye doing its best, through Its own spiritual Ray within us, to illumine and lighten our material corruptibility, in order to make it incorruptible; that from Personality we may enter Individuality; "that from darkness, we may go forth in Light"! And the time will come when we shall do this Work and become incorruptible *consciously*, working with Nature and

becoming one with her; for, just as this Wondrous Being is the foundation force back of and behind all that we call Nature, so that same Wondrous Being in far-gone former Manvantaras was then a Man. even as you and I now are. *Such we shall become, if we run the Kosmic race successfully!* Wonderful, inspiring thought! — p. 201

These ideas form the Esoteric background of all great civilizations, of all great Literature and Art. They are the heart Teachings of every Messenger that ever came from the Hierarchy of Compassion.

The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of Spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of embodied existence, help those who try to do the same thing, without personal motives. — Sankaracharya

This is the theme of all Oriental Art — of the Serene Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Kwan Yins. At the Fine Arts Gallery, pause before that great old Kwan-Shai-Yin that was carved a thousand years ago from a great tree by some Chinese Initiate artist. Look at it. It is the Higher Self — seen and realized! It is the Self of the Earth — the Wondrous Being of the Cosmos.

This glorious truth is the reason Hymns to the Sun were the invocations of all Ancient peoples. Thus, in the Mahabharata, the great epic of old India, Yudhishtira said, "Thou art, O Sun, the eye of the Universe! Thou art the soul of all corporeal existence! Thou art the origin of all things! Thou art the embodiment of the acts of all religious men!"

This, dear friends, is the pathway of Initiation, the way for the strong of heart to become channels for the Inner Splendor — going step by step into self-conscious at-one-ment with the Great Beings. From heart to heart may we go in the Sublime realization of True Compassion and Love.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT KARMA — *Henry T. Edge*

This word has now crept so much into public use that it does not need much definition. Broadly stated, it is the doctrine that our experiences are determined by our acts; that the law of cause and effect prevails in the moral world, just as it does in the physical world studied by science. If this is not so, then what theory must we accept in its place? We must either say that our fortune is determined by the will and wisdom of Deity, or else that it is the result of mere chance. But chance is a word used to cover ignorance, and if we use it we are simply side-stepping the question. No thinking person can believe that the universe and the life of men are without law and order and purpose.

One wonders why people have given so little attention to studying the laws of cause and effect in the moral world, when science has worked out these laws so successfully in the physical world. It is partly due to the influence of long-held religious teachings, which often encourage a man to look upon himself as a helpless being, dependent on divine intercession; instead of realizing the teachings of Jesus and Paul, that man is made in the divine likeness and has within him spiritual resources which he can summon to his aid. Then again, science has concentrated attention too much on the surface of things, and has even gone so far as to represent man as merely an improved animal. It has sought to explain everything by the laws of mechanics and chemistry. But we live much more in our minds and emotions than we do in our senses, so that science has left out the most important part of human life.

Again, to understand the law of Karma properly, we must accept the doctrine of Reincarnation. It is obvious that we enter this life with a ready-formed character; children of the same parents differ greatly, and the innate character of each child soon asserts itself. This character is what we have brought over from previous lives on earth; and it is the fruit of our own actions. In short, we make our own destiny; we have

made ourselves what we are, and can make our future by our own present thoughts and acts.

Still we can learn very much about Karma without taking Reincarnation into account. For, once you get the idea into your head you acquire a new sense of observation and begin to study the connexion between your thoughts, emotions, actions, and your experiences; so that the truth of the law begins to prove itself.

There is apt to be a tendency to regard Karma as a kind of supernatural agency, interfering with the course of Nature by poking in an arbitrary finger. This is an idea we have inherited from theology, and it may linger in our minds after we think we have discarded it. It is quite wrong. Karma is simply the working of Nature; effect follows cause as truly in the moral world as in the physical world. We sometimes hear people ask: "Was this event due to natural causes or to the operation of Karma?" An absurd question; *every* event is under the operation of Karma, and at the same time every event is due to natural causes. Theosophists do not believe in supernaturalism. If an experience seems the result of chance, that only means that we have been unable to trace the connexions; when we *can* see the connexions we call it *law*; when we cannot we call it chance. Is that reasonable?

The real teachings of Jesus tell us that every man has within himself, by virtue of his divine birth, the power to achieve his own salvation; for Jesus assures his disciples that, if they will but follow his behests, they can have the same powers as himself. Paul also in his Epistles insists constantly on the same theme; for him, the Christ is the immortal part of man, incarnate or "crucified" in an earthly body; but capable of being invoked so that a "new birth" takes place and the old Adam is mastered by the new. Theosophy, so far from being hostile to the teachings of Christ, champions them; and in so doing, Theosophy merely follows in the footsteps of many divines and Christian laymen who now take much broader views as to the meaning of the Christian Gospel. Many of these Christians are close to Theosophy in their beliefs, the main point of difference being that Theosophy recognises also the

same truths as found in other religions.

As to science, it is surprising to see what great steps are now being taken by its leading minds towards a more logical view of Nature. This new view has been forced upon them by the recent discoveries, which cannot be explained on the old principles of physics. It is seen to be necessary to postulate a causal Nature behind the external physical Nature; and that the real secrets of natural law are hidden beyond the veil of the bodily senses, and must therefore be correlated with finer senses which men in general have not yet learned to use. We can trace the action of light-waves up to the retina, and beyond to certain chambers in the back of the brain; or we can trace sound-waves to the tympanum and beyond; but after that, all is mystery. How these mechanical actions become translated into vision and hearing, we cannot tell. Yet so all-important a part of experience can hardly be left unexplored by science which pretends to explain Nature.

How does Karma operate from one life to another across the gap of death and of rebirth in another body? The details of such a process we can hardly expect to know in the present limited state of our knowledge; but they are not unknowable. It is all a question of patient study in regions to which we have not so far given our attention. If we are willing to concede the existence of forms of matter other than the physical, the question becomes easier; and science has to admit such a possibility, for it is familiar with some ultra-physical form of matter which can transmit ether waves all over the earth and beyond. If it is said, therefore, that our actions, thoughts, feelings are somehow stored up in one of Nature's repositories — the Astral Light, let us say — it does not seem so marvelous after all. We cannot enter more fully into this question here, but any earnest student will find much in the Theosophical books that will convince him, if he enjoys an open and unprejudiced mind.

It is often thought that the law of Karma implies fatalism and that it rules out freewill, but this objection is due merely to confusion of thought. Karma determines our experiences, but does not dictate how

we shall react to them. As sung in *The Light of Asia*:

If ye lay bound upon the wheel of change,
And no way were of breaking from the chain,
The Heart of boundless Being is a curse,
The Soul of Things fell pain. Ye are not bound!
The Soul of Things is sweet,
The Heart of Being is celestial rest;
Stronger than woe is Will: that which was Good
Doth pass to better — Best.

The delusion is based on a wrong idea of what is meant by cause and effect, based on notions derived from physics. In the first place we have no right to apply the principles of mechanics to a domain of conscious living beings. The links in the chain of causation are no longer masses of inert physical matter, but minds; and minds are endowed with choice and volition of their own, so that the chain of cause and effect cannot be rigid. But prominent men of science themselves are questioning the validity of cause and effect as a rigid process — "determinism," as they call it. In fact, it is seen that the law of cause and effect does not deny the action of freewill. Eddington says:

The relation of cause and effect involves a flow of power from the cause to the effect, and therefore a certain freedom on the part of the cause. But if every event is completely and necessarily determined, then how can any event be regarded as a cause, since it is absolutely determined from the start by prior events? It is not in that case the cause, but the cause is shifted back, and there is an infinite regress.

Christopher Caudwell says:

Into every effect all the previous events of the universe flow as a cause, and, lacking any one of them, the effect would be in some measures slightly different.

In fact, the law of cause and effect not only does not deny freewill but positively necessitates it. The idea that there is any such opposition is

due to confusion of thought, and has no support either from science or logic.

As to human nature, its essence is the Divine Monad, a spark of Cosmic Light; and this manifests itself through a series of vehicles, so that its presence and influence are always active in greater or less degree. Man's real will (and destiny, which amounts to the same thing) is to fulfil the laws of Universal Harmony, and he achieves the highest freedom by self-identification with the SELF. Every moment is a beginning. Let us throw off this nightmare of determinism; let us *act*.

There is no such thing as dead matter anywhere: the universe is composed exclusively of living beings. It is common enough to say that plants are alive; but minerals are alive also, though not in the same degree as the kingdoms above them. In fact, the very atoms and electrons are instinct with life and movement, so that they also are living beings. In every living being there is some degree of intelligence and freewill, however small. Thus we find freewill at every point in the universe. All these countless wills and intelligences act in accordance with the eternal laws of the universe, just as our own wills must also act. Thus we find order in diversity.

Karma is the preserver of equilibrium, the restorer of disturbed balance. The ancient Greeks spoke of Nemesis as a deity who punishes excess in any individual or community. But he is not a punisher — merely an adjuster, calling to order whoever has wandered too far off the path of justice. Thus we bring penalty upon ourselves by over-indulgence, physical or mental, in pleasure; for our life is guided by a power wiser than our personal will; it is guided by our own Higher Self, and this will bring us back into order again for our own good.

We should avoid the tendency of always looking at the painful side of Karma, and remember that our good acts and thoughts bring their consequences, just as do our bad ones. The good seed which we sow may counteract the bad seed. What seems punitive experience may be changed into remedial action, if we assume the right attitude of mind towards it. Our judgments as to what is good for us are short-sighted

and erring; there is a wiser law shaping our life; let us seek to cooperate and accept its decrees. Man has a spiritual will as well as a personal will.

Is there anything in the doctrine of Karma which stands in the way of our helping our neighbor in distress? Perish the delusion! It is our duty, our privilege, to help him; and all decent people, obeying the great law of Compassion, would act at once in a deed of mercy, without stopping to think about Karma. Besides, it may be part of his Karma that he should be helped. In refraining from helping him we wrong both ourself and him. We must obey the law of Compassion, without fear that we shall thereby interfere with Nature's laws.

The Theosophical Forum

WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED . . . (1) — *Sybil Tustin*

Where Two or Three are Gathered Together in My Name (There am I in the Midst of Them). This saying, attributed to the Divine Messenger, Jesus, is an occult truth far older than the Christian Era, old as man himself. "Gathered together in My Name" — moved to spiritual unity by the Christos spirit, the divine in man; that is what the phrase means: Wherever two or three so moved, gather together in sincere spiritual effort, the overshadowing and indwelling God will be present. And it is to this overshadowing and indwelling reservoir of spiritual power that we reach upward and inward for strength and inspiration, when gathered together in unity.

Yet this does not mean that in solitude there is no growth — for solitude and silence are great teachers, necessary ones for the spiritual growth of the individual, if rightly used by the Will.

Nevertheless, it is true on the spiritual plane, as on the physical, that union is strength, and in those unseen, but potent spheres of thought and aspiration, such union may have dynamic results. There is a galvanizing power in unity of thought, unity in the direction of spiritual effort, that can indeed "move mountains" of difficulty, and overcome all obstructions and frustrations in the long run.

Perhaps one never realizes the strength and peace of spiritual union, until one has known the lack of it. There are thousands today lonely in the midst of crowds, heart-weary among a host of doubts and disillusionments, who need the renewed hope, the peace, the strength to face life anew, that comes from mental and spiritual union with others. Man, throughout all time, has recognized the need to meet together for such refreshment. But in our time such centres of refreshment have far too often failed the seeker. Yet the true light burns on, sometimes a little candle in the darkness; and if its rays are seen, the traveller through the gloom will be drawn to its light and

warmth.

Therefore, wherever you be, seek and find those with whom you can share that light. It burns in the South. It burns in the North. It is in all directions. It burns that other candles may be lit from it, candles that may, in turn, become fresh centres to attract other wanderers in the dark.

Let us then make use of that Christos-spirit, that *brooding* indwelling power, which is invoked by the union of hearts and minds attuned to one purpose. Let us take the bread and wine of its spiritual refreshment, that we may carry our light with fresh power and courage, until the day comes when its central Sun shall illumine the World with Truth.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *The Theosophic Messenger*, England, No I. Vol I.
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The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY VERSUS PSYCHISM — *Helen Savage*

What the Theosophical Society offers is an opportunity to all lovers of humanity to do altruistic work, illuminated by the light of a comprehensive philosophy which explains the causes of the miseries and inequalities in the world. It was founded to help direct altruism along constructive channels, and to show that whole-hearted co-operation in such work was the safest way to higher development. The dynamic energy to give the Movement power to overcome every obstacle is not generated by striving to learn tricks of the occult arts, but by arousing a burning desire to serve. In short, the Society was not formed to be a "Hall of Magic." It was to be a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood in the world and "to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions."

Many Westerners find it very distasteful to contemplate a postponement of personal achievement. They say, "Why must we wait for future lives? We want powers *now*." Such people are fascinated by the various methods of training offered by self-styled "occultists," or by "yogis" from the East. Nevertheless, an inquiry into these systems and their results shows that even here they do not find satisfaction. Even when such systems are not positively dangerous, they practically all pander to the acquisitiveness of the undeveloped human being. Advertisements say: "You can learn in six weeks to gain power over others." Or, "You can have everything you want, power, riches, friends."

Yet with all their appeal, these adaptations of oriental systems are quite unsuited to the temperament of the average Westerner with his impatient, restless and undisciplined nature. As a rule we are entirely unable to go through the difficult courses of training to which the meditative, introspective Oriental is adapted by ages of heredity, by custom and environment. The eager enthusiast gets "stuck half way." Unable to win through to a promised success, and equally unable to

regain the more normal if not enlightened state he previously possessed, he does not know where to turn.

The better systems, with a quasi-spiritual appeal, promise the student looking for quick results, the possibility of reaching a state of cosmic consciousness by following a particular course of lessons — for a price. But cosmic consciousness is not to be bought! It is the unalterable rule of the real Teachers that no spiritual teaching shall ever be sold.

Further than this, the human soul has taken millions of years to reach its present stage, and that slow process of unfolding growth which is to culminate eventually in full spiritual enlightenment cannot suddenly be consummated. You cannot over-night make of a soul something that it is not. Its quality and character change slowly. Soul-enlightenment comes as the fruition of lifetimes of diligence and one-pointed effort.

Thus the Theosophical philosophy holds out no false hopes. It explains the nature, origin, and destiny of the complex being called man, and provides a grand universal setting in which the awakening consciousness of the aspirant to wisdom views his own progress as inseparable from that of the whole human race, and almost inconsequential in its purely personal aspects. He finds that, far from any barriers being raised to his progressive development, the expansion of consciousness he receives from a study of the Ancient Wisdom and from its application in a life of unselfish service, clears away veil after veil of the lower selfhood. Thus he himself, *by his own self-devised efforts*, brings about those higher stages of training and teaching which lead to the final objective: the attainment of Atma-Vidya, the union of the human self with the aspirant's own inner god.

... H. P. Blavatsky, writing in 1889, in the closing chapter of *The Key to Theosophy*, draws a picture of what the Theosophical Society may do if it can avoid the pitfalls that so many former efforts have fallen into.

She writes:

Then the Society will live on into and through the twentieth century. It will gradually leaven and permeate the great mass of

thinking and intelligent people with its large-minded and noble ideas of Religion, Duty, and Philanthropy. Slowly but surely it will burst asunder the iron fetters of creeds and dogmas, of social and caste prejudices; it will break down racial and national antipathies and barriers, and will open the way to the practical realisation of the Brotherhood of all men. . . . Further, the development of the psychic powers and faculties, the premonitory symptoms of which are already visible in America, will proceed healthily and normally. Mankind will be saved from the terrible dangers, both mental and bodily, which are inevitable when that unfolding takes place, as it threatens to do, in a hot-bed of selfishness and all evil passions. Man's mental and psychic growth will proceed in harmony with his moral improvement, while his material surroundings will reflect the peace and fraternal goodwill which will reign in his mind, instead of the discord and strife which is everywhere apparent around us to-day.

— Reprinted from *Psychic Powers*, p.120-5

The Theosophical Forum

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT? — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

Millions of years have passed since the most dramatic event in human history, the coming of the Manasaputras, who quickened in man the fires of mind. This made possible the conscious co-ordination between the hitherto latent intellectual and spiritual principles of man's constitution and the physical vehicle which had been evolved for their use in Earth-life. And for every year so many days, and for every day a night. And what can man answer if the divinity-lighted Self should question, What of the night?

With the awakening of mind a glorious promise dawned for the human race, the promise that man, now endowed with self-consciousness, with the knowledge of himself as an entity, could win awareness of the spiritual and divine elements of his sevenfold nature, which from the beginning had awaited the unfoldment that completes him as a being. And, moreover, man could now bring into function in Earth-life these intellectual, spiritual, and divine powers and faculties, all existing and evolving on planes invisible to man and unknown to him, though continuously exerting benign influences upon him. Just as the stars are invisible in daylight, so do these inner selves of man follow their shining paths unrecognized, until man awakens to the realization that the greater part of him is at all times that part which is inner and invisible. Could it be that in sleep man enters those inner worlds and lives a life as closely related to the functions of these inner selves as daytime activities are to the self man ordinarily recognizes as himself?

Some there are who protest against the continued mystery of these millions of nights. They cannot remain content with dreams which are mere reflexions of earthly things pictured as the sleeper is returning to waking consciousness. They cannot remain content with infrequent glimpses of deep dream, which are a foregleam of the full glory of experience in higher realms of consciousness. They *are* content to let the body rest: it is no craving for a longer interval of the pleasures of

sense that irks them. But once the knowledge of the septenary constitution of man becomes a living truth to a thinker, it is common sense — or *uncommon* sense and a higher understanding of economy — at least to inquire: What do *I* do at night? *I* am not my tired body. *I* am not my weary brain. What am *I* doing? Why can't there be some conscious link between day and night for me? And what can I do about it?

Well, the fact of the matter is that we have been told what to do about it. But this rule has been disregarded, much like the Golden Rule, voiced in sacred teachings the world over but not thought to have sufficiently practical results, until now, perhaps, when men of science recognise that it has operated successfully in the natural world and when men are being forced to see that if they cannot learn to live as brothers there is danger that they may not continue to live at all.

Pythagoras was one of the Teachers of the Ancient Wisdom who instructed his disciples as to the right approach to conscious sleep. He pointed out how one going to sleep could as it were blaze a trail from waking consciousness by which he could pass through and by which he could return direct without being caught in the confusing and often alarming scenes of the lower *Swapna* state of consciousness. The injunction given was simply that the disciple before going to sleep should scan the acts and thoughts of the entire day, *face* all of them, then with radiant will resolve to right what was wrong and rededicate himself to the highest — should gear his faculties to clearest seeing and noblest aims and slip away without dregs of thought or desire that drag him earthwards. In the inner worlds safety requires not only seeing but being. The passport is purity of heart.

Katherine Tingley's students remember instruction given by her:

Disintegrative forces are especially active and dangerous at the present time, owing to the general unrest, and are apt to work upon us destructively when we are asleep. That is, if we are will-less or negative. So that we should take the last hour before retiring for spiritual rest, constructive thought, quiet, silent

reflection on spiritual things. Such a course would place us beyond the reach of disintegrating agencies during those hours when the soul is free.

We are not so much at their mercy when awake, in a sense, for then we are on guard instinctively. But in sleep the body is in certain ways unprotected, *unless* guarded by the silent warrior-force of our aspirations and Spiritual Will. Just before retiring — that is the time.

The late Leader of the Theosophical Society, Dr. G. de Purucker, stressed the analogy between sleep and death. At death, which is the perfect sleep, the Inner Self of man withdraws to invisible worlds for rest and widely ranging inner experience, to return to a new body for continued experience on Earth. With sleep, the imperfect death, the Inner Self withdraws to invisible worlds while the body is refreshed for new physical activity. The secret of this passage to and from the inner worlds is the Self's secret. Of this an Irish poet, Monk Gibbon, wrote some years ago:

What place have you been, O mind, and from what country are you returned, absent now these seven hours or more it may be? Tell me all, for it is not right that those who are comrades until sundown should be strangers then. . . . Without warning you depart, and you return without a word. . . . Is it fair that you should travel and leave no tidings, that you should journey and bring no news? Tell your secret, mind, for even today we have communed on many things. . . . Tell your secret, mind, for if I knew where you had been so often, I might know the place to which you one day go.

And all of us have pondered Wordsworth's words about the newborn child who comes "trailing clouds of glory." Is there a glory that attends the moment of waking? An opportunity for a few moments to live in the light surrounding the Self on its return? Are we, in fact, only *half* living when we have not solved the secret of sleep? Destiny holds much in store for man. The Universe and Man are as yet unfinished — thanks

be to the twentieth century philosophers who are proclaiming this truth of Theosophical cosmology. Continuity of consciousness through sleep and waking, through death and birth, belongs to the complete human being, who has brought into function the higher intellectual and spiritual principles of his nature.

The waking moments after sleep undertaken with even a measure of conscious aspiring will bring startling glimpses of reality — a pause, in which a Greater Self is weighing everything and striking a balance, moments when vision and decision are clearer in relation to all that concerns us, hunches as to what to do and to say, hitherto unthought of, new light on personal and intellectual problems, practical enough to disarm the doubting mind. Wise would man be to take note of the analogy between sleep and death, to face himself with courage and will before his inner Self wings free into the night, and wise to gather even greater courage and wisdom from that Self as with morning it returns to Earth.

The Theosophical Forum

CONFIDENCE AND PEACE AND SECURITY — *W. Y. Evans-Wentz*

"I have lit the Lamp of Wisdom; its rays alone can drive away the gloom that shrouds the world." — *The Buddha*

Today, very much as in the last days of the Roman Empire, occidental man has lost faith in his ancestral religion, in his social organization, in his fellowmen, and in himself. Wherever he looks round about him, over the continents, he beholds national confusion, national hypocrisy, national dishonesty. None of his long-cherished moral codes shape the policies of governments or the character of the society of which he is a member. His former complacency as a citizen is dissipated. Life's values themselves have been revolutionized by a science fettered to utilitarianism. The chief theme of the press, of the radio, of the legislators, and of his over-vocal environment as a whole, is how to attain security — security against unemployment, against illness, against old age. There are Five Year Plans, Ten Year Plans, New Deals, Beveridge Plans. The few who still believe that there is an Otherworld beyond the ken of telescopes and microscopes fix their hopes, precisely as did the folk inhabiting the shores of the Mediterranean in the first centuries of the Christian era, in a miraculous intervention in the affairs of men by some all-powerful extra-terrestrial intelligence.

One of the direct effects of these socially unhealthy conditions, which have resulted from lack of self-reliance, manifests itself in the widespread tendency, especially marked in Europe prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, to worship human leaders, none of whom may be spiritually superior as men, and meekly to submit to their dictation in matters relating to thought and action. The self-reliant man, unlike a bee in a hive or an ant in a colony, is his own leader, as the Sages declare that he should be; he is his own censor, his own judge as to what is right or wrong conduct, his own priest and intercessor, and his own savior. When man delegates to others, who are spiritually no wiser than himself, the solving of his own most intimate and all-

determining life-problems, he becomes as one mentally incompetent; like a submissive ox, deprived of its sexual virility, he humbly lowers his head and allows himself, without the least protest, to be harnessed to the chafing and heavy yoke of totalitarianism.

In every age, as history testifies, wherever man has failed to safeguard and foster his spiritual manliness, totalitarian priesthoods have arisen and dictatorially decreed holy wars and inquisitions, and totalitarian governments have arisen and dictatorially decreed international warfare and its accompanying reversion to savagery and brutishness. Thus it is that cultural progress ceases, utilitarian ends displace humanitarian ends in education, hatred overwhelms love, greed neutralizes charity, selfishness destroys co-operation, standards of morality are set aside, and the divine in man being no longer permitted to exercise its saving guidance, civilization declines.

Because of this decadence of courage, and this vanishing of idealism and social responsibility, the occidental man of today lacks the indomitable pioneer initiative of his forefathers, and is filled with dark forebodings as to the future. Illusion has cast over him its hypnotic glamour; it has bespelled into inactivity the all-conquering powers of his higher self. He has lost the noble status of a fearless freeman and become a craven slave. He knows, at last, that neither his machines, nor his quotas and tariffs, nor his statistically-based systems of economics, neither his hydro-electric plants, nor his streamlined vehicles and super highways, can restore justice, or brotherhood, or freedom, or guarantee social security. In like manner will disillusionment and frustration overwhelm the coming generations in the now hopefully awaited age of atomic power.

The aim of every Great Teacher ever has been to help a disillusioned generation to regain their lost vision of guidance, their lost horizon, their own self-reliance, their own self-dependence, and to give to them assurance of the innate goodness of mankind and of the sublime purpose of incarnate existence. Since the life-wave first reached this planet, aeons ago, and man became man, humanity has never been

without such Teachers; and these Clear-Seeing Ones make known to us, not in virtue of mere belief, but in virtue of direct perception of the Real, that there are Those, greater than themselves, who direct the Earth's life-wave to its superhuman consummation. They tell us, likewise, that the world's sorrows are of man's own making, that what man has sown in past ages he is reaping in this age, that not until man transcends the Shadows in the deep Valley of Ignorance and gains the Sun-lit heights of Right Understanding can he enjoy Confidence and Peace and Security. And only then will mankind realize that their wondrous machines and myriad products of a utilitarian science have been as fetters to bind them to this lowly realm of transitory existence.

The Master Confucius advises us that the rule of Right Living is summed up in the one word "Reciprocity", that only when men practice reciprocity, "not doing to others what they do not desire done to themselves," will they possess Confidence and Peace and Security. Chuang Tze, another of China's Sages, has said: "Full comprehension of the scheme of the Universal Whole is known as the mighty secret of being in at-one-ment with the All-Good, whereby human society is so administered that there resulteth at-one-ment amongst men."

The Christ-Initiate, the Anointed One, has promised men that once they have sought and found the Heavenly Kingdom, the inner source of all power and wealth, within themselves, every thing of which they have need shall be added unto them. He bade men behold the lilies of the field, that neither toil nor spin; for in them, during a brief evanescent moment in time, the Hidden Glory, surpassing that of the mightiest of mundane kings, is made manifest. When man, too, shall be in tune with the Infinite Heart-Life, he, like the lilies, shall attain transcendency over the world's vicissitudes; no longer will he be a prodigal son, wandering bewildered and in rags through the world.

The Buddha, the Fully-Enlightened, in a farewell address, ere He entered into Nirvana, bade His disciples to be lamps unto themselves, to depend upon no other light for illuminating the Pilgrim Way than that Light which is within man. He bade them to be their own refuge,

and to work out their own salvation with diligence. It is because of the loss of this self-reliance, because of dependence upon objects and powers external to himself, that occidental man has become a bondsman of the transitory, of the unreal, of the evanescency of appearances. Man, as the Buddha teaches, must make for himself, by his own self-directed efforts, an island in the midst of this world's Sea of Instability if he would possess the manly strength and confidence born of self-dependence, the blessings born of peace, the happiness born of security: "By strenuous effort, by self-control, by temperance, let the wise man make for himself an island which the flood cannot overwhelm."

Thus have the Sages of the past sought and thus do the Sages of the present seek to dissipate Ignorance. Each of these Clear-Seeing Ones, those who have crossed over to the Other Shore, and those who are still embodied on Earth, has discovered and trodden the Secret Path. Some, like the Buddhas and the Christs, have traversed it to its very end; some, like the Bodhisattvas and the Saints, have traversed it far enough to be no longer in doubt of its sure direction and to have seen thereon, through the distant vistas of future incarnations, the attainment of its ineffable goal.

May all who aspire to Right Guidance enter upon that age-old Secret Path. May they thereby pass beyond Ignorance and win Wisdom. May they transcend fear and insecurity. May they, at last, like the Buddha and the Christ, triumph over all the sorrows of the world, even over death itself, and attain Freedom.

The Theosophical Forum

UNITY AND BROTHERHOOD — *John Lucas*

Two of the more particular objects of the T. S. since its revival by the champion of Truth, H. P. Blavatsky, in 1875 have been to promulgate the knowledge of the essential unity of all that is and to form an active brotherhood among men. The latter follows naturally from an understanding of the fundamental unity of all things in Nature, as anything we do whether for good or evil affects not only the immediate recipient of our attentions, but the whole of humanity and indeed the whole of the Universe. It follows that we should constantly strive to maintain in our lives that harmony and peace which is apparent in the depths of the Universe around us.

The essential unity of all that exists is a fact based on a knowledge of the spiritual core at the heart of all things, and has been a fundamental teaching of all the great Sages and Seers of the past. It has also been understood by intuitive and mystical poets of all ages, as witness the following inspired passage from "The Mistress of Vision" by Francis Thompson:

All things by immortal power,
Near or far
Hiddenly
To each other linkèd are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling of a star.

The conception has however for a long time sounded strange to western minds, accustomed to the old materialistic ideas and the arbitrary division of Nature into animate (organic) and inanimate (inorganic) kingdoms, between which there appears to have been a unique distinction. The recent staggering advances of science are however rapidly bringing about a radical change of ideas, and the following extract from a review by Prof. H. H. Price of R. G.

Collingswood's latest book *The Idea of Nature* (Sunday *London Times*, 11/3/45), is expressing Theosophical tenets revealed anew to the Western world in 1875:

Matter, even mass itself is resolved into activity. It is what it does. Since all activity requires time to happen in, there is no such thing as "matter at an instant." The notion of "simple location" — that a given physical entity is just at this place and nowhere else — is abandoned. Every electron is everywhere, since it acts everywhere. Moreover every piece of matter, even the simplest is a pattern of activities . . . the distinction between the living and the lifeless is broken down. Nature is not the dead-level affair we thought it was. It is a graded hierarchy, and even the lowest level entity, the electron, is a kind of simple organism.

There is therefore no reason to doubt the fundamental unity of Nature and also the fact of Universal Brotherhood as a necessary consequence.

Theosophy does not teach that Brotherhood depends upon external conditions — social, political, or even intellectual. Its root lies in the order of Nature, in the organic unity of the human race, physically and above all spiritually. . . . Mankind is an organism; men are its constituent cells, and what injures one hurts all. Theosophy shows that the recognition of this in the life of each individual with all that it implies — is the only basis on which a true civilization can be built. The Brotherhood of Man, therefore is not a sentimental theory, framed to ameliorate stern realities; it is a fact in Nature. . . .

The fact of universal brotherhood has again been a fundamental teaching of all the great Sages and Seers of the past, and also from time to time has been grasped intuitively by poets and artists. In this connexion the work of Beethoven is a shining example, particularly in his later compositions. Imagine an untidy garret room, the bed unmade in one corner, manuscripts littering the room in all directions. In the room a solitary figure, stone deaf, ill and uncared for, is concentrating

on his masterpiece, the Ninth or Choral Symphony. In the midst of all his own troubles, Beethoven turns to the troubles of the world around him, and, in the words of Schiller, conceives the great solution:

Alle Menschen werden Bruder

(All mankind as brothers hold we.)

The music makes the fact a reality, and today the world needs just this fact of Universal Brotherhood. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The Theosophical Forum

OCCULTISM AND HEALING — *J. W. A. Croiset van Uchelen*

When we speak about occultism and healing in the same breath medical science decries us scornfully. Was it not Hippocrates who lifted the healing art to a science by divorcing medicine from religion? But, we are asked to forget that Hippocrates himself was a priest-physician and that his famous oath is directed to the gods and goddesses in the faith of his fathers. (1)

And what were the healing methods used by Hippocrates, the so-called Father of Medicine? They were: foods, water and herbs; or phrased differently dietetics, hydro-therapy and herbology. Nevertheless his diagnostic studies and observations apparently contributed to secular medicine which, from that period, started its onward way. It is significant that during the rise of the Roman empire priest-physicians were still the sole custodians of public health, while secular medicine "prospered" during its decline. Up to that time Romans had never paid a fee for medical care, but the new type physician, who had removed the superstition of divine aid, had substituted in its place the more profitable superstition that man can buy health, and that since he only appreciates that for which he pays, he should pay well!

It was then, for the first time, that it became necessary to make laws against malpractice and to devise legal methods to hold physicians responsible. (2) In the sight of these medics, man had lost his status as a son of the Gods, to become a "case history." Thus it was that Cato cried out against them, declaring that the Romans had flourished for six centuries without doctors, only, in the end, to be murdered by Greek physicians thirsting after knowledge. Wrote Pliny: "It is at the expense of our perils that they learn, and they experiment by putting us to death, a physician being the only person who can kill with sovereign impunity." Departing from the Aesculapian Mysteries medicine had left behind the exalted ethical standards of its past. And more was lost: beauty and dignity; the noble spirit which surrounded the temples of

Aesculapius. The obsessing concern about utility and efficiency so-called, was to drive out every vestige of beauty, finally to make the hospital-wards the prison-like places they have become.

The body, "the temple of the most high," never since has been treated with such gentle reverent care, after commercialism entered the field of healing. When physicians were priests and priests physicians, healing was for *all* the sick and not alone for those who can afford it. In the temples dedicated to healing there was no discrimination between poor and rich. The physician then was not "in business," nor did the temple-grounds house the disgraceful places many of our present free and "charitable" healing institutions are.

Has medicine gained from the division from religion for which Hippocrates is blamed? Science has paid its contribution to civilization, but can it perfect it? The wisest men of all time have realized the reality of spiritual values, and have been inspired to serve human needs, not for gain or hope for profit, but by love of man. Science belongs to this world alone. Man does not. And while time moves on in its eternal cycles, we shall return closer and closer once more to the very methods employed by the physicians in the olden temples, who, like Hippocrates, taught men to find natural ways to health, using light, herbs, food and water as the principal means of alleviating human ills.

II

The universal disease of mankind, Buddha taught, is ignorance, and wisdom is the only remedy. (3) We have lost much that is only slowly being regained. Spirit, the root of all things, cannot be denied its own by barriers science, in its smug self-sufficiency, sought to erect.

The Pythagoreans already experimented in color-therapy and the use of incense, and other fragrances, for healing purposes. Astro-diagnosis and -therapy have been practised for thousands of years, and the medieval astrologer-physicians acted upon the authority of Hippocrates, Galen and Avicenna when they developed an elaborate system of correspondences between planets and herbs, as well as

chemical and mineral remedies. Seventeenth century England produced many notable writers on this subject, as Drs. Lilly, Culpeper and Coley, who enjoyed the patronage of Sir Elias Ashmole.

The Rosicrucians, who received their original teachings from the ancient Mystery Schools, at about that same period produced such physicians as Fludd, Maier and Heydon; and herbology played an important role, among other methods which are finding a re-awakened interest. The researches of Pythagoras in the healing effect of music became revived in treating shell-shocked patients shortly after World War 1. Color-therapy is used by many naturopathic physicians today.

To those who consider the subject of astrology not worth mentioning, it must be a shock to learn that, in writing to a friend, Dr. Carl Freud confided: "I use astrology in my difficult cases." Nor did he stand alone.

Alchemy's tradition too is long and venerable. Alchemists were not gold-makers; in seeking after ultimates of chemistry they made many important discoveries along the way which have enriched the pharmacopoeia of modern medicine. Sir Isaac Newton thought the subject sufficiently worthwhile to gather a magnificent collection of alchemists' literature and upon later distribution it was found that many works contained thoughtful notes in Newton's handwriting.

The power of mind, the ancients knew so well, became a field of investigation for modern psychologists who lost their way not in mind, but in matter. Mental healing went on its independent way, seeking success by affirmations, by denials, or by decrees. But here again we shall do well to heed the wisdom of Pythagoras, he who refused to ask favors from Divinity because "all men know what they want, but only the Gods know what they need."

Faith-healing in one form or another too, is as old as man, and it is told that Dr. Alexis Carrel became a devout Catholic after witnessing "miraculous" cures at the shrine at Lourdes, France. Man, to the scientists alike, remains "Man, the Unknown."

Esoteric knowledge alone can offer the key to the spiritual laws that

govern health. This was the gift of the ancients, seemingly lost. But slowly again we shall regain the wisdom of the ages the Mystery Schools promulgate today as in ages past.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Apropos of the Hippocratis jusjurandum — the great oath of medical ethics — there is some doubt among inquiring minds as to whether Hippocrates was its true author. Just as the Lord's Prayer was lifted bodily from the Jewish Talmud, it is quite possible that the Hippocratic Oath was part of the Aesculapian rites long before the advent of Hippocrates. ([return to text](#))

2. It has ever been difficult to make laws against a privileged class, especially if this class organizes itself against any regulations that interfere with its complete freedom of action. The Romans found this out when they tried to regulate the practice of medicine. Present day conditions bear not less watching. Very recently the State of New York adopted a bill, instigated by medical "authorities," which permits the arrest, upon demand of a physician, of any person suspected of a certain type of disease. The one so "suspected," even if healthy, becomes a virtual prisoner under complete control of the medics, who may inject poisons and otherwise "treat" the "patient," without consent of the victim. All the medics have to do is to brand you, your wife, or child, as "suspect," and the rest follows — by law. Future ages will stand aghast at the perversity and stupidity of 20th century medical science.

Reference: *Healing the Divine Art*, by M. P. Hall. All footnote quotations are from this work. ([return to text](#))

3. Nature, wise in all her ways, bestows upon her creatios the knowledge necessary for their survival. Man, in the process of becoming civilized, has dammed up his instincts and impulses, and thus has lost his psychic bond with universal life. He will blunder along, falling from one conceit into another. It is in this way, that nature, in the end, outwits the human error, for the man after long

suffering will come to realize that only by listening to the voice of nature can he survive. This discovery is Wisdom. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

INITIATION — *Henry T. Edge*

This word denotes a topic much to the fore nowadays; but it is customary to lay too much stress on the formal and ritualistic aspect of the question, to the neglect of its all-important real meaning. This shows a materialistic attitude, such as that whereby religions have deteriorated so that the outward and visible form has overshadowed the inward and spiritual grace. We have here a touchstone by which to distinguish the spurious from the genuine.

It is doubtless true that a day will eventually come to any aspiring pilgrim on the path of Wisdom when he will be called upon to undergo some special and formal initiations and to pass or fail to pass certain severe tests of his character and worthiness. But towards such a prospect as this it would be well to observe an unexpecting attitude, and not try to forestall it in our thoughts; for in the meantime there are so many vital opportunities occurring at every step in the life which we have to lead, by which we may win either success or failure in the apparently insignificant, but really all-important incidents of ordinary experience. These are the real initiations, and it is upon them that our eyes should be fixed — on the *now* rather than the distant prospect.

Initiation means the progressive unification of the personal self and the Higher Self; a process which can go on all the time, and by which we may ascend step after step if we are sufficiently in earnest. Further, we may be sure that we shall never be judged fit to undergo the higher and more formal initiation until we have shown by our success in these daily trials that we are deemed worthy of being so tested with any chance of success.

The necessary preliminaries to true initiation are to be found set forth in *The Voice of the Silence, Third Fragment*.

The first is:

Dana, the key of charity and love immortal.

The Sanskrit word means "giving." The motive for entering initiation must be unselfish. This rules out all systems of "initiation" which appeal to personal ambition. It is a thing which we may cultivate all the time; and until we have mastered it, our further progress will be barred; but what vistas may open up to us if we succeed in this first step! Think of the chances we miss; think of our complaints that we do not progress.

A pure strong unselfish thought beaming in the mind lifts the whole being to the heights of Light.

Thus said a Teacher. True, we cannot leap at one bound from selfishness to unselfishness, nor would it be wise to attempt it; but we *can* progress continually, and go forward in spite of many slips back; we can "grow as the flower grows."

2. Shila, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.

This means acquiescence in whatever Karma has in store; so that we shall not be forever carping, running away from one thing and running after another — harmony in thought and act, the *Gita* attitude. This again will come gradually; in its turn this is an acquiescence of the lower mind in the wisdom of the Higher; so that its purport is the same as that of the first key.

3. Kshanti, patience sweet, that nought can ruffle.

This involves Faith, reliance on the wisdom of the Higher Self, on the Buddhist light that can illumine the Manas and blow away the dust from the mirror. Union between lower and Higher again, as in the first two keys. The lower mind gets busy trying to fix things, and thus worries us and interferes with the steady patient wisdom of the Higher. Impatience is of the lower passionate nature.

Such are a few hints as to the true meaning of initiation. If we can turn

our minds more from speculating on the grandiose aspect of the question, and condescend to stoop to the less spectacular but far more important and really weighty affairs of the passing moment, we may pass successfully (or miss another fine chance) at any time. The lower man, not wishing to be dethroned, will use the mind for devising all sorts of excuses for evading what it fears so much. You do not want to become pious or a prig; it is unhealthy to be always brooding over trifles — and so on. But it is possible that some people may view the matter rationally rather than emotionally, and be enough in earnest to experiment.

The Theosophical Forum

THE CHELA PATH (1) — *H. Groot*

"... There is a Road, steep and thorny and beset with perils of every kind, but yet a Road, and it leads to the Heart of the Universe ..."

Could there be found a more beautiful motto, drawing in one stroke, so to speak, the character of the old, old Chela Path, which each one of us here sincerely hopes to tread sooner or later?

The Path is narrow. It is thorny. But it *is* a Path; it *can* be trodden, however great the obstacles and dangers may be to the weary pilgrim, who, spiritually speaking, exerts himself to the utmost to tread firmly this holy Path.

Nor is it the only Path to go. At each step it is crossed by other pathways, which seem broad and well-paved. The pleasing foliage of the spreading trees of self-sufficiency afford plenty of shelter against the dazzling Light of Truth and Self-knowledge, which blinding light shines right into the eyes of the pilgrim on the narrow Path. The pleasantly sloping broad and easy roads lead downwards, unperceived by the traveler, so that he, perhaps without realizing it, enwraps himself more and more in the poisonous vapors rising from the swampy land of the lower selfhood. The other Path, narrow and steep, leads on high. It demands the utmost of the pilgrim's powers. Each moment threatens the danger of making a false step and sliding down the road again, either to tumble down into an abyss, or to sink deeper than the point where the rising had begun.

This narrow, thorny, steep Path is the Chela Path and it must be traveled with bleeding feet. Where does it lead to, this upward Path, that there are those who choose to steadfastly walk it with inexorable earnestness, free from fear of the troubles and dangers that lurk at every cross-road; free from selfishness and the lower personality? What is the final purpose of it? And who are those Pilgrims who have

chosen to travel it?

We know what the final purpose is, and we know whither this Path will lead, ultimately. It is to the Heart of the Universe.

But where shall we find it? And *how* to tread the Path that leads to the Heart of the Universe? Who are they, who have the courage and the strength and the perseverance to commence upon that steep Path? Are they super-men, liberated from human weaknesses? Are they gods or semi-gods, exempt from human qualities?

No indeed, Companions. The chela is a human being, like all of us. His nature, which has a dual aspect, a higher and a lower, places him before contradictory objectives. The chela, too, knows the flashlights of personal desires and temptations, the delusions of self-conceit. He knows them all, as they arise in the lower nature of man. He knows them all, but he is not confused by them; they do not get hold of him. There is a secret, invisible guide, safely leading the chela along the marsh-lands of impurity. And this guide is the chela's own knowledge that he must travel his thorny road without paying attention to his lower personality. The only yearning infilling his thoughts and his very being, is, to approach nearer and nearer to that wondrous Heart of the Universe whose steady pulsation is echoed in the deepest recesses of his own heart. His attention is focused on the great *SELF* of the Universe, in which he has found again his own deepest Self. Thus he treads the Path, blind and deaf to the temptations and the sorrows of the lower personality, in which he, too, being human, is clothed. He does not fight. He does not attempt to kill his lower nature. All violence is strange to him. He does not grieve at the faults that lie behind him any more than a little child regrets its last fall when it is intent on learning to walk, but just rises again, ready and strong for new endeavors.

Nor does the chela in a personal sense rejoice at his own progress. He knows that all personal ambition will distract him from the lofty goal he has in view. He does not pride himself on his attainments; no more does he grieve at his failures. There is but one aim, one wish, and that is to tread the Path which will bring him nearer and nearer to the

Source of all Being.

If we ask the pilgrim whether it is not a difficult road to follow, he will smile at us pityingly and answer that not *his* Path is difficult to walk, but *ours*, in so far as it leads us away from the Light. And if we point at his bleeding feet he will look down in surprise, for certainly *he* had not noticed the wounds, and they do not harm him. In fact there is nothing of the personal man in him that can be hurt or harmed. He keeps aloof from ambition. He does not know of jealousy. Hatred and anger are incapable of disturbing his inner peace and balance. Thus he advances on the Path, which is rough to the *personal* man only, but is like a broad high-way, like a flowery plain for him, who, while renouncing the personal self, *finds* himself in the Universal Self.

Truly, how could it be otherwise? We read in *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*:

In living the Chela-life you simply exchange things that you detest inwardly, that you hate, for things that are beautiful, helpful; exchanging weakness for strength, ugliness for beauty, blindness for vision, darkness for Light.

So indeed is the revolution which takes place in the inner life of him who steadfastly and courageously places his feet on the Chela Path.

Where is this sacred Path to be found? How can we tread it? The Chela Path lies within ourselves. Yea, we ourselves *are* the Chela Path. "Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself," says H. P. B. in *The Voice of the Silence*, and likewise say all the great Teachers of Humanity.

The Path lies within ourselves, within each one of us. For that very reason we all can tread the Path, as the possibilities lie hidden in each and all of us. Every human being knows of precious moments in his life, during which he lives in his higher nature. Do let us keep in mind continuously that what is needed to raise ourselves to the higher, spiritual plane is not to acquire new faculties, but rather to let the obstructions of our lower nature fall off quietly, like waterdrops fall off

a swan's stainless wing. The confusion of the lower desires, the passions of anger, the braggings of ambition, the false smile of self-sufficiency, the whisperings of jealousy, the clamor of unbrotherliness, all drown the still small voice of the Higher Self. Silence their noise, and we find ourselves face to face with our own inner divinity. As soon as we consciously strive to attain this purpose we find ourselves on the Chela Path. But even beforehand we had a vision of the wondrous possibilities that lie hidden in man. For isn't it true, Companions, that we all of us know the blessed moments of inspiration in which the great, the good, the beautiful, is born from within us, the moments of self-forgetfulness and grandeur, in which we can perform deeds and can think thoughts of which later on we can hardly understand that they were *our* deeds, *our* thoughts? And rightly so, for we had outgrown our lower personality, be it even for a short while. They are the moments of sacred emotion, during which the grand secret of the Universe reveals itself to us in the beauty of a flower, in the smile of a little child, or in the sparkling of a dewdrop. They are the blessed moments in which we experience that there is no such thing as segregation; that all separateness is an illusion; moments in which the true One-ness of all being opens itself as a glorious verity before our enthralled vision. It is the whisperings of the Divine within ourselves, the comprehension of which will come home to us when the lower voices are silenced. It is the reflexion of the inner Light radiating through the lower principles now become transparent for a while.

These spiritual experiences may serve as guides to the Chela Path. From the very moment we consciously determine to do our utmost to continuously raise our whole being up to this high plane of thought and living we have placed our feet on the sacred Road.

The Chela Path is open for all who long to tread it; for all who have the vision to recognise it; for all who do not fear the sharp thorns that will tear the Pilgrim's human feet.

O wondrous Chela Path, Path of growth, it is said. Yet verily the Path of growth is not a difficult one, though none can tread it but on wounded

feet. How are we to understand this strange paradox? Is it the Path of Growing Consciousness? Then whereby is this growth obtained?

There is one word, weighty with significance, and it will give us the answer. It is SELF-FORGETFULNESS. Self-forgetfulness coupled with continuous self-renunciation. For the Chela Path is the path of renunciation of the personal selfhood. The thorns and the wounds belong to the personal selfhood only. He who pays attention to them while walking the path, will be racked and tortured. But the Chela does not heed it. What he is aiming at is growth of the consciousness of the Higher Self. A growth keeping pace with the Chela's success in losing sight of his personal self. Thus and not otherwise can he proceed along the Pathway. But there is a danger threatening him at every step. It lies in looking back on the personality and getting entangled again in past faults and failures. They will make him slide down and fall. And if he with the greatest exertion stands up again, he will find that he must travel anew part of the road he had already covered before his fall.

The Chela Path consists in rising and falling. In this sense too, it is a Path of growth, along which the chela progresses ever more steadily so that his stumblings become fewer and fewer.

This is spoken of in *The Voice of the Silence*, where it says:

No Arhan, O Lanoo, becomes one in that birth when for the first time the Soul begins to long for final liberation. Yet, O thou anxious one, no warrior volunteering fight in the fierce strife between the living and the dead, not one recruit can ever be refused the right to enter on the Path that leads toward the field of Battle.

And even if he does stumble and fall down, even so the effort is not lost, for as H. P. B. says:

And if he falls, even then he does not fall in vain; the enemies he slew in the last battle will not return to life in the next birth that will be his.

When the chela, guided by his holy perseverance, equipped with the armor of the seven Paramitas, succeeds in traveling the Pathway to the very end, then not far from the ultimate goal a cross-road awaits him. The Path divides itself and becomes the Two Paths. The one is called the Open Way. It leads to the ultimate goal: Nirvana. But the other, the Secret Way, leads him back to the world as a Buddha of Compassion. Guided by his Compassion and his self-forgotten love, he renounces even the state of perfect bliss and once more descends to the earth, saying: "As long as there is one soul left in anguish yet, I will not enter upon Nirvanic Bliss."

Thus, Companions, is the lofty Choice of the Lords Buddha. And so, too, is the Choice, be it on a small scale, put to any one who commences upon the Chela Path, at each moment of his life. For at each step we are placed before the Choice of the Two Paths, one leading up to Delivery and Bliss, the other to Renunciation, also called the Path of Woe.

As H. P. B. says in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Behold! The goal of Bliss and the long Path of Woe are at the furthest end. Thou canst choose either, O aspirant to Sorrow, throughout the coming cycles!

Companions, it is not a choice of one single moment. They who desire to tread the Path, have to make a choice at each new step. Ultimately all will travel the Path of Woe, the only Road possible to him who has attained to perfect self-forgetfulness and all-embracing Compassion. The Goal seems endlessly far ahead when the Chela sets out on his Great Journey. Countless are the opportunities to choose the Open Path, the one leading up to ultimate Bliss. But his eyes will compassionately fall on those who walk behind him in the valleys of suffering and ignorance, and his ears will listen to even the faintest sigh of unhappiness and sorrow, and in this way he will arrive at the Great Self-Renunciation.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address at the European Convention of the Theosophical Society,

Visingso, Sweden, 1937. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE GREATEST OF ALL — *J. W. A. Croiset van Uchelen*

Love is the cement of the Universe. — G. de Purucker

Only by erasing the barriers between man and himself, between men and men, can Universal Brotherhood become realized. Co-operation must replace self-seeking individualism. Peace must replace war. We cannot fight for peace, any more than co-operation can be imposed by force.

Man is separated from man, nation from nation, by self-assertion, the assertion of self, and the will to dominate. If we agree that the cause of human separateness is selfishness and greed, then what is the Power by which the Ideal may be realized? What is the power which even amidst the bestialities of war, stands untainted in the blood-drenched battlefields? What is the power that makes for heroism and sacrifice, the sacrifice of self? It is love alone which leads to self-forgetfulness. Love, surpassing the confines of national and racial boundaries, encompasses ALL. Love, set free from the human heart — where too often it is encaged, like a songless bird — that it may soar, taking man aloft in its flight to the Sun. Love, not as a human sentiment, but as a winged Reality.

We are seekers and know we know not; and can agree to disagree in harmony. Each approach has its beauty to instill, its heresies to conquer. In the final analysis there are as many pathways as there are men; but upon close examination most of our differences are but eddies on the surface of the great calm deep.

Conscious unity in endless diversity is the brotherhood of men defined. There can be no peace on earth, until the harmony of the spheres finds its echo in the hearts of men; and to this end no amount of scientific planning will avail, no amount of religious discourse will aid, no amount of philosophic speculation will suffice.

Then do we not need science? We do, provided the use to which the knowledge thus gained is put, is guided by the dictates of the heart, Then do we not need religion? We do, provided we can surmount the man-made barriers of theology. Then do we not need philosophy? We do, and need the sharpened intellect, provided we realize that no amount of philosophy can give soul-experience, which alone is valid to the individual.

The only power to overcome is the one of which one among the Great has said: "and the greatest of these is LOVE."

The Theosophical Forum

ON LOYALTY

As one of the last of his publications, Professor Josiah Royce published a book entitled *The Philosophy of Loyalty*. Reminiscent of the late President's phrase, "the only thing this nation has to fear is fear itself," Royce sets forth loyalty as the one thing to strive for and upholds loyalty to loyalty as the world's crowning need.

The charm of the incomparable fairy tales for children by Grimm is that he urges loyalty as the supreme virtue. Witness the two brothers starting on a journey and coming to a fork in the road. They agree to separate and explore the two paths separately but to leave a knife with two blades so that if one of the two encounters misfortune his blade will rust, whereas if the other meets with good fortune its blade in the knife will remain bright and shining. One does meet with good fortune and the other falls into evil hands, whereupon his blade rusts. The more fortunate of the brothers feels that something is wrong and returns to the road fork where the twain separated and discovers the rusty blade pointing to the route taken by the brother and warily discovers a method of rescuing him.

Sir Walter Scott's novels, the delight still of our youth, likewise inculcate the idea of loyalty as the crowning glory of man.

It is interesting to note that one of the best sellers, the Bible, so far as the writer has been able to discover does not contain the word loyalty. However, St. Paul in Chapter 13, I Corinthians, in the Greek dialect credited to him, is in reality speaking of the human quality, or shall we say divine quality, of loyalty in the word translated in the King James version as "charity," but in the revised version translated as the more understanding term "love." Love, however, is too broad a term to meet the sense of the Greek text, which is better interpreted "loyalty". Thus the revised version of this chapter is made to end: "But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

If we consider the closing part of this chapter and St. Paul's expressed wish for his disciples to abide in faith, hope and loyalty, the latter term is obviously more nearly the meaning of the Adept Paul when he adds "the greatest of these is 'loyalty'."

But let us now return to the opening of this instructive chapter. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not "loyalty," I am become as sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not "loyalty," I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not "loyalty" it profiteth me nothing. "Loyalty" suffereth long, and is kind; "loyalty" envieth not; "loyalty" vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; . . ."

Before we go on with this let us pause a bit and consider the different kinds of loyalty. There is the natural loyalty owed by a man to his family, his relatives and friends. There is the purely civic variety, a loyalty to civic institutions — - clubs, schools, societies; loyalty to organizations, as the City, the State, the Nation, and should it become organized, the United Nations. Thus far we have considered loyalty of the lesser to the greater.

Next comes the downward phase of loyalty. This applies to the loyalty of the superior to his subordinates, whether in the family or any other kind of exoteric organization. It applies to the debt owed by Kings, Presidents, Generals or Admirals in the military or naval service. This type of loyalty is often described as *noblesse oblige*. This is the mark of a true gentleman, everywhere, but he can best be recognized by his loyalty not only to his subordinates, but by his invariable kindness to the weak and needy.

Next follows the loyalty of man to man or man to nature, for in a broad sense this loyalty includes all the kingdoms, visible and invisible, from the atomic to the galactic.

Lastly we come to the real meaning of the term when applied to a consideration of the occult hierarchy and used to describe the relationship between teacher and pupil, which is without question the most beautiful of all human relationships, and one which carries the greatest promise for the future of the race as well as the individual. But one must not paint too rosy a picture in these troublous times. That is to say, that great as is the reward for him who follows the path of loyalty to loyalty danger unforeseen threatens when he departs from the rules of chelaship. When he forsakes loyalty to loyalty he risks danger of falling into evil hands; danger of forfeiting the power of knowing how to follow the true path of loyalty; danger of losing his way in a spiritual black-out. He may know the mysteries, he may have the gift of prophecy, he may speak with the tongues of men, may be the most brilliant speaker in the world, yet lacking loyalty these shall avail him nothing; he is become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

Another, unprofessed to be a master of tongues or prophecy or knowledge, but who has faith, hope and loyalty may lead a multitude to the path of true understanding and devotion.

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge,
of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters,
thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

The Theosophical Forum

HUMAN DESTINY AND THE ATOMIC BOMB — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

A star falls. We look up at the night sky and, like children, hasten to form a wish, heedless of the mighty cosmic forces active in either integration or disintegration, so sure are we that Earth swings securely in her orbit and that nothing like that can happen here. But something *has* happened here. A few months ago a man-made meteor fell from the sky and the shock of its fall banished the sense of security from the world. Has this served to stun brain-minds and permit the higher mind to glimpse beyond the terrifying facts more of Truth, to vision a wider frame of destiny for the human race? If it has, Theosophy, the archaic Wisdom-Religion that has survived the rise and fall of many races and civilizations, meets the need for greater knowledge of a future for man based on unity and good will.

As the program for the development of Earth-life unfolds and there is an increase of knowledge, man is compelled to adjust his ideas of his relations to the universe and with his fellow-men. In the sixteenth century, after Copernicus, man had to realize that not the Earth, but the Sun, is the center of the system of which we are a part. In the nineteenth century physical man was found to be, not a special creation of the Almighty but a part of Nature, bone of its bone and flesh of its flesh. In the twentieth century, with inner endowments not yet accounted for by science, man appears to be assuming the role of the Almighty and advancing the date of the Judgment Day by letting loose hell upon Earth and beginning the final destruction of life on this planet. All our theories as to the future have now to measure up to the possibility of wholesale destruction and mass extinction of human beings.

We have therefore to visualize a larger picture of the destiny of man and his Earth-home. We ask, Can man survive this possible mass extinction? Has Earth served its purpose in human evolution? What *is* Man, and whither goeth he? Reconstruction today is not merely

rebuilding of naked cities: it is actively imagining, visualizing, the wider frame of destiny, in which Man achieves all that the inner, intellectual, spiritual, and divine nature of Man has yet, in this friendly but as yet unfinished universe, to manifest in Earth-life. Man has shown that he can make a hell on Earth: he has yet to make a heaven here. His inner powers must be brought into function, must build out of cosmic truth the ideal which precedes the actual. The materials for this building, the means of filling out the picture of what is yet to be, are to be found in the Theosophical teachings.

What then *is* Humanity? What means its Earth-life? According to Theosophy, the tie between Earth and Man is deep and strong, not to be severed by a minor cataclysm caused by atomic bombs. Together Earth and Man came to birth: Earth is Man's springboard to all possible cosmic exploration. When the life-impulse stirred, after a period of repose, successive life-waves of awakening beings, of which humanity is one, actually built our seven-globed Earth, or planetary chain; and the host of souls evolved *pari passu* with the planet from ethereal conditions in the early stages to the solid forms they now have. Vast ages were required for this descent along the downward arc into material existence as we know it. It is not necessarily a fall into evil, unless and until there is intelligent choice of wrong-doing; it is but taking on the job of planetary experience. Later in evolution, and *now* for us, comes the turn to the upward, or luminous arc, during which after painful purgation and sloughing off of excess material (what has been and is still going on in the world), the waiting better part of man's nature will find expression, still on Earth.

The main point at present is that the turn upward has been made. It is a wonderful time of opportunity for humanity. Will men accept the modification of living in brotherly accord, gladly join the movement into the luminous arc, or will they hold back, clinging to old selfish, separative desires and methods and fail now to prepare for a more momentous choice to be made in a future cycle? It is a time for decision; all portents point to this. Faith, insight, knowledge of Man's cosmic destiny as taught in Theosophy, can bring "the rapture of the

forward view" which fires the human heart with high courage for spiritual adventure in this new time.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY GENERALLY STATED (1) — *William Q. Judge*

The claim is made that an impartial study of history, religion and literature will show the existence from ancient times of a great body of philosophical, scientific and ethical doctrine forming the basis and origin of all similar thought in modern systems. It is at once religious and scientific, asserting that religion and science should never be separated. It puts forward sublime religious and ideal teachings, but at the same time shows that all of them can be demonstrated to reason, and that authority other than that has no place, thus preventing the hypocrisy which arises from asserting dogmas on authority which no one can show as resting on reason. This ancient body of doctrine is known as the "Wisdom Religion," and was always taught by adepts or initiates therein who preserve it through all time. Hence, and from other doctrines demonstrated, it is shown that man, being spirit and immortal, is able to perpetuate his real life and consciousness, and has done so during all time in the persons of those higher flowers of the human race who are members of an ancient and high brotherhood who concern themselves with the soul development of man, held by them to include every process of evolution on all planes. The initiates, being bound by the law of evolution, must work with humanity as its development permits. Therefore from time to time they give out again and again the same doctrine which from time to time grows obscured in various nations and places. This is the wisdom religion, and they are the keepers of it. At times they come to nations as great teachers and "saviors," who only re-promulgate the old truths and system of ethics. This, therefore, holds that humanity is capable of infinite perfection both in time and quality, the saviors and adepts being held up as examples of that possibility.

From this living and presently acting body of perfected men, H. P. Blavatsky declared she received the impulse to once more bring forward the old ideas, and from them also received several keys to

ancient and modern doctrines that had been lost during modern struggles toward civilization, and also that she was furnished by them with some doctrines really ancient but entirely new to the present day in any exoteric shape. These she wrote among the other keys furnished by her to her fellow members and the world at large. Added, then, to the testimony through all time found in records of all nations, we have this modern explicit assertion that the ancient learned and humanitarian body of adepts still exists on this earth and takes an interest in the development of the race.

Theosophy postulates an eternal principle called the Unknown, which can never be cognized except through its manifestations. This eternal principle is in and is every thing and being; it periodically and eternally manifests itself and recedes again from manifestation. In this ebb and flow evolution proceeds and itself is the progress of the manifestation. The perceived universe is the manifestation of this Unknown, including spirit and matter, for Theosophy holds that those are but the two opposite poles of the one unknown principle. They co-exist, are not separate nor separable from each other, or, as the Hindu scriptures say, there is no particle of matter without spirit, and no particle of spirit without matter. In manifesting itself the spirit-matter differentiates on seven planes, each more dense on the way down to the plane of our senses than its predecessor, the substance in all being the same, only differing in degree. Therefore from this view the whole universe is alive, not one atom of it being in any sense dead. It is also conscious and intelligent, its consciousness and intelligence being present on all planes though obscured on this one. On this plane of ours the spirit focalizes itself in all human beings who choose to permit it to do so, and the refusal to permit it is the cause of ignorance, of sin, of all sorrow and suffering. In all ages some have come to this high state, have grown to be as gods, are partakers actively in the work of nature, and go on from century to century widening their consciousness and increasing the scope of their government in nature. This is the destiny of all beings, and hence at the outset Theosophy postulates this perfectibility of the race, removes the idea of innate

unregenerable wickedness, and offers a purpose and an aim for life which is consonant with the longings of the soul and with its real nature, tending at the same time to destroy pessimism with its companion, despair.

In Theosophy the world is held to be the product of the evolution of the principle spoken of, from the very lowest first forms of life, guided as it proceeded by intelligent perfected beings from other and older evolutions, and compounded also of the egos or individual spirits for and by whom it emanates. Hence man, as we know him, is held to be a conscious spirit, the flower of evolution, with other and lower classes of egos below him in the lower kingdoms, all however coming up and destined one day to be on the same human stage as we now are, we then being higher still. Man's consciousness being thus more perfect is able to pass from one to another of the planes of differentiation mentioned. If he mistakes any one of them for the reality that he is in his essence, he is deluded; the object of evolution then is to give him complete self-consciousness so that he may go on to higher stages in the progress of the universe. His evolution after coming on the human stage is for the getting of experience, and in order to so raise up and purify the various planes of matter with which he has to do, that the voice of the spirit may be fully heard and comprehended.

He is a religious being because he is a spirit encased in matter, which is in turn itself spiritual in essence. Being a spirit he requires vehicles with which to come in touch with all the planes of nature included in evolution, and it is these vehicles that make of him an intricate, composite being, liable to error, but at the same time able to rise above all delusions and conquer the highest place. He is in miniature the universe, for he is a spirit, manifesting himself to himself by means of seven differentiations. Therefore is he known in Theosophy as a sevenfold being. The Christian division of body, soul, and spirit is accurate so far as it goes, but will not answer to the problems of life and nature, unless, as is not the case, those three divisions are each held to be composed of others, which would raise the possible total to seven. The spirit stands alone at the top, next comes the spiritual soul

or Buddhi as it is called in Sanskrit. This partakes more of the spirit than any below it, and is connected with Manas or mind, these three being the real trinity of man, the imperishable part, the real thinking entity living on the earth in the other and denser vehicles of its evolution. Below in order of quality is the plane of the desires and passions shared with the animal kingdom, unintelligent, and the producer of ignorance flowing from delusion. It is distinct from the will and judgment, and must therefore be given its own place. On this plane is gross life, manifesting, not as spirit from which it derives its essence, but as energy and motion on this plane. It being common to the whole objective plane and being everywhere, is also to be classed by itself, the portion used by man being given up at the death of the body. Then last, before the objective body, is the model or double of the outer physical case. This double is the astral body belonging to the astral plane of matter, not so dense as physical molecules, but more tenuous and much stronger, as well as lasting. It is the original of the body permitting the physical molecules to arrange and show themselves thereon, allowing them to go and come from day to day as they are known to do, yet ever retaining the fixed shape and contour given by the astral double within. These lower four principles or sheaths are the transitory perishable part of man, not himself, but in every sense the instrument he uses, given up at the hour of death like an old garment, and rebuilt out of the general reservoir at every new birth. The trinity is the real man, the thinker, the individuality that passes from house to house, gaining experience at each rebirth, while it suffers and enjoys according to its deeds — it is the one central man, the living spirit-soul.

Now this spiritual man, having always existed, being intimately concerned in evolution, dominated by the law of cause and effect, because in himself he is that very law, showing moreover on this plane varieties of force of character, capacity, and opportunity, his very presence must be explained, while the differences noted have to be accounted for. The doctrine of reincarnation does all this. It means that man as a thinker, composed of soul, mind and spirit, occupies body after body, in life after life, on the earth which is the scene of his

evolution, and where he must, under the very laws of his being, complete that evolution, once it has been begun. In any one life he is known to others as a personality, but in the whole stretch of eternity he is one individual, feeling in himself an identity not dependent on name, form, or recollection.

This doctrine is the very base of Theosophy, for it explains life and nature. It is one aspect of evolution, for as it is reïmbodiment in meaning, and as evolution could not go on without reïmbodiment, it is evolution itself, as applied to the human soul. But it is also a doctrine believed in at the time given to Jesus and taught in the early ages of Christianity, being now as much necessary to that religion as it is to any other to explain texts, to reconcile the justice of God with the rough and merciless aspect of nature and life to most mortals, and to throw a light perceptible by reason on all the problems that vex us in our journey through this world. The vast, and under any other doctrine unjust, difference between the savage and the civilized man as to both capacity, character, and opportunity can be understood only through this doctrine, and coming to our own stratum the differences of the same kind may only thus be explained. It vindicates Nature and God, and removes from religion the blot thrown by men who have postulated creeds which paint the creator as a demon. Each man's life and character are the outcome of his previous lives and thoughts. Each is his own judge, his own executioner, for it is his own hand that forges the weapon which works for his punishment, and each by his own life reaches reward, rises to heights of knowledge and power for the good of all who may be left behind him. Nothing is left to chance, favor, or partiality, but all is under the governance of law. Man is a thinker, and by his thoughts he makes the causes for woe or bliss; for his thoughts produce his acts. He is the center for any disturbance of the universal harmony, and to him as the center, the disturbance must return so as to bring about equilibrium, for nature always works towards harmony. Man is always carrying on a series of thoughts, which extend back to the remote past, continually making action and reaction. He is thus responsible for all his thoughts and acts, and in that his complete

responsibility is established; his own spirit is the essence of this law and provides forever compensation for every disturbance and adjustment for all effects. This is the law of Karma or justice, sometimes called the ethical law of causation. It is not foreign to the Christian scriptures, for both Jesus and St. Paul clearly enunciated it. Jesus said we should be judged as we gave judgment and should receive the measure meted to others. St. Paul said: "Brethren, be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap." And that sowing and reaping can only be possible under the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation.

But what of death and after? Is heaven a place or is it not? Theosophy teaches, as may be found in all sacred books, that after death, the soul reaps a rest. This is from its own nature. It is a thinker, and cannot during life fulfill and carry out all nor even a small part of the myriads of thoughts entertained. Hence when at death it casts off the body and the astral body, and is released from the passions and desires, its natural forces have immediate sway and it thinks its thoughts out on the soul plane, clothed in a finer body suitable to that existence. This is called Devachan. It is the very state that has brought about the descriptions of heaven common to all religions, but this doctrine is very clearly put in the Buddhist and Hindu religions. It is a time of rest, because the physical body being absent the consciousness is not in the completer touch with visible nature which is possible on the material plane. But it is a real existence, and no more illusionary than earth life; it is where the essence of the thoughts of life that were as high as character permitted, expands and is garnered by the soul and mind. When the force of these thoughts is fully exhausted the soul is drawn back once more to earth, to that environment which is sufficiently like unto itself to give it the proper further evolution. This alternation from state to state goes on until the being rises from repeated experiences above ignorance, and realizes in itself the actual unity of all spiritual beings. Then it passes on to higher and greater steps on the evolutionary road.

No new ethics are presented by Theosophy, as it is held that right ethics

are forever the same. But in the doctrines of Theosophy are to be found the philosophical and reasonable basis for ethics and the natural enforcement of them in practice. Universal brotherhood is that which will result in doing unto others as you would have them do unto you, and in your loving your neighbor as yourself — declared as right by all teachers in the great religions of the world.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Theosophy*, July, 1897. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

HUMAN NATURE AND THE MASTER OF LIFE — *Helen Savage Todd*

The phrase "human nature" has fallen into bad repute. When a man does something that falls below his and our own standard of behavior we so often say, "Well, that's human nature for you." It is as though we generally agreed that you cannot really expect anything of a merely human being. If this is so, it is only because we are not as yet *complete* human beings. The Master of Wisdom is a complete human being.

Edward Thompson, in his charming book *The Youngest Disciple*, depicted Gautama the Buddha as a complete man. He has the truly human virtues, each in its pure state. There is no human virtue that is too homely for him to embody. Perhaps it all seems so very natural and *right* because these virtues are surrounded with a quiet flow of kindly humor that occasionally rises to the surface like a bright ripple on a stream. One of his pupils, Moggallana, a most industrious and devoted follower, is subject to sleepiness at inopportune times. Once when they are all gathered together for their meditations, it is obvious that Moggallana is having a comfortable doze and the Buddha says to him: "Torpor is one thing, Moggallana, and the Silence of Aryans in Meditation is quite another!"

Once when the Buddha is journeying with some of his disciples they come upon a farmer working in a field. He has been stung by a serpent, and the Blessed One turns into the field to render what help he can. As they approach, one of the disciples says: "That serpent is but his thread of fate, and came to accomplish the fruit of his own evil deeds in a former birth." But the Lord turns to the speaker chidingly and says: "Let the doctrine sleep at this hour," and he turns to instruct one of the disciples in the tending of the wound. — The Teacher has a perfect sense of the fitness of things.

He also is intensely practical. In the rainy season the disciples go up into the mountains with their Master, and Ananda, the great lover of

the beautiful in nature sings a song: "These are the Glades in which my soul exults." But, Ananda has forgotten to mend the leak in the roof of one of their huts and the rain pours in. The Buddha says to him, "I think it would be just as well to have dry beds to sleep on. To swim while I also try to sleep is *not* something in which my soul exults, O Ananda."

And of course Compassion gives to all the other virtues a touch of radiance. While the others sleep, the Buddha looks out upon the world with his Eye of Pity and with the Torch of Compassion peers into their hearts. And in the street sweeper, Sunita, he marks the conditions of discipleship "shining like a lamp within a jar." And so Sunita becomes a disciple, though none of the other devotees had any thought that the city drudge was worthy.

A virtue is a phenomenon, an appearance. It is an indication of an inner state. If the inner state is pure, the virtue is pure. To have the defects of one's qualities means that the quality is still tainted with some imperfections. The Paramita, Virya, the dauntless energy that overrides all difficulties and fights its way to truth, is stubbornness before it is purified.

The humblest virtue has its spiritual but by no means dehumanized aspect. Patience is sometimes nothing more than dumb endurance; but patience coupled with wisdom, or shall we say purified by wisdom, becomes the glorious Paramita Kshanti. To the Sage who understands the Law of Cycles there is no such thing as impatience because he understands that each thing will come at its appointed time, impelled into action by the force of its own momentum. The right thing out of time is no longer right. With the Sage, patience becomes spiritual poise.

Then there is simplicity, a quality that characterizes every superior man. A study of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett* is, among other things, a study in simplicity of character. There is no pretentiousness in the Letters, no pose, no attempt to create a mysterious or impressive atmosphere. So much is this so, that occasionally one comes across a reader who is actually disappointed in the Letters. In this

disappointment he gives himself away. It reminds me of someone who, having been looking at some fireworks, saw nothing to move him in the spectacle of Venus shining serenely in the evening sky.

The quality of non-attachment suggests to some people a sort of gray indifference. Blake's lines express the real non-attachment:

He who binds to himself a joy
Does the winged life destroy.
But he who kisses the joy as it flies
Lives in eternity's sunrise.

The Master of Life knows how to enjoy without the bitter after-taste because he does not possess. To possess means inevitably to suffer. We become great and wise not by *abandoning* our humanity but by *becoming* it. Did we not receive it from the gods?

So let us, if we would become great and wise, not *abandon* our humanity but *become* it. Did we not receive it from the gods? We are not in essentials different from the Master of Life. We stem from the same source. The Master recognises that source, and though he transcend his human self, he uses and perfects that self in order to become what he is.

The Theosophical Forum

BROTHERHOOD: AN INESCAPABLE REALITY — *Martha R. Franklin*

The dream of Brotherhood is not new. For centuries the establishment of brotherhoods in various fields has been the dream of reformers, of religious teachers, individuals and groups of individuals. Today the word "brotherhood" has become so hackneyed a term that one rather hesitates to thus define the tie which binds all mankind; yet the basis for this age old dream must lie in the recognition of the ideal that men should live as brothers; that men should live harmoniously with each other, doing nothing that would injure their fellows, as they would not wish their fellows to harm their own households or interests. I think there is within the human heart (the average human heart that we know) the ineffaceable conviction that this is the truest and the highest rule of life. Just why we fail so miserably in its application is another story.

Again and again groups of men and women have tried to realize and to demonstrate a brotherhood of common interest. Too often, if not always, men have gone about it as though brotherhood were a thing that could be created by this or that experiment, usually based upon a material foundation which crumbled under the weight of divergent desires and differences of opinion or policy of the individuals concerned. On-lookers, unwilling to risk the experiment, are ready to avow that "it just can't be done," and they seem to have much evidence to back up their argument. Surely no one is so foolish as to think that any group of people picked at random will be able to live together in complete harmony of taste and aspiration, even though they be mutually honest and sincere. It is not necessary that people live in physical propinquity to demonstrate the principle of kinship, which I believe Theosophists generally consider to be the acme and the substratum of human solidarity, the life-blood of human existence. Understanding, sympathy, a willingness to help where help is needed assuredly does not depend upon our living under the same roof with,

or following the same line of work as those who need the help and the understanding that we can give. But it does require a consciousness of the need — a recognition of the law which operates from the beginning to the end of the evolutionary drama.

This has to do with human brotherhood, human kinship. In order to understand this more fully one must come to look upon men and women not as the bodies that enjoy or suffer the experiences of life, but as the invisible spirit, the consciousness that dwells within and motivates these bodies. Man — the real man — is a *spiritual* being. His body is the house he lives in, the headquarters from which he works out into this particular field of human activity and progress.

Theosophists are concerned with *Brotherhood*, not merely a brotherhood, although the formation of an active brotherhood among men is one of the objects of the Theosophical Society. Brother — brotherhood — does not even imply identical forms, identical tastes or even similar capacity. "Brother" indicates a common parentage, a common lineage, a common heritage for all that is included in that term, which is just exactly the Theosophical meaning of Brotherhood. When the term Universal Brotherhood is used, it means just that — the one universal source of all that the Universe contains, the one common parentage of all humanity, and the relationship and inter-relation, the inter-blending of man with every other entity under the shining sun. We absorb, we breathe in, we breathe out, and blend ourselves with all the reaches of the Universe, whether we will or no. We barter and exchange, as it were, with every kingdom or plane of Nature. Think even of the physical transmission of the life energy and see where it leads you — back and back to a point beyond which the mere intellect cannot go. "Dead matter" has been, or is fast becoming consigned to the limbo of disproven theories. The teaching that every atom is animated by a conscious life center is fast coming to the fore in the minds of thinking people. This has been a familiar teaching to students of Theosophy for years.

Looking at the universe as a living, pulsating galaxy, can you not feel

that running through every fiber of it there is a flow of consciousness which to every atom seems reality, differing, of course in degree? Man, the most highly evolved entity on the globe, partakes more fully of the creative impulse of this spiritual force, and stands more closely, more consciously related to the source from which he comes. The source, the parent, being universal, omnipresent, immutable, and all men partaking of the essence of this parent, how can we deny kinship, our common heritage and destiny, our union with the universal? How can we, with any logical basis of reasoning disclaim the solidarity of the human kingdom or hierarchy? Whether we live together in this family or that, in this group or another, in one nation or another; this does not alter our common spiritual parentage, our kinship with other men living in other groups and other nations. The same consciousness — the same life-blood — pervades and persists, varying only in objectives and capacity. Mark Twain is credited with having said that it made no difference to him whether a man were black, white or yellow — Chinese or Hottentot — he was human — he could be no worse.

Perhaps the vilest thing in the universe is a person who has lost hold of his human, spiritual birthright, and who from standing a little lower than the angels has degraded his humanity to lower than the beast. Yet humanity as such stands as a solid phalanx in the march of evolution. As our humorist philosopher indicates, all are human — no worse — no better. Human blood, human consciousness flows through all, as the invisible currents of magnetic energy flow through and bind together every particle of the visible universe. Ugly as the job may seem to some, it is up to man to lift man — humanity — into a higher and cleaner state of consciousness; into a state of consciousness that will *recognize* and try to express the high purpose of his being. No man or group of men can ever attain the high estate of true manhood by standing on the shoulders of other men. With his own shoulders he must help to lift the load. The whole mass must be raised, but how?

Individual salvation might be an easy way out, if it worked, but it does not satisfy the awakened soul. There is the long trail of natural evolution, the other extreme. Life itself — the experiences of life —

have a way of grinding one in the mills of circumstance and necessity, often bringing one to a point where he determines that he will arise and return unto his father's house. That is one way of redemption; a long, hard way, but it is a way. Then you have the story of the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump. The larger the lump I presume the more leaven becomes necessary, and the world as we know it is quite an appalling lump. One man against the world seems helpless. One man alone could scarcely reawaken the spiritual faculty in this thing we call humanity. But one spiritually awakened man, one man who *recognizes* and understands even intellectually the common, divine source of the whole manifested universe may help some other individual or group of individuals to a recognition of this basic, steadfast truth. One man may bring to the minds and hearts of a few others a recognition of the fact that we are not the playthings of an extraneous super-natural God, but part of, heirs and co-workers with, the Spiritual Builders of the Universe; may inspire a few men to action that befits a kingly race. It may be possible for one man to do this much. In time those so awakened may light a fire in some other minds, may inspire the will in other hearts as those who have gone before have awakened our own. Ultimately — (not tomorrow or the next day or the next) the flame of understanding and the force of an awakened spiritual will may be found in a majority of men. The leaven will then have become the dominating force and tendency. I see no other way.

A natural burden, a natural responsibility seems to rest upon the so-called few — "The most excellent men," be they of one race or another, of one religion or of no religion at all. Quoting Krishna — ". . .for whatever is practiced by the most excellent men, that is also practiced by others. The world follows whatever example they set." (1)

Who are "the most excellent men"? That is the point to ponder. Perhaps they are those who occupy positions of influence and trust, the so-called leaders in the affairs of the world. Much could be said on the power of their example — the influence that they exert for good or ill, but of this each one can decide for himself. Just look about and picture what the status of human kind would be if the majority even of these

"most excellent men" lived up to the qualities and the actions that we recognize as belonging to true manhood — if their wisdom, their justice and their compassion were commensurate with their position and influence.

"The most excellent men." Perhaps it means those (even as you and I) who have even a faint glimmering of the working of this law of brotherhood, those who even partially awakened to the high significance of human life and opportunity, those who but faintly realize the indissoluble unity that encompasses not only humanity, but the whole universe.

At any rate, the responsibility of passing on to others what knowledge of beauty and truth we may have — of trying at least to lift the mass by individual effort — of adding our bit to the leaven, rests upon those who see the light and recognize the need. Brotherhood, as I see it, was established when the world began. It is up to man, the most highly conscious entity on the globe, to recognize this law and live accordingly, instead of trying to dodge the issue or break down the inevitable.

I can leave you with no greater appeal than that made by William Q. Judge at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, "Live with one another as brothers, for the misery and the trouble of the world are of more importance than all the scientific progress that can be imagined. I conclude by calling upon you by all that humanity holds dear, to remember what I say, and whether Christians, Atheists, Jews, Pagans, Heathen or Theosophists, try to practice Universal Brotherhood, which is the universal duty of all men."

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Bhagavad- Gita*. W. Q. J. Recension, p. 25. ([return to text](#))

IS THE INTELLECTUAL TEACHING OF THEOSOPHY NECESSARY? (1) — H. D.
Roderick

It just depends on the individual conception of what the word "intellectual" conveys. Have you noticed the variety of shades of meaning one or other word has for everyone? When talking Theosophy to enquirers it is always well to endeavor to find out what your querist understands by the word he uses. In practice — if you do this — you are making an effort to see things as someone other than yourself sees them. Often it will be found that nothing really stands between the enquirer and the Theosophical point of view except a misunderstanding of words and therefore of ideas.

So let the word "intellect" be briefly examined. It has a Latin root which means to discern, and to choose, whilst intelligence is stated to mean perception, understanding. In other words the use of intellect infers that you are using your power of choice among ideas. When the intellect has examined and chosen then the intelligence grasps.

What is the fundamental difference between man and beast, or between highly developed man and savage man? The beast is beast because it is the slave of instinct. The savage man is savage because he has not learnt to be otherwise; mankind is mankind because man has grown to become a more fitting vehicle to express intellect and intelligence. Once man becomes aware that there is no limit to the cultivation of mind, and proceeds to improve and extend his capacity to learn, he begins to weaken the threads which attach him to the animal world, and prepares to become a True Human, a *Whole Human*.

Anything that gives exercise in the realm of thought — the abstract thought process — is intellectual. When you and I began to learn our A B Cs at school, we began to exercise our minds, and when later on we began to select among these letters and form them into words of meaning we began to use our intellects.

Now suppose we all had stopped learning the alphabet when we had reached the letter N, what would be the result? The result would be that we should not be able to read and write and SPEAK, or to understand words uttered by another. You may well ask, What has this to do with the topic of our discourse? It has this to do with it. If you are not merely learning strings of words by heart as you and I used to do in spelling lessons, then every Theosophical book you read, no matter how elementary it may be, is giving you the *intellectual teachings of the Ancient Wisdom* with only so many words left out. When we say "so many words" we mean by it so much of the doctrine as has not yet been studied. We study the intellectual teaching of Theosophy in order that:

- (1) We may grasp the explanation of existence;
- (2) To awaken and stimulate our minds, "mind" being nearer to Spirit than material things;
- (3) To enliven and expand self-consciousness which is awareness;
- (4) To translate our belief in *Divinity* from a blind faith to faith based on knowledge;
- (5) By the studying of Universal Complexity to know its unity, its oneness, and hence, the all-pervading simplicity of Truth, and the unity of all things with IT.

Therefore it is not the ability to repeat the language of the Teachings by rote that matters at all. What does matter is to use the intellect to discriminate among ideas, and then the intelligence steps in to apply our new knowledge to living. By such a process we proceed from thinking to understanding. To understand is to *know*, and to know is to be patient, charitable, strong in soul, compassionate, and these last "things," things that make life on earth tolerable, are not words. They are feelings, qualities of the soul. They are things which each and every individual must learn by himself of himself.

Neither by closing the eyes and speaking a form of words to oneself,

nor yet by blank gazing at the stars at night, does one get knowledge of the Universe. We have to look around and in and out. We have to awaken the feelings of our souls, and unite and identify these with the whole mighty concourse of stars, to engender in our hearts that sense of kinship with them. It is not our bodies that can realize this kinship. The realization is in *Mind*, and through mind we know we are akin to Spirit.

The business of a Theosophist is to train himself to become efficient on all planes of his being: efficient in body, mind and Spirit. We must pass through the Hall of Learning, but the error would be to remain there too long. It would be as bad an error as staying in the animal realms.

Therefore, Brothers, work, study, think and learn, that by doing so you may help to teach others. Become translators of divine ideas for the sustenance and succour of human beings

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Y Fforwm Theosoffaidd (The Welsh Theosophical Forum)*, September-October, 1942. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE SPIRITUAL SPRINGBOARD — *Jeanne Abele*

When a diver prepares to dive from a springboard, he rises several times from the end of the board into the air, before making the final leap. The height of each rise is controlled by the combined action of his consciously impelled pressure on the board, and the board's mechanical impetus on his body.

The springboard serves as a useful analogy in considering the rise of the ego through various incarnations to higher and higher spiritual levels. The board is the earth-phase, desire is comparable to the diver's pressure on the board, various environmental and physical phenomena correspond to the board's mechanical impetus. If desire is strong in the spiritual direction, each contact with Earth will carry the ego into a higher level of spiritual awareness; the downward sweeps into the earthbound plane will be successively more forceful but briefer; the propulsion upward, mightier. The ego will recognize more clearly with each impact that the solid material plane is useful only in a limited and dimensional way, but that progress in the upward direction is boundless, infinite. However, the contacts must continue until the lesson is learned.

Physicists allege that the laws of gravity operate only within a certain radius of the earth. Theoretically, if an object could by some means pass this circumference, earth-gravity would no longer bring it back, and it would continue on into the unknown ether. This is the principle of the spiritually-gearred ego. Each incarnation serves to send it higher and higher spiritually, until at last it no longer needs the lessons and earthy comforts of this plane; and so leaves it forever and goes on to the mystic regions of the next aspect of its journey towards Divinity.

CREATORS — *Alexandra McLean*

What shall be our creations in the next cycle of 365 days? As a new year dawns, many of us feel an inner quickening, an impetus toward growth, a new incentive to work. Is it not the part of wisdom to stop and consider, to plan that which we desire to accomplish in the coming cycle? New cycles are always inspiring, in reality a challenge. And what greater cycle is there than *now*, this moment? Now do I think the creative thought, which will take form and live, becoming an active force for good or evil, a blessing or a curse, not only to myself, but to all, for ALL are ONE.

What a responsibility! What a privilege! How shall we at-one ourselves with the vast, creative scheme of harmony, peace, beauty, law and order that illumines the heart of all the evolving schemes of Boundless Space? How — but by the power of creative thought; thus living grandly, with our faculties, our powers attuned to the Divine Love and Compassion that is the Heart of the Heart of the Great ALL. For —

when a man's character and constitution are made harmonious with the Universe, then he *knows*. Wisdom flows into his mind; he does not have to search for it. Cognisance of the natural verities of the Universe comes to his intellect, because his intellect works in harmony, in musical modulations, with the beating of the heart of the Universe. — *Wind of the Spirit*, p. 309

So, I ask myself what do I wish to accomplish in the coming cycle of 365 days? Each of course, must answer for himself. From one who was a wise and faithful Teacher we have these words, which might be taken as a criterion by which to measure our individual aspirations.

To do our utmost to fill this emptiness in human hearts, more than anything else I believe to be our duty — to teach men the direct path to wisdom, to teach men to make the inner emptiness a filled richness, a richness of wisdom and of quick

and understanding sympathy, so that human lives by it may become grand and strong and true. Then we shall work justice, and gentle reason will preside in all our doings. — *Op. cit.*, p. 64

Having decided *what* — we wonder *how*. In *The Hill of Discernment* by A. Trevor Barker, there is a chapter on "The Creative Power of Thought in which the higher consciousness in man is spoken of as follows:

The higher part of us, the Divine part of us, is actually omniscient. therefore all we have to do is to find the means of opening ourselves to the inflow of this knowledge — and it can be done by asking for it, by aspiring toward it, by opening our minds to it, . . . and if you have a sufficiently strong desire and a sufficiently developed will, and enough confident expectation (which you may, if you wish, call faith), the result is quite certain. . . . This of course is a law which is constantly used by all of us all the time — generally perhaps more or less unconsciously; but it is a law which works, and it is an extremely creative law.

In trying to analyze this quotation we notice there are seven steps by which we open ourselves to the inflow of Divine Knowledge and we are reminded of the sevenfold structure of all embodied creation.

First — we sense the "Ideal" and ask for it.

Second — aspire toward it.

Third — open our minds to it.

Fourth — have a sufficiently strong desire.

Fifth — have a sufficiently developed will.

Sixth — enough confident expectation.

Seventh — the result is certain (the "Ideal" becomes embodied).

To ask — starts the flow of the Atmic Force. To aspire — is Buddhic activity by which the Ideal begins to have an illuminating quality. To have an open mind — allows for Manasic illumination by the Buddhic Light. Strong Desire — is the desire body of our creation. Developed will — is the Prana, the integrating aspect. Confident expectation — is

the pattern body, held consistently in mind and is like unto Linga-sarira. The result — is the "Ideal" embodied and is the Sthula-sarira.

So we have a sevenfold working out of our plan, our Ideal, which quite consistently follows the embodying of any ideal or thought throughout the Universe. It is the pattern by which our creative thought is objectified.

Beauty-full will be our creations, if we, their creators, heed the words of the great Teachers who have so plainly pointed the way. Our creations *are* our thoughts embodied and no creation can be greater than the Thought which engendered it.

Therefore it is necessary to emphasize the tremendous importance of submitting every such determination, aspiration, desire, to the dictates of the Higher Self in each one of us, to the Silent Witness of all our endeavors — *Op. cit.*

What a responsibility! What a glorious opportunity to be co-workers with Divinity!

The Theosophical Forum

THE BORDERLAND OF THE OCCULT — Charles J. Ryan

If correctly reported, some curious things have recently happened in the world — not war news — which are worth notice. While, as already mentioned, certain advanced thinkers are greatly widening the outlook on natural laws even to a close approach to Theosophical fundamental principles, the majority of scientists are still very hesitant to study natural phenomena which do not apparently lead to practical results as they regard them, but which are destined to be found exceedingly practical when properly understood. A small movement "toward the left," the occult, has been made lately in regard to the tremendous mystery of Time. This was touched on in *THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM* for April, 1945. Other phenomena, however, of importance in the revelation of the inner workings of Nature are still ignored. Ancient scholars, in India, Greece or elsewhere, made no hard and fast distinction between science, philosophy and religion, or even between what we regard as separate sciences. They looked upon life more as a whole and these things as merely aspects of the whole, and today a few daring scientific writers are trying to revive this point of view. It may be a very "practical" one, and one that would help in solving many of our problems such for instance as war and juvenile delinquency!

It would certainly be a great help to educationalists and reformers if they would learn about the potency of the "Astral Light" to reflect back the worst as well as the better deeds and thoughts of men, though of course unknowingly to the majority of human beings. The Astral Light is that "plane" of Nature which, as William Q. Judge says in *The Ocean of Theosophy* "contains, retains and reflects pictures of each and everything that happened to anyone, and also every thought; it permeates the globe and the atmosphere around it; the transmission of vibration through it is practically instantaneous. . . ." It resembles the sensitive photographic plate which receives and retains images, and like the films which contain the potency that under proper conditions

appears as a picture on the screen it occasionally flashes into physical visibility the images imprinted upon its substance, and sometimes, by a shifting of time values perhaps (?) presents the image of a coming event. H. P. Blavatsky said that the partition between the physical and astral planes is exceedingly thin and the wonder is that so few persons are consciously able to penetrate it. This is fortunate for us in our present stage of development, for as Mr. Judge says:

As an enormous screen or reflector the astral light hangs over the earth and becomes a powerful universal hypnotizer of human beings. The pictures of all acts good and bad done by our ancestors as by ourselves being ever present to our inner selves, we constantly are impressed by them by way of suggestion and go then and do likewise. — *Echoes of the Orient*

For this reason a clear understanding of the properties of the Astral Light should be a matter of common knowledge and careful study by all who are working for the elevation of the race. Its presentation to the ignorant western world in this critical transition age is one of the outstanding benefits brought by the Theosophical Movement. Of course western science may have to discover it by its own methods, as has happened in so many cases of the *re-discovery* of ancient wisdom before they were accepted, but when it is accepted the knowledge will be found to be an infinitely greater boon to real progress than that of the interatomic forces.

One of the flashes of revelation from inner planes which Nature occasionally provides, perhaps to test our advance in intuition, has lately been reported from England. According to the published reports, at least two thousand persons in the city of Ipswich and surrounding villages declared a few months ago that they saw a mysterious apparition in the late afternoon sky. It took the form of Christ on the Cross, even to such details as the nails. Military and naval officers were among the witnesses and many persons insisted upon making legal affidavits of what they saw. The vicar of the ancient church of St. Nicholas, the Rev. H. G. Green, made a careful investigation of the

accounts, traveling considerable distances to examine people who had seen the phenomenon. As could be expected, the usual "explanation" of autosuggestion was offered, and one learned expert said, "the power of suggestion is terrific. If a person thinks he is going to see a vision, he will see it." Another said it was probably produced by particles of ice in the upper regions, but he does not explain how the ice shaped itself into a perfectly definite form whose details were observed by thousands of supposedly intelligent people; and the two theories are hardly compatible.

If such phenomena were hitherto unknown some farfetched explanation, such as suggestion from a single individual spreading instantly among thousands of people spread over many square miles might appear plausible to simple reasoners, absurd as it sounds; but many such cases are on record though not all so well attested. Constantine's alleged vision of the Cross in the sky which helped to change history may have been a pious fraud, but to deny or to attempt to explain on normal lines the many other unexplained apparitions reported from the sky in ancient and modern times requires considerable hardihood. It is easy to call them "mirages" and let it stand at that. Certainly ordinary mirages such as the textbooks on light and optics describe are explained by well known laws of reflexion and refraction. They may always be expected when the conditions are favorable and can even be artificially reproduced in miniature. But such types as the Ipswich Cross do not follow the rules.

Putting aside the comparatively few well authenticated cases where the weird sky pictures showed events such as battles or funerals that took place *after* the vision, many cases of the Ipswich type are recorded which cannot be attributed to the ordinary laws of refraction by the wildest stretch of imagination. Fraud and practical joking is also ruled out by the conditions. Here are a few examples from our files.

Everyone has heard of Vanderdecken, the Flying Dutchman, whose spectral ship has long been said to haunt the seas near South Africa, and generally to bring ill-luck to the ship that encounters it. The

evidence in one case is unusually responsible, being contributed by Royalty and officially published not long after the event. When King George V, father of the present King of England, was a midshipman on board a warship with his brother they kept a Diary which was published in 1886 under the title *The Cruise of H. M. S. Bacchante*, describing their voyage round the world. When the ship was near the Cape the following incident occurred as reported in the book:

July 11 (1881) At 4 a. m. the *Flying Dutchman* crossed our bows. A strange red light as of a phantom ship all aglow, in the midst of which light the masts, spars and sails of a brig 200 yards distant stood out in strong relief as she came up on the port bow. The look-out man on the forecastle reported her close on the port bow, where also the officer of the watch from the bridge clearly saw her, as did also the quarter-deck midshipman, who was sent forward at once to the forecastle; but on arriving there no vestige nor any sign whatever of any material ship was to be seen either near or right away to the horizon, the night being clear and the sea calm. Thirteen persons altogether saw her. . . . The *Tourmaline* and *Cleopatra*, who were sailing on our starboard bow, flashed to ask whether we had seen the strange red light. At 10.44 a.m. the ordinary seaman who had this morning reported the *Flying Dutchman* fell from the foretopmast cross-trees and was smashed to atoms.

Then follows an account of the admiral having been "stricken down."

Other "phantom ships" which could not have been of the nature of the familiar mirages of vessels often seen in the Arctic regions have been seen in British seas, the New England coast, the St. Lawrence river and other places. Here is a well evidenced instance which aroused great interest and much discussion in the press. Shortly before the destructive eruption of 1886 of Mount Tarawera and the wonderful colored terraces of New Zealand a Maori war canoe was seen on the adjoining lake which seems to have been a very definite astral image conveying a warning to the Maoris of trouble. The *Dunedin Evening*

Star of June 17, 1886, contains a long account of the phenomenon, saying in part:

While skirting the southern shore those in the tourists" canoe distinctly saw a Maori war canoe gliding along nearly parallel to and apparently racing them. The Maoris in the tourists" canoe hailed those in the war canoe, but received no answer. . . . They said there was no war canoe in the district, and therefore this must be a phantom, indicative of evil. When the natives and the tourists returned to Wairoa they made inquiries of the oldest natives, all of whom declared that such a canoe as had been described had never been seen by them. Mr. McRae, who has been seventeen years in Te Wairoa, also said that he never knew a war canoe upon the waters of the Lake country. The day was beautifully clear.

Troops of soldiers have frequently been seen when there were none in the vicinity. A striking case is given by General Lord Roberts, the famous English Commander-in-Chief, in his *Forty-one Years in India*. During the Indian Mutiny in 1858 he and a friend with whom he was riding saw what appeared to be a body of hostile cavalry charging them. The illusion was perfect, and he writes:

We thought our last hour had come . . . when lo! as suddenly as they had appeared, the horsemen vanished as though the ground had opened and swallowed them; there was nothing to be seen but the plain, where a second before there had been a crowd of mounted men.

MAN AND HIS UNIVERSE (1) — *Beatrice Gray*

With increasing advance in scientific achievement and consequent increase of scientific authority in the world, some prominent scientists have themselves become alarmed at the lack of a corresponding development of human values, particularly in the field of morals. Dr. Compton, distinguished physicist, has stated:

The most fundamental values of morality and religion are ruthlessly shaken, with the implication that their value is negligible. It is just because so many scientific men seem blind to these human difficulties that one feels the greater concern lest in following science mankind may lose its soul.

The implication of Dr. Compton's words is clear. The question which he raises is: does science justify man in throwing over fundamental religious values? It boils down to the old so-called "conflict" between religion and science, the solution of which is even more imperative today as we stand on the threshold of the atomic age. It is a conflict which orthodox religions have failed to solve satisfactorily to scientific minds. It is a conflict which Unitarians, however, are well fitted to deal with, because on the one hand, having no dogmas, they can investigate science freely; while on the other hand, their greatest concern is the very "human difficulties" to which Dr. Compton believes many scientific men are blind.

As a contribution towards this end, we have started a Unitarian class to discuss the fundamental aspects of both science and religion. The first step in such a study is an adequate definition of religion, which each student must work out to his own satisfaction. The second step is the study of the fundamental facts and theories of science, attempting to fit them into the religious picture in a manner which will at least give us a scientific basis for morals. Dr. Moulton, a foremost American astronomer, believes the fundamental responsibility of science to

society lies in "deriving from the laws of the animate and inanimate universe about us and within us a basis for ethics whose authority for acceptance shall be in our own hearts."

For the definition of religion the following ideas are merely offered as suggestions. We sometimes hear it stated that nature inspires a more profound worship than the confines of a church; that under the vault of the sky, that amidst the grandeur of hill and valley and rushing water, that in communion with the delicate poetry of tree and flower, man undergoes what is called a religious experience. In other words, he directly touches some reality with the tendrils of his consciousness and thereby senses directly (that is, intuitively) the harmony in nature and the universe. He senses the linkages and the intricate interworkings of the cosmic infinitude — harmonious throughout. The religious experience seems to be a direct contact of the consciousness with the harmony of the natural universe.

Likewise harmony is obviously the key to the moral law. The moral instinct is man's intuition or direct perception of what is harmonious in human conduct. It is his longing to co-operate with his fellows in a universal scheme. The feeling of compassion, the longing to serve, are real experiences closely kin to the feeling of the holy and sacred in nature. Both experiences are fundamental, not depending on religious dogma. Such experiences constitute what may be called religion in a fundamental sense.

Such a definition of religion makes man's conduct not something to be determined by mere convention or convenience, but it bases morals in the universe itself. This idea is not new. The ancient Oriental philosophies, in common with their modern representative Theosophy, emphasize the importance of man's co-operation with nature, making his own conduct a part of the harmony of the universal order. The origin of this harmony is said to be cosmic mind as a part of the universe itself. Perhaps we cannot prove scientifically to everyone's satisfaction that there is such a cosmic mind behind our little minds, though many scientists are thinking along these lines. Perhaps we

cannot demonstrate the existence of the human soul in the scientific test tube, though a few scientists do even believe in the immortality of the soul on scientific grounds. But if, by our study of scientific facts as the second step in our undertaking, we can prove but one thing: the fundamental idea of harmony in the universe which the facts themselves follow, we will then at least have a scientific basis for the religious experience and above all for the moral law. That is, we will have a scientific basis for religion as above defined.

We can then say with scientific accuracy that the man who is living in harmony with his fellow men is following the fundamental law of the universe, while the man who acts for his puny self alone is working against the laws of nature and nature in due time will react against him. This idea is the very essence of the Christian teaching:

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is likewise the basic idea of the Bhagavad-Gita, of ancient India and is well expressed by the single Sanskrit word "Karman," which may be translated "action and reaction in the universe."

Let man have no fear, then, of the punishment of some external vengeful God, nor let him sit around waiting for some future bliss. It is now that he must seek to become an ever more co-operative part of the universal order. For right now man is a part of the universe itself, whose scientific basis we believe is harmony itself — is ethics itself. Happy is the man who forgets himself in unselfish service. He has become a part of the harmonious whole.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Sioux City Unitarian*, November, 1945. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

MODERN THOUGHT IN THE LIGHT OF THE VEDANTA: I (1) — *Ernest P.*

Horrwitz

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

The great ideal of the West is individual freedom in all social relations, that of the East spiritual freedom from all external relations.

Accordingly, the Western type of perfection is the man who has grown into a strong personality and is making good use of it, in order to acquire money, position and influence.

Not so the ideal type of the East, the contemplative mind which loves to turn from the world of sense and its cheap pleasures to enjoy the beatitude of the inner life of the soul. It is the deeply religious soil of India that has matured such tender blossoms of piety as the cultured Rammohun Roy or the saintly Ramakrishna Paramahansa, whose life and work are now becoming known to us from the lucid account published by Prof. Max Müller.

The evolution of European thought has proceeded in a more material direction, has taken a practical turn. Europe does not pay so much attention to her saints and philosophers as to the practical geniuses which she has produced in abundance. Mechanical inventors and geographical discoverers like Edison and Nansen, physical scientists and popular reformers of the type of Prof. Koch and Gen. Booth, strong will-powers in political life such as Bismarck and Gladstone — these are the men one admires because their ideas are directly applicable to practical life, and conducive to the material welfare of society.

Western people love to build up and to assert a strong personality, whilst Indian thinkers rather endeavor to renounce and to break up the personal self, looking upon it not as a help but a hindrance in the way of spiritual progress. All the ancient systems of India define sin as personal limitation. Man is born in sin, says the Vedanta, that is, as a separate being. He feels limited and in nature's bondage, and has

forgotten that he is free and infinite. To recover full consciousness of our true nature is the tempting ideal religion holds up before us; the thorny path to which she points for its realisation is utter self-abandonment. To feel himself free and immortal, man is to reject all selfish desires, and to throw out an unbroken current of sympathy and pity towards humanity, nay, the whole creation.

Love is the law which permeates every great religion, but physical science has no room for ethics. Modern scientists do not refute the fact that all manifestations are necessarily finite, that individual life cannot be but relative; but they are agnostics as to the reverse side of the picture; they will have nothing to do with the absolute side of nature, the Unknowable, the Infinite, God, or whatever name has been applied to the Eternal First Cause. Physicists are, and ought to be agnostics, because metaphysical facts, such as freedom, love and immortality, can never come under the cognisance of the senses and the intellect, but are only realised by mental negation: "Neti, neti," it is not this, it is not that; or by renunciation: Do not attach yourself to this form, do not attach yourself to that form. Therefore, agnosticism seems to me the best justified and the most dignified attitude in the domain of physical science, and her devotees cannot do better than draw a rational boundary-line between the Knowable and the Unknowable, and to exploit the Knowable to the fullest.

Different ideals must lead to different practices. Let us look for a moment at the practical outcome of these two ideas in East and West. There is a lack of organisation in India, I understand; there is but little political freedom, and not enough of national self-consciousness. The Hindus have, at all times, looked upon themselves too much as pilgrims and exiles on earth to feel great ambition for national independence and worldly aggrandisement. Their ultimate desire (I speak of the large class of religious-minded Indians) is rather to go through life untouched by the fleeting pleasures of the noisy world, and, after fulfilling their various duties as householders and citizens, to dissolve all social ties, and to enjoy, in the solitude of the forest, the more lasting comfort of meditating on God. In compensation, the Hindu race has

been granted beatific visions of the Heavenly Kingdom of which we poor worldlings can only catch a few occasional glimpses by the study of their divine scriptures and philosophies, more particularly the Vedanta.

How different is occidental life! Look at this tremendous material civilization in the midst of which we live, gigantic in extension and specialisation, wonderful in organisation and working order. Science, in its rapid progress and eager search, has utilised, in the service of man, every department of nature as far as hitherto known, and is daily benefitting human knowledge and human welfare. This huge social fabric of modern civilisation is held together and worked by efficient laws, framed, not by the authority of a few, but by the common consent of all — laws which help to adjust the economic relations of vast masses of population, and which allow, even to the poor and helpless, a share in the blessings of our social legislation, such as free education, free hospitals, workhouses for the aged poor, employers' liability, and many more. A dense net of railway lines and telegraph wires brings the most distant places into close contact; a quick postal service and a cheap daily press bring nearer together and often unite the multifarious interests of whole districts and countries. This is the bright side of the picture.

But where is much light there is much shadow. England is proud of the personal liberty of her citizens, of the economic freedom they enjoy under her rule, and rightly so. But what does social freedom mean? It means that all members of society are equally free before the law, that is, equally limited in their mutual relations in life. Social freedom must, of necessity, be relative. Economic laws are not permanent, but swing to and fro on the self-adjusting sliding scale of concessions and restrictions of class-privileges. So there can never be absolute freedom where economic conditions exist, where society is organised, where classes are divided and interests separated, where person stands against person. Personal interests will clash and strife and competition set in; that is the ultimate fate of every organisation.

Why do we organise? Because we wish to assert and protect the particular interests of a special society or nation, and because we do not want that particular body of men to succumb, but to survive in the struggle for superiority or, at least, equality. This process is going on all over nature, in the vegetable and animal economy as well as in the political economy of the human species. Nature is manifestation; we have to face this fact. And all manifestation is necessarily finite and different in parts; and wherever is partition and difference, there cannot be harmony and agreement. That is the invariable law of the natural world. Absolute freedom is not of this world, but is anticosmic and enjoyed in the same measure as attachment to the world of law and sense is renounced. Full freedom from the bondage of economic laws can only be enjoyed by those who have overcome greed and lust and anger, by the humble and unselfish. The truth that freedom and economics are antagonistic has been more clearly reasoned out, it seems to me, and more widely accepted, in India than in Europe; and that is why many thoughtful people amongst us believe that Indian idealism and asceticism will prove a healthful purgative to our materialistic and utilitarian conceptions.

The better man learns to perceive Unity in variety, the Permanent in the transient, God in the world, the more does his consciousness expand, does his heart open, in love and sympathy to his fellow-men, the more freedom and peace does he enjoy in spirit, and the more calmly and efficiently is he able to perform the various duties which are assigned to him in life. God is love, and he who loveth best, worketh best. That is sound Vedanta doctrine.

A monistic faith, such as the Vedanta, appears to me the safest and simplest guide through life's trials and temptations. Every human heart yearns, at times, to be lifted up above the petty cares and the drudgery of the daily routine, and to enjoy holy calm and the peace which cannot be got by mere understanding. Is there any idea more conducive to such a happy state of the soul than the monistic ideal of the Vedanta, than the bold cognition of "One Life without a second" running through the created world, of One Existence, all-conscious, ever free and

blessed, than the noble faith in the saving and purifying power of self-sacrifice and disinterested love? The flash of intuition which reveals to man the Infinite through the myriads of its finite semblances, the inner illumination which manifests to the soul the divine essence underneath the human form, is the glorious promise of the Vedanta to her earnest followers: "Tat twam asi," thou art that Infinite, but thou hast forgotten thy God-hood, and hast hypnotised thyself into the narrow belief that thou art man. This nescience is not individual, says the Vedanta, but universal. Nescience is a cosmic illusion (Maya.) which enslaves all nature. We are born in Maya, and shall be born in it again until we acquire true knowledge by means of renunciation, and by the light of the Vedanta.

Vedanta teachers have of late aroused much enthusiasm in England and America. The reason is, I believe, that modern science is unknowingly advancing on the same path, and searching after the same Unity which has been realised by the sages of Greece and India thousands of years ago. But while our modern physicists keep their eyes down to the earth, and look into the minutest details of Nature's shell, your ancient seers and prophets have lifted up their searching soul towards Heaven, and drawn divine inspiration from on high. And that has enabled them to see deeper into the hidden nature of things, and to find subtler laws and higher truths than we can ever hope to discover by comparison, classification and generalisation. Hindu wisdom has been quick in perceiving that every physical force and chemical particle which exists in the macrocosm of nature, must likewise be found in the microcosm of man. And so your Yogins (I do not mean the poor deluded jugglers who run after psychic powers, but the self-illuminated Aptas who desire nothing but freedom of the soul and God-consciousness) I say, for this reason searchers after God, are gladly turning from the laborious study of the endless differentiations in nature, and prefer to concentrate their undivided attention upon the inward Self, in order to learn discrimination between their destructible, mortal portion and the immortal Witness who eternally dwells in the heart of the creature. After becoming conscious of that

Divine light from which all nature borrows her reflected radiance, the devotee has only one object left in life — to give up, little by little, earthborn desires, and to live more and more in what is now a reality to him, in the One Universal Soul. It is called "Atman" in Sanscrit, and is the same as Emerson's "Over-Soul."

The Over-soul is real and transcending all thought, teaches the Vedanta, whilst the individual soul is called apparent, and a necessity of thought. Everything finite is apparent, and the individual is finite, merely the sum-total of his previous thoughts and desires. The individual is continually changing, according to the thoughts he thinks and the life he lives. The individual is made up, not simple but a compound of little permanence. Therefore, individual limitation is looked upon by Vedantic philosophers as a sinful state of ignorance and bondage, whilst universal expansion by means of love and wisdom is considered perfect freedom and happiness.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTE:

1. This lecture was presented on December 3, 1898, to the "Hindu Association" in London, President, R. C. Dutt, Esq., C. I. E., and was originally published in *The Theosophical Review*, London, England. Mr. Horrwitz was formerly lecturer at the Universities of Dublin, Ireland, and Durham, England, and Hunter College, New York. In 1927-8 he toured the East, speaking at the Universities of Bombay, Aligarh, Nagpur, and Rangoon. He is now, 1945-46, visiting lecturer at Theosophical University, Covina, California, on World Literature and on Semasiology (science of language), to which subjects he has devoted a lifetime's study. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT'S WRONG WITH METAPHYSICS? — *Katherine Heck*

Intrinsically, there is nothing wrong with metaphysics or mysticism in most of its phases. The trouble lies with the student of "other world" philosophies. Sometimes it seems that "victim" is a better word.

The following comments are not going to deal with the obvious dangers of the seance or warn against dabbling in black magic, but are for those of us who think: "I know better than that. It will take a mighty smart dugpa to fool me. I am a *real* student of *true* occultism." Yes? Well, there are degrees in everything and hierarchies in every place. There are smart devils for smart people. Everything is nicely graded in this thoroughly organized universe of which we mystics are so sure we are a part. And right here is the crux of the matter. If we become so convinced that we and the Universe are one, it is only a question of time in the cyclic development of the Western mystic, at least, before we *are* the Universe and our present incarnations are but paltry mud spots on the whole garment of Truth. We don't live here any more. We are heading straight for Nirvana on a private train labeled "Personal Salvation" for the Western mystic, and "Freedom from the Wheel of Life" for the Eastern philosopher.

In the T'ang Dynasty the Chinese poet Liu Chang-Ch'ing wrote the following:

"Walking along a little path,
I find a footprint on the moss,
A white cloud low on the quiet lake,
Grasses that sweeten an idle door,
A pine grown greener with the rain,
A brook that comes from a mountain source . . .
And, mingling with Truth among the flowers,
I have forgotten what to say."

This Taoist poem contains a key to mysticism. Inarticulateness is a

mark of the true mystic, and throughout all literature his message lies in what he has sense enough not to say. Mystics and true Occultists have a language of the heart. In the silence they converse one with another, and without words they enter together into the bliss of "at-one-ness" which is their goal.

Now it would appear from this that mystics and students of metaphysics would be the most unselfish of people. Indeed they would have a feeling for brotherhood which would make them knowers of sorrow and sharers of joy. As a matter of fact, you would suppose that a true Occultist would be tops as a psychologist just because he not only knows people but in a certain sense is "people." But it doesn't often happen that way because, first and foremost, mystics and occultists are people too and not perfect in their chosen path, however altruistic that path may be. Our problem, therefore, is with the sincere student on the path of wisdom or metaphysics who, by his very sincerity and earnestness, is most likely to miss the forest for the trees. He concentrates so hard on casting a mote out of his own eyes that sometimes he forgets that there are other people with eyes and motes of their own — and sorrows too.

So, a warning to ourselves: remember the whole. We have a body as well as a spirit and soul. Theosophy declares that the whole constitution of man is dependent upon its basic vehicle for expression and the chance to progress. Then why the haste to impede ourselves? Here is our opportunity as evolving entities to learn certain lessons, impossible to experience if we were not here on earth, with earth bodies and the necessary equipment for reacting to physical, mental, moral, and spiritual stimuli which can operate only on the Earth. The Earth is an entity too. We are not just our physical bodies, and the Earth is not just a bunch of oceans and land masses either. So it is quite possible that we have reached a stage in our evolution where fundamentally we are supposed, for our souls' good, to learn something about Globe D, the Earth chain. Otherwise, why are we here with all our fine equipment for learning?

What is really wrong with metaphysics? Intrinsically, nothing at all. But a subtle trap is set for the student who allows metaphysics to lead him — very quietly, almost imperceptibly — to a form of selfishness that outranks all the petty grabbing and pushing and "Me first-ness" of the world. *Spiritual selfishness*. But, alas, it is so often beautifully disguised as a love of mankind and an apparently altruistic search for truth.

It has been said countless times, but is worth repeating, that love and loyalty in our immediate personal contacts and fidelity to our present duties and tasks will change a theoretic acceptance of Universal Brotherhood into actual practice. In this wise, we will find ourselves firmly anchored to the path of aspiring Godhood, while to our hearts belong the stars.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY AN OBJECTIVE IDEALISM — *Abbot B. Clark*

Theosophy is an Objective Idealism. It is an Idealism, but not a pure or complete idealism like Bishop Berkeley's philosophy or Christian Science or some of the Oriental philosophies which deny the existence of matter altogether and say, All is mind, there is no matter. Or, All is God, or Spirit, there is no matter, no objective world. Theosophy is more realistic than that. Theosophy says that the objective world is a Maya, that is it is not as real as it seems, though it is real enough to those beings who are enmeshed in it. During the period of manifestation or Manvantara the objective world is real to all the beings who are a part of the manifestation but as the manifestation proceeds on the Upward Arc of Evolution it is indrawn into the Divine Spirit from which it first emanated.

All religions and many of the philosophies (the spiritual ones) admit, or rather, affirm, that the fundamental principle of the universe is a spiritual principle, call it by whatever name you like, God, or Brahman, or Tao, Adi-Buddha, or a hundred other names. In any case it is as real to the spiritual consciousness as air and sunshine are real to our objective consciousness. Let us quit disputing over names and admit that a fundamental Truth, a fundamental Reality, underlies all religions and that the forms which the various religions and philosophies take are more or less perfect, more or less imperfect, efforts to explain the Truth to the people or the age to which it was given. Theosophy is the latest such effort. Theosophy will explain how the physical world is only a temporary, transitory thing, therefore called by philosophy unreal, a Maya, a deceptive thing, not just what it seems. Modern science should greatly help us to understand this point. In the laboratory a qualified scientist, with proper equipment, can demonstrate to us quite conclusively that this solid floor on which we stand is composed of atoms which can be shown to be only points of electrical energy, electrons and protons, with as much space between

them as there is between the sun and the planets. This floor, this physical world, is real to us because we are composed of the same electrons and protons as it is. We are tuned in to it, we are in the same general or cosmic rate of vibration as it; therefore it seems real, it is tangible to us. Like the empty, soundless air, when we tune our radio into it we hear. If, like the clairvoyant, we could tune ourselves into a finer state of matter, the Astral Light, then the Astral Light would be the real to us. We should see right through physical walls. "Matter" would seem to us as a mere shadow. The astral would be the real world.

Now, suppose we could tune in to the next higher plane, the Manasic, the world of "mind stuff," Akasa. From there the astral world would seem to us as the great illusion it really is. Suppose again, that we tune in to the world of pure spirit, Buddhi, Christos. Then that, indeed, would be the real. And so on forever. But we have no words and no higher faculties for the divine infinities which may be beyond the spirit. We can say, if we wish, super-cosmic consciousness — Nirvana — the One Reality to the Nirvani, but an utter abstraction to us.

The point to remember is that whatever we are tuned in to, that, to us, for the time, is the real. Each time we wake up to something higher, that, to us, becomes the real. What is below us is left behind, an unreality. This does not mean that there is no reality. On the contrary, the only permanent, the only eternal part of us is the ever present, ever accessible, Divinity within.

So Theosophy is an Objective Idealism because it postulates a fundamental divine Reality and admits a seeming or temporary or transitory reality to all manifested planes as long as the manifestation (Manvantara) lasts.

POINTS OF AGREEMENT IN ALL RELIGIONS (1) — *William Q. Judge*

What room for doubt and what room for sorrow is there in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind and only differ from each other in degree?

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all this is lighted.

Lead me from the unreal to the real!

Lead me from darkness to light!

Lead me from death to immortality!

Seeking for refuge, I go to that God who is the light of His own thoughts;

He who first creates Brahman and delivers the Vedas to him; who is without parts, without actions, tranquil, without fault, the highest bridge to immortality, like a fire that has consumed its fuel. — *Mundaka Upanishad*

Such are some of the verses, out of many thousands, which are enshrined in the ancient Hindu Vedas, beloved by those we have called "heathen"; those are the sentiments of the people we have called idolaters only.

As the representative of the Theosophical Movement I am glad to be here, and to be assigned to speak on what are the points of agreement in all religions. I am glad because Theosophy is to be found in all religions and all sciences. We, as members of the Theosophical Society, endorse to the fullest extent those remarks of your chairman in opening, when he said, in effect, that a theology which stayed in one spot without advancing was not a true theology, but that we had advanced to where theology should include a study of man. Such a

study must embrace his various religions, both dead and living. And pushing that study into those regions we must conclude that man is greatly his own revealer, has revealed religion to himself, and therefore that all religions must include and contain truth; that no one religion is entitled to a patent or exclusive claim upon truth or revelation, or is the only one that God has given to man, or the only road along which man can walk to salvation. If this be not true, then your Religious Parliament is no Parliament, but only a body of men admiring themselves and their religion. But the very existence of this Parliament proclaims the truth of what I have said, and shows the need which the Theosophical Society has for nineteen years been asserting, of a dutiful, careful, and brotherly inquiry into all the religions of the world, for the purpose of discovering what the central truths are upon which each and every religion rests, and what the original fountain from which they have come. This careful and tolerant inquiry is what we are here for today; for that the Theosophical Society stands and has stood; for toleration, for unity, for the final and irrevocable death of all dogmatism.

But if you say that religion must have been revealed, then surely God did not wait for several millions of years before giving it to those poor beings called men. He did not, surely, wait until He found one poor Semitic tribe to whom He might give it late in the life of the race? Hence He must have given it in the very beginning, and therefore all present religions must arise from one fount.

What are the great religions of the world and from whence have they come? They are Christianity, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Mohammedanism. The first named is the youngest, with all its warring sects, with Mormonism as an offshoot and with Roman Catholicism boldly claiming sole precedence and truth.

Brahmanism is the old and hoary religion of India, a grown-up fully-developed system long before either Buddhism or Christianity was born. It extends back to the night of time, and throws the history of

religion far, far beyond any place where modern investigators were once willing to place even the beginning of religious thought. Almost the ancient of ancients, it stands in far-off India, holding its holy Vedas in its hands, calmly waiting until the newer West shall find time out of the pursuit of material wealth to examine the treasures it contains.

Buddhism, the religion of Ceylon, of parts of China, of Burmah and Japan and Tibet, comes after its parent Brahmanism. It is historically older than Christianity and contains the same ethics as the latter, the same laws and the same examples, similar saints and identical fables and tales relating to Lord Buddha, the Savior of Men. It embraces today, after some twenty-five hundred years of life, more people than any other religion, for two-thirds of the human family profess it.

Zoroastrianism also fades into the darkness of the past. It too teaches ethics such as we know. Much of its ritual and philosophy is not understood, but the law of brotherly love is not absent from it if it teaches justice and truth, charity and faith in God, together with immortality. In these it agrees with all, but it differs from Christianity in not admitting a vicarious salvation, which it says is not possible.

Christianity of today is modern Judaism, but the Christianity of Jesus is something different. He taught forgiveness, Moses taught retaliation, and that is the law today in Christian State and Church. "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" is still the recognized rule, but Jesus taught the opposite. He fully agreed with Buddha, who, preaching 500 years before the birth of the Jewish reformer, said we must love one another and forgive our enemies. So modern Christianity is not the religion of Jesus, but Buddhism and the religion of Jesus accord with one another in calling for charity, complete tolerance, perfect non-resistance, absolute self-abnegation.

If we compare Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism together on the points of ritual, dogmas, and doctrines, we find not only agreement but a marvelous similarity as well, which looks like an imitation on the part of the younger Christianity. Did the more modern copy the ancient? It would seem probable. And some of the early Christian

Fathers were in the habit of saying, as we find in their writings, that Christianity brought nothing new into the world, that it existed from all time.

If we turn to ritual, so fully exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church, we find the same practices and even similar clothing and altar arrangements in Buddhism, while many of the prescribed rules for the altar and approaching or leaving it are mentioned very plainly in far more ancient directions governing the Brahman when acting as priest. This similarity was so wonderful in the truthful account given by the Catholic Priest Abbe Huc that the alarmed Church first explained that the devil, knowing that Christianity was coming, went ahead and invented the whole thing for the Buddhists by a species of *ante jactum* copying, so as to confound innocent Catholics therewith; and then they burned poor Abbe Hue's book. As to stations of the cross, now well known to us, or the rosary, confession, convents, and the like, all these are in the older religion. The rosary was long and anciently used in Japan, where they had over one hundred and seventy-two sorts. And an examination of the mummies of old Egypt reveals rosaries placed with them in the grave, many varieties being used. Some of these I have seen. Could we call up the shades of Babylon's priests, we should doubtless find the same rituals there.

Turning to doctrines, that of salvation by faith is well known in Christianity. It was the cause of a stormy controversy in the time of St. James. But very strangely, perhaps, for many Christians, the doctrine is a very old Brahmanical one. They call it "The Bridge Doctrine," as it is the great Bridge. But with them it does not mean a faith in some particular emanation of God, but God is its aim, God is the means and the way, and God the end of the faith; by complete faith in God, without an intermediary, God will save you. They also have a doctrine of salvation by faith in those great sons of God, Krishna, Rama, and others; complete faith in either of those is for them a way to heaven, a bridge for the crossing over all sins. Even those who were killed by Krishna, in the great war detailed in the *Ramayana*, went straight to heaven because they looked at him, as the thief on the cross looking at

Jesus went to Paradise. In Buddhism is the same doctrine of faith. The twelve great sects of Buddhism in Japan have one called the Sect of the Pure Land. This teaches that Amitabha vowed that anyone who calls three times on his name would be born into his pure Land of Bliss. He held that some men may be strong enough to prevail against the enemy, but that most men are not, and need some help from another. This help is found in the power of the vow of Amita-Buddha, who will help all those who call on his name. The doctrine is a modified form of vicarious atonement, but it does not exclude the salvation by works which the Christian St. James gives out.

Heaven and Hell are also common to Christianity, Buddhism and Brahmanism. The Brahman calls it Swarga; the Buddhist, Devachan; and we, Heaven. Its opposite is Naraka and Avichi. But names apart, the descriptions are the same. Indeed, the hells of the Buddhists are very terrible, long in duration and awful in effect. The difference is that the heaven and hell of the Christian are eternal, while the others are not. The others come to an end when the forces which cause them are exhausted. In teaching of more than one heaven there is the same likeness, for St. Paul spoke of more than a single heaven to one of which he was rapt away, and the Buddhist tells of many, each being a grade above or below some other. Brahman and Buddhist agree in saying that when heaven or hell is ended for the soul, it descends again to rebirth. And that was taught by the Jews. They held that the soul was originally pure, but sinned and had to wander through rebirth until purified and fit to return to its source.

In priesthood and priestcraft there is a perfect agreement among all religions, save that the Brahman instead of being ordained a priest is so by birth. Buddha's priesthood began with those who were his friends and disciples. After his death they met in council, and subsequently many councils were held, all being attended by priests. Similar questions arose among them as with the Christians, and identical splits occurred, so that now there are Northern and Southern Buddhism and the twelve sects of Japan. During the life of Buddha the old query of admitting women arose and caused much discussion. The power of the

Brahman and Buddhist priests is considerable, and they demand as great privileges and rights as the Christian ones.

Hence we are bound to conclude that dogmatically and theologically these religions all agree. Christianity stands out, however, as peculiarly intolerant — and in using the word "intolerant" I but quote from some priestly utterances regarding the World's Fair Parliament — for it claims to be the only true religion that God has seen fit to reveal to man.

The great doctrine of a Savior who is the son of God — God himself — is not an original one with Christianity. It is the same as the extremely ancient one of the Hindus called the doctrine of the Avatara. An Avatara is one who comes down to earth to save man. He is God incarnate. Such was Krishna, and such even the Hindus admit was Buddha, for he is one of the great ten Avataras. The similarity between Krishna or Cristna and Christ has been very often remarked. He came 5,000 years ago to save and benefit man, and his birth was in India, his teaching being Brahmanical. He, like Jesus, was hated by the ruler, Kansa, who desired to destroy him in advance, and who destroyed many sons of families in order to accomplish his end, but failed. Krishna warred with the powers of darkness in his battles with Ravana, whom he finally killed. The belief about him was that he was the incarnation of God. This is in accord with the ancient doctrine that periodically the Great Being assumes the form of man for the preservation of the just, the establishment of virtue and order, and the punishment of the wicked. Millions of men and women read every day of Krishna in the *Rdnd-yana* of *Tulasi Das*. His praises are sung each day and reiterated at their festivals. Certainly it seems rather narrow and bigoted to assume that but one tribe and one people are favored by the appearance among them of an incarnation in greater measure of God.

Jesus taught a secret doctrine to his disciples. He said to them that he taught the common people in stories of a simple sort, but that the disciples could learn of the mysteries. And in the early age of

Christianity that secret teaching was known. In Buddhism is the same thing, for Buddha began with one vehicle or doctrine, proceeded after to two, and then to a third. He also taught a secret doctrine, that doubtless agreed with the Brahmans who had taught him at his father's court. He gave up the world, and later gave up eternal peace in Nirvana, so that he might save men. In this the story agrees with that of Jesus. And Buddha also resisted Mara, or the Devil, in the wilderness. Jesus teaches that we must be as perfect as the Father, and that the kingdom of heaven is within each. To be perfect as the Father we must be equal with him, and hence here we have the ancient doctrine taught of old by the Brahmans that each man is God and a part of God. This supports the unity of humanity as a spiritual whole, one of the greatest doctrines of the time prior to Christianity, and now also believed in Brahmanism.

That the universe is spiritual in essence, that man is a spirit and immortal, and that man may rise to perfection, are universal doctrines. Even particular doctrines are common to all the religions. Reincarnation is not alone in Hinduism or Buddhism. It was believed by the Jews, and not only believed by Jesus but he also taught it. For he said that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias "who was for to come." Being a Jew he must have had the doctrines of the Jews, and this was one of them. And in *Revelations* we find the writer says: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the house of my God, and he shall go no more out."

The words "no more" infer a prior time of going out.

The perfectibility of man destroys the doctrine of original sin, and that perfectibility was taught by Jesus, as I said. Reincarnation is a necessity for the evolution of this perfection, and through it at last are produced those Saviors of the race of whom Jesus was one. He did not deny similar privileges to others, but said to his disciples that they could do even greater works than he did. So we find these great Sages and Saviors in all religions. There are Moses and Abraham and Solomon, all Sages. And we are bound to accept the Jewish idea that Moses and the

rest were the reincarnations of former persons. Moses was in their opinion Abel the son of Adam; and their Messiah was to be a reincarnation of Adam himself who had already come the second time in the person of David. We take the Messiah and trace him up to David, but refuse, improperly, to accept the remainder of their theory.

Descending to every-day life doctrines, we find that of Karma, or that we must account and receive for every act. This is the great explainer of human life. It was taught by Jesus and Matthew and St. Paul. The latter explicitly said:

Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap.

This is Karma of the Brahman and Buddhist, which teaches that each life is the outcome of a former life or lives, and that every man in his rebirths will have to account for every thought and receive measure for the measure given by him before.

In ethics all these religions are the same, and no new ethic is given by any. Jesus was the same as his predecessor Buddha, and both taught the law of love and forgiveness. A consideration of the religions of the past and today from a Theosophical standpoint will support and confirm ethics. We therefore cannot introduce a new code, but we strive by looking into all religions to find a firm basis, not due to fear, favor, or injustice, for the ethics common to all. This is what Theosophy is for and what it will do. It is the reformer of religion, the unifier of diverse systems, the restorer of justice to our theory of the universe. It is our past, our present, and our future; it is our life, our death, and our immortality.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address given at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893. ([return to text](#))

WISDOM GREAT AS LIFE CAN GIVE — *Irene R. Ponsonby*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

You shall have wisdom great as Life can give, You shall have happiness as deep as tears. — Herbert J. Hall

Earth-life is a most important phase of growth for the human entity. It incorporates all grades of progress and provides the universal text-book of evolution. Here we put into practice those of our ideas and ideals which can be materialized, and here we accumulate the abstract dreams and aspirations which create for us the state of Devachan, the aroma of which we assimilate. Our future characters are the result of the grade we make in this life plus the impression left by the devachanic interlude. Earth-life, therefore, is an intensive process of becoming at one with the soul which has been strengthened and inspired in Devachan.

Of the "wisdom great as life can give" we take what we can — or, more technically but equally correctly, what we are; for our life's experiences are attracted by sympathy or antipathy to us: they are the reflexion of ourselves in others and on surrounding Nature, and their and its reaction. Thus it is that we learn all the most vital lessons through human relationship — a fact which is strictly in accordance with the structure of and the habits inherent in the Universe.

Universal Brotherhood, or the unified coherence in Nature, is no mere philosophically logical argument exposed to every travesty of self-interest. It signifies for the Theosophist, as for every deep thinker, the mystic love of all being, the human expression of universal compassion which is the constructive energy and creative impetus in the Universe. It is the insignia of true manhood.

Like Shakespeare's quality of mercy, it

is not strained,

It droppeth, as the gentle rain from Heaven

Upon the place beneath.

for it

springs not from the founts

Of love or hate; but rather from the sure

Allegiances of spirit, strong proud, pure. (1)

The Universe is a mighty organic entity in which there are no radical divisions or separations, and wherein the interacting of every part with every other part or with the whole is regulated by Nature's fundamental law of Compassion, for harmony is inherent throughout. However, since every part of this mighty whole varies in its state of evolution or relative perfection, and grade of individualization, it logically follows that there is conflict of wills in the processes of adjusting the individual desire to the universal design. This apparent 'struggle' arises in the yearning of the relatively imperfect towards greater and ever greater states of relative perfection. Knowing ourselves as less than we would be, we are dissatisfied, and recognizing this self-conflict in ourselves we sense it in others and thus life as a whole is colored by our individual self-conflict. This inherent discontent will probably always exist, for it is written in *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 95, Vol. II.): "Where there is no struggle, there is no merit"; nevertheless, while our own self-conflict may be the means of learning greater compassion, it should also be the means through which we become more in harmony with all Being.

The present evolutionary tendency, and one which will increase with the coming cycles, is for the individual man to unite more and more with his fellows on the basis of a mutual heritage of godliness. To this tendency all the principles of evolution and the very constitution of man lend themselves.

Man is united to his fellow-men, physically, intellectually, and

spiritually. Our bodies are composed of the life-atoms which form the substances of the Earth: our psycho-emotional natures are the imbodiment of astral forces: intellectual life-atoms produce and evolve our intelligences: and the spirit of man is an aggregated unit formed by the life-essences of the spiritual realms of the Universe. We all share alike in this wondrous bounty, though we differ in the uses to which we put our talents. While we can always give from our own storehouse the unique results of our individual harvesting, we cannot deprive another of his rightful share, for

every force in the universe thrills through our being, and every substance in the Universe has done its proportionate part in building us up and therefore has given us somewhat of itself.—

The Esoteric Tradition, p. 493

During our Earth-lives some of these life-atoms belong to us — they form our composite constitutions; others are but visitors, that come to us, stay a while, and then go elsewhere. When the cohering cord is withdrawn at the close of a period on Earth, our own atoms scatter, and who can say where they may not be found? We have been told that it is probable a large number of the life-atoms belonging to any excarnate entity are to be found in the bodies of men and women now living here. (See *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 910.)

Our life-atoms have no racial prejudice: their affinities are fundamentally international. This accounts for the universally instantaneous appeal of beauty, in Nature, Art, and Music, to the human mind and heart. We have proved these facts on the materio-physical plane; would that we knew more about their scope on the less material, and therefore far more vital, planes of consciousness.

It naturally follows that a study of our atomic relationship on the planes of manifestation leads us to the subject of the interwoven strands of destiny — our karmic relationships. These links differ from atomic kinship in that, whereas the latter are beyond our conscious control, our karmic links are the direct outcome of our willing and doing throughout many ages.

Some hundreds of thousand years ago humanity passed the lowest point in this particular phase of its present evolutionary progress on Earth. At that time the balance was struck in the coinciding processes of the involution of spiritual forces and the evolution of material ones: but both before and since that ebb-point, the current of readjustment, of sifting, between the forces following these processes has been intensified and the impulses towards accord on the one hand, and discord on the other, have gained impetus. We have been deliberate participants in these transition-cycles, with the result that today we find ourselves intricately and obscurely enmeshed — self entangled in a net of universal causation. We have forgotten the preceding scenes in which the plot took shape, but we know only too well the frustration which we are faced with now, when, yearning to be, we are checked by our unevolved selves.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From *Storm* by C. Henry Warren. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

UPAYA KAUSALYA: THE DOCTRINE OF SKILLFUL MEANS — *Harry B. Murphy and Karl Bendroth*

According to Har Dayal, *Updya Kausalya* is "the most important of the four supplementary *paramitas*" (1). It is explained as "skilfulness or wisdom in the choice and adoption of the means or expedients for converting others or helping them."

A wise and compassionate seer, a *bodhisattva*, though he perceives the truth of things directly, by direct experience, and nature's inner secrets are to him an open book, yet is not able to correctly express his understanding in words. As the Lankavatara Sutra says, "Words are neither different nor not different from meaning. . . The Tathagatas do not teach a Dharma that is dependent upon letters. Anyone who teaches a doctrine that is dependent upon letters and words is a mere prattler, because Truth is beyond letters and words and books." (2) There is no verbal statement that a wise seer can make about the deeper workings of nature which does not in some way do violence to the reality as he experiences it.

In addition to the fact that a *bodhisattva could not* express in words the real truth of a metaphysical question even if he wanted to, there is also the consideration that even a too-full approximation to the truth would not be good for many of his hearers. As T. S. Eliot puts it,

. . . . humankind
Cannot bear very much reality. (3)

Too much of truth can set back disciples from the Path and discourage them. Nor would disciples be able even to understand many of the things which the higher wisdom of a *guru* would be able to tell them.

For each one must hear only what he *can* hear, what he is able to hear. And thus it is that none of us ever reads the truth or hears the truth from our teachers — but our teachers, for our benefit, give us a

modified or "stepped-down" version of the truth which we are able to bear and which we can understand. In doing this, the teachers are exercising *updya kausalya paramita* (skilful means of helping others). Each people as well as each age has its own world-feeling (4), its own nature, degree and kind of understanding, customs, prejudices. When a wise teacher comes as a messenger of wisdom to a people he attempts to supply them with just that *upaya*, that version of truth, which is fitted to their nature. This *upaya* then becomes a religion for the people in question. Thus have the various world religions come to be, though each one has become more or less debased from what the original founder taught.

And with individuals as with nations we find that each one's understanding is different. Some are interested in science. Others are by nature religious. Some prefer philosophical clarity and precision; others are inclined to view such as being hair-splitting or sophistical. Some desire an attempted verbal statement of the details of nature's processes; others want to learn how to meditate, feeling that one should get to know the owner of a garden first, then *he* will explain about the flowers that grow in it. (5) Theosophy has tried to supply something of value for each of these various types of hearers. One value of understanding the *upaya* teaching is that it frees us from any narrow or sectarian tendency to imagine that any particular teaching of Theosophy is precisely true as verbally stated, or is the last word in truth. How often our teachers have warned us to "break the molds of mind"!

A practical application of *upaya paramita* is this: when we meet an inquirer we can make a greater effort than ever to try to enter sympathetically into his way of looking at things and try to present just those aspects of teaching which will be most valuable and meaningful to him. A listener tends to superimpose a concept from his own "thought or experience world" upon the ideas expressed by us. By our own careful observation of his remarks we can grasp this picture. The concept always varies according to the listener's own character.

Once we become aware of this we can observe this state of affairs even in ordinary "secular" conversations. And we in turn superimpose our own thought groupings upon the listener's attitude and inadvisedly assume that our words mean the same thing to him that they mean to us. Our enthusiasm concerning the teachings and our joy in expounding them is likely to be one of our greatest obstacles in trying so to choose our words that the hearer's understanding of them will be similar to our own. These are psychological facts to keep in mind while trying to practice *upaya*.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Dayal, Har, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanscrit Literature*. London. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, and Co., Ltd., pp. 248. ([return to text](#))
2. Goddard, Dwight, "A Buddhist Bible," Second Edition, 1938, pp. 310, -1. ([return to text](#))
3. "Burnt Norton" in *Four Quartets*. ([return to text](#))
4. *Vide* Spengler, *Decline of the West*, *passim*. ([return to text](#))
5. This is an important theme in *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, trans, by Swami Nikhilananda. New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, 1942. Cf. Matthew VI, 33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." ([return to text](#))

MODERN THOUGHT IN THE LIGHT OF THE VEDANTA: II (1) — Ernest P.

Horrwitz

I have said that the same truth which your Yogins and Vedantists have gained by internal perception, is gradually dawning on our physicists. Unity in variety! Darwin's great genius has directed the attention of the scientific world from the study of the numberless varieties of structure to the origin of species, to the unity of type from which all differentiation sprang. His profound researches have made the western mind fitter to seek after the "One without a second," and readier to receive the monistic teaching of the Vedanta. The more open-minded section of the Christian clergy seems likewise favorably disposed towards the Vedanta because it corroborates Gospel truth and supports Christian dogma. The religion of Christ is the religion of love, so is the Vedanta! Freedom is the goal of the Vedanta, and freedom is love. They who are free in spirit can never hate nor fear; they cannot be but fearless and compassionate, by the grace of their divine nature.

Physical science and the Christian Church have therefore reason to be friendly towards the Vedanta. No less reason have our social reformers who want to improve the condition of the working people, to settle the disputes between Capital and Labor in a fair and amicable spirit, and to strengthen the principles of a free democracy. The Vedanta philosophy holding up the ideal of freedom is just the metaphysical basis needed in a country which, at least politically, is a free country.

For these reasons, I believe, the Vedanta is exercising a certain influence with us, and will probably do so much more in the time to come. On the other hand I feel sure that western civilisation can teach India as good an object-lesson as the Vedanta can teach the West. It has been said that the civilisation of the future will be a rational combination of eastern monism and western economics. Neither should be taken over wholesale from one country by the other, but a wise selection be made of what is suitable and promising of good

results under existing conditions. Would you not think it a rash and dangerous experiment if an Indian reformer were to introduce indiscriminately into his native province the political institutions, educational methods, commercial usages, and social customs which he has learned to admire in England? That might possibly do more harm than good. I think it would be an equally grave error on the part of our Vedanta enthusiasts (and they are growing in number I understand) to ridicule the practice of Church attendance and the sacredness of Christian worship, in honor of the Vedanta religion. That would be acting in the name but not in spirit of Vedanta, which is universal and sympathises with all religions. Moreover, to belittle Christianity in favor of the Vedanta would be an error in judgment. Vedanta is only for the cultured few, for those with a large bump of comparison and causality. The Vedanta can as little replace the Christian Church in Europe as it can replace the Indian and Mohammedan Churches in the East. All these outward forms of faith, Buddhism, and Christianity, and Islam, are of great social weight and historical value, having come, in the fulness of time, to the various races, to help their national evolution, and to enable them to perform efficiently their civilising mission on earth. Religions are not the result of a mere historical accident, but the outcome of a providential necessity. To attack and to scoff at so pure and lofty a form of belief as Christianity, which has made the West what it is, simply because the universal and eternal truth embodied in the teachings of the Christ has degenerated into sectarian dogma and conformed to the world (as truth always does and always will do in the history of man), such an attitude is irreverent and unbecoming, and shows a narrow and fanatic spirit, certainly not the spirit of the Vedanta.

The Vedanta, as I understand it, does not enter into competition with any external form of belief, but rather claims to be the esoteric aspect of every religion, whether high or low, superstitious or profound. And really if we had only sufficient insight to see deep enough into the tenets of the Christian faith, as it is reflected in the Gospel of St. John and the Epistles of St. Paul, we might discover therein, to our surprise,

Vedanta pure and simple. I do not speak of modern Church doctrines, but of real Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ and expounded by the Mystics of the Middle Ages, the true Apostolic successors.

If you were to read the sermons of Master Eckehart, a Dominican monk who lived in the fourteenth century in Germany, and of his greatest disciple, Tauler, the "Friend of God," or if you were to feel yourself carried away by the "Spiritual Torrents" as experienced and described by the saintly Madame Guyon, the sweetest of Christian Mystics in France, you might fancy you had before you passages translated from your own Upanishads, from Shankara, or the *Bhagavad-Gita*, so identical are the thoughts and expressions. Tauler continually holds up as the Christian ideal "to lose all I-hood"; "to unbecome," as he calls it, and "to re-become God." Luther, the Protestant reformer, acknowledged his sermons to be the soundest theology, and the nearest approach to evangelical truth he had ever come across. Tauler's teacher had been Eckehart, who likewise declared the impersonal God, the Immanent Christ. Another of Eckehart's disciples, after having received the good message and realised the Christ, is said to have suddenly exclaimed: "Master, rejoice with me, for I have become God." The Evangelical and Dissenting clergy of our days look on Luther as a sound Churchman, and Luther accepted the "divinity of man" as preached by Tauler and Eckehart, and called these mystic doctrines sound and thoroughly Christian. Yet, I am afraid, these teachings of an impersonal God, and of the identity of Christ and the human soul, would be considered heterodox and pantheistic by the modern Church. A Christian minister would not dare to tell his congregation that man is God, and that those who know it need not pray to a personal God; that God is not a person, and that worship of an extra-cosmic Deity is but a stage of spiritual infancy in the religious growth of man. Do you not think that the Christian clergy would fiercely attack that man, and denounce him as a Freethinker and Antichrist? And yet Tauler was no Antichrist; Luther himself stood up for his doctrine. Nor was Eckehart a heretic; nay, he was even invited to Rome by the Pope himself, who conferred upon him the honorary degree of a Doctor of Theology. Alas!

that free spirit of true mysticism has long been lost in the Christian Church. Therefore, I make bold to say that it would do more good if religious reformers endeavored to restore the forgotten truth of esoteric Christianity to the consciousness of Christendom, instead of unsettling people's minds and upsetting their Christian faith with strange doctrines, the very language of which sounds bewildering to English ears.

In conclusion, I may be allowed to quote a few extracts from the writings of the now almost forgotten Christian Mystics. They will illustrate far better than my poor words can that the spirit of Christ's teaching is identical with the Vedanta, however much the language may vary. Here is the prayer of Madame Guyon, uttered a day after her spiritual experience of the Divine Unity:

O Infinite Goodness, Thou wast so near, and I went running hither and thither in search of Thee and did not find Thee. My life was wretched, yet my happiness lay there within me. I was poor in the midst of riches, and I was dying of hunger close by a table spread and a continual feast. O Beauty, ancient and new, why have I known Thee so late? Alas! I sought Thee where Thou wast not, and did not seek Thee where Thou wast. It was for want of understanding these words of Thy Gospel where Thou sayest, "the Kingdom of God is not here nor there, the Kingdom of God is within you."

The following are Master Eckehart's words:

He who seeth in one creature something different from another, and he who loveth God better in one creature than in another, that man is carnal and far from truth, and still a child. But to whom God is alike in every creature, he is become a man.

What does the *Bhagavad-Gita* say?

He who seeth difference in the world goeth from death to death; but he who seeth Me everywhere and everything in Me, he is a perfect Yogin.

Here is another saying of our German Mystic:

God in Himself was not the Lord — in the Creature only hath He become the Lord. I ask to be rid of the Lord, that is, that the Lord by His grace would bring me into the Essence, which is above the Lord, and above distinction. I would enter into that Eternal Unity which was mine before all time, above all addition and diminution — into that immobility whereby all is moved.

This is Christian monism, no longer remembered by the Church with her crude teachings of a personal God, a plurality of souls, the resurrection of the body, and a local heaven and hell.

Let me read one more passage from Eckehart's writings:

God and I are one in knowing. His knowing is my knowing. The eye whereby I see God is the same eye whereby He sees me. My eye and God's eye are One eye, One vision, One knowledge, and One love.

The same divine truth must have flashed across the mind of Ramakrishna Paramahansa when he said:

Knowledge and love are ultimately one and the same. There is no difference between pure knowledge and pure love.

Master Eckehart defines purity, just as the Vedantists do, as a turning away from the creature, and lifting up the heart towards 'pure goodness,' so that a man may find comfort in no creature, and that he may desire nothing but pure goodness, which is God. God is in the soul, and the soul flows over into God, and both are one.

Such is Mystic Christianity, or Christian Vedanta as Indian philosophers prefer to call it, and if these eternal verities were preached every Sunday from the pulpits of every Christian Church throughout the land, Vedanta would soon be a living fact in this country. The Church would receive fresh vigor, and experience a new life, and another spiritual wave of religious fervor would break out over Europe, even mightier and farther reaching than the momentous reformation of

Luther and Calvin. The monistic revival of the twentieth century will achieve no less, I believe, than the spiritualisation of scientific research, and the rationalisation of religious fervor. Then Science and Religion will cease their conflict, and will peacefully flourish, side by side, like two fruitful branches grown from the same tree of Divine Knowledge.

A great outpouring of spirit will pass over the earth, and the time will be ripe for the Church Universal, when the Christian and the Indian "Churches may meet as friends on the common ground of the Vedanta. The day will likewise come when another Divine Institution, the Mohammedan Brotherhood, will be incorporated into the Monistic Church, for Islam, too, has realised the "One without a second," thanks to the illumination of the "God-intoxicated" Sufis. Sadi and Hafiz have done for Mohammedanism what Eckehart and Tauler did for Christianity, and the Vedanta for the religions of India. May the time soon draw nigh when we shall be ready to institute the Church Universal where every worshipper, whether Buddhist or Christian, Moslem or Jew, is free to serve God in his own fashion of belief. Then a deeper meaning will ring out of the words of the old hymn:

All glory be to God on High
And on our earth be peace,
Henceforth goodwill of man to man
Begin and never cease.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Continued from the February issue. This lecture was presented on December 3, 1898, to the "Hindu Association" in London, and was originally published in *The Theosophical Review*, London, England. Mr. Horrwitz, formerly lecturer at the Universities of Dublin, Ireland, Durham, England, and Hunter College, New York, is now visiting lecturer at Theosophical University, Covina, California, on World Literature and on Semasiology (science of language), to which he has devoted a lifetime's study. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

THE UNIVERSAL APPROACH (1)

"That Thou Art, 0 Shvetaketu." — *Upanishads*

If there is one idea in Theosophical philosophy that has been reiterated more than any other, it is perhaps the necessity for proceeding in one's study according to the Platonic method — from universals to particulars. Theosophists know this admonition by heart, and it is evident to anyone who thinks, that Truth exists only in the Whole, not in the part; that it is only by viewing any thing, object, situation, or being, from the point of view of totality that its true nature and status can be known. How was it possible, do we think, that H. P. Blavatsky and Wm. Q. Judge were always able to see clearly when others were confused? How could they, in dealing with both great and small questions, detect so readily the fundamental principles underlying any line of action? The answer lies undoubtedly in their method of approach, in the fact that they employed the Platonic system of *deduction*, which enabled them to see at a glance all things and beings in their true and proper relation. If confusion is ours, perhaps it is due to our failure to apply this key.

Take, for example, the difficulty experienced by many thinkers, both in and outside the Theosophical Movement, in comprehending the Eastern metaphysical teaching regarding the powers and functions of perfected Men, or Mahatmans — of Buddha, for instance, who was said to be omnipresent, capable of being in an indefinite number of places at once. This difficulty, says H. P. B. in the *Glossary*, lies primarily in the fact that we reason inductively, that we view these powers as being attributes of *particular personalities*, of human Buddhas.

. . . it is not Buddha (Gautama, the mortal man, or any other personal Buddha) who lives ubiquitously in "three different states at the same time," but Bodhi, the universal and abstract principle of divine wisdom, symbolized in philosophy by Adi-

Buddha. . . . Thus it is not *one* Buddha who is meant, nor any particular *avatar* of the collective Dhyani Buddhas, but verily *Adi-Bodhi*, the first Logos, whose primordial ray is Mahabuddhi, the Universal Soul, ALAYA, whose flame is ubiquitous . . . because, once again, *it is Universal Being itself* or the reflex of the Absolute.

So material is our age that we persist in thinking of man only in terms of flesh and blood. Reasoning from this basis we utterly fail to understand how a single human being, even a Buddha, can possibly possess such powers. But reversing the process and beginning with the Over-Soul, it is not difficult to grasp the possibility. Beginning with universals, the student is led to see that it is Adi-Buddha, or Universal Being, and not mortal man, for whom these attributes are claimed. Thus, we find a lesson in the teacher's method of approach, and at the same time come a step nearer toward an understanding of the nature of perfected Man.

Consider, again, the lack of perception shown by the managers of the Theosophical Publication Society in London in 1888 when they reached the conclusion that philosophy is too advanced for men of this day, and that what is needed is "a stepping-stone from fiction to philosophy." This course, if pursued, would have spelled the wreck of the Theosophical Movement of this age. How account for this lack of perception? And how explain the fact that Wm. Q. Judge was able to see the truth and could warn, was able to know that philosophy is, in fact, man's greatest need, and that the true student is not satisfied by fictionized or stepped-down truth?

The answer lies again in methods of approach. The English theosophists were accustomed to Aristotelian reasoning. They were tutored under the Darwinian interpretation of evolution, which views man as an animal being, struggling upward through the ages, who had hardly reached the point where he could grasp philosophy. Mr. Judge, on the other hand, began with universals, with the Soul. He saw man as a divine Pilgrim incarnated in a body of flesh, to whom philosophy,

metaphysics, and ethics are as natural and assimilable as is physical food to the body.

It is not possible to see clearly unless one proceeds from the universal point of view. But is intellectual acceptance of this proposition enough? Does mere knowledge of the formula endow one with universal consciousness whereby he can see all things and beings as parts of one great Whole? Unfortunately, we know it does not. Wisdom in perception and action is not of the intellect. If H. P. B. and Mr. Judge were able to see clearly, it was not that they intellectually said to themselves, when faced with any problem: "I must study this situation from the universal point of view." Men approach all questions, in reality, from where they stand *in heart perception*, and Sages, being universal in their very natures, have no need to take any other position than their own. Such perception comes from creating in one's self the feeling of Universal Brotherhood.

Merely knowing in the mind, therefore, that one should begin with universals does not mean that his nature, when he approaches a subject, is universal. But to take the position of Brotherhood, to strive to live and think each moment of the day as Soul, gradually elevates the consciousness to the plane of All-Being. There, seeing all things and beings whatsoever *in one's self*, the universal approach to every question is assured.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Reprinted from *Theosophy* (Los Angeles), December, 1945. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

NARADA: A STUDY IN "THE SECRET DOCTRINE" — *G. de Purucker*

Narada is here, there, and everywhere; and *yet*, none of the Puranas gives the true characteristics of this great enemy of physical procreation. Whatever those characteristics may be in Hindu Esotericism, Narada — who is called in Cis-Himalayan Occultism *Pesh-Hun*, the "Messenger," or the Greek *Angelos* — is the sole confidant and the executor of the universal decrees of Karma and *Adi-Budh*: a kind of active and ever incarnating logos, who leads and guides human affairs from the beginning to the end of the Kalpa.

"Pesh-Hun" is a general not a special Hindu possession. He is the mysterious guiding intelligent power, which gives the impulse to, and regulates the impetus of cycles, Kalpas and universal events. He is Karma's visible adjuster on a general scale; the *inspirer* and the leader of the greatest heroes of this Manvantara. In the exoteric works he is referred to by some very uncomplimentary names; such as "Kali-Karaka," *strife-maker*, "Kapi-vaktra," *monkey-faced*, and even "Pisuna," the spy, though elsewhere he is called Deva-Brahma.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, page 48

Narada as the Hindus call him, Pesh-Hun as the Tibetans call him, is in the world. That agent of destiny whom Christians I suppose would call the agent of the vengeance of the Lord, is abroad in every land. His karmic work is proceeding: reaping in order that future crops may be sown. Terrible agent of what the Christians would call divine vengeance, and yet Narada or Pesh-Hun is man's greatest friend for the men who will recognise him. His work is not that of fate, it is that of destiny, which man himself weaves. If he is a disturber of man's ways in order that the mandates of divine justice shall be carried out, he is also the bringer of peace, and the restorer of harmony. To use a

beautiful Jewish phrase, it is, ultimately speaking, Narada or Pesh-Hun who "will wipe away all tears."

Now then, I was asked especially to make a few comments this morning upon the question of the Hindu Rishi Narada about whom under the Atlantean name of Pesh-Hun I spoke two or three weeks ago from this platform. H. P. B. speaks of Narada, as the Hindus call him, or Pesh-Hun as she calls his name from Atlantean times, (he is known by other names in other ages and lands), but she says very little about him indeed for the simple reason that his, functions in nature are so difficult to explain to a world which is utterly unaccustomed to the spiritual and intellectual teachings of Theosophy, that she just pointed to certain facts and left the matter there. H. P. B. not being here to answer questions that she herself had aroused, it falls upon me to do my best!

Who is Narada, who is this Pesh-Hun? In the first place he is a Rishi. He is also a Prajapati. You know what these names mean. Prajapati means a parent of offspring, does not say what kind of offsprings, maybe mind-born children, it may be children born of the body, for Prajapati means either or both. He is also a Manu when his functions concerning the human races alone are involved. He is a Dhyan-Chohan or what the Christians would call an Archangel. Of course this reference does not mean much today because the Christians themselves today hardly know what they mean by the term. But I am giving a few names in different systems of thought. In Greek and Latin mythology he would be a god or perhaps one of the highest of the Daimones, cosmic spirits. Put it this way: Narada is a Dhyan-Chohan, also Prajapati because of certain functions he performs, also a Rishi or great spiritual teacher because of certain functions he performs. Also a Manu because of the intimate connexion with the destinies of the human race. That is why these three names are used, each name being appropriate to different sections of his activity. He is a Dhyan-Chohan of the highest or the next to the highest class. I am not now referring merely to the three great classes of Dhyan-Chohans higher than the humans. I am referring to classes in a different category. Every possibility of Dhyan-Chohanic

type considered, Narada belongs to the next to the highest type.

What are the functions of Narada? Typically those of carrying out karmic destiny. There you have a key to all his activities. What the Lipikas have written down, Narada as an individual agent or as an individuality, as an Archangel, sees are carried out. He is the agent of karmic destiny. The consequence is, just because destiny to us humans is often so unpleasant due to our own faults and failings in the past, Narada has been given very uncomplimentary titles by those who have seen his work in the world and in the world of men and who do not like it. When they do like it, when it is something that humans like, he is given very complimentary titles: the Benefactor, the Kindly Helper, the Warrior for Mankind, the bringer about of all the good things in destiny. But when as an impartial, impersonal agent of karmic destiny he brings about trouble on the human race, then he is given very uncomplimentary names by men, as for instance he is called Kali-Kara, the Strife-Producer, because in the course of human destiny it is his work to bring about war and peace, to bring about war and to bring about peace.

Now can you see why H. P. B. has side-stepped this very function, duty, character of Narada? It is a ticklish thing because in the Occident we do not want to believe that the world is conducted by cosmic and spiritual laws, nor in the Occident do we want to believe that the horrible things that happen to us are infallibly and inevitably our own self-earned destiny. We prefer: it is *his* fault. That is the way we pass the buck, and yet show me anything that happens to you as far as you can see that is not the result of your own action. There is the law.

So the functions of Narada are to act as the agent of karman. How does he do this? Being a Dhyani-Chohan he cannot come amongst us and work as a human being does, because he belongs to a much higher kingdom, among the very highest of the three Dhyani-Chohan kingdoms. He is an impersonal, impartial agent of destiny. His duty is to see that the world is protected, that karmic law, destiny, be carried out irrespective of consequences; for it is the only way to re-establish

law, order, equilibrium, justice, and ultimate wisdom and peace. Otherwise there would be Nature piling up a vast accumulation of unexpended karman which sometime or in time might flood the human race and utterly destroy it. No wonder H. P. B. side-stepped this question.

How does Narada therefore work? Sometimes he over-shadows men of the proper psychological, spiritual, intellectual, and even physical temperament and works through them. These men then are called by H. P. B. Men of Destiny. They may not in themselves be even good men, which is another reason why Narada is often spoken of in uncomplimentary terms; but they may be good men, these Men of Destiny. But they are used as instruments and tools to carry out, to bring out, to bring to pass, certain things that are lying in the womb of time and must come out, and there must be a guiding spiritual power to see that the performing of these events shall take place without the complete wrecking of mankind. This is Narada's work: a protector of mankind and also an avenger.

The Occidental for centuries has been trained in a religious and philosophical system which is since early mediaeval times so utterly contrary to the facts of Nature that we have lost touch with how the world is ruled and governed. It is governed by spiritual and highly intellectual powers. For instance our own globe is, globe D of our chain. Not a thing takes place by chance, by hap, by hazard or by fortuity. Everything that takes place on this globe or in the Solar System or in the Sun or in the galaxy takes place according to law; and it takes place according to law because the agents of law, the agents of karman, are there to hold it firm, to prevent as it were the earthquake or the tidal wave or the cyclone, from going crazy and destroying indiscriminately. Do you see what I am trying to say? Destiny is held firmly in the hands of the gods; or as the early Christians phrased it in their own phrasing, a phrasing which has lost sense today, the world is ruled by God Almighty through the hierarchy of angels, which is our Theosophical teaching taught in the Christian form. These Angels carry out the decrees of destiny, and you even have remnants in Christian teaching

today of this old Theosophy of early Christianity, as for instance when they speak of the Angel of Death or the Angel of Destiny or the Angel of Disease — or turning to the New Testament, the Four Angels of the Apocalypse. You might ask what are they now? War, disease or pestilence, starvation, and death. I remember a Spanish writer, Ibanez, wrote a famous book *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*. So even in Christianity you have the same teaching.

Now it is Narada who is in charge of these karmic productions of destiny. No wonder he is called Kali-Kara, the Strife-Producer. He does not produce it out of nothing, out of a diabolic wish to injure mankind. He is simply the agent of karmic destiny bringing about for instance, the breaking up of old crystallized conditions which are becoming a spiritual opiate for mankind, or stopping things that are threatening to injure mankind. You see, a teaching like this also could be dangerous if it fell into the minds of irresponsible or weak men who would twist it to personal and selfish uses. Such men have no conception of the profundities and intricacies of theosophic truths, which are the archaic Wisdom-Religion of mankind; and through this ignorance even the uninstructed public could imagine that a Theosophist in speaking thus is saying something that he should not say.

Once more let me ask what or who is Narada? Narada is not only the agent of karmic destiny but is mankind's savior, the bringer about of man's evolutionary progress, the bringer about of change tending upwards to nobler things, and likewise paradoxically enough the bringer about or restorer of spiritual and intellectual stability. Because there can be no stability when an accumulated reservoir of karman is waiting and threatening to burst the dam and cause devastation, destruction indiscriminately.

Take into your minds some of the consequences of these thoughts. They will make you charitable, less inclined to hate and misjudge other human beings. You take Napoleon for instance, or Julius Caesar or Alexander — three men who if you judge them in the balance of ordinary human justice are three evil-doers because they were all

upsetters, all destroyers of convention and of established things. But the world lived through them, and yet who were they? Average men, each one with a peculiar cast, psychological and other which Narada could work through to bring about the karmic changes. Do you get it? In other words Narada is a kind of Siva, destroyer and regenerator, but his destructions are always beneficial, he is always on the side of liberty, absolute justice to all irrespective of anything, and on the side of progress. If there is one thing that Narada abhors it is cruelty, cruelty of any kind, cruelty to friend or cruelty to foe. You immediately put yourself under the watchful eye of Narada if you indulge in anything that is sub-human.

In passing, let me say that my reference to Alexander, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon, is not because I think these three men are patterns of human conduct, for I do not, very much to the contrary. But they are notable historical instances of men of destiny who were used almost as pawns precisely because of their weaknesses and distorted strength to bring about noble things despite these men themselves. I trust I make my meaning clear. Indeed, I personally do not like these three men, nor do I admire them in any sense.

It is a peculiar thing that if you will study the history of mankind you will find that the great plays of Narada, the great activities of Narada, are always accompanied by or followed very closely by a great manifestation of moral and religious life. The greatest religions are always established at the time of the greatest human turn-overs. Narada's work both of them. Narada prepares the ground, guides the loosening of karmic destiny, and as it were beckons with his hand to the gods of teaching to come in along the pathway he opens.

Some may wonder if Narada is the same as the Silent Watcher. No, the Silent Watcher is above all. You may perhaps at least figuratively say that Narada is the Siva-aspect of the Silent Watcher. Narada is a kind of Logos for this globe throughout the entire kalpa. And what is the function of the Logoi, greater or smaller, higher or lower? Each one to guide all its children into the future of glorious achievement.

I can only hint at certain things. Let me point out one thing which I don't know that Occidentals will understand very well. Suppose there were a great religion in the world which had lost the original inspiration, the theosophic inspiration of its Master, of its Founder, and it had become ecclesiastical and theological instead of continuing to be living and vital, a mighty and spiritually controlling power in the life of its followers. Suppose this religion — one of the noblest motors of human thought and conduct — had become mere formalism and rites, and there were even disputes whether the teaching of the Founder was really meant to be taken as we have received it. What does Narada do? Narada breaks that shell, releases the imprisoned spirit once again. Of course there is lots of trouble. Men on religious points are almost fanatic; you break up their crystallized beliefs, they can even become almost demons at times. But Narada has a bigger work in view than the merely conventional feelings of numbers of these coryphaei and their millions of followers. Narada in such instance works to release and restore to its pristine power and influence the imprisoned and perhaps forgotten spirit of the Founder. Do you see? It may be done quickly in a crash, in a disaster. Or it may be done through years and years and years of slow expansion and breaking of the old shell. Narada works in various ways always according to destiny and always in the kindest way that he can work, because he is a regenerator and a builder. That is the most important. Here you have an example. Religion had become a danger in a case like that. It had become a drug. People were going to sleep. The souls of men were so somnolent, so negative, as dominant factors in human life, that men actually were no longer truly ensouled by their souls. They were little more than bodies, blindly following merely conventional practices. But Narada re-ensouls these men. Their souls awaken. They begin to think and to question. They want the spirit. They burst the shell; overthrow the forms. And you have a great religious revival or regeneration in a case like that.

But of course it is a painful process. The coryphaei don't like it. Millions of their followers don't like it. Their quiet, comfortable, smug beliefs are overthrown. They don't know that they are exchanging old soiled

clothing for the garments of life, of spirit, exchanging the body for the spirit. They have not realized it yet. It is only after Time, the magic agent, has softened the woes of adversity, of the bursting shell, and has brought even those who are hurt to see and to say: "Why, it is the very best thing to happen. Now we understand the Master's teaching. Now religion has become a vital moving thing in my heart. It guides my life. It is something to believe in and to live by." Do you see? The work of Narada! But during the time, what did Narada do? He was a Kali-Kara, Strife-Producer, he had to break the shell.

And that is the work of the Logos too, whichever Logos you mean, the Logos of our globe or of our chain or of the Solar System. But mark you, distinguish between the work of Narada and evil men. Evil men may be used by Narada for karmic purposes, and that is done constantly, just as Narada will use good men. And be careful lest you set yourselves up as judges. But the distinction between the work of a bad man who is not guided by Narada and Narada's work is this: that the bad man is always working for himself, egoistic selfishness, the root of all evil; whereas the work of Narada, no matter what the channel, is always for the world, even though his human instruments imagine they are working for their own ends. You may not always see it but it is there. For instance, when Narada smashes a great organization by regenerating it, the bursting of the shell and the tortures suffered by those involved is torture for them, and they think it is hell. But actually it is not, it is a salvation, and they grow to know it after a while; but the process is to them a hell. So we have to be very, very careful in judgment, very charitable and understanding.

Now can you see why H. P. B. rather side-stepped all this matter of Narada and who he is and what he does? It is really extremely difficult even to attempt to explain Narada's work in the world.

Narada's functions therefore are so essentially spiritual and intellectual as well as psychic, that a preliminary study of the Wisdom-Religion is almost essential to prepare people to receive understand-ingly just who Narada is and what his functions in the world are. The main point to

grasp first is that our universe is governed by law and by order emanating from intelligent and spiritual sources, and consequently that everything that happens in that universe is within that sway of law and under the sway of that order, and in consequence there is no chance, which is to us Theosophists a word utterly devoid of all substantial meaning; and therefore that whatever happens has been caused — Karman. The first thing this teaches us is to stop sitting in the judgment-seat upon other men. It teaches us to stop arrogating to ourselves the all-capacity to condemn others. Judge not that ye be not judged. But keep it in mind that Narada so works, call him an Angel of Destiny, an Archangel of Destiny, or a Dhyan-Chohan whose work in the world is just that, guiding mankind and the other kingdoms too, guiding mankind's steps through tribulation and suffering from their own folly, towards freedom and wisdom and love, with his immensely strong hand of the friend, upwards and onwards through suffering and pain, through joy and peace, through war and disturbance, through attainment and progress, upwards and onwards forever.

I do hope you will understand all this; otherwise I shall bitterly regret that I ever tried to answer the question.

— This address by the late Leader of the Theosophical Society was given on March 22, 1942, at a regular meeting of the Headquarters Lodge at Point Loma, shortly before the Society moved its headquarters to Covina. At that time the Lodge was studying certain pregnant passages from H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, and the talks that Dr. de Pu-rucker then gave are mostly incorporated in the recent posthumous publication, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, issued by Theosophical University Press last September. Though this present article rightly belongs with that series, on correcting it, Dr. de Purucker asked that it not be published until the close of the war. — Eds.

THE HUMAN ORIGIN OF ANIMAL LIFE — *Allan J. Stover*

According to zoologists there are some 840,000 species of animal life living in the world today. If we study the various classes or orders of the animal kingdom, we will find that in every case each type, whether elephant or horse or insect or any other form, is a living remnant or representative of a long line of ancestors which reached its evolutionary crest millions of years ago, only a few species in each line having survived until today.

If we look still closer and consider a single stock, say that of the mollusca (snails, clams, sea shells, and so forth), in detail, throughout its history, we will find a central, somewhat primitive, generalized form continuing through the ages, and many side branches departing from this central line, specializing along some side-line, and dying out. In early times many monstrous forms of animals were developed and destroyed.

Thinking not in hundreds but in millions of years, each separate class of animal life is seen to have evolved along a similar pattern, that is, there is a central trunk or central stream of evolutionary progress, from which diverse side branches develop on some egotistical and often fantastic side-line and in many cases come to an early end, as they are unable to meet changing environmental conditions.

To return to the Mollusca, one of our oldest forms of life, many shells are simple and beautiful in form, and refined in color. Others, however, show signs of approaching extinction. And how may we know this? Simply by the species departing from the norm, or middle line, by growing useless spines and tubercles and by assuming strange growth patterns or too vivid color. Some species, such as the ammonites, departed from the Pythagorean curve upon which their shells had been fashioned for a hundred million years, and uncoiled, assuming a loose spiral, and the type departed this earth. A related

species, the pearly nautilus, has preserved its beautiful and simple form, and exists today, one of our most highly prized shells.

Thus, the pattern upon which animal evolution is founded consists of many parallel trunks or lines of descent, reaching into the unknown past.

Science has attempted to discover, and in many cases has *invented*, links connecting these various stocks; many things have been stated to be so, because it was assumed they must be so. Scientific prestige must be preserved.

Just as in each class there are many branches springing from a central trunk, so on a vaster scale each trunk is but a branch to a larger trunk existing from Round to Round. There is a continuing line of evolution, a central trunk from which the branches and branchlets of the animal kingdom have come. That continuing stream of evolution is man. Man has been to the animal kingdom as a whole what the central evolutionary stream in each stock of animal life is to its branches. However, in the large division, as compared with the small, there is a difference in the manner in which new forms of life have been derived from the parent stock. It is this:

All forms of life below the mammalian were derived from the cellular off-throwings of man during the preceding Globe Round, while the mammalia were thrown off from man during this present Globe Round. The manner in which new stocks have been derived from man is a mystery difficult for us, familiar with present-day conditions, to understand.

The human body is said to contain some twenty-six trillion cells. One type of cell only, and at a given time a single cell of that type, forms a focus through which a human being comes into embodiment. The remainder of the twenty-six trillion cells of the body divide and form new cells, but produce no new creatures, for they are held under the dominance of the human ego; but, nevertheless, they contain within themselves tremendous forces, latent at present, which, given the

opportunity, might so function.

The cell is a mystery, and contains an invisible being behind it; it is an infinitesimal focus of cosmic forces, a channel through which they pour into manifestation on our physical plane. These forces express themselves through the more ethereal part of the tiny cell.

Every cell may be looked upon as a point or focus through which its overshadowing self could rush forth into full embodiment, were the cell not held under the dominance of the human ego; for each cell has within itself the *potentiality* of becoming a complete entity. But the dominating human ego keeps the cell in its proper place, building the body of the ego, and receiving the swabhavic imprint which, when it is finally freed, will urge the then individual entity to itself evolve manwards.

Another thought: Every cell in man's body is a child of, born of, man's inner self. He is their oversoul; in a very true sense their god; and they, with unguessed possibilities of development locked up within them, have to wait for ages before opportunity comes for individual self-expression. Finally, when such opportunity for self-expression does come, out they go, in a great, rushing tide of life, and a new order of life is born which in its turn divides into many forms and varieties as it evolves and expands.

Early man was far more loosely knit, during the early races, than he is now. He had less physical and psychical dominance over the cells of his body than he does now, and consequently each cell was more at liberty to follow its individual drive or urge. Hence, when a cell, or a group of cells, separated from the body, these cells, freed from the dominance of the human ego, immediately started on the path of self-expression, and through the focus provided by the cell, the overshadowing, invisible entity rushed forth into embodiment.

At present, the imprint of the human hierarchy is so firmly stamped upon each cell that such a thing is impossible, but if we study the various stocks of animal and plant life today we will see a faint

reflexion of this urge to self-expression in the highly specialized offshoots from the main racial trunk.

In the untold ages spent before opportunity for individual development came, the time so spent marked each cell so strongly that, once freed, the urge to evolve toward humanhood shaped all future progress.

The progenitors of all forms of animal life below the mammalian sprang from man during the previous Round. This means, as I understand it, that the vital currents which in our Round produced the fishes, reptiles, birds, insects, and most of the invertebrates we know today, had their origin from man during the previous Round; that they evolved, reached their crest, and declined even as the animal world is doing today.

Then, when the hour struck, in the Fourth Round, they reappeared in a great new cycle of activity, and produced new forms, improvements on the old models, one might say. But the continuing stock — stream of life, vital impulse, call it what you will — issued from man, as Dr. de Purucker has said, in the previous Globe Round, in what is known as the "great tidal wave of life."

The mammals came from the human stock in the present Globe Round during the latter part of the Second Root Race and the early part of the Third Root Race. Man of that time was mindless and largely astral, not consolidated as is man today; neither was there a dominating spiritual entity to hold the lesser lives in check. Buds, or single cells, leaving man of that time — when the climate was as that of a tropical jungle of today, both warm and damp — continued to grow each along its own evolutionary tendency.

The mammalian life, thus being started, increased rapidly in number and variety, and due to the laws of acceleration and retardation, checked the advance of other forms of animal life. The mammalian life-wave reached its crest during the Miocene Period, and since that time the mammals have been steadily declining, both in number and in variety.

Dr. de Purucker writes in *Man in Evolution*:

Man still remains the storehouse or magazine of an incomputable number of vital or zoologic tendencies latent in the cells of his body; and though the old method of their manifestation has ceased, new and different methods will supersede the old. The urge to life working through the tiny lives of man's physical body, will none the less inevitably find new methods of expression, and these latent or sleeping tendencies will in far distant ages find appropriate outlets, thus perhaps giving origin to new stocks in that far-off future. — p. 203

This, however, will come to pass in some future Round, as during the remainder of this Round the origination of new stocks will become less and less, and those forms of life already existing will decrease rapidly in number as time passes.

We are gods to the lesser lives making up our bodies. In the far future these lesser lives will, like grown children, depart on a long evolutionary journey, to the time when they, in turn, will be self-conscious beings, even as man is now.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GOLDEN EVERLASTING CHAIN — *Marjorie M. Tyberg*

Among the ancients there was the tradition of a chain, one end of which was held at the highest seat of the Gods. It extended downward to the lesser Gods and Heroes and Sages, who were instructed by those above them and in turn instructed those below them. Thus was communicated to mankind the knowledge and the wisdom necessary for human life on Earth. Homer and Milton were two inspired poets who sang of this golden chain

Whose strong embrace holds heaven and earth and *main* —
Iliad, Book VIII

And in the Book of Genesis Jacob's Ladder is another symbol of this link between those Elder Brothers who "go up and down" on errands as Associates of the Hierarchy of Compassion, about whom Theosophy gives such wealth of timely and precious teaching.

The year 1946 brings terrifying realization that human intelligence and insight *may* prove inadequate for the mediation of differences between nations and the prevention of further global war. Are there then, in the Universe, Superior Beings, Spiritual Intelligences, who concern themselves with human affairs and have wisdom and power to guide human progress towards intellectual and spiritual maturity? Some step must be taken to render men capable of maintaining the global unity now seen to be essential for the completion of human destiny.

Planetary experience has gone on for millions of years, perhaps billions. Ours is not even the first man-bearing planet. Some there have been who have had, and have taken, the opportunity to mount high, even to transcend the human stage on the Ladder of Life. They watch over and guide those who follow, and who shall, like themselves become the *twice-born*, the spiritually illuminated. For man is born not only into a family, a race, but into a universal spiritual home.

"As above, so below." Theosophy teaches that what human parents and teachers, who have themselves passed from infancy to maturity, are to the young in their care, the Hierarchy of Compassion are to the host of human souls who have *still fully to evolve* the intellectual and spiritual faculties which will manifest in the life yet to be on Earth. Think you that the Cosmic Intelligences who established a planetary system — not to mention greater units like galaxies — are less capable of directing a host of souls through planetary experience than human guardians are of their task? An urgent need at present is for thinkers to expand their views to include Beings as superior to Man as Man is to the black beetle, as the biologist, Thomas Huxley, once suggested. To do so would engender new faith in the future of mankind.

No more than human parents, however, can the Hierarchy of Compassion avert suffering from those whom they would protect and guide. "The fruit of Karma Sages dare not still." Well they know that there is purgation, necessary and salutary, in adversity, and, on a larger scale, in calamity.

In the long drama of evolution and involution, Man, "a young god in the making," plays a part, the glorious possibilities of which are yet to be unfolded. From embryo to physical maturity the human sums up the evolutionary stages of the vehicle required for the use and manifestation of the spiritual and divine parts of Man's nature. Man has "got his body." The next step will reveal the now partially evolved principles of the human constitution which will enable Man to complete the human contribution to the Ladder of Life and to ascend to a Superior Hierarchy.

For Man's inner Self is one with the Spiritual Intelligences of the Cosmos — it is built of the same. It is Man's Self-conscious Mind that is the link with the Golden Everlasting Chain of Heroes, Sages, Mahatmans, Buddhas, Watchers, and Guardians. It is for Man, with his faculty of Imagination, his spiritual will, his compassionate heart, to communicate to his fellows, as the Great Ones have stepped down to him, the truths of the Ancient Wisdom, Brotherhood and Co-operation

with Cosmic Law, of which the poet Wordsworth wrote in his "Ode to Duty":

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;

And the most ancient heavens through thee are fresh and strong

The Theosophical Forum

THE THREE DEGREES OF THINKING — *Katherine Tingley*

Here is a hint which I have found very useful with my work. As far as I know it has never been written or spoken in modern times before. It is this: Impulse often takes a man off the path of right action, while intuition holds him firm and carries him through his difficulties. Here is the key that will save one from taking the wrong course through selfish impulse.

When a proposition first presents itself for consideration, it is the mortal brain-mind which considers it. This merely opens the door of the mind to the subject. According to my teaching, decision and action at that first impression would generally be entirely out of place. Slow, measured consideration is required. The old saying, "Think three times before you speak" has its application in this connexion. This is the esoteric side of the question.

First, open the door of the mind to receive the question or the subject for consideration. This first state of mind is generally followed by another — that of confusion and questioning and doubt as to which course is best. Slowly consider this too. The third degree of thinking will bring forth a reflexion from the intuition of the higher mind — the soul — that is more dependable. The exoteric saying is thus interpreted in a new way to the advantage of man. The fact is that the lower mind will step in and act, if allowed to do so, before the soul, the real master and teacher, has made its voice heard. The ancients taught this ages ago; and it is one of the great secrets that I have found in Theosophy for the benefit of the world's children.

— Katherine Tingley, extract from address given at Helsingborg, Sweden, reprinted from *THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH*, November, 1925.

LOVE AND DESIRE — *Byron Casselberry*

At what shall I aim? Is there any one thing that matters more than all else? Is there an order of importance in the uses I can make of my intelligence and energy? You may say with the books that the practice of love and charity comes first. But can love be "practiced"? Does one practice when one falls in love? To fall, in any sense, is not to practice anything: it is to be borne, for better or for worse, by something beyond oneself. One does not move: one is moved. Is love not practiced only when one has ceased to love? And the thing that is practiced — is it really love, or some extraordinary synthetic which, being unmoved by love, we have created and with which we endlessly deceive ourselves? Considering the long history of violence culminating in the recent world catastrophe, there must be about our thinking something that is terribly wrong. Surely it is more than urgent that we begin to think anew, with fresh interest, about love; and even more, about the *absence* of love. For it is the latter, not the former, that we know — and one must begin with the known. If I assume from the start that I know love, obviously I open myself to enormous error. No scientist begins by assuming that he already knows the answer; if he did, his research would have no meaning. One must first recognize the problem: the absence of love. And not in others — but in oneself.

Will charity ever begin at home — in my own heart — as long as I am content with voluntary goodness, which is the mere imitation of an idea? If I am deliberately brotherly, does my action produce brotherhood — or pleasant hypocrisy? Does insistence upon harmony really produce harmony — or does it bring about the artificial calm of conformity, which is stagnation? We make love into a policy which we adopt; naturally it is a mere shell, unproductive of joy. This premeditated love always turns to violence, open or concealed, when sufficiently provoked. It inevitably defeats itself. It gives rise to so-called righteous indignation — that marvellous refuge of the righteous

when they feel called upon to act in an unrighteous manner. That is why, while believing in brotherhood, we continue to bring forth disunity and war in their many forms. By assuming virtue we perpetuate vice.

The point is this: If I desire something for myself, however much I may be steeped in thoughts of love, I will automatically resent anyone who prevents or threatens my having it. Though I may suppress the resentment, conceal it from myself and from others under the cloak of my philosophy, it is inescapable because it is all of a piece with the original desire. Frustration of desire creates the enemy; and since desire can always be frustrated, as long as I have desire I am contributing to disunity and war. If this is true, my talk of brotherhood has very little value. The problem is not how to create brotherhood, heal disunity, or prevent war, but how to be free of desire. If I can really be free of desire, perhaps love will arise normally, without my having to pursue it.

How am I to be free of desire?

If a man suffering from hallucinations sought to cure himself only of the unpleasant ones while retaining those which he enjoyed, surely he would never be free of his illusions. To be free, he must understand the whole complex process of his self-deception, the high as well as the low. Is it not the same with desire? One cannot accept certain desires because they are noble, and reject others because they are base — not, at any rate, if one is to be free of desire. This choice of desire creates an endless flight from the base to the noble, from hatred to conceptual love — all within the field of desire. It is a futile race. Hatred moves along with conceptual love like a man and his shadow. To *pursue* love is still to be caught in desire.

If love cannot be known by seeking it, desire, on the other hand, *can* be known, can it not? We need not preconceive or seek desire, for it is always with us: it can be directly observed. It is a strange trait of human nature that we seldom know desire although we constantly experience it. We imagine that we love, then suddenly feel jealous. We

act, as we think, for the benefit of others, then feel hurt or angry when our efforts are criticized or overlooked. These things are a common experience, yet how much thought is given to them? When they are sufficiently acute, we are painfully forced to take cognizance of them. Then we find a drug-like solution, or just suffer until time renders them impotent. But as a rule they are mild; being well schooled in righteous behavior, we are able to brush them off and continue as before until they occur again. In spite of our philosophy of love and truth, this process goes on year after year until we are numbed by age. If evolution will cure it, why does it continue after years of effort? If it happens after a score of years, what is to prevent it happening after a score of lives?

To be free of desire, obviously one has first to see it — which means that one cannot cover it up with dreams of wisdom, or with any preconceived notion of one's spiritual stature. It is difficult and very unsettling, if one has lived at all in the assurance of assumed virtue (and I think many religiously-minded people unconsciously do), to break up this preconception of oneself and begin to see, without condemnation, cynicism or refuge, the subtle, philosophy-concealed movements of desire. It is difficult: but is there really any other way? Have we not sooner or later to face this thing? Must we not individually awaken into direct, non-theoretical perception of the ego and its many illusions? Surely, being caught in the separate self, we cannot forever cling to the inspiration derived from exalted beliefs, or even from known facts.

The sunset on a mountain is spoiled by a shadow in my heart. In the dust of humble self-knowledge there may lie the seed of wisdom and the root of love.

CYCLES — *William Q. Judge*

[A paper read by William Q. Judge before the Aryan T. S.,
October 22, 1889]

In advancing these few observations upon the doctrine of cycles, no claim to an exhaustive study of the matter is made. This paper is merely by way of suggestion.

The subject was brought before my mind by our discussion some evenings ago, when the question of the descent upon earth, or ascent from it, of celestial beings or progressed souls engaged our attention. It seemed certain that such ascent and descent were governed by cyclic laws, and therefore proceeded in regular periods. Some sentences from the *Wisdom of the Egyptians* by Synesius in matter furnished me by Bro. Chas. Johnston, now of India, read:

After Osiris, therefore, was initiated by his father into the royal mysteries, the gods informed him . . . that a strong tribe of envious and malignant daemons present with Typhos as his patrons, to whom he was allied and by whom he was hurled forth into light, in order that they might employ him as an instrument of the evil which they inflict on mankind. For the calamities of nations are the banquets of the evil daemons. . . .

Yet you must not think that the gods are without employment, or that their descent to this earth is perpetual. For they *descend according to orderly periods of time*, for the purpose of imparting a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind. But this happens when they harmonize a kingdom and send to this earth for that purpose souls who are allied to themselves. For this providence is divine and most ample, which frequently through one man pays attention to and affects countless multitudes of men.

For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns. . . . This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature. But when matter excites her own proper blossoms to war against the soul, the resistance made by these heroic tribes is small when the gods are absent; for everything is strong only in its appropriate place and time. . . . But when the harmony adapted in the beginning by the gods to all terrene things becomes old, they descend again to earth that they may call the harmony forth, energize and resuscitate it when it is as it were expiring. . . . When, however, the whole order of mundane things, greatest and least, is corrupted, then it is necessary that the gods should descend for the purpose of imparting another orderly distribution of things.

And in the *Bhagavad-Gitd* it is said by Krishna:

When Righteousness Declines,
O Bharata! when Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move *a man with men*.
Succoring the good, thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again,

And

At the approach of Brahma's day, which ends after a thousand ages, all manifested objects come forth from the non-developed principle. At the approach of Brahma's night they are absorbed in the original principle. This collective mass of existing things, thus coming forth out of the absolute again and again, is dissolved at the approach of that night; and at the approach of a new day it emanates again spontaneously.

In the foregoing quotations two great aspects of cyclic law are stated.

The latter has reference to the great cycle which includes all cycles of every kind. All the minor cycles run their course within it. When it begins a new creation is ushered in, and when it ends the great day of dissolution has arrived. In Arnold's translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita* the beginning of this great cycle is beautifully called by him "*this vast Dawn*," and of the close he reads:

When that deep night doth darken, all which is
Fades back again to Him who sent it forth.

The real figures expressing the mortal years included in this period are not given. Each Manvantara, according to the Hindus, is divided into the four Yugas or Ages, with a certain number of years allotted to each. Speaking on this subject in *The Key to Theosophy* (page 83), H. P. Blavatsky gives us a clue thus:

Take as a first comparison and a help towards a more correct conception, the solar year; and as a second, the two halves of that year, producing each a day and a night of six months' duration at the North Pole. Now imagine, if you can, instead of a solar year of 365 days, eternity. Let the Sun represent the universe and the polar days and nights of six months each — days and nights lasting each 182 trillions and quadrillions of years instead of 182 days each. As the Sun rises every morning on our objective horizon out of its (to us) subjective and antipodal space, so does the Universe emerge periodically on the plane of objectivity, issuing from that of subjectivity — the antipodes of the former. This is the "Cycle of Life." And as the Sun disappears from our horizon, so does the Universe disappear at regular periods when the "Universal Night" sets in.

This is about the best idea we can get of it. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive these periods. No brain can grasp 182 trillions of years, much less if quadrillions are added. Few if any persons can mentally traverse the full extent of even a *million*. But we can make an approximation to the idea by using her suggestion of dividing the year and calling six months a day and six months a night, and then

extending each into what is equivalent to infinity with us, since it is impossible to seize such immense periods of time.

And carrying out the correspondence suggested by her, we have at once a figure of the inclusion of all the minor cycles, by calling each day when we rise and night when we sleep as the beginning and ending of minor cycles. Those days and nights go to make up our years and our life. We know each day and can calculate it, and fairly well throw the mind forward to see a year or perhaps a life.

A quotation from Vol. I, at p. 31 of *Isis Unveiled* will give us the Indian figures. She says:

The Maha Kalpa embraces an untold number of periods far back in the antediluvian ages. Their system comprises a Kalpa or grand period of 4,320,000,000 years which they divide into four lesser yugas running as follows:

Satyayuga: 1,728,000 years.

Treta yuga: 1,296,000 years.

Dvapa yuga: 864,000 years.

Kali yuga: 432,000 years.

4,320,000 total years.

which makes one divine age or Maha-yuga; seventy-one Maha-yugas make 306,720,000 years, to which is added a *sandhi* (or twilight) equal to a Satya-yuga or 1,728,000 years, to make a manvantara of 308,448,000 years. Fourteen manvantaras make 4,318,272,000 years, to which must be added a *sandhihamsa* (or dawn) 1,728,000, making the Kalpa or grand period of 4,320,000,000. As we are now (1878) only in the Kali yuga of the 28th age of the 7th manvantara of 308,448,000 years, we have yet sufficient time before us to wait before we reach even half of the time allotted to the world.

Further H. P. Blavatsky clearly states that the other cycles are carried out within this greater one, as at p. 34, Vol. I.

As our planet revolves once every year around the Sun and at the same time turns once in every 24 hours upon its own axis, thus traversing minor cycles within a larger one, so is the work of the smaller cyclic periods accomplished and recommenced within the great Saros.

Leaving the region of mathematics, we find this great period represents the extension of pigmy man into the vast proportions of the great man, whose death at the close of the allotted period means the resolving of all things back into the absolute. Each of the years of this Being embraces of our years so many that we cannot comprehend them. Each day of his years brings on a minor cataclysm among men; for at the close of each one of his days, metaphorically he sleeps. And we, as it were, imitating this Being, fall asleep at night or after our diurnal period of activity.

We are as minor cells in the great body of this Being, and must act obediently to the impulses and movements of the body in which we are enclosed and take part.

This greater man has a period of childhood, of youth, of manhood, of old age; and as the hour arrives for the close of each period, cataclysms take place over all the earth. And just as our own future is concealed from our view, so the duration of the secret cycle which shows the length of life of this Being is hidden from the sight of mortals.

We must not, however, fall into the error of supposing that there is but one of such great Beings. There are many, each being evolved at the beginning of a new creation. But here we touch upon a portion of the ancient philosophy which is fully explained only to those who are able to understand it by virtue of many initiations.

The *Sandhya* and *Sandhyahamsa* referred to in the quotation taken from *I sis Unveiled* are respectively the twilight and the dawn, each being said to be of the same length and containing the same number of years as the first or golden age — *i. e.* 1,728,000. It is in strict correspondence with our own solar day which has its twilight and dawn between day

and night. . . .

Now turning to *Isis Unveiled* at p. 32 of Vol. I, we find this remarkable paragraph:

Higgins justly believed that the cycle of the Indian system, of 432,000, is the true key of the secret cycle.

But in the following paragraph she declares it cannot be revealed. However, we may get some clues, for we see in the figures of Kali yuga, 432,000, and in the great total (leaving out the Sandhis), 4,320,000. What this secret cycle is, I, however, am not competent to say. I only desire to throw out the hints.

Having thus glanced over the doctrines of the great cycle which includes all others, let us now devote a little consideration to the cycle referred to in the passages from the *Egyptian Wisdom* first quoted.

This cycle may be called for the present purpose *The Cycle of Descending Celestial Influences*. By "descending" I mean descending upon us.

Osiris here signifies most probably the good side of nature, and his brother Typhos the evil. Both must appear together. Typhos is sometimes called in the Egyptian books the opposer, and later with us, is known as the Devil. This appearance of Typhos at the same time with Osiris is paralleled in the history of the Indian Krishna, who was a white Adept, for at the same time there also reigned a powerful Black magician named Kansa, who sought to destroy Krishna in the same way as Typhos conspired against the life of Osiris. And Rama also, in Hindu lore the great Adept or ruling god, was opposed by Ravana, the powerful Black magician king.

In instructing Osiris after the initiation, the gods foresaw two questions that might arise within him and which will also come before us. The first is the idea that if the gods are alive and do not mingle with men to the advantage of the latter and for the purpose of guiding them, then they must necessarily be without any employment. Such a charge has

been made against the Beings who are said to live in the Himalayas, possessed of infinite knowledge and power. If, say the public, they know so much, why do not they come among us; and as they do not so come, then they must be without employment, perpetually brooding over nothing.

The instructor answered this in advance by showing how these Beings — called gods — governed mankind through efficient causes proceeding downward by various degrees; the gods being perpetually concerned in their proper sphere with those things relating to them, and which in their turn moved other causes that produced appropriate effects upon the earth, and themselves only coming directly into earthly relations when that became necessary at certain "orderly periods of time," upon the complete disappearance of harmony which would soon be followed by destruction if not restored. Then the gods themselves descend. This is after the revolution of many smaller cycles. The same is said in *Bhagavad-Gita*.

But frequently during the minor cycles it is necessary, as the *Egyptian Wisdom* says, "to impart a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind." This can be done by using less power than would be dissipated were a celestial Being to descend upon earth, and here the doctrine of the influence among us of *Nirmanakayas* (1) or *Gnanis* is supported in the Egyptian scheme in these words:

For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes, who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns.

This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature.

These "heroes" are none other than *Nirmanakayas* — Adepts of this or previous Manvantaras — who remain here in various states or conditions. Some are not using bodies at all, but keep spirituality alive among men in all parts of the world; and others are actually using

bodies in the world. Who the latter are it would of course be impossible for me to know, and if I had the information, to give it out would be improper.

And among this "sacred tribe of heroes" must be classed other souls. They are those who, although now inhabiting bodies and moving among men, have passed through many occult initiations in previous lives, but are now condemned, as it were, to the penance of living in circumstances and in bodies that hem them in, as well as for a time make them forget the glorious past. But their influence is always felt, even if they themselves are not aware of it. For their higher nature being in fact more developed than that of other men, it influences other natures at night or in hours of the day when all is favorable. The fact that these *obscured adepts* are not aware now of what they really are, only has to do with their memory of the past; it does not follow, because a man cannot remember his initiations, that he has had none. But there are some cases in which we can judge with a degree of certainty that such adepts were incarnated and what they were named. Take Thomas Vaughan, Raymond Lully, Sir Thomas More, Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and others like them, including also some of the Roman Catholic saints. These souls were as witnesses to the truth, leaving through the centuries, in their own nations, evidences for those who followed, and suggestions for keeping spirituality bright — seed-thoughts, as it were, ready for the new mental soil. And as well as these historical characters, there are countless numbers of men and women now living who have passed through certain initiations during their past lives upon earth, and who produce effects in many directions quite unknown to themselves now. They are, in fact, old friends, "the sacred tribe of heroes," and can therefore be more easily used for the spreading of influences and the carrying out of effects necessary for the preservation of spirituality in this age of darkness. We find in our present experience a parallel to this forgetting of previous initiations. There is hardly one of us who has not passed through circumstances in early life, all of which we have forgotten, but which ever since sensibly affect our thoughts and life. Hence the only point about which any

question can be raised is that of reincarnation. If we believe in that doctrine, there is no great difficulty in admitting that many of us may have been initiated to some extent and forgotten it for the time. In connection with this we find in the 2d volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, at page 302, some suggestive words. The author says:

Now that which the students of Occultism ought to know is that the third eye is indissolubly connected with Karma.

. . . In the case of the Atlanteans, it is precisely the spiritual being which sinned, the spirit element being still the "Master" principle in man in those days. *Thus it is that in those days the heaviest Karma of the fifth race was generated by our Monads. . .*

Hence the assertion that many of us are now working off the effects of the evil Karmic causes *produced by us in Atlantean bodies*.

In another place she puts the date of the last Atlantean destruction as far back as 11,000 years ago, and describes them as a people of immense knowledge and power. If we allow about 1,000 years for our period in Devachan, we will have only passed through some eleven incarnations since then; and supposing that many more have been our lot — as is my opinion, then we have to place ourselves among those wonderful though wicked people at the height of their power. Granting that we were guilty of the sinful practices of the day in which we then lived, and knowing the effect of Karma, it must follow that since then we have passed through many very disagreeable and painful lives, resembling by analogy dreadful situations in the years between youth and maturity. No wonder, then, if for the time we have forgotten outwardly what we then learned.

But all these historical personages to whom I have referred were living in a dark cycle that affected Europe only. These cycles do not cover the whole of the human race, fortunately for it, but run among the nations influenced for the allotted period, while other peoples remain

untouched. Thus while Europe was in darkness, all India was full of men, kings and commoners alike, who possessed the true philosophy; for a different cycle was running there.

And such is the law as formulated by the best authorities. It is held that these cycles do not include the whole of mankind at any one time. In this paper I do not purpose to go into figures, for that requires a very careful examination of the deeds and works of numerous historical personages in universal history, so as to arrive by analysis at correct periods.

It is thought by many that the present is a time when preparation is being made by the most advanced of the "sacred tribe of heroes" for a new cycle in which the assistance of a greater number of progressed souls from other spheres may be gained for mankind. Indeed, in *his Unveiled* this is plainly stated.

Writing in 1878, Madame Blavatsky says in Vol. I of *Isis*:

Unless we mistake the signs, the day is approaching when the world will receive the proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature, and ancient science embraced all that can be known. Secrets long kept may be revealed; books long-forgotten and arts long-time-lost may be brought out to light again; papyri and parchments of inestimable importance will turn up in the hands of men who pretend to have unrolled them from mummies or stumbled upon them in buried crypts; tablets and pillars, whose sculptured revelations will stagger theologians and confound scientists, may yet be excavated and interpreted. Who knows the possibilities of the future? *An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin — nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is almost to begin, and the future pages of history may contain full proof that —*

If ancestry can be in aught believed,
Descending spirits have conversed with man,

And told him secrets of the world unknown.

Now the way to get at the coming on of the period or close of a larger cycle without wandering in the mazes of figures, is to regard the history and present state of mankind as known.

Thus in the darker age of Europe we find India almost unknown and America wholly so. That was a period when cycles were operating apart from each other, for men were separated from and ignorant of each other. In these continents there were great and powerful nations ruling in both North and South America, but they were not in communication with Europe or India.

Now, however, China knows of and communicates with England and America, and even dark Africa has constant visitors from all civilized nations, and to some extent is affected by us. Doubtless in the greater number of towns in Africa the white man and his doings are more or less like fables, but we with larger knowledge know that those fables rest upon the *fact* of our explorations there.

Judging, then, from the appearances in the affairs of men, we can conclude that now some great cycle is either ending or beginning, and that a number of minor circles are approaching each other.

At the same time with these social or material cycles, there are corresponding ones on a higher plane. One is quite easy to trace. It is the influence of Eastern metaphysics upon the Western mind. This higher cycle had been revolving for many years among the Orientals before we came within its power. Our falling under it is due to a physical cycle as a means. That one which is represented in the progress of trade, of science, of means for transportation. In this way the philosophical system of India and Tibet has begun to affect us, and no man can calculate its course.

Taking into account the spiritual cycles all so intimately connected with Karma and reincarnation, one would be compelled to conclude that this cycle will not be slow or weak. For, if we in Europe and America are the reincarnations of the ancients who formulated this philosophy,

we must certainly be powerfully affected upon having it presented to our notice in this life. And as the very air is getting filled with theosophical ideas, and children are growing up every day, the conclusion is irresistible that as the new generation grows up it will be more familiar with theosophical terms and propositions than we were in our youths. For in every direction now, children are likely to hear Karma, Reincarnation, Buddhism, Theosophy, and all these ideas mentioned or discussed. In the course of twenty-five years, then, we shall find here in the United States a large and intelligent body of people believing once more in the very doctrines which they, perhaps ages ago, helped to define and promulgate.

Why not, then, call one of our present cycles the cycle of the Theosophical Society? It began in 1875, and, aided by other cycles then beginning to run, it has attained some force. Whether it will revolve for any greater length of time depends upon its earnest members. Members who enter it for the purpose of acquiring ideas merely for their own use will not assist. Mere numbers do not do the work, but sincere, earnest, active, unselfish members will keep this cycle always revolving. The wisdom of those who set it in motion becomes apparent when we begin to grasp somewhat the meaning of cyclic law. The Society could have remained a mere idea and might have been kept entirely away from outward expression in organization. Then, indeed, ideas similar to those prevalent in our Society might have been heard of. But how? Garbled, and presented only here and there, so that perhaps not for half a century later would they be concretely presented. A wise man, however, knows how to prepare for a tide of spiritual influence. But how could an every-day Russian or American know that 1875 was just the proper year in which to begin so as to be ready for the oncoming rush now fairly set in? To my mind the mere fact that we were organized with a definite platform in that year is strong evidence that the "Heroic tribe of heroes" had a hand in our formation. Let us, then, not resist the cycle, nor, complaining of the task, sit down to rest. There is no time for rest. The weak, the despairing, and the doubting may have to wait, but men and women of

action cannot stand still in the face of such an opportunity.

Arise, then, O Atlanteans, and repair the mischief done so long ago!

Roll on, O Wheel, roll on and conquer;

Roll on forever more!

FOOTNOTE:

1. For *Nirmanakayas* see *The Voice of the Silence*, and its glossary.

[\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

CONCERNING THE SUN — *Norman Arthur Lewis*

Our friend and parent, the Sun, is by no means such an obvious character as his shining face might lead us to suppose. This tremendous demonstration of heat and light we observe whenever and wherever the Sun makes his entrance is assuredly only a kind of planetary opinion, a sort of earthly bias of thought, something deceptive about our own observation as a planetary spectator.

Occultly speaking, the great extrovert of our Solar System is most subtle, hidden, and interior in his action; and indeed we do violence to our own understanding when we consider him as mere heat, mere light, mere physical energy.

Into that great living and conscious heart flows the circulating *something* — we may call it energy, intelligence, consciousness, Divine Fire, Akasa, terms by no means synonymous, yet all contained in our meaning — into the Sun's North Pole flows the circulating force; and it is purified, renewed, revitalized in that great vortex of forces and energies. It passes out through the Sun's South Pole to travel its path of Being, of Life-Existence, throughout the billions of entities, of atoms, in our Solar System.

It is like the passage of blood through our human veins, or the almost instantaneous passage of an electrical impulse from one place to another, but most like nothing else but its own passage. After all, there is no lesser, more limited phenomenon to compare with this everywhere-present Now. The Master K. H. referred to it as "Radiant Energy," "all pervading, omnipresent life." In this sense, the term, "circulations of the Cosmos/ is only illustrative, since for our sort of perception, for our unfortunate insistence upon Time, and for our somewhat concrete idea of Space, these circulations are entirely too spontaneous for our actual comprehension of them.

The Sun is a great teacher, a celestial radio, the great heart, the great

brain; the Sun is all and many things from a relative point of view, but truly we can have no greater or *clearer* understanding of it than our own ultimate embracing of the unqualified Great Thought, the whole space, the whole Love, the complete consciousness of this subtle immensity which at all moments supports the most obvious and limited of material objects. One cannot grasp, in an ordinary conscious state, the true function of this subtle body of force. Therefore, it would be well to remind ourselves that we will be discussing our subject in terms of a kind of mental diagram.

We have all seen diagrams with, say, object A and object B, with wavy arrows pointing from A to B, representing forces. As I discuss the Sun and Jupiter, I am going to ask that you substitute for the wavy arrows the "subtle immensity" mentioned above, that communication (too spontaneous for comprehension) of this primary or elementary energy from the Sun's South Pole to Jupiter.

Jupiter is a planet, and a receiver of the Sun's energy. Jupiter is an evolved life-center of a particular kind, and therefore has gathered to him the life-atoms karmically related to him in an aura, so to speak, of cosmic dust, meteoric fragments, bits of dead suns, odds and ends of attractive, neutral, and repellent matter. This aura is tailed the "meteoric continent" of Jupiter, and is the lens or screen, the magical curtain through which the Sun shines on Jupiter as the light of the Sun.

The planets keep themselves warm, much as our own bodies do, by their own vitality, their own vital heat. The electro-magnetic and subtler energies of the Sun, in encountering the resistance afforded by the particles comprising a planet, set up a vibration in these particles, which vibration constitutes heat and light. There is nothing of heat in the subtle energy itself, but its meeting with the planet generates heat. More fully explained, it is because the magnetic, electric, and electro-magnetic nature of the planet (another way of describing its physical existence), interacting and reacting with the magnetic continent, converts the subtle energy, and sets up a current of heat, energy, light, and other activity relative to the planet's own mode of being.

In this way, Jupiter, for instance, although farther from the Sun than the Earth is, is not colder than the Earth, but much, much hotter. It seems that the body of the benign and pleasant Jupiter is something of a furnace. There "fluids are gases, and solids are fluids," a shifting mass of molten matter. Jupiter is a younger planet, and has not cooled as the Earth has.

It is interesting and necessary to note that the meteoric continent or veil is of extreme importance in these processes. The quality and quantity of *transformed energy* Jupiter will be able to derive from the offerings of his "teacher" — that is, the actual solar energy expended on and by Jupiter, will to a great extent depend upon the quality and quantity of karmically related worldstuff Jupiter has attracted to himself.

As the circulations of energies travel into the Sun via its North Pole and out its South, so it is with Jupiter, the Earth, and all the planets. In regard to this polarity of the Earth, I quote Dr. de Purucker:

Even the ancient Greeks taught this. Do you remember Eolus and the cave of the winds? The cave of the winds was the Earth, and the winds were the winds of the spirit, the circulations of the universe figured as winds: a cave of which the northern gate was made of horn, through which the gods descend — and through which they ascend also, but mostly descend And the south gate of the earth, of the cave of the winds, was made of ivory, signifying the elephants, as the horn does the tusked animals of the north. And out of the south gate go the hordes of men.

The forces of nature are fluids emanating from great cosmic hearts, beating and sending out the lifeblood, each one of its own special essence, force, and spirit, to the farthest reaches it can *contain*, or embrace.

Electricity, magnetism, heat, gravity, all the real forces of nature, can be called the fluid efflux from a cosmic being, or entity; the Sun for us,

since we live in the body of this Solar System, within the aura of the Sun. The great forces are bipolar, could perhaps be stated, in terms of being and consciousness, as polarities of: not love and hate, not attraction and repulsion, but perhaps best as love and repulsion.

In the course of manvantaras and evolutions, through the long day of our Solar System, the various planetary chains live and die, are disembodied, have their nirvanic rest, and then come back again for renewed life, and do this several times. Their dead bodies, that is, bodies of former globes in the various planetary chains, remain as moons of the new globes, and follow their old orbits for a time. And so, in and out of manifestation, the planetary chains follow their course of life, until that great slowing down, when the Sun nears his great sleep, and the Solar Manvantara draws to a close.

At that time, once more, the Great Mind, the Great Vitality of the Cosmos, will be drawing inward, for all the world in the same way as the mind and being of a dying man draw inward. Then the planets, or whatever evolved states and vestigial moons of them will remain at that time, will be drawing back to the source, perhaps in the way the failing shoots of a fountain do when its wafer is shut off. The dissolution of our Solar System will have begun; and then, suddenly, the Great Thought will be forgotten, there will be an unheard explosion, and the vestiges of form and entity will have disappeared for the Solar Pralaya, or night of our universe.

The Theosophical Forum

WHO AM I? — *H. T. Edge*

Enquirers seeking light on their problems, and attending Theosophical meetings, may sometimes be deterred by the use of technical language and set forms of speaking; whereas it may be possible to convey the same ideas in simple ordinary terms and by an appeal to common experience.

Take the case of higher self and lower self for instance. This is merely the expression, in technical Theosophical language, of a fact of common experience. We all know, to our own anxious concern, of the existence of these two contrasted elements in our own make-up. We have to deal with this mysterious human machine in whose workings we find ourselves involved; but we need somebody to explain the mechanism, the wiring, the switches, etc., so as to be able to make sense of it and handle it to some useful purpose. Perhaps we have tried religion, or science, or psycho-analysis, or what not, and failed to find satisfaction; and we have hoped to find it in Theosophy. We have been scared off perhaps by technical language.

But the essential point is quite simple. Religion offers a God who is outside of man and outside of the universe; science and psychology are too materialistic: they study the machine but not the power that runs it. Theosophy tells us that man is *essentially* divine; that he is a spark of divinity encased in a fleshly tabernacle.

Theosophy teaches a belief in man's eternal immortal nature.

Our first duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions.

Let once man's immortal spirit take possession of the temple of his body, and his own divine humanity will redeem him.

Our Higher Self is a poor pilgrim on his way to regain that which he has lost.

There in a few words from H. P. Blavatsky, you have it in a nutshell. Our nature is dual, twofold, compact of warring elements. Religion tells

us that man was created in the image of God, but the doctrine has been allowed to degenerate into a mere form of words and its sublime truth has been lost sight of.

But, leaving religion and science and psychology alone, let us appeal to actual experience. You want to make sense of your own life: try this idea that man is essentially, first and foremost and all the time, a *divine* being, and see how this works. The Theosophical doctrine of Evolution shows that man began as a spiritual being, and descended into material earthly life, and is now on the way up again towards the place of his origin. In fact, what we have to do is to realize our divine nature.

It is because of this divine spark that man can never never find satisfaction in the gratification of personal desires. His lower nature pulls him one way, his higher nature another. Here is your problem in a nutshell.

But who am *I*? you will ask. These two natures, the higher and the lower self, cannot be two separate beings. Well, again we appeal to experience: you are a self-conscious mind, endowed with freewill, the power of choice. If I should try to formulate this in words, I should fail, and mix you up as well as myself; so I will not try; I will just leave you to feel it and know it as a truth that cannot be denied or explained away. So the practical point is that you are to get busy and set this mysterious power of freewill to work at unifying yourself. This contest between the higher and lower nature is to be resolved by teaching the lower to recognise the higher as its master.

Your personal will is continually frustrated — but by what? God, Fate, Chance? No, but by your spiritual Will; by your spiritual intuition, which knows better than you do what is good for you. What religion calls the will of God is actually so; but not the will of an outside God. It is your own will, your Spiritual Will, the voice of your own better self, of your own divine nature.

Try this as a working hypothesis, and if you find it makes sense of your problems, then look into other Theosophical teachings for additional

light.

The Theosophical Forum

MYOPIA — *Alexandra McLean*

Myopia is a defect in vision whereby objects may be seen distinctly only when very near the eye. Is there any connexion between physical myopia, by which millions of human beings are limited in vision, and racial myopia, by which existing races of today fail to see each other truly? If physical myopia is distorted vision because of wrong focusing, is not racial myopia an analogical truism.

"Man, know thyself" (*know thy self*). Is not this self ONE? Therefore in truth there is no difference, no *real* difference in segments of that ONE functioning through the individuals of various races, irrespective of color, creed or distance from one another. The Great Ones in all ages have reiterated and brought to our attention the truth of the Unity of the Universe and all evolving forms and entities within it. Yet we go on and on, each race (or large portions of that race) thinking they are superior, different, more worthy of a place in the sunlight. What folly!

The vision of the world indeed seems myopic to an alarming degree, but humanity's vision *in toto* is the result of improper focusing; the shortsightedness, lack of understanding and justice in the individual's dealings with his "other selves" in the great Unity of which we are all inseparable parts. It is well to remind ourselves of Karma and its just and infallible workings. Our myopia, physical and racial, did not just happen; we ourselves generated the cause. We but reap the effect, which is again a *cause* that at some time we will reap with tears or joy.

What can we do about it? In the words of G. de P. — "we must shift our moral center of gravity to ethics, where it rightly and truly belongs, and away from property where it has been falsely placed during the last few thousand years . . . from politics and profit to morals and mutual service." Just as simple as that, yet how positive and unequivocal; and when we have read them our duty is clear. Each must correct his own vision, seeing the *reality* of Brotherhood.

The whole secret lies in a change of outlook, in a change of vision . . . Once our center of gravity of moral consciousness is taken from prosperity as the pivot of civilization, and placed in man himself as the center of all greatest and primal values, then 99 percent of the world's constantly recurring paroxysms of agitation, perturbation and violence will vanish. . . .

Vision, like all else is sevenfold, and to have the Highest, Inmost aspect expressing a Buddhist Splendor, a Christ Consciousness, through us is a worthy desire. "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light." Allying ourselves with the SELF at the hearts of our beings, we are individually at-one with the same SELF in others. No longer do we see others as distorted and out of focus, in any way inferior to those of our own household, neighborhood, state, country or race. We see them as Gods in the process of becoming, each striving to unfold the glory within himself — his SELF.

In the light of past history, none of us, not one race, can feel sanctimonious or claim freedom from the judgments of other races. The conditions of *now* need our highest degree of accurate vision, the clear, distinct view of Divinity at the heart of all, the long range view of what is the Heart of ALL.

As students or chelas, we are dedicated to the promulgation of Brotherhood, not the word, but the actuality. Again the words of G. de P. who was repeating to us what all the Great Ones have said:

Do unto others — I will put it in the other form — do not do unto others what you yourself object to having others do unto you It is in this way that in due course of time the Buddhas are born, the holiest men on earth.

And another Teacher said: First cast out the beam in thine own eye thus clearing our sight, strengthening our vision, *not* for the benefit of ourselves, but that we may see clearly to help our brothers. Tolerance and mercy in judgment is godly. Even as physical myopia may become chronic, causing blindness, so with racial myopia, with an increasing

failure of understanding. Then indeed we may go into days of darkness well nigh beyond human endurance. Kali-Yuga is an age of darkness, but not to those who develop True Vision. Is there any sure way of clearing our vision, a practical, day-by-day method of developing our understanding and true seeing? When we seek "first things first," when we desire above all else that our Sevenfold Self function harmoniously, guided and illumined by the SELF that is the Divinity in All — then we will see truth, express truth, *be* Truth.

"O my Divinity, blend Thou with me, that from the corruptible I may become incorruptible, that from imperfection I may become perfection, that from darkness I may go forth in Light."

And if "in Light" — then *as* Light: a nucleus of clear vision, understanding, tolerance, and compassion.

The Theosophical Forum

"WHAT I IN FACT DESIRE" — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

"We must be ready to say at any moment under whatever circumstances, whether expected or unexpected, "It is just what I in fact desire." For only those ideals can be dissipated which rest upon a lower basis than the highest aim, or which are not in accord with Nature's (God's) law." — W. Q. Judge, *The Path*, Feb. 1890

It would seem as if these very challenging words of W. Q. Judge could be sincerely uttered "*under whatever circumstances*" only by one who recognized himself as a pilgrim of eternity, to whom life seemed like a moral gymnasium, a training school for higher levels with broader outlooks. Such a one would realize himself as an actual component of his Universe, responsible for his thoughts and actions on each rung of the Ladder upon which he had so far climbed or perchance failed to climb when it came in sight. He would further realize that golden-winged opportunity, which does not always show its gold on the surface, blesses only him who seizes it, while time flies bearing on its wings those claimed or unclaimed. He would foresee that though it might be easy to let the moments drift by, the awful result of this negative attitude would be some day almost crushing, when he could hardly be able to lift his head and say, "It is just what I in fact desire." He would also realize that the value of the day consists in the gain toward self-understanding and mastery, that the great moments are made from the small ones, that wrong trains of thought must be arrested before they gain momentum, that the joy of thought control far outweighs that of thought indulgence, and that the inevitable of today was the avoidable of yesterday.

A different point of view often changes the whole form and color of an object, and as it may be thus with the moments, such a pilgrim would shift his outlook and, if need be, use constantly a double focused lens to get the broad sweep of events and yet attend to the finest details. And

further, he would have perceived that an aroma of good feeling does the service of a lantern in the darkness. Thus he would have learned to live in the present but to connect it with the eternal.

Finally, at some time must come the crises of life — the soul's examination days, when he will know how to write on the tablets of destiny, "This is just what I in fact desire" — and realize these further words of W. Q. Judge that "Any other course is blindness. All the passing shows of life, whether fraught with disaster, or filled with fame and glory, are teachers. He who neglects them, neglects opportunities seldom the gods repeat. And the only way to learn from them is through the heart's resignation. When we in heart become completely poor, we at once are the treasurers and dispersers of enormous riches."

The Theosophical Forum

APHORISMS BY W. Q. JUDGE

Volume I of *Letters That Have Helped Me* was first published in book form in 1891. Less familiar to students of occultism is a second volume of the same name. It not only sets forth material of historic interest, but differs in other respects from the earlier collection.

The Foreword to Volume II, written by its compilers, is permeated with reverence and devotion to one who preferred to "appear as nothing in the eyes of men."

The following passages, selected from this second volume, are illustrative of Mr. Judge's simple, quiet dignity, and his forthright wisdom.

Organizations, like men, may fall into ruts or grooves of mental and psychic action, which, once established, are difficult to obliterate. To prevent those ruts or grooves in the Theosophical movement, its guardians provided that necessary shocks should now and then interpose so as to conduce to solidarity, to give strength such as the oak obtains from buffeting the storm, and in order that all grooves of mind, act, or thought, might be filled up.

Remember it is the little things the work is done through, for they are not noticed, while the larger ones draw the eyes and minds of all.

It is not high learning that is needed, but solely devotion to humanity, faith in Masters, in the Higher Self, a comprehension of the fundamental truths of Theosophy and a little, only a little, sincere attempt to present those fundamental truths to a people who are in desperate need of them.

No vain striving to preach or prove phenomena will be of any value, for, as again Masters have written, one phenomenon demands another and another.

Let us all draw closer together in mind and heart, soul and act, and try thus to make that true brotherhood through which alone our universal and particular progress can come.

If you try to put into practice what in your inner life you hold to be right, you will be more ready to receive helpful thoughts and the inner life will grow more real.

It is best not to inquire into some of the mysteries of life, but surely a full reliance upon the Spirit within and upon the law that the hands that smite us are our own, will relieve the pressure of some events that seem mysteries. I find the greatest consolation in these reflections, and then I see that each moment is mine, and that when gone it is passed and merged into the sum of my being: and so I must strive to Be. Thus I may hope to become in time the conscious possessor of the whole of Being. So I do not strive after mystery. The great struggle must be to open up my outer self, that my higher being may shine through, for I know that in my heart the God sits patient, and that his pure rays are merely veiled from me by the many strivings and illusions that I bring on outwardly.

What should be done is to realize that "the Master-Soul is one" with all that that implies; to know the meaning of the old teaching, "Thou art That." When this is done we may with impunity identify our consciousness with that of anything in nature; not before. But to do this is a lifetime's work, and beforehand we have to exhaust all Karma, which means duty; we must live for others and then we will find out all we *should* know, not what we would *like* to know.

Devotion and aspiration will, and do, help to bring about a proper attitude of mind, and to raise the student to a higher plane, and also they secure for the student help which is unseen by him, for devotion and aspiration put the student into a condition in which aid can be given to him, though he may, as yet, be unconscious of it.

It is easy to do well by those we like, it is our duty to make ourselves do and think well by those we do not like. Masters say we think in grooves,

and but few have the courage to fill those up and go on other lines. Let us who are willing to make the attempt try to fill up these grooves, and make new and better ones.

H. P. B. then said that it is by falling and by failing that we learn, and we cannot hope at once to be great and wise and wholly strong. She and the Masters behind expected this from all of us; she and They never desired any of us to work blindly, but only desired that we work unitedly.

Begin by trying to conquer the habit, almost universal, of pushing yourself forward. This arises from personality. Do not monopolize the conversation. Keep in the background. If someone begins to tell you about himself and his doings, do not take first chance to tell him about yourself, but listen to him and talk solely to bring him out. And when he has finished suppress in yourself the desire to tell about yourself, your opinions and experiences. Do not ask a question unless you intend to listen to the answer and inquire into its value. Try to recollect that you are a very small affair in the world, and that the people around do not value you at all and grieve not when you are absent. Your only true greatness lies in your inner true self and it is not desirous of obtaining the applause of others.

We make a good deal of progress in our inner, hidden life of which we are not at all conscious. We do not know of it until some later life. So in this case many may be quite beyond the obstacles and not be conscious of it. It is best to go on with duty, and to refrain from this trying to take stock and measuring of progress. All of our progress is in the inner nature, and not in the physical where lives the brain, and from which the present question comes.

But here is advice given by many Adepts: every day and as often as you can, and on going to sleep and as you wake, think, think, think, on the truth that you are not body, brain, or astral man, but that you are *THAT*, and "*THAT*" is the Supreme Soul. For by this practice you will gradually kill the false notion which lurks inside that the false is the true, and the true is the false. By persistence in this, by submitting your daily

thoughts each night to the judgment of your Higher Self, you will at last gain light.

Every time we think that someone else has done wrong we should ask ourselves two questions:

(1) Am I the judge in this matter who is entitled to try this person?

(2) Am I any better in my way, do I or do I not offend in some other way just as much as they do in this?

This will settle the matter I think. And in . . . there ought to be no judgments and no criticism. If some offend then let us ask what is to be done, but only when the offence is against the whole. When an offence is against *us*, then let it go. This is thought by some to be "goody-goody," but I tell you the heart, the soul, and the bowels of compassion are of more consequence than intellectuality. The latter will take us all sure to hell if we let it govern only.

The law is this. No man can rush on and fail to escape the counter current, and in proportion as he rushes so will be the force of the current. All members who work hard come at last to the notice of the Lodge, and the moment they do so, the Black Lodge also takes notice, and hence questions arise, and we are tried in subtle ways that surpass sight, but are strong for the undoing of him who is not prepared by right thought and sacrifice to the higher nature for the fight. I tell you this. It may sound mysterious, but it is the truth, and at this time we are all bound to feel the forces at work, for as we grow, so the other side gets ready to oppose.

Now, it is true that a man cannot force himself at once into a new will and into a new belief but by thinking much on the same thing — such as this — he soon gets a new will and a new belief, and from it will come strength and also light. Try this plan. It is purely occult, simple, and powerful. I hope all will be well, and that as we are shaken up from time to time we shall grow strong.

We all differ and must agree to disagree, for it is only by balancing

contrary things that equilibrium (harmony) is obtained. Harmony does not come through likeness. If people will only let each other alone and go about their own business quietly all will be well. . . . It is one's duty to try and find one's own duty and not to get into the duty of another. And in this it is of the highest importance that we should detach our *minds* (as well as our tongues) from the duties and acts of others whenever those are outside of our own. If you can find this fine line of action and inaction you will have made great progress.

Stick to it that the way is to do all you can and let the results go. You have nothing to do with results; the other side will look out for that. This is really the culmination of the work of ages, and it would be a poor thing, indeed, if the Lodge had to depend alone on our puny efforts. Hence, go on and keep the spirit that you have only to proceed, and leave the rest to time and the Lodge.

Make yourself in every way as good an instrument for any sort of work as you can. Every little thing I ever learned I have now found out to be of use to me in this work of ours. Ease of manner and of speech are of the best to have. Ease of mind and confidence are better than all in this work of dealing with other men — that is, with the human heart. The more wise one is the better he can help his fellows, and the more cosmopolitan he is the better, too. . . . When the hour strikes it will then find you ready; no man knows when the hour will strike. But he has to be ready.

H. P. B. wrote me in 1890: "Be more charitable for others than for yourself, and more severe on yourself than on others." This is good advice. A strain always weakens the fibres and produces friction.

Try to take pleasure in doing what is your duty, and especially in the *little* duties of life. When doing any duty put your whole heart into it. There is much in this life that is bright if we would open our eyes to it. If we recognize this then we can bear the troubles that come to us calmly and patiently, for we know that they will pass away.

It is not wise to be always analyzing our faults and failures; to regret is

waste of energy: if we endeavor to use all our energy in the service of the Cause, we shall find ourselves rising above our faults and failures, and though these must perhaps occur, they will lose their power to drag us down. Of course we do have to face our faults and fight them, but our strength for such a struggle will increase with our devotion and unselfishness. This does not mean that vigilance over one's thoughts and acts is ever to be relaxed.

There is never any need to worry. The good law looks out for all things, and all we have to do is our duty as it comes along from day to day. Nothing is gained by worrying about matters and about the way people do not respond. In the first place you do not alter people, and in the second, by being anxious as to things, you put an occult obstacle in the way of what you want done. It is better to acquire a lot of what is called carelessness by the world, but is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of one's own duty, satisfied that the results must be right, no matter what they may be.

The Theosophical Forum

MENTAL FURNITURE — *M. G. Gowsell*

The matter of household furniture looms quite large in the interests of the majority of us occidental people. And of course it naturally follows that these personal possessions will be almost as varied in character as the householders themselves, either in the arrangement or disarrangement of the diverse items in a room, or in their style, shape, substance or origin. Particular value might be placed upon them as family heirlooms, or perhaps as antiques. Some of the belongings may be classed as Renascent, Victorian or ultramodern, and be valued in proportion to their age. But the appraisal of any one of them might be quite apart from its usefulness or serviceability. Few people will fail to recall how, when and where the various items were acquired and what they cost.

But how many of us attach as much, if any importance whatsoever, to our mental furniture: how and under what circumstances we came by the several items comprising this so vastly more important aggregation. Our personal reactions to any given circumstance in life at any time will depend wholly upon our mental furniture: in other words, upon our preconceived ideas, which too often will account for the bulk of it. These may have been intelligently noted, tested, even reflected upon and closely scrutinized before being accepted, or, which is far more likely to be the case, they may have been simply borrowed, unthinkingly. Too often our staunchest convictions will, upon close inspection, be found to be mere opinions or prejudices — prejudgments, to give the word its true meaning — and hence be seen for what they are, just vagrants, existing without visible or logical means of support. Would that we might exercise the same amount of discrimination in respect to these vital items that we use in selecting our household equipment.

There is a subtle connection if not correspondence between what we may choose to call mental furniture and the household variety, the

constituents of both ranging from the antique to the modern. Moreover it happens that in most households the several rooms will be differently furnished. Let these rooms then represent places where we indulge in different thought processes. For our thoughts will be modified if not changed as we go from room to room for different purposes. There would of course be the kitchen and dining room where meals would be the main subject of speculation. There will be the living room where our thoughts become more general. There might perhaps be the library or study, and each place differently appointed. Most people will agree that diverse places invite entirely separate sets of ideas or lines of thought, and so to have an intimate bearing upon certain phases of our mental equipment, or parts of our composite nature, of which they are a reflection. As an illustration: Take the man whose circumstances compel him to go from city to city or country to country. He would certainly find himself presenting a totally different part of himself, quite another front, while in New Orleans to that in New York. He would likewise react in quite another manner while in Sydney or Melbourne to when he was in Rome or Moscow. So disparate, so pronounced may these be, that he might be said to be hardly the same man at any two of such places. So much for the psychology of places in a larger degree. It will be somewhat similar with all of us as we move about within our home sphere.

Much is being said about our way of life. And it may be pertinent to point out that much of our mental furniture lying in the background of the general awareness is being weighed in the balance. Termites of circumstance are making rapid inroads into some of our oldest and most cherished items, rendering them inept, inadequate and wholly unsafe for further service, when not actually dangerous to longer have around. Wasn't it Plato who said that ideas rule the world, the implication by extension being that ideas also rule our individual lives and serve to make us what we are, for as a man thinks so is he. Well, how *do* we think? Did space permit it might be of interest to go over the matter in some detail and ascertain just how we equip ourselves for the function, for there are various kinds of thinking. Doubtless the

commonest form that our thinking takes is that of reverie, sometimes referred to as the free association of ideas: what one may choose to think about when he doesn't have to think. But as this cannot be regarded as real thinking, being altogether too egocentric and hence pettily personal, perhaps the least said about it the better. To expatiate here would only be to hold up the mirror with a vengeance and prove about as unprofitable perhaps as would meditation upon one's limitations, none of which may be surmounted except by applying the chemical law of substitution.

Thinking should have, as an objective, an increase of knowledge. Means to such an end would naturally involve more than one kind of thinking, one of which will be when our beliefs are seriously questioned, as then they will need our defense. For people believe what they want to believe. Some will go to great lengths in support of their opinions, not so much perhaps that they attach any inordinate value to their ideas, as such, but that they should be questioned is all too apt to incur resentment, their self-esteem being jeopardized, and thus some face-saving will be in order. Hence there would be an assembling of every conceivable excuse or argument for maintaining their views. Nevertheless this would engender some thinking, if only to defend what they have long been accustomed to accept as unquestionable verities. Of course, in the final analysis, like the reverie, this will be more a matter of cerebration than of real thinking.

Real thinking is creative, means work, and represents the opposite pole to the reverie. It has to do with the higher mind, which is impersonal and quite another part of man's composite nature. It is through the region of the higher mind, not yet too readily available to the majority, that we achieve real knowledge of the great worthwhiles of life. It is this, or through this, that the transformation of a man or of a world may be achieved. A reflective mind is a primary essential to this kind of thinking. For it is by such means that we are enabled to change our mind, yes, and change our heart also. Finally, it is of the utmost importance that our mental furniture be kept in order at all times, particularly during these of today.

"STUDIES IN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY" — J. M. Prentice

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

A Personal Appreciation

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, one of the really great teachers and an outstanding man of letters in our time, published a splendid little treatise entitled *On the Art of Reading*. It comprised twelve lectures given on various occasions to students at Cambridge University. From the second lecture is extracted the following passage:

Between these mysteries of a harmonious universe and the inward soul are granted to live among us certain men whose minds and souls throw out filaments more delicate than ours, vibrating to far messages which they bring home to report them to us; and these men we call prophets, poets, masters, great artists, and when they write it we call their report literature.

The passage recurred to me as I was seeking a suitable introduction to the difficult task of reviewing this last gift from our late Leader. I was tempted to cut the passage off short at the word "artists" and indicate the unfinished nature of the quotation thus Because the question confronted me, as it has before: After allowing for the authenticity of these far messages that G. de P. brought home to us, how do they rank as literature?

It is not an easy query to answer without some reservations, without perhaps even giving unintended offence in some quarters. Much of what G. de P. has left us was spoken, and no attempt has been made on publication to alter this material from the oral to the spoken form.

Hence, to get the very best effect of much of G. de P.'s published work, it should be read aloud. There is no doubt, no question, that G. de P. had

an outstanding command of spoken English, but when it comes to us in print in a literal reproduction there is a sense of prolixity — a superabundance of adjectives, of verbs, a determined insistence that no shadow of doubt should be left in the mind of the hearer (rather than the reader); that every shade of meaning should be made manifest. In the same fashion that H. P. B. used *facts* in her determination to leave no stone unturned, to make her case completely fool-proof, so G. de P. used *words*.

A brilliant Englishman recently published an essay on books that had affected his outlook. He spoke of the *Secret Doctrine* as one of the great formative works in his reading but spoke of it as written "in angry and abominable English." Without in any way agreeing with this, one could easily imagine the same or a similar essayist finding a book like *The Esoteric Tradition* jewelled, over-ornate, finicking. I remember, when it was published, writing an enthusiastic review which was entirely sincere, but after a couple of critical re-readings I found myself returning to Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy* as my regular stand-by, a doorway into a land where I was familiar, and not the tropical exuberance, the prolific growth of this new realm.

Please understand that I am not being wise after the event or saying something that I did not say, even more emphatically to G. de P. himself. During his lifetime the Leader and I had some merry exchanges on such points as redundancy, recapitulation, repetition, in his published writings. "Every time I open *Fundamentals* my fingers itch for the blue pencil," I wrote once in the very early days of my membership. The reply was worthy and typical: "By all means use the blue pencil to your heart's content, *but only on your own copy*!" G. de P.'s method was the Oriental method of teaching by recapitulation. Perhaps thereby he showed himself the lineal descendent of those Eastern sages who used such methods ages ago.

As regards my stricture on *Fundamentals*: notwithstanding the retention of the oral form and (to those who did not know the background) the almost fulsome adulation paid to his predecessor —

which, to my personal knowledge, has proved a bad stumbling block to many worthy students — I still regard this as his greatest book, his most priceless gift. I rank it third only to *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. But I confess with a sense of my own perverseness that after more than forty years of Theosophical reading, I still find "Mahatman" and "Karman" pedantic and completely unacceptable. G. de P. sympathised with me in this and told me to please myself regarding their use in my public work, but in all my small writings I have conformed, as a mark of respect to his desire for accuracy.

Coming belatedly to *Studies in Occult Philosophy* and by a round-about track, I want to offer a tribute to its scope, its scholarship, its vast intent, its magnificent Theosophical vistas. Good as the two preceding posthumous volumes were, this is still better. Hints regarding matters hitherto hidden in the secrecy and silence of Esotericism abound; many dark and difficult teachings are clarified; many a secret of Occultism is wholly revealed.

This does not mean that study is not required. The book is definitely for the student and much of the gold will only be found after the ore-bearing material has been thoroughly worked over. Not that the reading is difficult. These "far messages" are easier than either *Fundamentals* or *The Esoteric Tradition*. One fascinating section will be found pp. 244-253. The quotations from the S. D. are eloquent in themselves — one is probably the very apex of all that was written either by or through H. P. B. as far as literary style is concerned. In expanding these teachings G. de P. has produced a noble prose style that is equally satisfying and has transmitted therein one "far message" that will reverberate in the mind rather than the heart.

KARMAN — *Lydia Ross and C. J. Ryan*

"Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself, the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment."

Who has not, at some time in his life, asked why he should be the one to whom unforeseen and apparently undeserved sorrow or joy has come? Why should one person rather than another enjoy unfailing luck in life, without any effort of his own? Again, why should many years of misfortune or success suddenly come to an end, and entirely opposite conditions prevail? Science assures us that law and order rule throughout material Nature, yet it offers little but chance and accident in answer to such questions as the above. Orthodox theology asserts that all is due to the "will of God" — a mere evasion. Modern philosophy gives no satisfying answer. The Ancients, however, combined Science, Religion, and Philosophy in a working philosophy of life. They knew that, for humanity, Reincarnation gave room for the play of perfect justice — Karman.

Karman is a Sanskrit term which expresses, in one word, the idea of the universal law of Cause and Effect that operates always and everywhere. The word itself means "action," and it ever works to restore disturbed harmony or unbalanced equilibrium, whether this action prevails in human life or in any realm of Nature. Karman is the unerring Law of Consequences which, in man's life, makes him reap whatsoever he sows. Man, with his mind, soul and will, is a responsible being; he is neither the helpless subject of a personal god, nor the prey of fatalistic chances in a lawless universe. Karman may be defined as perfect justice in action. It is not the ruling of a capricious Law-Giver; *it exists in the very nature of things.*

Man being a thinker, his thoughts build his character and become the causes of actions which, in their turn, start new trains of effects.

Moreover, the very way in which he meets his present conditions sets up a new chain of causes, whose effects appear sooner or later. Both good-and evil-doers reap whatsoever they sow, even if it takes many life-times before the harvest ripens. The apparent injustice often seen in the prosperity of the selfish and heartless and in the suffering of the good, would be, indeed, an unsolved problem, if there were no previous lives wherein the causes of these conditions had been set on foot.

The action of Karman upon us is not the verdict of a Supreme Judge carrying reward or punishment, compensation or retribution; whatever happens is simply the natural consequence of our own thoughts and deeds. Karman is as impersonal as the law of gravitation; and as it is unerring, constant and all-embracing, we can trust it and work with it. How fortunate that is, for who does not long for justice to be done? The existence of Karman in the vast Scheme of Things accounts for that innate sense of justice in every human heart, ever urging us to find it in action. The decrees of human law do not bear evenly on all concerned, because it is impossible to take into account all the conditions, past and present, seen and unseen. But the universal karmic law leaves nothing out of account. It balances all the causes and their effects, known and unknown, including thoughts and motives both in this and past lives, and it strikes a just balance, even after many days.

There is no favoritism in the action of Karman nor is there any possibility of escaping from it, any more than we can escape from our weaknesses except by rebuilding our character. The rebound of wrongdoing cannot be turned aside by prayer, nor by mocking at Nature's laws, nor by scheming to avoid them. Nor do the consequences of any loving or helpful thought or action fail to return, in full measure, to him who sent them forth.

Our character is the outcome, the offspring so to say, of what we were in our past lives. So that, looking backward, we see ourselves, each one of us, as his own ancestor, even as in this life each is a child of his own

past. In a word, Karman and Reincarnation solve the problem of individual evolution; it is the incarnating spirit of man involved in and working its way through experiences in physical bodies and material forces, life after life.

It was said of old: "Be ye perfect," and again: "*Work* out your own salvation," which in scientific terms means "your own evolution," for, as H. P. Blavatsky says:

"The whole order of Nature evinces a progressive march toward a higher life. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution with its endless adaptations is a proof of this."

The "design" of the impersonal karmic law is to preserve the balance of all our forces — physical, psychic, mental, and spiritual. When we do work with the law we keep to the middle lines of progress and move naturally and steadily onward into a larger and better life.

Unfortunately, too often our desires use our will to lead us far astray from the highway of progress. The wise waste no time in following profitless by-paths, but train themselves by controlling their desires. A few Great Souls have outrun the majority of men, and have become the world's Sages and Seers, many of whom are known to history, and whose teachings and examples are an inspiration to their fellow-men.

The karmic law is not only just but it is truly merciful, because absolute justice and mercy are one. Even its painful effects are natural reminders that we are, or have been, off the road to peace and power and the real joy of living. We can all learn much from the pain and suffering that befall us, more than from success and pleasure, which so often magnify our selfishness. We cannot gain sympathetic understanding merely by observing the suffering of others; only by having been through similar trials can we feel their needs and know how to give real help. If we refuse to help others in trouble under the plea that they brought it upon themselves and must take the consequences, our action is utterly mistaken and heartless. As Mme. Blavatsky says: "Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a

deadly sin." When we succeed in lifting the suffering from another, it proves that we had the privilege of being the active instrument of Karman. We may be repaying an unknown debt we owe him.

Poverty, sickness, and sorrow are by no means always the result of ill-doing either in this or in a former life. Karman is not so mechanical as that! In many cases a strong soul chooses conditions of hardship and difficulty so as to gain strength and fortitude, and also to acquire a sympathetic understanding of the sufferings and limitations that fall to the common lot.

While it is the sacred obligation of the more advanced or more fortunate to help the less fortunate, what many persons need most is to be shown how to help themselves. They will gain strength by learning how to accept courageously what comes to them and to make the best of it. Self-knowledge gives us the understanding heart by which we can help wisely, because the study of one's own nature, in the light of Karman and Reincarnation, gives the key to the needs of others.

Karman acts on all planes, visible and invisible: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Moreover, causes and effects react from plane to plane, so that selfish thoughts and emotions, like anger, jealousy, fear, and hatred, sooner or later react upon the health and mental outlook. Again, the unselfish impulse to help or to protect another in danger calls forth unsuspected power and a buoyant sense of spiritual resource equal to the occasion. As our different kinds of karman thus act and react upon the different parts of our composite nature so do its effects react upon other persons, as they, in turn, affect us. We see this plainly in family and other ties. The same rule holds good of our place and share in the general karmic conditions of the locality, the nation, and the race, to which we belong. If we suffer from retributive Karman, like wars and other calamities, we also reap the collective benefits that belong to organized society. Though we seem to have had no direct part in making the exact conditions — good or bad — into which we were born, yet we did make the causes which resulted in our being born into these conditions.

Karman accounts for the accidents and fatalities which befall some who are apparently well protected from danger, while others, unguarded, survive a series of hairbreadth escapes without a scratch.

Knowledge of Karman throws light on the mystery of good and evil. Man plans and creates causes, good, bad, and indifferent, and the just law returns to him equal effects in kind. If he metes out good, it is meted out to him in equal measure, though it may be in a future life. If he has done evil, there is no "remission of sin" by any external power, no atonement through shedding the blood of an innocent victim. He has wronged his own spiritual nature, and he alone can right the wrong against his better Self. He will suffer, sooner or later, until he has done himself justice. Even a man of good mind and morals may feel the effects of his past errors long after he has mended his ways. For instance, the final results of wrong thought and action in a past life may have worked down to the physical level on their way out, making him crippled or diseased, while at the same time he is also reaping and sowing good mental and moral karman. If wise, he will add remedial means to Nature's efforts to cancel the old score. If he unwisely uses his own will or that of another to dissipate visible disease by throwing it back on the mental plane, he is opposing the law of Nature. The retarded effects will appear later with added force in a worse way, physically or mentally. Of course, this does not mean that we should not try to prevent or to cure disease by a healthy mental attitude as well as by physical means. When we work with kindly Mother Nature we move onward with the mighty currents of the evolving Universe of which we are a vital part.

Nature works in cycles, of longer or shorter duration, so that karman may be delayed until appropriate conditions appear. For instance, an infant cannot suffer the mental trials or intellectual pleasures which, if due to appear in its present life, would be reserved for maturer years. We incarnate in the family, in the time, and in the surroundings where we belong. We create our own future.

We reap what we have sown; we never "gather grapes from thorns" or

"figs from thistles," nor good from evil, wisdom from stupidity, nor health from wrong living. Like always produces like, in our unfolding human nature as well as in all the various realms of material Nature. Some seeds lie dormant for years, while others germinate quickly; so it is with the germs of thought and action, some remain latent for many lives, while others come to the surface very soon. Sometimes the general trend of life is markedly changed by sudden poverty or riches, by fame or disgrace, or by something else that seems wholly foreign to the individual or family character. These are cases where one kind of karma being exhausted, another kind follows. Then, again, a long-delayed account may find an opportunity to appear abruptly in the midst of a smooth current of events.

Karmic causes may so modify each other that the result, while unlike either cause, will be the just effect of both. Also, one cause may be so completely opposed to another as to neutralize its effects.

Knowledge of Karma invokes self-reliance. It appeals to man's innate power and dignity as an embodied soul which, having reached man's estate, may naturally continue by "self-directed evolution" to bring out the best within himself and to unfold his spiritual nature in ever greater degree. With a divine birthright to draw upon, man is no mere "miserable sinner" passively waiting to be saved by an innocent sacrifice. Atonement really means at-one-ment with the Christos spirit "within." That inner Self well knows that "every man shall bear his own burden." No doubt the karmic record of our countless past lives is stained with many sins both of omission and commission; but the record is also illumined with ages of struggle and hard-won victories in self-control.

Karma is by no means fatalism, for it is the logical doctrine of "another chance." No wrong-doing can bind one for ever, because new opportunities are always presenting themselves. Even the painful effects of grievous past error can be met and endured so courageously and understandingly that the experience may count as gain. The real man can make these old stumbling-blocks serve as stepping-stones

toward a finer manhood, a nobler character, and a knowledge of self
"which is wisdom itself."

Karman is so far-reaching in action that it calls for deep study. It seems unfamiliar at first because before Theosophy was presented, we had been given only unrelated fragments of universal Truth. These fragments did not reveal the basic fact that it is the one Law of Cosmic Justice which regulates even our human life. Our minds are awed and strengthened by the majestic truth that man is an intrinsic part of the Great Plan, in which his welfare is dear to the very Heart of Being!

The Theosophical Forum

MIND OR MEDICINE? — *J. W. A. Croiset van Uchelen*

More than once I have been asked what my point of view as a doctor is as regards metaphysical healing. This is a pertinent question, but should be formulated more specifically before it can be answered. What do we mean by metaphysical healing? Do we mean the use of human mind by means of affirmations, denials, or decrees? If so, we are limited by the limitations of man. But if we mean the All Consciousness of Mind, and faith as a pure religious quality, we reach toward unlimited powers. I shall assume therefore that the latter approach is the one to be considered. Now first of all, what is man's Quest, if not for Truth, for Reality? Fundamentally, this is a religious search for Union with the Divine. But since man is endowed with mind, the mind as well as the heart seeks to be satisfied. And so, our soul search, through the heart, is linked to a mental search, through the mind. Thus, we must utilize the three main avenues of human thought: science, philosophy and religion; for these are one, beyond the limitations of man-made boundary lines.

Voltaire, you will remember, stressed the necessity first of all to define our terms. To define anything, we must analyze it. In the process we may gain considerable knowledge, while at the same time avoiding much confusion. Now science is defined as classified knowledge, that is, knowledge about phenomena. It is worthwhile to note that this definition holds equally for metaphysical science. It makes no fundamental difference whether we deal with phenomena perceived by physical means, or whether we are dealing with worlds and processes of a non-physical nature. In both cases we are dealing with phenomena, with the manifested, whether in grosser or subtler form is not the point. Science does not know what electricity is, what nerve force is, or life; it deals with phenomena observed, just as psychology deals with the phenomena produced, in reaction, by mental activity; mind, as cause, remaining the unknown quantity. Here then, we are

dealing with technical teachings, as comprehended by the intellect — leaving the heart cold.

Religion and philosophy on the other hand, enter the realm of causation and the non-manifested, the realm of pure consciousness, if you like, spoken of by Plato as the world of Ideas. I prefer to speak of the world of the Real, of the Divine, which is non-corporeal, yet enfolds within itself. Its expression in the manifested of which It is the Causeless Cause, eternal, changeless. Now, if we agree that religion and science should go hand in hand, then we must realize that the fundamentals of religion *per se*, are as permanent and changeless as the proverbial two times two is four of mathematics. And where science makes its appeal to reason, religion must put forth its claim to faith. In the one we rely upon man, in the other our reliance is placed upon the divine. Science dissects matter. Religion accepts spirit. One deals with phenomena, the other with noumena. Science seeks for knowledge. Philosophy and religion reach out for wisdom. If we should say that science is man-made and religion God-given, we should perhaps point out that scientists need but to put their trust in the senses, while their beliefs rest upon the claims and findings of other men (many of which claims are short-lived indeed). In religion, there is faith "in the evidence of things not seen" and reliance upon pronouncements by those, greater than man, whose teachings have stood the test of ages. At this point we also must clearly distinguish between belief and faith. A belief is an acceptance upon authority, but unto faith is added that element of "intuitive knowledge" which science cannot recognize.

Our beliefs are in doctrines, in interpretations. Faith rests on realities. Interpretations, based on assumed original teachings, if not prophetic, are man-defined. Churches, sects or movements, give their many varied interpretations; individual leaders offer theirs. As an example, the teaching of the Immaculate Conception is an interpretation formulated by the Church, as the fruit of theological speculation. This is a doctrine. Oriental teachers also present their concepts, introducing doctrines of Eastern Schools. We may reject, or accept such doctrines,

but our acceptance does not constitute faith, but a belief.

In passing we might also make mention of the use of symbols, as associated with every religion. Whether the idea of the Creator of a Divinity, is represented by a totem-pole, or a plaster of Paris statuette, or by any other symbol, is of no consequence to the quality of faith itself. It may be remembered that Christian missionaries in China found it necessary to dress Jesus as a Chinese, in order to make their point. Does it matter? Symbols are useful as long as they assist us in the contemplation of an ideal. And most of us are so helped, it is fair to say. Symbols are determined by the training and temperament of the worshiper, his artistic and mental capacity. What appeals to us most readily is to a great extent determined by the environment in which we are born and develop. For instance, if the presentation of Jesus crucified does not appeal to the average Protestant, it is because he has learned to see in it, first of all, a picture of suffering, rather than that of selfless sacrifice, and so he more than likely prefers a picture of Jesus as the expression of outpouring Love, which is the greatest tenet of the Christian religion. To millions of Orientals the familiar image of Buddha is the symbol of all that is holy and noble; and those who were greatest among his followers take the place of the array of western saints. Many who now laugh at the presentation of a God on a throne in a gold-paved heaven, assume ignorantly that Original philosophies are free of such presumed childishness, when, as a matter of fact, the Westerner is dealing with symbologies mostly not understood by him. Buddhism itself has given an allegorical description of Devachan, or heaven, not less amusing to the uninitiated perhaps. It speaks of a region of bliss many thousand myriads of worlds beyond ours, encircled by seven rows of railings, seven rows of vast curtains, seven rows of waving trees, where flow crystalline waters in the midst of seven precious lakes. This is Devachan, the holy abode of Arhats, governed by the Dhyanis-Chohans and possessed by the Bodhisattva. All this is, literally, immaterial to faith itself, which knows of reality beyond the forms of the manifested; first intuitively, later through mystical experience. Faith is of the heart, not of the mind. It calls for

self-surrender, gratitude and humility, not for self-assertion nor pride of achievement. Note that a self-surrender to and faith in a divinity, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, is not illogical to the intellect, but the concepts themselves are beyond human understanding and therefore beyond discussion, even if real.

Not all savants, by any means of measure, are saints, but saintliness assures a measure of wisdom; for all these things shall be added unto him who has faith, and there are many examples of this throughout the ages. Academic education is no guarantee for spiritual discernment, but the latter lifts human thought above self-deception into self-discovery. Faith is invoked, it cannot be impelled. It is a grace bestowed, invoked and strengthened by love. Cicero spoke of "the divinity of faith itself."

Psychology has made its strongest appeal in its search for a link, but failed to rise above its materialistic approach toward the immeasurable forces of the super-consciousness.

Fundamentals are too often lost sight of and secondary mental processes involved become viewed as primaries. For instance, it is said an army marches on its stomach, but it would be absurd to conclude that by explaining the physiological activities of the stomach we had explained what marching is. Similarly, if in talking about metaphysical healing we are content to limit ourselves to the reflected mental activity and elaborate upon the process of suggestion involved, we have not dealt with the fundamental underlying element, that of faith. Attempts at scientific evaluations of spiritual values must fail, since they cannot be supported upon a materialistic basis. The manifestation of such values is from within, without, or from above, below. Spiritual values are complementary, not contradictory to material processes, which demand a building from below upwards. Here in fact are the two methods of acting which must be fused. The future demands our recognition of interrelationships, rather than a broadening of illusory lines of demarcation — in every field. As a matter of fact, science unwittingly has already transgressed its self-erected barriers into the

borderland of a realm where its own restricted methods are barely applicable. That the projection of consciousness, aided by this mysterious power of faith can take dominion over the manifested and perform seeming miracles which mind alone is unable to accomplish is an assertion which rests on demonstrated fact. Even if not explained it cannot be denied.

And so, you see, that while defining terms, I have come to express my own conviction in the matter of metaphysical or spiritual healing. Dr. de Purucker, in answering a question, once discussed the various rays used in healing and the possibility of their conversion in order to establish a healthy rate of vibration in diseased tissue. (See *Studies in Occult Philosophy*.) Through heart and mind powers far beyond the grasp of physical science can be released — *depending upon the individual*. One who can employ these means can succeed where all other methods fail. The powers of nature obey those who make obeisance. Of course to be a member of an occult fraternity does not make one a master of occultism, any more than a member of a metaphysical healing cult necessarily is successful in employing its methods. But I am convinced that those who seek and have the quality of faith can accomplish more than any doctor can do for them. As a Sage once said: Physician heal thyself! So in time everyone will have to become his own physician. In the meantime there is still place for those who can serve their fellow-men without violating nature. It all depends upon the individual, it was said. Why? Because we can follow and absorb to a certain point, beyond which we must learn to stand alone in the Silence, before we can come face to face with Reality. The achievement of the scientists, after all, is an individual achievement. The attainment of the religionist, the at-one-ment with Reality, is an individual experience. The experience may take a second in man-made time; it may be sustained longer, yet, though individual, it reveals the Oneness of All!

NOTES ON THE LOWER NATURE — *Norman Arthur Lewis*

How much can be gained by the manipulations of the senses and of the brain mind on behalf of that divine being who moves serene and untouched through the greatest of our joys and the greatest trials, free and triumphant, poised in birth and death . . . how much can we do for our clearer knowledge of him?

Training the vehicle is all, training and training, until we have made order, made a workable process, through which to work his will and his inspiration. We must untie the knots, remove the barriers, clear the way. This is action in his name, there is no other.

Very important it is to know the value, and the valuelessness, of words. Perhaps words are the means by which we are bound most securely. The fact that words are so intimately associated with magical practices, and with the "creative aspect" of man and the cosmos, attests their potency. They are the instruments of Karman *par excellence*. Indeed, the words of one man can work more good or evil — sometimes both, at different times — than the actions of many people. Perhaps one of the great powers of language, generally speaking, is just that it has been set so high in human estimation. Because it has been used to represent the highest of values, it can be mistaken, it, mere language, for truth itself. Words left to their own devices, left to glare from the page, breed new spooks before every eye they meet; and yet, in themselves, they may appear the most innocent and dull of the whole dictionary. Words are born conjurors, and are just as unreliable as any other witchdoctor.

Look within.

What is it we are always trying to accomplish? Isn't it to reach that state, or attain that end, that good is the reflex of our involuntary natures, that we have truth for our every motive?

In the rumbling and blundering world of "facts" (i.e. things done or made), man is most truly an *idea*, and it is in the realm of ideas that he will find his order and his fulfillment. How much it is an understatement to the minds of most men, that "Ideas rule the world." Only when men have taken the trouble to rule themselves can they begin to understand the real meaning of those words, for only then can they attain to the realm of ideas. Until then, they are "ruled," with the world.

A real "command of the facts," that possession so much desired by many today, can be said to belong only to that man who recognizes an idea when he is one.

We can say that the world itself is the battered old hulk of the Tower of Babel, the confused and tumbling mass of facts, figures, signs, symbols, and words, words, words; representing a billion diverse points of view. Perhaps one day the stragglers among the ruins will welcome the coming of the great engineers and builders who will set up the City of the Sun from these poor random blocks, these orphaned buttresses and doorposts.

So, too, our own personalities correspond to this figure, are indeed the likenesses of the ruined old Tower of Babel, and cry out for the Architect, the Builder, the inspired one who has more care for a harmonious Unity than for all manner of curious and fascinating diversity.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY: A UNIVERSAL INSPIRATION (1) — Kenneth Morris

In ancient times there were no churches, as we have now the Christian, Buddhist or Mohammedan Churches. Each tribe or race had its own god or gods about whom many stories were told, and in whose honor various festivals were held at different times of the year. These stories and festivals all had an inner meaning and were meant to suggest something of hidden truth to the enquiring mind. Some such stories come down to us from the ancient Welsh in the *Mabinogion*, and there would be some earnest natures who would ask, what is the meaning of it? Why am I here, what is the meaning of life and death? How can I acquire such knowledge of these things as the gods have?

An enquirer of those days went to the Druids who were the custodians of wisdom and said, "Teach me! I want to understand the Mysteries of the Universe." And the Druids would answer: "Discipline comes before Philosophy. He who would know the doctrine let him do the Will." And there must be a pledge of secrecy never to reveal what was learned.

So the candidate pledged himself, and underwent training for years until his spiritual nature and perceptions were thoroughly awakened, and he came to understand, in varying degree, the truth about himself and life and death and the universe.

Now that was the method all over the world. Whether you look at Greece or India, Egypt or China, Wales or Mexico or Peru, you find the same general method: a simple religion, with stories about the gods and festivals in their honor, for the people; schools pledged to secrecy in which candidates for wisdom could receive training and initiation.

But all human institutions suffer the same fate: they grow old in time and die. The Schools of the Mysteries grew old, and became ineffectual as a link between the world and the Spirit; and in and about the Sixth Century before Christ a tremendously significant thing happened. Remember that in those days if a man travelled from Greece to Egypt

he was a very great traveller; that few Greeks had travelled as far as to Persia; that they had but vaguely heard of India; that Hindus hardly knew there was such a country as China, or Chinese that there was such a country as India; still less did people in the Old World know of America. And yet at that one time seven great men appeared in the world: two in China, two in India, one in Persia, one in Greece, and one in Mexico — Laotse and Confucius, the Buddha and the Founder of what is called the Jain religion, Zoroaster, Pythagoras and the Mexican Emperor Quetzalcoatl. These all turned their backs on the official Mysteries of their countries and started a new epoch, a new phase of history: the Age of the great World Religions. They all lived at the same time and the teachings of each were suited to his own country, but they all had a great body of ideas in common, and nowhere do they contradict each other. And when, five or six centuries later, another Great Teacher arose in Galilee, we find him giving out the same teachings that his glorious predecessors had given out: that there was a Right Way to Live, a right path to follow by which one might come to know the secrets of life and death.

The Founders of all the Great Religions were at one in this way: they all claimed that they taught nothing new. "I preach the Law, the Doctrine of all the Buddhas my predecessors," said the great Indian Prince, Gautama Siddhartha, who, moved by infinite compassion for the woes of mankind, gave up his wealth and power and wandered the world seeking until he found the cure for human sorrow. "I preach the Tao, the Way of the Universe," said Great Lao-tse of China, "which would seem to be older than God." "I originate nothing," said Home Secretary Confucius, who had wiped out evil-doing in his country simply by the example he set. "I love the Ancients, and therefore I teach the doctrine of the Ancients."

That is to say that what they had to teach had always been in the world and only needed re-stating and being given new authority and published abroad. There were two sides of it: the Will and the Doctrine, the Ethics and the Philosophy. They all gave out the ethics such as are contained in the Sermon on the Mount, and they all gave out more or

less of the Doctrine and the Philosophy; the Buddha most of all. The Philosophy was the very heart of the Mysteries and contained the basic ideas about life and the importance of ethics as the reason why right is right and could be no other way.

Let us explain these basic ideas and how they affected human history. Consider history as a road and the Mysteries the light illuminating that road, and streaming forth in many directions, shedding its beams on the activities of man all down the ages.

History from books gives only the skeleton, and to get flesh on those bones and the breath of life into the body it is necessary to read the literature of the period you wish to study. And so with religion — if you want to know the religion of any people or age study their art; it will give you their vital spiritual inspiration. So now the streams of light along the dark, wet road will be the art of some of the ancient and modern civilizations. Let us look at Egyptian art and see in the gigantic bust of Rameses II eternity calm and unmoved. In its remote humanity there is the suggestion that such a being would be unaffected if the universe crumbled in ruin. It is typical of all the statues of the Egyptian kings. In his art the sculptor said, "The Pharaoh was as other men when living but what we are to carve in stone is the eternal part, the god-like part that is eternal." It is man that is the manifestation here of the Divine Principle which ensouls eternity.

The same tale is told in thousands of statues of the Pharaohs; in the great statue of the Vocal Memnon which sits beside the Nile forever gazing out into its kindred eternity; in the ancient Sphinx coeval with the desert sands, coeval with the Soul of Man, typical of its grandeur.

The Gods are what scientific Europe imagine to be dead, soulless things; or in the future will call the Forces of Nature. But we know that the Sun is a living being, that Nature is a living being, and also Electricity is a living being: like unto ourselves as being living and conscious but with a great unlikeness to ourselves too. And so the statues of the Gods are symbolical, suggesting the spiritual qualities of the soul as being different and above the human. Thus Horus, the Sun-

god, is shown with a hawk's head, because that bird, sailing aloft, sitting calm in the blue of heaven on its outstretched wings, reminds us of our Lord the Sun. Thus we shall be reminded that the Gods, though living beings, are not personalities like ourselves in the lower aspect of our nature. And we shall also be reminded that Man is God: that the inmost self is Divine, ancient, constant and eternal.

Turn now to the art of China: perhaps the greatest the world has ever seen. Among the mountains of the province of Che-kiang and up the valley of the Yangtse-kiang — the Son-of-the-Ocean River — they built their temples and monasteries. Visualize the jagged sky line of the peaks and mountain-shoulders above; the slopes clad in pine forests; the still waters of the lake below; the cliffs and crags soaring above, and up there, looking as if Nature herself in her loveliest mood had blossomed out into it, the temple with its intricately carved pillars, its tilted eaves, its glazed tile roofs shining yellow, or azure or richest purple; right at the top of the precipice yonder, or there snuggling into the cleft; looking as if nothing could have had the skill, the sheer artistry, to build it but that which put the blossom on the rose and on the daffodil. Right here we see in the heart of Nature the loveliest work of Man — who is a part of Nature inseparable from the universe, the child of Nature, of the universe; divine as they are: the divine fruitage of a divine Tree of Being.

A Chinese painting tells the same story. A square foot of silk and a thousand miles of space. More than that, for the fine Chinese landscape always manages to suggest infinity. Looking into such pictures, one's mood is uplifted, carried out beyond the show of things, of petty griefs and vanities, into Tao, the Way of the Universe.

And now turning to Greek art, selecting first their architecture, the same note appears. Put a Greek temple in its right surroundings, and you have it again on the mountainside — a thing of white marble pillars chaste among the dark green of pines, reflected on the still blue waters below. The same tale is told by it: Man's work in the midst of Nature's, perfect as if Nature had made it and not man; Man one with

Nature; Man and Nature divine.

But unfortunately that is not all Greece has to tell us. When the Great Teachers were founding the religions; when Prince Gautama left his palace to find the truth and to become the Buddha; when Confucius left his Home-Secretary's office to wander the world in search of a king, a young man left Greece to find truth somewhere in the world. His name was Pythagoras, and he journeyed to India, Persia and Egypt, and perhaps to Britain to study under the Druids. He returned to Greece, or rather to Italy, which was then dotted with Greek colonies, and there at the town of Krotona he founded a school and started his new religion — the same religion that all the others started. But the Greeks of Krotona arose and destroyed the school, and scattered the Pythagoreans. The effort failed. And we see the consequences. Greek sculpture began by taking a leaf from the Egyptian sculptors' book; the early statues have some of the majesty and grandeur of the Egyptian, some of the majesty and grandeur of the Human Soul, the Deathless. But then they obtained greater and greater technique, greater and greater mastery over their medium; and with it more and more an eye to physical, and less and less an eye to spiritual beauty. In Pheidias, the greatest of the Greek sculptors, you see still some touch of Egyptian dignity, but far more sense than the Egyptians ever had of the attractive beauty of human flesh and form. And then when you get to Praxiteles about a century later you get such a work as his Apollo Sauroktonos — Apollo the Lizard-killer — a pretty lackadaisical effeminate youth for sentimental maidens to fall in love with: the Sun-god, among the sub-limest conceptions the human mind has ever risen to, reduced to that! The Greeks as they progressed steadily went on losing sight of the spirit, and becoming more and more interested in the flesh. And we have suffered for it ever since.

For Greco-Roman civilization went down, and night fell on the western world. Caesar had smashed Druidism, the one branch of the ancient Mysteries that remained pure, and where was light to be found to inspire the new civilization that was to rise in Europe? It began to rise: day dawned, after eight centuries of barbarism, in the twelfth and

thirteenth centuries. Then once again there was a grand flowering of the human spirit, a triumphant out-burst of human genius, in western Europe. But where was its Buddha, its Laotse or Confucius, its Pythagoras, Zoroaster or Quetzalcoatl? The answer is not in Christian civilization for it has never been inspired by the ideas of Jesus, and was not founded on them.

The next great flowering of genius in Europe after the era of the magnificent Gothic cathedrals was through the art that comes next above sculpture and architecture in the non-materiality of its medium: painting; the painting of the Italian Renaissance, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Here again, for one who knows the spirituality of the Chinese painting, is a sad story to read. There are endless pictures of Christ, the Virgin and child, and the saints. Read the Gospel story and derive anew for yourself a conception of what sort of Man the hero of that story is. The Lion of Nazareth, a denouncer of threats, who made the dignitaries of the church tremble: was that not he?

And what do we get in the pictures of him? A piteous man, eyes turned up to heaven in impotent supplication! Any learned and honest Hebrew scholar will tell you that the Cry on the Cross rightly translated runs: "My God, my God, how thou dost glorify me!" That, and not the other, is the man to compare to the Buddha himself in grandeur. "Ye are Gods in the innermost of your being"; not "Ye are worms and sinners." So the great painting of European civilization missed carrying any spiritual message, and misinterpreted the Great One whom it professed to honor.

But next that creative force, having exhausted the art of painting, flowed into the art next above it in non-materiality of medium, literature. It would take too long to look into the great literary figures of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or you would see how the divine Soul of Man was coming back into its own: into the signs you could read in Cervantes and Shakespeare, for example. I will just mention Milton who sets out to write an orthodox theological poem, and somehow the divine soul steps in and thwarts his purpose. He

paints Satan and his angels hurled out of Paradise into bottomless perdition, but through all the picture another shines through, that of the Soul of Man divine, cast down into incarnation into the hell of material life on earth, but divine still. And Milton shows how "In our proper motion," we ascend up to our native god-hood.

And now to music, divinest of the arts. In the eighteenth century the great age of European literature was coming to an end; its last appearance was in Germany through the voice of Goethe. But already in music there had been a Bach, opener of a Great Age, and Mozart, like a pure spirit descended from heaven to tell the world of unearthly and unutterable beauty. He was to be followed by the summit figure of European genius, that of the tremendous Beethoven with the wings of thunder. What has he to tell us? Eternally that the soul of man is divine. Master of the lower forces of his nature, with every ringing note of music he proclaimed and accentuated the message of Jesus and Buddha and Confucius; of the Egyptian sculptors and the Chinese architects and painters and poets — *eternally that the Soul of Man is Divine.*

And then came H. P. Blavatsky to explain things, to teach once more the Doctrine, the Philosophy of the Mysteries, of the Buddha, Laotse, Confucius, Pythagoras, Quetzalcoatl and Jesus; and to found the Theosophical Society. Man is divine, she taught us; and she taught us how and why. He is immortal; the master and maker of his own destiny. He lives many lives on earth, and shall, until he has learned all that life on earth can teach him — until he has made the kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Study Theosophy. There is no problem in life that it cannot help you to solve! By your own efforts you shall save yourselves. By your own efforts make this earth, your home, into a paradise. For the universe exists for the purposes of the Soul; everything, every existence in it, is learning by experience, is on the upward path. You can find the God within yourself, that is the inner core of your being. You are the child of the universe, part and parcel of it, of Nature Universal; and you may win to the Heart of it. You may acquire transcendental wisdom and become even as the Christ and the Buddha, God-Men, Men Gods. There is knowledge to attain. There is

divinity. And there is a way to attain it. We suffer from ourselves. There is no injustice. We have made our present lives; and we are what we have made ourselves. We are at the mercy of none but ourselves, and can make our tomorrows glorious. That is the message of Theosophy, as far as I can put it in a few words: the Divinity of Man — of you, of me, of all of us.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Informal talk given to a group of coal miners in the Rhondda Valley, Wales, in 1933. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SPIRITUAL REALISM — *Allan Stover*

One might as well mistake the erratic swirl of foam upon an incoming tide for the mighty surge of the tide itself, as to mistake the scum and confusion of present world conditions for the swelling tide of the new age now upon us, indeed at our very doors.

Plato taught that it was the universals rather than the particulars which were substances and things. In other words, the real is the spiritual essence which from its nature and habit is interwebbed and merged in the one Universal Reality. A true realist was one who understood the spiritual and universal laws underlying all existence.

In recent years a realist has come to mean, not one who knows the inner laws governing life, but one who sees only the obvious and often only the sordid, material character of life. Law and purpose in nature is denied, and as a result understanding is in confusion.

The great need today is for Spiritual Realism which will help men to see that the universal laws upon which the fabric of all Nature is woven are in very truth, realities.

What are these laws, we may ask? They are the fundamental truths taught today as Theosophy — the essential divinity of man, reimpodiment, karman, the law of cycles, universal brotherhood as a law in nature; and many others. We as Theosophists may have studied these doctrines for many years; we may quote chapter and paragraph. Oh, yes, we may think we know all about them. But to what extent are these wonderful truths actual living realities to us? To what extent do we rely upon them when the pinch comes?

The spirit of the new age challenges us, calls us from intellectual refreshment to labor, demands that we give an accounting of the spiritual treasures we have received. It is asking us "Have these precious truths for which the Teachers gave their lives that you might

receive entered into your very life and consciousness governing your every act and thought? Or are they merely intellectual abstractions, interesting topics for lecture or discussion? When faced with what you consider a personal injustice, do you fight back and seek to justify yourself before the world, or do you forgive and leave it to the good law to adjust"? There is the test.

The significance of the present time, and our answer to its challenge, may be of far more importance to ourselves and to the race than is commonly supposed.

The fate which overtook Lemuria and Atlantis will soon be upon us, for in some 16,000 years our own Fifth Root-Race will be cut in two by great cataclysms. Large areas of land will sink beneath the sea, other lands will appear, and climates will change. We are apt to think of these events as occurring many thousands of years in the future, but in terms of reincarnation and the span of life on earth they are only two or three lives ahead. It is this which makes right action today so urgent, for our actions and thoughts now, may very well determine our success or failure then; they may even be our final testing.

Evidence shows that great changes of land and climate have already commenced so that the pattern of things to come, is even now becoming apparent.

A careful study of tide gauge levels throughout the world, shows that due to a combination of causes sea levels between the latitude of the Canadian border and the corresponding Southern latitude are slowly rising. On the other hand, in Alaska, Canada, and Scandinavia sea levels are falling and over large areas the land is rising at the astonishing rate of two to three meters per century. This rapid rise of the circumpolar regions is said to be largely responsible for the (at present) slow submergence of the middle belt of the earth, where a summary of records from 71 stations shows an average rise of sea level of 12 cm., or a little over 4½ inches per century.

The rise in sea level per century for a few of these stations is Atlantic

City 34 cm., San Diego 17 cm., New York 23 cm., San Francisco 12 cm., Galveston, Texas 48 cm., Hawaii 22 cm., the Azores 9 cm., Cherbourg, France 11 cm. (1)

For the last 50 years glaciers throughout the world have shown a constantly increasing shrinkage. Another interesting development is a new mountain range, the Sierra Madre del Sur, which is rapidly rising over a distance of 1,500 miles, along the West coast of Mexico and Central America. At the same time a "deep" is forming on the sea bottom parallel to the range.

These are a few of the many indications showing the commencement of earth changes even more momentous than those taking place in the social and political worlds.

The earth is indeed a living being, and undergoes changes which proceed step by step with changes in the plant, animal and human life whose home it is. All Nature thrills to the coming of dawn, whether it be that of a day, a year, or of a new race.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Figures are from *Changes in Sea Level, Postglacial Uplift, and Mobility of the Earth's Interior*, by Beno Gutenberg. Bulletin of the Geological Society of America, May, 1941. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

CONSCIENCE AND INTUITION — *Abbott Clark*

Conscience and intuition are two of the highest faculties commonly or frequently active in the average normal man. Their nature and function are quite different and act in two widely separate phases of our lives. Conscience has to do with right action in our daily lives. Intuition is the enlightener of our minds in regard to fundamental principles, truths, realities. Most of the discoveries of the truths of nature which scientists make are the work of intuition. The fundamental idea or principle or truth is first perceived intuitively and then worked out in detail by the mind. The eternal realities which form the basis of all religions are perceived intuitively by great Teachers and then formulated by the mind of the Teacher according to the requirements of the people to whom the Teacher is sent. The creeds and dogmas are mere mental forms which perhaps reveal but more often conceal the fundamental realities.

The *a priori* or deductive philosophies are those in which the fundamental truths are first conceived by intuition and thence formulated by the mind. These philosophies are the more spiritual ones. This method is often called the Platonic method while the *a posteriori* or Inductive or common scientific method is called the Aristotelian method. It tries to establish laws or principles by reasoning from a multitude of facts or discoveries to the general principles or laws. The trouble with this method of reasoning is that the discovery of a new fact may upset the whole philosophy like a house of cards.

The principles of Theosophy are usually grasped intuitively. We feel that we know the truth. Then we work out the details by thought and study.

But the word intuition is too often loosely and erroneously used for mere impressions or impulses, or for things perceived psychically or for the results of psycho-physical-sensitivity. These impressions or

perceptions may be quite correct but are more often very imperfect or may be altogether erroneous.

Intuition is the voice of the Monad within us. It comes from Atma-Buddhi-Manas. Being from Atman it is cosmic. It is an infallible perception of Reality. It is the cosmic spirit acting through its vehicle, Buddhi, upon or within the mind, Manas. It is a direct ray of the divine spirit enlightening our minds and hearts.

The still small voice of conscience is from Buddhi-Manas and therefore pertains to our own individuality. It is the ethical wisdom gathered through many lives and stored in the immortal individuality — Buddhi-Manas. Practically speaking it is an almost infallible guide to conduct — at least it is the best we have. Any fallibility comes not from conscience but from the imperfection of our brain-minds which refuse to listen, or listening, pervert the message. Conscience is often spoken of as troublesome or even painful. Quite so to the headstrong animal-man which brooks no restraint. The elemental nature within us objects to restraint, but the success and happiness of our lives depends upon such restraint.

Conscience is that within us which takes note of the laws of right and wrong. These laws are as fundamental in Nature as is the law of gravity. If you lose your hold on the steering wheel of your auto you end up in the hospital or the morgue. If you lose control of your animal nature disaster is equally certain. Most of the mistakes and sufferings of our lives are the direct result of this lack of self-control. The animal has only sense enough to strive for its own wants. It has not the intelligence to rule the complicated affairs of human life. The truth is that even the animal part of us is far happier when it is doing the right thing. It is then at peace and is content. Properly controlled, the personal nature within us is the greatest servant in the world. It is the conscience which is the rein restraining and guiding the personal self away from wrong and into right action. Therefore it is man's best friend. It is a better friend than his mother because it is still with him where she cannot go. It might be aptly called a protective radar-beam

that, observed, will save one's ship of life from a crash landing.

It would be a matter of simple common sense to cultivate a more intimate relation to so helpful and faithful a friend. If listened to attentively and followed conscientiously it might work wonders, a spiritual magic, in our lives and characters by cleaning up our minds and hearts to such an extent that the spiritual light of intuition might illuminate our minds, to such a degree as to make geniuses of us. Let's try it.

The Theosophical Forum

EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION OF ANIMALS — *J. T. Arneson*

"Coming Events Cast Their Shadows Before"

On a sultry July afternoon in 1939, a cloudburst roared down East Birch Creek canyon and devastated the little town of Pilot Rock, Oregon. A rancher on his way to town that morning was amazed at the uncommon activity among the little animals which made their homes along the creek. Clearly, something had disturbed them. Altogether he saw countless "chucks" and gophers, bull snakes, rabbits, and a covey of quail with many very young fledglings, all headed for higher ground.

The day had begun clear and bright, without a cloud to mar its beauty. About noon large thunderheads began to appear over the foothills. Then, within an hour, the storm broke. Immediately every ravine became a torrent, sending a fifteen-foot wall of muddy water down the main canyon, destroying everything in its path.

Could it have been an accident of nature that sent these creatures scurrying for higher ground? Or did some subtle intelligence warn them of impending danger? "Coming events cast their shadows before." Surely the Cosmic vibrations on that morning must have been heavy with evil portent.

THE HOUND'S NOSE

There is something positively uncanny about the amazing sensitivity of a hound's nose. Under favorable conditions he can follow a trail many days old. Surely here is involved some higher and infinitely finer instinct than mere sense of smell. Undoubtedly the dog is able to pick up the vibrations from the magnetic aura of the person being trailed. This faculty enables the dog to follow a trail where no vestige of scent remains, and in addition he gets a clear-cut mental picture of his quarry.

BATS

A strange creature is the bat. Although nearly blind, he comes forth after dark to wheel in dizzy circles through the forest — and he never strikes a twig. What is his secret? Science has a rather involved theory that the bat locates objects about him by means of sound vibrations. The bat emits a throaty cry while in flight, and it is thought that the vibration bounces back after the manner of radar, thus warning him of objects in his path.

While this theory sounds plausible enough and may be well founded, it does not explain how the bat locates his food supply nor how he is able to return unerringly to his own barn loft or hollow tree. It would seem that this tiny creature, too, possesses some "sixth" sense to guide him in his peregrinations.

FISH, TOO, ARE SENSITIVE

Fish, too, are sensitive to all manner of vibrations, and water is an excellent conductor of sound waves. Test this the next time you go swimming. With your head submerged, tap two stones together and note how the sound is amplified.

A marine returning from service in the Solomon Islands reported witnessing a most unusual method of catching fish. He told how a native fisherman, in a guttural chant "shouted at the water" and that numerous fish came to the surface, to be gathered into the boat. This was not told as a "fish story" nor a tall tale, incredible though it sounds. The marine who told the story could offer no explanation. He did not know that the native probably intoned certain vowel sounds, the vibrations of which stupefied the fish and made the waters untenable for them. Most likely, the tones used so agitated the water that the fish were forced to the surface to escape an unpleasant vibration.

ARE BIRDS PSYCHIC?

It is hardly believable that birds or animals are psychic, for this would seem to imply a spiritual background. But it is said that the crow always knows when the farmer has a gun, and the buzzard was

thought by early plainmen to be an ill omen, a harbinger of death.

But all birds are extremely sensitive to all manner of vibrations. They are dependent upon vibrations for most of their food. It is by this means that the robin locates a worm on the lawn. To say he "hears" the worm in the soil is misleading; actually he "feels" it, for the worm, like all forms of insect life, puts out a minute vibration. It is in this way, too, that the woodpecker detects larvae beneath the bark of a dead tree. And it would seem that the buzzard, far from being psychic, is able to trail a thirst-crazed steer simply by picking up the vibrations of fear which emanate from the glands of the stricken animal.

THE ASTRAL LIGHT

The earth is enveloped in an imponderable aether which mirrors every event that takes place — past, present and future. In the Orient there is wide knowledge and acceptance of this doctrine. It is known as the "Akasa." As a television set produces a picture on the screen by means of electrical impulses, in like manner this Akasa, through Cosmic vibrations, materializes a picture of a coming event in the mind of one attuned to receive it. It is a living picture gallery of worldly events, and is the "Recording Angel" to the Christian.

Mother Nature has endowed many of her tiny creatures with strange instincts before which man, in all his vaunted intelligence, stands humbled. No doubt these instincts are necessary to their way of life and to perpetuate their species in a hostile world. If man were less of a materialist and could live closer to the heart of Nature, she would be less reticent in revealing to him her manifold mysteries.

There is much evidence to support the theory that animals are given the ability to prognosticate coming events. Farm animals "act up" before a weather change, and swallows fly high before a storm. And the farmer always looks for cold weather when pigs carry straw. It is not thought that pigs are capable of logical reasoning; therefore it must be concluded that they receive from the Akasa a strong mental impression or a picture of the approaching blizzard.

MAN'S REASON FOR BEING — *Jeanne Abele*

At a recent Theosophical meeting, the question was asked: Since physical man's plight is so pitiable, his pleasure so fleeting, his efforts so weak, his achievements of so little account, why not eliminate this phase of existence, and start our upward journey from the next plane?

Superficially, it would seem a fair, if somewhat audacious question. However, we know that in the Divine economy there is reason and place for all that is. Therefore, if we tried to eliminate one phase of our development, we would in effect be trying to upset the Divine balance. Since we know this to be an impossible feat, we must accept the obvious fact that there is a reason for this phase of existence. There have been many and varied attempts to find the reason — some have fallen short of presenting an acceptable explanation; others have cast only partial light on the subject; still others are understandable to the few whose minds have been prepared by lengthy study and research.

But there remain great numbers of us who are standing on the threshold, our hand on the door of revelation, the conviction growing within us that behind this door is the knowledge for which we seek, the answer to the eternal WHY . . . but where is the key to unlock the door? In what way can we command, "Open, Sesame!"

There are many keys to the kingdom of understanding. Herein is contained one simple interpretation of the Plan of the Whole, and of man's integral part in it.

Now we are taught in Theosophy that the Divine Spark animates and motivates All. It is omnipresent; however, in the lower strata the reflection of Divinity is unconscious. Not until it reaches the plane of human existence does it become self-conscious. The lower strata would seem, metaphysically, to undulate and pulsate with this tremendous unconscious Force; the Force breaks from time to time through the crest of one of its own waves, gains entree through the first incarnation

of some particular ego, and starts its upward journey toward complete identity with Divinity.

This physical vehicle is the first in a planned series of levels through which the force must rise. There is no possibility of skipping any step in the progression, because each opens into the next — there is no other means of entrance. The length of time spent on each level can be shortened through the advantageous use of Free Will, but this cannot be utilized until the God Spark becomes self-conscious.

We now see the immediate necessity for physical man. But this does not completely resolve the question. We appear to have a unit, man, replete with metaphysical potentialities; where and how and why does he take a place in the material world?

The most advanced material scientists rest today in the conviction that every physical idea has its metaphysical complement. They place man in families, families in races, races in the world, the world in its place in the solar system, our system in relation to the countless other systems in the universe. And the universe? The universe, they agree, is the expression of some great force which they call by various names, and which we recognize as Divinity, the same Divinity whose reflection has found its way into self-consciousness through man.

So we see man on the one hand as a member — a small part of a complex physical whole. And here the question arises: If man is no more than a tiny cog in a huge mechanism, an infinitesimal automaton who has one set job to do, one place to occupy, of what value is this self-consciousness of which we speak? Why is he given self-consciousness, if his pattern is already so prepared for him that he could walk through his performance without the need to be conscious of what he is doing?

To answer this query, we must consider the metaphysical nature of man. This is the side of his nature which makes him an individual, which gives him the manner and means of being a unique expression of Divinity. Because it is from this side of his nature that the

opportunity for the use of Free Will comes. Outwardly, he finds himself stopped by the pre-arranged pattern of the physical universe. But if he turns inward, he will find the Divine Spark leading him through the labyrinth of his inner being, unfolding increasingly beautiful vistas of joyous activity, and opportunities for higher and higher expression of the qualities of Divinity — these without limit, obtainable through the exercise of Desire and Free Will.

Up and up and up he rises, the individual in whom all principles merge. So we have man as a complete entity. On the one hand a part of the whole — on the other, the whole of all his parts.

Integrating the two aspects, man appears in truth as the portal through which passes the reflection of Divinity from unconsciousness to self-consciousness; the focal point of the limitless freedom of the metaphysical, and the orderly pattern of the physical; dynamically useful, utterly necessary. Because only through man flows the rich abundance of the whole; through him comes the interpretation and evaluation in spiritual terms of the physical universe; through him the lessons learned from the physical pattern serve as a spring-board to spiritual progression.

And learning his place and necessity in the Divine economy, never again will he pose the melancholy question, Why was I born? Why am I living? He has the joyful answer already before him: "EACH ONE OF YOU IS AN INCARNATE GOD. BE IT!"

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF MAN — *Lydia Ross and C. J. Ryan*

What light does Theosophy throw upon the problem of man's real nature?

First of all, Theosophy denies that man is merely a "large-brained ape," perishing at death, as it is alleged "all other animals" do. Neither is he the ordinary personality of theology, created at birth and departing into an eternity of happiness or misery after death. The real man is a glorious, immortal Intelligence, striving to evolve to greater heights. This inner self passes through many lives on earth as it works onward and learns by experience. The ordinary human personality, Mr. A. or Mrs. B., is only a temporary instrument through which the Higher Self comes in touch with the ordinary world of matter.

Behind or above even this greater Self, stands a still more sublime Light, a Spark of the Central Divine Flame. This Light is hidden behind the deeply enshrouding veils which constitute the composite nature of man, but we can find it if we will. Though the journey may be long and hard, the reward is past all telling.

That is a wonderful picture. What is the first step on this journey?

It is simple — to practise brotherhood, to become unselfish. That is the only way to the inner Divinity. The Grecian Oracle said "Man know thyself," the god within; and when Jesus said "Ye are gods" and "the kingdom of God is within you," he was only repeating the message of all the World-Teachers. Have you studied your own nature without fear or favor?

Very little, and I have not been overpleased with what I found when I tried. There seem to be two natures within which do not agree. My conscience and my desires are so often at loggerheads!

You have recognized that we have at least two natures, a higher and a lower, but there are many degrees between the man of flesh and the god. Your present personality, with its limitations and inner conflicts, is one of these.

That seems strange. I always thought I was — well, just myself, a thinking being, a unit.

Here is a suggestion to think over. Compare the state of a man who is

thoughtful of others and self-sacrificing, with that of one who thinks of nothing but his own self-interest. Remember how a soldier may get a wound and never feel it in the heat of battle, or a student forget his meals when intent upon a problem. These are familiar illustrations of different states of consciousness.

Do you mean that they are only different sides of the same human nature?

Yes, but they point to something deeper, to a far greater complexity in the constitution of man than has been suspected in the West. Man is far more than he appears, even the worst of us.

Well, it has never seemed reasonable to me that "pure Spirit" could directly interlock with gross matter, yet most believers in a future life speak of nothing but "body and soul." It is not scientific.

No indeed, and such a crude notion shows how far Western thought has fallen behind the profound psychology of the great Eastern philosophies. Theosophy clears up that incongruity and many others by its scientific analysis of the graded links that unite the opposite poles of our being.

That is a new idea to me. Please explain those elements.

Theosophy classifies man on earth into seven main "principles" or components. This arrangement is in harmony with such great natural laws as we find in the sevenfold divisions of light, sound, the chemical elements, etc. The human septenary can be condensed into three major divisions for convenience. Here is an arrangement which combines both enumerations in simple form:

SPIRIT

Atman	the Immortal Self or Divine "Monad."
Buddhi	the Spiritual Soul, the first Veil of Atman.

SOUL

Manas (higher part)	the Higher Mind, illuminated by Buddhi. The Reincarnating Ego.
Manas (lower part)	the ordinary brain-mind. The "Human" Ego.
Kama	the element of Desire. The Driving Energy in man.

BODY

Prana	the Vital Energy, the Life-principle.
Linga-sarira	the Model Body or Ethereal Framework.
Sthula-sarira	the Physical Body.

The foreign names are Sanskrit, and are more expressive than the English

equivalents, as you will find when you study Theosophy.

The upper combination, or "Spirit," is the highest, immortal essence in Nature and in ourselves, the Spark of the Divine Flame. It cannot properly be called "human" in our present imperfect state of evolution. These diviner principles are beyond our highest imagination, but we can learn to tread the path which leads onwards and upwards to the highest illumination — the path of unselfish love and service to humanity. Those who have followed it to the end are the supermen, the Buddhas and the Christs.

The Intermediate Duad, called "Soul," is the highest *thinking* part of our really human nature. The higher mind, or Manas, is the Reincarnating Ego, the enduring source or "parent-soul" of the ordinary mortal personality. This spiritual self projects, as it were, a Ray or Shadow from itself at every new incarnation, a pale and too often distorted reflection, that is called the Lower Manas. The Reincarnating Ego is like a long-lived tree which puts forth its leaves for a season and in the autumn withdraws the sap to enrich the trunk. The Lower Manas is the ordinary brain-mind with its emotions and limitations. Owing to its close association on earth with the driving force of Kama or Desire, it is the battlefield of the inner conflict you have described. Desire may be either good or evil, according to the thought that colors it, but it is the necessary impulse by which we rise. Unfortunately for us, the temptations of "the world, the flesh, and the devil" are so strong that the Lower Manas, or Kama-Manas, is easily entangled in a thousand illusions. But even those who have fallen into grave errors feel something of the high and holy aspirations flowing from the inner god, the "Father in Heaven," and every man has the power of choice. We are our own saviors.

Do I understand, then, that the lower reflection of this Thinker is the personality that I call "myself," with all my faults and failings, and that the Higher Manas is a kind of overshadowing Guardian which lives in a higher spiritual state?

That is partly correct, but the Reincarnating Ego is not really a different being from yourself, although you may have difficulty in recognizing its presence. It is the better and nobler side of your thinking being, as it were, and, in its comparative freedom from the bondage of matter, it has a far greater range of spiritual power and knowledge than the brain-mind. It carries the memories of all the previous incarnations, which are a sealed book to the personality of any one lifetime. It knows the justice of all that happens to the personality — that this is the result of the acts and thoughts of former lives. When possible, it

breaks through the barriers to illuminate some difficult problem with a flash of intuition, or maybe to warn against coming danger. It is the inspiration of genius.

Tell me something about the lowest division of the three.

Little need be said about the body of flesh. It is the most fleeting and illusory of all. Every moment new particles are streaming in and others are passing out, and even its very atoms are "mostly holes" as science has lately discovered. The body is not the producer of life and thought, but is the result of them. The life-energy which holds it together, Prana, or the "Breath of Life," is a part of the Universal Life acting through a subtle, semi-material form or model body on which the physical body is built. This is the Linga-sarira or "Astral Body." It can be studied only under unusual conditions, but it is not *spiritual*, though made of ethereal substance. It is the necessary channel or link between the mind and the brain, and when its remarkable properties are studied by the psychologists of the future they will find the answer to many problems.

Then can this Astral Body be separated from the physical?

Very rarely, except in the natural way during sleep. Occasionally the Astral Body of a living person who is a medium detaches itself and assumes the appearance of another human being, because it is plastic and can reflect images existing in the ether or in the minds of others. Sometimes the Astral Body of a deceased person becomes visible for a short time after death, and is mistaken for the true "spirit" which has passed inwards and onwards beyond our reach.

Is this the explanation of well-authenticated ghost stories?

In some cases, probably; but we cannot pursue that subject now, as it would lead us too far afield. The Linga-sarira changes very little during life, but, as a rule, it breaks up soon after death.

What becomes of the higher elements after death? What happens to "me," with all my weaknesses and worldly passions?

There is, of course, no "death" for the spiritual part of us. Death is the twin brother of sleep. Just as we lay aside our garments after the day's work and lie down to rest, so does the Reincarnating Ego and its "reflection," the Lower Manas, abandon the physical and astral bodies when they are no longer needed. After certain experiences which follow the great change, the Lower

Manas passes through a period of purification in a state called "Kama-loka." For the average person this is a quiet and painless process, but for the selfish and grossly sensual it is indeed far from pleasant. When the purification is accomplished the purified Lower Manas is absorbed into the bosom of its parent, the Higher Manas, from which it originally came. In this high, spiritual state, called "Devachan," it enjoys unspeakable peace and happiness until the hour strikes for another incarnation on earth.

Are the lower desires entirely dissipated when this purification is complete?

For a while they are associated with the dregs of the Lower Manas, which are too heavily weighted with evil to rise to spiritual planes, but they finally disintegrate. We cannot, however, escape the consequences of our acts and thoughts, good or bad. Their seeds remain dormant until the next incarnation, when they send out roots and branches to form a new personality. The universal law of Karman, of Cause and Effect, cannot be avoided.

How do the various elements in man assemble for the next life?

When the time comes for a new experience on earth, the Reincarnating Ego feels the stirring of the seeds that were sown in the past. By perfectly natural means the lower principles are re-formed. A new Astral Body is developed of the required kind; upon this the physical takes shape; and then the animating energy of Prana, the Breath of Life, comes into action. Meanwhile and progressively, the Higher Manas sends out its Ray to illuminate the brain of the growing child, and the curtain rises on a new act in the drama of our evolution toward human perfection.

The Theosophical Forum

HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR . . .

From writings of H. P. BLAVATSKY in "Lucifer"

We stand at the parting of the ways, where the one path leads down the acclivity to the dark valley of ignorance, and the other climbs upward toward the pure celestial level of being. For us, it is to utter the cry of warning, and the word of encouragement: *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear* — AND BE WISE. — Vol. III, No. 13, p. 3

The Theosophical Society, indeed, as a body, is the *only* one which opens its arms *to all*, imposing on none its own special beliefs, strictly limited to the smaller *inner* group within it, called the Esoteric Section. It is truly Universal in spirit and constitution. It recognises and fosters no exclusiveness, no preconceptions. In the T. S. alone do men meet in the common search for truth, on a platform from which all dogmatism, all sectarianism, all mutual party hatred and condemnation are excluded; for, accepting every grain of truth wherever it is found, it waits in patience till the chaff that accompanies it falls off by itself. . . . Theosophy is monistic through and through. It seeks the one Truth in all religions, in all science, in all experience, as in every system of thought. What aim can be nobler, more universal, more all-embracing? — Vol. IV, No. 23, pp. 359-60

For the extension of the theosophical movement, a useful channel for the irrigation of the dry fields of contemporary thought with the water of life, Branches are needed everywhere; not mere groups of passive sympathisers, such as the slumbering army of church-goers, whose eyes are shut while the "devil" sweeps the field; no, not such. Active, wide-awake, earnest, unselfish Branches are needed, whose members shall not be constantly unmasking their selfishness by asking "What will it profit us to join the Theosophical Society, and how much will it harm us?" but be putting to themselves the question "Can we not do substantial good to mankind by working in this good cause with all our

hearts, our minds, and our strength?" — Vol. III, No. 14, p. 92

There is no room for *personalities* in a work like ours; and all must be ready, as the Founders are, if needs be, for the car of Jaggenath to crush them *individually for the good of all*. — Vol. III, No. 15 p. 187

A true theosophist must be a cosmopolitan in his heart. He must embrace mankind, the whole of humanity in his philanthropic feelings. — Vol. III, No. 16, p. 267

Surely we learn better and profit more by criticism than by flattery, and we amend our ways more through the abuse of our enemies than the blind pandering of our friends. — Vol. IV, No. 19, p. 4

Occult truth cannot be absorbed by a mind that is filled with preconception, prejudice, or suspicion. It is something to be perceived by the intuition rather than by the reason; being by nature spiritual, not material. Some are so constituted as to be incapable of acquiring knowledge by the exercise of the spiritual faculty; e.g. the great majority of physicists. Such are slow, if not wholly incapable of grasping the ultimate truths behind the phenomena of existence. There are many such in the Society; and the body of the discontented are recruited from their ranks. Such persons readily persuade themselves that later teachings, received from exactly the same source as earlier ones, are either false or have been tampered with by chelas, or even third parties. Suspicion and inharmony are the natural result, the psychic atmosphere, so to say, is thrown into confusion, and the reaction, even upon the stauncher students, is very harmful.

Sometimes vanity blinds what was at first strong intuition, the mind is effectually closed against the admission of new truth, and the aspiring student is thrown back to the point where he began. Having jumped at some particular conclusion of his own without full study of the subject, and before the teaching had been fully expounded, his tendency, when proved wrong, is to listen only to the voice of his self-adulation, and cling to his views, whether right or wrong. The Lord Buddha particularly warned his hearers against forming beliefs upon tradition or authority, and before having thoroughly inquired into the subject. —

Is it not enough to bear the burden of the knowledge that from birth to death, the least, the most unimportant, unit of the human family exercises an influence over, and receives in his turn, as unconsciously as he breathes, that of every other unit whom he approaches, or who comes in contact with him? Each of us either adds to or diminishes the sum total of human happiness and human misery, "not only of the present, but of every subsequent age of humanity." — Vol. IV, No. 19, p. 9

Karma, thus, is simply *action*, a concatenation of *causes and effects*. That which adjusts each effect to its direct cause; that which guides invisibly and as unerringly these effects to choose, as the field of their operation, the *right person in the right place*, is what we call *Karmic law*. What is it? Shall we call it the hand of Providence? We cannot do so, especially in Christian lands, because the term has been connected with, and interpreted theologically as, the *foresight* and *personal design* of a personal god; and because in the active laws of Karma — *absolute Equity* — based on the Universal Harmony, there is neither foresight nor desire; and because again, it is our own actions, thoughts, and deeds which *guide that law*, instead of being guided by it. "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he reap." It is only a very unphilosophical and illogical theology which can speak in one breath of *free will*, and grace or damnation *being pre-ordained* to every human *from* (?) eternity, as though eternity could have a beginning *to start from*! But this question would lead us too far into metaphysical disquisitions. Suffice it to say that Karma leads us to rebirth, and that rebirth generates new Karma while working off the old, *Sanchita Karma*. Both are indissolubly bound up, one in the other. Let us get rid of *Karma*, if we would get rid of the miseries of rebirths or — REINCARNATION. — Vol. IV, No. 20, p. 89

There are a few articles of belief among the best theosophists, the bare mention of which produces upon certain persons and classes of society the effect of a red rag on an infuriated bull. One of these is our belief — very harmless and innocent *per se* — in the existence of very wise and

holy personages, whom some call their MASTERS, while others refer to them as "Mahatmas."

Now, these may or may not actually exist — (we say they do); they may or may not be as wise, or possess altogether the wonderful powers ascribed to, and claimed for them. All this is a question of *personal knowledge* — or, in some cases, faith. Yet, there are the 350,000,000 of India alone who believe since time immemorial in their great Yogis and Mahatmas, and who feel as certain of their existence in every age, from countless centuries back down to the present day, as they feel sure of their own lives. Are they to be treated for this as superstitious, self-deceived fools? — Vol. IV, No. 22, p. 269

What then are the "matters" that seem to Mr. Bradlaugh "as *unreal* as it is possible for any fiction to be"? We hope he is not referring to those physical phenomena, which most unfortunately have been confused in the Western mind with philosophical Theosophy? Real as these manifestations are — inasmuch as they were *not* produced by "conjuring tricks" of any kind — still the best of them are, ever were and ever will be, no better than *psychological illusions*, as the writer herself always called them to the disgust of many of her phenomenally inclined friends. These "unrealities" were all very well as *toys*, during the infancy of Theosophy; but we can assure Mr. Bradlaugh that all his Secularists might join the T. S. without ever being expected to believe in them — even though he himself produces the same "unreal" but *beneficent* "illusions" in his mesmeric cures, of many of which we heard long ago. And surely the editor of the *National Reformer* will not call "unreal" the ethical and ennobling aspects of Theosophy, the undeniable effects of which are so apparent among the bulk of Theosophists — notwithstanding a back-biting and quarreling minority? Surely again he will not deny the elevating and strengthening influence of such beliefs as those in Reincarnation and Karma, doctrines which solve undeniably many a social problem that seeks elsewhere in vain for a solution? . . .

The phenomena of thought-transference, hypnotism, suggestion, and

many other mental and psychic manifestations, formerly regarded as supernatural or the work of the devil, are now recognized as purely natural phenomena. And yet it is in truth the same powers, only intensified tenfold, that are those "unrealities" Mr. Bradlaugh speaks about. Manipulated by those who have inherited the tradition of thousands of years of study and observation of such forces, their laws and modes of operations — what wonder that they should result in effects, unknown to science, but *supernatural* only in the eyes of ignorance. — Vol. IV, No. 23, pp. 357-8

Things have strangely altered since the days of antiquity, when the truly wise made it their first duty to conceal their knowledge, deeming it too sacred even to mention before the *hoi polloi*. While the medieval *Rosecroix*, the true philosopher, keeping old Socrates in mind, repeated daily that all he knew was that he knew nothing, his modern self-styled successor announces in our day, through press and public, that those mysteries in Nature and her Occult laws of which he knows nothing, have never existed at all. There was a time when the acquirement of Divine Wisdom (*Sapientia*) required the sacrifice and devotion of a man's whole life. It depended on such things as the purity of the candidate's motives, on his fearlessness and independence of spirit; but now, to receive a patent for wisdom and adeptship requires only unblushing impudence. A certificate of divine wisdom is now decreed, and delivered to a self-styled "*Adeptus*" by a regular majority of votes of profane and easily-caught gulls, while a host of magpies driven away from the roof of the Temple of Science will herald it to the world in every market-place and fair. Tell the public that now, even as of old, the genuine and sincere observer of life and its underlying phenomena, the intelligent co-worker with nature, may, by becoming an expert in her mysteries thereby become a "wise" man, in the terrestrial sense of the word, but that never will a *materialist* wrench from nature any secret on a higher plane — and you will be laughed to scorn. Add, that no "wisdom from above" descends on any one save on the *sine qua non* condition of leaving at the threshold of the Occult every atom of selfishness, or desire for personal ends and benefit — and you will be

speedily declared by your audience a candidate for the lunatic asylum. Nevertheless, this is an old, very old truism. Nature gives up her innermost secrets and imparts *true wisdom* only to him, who seeks truth for its own sake, and who craves for knowledge in order to confer benefits on others, not on his own unimportant personality. And, as it is precisely to this *personal benefit* that nearly every candidate for adeptship and magic looks, and that few are they, who consent to learn at such a heavy price and so small a benefit for themselves in prospect — the really wise Occultists become with every century fewer and rarer. How many are there, indeed, who would not prefer the will-o'-the-wisp of even passing fame to the steady and evergrowing light of eternal, *divine* knowledge, if the latter has to remain, for all but oneself — a light under the bushel? — Vol. VII, No. 37, p. 5

But what has the new cycle in store for humanity? Will it be merely a continuation of the present, only in darker and more terrible colours? Or shall a new day dawn for mankind, a day of pure sunlight, of truth, of charity, of true happiness for all? The answer depends mainly on the few Theosophists who, true to their colours through good repute and ill, still fight the battle of Truth against the powers of Darkness. . . .

If Theosophy prevailing in the struggle, its all-embracing philosophy strikes deep root into the minds and hearts of men, if its doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma, in other words, of Hope and Responsibility, find a home in the lives of the new generation, then, indeed, will dawn the day of joy and gladness for all who now suffer and are outcast. For real Theosophy is ALTRUISM, and we cannot repeat it too often. It is brotherly love, mutual help, unswerving devotion to Truth. If once men do but realise that in these alone can true happiness be found, and never in wealth, possessions, or any selfish gratification, then the dark clouds will roll away, and a new humanity will be born upon earth. Then, the GOLDEN AGE will be there, indeed.

But if not, then the storm will burst, and our boasted western civilization and enlightenment will sink in such a sea of horror that its parallel history has never yet recorded. — Vol. IV, No. 21, p. 188

THE LAUGHTER OF THE GODS — *Madeline Clark*

A religion that is long-faced is no true religion at all. The sense of fun, that deep, good-humored undercurrent in every normal human heart, has in it the purest elements of reverence. Yielding to it, perhaps at moments of greatest stress and strain, we hear the laughter of the gods — a laughter that can be and is wholly compassionate because they see the larger vision of things, the perspective of destiny that is hidden from our lesser human sight. Theosophy, in its religious aspect, admits of fun and humor up to the very last steps upon the heights of attainment.

When A. P. Sinnett sent a present of a pipe to the Master M. (p. 374 of *The Mahatma Letters*) the answer came, ". . . The pipe is short and my nose long, so we will agree very well together, I hope. . ." H. P. Blavatsky's sparkling wit enlivens her writings so that they are a perennial delight. Her frequent references to her "Kalmuk" features, and humorous allusions to the many tragic situations in which she found herself through the duplicity or cruelty of others, are classics of the tragi-comic. We have the story of William Q. Judge playing leap-frog with Olcott and the Messrs. Keightley in the back garden of the London Headquarters after one of the worst of the meetings during his persecution when the tension was at its height. Those now living who knew Judge still carry with them the memory of his flashing smile, hinting at volumes of humorous possibilities that might lie behind it. Katherine Tingley would entertain us by the hour with madcap tales of her girlhood escapades, while her hands as well as ours were busy with sewing in preparation for one of her great dramatic productions at Point Loma. An early keynote given by her to her students was the now familiar "Life is joy!" Dr. de Purucker had a great sense of the whimsical, and took the most exquisite delight in small drolleries. With all four of these beloved Teachers there was that indescribable quality of artless glee that can only be thought of as childlike in the truest

sense, for they had indeed touched, more nearly than we, the "kingdom of heaven." We might add here in passing that that happy freedom of spirit is still with us in our present Leader.

And what is the significance of all this? Is the sense of humor merely a shallow means of relieving the tension of strenuous effort such as has always been necessary in our Theosophical work as in all normal and beautiful human activity? G. de P., who let us in on so many sidelights to the Teachings, always pointed out that the sense of humor is a spiritual quality. And we can easily see why. We can see what a safeguard it can be on the Path, preventing us from taking ourselves — our personal small selves — too seriously, saving us from some of the most — to us unsuspected, but in the eyes of the Teachers the most obvious — pitfalls connected with an undue solemn sense of our own great worthiness and consequent importance, and of what we consider is our due after many years of devoted service, etc. There is no more wholesome homily, for Theosophist or non-Theosophist, than G. de P.'s talk on "Why not Laugh at Yourself?" which is to be found on page 75 of his posthumous book *Wind of the Spirit*. As a fellow-student has just aptly remarked, "Were it possible, all solemnity and no humor would make man a dull and stupid creature, *and perhaps even an evil creature.*" Even so.

The Laughter of the Gods! Healing in its compassionate undertones; terrible in its reverberations; bringing gentle ease to those tired for the moment in their efforts for others; shaking with its thunders the very foundations of those houses built with cards, the haunts of self-seeking and selfishness: — a laughter that we can never understand until we move away from the confines of the petty and the small, and enter into the gods' own spacious dwellings, where we may have some share in their confabulations for the benefit of the world and all creatures.

LIGHT ON HUMAN EVOLUTION — *Charles J. Ryan*

Not long after the Theosophical Society was established in India the Masters told Mr. Sinnett that they wanted an institution that "would arrest the attention of the highest minds." One of the obstacles to more rapid progress has been the teaching of the mechanistic, soulless form of human evolution which prevails so widely among the authorities who guide the minds and direct the studies of the rising generation in many educational institutions, at least in the area of Western culture. This has, of course, been the result of scientific research which broke down the literal accuracy of the Bible story of the creation of man about 6000 years ago. Scientists and theologians entirely failed to recognize the Oriental method of stating great truths in fanciful allegorical form; but, as a matter of fact, the story of Genesis enshrines the true story of man's evolution in a poetical disguise which becomes perfectly clear when the key to its interpretation brought in *The Secret Doctrine* is applied.

The destruction of the superstitious literal interpretation of the medieval ages was a good thing, and also the establishment of the broad principle of evolution even in a very limited shape. But Darwinism or Neo-Darwinism — no matter which — lost touch with any suggestion of spiritual or intelligent Guidance in evolution, and in spite of increasing tendency in other scientific departments toward less mechanistic views, "the still, small voice" of Theosophy with its magnificent exposition of Cosmic and human evolution finds it difficult to attract the attention of the "highest minds" who control our universities and colleges. But the unexpected discoveries in Africa and Eastern Asia have begun to tell, and we believe it is no exaggeration to say that the work of devoted Theosophists for the last seventy years or so has permeated the mental atmosphere of the world with "spiritually-scientific" concepts whose effects are now becoming apparent. Anyway an increasing number of experts are beginning to doubt whether the

accepted arguments for the ape-ancestry of Man are valid. Among these are such eminent anthropologists as Dr. Robert Broom, Professor Frederic Wood-Jones and others. Dr. Broom is not the only anthropologist who has deplored the mysterious disappearance or deliberate neglect of certain fossil evidence which throws doubt on current popular theories. According to Dr. G. W. H. Schepers, writing against the theory that Man is an offshoot of the Anthropoid Ape, "Those who believe differently have either spoilt their reputations or have wisely remained silent on the subject"!

Within the last twenty years or so the scientific world has been profoundly stirred by remarkable discoveries in South Africa of very ancient remains of the so-called Ape-Man, Anthropoid Apes of a more highly advanced type than anything yet known. Intensive research is continuing to bring to light many facts of interest to Theosophical students who are sufficiently acquainted with the technique of anthropological studies to appreciate the importance of certain new discoveries in support of H. P. Blavatsky's arguments in *The Secret Doctrine* against the theory that man is the direct descendant of some ancient variety of the Anthropoid Ape with all its materialistic implications.

In regard to this South African development the Theosophical University Library at Covina has just received a valuable and welcome addition, *The South African Fossil Ape-Men, the Australopithecus*, published by the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, and presented by Dr. Robert Broom, F. R. S. "in memory of a happy day spent at Point Loma in 1937," as he writes. The main portion of this highly technical and fully illustrated study of the very humanlike "Ape-Men" bones found in the Transvaal is written by Dr. Broom who has devoted many years of intensive research and study to South African Paleontology, especially in relation to Early Man and the Anthropoids. He has developed profoundly spiritual concepts of human evolution which are fundamentally in harmony with those of the Ancient Wisdom though in some matters the latter represents a wider and more Cosmic picture of man's upward journey to the gods.

The second part of the book is written by another highly-qualified scientist, Dr. G. W. H. Schepers, who presents a detailed analysis of the brain casts of the South African Ape-Men, and some striking criticisms of the popular theory, derived from Darwin, that modern humanity was directly descended from some kind of Anthropoid Ape.

The skeletal remains of three types of Ape-Men found at Taungs, Sterkfontein and Kromdraai are particularly interesting because they are by far the nearest to man of any Anthropoid yet found, and at first it was rumored that the desired "missing link," Man's immediate ancestor, had been discovered, but this was soon found to be erroneous. However, as Dr. Broom points out, the structure of the brains of these Ape-Men resembles that of Man far more closely than of those of the other Anthropoid Apes, though of course they are much less in volume than those of the smallest human brain. In some cases the teeth — important factors in the study of relationships — are identical with human teeth. For many reasons the South African Ape-Men are generally and quite reasonably accepted to be a collateral line of Anthropoids which ran for a while side by side with Man, distant cousins as one might say — "poor relations," who died out without leaving any modern representatives. None of the specimens yet found are as old as the most ancient human races. Science has found the true ancestor of man a very elusive personage! How can this be? Where is he hiding?

According to *The Secret Doctrine*, many intermediate forms between intelligent Man (*Homo sapiens*) and the anthropoid apes flourished in very distant ages but *none were predecessors*. They were offshoots from the human stock and were produced by a complex process of miscegenation which is outlined in that Book of Revelation and which is fully discussed in Theosophical literature, but which cannot be described here. Field-Marshal J. C. Smuts, who contributes the Introduction to Dr. Broom's detailed analysis, believes that "we are at any rate coming nearer to the solution of the age-old question of our human origin." According to the Ancient Wisdom, however, certain

factors which must be understood before this can be done have not yet been discovered or even suspected by science. To solve the mystery it will have to brush aside the prejudice against the occult in Nature and learn that the spirit of man can function in other bodies than the physical.

Marshal Smuts says, "Races, like individuals, disappear by the way, but the great march of life goes on steadily, endlessly, to goals beyond our ken, perhaps beyond our present human type." We might add that human life in almost incredibly remote ages has marched through types that would seem very strange to our present understanding, as indicated in *The Secret Doctrine* and mentioned in the most ancient writings and traditions. Among the most important of these transformations, that of the astral to the physical, (still unknown to biology though evidence is available) the reader should consult Volume II, pages 652-3, 689, 737, etc.

About twelve years ago Dr. Broom published his profoundly significant *The Coming of Man*, strictly scientific factually and yet not above the comprehension of the layman, in which he presented his rather unorthodox belief that Natural Selection or any other mechanistic theory of Evolution does not satisfy our sense of fitness, and that *intelligent spiritual forces* are the active agencies in the production of the marvelous variety we see around us. Worse still, he declared that "Man has been the end foreseen from the beginning," a purely Theosophical concept. Since then he has seen no reason to modify his views and in fact the march of discovery has reinforced them. In an article printed in *The Outspan*, a leading South African journal, for April 5, entitled "The Religion of a Scientist," he gives carefully thought-out reasons for believing as Theosophy teaches, that "some great Power had planned the creation of countless human Egos on earth; but that much of the working out of the Plan was the work of subsidiary powers who were neither all-wise nor all-mighty." This would explain the evolution of tetanus germs and tape-worms and poisonous snakes, etc., which has proved such a stumbling-block to theologians and even philosophers! To the materialist he says: "It is awkward to be a

materialist and then find that matter is not a very real substance and that mind has probably more claim to reality than has matter."

Returning to *The South African Fossil Ape-Man*, we find in Dr. Schepers' section a remarkable chapter on "Theory and Speculation" in Darwinism, in which he reaches conclusions that have been familiar to students of Theosophy ever since *The Secret Doctrine* was written, though not to biologists. He shows that facts discovered since Darwin's time throw new light on the evolution of Man and Ape and upset the popular belief that Man is descended from the Anthropoid Apes or even from the Primates, extinct or living. He delineates a hypothesis of man's ancestry that places the line of descent that ultimately became human as entirely free from the Anthropoids or any other Primates. The apelike characteristics of the Anthropoids were permanently differentiated a very long time ago. Man is of a simpler and less differentiated type and yet is supposed by the orthodox school to be descended from some kind of Anthropoid, which is a reversal of the order of Nature. The rule is that after biological forms have reached a limit of differentiation they die out or remain static; they do not reverse the order and return to a lesser degree of physical complexity. Assuming that man descends from an Anthropoid, and to explain the discoveries of remains of quite modern type of Man in what appear to be extremely early geological periods, anthropologists, according to Dr. Schepers, "seek all manner of unlikely explanations for such an "impossibility," even going so far as to discredit usually reliable witnesses."

How many times has this been pointed out with astonishment in this journal and other Theosophical literature!

Dr. Schepers believes that the famous *Pithecanthropus* of Java and the other so-called Dawn-Men — very "low-brows" — are not Primitives but Degenerates (a Theosophical teaching) and he even ventures to declare that not only is the origin of Man unknown but also that of the Anthropoid Apes, and that the primeval mammalian ancestor of both lines of descent may be looked for in the older Tertiary Age. Most

geologists estimate the beginning of the Tertiary to be about 40 to 60 million years ago.

Dr. Schepers' remarks about embryology might almost be taken from *The Secret Doctrine*. He shows that the prenatal stages passed through by Man do not recapitulate the phases of evolution from the Anthropoids down to *Homo sapiens* as called for by the Darwinian theory. For instance, at no time in the process does the human hand or foot resemble those of the apes. He discusses many other facts which have been used to perpetuate the Darwinian ape-ancestry of Man and shows that they have quite another interpretation when considered without prejudice and free from the pressure of the popular scientific creed and the authority of great names. Advanced students of Theosophy who know the difficulty in swimming against the stream of materialistic science (especially strong in biology and evolution) will find this magnificently outspoken analysis of the situation a great help when meeting the objections of the younger generation who have been trained in the colleges to accept the materialistic view of man's nature and origin.

As to Dr. Schepers' position in relation to the possibility of evolution having meaning or purpose we do not wish to be misunderstood. He does not discuss this problem or the existence of a reincarnating spirit in Man but he seemingly accepts the general scientific belief that Man is a purely "natural" evolution from the lower animal kingdom. For the spiritual interpretation of human evolution, however, we must turn to Dr. Broom. But anyway, we should be grateful to Dr. Schepers, for he has taken a long step in agreement with the Theosophical explanation of the appearance of the Anthropoids, and he gives a tremendous age for the early ancestors of Man, even though we may not agree that they were primitive mammals of the Eocene or Oligocene period.

OUR SEVEN-FOLD EARTH — *Allan J. Stover*

Students of occultism have known for untold ages that there is much more to the earth than is generally supposed.

In the Puranas of India there are lengthy accounts of the seven *dwipas*, or sacred continents, which were separated one from the other by seas of salt water, sugar cane juice, wine, butter, curds, milk and fresh water. The whole tradition is so involved and confused as to sound like sheer nonsense to one not having the esoteric keys, for the word *dwipa* may refer to a continent, to a globe of the earth chain, or to something else.

In the folklore and myth of peoples throughout the world, savage, barbarian, civilized, are found references to a storied or layered earth with one or more underworlds and a series of heaven-worlds, often seven in number. Here again we need the light of the esoteric philosophy in order to understand the imagery.

One of the most beautiful descriptions of the earth's seven-fold constitution is to be found in the *Phaedo* of Plato, as translated by Thomas Taylor. Here is an example of the means employed to veil the doctrine of the globes in an earlier age, that of Greece about 300 bc:

The earth is prodigiously great, and we do dwell in places extending from Phasis to the Pillars of Hercules, inhabit only a small portion, about the Mediterranean Sea, like ants or frogs about a marsh.

The places which we inhabit are nothing more than the dregs of this pure earth or cavities into which its dregs continually flow. We are ignorant therefore, that we dwell in the cavities of this earth, and imagine that we inhabit its upper parts. Just as if some one dwelling in the bottom of the sea should think that he resided on its surface, and beholding the sun and the other stars

through the water, should imagine that the sea is the heavens.

For if it is proper to tell you a beautiful fable . . . this earth if one surveys it on high appears like globes covered with twelve skins, and distinguished with colors

This upper earth, too, contains many other animals and men, some of which inhabit its middle parts, others dwell about the air as we do about the sea and others reside in islands which the air flows about and which are situated not far from the continent. And in one word, what water and sea are to us, air is to them; and what air is to us aether is to them. . . . And besides these they have temples and groves in which the Gods dwell in reality . . . the sun, moon and stars are seen by such as they really are.

A similar account is to be found in the Rig Veda, in which, as ordinarily translated, three earths or three strata or layers are mentioned. In *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, page 758, H. P. B. states that in this instance the translators are mistaken, for the three strata or layers do not refer to our globe alone, but to the three layers or planes in which the upper manifested globes are situated, two by two on each plane, one on the descending arc, one on the ascending arc.

Thus, if we are referring to the globes, there are seven earths; if to the planes on which these globes exist there are three; or, if we include Globe D and its cosmic sub-plane, four.

Here, then, is the key which explains legends of a multiple or layered earth, whether three- or four- or seven-fold.

Furthermore, the earth does not exist apart from the lives composing it. It is composed of lives of many grades, all of them evolving and progressing, endlessly. In the human kingdom this evolutionary journey is accomplished through embodiment in a series of Root-Races, Family Races, National Races, Tribal Races, and Tribal Generations. The evolution of the elemental, mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms is accomplished by embodiment in a series of races closely analogous to

that of the human. We may think of this evolutionary journey as a vast musical symphony in which each life, from atom to globe, plays its part, each working in harmony with the rest.

The invisible worlds or planes are composed of lokas and talas, or grades of spiritual and material substances respectively, which combine to form any world or plane, our own for instance.

The lokas are predominantly spiritual in nature, the talas physical, the latter word meaning bottom or lowermost, that is, loaded with matter.

Each one of the globes, including our own earth, contains or is composed of seven lokas and seven talas, there being seven worlds or spheres of existence. They are within each other, not exactly like the skins of an onion, but interpenetrating, and each inner one is finer, more spiritual, more ethereal, than its next outer, and most spiritual of all is the inmost.

We are on one of these loka-tala worlds at the present time and there are six other humanities evolving, similarly to our own, through the loka-talas of Globe D and of the other Globes. The following quotation in this connection is taken from *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, page 405:

These lokas and talas interpenetrate each other. As H. P. Blavatsky says in a very noble passage in *The Secret Doctrine*, they have each one their own "geographical" spheres; the respective inhabitants of the different Lokas and Talas live in their own world, pursue their own vocations, work out their own karmic destiny, even as we do in our world. It is but human egoism that claims so foolishly that ours is the only race of intelligent beings in the boundless Kosmos, and which goes so far as to deny intelligence and consciousness to beings even on other physical planets.

With the seven-fold pattern playing so important a part in the structure of both inner and outer nature, it is to be supposed that the physical structure of our earth follows the same scheme, as indeed it does.

Geology states that the earth consists of a central dense, solid core surrounded by a plastic envelope enclosed within a series of rocky shells upon which, like a layer of dust, lies the crust of land, water and mountains which we know as earth.

Furthermore, aeronautical specialists and radio engineers have shown that the upper atmosphere of the earth is built in a series of layers which have been investigated by radio waves, sound reflection, and sounding balloons.

The first of these atmospheric layers, that zone of clouds and storms which surrounds us to a height of seven to ten miles, is known to science as the *troposphere*. In the figurative terminology of the ancients, this is the sphere of water.

The second layer, in which ozone, a triatomic form of oxygen occurs, is known as the *ozonosphere*. This we may call the sphere of air.

The third layer of the upper atmosphere of the earth is known as the *ionosphere*. It is the sphere of fire, an intensely heated layer of ionization without which we on earth would receive such an amount of ultra-violet light that life for us would be almost impossible.

Above the ionosphere lies the vast reach of space in which the auroral displays occur. This is the realm of Fohat, the sphere of aether.

To summarize: The seven-fold structure of the seven planets, the seven globes, the lokas and talas, as well as that of the races and sub-races, is composed of lives in various stages of evolution. Each unit, from atom to planet, is a living being. Each follows the same evolutionary pathway as far as it can. All are interwoven, interlocking, working together.

The wealth of information in Theosophical books is to be looked upon as consisting of keys to Universal Nature. And these keys are laya points of wisdom from which we may unfold a universe of thought in much the same way that a physical universe unfolds from its center.

PERSONAL PRONOUNS — N. A. Lewis

One of the most profound of teachings in the whole body of Theosophical thought is that of the Higher Self and the duality of man's nature. Students have found a great value, spiritual and practical, in learning to say, "Thy will, not mine, be done." To say "I" from the consciousness of this higher individuality in oneself, from the consciousness of the true Self, is an extremely beautiful experience. Whatever of Divinity man has brought to his experience he has brought through this consciousness, this knowledge of Self.

It is in the light of this higher experience that the real brotherhood of man becomes apparent. We are all one in the perfection of that higher plane, and we are divided in the tragic unconsciousness of it, or in the willful turning from it. Power, wisdom, and beauty stem from that inexhaustible cosmic source, and our evolution consists in spirited movement toward it. Surely, then, our individual fulfilment will lie in the fulfilment of the brotherhood of man, in terms of power, wisdom, and beauty.

And what is the path to that fulfilment? Service. That is part of the answer, that is what we are to *do*.

There is something else, too: Love! If service is the watchful eye or the helping hand of humanity, love is the heart of it. That is what we are to *be*.

In the language of love, a most prominent word is the personal pronoun, "You." It is constantly employed by the lover in expressing to himself and to the beloved the sense he has of expanded horizons, of extended consciousness. The pleasure he feels in saying it is in the fact that it means not only something personal, but also something larger and more inclusive. It expresses identification with something other than self and yet perceived as similar to self. In the expressions of transcendent love we find reference to the beloved as "My Other Self,"

which is regarded as divine. Theosophists can see in this that the lover is expressing his consciousness of his own higher nature. Perhaps equally important is the possibility that he is seeing and expressing the higher self of that other one, the beloved. Metaphysically, in such cases, the difference is only very slight indeed, and the lover experiences a "oneness" with the beloved. The lover says "You," however, or "We," but not "I."

In the same way, the student of yoga, or the man, let us say, who is becoming cosmically aware, experiences this "Other Self," and he regards it as divine. He can serve this other one, he can work "selflessly" in the service of the spirit. But should he say "You," or should he say "I"? Does he conceive of this higher self as the center of the universe and also as the center of himself? Or does he look outward into the world of men and brothers for that center, that focus, of spirituality?

Since it is everywhere, it must be in both places. Isn't that an important yoga, or joining (from Sanskrit *yuj*, to join), which unites the two? Lover, Love, and Beloved — Brother, Service, and Brother — Man, Life, and the Cosmos, can be united by practice of right Pronunciation of the great mantram, "You."

The Theosophical Forum

A PROPHECY AND A CHALLENGE

From the writings of G. de PURUCKER

No thing in this world can prevail against the T. S. and its work as long as we stand united, determined to continue to stand united no matter what may be at times our own personal feelings or convictions regarding others. United we stand; divided we shall fall. There is no doubt of that whatsoever. Remember it. To me it is inexcusable . . . to me it is not only non-understandable but inexcusable, for anyone to hinder our work, even from personal convictions; because such an individual in the Section, or a body of them, a group of them, or scattered individuals among them . . . may imagine that the Society or its officials should act otherwise than has been the case in the past or than is the case at present.

. . . United we shall stand, we shall progress, we shall become prosperous, and we shall do our work. Disunited, fighting amongst ourselves, we shall fall. Of that there is no doubt. . . . At the head stands the Leader, who will not tolerate untheosophical work, untheosophical attitudes towards the hard workers, who will not tolerate the unbrotherly criticism of those who are carrying the burden, filled with charity as my heart always is and loving all the time our dear members, not one of whom has ever wilfully worked against the T. S.; but looking at the history of the past we have seen how, once, the T. S. of H. P. B. was rent in twain because individual thought their opinions were more important than those Theosophic — nay *inherent*, spiritual principles of unity and of the practice of brotherhood and of forgiveness, which make any organization strong and victorious, ultimately, and the lack of which invariably will bring disaster, shipwreck possibly — complete disaster, that is. — *Messages to Conventions*(1), pp. 146-7

If we do not keep the Theosophical Society or the Theosophical

Movement, for to us in our inmost hearts they are one, always fluid, always uncrystallized, always ready to grow, always ready to lead and not to follow — if we are not prepared for this and have not the vision sublime of our destiny as well as of our duty, then we are slack, then we are failing in our *devoir* and are not true pupils or chelas of those to whom some of us at least owe perfect allegiance and all of us owe reverence.

I mean, in other words, that the Theosophical Society is a living body; it is an ensouled organism; it is an organic entity. It is not a mass of crystals changing never except when broken under the hammer of fate. The Theosophical Society is an ensouled body, and therefore not only can it learn, but it can grow, it can become greater. . . . We live and we lead, and therefore we must grow greater with the times as the times themselves wax greater.

For this reason: because the Theosophical Society is ensouled by us, living spirits, is it a growing entity, is it an ensouled organic entity, learning its lessons too, making its mistakes if you will, but learning out of them. But because it learns from its mistakes it advances, changes with the changing times, ready for new eras when the new eras come upon us, ready to seize any new light from the gods and glad of the opportunity to win the new light. We are torchbearers and we must keep our torches alight and lifted, not extinguished and held down in the foolish conviction that what the gods once delivered unto men is unalterable, cannot be changed or improved, and that no further truth can come from the heart of Father Sun. — *Ibid.*, pp. 74-5

Let us, therefore, never forget that the main purpose and object of the Theosophical Movement, and therefore of our own beloved Theosophical Society, is the establishment of a spiritual Brotherhood on earth, devoid of vapid sentimentality and reposing on Nature's own heart as a foundation. For this we Work; for this we strive; for this we live; and the Theosophical Movement is destined to be a wretched and inglorious failure unless we can bring this to pass at least in part — and by the gods immortal it shall be done!

... If The Theosophical Society is to fulfil its destiny and become something different from similar organizations of past time which failed to achieve what they were founded to achieve, then our hearts must soften towards our fellow human beings, and our brains must be enlightened by wisdom which we find in the magnificent doctrines of Theosophy; and above everything else the realization of our duty to our fellows must take sole and single possession of our consciousness. Then shall we succeed, and then will The Theosophical Society live on and expand into the glorious destiny which it will not only have by right, but will inevitably attain.

... I tell you frankly, my beloved Comrades on the Path, that my heart aches when I survey the past history of the Theosophical Movement, and recall the feeble and halting responses of so many to the sublime ideal that my three great Predecessors strived for and fought for and lived for. Nevertheless the record in achievement of those three great Theosophists is a marvelous one: it is stainless and grand. But let it not now once again happen, as it then almost happened, that the Theosophical Movement come near to becoming a wreck on the sand-banks of the River of Life. — Sixth General Letter, April 20, 1930. To the Members of the Theosophical Society throughout the World and to Members of the E. S.

Brotherhood is no sentimental doctrine taught by lip-altruists in an attempt to gain a following for themselves among men, but is founded upon universal Nature's most fundamental fact. Living in accordance therewith, we become collaborators in the Cosmic Work, and all good things in time accrue to us: powers, faculties, and wisdom, become ours naturally, like the manifestation of all the spiritual beauty and fragrance of some lovely flower, and such growth takes place in the silences, and is marked by an increase in our understanding, in our sense of unity with all that is, and in the appearance in our hearts of the magical power of almighty love. — *Ibid.*

Children of the Universe, sons of the Boundless, we are fundamentally one in essence; springing from the same ultra-divine Source we have

passed, each one of us, through many and devious pathways to our present sphere of life, and to our present stage of evolutionary development; and it is our living and sojourning in the material spheres which have brought about the evolution from within the material parts of our own inner constitution of the enshrouding veils of the lower selfhood which enwrap us straitly, and which to some extent blind us therefore to the great luminous Reality at the core or in the divine essence of each of us. We must rend these veils of the lower selfhood so that the divine sun within may shine down into our minds and illumine them, and so that our hearts may expand with the universal love which even now is working within us, did we only recognise it. We must, in short, make our consciousness, as we evolve further along the Path, progressively more inclusive, so that in time it may become relatively coextensive with the Universe, which is our Home: and when I say Universe, you will understand me, as Theosophists, not to mean solely the physical spheres, but the vast reaches of the Boundless, extending from the super-divine even to our own material world and to the spheres of being below this latter. — *Messages to Conventions*, p. 14

Do you not know that the Path to the Heart of the Universe is different for every living entity, and yet that all those paths merge into One? Each man must tread his own evolutionary path, which in the world's foolish view means that in his ordinary brain-mind way each man must hold fast to his own opinions. But verily this is a mistaken view. Opinions! It is opinions that separate men in politics, in religion, in all the ordinary affairs and avocations of human life. It is so, alas, even in our own Theosophical Movement; it is so in religious and philosophical societies everywhere. Men worship opinions instead of realities. — *Ibid.*, p. 28

The thing is to hold like grim death to principle and to loyalty, and never allow anything to swerve you from the path. This brings happiness, it brings peace, it brings contentment, and self-respect. — *Theosophical Forum*, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 8

Men in the average do not realize what old karman is still bearing heavily upon us children of Earth; and unless we of our Holy Order, of the Order of Buddhic Splendor and Compassion, can stem the tide of disintegration now beginning to flow, we shall have lived in vain, and our Society will become a byword in the councils of the gods.

The duty of every F. T. S. is not only to the T. S. as a whole, but to every other Fellow of the T. S., and, indeed, to everything that lives. Every F. T. S. should realize that the karmic law will hold him individually responsible for the part that he plays, or that he fails to play, in the grand drama of human destiny in which we are all involved — in which we are all participants and actors. . . . As long as the T. S. remains true to its purposes, and true to the ideals which presided at its birth, it will succeed in stemming the tide of karmic disintegration which otherwise will sweep over us. Remember these words. They are wholly true.

. . . "Keeping the link unbroken" refers solely, as H. P. B. then uttered it, to her heart-prayer for her F. T. S. to remain faithful to him who was to follow her, and to her who was to follow him, and to the line of Teachers thereafter in orderly sequence. — Sixth General Letter

Here I repeat once more the absolute need in our Theosophic work of a genuine guide and teacher; and if we have confidence and trust that the Masters have not neglected us, and that such a Theosophic guide and teacher exists as a Messenger in the world, great will be the benefit that we shall derive, both individually and collectively. — Ninth General Letter, Nov. 27, 1930 Theosophical Forum, Vol. II, No. 4, p.6

I repeat, as I have said before, that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion and Peace live and work for humanity as always they have lived and worked; that their influence on mankind is as strong today as ever it has been; that the stream of inspiration and of illumination and of wisdom and of help flows as strongly from them as ever it did. . . .

Without in any wise wishing to utter one word of unkindness, I feel it my bounden duty to say that the idea that mankind could be left even

for a year's time deprived of this stream of inspiration and light from our Teachers, is wholly wrong, unjustified and unjustifiable. — *Ibid.*, p. 5

I tell you that the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion founded the modern Theosophical Movement for one sole purpose, which has two aspects to it: in order, first, to found a spiritual brotherhood among men, world-wide, without qualifications, without frontiers or barriers, to which honest heart might belong; and the other aspect of it is a diffusion into the intelligence of the Occidental world of the principles of the age-old Wisdom-Religion of mankind, bringing men hope, bringing men peace bringing men consolation; and, above all else, destroying the fear of death. We Theosophists must do our destined work. We cannot pause. — *Ibid.*, p. 9

But when you ask a member of the Theosophical Society who knows its history — for instance, should you ask me, were you to ask me — my private opinion about it all, then I can only tell you that our chief happiness is in having continued from the first in unbroken succession and without change — which does not prevent a more elaborate and developed presentation — the teachings of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, whose Messenger to the modern Occidental world, H. P. B., brought the principles of those teachings to us. — *Ibid.*, p. 13

There is most emphatically in the Theosophical Movement existing throughout the ages a succession of Teachers, trained to know and therefore having the right to teach, who succeed each other from predecessor to successor in regular serial line. This at various times has been called by different names — the passing on of the Word, or the transmission of Light, the "Golden Chain," or the "Hermetic Chain." . . .

The Occult Succession or transmission of authority from Teacher to Teacher merely exemplifies the same natural laws that are existent in the ordinary affairs of men plus the fact that in the Esoteric Schools the succession is a real and vital one based upon actual initiation and training of the Teachers and not upon formal or conventional customs or

habits.

... The body or association of the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion contains the same esoteric succession of Teacher after Teacher, the predecessor going on into greater Light and in his turn being succeeded by the chosen pupil best prepared to pass on the Torch of Light which the Teacher resigns into his hands. — *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19

How can anyone be completely understood . . . who is obliged, as every real Leader is, to keep a great deal of his heart's hope behind the veil of privacy? — *Ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 11, p. 9

The real roots of the authority, mystical and official, which the Leader of the Theosophical Society has, and the reach of his influence into the minds and hearts of the members of the T. S., are dependent not at all upon any constitutional document, nor upon any legal sanction or safeguards, but repose solely upon and in the devotion and love and trust of the membership throughout the world, and their confidence in their Leader's and Teacher's capacity to lead and to teach. His authority and influence, therefore, are based upon spiritual and intellectual and ethical grounds, rather than upon the legal authority imbodyed in a formal document. — Third General Letter, Oct. 21, 1929

Remember that it is Nature's law that all things begin small: begin with a seed, and the subsequent growth of any such seed or beginning is wholly dependent upon the character and vigor of the life-forces which will pour through it, manifest through it, bringing first into existence the blade, then the stalk, and then in time, the majestic, wide-spreading tree.

... I repeat: *It all depends upon you!* As the Christian would say: "Where two or three are gathered together in the proper frame of mind, there is the Christos-spirit among them," and he would say truth: precisely similarly do I say unto you, my beloved Comrades on the Path: Where two or three are gathered together in the proper Theosophic spirit of devotion and unquenchable energy, there is the Buddhic Splendor working with you, and you can, if you will, become channels for

receiving it in full flood. — *Ibid.*

I greatly desire to arouse the inherent faculties of creative activity of the members everywhere, so that they shall be responsible for their own conduct, and I think that this can best be achieved by their becoming autonomous in so far as their local or national affairs are concerned. . . . — Second General Letter, Sept. 1, 1929

There is not a member in the Society, young or old, man or woman, who has a right to consider himself or herself exempt from the bounden duty of falling into line at present, and from doing his or her very best in every respect to push the revolving wheel of our Theosophical Society forwards along the Path. — Third General Letter

Let us keep our minds fluid, our hearts unlocked, our brains expanding. Let us be ever ready at all times and in all places to be receptive of a greater truth than that which now we have, or in the future shall have. — *Messages to Conventions*, p. 48

I feel impelled, indeed compelled, to point out to you, my Brothers, that the Gupta-Vidya of the archaic ages, the Rahasya-doctrine, the Secret Wisdom, the Esoteric Teaching, is as strong today, and as active today, as ever it was; and that those, our Theosophical brothers, greatly err and wander wide from the facts who say that the processes of the Universe and the undertakings and activities of the Lodge of our Masters receive setbacks and closures, and that the flow of truth into human hearts is bounded by certain time-periods, and that in between these time-periods there is naught but barren spiritual and intellectual sterility or sterile barrenness, and that human hearts which cry in agony for light and truth cannot receive them except at certain intervals, unless indeed through the medium of the merely written word. Beautiful as that written word may be, it is not the same as the conviction which a man should have, that he can attain truth whenever he *wills to take it*. Truth is not on tap, as it were, to be shut off and turned on. The currents are flowing for aye, and good men and true and good women and true who live the life, and who do the deeds, who do the Theosophy that they preach, can have it whenever they will to

take it.

This is no denial that there are certain cyclical periods when more particularly and more specifically open action for public propaganda is taken by our Masters, for this last is of course true; but there is at no time, nor is there anywhere, a hindrance to any loyal Theosophist, whether a fellow of the T. S. or not, from coming into touch with the great Guardians of the Ancient Wisdom and receiving from them as much of the Wisdom-Religion of the gods as he is able to assimilate. It will depend upon himself only, upon himself alone. — *Ibid.*, p. 69

Only thus can any Movement succeed: through the gathering of strength, of understanding, of wisdom, and through the expansion of the inner nature by the magical force of almighty love. New powers, unfolding faculties, come in the times of stress and trial. These are the times when men grow and become great, and when the spiritual powers begin to manifest in a feeling of sheer delight and expanding happiness that comes to anyone who feels the inner nature developing and expanding, and that inner nature, the inner constitution of the human being, becoming constantly and ever more and more at one with the Cosmic Life. That realization is not reached by methods of slothful pleasure, or of pleasurable sloth, but by high hearted striving for betterment. Once you get the psychology of this thing and realize its inner beauty, its splendor, and how it brings out the warmest feelings of the heart, then you will look upon the days of tribulation and labor, if we may speak of them as such — on these days of growth in building — as the days of splendid promise. — *Ibid.*, p. 3

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Messages to Conventions and Other Writings on the Policies, Work and Purposes of the T. S.* One of G. de P.'s most important and interesting books, worthy of lifelong study by all lovers of the Theosophical Movement. ([return to text](#))

G. DE PURUCKER AND PRACTICAL OCCULTISM — *Madeline Clark*

September has become for Theosophists a month of heroic memory connected with the thought of G. de P., of his life among us with its own peculiar quality and challenge, and of what he left with us in homely counsel about life and living.

Taken to heart and lived at least in part, the distilled essence of it is felt in a "changed outlook, an enlarged vision, a deeper insight into the verities of life. "Do you get it?" he often used to say; meaning, did we get the point, the subtle underlying substance of the thought he had been expounding in his inimitable way.

He taught us, for example, (and it dawned upon our consciousness as a fact in the course of time) that mysticism, however transcendental, was not necessarily spirituality. The same was true of estheticism. Psychic experiences likewise were by no means on the spiritual plane — in short, we learned that to keep our feet well on the ground, attending strictly to the duty of the moment and appraising life and circumstance with a factual eye, is the true practical occultism. When, after a particularly inspiring meeting in the Temple at Point Loma, one of his students made some rapturous remark to him expressing exalted feeling, G. de P.'s reply was some thing like this: "Have you seen to —," some homely household duty that was occasionally forgotten.

And then there were his references to the "Woofie-bird." The Woofle-bird, it seemed, "always flies backwards, and the reason is that it doesn't care a whit where it is going but wants to see where it has been." With this one humorous sally the Teacher turned our eyes forward along the path of achievement and away from the dead past more effectively than by hours of solemn dissertations.

This brings us back to the theme of humor as a saving power, which was so important an element of G. de P.'s teaching. To regard with detached amusement the elemental and impulsive part of ourselves

that so largely fills the stage, we learned, was to get the proper perspective on our own natures: to laugh at it and even to ignore it was to put the stress of our will and effort into the positive and constructive course of action.

G. de P. had an engaging way of introducing a teaching. He would say, "I will tell you a secret," and then would show us how fascinating the technique of self-conquest could be — like this: We could actually (he said) become like unto what we admired and loved, by thinking towards it and dwelling upon it. . . . The key to right meditation was simply the being so downright interested in the subject chosen for contemplation that the mind dwelt upon it easily and naturally, and did not have to be "whipped" into concentration. But a form of meditation equally valuable was to hold the consciousness of these lofty teachings in the back of the mind all through the day's duties, and brood upon them thus. . . . To judge of the progress we were making, we had only to study our own reactions to the common events of life, observing how we met and handled situations, how it all affected us. That was criterion enough. . . . And then there was self-forgetfulness, the master-key of them all.

Our thoughtless estheticism was curbed by his trenchant observations. If we remarked on the jubilant song of a mocking-bird or the quaint antics of a pet animal he would sometimes say with a rueful smile, "Poor thing!", meaning that the creature was so far behind in the scale of being, and had so many aeons of evolution to live through before it arrived at self-consciousness, that it was rather to be pitied, from our human standpoint. Yet, on the other hand, stooping over a beautiful hydrangea blossom one day he said, "If we only knew what was locked up in here we would know the Universe," showing how he revered all life.

But to return to the "Woofie-bird," and the idea of looking forward instead of backward over trodden paths. Upon this naturally followed the teaching, which G. de P. forever accentuated: *Change is growth*. This stood us in good stead when it became apparent that we must move

from our beloved Point Loma and establish new Headquarters at this beautiful spot near Covina. That move was more than a test, it was a triumph of G. de P.'s skill in touching our understandings with a fire that inspired our trust in his own joyous vision and confidence in the future. Perhaps in no other way than by actually making this move could we have realized as fully as we did that however dear the surroundings and however beautiful, they were only a means to enable an inner energy to work out its appointed purposes: when those purposes had been fulfilled, the fugitive but potent force withdrew to find its next appropriate vehicle: that no particular spot on earth is *in itself* any more sacred than any other spot, without the informing spirit to make it so.

Countless other hints, and keys to the riddle of everyday living given to us by G. de P. come to mind — our readers will all have caught some of them. But the whole burden of G. de P.'s kindly and patient efforts to show us the wise ways of life are perhaps summed up in this: that we must judge our experiences honestly, with a dispassionate attitude that faces the best and the worst with equanimity; with a clear-eyed perception of truth which will safeguard us from delusions, and will show us where our feet are set — in short, the faculty (borrowing a traditional phrase from the Mystery-Schools) TO SEE THINGS AS THEY ARE.

It is inspiring to reflect that in imparting to us these homely lessons — the "horse sense" of occultism — our Teachers are letting us in on a modicum of the genuine and traditional wisdom of the occult schools. They are sharing with us the teaching they themselves have received. After having had the benefit of this instruction from four of our Leaders, whose methods and teachings along these lines were fundamentally identical, we cannot help but recognize the stamp of the School, the effects of whose training they all have shown: the School of the Masters of Wisdom.

HOW DO YOU GROW? — *Hazel Minot*

Growth can be of many kinds and on many planes, but whatever its nature, it has a definite pattern that it is following. This pattern is the karma we have made for ourselves. So our growth, in the last analysis, is our responsibility.

Do you grow by fits and starts, swinging from one extreme to another? Or do you go around in circles until you are dizzy, without seeming to arrive anywhere? Have you ever tried to figure to yourself what course could be most easily followed in evolutionary progress? The course, indeed, that we all probably follow without realizing it?

Picture to yourself a spiral. A flexible wire spring will serve admirably in an objective study of the subject — but remember that the spring is only an "aid" in this study. It illustrates on the physical plane something that is fundamentally connected with consciousness. The source of our growth is our inner, real self, and the pattern it weaves, however it may affect our actions on the physical plane, has its origin in the realms of consciousness.

We travel a spiral course in our progress towards Divinity. Sometimes that spiral is compressed, and each stage is so close to the one below it and the one above that we seem to be making very little if any growth. At such times we do appear to be moving in a circle. If the compression is very great the coils of the spiral may even become entangled, and we shall appear to be going backward on our course. But if the spiral is extended, stretched a little, we shall perceive that growth is taking place as we pass from one coil to another. Of course the lowest point of the coil above will come below the highest point of the coil next below, and so from time to time we shall find ourselves experiencing an apparent drop. This, however, is in the natural course of things, and if we observe carefully we shall note that such a "low" is better, if only by a hair line, than the last one we experienced. Extend the spiral still

more and there is a correspondingly greater difference between "lows" and "highs." Stretch the spiral to its utmost, and the consciousness of moving forward will become more and more pronounced.

Now, since we are our own karman, the directors of our lives, it is up to us to extend the coils of our evolutionary spiral, striving always to increase the distance between the coils. Spiritual growth comes through doing this very thing and doing it consciously. The spiral pathway that we follow, whatever the distances between its coils, is ourselves, but the part of us which directs the course is always superior to the course itself. It must forever remain so, and in our aspiration to go forward we should always keep this in mind — otherwise we shall lose sight of the goal in the fascination of watching our progress. This goal will seem to be constantly beyond our reach because it is a "forever becoming." We shall approach it through a day to day growth in the right direction.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS MIND? — ITS NATURE AND FUNCTION — *John H. Manas*

One of the most controversial, least known and most misunderstood subjects today is that of "Mind." Webster defines mind as "the intellectual or rational faculty in man, consciousness, intelligence, memory, soul." This is not exactly true. In the Greek language, for mind we have the noun "*dianoia*" and the verb "*dia-nooumai*." Both are composite words from the preposition "*dia*," which means through, by way of, by means of, and "*nous*," which is the thinking agent, or that which thinks in man, the human soul. Therefore, "*dianoia*" for mind in the Greek language means the substance or the instrument through which the soul of man functions in thinking.

This etymological fact brings us to the acceptance of a dual principle in man, that of Spirit and of matter. This dual constitution of man, the microcosm, necessarily brings us to the acceptance, too, that God, the Macrocosm, also is of the same dual principle.

Everywhere in Nature, in the heavens, on earth, in all physical forms and material substances, one sees two outstanding things, matter and motion. The latter is the phenomenon of an invisible force acting upon visible substance. Since this phenomenon is universal, in all heavenly bodies and in the atoms of all substances on earth, we come to the logical conclusion that this force is Universal permeating all things and all beings in Nature. This invisible Universal force we call the Spirit of God, which, by acting upon Cosmic Matter, brings forth creation.

In the same way the human soul as a spark of Divinity, an invisible force, acts upon its four physical bodies, physical, etheric emotional and mental. This explanation agrees with the Greek definition of mind as being a material substance through which the soul of man functions.

WHAT IS THOUGHT?

All persons who have evolved to the stage of being conscious of the

independence of their soul from the shackles and the influence of their physical bodies, can understand how the soul works through this finest material body in man, his mind.

Man receives impressions from the outside world through his five senses. These impressions are nothing else than vibrations reaching the mind through the brain cells. These mental vibrations and images the soul perceives according to its development and forms respective conclusions through its faculty of reasoning. It works like the movies. The man in the theatre sees a series of luminous pictures on the screen. The soul of man sees similar pictures on the screen of its mind.

When man thinks, the opposite operation takes place. His soul, the thinker in him, creates its own pictures on his mind, or his mental canvas. As the painter paints, using paint, brush and canvas, what he sees outside, or what he sees inside in his mind, in the same way, the soul uses the faculties of imagination and visualization and projects on its mental body, as on a canvas, the creations of its consciousness. *The product of this junction of the human soul projected and taking form in its mental body, we call thought, and the operation by the soul we call thinking.*

The faculty of the soul that compares several, various mental pictures and seeks a harmonious relationship between them to its inner satisfaction, we call reasoning. The painter who can paint the clearest and the most vivid picture with such an arrangement of the objects involved as to cause a pleasing feeling in the spectator, is considered the best painter. In exactly the same way, the soul that can imagine and create in the human mind (mental body) the clearest and most vivid mental picture with the most harmonious relationship to the human desires, motives, emotions and objects, is considered the best thinker. We, therefore, can see that thinking depends upon the development of the consciousness of the human soul, the training of the mental body and the thought materials available to the soul and its ability to imagine, to visualize and correctly to compare among several, various mental pictures, or thoughts.

HOW HABITS ARE FORMED

Each physical body has its own properties. The main characteristic of the mind is to invigorate, to make grow through its vibrations any mental picture received on its fertile soil from without, from objects, from books and so forth, and from the thoughts of other men, intentionally or unintentionally.

If the soul allows any thought to possess or to attach itself to its mental body, these thoughts, especially evil thoughts, will begin to grow to such proportions that the human soul gradually grows accustomed to expressing itself through these mental avenues, and through these deep grooves in the brain, and it will lose its control over the material mind. In this way, all bad habits, with all their sad consequences, are formed in man.

Evil thoughts are like weeds, or tares that our enemy sows in our field when we are asleep. The fact of this mental law proves beyond any doubt, that bad books, shows depicting murder and crime, obscene magazines, vulgar language and immorality, can cause destructive habits to be created in the minds of weak souls, or the souls who are taken unaware by the incoming bad mental image. Thus, these mental weeds find a way to take root and grow in the mental body, or mind of a person. On the contrary, beautiful surroundings, exquisite pictures, moral shows, good books and fine, harmonious music, certainly are the moulders of the minds of persons for real Progress, peace and happiness.

This was the reason for the many beautiful temples, statues, stadia, public dances, all kinds of games and festivals held regularly by all the people of the community in all cities and villages of ancient Greece.

HOW TO HAVE PEACE AND HAPPINESS

From the above facts explaining mental laws in operation, one can clearly see the reason for our present day chaos, inharmony, wars unhappiness, sickness, poverty and all kinds of trouble in which humanity is found and is suffering today.

No man-made law or any human power can win over the tremendous soul force of the individual who was brought up in, or has allowed himself to acquire bad mental, emotional and physical habits. The nature of the human soul is continuous activity. This action is directed and expressed in society in good or bad deeds, according to the habits existing in its members.

The salvation of humanity as a whole today depends upon the creation of moral discipline in the physical, emotional and mental natures, or bodies of the individual, everywhere in the world. This is the only way out of the national, racial, social, economic and religious chaos that exist in the world today.

The Theosophical Forum

BREAKING THE MOULDS OF MIND OF MEN — *Helen G. Steward*

We have been told that "Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky came to break the moulds of mind of men," not of a limited number, but of *men* — that could mean hundreds, or thousands, or even millions. Was this so that man could re-create for himself a new concept of God?

The breaking of mental limits with the ensuing expansion of thought has oftentimes appeared to hinge upon the most casual of incidents.

A great seer like H. P. B. lifts the lid or "breaks the mould of mind" and, lo, the powers of mind in man, released, revolutionise the thinking world.

An apple falls, in its maturity, and the heretofore unseen laws of gravitation spring into "ken," but not for the betterment or enlightenment of the few — the world is set a little freer, millions benefit.

A youth discovers Petrarch in his father's shop, and Samuel Johnson gives to the world, not the few, a dictionary.

"The mind with its activities," wrote Emerson, "is the center of man," and he continues, "the mind in its highest and purest state of enjoyment is the highest ethical existence."

Some men can easily and pleasurably accumulate an enormous store of learning, some can retain in the lower brain-mind an enormous accumulation of facts and by constant exercise can develop what is regarded by some as a high degree of intellectual ability and intellectual attainment. Some can give the impression of ripe wisdom and sane balance, and can so act that others of lesser intellectual ability are stimulated to emulate this "wisdom and balance"; which is certainly conducive to personal enjoyment, but is it of spiritual worth?

H. P. B. opened the door to an unseen and almost undreamed-of world.

She gave a logical explanation for some of the so-called "happenchances"; and whether people took the explanation at the time or not, time has proved that the so-called accidents which have led to some great "discovery," to some things which have proved beneficial to humanity, were not "fate" or "chance," but a glimmering of a something greater in the realms of reality.

One of our Great Leaders who was a deep student of H. P. B. says, "Break the moulds of your mind at all costs," and again, "Free your minds, keep them plastic." How often have we heard the expression, "keep an open mind, do not close the doors of your minds, do not let your thought become crystalized."

H. P. B. most emphatically did not come merely to shock us with something that was "new," but she most certainly did come with a message that was sublime, and as one of our great writers has said, "Because some have given out ridiculousness in place of her sublime message, it does not mean that the great Lodge and its powers and wisdom are exhausted, or that there must be no advance in teaching or knowledge," nor, I might presume to add, no change in procedure, as long as it follows the spirit of that Great Messenger, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

PILGRIM

Where is the road to Emmaus? Where are the pilgrims who once trod that busy thoroughfare when Christianity first challenged the thought life of Asia Minor?

We are those pilgrims whose footsteps now echo, as it were, out of the seemingly distant past. Like the two disciples of Jesus who walked along the road to Emmaus, our dual natures, our Higher and Lower selves, are also challenged as we ponder the whys and wherefores of life. We are re-enacting in this 20th century that Biblical narrative which so beautifully portrays the two pilgrims communing "together" on the road to Emmaus, which is as the highway of life, earth, air and water; the "three score furlongs from Jerusalem to Emmaus."

We, too, on this old, old path are tired and hungry at the close of day, and find, as did the disciples, that at times the road is steep and stony. We feel the same deep soul-longings for the Friend, who through His compassionate love for mankind became a "living sacrifice," a Way of Life, which like the road to Emmaus leads the disciple through sacrifice and service to RECOGNITION.

"Many are called but few are chosen." Among all the souls on the road to Emmaus, only the two disciples were selected to be the companions of Jesus, the Christ, who drew nigh unto them, but they knew Him not. "A shepherd knoweth his sheep and calleth them by name and leadeth them." Even so, Jesus walked with His disciples and bade them tell of their sorrow, for they were greatly troubled. When they had related the tragedy of the crucifixion Jesus said, (St. Luke 24: 25, 26) "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken!" . . . "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His Glory?" ... "and He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

"When Jesus made as to go further, the disciples constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, the day is far spent." . . . and He went in to tarry with them."

Thus it came to pass that the Stranger entered into the inn with the disciples, where they sought rest and refreshment. They were tired and hungry after long hours at the trial and crucifixion of Jesus in Jerusalem. They, also, had struggled with His adversaries whose crown of thorns had caused blood to fall upon their own hands as they raised the vinegar of mockery and thrust the spear of doubt into the body of Humanity; and in so doing forfeited the privilege of witnessing the Light of the real Sacrifice, in the inner room with the two disciples; where "He took bread and blessed it and gave it to them, and their eyes were opened, and they knew Him . . ." and their hearts "burned" within them.

Surely there is consolation in this thought for the disciple suffering despondency today, as in the dual nature of discipleship he trudges along his road to Emmaus unaware of the Presence of his Friend. When the eye of the material self is focussed upon the dark illusions of men, which are the barriers to perception by the spiritual eye of intuition, the disciple fails to recognize his radiant inner god and hears not that same Voice which "expounded" to the disciples at the inn, the Scriptures of the Ancient Wisdom. However, the Light on the Path seeks the disciple no matter where he is, or what he is doing, and finds him, even though it be somewhere on the road to Emmaus.

In this graphic epoch one may perceive secrets of Life as taught in Theosophy, in the power of Attraction and Repulsion, in Love and Hate, and in the relation of all Life through Unity in Universal Brotherhood.

Theosophists accept the teaching of life after death, the continuity of Life, and rejoice as did the disciples, who, "in that same hour hurried to Jerusalem" and told their brothers the glad tidings; but Thomas refused to believe unless he could see the print of the nails. And as they were talking together Jesus stood in their midst, saying, "Peace be unto you."

To Thomas, He said, "Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and thrust it into my side and be not faithless but believing." And Thomas's eyes were opened and he believed. Then Jesus saith unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen thou hast believed, blessed are they that have not seen and yet believe."

Thus, over the highway of life forever blows the "Wind of the Spirit," Its divine Motion, Ideation, impregnating with its Breath the concepts of disciples who are learning that Sacrifice is not in giving up, but in giving; not in losing life, but in gaining Life, that they may have it more abundantly for the pilgrims on the road to Emmaus, . . . Mankind.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MONAD AND THE SOUL — *Lolita W. Hart*

Perhaps the simplest way to picture a monad is as a part of a sea of consciousness with the light of divinity shining on its endless ripples, each ripple vivified and pouring forth its expression of limitless possibilities through the various kingdoms of nature.

The monad does not really descend into the kingdom of our material world, but shines into it — just as the Sun pours its rays onto and through our earth, and holds in its magnetic power the Earth and every particle that makes it up and lives upon it, but remains in its place as the heart of a solar universe.

The monad through many evolvings and revolvings emanates from itself, or, so to say, clothes itself with, living vehicles or forms which we call souls. Through this continual outpouring of divine energy, it is able finally to express itself as man, the thinker. Man, as a human soul or ego, for he is composite, "swings between the pit and the Sun and is to be saved." Here it is that humanity stands in its great pilgrimage from unself-conscious divinity to self-conscious godhood.

The soul in man is an inferior monad, and in its turn, through its struggles and experiences while on earth, and as it progresses toward the light of the divine, raises other inferior souls, called life atoms. In *Fundamentals*, p. 157, Dr. de Purucker says,

. . . the Monad, the *spiritual radical* . . . itself can evolve only by raising inferior souls and psychological vehicles into *self-conscious entities*, which thus in turn themselves become **Monads**. THIS IS THE GENERALIZED AND ENTIRE PLAN OF EVOLUTION ON ALL PLANES. This is our Great Work.

There are two points of view in considering these difficult spiritual teachings. From below, each man, as a soul clothing a monad and expressing the glorious golden light and spiritual fire of the monad as

best he can, is quite correct in speaking of *his* spiritual monad, as the center of his being. Each one of us travels his own road back toward that inner glory which illumines every man, and which he rightfully calls his higher self, his Christ immanent, and which he may consciously contact if he can quiet his restless mind and look toward that center of his being. From above, however, the spiritual center, like the Sun, shines on all men alike and is one — a shining sea of spiritual light and fire.

Mme. Blavatsky (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 614) warns us that:

Those unable to seize the difference between the monad — the Universal Unit — and the *Monads* or the manifested Unity, . . . ought never to meddle in philosophy, let alone the Esoteric Sciences.

Again (Vol. I, p. 177) she says:

. . . the Spiritual Monad is One, Boundless and Impartite, whose rays, nevertheless, form what we, in our ignorance, call the "Individual Monads" of men. . . .

If we think of consciousness or living awareness as a shining sea, we cannot consider the drops of that ocean of life as unlimited in number. It would be difficult to understand good and evil and the apparent inequalities in life, if we did not accept the teaching that the number of monads on earth is limited, though practically countless. These "monads," as individualities, have passed through countless births and deaths here on earth since they first animated the "empty senseless shells" of the first race many millions of years ago, and are amongst us today — are in fact ourselves.

Again we quote from Mme. Blavatsky, (*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, page 185):

. . . there is no such thing as a Monad (jiva) [i.e.: living center] other than divine, and consequently having been, or having to become, human. . . . The Monad is a drop out of the shoreless

Ocean beyond, or, to be correct, *within* the plane of primeval differentiation. It is divine in its higher and *human* in its lower condition . . . and a monad it remains at all times, save in the Nirvanic state, under whatever conditions, or whatever external forms.

Evolution then may be considered as the pouring forth of the inherent faculties of the monad as it progresses through the kingdoms of nature, reaches the state of humanhood, and then expands into Godhood or *relative* freedom, *Moksha*. This freedom from the limitations of our senses and material life is relative, for though it is bliss to us as we are constituted at present, just because we are essentially divine (which means endless), it is an open door to another beginning and to unimaginable experiences and glories of greater awareness.

The essential unity or oneness of monadic life is the true basis of brotherhood. Men are not at equal stages of evolution, but the same life, the same spiritual glory, is seeking to express itself not only in every man but in every living speck of matter, and that glory is the monad, a spiritual consciousness center.

The Theosophical Forum

SANKARACHARYA: THE WISDOM OF AN AVATARA — *Madeline Clark*

There are times, especially in these days of Kali-Yuga, when humanity seems like a wayward child, playing its dangerous games, oblivious of certain highly-evolved men, its Elder Brothers, who stand in the background laboring to save it from itself. Of these labors by men who have arrived at spiritual maturity, and of their gifts to mankind, the race as a whole is equally ignorant; it remains for the individual thinker to admit into his consciousness the thought of these Great Sages, the belief in their existence, and the inclination to follow in their footsteps.

Among such individual thinkers — and they are numerous — who want to penetrate to the very source of Truth, many will find refreshment of spirit in this little volume, (1) which contains not only Sankaracharya's *The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom*, but also his shorter treatises, *The Awakening to the Self*, *The Awakening to Reality* (a key to his *Crest-Jewel*), *The Essence of the Teaching*, and a poem, *The Song of the Self*, together with explanatory matter by the Translator, and an Appendix with an account of the life of the Sage.

Charles Johnston, a thorough Sanskrit scholar, associate of the early Leaders of the Theosophical Society, H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, made this excellent translation during the eighteen-nineties as part of the Oriental Department Papers, published separately or in the pages of Mr. Judge's magazine *The Path*. A devoted Theosophist, Johnston described these classics of Sankara's as "matchless theosophic documents. . . ." "They really teach," he adds, "quite plainly and lucidly, the first steps on the path of wisdom; they point out, with clear insistence, the qualities that are necessary to make these first steps fruitful; qualities without which the learner may remain, hesitating and halting, on the threshold, through lack of the force and sterling moral worth which alone make any further progress possible.

"Nor are these necessary qualities difficult to understand. They are not queer psychic powers that only flatter vanity; they are not mere intellectual tricks that leave the heart cold; they are rather the simple qualities of sterling honesty, of freedom from selfishness and sensuality — which have formed the basis of every moral code; . . .

"These treatises of Sankara speak to the common understanding and moral sense in an unparalleled degree. They are an appeal to the reason that has hardly ever been equalled for clearness and simplicity by the sages of the earth. Their aim is Freedom (Moksha), "Freedom from the bondage of the world. . . ." "But," he adds, "It is not enough for the mind to follow the lucid sentences of Sankara. . . . The teaching must be woven into life and character if it is to bear fruit."

The reader is always at the mercy of the translator: but in this case we may be grateful that the text is so fully and sympathetically interpreted, and rendered into English that achieves such beauty of expression.

The famous opening passage of the Prologue in *The Crest-Jewel* brings us instantly the urgent eloquence and direct spiritual appeal that characterize all these treatises:

"For beings a human birth is hard to win, then manhood and holiness, then excellence in the path of wise law; hardest of all to win is wisdom. Discernment between Self and not-Self, true judgment, nearness to the Self of the Eternal and Freedom are not gained without a myriad of right acts in a hundred births. . . . After gaining at last a human birth, hard to win, then manhood and knowledge of the teaching, if one strives not after Freedom he is a fool. He, suicidal, destroys himself by grasping after the unreal."

Thereafter the whole tenor of these living words is to turn us away from the unreal, the unenduring, and gradually to bring us to love and cleave to the Real, the lasting and Eternal. From the "First Steps on the Path" to the last chapter, "Forever Free," the teaching turns on the motivating idea of "an utter turning back from lust after unenduring

things. . . . Thereafter Restfulness, Control, Endurance" and the cultivation of "love, as the food of the gods serenity, pity, pardon, rectitude, peacefulness and self-control."

All that is less than the Eternal is but a vesture of the Eternal. This insistence that all that is less than the Self is Maya, or "Disguise," or "Vesture," is what has been bitterly discarded in the West as a pessimistic philosophy, and yet . . . the Real is in everything: THAT THOU ART: "Every pot and vessel has clay as its cause, and its material is clay; just like this, this world is engendered by the Real, and has the Real as its Self, the Real is its material altogether." So life, action, high enjoyment, creative activity, are enriched as we live them in the light of the Eternal. It is a philosophy that penetrates beneath the veils of illusion, leading us *to see things as they are* — the traditional aim of all true esoteric training.

The verses on the Three Potencies: Substance, Force and Darkness, are illuminating: they correspond to the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas of the *Gita* undoubtedly, for Substance is "pure like water . . . a reflected part of the Self, and lights up the inert like the Sun." But "Desire, wrath, greed, vanity, malice, self-assertion, jealousy, envy, are the terrible works of Force . . ."; and as for Darkness: "Though a man be full of knowledge, learned, skillful, very subtle-sighted, if Darkness has wrapped him round, he sees not, though he be full of manifold instruction . . . wrong thinking, contradictory thinking, confused thinking — these are its workings. . . ." The mind being "the cause of man's bondage, and in turn of his liberation," we are told that "purification of the mind should be undertaken with strong effort by him who seeks liberation. . . ."

The most intent study is needed to gain even a few of the implications in the teaching of the Potencies and Vestures, and there are other problems equally deep, such as the meaning of "That Thou Art," and the Three Modes of Deeds — "deeds to come," "deeds accumulated," and "deeds entered on" — really a study of *karman*. But ever and always we are led back to the Source, the Self, "It," "the Witness," which

wears as its "disguises" the qualities, attributes, activities, of all that is less than itself. The Appeal to the Higher Self: "Save me from the wound of the world's pain" — is only to be answered by this sublime philosophy leading ever back to the Eternal.

In all these discourses we have the attributes of body, mind, and soul as related to the Self evaluated dispassionately, held at arm's length, as it were, for study and examination, as by one who knows and understands them all and has mastered them all. The very style of the *Crest-Jewel* is of the same dispassionate nature — it breathes serenity, benevolent detachment, is free from the emotional element which disfigures so many of the lesser and later mystical treatises of other men and nations. Acumen, mental vitality, authoritativeness, and the spiritual strength of the Sage come through to us in the unfolding of the thought, and something higher than purely intellectual comprehension is aroused. Dwelling on these masterly analyses irradiates the whole being of the student; it clarifies his perceptions, and enables him to see the true nature of things.

In the early chapters the distinction between the Seer and the Seen is firmly established: thence we are made acquainted with the true nature of the Vestures and their attributes, and so gently led on to the contemplation of the final Freedom:

"The grub, throwing off attachment to other forms, and thinking intently on the bee, takes on the nature of the bee: even thus he who seeks for union, thinking intently on the reality of the Supreme Self, perfectly enters that Self, resting on it alone." The contemplation of this progress from "dream" to "waking," from illusion to enlightenment, while it does not enable us to accomplish so mighty a task in a short time, builds up a form for the future in the inner worlds undoubtedly: a mould to which our actions will the more easily conform. And in a sense it is accomplished ideally each time it is followed out in thought to its completion: "The Self, rising in the firmament of the heart — sun of wisdom, darkness-dispersing, all-present, all-supporting,

shines forth and illumines all."

Hence the value of meditation, the power of "uninterrupted intentness." "Let him know that thinking is a hundred times better than scripture; that concentration, thinking the matter out, is a hundred times better than thinking; that ecstasy free from doubt is endlessly better than concentration. . . ." The very reading of this book induces meditation: coming into touch with the compassionate purpose of the exalted Author, who wrote for all succeeding generations of men. This is a strong help to the aspirant, for he even receives a portion of that energy of the Divine infused into this work by the Mighty One who wrote it.

Can we say that this transcendental philosophy has any immediate message for the present time? Can it meet the spiritual need of this Kali-Yuga, this Age of Iron, in which we toil? Emphatically, Yes. For when the old order is crumbling away, it is the very time to seize hold on the idea of the Immutable, the Eternal Self, the only lasting thing that we can look to. Out of the ruins of the old rises the Phoenix of the new — the very destruction of old forms is helping us to see through their tottering fabric the Reality beyond.

And once having turned our eyes that way, we see, bathed in the light of that Reality, the Sages, the Saviors of men, of whom Sankaracharya was one. Known to scholars as having left to posterity a complete system of instruction for spiritual progress in the Adwaita-Vedanta, a re-formulation of the Ancient Knowledge from the Golden Age of India, he left us the fruits of his transcendent genius in his Commentaries, his Manuals and Catechisms, and in the schools which he established for the perpetuation of the teachings.

Who was Sankaracharya? Theosophists have long known that between this holy Sage and Gautama the Buddha, "the finest flower of the human race," a mysterious connection existed. Dr. de Purucker describes Sankaracharya as one of the avatars — a combination of a pure physical vehicle and a god, brought together by the intermediate or human soul of a great and good man. In his *Studies in Occult*

Philosophy, pp. 696-7, Dr. de Purucker shows that it was the Buddha himself who in his compassion brought about the coming of the Avatara Sankaracharya, and who lent his own human essence to be the intermediate part of the Avatara who was to carry out the work of supplying the insufficiencies of mystical and religious doctrine left unfinished in Gautama's own period of teaching. This brings us close indeed to the divinities when we take to heart the teachings of this jewel of learning, this *Crest-Jewel of Wisdom*. The book is, literally, a gift of the gods.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom* and other Writings of Sankarachirya. Translations and Commentaries by Charles Johnston. Theosophical University Press, Covina, California, 1946. 163 pp, \$2.00. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

DIVINE DISCONTENT — Alexandria McLean

Discontent might be called a generator of desire, and desire, in its highest aspect may be termed "Aspiration," and is an impetus to evolution. Discontent is closely allied with cycles. As a cycle nears completion — discontent manifests because the existing condition has served its purpose and no longer satisfies us.

G. de P. in *Studies in Occult Philosophy* reminds us, "You may remember reading in the old Hindu scriptures in the Veda: "Desire first arose in the bosom of IT," speaking of the universal, cosmic desire to be, to manifest. What kind of desire is that? It is atman-kama."

Discontent, like all else is seven-fold. In its highest aspect it may be considered "Divine," as it is an urge, almost at times audible; a challenge from the Divinity within us, to unfold and express the higher qualities. This Divine Discontent is also closely allied with the doctrine of Swabhava, for by the latent Divine Discontent in every "seed of the Spawn of Life" whether it be a galaxy, a man, or one grain of sand, comes the opportunity to unfold that which IS its highest, inmost aspect.

We have been told that analogy is the key to understanding, therefore let us think of such a well-known thing as an apple seed and consider what Divine Discontent does for the seed. Without the inherent urge within the seed (which to our consciousness may seem an "unconscious" urge) but which may truly be termed "Divine Discontent" — without this urge, the seed could never be more than a seed. But with this urge, the existing condition is transcended and the seed becomes a sapling. By that same "Divine Discontent," the sapling becomes a tree, the tree puts forth blossoms which become fruit, bearing seed.

And what of Karma, in relation to this Divine Discontent? It is an important constituent within the urge, for the quality and quantity of

the urge is a result of action in past cycles. At the same time new Karma is in the making, for with the urge to change, the individual must discriminate and *will* the direction of his actions, hindering or helping in the unfoldment of the Divinity Within. This "Discontent" is a power, a great, vital force which we must direct, lest it disintegrate and make chaos of our seven-fold nature. We may indeed be thankful for this gift of the Gods, a spark of Divinity that by subtle and devious methods urges us onward-upward-inward.

Perhaps the greatest work of "Divine Discontent" is to lead us through purifying our desires to reach the desireless (for our self). Merging all personal longings in a great renunciation, we may finally be strong enough to walk the "Secret Way." As *The Voice of the Silence* phrases it, "Unveiled stands Truth and looks thee sternly in the face. She says: "Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of Self; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men'."

And so — we may consider "Divine Discontent" as an urge to perfect expression — *not* for the joy of self, *not* to lead us to Nirvana, but that we may become ever more perfect instruments of Divinity, expressing the law of Love Eternal. "The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which IS, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE."

In *A Buddhist Bible* as edited and published by Dwight Goddard, we find in the section devoted to the Summary of Buddha's Dharma, under the heading, "The Ten Bodhisattva Stages" — the tenth stage, Dharmamarga is as follows. "In this highest state, the Bodhisattva becomes wholly identified with the Great Truth Cloud, and, like a cloud saturated with Truth and Compassion, he becomes Tathagata, his life perfectly integrated with the lives of all, and goes forth to sprinkle the rain of the Good Law by which the seed of enlightenment takes root in the minds of all sentient beings, and in the long last brings them to Buddhahood."

Is this our aim? Then let us heed the urge of "Divine Discontent. Let us

rejoice, discriminate and *will* our every thought and action toward this Great Goal.

The Theosophical Forum

"THOU HAST REAPED. . ." — *Harold S. Minton*

In *Light on the Path*, a little devotional book familiar to most Theosophists, there is this passage: "It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow."

In years gone by I puzzled over that injunction, wondering at its sequence of thought, feeling that it should have been reversed. Surely one could quite logically expect to sow first and, having sowed, to reap the effects — good or ill! Time, which does so many things to all of us, has brought a deeper understanding of the significance of this passage. We are constantly sowing or reaping, and often we seem to be doing both at the same time, for the two processes are inextricably interwoven; but there comes a moment when we have to step out from the past, as it were, and sow afresh for the future — a future that shall be our responsibility *consciously*.

As children we learn to do many things because we have been told that it is right to do them. If they are truly the right things to be done, we shall one day have to do them all over again, and this time do them because we recognize their excellence, and for that reason *choose of our own volition* to do them. It is not so simple as it sounds, however, and a study of our actions and reactions will bring this fact home to us. Merely having done something willingly, because automatically, is no sign that we shall do it in the same agreeable manner when we have to do it from choice.

Having stubbed my toe on this figurative rock more than once, the thought has come to me that here lies one explanation at least of the statement "thou hast reaped, now thou must sow." For by living in harmony with our fellows we reap certain benefits; but if we live thus without much thought on our part, and largely because we have been brought up to live that way, these benefits come to us second-hand, as it were, and are garnered from the experience of others. It is not well

that we should benefit in this manner indefinitely. The time comes when we must start out on our own — prepare the soil, sow the seeds, and reap whatever comes up.

Perhaps this requirement that we shall eventually sow our own seed is one of the reasons why we as humans seem to take such aeons to arrive anywhere evolutionally. Of course the law of cycles has to be taken into account — but here again, because we must learn to sow our own seed, we have an added reason for apparently retracing our steps so many times. There is a similar thought hidden in the tales of the childhood of the race. This was a golden age when the gods walked with men and instructed them. Men in general followed the directions of their teachers, and a childlike happiness prevailed. Then the gods said, "It is not well; you have reaped, now you must sow" — and humanity was given an opportunity to work out its own salvation.

Down through the ages we have had chance after chance to show what kind of seed we could sow all on our own, and time after time the gods have sent one of their number to show us anew the principles of good husbandry. We have learned many things — slowly, even painfully — but still we do not fully grasp the fact that *we* have to *choose* to do things the right way. We like so much to make laws, to legislate ourselves into doing what is right. Laws are necessary, and the better they are, the happier are the individuals who are governed by them; but they are only one factor in this spiritual husbandry, and not even the most important. They serve to tell us what to do, when to do it, and how to do it, but the important thing is *doing* it, and doing it because we want to.

Today we are faced again with the necessity of choosing for ourselves. The nations are the chief actors in this drama. But these nations may be likened to the actors of ancient times who wore such accessories of costume as would increase their stature, and give the impression that they were super-men or gods. The nations are only aggregates of individuals, and very much limited by the manner in which those individuals have learned to think and feel and make decisions — by

their ability to choose, and choose wisely.

So we come back to our own responsibility, and we find that we are more important to the "tilling of the soil" than we perhaps thought we were. We have reaped, now we must sow. What shall the harvest be?

The Theosophical Forum

THE LURE OF PERSONALITY — *Charles J. Ryan*

The *Bhagavad-Gita* warns the aspirant for true wisdom to beware of "attachment to objects of sense," and St. Paul says "the love of money is the root of all evil." In both cases it is not the "objects" or the "money" themselves that are denounced, but the concentration on more or less selfish and personal desires and satisfactions which obsess the mind, in spite of the fact that it leads to nothing but a succession of pains and so-called pleasures. The attachment to objects of sense is a hardening quality and one of the most formidable obstacles to spiritual progress. If we want the Light to shine we must clean the lantern and trim the wick.

There is a more subtle meaning to "attachment" than appears at first sight. It is perilous to the health of the soul not only when applied to gross matters such as greed for power, riches or praise. Everyone knows that danger to some degree; it is elementary. But attachment is also to be avoided in regard to much that we are apt to pride ourselves on, such as the personal gratification aroused in us by doing good works. It is a subtle form taken by "the snake of self" mentioned in *Light on the Path*, and which though not altogether ignoble, must be killed and not only scotched. In a world like this, so selfish and slow to learn, acts of beneficence if based on pure desire to help our fellow men are of untold value to giver and receiver, and will be blessed, but if alloyed with the personal element of "I am doing this" even self-sacrificing labor for others loses some of its virtue. Let us see what a high authority says about this:

Many years ago, in 1896, when Katherine Tingley was in India, she was directed to visit "the Holy Man of Benares," Swami Bhaskaranda Saraswati, a chela of the Master M. and a highly honored spiritual and intellectual Teacher, then more than 100 years old. He was full of energy and kindness and his intelligence was undimmed by the passing of the years. The meeting of these two Leaders, both inspired

by the same ideals, was a remarkable event, which she described in detail to some of her students on her return to America. The Swami's teaching was largely directed toward the development of that positive quality of impersonality so necessary for spiritual progress. D. Gopal Mukerji, one of his followers, describes the Swami's methods of training his chelas, one of which is worth careful thought in regard to the subject we are considering.

During one of his visits to Benares, Mukerji noticed that a hospital had been erected on the grounds of the *asram*, and on being asked about it the Swami said it was "the punishment for doing good!" The Swami had a strong vein of humor, but this quaint remark had a deep meaning. He told Mukerji that although it was a good work and a necessary one he had to be careful to keep his personality from being too deeply entangled in its administration.

Noticing that the Swami's disciples were working with great enthusiasm in the healing work, Mukerji remarked that they might be in far greater danger of becoming immersed in good works to the exclusion of higher duties. The Swami replied:

"Yes, like those two young ladies there, other people come to me to serve God. Well, youth suffers from the delusion that it can "do good," but I have remedied that somewhat. I let them take care of the sick as long as their outlook on God remains vivid and untarnished, but the moment any of my disciples shows signs of being caught in the routine of good works — like a scavenger's cart that follows a routine of removing dirt every morning — I send that soul off to our retreat in the Himalayas, there to meditate and purify his soul. When he regains his God-outlook to the fullest, if he wishes, I let him return to the hospital. Beware, beware, good can choke up the soul as much as evil."

He said much more to the same effect, pointing out that by living a noble and sanctified life without straining to "save" the personality by doing good, "the routine" as he calls it, all the good you wish to do will come about of itself. This, of course, when properly understood is the inner meaning of the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10, where Jesus

reproved Martha for being "cumbered" by her concentration on the personal "routine" of hospitality, while Mary, more intuitive, flung it aside "to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear his word."

The Theosophical Forum

SIGNIFICANCE OF MIND IN OUR CYCLE — *Gertrude W. van Pelt*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The gift that Prometheus brought to man has been likened to fire as an extreme symbol of constructive or destructive energy. Dr. de Purucker has often said that ideas rule the world. An idea of rescuing the Holy Sepulcher once sent thousands of children wandering on foot over Europe.

Theosophy throws a strong light over the little understood nature of thoughts. In *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 653, Dr. G. de Purucker writes, "Thoughts are energies, elemental energies. They do not originate in a man's mind. These elemental entities pass through the sensitive transmitting-apparatus which our mind is, and each one of us colors the thoughts as they pass through our minds, thus giving a new direction, a new karmic impulse to them. No thought was ever created in a human brain." And on page 652 he writes "The thoughts that we think in one incarnation affect us powerfully, because of karmic reaction, in the next incarnation, and indeed in all succeeding reïmbodiments. It is by and through thoughts, speaking generally, that we grow, unfold, which means evolve."

In *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 124 ftm., we find, "Every thought, in addition to its physical accompaniment (brain change) exhibits an objective . . . aspect on the astral plane." And quoting from the *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by Dr. de Purucker, p. 311, "Every thought you think clings to the mind and inheres in it, and becomes what the Ancient Wisdom calls an "elemental," and it will turn and torture you unless you break them, i.e., transmute them." And on page 331, "Each thought has its own life, each thought has its own essence, each has its own course to run."

From these quotations we may gather, that though we do not create thoughts, we have a responsibility for those which we entertain and therefore reinforce. It is the undercurrent of thought which colors the day and proves that the joy of thought control far outweighs that of thought indulgence in loose and disintegrating thinking. The importance of wise and constructive thinking is emphasized by Mr. Judge in the 2nd Volume of *Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 17-18, from which I quote.

"So the Masters have said that this is a transition age, and he who has ears to hear will hear what has been said. What we do now in this transition age will be like what the great Dhyan Chohans did in the transition point — the midway point — in evolution at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. In the mental development we are now at the same point: and what we now do in faith and hope for others and for ourselves will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed. Thus in other centuries we will come out again and go on with it. If we neglect it now, so much the worse for us then. Hence we are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the Race. . . . Let me refer you to that part of *The Secret Doctrine* penned by Master Himself, where the midway point of evolution is explained in relation to the Ungulate Mammals. It should give you a glimpse of what we have to do."

The Theosophical Forum

THE GREEK FRET IN UNIVERSAL SYMBOLISM — *Allan J. Stover*

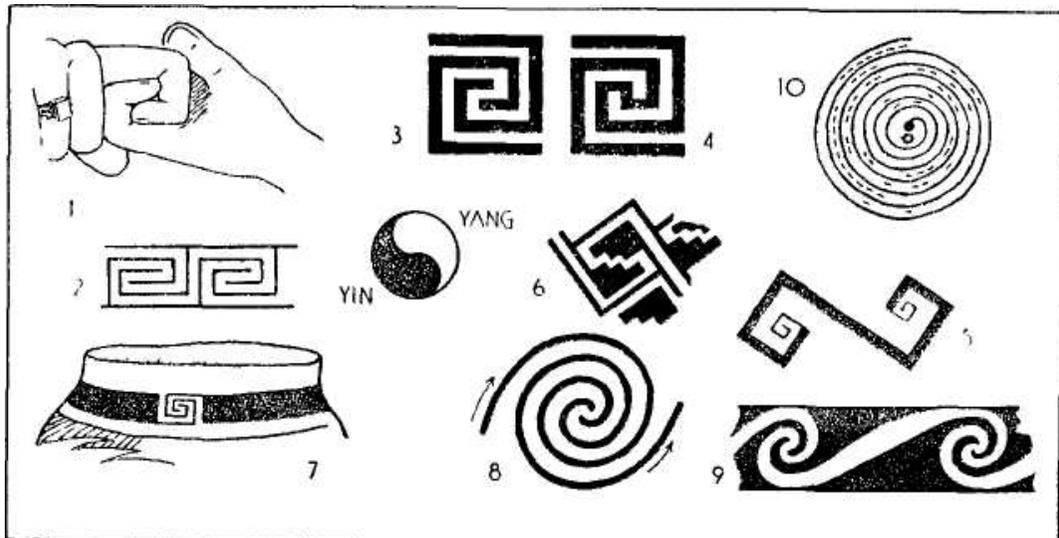
The Greek Fret and its analogue, the scroll or wave design, are worldwide in distribution, being found in Greece, Egypt, India, China, Scandinavia and North and South America. Its distribution alone would lead one to suppose a symbolic meaning attached to it of sufficient importance to explain its wide use; but the explanations commonly offered, are of too obvious and slight a character for serious consideration. According to one theory the fret was first copied from basketry patterns, according to another the scroll was copied from the volutes formed by wind-blown grass in desert sand, and so became symbolic of the whirlwind.

The culture of the American Indian throws much illumination on the thought and philosophy of ancient civilizations, and since the fret is still used with purpose and understanding by the Indians of the Southwest, it seems worth while to see what clues to the symbolism of the fret and wave design we may find.

There is many a correspondence between the myths of ancient Greece, and those of the American Indian; and although we may regret the vanished civilization of Greece with its poetic imagery, there are thousands of Indians in the Southwest, who still look to the Sun-father and the Earth-mother with reverence and respect, as the source of all life. To the Hopi and Navajo, space is filled with hierarchy upon hierarchy of gods, who, they believe form the very structure of the universe. There are gods above and gods below, and every operation of Nature is, for them, caused by spiritual beings of greater or lesser degree of evolution — beings whom we, lacking the terminology of the Indians, class under one term as gods.

This mingling of the Above and the Below, of the Sky-father and the Earth-mother, and of the Waters-above with the Waters-below is well illustrated in a dance of the Hopi and Pima Indians, in which the fingers are linked in a peculiar manner, forming a fret as in Fig. 1. This is represented graphically in Fig 2 which is the common form of the Greek fret.

Some aspect of the rotation of the Above and the Below about a central vortex, seems to have been the idea behind the use of the fret so frequently seen on Indian pottery; for although there is great variation in the design, the symbolism of the intermingling of spirit and matter through involution and evolution is always implied.



There is expressed in this ancient symbol, a universal truth or law regarding the higher and lower nature of man, as well as the nature and creation of the earth. Indeed it may well apply to all coming-into-life, for every living thing is dual, having both a higher and a lower nature, or, we might say, is formed of two elements, one spiritual and one physical.

Take, for example, the scientific explanation regarding the formation of a rain storm. Each storm center is the result of a warm tropical wind meeting a cold arctic wind and forming a great whirl of winds rushing towards the center where the air pressure is least. Within the turmoil of the storm cloud, positively and negatively electrified droplets combine again and again until of a sufficient size to fall to earth as rain. That the Indians understand something of this phenomenon is shown by their use of the fret design to symbolize clouds and rain. The Greek physician Hippocrates, 460-377 B.C., (called the Father of Medicine) mentions the formation of a storm cloud in such a way as to show a knowledge of the warm and cold front origin of storms.

So general is the application of the philosophy contained in the fret that one is reminded of the Yang and Yin symbol of the Chinese; in which the light and dark segments of the circle show spirit and matter in relation, one to the other. The Yang or spirit and the Yin or matter are often called the All-father and the All-mother.

Fig. 3 shows the basic fret common to both Greece and America; in this the upper and lower lines are not joined in the center of the vortex; the spirit does not descend into matter, i.e., the body, but overshadows it, vitalizes it and this is well illustrated in this symbol.

Fig. 4 is the same fret, but with the lines joined, thus destroying much of the symbolism, reducing it to a decorative pattern. Fig. 5 is drawn from an old Hopi food-bowl, and shows the two arms of the fret opened or separated. Fig. 6 is a portion of a

cloud pattern derived from the fret, which was often used on water jars as a prayer for clouds and rain.

It is a general belief among the Indians of the Southwest that mankind has lived in, and finally emerged from a series of great caves or worlds, through an opening, which they believe all beings still use in entering and leaving this world.

The Navajo, in weaving their famous rugs symbolize this place of emergence by leaving some hidden part of the rug unfinished. The Hopi are accustomed to leave the encircling painted band about the rim of their pottery broken — the lines not joined, in other words. The bowl, being made of clay or earth, represented Mother-earth; the rim, circular in shape, represented the horizon, and the contents (food or water) the gifts of earth; and so these children of nature left an opening symbolic of the sacred place of emergence through which they believed all life ascends and descends, or enters and leaves our earth.

A Theosophist expresses the same idea when he says that everything passes from plane to plane, and from globe to globe, through a Laya center or dissolving point. Moreover, both Homer and Plato speak of the earth as a dark cave, with an opening through which not only men but the gods come and go.

The illustration Fig. 7 is taken from a Hopi pot found at Homolubi, Arizona, by Fewkes, and in this case shows the break in the line joined with a fret as though suggesting that entrance and exit is made through a labyrinth or maze. Here again if the lines of the fret had been joined, passage through the maze or fret would be impossible, and the symbolic place of emergence would be closed — a thought too fearful to consider, in the mind of the old-time Hopi for they believed a connection existed between a pictured image and the reality.

The volute scroll or wave pattern is shown in its basic form in Fig. 8; note its similarity to the rectangular fret, with the two lines indicating evolution and involution, and which in this case also are not joined in the center. This symbol is often arranged in a series of four in which the upper line of one unit becomes the lower line of the following. Fig. 9 is typical of a great variety of wave patterns derived from the scroll.

Fig. 10 is from one of Mme. Blavatsky's letters to Mr. Sinnett in which she explains the involution and evolution of spirit and matter in the Brahma Loka Tala planes or worlds. The dotted line of evolution moves from the center to the outside; the black line of involution from the outside towards the center, shows the descent of spirit, and the ascent of matter, to build our world of form and consciousness.

As to whether the ancient Greeks attached similar ideas to these symbols as the Indians of America, we have of course no direct evidence; but a comparison of the creation myths of the two peoples strongly suggests a similarity of concept throughout.

According to a creation myth of the Southern California Indians there was at first nothing. There was only an Above and a Below — Father-sky and Mother-earth, though both were of a different nature than at present; the Sky came down to his Sister the Earth and brought light to her, and the earth and all the life on it came into being.

The Zuni creation myth as recorded by Cushing contains the following: . . . "With his substance of flesh outdrawn from the surface of his person; the Sun-father formed the seed-stuff of twain worlds, impregnating therewith the great waters, and lo! in the heat of his light these waters of the sea grew green and scums rose upon them, waxing wide and weighty until, behold" they became the "Four-fold Containing Mother-earth" and the "All-covering Father-sky'." Through the mingling together of these two upon the great earth waters all terrestrial life was conceived.

According to the early Greek myths, Ouranos, the personification of the celestial spaces of the starry deep, married Gaia or the primordial earth, and from their union came the Titans, world builders, and the progenitors of the human race.

The Sky-father and Earth-mother of the Indians; and Ouranos and Gaia of the Greek mythology are so close in concept and idea as to seem identical.

Now if we turn to *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by Dr. de Purucker (p. 79) we shall find a *literal* translation of the second verse of Genesis which is as follows, "And the earth became" or "grew into ethereality. . . ." "And darkness upon the face of the ethers. And the Ruahh (the spirit-soul) of the Gods (of Elohim) (fluttered, hovered) brooding'."

Dr. de Purucker continues, "You see the same thought here that you see in practically all the ancient teachings; the figure or symbol of the cosmic soul brooding over the waters of space, preparing the world-egg: that of the cosmic egg and the divine bird laying the cosmic egg."

Theosophy states that the great symbols and myths were given mankind by Spiritual Teachers and that these glyphs formed part of a mystery language which explained the origin and destiny of man and the earth on which he lives.

Here is the clue which shows that true myths and symbols are not the invention of primitive minds groping in the dark for some explanation of things, but contains keys to Laws -of Nature of which science is not yet aware.

THE PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL TEACHING — *Richard Heinemann*

No course of action can so quickly antagonize people, or bring their worst qualities so explosively to the surface, as merely keeping your head while they are losing theirs. Since people in masses "think" emotionally (we call this "crowd psychology"), any challenge to the conclusions they have reached seems to them an attack on the worth of their own persons or personalities. Still more to the point: emotional thinking is so self-centered and self-satisfied that a sudden awareness of the mere existence of an opposing idea comes with the wrenching force of an emotional shock. Especially is this true when the opposing idea lies on higher mental or spiritual levels than the one it challenges, for mind and spirit are the great enemies of emotional smugness.

A Jesus always will be crucified, a Socrates always will be sentenced to drink poison, a Christian always will be thrown to lions or crocodiles: that is the natural price one pays for being a Jesus or a Socrates or a Christian. Such persons, by merely standing for the higher truths of being, attract to themselves the resentment of all crystallized minds. Apparently it is necessary for most men to defeat a superior opponent by material force, as a sop to their own egotism, before they can consider his ideas. They must crucify, or at least satisfactorily persecute their savior before they can recognize him.

In the process of learning, it is necessary first for an idea to be presented to the consciousness — that is, it must be able to get a hearing. This does not mean only that the person must be told of the idea (for how many thoughts go in one ear and out the other); it means he must become aware of the idea. In this process of awakening awareness, sometimes the idea is accepted; much more often it stands as a point of irritation in the consciousness. When an irritation disturbs our physical body, our first impulse is to scratch it. When the irritation is emotional, the impulse also is to scratch, and we attempt to do this by scratching out of existence the person or thing that bothers us.

In order to "scratch" the annoying idea, we must turn our attention squarely upon it. This furnishes it the golden opportunity to sink a few roots into our consciousness. However we may abuse the unfortunate person who brings it to us, none the less the idea has been planted as a seed in the very heart of our being. Under proper conditions it may grow — and all learning is entirely a matter of growth. Every happening that in any way touches the idea from that time on will force us to make unconscious comparisons, and on these the seed within us grows. In the course of time, as we destroy one after another form the idea takes in the world outside of us, we become vaguely uneasy. Within us is a stirring; the old, long crystallized ideas gradually become hollow and undermined, till they may be shattered by the next challenge from the outside world — perhaps by the next savior that we stone to death. Then the miracle happens, and like Saul of old we hear a voice that cries (within us): "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest."

That is why real teachers and real saviors are not concerned about the way people treat them. In their hearts is the knowledge that whether they are well-received or cast out, whether they are praised or persecuted, the people none the less must learn from them. A real teacher measures his progress, not by how easily the people seem to learn, but by how well they learn.

One of the most worth-while speakers in America today — Sadhu Grewal - — paused at the climax of one of his finest lectures to explain: "But lectures like this are not teaching!" His audience, under the illusion that they were actually learning the information being presented to them, did not understand this deep point of psychology. However, if you were to ask those people today what they learned at that lecture (delivered only a few months ago), you would find that they remember practically none of it. Scientific figures show that people remember only three percent of the things they hear at a lecture. Even of this three percent, it is questionable how much is really learned, and how much remains as mere "information."

It is only when there is some point in our own experience that we can

use to picture to ourselves the ideas a speaker is trying to present, that we can even begin to understand them. These points of experience are the "fertile" spots in our consciousness, on which ideas may land and begin to grow. In other ideas we may have a cold, intellectual interest, but they do not become a part of us — we do not actually learn them. They may remain in our minds until some experience opens a "fertile" spot for them, but until that time we only imagine that we understand them. It is here, indeed, that we may realize why the same statement or idea will mean different things to the various members of an audience, for each approaches the statement from his particular background of experience, and can understand it only on the basis of his particular points of comparison.

Some teachers have a habit of asking, "Can any one of you give an example to illustrate this point?" This practice is of doubtful value. Not only are the "examples" likely to be far-fetched, but if the student must consciously search for them, they are apt to be nothing but intellectual comparisons. Real points of experience are the ones that leap out and seize hold of an idea as soon as it is grasped by the brain-mind. Such examples certainly should be discussed, but the best practice is to encourage the students to present them spontaneously, just as they come to mind.

Another criticism of the plan of asking for examples is that it keeps the students in a tensed state of mind that psychologists call "voluntary attention." This makes learning difficult, on the same principle that the person who watches his feet is not a good dancer, or the person who keeps his muscles tensed is a poor automobile driver. What is more desirable is "involuntary attention": the kind that is given because the student simply becomes lost in the subject. The mind under these conditions is most receptive; it is absorbed in the learning process, without any sense of strain. In a classroom such conditions can be created only when the relationship between teacher and pupils is entirely natural and spontaneous, and the students can simply forget they are in a classroom.

The spiritual leader, who sees all the world as a school and its men and women as the pupils he must teach, puts all his reliance on the involuntary kind of attention. Where it is not present, he creates it. Those who come to him for instruction he very often drives away, knowing that the more sincere and earnest of them will return again, and that this delay in the instruction will sharpen the attention and arouse an eagerness that will produce something very much like a "fertile spot" in the pupil's consciousness. The eagerness with which a pupil learns has much to do with his ability to absorb a lesson into the actual habits of his thinking.

The true teacher cares nothing for the motives that bring a pupil to him, but is ready to bless any motive that can arouse the kind of attention the pupil must have to make him receptive for the lesson. If a man feels contempt for him, this teacher is not displeased, for he understands that even the contempt may be a tool with which he can drive home a lesson in the man's consciousness. The bishop in *Les Misérables* was a true teacher when he made something near to a saint of Jean Valjean by allowing him to steal, and then go unpunished with his "victim's" blessing, and the stolen goods as a gift. Jesus left some lesson with every person who came near Him, though in many cases it may have taken years for such "pupils" to begin to understand the lessons. What is most important is that Jesus very seldom taught these lessons by words or preaching, but rather by allowing men to observe the ordinary conduct of His life — and compare it with their own.

The true teacher sets an example, but does not go out of his way to call attention to it. Least of all does he insist that others follow it. He allows everyone to draw his own conclusions, for he knows it is better for a man to do his own thinking, however badly, than to accept without thinking the judgments even of a sage.

Hate, fear, enmity, contempt, doubt, distrust, or self-seeking may be negative emotions, but they do center the attention of the one who feels them on his victim — and if the "victim" happens to be a teacher or holy man, he can use that attention to drive home a lesson. Jesus taught

the men who crucified Him, and perhaps of all His disciples none learned more, or had the lessons driven home more vividly than the one who betrayed Him. Indeed, in no other case did Jesus so prove His worth as a teacher as in taking Judas for a disciple and allowing Himself to be betrayed — for He must have known that Judas could learn his particular lesson only by the experience of trying to live with his own soul after the betrayal.

More often than not, the lessons are not learned from one single experience. Knowledge and understanding are results of growth, and are developed by long series of experiences and comparisons. Whether the actions of a teacher will complete the growth and bring the knowledge to full flower, or will merely plant the seed, or perhaps only help to cultivate a seed someone else has planted, must depend on the circumstances and the "pupil's" degree of preparation. The true teacher, understanding this, never grows impatient, and never feels there is any wasting of his efforts.

Very often the finest teachers do not call themselves teachers, or assume any titles that might seem to set them apart. It is told of Socrates that when men asked him to recommend a philosopher to them, he would recommend philosophers, without mentioning himself, so easily did he bear being overlooked. Epictetus taught his followers that when they were among men who were discussing philosophic ideas, they should "remain for the most part silent" — for he desired them to digest the things they studied, and express them outwardly through the effect on their way of life.

Such is true teaching. All else is oratory.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GREAT ANTIQUE HEART — *Leonard Lester*

Every dawn brings a new Sunrise, a new promise, a new hope. Sunrise — a divine event — but so familiar that we hardly notice it, and accept as a matter of course its awakening benediction; nor do we pause to reflect upon what this steadfast, unswerving devotion can reveal for us of the beauty, the harmony and the precision of Universal Law.

Awakening from the baths of sleep — a state of consciousness we do not understand — we re-enter the waking world to don again the cloak of customary routine. But do we bring to this waking world a clearer understanding of its deeper meaning than we do in those vague conjectures we entertain about the oblivion of sleep? The same deadening torpor that robs the soul of its morning benediction veils our perception of the living realities which underlie our daily life — our supreme heritage of Truth and Inspiration.

These living verities declare that it is to learn the purpose of life through undergoing its experiences that we find ourselves daily face to face with our familiar problems, that life is a school of experience, a discipline, in which every incident, if turned to account, is an opportunity for growth in knowledge, wisdom, and power for noble service.

It is true that the thought atmosphere of the world as a whole is in a turmoil, and this, with all its harshness and crudity, has its depressing effects, which all must feel. And our feeling of unity and individual responsibility with and for this living world of Humanity of which we are a part has grown faint or become deadened. Nature, too, revolts, and her divinity groans under man's heartless abuse of her bounty. We have lost that pristine wonder which was alive in "the great antique heart, how like a child's in its simplicity, like a man's in its earnest solemnity and depth! Heaven lies over him; . . . making all the earth a mystic temple to him, the earth's business all a kind of worship." (1)

Nevertheless this ancient heart-wisdom is as living as ever, for it is timeless, indestructible, appearing in new forms, some as yet but dimly recognized; its old, outworn garments being cast aside. It is the same ancient flame of the spirit reborn in vestures of thought and action more adapted to the needs of this new dawning era for the evolving soul of man.

Mankind can still claim its divine birthright of spiritual power, inheriting its boundless vitality in calm abundance; and its voice crying in the wilderness of the world today calls upon all living souls to become its temple.

Theosophy brings new life to the discouraged — a new beam of Light. It reveals a Path — a Path that flows through life. It is the law of Right Action, the path of Duty. In the *Bhagavad-Gitd* are these words of Krishna addressed to Arjuna: "As the ignorant perform the duties of life from the hope of reward, so the wise man, from the wish to bring the world to duty and benefit mankind, should perform his actions without motives of interest." All inspired thinkers and poets, ancient and modern, join in homage to the divine mandate of Duty; in Wordsworth's magnificent *Ode to Duty* the lines

Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong,
And the most ancient Heavens through thee are fresh and
strong,

echo the theme of its all-pervading, cosmic sway, and again the wise words of Carlyle: "Truly this same sense of the Infinite nature of Duty is the central part of all within us," (2) voice a profound wisdom of the heart.

"To bring the world to Duty and benefit Mankind" is indeed the dominant word of command voiced by the great and wise of all ages. For all who have ears to hear it is sounding today through the work of the Theosophical Movement, whose teachings have power to re-kindle this indwelling spirit of Devotion in a united world-conscious non-spectacular program of enlightenment, which, if carried forward by

earnest men and women, will eventually change the world, by changing the hearts and minds of men.

"Duty, the central part of all within us," these words express the essential nature of Devotion which H. P. B. declared to be "the first and foremost motor in man's nature; for it is the only one that is natural in our heart, which is innate in us, and which we find alike in human babe and the young of the animal." And, quoting from the opening passage: "When, moved by the law of Evolution, the Lords of Wisdom infused into [infant Humanity] the spark of consciousness, the first feeling it awoke to life and activity was a sense of solidarity, of oneness with his spiritual creators. As the child's first feeling is for its mother and nurse, so the first aspirations of the awakening consciousness in primitive man were for those whose element he felt within himself, and who yet were outside, and independent of him. DEVOTION arose out of that feeling, and became the first and foremost motor in his nature."

It is suggested that students of Theosophy and all those who feel the urge to serve by passing on to others these vitalizing thoughts should renew their minds through frequent perusal of this wonderful passage (3) in H. P. B.'s great book. For the sense of one-ness and aspiration it invokes strikes the keynote which underlies all that for which the Theosophical Movement exists.

And surely, never in the history of the human race has there been an epoch when the need for this vitalizing spirit of Devotion has been more imperative. It is Action that is needed. The power is at hand; it comes by use. Recall Emerson's stirring words: "The law of Nature is to do the thing and you will have the power; they who do not the thing have not the power."

We have witnessed the results of the deadening spell of apathy — of deafness to the counsels of wisdom. We have marked the shelving of any wise constructive action deemed unpractical because courage and trust are lacking, but mainly because the lamp of spiritual understanding is unlit. And now, in the eyes of many our Western Civilization has sunk below the credit-level of decent, useful Humanity.

Are we to continue our barrenness of purpose, our fruitless questionings, when all the while a living answer is at hand? The Human Family cannot evade its besetting miseries (self-induced) by halting to temporize and discuss its differences. The crying need is to turn the thoughts of men away from these to the unifying bonds of eternal kinship, and so invoke the great heart-undertones of Human Solidarity. The call is a practical one and by it the nobler manhood of all peoples is challenged.

We are living in the Kali-Yuga, the dark cycle in which the forces of evil have their innings. A wise Teaching declares "that every one is so placed in this world as to exhibit his worst qualities," adding that "the purpose of this life is to strengthen the weak places of the spiritual man." (4) Is it not natural then, that the world, in its period of struggle towards regeneration, should present a picture of weakness and error? It is because a clearer light of guidance and perception than heretofore is over us that we may learn how black the picture really is, with the fumes of discord and hate. It holds a salutary lesson for all mankind — not pleasing to contemplate as a portrait of the Human Family.

But let us take heart. All is in the ordering of Universal Law. Man reaps what he has sown. He has the power and the wisdom — if he will — to sow seeds of Enlightenment and Peace for a world unborn by kindling this Wisdom in the living currents of the human heart today.

With our higher judgment and intuition aroused to a realization of the true state of the world today, what opportunities it reveals to those who would serve the race! The past, merged into the present on the brink of the dividing of the ways — the choice of a path towards a divine destiny for the Race or a falling back along the broad highways of decline.

It is no time for hesitation. A clearer vision, a vaster grasp of proportion is needed, and with hearing alert to know the call and whence it comes. No time, this, for spiritual self-culture, engrossed in its own advancement. No moment, this, for the "gratification of spiritual aspirations." (5) Now is the supreme opportunity, offered to

all, to *serve*.

Thoughtful minds are awakening — they sense the premonition that a new era is already born and is being unfolded before our eyes.

Our work demands knowledge of the world, wisdom, born of experience, to understand and interpret the diversities of human nature and the human family, and above all the practical wisdom and tact to discern the strategic points at which to direct our appeal — in plain words, to reach the right people. Among these are the thousands of the rising as well as of the present generations, who, often, unknown to themselves, cherish the longing to be joined in a comradeship of service for world-betterment — a Cause which regenerates and inspires.

These thoughts on Devotion are brightened by the hope and conviction that there are earnest minds among the Youth of the race who are spiritually awake and alert to the needs of the hour. These bring with them a new vision of life and a new energy into the human picture, and viewing the spectacle of recent events they have a keen awareness of something lacking — of a desperate need for enlightened action, and their virile and intelligent minds are spurred by a hunger for a knowledge which can answer the riddles of life.

Living example is the only key to the hearts of these. Example is a living reality, an expression of the nature of the indwelling motives and ideals. The Devotion that is spiritually vital carries within it a power of creative appeal of like for like. Its symbol is a flame that can kindle a thousand torches. Devotion may be quiet and unheralded, for it loves not parade nor display. Its steadfast, constant loyalty to the Highest within it, transmitted from heart to heart, gaining momentum as it grows, is the only power that will change and transfigure the lives of men. Devotion is summed up in these words of W. Q. Judge: "For Love and Trust are the only weapons that can overcome the real enemies against which the true theosophist must fight." (6)

FOOTNOTES:

1. Carlyle. *Past and Present*, Chapter XV. ([return to text](#))
 2. Carlyle. *Past and Present*, Chapter XV. ([return to text](#))
 3. *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky. Vol. I, page 210. ([return to text](#))
 4. From: *The Path*, Dec. 1886, p. 278 recorded from *Man: Fragments of a Forgotten History*. ([return to text](#))
 5. See *Bulletin* for Aug. 5, "46, No. 16 (quoting K. II.) — (bottom of last page). ([return to text](#))
 6. From *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Vol. II Letter XXI. ([return to text](#))
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The Theosophical Forum

SOME SECRETS OF THE HEART — *Madeline Clark*

Like the diamond in the heap of grain, a thought encountered in a paragraph from *Science* (1) flashed forth a suggestive gleam — and a train of ideas was born. This is the paragraph:

I remind you that the uses to which the heart and the blood and the blood vessels are put, engaged the attention of naturalists very early. They (the naturalists) kept coming back century after century to an attempt at solution, always thinking that an answer had been found, but never aware of the inaccuracy or the inadequacy of those answers. We think now that we have been making and are making great strides toward understanding. And we are. But let me remind you also that in a very real sense, we possess small likelihood of thinking of kinds of mechanisms except those which lie reasonably close to our hands. And yet, in connection with the circulation and its mechanics, the questions we can and do ask for which there is not even an approach to an answer are very startling. I am thinking, in the heart, of so essential a part of its mechanism as rhythm — rhythm itself being a phenomenon widely recognized as occurring in many aspects of nature, without in most situations our having the remotest notion as to how to proceed to find an answer to our enquiry concerning its origin or its nature.

— Learned Sirs, if you could fathom that marvel, you would know the secret of the Universe. That mysterious and invincible rhythm that comes to you through your stethoscope, if you could trace it to its source, would take you out to the very borders of universal manifestation — beyond the planets in their courses, beyond the Polestar, beyond the realms of Time itself, to where Eternal Duration holds sway over the deeps of Space. In that human heartbeat you hear an echo from Infinitude, because, as you yourselves have half-perceived,

everything in manifested life responds in rhythm to "that Absolute Unity, that ever-pulsating great *Heart* that beats throughout, as in every atom, of nature." (2)

This little man, this soul tossed on the frothy billows of circumstance, who comes to you for help in keeping his bark seaworthy, is himself an epitome of the Universe. "He is in little all the sphere," as George Herbert, the Welsh-English mystic (1593-1633) says in his poem on *Man*. To the myriads of infinitesimal lives that ensoul the cells and atoms of his being, a single beat of his heart is the beginning and ending of a definite cycle. Imagine him expanded to the utmost in all his spiritual parts and principles, and you have the Adam Kadmon, the Heavenly Man, the cosmic entity itself, of which the "one absolute attribute, which is ITSELF, eternal, ceaseless Motion, is called . . . the "Great Breath" . . . the perpetual motion of the Universe." (3)

We can follow this Rhythm or Motion to the very confines of thought, but we can never get away from it. It manifests in the coming-into-being of worlds and systems and their august deaths, when they sink again into "the dark mystery of non-Being";* and it is in the ceaseless reimpodiments of all lesser creatures, down to the very smallest; it governs the beating of the Solar heart in its eleven-year cycle; it is seen in the tides of the ocean, the fluctuations of the seasons, day and night, sleeping and waking, the fall of the leaves and budding of the trees, in Mendeleef's table of the Elements, in Bode's Law, and in all the majestic movements of the celestial bodies. It is "finite and periodical" in the manifested universe, but "eternal and ceaseless" in the Intra-Cosmic Spaces. . . . That human heart will cease to beat; it and the Universe and all in it will in time pass away, but the underlying immortal Rhythm is unceasing, and will one day bring them forth again.

"We must put hard heads at the service of soft hearts," said Dr. Cohn at the close of his address: another flash of the diamond, for he has unconsciously touched an ancient truth, which does put the head at the service of the heart, as a matter of their essential nature, linking both in a mystic spiritual unity.

Our Theosophical Teachers have pointed out (and history supports this) that the ancients held the heart to be the seat of the understanding, in some sense, of the deeper thinking faculty, and that the head (the brain-mind) was second to the heart and guided by it in its intellection. How is it that we, for example, still use the expression, "to learn by heart — "? It is a carry-over, undoubtedly, from the days when the relations of heart and brain were better understood. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," is still a common saying. "What his heart thinks his tongue speaks," said Shakespeare. And there is still a minority of scholars and thinkers, who conceive the heart to be the organ of "inmost and most private thought," to quote from the dictionary. Yet for the most part the thoughtless multitude of today think of the heart only as the seat of the emotions, sentiments, and even passions, or at best as expressing the motivating power to thought.

There is a modern revival in Theosophy of the ancient teaching regarding the heart and its spiritual functioning in our human makeup, and it was given by Dr. de Purucker in several of his talks to his students. (4) The heart, he said, is the most evolved organ in the body, "the hyparxis, physically speaking," and is actually the organ of our Inner God, whose ray touches it and fills it with its presence. That is why it is in actual fact the abode of conscience, love, peace, courage, hope, and wisdom. The mystic heart, of which the physical organ is the physical vital instrument, is higher than the brain, said Dr. de Purucker, "because it is the organ of the individual's spiritual nature, including the higher manas or spiritual intellect."

Here is a teaching to fire the imagination — that man carries within his breast, pulsating, vibrating with cosmic life, a tangible link with the spiritual worlds to which he aspires. Many a time must we all have marveled at the miracle of the unceasing motion of the heart from birth to far-off death, absorbing the shocks, the joys and jolts of life, invincible and undismayed. But the fact that it is sustained and energized by one of the bright gods, destined to manifest for the period of a human incarnation, that alone perhaps brings such a marvel

within our understanding.

Now then, Dr. de Purucker goes on to make plain how it is that the heart leads, and the head follows. The two centers connected with the brain, the pineal gland and the pituitary body, are the seats of the spiritual intuitions and of the will, respectively, and their connection with the heart is of the closest, for the pineal gland is the heart's organ of spiritual-intellectual activity in the head, and its impulse to activity comes from the heart. The pituitary body is in its turn actuated by the pineal gland, and when high and noble impulses come from the heart, the whole being of the man becomes "a harmony of higher energies — relatively godlike." (5)

These higher energies, which we might call in a general way the faculties of sensitive perception and of instant intuition, are actually the sixth and seventh senses represented by these centers in the head, which the human race is destined to develop, but which are "not yet existent and working in us and through us as manifested activities " Yet even now the first faint stirrings of these faculties can be felt. But they can never be developed safely unless all selfish motive is eradicated. Dr de Purucker tells us how to go about the conquest of these higher powers:

The first rule is live as a true man. It is as simple as that. Do everything you have to do, and do it in accordance with your best. Your ideas of what is best will grow and improve, but begin. The next thing is to cultivate *specifically as units* the higher qualities in you which will make you superiorly human as contrasted with inferiorly human. Be just, be gentle, be forgiving, be compassionate and pitiful. Learn the wondrous beauty of self-sacrifice for others, there is something grandly heroic about it. Keep these things in your heart. Believe that you have intuition. Live in your higher being. Then when this can be kept up continuously so that it becomes your life, habitual to you then the time approaches when you will become a man made perfect, a glorious Buddha.

Scientific discoveries of recent years in regard to sunspots and the magnetic influence of solar radiation support the statement of Theosophy that the Sun is in actual fact the pulsing heart of the Solar System. Theosophy goes still further, and says that the Sun is the heart *and mind* of the Solar System. In *The Secret Doctrine* H. P. Blavatsky quotes an ancient Commentary as saying:

The Sun is the heart of the Solar World [System] and its brain is hidden behind the [visible] Sun. Thence, sensation is radiated into every nerve-cell of the great body, and the waves of the life essence flow into each artery and vein. The planets are its limbs and pulses.

And Dr. de Purucker refers familiarly to the same fact in his *Studies in Occult Philosophy*:

the Sun, being as it is not only the heart but the mind of the solar system as long as this solar system remains a coherent unity, is therefore the governor of all the forces in that solar system — governor and controller, as well as source and final focus.

Here we have heart and mind (or brain) seated in the same celestial organ: a suggestive and significant fact, more closely related to our human heart and brain than will be understood soon or generally.

A final word — again highly suggestive: The doctrine of "singular points" (Sir James Jeans), or "laya-centers," as named in Theosophy, through which the matters or substances of one world or "dimension" stream through into the world next below, is really one of wide application. Dr. Jeans applied it to nebulae: Dr. de Purucker remarks (*Questions We All Ask*, Series II, p. 219):

Let me tell you something more: every globe that you see in space has as its center, its heart, just such a "singular point," . . . and through this center of each such globe come into that globe the streams of entities, the river of living things, by which that globe is inhabited, all of them on their evolutionary pathway.

They then enter into the atmosphere of any such globe, such as our earth, and find . . . their habitats. . . .

— Considering the human heart as the gateway for the life-giving elements which sustain the circulations of the body, could not the heart in its higher function be the laya-center through which stream into our consciousness spiritually creative life-atoms from the higher worlds?

FOOTNOTE:

1. From *Remarks on Professions in Medicine*, by Dr. Alfred E. Cohn, Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, New York. January 24, 1940, address before the Alpha Omega Alpha. ([return to text](#))
2. H P B, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 2. ([return to text](#))
3. H P B, *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 2. ([return to text](#))
4. Preserved in Dr. de Purucker's books, *Man in Evolution* and *Studies in Occult Philosophy*. ([return to text](#))
5. The process of the heart's influence upon the pineal and pituitary centers can only be mentioned suggestively here the whole subject, embracing also the other centers, or "chakras," should be studied in the two books by Dr de Purucker already cited in this article. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH — *Allan J. Stover*

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge:
The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
— Tennyson, *The Passing of Arthur*

Pythagoras, who, according to tradition, was able to sense the ever changing harmony of the stars and planets in their movements, called this universal symphony of nature the "Music of the Spheres," as coming from the heart of nature herself.

While we are not able to hear this celestial music ourselves, the earth in its yearly journey about the sun produces the seasons, which we may think of as a musical symphony in four movements; for in each quarter of the year the motif and tempo vary, bringing to every being new conditions for necessary experience. For the year, the lunar month, and every day, each repeats on its own small scale the pattern of a manvantara. And the rotation of little cycles within larger cycles brings about shifts and changes, so that no cycle is ever exactly like the preceding.

This may be one reason why the Teachers have always warned us not to let our minds crystallize about any idea, for if we do we may fail to see the opportunity in the new phase of the great symphony.

A year is rounding to its close and a new year will soon begin, in which a new chance is offered to everyone, for it is in a sense a reshuffling of the cards. It is a true intuition which has led to the practice of making New Year's resolutions.

Into each phase of life from childhood to old age there comes a karmic heritage from the past which could not find expression except under those particular conditions. But continually men strive to carry youth

into middle age, and middle age into old age, not realizing that each scene in the drama of life has experiences and opportunity for soul growth not provided by any other.

In the calendar in common use much of the inner structure of the universe is symbolized, and just because the interlocking cycles of every grade follow the same general plan, the student will find much worthy of careful study, in this one of the most familiar things in life.

Unfortunately the calendar as used at present is in certain ways out of gear with nature, but nevertheless the twelve months are symbolic of the twelve signs of the zodiac and their twelve magnetic influences. The days of the week are named for the seven sacred planets and the seven universal principles associated with them. The four quarters of the year, the four phases of the moon, and the four parts of the day, in their intermeshing form a kind of paradigm of the operations and structure of the universe.

But there is a grander significance which is contained in the initiatory cycles which take place at the four sacred seasons — the summer and winter solstices and the vernal and autumnal equinoxes. At these times those who are worthy and well qualified are permitted to take the step which raises them above ordinary humanhood into that of active workers in the guardian wall of humanity.

The Theosophical Forum

THE OCCULT WAY (1) — *Doris Mason*

The fundamental teaching of occultism is that he who would become an occultist must first live the life — a life of spiritual self-discipline, impersonal love, constant devotion to duty, and unswerving loyalty and obedience to the teacher — and right here I would like to say that unswerving loyalty and obedience to the teacher is absolutely necessary in treading the Occult Path. Once we disobey and decide to go off on our own, we lose contact with the teacher, thus becoming in danger of losing the power of discrimination between *true* and *false*.

Any subject spoken or written is confined to the limitations of the mind and understanding of the speaker. Each gives the picture as he himself sees it.

In meditating on the symbolism of the Occult Way, or path, I have always pictured to my mind a white gate at the entrance; a gate such as we see at the entrance of any public park. Just as in the case of the gate to the park — this gate also is locked, and only at certain times is it possible to unlock it and pass through. We may pass it day after day, and year after year, we may have the idea in the back of our minds some day to open the gate and see what lies beyond it, but we keep putting off that day. Of the thousands who pass that gate, some in their preoccupation with their own worldly affairs, and others with the idea of sometime in the future opening the gate, there are few who consciously and of their own volition actually open it and walk through. The only key necessary to open it is, of course, the unselfish desire within ourselves to dedicate our lives to the service of humanity.

Once within this gate, straight ahead we see what appears to be a rocky, rugged, apparently barren and lonely path. Right at this point he who would tread the path to chelaship must choose. Few actually choose the rugged path. Some smell the fragrant flowers of Intellectualism to the left and wander off in that direction — others see

the vivid foliage of psychic phenomena on yet another path and wander off in that direction. Those who do either never actually enter the Path of, or towards, Occultism, known to Theosophists as the Chela Path, although they may in their psychic or intellectual opium dreams delude themselves in the belief that they are on the Path. True they entered the gate, but they failed to step onto the path itself.

Our teachers have spoken of this path as "steep and thorny," and as a "lonely path." Both are right in a sense, for first of all it is the path of *self* discipline, not discipline of our companions, our neighbors, of our friends, or even of our so-called enemies, as some seem to believe. At the very first step on this path we must give up entirely the personality, the *self* we have been, for we no longer belong to ourselves alone, we can no longer let the lower physical self dictate to us what we will say, where we will go, what we will do, or even what we will think. Our lives, once we enter the Path are dedicated to doing the Masters' work. We go, and I am speaking geographically now, where they direct us to go. We also do what they wish us to do. Even though we inwardly *know this is so*, we sometimes deceive ourselves into believing that we go to a certain country, city or town because we want to go. Once there, we realize the purpose of the change in location, we recognize once again the touch of the Masters, and see before us the work we are to do. And we also know there is no escape until the job is finished and we once again receive our orders for *change of station*. I do not mean to imply here that the Masters contact personally, or through correspondence, all who tread the Occult Path. However, those in the Theosophical Society are taught by teachers who have been trained by the Masters.

In the vocabulary of the Army, entering the path is like unto being called to *active duty*, and these sometimes bewildering moves to places we had no intention of ever visiting, can be compared to a *change of station*. The *orders* received, although not written and signed as they are in the army, are nevertheless just as clear, and to disobey them can bring more severe discipline or punishment than any court martial could deal out to us. Any soldier with a minimum of intelligence soon learns that life flows along quite harmoniously in the Army, if he obeys

the orders of his superiors — so it is on the Occult Path — we follow the rules of self-discipline laid down for us by those who have trodden the path before us. It is not too hard. We do not become saints overnight and sometimes it seems to us after years of trying, that we have made little progress.

I have always identified the rocks and thorns seen ahead on the path as our own weaknesses and bad habits which we must overcome before we can go farther. With some of us, it is a bitter gossiping tongue, with others it is malice and jealousy, or a vicious desire to meddle in other people's affairs, still others fight laziness, and the tendency to let the other fellow do the hard work while they dream. There are so many such rocks along the way. However, the sharp rocks are not so serious; we are ever aware of them. The treacherous pitfalls hidden deep in the brush and foliage of self are *pride, vanity, desire for praise, and delusions of grandeur of either the spiritual or earthly variety*. Few of us are free of these. A sense of superiority is present in some form in almost everyone. Few of us can truthfully say we do not consider ourselves socially, spiritually, or intellectually superior to anyone else. Often it takes the form of a private hunch that we are quite a bit smarter than the rest. Or that no one else could possibly do our particular job as well as we are doing it. In fact some of us are convinced that should we cease doing the work we are now doing, our particular department would have to fold up and close its doors. We cannot bear the thought that anyone else could do the job as well and perhaps more efficiently than we are able to do it.

In England in 1944, during the worst of the buzz bomb blitz, an Army Chaplain spoke to a group of about 500 soldiers and officers. The tension caused by the constant bombings brought out the very worst, or the very best that was in all of us. There had been many reports of unjust treatment of the men by some of the officers, who in turn reported lack of discipline among the troops. This chaplain spared neither; he started with the officers:

"*Who do you think you are?*" he shouted. "*Do you fancy that you, the*

real you is *Major* Smith, or *Captain* Jones? Only for a little while has fate given you the army title you now wear. Only for a little while perhaps, will you even have the name of John Smith which was given you at birth. Do you think you won your rank because you were *actually* superior to your fellow men? If you do, allow me to disillusion you. A power higher than any Bureau in Washington put you in the position you are now in. You were probably not the best material that could be had, but you were given the chance to become a leader of men in a small way. Death is very close to us all here at this moment. This may be your last chance to be remembered, and live in the memory of the men who serve under you, as a grand leader; or you may die unregretted as the *failure* you now are. Only a second in time, perhaps, and all you have of earthly things may no longer belong to you." To the soldiers he said, "How can you expect life to go right with you, if you spend all your time figuring out ways to disobey the rules and regulations? Think more of doing the duty that lies nearest to you, and you won't have so much time to think of the ill treatment you may, or may not, be receiving!" That particular talk was what we all needed; we left the assembly much chastened.

In *Light on the Path* we read,

And that power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men.

That is the hardest hurdle for most of us to cross. We cannot bear to be considered as nothing in the eyes of men, we must everlastingly stimulate the ego with reminders of our importance. It is hard for us to realize that none of this is ours, none of these things actually belong to us, that all will be taken from us eventually, and that the moment may be much nearer than we realize.

Some who are young now feel quite superior to their elders. There is nothing unique in being young — all living beings have youth at one time in their lives.

And some who are older are apt to feel that their years give them a

cloak of virtue in which to wrap themselves while they sit in judgment on the young, deaf meanwhile to the rattling of the skeletons of their own youthful indiscretions in the closet behind them.

Some feel superiority in the form of the *martyr complex* — I've heard so many remark that they had sacrificed their lives, or many years of their lives to this or that. *To dedicate one's life to anything worthwhile is not a sacrifice — it is a privilege.*

And so it is in following the occult path — *it is not a sacrifice of anything that really belongs to us — it is rather a coming into our rightful heritage.*

It may seem to you that I've dwelt too long on the *obstacles* to be overcome on the path, but not until we set our own houses in order, so to speak, and clear out the things which clutter up our lives, can we gain the vision and the strength to carry on the work of the Masters. We cannot do much to help others while we are all muddled up and confused, ourselves. And what is worse — we hamper the Teacher's efforts to help and teach us, until we clear the channel between ourselves and him.

In time, constant practice of self-discipline will give us the strength to go on undaunted and not disillusioned by the selfish, personal axe-grinding of those whom we wish with all our hearts we could respect. As the contact with the higher self grows firmer, we learn to walk alone, unmoved by the conduct or criticism of those around us.

As Kahlil Gibran, the Persian poet, so aptly expresses it in his *Sand and Foam*,

I have learned silence from the talkative,
Toleration from the intolerant,
Kindness from the unkind;
Yet strangely enough —
I am ungrateful to these teachers!

Each treads the Path in his own way, for each has his own destiny or

Karman to work out — it cannot possibly be the same for all. And — to put it bluntly — it's really none of our business how another may be following the path.

The time is so short — there's so much to be done, and so few are willing to do it.

We must grow strong and sure of ourselves — millions need the strength and help we can give. For too long we have pampered ourselves, deliberately and through indolence delaying our spiritual evolution. For too long we have *received*. It is high time we started to *give* — not alone of our possessions — that is simple — but of *ourselves*. For then, and only then, are we living *the occult way*.

In closing, I want to pass on to you something that has exerted the strongest influence in my life and has given me more courage than any one thing for many years — it long ago filled the place left empty by the omission of the prayers which had comforted me as a child. It is from the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Many of you are familiar with it, of course, but in all imaginable situations it has never failed to recall me to my duty, or to comfort me when comfort was sorely needed — it is this:

Therefore perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the result, obtaineth the Supreme.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address delivered in the Temple at Covina, September 29, 1946.

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The Theosophical Forum

CYCLIC IMPRESSION AND RETURN AND OUR EVOLUTION (1) — *William Q. Judge*

I

The word cycle is derived from the Greek word *Kuklos*, or a ring. It has been turned in the English language into the word cycle, by the process of saying *Kykle*, and then cycle. The corresponding word in the Sanscrit is *Kalpa*, which has in fact a wider and a deeper meaning; because cycle in English is a word which covers, is used for, and thus somewhat confuses, many cycles. It is used for the small cycles, and the larger cycles, the intermediate cycles and the great ones, whereas the word *Kalpa* means and implies only one cycle of a large size, and the smaller cycles within that are designated by other words.

What is a cycle? It is a circle, a ring. But not properly a ring like a wedding ring, which runs into itself, but more properly like a screw thread, which takes the form of a spiral, and thus beginning at the bottom, turns on itself, and goes up. It is something like the great Horseshoe Curve in the Pennsylvania Railroad. There you go around the curve at the lower end; you go down into the horseshoe, and as you turn the grade rises, so that when you arrive at the opposite side you have gotten no further than the beginning, but you have risen just the distance between the two ends of the grade.

But what do we mean by a cycle in Theosophy, in our own investigations of nature, or man, or civilization, or our own development, our own origin, our own destiny? We mean by a cycle, just what the Egyptians, the Hindoos and the philosophers of the Middle Ages meant by it; that is, that there is a periodical return or cycling back, circling back of something from some place once more. That is why it is called cycle, inasmuch as it returns upon itself, seemingly; but in the Theosophical doctrine, and in the ancient doctrines, it is always a little higher in the sense of perfection or

progress. That is to say, as the Egyptians held, cycles prevail everywhere, things come back again, events return, history comes back, and so in this century we have the saying: "History repeats itself."

But where do Theosophists say that cyclic law prevails? We say that it prevails everywhere. It prevails in every kingdom of nature, in the animal kingdom, the mineral world, the human world; in history, in the sky, on the earth. We say that not only do cycles pertain, and appertain, and obtain in and to the earth and its inhabitants, but also in what the Hindoos call the three kingdoms of the universe, the three worlds; that is, that below us, ourselves, and that above.

Now, if you will turn to Buckle, a great writer of the English school, you will find him saying in one of his standard books, a great book often quoted, that there is no doubt cyclic law prevails in regard to nations, that they have come back apparently the same, only slightly improved or degraded, for there is also a downward cycle included within those that rise; but Buckle did not discover a law. He simply once more stated what the ancients had said over and over again. And it has always seemed to me that if Buckle and other people of that kind would pay a little more attention to the ancients, they would save themselves a great deal of trouble, for he obtained his law by much delving, much painstaking labor, whereas he might have gotten the law if he had consulted the ancients, who always taught that there were cycles, and that there always will be cycles.

Among the ancients they had a great many large and important cycles. In their classification they had a Saros and a Naros, which are not understood today by us. They are known to some extent, but what exactly they are, we do not know. The Egyptians taught that there was a great sidereal cycle, and that is recognized today, at last; that is the cycle of 25,000 years, the great one caused by the fact that the sun went through the signs of the Zodiac in that length of time. Now, I do not assume that you know nothing about astronomy, but in order to make it clear, it will be better for me to state this over again, just as it is. The

sun goes through the signs of the Zodiac from day to day and from year to year, but at the same time, in going through the signs of the Zodiac, he goes back slowly, like the hands of a clock ticking off the time. In going through that period he comes back to the same point again, and retards himself, or goes back: that is called the precession of the equinoxes, and it is so many seconds in such a length of time. Those seconds in the sky turned into time show you that the sun takes 25,000 and odd years to come back to the place from which he started out at any particular time; that is to say, if you imagine that on the first of April, this year, the sun was in such a degree of Aries, one of the signs of the Zodiac, he will not get back to that sign by the precession of the equinoxes until 25,000 years have passed away.

Now, the sun is the center of our solar system and the earth revolves around it, and as the earth revolves she turns upon her axis. The sun, it is known now by astronomers, as it was known by the ancients (who were ourselves in fact), revolves around a center. That is, that while we are going around the sun, he is going around some other center, so that we describe in the sky not a circle around the sun, but a spiral, as we move with the sun around his enormous orbit. Now do you grasp that idea exactly? It is a very important one, for it opens up the subject to a very large extent. There is a star somewhere in the sky, we do not know where — some think it is Alcyone, or some other star, some think it may be a star in the Pleiades, and some others think it is a star somewhere else — but they know by deduction from the known to the unknown, that the sun is attracted himself by some unknown center, and that he turns a-round it in an enormous circle, and as he turns, of course he draws the earth with him. In the course of 25,000 years in going around the signs of the Zodiac, he must take the earth into spaces where it has never yet been, for when he reaches this point in Aries, after 25,000 years, it is only apparently the same point, just as when I came around the curve of the Horseshoe, I started around the first point and went around the curve, came back to the same point, but I was higher up; I was in another position. And so, when the sun gets back again to the point in Aries, where he was on the first of April this

year, he will not be in the exact position in the universe of space, but he will be somewhere else, and in his journey of 25,000 years through billions upon billions of miles, he draws the earth into spaces where she never was before, and never will be as that earth again. He must draw her into cosmic spaces where things are different and thus cause changes in the earth itself, for changes in cosmic matter in the atmosphere, in the space where the sun draws the earth, must affect the earth and all its inhabitants. The ancients investigated this subject, and declared long ago this 25,000 years cycle, but it is only just lately, so to speak, that we are beginning to say we have discovered this. We know, as Nineteenth century astronomers, that it is a fact, or that it must be a fact, from deduction, but they knew it was a fact because they had observed it themselves and recorded the observations.

The Egyptians had also the cycle of the Moon, which we know, and they had more cycles of the moon than we have, for the moon not only has her cycle of twenty-eight days, when she changes from full to disappearance, and then again to youth, but she also has a period of return somewhere over fourteen years, which must itself have its effect upon the earth.

Then they said, also, that the human soul had its cycle, it being 5,000 years. That is, the man died, or the king died, and his body was turned into a mummy in the hope that when, after his five thousand years cycle had elapsed and he came back once more to earth, he would find his mummy there? No; but that no one else should have taken his mummied atoms and made a bad use of them. Mummification is explained by us in another way. Their knowledge of the law of cycles caused them to make the first mummy. They held that a human soul returned; they also held that all atoms are alive, just as we do; that they are sensitive points; that they have intelligence belonging to the plane on which they are, and that the man who misuses atoms of matter, such as you have in your bodies and your brains, must stand the consequences. Consequently, saying that to themselves, they said, "If I die, and leave those atoms, which I have used so well, perhaps some other man will take them and use them badly, so I will preserve them

as far as possible until I return, and then by a process destroy the combination of atoms, absorb them into some place, or position, where they might be put to good use." That may seem offensive to some today, but I am merely repeating the theory. I am not saying whether I believe it or not.

The ancient Egyptians who held these theories have disappeared and left nothing behind but the pyramids, the temples of Thebes, the Sphinxes and all the great monuments which are slowly being discovered by us. Where have they gone? Have they come back? Do the Copts now in Egypt represent them? I think not, although heredity is the boasted explanation of everything. The Copts are their descendants? They know nothing, absolutely nothing but a simple language, and they live the life of slaves, and yet they are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians! What has become of them? The ancient Egyptians we think were co-laborers with the ancient Hindoos, whose cycle remains; that is to say, whose descendants remain, holding the knowledge, in part, of their forefathers, and we find that the Hindoos have held always the same theories as to cycles as the Egyptians held. They divided the ages of the world. They say manifestation begins, and then it lasts for a period called a Kalpa, an enormous number of years; that Kalpa is divided into ages. The small cycle is composed of a large number of years; one will be four thousand, another four hundred thousand, another will be a million, and so on, making a total which we cannot grasp with the mind but which we can write upon the paper.

Now, the idea of cycles came from the Hindoos, through the nations who spread out from there, for it is admitted that the land of Hindustan is the cradle of the race. The Aryan race came down into Christendom, so that we find the Christians, the Romans, the Greeks and all people around that time holding the same theories as to cycles; that is, that cyclic law prevails everywhere. We find it in the ancient mystics, the Christian mystics, the middle age mystics and the mystics of times nearer to ours. If you will read the works of Higgins, who wrote the Anacalypsis, you will find there laborious compilations and

investigations on the subject of the cycles. Do they obtain? Is there such a thing as a cycle which affects human destiny?

Coming closer to our own personal life, we can see that cycles do and must prevail, for the sun rises in the morning and goes to the center of the sky, descends in the west; the next day he does the same thing, and following him, you rise, you come to the highest point of your activity, and you go to sleep. So day follows night and night follows day. Those are cycles, small cycles, but they go to make the greater ones. You were born, at about seven years of age you began to get discretion to some extent. A little longer and you reach manhood, then you begin to fall, and at last you finish the great day of your life when body dies.

In looking at nature we also find that there are summer and winter, spring and autumn. These are cycles, and every one of them affects the earth, with the human beings upon it.

The esoteric doctrine, the inner doctrine of the old Theosophists and the present day Theosophists, to be found in every old literature and religious book, is that cyclic law is the supreme law governing our evolution; that reincarnation, which we talk so much about, is cyclic law in operation and is supreme. For what is reincarnation but a coming back again to life, just what the ancient Egyptians taught and which we are finding out to be probably true, for in no other way than by this cyclic law of reincarnation can we account for the problems of life that beset us; with this we account for our own character, each one different from the other, and with a force peculiar to each person.

This being the supreme law, we have to consider another one, which is related to it and contained in the title I have adopted. That is the law of the return of impressions. What do we mean by that? I mean, those acts and thoughts performed by a nation — not speaking about the things that affect nature, although it is governed by the same law — constitute an impression. That is to say, your coming to this convention creates in your nature an impression. Your going into the street and seeing a street brawl creates an impression. Your having a quarrel last week and denouncing a man, or with a woman and getting very angry,

creates an impression in you, and that impression is as much subject to cyclic law as the moon, and the stars, and the world, and is far more important in respect to your development — your personal development or evolution — than all these other great things, for they affect you in the mass, whereas these little ones affect you in detail.

II

This Theosophical doctrine in respect to cycles, and the evolution of the human race, I think is known to you all, for I am assuming that you are all theosophists.

It is to be described somewhat in this way: Imagine that before this earth came out of the gaseous condition there existed an earth somewhere in space, let us call it the moon, for that is the exact theory. The moon was once a large and vital body full of beings. It lived its life, went through its cycles, and at last having lived its life, after vast ages had passed away, came to the moment when it had to die; that is, the moment came when the beings on that earth had to leave it, because its period had elapsed, and then began from that earth the exodus. You can imagine it as a flight of birds migrating. Did you ever see birds migrate? I have seen them migrate in a manner that perhaps not many of you have. In Ireland, and perhaps in England, the swallows migrate in a manner very peculiar.

When I was a boy, I used to go to my uncle's place where there was an old mass of stone ruins at the end of the garden, and by some peculiar combination of circumstances the swallows of the whole neighboring counties collected there. The way they gathered there was this: When the period arrived, you could see them coming in all parts of the sky, and they would settle down and twitter on this pile of stone all day, and fly about. When the evening came — twilight — they rose in a body and formed an enormous circle. It must have been over forty feet in diameter, and that circle of swallows flew around in the sky, around this tower, around and around for an hour or two, making a loud twittering noise, and that attracted from other places swallows who had probably forgotten the occasion.

They kept that up for several days, until one day the period arrived when they must go, and they went away — some were left behind, some came a little early, and some came too late. Other birds migrate in other ways. And so these human birds migrated from the moon to this spot where the earth began (I don't know where it is — a spot in space) and settled down as living beings, entities, not with bodies, but beings, in that mass of matter, at that point in space, informed it with life, and at last caused this earth to become a ball with beings upon it. And then cycles began to prevail, for the impressions made upon these fathers when they lived in the ancient — mind fails to think how ancient — civilization of the moon, came back again when they got to this earth, and so we find the races of the earth rising up and falling, rising again and falling, rising and falling, and at last coming to what they are now, which is nothing to what they will be, for they go ever higher and higher.

That is the theory, broadly, and in that is included the theory of the races, the great seven races who inhabited the earth successively, the great seven Adams who peopled the earth; and at last when this earth shall come to its time of life, its period, all the beings on it will fly away from it to some other spot in space to evolve new worlds as elder brothers who have done the same thing before in other spaces in nature. We are not doing this blindly. It has been done before by others — no one knows when it began. It had nothing in the way of a beginning, it will have no end, but there are always elder brothers of the race, who live on.

As some have written, we cannot turn back the cycles in their course. The fire of patriotism cannot prevail against the higher destiny which will plunge a nation into darkness. All we can do is to change it here and there a little. The elder brothers are subject to law, but they have confidence and hope, because that law merely means that they appear to go down, in order to rise again at a greater height. So that we have come up through the cyclic law from the lowest kingdoms of nature. That is, we are connected in an enormous brotherhood, which includes

not only the white people of the earth, and the black people of the earth, and the yellow people, but the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the mineral kingdom and the unseen elemental kingdom.

You must not be so selfish as to suppose that it includes only men and women. It includes everything, every atom in this solar system. And we come up from lower forms, and are learning how to so mould and fashion, use and abuse, or impress the matter that comes into our charge, into our bodies, our brains and our psychical nature, that that matter shall be an improvement to be used by the younger brothers who are still below us, perhaps in the stone beneath our feet. I do not mean by that that there is a human being in that stone. I mean that every atom in the stone is not dead matter. There is no dead matter anywhere, but every atom in that stone contains a life, unintelligent, formless, but potential, and at some period in time far beyond our comprehension, all of those atoms in that stone will have been released. The matter itself will have been refined, and at last all in this great cycle of progress will have been brought up the steps of the ladder, in order to let some others lower still in a state we cannot understand come up to them.

That is the real theory. Is that superstition? If you believe the newspapers, that is superstition, for they will twist and turn everything you say. Your enemies will say you said there was a man in that stone, and that you have been a stone. You have not been a stone, but the great monad, the pilgrim who came from other worlds has been in every stone, has been in every kingdom, and now has reached the state of man, to show whether he is able to continue being a man, or whether he will once more fall back, like the boy at school who will not learn, into the lowest class.

Now then, this law of impressions I have been talking about can be illustrated in this way: If you look at one of these electric lights — take away all the rest, leaving one only, so as to have a better impression — you will find the light makes an image on the retina, and when you shut your eye, this bright filament of light made by a carbon in an

incandescent lamp will be seen by you in your eye. You can try it, and see for yourselves. If you keep your eye closed and watch intently, you will see the image come back a certain number of counts, it will stay a certain number of counts, it will go away in the same length of time and come back again, always changing in some respect but always the image of the filament, until at last the time comes when it disappears apparently because other impressions have rubbed it out or covered it over.

That means that there is a return even in the retina of the impression of this filament. After the first time, the color changes each time, and so it keeps coming back at regular intervals, showing that there is a cyclic return of impression in the retina, and if that applies in one place, it applies in every place. And when we look into our moral character we find the same thing, for as we have the tides in the ocean, explained as they say by the moon — which in my opinion does not explain it, but of course, being no scientist, my view is not worth much — so in man we have tides, which are called return of these impressions; that is to say, you do a thing once, there will be a tendency to repeat itself; you do it twice, and it doubles its influence, a greater tendency to do that same thing again. And so on all through our character shows this constant return of cyclic impression.

We have these impressions from every point in space, every experience we have been through, everything that we can possibly go through at any time, even those things which our forefathers went through. And that is not unjust for this reason, that our forefathers furnished the line of bodily encasement, and we cannot enter that line of bodily encasement unless we are like unto it, and for that reason we must have been at some point in that cycle in that same line or family in the past, so that I must have had a hand in the past in constructing the particular family line in which I now exist, and am myself once more taking up the cyclic impression returning upon me.

Now this has the greatest possible bearing upon our evolution as particular individuals, and that is the only way in which I wish to

consider the question of evolution here; not the broad question of the evolution of the universe, but our own evolution, which means our bodily life, as Madame Blavatsky, repeating the ancients, said to us so often, and as we found said by so many of the same school. An opportunity will arise for you to do something; you do not do it; you may not have it again for one hundred years. It is the return before you of some old thing that was good, if it is a good one, along the line of the cycles. You neglect it, as you may, and the same opportunity will return, mind you, but it may not return for many hundred years. It may not return until another life, but it will return under the same law.

Now take another case. I have a friend who is trying to find out all about Theosophy, and about a psychic nature, but I have discovered that he is not paying the slightest attention to this subject of the inevitable return upon himself of these impressions which he creates. I discovered he had periods of depression (and this will answer for everybody) when he had a despondency that he could not explain. I said to him, you have had the same despondency maybe seven weeks ago, maybe eight weeks ago, maybe five weeks ago. He examined his diary and his recollection, and he found that he had actual recurrences of despondency about the same distance apart. Well, I said, that explains to me how it is coming back. But what am I to do? Do what the old Theosophists taught us; that is, we can only have these good results by producing opposite impressions to bad ones.

So, take this occasion of despondency. What he should have done was, that being the return of an old impression, to have compelled himself to feel joyous, even against his will, and if he could not have done that, then to have tried to feel the joy of others. By doing that, he would have implanted in himself another impression, that is of joy, so that when this thing returned once more, instead of being of the same quality and extension, it would have been changed by the impression of joy or elation and the two things coming together would have counteracted each other, just as two billiard balls coming together tend to counteract each other's movements. This applies to every person who has the blues. This does not apply to me, and I think it must be due to the fact

that in some other life I have had the blues. I have other things, but the blues never.

I have friends and acquaintances who have these desponding spells. It is the return of old cyclic impressions, or the cyclic return of impressions. What are you to do? Some people say, I just sit down and let it go; that is to say, you sit there and create it once more. You cannot rub it out if it has been coming, but when it comes start up something else, start up cheerfulness, be good to some one, then try to relieve some other person who is despondent, and you will have started another impression, which will return at the same time. It does not make any difference if you wait a day or two to do this. The next day, or a few days after will do, for when the old cyclic impression returns, it will have dragged up the new one, because it is related to it by association.

This has a bearing also on the question of the civilization in which we are a point ourselves.

III

Who are we? Where are we going? Where have we come from? I told you that the old Egyptians disappeared. If you inquire into Egyptian history, the most interesting because the most obscure, you will find, as the writers say, that the civilization seems to rise to the zenith at once. We do not see when it began. The civilization was so great it must have existed an enormous length of time to get to that height, so that we cannot trace it from its beginning, and it disappears suddenly from the sky; there is nothing of it left but the enormous remains which testify to these great things, for the ancient Egyptians not only made mummies in which they displayed the art of bandaging that we cannot better, but they had put everything to such a degree of specialization that we must conclude they had many centuries of civilization. There was a specialist for one eye and a specialist for the other, a specialist for the eyebrow, and so on. In my poor and humble opinion, we are the Egyptians.

We have come back again, after our five thousand or whatever years' cycle it is, and we have dragged back with us some one called the Semitic race, with which we are connected by some old impression that we cannot get rid of, and so upon us is impinged that very Semitic image. We have drawn back with us, by the inevitable law of association in cyclic return, some race, some personages connected with us by some acts of ours in that great old civilization now disappeared, and we cannot get rid of it; we must raise them up to some other plane as we raise ourselves.

I think in America is the evidence that this old civilization is coming back, for in the theosophical theory nothing is lost. If we were left to records, buildings and the like, they would soon disappear and nothing could ever be recovered; there never would be any progress. But each individual in the civilization, wherever it may be, puts the record in himself, and when he comes into the favorable circumstances described by Patanjali, an old Hindoo, when he gets the apparatus, he will bring out the old impression. The ancients say each act has a thought under it, and each thought makes a mental impression; and when the apparatus is provided, there will then arise that new condition, in rank, place and endowment.

So we retain in ourselves the impression of all the things that we have done, and when the time comes that we have cycled back, over and over again, through the middle ages perhaps, into England, into Germany, into France, we come at last to an environment such as is provided here, just the thing physically and every other way to enable us to do well, and to enable the others who are coming after us. I can almost see them; they are coming in a little army from the countries of the old world to endeavor to improve this one; for here ages ago there was a civilization also, perhaps we were in it then, perhaps anterior to the ancient Egyptians. It disappeared from here, when we do not know, and it left this land arid for many thousands of years until it was discovered once more by the Europeans. The ancient world, I mean Europe, has been poisoned, the land has been soaked with the emanations, poisoned by the emanations of the people who have lived

upon it; the air above it is consequently poisoned by the emanations from the land; but here in America, just the place for the new race, is an arable land which has had time over and over again to destroy the poisons that were planted here ages and ages ago. It gives us a new land, with vibrations in the air that stir up every particle in a man who breathes it, and thus we find the people coming from the old world seeming to receive through their feet the impressions of an American country. All this bears upon our civilization and race.

We are here a new race in a new cycle, and persons who know say that a cycle is going to end in a few years and a new one begin, and that that ending and beginning will be accompanied by convulsions of society and nature. We can all almost see it coming. The events are very complete in the sky. You remember Daniel says, "A time, half a time, and a time," and so on, and people in the Christian system have been trying to find out the time when time began, and that is just the difficulty. We do not know when the time began. And the only person who in all these many years has made a direct statement is Madame Blavatsky, and she said, "A cycle is ending in a few years, you must prepare." So that it was like the old prophets who came to the people and said, "Prepare for a new era of things, get ready for what you have to do." That is just what this civilization is doing. It is the highest, although the crudest, civilization now on the earth. It is the beginning of the great civilization that is to come, when old Europe has been destroyed; when the civilizations of Europe are unable to do any more, then this will be the place where the new great civilization will begin to put out a hand once more to grasp that of the ancient East, who has sat there silently doing nothing all these years, holding in her ancient crypts and libraries and records the philosophy which the world wants, and it is this philosophy and this ethics that the Theosophical Society is trying to give you. It is a philosophy you can understand and practice.

It is well enough to say to a man, Do right, but after a while, in this superstitious era, he will say, Why should I do right, unless I feel like it? When you are showing these laws, that he must come back in his cycle; that he is subject to evolution; that he is a reincarnated pilgrim soul,

then he will see the reason why, and then in order to get him a secure basis, he accepts the philosophy, and that is what the Theosophical Society and the Theosophical movement are trying to do. It was said the other day, in speaking of a subject like this, that the great end and aim is the great renunciation. That is, that after progressing to great heights, which you can only do by unselfishness, at last you say to yourself, "I may take the ease to which I am entitled." For what prevails in one place must prevail in another, and in the course of progress we must come at last to a time when we can take our ease, but if you say to yourself, "I will not take it, but as I know this world and all the people on it are bound to live and last for many thousand years more, and if not helped perhaps might fail, I will not take it but I will stay here and I will suffer, because of having greater knowledge and greater sensitiveness" — this is the great renunciation as theosophy tells us.

I know we do not often talk this way, because many of us think that the people will say to us at once when we talk of the great renunciation, "I don't want it; it is too much trouble." So generally we talk about the fine progress, and how you will at last escape the necessity of reincarnation, and at last escape the necessity of doing this or that and the other, but if you do your duty, you must make up your mind when you reach the height, when you know all, when you participate in the government of the world — not of a town, but the actual government of the world and the people upon it — instead of sleeping away your time, you will stay to help those who are left behind, and that is the great renunciation. That is what is told of Buddha, and of Jesus. Doubtless the whole story about Jesus, which cannot be proved historically to my mind, is based upon the same thing that we call renunciation. He was crucified after two or three years' work. But we say it means that this being divine resolves he will crucify himself in the eyes of the world, in the eyes of others, so that he can save men. Buddha did the same thing long before Jesus is said to have been born. The story that he made the great renunciation just means that which I have been telling you, instead of escaping from this horrible place, as it seems to us. For this is indeed horrible, as we look at it, surrounded by obstructions, liable to

defeat at any moment, liable to wake up in the morning after planning a great reform, and see it dashed to the ground. Instead of escaping all that, he remained in the world and started his doctrine, which he knew at least would be adhered to by some. But this great doctrine of renunciation teaches that instead of working for yourself, you will work to know everything, to do everything in your power for those who may be left behind you, just as Madame Blavatsky says in the *Voice of the Silence*, "Step out of the sunshine into the shade, to make more room for others."

Isn't that better than a heaven which is reached at the price of the damnation of those of your relatives who will not believe a dogma? Is this not a great philosophy and a great religion which includes the salvation and regeneration, the scientific upraising and perfecting of the whole human family, and every particle in the whole universe, instead of imagining that a few miserable beings after seventy years of life shall enter into paradise, and then they look behind to see the torments in hell of those who would not accept a dogma?

What are these other religions compared with that? How any man can continue to believe such an idea as the usual one of damnation for mere unbelief I cannot comprehend. I had rather — if I had to choose — be an idolator of the most pronounced kind, who believed in Indra, and be left with my common reasoning, than believe in such a doctrine as that which permits me to suppose that my brother who does not believe a dogma is sizzling in hell while I, by simply believing, may enjoy myself in heaven.

Theosophists, if they will learn the doctrine and try to explain it, will reform this world. It will percolate everywhere, infiltrate into every stratum of society and prevent the need of legislation. It will alter the people, whereas you go on legislating and leaving this world's people as they are, and you will have just what happened in France. Capitalists in that day, in the day of the revolution — that is the royalists — oppressed the people. At last the people rose up and philosophers of the day instituted the reign of reason, and out of the reign of reason —

mind you they had introduced there a beautiful idea of mankind, that idea struck root in a soil that was not prepared — came the practice of murdering other people by the wholesale until stream of blood ran all over France. So you see if something is not done to raise (he people what the result will be. We have seen in Chicago the results of such acts, the mutterings of such a storm if the theosophical philosophy — call it by any other name you like — is not preached and understood. But if these old doctrines are not taught to the race you will have a revolution, and instead of making progress in a steady, normal fashion, you will come up to better things through storm, trouble and sorrow. You will come up, of course, for even out of revolutions and blood there comes progress, but isn't it better to have progress without that? And that is what the theosophical philosophy is intended for. That is why the Mahatmas we were talking about, directing their servant H. P. Blavatsky, as they have directed many before, came out at a time when materialism was fighting religion and was about getting the upper hand, and once more everything moved forward in its cyclic way and these old doctrines were revived under the guidance of the theosophical movement. They are doctrines that explain all problems and in the universal scheme give man a place as a potential god.

FOOTNOTE:

1. This paper was read by Mr. Judge before the Sixth Annual Convention of American Theosophists and afterwards printed, together with the other Convention addresses, in the Appendix to the Convention Report. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE SHADOW OF THE FUTURE — *Martyn Witter*

There is a saying that future events cast their shadows before them. This is true, for it could not be otherwise. Events must take place in the more ethereal worlds before they can enter the physical, for every single effect is the result of a chain of causes. It is thus too late to prevent a happening after it has already reached the state of physical manifestation. However, even while it is occurring we have the free will of choice as to how we will meet the consequences. Nevertheless, it would be far better to control the causes in the ethereal worlds, before they reach the physical as effects.

We have heard people say: "Why did I do this thing?" They seemed powerless at the time to resist, even though they knew it was wrong. Instead of guarding every single thought, they let their thoughts roam as untamed horses. Then, after the effects from these wanton thoughts took a definite shape in the inner worlds, the actors strove to prevent their physical manifestation. However, it was then a little too late to prevent some of the effects, for the lines of the play had already been spoken and the recorder had heard them.

While it is true that a considerable portion of ancient causes and their consequences enter into our lives, yet a very vital part of our present circumstances depends upon our every day actions. It is, then, every single thought and emotion which we must either discourage or encourage. This requires a positive and forceful awareness. Without the development of this faculty we can expect little control over the influences arising from the animal man and its treacherous astral denizens.

It is easy to discuss intellectually the doctrine of consequences or the law of karma, as well as self-directed evolution. However, the putting of these teachings into actual practice is as highly skilled an art as we could expect to find anywhere. Without a doubt one will fail many

times while striving to attain this state of self-control. Yet if, after each fall, we remain humble, and sincerely seek out the source of our mistakes, we will arise stronger and more sure of foot. The art of putting our Theosophical teachings into actual practice is like walking upon the keen edge of a sword. We must have self-awareness and self-analysis, while at the same time being self-forgetful. Thus one will strive to attain, while at the same time being more interested in the weal and woes of others than in his own. Be it as it may, your every thought is casting its shadow upon the future. Let each thought be more self-sacrificing, humble, and forgiving, and less egotistical, than the last.

The Theosophical Forum

THE WIND IN THE LYRE — *Enoch Albert Holmes*

. . . the surplus of life very quickly passes through the previously developed atman-sthula-sarira, gives the buddhi touch to it, and passes down. . . .

— G. de Purucker, THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, Sept. 1943, p. 403

Given a "birth" of each of man's principles from the previous higher principle, during the process of involution, can it be assumed that the atman of each such principle has some subtle connection with the sthula-sarira of the one higher?

This body of ours, nay the very stones on which we tread — all manifested matter, has a grossness and a divinity; that divinity which "liveth in the heart-life of all things." What is the atman of matter? Is it that divine immanence which broods on the hills, and in masterpieces of art, in sculpture and in architecture?

In the wild melodies of old Orphic singers, or before the images of those gods of whose perfect beauty the divine theosophists of Greece caught a fleeting shadow, and with the sudden might of artistic ecstasy smote it, as by an enchanter's wand, into an eternal sleep of snowy stone — in these there flashes on the inner eye a vision beautiful and terrible, of a force, an energy, a soul, an idea, one and yet million-fold, rushing through all created things like the wind across a lyre. — Charles Kingsley, *Hypatia*, p. 126, ed. Dent and Sons, Ltd.

That which is physical, however sublime, must have form; and as this idea of form seeps through the antaskarana of the eye, does it not become the "Form of Idea" or the garment of linga-sarira? G. de P. has given us a hint (THEOSOPHICAL FORUM, Sept. 1943, p. 404):

. . . it will be a marvelous instrument, attuned to the harmonics of nature, individualized man himself. It will be like a sounding

board catching every vibration.

Will it be a sounding board for the vibrations of prana? Is the atman of linga-sarira just this side of the bridge whose other posts lie on pranic ground? Has vitality a basis in complete awareness of the inner sentient existence, of transcendent imagination?

Where, now, comes the acme of vitality or prana? We are told that it will become an individualized force capable of supernormal powers such as Wotan is said to have wielded.

Can one detect, or does one only fancy the connection between use of such a power, in its destructive aspect, and that principle of the passions and desires which is kama?

Did the ancient "berserker" (and maybe his modern war-time counterpart) summon up the last surge of his vitality by flying into a passionate rage? From sane gentle humanity, mankind can let its ego-consciousness sink even below desire, to this level of the animal passions.

What of the atman of kama? We know it as aspiration — desire upward. Do we also know it as ambition, and only find substance for it, as such, in the brain-mind, in the lowest aspect of manas?

Is wisdom the highest altitude in manas? Then maybe wisdom that is realized is the justice-compassion footstool of buddhi. Then maybe the Bodhisattva attains to that boundless space, which, in turn, is but the form of consciousness *per se*.

HEIGHTS BEYOND AND BELOW

If we grant this end-on evolution of the principles of man, we seem to belittle, even to castigate, in turn, the highest manifestations of each of the planes of being. We have supposed the rarest works of art to contain no higher intrinsic worth than "ideas of form." Beyond this, any other sensation they arouse "flashes on the inner eye," which is self-illuminated.

Of course the lower hierarchies of the physical atoms live their own consciousnesses in their own "boundless space," and who knows but that each of the atoms in a statue, or in the colors of a portrait, has its own sensations to its own degree? Yet these are irrespective of the sculptor's chisel and of the artist's brush.

Perfection of the inner senses we have analyzed as being still a sentient existence. Prana at its strongest we have indicted as consort to passion, whilst kama at its best is suspect of ambition. Manas to wisdom, which paled before the "attainment" of buddhi, which in turn, merged into the Shining Sea of Consciousness. And even this Consciousness may harbor the seed of self in the Pratyeka Buddha.

Must we disown each of these summits as we ascend the heights beyond?

"Kill out ambition," says *Light on the Path* yet "Work as those work who are ambitious." Here perhaps is our answer. It will apply on all planes.

As ambition turns to ashes, so does material beauty fade. Be alive to it, appreciate it to the full, but do not become enslaved to it. There is many a sovereign soul under a rough exterior, and many a bright verdure which conceals a deadly bog.

H. G. Wells finds (in his *Experiment in Autobiography*) that there is a certain beauty in the taste of cheese on the palate, and in the savor of beer. Many of us will take his word for the latter, but I think he would be among the first to agree that this beauty of sentient existence is not the highest of man's faculties, nor the ultimate purpose of his life.

Let us enjoy our cheese, (and our beer, if we take it!) but incidentally, and for the sake of living.

In prana-vitality, we have the beauty of the rhythm of that life-force which sparkles in the running brook and is absent in the stagnant pool, until the water and plant life seek to grow to their own pranic fruition.

We, too, must grow to our pranic fruition. As the aeons roll will come those powers, and the responsibilities surrounding them. Is not the

Warrior in the *Bhagavad-Gita* abjured to stand detached in the heat of "battle," to fight the good fight, yet not allow passion to cloud the vision?

There is a beauty in kamic aspiration which will not be gainsaid, nor shall we be free from the desire to become perfect until perfection is attained. Yet if Caesar was ambitious, "'Twas a grievous fault."

What is our motive in this universal urge to perfection? Is it to "attain," or is it to become more useful to brother man? The first implies ambition. For the second we can bend all our efforts. We are working as those work who are ambitious.

There is a beauty of philosophical thought in the wisdom — atman of manas. Yet we are told that to live the Life is to know the doctrine. "First seek ye the Kingdom of Heaven," and even that same wisdom, which is sublime in its own sphere, "shall be added unto ye" — as an incidental concomitant.

Maybe these superlatives of manas, buddhi and atman — man's highest principles — had best be left inviolate. Any attempt to dethrone them by the pen would have a worldly savor of "sour grapes." Yet does not Aeschylus have Prometheus foretelling the supercession of Zeus, in his *Prometheus Bound*?

Beauty, Truth, and Goodness, then, are present on all the planes of existence. They are qualities which can excite a responsive chord in each of man's seven principles. If the atman of sthula-sarira is of less puissance than the atman of linga-sarira, it is no more so than is the glorious Atman of man less puissant than Brahma, or Brahma than Parabrahman.

Who are we to ignore the goddess of beauty, Aphrodite, because she is divine of matter only? Who are we to question the divinity of Pegasus, steed of imagination? True enough he can only wing us to the gods on pinions of aspiration.

Thomas Carlyle defined the province of literature and drama as the

means of interpreting great thoughts through the emotions. Great thoughts can also be interpreted by good works, by a cheering vitality, by hitching our wagon to a star, by sharing such of the wisdom of the Masters as we have heard, and by demonstrating, each one of us, that Universal Brotherhood is a Fundamental Fact in Nature.

The Theosophical Forum

KNOWLEDGE WISDOM AND EXPERIENCE — *J. Croiset van Uchelen*

Socrates in *Phaedo* said: "To use words wrongly and indefinitely is not merely an error in itself, it also creates an evil in the soul." It not only makes exact thought and therefore knowledge impossible, it also creates careless and slovenly habits of mind. In this article let us discuss just three words: Knowledge, Wisdom and Experience, and try to define these. A dictionary will not help us much, stating as it does, that "Knowledge is that which we know!", or "Knowledge is the apprehension of truth" (which it is not). Then again it says: "Knowledge is the conviction that mental apprehension corresponds with reality." But what is truth, reality? In the philosophy of Kant we may find four different kinds of reality. Lastly I quote: "Knowledge includes intuition." "All knowledge must ultimately repose on propositions unproved and unprovable." By this time I had decided, without the further use of books, to find more universal definitions for these very words we use so often; this by a process of quiet contemplation. When I finally wrote down the result of this effort, it seemed so simple, as if it had been said a hundred times before — which no doubt it has! But at any rate, the mental gymnastics had proved refreshing, for is it not far more fascinating to contact what has been said, in thought, through the mind, rather than through the spoken word or written pages?

Knowledge then, is the accumulation of data, no more, no less. Wisdom is a state of being, being wise. We are not knowledge, we possess and accumulate it.

Wisdom we cannot take into our possession; we are, or are not wise.

Knowledge is learning. Wisdom is.

Knowledge makes the savant, Wisdom the Sages.

We acquire knowledge. Wisdom must be attained.

Knowledge deals with phenomena in space and time.

Wisdom is beyond the manifested; spaceless, timeless.

Knowledge can be passed on to others. Wisdom must be found.

Knowledge changes forever. Wisdom forever remains.

We may well pray for Wisdom. For knowledge we don't have to pray; we go to school!

He who speaks from knowledge is a teacher, however great, and must repeat: thus have I heard.

Only the Master can proclaim: "I say unto you . . . for I and the Father are One."

Now it must be realized that every time we say "I know," we really merely think we know: "to believe in, as though true," the dictionary has it. To be informed might be the better expression. As one writer stated: "The relation of knowing is the most mysterious thing in the world." How true! It is when we say "I am" that we know, but cannot answer why or what, until the I is lost in Being, and Wisdom supervenes.

Knowledge forever changes. How could anything be permanent in an ever-changing world of Maya, whose existence is but a fleeting image perceived through the unfolding senses; nay more, in which as *The Secret Doctrine* says: "the cognizer itself is but a reflection." (Vol. I, p. 39)

Now, as for the word Experience, what is it but "to undergo." Yet here again one might make a distinction between outer experience, resulting from sense perceptions, and inner experience which is a state, although the *Mandukyopanishad* repudiates such a distinction as found in Western philosophies. Experience alone can translate Wisdom; then words are inadequate. For even the most exalted words uttered by a saint or sage, who seeks to speak of this illumination in retrospect, can give but a faint reflection of the indescribable. What *can* be invoked, is a resonance in the hearts of men, for the Kingdom of Heaven is within. A teacher may endeavor to stimulate our search, may

suggest a code of ethics and point a way; all else remains with the individual.

It might be said: "Why, if man must reach beyond the senses, nay even beyond the intellect, must he learn to think?" In order to become aware of the limitation of reasoning, which loomed so large that materialism was the inevitable outcome of its self-aggrandisement. Knowledge is valuable, as it gives mastery over environment, but is not wisdom. By learning to think, we learn to surmount thinking, and still the mind.

It has been said, that we must become like little children, seemingly closer to the Kingdom of Heaven. Children do not share our mental problems, nor rely on churches or philosophies. They have an inner faith; they are, and trust. We *think* we are wiser. We must learn to stop thinking; after, not before, we have mastered the intellect, and listen to the Voice of the Silence. We must learn to quiet the mind, in order to Experience.

It will be said: "But observe the things man's thinking and knowledge have accomplished!"

It might be asked: "What does remain?" Civilizations rise, to be lost under the sea, to be buried under the desert sands. Maya. These *things* the Sage did leave behind. Jesus did, and Buddha, and Krishna. Maybe these things are not as valuable as we *think*. And although, while in the body, we must justly deal with our physical environment, all this ends. Is our Search not for the Eternal? Theosophy encourages the search for Self. "Man know Thyself" remains the great command. For even though I know that "I am," where am I, what, and why? I am asleep or awake, here or there, I am sad or happy, hungry or fed; I am all this, yet am I none of these things — for before Abraham *was*, I *am*, as said the Master.

Has it ever occurred to you, that all philosophies, however elaborately they may explain "how," forever fail to answer "why"? Why, is the first question of a child; it is the last of the intellect. . . .

'I am,' in the manifested, in space and time; but there is the spaceless timeless, where the "I" is lost, yet remains in Being. Do we not ask to be

lead from the unreal to the Real? Says *The Secret Doctrine*: "Nothing is permanent except . . . the noumena of all realities . . . the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality"; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya."

What is manifestation but differentiation in time and space; what is time but a measuring out of motion in space?

When we stop thinking, and the mind becomes a blank (not negatively so, yet without effort) then there is no such "thing" as time, nor space; for time and space are indivisible. That blank is stillness, timeless, spaceless, yet containing all.

Beyond the many "I's, we imagine the One all-encompassing Self, the Oversoul of which Emerson spoke; beyond the mind, my mind, your mind, all minds, the One Consciousness, shared with all in the Oneness of true Being.

We can but feel our way, while groping in the dark. *Tat Twam Asi*.
Thou art That. What more can be said in human language?

And here let us conclude with a *few* lines of a recent translation from the *Kathopanishad*:

"This tree of a world, beginningless and endless, has its root on high, while its branches spread below. That root is Brahman. That is known as Immortal. All the worlds have their Being in That, and none can transcend That. That verily is the Self.

"If a man fails *to* attain Brahman before he puts off his body, he must again put on a body in the world of created things.

"When all the senses are stilled, together with the mind, and the intellect wavers not — that, the wise say, is the highest state.

"When all desires that linger in his heart cease, then the mortal

becomes immortal. Verily does he attain Brahman even in this life if, while he lives on earth, all the knots of ignorance within his heart are loosened.

"This is the highest truth that is taught in the scriptures."

Here the quotation ends.

In the Silence rests the voiceless sound, where the soundless Voice may guide us.

The Theosophical Forum

THE DRAGON – *Allan J. Stover*

Seven times and seven score times on high

All hail the golden wings unfurled —

The Druid of the Circled Sky —

The Flame-bright Dragon of the World! —

— *Kenneth Morris*

Symbols are an introduction to wordless thought, and form a language of analogy by which we may explore the inwardness of the universe. Each symbol has its inherent meaning, but it is a general meaning, and acquires a specific or limited significance only through association and use. It is sometimes said that a symbol has many interpretations; but this is because we are accustomed to look at everything from our word-bound mentality, and so fail to see the universal application of the symbol as an interpretation of nature's laws.

The mystical concept of the dragon is one of the oldest known to man. It was common to China, Japan, Tibet, Europe and the Americas; and temples of the dragon as emblem of the Sun, life, and wisdom, once covered the globe. To this the mysterious monoliths of Stonehenge and Carnac, the Pyramid Temples in America, and many similar remains, bear silent witness.

Lao-tze thus described water: "Water is the weakest and softest of all things, yet it overcomes the strongest and the hardest. It penetrates everywhere, subtly, without noise, without effort." So it becomes typical of the spirit which is able to pass out into all other existences of the world and resume its own form in man; and associated with the power of fluidity, the dragon becomes the symbol of the infinite.

In its essence, the dragon in China, America, and Wales signified the divine spirit of the waters; and the waters were themselves the fluid aspect of any principle of nature. The dragon and water myth illustrates the relationship between spirit and matter in nature; it is the

Yang of Chinese philosophy as opposed to the Yin; and as there are many grades of matter ranging from the physical to the divine, Chinese mythology divides the dragons into classes according to their nature and habitat.

It was not always so, for as explained in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. I, p. 408) the genii or four Maharajas of the cardinal points known to the Chinese as "the Black warrior, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird, and Azure Dragon [are] called in the Secret Book the "Four Hidden Dragons of Wisdom" and the "Celestial Nagas." Now, as shown, the seven-headed or septenary DRAGON-LOGOS had been in course of time split up, so to speak, into *four* heptanomic parts or twenty-eight portions."

The archaic dragons and serpents of antiquity were all seven-headed and typified the seven principles throughout man and nature. Later this symbol was broken up into separate classes, into good and evil dragons, and, in Europe during the Middle Ages, into an emblem of evil only.

In Central America the Dragon is represented as two-poled, having a head at each end. When separated, the dragon becomes dual as are the good and evil serpents of the caduceus, or sometimes a dragon is opposed by a serpent.

In its earthy aspect, the dragon is the fiery essence in underground water which attracts the divining rod. It is the *Od* of Baron Reichenbach, in his researches into the astral light.

In the air, it is the lightning of the storm cloud and the fertilizing power of the rain; in the hurricane, it is the noise and whirling vortex of the winds; for on every plane there is some aspect of the dragon power.

In the Orient, folklore, art, and poetry, have woven a garment of fancy about the ancient myth, which, delightful as it is, obscures the deeper significance of the symbol. Yet while it conceals it preserves truths which might otherwise be lost.

Like the Sphinx of Egypt, and like man himself, the dragon is

composite, and represents the several kingdoms of nature. In China, the Imperial five-clawed dragon has the scales of a fish, the neck of a lizard, the paws of a tiger, the claws of an eagle, and the horns of a deer; in all, there are nine attributes to this strange creature, who as the embodiment of Yang, the spiritual principle, continually seeks to subdue the nine Yin inherent in matter.

According to Chinese Mythology there are three classes of dragons; the lowest were the Li Lung or earth dragons, whose realm was the waters of the earth, the second class were the Chen Lung or spiritual dragons associated with storms and clouds, the highest class were the Tien Lung, the celestial or heavenly dragons who guarded the mansions of the gods, and were adopted as an emblem by the Chinese Emperors.

The domain of the Li Lung or earth dragon was the sea, the underground waters of the earth and the streams, lakes and waterfalls on the surface. It was this earth dragon living underground who was supposed to guard precious metals and to cause earthquakes; it is also referred to as the golden dragon, and is the variety associated with the fossil bones of the dinosaurs. The Chinese say that these bones are strong in the principle of Yang, and so expel the evil Yin which is afflicting the body.

The second class of dragons, the Chen Lung, whose home is in the air, shows itself in the lightning and in the fertilizing and vivifying power of rain. Above these are the Tien Lung which reside in the sky, guarding the mansions of the gods. The Tien Lung symbol is used only by those in the Imperial service. It may be recognized by the horns and the five-clawed feet.

The figure ordinarily used in decoration has three claws, and is divided into a number of minor divisions by custom and fancy.

It is a strange fact that in both the Gobi Desert of China and the Badlands of the Dakotas in the United States, the native tribes gathered the bones of fossil dinosaurs and prepared them for medicine. In each case they supposed they were gathering the remains of dragons, the Li Lung

in China; the *Unk-ta-he* in Dakota. In America the earth dragon is known to the Dakota Indians as the *Unk-ta-he* (a word which defies analysis). This mythical being is the god of the water, and is said to fly through the air as a fiery meteor. He is the one whom tradition credits with bringing the first land forth from the water; and it is he also who conducts the soul of the deceased from the village of souls, down the river of life to the earth, where the soul reimbodies as a man. The *Unk-ta-he* lived in rivers and lakes and also in underground waters, and is represented in picture writing as horned and composite in structure.

The Algonquins also had their fire dragon or light-thrower, which they believed flew from one deep lake or river to another.

In Southern California there are many stories of Taquitz, the fiery monster supposed to live in the waters within Mount San Jacinto, and to fly through the sky as a low-flying meteor. To it the Indians credit the strange sounds sometimes heard within the mountain.

The Great Dragon of Quirigua, in Guatemala, is a marvelously carved ovoid stone weighing twenty tons. It is placed North and South and has two mouths. In the northern mouth a beautifully carved divinity is seated, in the southern is a long-nosed demon of the underworld; while about the circumference are twelve eyes. The stone is covered with an intricate design which, without representing any definite form, suggests the potentiality of all life in a strange blending of human, reptilian, and avian elements. As a whole, it symbolized the primordial earth, the spiritual earth from which the earth emanated, upon which it depends.

W. H. Holmes of the National Museum says of this stone, "It conveys vividly the impression of a living thing — a dragon out dragoning all the composite monsters of the Orient. So virile are the forms, so tense the coiling, so strong the impression of life, that a thrill almost of apprehension steals over one, for there is a distinct suggestion that the bulging imprisoned inner monster might break its bonds, uncoil its length, and slide away into the deep shadows of the forest immediately at hand." (Smithsonian report for 1906: The Great Dragon of Quirigua,

Guatemala.) As to its symbolism Mr. Holmes asks, "May it not be, as some have surmised, that this image impersonates the Earth Monster, The World God, and that from the wide-open jaws, facing the ceremonial plaza, issued the divinity of the world of man, that through the glyph-hidden jaws of the southern end peered the grotesque demon of the underworld?"

Whatever the date of the carving may be, the tradition followed is very old, and in occult significance this image may well be the chief of dragon symbols.

Among the Aztecs, the earth was said to have emanated from the primordial Cicpactyl or earth dragon which was also the first sign of their zodiac, the first day of their calendar; and the first day of creation was called "I Cicpactyl."

The Mayas had the same system with Imix replacing Cicpactyl as the name of the primordial or spiritual earth. In their codices Imix is shown as a dragon associated with waterfalls, and with the color green as indicating beginning or newness.

Truly China, America, and the Land of the Druid all fall under the domain of the dragon, and it is by comparing the myths as found in these countries that we can better understand the development of the symbol.

The earliest Chinese account is the symbolic story of a dragon-horse rising from the river Lo, and bringing the *Trigrams* to Fu Hsi in the year 2853 b.c.

The eastern dragon is not the gruesome monster of medieval superstition, but the genius of goodness itself. He is the spirit of change, therefore of life itself; in Theosophical language he is the Wind of the Spirit, again rising from the depths to renew and revitalize the life of the world.

"He may become the size of a silk worm, or enlarge to fill the space of heaven and earth." (Kakuzo)

In Japan four classes of dragons are recognized and are said to represent the four dragons which rule the four seas which surround the earth. The myth has traveled a long way from its source when such a perversion of the symbol can arise as the notorious Black Dragon Society of recent years.

Ernest Ingersoll believes that the four classes of Nagas of India correspond to the Chinese division, and that this with the Mahayana conception of Buddhism, did much to shape Chinese Symbolism during the Han dynasty.

The four classes of Nagas are as follows:

1. Heavenly Nagas, who uphold and guard the heavenly palace.
2. Divine Nagas, who cause clouds to rise and rain to fall.
3. Earthly Nagas, who clear out and drain rivers.
4. Hidden Nagas, who are the guardians of treasure.

The last two classes appear to be combined in the later Chinese classification.

One of the most familiar designs in the Orient is that of two dragons contending for a flaming pearl, which is sometimes explained as two forces, positive and negative, producing rolling thunder during the formation of a storm. But there is a much deeper explanation than the physical one.

According to tradition, the T'ien Lung, which means literally Heaven Dragon, carries a pearl under its chin. This pearl is white or red with a golden aura, and has four three-forked flames rising from it. Suspended from the pearl is a comma-shaped pendant, dark in color, which probably represents the Yin portion of the Yang and Yin monad, separated yet still pendent from the radiant pearl, even as man is pendent from his spiritual nature. There are variations and simplifications of the design, and sometimes the pendant is omitted.

These strange comma-like objects, carved out of shell or bone, have been found in the mounds of the Ohio Mound Builders, and while no

one knows their use or significance, one might suppose them linked in some way with the dragon myth, as it is in the Orient.

The precious pearl figures in many designs. Often two dragons are shown rushing through swirling clouds towards a pearl which floats between them.

An eighteenth century vase is "decorated with nine dragons swirling through scrolled clouds enveloping parts of their serpentine bodies, in pursuit of jewels of omnipotence which appear in the midst of clouds as revolving discs emitting branched rays of effulgence." (Ernest Ingersoll)

A popular explanation of the dual dragon contending for the pearl is that of bad luck and good luck trying to secure the prize.

Whether we speak of the Nagas of India, the *Unk-ta-he*, Imix, Feathered Serpent or others of America, or the various dragons of China or the Druid lands: there is an esoteric current running through all these. They have too much in common not to have had a common source.

In all countries the dragon, because it is the symbol of imbodyed spiritual qualities, has been used as a title for great initiates and adepts, who are spoken of as Dragons of Wisdom, and as Nagas or Serpents. The Sun itself is often called the Cosmic Dragon in occult literature.

The sphinx, combining lion, eagle, man, and bull, signifies the four-fold nature of man and the universe according to a monadic classification. The seven-headed dragon or serpent symbolizes the seven principles in man and nature, while the dual or two-headed dragon suggests the dual nature everywhere existing.

G. de Purucker describes the Dragon as "the Demiurge, the establisher or former of our planet and of all that pertains thereto; neither good nor bad, but its differentiated aspects in Nature make it assume one or the other character." And he adds:

"Summarizing, therefore, the Dragon and the Serpent, whether high or low, were types of various events in cosmic or world history, or again

of various good qualities whether in the World or in man, for either one can at different times signify Spiritual Immortality or Wisdom, or Reimbodiment, which last in this sense is equivalent to Regeneration."

The Theosophical Forum

SAGES — *Marion O. French*

Minerals, vegetation, and animals are conscious in their respective gradations. Human beings are self-conscious, and some men and women become cosmically conscious. A few have achieved the encompassing enlightenment of spiritual consciousness. A transformation has taken place in their physical status as the circle of consciousness expanded. Their sensory faculties have become refined to the point of being psychic. In them, the third Eye of Siva has opened. Through it, they see Reality in all its scintillating kaleidoscope of Beauty. With all the power of their souls, they endeavor to transmute these visions to enlighten humanity. It is a difficult task because what has become commensurable for them continues to be incommensurable for others. The unenlightened see a reflection of Divinity in the mirror of Maya, as Deus Inversus. They are, as it were, confronted by the problem of transferring the flesh of the right hand into the symmetrical skin of the left; without the secret of passing with "Alice through the Looking Glass."

Any solution of this problem of symmetry is apt to present itself as a symptom of insanity that must be dismissed. If followed further, the "Quest of the Holy Grail" may cause the mind to find itself in a void wherein all sensation has ceased. Without the power of spiritual perception, this is isolation in a soundless and stygian negation. Nonetheless, the mind perseveres in seeking. Exoteric religions offer an end to the search in the form of blind faith. They assume that the hierarchy of the church is inspired by Deity to enlighten the laity. In contradistinction to this ecclesiastical opinion is that of Gautama the Buddha. To the simple woman who brought him bread and the question of how to find the road to heaven, He replied that, "The dove flies home by love alone." This, then, is the relation that must exist between the chela and the guru. The sphinx will not describe specifically that which he sees, lest the student should accept it on

authority and fail to identify the Self with the Knowledge. The disciple must decipher the symbols that are displayed by means of meditation. For most people trained in the western tradition of inductive research and empiric methods, it is extremely difficult to accept this attitude of passivity as a student. They are accustomed to searching actively for scientific explanations or proofs. Being incapable of direct cognition, they must resort to reasoning by analogy.

Inadequate as this analogical method is, it is the only one available for general use. Therefore, it may serve a useful purpose to employ it in an attempt to rationalize the method of the Sage, his spiritual vision, and his perspective. Sages are born with an instinctive desire to see through the fontanelle in the top of the skull, that is so soft in infancy. They may succeed in lifting the covering curtain by their own efforts. Sometimes, they short-circuit their nervous systems by the intensity of their efforts. Consequently, to be passive in obedience to the behests of an Enlightened One is the safest approach to Wisdom. Physiologically, the third organ of sight, or Eye of Siva, is a singular instrumentality. The conarium encases the pineal gland that is constituted to be *en rapport* with the Four Kingdoms of Nature. Being human, it has the cellular structure and attributes of animal organisms. Its vegetable aspect is suggested by its similarity in shape to the pine cone, or seed of that ancient tree. Within it are yellow mineralogical accretions that might be compared to quartz crystals, and that give a key to the "speaking stones" of antiquity. The potencies of the Four Forces are inherent in it by reason of its connection with the pituitary body and the entire nervous system through a dehydrated or residual tube. The function of this operative pituitary appendage to the atrophied eye in the conarium may be considered that of an actuating agency.

The most important point in regard to the Eye is the perspective envisioned by the Sage. Dawning faculties of clairvoyance and clairaudience may catch glimpses and hear whispers of the past and future in the non-existent present. They conclude that the conquest of time has been achieved. Actually, a two-dimensional vision in time is being acquired, and, still, pertains to "plane-tary" time. The fully

opened Eye looks forth in six space-time directions upon the dimensionless vista of duration. The point of view is from "the center that is everywhere in the circle (or sphere) whose circumference is nowhere," as St. Augustine defined God. There, "everything is everywhere always," as P. D. Ouspensky puts it. Infinity is always limited for all but the unknowable essence of Deity itself; as is indicated by the fact that any solid, no matter how small, contains an infinite number of planes. Hence, the scope of vision of the Eye in our Galaxy extends as far as the solar rays can reach. This space is that within the circumference of our Sky or Island Universe and may be construed as computable in the space and time terms that determine the cycles and cyclic events. The perspective in which it is visualized by the Sage for the benefit of the blind may be termed psychological. Like that of Chinese and Japanese prints, it may enlarge these forms and figures in both the foreground and the background that are important as impending events in the tableau taken from the entire drama on the circumferential screen. It is a chronometric motion picture in one sense, a pertinent presentiment.

Erudition, alone, is of no assistance in gauging the vision of the Sage. Love, only, serves to establish the radio receptivity that is capable of receiving these high frequency television broadcasts. One must, literally, become as a little child, humble, passive, and making the confession of ignorance that is the beginning of wisdom. In that frame of mind, it is possible to differentiate between the true and the false. One may discern the authentic Sage, the veritable guru, and not be deceived by impostors who attempt to hypnotize us with astral images. The soul knows, if the mind does not interfere. The guru guide sees much that is beyond our cognizance, and love is the sole test that we can judge him by. Since he has identified himself with Love, he will extend it to us in his every thought, word, and deed. Impostors do not love their fellow men, and love is something that can be felt. It cannot be weighed and measured, or placed in a retort to determine its specific gravity, or whether it is gold or dross.

Thus, Sages cannot be analyzed or proven by scientific tests of their

intelligence quotient or of aught else. What they see and know is unknown to us. We can, however, form some concept of the operation of that vestigial third eye that we all possess. We can conceive, then, that true sagacity may see through it far into the Great Beyond. In the conarium, the crystalline substance that is comparable to quartz crystals may be considered as capable of what modern physics calls the piezoelectric effect. The scientific explanation of this in quartz crystals is as follows:

"Electrical energy applied to two parallel faces of the crystal produces a mechanical strain in the crystal. This strain in turn produces a dielectric field which in turn again produces a strain. This process goes on. At the natural period of the mechanical vibrations of the crystal, the two actions may be made mutually self-sustaining by feeding back a sufficient portion of electrical energy to replenish the energy which is lost as heat during each cycle."

From numerous physiological experiments, we know that the body generates electrical energy. A delicate ammeter will register the amperes necessary to initiate and to sustain muscular action. Also, we are familiar with the fact that tensor action by the muscles will produce or reduce membranous mechanical strains. Thus, the conarium may have what we might call the transmitting capacity of a small crystal television set. Likewise, with respect to audition, the properties of crystals of the chemical compound known as Rochelle salts may be viewed as analogical. "When one of these crystals is squeezed, it generates a minute alternating electrical voltage." This fact is made use of in the audio-frequency amplifier of electrical phonographs. "If for the needle holder we substitute a diaphragm, then sound waves striking this diaphragm set up a fluctuating alternating voltage across the faces of the crystal. These voltage variations are amplified by the audio-frequency amplifier."

There is but one Divine Law, that all obeys. In the Smaragdine Tablets of Hermes Trismegistus "the uplifted right hand is inscribed with the word "Solve," the left with the word "Coagula'." As alternating, they

may be said to produce the positive and negative phases of an electric current. Further, an electric current sets up a magnetic field capable of creating subsidiary electric currents by induction. *The Secret Doctrine* states that the Tabula Smaragdina has seven esoteric keys. The anthropological one is that the "One Thing" mentioned in it "is Man." "The father of That One Only Thing is the Sun; its mother the Moon; the Wind carries it in his bosom, and its nurse is the spirituous Earth." Occultly, it is added "and Spiritual Fire is its instructor (Guru)." Also, "The Superior agrees with the Inferior; and the Inferior with the Superior; to effect that one truly wonderful Work." This Work "is Man." Thus, sights and sounds gathered from the noumenal realms may be said to reach the consciousness of the Sage with crystalline clarity. His ability to transmute them so that we may perceive them in their phenomenal aspect is an acquired power such as poets, mathematicians and musicians have developed through successive embodiments. He must utilize the conventionalized forms of religion, art, and science with which we are familiar, as media of transmission. The constant current that actuates his efforts is Love.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MOTION OF GROWTH — *Alexandra McLean*

Change may be termed the *motion* of growth. It is an enduring constituent within Life, an eternal energy that cycles through the eons, in Life's ceaseless manifestations of "Being-Becoming."

The great first postulate of Theosophy is the "ONE ABSOLUTE BE-NESS." This "Be-ness" is symbolized in *The Secret Doctrine* under two aspects . . . absolute abstract Space . . . and absolute abstract Motion. . . This latter aspect of the one Reality, is also symbolized by the term "The Great Breath."

Now, growth implies motion, and motion is the very essence of the Great Breath that breathes through and in us all. Were it possible for Breath, or motion, or change, to cease to be — then would be stagnation, crystallization, death. But there is no death, no cessation of the "Breath" of Life.

Change there must be; it is a law of the ONE LIFE, by which at each new Manvantara, evolution comes forth on a higher plane. It is also a law in every individual life expression, from the least to the greatest, by which the secret pattern, the heart of the form, comes into outer visibility.

Man in his seven-fold being is part of the Great Unity. Insignificant as he seems if compared with a Galaxy — yet by means of his consciousness there is the possibility of expanding his awareness into harmony with the Great Plan, at-one-ing his sevenfold self to the Divinity that is the Heart of the Great ALL. By change comes this growth, through eons of effort, learning to breathe through all, with all, for all.

Growth — the unfolding of the Swabhava of every thought, word and deed of which *we* are the authors! Goethe has said in *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*: "To act is easy, to think is hard; to act according to our thought is troublesome. . . . The height charms us, the steps to it do not;

with the summit in our eyes, we love to walk along the plain." The "summit" is our Inmost SELF, and to IT we should be constantly true. Krishna is reported to have said, "Whatsoever thou doest, whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou offerest as oblation, whatsoever thou givest and the austerities thou performest, O son of Kunti, do thou as an offering to me."

Katherine Tingley gives us these words: "Your spiritual energy grows day by day and hour by hour just so far as you permit it to grow and help it to evolve. It is a force that is very real and immensely powerful — a potent force that becomes, if you do not prevent it, a great wheel of activity in the universe. . . . Dare to be yourself — your greater SELF! Dare to leap forward and be something you never before knew it was in you to be. . . . The need is for energy, aspiration."

By aspiration plus will, the growth that comes to us may be and should be — self-planned, self-generated, self-directed into harmonious expression. We are the masters of our fate. By perfecting our sevenfold instrument we help in bringing forth the Divine Harmony in all. The good Law is justice and progress for *all*; for all is ONE, and that which hinders or helps any one likewise hinders or helps the ONE. We are all involved in every atom there is.

Again quoting K. T., "Let us make our every act the expression of all that is divinest in our hearts. There must be heroic determination in our hearts for *continuity* of right action."

Action, Change, Breath are the Karmic Winds that blow ceaselessly and by which we are all affected. If — in our daily living, nay, in our hourly, moment-by-moment living, we seek to bring forth, to evolve, and express the Inner Divinity, by tolerance, compassion, service, and duty well done — then indeed the motion of growth will be harmonious and we will be sounding our small tone in accord with the Music of the Spheres.

What a colossal concept, one worthy of deep and persistent meditation; "Life is." Growth is Life's motion, unfolding its innate Divinity in ever

greater perfection. We are a part of this great Life and within *us* is the power to grow, to become — what we will.

The Theosophical Forum

THE PRESENT CYCLE AND H. P. B. — *James Stauffer*

If we pause for a moment in the rush and confusion of present events and review the changes which have taken place with increasing swiftness during the last hundred years, we may well be amazed at the progress made during that period, both in the material and technological sense, and also, and perhaps principally, in the world of thought and ideas. At the same time, in quietly reviewing the course of events, we begin to perceive an underlying pattern or purpose which led us, as a race, to where we stand today.

We often hear the aphorism of Plato repeated, that "ideas rule the world," but do not always realize that by ideas Plato meant the archetypal pattern which is above ordinary thought, but which colors and gives direction to thought in all fields of endeavor.

In ancient times, the arts and sciences were taught within the sanctuary of the Mystery Schools, where under strict ethical and moral training, the spiritual intuition illumined the mind of the student. Discipline and moral fitness preceded knowledge of nature's secrets; for there are secrets of nature which are dangerous to mankind.

In those days, knowledge was not separated into compartments as is the case today, but each study was related to the spiritual evolution of man, his origin, destiny, and relation to the universe in which he lived. Thus the different phases of knowledge were synthesized into an organic whole, by a higher consciousness capable of viewing the whole field of human thought from above.

With the withdrawal of the Mystery Schools, the inner esoteric illumination receded and the exoteric knowledge, left to itself, divided and subdivided into more and more restricted and materialistic fields of research.

To make matters worse, during the Middle Ages which followed, the

church attempted to synthesize all thought within the iron bonds of dogma, which eventually resulted in the violent reaction of Nineteenth Century materialism.

Thus the world to which H. P. Blavatsky came and worked in the late Nineteenth Century was one in which separation and isolation were the rule, for science and religion were not only separated but in violent conflict. In this ideology, racial and national consciousness were strongly developed: our planet was the only planet in all space capable of supporting life, our race at the peak of competitive evolution, and it was generally believed that there was little more to be learned except to fill out details in the accepted theories and hypotheses of a materialistic science, whose creed was the survival of the fittest, and the ape-ancestry of man.

Into this world of separateness and materialistic ideology in religion, science, and social and national life, H. P. Blavatsky came like a human bomb-shell, announcing the existence of a living universe in which everything was interrelated.

She formed a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, and demonstrated in her voluminous writings that such brotherhood is the basic law of nature. She presented a picture of the cosmos as an organic being in which solar systems, suns, and planets are living parts of the whole, each bearing its appropriate lives, and all the lives united and interlinked, evolving through endless time.

Others have said that man must be good, (under threat of punishment or hope of reward), but H. P. Blavatsky showed the necessity for right behavior by presenting a cosmic view in which man's place in the universe as an immortal evolving being made the desirability of right behavior self-evident — since a universe governed throughout by eminent justice reacts upon the inharmonious unit automatically: one who harms another only harms himself in the end.

Only a great occultist, with a prevision of the age upon which we are now entering, would have had the courage and the skill to break the

crystallized molds of mind as she did. It was the birth of a new ideology destined to replace the old; which if the world survives the dangers now threatening it, will color and shape the global civilization of the future.

This total view of the universe is the gift of H. P. Blavatsky to the Western World: a gift which was largely scorned and rejected in her time, but is today being recognized, although the source is in most cases either unknown or unacknowledged.

Into this cosmic vision of nature the other teachings given by Mme. Blavatsky — Karman, Reimbodiment, Hierarchies, Cycles, etc. — fit as explanatory details and necessary features of universal laws of nature. But the chief motif and keynote of her work was the establishing of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, and the repeated declaration that Brotherhood is the basic law of nature. Once that is realized the rest follows of necessity.

We are approaching the midpoint of our Fifth Root Race, and as every race is divided at its midpoint, we will in the future see a definite division forming as the majority of people enter upon the downward sweep of the latter portion of the racial cycle.

On the other hand, the forerunners of the next race will gradually begin to emerge and separate themselves from the present race much as our Fifth Race once separated from the Atlantean.

We are entering upon a new cycle whose keynote has been sounded by H. P. Blavatsky and those who followed her, and by thousands of intuitive and noble men and women throughout the world, who may never have heard of Theosophy, but who feel the urge of the new time.

All over the world we see the forces gathering both of construction and of destruction, and as time goes on these will become more and more apparent. At the same time, the nature of the cycle upon which we are entering is becoming increasingly apparent; and those who seize the opportunity to work with the rising tide will take their place among the builders of the new age.

INTELLECT AND INTUITION — *Leonard Lester*

The conflict of intuition against intellect has covered mankind in the crumbling ruin of despair. Man will never surrender himself to be the permanent vehicle of any set of ideas unless it completely satisfies the whole of his nature; the union of intellect and intuition only will end the conflict. — From *Man: Fragments of Forgotten History*

Those youthful minds who still retain their heritage of right-thinking are not dismayed at the spectacle of life in the world today, for they intuitively feel that there *is* some remedy for the startling lack of wisdom revealed in the management of human affairs and that something *does exist* to satisfy the heart-hunger for a knowledge that can solve those riddles of life which confront every alert and receptive soul.

These voices of world-turmoil which are broadcast daily in the form of news seldom have the authentic ring of truth — the *pros* of today may be denied by the *cons* of tomorrow — resulting, for the average listener, in uncertainty, dissension, or disgust. But this dissemination of current events may serve at least to demonstrate the unreliability of opinions, the partiality or bias of judgments; — in short, it needs but little reflection to see that the unenlightened mind of man, engrossed in material concerns, is but a poor instrument upon which to rely for learning the truth. Its powers of perception and understanding are undeveloped and too narrow to embrace that wider arc of Vision which a higher and profounder conception of Man's nature and destiny demands.

Whence this confusion — these diversities of opinion and judgment — this lack of power to unite constructively even in a plainly beneficent enterprise in which the whole human family is profoundly concerned? May not this radicate to a large extent in the nature and methods of our

thinking, in the distractions of multifarious and conflicting interests, in our habitual analytic mentality — looking first for the divergences rather than for the harmonies in any problem under discussion — thus creating opposing sides, dissensions, and verbal conflict?

It is inevitable that there should be differences of view-point and ideas, as of character, but rightly considered, these differences, in their essential reality, exist as *constructive agencies* in the progressive stages towards a common understanding. They are, as it were, the raw material out of which the unseen Master-Builder seeks to mould and fabricate his Temple into a perfect whole; and then, when the spirit of Unity, through a natural equilibrium of differences, is at last allowed to preside in the arena of the human mind, a transmutation takes place — the nobler powers of the mind are liberated, being shone upon and enlightened by spiritual sources from above instead of being controlled by earth-bound motives below.

In the foregoing, mention is made of the unenlightened mind as lacking the vision to embrace the higher and deeper conceptions of man's nature and destiny. Not in the material pastures of the world's life over which mankind has browsed, fought and flourished for ages and to which he has become bound by ties of desire, could he be expected to evolve into partnership in the higher mansions of Mind. Only when the human soul earnestly *desires*, and in thought and action *aspires* to live in communion with its higher Consciousness, can a great step forward for the whole of humanity be brought about. The Wisdom of the Ages awaits its fitting times and seasons to be shared and scattered abroad among men; for it has answers to our questionings — just as soon as the minds and eyes of the sleepers are awakened and their casements opened to the Light.

All are familiar with the ancient axiom, "Man, know thyself," but how many guess that the Truth that dwells within those words is more urgent in its appeal to the generations of today than ever before.

We are at the close of an era of the human mind in which the achievements of cold intellect and materially-directed Science and

Invention have reached their high-water-mark of attainment. But the recent precipitation of tragic events has revealed, on a graphic, world-wide scale, the perishable nature of these highly extolled conquests over matter by mind, and most appalling of all, the slackness and moral unsoundness of the foundations upon which our modern civilization is resting.

Has not the hour struck (announced by the atom bomb) (1) for the higher mind of man, lit by heart-wisdom, to claim and exert its ascendancy in the conduct of human affairs?

The long-smothered intuitions of man will gradually become clarified and vitalized as the light of wisdom within him is put into conscious use. For the soul-powers are within himself, and he alone, and only he, can effect that re-orientation of activity in heart and mind which will align him in the ranks of those who are heirs to the Wisdom of the Ages — as modern in essence as it is ancient in spirit, being Timeless and Eternal.

The dubious apprehensions and unrest, vaguely blended with envisionments of a brighter future for mankind, which fluctuate in the common heart and mind of the world today, are harbingers of coming changes in man's thinking, and of the dire need for it. These, too, are glimmerings of intuition, far gleams of soul-remembrance — reminiscences of man's innate divinity and one-ness with the Over-Soul.

The destructive agencies that have rocked the world and stunned humanity, are in reality regenerative agencies working in harmony with evolutionary law and human destiny; destroying the out-worn and degenerate, and awakening mankind to the inauguration of a reign of higher and more universally-beneficent consciousness.

In the degrees of enlightenment and experience which every soul must pass through on its long pilgrimage to perfection the powers of intuition will come more and more into play. They will inspire and direct creative intellect into channels of fruitful thought and endeavor,

and kindle the love of useful and benevolent activities in the paths of Peace. For the Vision which inwardly illumines it is the power to perceive the Cosmic Unity behind and within the diversities of manifested existence.

Let us all strive to hasten the day when the hearts of all men are joined in this great Enterprise — the Cause of Sublime Perfection! Then will the Intuition shed its light for all, awakening living responses on the resonant keyboard of the Soul.

FOOTNOTE:

1. The proposals to put Atomic Energy to work in constructive and beneficent projects are well-meaning and vast; but are we so sure that our present mental equipment can be trusted to remain true to the task? Would not an atomic Transmutation of the human mind and heart also be necessary? ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE FOUR WINDS

I have had in mind asking if you would in the THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM give some elucidation of the reference made on pages 122-24 of *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, to the four cardinal points and the influences exerted by the rulers; also the four kinds of winds having evil and beneficent influence upon the health of mankind and every living thing. Recently I purchased *Studies in Occult Philosophy* by Dr. de Purucker, and apparently in the article on "The Four Beasts of the Christian Apocalypse" reference is made to the same thing. I would appreciate having information regarding the evil and beneficent influences of these "winds." — M. E. S.

Very little information has been given in regard to the nature of the four kinds of "winds," no doubt because of the danger attached to its possible misuse. It will be noticed in the pages of *The Secret Doctrine* quoted in the question that the north and the west winds were formerly considered evil, while the east wind is good. Indra fights with Ahi-Vritra, the terrible hot wind — similar to the Simoon of Africa and Arabia. Yet in Egypt Tum is the spirit of the *north wind and the west*, and is a very high creative deity, the equivalent of the Tibetan Fohat. Perhaps the Egyptians were tempted to associate Tum with the north wind because it was beneficial to the shipping on the Nile as it counteracted the strong current of the river which flowed northward! The Greeks dreaded the north wind, and the minor god who personified it, Boreas, was worshipped by the Athenians only because he had destroyed hundreds of the ships of Xerxes during the Persian war!

The four "Maharajahs" and the four Cardinal points are represented in Oriental philosophy by the four Royal Stars, Regulus, Aldebaran,

Fomalhaut and Antares, which are approximately six hours away from each other and therefore roughly indicate the four quarters of the heavenly vault. They correspond mystically, in the above order, with the Guardian Angels of the Gnostic Ophites and others, with Michael, Uriel, Raphael and Gabriel respectively. The Qabalah also has a similar arrangement of the great Powers, Winds, or Breaths, the Guardian Angels of the Four Corners of the earth. These mystical Fours "stand behind the Thought and the Word from which all "This," the Universe, sprang into being." A fiery Wind followed the Directing Thought of the Creative Forces.

The American Indians, ancient and modern, attached the greatest importance to the four divisions of space, each with its own color and qualities and with its appropriate wind. The Four planes of Being and the Four successive Races of Men are all related to the same principles as found everywhere, relics of the Ancient Wisdom.

All this symbolism implies the great esoteric teaching that the universe is embodied consciousness and that there is no "dead matter." Behind the seemingly mechanical movements of the winds there are more or less intelligent forces which if understood would throw a strong illumination on many obscure phenomena of the atmosphere. When Jesus "rebuked" the stormy winds on the Sea of Galilee, he showed his knowledge of and control of these intelligent forces. There is a definite connection between the powers behind the "Winds" and the Breath in man. Jesus was hinting at this when he spoke of the wind blowing where it listeth and connected it up with "every one that is born of the Spirit" — initiates, (*John* ch. 3, verses 5 to 12) a marvelous passage of slightly veiled esoteric or Qabbalistic teaching.

In *Isis Unveiled* and elsewhere, H. P. B. refers to the power of the human breath which is a "reflection" of Cosmic energies, and shows how it has been misused by sorcerers. We have always been warned against the danger of ignorantly arousing the unknown forces that can be released by certain processes of breathing.

In the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine* and on pages 53-56, Vol. I, a

magnificent description is given of the Great Breath, eternal and ceaseless, the divine basis of all creation. Every other form of rhythmic motion is derived from the One and this of course stands behind "the Winds of the Spirit" symbolized by the "Four Maharajahs" and the like, all of which have their own peculiar individual qualities. For instance, on page 612, Vol. II of *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. B. speaks of the *Pravaha* wind, which is, like Tum in Egypt, clearly connected with Fohat in his aspect as a mystic and occult force that gives the impulse to and regulates the courses of the stars and planets, one of the problems in astronomy not yet completely solved.

When H. P. Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine* the very suggestion of intelligent forces would have been utterly scouted by the scientists, to whom "blind, unintelligent forces and dead inert matter" was the answer to the problem of existence. How greatly their outlook is changing is shown by many recent developments. For instance Sir Richard C. Tute in his valuable work *After Materialism — What?* shows how far philosophic science has approached spiritual interpretations and is "disengaging itself from material prepossessions." Based on strictly scientific evidence, this book is a magnificent tribute to the reality of the occult teaching brought to the West by H. P. Blavatsky. A few ideas taken from a letter to *The Scientific Monthly* for October, 1946, written by Sir R. Tute will illustrate the new attitude in regard to the universality of life and consciousness throughout the visible and invisible Cosmos, which is the background for the concept of Intelligent Forces, symbolized under the guise of the Four "Maharajahs" and the Four "Winds" each with its own qualities. Speaking of the Monads, which according to the Ancient Wisdom are the ultimate living spiritual consciousnesses, "the very elements of which the universe is made," as he says, he continues: "The modern scientist recognizes that physical reality is produced by superphysical agencies, which must be so designated because they can never be observed. . . . The Monads are simple, *percipient*, self-acting beings . . . spiritual beings whose very nature is to act."

And from the same point of view Sir Richard remarks that the

mechanists who still cling to specious mechanistic explanations such as Natural Selection and Survival of the Fittest "are flouting the well-established, if recent, findings of the physicists that the universe as known to them shows no signs of mechanism." He mentions "for the reassurance of proposed readers of his book that it has been wholeheartedly approved by scientists of the standing of Jeans and Stromberg and that it aroused the interest of Einstein."

In spite of all the ignorant and prejudiced attempts to destroy the Theosophical Movement, it would seem that its principles are no longer regarded by leading minds in science as far-fetched or superstitious. — Charles J. Ryan

The Theosophical Forum

"H. P. B." (1) — *A. P. Sinnett*

The world at large has heard too much about Mme. Blavatsky, and has known too little. Her misfortune was that she was interesting to average newspaper readers, and a grievously inviting subject for average newspaper writers. As she believed — as all Theosophists believe — she was concerned with bearing a message to the world of grave importance and infinite solemnity. It was not half uttered — not a hundredth part understood — before it was snapped up by every lively journalist in search of a new joke. Modern society has lost a great deal by gaining whatever amusement was involved in the treatment of Mme. Blavatsky as food for caricature. It is further to be regretted that she herself all the while, very sensitive to suffering of all kinds, has writhed in misery beneath the jeering to which she has been exposed. Now that at last she has bequeathed to the flames the battered and unwieldy physique that has burdened her fiercely energetic spirit so long, the time has perhaps come for focusing public attention a little more closely than has been possible hitherto on the work and purpose of her life.

THE LAST THREE YEARS OF HER LIFE

Only four or five years ago she seemed fairly overwhelmed by the tide of obloquy turned against her by the Psychical Research Society. I visited her at Wurzburg in 1886, and then she had very few friends left, very little purpose in this life except to write her long-promised book, "The Secret Doctrine," and was spending her time in almost complete seclusion; while the world at large spoke of her as a detected impostor, and the Report against her, by a representative of the Society just named, was complacently regarded by its author as having put an end once for all to one of the most extraordinary delusions of the age. Bit by bit the famous Report has been torn to pieces by competent critics, till hardly a rag of it remains. The inextinguishable force of Mme. Blavatsky's character has borne her forward and far more than

recovered for her all her lost ground. She has been for the last three years the center of a devoted circle of disciples, the nucleus of a great organization of occult students, which included over a thousand persons. The weekly lectures given in her presence by her Theosophical pupils have been attended by crowded audiences. Never before in her life has she been made so much of as during these last few years, when the vigour of her mind, the irresistible personal influence she exhaled, have pushed into the background, as so much silly impertinence, the accusations of fraud and trickery which looked at one time formidable enough to menace her with annihilation as a public teacher.

A GREAT SPIRITUAL REALITY

Like many other prophets and seers, she has been scorned and denounced, but her strength has been greater than that of her assailants. She has been suffering continually from illness, and partly through muscular weakness, partly because of her inconveniently bulky proportions, could scarcely get about more than from one room to another; but her mental and moral energy has made her the absolute chief of her large heterogeneous household, and of the busy volunteer staff of the Society she directed. A state of things like this should be recognised as more eloquent than petty details of disputable evidence pointing to the theory that she concocted spurious marvels. Vulgar cheating does not bring forth ever-increasing devotion and respect as its fruit. It is impossible to account for Mme. Blavatsky in any intelligent way except by regarding her as a great spiritual reality.

THE SPIRIT OF HER TEACHING

Nothing in her external attributes prepared one at the first glance to look at her in that light. She was rugged and eccentric in her ways and appearance; she dressed anyhow — in loose wrappers — smoked cigarettes incessantly. Worse than this, she was passionate and excitable, and often violent in her language. Namby-pamby conventionality shrank from her aghast — to her grim satisfaction, for she loathed it. She had a loud voice, that grew harsh in its tones when

she felt irritated, and something or other would irritate her fifty times a day. And yet her disciples, summing up the spirit of her teaching in the course of the address read at her cremation, say: *A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for all, a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a constant eye to the ideal of human progress and perfection which the sacred science depicts — these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the temple of Divine Wisdom.* If we are to judge a tree by its fruits, we may judge Madame Blavatsky, to some extent, at all events, by the principles we find flourishing amongst those who are proud to acknowledge themselves her followers in the path of occult development.

HER MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

No one will ever make sense of Mme. Blavatsky's career, or understand her influence, if they try to think of her as a woman of genius on her own foundation, so to speak, with ideas and theories of life and a great zeal for these, as other enthusiasts have been zealous for other theories and ideas. The tremendous importance of Mme. Blavatsky in the circle of her followers was due to the conviction they all felt that she was the visible agent of powers and personages transcending those of the ordinary world. Ancient theories of religion embodied the belief that by going through certain processes of training and initiation, men still living could attain to superior spiritual conditions, acquiring faculties and powers of an exalted order. Occult students conceive that, though there are no institutions in London to provide facilities for initiation, and no priests in our day qualified to confer degrees on the aspirant for spiritual progress, nevertheless wisdom and knowledge concerning spiritual things have not died out of the world altogether. A great many persons connected with the Theosophical Society regard themselves as in contact with the present representatives of that higher evolution, and acknowledge such contact as having been originally brought about by or in some way through the intermediation of Mme. Blavatsky. The message, in fact, which she had to deliver, was to the effect that those who had the courage and qualifications for treading it might still find

the way of occult initiation open; that real knowledge concerning the possibilities of spiritual progress lying before mankind was procurable, and that a very lofty rule of life had to be adopted by those who would enter on "the Path."

HER LIFE AT AVENUE ROAD

Teaching these principles incessantly by speech and pen, Mme. Blavatsky has effectually lived down the distorted misrepresentations of her character put about from time to time by people who have resented and disbelieved in her wonder-working. At 19, Avenue Road, Regent's Park, where she resided, at the head, practically, of a large co-operative household, she was treated with an ardent respect that amounted to something like devotion. Shielded by this more than affectionate esteem, even she, sensitive as she has always been to attack, has learnt in the evening of her life to care a little less than formerly about the rude sneers of the outer world. She has been more at peace of late at the Avenue Road than during any other period of her varied career, though as busy as ever with her pen. The change and amusement required by most people played no part in her existence. To realise her as she has been for the last few years, we have only to get into the mind's eye a picture of her writing-room at the Avenue Road, with a large writing-table in the middle, the window shielded with a fern-glass over the lower half to the left, another table to her right, laden with books, photograph stands, and receptacles for papers, a sofa behind her, bookcases against the walls, a chair or two for the accommodation of visitors, but for herself always the big armchair at the writing-table — suited to her ample proportions — in which she permanently lived.

How she hated her ample proportions, by the by! When I corresponded with her in India, before I knew her personally, she used to describe herself as a "hippopotamus" and a Calmuck savage though the bright and lively style of these descriptions counterbalanced the alarming purport. Then she chafed furiously at the cruel fate that had made her a woman — in this incarnation.

THE ESOTERIC SECTION

The back room, opening out of her writing room, was her bed room. It was variety enough for her to pass from one chamber to the other, though sometimes she would get as far as the lecture hall adjacent to the house, which the Theosophical Society built for the convenience of its meetings when Mme. Blavatsky and her group of friends settled in the Avenue Road.

Beyond Mme. Blavatsky's room, and opening out of it, was "the secretaries" room, where two or three young men, devoted adherents of the "Blavatsky Lodge" of the Theosophical Society and members of the Avenue Road establishment, carried on the business of the Society and that of Mme. Blavatsky's magazine, *Lucifer*, under her general direction; and the "Esoteric Section" alone gave them plenty to do, for this branch of the Theosophical organization engaged Mme. Blavatsky's deepest interest and energies in the recent latter days. . . .

Her never-resting mind required no relaxation from work beyond that involved in conversation with friends, chiefly about her work. It has been so ever since I first knew her in 1879; it was so before that, ever since the public phase of her career commenced, four or five years before that date, as I am informed, when she began her mil by writing "Isis Unveiled" at New York, and stuck to that gigantic task — without breaking off, so to speak, except to talk with her early American friends and work occult wonders for their gratification. . . .

HER EARLY LIFE

For about twenty years she wandered about the world, getting supplies of money from time to time from her father, always on the look-out for wonders and mysteries and for people of any kind qualified to open for her the doors of occult knowledge.

. . . A blatant world, "all ear and eye, with such a stupid heart to interpret ear and eye," has coined a score of groundless charges against her, on the assumption that a life so unconventional must have been riotous and vicious. There are people who cannot realize how any man

or woman having the opportunity can be otherwise than vicious. But Mme. Blavatsky was abnormal in this respect. She deserved no credit for not being sensual, any more than a horse might deserve credit for not drinking absinthe. Her love of a wandering life sprang from no instincts of the kind that may sometimes prompt such restless activity. She cared nothing, it is true, for refinement in the ordinary sense of the word, even hating the superficial graces and ornamentation of life; but cared still less, to the extent of getting far on the other side of zero in respect to such feelings, for the whole range of emotions having to do with the pleasures of sense. As a mere subordinate illustration of this, her dislike of alcohol in all forms amounted to a comically intense loathing. The indefatigable tongue of slander has charged her, amongst other things, with drinking. One might as well charge a polar bear with setting fire to an iceberg.

"THE PHENOMENA"

She was relatively in good health in her New York days when the Theosophical Society was first founded by a very small group of enthusiasts in 1875, and wonders of many kinds surrounded its origin. I do not propose here to argue the question of Madame's "phenomena" at any length, but one could no more write a memoir on trigonometry and say nothing about triangles, than survey the strange career just concluded and ignore the marvels coruscating all through it. And at this early period of her enterprise she seems to have depended more on the startling effect of surprising powers she was enabled to exhibit than on the philosophical teaching concerning the evolution of man and the world, and the ultimate destinies, or rather the opportunities lying before humanity for those who can appreciate them, which became the burden of her later utterances. I have never been able to gather from her that she had any settled plan of operations at New York. In a general way she wished to make known the existence of Eastern Initiates possessing knowledge and powers far transcending those of ordinary humanity. She had not yet got the whole idea of a spiritual crusade which should lead converts into "the Path" of occult development formulated in her mind. This was brought into shape

later on in India when she migrated thither accompanied by Col. Olcott and when the Theosophical Society began to acquire momentum in that country.

IN INDIA

At this stage my own acquaintance with her began in 1879. Her troubles at this time were all before her, and they had not yet begun to depress her naturally buoyant spirits. Her friends of recent date have only known her weakened by illness, somewhat embittered and disheartened by calumny, contumely, and misrepresentation; almost sternly bent on preaching the lofty ethics of the Theosophic code, and drifting into a position in which, as the recognized spiritual chief of so many earnest followers, she was hardly able to divest herself of a quasi-papal character. When the movement she set on foot was still in its infancy, she was burdened by none of these oppressive circumstances. Her bright intellect and abundant wit made her a charming conversationalist, and many people, I am sure, who met her at Allahabad in the year just mentioned, will remember her chiefly as a very delightful companion at the dinner table, full of sparkling and eccentric anecdotes, and only unconventional enough to be an amusing feature of any gathering she joined. For she would never allow herself the strong language in which she sometimes indulged when any but intimate friends were present. As I have said in describing her as she was at this period in the book already referred to: (2) "No one with the least discernment could ever fail to see that her rugged manners and disregard of all conventionalities were the result of a deliberate rebellion against, not of ignorance or un-familiarity with, the customs of refined society. Still, the rebellion was often very determined, and she would sometimes color her language with expletives of all sorts, some witty and amusing, some unnecessarily violent, that we should all have preferred her not to make use of. She certainly had none of the superficial attributes one might have expected in a spiritual teacher; and how she could at the same time be philosopher enough to have given up the world for the sake of spiritual advancement, and yet be capable of going into frenzies of passion about trivial annoyances, was

a profound mystery to us for a long while, and is only now partially explainable within my own mind, by some information I have received relating to curious psychological laws under which initiates in occult mysteries, circumstanced as she is, inevitably come. By slow degrees only, and in spite of herself — in spite of injudicious proceedings on her part, that long kept alive suspicions she might easily have allayed if she could have kept calm enough to understand them — did we come to appreciate the reality of the occult forces and unseen agencies behind her; . . . but guests, especially if they happened to be of a very materialistic temperament, would regard anything Mme. Blavatsky might do of an apparently abnormal character as so much juggling, and hardly disguise these impressions from her. The result in such cases would be a stormy end to our evening after such guests had gone. To be suspected as an impostor, deluding her friends with trickery, would sting her at any time with a scorpion smart, and bring forth a flood of passionate argument as to the cruelty and groundlessness of such an imputation.

"Recollection of this time supplies me with a very varied assortment of memory portraits of Madame taken during different conditions of her nerves and temper. Some recall her flushed and voluble, too loudly declaiming against some person or other who had misjudged her or her Society; some show her quiet and companionable, pouring out a flood of interesting talk about Mexican antiquities, or Egypt and Peru, showing a knowledge of the most varied and far-reaching kind, and a memory for names and archaeological theories she would be dealing with, that was fairly fascinating to her hearers. Then, again, I remember her telling anecdotes of her own earlier life, mysterious bits of adventure, or stories of Russian society, with so much point, vivacity, and finish that she would simply be the delight for the time being of everyone present."

HER LIFE IN BOMBAY

At this time Mme. Blavatsky's own home was established at Bombay, where she resided with Colonel Olcott and two or three persons, Indian

and European, associated with the Theosophical Society. At first she lived in a comfortless native quarter of the town, but afterwards in a small bungalow called "The Crow's Nest," at Breach Candy, which had long been unoccupied owing to a bad reputation for snakes and ghosts, and was thus let to the Theosophists, quite willing to brave all encumbrances of this sort, on reasonable terms. The building lay on the slope of a steep hill, and the upper part, an enclosed verandah with two or three rooms opening out of it, constituted Mme. Blavatsky's quarters. Here I visited her in 1881, and found her immersed in a constant ebb and flow of native visitors, members of the Society, and others. She would have admiring groups of such friends round her up to all hours in the evening, smoking innumerable cigarettes and talking Vedic philosophy with eager enthusiasm, or as eagerly and excitedly discussing some trumpety little incident connected with the progress or difficulties of the Society, or the misdoings of some "enemy," which a person of cooler temperament in her position would have found too insignificant to engage five minutes' thought. . . . And then, if I may again quote a few words from my own former account of her, "in the midst of some fiery argument with a Pundit about a point of modern Hindoo belief that she might protest against as inconsistent with the real meaning of the Vedas, or a passionate remonstrance with one of her *aides* of the *Theosophist* about something done amiss that would for the time overspread the whole sky of her imagination with a thundercloud, she would perhaps suddenly "hear the voice they did not hear" — the astral call of her distant Master, or one of the other "Brothers," as by that time we had all learned to call them — and forgetting everything else in an instant, she would hurry off to the seclusion of any room where she could be alone for a few moments, and hear whatever message or orders she had to receive."

AT SIMLA

She would make no efforts at this time to cultivate friendly relations with the European society of the place, having started indeed with a very flourishing stock of misconceptions about the character of the English in India, which gave way after a time, but at first made her

fancy herself, by reason of her special sympathy with the natives, as necessarily antagonistic to the Europeans. Moreover, she hated the outer forms and ceremonies of Anglo-Indian life, and would have found it a terrible penance to give up the loose wrappers she habitually wore, or the cigarettes she constantly smoked, for the sake of commonplace parties and people who know nothing of the Vedas, and still less of the mysterious occultism in which all her deeper interests were rooted. However, it is none the less true that she did fret after a time at the isolation as regards European society, in the midst of which she lived at Bombay, and she used thoroughly to enjoy the change in this respect she obtained from time to time during her visits to Allahabad and Simla. At Simla especially she made many friends, and during the summer of 1880 she was perhaps the prominent feature of the Anglo-Indian season, for that was the year of her most sensational performances, as described in "The Occult World"; and though, of course, accounts of these no sooner began to penetrate the newspapers than they evoked outcries of ridicule and incredulity, a great many people at the time, including some very prominent members of the English community who apostatised afterwards, when the tide of scornful public incredulity set in strongly, were altogether overwhelmed by the marvels of which they were personally witness.

THE FIRST STAGE OF HER MISSION

Up to this time we had received no glimmerings of the comprehensive or systematic teaching concerning the evolution of man and the world and the laws governing the spiritual progress of humanity, that ultimately identified the Theosophical Society with something resembling a new religion. So far Mme. Blavatsky's efforts had been altogether directed to establish the broad fact that there were people in existence whose knowledge and power transcended those of ordinary mortals; that they corresponded in the present day to the initiated hierophants of ancient religious systems; that some touch with the superior wisdom they possessed was to be got at through the study of Indian sacred literature; and that Western communities, insofar as they had begun to investigate abnormal super-physical phenomena by

means of the practices resorted to by "spiritualists," were altogether on a wrong track. Many modern newspaper writers are so densely ignorant of everything that appertains to this investigation, that they not only mix up the silly, fraudulent imitations of spiritualistic phenomena with the real occurrences, such as they are, to which scores of eminent and entirely credible inquirers have borne testimony, but also confuse these occurrences, the central block of real experience connected with spiritualism with the theories of occult science, as these have been gradually developed in recent years through Mme. Blavatsky's agency and others which she in the first instance set in motion. It is only necessary here to explain occult teaching sufficiently to make her Theosophical work intelligible; and her attitude towards spiritualism will be made apparent when I say that the occultist's view of Nature recognizes a plane of phenomena and existence directly in contact with our own, though imperceptible to commonplace physical senses, in which the inferior remnants of post-mortem humanity float about and persist for a time, while the true Ego or spiritual consciousness of every departed soul fit to have anything worth calling a spiritual life, passes off into realms with which the mediumship of the spiritualist has, as a general rule, no contact whatever.

HER OBJECTION TO SPIRITUALISM

From the first moment when Mme. Blavatsky completed the apprenticeship of her wandering life and came back to Europe in 1870, at the close of three years spent in an Eastern seclusion, of which it is useless to speak except to persons knowing something of what occult initiation means, she regarded herself as especially bound to combat and oppose the spiritualistic movement, not from the ignorant and stupid point of view of those who regard the whole thing as a vulgar fraud, but from that of the inner penetralia of the movement itself. No one knew better than she that the phenomena of the spiritualists were often entirely genuine, but she felt herself in possession of knowledge which the most earnest spiritualists were entirely without, which enabled her to go behind the phenomena and explain them as

originating from super-physical causes, quite unlike those to which they were assigned by spiritualists. To wean the spiritualists from their misconceptions was thus the real motive of the very first step she took — at Cairo, in 1870 — in the direction of Theosophical work. She founded a little Society for investigating spiritualistic phenomena, and of course this action on her part has been twisted later on by her detractors into the statement that she began her public career as a spiritualistic medium. Her letters to private friends written about this time and later on from New York, whither she migrated a year or two afterwards, amply establish her bitter antagonism from the first to the whole theory of modern spiritualism, so that the charge against her that she practiced as a spiritualist medium is a ludicrous inversion of the facts.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Greatly promoted by the dogged determination and single-minded exertions of Colonel Olcott, the Theosophical Society grew rapidly during the years Mme. Blavatsky spent at Bombay. . . . In this country a certain readiness to brave conventional opinion is still required by people who attach themselves to a movement resting on special knowledge and experience not yet hall-marked by orthodox authority, but in India there was nothing in Mme. Blavatsky's profession of belief in the existence of and acquaintance with occult initiates to offend public opinion. A similar conviction is so widely spread as to be general throughout India, while the whole programme of the Theosophical Society, in its exaltation of the importance of Indian literature and traditions, was flattering to native susceptibilities. So wherever Colonel Olcott wandered in the course of his incessant tours, he found it easy to establish branches of the Society, and these were counted by hundreds when the Theosophical household moved at the end of 1882 to Madras.

IN LONDON

Here are some extracts from a characteristic letter she wrote to my wife and myself in 1884, when she had come Londonwards as far as Nice for the sake of the sea voyage, being in a thoroughly bad state of

health: —

"I have received the kind invitations of yourselves and of ----- and ----- and others. I am deeply touched by this proof of the desire to see my unworthy self, but see no use to kick against fate and try to make the realisable out of the unrealisable. I am sick, and feel worse than I felt when leaving Bombay. At sea I had felt better, and on land I feel worse. I was laid up for the whole day on first landing at Marseilles, and am laid up now. At the former place it was, I suppose, the vile emanations of an European civilized first-class hotel, with its pigs and beef, and here — well, anyhow I am falling to pieces, crumbling away like an old sea-biscuit, and the most I will be able to do will be to pick up and join together my voluminous fragments, and gluing them together, carry the ruin to Paris. What's the use of asking me to London? What shall I, what can I, do amidst your eternal fogs and the emanations of the highest civilization? . . . What kind of company am I to civilised beings like yourselves? . . . I would become obnoxious to them in seven minutes and a quarter were I to accept it and land my disagreeable bulky self in England. Distance lends its charms, and in my case my presence would surely ruin every vestige of it."

In spite of this reluctance, the intense interest she felt in the progress of the Theosophical movement in London, and the continued pressure of her friends' wishes, brought her over to London eventually after a few weeks spent in Paris. At whatever house she stayed, her presence becoming known drew crowds of visitors anxious to see her. The constant ebb and flow of people round her never seemed to weary her. Ill as she often was, her nervous energy was inexhaustible, and she flung herself now into the task of promoting a Theosophical propaganda in Europe as if that were the final culmination of her work to which everything else were subordinate. No one ever more than Mme. Blavatsky acted on the principle of doing with all her might whatever work she was engaged upon at the moment.

THE ALLEGED "EXPOSURE"

But a terrible catastrophe was brewing for her all this while. A

magazine published at Madras in the interest of the missionary body at that place — always bitterly inimical to the Theosophical movement, which tended to exalt native confidence in the Oriental philosophies and religions, which it was the missionaries' business to attack — obtained from a woman who had been attached to the Theosophical headquarters as a kind of housekeeper (and whom Mme. Blavatsky had very unwisely treated as a friend) certain letters purporting to be written by Madame, the contents of which seemed to show that some of the abnormal phenomena that had taken place at Madras and elsewhere had been fraudulently concocted by Mme. Blavatsky with the assistance of the ex-housekeeper and her husband. The authenticity of these letters was strenuously denied by Mme. Blavatsky; but the Psychological Research Society sent out an agent to investigate the whole imbroglio. Mr. Hodgson, the agent in question, was entirely won over in the end by the accusing side, and published a Report condemning Mme. Blavatsky unreservedly. A complete review of this disagreeable business would take up too much time.

THE REPORT OF THE PSYCHICAL RESEARCHER

Volumes have been written about it, and while at first no doubt the leaders of the Psychological Research Society undoubtedly accepted Mr. Hodgson's view, the few people who had been intimate with Mme. Blavatsky all through the period of the transactions referred to, showed by degrees, in various pamphlets and articles, how worthless Mr. Hodgson's conclusions were, how fatally he had been hoodwinked by the enemies of the Theosophical movement at Madras, and how narrow-minded and unjust his methods of inquiry had been. To the present day, of course, people who are out of touch with the deep realities of the Theosophical movement — which, however completely its origin may be traced to Mme. Blavatsky's efforts, has long since acquired a momentum and interior justification of its own quite independent of her personality — are vaguely of opinion that Mme. Blavatsky was somehow exposed by the Hodgson Report, and that the continued regard and respect shown for her by a large Society is an unaccountable manifestation of human credulity. But, nevertheless, no

one ever lived down all injurious accusation more effectually than Mme. Blavatsky, before she died, lived down the apparently at the time overwhelming denunciations of the Psychological Research Committee.

A TREMENDOUS BLOW

It was a tremendous blow at the time, of course. She returned to India at the end of 1884, while Mr. Hodgson was carrying on his investigations there; but that gentleman never sought her explanations of the circumstances he thought suspicious, never showed her the originals of the letters on which the whole accusation turned, and disguised his unfavorable conclusions while staying as a guest at the Theosophical headquarters. Then she fell very ill again, nearly died — was in fact given over by the doctor in attendance upon her — but unexpectedly rallied, and when a little better again returned to Europe, where, however, at the time her star seemed to have set entirely, and many of the people who had exhibited a spasmodic enthusiasm for her and her teachings in 1884, fell off both from the number of her friends and from the movement.

She wrote from Naples to my wife, in June, 1885, soon after landing: —

"The sight of your familiar handwriting was a welcome one, indeed, and the contents of your letter still more so. No, dear Mrs. Sinnett, I never thought that *you* could have ever believed that I played the tricks I am now accused of, neither you nor any one of those who have Masters in their hearts, not on their brains. Nevertheless, here I am to stand accused, without any means to prove the contrary, of the most dirty, villainous deceptions ever practiced by a half-starved medium. What can I and what shall I do? Useless to either write to persuade or try to argue with people who are bound to believe me guilty to change their opinions. Let it be. The fuel in my heart is burnt to the last atom. Henceforth nothing is to be found in it but cold ashes. I have so suffered that I can suffer no more."

AT WURZBURG

This tone of despair was very unnatural to her, and in the dejection of

the moment she underrated her own reserves of strength and courage. At Wurzburg, where she settled down for a time, old friends found their way to her again one by one. She had fallen out of fashion, it was true, but for all who had got upon the track of the great principles she had been instrumental in interpreting, realms of interest lay before them which would equally have drawn them on, even if Madame Blavatsky had been as personally unworthy of respect as her worst enemies declared. But in truth the more any Theosophist has at any time become attached, through experiences or mere reasoning of his own, to the pursuit of occult knowledge and development, the better he has been able to appreciate Mme. Blavatsky's career as a whole, without worrying about petty scraps of evidence seeming to impugn the *bona fides* of this or that little manifestation of abnormal energy among the hundreds or thousands of those with whom she has been concerned. That in his most seemingly injurious discoveries Mr. Hodgson had altogether blundered, became, for all who learned to appreciate the Theosophic position, a thousand times more probable than that Mme. Blavatsky was otherwise than genuine throughout, as most certainly a great many Theosophists of their own knowledge knew her to be in regard to her general relations with what I have called the Occult World.

IN LONDON ONCE MORE

So finally it came to pass that Mme. Blavatsky, having grown very tired of her isolation at Wurzburg, moved for a change to Ostend, and after staying on there till the spring of 1887, was brought back to London by the earnest invitation of a Theosophical group, by whose care and forethought the journey, very difficult for her in her then state of health, was facilitated by every arrangement that could be made for her comfort. Norwood, where she stayed for a few months, then became the vortex of Theosophical meetings and activities of various kinds, and afterwards several members of the Society joined together in taking a house in Lansdowne Road, Notting Hill, where "H. P. B.'s" banner was set up very proudly, and everything done by all parties concerned to emphasise in the most unequivocal way their devotion to

and trust in the leader whom the outer world vainly imagined to have been crushed entirely by the much-talked-of Report. "H. P. B.," I may explain, was the simple designation by which Mme. Blavatsky came to be known and addressed henceforth in the Society in accordance with her own wish. From this time on, the few remaining years of her life have seen her personal ascendancy and influence with all around her constantly increasing. Her receptions have been crowded, her spirits and energy have recovered their old vigour, schemes of all kinds have been set on foot around her for pushing on the Theosophical movement, and a practical answer has been afforded to critics who suppose that the interest Mme. Blavatsky excites turns on the "phenomena," genuine or otherwise, which have been so much talked of in connection with her, by the fact that in these last few years her public energies have been entirely bent on teaching Theosophical philosophy and ethics, and no casual frequenter of her receptions or lecture-room has ever been encouraged to expect the smallest manifestation of occult mysteries.

HER LATE WRITINGS

In spite of this, as teacher and philosopher Mme. Blavatsky has been more closely surrounded by eager admirers than at any time in the past as a wonder-worker. She has been working more productively, moreover, than ever before as a writer. Besides a constant stream of articles in the monthly magazine she edited, she has published, during her final residence in England, the two bulky volumes known as the "Secret Doctrine." . . . She has also published "The Key to Theosophy," and a little book of great interest for occult students, called "The Voice of the Silence." Idleness never had any charms for her, and she had to be very ill indeed before she would tear herself from her writing-table and surrender herself to her bed.

THE SOURCE OF HER STRENGTH

This irresistible force or energy in her nature is the clue to a comprehension of her, as far as it is possible to understand her without explicit reference to the "occult world" from which her power,

knowledge, and influence were really derived. She always, as it were, filled every place she occupied. She dominated every situation in which she was placed, and she had to be either greatly loved or greatly hated by those whom she came in contact with. She could never be an object of indifference. For people even who quarreled with her and shunned her she remained an important fact. People who knew her were always talking her over; and even, though in some cases she might give offense and exasperate friends for a time, these would generally in the long run be found amongst the number of her friends once more. She was more interesting than even she could be irritating.

A GREAT SCHEME OF PHILOSOPHY

And now the generation she has lived with is left face to face with the mass of literature she has left behind her, with the great scheme of philosophy, at the same time a vast and coherent system of thought, interpreting Nature and Man, which has been elaborated under her guidance — by herself or others in co-operation with her; and with nothing countervailing this tremendous bequest but some trumpery imputations on the *bona fides* of a few among the endless series of marvels which have always been taking place around her, in all countries and amongst endlessly various people, all her life — imputations, moreover, which have been in themselves discredited and refuted for those who take the trouble to read both sides of that wearisome story. To discuss Mme. Blavatsky at this stage of the proceedings, with reference to a single petty controversy about a single episode in her extraordinary career, would be like criticizing some great picture with exclusive reference to the smell of the paint. . . . The broad fact remains that Mme. Blavatsky's influence in the world for good, directly and indirectly, has been world wide, and that views of Nature and spiritual evolution which are distinctly traceable for those who understand them to the impulse given out by Theosophical writings, are fermenting in modern society to an extent that bids fair to accomplish serious and important modifications of religious thinking.

FOOTNOTES:

1. From the magazine *Borderland*, London, June, 1891. ([return to text](#))

2. *The Occult World*. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

A SERMON FROM MOUNT MERU — *Marion O. French*

Now, in this Sacred Season, let us make one wish to guide us through the New Year, for we are entering a crucial cycle of the Kali-Yuga. That Wish should be a prayer from the heart to follow the Golden Rule. It would be well to repeat it until the words run like a song from our lips. "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

Thus spoke the sainted Syrian Sage, Avatara and Messiah, known to men as Jesus of Nazareth. For us He came as the embodied Christos to enlighten the Dark Age. His "Sermon on the Mount" fills Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of *The Gospel according to St. Matthew*. It embraces the whole essence of Christianity in the pristine purity and glory of that Faith. It contains the Lord's Prayer and the Rule of Gold that is the Law by which we shall be measured. Therein is the Doctrine enunciated by the first Divine Instructors of mankind. It holds within it the esoteric ethics that have been repeated in exoteric terms adapted to the age by every Saviour that links us to Divinity with an unbroken Messianic chain.

This sacrosanct preachment may, properly, be construed in perpetuity as The Sermon from Mount Meru. It begins, "and seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain"; and having therefrom commenced to preach "as one having authority, and not in the manner of the scribes," as a risen Helper of Humanity, Jesus spoke to the "multitudes" upon the plain below. Wandering and wondering, these people on the lower plane looked up to listen. They knew not whither they were going, nor why, for they were enmeshed in the toils of two-dimensional time that seemed to run in endless circles from an unknown past into the terrors of an unseen future. It tied them to the surface of that plane whereon their vision was confined within a close and encompassing horizon. What lay beyond they knew not. Many, climbing upon and crushing their brethren beneath them strove in vain to see a little further.

Compassion moved the Heart of Him who stood upon the Mount and saw their suffering, "and He opened His mouth and taught them." To Him, from that coign of vantage, the paths that lay ahead of men in all directions were clearly open to view. He saw too well that "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction," and "narrow is the way which leadeth unto life." He saw "many" following the broad paved highways that ended in abysmal depths, and "few" that found the "strait gate" leading ever onward and upward. There, below Him, His fellow men faced the divergent paths of life. They lacked the psychological perspective that could see in an eternal Now the culmination of all paths and what lay in wait along those that led downward in the "easiest way."

There is a wealth of meaning in that *psychological perspective* of ancient Chinese art. It portrays in disproportionate size those forms in the background that are beyond the eyesight of figures in the foreground, but that are of vital import for their future. Those figures have freedom of choice, but what awaits them as reward or punishment lies ahead in the future in the form of Fate, of self-generated Karma.

From *The Secret Doctrine* we may know that Mount Meru is called *Sveta-Dvipa* in Puranic literature, and is the "land of the 'Gods' under their chiefs the 'Spirits of this Planet.'" (1) "As Meru is the high abode of the Gods, these were said to *ascend* and *descend* periodically; by which (astronomically) the *Zodiacal* gods were meant, the passing of the original North Pole of the Earth to the South Pole of the heaven." (2) "It is the north pole, the country of 'Meru,' which is the seventh division, as it answers to the Seventh principle (or fourth metaphysically), of the occult calculations for it represents the region of Atma, of pure soul, and Spirituality." (3) Also, "astronomically and metaphorically the celestial pole, with its pole star in *heaven*, is Meru, or the seat of Brahma, the throne of Jupiter, etc." (4) Thus, in Christianity with its numerous sects, as in all the other religions that have arisen from the revelations of the Buddhas of Compassion, the Sermon is one and the same. Always, it is Brotherhood and the Golden Rule that Their lips utter. That "is the law," and "the prophets" always preach it. There is

but One, the incognizable totality of Deity, the Center that is everywhere in the Circumference that is nowhere, now and forever. The Psyche seeing through the Eye of Siva with psychological perspective may envision all. That Vision, though, as *The Voice of the Silence* tells us, is granted only to those who seek to see solely for the sake of others. There we read: "Would'st thou thus dam the waters born on Sumeru? [Mount Meru] Shalt thou divert the stream for thine own sake, or send it back to its prime source along the crests of cycles?"

So, let us renew our faith in the recurrent rebirth of the Christos, under whatsoever religious Name we know Him. With Him, we may find at-one-ment only through love for our fellowmen, and Today is the Time in which to reassert that high resolution.

FOOTNOTES:

1. S D., II, 6. ([return to text](#))
2. S. D., II, 357. ([return to text](#))
3. S. D., II, 403. ([return to text](#))
4. S D, II, 785. ([return to text](#))

THOTH, DIVINE SCRIBE — N. A. Lewis

Who is this Thoth, of whom so many explanations are made, and who remains, even so, mysterious, inscrutable? We find references to him everywhere in occult writings, and his name is coupled with that of Hermes sometimes, and sometimes with that of Mercury, which gods — or demigods — or teachers — he resembles in his attributes. Above all, we find him associated with secret wisdom and magical arts. He seems, as much as Isis, to be a patron of the occult tradition. There is a legend of the Books of Thoth, which are (supposedly) lost, which contained all the truths, all the records, of mankind. The modern pack of Tarot cards is popularly called The Book of Thoth, although there is reason to doubt that this is the same kind of book as the above-mentioned Books. The legend of the Emerald Tablet of Hermes is probably closely related to this tradition.

We may imagine that Egypt had its Chain of Thoth before the Chain of Hermes received that name.

Thoth is said to have brought to man practically every art and science of civilization, but perhaps the very keyword of his contribution is *symbol*. With the ability to represent by pictures, diagrams, metaphors, and algebras the cumbersome objects of the material world, man can plan mentally and with a pencil and paper what he would otherwise have to try out physically with much labor, time, and expense, or not at all. Obviously the greatest mastery of time and space — or even of subjective matters — is to be achieved only through the creative use of symbols. Money, too, under the patronage of the later Mercury, is certainly an example of the common utility of symbol, a system obviating the clumsy methods of barter. Movies, with their projection of a large image from a tiny film, show another function of Thoth. We might call *reduction to abstraction for efficiency in storing or transporting* the principle behind these various functions.

It was under the tutelage of Thoth that the Egyptians evolved their system of hieroglyphs, a very well integrated one, since it entered into every department of their lives. It is hard to tell their art from literature, their literature from art. In other words, their word for a thing, their symbol in writing, was very close to being a picture of the thing itself. It is the reverse of this relationship which is so remarkable; since any object or event was the living hieroglyph for a certain idea. A study of their hieroglyphs reveals that positions of the body, wearing of collars, aprons, etc., colors of clothing, types of headdress, in fact almost everything in life, stood as a symbol of sound and meaning to the educated Egyptian. On this basis, as we may guess, the Mysteries were subtly and secretly taught in the temples, and at least some degree of intuition must necessarily have been attained by all who were able to read.

In this connection, it might be well to bring forth a distinction encountered in later mythology between the natures of Apollo and Mercury. Apollo, it is said, was given the power of expression by means of words and sentences, the gift of language, but to Mercury went the gift of expression by omens, symbols, and all sorts of means. In this way, for example, an event could be brought to pass in the life of a man or woman, that he or she might read it, and come to know some message from the god. This last is the way of Thoth. Those who know Nature's Alphabet, so to say, and who read from the open pages of Life, are studying the universal knowledge under his guidance. It is given to some great teachers and spiritual leaders to instruct their pupils in this way, pointing out sentences and paragraphs in a hieroglyphic text that is the Divine Life itself. Such teachers are our Masters, whose methods of "bringing to a crisis" and of demonstrating by example and experience are well known to students of their letters.

But there is another face of the matter! Thoth is also the Recorder, the Scribe of Millions of Years. Where and what are these records? Of course, in his language every scratch on a stone, every wrinkle on a cheek, every smudge on a window is a word of power; but these are at best temporary! Must it not mean that he is the keeper of the astral, or

perhaps the akasic records? Then he lives in the realm of models and archetypes, he is the warden of the noumenal world, which contains not just the present forms of things, but their every form in all variations, and their eternal forms also. It is to him we must go, if we would have any definite knowledge of the past, present, or future. He has the power, as lord of those realms, over our memory and over our every thought. Indeed, if we credit the occult history of an early migration of priests from the vicinity of Egypt to Britain, we may ask if our English word *thought* may not be closely related to his name, which even today is sometimes written *Thot*.

He has been called, in ancient inscriptions, "Lord of Khemennu, self-created, to whom none hath given birth, god One"; "he who reckons in heaven, the counter of the stars, the enumerator of the earth and of what is therein, and the measurer of the earth"; and "the heart of Ra which cometh forth in the form of the god Thoth." He appears as an ibis, or a human being with the head of an ibis, often carrying the sceptre of divine power and the *ankh* or *crux ansata*, emblem of life. Sometimes he wears the crown of the crescent moon and disk, and sometimes he wears a crown of a solar significance; it must be remembered that he must surely be related in one of his aspects to the planet Mercury. Perhaps it is because of the several astronomical relationships which he symbolizes that he is called Trismegistos, or "thrice great."

Probably an Atlantean survival from remotest antiquity is the dog-headed ape — or sometimes just a rather intelligent-looking ape — who accompanies Thoth. This ape seems to be specially related to Thoth in his moon-god aspect. One may guess his significance to be some feature of the lower nature of man, which might be under the care of Thoth.

In the *Book of the Dead* (supposedly written by Thoth, by the way), it is this ape who sits on the balance of the scales at the "Weighing of the Heart," and reports to Thoth, the recording angel, the behavior of the scales. In this ceremony, the heart of "Osiris, the deceased," is weighed in the one pan of the scales against the Feather of Truth in the other.

This feather is said to represent his words or deeds, or *what has been committed* by the "deceased," a true report of his life, in other words.

Thoth was very helpful to those who faced the terrors of the underworld. He was master of dreams and trances. More important, he stood as guide of the dead; and by means of the "words of power" he gave them (be it remembered that the Egyptians had a special kind of written language) they were able to pass through safely to the Boat of a Million Years, or to the Fields of Peace of Osiris.

According to Budge, in *Gods of the Egyptians*, Thoth had particular rule over the lunar month, especially the new moon, and in a lesser way the full moon, and over the winter half of the year. The Zodiac of Denderah shows Thoth as a god of the sign Capricorn; although Kircher, in his *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, names Hermanubis, a psychopompic variation of Thoth, as ruler of the sign of Cancer. Be that as it may, the Fourth of January is named the Day of Hermes, under certain conditions (see *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, G. de Purucker, page 211). In the general astronomical and astrological confusion as to the cosmic identity of our Thoth-Hermes-Mercury deity, we must not lose sight of one paramount fact; as an *association of ideas* this figure is most enlightening. To consider in what ways all of his many phases and aspects may be reconciled and synthesized is to gain some deeper understanding of our own mentation and psychological processes. His attributes are those of our understanding itself.

The minds of some are tombs in which the resurrection of Osiris is to take place. May their dead eyes read the beautiful story of truth which is written upon the walls! May they come to know the sound in their ears of those words which stand as men, making offerings to the gods! May they translate into the speech that carries with it radiant light the stories written in autumnal colors upon their very garments! May Thoth guide them and guard them, and bring them to know that glory which first he wrote, and which will remain written to the end of time!

THE LIVING SYMBOL — *Clarence Q. Wesner*

From the very beginning of Aeons — in time and space in our Round and Globe — the Mysteries of Nature . . . were recorded by the pupils of those same now invisible "heavenly men," in geometrical figures and symbols. The keys thereto passed from one generation of "wise men" to the other. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 612

A sea-shell in its pool of living water is an object of exquisite beauty. The hues and shades and mysterious color-changes seem to belong to another world. But we lift the shell from the water, and as it dries in the air the magic colors fade, the surface becomes dulled and the tones of color vanish before our eyes. When dropped again into its pool the shell once more lives in its former beauty. This beauty is apparent only when the shell is in its proper element. There its beauty is alive; removed from its proper element, the shell is drab and spiritless.

So it is with symbols. They are alive only in the element which gave them birth. To discover the true meaning of a symbol we must recover and awaken the consciousness of the ages and men to whom the symbol was given. A symbol will not be correctly interpreted if we put it in a twentieth century setting. The mind of infant humanity was closely tuned to the Soul and the Spirit. Only if we are able to so tune our minds will we return the symbol to its proper and native element.

A few symbols are found among all men. The basic meaning of such a symbol will be found to be the same no matter what age or race has used it. The details of explanation may possibly vary considerably. It is the mind which seeks to "explain" the symbol, and as the mental characteristics of each race differ, so will the symbols acquire a superficial meaning acceptable to the cultural or religious system then flourishing. These local variations of detail must not cause the fundamental meanings to be overlooked.

Our religions, arts, and entire culture are full of the symbols of antiquity. On every hand we find the circle, the triangle, the cross, the zig-zag line, either angular or rounded, the tree, the vine, the rose, lotus or other single blossom. Each of these is a symbol used by men at some time to express certain mysteries of nature.

A symbol has been defined as "a pictorial expression of the action of universal law." The symbol makers did not distinguish between "spiritual law" and "natural law." They knew that the same cosmic laws act throughout nature. A cosmic process is mirrored in human life. Thus each symbol has several explanations basically the same, but depending on whether the symbol is used in connection with the divine, spiritual, or human plane. Addition of detail in an attempt to limit the symbol to a specific thing generally spoils the whole meaning. A wealth of detail may obscure the main point upon which the details hang.

Our minds may become bewildered in the maze of symbology. Symbols are simple, complex, beautiful, grotesque, harmonious, and some may be considered vulgar or obscene. The intuition, nevertheless, finds in these symbols keys to the answers to the questions that all thinking mankind has asked: "Whence come I? Whither am I travelling? and Why?" Did the rising sun, *merely by analogy*, symbolize the birth of man into human life, and the setting sun the abode of the dead? Or may our ancient brethren be trying to remind us of some occult truths that are forgotten in this generation?

"Whence come you? Whither are you travelling? Why?" The Soul knows the answer to these questions; truly the Soul is the answer. The waters of Lethe are not wholly effective. The Soul knows that it has partially forgotten and that through association of spiritual ideas the knowledge may be regained. Symbols are memory-aids to the Soul. When the Soul awakes and at least partially remembers, the mystic, the poet, the bard, thrills men with songs of the Home they but dimly remember. And when the mind is attuned to the Soul and the Spirit there appears among men a god-man, a Saviour.

A great danger, however, lies in the use of symbols. The mind, operating on the plane of things, in time confuses the symbol with that which is symbolized. Picturesque accretions grow upon and around the symbol. The concrete thing is mistaken for something of value *per se*. Absurd interpretations give way to no interpretation at all, and the symbol becomes a fetish, an object of blind and senseless veneration.

Now and then the soul of an intuitive man rebels against this symbolatry; a new interpretation is sought of the ageless symbol. If the intuitive soul is spiritually awake the new interpretation will probably be close to the original meaning. But we may rest assured that any labored intellectual analysis involving anthropological and psychological complexities has missed the point of the symbol. The mystic and not the scholar is the true symbologist.

One class of symbols may be called Natural Symbols; these are comparatively few in number, and awaken the same soul-memories in all men. The mind may say that the circle is a picture of the sun and the zig-zag line a picture of waves on the surface of water. The Soul sees in the circle the symbol of the Divinity which is the heart of the sun — the source of all Life and Light and conscious Being on this our earth; and the waves are the Waters of Space, the womb of all manifested things.

Frequently symbols require an explanation, which is usually of local application and limited interest. These mean nothing without the explanation, which is usually arbitrary. Thus the carpenter's square is said to be the symbol of St. Thomas, because he was a carpenter, and the pilgrim's staff and wallet of St. James the Greater, because he was a great traveler. Without the explanation the square and staff might mean anything, or nothing.

Words and phrases are also used as symbols; Jesus is called "the Lamb of God," and again "the way, the truth, and the life." The "baptism by water and baptism by fire" are word-symbols of the lower and higher regeneration. Parables and allegories are also word-symbols, often personifying the various principles and egos of man. The gods and goddesses of the Pagan world are personifications — symbols — of the

powers, processes, of the actions and interactions of the invisible Beings that constitute what we loosely call Nature.

The cross has been held a sacred symbol in all ages and among all men. Christians see in it the crucifixion and resurrection of the Christ. However, the cross depicted as an instrument of torture bearing the figure of the dying Saviour is not a symbol, but a picture. History shows that this type of crucifix is a comparatively late innovation.

Let us in our minds go back to the days when the Heavenly Men mentioned by H. P. B. were still among us teaching by means of symbols the truths which are too soon forgotten and periodically restated for the benefit of those who have ears to hear and eyes to see. They taught us of the nature of Father Sun and of our relation to It — that from It we come and to It we shall in cyclic time return.

The vertical line dropping from the sun at meridian height to the earth is a perfect symbol of spirit, the link between the divine spark in man and its source. The horizontal line, representing the horizon, the limit of the visible earth, symbolized matter. Spirit descending into matter, the meeting of heaven and earth, the god assuming a body of flesh — these are the things the cross will never let our souls forget. The divine heroes are not unique in their crucifixions and resurrections; every man is a divine incarnation.

The earliest form of the Christian crucifix showed the Saviour clothed in royal robes and crown standing against the cross, with the arms extended at right angle to the body, and along the crossbar of the cross. This is the universal posture of benediction and pictures the resurrected Christ embracing all existence in his limitless love.

The figure of the resurrected and glorified god-man standing in front of the cross is the promise that, just as the Divine Ones have solved the riddle of the worlds of matter and their relation to the All, so shall each of us in the course of the ages, or through initiation, manifest here on earth our Inner Divinity.

So taught the Heavenly Men through the use of symbols.

THE UNIVERSAL MADONNA — *Hazel Boyer Braun*

Today when Modern Science is challenging every person to Cosmic thinking, we seem to be a people climbing up a mountain side from which we view the past five hundred years as a valley, in which we have been occupied with what Plato termed "Our shadows on the cavern wall."

Now we can see the vista of so many mountain tops, each the crest wave of a culture that gained its impetus in the Mystery Schools of antiquity — each one hailing us with its art, its religious beliefs, and eternal search for truth.

No theme in all the glamor of these sunlit peaks is more fascinating than that of the Universal Mother, which is recalled to us so intimately at the Christmas time. Every race has its idealized motherhood, ranging from human to Cosmic symbolism. The beauty, self-forgetfulness, and nobility of mother love as we know it in our everyday human homes is cherished in the heart of everyone.

We have been taught that every great truth has its deeper meanings, that each one has seven keys, and as yet from the peaks on which we stand today but a few of them have been turned. At least three or four may be suggested for this motherhood idealized in every land.

The Madonna, the Virgin Mother of the Savior, is adored in every Christian Church, and the beauty with which the artists have interpreted her adorns the valley from which we are emerging. "As above, so below." Human motherhood is in every respect a reflection of Mother Nature with her Spiritual Compassion and Mercy; for, the Cosmic Forces of Universal Life reflect or manifest according to their plane of evolution the Divine Love which is at the Heart of all Life. The beauty and compassion of this Divine Love is beyond the limitations of any descriptive terms, but manifests in human motherhood, a dim reflection, but nevertheless carrying at its core the Divine Truth.

The Madonna is, then, a symbolic figure. We have been educated, in our study of Art, to know the Italian Renaissance Madonnas, but we can better understand the tradition back of them if we take a more universal viewpoint. All of the culture of the Orient springs from the Mystery Schools where great Sages, Seers, Saviors, taught those initiated in the Mysteries the truths of Cosmic Reality, and these disciples in their turn taught the public with veiled truths and held secret the Sacred Knowledge. So we need our seven-fold keys to search out the hidden thought in type-figures, myths, and symbols.

It is generally known today that there were very many Saviors who came as did the Syrian Jesus to teach humanity. The same identical stories cluster about the birth of each one. Ever so many Saviors from the peaks beyond had mothers named Mary, or Maria, suggesting the Ocean of Space. We note that the noun mother in the Greek is *meter*, from which comes Demeter. In the Latin it is *mater*, and in the German, *mutter*, while Mut-em-Ua was the Virgin Mother of Amenhotep III of Egypt. We learn that the Sanskrit root *ma* suggests a relationship to the Sanskrit word *Maya*, which means the great illusion.

Here is a key to be turned, and we find the teaching that a Divine Being descended from a hierarchy above ours to this realm of illusion to teach. Always the Seers are born in a stable, a cave, or a meadow, where there are cows or sheep. The Divine One took on an animal or physical body as does every human being.

The Savior was born of a Virgin Mother, which means that he attained a "Second Birth." It means that he became as a little child through Initiation in the Mysteries, and there is an even deeper and more Esoteric meaning to this term. We find this same story told about Mithras, Apollonius of Tyana, Sankaracharya and Krishna of India, Quetzalcoatl of Ancient Mexico, and so many others. All were born at Christmas time, which gives us the key to the fact that this refers to the second birth. It is the most sacred of all the initiatory cycles. The time when Great Souls are initiated, when the sun having reached the lowest point, gives birth to the New Year, and makes an appropriate

time for inner illumination.

Now, we find reflected in the Art of the Ancients the more Cosmic symbolic use of the Madonna. In Egypt we find engraven on the temple walls and modelled in amazing sculpture the lovely figure of Isis holding the child Horus. This is symbolic of a Cosmic Drama. Osiris, the Sun God, represents some great Raja Sun about which perhaps our Universal Solar System or a great Galaxy is revolving. Isis is Mother Nature, the Cosmic forces, and her son Horus is the sun that rises for us in the morning. Note the beauty of these majestic thoughts.

This majesty is reflected in the sculpture and painting representing the Cosmic Mother of the Orient as well as of Egypt. The great figures of Kwan Yin, the Chinese Madonna, who in Japan is called Kwannon, often reveal a dignified and compassionate goddess of Mercy holding in her arms the child, earth.

As we look up to the skies we recall that every Madonna wears a blue cape, and this garment of heaven links the Mother of Jesus with all the Cosmic Mothers of all lands, and turns another key to her symbolism. The Spaces of Space, the Great Deep, the Womb of Being, the Unknown Darkness, is the teaching revealed with this key. The Chinese term it Tsi-Tsai, also Wu Wei.

A key to the Chinese thought about the Spaces of Space is to be found when we note the embroidered coats of Emperor Initiates, designed with Dragons, clouds, and waves — the waters of the deep.

Is it not clear, viewing it as we do from our distant mount, that all these peoples studied the same universal truths? That the Mystery School taught deep truths about the Universe, how it is mysteriously generated, its female side, the procreative power in nature?

We find this evidenced in the fact that the very word Parthenon means in Greek "virgin," and in this Temple of Athena, the virgin mind-born goddess, men and women went to be taught about "The Great Deep," the "Mysteries of the Spaces of Space."

Then there is Mylitta, the virgin goddess of the temples unearthed on the island of Malta or Melita, suggesting that the island took its very name from its Virgin Mother, as does Arizona, *Ari* being a Mexican Virgin, and *zona* meaning valley.

There can be no doubt of a cosmogony that is parent to the secret teaching, which suggests to us that we may view the trinity in so many of the ancient legends as conjoined to make the pathway for man's release, whether we call it Zeus, Semele, and the child Dionysus; Osiris, Isis, and Horus, or The Sun God, Mama Ocolla Huaca, and their son Manco Capac of the mystic isle in Lake Titicaca at that seat of the Mysteries near Cuzco in Olden Peru. The Apple so often held in the hand of the Christ Child may suggest the same thing, the fruitage of man's life, the becoming his Divine Self.

The Theosophical Forum

SPIRITUAL GUARD DUTY — *Abbot Clark*

In the service of one's country Guard Duty is so important that the guard is the only man in the army who can be shot for taking a nap. By one hour's neglect the whole army may be thrown into confusion or even captured. The same law works in regard to a man's life. We are all surrounded with enemies in the shape of temptations or allurements of one kind or another which may seize us at our weakest point. Usually it is some well-known weakness that betrays us but sometimes it is at the least suspected point that we are tried and found wanting. This applies in all the affairs of daily life, business or pleasure, public or private. I might almost say, waking or sleeping, for if we go to sleep with a wrong thought the elementals connected therewith may molest us and bad dreams or even nightmares result. We might call this psychic Guard Duty for there are all sorts of enemies of humanity, mostly of its own making, on the astral plane. The astral plane surrounds us as water surrounds a ship, and our weaknesses act as holes in our aura through which salt or dirty water may pour in and a bad dream or a bad day may result. Sometimes we may have what might be called lobster-salad or mince-pie dreams which come from indigestion and serve us right for our indulgence. Well, what are you going to do about it? The answer is easy. Guard your mind, thought and *feeling* before going to sleep. The wise Pythagoras gave a rule which can hardly be improved upon. I will quote it as G. de P. gave it from memory:

"Let not the setting sun reach the western horizon, nor close thine eyes in sleep, before thou hast gone over all the events of the day just past, and hast asked thyself this question: What have I done today that has been done amiss? What have I done that has been done aright? Have I injured anyone? Have I failed in my duty? Let not the setting sun reach the western rim of space, nor let thine eyelids close in sleep ere thou hast asked thyself these questions."

Then Dr. de Purucker adds the following which is pertinent to our

present subject: "If only men and women would consciously follow that simple rule, ninety-nine per cent of the world's trouble, heartache, sin and anxiety would be non-existent, would never happen. And the reason is simple. The world's troubles arise from our weaknesses, not from our strength; and if we would increase our strength, and do away with our weaknesses, every human being thereafter, in proportion to his inner evolution, would become a power for good in the world. And you see what that would mean. It cuts at the tap-root of most of the thoughts and feelings and acts that bring misery amongst us."

Mme. Tingley gave us a good rule which will keep our souls from getting caught while passing through the astral plane in going to sleep or in waking. It is as follows and is for nightly repetition:

"Let us end the day with more power of thought for self-conquest than we had at the beginning of the day. Let us close our eyes tonight with a clean conscience, and with a feeling of generous love for all that breathes, which is the best side of our natures. Let us seek more knowledge, more light, more strength, in the silence of our last thoughts before retiring."

Another way of putting these same helpful rules is in what is called "The chela's daily life ledger." The last thing before going to bed or to sleep one should carefully think over the day. Note your failures and successes and how to correct the errors and how to repeat or accentuate the successes. Note your weaknesses and use your will to be strong and resolute on such points or occasions as may need reform. Especially forgive your enemies — if you have any, and if not, think kindly of those who may need it, particularly of those whom you may dislike, for they, like yourself, are travellers struggling on the Path. Above all note any tendency you may have to criticize, for criticism is one of the most insidious of inner enemies. It springs from the sense of separateness — which is the root of all evil. It is the negation of Brotherhood. See if it is not a hidden and insidious form of egotism, in which case it is the devil's way of praising himself. When this healthful self-appraisal is over take your favorite devotional book and read a

chapter and/or meditate on the Higher Self. This frees you from earthly attachments and helps the soul to wing its way through the air-ways of the spirit to or near to where the Masters dwell.

The Theosophical Forum

WORKING WITH NATURE — *Alexandra McLean*

We appeal, therefore, to all who wish to raise themselves and their fellow creatures — man and beast — out of the thoughtless jog-trot of selfish everyday life. . . . What is wanted is true knowledge of the spiritual condition of man, his aim and destiny. — W. Q. Judge

We speak about the "nature" of things, and usually very superficially, meaning only the qualities most obviously manifested and easily perceived. We say it is the nature of a bird to fly, a fish to swim, of honey to be sweet; but are only using human terms for partial outer manifestations of these material forms. Their REAL Nature is not so easily labeled. And what is the "nature" of NATURE?

In Theosophical parlance we often speak of Seven; the seven angels, seven governors, seven keys, seven jewels, seven globes, seven rounds, seven races, etc. — and the seven-fold nature of man. It is safe to say that without understanding the seven principles of man, we can in nowise understand the "nature" of man.

NOW NATURE is also seven-fold, a great Unity, a vast Hierarchical Structure that expresses through many Hierarchies. To simplify, let us consider a three-fold aspect, a trinity through which we might say NATURE manifests, the trinity of Spirit, Soul and Body.

Spirit	Law	ONE Law (Divine Justice for all)
Soul	Process	ONE Process (dual aspect of involution-evolution)
Body	Qualities (made manifest)	ONE Quality (Wisdom-Love in action)

Now man has the privilege of working *with* Nature, thus becoming co-creator of ever more refined and glorified forms. He may *consciously*

cooperate with the trinity of Nature. He who works in aiding the evolution, development and perfecting of form in any of the lower kingdoms — is at the same time refining and perfecting the expression of himself (and of the great WHOLE, for all is ONE). Thus the "body" of Nature is glorified in the great evolutionary unfoldment. And as the forms are refined they become increasingly better channels for the Higher Forces of Nature.

These Higher Forces, which we may term the Atma-Buddhi of Nature, can only become manifest as men attune themselves to the Inner Heart of Nature. As man's Higher Manas "touches the hem of the garment" of the Inner Truth, it thereby draws virtue into itself which is transmitted through his lower vehicles. Porphyrios has said "Of that nature which is beyond intellect many things are asserted according to intellection, but it is contemplated by a cessation of intellectual energy better than with it." By aspiration which is prayer, by adoration which is loving service, by faith which is a silent "listening" — we become aware of the voice and will of our own Higher Nature, which is a part of the Higher Nature of ALL.

May we change the arrangement of the Occult Law "Dare — Do — Be Silent" — in this instance to read: "Be Silent — Dare — Do." Only in the deepest part of our Nature, at the "silent center" which is Light, Life and Love in unexpressed purity — can we hear the voice of That NATURE which is the expression of the great and glorious Hierarchy of Truth. Only in that silent center may we in some faint degree catch a glimpse of the nobility and grandeur of the visible garments of Nature in the far distant future. Only in that silent center may we become at-one with the Divine Heart, the "Nature" of THAT which is.

We hear it said, "O, what can you expect, that is human nature!" Or, "Do not expect too much, it is human nature to be jealous, to hate, lust and war!" No greater falsehood was ever perpetuated! It is destined that man shall *become* that which he desires and wills. Our REAL Nature is Divinity Itself and it is for the individual to *choose* which shall grow and predominate, his lower or his higher nature.

When Katherine Tingley met H. P. B.'s teacher at Darjiling, during a conversation with her he said, "To move away from the material plane of effort and thought and personality, — that is what the Soul is urging us to do: to move out into the hidden vast realities of life, and understand that within and above and around us, and in the very atmosphere in which our thoughts and feelings exist, Universal Life is pulsating continuously in response to our yearning and questionings. . . . So the aspirant should not think about the cultivation of powers, but live in the light and strength of his own Higher Nature. The Divine Law is in every man and woman, and each must find it there for himself, and make it manifest in his life. . . . Selflessness attains; selfishness defeats: men's possibilities are in direct proportion to their ability to see beyond themselves and to feel for others."

There is a perfect plan of evolution inherent within the Inmost Consciousness of our Galaxy (the karmic seed of a previous Manvantara). We are part of it. Shall we not rejoice in this colossal concept? What a profound privilege to become *conscious* workers with the "Nature" of this great wonder, to aid in bringing into visible form, the glories and harmonies of this "Nature."

Be Silent — Dare — Do.

"In the search for freedom, in the quest for sublime perfection, there is eternal alliance between Man and Nature . . . and it is in the plan of evolution that we should enjoy this noble silent companionship, and that all Nature should constantly appeal to and invoke that which is impersonal, and therefore godlike, in ourselves."

Working *with* Nature, we work with Divinity. We become Divine Artificers, working with the Fire of Life Itself, aiding in the work of the unfoldment of perfection through the Seven-fold Nature of ALL.

He who would follow in the footsteps of the Great Ones who have gone before, must learn through cooperation, service and sacrifice. He who would finally win the privilege to use Nature's secret key into the "ABSOLUTE" must choose to remain selfless "till the endless end."

"Thou art enlightened — Choose thy way. . . .

"Hark! . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, ALL NATURE'S wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

JOY UNTO YE, O MEN OF MYALBA.

A PILGRIM HATH RETURNED, BACK "FROM THE OTHER SHORE."

A NEW ARHAN IS BORN.

Peace to all Beings."

The Theosophical Forum

NATURE, THE WEB OF LIFE — *Allan J. Stover*

One of the mysteries of geologic history is the simultaneous appearance upon the earth of specialized forms of animal life and the particular plants upon which they feed. Thus the first grazing mammals appeared in the Eocene period at the same time as the grasses upon which they feed. Similarly the bees appeared with the flowering plants, neither being able to exist without the other; for without insects to distribute pollen the seeds of many plants would be infertile, and without honey and pollen the bees would starve.

One of the most interesting examples of mutual dependence between plant and insect is that of the Yucca of the Southwest and the Pronuba moth.

The Yucca, which belongs to the Lily family, differs from most plants in having the stamens widely separated from the pistil, and in the pollen being held within a sticky fluid which prevents the wind from blowing it from plant to plant and so fertilizing the flowers. The Pronuba moth moreover is interested only in laying its eggs where the young grubs will have suitable food, for unlike many insects it feels no attraction for honey as food.

The transaction then is one which provides for the continuation of the Yucca through the fertilizing of its embryo seeds in exchange for a number of tender seeds for the young Pronuba grubs to feed upon. Neither insect nor plant could survive without the other.

The female moth visits several Yucca plants, collecting a small ball of the sticky pollen; then she flies to a mature flower, inserts her long slender ovipositor through the succulent wall of the pistil and deposits a single egg in an embryo seed. After laying each egg, the mother moth climbs the pistil and rubs some of the pollen on to the stigma and then returns to deposit another egg.

It is not only in the lower kingdoms that this cooperation and interdependence exists, for all the kingdoms of nature are closely linked together in a totality of life. In its history the earth has passed through many great changes, producing what is often referred to as the Age of Fishes, the Age of the Coal Forests, the Age of Reptiles, the Age of Mammals, etc. In these periods the clothing of all forms of life may be said to be made over to harmonize with the new style.

As H. P. Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. II, page 262):

"Species and genera of the flora, fauna, and the highest animal, its crown — man, change and vary according to the environments and climatic variations, not only with every Round, but every Root-Race likewise, as well as after every geological cataclysm that puts an end to, or produces a turning point in the latter."

Along the same line G. de Purucker in a private letter explains further, — "The main point to remember is that the different great stocks of mineral, vegetable and animal and human lives follow each other with coincident or coordinate great changes of land and sea, and therefore also of climates.

"In other words, the stocks of beings, or monads, co-operate or co-ordinate and thus produce the different and serial and successive patterns of what we today call geological eras, or which the biologist and zoologist and botanist would call the successive waves of plant and animal life."

There are styles, fashions through which the world passes during which both plant and animal life is stamped with the characteristic of the times, and this characteristic is that of the race of man then beginning its rise. G. de Purucker has pointed out that while there are remnants of both the Third and Fourth Root-Races now on earth, all these now bear the stamp of our own Fifth Root-Race because living in Fifth Root-Race times. The same may be said of the so-called "modernized" plants and animals, for while of ancient stock they all have in some degree changed with the changing times. Those who are

not able to adapt themselves to new conditions finally drop out and disappear.

In other words the entire life on this living earth evolves together, and the impact of a new and vigorous race accelerates certain characteristics and retards others in both the plant and animal kingdoms.

Even today, wherever the European peoples go, there is an immediate effect upon the native tribes of a lowered birth-rate, while the host of European weeds, rats, mice, and diseases which follow the colonists work havoc upon native life of all kinds.

The science of Ecology groups the plant, animal, human, and climatic complex as a social organism, which is more than the sum of its parts. It has a body to study as well as a cell, a society as well as an individual: this totality of life is called a Biome, and any intrusion of foreign elements changes the whole structure of the organism. Man, since he dominates any Biome by his presence in any locality profoundly affects every living unit composing it, and through the destruction of forests, through poor management of land leading to soil erosion, and in other ways may even change the rainfall and climate.

Ecology then would look upon the European impact upon another land, as the invasion of one Biome by another, for, as said above, the man is accompanied by other elements belonging to his former home: food-plants and weeds, rats and mice, birds, bacteria and disease germs peculiar to himself.

Any such invasion is far-reaching in its effects upon the whole, whose nature is to some degree altered throughout.

Many have observed that important food plants decline with the passing of the animals or people dependent upon them, the Beech which once covered the ground with delicious nuts upon which immense flocks of wild pigeons fed, now with the complete disappearance of the pigeons has almost ceased to bear fruit. Deer often decline through disease more rapidly in regions where predatory

animals are removed than where they are allowed to remain.

Man and nature are linked on inner lines of affinity and repulsion, forming a web of life in which everything that is done affects the whole. It is the structure of a universal brotherhood in which man has dominion over the creatures of the earth, not that he may despoil them for his own uses, but that he may be the helper and protector of these brothers of the lower kingdoms.

The Theosophical Forum

CHANGE IS GROWTH — *Mildred Hodgson*

It is more than ever necessary today for us to realize that man has reached a most critical stage in his evolution. Change is the order of the day, whether we like it or not. But although most people admit this to be true, they will at the same time confess their reluctance to accept or make changes on their initiative. We must recognize that most people have a deep-rooted dislike for anything that will disturb their routine; for man, being essentially a creature of habit, tends to take the line of least resistance.

As man is obviously passing through a transitional period, and as there can be no growth without change, we must seek the cause of his unwillingness to welcome changes in his life. I do not think we have far to seek — it is man's greatest enemy — fear. For if we have only a slight knowledge of man's history, we will agree that fear has been the dominating force in his life. It almost seems that fear is a necessary part of the divine plan, and that without it there could be no development. There is an ancient teaching to the effect that God sleeps in the mineral, is semi-conscious in the vegetable, conscious in the animal, and self-conscious in man. It would appear that it is only when the consciousness has reached a certain degree of sensitivity, that fear is born.

So let us try to define fear. Surely it is an awareness of the forces and powers of our surroundings. Every one of us, indeed every infinitesimal atom, is unconsciously resisting the entire universe. Few of us realize the fact that everything outside ourselves stands in opposition to us. We are targets for the impacts of all nature. It is these impacts that we should welcome, for this is the only means by which the life locked up within us can be roused into activity. This outer stimulus and the inner impulse constitute the primary duality, so far as man is concerned, and without this there could be no existence, as he knows it.

Most of us are so accustomed to associating the idea of Deity with love and compassion, that we tend to overlook the fact that there is a continual breaking-down process (often of a very ruthless character) going on simultaneously with the building-up process. This is the law of mutation and transmutation. And it is in this law that lies man's hope for the future. A pulling down of the old, that forms newer and more responsive to the life within may prevail. The fact that there is nothing static in nature offers the consolation that no matter how painful our conditions are, they too will pass.

Let us now try to see man and the world as they are today. Chaotic conditions prevail everywhere. Man himself is bewildered. He has just emerged from a war which has had no equal in history. Now he knows that man can sink to the lowest possible depths of degradation, and that he can also rise to great heights of self-sacrifice, and display superb courage. But the fact remains that the terrible sufferings and experiences through which he has passed have only intensified his fears.

Many people think that man has deteriorated. Actually he has become acquainted with the duality of his nature. Now he knows what Jesus meant when teaching that, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. . . ." Obviously we cannot love both good and evil; we cannot run with the hare and hold with the hound. We have to make a choice. And it is this choice which confronts so many of us today. There can be no compromise. We either challenge on behalf of our own higher principles, without regard to circumstances, consequences, or the personalities involved, or we continue to take the line of least resistance, by pandering to the weaknesses of the personality.

I believe that as a result of man's terrible sufferings he has developed a much truer sense of values. Men of all colors, races, and creeds were brought together during the war, thereby weakening the many prejudices which existed between peoples. We must remember that

when a man is suffering or facing death, all hatred and prejudice cease. It is as if they never existed, and indeed they did not, fundamentally.

We must also bear in mind that individual suffering passes unnoticed, but collective suffering has a dynamic effect on the humanmind. For what does intense suffering imply? Surely it is beyond trivialities. Surely it is an agonizing cry — to God — for help. And surely, when millions of people cry for help and guidance, a mighty thought-form is created — a form born from man's own suffering. Is it not reasonable to suppose that this form could be used by a powerful force that would answer man's cry for help? Could not this form serve as the vehicle for the manifestation of a universal principle — the principle of brotherhood? Is not this precisely what happened during the war?

And this divine Principle, which can truly be called the child of man, what of it? Are we going to care for this child in order that it may unfold its power, wisdom, and beauty, or are we going to sink into apathy once again, and neglect to cherish this, our most wonderful possession? It is those of us who are aware of all that is at stake, who must decide.

And what about the Theosophical Society? It obviously has a definite part to play in the world today. But are we quite clear in our minds as to the part allotted to it? Can we say with any degree of truth that each lodge is functioning to its fullest capacity? I doubt it. We should try to find out the cause. I wonder if the answer is once again — fear? Some of our members have established certain habits of lodge procedure, and are consequently afraid of getting off the beaten track. Hence, instead of healthy changes, we have a static condition which is decidedly unhealthy. We must remember that it is the individual members in their aggregate who compose the Society; and those members, being individually subject to the law of mutation, should automatically introduce changes into the Society. Changes, however, are not very apparent.

But let us turn our attention to the nature of our Society's work. In this connection we can do no better than look for guidance to those Objects

upon which our society was founded. The first and most important is the Universal Brotherhood of Man. It seems to me that the Theosophical Society was meant to be the vehicle for the divine Principle which has at last entered the consciousness of man. If this is the case, what are we going to do about it? First of all it must be given its proper place. And that place is the heart's center. It must not play the part of Cinderella, relegated to the kitchen.

I think we must admit that many of our members have tended to over-emphasize the mind principle at the expense of equally important aspects of their natures, the result being a lack of balance, or a wrong sense of values. It would be suicide if we were to develop a robot-like mind (a mind that knows all the answers), and there is every danger of this happening if more attention is not given to the creative faculty. It is by striving to be creative that we purify ourselves, for when truly creative we are temporarily detached, impersonal — and the more often we reach this stage, the greater will be our resistance to the purely personal, and the deeper will be our understanding of life and its problems. We shall be better able to apprehend what is meant by the "One" differentiating into the "Many." And when we really understand this sublime teaching, we shall appreciate what Krishna meant when describing the sage as one to whom a lump of earth, a stone, and gold are the same. At this stage, we shall be free from arrogance and conceit, no longer shrinking from the outcast, or attaching undue importance to labels, for we shall see all forms in their aggregate as the physical form of Deity. At last we shall realize that the air we breathe, the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the ground upon which we walk, are all expressions of the "One Life" . . . the "Unity." We shall at this level admit that there could be no physical form without its archetypal form, and that indeed the physical form is a projection or reflection of that divine form, and also that the fact of physical existence implies that the Divine wills this existence, and has a divine purpose to accomplish through it. In fact each man will know that he is divine in nature, and that the contribution he makes to life is of equal value to that made by any other man. Never again will he feel

unwanted; never again will he be subservient to any man, no matter how high his social position — for a man at this stage will be truly *Man*.

What line of action should we Theosophists take in order to meet the needs of present day conditions? I suggest that we try to emulate the attitude taken by that great soul, our Teacher, H. P. B., who personified the "pioneer spirit." It is this spirit of the pioneer which is so desperately needed in the world today, and likewise desperately needed in our Society. It was H. P. B.'s sublime mission to fight orthodoxy and to found a Society wholly unorthodox in its teachings.

Are we then to become merely orthodox theosophists, with crystallized ideas of our teachings? Cannot we understand that Theosophy is all-inclusive; that it can have no barriers, because it relates the known to the unknown? Cannot we understand that it seeks to reveal the relationship which exists between God and man; between heaven and earth; between man and man; and indeed between man and all forms of life both above and below the human? Theosophy treats of the totality, and therefore the true Theosophist will not close the door on any phase of life, nor on any idea presented to him, without first of all giving it his full consideration.

Can we imagine that H. P. B. sacrificed herself in order to pander to the vanity of a few intellectuals, or would-be intellectuals? Surely her sacrifice was made for humanity! And surely it is our duty to be concerned with the masses, as well as the few! And if we are to give our attention to the masses, we shall have to propagate our teachings in a language that the masses can understand. It is possible, I think, to maintain the standard of accuracy set by Dr. de Purucker, and at the same time to relate Theosophy to current affairs and ethical problems. But in this connection it would be interesting to have the views of other Theosophists who, like the writer, share the life of the common people. I fully appreciate that the rendering of our teachings in intelligible language is a very sticky problem, but nevertheless it is one which will have to be solved, if we are to infuse fresh "life" into our lodges. Another important point to remember is the necessity for attracting

young people to our movement, for it is to them that we must look for a continuance of the work.

Are we ready to change our attitude and modify our preconceived ideas in order to come into a closer relationship with younger people, and non-Theosophists? Remember that we teach primarily by example, and if we are unprepared to allow the law of mutation to operate through ourselves, we not only retard our own progress, but also that of the Society, which we profess to serve.

Let us then accept the challenge of the age, and let us ponder well these words from that great Teacher, Sri Krishna: "Who carp at My teachings and act not thereon, senseless, deluded in all knowledge, know thou these mindless ones as fated to be destroyed."

The Theosophical Forum

CURIOSITY — N. A. Lewis

What would life be like — *if*—? Curiosity may have taken all nine of the cat's lives, but it fulfilled them also! There is something divine about curiosity, something that puts the shams of life to flight and seeks out the (perhaps painful) new truth. It takes a lot of courage, sometimes, to be the least bit curious about the dark and misty alleys of our world. There is the Old Boogey Man in the shadows, waiting to nab the timid inquirer and carry him off to the den of the Horrid Truth! Beware of him! He will get you, and take away your dearest illusions; he will strip you down to bare despair, and laugh at you; he will teach you that you are not so nice as you thought you were!

But what of the shaky, breathless joy that follows right after tears, when we realize that now we know, and we will know forever the deeper reality, the deeper and more sound truth of one more aspect of this huge and marvellous celebration, Life? What of that? What of the solemn and triumphant genie who rises up in our hearts, and shines like the Sun, and sounds like a song, to tell us we have won another battle?

Such are the fruits of curiosity, really honest curiosity, such is the great heritage of all evolving beings!

It is not enough to seek once, or twice, not enough to ask only occasionally. "What is it that is?" It is not enough to form a daily habit of asking ourselves certain selfsame questions, to which we come to have some very slick answers. We must ask always new and harder questions, more "dangerous" questions, we might say. We must go further and further in the knowledge of the *what* and the *why*, particularly, of the lives of those around us. We must know our neighbor's life, not in the sense of knowing in a gossipy way all of his comings and goings — Heaven forbid! — but in learning to sense more and more keenly the delicate, the quiet something within him which is

his real nature. Such things are not for talk, not for conversation, but belong to the holiest of holies in all the starry universe. That course of action holds some dangers for us, grave ones, and many a cat has lost some lives in it, but it is eminently worth while, as the finest education one could acquire.

No less is it important for us to inquire into ourselves; though, as important as the old saying, "Man, know thyself," may be, it is not good to inquire and inquire only into one's self, without any reference to others. That was never meant to be an injunction to the aspirant to encase himself in self-interest, and enshroud himself with selfish indifference. Our human situation is no such matter, as we all deeply know. There have been many stories written about the loneliness of the tomb, many poems written about the largeness of the world and the smallness of the blinded little creature.

Must we *fear* something? Must we fear death, or God, or the Devil — must we fear something, to come to the point of honesty with ourselves? Without curiosity, yes, without the positive interest, yes; assuredly, if we wait to be driven to school, we shall learn in sorrow and fear. Tears, sobs, mournful cries — are these the only accents of spoken truth? Without curiosity, yes: without the courage to ask, the bravery necessary to go and seek, yes.

Are we cozy, are the skies cloudless, are the flowers especially fragrant today? What is that haunting something that lurks behind the bright eyes of the perfect days? What is that tempting something, that, in the stories we heard in childhood, called the gypsies "over the hills and far away" by the very beauty and peace of nature? Perhaps it is the gypsies' taste for calamity which makes them relish life so much — and which makes some of them so wise. Perhaps not, but their very moving is a questioning of life, their very wandering is a learning process. Perhaps they grow hungry and sick and tired, but their life surely must be rich and full!

Let us *try* life; let us touch the keys, if we would hear tones, draw the bow over the strings, if we would hear the fine clear vibration! Let us

make such music as will reach to mountain peaks and skies beyond, let our music be a plea for music — because to ask is to answer, and to answer is to ask.

The Theosophical Forum

THE LAW OF THE UNIVERSE — *Kathleen Pray*

The subject of Universal Law is, or can be, a profound one. Fortunately Theosophical teachings are fascinating and provocative in both their simplicity and their complexity. Theosophy has that virtue, which led Judge to so delightfully compare it to an ocean, of varying depth — a study in truth from the shallowest understanding of it to its most unfathomable depths. So this discussion of the great Laws of Nature is only a viewpoint taken from some depth or another in the Ocean that is Theosophy. Such a discussion readily brings forth questions on freedom, for we want to know whether law has anything to do with our lack of freedom. We are not entirely free and why can we not be? What is freedom?

Freedom is only relative as probably are all such abstractions. The lack of it is certainly not due primarily to man-made laws, for these in the main give us more freedom and security of a physical kind. But even without the most confining of these laws man would not be free. This is because the Universe is based on a comprehensive law or operation which governs all Nature and makes it inevitable that we be dependent upon and responsible for all living things. Therefore we are far from being entirely free agents.

By Universal Law we mean the operation of the Universe, the inevitable, the immutable, the everlasting Laws of Nature. And our perception of these Laws, when clear and accurate, is Truth. We are not dealing here with physical law alone, which is only the outward manifestation of that which works in invisible and causal realms. If we use Dr. de Purucker's definition of Universe — "actually and literally imbodyed consciousness" — then Universal Law is the working of these consciousnesses, the vast and complete function which expresses the individuality, the essential characteristics of the Universe. And we are a part of, we compose, we *are* the Universe.

This great Law is neither dictated nor enforced by any outside agency, or by one individual upon another, for all beings are agents, instigators, perpetuators and reapers of the Law. While this is true, it is only highly evolved beings, the gods, who are the ideal, the relatively perfect instruments through which the Law may operate. Entities below us in evolution are entirely unself-conscious agents, and we are only beginning to realize that we are agents and have the possibilities of perfecting ourselves. It is, for example, of a Dhyani-Buddha that we might say, speaking in correspondences, the very circulation of his blood, his respiration, his movements, thoughts and energies are manifestations and expressions of Universal Law.

There is enough authority in our Theosophical teachings for us to say that Karman represents, at least to our minds, the sum total of Universal Law. Perhaps the most familiar statement to this effect is from *The Key to Theosophy*, where H. P. Blavatsky says that Karman is "the Ultimate Law of the Universe, the source, the origin and the fount of all other laws which exist throughout Nature." While the literal translation of the Sanskrit term Karman is "action," we have the more or less traditional definition of the word as it is used Theosophically. It is that Law of Consequences according to which every action, every thought, every emotion is a cause which produces an inevitable effect. These actions as produced are energies that must be expended, and from this expenditure come unavoidable results.

Nevertheless, the broader definition as "action," with its implied reaction, more aptly describes Karman as the Ultimate Law. The entire Universe is in constant action. We can see and feel this action in our world of senses: not particularly in the rather desperate hustle of our human affairs, but in the gentle breezes and the harsher winds; in the movement of trees, in the fall of snow and rain; in the tides, the shifting sands, the rise and fall of continents; in the growth of plants, the twinkling stars, the sun's rays and moving shadows; in the heart-beats and respirations, in the constant flow and interchange of atoms. Have you glanced at a patch of bare ground or grass, thinking it to be still and calm with no sign of movement; then on looking closer have you

seen the dense and quicksilver activity of myriad ants? So it is with Karman, for this activity is concerned with all spheres, visible and invisible. It can be imagined that from a distance this Universal Law would seem to function as a smooth continuous flow of action, a hardly discernible movement. But on closer scrutiny this same movement would be seen as vigorous action, pushing action; impelling forces intercepting, converging, dovetailing each other, but all in one general direction.

Remembering Dr. de Purucker's definition of Universe, we might say then that Universal Law (Karman) is "consciousnesses in action," which is a statement of the function of the Universe as a whole. While it is often spoken of as one vast Law, it has many facets, many characteristics. Just as we make ourselves acquainted with a chemical by studying its various properties, its characteristics and reactions, so may Karman be broken down, not into different laws, but into extensions or properties of the One Law. The various doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom may be formulated into extensions of Karman in terms of *action*.

For example, we have the doctrine of *Evolution* which is the *reason and purpose of all action*. Our activity is for the purpose of evolving, of unfolding and developing. This process brings forth all the possibilities that lie latent within each being. The Law of *Cycles* is the *measurement and rhythm of action*, the time-periods, great and small, of repetitive but progressive activity (the measurement) and the duality expressed in these periods, such as activity and rest (the rhythm). This rhythm may also be seen in the dawn, the rise, the peak, the fall, and the twilight of any cycle. The teaching of *Hierarchies* gives us the *organization or system of consciousnesses in action*. A hierarchy has been defined as "a system of delegated, directive powers and authority that exists in a self-contained body, directed and guided by a Hierarch." Theosophically this refers to the unnumbered classes of evolving entities. There is an endless chain of hierarchies, the peak or apex of one forming or being included in the base of the next highest. The nature of these *consciousnesses in action* is *composite, Seven-Principled*.

All entities have the opportunity of awakening and developing and perfecting these principles.

Then we have the doctrine of *Reimbodiment*. Embodiment is one-half a cycle as previously mentioned, the activity side, the *empirical and informative aspect of action*. The other side, death or disembodiment, is rest and the assimilation of the experiential. Reimbodiment then is the coming into the experiential side of life again and again. Reincarnation, the term used when speaking of man, has been viewed with much alarm in the past, perhaps because the view has been rather myopic. It should be considered as a part of endless Universal cycles applying to every living being, not as a strange occurrence that has only to do with man. All the cycles that we know include repetitions of rest and activity; there is nothing that is in an unceasingly and everlastingly active state. Just as inconceivable is a never-ending latent or quiescent condition. Activity and rest are dual aspects of life.

As the culminating extension of action, there are the Laws of *Universal Brotherhood and Compassion* which express the *co-operative action* necessary to a perfect functioning of the whole. In another sense they express the *responsibility of action*, the responsibility of every acting consciousness to all parts and to the whole. Until we recognize this Law and comply with it we hinder not only our own evolutionary activity but all such activity. We must recognize the Oneness — in source, function and purpose — of all that is.

Our study of Universal Law is important in the same way as knowing the laws that govern our cities, states and countries. We have no excuse for not knowing those that apply to us. Ignorance of these laws does not mitigate or cancel out punishment when they are not upheld. So it is with the Laws of the Universe. They work on us or through us whether we know it or not — how much to our advantage if we do know! Perhaps the most significant aspect of this knowledge is that any enforcement of these great Laws is done by us, the consciousnesses in action. We impel ourselves, we impel Karman. The divine urge within us to manifest and evolve is the same force which brings action and

reaction. Therefore we can see the futility of opposing these Laws and in particular of trying to set them aside, an absurdity so well underscored in Ambrose Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary* where he defines *to pray* as "to ask that the Laws of the Universe be annulled in behalf of a single petitioner, confessedly unworthy."

Either ignorance or knowledge of law is directly connected with that elusive quality called freedom. It is elusive because it is relative. As an instance, two definitions under *free* in *Webster's Dictionary* are: one, "not determined by anything beyond its own nature or being" and two, "not united or combined with anything else; unattached." By the first we are free because we are not determined by anything beyond our own nature or being. By the second we are not free, for we are not unattached, we are united to all things. Does it seem paradoxical to say that laws confine only when they are ignored or actively worked against? It is true, for obedience to law is the only freedom; we are slaves when we struggle against it.

Probably all great Teachers have said in essence: "The truth shall make you free." And they have not meant a technical knowledge of truth; they mean *becoming truth*. In understanding and becoming the Laws we gain mastery over them and freedom of harmonious action. This recalls H. P. B.'s words from *The Voice of the Silence*: "Chafe not at Karma, nor at Nature's changeless laws. . ." "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance."

The Theosophical Forum

ROOTS — *Alexandra McLean*

Roots: it seems they hold a very important place in the scheme of things. Their work, invisible to the mortal eye, unobtrusive and silent to the mortal ear, yet brings into manifestation in the external world myriad forms of glory. What stability, strength and power they transmit to the growing and unfolding entity they serve. In all the category of words, it seems that the small word "root" is symbol for one of the greatest mysteries. It implies innate wisdom, humility, devotion, discrimination and dependability.

If we consult a good dictionary as to the meaning of "root" we are intrigued and amazed at the variety of uses beyond the one usually assigned to it, i.e., "Popularly, any subterranean part of a plant." We find it used in anatomy, astronomy, astrology, ethnology, hydraulics, law, mathematics, music, philology, etc. We consult a Thesaurus and hours may be profitably spent in considering the subtle varieties in usage of the word "root."

The Botanical definition offers, "In the higher plants (ferns and seed plants), a portion of the plant body bearing neither leaves, nor reproductive organs, but provided with a growing point and functioning as an organ of absorption, an aerating organ, a food reservoir, or a means of support." One of the specific definitions gives us, "An ancestor or progenitor and hence an early race; a stem, also, — the cause, source." There are thoughts in these definitions which applied Theosophically might be developed to great length. We will attempt to hint at a few ideas and leave it to the reader, if interested, to follow up and develop them for himself.

Dr. de Purucker in speaking of Elemental Kingdoms and Cosmic Elements tells us — "Thus then, these cosmic elements are the different stuffs of the universe, the different substances out of which the universe is builded. We can call them the various prakritis of the

universe. . . . Spirit in its sevenfold aspects is the *root* of all these cosmic elements, or *prakritis*." (Italics mine.)

H. P. B. calls the Higher Self (ATMA) "the Divine Root of all being. . . ." She also offers from an occult catechism (*S. D. Proem*, p. 11) "What is it that ever is? Space. . . . What is it that ever was? The germ in the root. What is it that is ever coming and going? The Great Breath. . . . The three are one . . . and this is Space."

Now what is it in man that may be analogous to the roots of a plant? Perhaps it is our aspirations. Man, possessed of "Manas," is a self-conscious entity and must learn to discriminate, to *choose* that which he needs for full development and the unfolding of the Inner Divinity. Man may direct a strong tap root deep into the SOURCE, the Truth of his being. He may send thoughts like root tendrils into the depths of his inmost, seeking the true sustenance for growth. The purity of his aspiration (not for selfish self development, but that he may be an ever more perfect expression of Divinity) and the force of his will shall be as the life energy in roots, surmounting difficulties, finding and bringing that needed to complete his life cycle. Divine Nature works with man and through the just law of his own Karma, provides him with circumstances and opportunities for growth.

We are rooted in Divinity, but the vast powers of this Divine Nature can only act through us as we by aspiration and will create channels (strong roots) for their flow. Evolution is a slow process. The lotus does not open until it has risen above the mud and water into the higher atmosphere, where light plays an important part in the flowering. Even so — man does not become "more than man" except through cycles of growth upward-inward into the "atma-sphere" of his SELF. We are gods in embryo and must be nourished by the food of the gods, the "Celestial Fire" that is the *Reality* of our Inmost.

All manifesting entities follow the same universal law, unfolding the seed of a previous completed cycle. All have roots with their "growing point" and each according to his degree of consciousness, his aspirations and will, must seek and find the nourishment for his own

growth. Roots, like all else, are sevenfold and thus each entity may be fully nourished in all its sevenfold being. Within all, the humble dandelion or "Surya" our sun, within the visible and the invisible (for all is ONE) is an urge that is part of the great Cosmic urge. At the core of Being, invisible, is the Divine Dynamo, the generator of all possibilities of expression. Into THAT, "The Dot, which is everywhere; the circle, which is nowhere" must we *consciously*, ever more consciously, send our roots and draw the Life that will in time make us "more than man."

With Tennyson we may soliloquize:

"Little flower — but *if* I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

In "ROOTS" we indeed have more than meets the eye or reaches the ear. The true significance, the esoteric potencies, may only be apprehended by intuitive comprehension. Roots are the humble, willing, eager servants of TRUTH, seeking persistently for that SOURCE that is the fountainhead of Life itself and bringing into visible form the glory of the secret pattern. "Tat twam asi."

The Theosophical Forum

DESERTS AND THE LAW OF CYCLES — *Allan J. Stover*

In the cyclic rhythm of Nature, life is always springing into new vigor and activity in some places and dropping into dormancy and obscurity in others.

The reason for this is that all life, including that of the earth itself, is closely linked and interdependent, so that anything that affects one kingdom of Nature or class of life, affects all. As the time for a new Race or Sub-Race approaches, great changes take place on the earth with the sinking of old lands, the rising of new lands, changes of climate, and the purification of large areas by desert-conditions in order to rid them of the miasmatic influences left by past populations.

All this is taking place at the present time, slowly but continuously. At present the sea level is slowly rising on those lands south of the Canadian line, while the Hudson's Bay district shows a rapid lowering of the sea by as much as three meters a century, with corresponding conditions prevailing in northern and southern Europe. In Mexico and Central America a new mountain-range is rising which is 1500 miles in length. Glaciers throughout the world have been steadily retreating for the past fifty years. The earth itself is separated, Round from Round, by a purifying dormancy or sleep during which the entire face of the globe is reworked, much as a field is plowed and harrowed before fresh seed is sown.

The same is also true of the continents which, after bearing a "crop" of life — human, animal, and plant — are renewed by volcanic outpourings, are flooded by the sea or become deserts. This is not new in principle.

We see this cyclic alternation of activity and rest-and-renewal everywhere in both large and small cycles, as in the alternation of the seasons, and even in the waking and sleeping periods of our daily life.

Perhaps that is why deserts have such a strange fascination for most people, who when they enter these Lands of the Sun feel a lifting of the spirit and a sense of freedom unknown in thickly populated regions.

Of the land-surface of the earth today fully one-sixth is occupied by deserts, and the total area is slowly increasing. Yet the soil of the desert-areas was once fertile and well watered, and amid their sands lie relicts of ancient and often unknown civilizations. To quote from Dr. G. de Purucker's article entitled "Central Asia, Cradleland of our Race," which appears in his posthumous book, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, (page 16):

If you take a map, a map of Asia, and on it find Persia, Baluchistan, Afghanistan, Bokhara, and Turkestan, the Sea of Aral, and the Caspian, and to the east the Pamir and the Hindu Kush, and the Tien Shan, the Altyn Tagh, etc. — an enormous tract of country, most of it desert waste — there you will find the seat from which we came as a racial stock. The time was when that land was covered with highly developed civilizations succeeding each other in time. Hundreds of wonderful cities flourished there. The land was green and fertile, it was an aggregate of beautiful countries.

Then, having served as a home for the new Fifth Race (our own), the lands rose, became arid, deserts claimed the region, and the human population migrated to the new lands rising in Europe and elsewhere.

We may look upon the earth as a school of experience, where like a school during vacation-time, only a few janitors, officials and employees remain to keep things in order while the pupils are away. A somewhat similar process of alternating periods of activity, separated by periods of rest and renovation, exists on a lesser scale in cycles of smaller degree.

While deserts are a necessary and natural phase of earth-history, there is an unnatural arid condition caused by man's misuse of natural resources, and therefore out of proper time. This is evident in the

"dustbowl" of America. The same is true elsewhere, and few realize the immensity of this disaster of recent years.

Specialists tell us that 100 million acres of farm-land have been completely destroyed for farming at a profit; that 125 million acres are seriously damaged; and that yet another 100 million acres belonging to the best farm-lands are seriously threatened. These figures are taken from a Government pamphlet published in 1936. During the "blow seasons" the land in the Great Plains region even now continues to move.

The atomic bomb, the widespread erosion in North and South America, the waste of forests and wild-life — all these show that man has indeed brought himself to the point where Universal Brotherhood and mutual understanding must prevail, or else future races will some day be searching sand-dunes for relics of our own civilization.

The Theosophical Forum

WORLDS WITHIN WORLDS — *H. Minot*

Worlds within worlds! When we use this phrase our first thought, perhaps, is of worlds not to be understood or glimpsed by our physical senses. But even on the physical plane there are worlds within worlds: worlds so different from each other in atmosphere, reactions, thought and feeling, and a multitude of other variances, that to become aware of them and of their divergences, is to understand somewhat of the interplay of action that goes on continually on this one plane, and similarly on and among other planes of being.

One may travel along a paved highway and fill one's soul with beauty — rolling hills, showing green here and there because of the heavy winter rains, but touched, however lightly, with autumn russet and gold; or pass fields where mounds of bean-straw, warm in the light of the sun, add richness to the coloring of the landscape. These are peaceful scenes, but the highway itself is a pulsing artery of life. The very pavement speaks of man's endeavor to cover the distance between any two points with the least expenditure of time, or wear and tear on his conveyance. Everywhere along that white-lined winding ribbon the demon speed makes his presence felt. Even in the midst of rural charm one is conscious of that world of hurly-burly — impinging, pressing hard upon one, and sometimes even threatening.

But take a by-road — preferably a good dirt road — and what magic results! One may be almost within touching distance of a highway, and yet, to all intents and purposes, be in a world apart. Hills, not so different from those others, dream lazily in the sun, uncaring though cloud shadows chase one another along their slopes. The fields, too, are under the same spell, and here are horse and plow or wagon rather than the noisy tractor. But even this triumph of a modern age, if used, is not the same impressive monster in this world apart that it contrives to be when working in a world ruled by machines. In the one it is a capable servant, in the other, it and its like are well-nigh master.

Fruit trees, nut orchards, grazing cattle, a lone rider on horseback, and vast expanses of hills and sky — these bring peace, for they loosen nervous tensions that exist almost unconsciously in this age of "getting somewhere" quickly. One comes to know the quiet places of the soul — the worlds within worlds of our own being — and to find the strength that lies in repose.

The Theosophical Forum

MAN A SEPTENARY BEING — *Marion Hazleton*

I established this whole universe with a portion of myself, and remain separate. — *Bhagavad-Gita*

Every beginner in the study of Theosophy is familiar with the sevenfold classification of man in its simplest aspects, but like all the doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom, the subject may become exceedingly abstruse in its deeper ramifications. Let us here devote ourselves more particularly to a discussion as to whether these seven principles really exist, how they correspond to the principles of Nature, and how the exceedingly complex physical, mental, and spiritual reactions of man can adequately be accounted for by any other theory, the hypotheses of body and mind, or body, soul, and spirit, being wholly unsatisfactory.

"God geometrizes." Once admit Universal Cosmogony to be based on mathematics, and that the number Seven is fundamental in Nature, and reasoning by deduction we are led to the inescapable conclusion that man is also sevenfold — for analogy and correspondence are important aids in arriving at Truth. "As above, so below." — "As in heaven, so it is on earth." — "As in the great, so in the small." These are no idle statements, but the experience of sages and seers of all ages. How often have we not heard Dr. de Purucker say that man is a child of the Universe; that he has everything in him (*in potentio*) that the Universe has; that the Universe would cease to exist if a single atom could be destroyed!

Greek philosophy required a scale of descent and ascent between the "Creator" and his "Creation." According to Plato, it was *needful* in order to explain the apparent defects and disorders of sublunary affairs "The tradition has come down from very ancient times that the heavenly bodies are Gods, and that Divinity encompasses the whole of Nature," says Aristotle. Plotinus says: "The part has everything the soul has. . . ." "Mind is a portion of the soul which animates and governs the

Universe. The principles which are implanted in the human reason must inhere in the Divine Reason, and must be reflected in the visible world. The world is assuredly the image and copy of the Divinity, the outward and multiple development of the Eternal Unity. The finite is a true expression of the Infinite Being. The world is now a Triad, combining the Monad and Duad; now a Tetrad, now a Decad, which, in combining the former four, involves all the possible accordances of the Universe," said Pythagoras.

Parmenides, in his physical theory, was an Atomist. Instead of one element, he declared that the elements or first principles were numerous, or even infinite. No point in space is unoccupied by these atoms, which are infinitely divisible. He imagined that in Nature there are as many kinds of principles as there are species of compound bodies, and that the peculiar form of the primary particles of which any body is composed is the same with the qualities of the compound body, itself. This was the celebrated doctrine of *Homoe-meria*, of which Lucretius furnishes a luminous account in his philosophic poem, *De Natura Rerum*:

. . . That bones from bones
Minute, and embryo, nerves from nerves arise;
And blood, from blood, by countless drops increased.
Gold, too, from golden atoms; earths concrete,
From earths extreme; from fiery matters, fire;
And lymph from hmpen dews. And thus throughout
From primal kinds that kinds perpetual
Spring.

Said he: "Man is the measure of all things; thought is the same thing as the cause of thought. . . ." "God is the First Principle of all principles," said Democritus. . . . "There are in Nature as many kinds of principles as there are species of compound bodies," said Anaxagoras. He considered these principles as eternal, because he held that nothing can be really created or annihilated — *de nihilo nihil, in nihilum nil posse reverti*. This doctrine was held by all philosophers of the Ionian

school.

"God created man in his own image." If man is made in the image of God, it is pertinent to inquire just what this God is. Certainly no thoughtful person would interpret this to mean that God has a head, two arms, two legs, etc. God "created" man of his own *essence*, in his own likeness as regards the principles of his constitution.

The Universe has been divided in various ways by all the most ancient religions and philosophies, all, however, deriving it from a First Unknown and Unknowable Cause. Among the multitude of beautiful statues of Olympian gods and goddesses which the apostle Paul saw in his visit to Athens (not much to his liking, by the way), was a plain marble altar on which was inscribed: "To the Unknown God." He was so struck by this that it led to many discussions with the Athenian philosophers of that day. Whether they derived two, three, or five emanations or principles from this Supreme Being, this Unknown God, they eventually became the seven.

Seven is one of the fundamental numbers in Nature, and the most sacred of all, by which all kingdoms, races, genera, time-periods, qualities, etc, are correlated. It would take up all the time at our disposal to simply enumerate all the sevens mentioned in Science, Philosophy, and Religion. Let us, however, mention a few. According to the Adepts of ancient Aryavarta, seven principles are evolved from three primary principles, and these three primary principles from a single principle or Monad. This can be demonstrated with light. The sun's ray represents the one; from it proceed the three primary colors, while the four secondary colors of the spectrum coexist with the three primary. The above gives us a perfect illustration of the derivation of man's seven principles. Then we have the seven states of consciousness, the seven Manus, the seven portals, the seven musical tones, the seven days of the week, the Seven Sacred Planets. Our Mother Earth renews her strata every seven years. The number seven appears with frequency in Genesis, Job, the Mosaic Books, the Kabala, and all other ancient mystical writings. The mysterious number seven

can be traced on almost every page of the oldest Aryan scriptures and the oldest Zoroastrian books as well; in the tile records of Babylon and Chaldea, and the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, so-called, more properly *The Book of Coming into Light*. In the *Atharva Veda* we read: "Time, like a brilliant steed with seven rays, full of fecundity, bears all things onward. . . ." "Time, like a seven-wheeled, seven-naved car, moves on; his rolling wheels are all the worlds, his axle immortality."

There are seven centers in man's head — two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and one mouth — and seven passages connected with them. Man's monad performs seven peregrinations through the seven major kingdoms and an infinity of subkingdoms, all in series of seven, through seven chains of seven globes each, during seven manvantaras and seven pralayas. Says one of the *Mahatma Letters*: "Within a solar manvantara the number of his (man's) existences is $7 \times 7 \times 7+7$, or 777. . . In the first seven months of gestation the foetus repeats in miniature the mineral, vegetable, and animal cycles through which it had passed in its previous reembodiments. The child's development is completed only towards the end of the seventh year."

Then we have the seven initiations, and the seven deadly sins of the Book of Hermes. The human body is renewed every seven years. Each of the kingdoms of Nature is subdivided into seven classes. "There are seven intermediate stages between universal and individual consciousness. Nature follows the same groove from the "creation" of a Universe down to that of a mosquito. Worlds, like men, have their seven principles. Each principle remains forever within the body of its cosmic source. At the beginning of manifestation, man is an unconscious seventh principle [the unself-conscious godspark of Dr. de Purucker], with the germ of the other six lying latent and dormant within it," say the *Mahatma Letters*. When the ray from the monad enters *any* germ-cell it has the other six principles latent within it.

Thought is the same thing as the cause of thought;
For with the thing in which it is announced,
You cannot find the thought; for there is nothing,

Nor shall be, except the existing. (1)

Here we have the same conception, but with the additional idea that the phenomenal world is really non-existent, i.e., illusory and impermanent.

Both the deductive and inductive methods of reasoning must be employed if we are to get a comprehensive grasp of this subject. Says Proclus: "It is absurd to assert that the Universe is inanimate and that we who have a part of the body of the Universe have a soul. For how can a part have a soul if the Universe is inanimate? . . ." "It is not possible for anything to be generated destitute of God. The soul being incorporeal and divine, it was impossible for her to be conjoined with the body without a medium, for what the Aether is to the Universe, imagination is in man." Here, in Aether and imagination we have an example of a correlation of one of man's principles with one of the seven principles of a globe, a solar system, a galaxy, or a kosmos.

It is easily seen that physically man is compounded of all the seven kingdoms. He takes in the mineral, vegetable, and animal life-atoms through his food and drink, and the imponderable elements through the air he breathes. May it not be reasonable to suppose that his other principles are likewise compounded, each on its own plane? What more natural than to associate his appearance with *Sthula-sarira*, physical ailments with *Linga-sarira*, physical strength or weakness with *Prana*, intellect with *Manas*, intuition with *Buddhi*, spiritual exaltation with *Atman*?

Why should we doubt that man bears the same relation to the Celestial Sphere that the raindrop does to the cloud above, or that he, like it, is withdrawn again and again into his parent source? But for man to become the reflection of the Divine, it is necessary for the Divine Power to be "stepped down" from the Universal to the Particular. Even as the powerful current of the electric dynamo must be reduced by a transformer, in order that the tiny filament in the bulb may not be shattered, so must the terrific spiritual potencies of God be reduced through emanations so that man may not be annihilated by the divine

splendor.

This is one of the reasons why man's principles are themselves sevenfold, as only seven "steppings down" would not be gradual enough. Through seven times seven graduations the divine potencies are sufficiently reduced to contact the lowest end of the scale — gross matter or *Sthula-sarira*. This is one of the significations of the Pillar of Light of the Hermetists, and Jacob's Ladder of the Bible. This Ladder is also the symbol of the orderly progression which the Angels, those Pilgrims of Eternity, none other than ourselves, make down and through the seven principles of the Universe. As these principles are also sevenfold, these forty nine steps aid in the process, when, in the fullness of time, man's principles are progressively withdrawn into one another, and finally into the bosom of the Monad. In Cosmogony this is "the heavens rolling up like unto a scroll."

We often speak of *Manas* as gravitating towards *Kama* or *Buddhi*, which is a good illustration of one step in this process of progressive evolution and involution. It should be borne in mind that all the principles above *Prana* are *states of consciousness*. No two blades of grass are ever alike. No two human beings are ever alike, and this infinite variety is caused by the combinations of these states of consciousness acting upon man's complex principles. The gradations of tones along the seven octaves of the whole keyboard of life are numberless. Herein lies the key to the behaviors in human nature so familiar to psychologists and psychoanalysts. Schizophrenia — "split personality" — has become a commonplace. We have today our Jekylls and Hydes.

How is it possible to account for the multiplicity of man's emotions and reactions, if he is only body and mind, or body, soul, and spirit? It takes the infinite combinations of the "Fortynine Fires" within him, upon all the planes of his being, and the operation of his senses upon other planes than the physical to give us a really comprehensive and logical explanation of his loves, his hates, his lusts, his inhibitions, his exhibitions, his weaknesses and his strength. Only when we recognize

our close relationship, principle for principle, with Nature, do these things become clear to us.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Parmenides. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

HOPE OF THE WORLD — *Louis F. Callaway*

Education today means simply what the old latin word *educere* implies — to lead out — to lead out of oneself the inherent intelligence that will instantaneously beget ideas which complete ideals in expression and in action.

Scientific study and research and progressive education are the hope of the world. We have only to look about us to see that ignorance is the root of all evil. And much of the ignorance and superstition of today lurks and stalks like a ghost within the confines of some of our structural palisades erected to God, all in the name of goodness, and as a result, some men have become as taboo-ridden, if not more so, than Andaman Islanders.

Many of the scientists and philosophers of the past have been realizationists who have been fully convinced that science is the great master-key to the hope of the world. The illustrious Euclid inscribed above the entrance of his domicile: "He who hath not a knowledge of geometry shall not enter my sacred portals." The great Descartes said: "Mathematics alone will avoid sophisms, and by it, all problems of life can be solved, if proper principles be applied"; and the intellectual Socrates wrote: "Man, know thyself."

In thinking of science let us want also to include the foundations and implications of social science. Man may extend his search into the realms of economics, man's striving for subsistence and existence; sociology, man's cooperation with man for higher hopes through his social attitudes and social ideals; psychology and metaphysics, mind or soul science, through which may come the hope of a fuller life *here* and *now*, or perhaps a hope of immortality. Add to these mathematics, the science of numbers ("The measured order of his plan"), proportions, symmetry, balance, truth, and beauty, all of which are manifested in the whole of the universe; add also biology and evolution, the laws of

life; and anthropology, to open man's vision to the beauties of the kinship of human life with all life — and we see why Science can truly be called the hope of the world.

If one is interested in knowing just what the social and economic conditions, the philosophies, and the sentiments of men have been in any particular period of history, he has only to go back into the literature of that period. Literature, notwithstanding its artificialities, is most revealing, for it mirrors life. Let us go back into the Elizabethan period of English literature and point our pedagogical finger at Christopher Marlowe who, in one of his plays, portrays the leading man, a Dr. Faustus. Because Dr. Faustus is a scientist, he is depicted as having sold his soul to the Devil for a mess of pottage. History and literature reek with similar examples of such beliefs.

Much is said about God and religion, but little is said that may give the thinking mind something to get intellectual teeth into. A goodly part of our thinking has been *soupy* thinking — *absit invidia*. The mistaken idea that the *good* alone have found a solution to the riddle of the universe has been blown to bits since the Victorian period. That no idea could be farther from the truth is plain to scientists and men of letters who have spent years working with scholars in *pure* theology for the improvement of spiritual ideas and ideals on an intellectual rather than on an emotional basis.

The things with which truth seekers are concerned primarily are not Paul's journeys through Rome; the crucifixion (crime at the cross); tombs (morbidly); Heaven (the *happy hunting ground*); hell (fear — the most destructive psychology to man); the Devil (like the *boogy man*, another mythical, fictitious character); mortification of the flesh (punishing the body for a cause. . . . what cause?); they are not concerned with medieval orthodoxy and dogmatic and empty theories and ideas; but rather with the fundamental spiritual principles by which man may learn to attune himself with the great Kingdom (within), and with the vibrating, pulsating laws of Life in order the better to live his individual life.

Teachings relating to an anthropomorphic God have been hammered into the minds of men since the Dark Ages, and the unwary have been led to believe that evolution and certain other scientific theories are pseudo or the lunatic fringes of science; that science is of the Devil; that psychology and metaphysics are the practices of witch-craft; and that education and scientific studies have made atheists of the younger generations. In other words, it has been considered devilish to delve into the mysteries of the universe. These teachings and beliefs, if they prevailed, would be destructive to our entire system; they are "Down with the colleges and universities!" The true scientist has breathed more deeply and has lived more fully. Nor is the true scientist a materialist. He is in touch with Life. The scientist is truly one of the Illuminati. He sees the beauty of this divine Law of the Universe and observes its activities under the microscope each day, and he feels the presence of this great Universal Mind — Infinite Intelligence — in his avid quest of the unknown. In Nature's living substance he sees the Energy and feels the great Principle in manifestation. He is attuned with Life. Life gives meaning to life.

No true scientist could be an atheist. Never more spiritual men lived than Darwin and Ingersoll, and yet, the rabble and the unhallowed have conferred upon these men diplomas of atheism. Other great scientists and philosophers of the past have been charged with heresy and immorality, persecuted, and even put to death. But if we do not encourage the creative minds and the geniuses, whither are we going?

Many of our teachings and beliefs, outside the realms of science, have failed to give us the basic principles of an interpretation of modern life. Until the yet-existent medieval orthodoxy extends to science and progressive education the right-hand of fellowship, it will continue to be shallow and stagnant orthodoxy, and the world will continue gradually to slip into a state of social-economic decadence and intellectual and spiritual retrograde.

Anybody, even the most illiterate, can lead the religious life, but "without intellectuality, self-cultivation, and self-realization, no man is

prepared even to begin to live the spiritual life." Is consciousness (intelligence, awareness) a mundane luxury, a psychological accident, or a will-o'-the-wisp figment of the imagination, induced by an indifferent law? Or could it not be a consoling depth of feeling, a controlling grace, a wealth of perception that human choices have some bearing upon an infinite order of being? To possess a faith in consciousness and to feel that it represents a universal oneness with all things makes a great difference in the lives of men and nations.

The Church has not infrequently posed an answer to the question: "Can a good scientist believe in God?" The question obviously should be: "Can a true scientist believe in a Supreme Being?" — since there are many connotations to the word God. The danger of the medieval, orthodox connotation of the term is that it implies materiality, fixity, absoluteness, and conclusiveness. "Man proposes, but God disposes." When men conclude, they cease to think.

Mankind, in an endeavor to throw off the shackles that have kept him down to earth, stands at the portal of Wisdom, petitioning high Heaven for a new hope — a founded, glowing, enlivened spiritualism (not spiritism) that will link humankind and reestablish the great Brotherhood of Man.

Spiritual men may feel deeply with Einstein who said: "Certain it is that a conviction, akin to religious feeling, of the rationality or intelligibility of the world lies behind all scientific work of a higher order. This firm belief, a belief bound up with deep feeling, in a Superior Mind that reveals itself in the world of experience, represents my conception of God."

"On earth, peace, to men, good will."

THAT THOU ART! — *Mary Martin*

Theosophy teaches that all entities, from atoms to universes, are evolving beings; that what we call Monads are in themselves, in their very essence, partakers of eternity, of infinity. The heart, that Innermost Within of these beings, is utter divinity, expressed by Hindus and by Theosophists in the Sanskrit words, *Tat twam asi!*

We have so many revelations of understanding in this regard, as the poet who tells the little flower that if she will tell him what *she* is, he will tell her what God and man *is*, and they laugh quietly and joyously together, for each knows that the other has intimate knowledge of their true relationship.

Another so generously shares with us her mystical beauty in lines which the thought of the Psalmist evoked, " 'I will lay me down in peace to sleep, for Thou Lord makest me to dwell in safety.' I relax in the beautiful darkness, God's curtain of love drawn o'er the world that all may rest. Like the birds fold their wings after their evening vespers have been sung, I fold my aura of protection round about me and rest in the arms of infinite love. . . . 'Thou Lord makest me to dwell in safety.' I keep repeating these words until the assurance of that safety, under all conditions, glows with glory in my soul, and by my faith I draw from worlds unseen, the bright protective angels, waiting for the call to earth. They bring with them the same sweet peace that must have flown o'er Eden when in the cool of the day, God walked beneath the trees. 'Thou makest me to dwell in safety.' " (1)

I have recently re-read parts of *The Garden of Vision*, by L. Adams Beck in which is given the lesson of the Boundless All, and you may be interested in remembering parts of it with me; particularly that part where the little Japanese girl, *Sayoko* and the English girl *Yasoma*, are granted the privilege of hearing Professor Kitesato talk about a "Very strange No play, which turns on the true things which lie behind the

world we see" and connect it with Western Science:

How beautiful it was in the wood as they went winding through the pale russet of heaped pine needles under the pines bathing in the afternoon sunshine! How much at home were all its Presences! They went into the hall. Outside, the sunshine was golden on trees and grass, but only a few of the golden arrows shot into the brown shadows and filled the emptiness with dancing notes. Very high was the roof of the hall, lost in glooms of wood so dark that it carried thought beyond the unseen bounds of man's handiwork. But that was only outward grandeur. All the rest was of the barest simplicity — a matted floor, nothing else but a sort of reading-stand upon which might be laid a book of scriptures or commentaries or the text of the reader's discourse. All was so quiet that the fluttering of a bird outside was a violence to the silence. Voices drew near, and the men trooped in. Kitesato put his manuscript on the reading-stand, and without any prologue, but a bow to all present, plunged into his subject. His English was perfect but for accent and an overfine scholastic attention to words.

"The No play being possibly the greatest art in Japan — or certainly among the greatest — may be approached from many different points of view. Today I take it from that which you study here, the opening of the spiritual eye (Zen Buddhism) and its relation to Western Science; and that being my aim, I choose two well-known passages as indication of the road I tread. The first is as follows:

"Before a man studies Zen, mountains are mountains to him and waters are waters. After he gets instruction in the truth of Zen by observing a good master, mountains are not mountains to him and waters are not waters. But after this, when he really attains to the Place of Peace, mountains are once more mountains and waters are waters.

"Most true, for, in the first instance he accepts them as what they seem — unquestioned realities — the matter of which the world is built in one of its most grandiose shapes. In the second instance, after a little instruction, he takes them as mere illusion, a deception of the senses. In

the third, after he has received *satori*, that is to say 'Enlightenment,' he sees the mountains and waters as they are in truth and in their relation to Universal Power. And, this being so, it follows that he has realized the whole universe in its inmost mind-essence. He is a Master.

"Now the whole secret of the No Plays — that which makes them lucent to us and almost incomprehensible to the average foreigner — is *yugen*, a word of our own which has more than one meaning and which may be said to have been given to us by Zen Buddhism, since that form of Buddhism has most truly and deeply adjusted man to his place in the universe. It is for this reason that Zen has been hailed as the highest reach of human thought and the most practical of practicalities and is as such recommended in the No plays themselves.

"What then is this great word *yugen* given us by Zen? What does it mean? It means: That which lies below the surface. That which the obvious hides. It is *yugen* which gives the mysterious charm to great Chinese and Japanese landscape painting and to their portraits, whether of human beings, animals, or flowers. *To them all are one.* All reveal the Universal, sphinxlike beneath the obvious, yet answering the riddle freely to those who have opened the third eye of vision. We have used a symbol for this *yugen* — a white bird with a flower in its beak. A winged thing, as you perceive, with the simplest yet most exquisite form of earthly beauty as its device. Could a man understand the whole truth of that flower, he would have mastered the secret of the All, for *yugen* is the call of the Universal to the Universal in man.

"Consider the charm of anything which charms those educated as you are, whether in literature, music, or any other art. It is *yugen*, the hidden meaning of yourself, blending with what you love. You love it because it is yourself moving you to emotion and sharing emotion with you. Together, you make and share a common sacrament. For it also is your true Self, the One Self, of all nature and all it symbolizes. *In the Universe is no room for two.*"

". . . the hidden meaning of yourself, blending with what you love. . . . Together, you make and share a common sacrament." We spoke above

of so many revelations of understanding in this regard — many will come to mind bearing the tender message of the 'Christ Within.' My thought returns to a ward in a hospital with rows and rows of white beds. On this particular morning, I find many new faces on "my" (a receiving) ward. The Major says, Mary, take good care of these boys — give them anything they want! Then I perceive the ethereal quality about them and know them to be boys who were prisoners of the Japanese. One boy, an English lad who was taken at Shanghai and was a slave laborer in Burma, was frail of body but had in his eyes that Light that comes only when one has made direct contact with the All. One Saturday when I was very late in reaching the ward to which he had been transferred, I went in to talk with him and the others without giving any reason for my tardiness, and this boy said, O yes, another Gray Lady told me you were attending Ozaki's funeral services. (Ozaki, a Hawaiian-Japanese, was a member of the 100th, the Purple Heart Battalion). I had been so close to Ozaki that it had not occurred to me that anyone would question the propriety of my attending the service held in his honor. This came to me when this English lad smiled and said, "I knew a good Jap once." I was taken back for a moment and said, "You *did*"? He said, "Yes, it was a little old woman, and I and many others would have starved to death had it not been for the morsels of food she sneaked in to us." This was the only statement I ever heard him make about the Japs. Don't you believe this is another proof of that Compassionate Love that Dr. de Purucker refers to as the cement of the Universe?

The second passage given by Kitesato is as follows: "One knocked at the Beloved's door and it was asked from within, Who is there? He who knocked replied, It is I, and received the answer, There is no room for two. Finally, the Voice asking, Who is there? was answered by the rapturous cry, It is THOU! And the door was opened. Against that reply, the door is never shut."

From our beloved *Voice of the Silence* we receive this same Truth, *Tat Twam asi!* "And now thy *Self* is lost in SELF, *thyself* unto THYSELF, merged in THAT SELF from which thou first didst radiate.

"Where is thy individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever-present Ray become the all and the eternal radiance."

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. — 1 John 4:13

FOOTNOTE:

1. From Healing Silences. Evelyn Whitell. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE MYSTIC SECRET OF SPRING (1) — Hazel Boyer Braun

The way to grasp an understanding of the mystic inner life and of the operations of Cosmic Intelligence is to observe in minute detail the nature of things around us, for Universal Nature is repetitive in the majestic and harmonious movement of all life.

What we see in the face of nature at this lovely Springtime Season is a reflection of a grander flow of spiritual energy in higher planes, a secret sway of the blossoming spirituality in which man may play his part if he be ready and prepared. So accurate is the law of analogy that if we were each intuitive and mystically inclined we might sit together in silence this afternoon studying these flowers, the full bloomed faces that have unfolded to the sunlight and their tight-held buds In this symbol we might read what happens in the constitution of Man, and of the planets, solar systems, and universes.

There is optimism, a sense of inner peace and understanding when we realize that the whole effort of evolution is in the direction of resurrection. The urge of the blossoming power in every center of consciousness, in every kingdom of life must surely bring about a gradual evolutionary blooming, growing, resurrecting of life.

We have been taught that every grain of sand, every minutest particle of physical life enveils a center of divine consciousness that has and is in process of putting on these garments or souls or vehicles in order to learn by becoming. It has sometimes seemed to me that perhaps the very reason that the tempo of the more material realms or planes of being is so much more rapid than that of the higher ones that rise ever more majestically into a slower rhythm, is because they are so far from the goal that they must hurry. This is but a whimsical suggestion as I think of the tiny cells flashing into and out of life faster than we can think, obedient to an inner urge to go ever higher.

This urge is translated by man into the activities of that part of his own

being in which he happens to be centering the driving power of his life. That is why man is ever instructed by the sages and seers to know himself, to recognize this urge and to grasp the ever widening horizons of consciousness that are his heritage. As man responds obedient to the divine urge to rise to the Christ part of his nature, the range of his consciousness grows ever wider, hence the slower rhythm, for there is that within us that is capable of absolute knowledge, capable of ranging the Universe in its visible and invisible realms.

It seems very important to know ourselves, to watch how we respond to the urge of life. Some translate it into a mad chase after fame and wealth only to realize that this did not bring true happiness, that it could not, that the spiritual urge is yet unfulfilled. Truly the goal is reached only by learning to give, to consecrate one's life on the altar of the greatest of all causes, that of helping humanity.

To attain this goal of self conquest, we need guidance, we require the help of a teacher who has passed through the mystical resurrection, who has made the greatest of adventures successfully. The wisdom and love, the compassionate seership of such a teacher unlocks the heart and mind for us. It is a mystical process.

If we are content to wait for the natural processes to bring about this resurrection, we may wait eons and endure the agony of the cross along with the enduring life-wave of humanity. Yet at any time we may step forward, make an inner call for help and, if we have the character to live by this call, we can put our feet on the short cut, we can find guidance.

Our teacher has called the Universe a Tree of Life with its roots in the heart of being, its branches the planes of Universal Life, its fruits — man and gods — at once the fruit and the seed. This tree is often called the cross. Nothing seems so important to me as knowing about this Cross of Universal Life. The process of passing from an unself-conscious godspark to self-conscious godhood brings into being a dark side and a light side of life. The great adventure is victory over this cross. The misery we see in the world is just this.

There are two symbols that we associate in our minds with the cross. One is wings and the other is the spear or sword. They remind us that we must arouse our imaginations, direct our thoughts toward the hid wonders of the universe before we can ever pass consciously through them. Plato said *nous* alone furnishes with wings: *Nous*, the higher mind, the intuitions and aspirations.

The sword is the symbol of the spiritual will which must come into action. It must come forth to help us to successfully resist temptation to do wrong or to be less than we *are*. Resurrection and renunciation seem to me to form a cross, to be vitally related. We find ourselves when we lose ourselves, but first we must want to! Like attracts like. Where we center our secret thought, there shall we be.

If we could take away from this meeting today a recognition of what it means to watch our thoughts, and how we translate this urge of our inner life which drives us always, we should have found a helpful key. Even when we come here into the Temple where our higher selves are more consciously at home than anywhere else because we come seeking light, if we were kept here several hours, what would happen? There would come that urge to be on our way. One reason for this is that we have not learned to concentrate on spiritual things so positively that we can be quiet, be still and take instruction. Another reason is the fact that the Teacher can not walk for us. He can awaken our minds and stimulate fresh aspirations; then we must each walk the path. This is what the Lord Buddha meant when he said in the closing words of his life, "Brothers, all that is is composite and transitory, therefore work out your salvation."

In this school of the Universe we are taught that "the struggle for the eternal is not in the daring deed nor yet hundreds of them. It is the calm, unbroken forgetfulness of the lower self for all time," and in the realization that we each have within us "that same guide that the Masters possess." By obedience to it we may become what they are.

Initiation is the process of man's resurrection, raising him from

manhood to Divinity, the blossoming of Truth. All nature is singing to us of this glory. If you have a garden you must feel this wonder of life daily. We can, if we try, feel just as the flowers feel when raising their faces to the morning sun, for we have been flowers. We have been the stone, the gold, the diamond, as we rose in the mineral hierarchy. The impersonal lily, the rose, all these secrets are locked up in our nature and when we are more self-conscious in a more impersonal manner we may be able not only to feel that thrill of joy that the flowers and trees feel, but we must identify ourselves with the sun itself. The *Bhagavad-Gita* says the sun is the gate of the paths which lead to the gods.

We are taught that the process of Initiation is the digestion of the truths of the universe. See how important it is, how noble and uplifting to study Theosophy, the wisdom of the gods, to spend our evenings studying together these lofty inspiring truths, to think of them when we wake in the morning and the last thought as we fall asleep. This indeed is the process of identification with the Great Silence, the Radiant God within us and our only possible hope of ever blossoming into a Lord of Meditation, a great power in the Hierarchy of Compassion.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Report of a Lecture delivered in the Temple at Point Loma during the 1930's. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

"YOURS TILL DEATH AND AFTER, H.P.B." (1) — *William Q. Judge*

Such has been the manner in which our beloved teacher and friend always concluded her letters to me. And now, though we are all of us committing to paper some account of that departed friend and teacher, I feel ever near and ever potent the magic of that resistless power, as of a mighty rushing river, which those who wholly trusted her always came to understand. Fortunate indeed is that Karma which, for all the years since I first met her, in 1875, has kept me faithful to the friend who, masquerading under the outer *mortal* garment known as H. P. Blavatsky, was ever faithful to me, ever kind, ever the teacher and the guide.

In 1874, in the City of New York, I first met H. P. B. in this life. By her request, sent through Colonel H. S. Olcott, the call was made in her rooms in Irving Place, when then, as afterwards, through the remainder of her stormy career, she was surrounded by the anxious, the intellectual, the bohemian, the rich and the poor. It was her eye that attracted me, the eye of one whom I must have known in lives long passed away. She looked at me in recognition at that first hour, and never since has that look changed. Not as a questioner of philosophies did I come before her, not as one groping in the dark for lights that schools and fanciful theories had obscured, but as one who, wandering many periods through the corridors of life, was seeking the friends who could show where the designs for the work had been hidden. And true to the call she responded, revealing the plans once again, and speaking no words to explain, simply pointed them out and went on with the task. It was as if but the evening before we had parted, leaving yet to be done some detail of a task taken up with one common end; it was teacher and pupil, elder brother and younger, both bent on the one single end, but she with the power and the knowledge that belong but to lions and sages. So, friends from the first, I felt safe. Others I know have looked with suspicion on an appearance they could not fathom,

and though it is true they adduce many proofs which, hugged to the breast, would damn sages and gods, yet it is only through blindness they failed to see the lion's glance, the diamond heart of H. P. B.

The entire space of this whole magazine would not suffice to enable me to record the phenomena she performed for me through all these years, nor would I wish to put them down. As she so often said, they prove nothing but only lead some souls to doubt and others to despair. And again, I do not think they were done just for me, but only that in those early days she was laying down the lines of force all over the land and I, so fortunate, was at the centre of the energy and saw the play of forces in visible phenomena. The explanation has been offered by some too anxious friends that the earlier phenomena were mistakes in judgment, attempted to be rectified in later years by confining their area and limiting their number, but until some one shall produce in the writing of H. P. B. her concurrence with that view, I shall hold to her own explanation made in advance and never changed. That I have given above. For many it is easier to take refuge behind a charge of bad judgment than to understand the strange and powerful laws which control in matters such as these.

Amid all the turmoil of her life, above the din produced by those who charged her with deceit and fraud and others who defended, while month after month, and year after year, witnessed men and women entering the theosophical movement only to leave it soon with malignant phrases for H. P. B., there stands a fact we all might imitate — devotion absolute to her Master. "It was He," she writes, "who told me to devote myself to this, and I will never disobey and never turn back."

In 1888 she wrote to me privately:

Well, my *only* friend, you ought to know better. Look into my life and try to realize it — in its outer course at least, as the rest is hidden. I am under the curse of ever writing, as the wandering Jew was under that of being ever on the move, never stopping one moment to rest. Three ordinary healthy persons

could hardly do what *I have* to do. I live an artificial life; I am an automaton running full steam until the power of generating steam stops, and then — good-bye! . . . Night before last I was shown a bird's-eye view of the Theosophical Societies. I saw a few earnest reliable Theosophists in a death struggle with the world in general, with other — nominal but ambitious — Theosophists. The former are greater in numbers than you may think, and *they prevailed*, as you in *America will prevail*, if you only remain staunch to the Master's programme and true to yourselves. And last night I saw .'. and now I feel strong — such as I am in my body — and ready to fight for Theosophy and the few *true* ones to my last breath. The defending forces have to be judiciously — so scanty they are — distributed over the globe, wherever Theosophy is struggling against the powers of darkness.

Such she ever was; devoted to Theosophy and the Society organized to carry out a programme embracing the world in its scope. Willing in the service of the cause to offer up hope, money, reputation, life itself, provided the Society might be saved from every hurt, whether small or great. And thus bound body, heart and soul to this entity called the Theosophical Society, bound to protect it at all hazards, in face of every loss, she often incurred the resentment of many who became her friends but would not always care for the infant organization as she had sworn to do. And when they acted as if opposed to the Society, her instant opposition seemed to them to nullify professions of friendship. Thus she had but few friends, for it required a keen insight, untinged with personal feeling, to see even a small part of the real H. P. Blavatsky.

But was her object merely to form a Society whose strength should lie in numbers? Not so. She worked under directors who, operating from *behind the scene*, knew that the Theosophical Society was, and was to be, the nucleus from which help might spread to all the people of the day, without thanks and without acknowledgment. Once, in London, I asked her what was the chance of drawing the people into the Society

in view of the enormous disproportion between the number of members and the millions of Europe and America who neither knew of nor cared for it. Leaning back in her chair, in which she was sitting before her writing desk, she said:

"When you consider and remember those days in 1875 and after, in which you could not find any people interested in your thoughts, and now look at the wide-spreading influence of theosophical ideas — however labelled — it is not so bad. We are not working merely that people may call themselves *Theosophists*, but that the doctrines we cherish may affect and leaven the whole mind of this century. This alone can be accomplished by a small earnest band of workers, who work for no human reward, no earthly recognition, but who, supported and sustained by a belief in that Universal Brotherhood of which our Masters are a part, work steadily, faithfully, in understanding and putting forth for consideration the doctrines of life and duty that have come down to us from immemorial time. Falter not so long as a few devoted ones will work to keep the nucleus existing. You were not directed to found and realise a Universal Brotherhood, but to form the nucleus for one; for it is only when the nucleus is formed that the accumulations can begin that will end in future years, however far, in the formation of that body which we have in view."

H. P. B. had a lion heart, and on the work traced out for her she had the lion's grasp; let us, her friends, companions and disciples, sustain ourselves in carrying out the designs laid down on the trestle-board, by the memory of her devotion and the consciousness that behind her task there stood, and still remain, those Elder Brothers who, above the clatter and the din of our battle, ever see the end and direct the forces distributed in array for the salvation of "that great orphan — Humanity."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Taken in full from the pamphlet *H.P. B. In Memory of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky*. By some of her Pupils. London, New York, Madras, 1891. ([return to text](#))

THE THREE BROTHERS — *George Simpson*

One of the most mysterious of all nations in our occidental world is a people known today as the Celts. It would seem from the study of the remnants left to us that those people had an evolution in which the very highest of the ancient mystery schools had an imbodiment lasting for hundreds of years at least. But for the Theosophical student that period runs back to thousands of years; in fact, by the Theosophical philosophy a clearer vision can be obtained, because it shows that this people that we today call the Celtic people were inheritors of a system of philosophy that had been worked out and lived in a period that far antedated their own dawn as a nation.

These islands were known in ancient days as the Sacred Isles or the Isles of the Mighty, and the old philosophy that was taught and lived there can be summed up today in a way that still shows the same universal keynotes of all philosophies. This teaching of the Celts was presented by the systems of triads, in which three of course is the key-figure. It corresponds to the symbol of the triangle, the two sides and the base; which is only another way of expressing the universal three, whether you speak of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, or the three logoi of the Grecian system in connection with our own Christian religion: Father, Holy Ghost and Son, or Body, Soul and Spirit, as we would say with Paul — soul and spirit beginning at the other end of the triad.

Now let us see whether we can tell an old Welsh bardic tale that illustrates from a Theosophical point of view the composite nature of man. In telling these old tales no stage need be set; they were told in few words, and the action was swift. It ran something like this:

There were three brothers. The eldest was known as the Lord of Harmonies. He was able to hear the most secret of all music — that which issues forth from the Voice of the Silence, the Music of the Spheres. The wind as it passed through the trees was audible in its

inmost self. He knew the music made by the growing grass, and the rhythm of the atoms in the lowest forms of life; he could hear them all; and hearing, he knew the story of their birth and their evolution and the ultimate attainment from the lowest to the highest.

But he had a brother somewhat younger than himself, and he was the Lord of Clear Vision. Nothing could be hid from his gaze. Not only the visible worlds, but the invisible worlds were open to him. He could see the rhythm and majesty of all things. He could divine with his vision not only the past and the present, but he could see the future with understanding.

Another younger brother had that gift too, but he as yet was young, and the responsibilities of life had rested but lightly on his shoulders. And as time passed on he became impatient in this land of harmony and beauty, so that the second brother became alarmed and went to the older brother whose wisdom he knew would give him guidance in this matter. The elder brother listened, and a smile came to his face, and he said to the second brother, "Go get the Gloves of Gwron and put them on the hands of the younger brother."

And this was done: and the minute the gloves were put on the hands of the younger brother he turned and looked on the far horizons and felt in need of adventure. And the gloves themselves seemed filled with magic that lured him, and he began to work and weave and create things with his hands, and in this weaving wonderful things happened. The face of the world itself began to change, and new cities arose, and new peoples filled them, and still the work swept on and on.

Civilizations rose and fell. Each time it seemed that he would build to a higher and higher peak — and yet there was something lacking, something seemed to sweep in and destroy the work. Yet again and again the urge of the magical Gloves drove him to try once more. And when it seemed to come within his grasp that something could be builded that would be lasting, a mighty wind swept in, in which man turned against man and cities fell, each one more swiftly than the last, because the Gloves had forged weapons that carried grim and dire

destruction.

And when that wind had died away and desolation was everywhere, he stood to wipe the sweat from his brow, and in doing so he pulled off one of the Gloves — and lo! once more vision came to his eyes and there he beheld with him his brother the Lord of Clear Vision — and something in that clear look that he gave him told him that in all his labors and peregrinations he had never left his side. Clear vision should be his the minute he might ask for it. And as he looked and beheld the inner splendor he heard familiar harmonies, and there beheld his brother the Lord of Harmonies, and knew once more the peace that only the Voice of the Silence can bring.

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There is the story that has been swept down like a tiny bark along the river of time. And to a student of Theosophy its inner meaning is one of beauty, because there you have man's own composite nature. His inner divinity, his spiritual self, linked with the intellectual self, that human child which through evolution attains at-one-ment with its Higher Self.

And so in countless stories of similar nature and wondrous beauty you find, like the pearl in the oyster, the jewel of truth left by the Bards of old; and perchance we may at some other time meet around the ancient hearthfire and through the twinkle of the flames that leap upward hear once more the voice of the ancient Bard as he strums his magical harp and tells his tale, bearing the old, old truths that today Theosophy has brought back once more — dressed in the garb of this modern time, and yet the same old truth of long ago.

The Theosophical Forum

SOCRATES — *Ingo Burmester*

Socrates, the Greek teacher-philosopher, effectively spread many new philosophical concepts, which have been influential down to our own times. The reasons for this influence are not far to seek. They lie in the originality and the inspired quality of his thought and of his methods of teaching.

In his personal life Socrates achieved a marvelous measure of physical and mental control. Initially he had a strong, though ugly, body. Whether natural or developed, he showed an unusual disregard for physical hardships. Both his physical and moral courage are evidenced by records of his military career and later by his attacks on current Athenian governmental abuses. Most of his life (470 to 399 b.c.) was spent in his native Athens.

What we know of Socrates is uncertain. He wrote nothing himself but there is plenty of information available about him, even though most of it is of a contradictory nature. Aside from numerous minor references placing him historically, the real nature of the man and his philosophy are gleaned from three authors. Aristophanes, the poet, caricatured him in his "Clouds." Xenophanes, a disciple and devoted admirer, wrote at length in defense of his memory. But Xenophanes did not truly understand the philosophy of Socrates, so his plaudits do not make a good basis for a real analysis of the philosophy. Most of what we know about Socrates comes from the "Dialogues" of Plato, who was a pupil. Most authorities think that the naturalness of Plato's treatment of the Socratic theme makes it more than likely that he attributed much to Socrates which was in reality highly colored by his own ideas. Whatever is the case, there have been attributed to Socrates, by interpreting and checking the obtainable data, a definite historical background and a derivative or original philosophy.

Socrates claimed no origin for his beliefs except himself and his

guiding *daemon*. However, because he spent a lifetime talking with and teaching a great many of the inhabitants of Athens, including many of the best minds of the time, it can be considered that he absorbed many ideas through his associations.

He consecrated his life to teaching, to awakening a moral consciousness (an awareness of real moral content and value), and to the effort to stimulate the impulse in people to seek self-knowledge. He was started on this path by the guiding and impelling force of mystical experiences. The power in the experiences consisted of what he called a *daemon*. This entity instructed by informing him of what he *must not do*; otherwise it allowed him free rein. One such injunction was to refrain from politics. Socrates believed this guidance to come from a divine, all-knowing, ethical source. He obeyed it implicitly, so it must be conceded that he did not consider the possibility of its being a keen *conscience*, subject to the limitations of such a function. Whatever is the case, it led to his death and a great antipathy to his immediate memory.

In accord with the trend of his times, Socrates' teachings and teaching were based on moderation and reason. He believed that the souls of all men have garnered knowledge somewhere, apart from their present body, and that the mind of that soul, with help, could be made to remember. In light of this, he introduced the Socratic Method of teaching. To be fair, Zeno, a pupil of Parmenides, used it first; but Socrates developed the method and illustrated its full usefulness. Socrates asserted that his wisdom lay in that he knew nothing; that all men knew nothing; that knowledge was obtainable, but that up to date only divinity was knowledge. The Socratic method is the asking of leading, pointed questions for the purpose of eliciting answers that will lead the student to a truth without the teacher's having imparted any information. This hinges on the ability of the teacher to ask the right questions. Today this method is generally considered appropriate only to dialectical discussion — such points as pertain only to the logical association of already established fact or opinion — but is unsuited for the discovery of factual data.

The doctrine expounded by Socrates does not appear to be grounded on any basic, initial, philosophic ideas. This is because his method of teaching demanded that he approach each prospective student differently, and consequently he arrived at seemingly opposed conclusions. Socrates did affect many excellent minds of his day, and so we must conclude that his philosophy had a fundamental grounding. Otherwise it would never have satisfied some of the questions prevalent in that era. Let's put it this way: Socrates tried to and did establish an approach to knowledge. Had he not been able to excuse and defend such an approach by satisfying previous philosophical controversies, his own premises would never have been granted.

Socrates' main doctrine was that knowledge, aside from its objective aspects, such as apparent utility, has a subjective side. He considered this idea primarily with regard to ethical questions. True knowledge regarding them was only established when they could be defined. This doctrine has received much philosophical attention. This is because it raised many questions not previously considered. As an example: true knowledge, for the Sophist, was information that had utility. Socrates opposed the Sophists and defeated this idea on many occasions. This was his reasoning: to inquire about existence, we must have *ideas* of this existence. These ideas are garnered, by inductive methods, from our surroundings. The validity of these ideas can not be surely established till we know the nature of the entity holding them. So man must first seek to know himself. This knowledge of self affords concepts from which to deduce the real nature of the idea. He believed that no one ever wittingly acts wrongly. So then, to act right, with knowledge, is virtue. Knowledge is virtue. There is but one knowledge, so there is but one virtue and it leads to happiness.

He applied this doctrine to the moral and ethical concepts of the time. Socrates' endeavor was to find a permanent, true code of behavior and so insure the welfare of all. But in doing this he did two other things: he incurred the animosity and hatred of those too lazy to think; and worse, he attacked the state by attacking the maxims and ritual of its religion. He was impeached, and rather than retract and stop his

teaching, he sentenced himself to death. Another cause for his impeachment has been suggested: it is that he was divulging secret information of the Orphic Mysteries. This act was punishable by death.

Till the time he drank the Hemlock Cup, he believed that he was an emissary of God; had a responsibility to the world which he could not shirk. He must teach people what he knew and make them wish to search for knowledge for its sake alone. Socrates had a marked effect on the present. His theory of knowledge has fashioned and altered all succeeding philosophy and consequently the course of all peoples contemporaneous with that philosophy.

The Theosophical Forum

POWER OF THE SILENCE — Alexandra McLean

When we come into sympathetic relationship, into identic vibrational frequency, with this innerheart-beat, this pulsing of the Divine, then our lives are made over. — G. de Purucker

Who among us has not longed for silence? In the confusion and discordance of modern living, how ardently at times we long for silence. And this desire, this urge within our hearts — perhaps we may call it an "echo" of the *Voice* of Silence. Aware of it, we begin to seek.

Undoubtedly there are remote places on our planet Earth where relative silence may be found. On some high mountain top above timber line, we may be alone, become very tranquil and listen to the silence of the heights. But this is not the Absolute Silence. At best, it is but a poor substitute. The desert also at times offers a majestic stillness that is akin to Silence, but the Reality is not there. No matter where we go in the external world, high or low, near or far — nowhere upon the *outside* of our globe of awareness, will we find SILENCE.

What is the *Power* of this Silence, why should we seek it? The answer may be happily and aptly expressed by the Sanskrit words that the Hindu Guru speaks to his chela when, after questioning him as to his understanding of the Unity of all, the chela makes answer: "O Gurudeva, I see no difference between life and life, and light and light, and power and power, and mind and mind, except in degrees." To which the Guru makes reply, "Thou seest well, child. Now listen to the heart of all this teaching: AHAM ASMI PARABRAHMA." The meaning is: "I am the Boundless, I myself am Parabrahma for the life that pulses in me and gives me existence is the life of the divinest of the divine."

Therefore, we seek the Inner Realm, the SILENCE — in which we may find this Reality. With true "Christ-Wisdom" the Master Jesus told his disciples, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret. . . ." And

when we have gone within and closed the door — what is our prayer? Is it not a humble but expectant listening? Is it not a giving over of our personal self to the "Father Within," the ONE, that the Power and the Glory may use us? Having in-gathered all our senses, having shut the door to the outer and entered the Silence, we become aware in increasingly glorious degrees of our SELF and are illumined and filled with the *power* of the Indwelling Divinity.

The *Power* of Silence is unifying and in that unity there is strength, for we become part of the Hierarchy of Wisdom-Love in action. "It is one of our Theosophical duties to show men the way to wisdom, to peace, to happiness, to strength and to spiritual powers — the real powers, the powers which are safe and clean and sweet, which make a man lovable, which make him compassionate, which guarantee that power put into his hands will be wielded never for self but always in order to benefit others . . . man must learn the first lesson of the Higher Occultism . . . which is to control himself; and all powers that later he gains must be laid on the altar of impersonal service — on the altar of service to mankind."

The *Power* of Silence is vitalizing for we become one with the "fountain of strength." "Oh, how wonderful, holy, sublime . . . is this truth: that within each one there is an unspeakable fount of strength, of wisdom, of love, of compassion, of forgiveness, of purity. Ally yourself with this fountain of strength: it is in you, none can ever take it from you."

The *Power* of Silence is harmonizing, and in unity, strength and harmony our sevenfold being becomes integrated. A Sage of modern India, Rabindranath Tagore, has said, "It is for man to produce the music of the spirit with all the notes he has in his psychology. . . . In music man is revealed and not in noise."

The *Power* of Silence is creative. At-one with the Source, Truth which is inherent seeks to express and our rising aspirations will carry within them the power to *become*. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." (2nd. Tim. 1:7)

The *Power* of Silence is Peace. We become part of, aware *in* — the great Cosmic Peace, a profound Peace that may be transformed in our outer lives into dynamic action expressing wisdom-love in all our dealings with our fellow men.

And now — the *Power* of Silence completely absorbing us, we hear, we know, we understand; and the silence of earth, water, air and fire, merges in the "Song of Songs" that wells within the SILENCE OF OUR-SELF. "You reach the Great Quiet, and mighty strength. You touch the vast reservoir where are stored up all the greatest forces of the Universe; for the very heart of each one is in actual fact the heart of the Universe — a "heart" which is not localized but is everywhere. . . ."

And ONE is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory — forever!

"AHAM ASMI PARABRAHMA."

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION — *Allan J. Stover*

The term evolution is employed here in its original sense of unfolding or unwrapping from within; as of a seed or bud. Organisms are, indeed, influenced by environmental factors, but the way in which the organism responds to one or another influence is determined by what is latent within it as a part of its inner nature. Fundamentally, the heart of any being has within it numberless phases of character and specializations of form awaiting opportunity to manifest. Then, when nature presents the proper conditions, there is a response and new characteristics appear. That this is so is shown by recent experiments in which a series of transplant stations were established across the State of California. Carefully bred seedlings from identical plants were transplanted at intervals across the State from the coastal plain through the coast range, interior valleys, foothills and Sierra Nevada Mountains to the desert valley east of the mountains. The experiment resulted in many variations in size, form, color and general appearance.

Darwin attempted to show by his discoveries that, because of outside influences, evolution proceeded by a transformation of one form into another. Thus, while the theories of Darwinian evolution, including the survival of the fittest, the origin of species and the influence of heredity and environment, may appear to be true, it is only within the smaller groups such as the genus and the species that they hold good and, then, only in appearance. In the constantly changing phases of geological history, Nature has provided many opportunities for unfolding varying aspects of character. There are many parts to be played on the stage of life and, as in a school, the student is required to study many subjects in order to become a well-balanced man or woman.

Physical bodies are merely the houses of life in which all egos live while learning the lessons possible under particular conditions. When the ego has mastered the lessons of one condition, it passes on to other

homes better fitted for its new evolutionary status. It is this inner evolving self, whether of a man, an animal, or a plant, that is the compelling force in all evolution. Today, scientists are coming to realize gradually that chance and outside influences have little to do with true development. They are a means but not a cause. Darwin said that intelligence arises first when organisms begin to cooperate. In recent times, Dr. Osborn has stated that there is an unexplainable and mysterious factor which he calls, "creative aristo-genesis"; that is, a creative urge originating in the higher portion of each being which is the cause and directing force behind evolution.

Dr. Robert Broom in his presidential address before the South African Association for the Advancement of Science in 1933 said, "The origin of species and much of evolution appears to be due to some organizing and partly intelligent spiritual agency associated with the animal or plant, which controls its life processes and tends to keep the being more or less adapted to its environment." "But in addition to this there seem to be other spiritual agencies of a much higher type which have been responsible for what may be called greater evolution — the evolution of vertebrates, the steady advance from fishes to amphibians, to mammals, and ultimately to man." With the exception that it is the indwelling life and not the house in which it lives which advances from class to class, the Theosophist finds the above quotation very well stated.

In studying nature, we find that each group of organisms, such as a genus or family, has a lifetime consisting of a birth, a youth, a maturity and a death; as does each individual composing it. Moreover, each individual recapitulates the history of the race to which it belongs. This is supposed to be the case with transformations such as that of a caterpillar passing through a series of changes to become the winged and colorful butterfly. In the case of the higher animals, the recapitulation takes place quickly during the embryonic stage. In fact, all living things begin life as a single cell and pass along the evolutionary path as far as they may or as they are evolved to do. In general plan, all follow the same pathway until they reach their

particular station in life and, there, they stop. It is this which binds nature together in an organic whole, linking each life with every other life.

The plant body contains mineral and vegetable substances, the animal body mineral, vegetable and animal substances: each kingdom includes something of the preceding kingdoms within it. What, we may ask, made these grooves of evolutionary progress in the first place? Did man pass through each of the lower types of life in turn, as the Darwinists suggested? Suppose we take a single illustration. Theosophy tells us that man was once a globular mass of light, without organs or physical form. The microscope reveals numerous creatures both plant and animal which are gelatinous, single-celled beings without organs. Nevertheless, man was never an amoeba. Neither was he ever a rabbit; although mammals follow now the general pattern of man's structure at the present time. In succeeding eras, the animals will adopt, so far as they are able, the human "style" of that period. Thus it is that all things aspire to manhood, and man, in his turn, aspires to godhood. This current of evolution has been diagrammed as a ladder or tree of life, symbols which are full of significance to the intuitive student.

A study of earth history shows that evolution is not a steady process, but moves in cycles and, at certain times, change and development are rapid. In this, it resembles an examination; for many types of both plant and animal life fail to make the grade and are destroyed. The others, under the stimulus of rapidly changing conditions, adapt themselves to the new surroundings and become the types of the new age. Then follows a time of slow almost imperceptible growth or advance until another revolution of rapid change approaches.

What is learned from a study of the evolutionary development of plant and animal life is much more important than is generally supposed. A former Leader of the Theosophical Society, Dr. G. de Purucker, has stated repeatedly that all things follow one law, for small cycles repeat on a small scale the same pattern that large cycles pass through on a larger scale. All things follow the pattern of and contribute to all other

things in a vast system of cycles, or wheels within wheels, that proceeds throughout universal nature. This being so, we find within our own experience instances of the same course of action as is recorded in the pages of the geological strata. When the student of Theosophy comes upon a time or cycle in which study is difficult and progress seems at a stand-still, he or she should remember that a true evolution of character is being experienced. The student, by aspiration, has called upon the Higher Law and, in evolving through self-directed effort, is beginning to work in harmony with the rhythm of universal nature. Having once experienced evolution within ourselves and watched the cyclic development of some faculty, we have a basis for understanding all evolutionary progress. We have made that knowledge a part of ourselves by observing and considering our own experience. The test of any law of nature lies in its universality and so we see the patterns which are unfolded in a study of geological history repeated in lesser cycles of all kinds. If we study the problems and cycles of daily life in the light of this knowledge, we are taking the first step in a self-directed evolution.

There are many parallels between the life of a race and the life of an individual. One of these is the fact that, as a life stock becomes old, it loses its ability to adapt itself to new conditions if it has become fixed or crystallized in its habits. This is as true of a race as of an individual. In general, any abnormal specialization is a sign of old age and of approaching extinction. It is an evidence of a departure from the main evolutionary stream and an entering upon some purposeless and egoistic trend which not only comes to a quick conclusion but uses up the store of vital energy. This leaves the individual unable to cope with the tests that come at periodic times.

True evolution is inspired by the inner self. The useless specializations are often due to portions of an organism "going on their own." Middle lines are necessary if a race or an individual is to live to a ripe old age. We may picture the life course of a family, whether plant or animal, as a current or stream of life in which the middle portion continues to the end. Here and there side streams develop and branch off, only to

become extinct. The history of living things shows that an enormous number of plant and animal types have vanished, as out-moded vehicles, while the best adapted have continued to evolve and are still with us today. Human evolution is similar. Study literature, art, architecture, social customs, etc. and see how soon after specialization sets in with needless ornament or luxury, a rapid decline begins. The great value of a study of nature is that it shows us how closely we ourselves are linked with the universe in which we live. In a very real sense we are an epitome of that universe, builded of its materials and following its laws.

The Theosophical Forum

MAN KNOW THYSELF — *H. Minot*

How nearly do we approach hidden truths when, with an open mind, we seek to understand the ancient religions? What secrets can we rediscover in myth and legend? What, indeed, were the early shrines sacred to the gods of prophecy? Why, when man asked foreknowledge of these gods, should he be enjoined to know himself?

To have knowledge of himself was to know his relation to everything around him, and to understand that all these things — himself included — were lives in a still greater life. Man, the Earth, other worlds and solar systems were parts of a vast Universe, and this was but a child of other and greater universes. To comprehend the workings of his own consciousness was to have the power to extend that consciousness until it should embrace the Universe itself, and to feel with the sure touch of sympathy the pulse-beat of every living thing within that Universe. Thus, if he could not be his own prophet he was, at least, better fitted to interpret the words of those who were the messengers of the gods. Still more important — if he *knew* himself, knew his motive, the hidden purpose of his desires, and the strength of his own will to direct those desires for the good of all, he could make no mistake in the answer given to his questions. Had Croesus really known himself, Lydia would have not been lost to him.

Again: do we moderns understand the attitude of the ancients toward prophecy? Do we not judge them by our own standards, even by our own limitations? And does this not account for our somewhat cynical attitude toward the supposedly ambiguous replies of the oracles? A man wishes converse with the gods. Unless the individual were unusual — that is, highly intelligent or, more important, spiritually developed — this would be possible only through some mediator (the oracle). Even then, the message that came would mean nothing to the man unless he were fit to understand it — the gods do not rule a man's life; they merely gave him a greater opportunity to rule it for himself.

And therefore, the injunction at Delphi — Man Know Thyself.

What is it to know oneself? Which self? Shall one concentrate on the failings of the imperfect human self, seeking thus to be armed against them and, little by little, shrink into a still smaller self? Or, shall one reach out to the greater Self within him, and by constant aspiration come to associate, and be one, with it, thus raising the imperfect self? There is magic in the thought of interpreting the oracle in the light of the greater understanding of that Higher Self. Delphi was sacred to Apollo, the sun-god. Man, in his inmost being, is a "son of the Sun." What wonder, then, that he was enjoined "to know himself"?

If we know so little about ourselves, how then, shall we have the temerity to "sit in judgment" upon others? The more we have plumbed the depths of our own natures, the less shall we be likely to assume such an attitude, for comprehension brings compassion. Perhaps this quest for knowledge of our real Self is for the express purpose of making us more understanding of others, of their real Selves. It is something to think about, anyway. And, after all, what is Man? A universe in little, and an atomic life in the Universe surrounding him.

The Theosophical Forum

AT HOME IN THE UNIVERSE — *Alexandra McLean*

Everyone is rooted in the common fountain of Cosmic Life —
Intelligence — Substance.

— G. de Purucker

What and Where is our real home? Preceding the seven stanzas on Cosmic Evolution from the secret book of Dzyan, as set forth by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine*, we find a wondrous poem. It is too long to quote in full, but the answer to *What* and *Where*, seems to be

"Gazing into eternity . . .
Ere the foundations of the earth were laid,
Thou wert. And when the subterranean flame
Shall burst its prison and devour the frame . . .
Thou shalt be still as Thou wert before
And knew no change, when time shall be no more.
Oh! endless thought, divine ETERNITY."

And then H. P. B. points out that "The word 'Eternity,' as understood in Christian theology has no meaning to the Asiatic ear, except in its application to the ONE existence." (S. D. p. 35) And to this ONE existence we all belong. Our HOME, in its infinite aspect is the Boundless. But she also points out — "The reader has to bear in mind that the Stanzas given treat only of the Cosmogony of our own planetary System. . . . The secret teachings with regard to the Evolution of the Universal Kosmos cannot be given. . . . Moreover the Teachers say openly that not even the highest Dhyani-Chohans have ever penetrated the mysteries beyond those boundaries that separate the millions of Solar systems from the 'Central Sun,' as it is called." (S. D. p. 13)

However, we are also taught "As above, so below." And the Talmud offers, "If you would know the invisible, open wide thine eye upon the visible." Therefore, looking upon the visible, we know that our planet is part of our Solar System and that the Solar System is a part of our Great

Galaxy, which in turn is a part of something much greater (about which it were foolish at this time to speculate). Nevertheless, of "That Greatness" we *are* a part and the glory of the concept leaves us wordless.

From the vastness of this truth, which is like looking through a great telescope, we turn our attention to the minute concepts of our immediate homes which is indeed a microscopic view. But it is *here*, in our present environment, we must start the process of alchemization, changing self to SELF. Gradually — moment by moment, day by day, year by year, life by life unfolding 'That' which we ARE. Growing by sharing, expanding by giving, unifying, by love and compassion for ALL.

There is a current phrase with which we are all familiar, "One World." It seems worthy of deep and sincere effort on the part of all students of the Ancient Wisdom to help bring this ideal into actuality. How are we to do it? The ten 'Paramitas' or glorious virtues of right living, point the way. They are as ten golden links in a chain of Truth and if we add the 'Seven Jewels of Wisdom' (the seven basic operative laws) we indeed have a magic talisman, the means to self-directed evolution and harmonious expression to all.

Every great Sage and Teacher, from earliest times to the present day founder and leaders of our own Theosophical Society, have stressed the idea of UNITY. They have taught us the 'oneness' of all the brotherhood that is a *fact* of Nature. They have shown by word and deed that cooperation, compassion, overcoming evil with good is the only efficacious — the true way.

In the small book, *Golden Precepts of Esotericism* the very heart beat of Divine Love is felt and the Voice of Wisdom speaks through the kindly and sincere efforts of Dr. de Purucker, who offers us gems from the archaic teachings. Consider this (p. 11): "Man is an inseparable part of the Universe in which he lives, moves and has his being. There is no separation whatsoever between his roots and the roots of the Universe, there is no distance between them. The same Universal Life flows through all things that are. The same stream of Consciousness which

flows in the mighty whole of the Universe, flows therefore through man, an inseparable portion of the Universe. . . ."

Is this not a sublime thought, worthy of becoming a living part, an activating unit in our consciousness? And if we accept this as Truth, what wonders open to us! We begin to *feel* a brotherhood with every living, evolving entity. We see beyond-*within* the myriad forms of Nature, the beauty, the harmony, the glory of LIFE. Grass, flowers, trees — seem growing in our very hearts. Our breath mingles with the breeze, the fragrance of the rose becomes a part of us. A great and constant change merges and blends throughout ALL.

We have each in our own way and in varying degrees, experienced these moments of soul-expansion. Perhaps on a mountain top above the timber line, we have communed with the Stars. Silently, in reverence — we have looked upward, lost all sense of our tiny self and entered a vaster world. "Something" entered our hearts, mingled with our awareness and surely "Something" went *from* our hearts in gratitude and blended with the 'Heart of the Stars.'

Perhaps the ocean or the desert in their vastness have conveyed to us a feeling of rhythm, power, silence, mystery, and for a time, the sense of personal smallness was lost. We *became* in consciousness a 'conscious' part of their magnificence.

It may be some tiny, so-called weed, or wild-flower, has by its delicacy and minute perfection led us into a feeling of almost adoration — as we contemplated and thought of its cycle of involution-evolution, of its expression of beauty (it also — rooted in the Universe!).

Now this being so — each of us then finds it easier to feel we truly *are* brother with our fellow men, irrespective of race, color, creed.

Humanity is ONE, the "Manas" element of our Earth Planet.

LIFE is the great mystery, an eternal expression of the Boundless. But *our* life is the expression of this Great Life through us, an evolving entity; and by every thought, word and deed, we are either helping or hindering the harmonious expression, not only of ourself but of a

larger unit (and also of billions of smaller units). We make ourselves significant in the unfoldment of higher forms of life expression as we align ourselves with the basic truth of the *Unity* of All and consciously cooperate for the glory of all. We should be alert, no matter where we are — alert to the truth of Brotherhood and act it, express it, by word and deed.

We know that every being and every race has its own destiny to unfold, but each part is necessary, a part of the Great Whole. St. Paul in writing to the Corinthians gave these words. "For the body is not one member, but many. . . . If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? . . . And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. . . . That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care for one another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." Is this not analogous to the human family, are not all human beings in truth members of one body, which we call Humanity? It is obvious, we *know* it — but we do not *act* as if we knew it.

The heart essence, the inmost of each, is an unseparated part of the Universe. Our Home *is* the Universe and we can not be lost from it. As the Psalmist sang in the ecstasy of his knowledge of the all-pervading presence of God — "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea: even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

What stupendous possibilities unfold in our consciousness as we realize our home is *not* our body, our town, nation, race — not even our planet — but the "Universe." All of us, each one, an unseparated part of it, evolving, unfolding our innate Divinity and at the same time helping our younger brothers to progress and unfold *their* Divinity.

"ONE WORLD" surely! A world in which "Charity and immortal love" are

more than a rule of conduct; where they are the natural and spontaneous outpouring of all hearts toward all because each "urgently desires to become a center of benevolent radiance." ONE WORLD, whose humanity sings its blended harmony in perfect accord with all the other "worlds" in our great Universe. ONE — with no schism.

Again referring to *Golden Precepts* (p. 90) "The Great Heresy and the only real heresy is the idea that anything is separate, distinct, different essentially, from other things. That is wandering from natural fact and law, for Nature is nothing but co-ordination, co-operation, mutual helpfulness; and the rule of fundamental unity is perfectly universal: everything in the universe lives for everything else. It is the sense of separateness that is the cause and root of all evil."

"At HOME in the Universe" — because we have identified ourselves with the Divinity that is the reality of all.

The Theosophical Forum

KEYNOTES TO MEDITATION: 1 — *Leonard Lester*

"Indefatigable in Action"

That is: never to allow that sweet sustaining devotion to relax: fatigue, monotony, apparent barrenness in results, notwithstanding. The outer immediate results are not the *real* index, or crown, of unselfish endeavor.

For this inherent devotion to the greater Ideal is one with the mystic current of Life, that tide of vital renewing which swings the orbits of all beings into harmonious action.

"Look thou within; within thee is the fountain of all good, and it will ever spring if thou wilt ever delve," says the wise Marcus Aurelius. And Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chapter III: "There is nothing, O son of Pritha . . . which it is necessary for me to perform . . . and yet I am constantly in action. If I were not *indefatigable in action* all men would presently follow my example. If I did not perform actions these creatures would perish."

What is this action? One thing is certain: the action here referred to is not hurry and bustle, the sensation-born impulse to do things. It is the inner spirit of devotion that ensouls all actions with moral beauty and power.

"Even sages have been deluded as to what is action and what inaction. . . One must learn well what is action to be performed and what is not to be, and what is inaction. The path of action is obscure." The man who sees inaction in action and action in inaction is wise among men; he is a true devotee and a perfect performer of all action.

"Perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event: for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the result, obtaineth the Supreme. . . . For whatever is practiced by the most excellent men, that is also practiced by others.

The world follows whatever example they set." And again: "O son of Bharata, as the ignorant perform the duties of life from the hope of reward, so the wise man from the wish to bring the world to duty and benefit mankind should perform his actions without motives of interest."

And Devotion gladly accepts its responsibilities as well as its duty, and first among these is *constancy* in sustaining and transmitting the vital current of Being of which it is a link, a living vehicle. But more: as increase of life and power grows with practice in any art, so does an influx of higher energy and stamina enter the moral fiber of those in whom devotion has become a second nature, a regenerative, revivifying agent of the soul.

"The Fountain of all Good: and it will ever spring if thou wilt ever delve."

The Theosophical Forum

ISVARA — *Marion O. French*

Isvara is the preceptor of all, even of the earliest of created beings, for He

is not limited by time. — *Yoga Aphorism 26 of Patanjali*

Ineffable Spirit of Truth garbed in the effulgent glory of radiant robes, we can but touch the outermost hem of thy garment. Yet, this is enough, for the fringes thereof are the Divine Monads, the Immanent Christs in each of us. Through them, Thou speakest with infinite patience and compassion, repeating through time without end the lessons that we all must learn. Coaxing with the secret pleasure of the generous act, admonishing with the suffering that comes of evil as *live spelled backwards*, Thou leadest on. Truly, Thou art the loving Mother and stern Father without whom we, Thy children, must perish.

So we might state almost the whole of the lesson of life. Down through the Hierarchies to each of us cometh the instruction of Isvara, Light of the Darkness, and Voice of the Silence. Into each a ray shineth, lighting The Way up from the lower to the Higher Self and on into an unspeakably beautiful Beyond. Through the Spark of the Flame, the Christos within, that Higher Self under the guidance of Isvara seeks ever to lead us upward to reunion with our own Divinity. This is tuition, that of the parent for the child, of the teacher for the pupil. In ever expanding spheres of consciousness it continues on forever toward Isvara. Through cycle after cycle that pass like the seasons of the year, the blossoms of successive lives bloom forth upon the planes of manifestation from Saptaparna, the man-plant. These are our lives, fragrant and graceful, or alas, fetid and disgraceful.

Let us remember, while we are under tuition, that we do not come back to exhibit the proficiencies that we have acquired by lessons well learned. No instructor, let alone the Higher Self, keeps a student in the same grade indefinitely for the sole purpose of permitting him, or her,

to shine as brilliant in one subject. We are brought back to remedy deficiencies and can never advance very far until we do so. It takes moral stamina to return to rectify a failure. A wilful and rebellious pride seeking applause for some particular ability that repetition has made almost automatic will hold us here until aught in the way of mundane glory begins to pall upon us. Such self-adulation as is engendered by success in some highly specialized skill is a great temptation and one that leads on in ceaseless circles with the lure of subtle sophistries. Nonetheless, it binds us as securely on the wheel of life as do the cords of sodden sensuality. The tuition to which we are subjected has but the one object of developing the intuition. Then, we can return and take conscious direction of our lives and cease to be led like little children. Then, in simile, the golden stamen that rises in each flower will have become pollinated by pollen wafted from higher spheres.

Compassionately, when a human life has been a good one, the Higher Self drowns with the waters of Lethe all memory of some special proclivity. This is done in order that we may come to circumstances which will render it necessary for us to correct our lack of knowledge in essential prerequisites for further evolution. Kill our ambition and all sense of separateness sayeth the ancient doctrine, lest it hold over from life to life in every greater terrestrial achievement in this or that, and nothing else. This is the price we pay for pride, for the ruthless ambition that leads us on to an ever narrowing circle of consciousness in a selfish determination to excel our fellow men as though they were separate from ourselves. Surely, we should strive to be as skillful as we can in whatsoever task we are called upon to perform, or that into which our lives lead us. We may have an impersonal ambition to do extremely well any duty that will benefit the world at large. This is a sort of professional ambition that finds its highest recompense in contributing to the advancement of a trade, an art, or a science. This will not bind us ever tighter upon the wheels of lives. Intuition will develop soon under this uninhibited tutelage that is not self-centered. Manifold skills will come as direct cognition replaces the laborious

necessity for studying out each detail. The influx of illumination will be in direct proportion to our selflessness.

The Theosophical Forum

KEYNOTES TO MEDITATION: 2 — *Leonard Lester*

The Threshold of the Moment

All are familiar with Bulwer-Lytton's graphic story of The Dweller on the Threshold of Initiation. It visualizes the grim sentinel of retribution who guards the entrance to a higher state of being for the adventurous soul who would test his worthiness to advance. In the story of Glyndon's ambitious quest this Dweller is represented as a gruesome spectre, terrible in aspect to the rash and unprepared candidate, it being in reality the picture or simulacrum of his own lower nature built up heedlessly by himself, the progeny of idle thoughts and acts woven thus into character, daily and hourly. It makes a thrilling highlight in the story, this hideous Dweller on the Threshold, but also symbolizes a great truth.

But while we ponder over the grim picture of the Dweller, do we study with equal care the very real Threshold upon the brink of which we stand at every moment of our lives? Let us ask ourselves: what do we bring within us to face new experiences? In what habitual attitude do we approach this living Threshold? This instant of choice and determination is verily an initiation, and the presiding spirit in which we enter it is silently moulding our character as surely as the plastic clay on the revolving wheel is modelled after the image in the potter's mind. Is that image positive, firm and clear-cut, or negative, blurred and shapeless? Does it stand erect, active, facing the light, or is it harrassed by doubt and uncertainty drifting with the shadows of mood and temperament — the frettings and inconstancies which mark the disease of our modern life. For it is the positive attitude that always sounds the tone of Affirmation of Being — the divine Resonance of the Eternal. But doubt, hesitation, indifference are all the dark progeny of denial of the Highest.

"The idle Word — condemned by Jesus is *inactivity of Being*. It is the cessation of the homogeneous resonance, the Logos or Word.

The Word in its highest activity is pure spirit; in stagnation it is hell. To each man it is given in trust for all men . . . Through misuse he may learn its use. If he denies it he is lost; for by it alone he lives." (1)

Always we are creating some bright or dark guardian-angel to question or encourage our progress on the path of life; and the bright angel who guards the Threshold also guards the pilgrim on his path.

Thought is cumulative; thoughts become habits; habits entertained become character, destiny. Here is a clue: from W. Q. Judge, speaking of prevalent habits — of irritability — he says "sit down on it always, it is a terrible and cowardly foe and should never be allowed to *dwell inside*." And here are some wise words by K. T. "Electing difficult things while they are easy, and managing great things in their beginnings — transact your business before it takes form — this is the way, as the sages of antiquity have taught."

Some vibrant words, again from the pen of W. Q. Judge, may aptly be quoted here. They are from his article, signed Hadji Erinn, in an early number of *The Path* magazine: "What is the daily Initiation" he asks and answers. After referring to certain greater, solemn, and set initiatory ceremonies, he says:

"This, the daily one, without success in which no aspirant will ever have the chance to try for those that are higher, comes to the disciple with almost each moment. It is met in our relations with our fellows, and in the effects upon us of all the circumstances of life. And if we fail in these we never get to the point where greater ones are offered.

"If we cannot bear momentary defeat, or if a chance word that strikes our self-love finds us unprepared, or if we give way to the desire to harshly judge others, or if we remain in ignorance of some of our most apparent faults, we do not build up that knowledge and strength imperatively demanded from whoever is to be master of nature.

"It is in the life of everyone to have a moment of choice but that moment is not set for any particular day. It is the sum total of all days; and it may be put off until the day of death, and then it is beyond our power, for the choice has been fixed by all the acts and thoughts of the lifetime. We are self-doomed at that hour to just the sort of life, body, environment and tendencies which will best carry out our Karma."

This is a thing solemn enough, and one that makes the "daily initiation" of the very greatest importance to each earnest student. . . . But all this has been said before and it is a pity that students persist in ignoring the good advice they receive.

Do you think that if a Master accepted you He would put you to some strange test? No, He would not, but simply permitting the small events of your life to have their course, the result would determine your standing. *"It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it."*

1. From "Reflections" by W. Q. Judge, *The Path*, Vol. III, February, 1889.
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The Theosophical Forum

YOGA IN DAILY LIFE — *Ernest Wood*

It is often thought that yoga, as expounded by the most famous authority on the subject, namely Patanjali, is something to be attempted only by highly privileged persons, either particularly endowed mentally or favored by having the agreeable karma of a pleasant existence in the countryside. This is not the fact. Many of the old books touching on Yoga say to those who read them that the reader, having had the good fortune to be born a man, and especially a Brahmin (which really means a thinking man), would be indeed a fool to miss the opportunity of taking deliberate steps to reach the goal of life. To put this in modern terms I would say that yoga is life in any environment lived intelligently with a good knowledge of human psychology, as contrasted with the same life lived according to the animal instincts we have inherited. It is a life in which we make the most of our intelligence, even to the point of the conscious enjoyment of intuitions and ecstasies.

The word yoga is to be taken in two senses: (1) as describing the goal of life, which is "union with the one life" or "the uncovering of the light" and (2) as describing the practical steps which may be taken to accelerate our movement towards that desirable end. Really, no one can escape that movement, because do what we will we are bound to learn either by thought or by experience.

If we follow what may be called the positive path of yoga pursued by the man of intelligence and love and will, we shall learn by intuition — in other words, finer elements in our active being will awaken and take hold of finer realities in our lives. But even if we follow the other and common way, the path of material enlargement — the path of quantity of things, not the path of quality of life — we shall be taught by karma, and thus we shall move towards the progressive uncovering of the light, though with pain and trouble and difficulty, instead of with freedom and ecstasy.

Now, turning to Patanjali, we find first his statement that the practice of yoga is chitta — vritti — nirodha. Chitta is the mind that deals with things. Vrittis are ideas. Nirodha means control. So yoga is control of the ideas in the mind. Patanjali goes on to say that when this control is achieved the man exists in his own true state, but otherwise he is the slave of his ideas and that implies his circumstances also. Somewhere else the uncontrolled man has been described as the slave of Nature.

Students of Patanjali do not always realize that vrittis are ideas and that ideas are objects in the mind. Ideas are not to be confused with thought. Thought is an activity of the mind in relation to objects or forms of the material world, and it uses ideas in its thinking. It is not the same as mental drift or the undirected flow of ideas.

It is quite necessary to make this clear distinction between thinking and ideas. We know it well in the study of Geometry, where first we have certain axioms, which are ideas, and then we manipulate those in various ways when we deal with propositions. In Geometry then, still further, when we have done our thinking on a certain proposition, so that that has become for us a definite result, that in turn becomes an idea upon which later on we may still further build with further thought. That vrittis are ideas and not operations of thinking becomes quite clear when Patanjali proceeds to give us a list of the vrittis.

He enumerates them as in five classes. The first group is that of right ideas, which he says can be arrived at by perception, or by inference or from the testimony of reliable witnesses. The second division is the group of wrong ideas, as in the case when at dusk we mistake a post for a man or a piece of rope for a snake. The third group is fanciful ideas, such as the horns of a rabbit. Fourthly comes sleep. We say in the morning we slept well last night. We mean not merely that we felt well when we woke up, and therefore we infer that we slept well, but that there was some sort of conscious experience which can be described by the expression "slept well."

Lastly, we come to memory. Memories, of which there are several

kinds, need not be described here.

Obviously, it is a good thing for every person, whatever he or she may be doing in life, to use his or her brains in thinking, not merely in mental drift. Mental drift occurs if, let us say, at one moment I am thinking of a cat and a few moments later I find myself thinking about a bridge which I have often admired that spans the river Indus. Now, I could ask myself how I came to think of that bridge soon after I started to think about a cat. Upon looking into my mind I find that the idea of a cat brought forth a picture of a cat lying on a hearth-rug, that then this hearth-rug reminded me of a factory where I had seen such rugs being made. That factory was near the banks of the river Indus and further up the river was the bridge of which I found myself thinking. That was mental drift. If I had controlled my ideas I might have thought of something to more purpose. I might have controlled my idea on the cat so that I would know a lot more about it. I would have directed my thought by my will. As we do in all study, I would first have concentrated and then meditated. I would have concentrated on the cat and then I would have expanded my knowledge of the cat without abandoning my concentration upon that subject. That process of thinking is really what we call meditation when we apply it to spiritual, religious, ethical, abstract or philosophical thinking.

Next, Patanjali tells us that nirodha or control becomes steady with practice and uncoloredness. (I am sorry to coin such an uncouth word, but there is nothing else for it.)

Patanjali speaks of these two as abhyasa and vairagya. Abhyasa is practice, and one need only say that it is helpful to practise occasionally, when there is opportunity, the art of controlling and directing our own ideas, in reference to anything that may occur to us at the moment, or that may come up in the business of life. We shall have to tear the word vairagya to pieces to get the real meaning out of it. Vai means contrary to or against; raga has to do with being red or colored, and the termination ya is here equivalent to our "ness," thus converting the whole thing into the abstract noun, uncoloredness. The

idea is that just as you may put a block of glass on red paper and it will look red, or on green paper it will look green, so do persons have their thinking and feeling colored by their environment and ideas. But the instruction here is that the aspirant should stop, look and listen every now and then to see that he is not being carried away by external impulses, but is using his own faculties in every business that he deals with. This is a subject that could be expanded very much indeed, for multifarious are the ways small and big in which we become slaves to Nature. But this much should now be said — that first we should complete an idea by meditation, if we want to stop the mental process and derive some intuition by some uncovering of the light.

I have described the first few sutras in Book I of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. Later in Book I that author describes the final practice of complete control, called samadhi. We can leave that for the moment and jump to the beginning of Book II, where Patanjali tells the student of yoga what he must do first of all in practical life. I have heard of cases in which a would-be pupil has come to a teacher of yoga and the teacher has sent him away, telling him to come back after a number of years, and that in the meantime he should live an ordinary life in the world and try to practise certain things in that life.

Patanjali here gives us three things which are to be practised in the world as a kind of preparatory yoga, and in conjunction even with more advanced yoga if that is being carried on in the world of ordinary life. I must mention that these three practices are intended to weaken five difficulties or obstacles, instincts which arise in a man himself. These five are called the kleshas. They are: (1) mistake, (2) I-am-ness, (3) liking, (4) disliking, (5) clinging to form.

The first is the error of identifying oneself with the game of life. It is as though a chess player were to forget that his game is only a game. The yoga practice in this connection is to observe the distinction between the self and not-self as often as possible, to watch the business of life going on as a spectator but not as a passing spectator rather as one who is playing a very important game with a very definite purpose, and yet

is playing that game outside himself. In this one watches not only the external activities but also the flow of one's own thought and feeling. One sees the vrittis and becomes aware of the kleshas which build and sustain them. One has no need to pronounce sentence upon them. The mere viveka or perception uncovers the light. There is nothing to be done or made. The second klesha is self-personality. We know that our personality is a definite compound, let us hope well coordinated and useful in the world. There is a certain type of body with certain abilities and accomplishments, accompanied by a collection of ideas and habitual feelings. Such personality is a definite thing. As long as we recognize it as such and use it as our instrument in the business or game of life, it is well, but as soon as we fall into thinking "I am this" we lose our true character. For the character or core of a man is something different, which expresses itself in certain powers of thought, feeling and will.

The third klesha is akin to that coloredness which I mentioned before. It is a strong desire to obtain something, or even more, it is wishing. The implication is that we can become agitated and enslaved because we cannot get the thing that we want, or we cannot get enough of it, or, having obtained it, we are afraid of losing it. It colors our life. If we have it not, it worries us so that we do not employ our powers in dealing with other things that are in our power, or in our possession.

The fourth of these kleshas is just the opposite of that. It is the troubled condition which arises when we want to get rid of things or persons that we have, or conditions that we cannot get away from. If we allow this desire to escape from undesired conditions, to dominate our thinking and feeling or to govern our actions, again we lose our character and independence.

The fifth is clinging to things, even to the extent of fear of death. We have to come to that point of understanding in which we can feel that such possessions are simply for use, that they must come and go, that there is no such thing as static wealth; that life can only live on the wing — in brief, there is not life but only living, in which everything is

to be used as a possession. If we fail in this, it is a fact that we become possessed by our so-called possessions. This applies to everything, even to the body itself, in regard to which there is such widespread and quite unnecessary fear of death.

I do not want to dwell particularly on these kleshas at the moment, but the three practices enjoined on the novice will deal with them quite effectively. These three practices are called tapas, swadhyaya and ishvara-pranidhana. They pertain to the three parts of our nature — body, thoughts and feelings. Tapas means literally ardor. It is from the root tap, which means to heat. It almost means effort but not quite. Some have exaggerated it into the idea of mortification of the flesh, and there are instances in India of people doing very absurd things, such as sitting on spikes or holding an arm up until it withers, with the idea of practising tapas. Those are only superstitions for the real thing. Put simply, tapas means that the novice must do for his body whatever he knows to be best. If, for example, he thinks that it is not good to take mineral salt with his food, then he will not take it. If he thinks that a certain amount of exercise at a certain time is good, he will do it. With regard to action or abstention from action, he will live his bodily life in accordance with his best understanding, in relation to its own best functioning and his social environment, in which it should be harmonious with others.

The second practice means self-study. It is just that a certain amount of time should be given to studying the nature of man and his relation to his environment.

The third klesha is bowing to the Divine. This means a feeling of devotion with regard to everything. It is that religious life which includes both ethics and devotion. Everything has to be thought of as providing the best opportunity for self-development. This puts an end to a great many of the bad emotions in life, such as resentment, envy, jealousy, greed, pride, anger and fear. It makes the aspirant look out upon the world very much as an architect does, who takes all materials for exactly what they are: wood, stone, etc. Stone is stone, iron is iron,

glass is glass, and he would be a very curious architect who would sit at the roadside and weep because he could not bend a sheet of glass as he would bend a sheet of iron. There is, however, in this practice not a mere intellectual acceptance of all things as useful. It is more than that. It is a glad and joyful devotional response to this great fulness of life in which we find ourselves. It should carry with it all that intense devotion which is sometimes found with very narrow outlooks in religious circles, but it involves a recognition of the highest in everything.

I need not carry this idea of yoga in daily life much further. It is quite open to all of us to spend part of our day in concentration, meditation and contemplation, and in that contemplation to receive occasional inspirations and intuitions, accompanied by a corresponding ecstasy. To be able to control our thoughts, to expand them, and then to suspend them in an act of contemplation of any thing or idea, is not outside our reach and in fact should become easy when the three preliminary practices are carried on in daily life. These three practices weaken the kleshas. Later on we may perform a "meditation" that will entirely destroy them.

Patanjali mentions certain siddhis or abnormal powers which arise in a man as he progresses in the art of mind control or the control of ideas. But he mentions also that these are not of importance. If they become a source of pleasure or amusement, the man will stop at that subject and go no further. They will come, but he has merely to note them and pass them by. He can use them as white magic for the benefit of mankind, or the welfare of the world, but that will only be part of his particular business in life, and in his yoga practice they too will have to become subject to nirodha. If he delights in them he comes within the sphere of the kleshas, and will fall into black magic from which he will ultimately escape only by the tuition of karma.

I have said enough, perhaps, to show that yoga is for all of us and that there is no need to treat the subject with that kind of false respect which would make us think that it is only for uncommon people or

people more advanced than ourselves.

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN THEOSOPHIC PSYCHOLOGY: 1 — *Marion O. French*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Consciousness

Psychology is defined as "the science of the human mind or soul and its operations." Since Occidental psychology is not based upon a clear concept of the nature of the mind and soul, its conclusions regarding the operations thereof cannot be considered as scientific. To clarify the subject, a series of studies will present the basic theosophic concepts. The text will set forth the fundamental factors in a logical sequence for practical application. For a comprehensive understanding, students are referred to *The Esoteric Tradition* by Dr. G. de Purucker. As stated therein, "Consciousness, or mind, if the word be better liked, comes first, and out of it flows everything else into manifestation." (p. 228, Vol. I) No other available treatise on the nature and operation of the consciousness is comparable in clarity or in scope to these profound volumes by G. de Purucker.

As a premise, it is obvious that consciousness is the only fact that we can study directly, since all others are perceived through it. As an implied corollary, numbers may be regarded as the concepts which all manifestation follows in evolution and devolution, or integration and disintegration. "Foreknowledge and Reason," said Nichomachus the Greek mathematician and Pythagorean, "created all according to Number, conceivable to mind only and therefore wholly immaterial; yet real, indeed, the really real, the eternal." Geometrical forms may be regarded as numerals solidified. They are, thus, the first and clearest images which reflect creative thought. Or, as Plato declared and H. P. Blavatsky quoted (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 506) "God geometrizes." Therefore, mathematical postulates may be utilized, as in physics, to

determine tenable psychological hypotheses. In physics, the former obstacle to progress was the assumption that matter consisted of discrete stable elements and force was an operative energy distinct from the matter on which it operated. (See *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 164.)

In psychology, the great heresy is, still, that individuals are assumed to be wholly separate entities who react to motivating factors, either subjective or objective, much in the same manner that matter was supposed to react to force. This mechanistic concept is as untenable for organic life as it was for inorganic matter. To cling to it is to assume that the motivating factors exist as an inherent sum total in the universe under the old interpretation of the "law of the conservation of energy." An innate sense of its inadequacy is what leads many to seek for the influences that affect them in astrology. The instinct is correct, but "Occidental astrology is but . . . a few tattered remnants of the ancient astrological Wisdom . . ." as G. de P. states. (*E. T.*, V. I, p. 191) Correctly, individuals should be viewed as constituent parts of aggregations and as participants in the production of all actuating agencies. The individuals, the aggregations and the factors that motivate them have the same source. It is the inexhaustible fount of universal consciousness.

That source, as we may infer by astronomical observation, consists of innumerable aggregates, or congeries of many in one. Each particular One, however, is, at once, an individual and the sum of its components. This is, in no wise, different from the fact that a man is both an entity and the sum total of the living and subconsciously thinking cells and organs that compose his body. As the ancient wisdom of mankind indicates, the Empyrean that surrounds us is the abode of countless conscious entities, great and small. The great Ones outline sublime mural designs upon the immense rotundas of the celestial spaces. The little journeymen painters who serve their apprenticeships under this divine guidance are occupied in filling in the details. When the days of labor have ceased and the night of rest has come, that structure will represent the work of all of them. Its indelible imprint upon the akasic

record that is the universal memory will remain forever as their memorial and as a model for the more beautiful and perfect edifices of the future.

Upon the *Smaragdine Tablet* of Hermes was engraved the essence of the one law: "What is below is like that which is above; and what is above is similar to that which is below to accomplish the wonders of the one thing."

"As all things were produced by the meditation of one being, so all things were produced from this one *by adaptation*." (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 507) The adaptive method is that of using numerals as determinants for the harmonic proportions of all phenomenal forms. We may visualize them as the Digits of Divinity, the creative Fingers of Deity that mould matter into formative existence. There are five regular geometrical solids, or six if the transitory parallelo-piped that is analogous to the binding carbon atom be included. They are the models for all the infinite variety of mineral, vegetable, animal and human organisms. All the incessant mutations, variations, combinations and interrelations thereof are determined numerically. They constitute the observable, objective, phenomenal manifestation of noumenal, subjective thought upon the planes of existence. Literally, it is a process of reflecting the self to the self in order to attain to complete individual self-consciousness. This is the meaning of the aphorism "Man, Know Thyself" that was carved above the portal of the temple of the Delphic Oracle.

In his mathematical instruction, Pythagoras sought "to free the soul from the fetters of sense and force it to realize its powers." (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 7) In essence, this is the same as to emancipate the mind from the toils of time, or from the logical chronometric sequence of what we call events. They are the effects that follow causes in accordance with the Karman that we, ourselves, have generated. The filaments, spun into that seemingly interminable thread which extends from the past into the future, are those causes. As Plato puts it, the spinners of the threads are the three Fates enthroned around the

distaff of Necessity. Upon it is wound the flax of Universal Life, the "Kosmic Consciousness-Force-Substance" that G. de P. discusses (*E. T.*, V. I, p. 199). From it, the filaments come that are twisted into thread upon the spinning wheel. Those Fates are the daughters of Necessity, and Lachesis sings of the past, Clotho of the present and Atropos of the future. Their song is accompanied by the harmony of the Music of the Spheres intoned by the Sirens seated upon those orbs. (*The Republic*, Book X, p. 499) The adjustments of timing in the motion of the spindle made by the Fates can be compared to what would occur in a rotating planet as it revolved upon its orbit. The equations are those of an epicycloid as a point on the circumference of a circle that rolls on the outside of a fixed circle, which will make 7 cusps if the radii are as 1:7. Astronomically, the problem becomes complicated because the fixed circle, or orbit around the sun, advances spirally as the sun describes its orbital course. For reference see *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 46 and *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 91.

We may imagine the threads that are spun upon the "Wheels" of life as being woven into tapestries on the warp of space with the weft of time, to form a recording cyclorama in the astronomical structures of infinitude. In each, we may sense a dynamic symmetry of space and time relations in the conformity of all to sublime Deific Concepts. By understanding its processus, we may become conscious collaborators in that creative design rather than unconscious ones. Hegemony is exercised through mathematical laws in this Universe that "actually is embodied consciousness," as G. de P. states. (*E. T.*, V. I, p. 258) This, then, is the basic aspect of real psychology. The development of the thesis thereon will be carried forward through the next Study No. 2 on Hierarchies of Consciousness. Succeeding studies will seek to elucidate the operation of the individual consciousness within that of its Hierarchy.

"THE CREATIVE URGE IS A PRICELESS THING" — Hazel Boyer Braun

More just now than at any other time, we need to reach out with heart and mind to grasp the feeling that we move with the current of a life greater than the human one. This tends to lift us out of the stratum of violence. The weight of our life can tell in the balance of constructive forces if we are careful to be never at war in our thoughts, to be truly creative in sending out love and courage to all who are troubled.

The reservoir of world thought requires clarifying in these times when so many persons have lost what they most cherished in life, home and loved ones. It is important that we be positive in the best ways lest we be caught up in a stream of gloomy thoughts which only add to the world's sadness. We can still be dynamic and definitely the generators of a spirit of joy and beauty.

When we have the spirit of giving and helping, we are working with nature, in harmony with the action of the sun's rays, the rain and the gentle breezes that open the petals of the flowers. This arouses in us the creative side of our natures and then we shall find at hand work to do that will be helpful. If we determine to do some beautiful thing every day of our lives we can rise to this creative level of consciousness. It may be no more than making an arrangement of flowers to send to some one or making the home more beautiful than usual. Association with creative work inspires us to do something, *then* the will comes into play.

It is possible to escape contact with the baser and ugly side of life. One may live with his chosen works of art, his garden blooming with flowers and his own thoughts, but unless the real self is stirred by some ideal of service to help humanity through the unfortunate lessons of life, there can be little true happiness. Where there is time, it is wise to take up some form of creative work and give expression to the best self that it may become a genuine contribution to the light side of nature

and the life we all share.

We need art in our lives more in times of great stress than at any other time. The magic of it is more easily comprehended when we try it on troubled minds, persons absorbed in personal affairs; for if they have learned to be quiet and sympathetic to interests outside of themselves, they will always find the effect of this magic in an hour or two all alone in an art gallery. Happy days would be found nearer if all who were unhappy would cultivate a friendship with art.

The compelling inspiration of the artist challenges self-forgetfulness in one who would get the true message intended. The artist can only interpret grand ideas when he himself is self-forgetful, lifted by the inspiration of the moment into a higher stratum of consciousness. In every age great art is the product of self-forgetfulness, of that artist who goes quietly about his work and finds happiness in it.

Whenever an artist has been carried out into the higher ranges of his consciousness by the inspiration of his work, this imprint has the power to lift the sensitive beholder out of the ordinary self and to awaken the higher imagination, to refresh the whole nature. The search for truth, for understanding that flows in sympathy and kindness, must be in the background of all true art that will live and furnish an ideal of inspiration to others.

We must begin sometime if we are ever to come into our own as awakened artists. An artist is not made in a lifetime. It takes the mounting impress on our characters of many lives of real effort. The creative urge is a priceless thing. It drives the artist to want discipline, to go to any trouble, to strive ever toward perfection, growing in the conception of the ideal. Discipline is the very foundation of all art. Discipline abolishes the petty and the personal and makes way for that abandon which releases the inner greatness. "One should discipline one's self in the spirit of autumn, and deal with others in the spirit of spring," said old Chang Cha'o.

As we advance away from much that we abhor in the art expressions

of today, from brutality, sensationalism, fakery, vulgarity, and the reign of the evil forces in man's nature; as we approach cleaner, simpler, and more wholesome living, finer sentiment about life, more and more numbers of the human family will become artists, in the sense that all life is a school of art.

Everything moves in cycles. Just as violets blossom in the spring time and chrysanthemums in the autumn, so the human family has its dark ages of spiritual barrenness and its epochs when conditions are right for interest to center upon the nobler aspects of life, a time when latent memories of "golden ages" of enlightenment in the eons of the past blossom forth and men catch again gleams of age-old spiritual truths.

Those "golden ages" of China, Egypt, Greece, and other lands were times when art, science and spiritual truths were revered, when every person was an artist of some kind. The art expressions were noble, there was beauty in the smallest detail of daily living, simplicity, dignity and regard for others. The inner joy, the generating force that brings to flower such a cultural cycle, is deeply rooted in man's spiritual nature.

As we grow into a genuine culture in this western world it will be the usual thing for every person to be an artist just as it was in those ancient days. The value of the development of the potential artist that dwells in every human being will then be clearly recognized, for it is a challenge to all, a chance to forget our small personal selves, to grow and to be our greater selves.

Even the products of the lowly earth, which in obedience to human hands, responsive to the artist's vision, have been transformed into vases, jars, bowls, plates, kettles, figures, and bottles of innumerable varieties of color and form, make us realize that the love and devotion of the artists who have made them have impressed something of their self-forgetfulness, of impersonality, on the very atoms of the pots they have made and have lifted them up, but not simply by the new forms they have given them.

With all our aspiration, our turning of our faces toward the stars, we are after all bound to this old earth until we have done our part to launch every atom of the vehicle of our experience, on its way toward its God-like unfoldment. Indeed we can learn even from the pots and jars; yes, and kettles. It was George Midgeley who said: "When you are up to your neck in hot water, do what the kettle does — sing!"

The artist, filled with awe and reverence, with joy in his work, his quick sympathy ever stirred by nature's manifold wonder, possesses the seer's vision that senses some of the inner beauty and harmony residing within the simple objects of life about him. All nature speaks to him in terms of rhythm; poems in line, color, mass light, shadow, movement, and repose. He is absorbed in his world of the problems of interpretation of all he sees and feels.

The power to be an artist — whether musician, poet, painter sculptor, architect, dancer, actor, or writer — is latent in every human being. An artist's career is filled with an inner joyousness that comes from obedience to the awakened positive and creative forces in his own nature, and he truly lives only when he is waked from absorption in non-essential affairs, into the universal wonder the unspeakable grandeur of the inner spiritual qualities of the world in which we live.

As we move forward into a new time and a more genuine culture every occasion should be modeled after a plan of perfect harmony and beauty, an inspiration to carry a lovely spirit into the daily tasks, great or small.

The Theosophical Forum

THE HEART DOCTRINE — *Virginia Vaughan*

Today's thinking is wrong in that if we have been told something is true, we too often accept it as truth without bothering to sit down to figure things out for ourselves. We do not follow our *own* reasoning, we follow the reasoning of others. Yet there commonly are two types of minds: first, the coldly intellectual reasoning mind, and second, the intellectual mind lit by intuition which unerringly guides it to correct conclusions. The mind *alone* is cold. But when it is guided by the intuition, love and compassion of the heart, then the man who has this mind is truly great. The one who has not intuition must have things proven to him; he cannot accept hearsay, unverified reports — and most unfortunately, because he does not possess it — cannot acknowledge intuition. This kind of mind cannot accept your saying "I know this is so because I feel it to be the truth"; such a statement immediately causes resentment, incredulity or even derision.

Reasoning by the mind must be developed, but not mind-reasoning *alone*; for without its spiritual counterpart it is dangerous, and hinders development of the higher perceptual faculties. Frederick Clarke Prescott in his book *The Poetic Vision*, speaks of this. He calls it the Voluntary or Purposive thought, and it is guided by a "Distinct purpose or conscious interest, controlling by selection the associations spontaneously offered to fit the end in view. The will, impelled by interest, fixes the attention, and this results in reasonings, or attention. . . . It is closely in touch with sensuous experience, immediately utilizing the reports of the senses and controlling them. Its result is the knowledge which is systematized in science. The thought contained herein may be relatively cold and mainly intellectual; the imagination is at work but controlled, working in a prosaic way."

Those who have developed their intellectuality to a great extent, yet in some way have overlooked the equal development of the spiritual compassion and brotherhood aspect, are often deluded into believing

they are far in advance of their brother beings. These are the ones who are unable to discern the Real from the Unreal, and are led on devious and illusory paths. Because they have not the Heart Doctrine — Intuition — they are like half-blind persons, for without intuition they cannot perceive what is right and what is wrong. They are falsely directed because it is only their brain-mind's function directing them; they have not the higher spiritual faculties working to any great degree through the mind.

For these persons, this leads to a state of egotism, an intellectual superiority complex, which in the end will bring them nothing but misfortune and an ultimate realization that they are — not ahead — but behind on the ladder of life. By observance one sees evidence of this. People who may have very little education or a completely average intellect, are often far more advanced in certain ways than those who may be very learned and superior intellectually. These intellectuals have developed a marvelous sense of reasoning, capacity for absorption and understanding; but they have not the true compassion, the understanding and sensitivity, nor the sympathy and tolerance for others" failings that shines like a light in those who live the Heart Doctrine. Absolute Loyalty, an esteemed human quality, actually divine, is absent in these coldly Intellectual egotists. Thus we should not be overwhelmed by seemingly learned and overpowering intellects, *unless* we see that they have developed *in equal degree*, the spiritual heart doctrine that is more important in one person than twenty of great intellect without it.

One who has his reasoning intellectual mind often encounters a real difficulty when first he becomes interested in Theosophy. He must go through many more phases than he who can feel, by intuition, that these teachings are right and true. Perhaps to him the Theosophical doctrines of Karma, Reincarnation — the basic teachings — are accepted; he sees enough proofs and results to believe them reasonable. Then he enters into the more technical and deeper teachings, and there he may rebel at acceptance. It is at this point that the reasoning brain-mind, unenlightened by a conscious opening to the

higher Manas and Buddhi principles, fails. There is nothing to go on except the words of our Teachers, the Leaders of the T. S., and ancient teachings of past civilizations. There are no proofs, except the realization of truth that comes from *within*, although the broad view shows that the whole philosophy fits into one logical plan which answers every problem.

There must be reception from a far deeper source than the brain-mind. Unless Intuition is developed, many teachings will be "seen through a glass darkly." Broad-mindedness, sympathy, tolerance, loyalty, and compassion for others are all methods leading to development of this faculty; and there must be a desire to learn, only not for the purpose of personal ambition, but for the purpose of aiding and imparting knowledge to others.

It is important therefore, not only to individual evolution, but to the evolution of the whole race, to develop intuition. If our present humanity is deceived by the illusion of Intellectuality without Spirituality, our civilization will regress. Let us look carefully then, in order to assure ourselves that Intellectuality leading to individual progress is not our motive or objective.

"Which wilt thou choose, O thou of dauntless heart? The Sam-tan of "eye Doctrine," four-fold Dhyana, or thread thy way through Paramitas, six in number, noble gates of virtue leading to Bodhi and to Prajna, seventh step of Wisdom?"

The Theosophical Forum

SPEAKING OF THEOSOPHY . . . — *Robin Pratt*

Whether we are "Old Theosophists," fully informed about the intricate time schedules of the peregrinations of the rounds and the races, the complex interrelations of vast cosmic entifications and their energizing principles, — stop me if I misspeak, — or whether we are the merest fledgelings, gasping in full wonderment that here at last we find the Great Answer to It All, we like to "talk Theosophy."

Who among us, having for the first time encountered Theosophy in the questing years of life, but remembers the stunning, light-breaking impact of these great truths upon our minds, the thrill of new confidence within our hearts. You who have known Theosophy from earliest memory, having been born into it, are in a way fortunate. But you have, in this life at least, missed that throb of sudden discovery after prolonged searching, that coming into the sunlight after years of tunneling, wrestling and black conflict, — and having missed that, — you do not perhaps quite fully evaluate the wisdom that is yours nor sense how much others need it. One does not question or seek to share what seems a native inheritance.

Some of us find Theosophy only after much searching, and like most converts we are slightly fanatic about it. We want to rush out and tell others all about it, willy-nilly. This exuberance is reasonable enough if not allowed its head too long before it is broken to the bit. Ask any old Theosophist why this is. He will expatiate upon this swing of the pendulum in impressively couched terms, redolent of the more abstruse portions of the *Secret Doctrine*, touching upon the Law of Cycles with a dash, maybe, of Sanskrit to give it just that soupcon of esotericism and ancient authority. But the point is, fanaticism, though excusable at first, is reprehensible when perpetuated beyond the time when the scales should be balanced and equilibrium restored. Fanaticism breeds fixity, and the essence of the Theosophic teaching is away from crystallization of concepts toward the unfoldment of

consciousness, toward expansion, ever becoming, adaptability and change.

If we would have others listen to our teachings, we need first to be good and receptive listeners ourselves. Some of the greatest teachers of Theosophic Wisdom never preach at all, nor even speak of it. From the eloquent silence of their vital, integrated and luminous lives, and from their understanding hearts, they elicit enquiry and inspire unsolicited emulation.

He who is not really seeking does not want to hear what we may have to say. He will not listen. If our path crosses his, nothing but lives as they are lived and our sincere compassion for his problem will make any difference to him. Therefore, conversationally speaking, one does not set out to talk Theosophy. One knows it, lives it, and one develops that special awareness of the moment's need so that no true inquirer ever goes away unaided.

The true inquirer for a reconciliation of life's seeming anomalies asks everywhere. He asks within himself, seeks out his pastor, teacher, and consults the man on the street. He is pretty desperate, mind you. What is the reason for all the suffering? Why must we live only to die? Why does not life, with its myriad inequalities, add up better than it does? He finds no answer within, and he is equally frustrated without. His pastor pontificates, or, if a kindly simple soul, he offers a well meant but unsatisfying blanket formula of dogma and the enjoinder that the supplicant open his heart to the Lord and all things will be added unto him. And the professor, privately sharing his uncertainty, offers him cynicism in the guise of much learning. That man on the street says, "Search me! Let's have a drink."

But the quester does not give up though no light shines. He is spiritually desperate. When the striving is great enough, the answer is forthcoming. Hope is almost spent perhaps, and just then someone, somewhere, *SAYS* something. It may be only a word, a phrase, or a lecture attended with a chance acquaintance. Chance? Or it may be no spoken word at all but encounter with a life so tranquil and yet

powerfully pervasive that it bespeaks a motivation one longs to fathom.

And so one gets the hint, the clue, and moves on from there to discovery of some of the many sources of answers to one's questions. Usually it is all so new and strange, so absorbingly fascinating, that the searcher yearns for plenty of soul satisfying talk, — conversation with someone who is informed about these ancient and eternal truths. Of course, he begins reading voraciously, but he needs the outlet of communication and clarification gained only through conversational interchange, especially at the beginning.

There is something in the experience of spiritual awakening, as all who know will attest, that is like recognition, as if one were in a very real sense coming home after a long journey. It is like waking from a long bad night of dreaming and seeing the sunshine streaming through the familiar ruffled curtains of one's bedroom. For a little while the novice should be given the opportunity to talk it out, — at the expense, maybe, of his guide's leisure hours and precious sleep. Usually the delight is mutual, and the opportunity to help is beyond price.

How then do we who have found our truths meet the need of the true searcher? Do we open our hearts to his problem so that we have the compassion that helps us see life from his point of view, intuit where best to commence, how little or how much to say, and in what language? Have we clarified our own thinking, cleansed our natures of emotional colorations and pet prejudices, familiarized ourselves with the fundamentals so that we can answer the need lucidly, simply and fully enough? Having the knowledge, perhaps a great fund of it, have we the fine discrimination to say less than too much, letting the neophyte articulate his newfound wonder, haltingly express what this truth means to him?

The temptation of the teacher is to hold forth, dilate, submerge the pupil in a welter of verbiage. Time. . . . There is time for teaching in small doses, and administered only when he asks his questions, as he surely will if Theosophy has sounded a gong in his being. Whatever the degree of his enthusiasm, it is not well to gorge him before digestion

has a chance to do its work.

Depending on his background, the seeker needs special intuitive response from his mentor. Does his search stem from emotional desperation, intellectual frustration, — what? What are his conditioning prejudices? To trample roughshod on his tender corns of prejudice before he has oriented himself to the new enfranchising concepts can alienate and delay him. In his nature fairly uncomplicated though well intentioned? Is his capacity for intake limited to a few simple, practical ideas and their working hypotheses, or is he one who needs to plumb the depths and reach beyond the farthest star before his questing mind can find its stillness? It is no time for blundering on the part of him who attempts to serve as guide. Though the moment is certainly not the one for withdrawal into taciturnity, and he may even wisely let the wisdom pour forth as one may who has the "gift of tongues," the general emphasis of his effort to help may safely be on the side of discreet reticence. The understanding heart in its compassion knows what help is needed and, partly with its stillness as well as with what it is moved to say, it plays its right part in the unfolding of a budding consciousness.

As the one whose privilege it is to help senses the explicit need, savours of the problem, help must come through him. His years of study have rendered him a suitable channel, as has his life. If he is very wise, he sternly checks the temptation to air his erudition; he remembers his own long-ago exquisite moment of discovery. He tunes his spirit to that of the newcomer, finds the right rhythm. Thus joy and discovery and the wisdom of the heart blend in a true harmony of brotherhood.

Having accepted the intuitive appointment to serve in the early awakening of another, responsibility looms large in other ways than the mere imparting of the truth. One's own life and practices must come under scrutiny. How do we, the expositors, exemplify these fine truths which we teach? Though the eyes of the grateful pupil may be charitably blind to the faults of the teacher for a time, the way of the neophyte is sometimes marred by disquieting disillusionment.

Therefore, disclaiming perfection, we nonetheless mend our ways and deepen the wellsprings of our hearts. And the high wisdom of the heart channels its crystalline stream to the thirsty heart of another.

The Theosophical Forum

THE COMPLEX NATURE OF BOOKS — *Allan J. Stover*

How often in browsing through a library, we sense the futility of the printed book as medium of expression for sublime ideas beyond the ordinary power of words. Too often the body of the book, such as it is, has no soul.

The ancient poets prayed to the gods to inspire them — i. e., to breathe into the words an inner meaning, a spiritual force. To read books so written is often to evoke a current of thought paralleling the printed words, like an aroma of some unearthly fragrance. Such books have souls, the spirit has breathed upon them, the writer has been in some degree illumined by his higher self, and its light is reflected in the words of the printed page. We all have certain books we treasure, and turn to again and again; it may be to a chapter, perhaps only a paragraph, but in any case we open a door through which we catch glimpses of inner beauty and light.

All the great writers whose works endure have put something beyond mere words into their books; all, though sometimes unconventional in their lives, were illumined by high and noble ideals. William Quan Judge once said: "A very truism, when uttered by a Teacher, has a deeper meaning for which the student should seek, but which he will lose if he stops to criticize and weigh the words in mere ordinary scales." The sayings of Lao-tse open up vistas of thought beyond the power of words to express and H. P. B.'s *Voice of the Silence* stands supreme in its use of words to enlighten and inspire.

The words of a true Teacher speak on all planes of consciousness and not alone to the physical brain, and this is why they become priceless treasures to the human race.

The highest class of books, then, are those whose authors were to some extent illumined by the light of the higher self. Perhaps the most abundant class are the productions of the ordinary mind (kama-

manas). These include hosts upon hosts of valuable and instructive works of travel, history, description, etc., of both a technical and popular nature. In these the reader frequently finds hints of a deeper understanding of nature's laws. Then there are the books of passion and violence, the "horror tales" reeking of kama-loka, and the weird and uncanny drivel sometimes inspired by the lower astral realms.

Books are as various as the classes of people who read them, but unfortunately much of the literature of today is permeated by effluvia rising from the depths which defiles all it touches. These books, carrying no message for the soul but to the tune of "everybody's doing it" play their part to drag down humanity to the lower levels. . . It matters not that these are listed as best sellers and carry enticing blurbs — to read unworthy books is to be surrounded by and attract to oneself the leering and cruel elemental forces that accompany the acts of violence and lust the words too often describe. For the time the reader is identified, to a certain degree, with the characters whose adventures he so eagerly follows.

Is this mere fancy? Let the reader study his emotional reactions as he reads, take note of his dreams at night, and decide for himself.

Many authors, perhaps the majority, during months of intensive writing, visualize their characters, and through the creative power of imagination endow them with vitality and substance; and in his turn the sensitive reader reproduces the emotions, thought and mental images, as sound is reproduced from a record.

One's life may be changed for the better by a good book, or on the other hand sometimes started on the downward path by an evil book; because of this, the trend now becoming all too evident in literature and art carries an ominous suggestion of national degeneracy, comparable to social conditions at the time of the fall of the Roman Empire, or again during the decadent Period of the Restoration, in seventeenth century England. Both periods historians would like to forget.

The destiny of the race today hangs in the balance, and every act and every thought weighs the scale in one or the other direction. The decision rests with each individual.

The Theosophical Forum

THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL PROPOSITIONS — *H. P. Blavatsky*

The Secret Doctrine establishes three fundamental propositions:

One — An Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, and Immutable PRINCIPLE on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude. It is beyond the range and reach of thought — in the words of Mundukya, "unthinkable and unspeakable."

To render these ideas clearer to the general reader, let him set out with the postulate that there is one absolute Reality which antecedes all manifested, conditioned, being. This Infinite and Eternal Cause — dimly formulated in the "Unconscious" and "Unknowable" of current European philosophy — is the rootless root of "all that was, is, or ever shall be." It is of course devoid of all attributes and is essentially without any relation to manifested, finite Being. It is "Be-ness" rather than Being (in Sanskrit, *Sat*), and is beyond all thought or speculation.

This "Be-ness" is symbolized in the Secret Doctrine under two aspects. On the one hand, absolute abstract Space, representing bare subjectivity, the one thing which no human mind can either exclude from any conception, or conceive of by itself. On the other, absolute Abstract Motion representing Unconditioned Consciousness. Even our Western thinkers have shown that Consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, and motion best symbolizes change, its essential characteristic. This latter aspect of the one Reality, is also symbolized by the term "The Great Breath," a symbol sufficiently graphic to need no further elucidation. Thus, then, the first fundamental axiom of the Secret Doctrine is this metaphysical ONE ABSOLUTE — BE-NESS — symbolized by finite intelligence as the theological Trinity.

... the "Causeless Cause," the "Eternal," and the "Unknowable," may be essentially the same as that of the Consciousness which wells up within

us: in short, [that] the impersonal reality pervading the Kosmos is the pure noumenon of thought. . . .

Parabrahm (the One Reality, the Absolute) is the field of Absolute Consciousness, *i.e.*, that Essence which is out of all relation to conditioned existence, and of which conscious existence is a conditioned symbol. But once that we pass in thought from this (to us) Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contrast of Spirit (or consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object.

Spirit (or Consciousness) and Matter are, however, to be regarded, not as independent realities, but as the two facets or aspects of the Absolute (Parabrahm), which constitute the basis of conditioned Being whether subjective or objective.

Considering this metaphysical triad as the Root from which proceeds all manifestation, the great Breath assumes the character of precosmic Ideation. It is the *fons et origo* of force and of all individual consciousness, and supplies the guiding intelligence in the vast scheme of cosmic Evolution. On the other hand, precosmic root-substance (*Mulaprakriti*) is that aspect of the Absolute which underlies all the objective planes of Nature.

Just as pre-Cosmic Ideation is the root of all individual consciousness, so pre-Cosmic Substance is the substratum of matter in the various grades of its differentiation.

Hence it will be apparent that the contrast of these two aspects of the Absolute is essential to the existence of the "Manifested Universe." Apart from Cosmic Substance, Cosmic Ideation could not manifest as individual consciousness, since it is only through a vehicle of matter that consciousness wells up as "I am I," a physical basis being necessary to focus a ray of the Universal Mind at a certain stage of complexity. Again, apart from Cosmic Ideation, Cosmic Substance would remain an empty abstraction, and no emergence of consciousness could ensue.

The "Manifested Universe," therefore, is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its *EX*-istence as "manifestation." But just

as the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of the One Unity in which they are synthesized, so, in the manifested Universe, there is "that" which links spirit to matter, subject to object.

This something, at present unknown to Western speculation, is called by the occultists Fohat. It is the "bridge" by which the "Ideas" existing in the "Divine Thought" are impressed on Cosmic substance as the "laws of Nature." Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation, the "Thought Divine" transmitted and made manifest through the Dhyān-Chohans, the Architects of the visible World. Thus from Spirit, or Cosmic Ideation, comes our consciousness; from Cosmic Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualized and attains to self — or reflective — consciousness; while Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life.

Further, the Secret Doctrine affirms:

Two — The Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing," called "the manifesting stars," and the "sparks of Eternity." "The Eternity of the Pilgrim" is like a wink of the Eye of Self-Existence (Book of Dzyan). "The appearance and disappearance of Worlds is like a regular tidal ebb, flux, and reflux."

This second assertion of the Secret Doctrine is the absolute universality of that law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature. An alternation such as that of Day and Night, Life and Death, Sleeping and Waking, is a fact so common, so perfectly universal and without exception, that it is easy to comprehend that in it we see one of the absolutely fundamental laws of the universe.

Moreover, the Secret Doctrine teaches: —

Three — The fundamental identity of all Souls with the Universal Over-Soul, the latter being itself an aspect of the Unknown Root; and the obligatory pilgrimage for every Soul — a spark of the former — through the Cycle of Incarnation (or "Necessity") in accordance with Cyclic and Karmic law, during the whole term.

In other words, no purely spiritual Buddhi (divine Soul) can have an independent (conscious) existence before the spark which issued from the pure Essence of the Universal Sixth principle — or the OVER-SOUL — has (a) passed through every elemental form of the phenomenal world of that Manvantara, and (b) acquired individuality, first by natural impulse, and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by its Karma), thus ascending through all the degrees of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest Manas, from mineral and plant, up to the holiest archangel (Dhyani-Buddha). The pivotal doctrine of the Esoteric philosophy admits no privileges or special gifts in man, save those won by his own Ego through personal effort and merit throughout a long series of metempsychoses and reincarnations.

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Such are the basic conceptions on which the Secret Doctrine rests.

It would not be in place here to enter upon any defense or proof of their inherent reasonableness; nor can I pause to show how they are, in fact, contained — though too often under a misleading guise — in every system of thought or philosophy worthy of the name.

Once that the reader has gained a clear comprehension of them and realized the light which they throw on every problem of life, they will need no further justification in his eyes, because their truth will be to him as evident as the sun in heaven.

COMMENTARY — G. de Purucker

[On the opening page of *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* by Dr. de Purucker appear these words: "In our last two meetings we studied the Three Fundamental Propositions or Principles in H. P. Blavatsky's wonderful work, *The Secret Doctrine*." Reports of these two meetings were not included in the published work, the book starting with the third lecture. Pertinent extracts from these preliminary lectures, given respectively January 4 and January 11, 1924, are here reproduced, with closing remarks by Katherine Tingley, then Leader and Teacher. — Eds.]

We should all feel deeply and gratefully sensible of the occasion which is here given us to approach along the paths of thought the doctrines which from immemorial time have enlightened the intellect of our fellow-students, have given courage to strong hearts under persecution, and have directed the forces of the world along the lines which men hold dearest — the lines of religion and the ethical principles which govern human conduct.

Personally I am deeply sensible of the responsibility which the Teacher's remarks, preceding this talk, have put upon me, as called forth by her to say words which shall be simple, condensed, clear, helpful. Her instructions are to take the literary masterpiece of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky's life, her *Secret Doctrine*, and from beginning to end of it touch, if possible, upon every main doctrine therein contained, and produce a record and interpretation of its teachings which all minds can understand and which will be helpful to all members of the School both here and throughout the world.

The subject is a great one: great in scope, great in possibilities. I approach the duty with a true awe, with my heart filled with reverence for these venerable doctrines which from times so far back that "the

mind of man runneth not to the contrary" of them, have provided the world with its religions, its philosophies, its sciences, its arts, its ethics, and therefore its governments.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky opens her work by enouncing three fundamental propositions. *First*, is her enunciation of an inscrutable Principle; the *second* postulate, the second fundamental proposition, is her declaration that the universe is the playground, the field, the arena, the scene, of incessant, eternal, never ceasing periodicity: that is to say, cyclical movement, the manifesting of the eternal Life in the cyclical appearance and disappearance of worlds — stars, planets, and the other celestial bodies in the cosmic container which men so vaguely and inaccurately call Space. She tells us, voicing the teaching of the Ancient Wisdom, that these worlds come and go like sparks, mystically called the "sparks of eternity." The life-cycle of each of the greater bodies is of necessity of immense duration.

The *third* postulate — by no means the least in importance, that which is easiest to understand, that which for men perhaps is most pregnant with truth — is that the universe and all in it are one immense, eternal Organism. This third fundamental proposition tells us not merely that the universe is one with all that is in it, but more particularly that the being of man, his body, his bodies; his soul, his souls; and his spirit, are but the offspring, the fruitage of forces. — Here we come upon one of the doctrines most necessary for us to understand in the magnificent sweep of Theosophical philosophy, and it is the doctrine which H. P. B. has called the doctrine of Hierarchies; that is to say, that the Cosmos, the universe, while one organism, is nevertheless formed, so to say, of steps, or gradations of beings, consciousnesses, or intellects, of all various kinds, which the universal life manifests in, and that these are interrelated, and correlated and co-ordinated, and work together in one unity towards one common object and end.

We see thus that we are not merely the fleshly children of earth, beings like butterflies, born of a day; but verily sparks of the Heart of Being, of the central fire of the universal life. If we could feel this wonderful

truth in our hearts, and if we could carry our feeling into our daily lives, no force would be greater to govern our conduct than it; nothing could better mold our destinies, nothing could put us upon a nobler path of achievement and service than it.

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Before resuming our talk of last week it would seem good to quote from H. P. Blavatsky the paragraph occurring at the bottom of page 13, preceding her treatment of these fundamental Propositions:

Before the reader proceeds to the consideration of the Stanzas from the Book of Dzyan, which form the basis of the present work, it is absolutely necessary that he should be made acquainted with the few fundamental conceptions which underlie and pervade the entire system of thought to which his attention is invited. These basic ideas are few in number, and on their clear apprehension depends the understanding of all that follows; therefore no apology is required for asking the reader to make himself familiar with them first, before entering on the perusal of the work itself.

These three Propositions may be called a synopsis of the entire system of Esoteric Philosophy. They are an epitome of the religious and philosophic reasoning of the human soul from times vanishing into unknown antiquity. Necessarily, therefore, are they very difficult to understand, and in some of their reaches they cannot be understood fully by the human mind. For instance, while we cannot say with reference to this first Proposition what this *Principle* is of which H. P. Blavatsky speaks, nevertheless we can talk about it, talk around it, say what it is *not*, as H. P. Blavatsky herself does when, after saying that in the words of the Hindu Upanishad, it is "unthinkable and unspeakable," she proceeds to speak of it and to give the ancient teaching about it as it was understood by the greatest minds of olden times.

This principle beyond the reach of human thought must be all that

which passes human understanding and which for that reason we can only call the ALL — a word simply expressing our ignorance, it is true; but it does express the fact that this ineffable Principle is ALL.

Ultimately from it we sprang, back to it we are journeying through the aeons of illimitable time. All thoughts ultimately came from it, but by no fiat of a thinking mind however great. The ancient philosophy tells us that we may liken the first stirrings of being in this ALL to the life-germ of an egg. How marvelous it is that a thing which, when chemically analyzed, consists of but a few elements of matter, yet if not disturbed or destroyed, under proper conditions, brings forth a living being!

Many are the religions which have treated of this Principle in varying ways. The Hebrew Bible opens its cosmogony with the words: "In the beginning," that is to say, "In the principle"; and so translated in the Greek Septuagint. "God made the world and the world was without form and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the waters." Now here is a wonderful thing. The thought in those lines is by no means well expressed philosophically, but it does contain the esoteric teaching as we have it here in the Secret Doctrine. "In the beginning — in the Principle — in the ALL." The next statement is that "God" (the original Hebrew of this word is the plural noun "*elohim*, a curious compound of a feminine noun with a masculine plural termination), *Elohim*, made the earth and the earth was formless and "void." What does "void" mean? It means emptiness, vacuity.

The next statement is "And the Spirit of Elohim moved upon the waters." What waters? We have been told that the earth was formless and empty, and that it was void, — and let me remind you that the word *void* here means more than "empty"; it means, properly, in this application, *intangible, immaterial*, as we would say an astral world, a spiritual world, even, if you please. Upon it where were the waters upon which *Elohim* or the *Gods* moved? Why should they move upon the "waters"? Are most students of religion and philosophy aware that "water" is a term used in the ancient religions as signifying Space, the waters of space? So then we have an immaterial world, brought forth

from the ALL by powers, by gods if you like, and the spirit, the force of these beings, moved over or within this intangible and immaterial globe or world. . . .

Turning to the further Orient and taking up the Sanskrit teachings as expressed in the Veda — the most ancient and highly revered religious and philosophical works of Hindusthan — we find in the translation of Colebrooke the following:

Nor Aught nor Naught existed; . . .

Think of the thought in this. Neither some thing nor no thing existed.

. . . Yon bright sky

Was not, nor heaven's broad woof outstretched above.

What covered all? what sheltered? what concealed?

Was it the water's fathomless abyss?

Again the reference to the waters of space.

There was not death — yet there was nought immortal,

There was no confine betwixt day and night;

The only One breathed breathless by itself,

Other than It there nothing since has been.

Darkness there was, and all at first was veiled

In gloom profound — an ocean without light —

The germ that still lay covered in the husk

Burst forth, one nature, from the fervent heat.

See the marvelous attempt to render into ordinary human language, into commonplace figures of speech, however beautiful they may be, thoughts whose subtlety and profundity the human mind can reach towards, grasp for, attempt to reach — and yet must largely fail. And nevertheless we sense, we feel, as it were by an inner consciousness, the existence, the reality, the actuality, of that which we know is, and fail to tell.

Here we have a statement that no thing was and not-no-thing was. To This, we can give no human name; yet, as the mind works analogically,

they tell us that the germ of life arose in It as It then was. So is It now, nothing less, nothing gone, nothing added; always the same so far as we can see, and yet changing ever. Utter immobility is death. In It death exists not. Motion as we understand it, is life, and yet in It such life in reality exists not. It is in reality neither in motion nor motionless. All we can liken It to is utter Space, containing unending motion *as we understand it*, in infinity, in eternity — and all these are but words — an open confession of the inability of the human mind to reach it. Yet how noble, how proud, a statement it is of the mighty forces of the human spirit which can reach up, and even as it were get some intimation of the unutterable. There in itself is a basis for a religion of truth. How mighty a thing is the mind of man!

On page two of the first volume of her work, H. P. Blavatsky says: "It is the ONE LIFE: eternal, invisible, yet Omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations."

Is it possible inwardly to conceive the immensity of this spatial ALL and our cosmos, our universe, as hanging from It by a thread of spirit? Our *universe*, not alone our dust-speck of earth, but the universe comprised within the encircling zone of the Milky Way; and the numberless other universes hanging from It.

The ALL itself never manifests; It is the *Unmanifest*; nevertheless from It manifestation proceeds. To what can we liken It then? What were the figures of speech that the ancients used, the pictures the metaphors, by which they explained the manifest proceeding from the Unmanifest? — the material from the Immaterial, life from not-life, personality from non-personality, being, entity, from non-being and non-entity? Here is one figure: the World-Principle is the Sun. The sun sends forth innumerable rays of light eternal, in all directions, all part of that which sends them forth. The sun itself was to the ancients but the material manifestation on this plane of a hierarchic series which had its roots again inmeshed in something still higher than itself, and so forth. How did they describe this Principle, this Unspeakable, in the Vedas? Silence and darkness surrounded the thought and they simply

called it *Tad* — *That*; not even "God," not even "The Shining One"; it was limited by no adjective, simply THAT.

Another figure was the World-Tree, even more universal than that of the sun, found in the Hindu scriptures, found in the ancient American Maya, Inca, Toltec, symbols, found in ancient Europe and preserved to this day in the Scandinavian Eddas. The World-Tree — how is it imagined? It was figured as growing from above downwards, its roots rooted in THAT, and its trunk, its manifold branches, and its twigs, and its leaves, and its flowers, stretching downwards in all directions and representing the manifesting and manifested life, the incalculable things into which this cosmic river, this spiritual flood of being, runs.

Suppose a tip at the end of the lowest, utmost branch, the tip of a leaf: it draws its life from the leaf, the leaf from the twig, the twig from the branch, the branch from a larger branch, the larger branch from a larger one still, it from the trunk, the trunk from the roots, the roots — why proceed further? We can continue indefinitely. But the ancients, with their deep religious faith, simply said THAT, when referring to that which transcends human power of conception. So, when H. P. B. says here "And yet periodical in its regular manifestations," so must we understand it. It is her own teaching that It manifests never, but from It springs all life. "Between which periods reigns the dark mystery of non-Being." Between the periods of manifestation called manvantaras there are the so-called cosmic or universal pralayas. . . . Therefore, in the words of H. P. B.:

Between which periods reigns the dark mystery of non-Being;
unconscious, yet absolute Consciousness; unrealisable, yet the one self-existing reality; truly, "a chaos to the sense, a Kosmos to the reason." Its one absolute attribute, which is ITSELF, eternal, ceaseless Motion, is called in esoteric parlance the "Great Breath," which is the perpetual motion of the universe, in the sense of limitless, ever-present, SPACE. [I, 2]

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KATHERINE TINGLEY: Thinking towards the unthinkable is a wonderful, spiritualizing force; one cannot think toward it without a disposition to either think more or feel more, without opening up the inner consciousness of man. And when that inner consciousness is awakened, the soul finds itself closer to the infinite laws, closer to THAT, or that Great Center that no words can express.

I have a very, very strong feeling that even if we turn away from the truth presented to us, it leaves its impress. If we look towards it, there is a greater impress; if we think towards it, it is still greater; and it is that very condition that opens up the soul of man and brings him nearer to the consciousness of the profound and sacred and wonderful principle, impossible otherwise to conceive.

Now I declare that I cannot think towards my higher self and accept and feel it as fully as I am capable of, without opening the doors to a higher state of consciousness. If I remain in that state of consciousness, I am closer to greater light, and as I familiarize myself with the thought that I am a part of this great universe in a very true sense; and a *necessary* entity, only so far as I serve humanity (and in serving humanity, you have got to love it), so by entering into that state day by day the thinker will take its place, and the doors will be opened to that higher state of consciousness. That is where intuition commences to work. As Professor de Purucker said, it is not that we need to get anything new, but we need to make active that which we possess, and bring our souls and winds and aspirations to a higher state of consciousness.

The Theosophical Forum

ART AND THE NEW AGE — *Hazel Boyer Braun*

Humanity finds itself moving rapidly into a new era, strikingly different from the preceding one, and with certainty we may expect marked changes in the forms of art expression. Much confusion arises, however, when artists attempt to create a new art based on supposedly new principles. A truly great art of the future must employ universal ideas, as in all illustrious periods of culture in the past, for the deepest intuitions of a people are expressed in the distinct forms of their art.

In the understanding of this intuition lies the inspiration for the art of the future, and we must reach the heart of these grand ideas before we can grasp the fundamental basis underlying all art principles. These truths, expressed in symbolic language, need not be locked secrets for us today. Certainly there is no more fascinating study than that of comparative symbology, wherein is evidence that all the peoples of the earth once understood the same universal teaching.

Symbolism and myth were not born of fear of nature's forces at all, as has been stated by some researchers, but simply constituted the language of those who had been taught some of the secrets of the universe. Symbols are universal and express reverence and understanding of nature. Today we are in touch with the whole globe in an outer sense, can hear the voices of those in remote lands and learn about their daily lives; but the ancients based their kinship upon the teachings of the Mystery Schools which provided an inner communion of thought.

In former times art and religion evolved side by side, as parallel lines of expression of man's soul life. The classic period of Greece for instance was absolutely responsive to the needs of the spiritual development of the people. Their art presented man in heroic or godlike form, whether the subject was historic or mythological, only its quintessence was embodied in a severe and conventionalized style. The

ideal Greek statues were not primarily illustrations of mythological stories, but revelations. We know how the Zeus of Phidias was regarded. Dion Chrysostomus said: "So much light and godhood had the artist wrought into Zeus that at sight of the statue even the most miserable of mortals forgot his suffering."

Democritus struck the keynote when he declared beauty to be perfect measure, free from deficiency or excess: the ethical ideal embodied in this esthetic formula. The Greek idea of the fundamental principle of harmonious proportion and measure was applied to their architecture, their entire art expression and likewise their understanding of the building of worlds, because they never thought of themselves as separate from the universe.

As we survey the history of ancient peoples we are often fascinated by their art, which like a flower springs from the soil of esoteric wisdom. Today nearly every outstanding artist has a deep regard for the art of ancient China, and every gallery and studio has its precious treasures from the old masters of the far east. There is a significant promise in the present enthusiastic interest in Chinese art, from artist to layman.

With the prevalent interest in oriental art, let us note a parallel in the opening of a new epoch in our present cultural life. The trend of art, among our nature loving people, has something of that grand reverence for universal nature which inspired the Chinese.

Abstractions, surrealism, and many other more or less short-lived art impulses are searching in the same direction as the mystic who paints out-of-door themes as a hymn of praise to the inner divinity that lies at the heart of all things. The surfeit of sophistication and surface interests is the keynote that emphasizes a growing hunger for spiritual values in art and in life.

It is not difficult to recognize soul quality in art, and to see that the rare simplicity found in the vital living rhythm of the old dragon tiles made for Chinese tombs, or those Chimeras in sculpture which suggest mystic ideas in living forms, is rooted in life-giving truths of the ancient wisdom. We believe the cruelty portrayed in the forms of some of the

ancient bronzes was inspired by a realization of the danger of the elemental forces present in the cosmos, also found in the lower aspects of man's nature: forces which may lead him into destruction if not curbed by his higher nature. Another example is the Chinese dragon as an emblem of the higher man released from his body.

We find the same penetrating understanding of cosmic truths in a small stone sculpture of a three-faced deity, the Hindu Trimurti. It is significant first because of its beauty, its innate expressiveness of those qualities that we associate with the thought of divinity: serene but vitally living Splendor, the great Silence, the Sacred Flame, the Radiant Presence. No student of the ancient teachings would mistake this three-faced figure to be a personalization of deity, but would recognize in it a symbolic reminder of the primal, universal substance manifest in three aspects — Brahma, from the Sanskrit root, Brih — meaning to grow, to expand; and Vishnu from the root Vis — to pervade, being infinite space of which the gods, the Rishis, the Manus, and all in the universe are the simple potencies; and then there is Siva, the resolver, the regenerator. Modern scientists might find a relationship to the three-faced deity in their expanding and contracting universe.

It is very difficult to attain the fullest possible appreciation of the art of old India and China without making a study of the philosophy which inspired it. But the keys to an understanding of the language of symbols are relatively simple and will carry the student far. The over-ornate decoration often found in the East is sometimes criticized, because the motive and symbolism of the design is not understood by the westerner. There exists today a highly decorated gateway to a Stupa which must have stood at Stanci, India, in very ancient times. There were four of these gates placed around a circular structure, the whole of which was symbolic of the structure of the universe. At the ends of the cross-pieces of this gateway we noted on each a concentric circle with seven spirals. The gateway itself suggests man's placing his feet upon the mystic pathway, and the three cross-pieces implies that only those of the third degree of initiation were taught there. The concentric circles are identical with those wrought on gold disks which were

found in the tombs of ancient Greece, and also inscribed on the boulder blocking the entrance to a cave temple in Ireland. The symbol of the concentric circles tells all who may read it that within this temple were taught the structure of the sevenfold universe, the nature of man, the races of humanity, and the secret teaching concerning the planets.

The Greeks suggested the planes and hierarchies of existence by the various characters in their myths, each character recalling to those wise old students the fact that man may progress step by step to the place where he blends his nature and understanding with that of the cosmos and becomes godlike. The Babylonians hinted of the cosmic planes in the structure of their temples with their seven or ten steps; and sometimes many more.

Ancient Mayan artists carved a series of four faces, one above the other, on the headdresses of their monolithic statues. These heads represent the four monads or souls of man, and link with the fourfold division known in Vedic India.

The Aztec calendar stone now in the National Museum of Mexico City illustrates a tradition and calendar system of great antiquity. In it we may find evidence that the Incas, Mayas, and Aztecs have the roots of their culture, not in cave men and crudity, but in an ancient wisdom and divine knowledge that links their civilization with that of the Orient. They knew astronomy and other sciences by a process of initiation into their mystery schools. One noted American archaeologist says of the calendar stone:

It clearly determined, once and for all, the sequence of the days; the relation of all classes of the population to each other and to the whole, and set forth not only the place each group should occupy in the market place, but also the product or industry with which it was associated and the periods when its contribution to the commonwealth should be forthcoming to regular rotation. The stone was therefore not only the tablet but the wheel of the law of the state, and it can be conjectured that its full interpretation was more or less beyond the capacity of all

but an initiated minority, consisting of the elders, chiefs and priests.

The grades of social and political life were similar, according to the old records, to the early civilizations of Hindustan in the Vedic period. In both Central America and India the population was divided into four grades: the agriculturist; the commercial man; the administrator, warrior, king or prince — in short the world of officialdom; and the fourth grade the Brahmana or the philosopher, sage or initiate.

The four grades or castes of humanity are said to have taken their origin from the four paths which have been known in the Orient from time immemorial — the paths of consciousness by which man works out his own salvation through the circling years.

Some scholars consider Mayan art the greatest in America, comparable with those monuments of the Orient which were reared in the golden ages of the past, when entire nations glimpsed something of the inner splendor of life and built magnificent temples, pyramids, and towers. Karnak in Thebes, the sun-temples of Mexico, the monuments of Peru, Java, Cambodia, Athens and down the Nile, were all reared by peoples who paid humble tribute to deity. Each is universal and impersonal in significance, without the slightest trace of sentimentality.

With abounding vitality, the mysterious megalithic structures the world over speak the same mystery language as these ancient temples, yet in tones that often seem to echo from a far greater antiquity. Wherever we find them they are so similar and so amazing; the old Peruvian walls, of which the Sacahuaman fort is typical, the stones often weighing 300 tons, yet so carefully finished and put together that they have better withstood earthquakes by their very irregularity than by a rigid wall.

The amazing statues found at Akapana, Tiahuanaco and Lima, cut in intensely hard stone, are often twenty feet in height. These stone statues of America lead one in thought to the great platforms of Easter Island, the masonry of the Great Pyramid of Egypt, the circle of

Stonehenge, the Dolmens of Scotland, and the carvings and paintings discovered in the caves of Spain. Many of these belong to an antiquity greater than science is ready to admit, but decade by decade the horizon is pushed back as our knowledge increases.

The following quotation from the writings of the Old Emperor Taitsoong challenges us to widen our vision: "By using a mirror of brass, one can see to adjust one's cap; by using antiquity as a mirror, one can learn to foretell the rise and fall of empires."

As we take stock of our present status with a breadth of vision that encompasses pre-history and probes the future, we see in our United States the development of a unique architecture, that of the skyscraper erected to the god of commerce. On the other hand, the formation of our state and national parks embodies a tribute to nature that is noteworthy in a young civilization, so buried in material living and thinking that, as yet, it cannot compare in certain ways with older cultures this same land has known.

Many of us love the art of the American Indian because of its simplicity as an expression of children of nature who, having learned from the mountains and trees and sky, love silence and communion with nature above all else. Here is no brain-mind fakery of childlike naivete, but an intuitive sense of balance and rhythm which is characteristic of the repetition, accent, and dignified tempo of their music.

Indian arts are closely allied with the humble necessities of life: pots of clay to cook with, baskets to gather acorns, rugs to protect from cold, arrows to provide food and kill the menacing enemy. The creative imagination is given full vent in the elaboration of gay garments, headdresses, moccasins, deerskin suits, and jewelry. It is in the decoration of these simple necessities of life which they, even more than the white man, love to have beautiful that the Indian outlook on life is symbolized. In rugs, pottery, and baskets may be seen the patterns of clouds, rain and lightning — all those valued associations with thunder storms that make the corn grow. The colorful cubes built into stepped designs suggest the distant mountains toward which their

gaze is directed as they work.

Tassels on the corners of rugs represent the four mystic directions, the four seasons of the year. The familiar squash blossom design is the emblem of maidenly purity, wrought in a silver necklace or in the embroidery of a dress. The Thunderbird design is almost identical in significance with the Chinese Dragon; both represent the spiritual power whose home is the mists and clouds of heaven, both are the life giving power of the rain.

Truly Indian art possesses its tranquil dignity because it is above all intuitive.

Lawrence Binyon further completes our perspective and helps us to understand where we stand in the scheme:

In the East, not the glory of the proud human form, not the proud assertion of human personality, but instead of all these, all thoughts that lead us out from ourselves into universal life, hints of the infinite, whispers from secret sources — mountains, waters, mists, flowering trees, whatever tells of powers and presences mightier than ourselves.

All this tells us plainly that since the Periclean age, since the beginning of its decline, we, as a western people have, to use the Chinese saying, "Lost the way to Heaven." We turn to the art of the West and search in vain for magnificent monuments comparable to those of antiquity. Cathedrals, yes, built under the shadow of a dark and restricted understanding of life — art is there indeed, for now and then an artist broke through to a universal point of view. But may we not hope for something greater as we grow and learn?

There is hope in our being an out-of-door-loving people, for this in itself may raise our eyes to a more penetrating understanding of nature so that we may not be altogether submerged in a borrowed sophistication. Nature, art, and civilization must ever go hand in hand if we use the mirror of antiquity to make our prophecy. In the landscape painting of America, we sometimes catch the impersonal subtle mysticism of the

great old Chinese landscape painters, who are held by deep students to be the greatest artists of all time, insofar as we can know today.

The Theosophical Forum

KEEPING ON THE BEAM — *Lydia Ross*

To keep on the Beam of Intuition in Life's journey, means wise goings on all flights and timely arrivals at all landings.

The man-made birds that today soar freely above and around the earth are something more than just another brain-mind conquest of Nature's forces. The plane, moving into higher levels of the earth's atmosphere, is symbolic of new levels and wider vistas opening up in man's own nature. It must be so; otherwise the human creator would be something less than his creation.

The inventors and pilots of the airplanes may or may not be noted as aspiring individuals. But as integral human elements of the current mental and ethical life, they must feel, in degree, the worldwide urge to find a somewhat freer and higher standard of living. If the passengers mostly bring aboard their own "atmosphere" of routine personal affairs, and only casually look out at the painted picture of a world going by, they are missing the finest thrills of the flight. For the few, however, who enter into the spirit of flying, the plane may give them a lift in more ways than one.

In our endless journey of Destiny, we mere men are being carried along by Mother Earth as she cycles steadily onward and outward into new and grander spaces of Space. Wise old Earth keeps on the Beam of Progress and becomes at home in ever enlarging and finer realms of matter. She is thrilled with renewed life in her fearless journey of planetary adventure with its cosmic cycles of regulated landings for rest and vital renewal.

As we human embryonic planets are ferried along by Mother Earth, each one of us vibrates with delicate inner thrills of the same vital cosmic urge to unfold and expand and become at home in the ever-new and finer realms of our unknown self-hood. In our age-old journey of self-becoming, we have become self-realizing, responsible pilots of our

own destiny. The natural charted beam of man's progress is the invisible, voiceless, inner beam of Intuition. It is the individual something, more sure and real than an ace pilot's technical knowledge of flying. It is a mystic beam of living light generated by man's spiritual self. It is the discriminating principle of our sevenfold nature. It is the "wisdom of the Wise" which all great sages and Saviors have evolved by many lives of impersonal and unselfish thought and service for humanity. By aspiration and strong will for self-conquest, they long ago evolved beyond our present level of attainment. As Elder Brothers they show us the way by which we may work out our salvation from the evil of ignorance and its self-imposed suffering. As living men, they understand all the levels of earth life as viewed from the conscious altitude where the Higher Mind *merges* into the next higher level of spiritual vision. This evolutionary move is as natural and logical a step in progress as is that untimed movement above the field when our passenger plane lifted its little round feet on its take-off from solid earth for the levels of the air.,

Our winged ship soars upward and onward, and we at once feel at home in a free clear level of finer air. The going seems smooth and unhurried. We forget that time and space are measured on a different scale from the familiar one in the picture on the receding landscape a mile or two below. Looking down, the countless details that made up our pattern of daily life are lost in the toy pictures of towns and roads and narrow ribbons of rivers. These are now the details that dot a great moving panorama of hills and mountains and blue ocean expanse which make up the backdrop of our coastal flight.

As this vast panorama slowly unfolds and rolls by, it seems that it surely must picture a continued story of Plan and Purpose so vital and majestic that even the big cities here and there are mere punctuation points.

What, then, does earth life mean? We have caught glimpses of a few shifting scenes of an over-all picture of Mother Earth's playhouse for us. With so marvelous a stage setting, surely "the play's the thing."

Is not the airplane perspective symbolic of that of our spiritual self, patiently overseeing its bewildered human child? We think of Krishna, "tenderly smiling" upon downcast Arjuna weighed down with doubts and fears, whose recorded wisdom in the *Gita* is yet the traveller's guidebook for the Earth journey.

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THE ASCENDANT SPIRIT — *A. S. Pratt*

Begin! The field of service is unlimited! — Arthur L. Conger

It must be a strange thing to be locked in the heart of a rose — and not know it. Or to be one with the dewdrops in the field and not suspect the ending night, the rising sun so soon to shine within each one.

The corners of life are blessedly blind. But we are approaching one today which we, as a spiritual group, must try to look around, to anticipate. For this one is our business. We are not un-self-conscious entities in the darkened heart of a bud, but thinking sons, concerned and intuitive; and responsible for subjective, causal action. Already we see the shafts of light streaming across the corner, as we press on into the new day with every step.

What, then, can we assemble in the way of preparation for the unfolding spirit which has been foretold, for the downflow of directed energy and brilliance which will move out the dark across the face of the earth? What causes can we crowd upon the astral light to insure intervention — effective and on time? For the hour is late, and we have the prime responsibility under the impress of Hierarchical planning to lead in the work, the responsibility that ever attends knowledge.

Preparation in this urgency comes in two packages — self-preparation and planet-preparation. And we open them in that order. If we look for a technique in the first, we find three requirements which appear to need incessant attention:

1. **AWARENESS.** This is that thing beyond belief and faith which stretches out into expectancy. It is the awareness that a spiritual resurgence of humanity is not only possible but imminent. It is the song of the sparkling river which carries joy in its heart as it winds down to the certain sea.

2. **OBEDIENCE.** Belief breeds obedience. When once the ear has turned

irrevocably within to listen at the fount, the path purposes of the Higher Self become audible, and the preparation of a walking, working representative — up hill and down — finds expedition. Adherence to discipline is the disciple's art.

3. LOVE. How well we know the requirement! And how difficult for us to grasp the moment's love! It seems that awareness and obedience to inwardly recognized truth are all sharp corners and cold without the divine blender, love; without joy; without that spontaneity of selfless action which is the mark of spiritual height. Love it is which is lodged in the individual heart but which by nature cannot remain there since its virtue, its function, is radiation. Ever it seeks Itself in another nook of God. And Itself is everywhere.

It is permissible to open the second package without delay. Because the pain in the body of the human family is so very great, because those concerned with the dissemination of evil energies are so tirelessly active, we must get out there with what we've got — *now*. We cannot wait for perfect building materials before building a wall. As we are adding to our strength, we are to take the news to those in need, to those confused earnest men and women whose desperation at this time finds no lifting hand.

Although the plan for extending the periphery of Theosophy — and awakening men in the places where they are — can only be known in the unrolling, some things may be said to the question, "What, to whom, and how?" It is patent that the message will carry the facts in their simplicity — the fact of the divine Word within, momentarily available as traveling instructions for the pledged server; of the gift of the guide-qualities of the spirit, love and truth; of the oneness of all men and things through interchange with the Self, who is God; of man's own responsibility for his present manifesting condition; of his inner constitution and the living divinity in all kingdoms of nature; of the ladder of evolution and his place on the cosmic organization chart — and great privilege, through rebirth, to grow consciously into the light and group usefulness. If its beauty is to be heard above the noise of the

storm, the teaching will be made clear through example and analogy, poetry and — silence. And rising from amidst the necessary repetition and repetition of basic facts, we would expect to hear the NEW.

As the sun is for the flower that turns toward it, so is our teaching for those in need. Whatever channeling we who stand in the stream of love can accomplish is for those who lift their troubled hearts to receive it. Some, through long suffering, have reached the dark hour of despair, parent of surrender; others have awakened, and this is seeking-time for them. We shall find these people with courage to turn their faces to the new morning on every level of knowledge and circumstance, in every place. They await us.

It is through circulation that the blood gets its life out to the far rounded corners of the body, and it is in like manner that the fire within must send and take its light to the waiting wicks. It is circulation we are concerned with, subtle and physical. Circulation of ourselves, silent or administering, silent or answering — two parts silence to one part talk. Circulation of the One Life in our articles, letters and telephone conversations; in the products of our hands, the flowerings of our inner convictions.

In the outer work of our sacred mission to acquaint men with the native joy which is theirs, the open public meeting is of first importance. In these, the simple facts which we have been privileged to learn are available for the taking, and travel without cease to receptive minds. If we would assist in the rehabilitation of the spirit on earth, each man among us will support and extend this activity which takes the loaves from our shelves at this time of hunger. This, and our study-groups which give circulation to the books and an understanding of their content.

Nor shall we forget or doubt the efficacy of the unseen circulation of outward-going thought, the placed causes of all effects. From meditation and dedicated action they stream forth on the lightways of the planet, quietly, swiftly, surely.

It is solemn enough, this finding oneself in the heart of a rose and responsible for its unfolding. But, working together, we shall push the petals out with joy for we are aware of the climbing sun, the Ascendant Spirit, which will assist us.

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN THEOSOPHIC PSYCHOLOGY: 2 — *Marion O. French*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Hierarchies of Consciousness

One cannot start with a Supreme Hierarchy called God in discussing the gradations of individualized consciousness in the Universe at large. The limitless totality of All termed Tat in Sanskrit is incomprehensible. It embraces no-thing and every-thing, unconsciousness and consciousness in what we may designate as the Kosmos. Every individual Hierarchy, or aggregate of subsidiary consciousnesses, is autonomous within its Cosmos, or space of Space, in proportion to its status of evolution. No One of them can be the All; hence each is limited by the law that governs the entire Kosmos. That law is stated on pages 137-8 by K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters*. He asserts that the "infinite FORCE" known as God or infinite mind to most men, exhibits only the functions of the human cerebellum in so far as can be ascertained. Such functions are involuntary, unconscious and mechanical. The description is that it displays "no more than the regular unconscious throbbings of the eternal and universal pulse of Nature, throughout the myriads of worlds within as without the primitive veil of our solar system." Aught else is only to be inferred from "the Kabalistic theory (correct in every other relation) of the Macrocosm being the prototype of the Microcosm." In essence, this is identical with the *Smaragdine Tablet* of Hermes mentioned in Study No. 1 of this series.

With respect to astronomical nomenclature, it is possible to picture the spaces of Space as occupied by an endlessly ascending scale of aggregate entities. Our present knowledge permits us to surmise that a Metagalaxy may consist of a specific number of Galaxies. Our Galaxy is said to include three Spiritual Suns, a Central Sun, a Polar Sun and two

Equatorial Suns with their planets, *Secret Doctrine*, II, 240. The statement is derived from the Qabalah and is set forth, hypothetically, in *Principia Nova Astronomica* by Henry Pratt, London, 1894. In accordance with the Hermetic doctrine of correspondences, our Solar System may be regarded as conforming to the plan of this prototype. Definite data that is available is not adequate for an exact delineation of its construction. This astronomical enumeration is set forth in order to establish a basis for the categories of consciousness that determine our psychological apparatus and its motivation.

As *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 198, indicates, "It is all a matter of expansion of consciousness. . . . But our consciousness expands . . . self-consciously, first to comprehend all in the solar system, and then still later in aeonic time to embrace the Galaxy, and finally to embark upon still vaster fields within the limitless ranges of Kosmic Space." The stages of this evolution from within of the inherent powers of consciousness may be tabulated in successive steps. They will be; first, from unconsciousness to consciousness, and to self-consciousness as a normal evolutionary development thereof. This subject is analyzed scientifically in *From the Unconscious to the Conscious* by Dr. Gustave Geley, formerly Director of the *Institut Metapsychique International*. Its conclusions are closely analogous to those of the theosophic doctrines, and both have their sources in the ancient wisdom. It will be referred to specifically in the following study on the operation, or functioning, of the individual consciousness within that of its Hierarchy. In psychological terminology, the connecting link between the "eternal imperishable, but also *unconscious* "Monad" " (p. 104, *The Mahatma Letters*) and the consciousness of the individual entity is the subconscious mind. With that link, which is the soul or psyche, fully established, the succeeding stages will be " "Full Individual Consciousness" " and "*Absolute* Consciousness." (Ibid.) This, then, gives four states or stages of consciousness. In the final one, we will attain to "The light of *Samma-Sambuddh* —

. . . that light which shines beyond our mortal ken
The line of all the lives in all the worlds — " (Ibid.)

The "four great Planes or Bases or Worlds" that pertain to the stages of consciousness are listed by G. de P. (Ch. VIII, *E. T.*) as:

Divine, or sphere of activity of the Gods.

Spiritual, or domain of the Monads (unconscious).

Souls, or rays from the Monads (conscious but liable to recall).

Physical, or habitat of life-atom entities.

These must be understood as interpenetrating in the sense of general levels of life extending from the surface to the depths of one ocean. A more detailed description, with diagram, is given on pages 173-79, *E. T.*, and includes the ten divisions of our "Home Hierarchy." In *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 200, H. P. Blavatsky gives a diagram comparing the Gupta Vidya and Chaldean Qabbalah versions of the four lower planes, or worlds, and the three next above them. They are the Archetypal, Intellectual Ideative or Creative, Substantial or Formative, and the Physical-Material which we inhabit. These are called Emanations, Creation, Formation and Labor or Works in the Qabbalah and are discussed by G. de P. (*Ibid.*)

The four Suns in the Galaxy have been mentioned. In our Solar System, there are three planets between the Earth and the Sun, if the existence of the Intra-Mercurial Vulcan be accepted. With respect thereto, K. H. states, p. 169, *The Mahatma Letters*, that "not all of the Intra-Mercurial planets, . . . are yet discovered." Likewise, there are three planets with orbits outside that of the Earth. The status of Neptune and Uranus as not pertaining to our system is explained in *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 192. The reason for not enumerating twelve planets as composing a chain is given on page 183. On page 182 it is stated that "All physical bodies in the sky that we see are fourth-plane globes, i.e., globes existing on the Fourth Cosmic Plane, and this statement is without exception, at least so far as our solar system is concerned."

Inferentially, we may judge that some of those which we see nearby are not members of our chain. The location of the Earth as fourth in our chain of seven globes is shown in the diagram on page 200, I, *S. D.*, noted in the preceding paragraph. Thus, the four-fold enumeration of

the Suns, of the Cosmic Planes and of the placement of the planets is in accord with the Hermetic doctrine of correspondences.

The correspondence may be carried down into the four gaseous components into which all matter, including our bodies, may be resolved. A discussion of *The Mysteries of the Hebdomad* is given in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 590-7. Diagrams therein show the square "quaternary" surmounted by the triangle or, in solidity, the cube capped by the tetrahedron. The parallelism between the human and the physical, or inorganic, principles is indicated. The basis of the four elements is given as Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Oxygen and Carbon, which correspond to Fire, Air, Water and Earth. The statement of the "Alchemists" in regard to the four lower principles and the three higher human ones (Atma, Buddhi and Manas, or spirit, soul and mind) is quoted. It is:

"When the Three and the Four kiss each other, the quaternary joins its middle nature with that of the Triangle," (or Triad, *i.e.*, the face of one of its plane surfaces becoming the middle face of the other), "and becomes a cube; then only does it (the cube unfolded) become the vehicle and the number of LIFE, the Father-Mother SEVEN." — p. 593

The concept may be enhanced by quoting the beautiful imagery of B. W. Betts, inspired author of *Geometrical Psychology or The Science of Representation*, London, 1887. This volume will be referred to in subsequent studies on Symbolism of Consciousness and Mathematical Laws of Consciousness which will follow the next Study No. 3 on Individual Consciousness.

If we take the active or positing ideal activity as hydrogen we have the determining or passive real activity as carbon, and the synthetical activity of the Imagination in supporting and combining these opposites as oxygen, which, as you are aware, is a supporter of combustion. Further, the negative reactionary activity, which is not contemplated as activity but felt as resistance and gives definite substance to our Thoughts, may be

compared to nitrogen, which carries off, as oxygen carries on, the opposite activities of Life. That which, therefore, enters consciousness as "I" is the equilibrium of these opposite activities or elements which cannot be explained but only felt, and we must not confuse the condition of these elements in their pure or uncombined state, with their condition when in action and reaction with one another. It is undoubted, for instance, that hydrogen and oxygen, in composing water lose all their original characteristics, and that the union is attended with activities too minute for the microscope to detect, and which can perhaps be analyzed by correspondence in the human race. If these activities exist the so-called elements interact again in a new and infinite sphere of individualities, and, at the moment of reducing form to elementary composition, at the same moment our Panorama widens into infinitude, divisible only by Thought, and our hydrogen, carbon, oxygen and nitrogen dissolve in a flood of Light, tinting it with rainbow colors.

This transmutation of terrestrial values into those of spiritual realms is the *raison d'etre* of psychology as a science. Truly understood, it points the way to the Resurrection that will lift us to the status of the Risen Souls who inspire mankind. There be not many such, but they are the leaven in the loaf. Each *one* added to that Lodge of the Elect will help to lighten the heavy dough of misery in which men suffer. The radiation of their thought, consciously directed in accordance with Creative Law, will permeate the bread of life upon which humanity subsists. This is the token of the bread and wine, the flesh and blood of the Christos. It is Wisdom and Love conjoined in the Elixir of Life as Thought purified and freed from dross. It is nectar and ambrosia commingled in the River of Bliss that is Ananda. Borne upon its current, the consciousness may contemplate Nirvana. To forego this in the service of humanity is the great renunciation of the Buddhas of Compassion. In some degree it is attainable by all whose beautiful thoughts create an intense emotion of compassionate love.

ETERNAL TRUTHS (1) — Clifton Meek

HAS RELIGION BEEN DOING SOMETHING FOR US — OR TO US?

There appears in the April issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal* a critical analysis of present-day religion by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, a Christian spokesman for whose intellectual honesty I have long had a deep regard. It is entitled: "How Religion Helps to Mess up the World," and is something every religious-minded person should read, particularly those who measure spiritual values with a sectarian yardstick. To examine one's own religion, discern its weaknesses, and point to its ineffectiveness, demands a breadth of vision and honesty of purpose few men are capable of revealing. One of the strange but familiar aspects of dogmatic religion is that it imbues its devotees with the belief that they alone have truth, and nothing but the truth, and that it is always someone else who must be reformed; the religious concepts of others must be changed and improved, rather than their own.

For too long have religious concepts been looked upon as something too sacred to be honestly questioned and weighed in the light of logic and reason. Yet the highway of history is marked by the funeral pyres and maligned reputations of honest men who have dared to question enthroned error and plead for intellectual freedom and the inherent spiritual rights of the individual. The very life-blood of dogmatism is an unquestioning blind faith which precludes the individual's inherent spiritual capacity to grow and expand toward a greater understanding of the eternal verities, and is a denial and negation of the fundamental concept upon which all religion is supposed to be based — that man is essentially a spiritual being. Granting that he is, the only logical purpose of life and his experience in a world of matter is the progressive unfoldment of his own intellectual and spiritual capacities, and which cannot be accomplished by following anything blindly. Unless this premise is admitted, religion and life itself are meaningless,

or to use the terms of a materialistic and moribund 19th Century science that life is but "A fortuitous concurrence of atoms" — — a universe without rhyme, reason or purpose. The present-day state of religion, its ineffectiveness in bringing peace to the world and brotherhood to men — which Dr. Fosdick points out and deplores — is nothing new. The germs of the weakness were present from the very beginning, and attention has been called to that fact time and again.

For centuries western civilization has been nurtured at the breast of a unique ecclesiastical system with its various sectarian ramifications, built upon dead-letter interpretation of the early Christian mystery teachings, the esoteric nature, or inner meaning of which never was revealed publicly, even by the Christian Master himself, but given at least in part to a few half-educated disciples. The church did not lose them, as has sometimes been claimed, for the reason that it never possessed them. What happened to Christian doctrine from the very beginning is well known to students and scholars. Innumerable Christian sects sprang up in the first century, and there was much bitter wrangling as to the meaning of this, and the meaning of that, and it is doubtful if Christianity per se, in its pristine purity, survived the first century of our era. Several of the early church fathers, Clement and Origen, undoubtedly had some understanding of the true nature of the teachings, judging from their writings still extant, but their influence on church doctrines soon was overcome and swept aside by the overwhelming spirit of dogmatism which was fast crystalizing as the last remnants of Christian Gnosticism and neo-Platonic thought were discarded.

That no vestige of the ancient culture remain to reveal the source of their borrowed robes, the Christian mob, led by the monks, burned the celebrated Alexandrian library, long a seat of Mediterranean culture and learning, and destroyed, as they supposed, some 700,000 ancient manuscripts, which was just the beginning of the long purge. When the perspective of time gives a cleared relationship between cause and effect, and the history of our age and civilization is written, I think the ancient stupidities of the race will again be revealed — the familiar

pattern of men blindly marching down the corridors of time, following the same banners of half-truths and illusions, refusing to examine their beliefs, and screaming in rage when anyone else did, marching stiffly onward into the catastrophe that marks the end of every fool's paradise, and where we now find ourselves.

Human nature being what it is, and what it has been as far as history records — a veritable storehouse of conceit and pride — man in every age has smugly drawn the mantle of his own illusions about him; viewed his handiwork with colossal pride; pointed to the gods his half-evolved mind has created and loudly proclaimed: "THIS IS IT!" From the graves of the unnumbered dead; from the monumental relics of long-forgotten civilizations lost in the night of time comes a voice of warning: "Take it easy, brother! That's what we thought, too! The last word of Divine Wisdom has not yet been revealed!"

1. From the PEOPLE'S FORUM, where letters and comments of general public interest appear regularly in *The Norwalk Hour*, Norwalk, Connecticut. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

"THAT INWARD EYE — THE BLISS OF SOLITUDE" — *M. S. Tustin*

So wrote the poet Wordsworth of the human faculty of recollection — recollection of the beautiful — that power of envisaging in tranquillity, the inspiring events or scenes of the past.

All of us have, to some extent at least, the god-given capacity for recognizing beauty of one kind or another. It is part of the constitution of man, our divine inheritance. This faculty can be fostered or retarded in childhood and youth. It can change and develop in character. It can, alas, atrophy in some natures with the passing of the years. But those who retain this power, old or young, have a storehouse of treasure that cannot be taken away from them. For them, solitude can indeed be bliss.

Just how much of this "bliss" we may permit ourselves to experience in these days is another matter. For most of us, life today brings such a constant round of necessary activity that "time to stand and stare," as another poet puts it, is a luxury. One has almost a feeling of guilt when indulging in such a pastime, and is inclined to ask oneself, "Is it productive of anything?" Wordsworth, it is true, could turn the use of his "inward eye" to some account, for he could not only recreate for himself the vision of those daffodils "beside the lake, beneath the trees," but he could convey the beauty and delight of that vision to others by the magic of his poetry. You and I, being no Wordsworths, may feel that time spent in such backward glancing is unprofitable, both to ourselves and others. "We must," we say, "get on with the job."

And in one sense this is true. To indulge in beautiful visions, of whatever nature, when we ought to be concentrating on an immediate duty or problem is idle self-indulgence, camouflage it as we may to ourselves. And to think we can benefit the grief-stricken or destitute by pointing out the beauties of nature or the possibilities of human evolution is worse than folly, it is thoughtless cruelty. One surely would

not ask a stricken Fenland farmer or a British shepherd, faced with row upon row of dead and dying sheep, frozen in the winter blizzards, to admire the beauty of the storm cloud or the pattern of snowdrifts on the frost-bound hills!

In all these matters we must use discrimination, learning by study of our own nature, our reaction to our own suffering and despair, when and where to speak, or to withhold speech. Silence is a potent balm, — service a restful sling to a broken or bruised heart.

Yet there comes a time when, warmed by quiet sympathy and unobtrusive help, the heart is ready for the spoken word, nay, it craves that word; for the spirit of man, unconquerable as the Spring, will respond to the touch of the awakening light. It may be then that we can say a few words about our great Teachings, to awaken new hope, arouse new courage. It may be we can strike the right chord by drawing attention to the everlasting optimism evinced every year in Nature's own handiwork.

Sometimes we ourselves, during the trials of last Winter, felt inspiration and tranquillity of spirit drain from us, as warmth and wellbeing denied us their comfort. It was hard, with taps frozen, and no fire in the grate, to radiate cheerfulness and humor; hard, when with a sniffing cold, and chilblained feet we had to turn out to work, to say "God's in his heaven, all's right with the world." The lark was *not* on the wing, and morning was *not* at seven.

Yet the "inward eye," for me, at least, can recall in a golden sunrise, a magic sparkling roadway, and the sudden wonder and delight on children's faces responding to the suggestion that we were not just Tom, Harry, Mary and Jill walking with Teacher to school, but a royal family of Princes and Princesses treading a pathway strewn with priceless diamonds. That this magic carpet, this royal jewelled way, must soon vanish from beneath the feet did but enhance its beauty and its value. What matter its transience? For the time being we were richer than princes of the Orient, stirred to a new realization of beauty. We "gazed and gazed, but little thought what wealth the show . . . had

brought."

It takes the pointing finger, the word in season, sometimes, to awaken in our fellow men that other "inward eye," whose faculty is to discern the diamonds of light and truth that are about our Path: to translate Life's cold and bitter experiences into jewels of inexpressible value. First we must recognize this transfiguration for ourselves; and then we shall find the opportunities to impart that wealth to others, — wealth that is indeed "treasure in heaven."

The Theosophical Forum

ENDOW THYSELF WITH JOY — A. S. Pratt

The long face of sanctity, self-conscious and taut, is losing place on the new spiritual path. Today's true pilgrim seems to be finding his progress without the benefit of black hat, black coat and black shoes balancing their gloom on the razor's edge. For Love is being discovered — and Love's ebullient youngster, Joy.

No longer need the dedicated one pocket his spirit and creep around in solemn mystery, clothed in the drab hues of frayed centuries; nor frown his way through life under a heavy burden of duty, locked in the embrace of fear. The times are against it; and God has forever been against it.

With half a look around this orderly — if troubled — planet, it is plain to see that its Informer breathed joy into every nook and atom — and took considerable delight, Himself, in doing it. The obedient sub-human kingdoms spill over with joy, just as the cup runneth over for all earnest men who have made their irrevocable commitment to assist in the work of evolution. Not for nothing does the far star in the winter sky spin his gladness into your heart as you crunch along in the snow; nor springtime, long patient, finally burst her seams and adorn hill and valley with her colors. It is the divine way of showing love to the myriad children who are looking for it. For love, whose chief attribute is that it cannot be contained, ever radiates. It is love at the center and joy all along the circumference.

It was a Master who once said to the brother he sought to train, "Endow thyself with joy"; for He knew it was all too easy to become tense on the path of initiation, to favor the intellect and conscience, and neglect the heart's throbbing need to escape to another with its essence. He might have pointed anywhere to Nature in operation: to our friend, the brook, which ripples out its song all the way to the sea; to the slender birch rejoicing in its resiliency in the wind; to the first days of the light

green leaf finding the sun, or to the expectant puppy on the schoolhouse steps, tail thumping. Beauty and joy exist wherever the all-pervading spirit is free.

What a blessing it is that mankind, rounding the low corner, is moving daily toward this expression of love, that the downflow of buddhic content is automatic with growth — a gift that goes with height. Perhaps we are lamps with green shades, very close to the table: raised, we shall spread the light in ever-widening areas.

Higher we climb in good time — as we care enough to will it. But, meanwhile, can we not sing a bit to get used to it?

It is more than likely that — this moment — the sprayed energies of joy are seeking channel into our lives and lodges, and only await the removal of debris to manifest. If we have dust and rust in either place, dead intentions, dead furniture and darkness, it is time to clear the way for the new and rejoicing. If the windows stick when we raise them, and the dust filters through our hair when we let the curtains up with a bang to the top, let us not be dismayed. The old budes slowly — although it shrinks pretty steadily before sunlight and fresh air.

It is a matter of whose side we are on. The colors and music of divinity, of gladness, belong to us and not to the Forces of Evil whose initials spell FOE. It is a fact that our one world is wounded and bleeding in these days, that traces of subjective enemy action are visible on every front. But there is no evidence that man is retreating. From his stance in sensuality and ignorance, and their results, he battles with what he has got, and tries and tries. What the gentlemen of confusion need is *help* — a shipment of light and joy to smoke and smile out the insidious foe. These are available to us, and available increasingly for distribution.

It may be a Dark Age that we chose to get ourselves born into, but we did it because it provides such a magnificent background for the light. These are the times of opportunity, and our job's joy.

SPIRITUAL RESERVE — *Sylvan*

A Fellow Theosophist writing from a war shattered country gives a heart-stirring impression of the dark years in which not only theosophical but all spiritual books were prohibited and destroyed; how they were robbed of spiritual food "so we had to live from our spiritual reserve." A phrase to ponder; a theme to fire the heart and mind. Spiritual reserve! Is it just a beautiful phrase, dropped like a pearl into the vortex of our busy life? Have we not enough for our needs? In a land of plenty why contemplate want? In the light of teachings abundantly at hand why worry about spoilers and robbers? In ecstasy why toy with the thought of anguish? Why should radiant youth give even a fleeting thought to age? Want, robbers, anguish will be dealt with when they come. Old age may never come. Why worry? Worry is of no avail, but a little thought should profit us much.

We know the value of physical and economic reserves, yet remain too often indifferent, then when need stares us in the face find it impossible to establish them. To one, young or old, who has felt its sustaining power, spiritual reserve seems of inestimable value, worth all that it takes to establish. Without it even material abundance cannot satisfy. It is more permanent than vast fortunes. It is the only reserve upon which we may with surety depend. It is the rightful heritage of youth as well as of age. Without spiritual reserve how are we going to meet the dark days of stress, disappointment, loneliness, ill fortune, disaster, failing or shattered health or old age? When these shadows fall across our path shall we have that fibre of spiritual consciousness that will fortify and sustain, and enable us to live from our spiritual reserve? Shall we be able to stand unaffected when doubt or destruction hacks at every gateway of the senses, when the fabric of life is torn by fingers of personal loss and frustration, condemnation or betrayal? It is then that the sore and hungry heart cries out; not in days of prosperity and well-being.

Does any one truly doubt that there is an indefinable fountain-head of something vital and enduring beyond the intricate web of our commonly accepted lives? Our ability and right to draw upon this source of supply depends upon the quality and the persistency of our contributions to life and to the living. We may not be conscious of spiritual accumulation. We cannot check up on total deposits or estimate interest due on the account. We may be sure, however, that according to our voluntary and continuous contributions we shall be able automatically to draw upon this reserve when all visible resources are swept away, when physical, mental and even moral strength is almost vanquished by dire circumstance. In times of stress there may be found a clear flowing spring of unshakable trust in the Law that works for righteousness, an out-flowing of a buoyant spirit from within which enables us to stand upright in the throes of anguish and say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth," or with Job declare "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

Perhaps this spiritual reserve is a natural outcome of habits of courage, endurance, kindness, understanding, generosity and compassion engendered within and by the man himself. These and other active qualities of the heart and mind are the "deposits" we must make if we are to expect the reward, the safeguards pointed to and promised by all the Saviors of the world to those who seek to follow the light and the voice of the Divine Spirit which dwells within the consciousness of every man; to those who through lives of joy and sorrow, radiant health and devastating pain, days on mountain peaks and nights in dark valleys, hear and follow the higher promptings of the human heart and mind.

Our spiritual reserve! The resultant of lives devoted to one's own proper duties, be they humble or exalted, through which the Arbiter can trace the unbroken thread of service and sacrifice guided and sustained by a constant appeal to the Supreme Being, called by any name dear to the warrior's heart.

MODERN ART, A MIRROR OF HUMAN PROGRESS: I — Hazel Boyer Braun

PART I

True art has a message for every age, for universality is the first measure to be applied to any claim for greatness. Order is the very law of cosmic life, producing harmony and a sense of peace. When we contemplate music, painting, or sculpture from this point of view, we immediately grasp the idea that everything is evolving, and understand that what we call art today is but the expression of today's place in progress.

Leaders in the art world are pointing to the fact that the art of our age is *WHAT WE ARE!* Under it all there runs deep and true a current that represents the emotional interests of our many-sided public. In our various schools of art we find a cross-section of life, a record of an age that we are often unwilling to look in the face. We should frankly acknowledge the weak points in our "civilization" before we blame the artists for reflecting them in their work.

The well known painting "American Gothic" by Grant Wood is an example of a current effort toward realism translated into a veritable essay about those simple midwestern farmer folk. It does not make us happy even though we delight in the creative genius of the artist. We feel pained when we are reminded so vividly of the evolutionary status of minds that are so set, so rigid in the understanding of universal life, as the types in this canvas. We've known too many of them.

Many persons ask why so much of modern art is ugly. This is because there is much in our life that is ugly. We are all so closely linked together as a humanity that everything that is done and thought affects us all. We cannot have a great art until we lift the whole to a higher level.

There are numbers of serious minded persons who really want to

understand better the newer expressions, yet continue to measure them by old standards. The constant demand that the artist see exactly as they see, prevents the average layman from realizing a closer companionship with the modern artist. It is always a mistake to fail to grant art the right to progress. Surely all thinking persons must agree that art, like all other phases of life, would cease to evolve if it stands still and changes not.

It is so easy to condemn the minute we find something with which we do not feel immediately harmonious. Prejudice must be transmuted into open-mindedness. It is because there is such chaos in the general understanding of life that art is such a puzzle to so many. When we realize this we see how necessary it is for art students and persons who visit art galleries to do so with an open mind.

Dogmatism is out of the running, in religion, science, and art. Any observant person today realizes that there must be required countless grades or degrees of heaven and hell to meet the needs of the evolving individuals in the human family. So it seems necessary to have all manner of art expressions. They run the gamut from the most materialistic: brutality, vulgarity, personality, sensationalism, and the speed of this age with its fervid rapid vibrations; to the very opposite: serenity, the spiritual and impersonal, the slower tempo of the soul life.

Art is tending toward creativeness and while we may see the reason why this impulse has not always achieved greatness, let us applaud the effort. A demand should be made that an artist have something real to say to the world before he merits serious attention. Because of the confused ideas of truth and beauty which exist in the minds of the human family, it is necessary perhaps that time be the final measure of true merit.

Man's prejudice, his inhumanity, raise a strange but very real barrier through which all truth, all illumination and, in fact, all forces that tend toward harmony must force themselves in the battle of life. Nowhere more than in the realm of art is this so evident, where trend after trend is emphasized in the forward movement.

In the attempt to recover from a position of kneeling to the idealized formula of established leaders in art, modern artists are now plunged into a maelstrom of conflicting schools and styles. Too many artists and lay persons become devoted to types and trends to the exclusion of all else, hating with wild fury. Too often the artist who is wedded to conservatism gets white with rage when recognition is given to what he terms modern; and with equal vehemence, some of the moderns not only look with contempt upon the work of their contemporary who gives a sense of reality to his creation, but then turn with adoration to an old master whose work is absolute realism.

All the phases of unkindness, of failure to sympathize with every serious effort, are due to a mistaken idea of what art is and where to seek it. While we never feel that anyone can define art, it seems evident that real art must spring spontaneously out of the experience of the individual. It cannot be made to conform to any dominion, it can neither be a slave to doctrine, serve as propaganda, nor bend in obedience to any rule. The only rule is that there shall be no rule. Art must be the instrument of its own finding, the outpouring of the realities of the artist.

Somehow we prefer to keep art in the liquid state — to feel that it will ever be challenging the art critic's vocabulary. All our intuitions are opposed to a crystallized definition of art.

Certainly art is as universal as truth. Neither may be captured and wholly enshrouded with a label of any type that the imagination of man can conceive, for art and truth have not yet been fully comprehended. No artist can produce great art until he has evolved the broadest tolerance which permits his innate taste to find for him the finest in all things. This natural intuition is so precious to a clear vision, yet it is impossible for it to function through prejudice and mere intellectuality.

Few persons have an outlook that is universal and impersonal, while many build their conceptions of art on intellectual ideas and never see

the ideal that is sensitive only to the delicate perceptions of the intuition. Just as a work of art is limited by the vision of the creative artist, it may be interpreted only with the limitations of the observer.

It behooves us to become not only intelligent in our approach to art but intuitive. Intuition is the greatest essential, for it is instant cognition directly from the higher self, from the higher reaches of man's nature.

The Theosophical Forum

STUDIES IN THEOSOPHIC PSYCHOLOGY: 3 — *Marion O. French*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Individual Consciousness

The consciousness of the individual is a derivative from that of the Hierarchy of which it is a constituent. The relationship may be clarified by paraphrasing the explanation given in *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 943. The "children-rays" from the "spiritual Hierarchy" of our Globe "are human egos." Thus, in the consciousness of every entity: "The field of vision or of thought is like a sphere whose radii proceed from one's self in every direction, and extend out into space, opening up boundless vistas all around." — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 65. For an amplification see p. 429, *Ibid.* Mathematically, the graph of the four-leafed rose or equation $\gamma = \alpha \sin 2 \theta$ shows on a plane four petals that typify the four stages of consciousness referred to in Study No. 2. The radii from the center of the circle represent either individuals or aggregates of egos, for each radius contains an infinite number of points. As "children-rays" they are subject to tuition, which implies duality as does a point in a line, until they have developed intuition.

No summit to the ascending scale of consciousnesses can be surmised since all are embraced in the incomprehensible totality of *Tat*, the Boundless. Consequently, no definite point can be assumed at which completely autonomous consciousness is achieved. Otherwise, the "infinite FORCE" mentioned by K. H., p. 137, *Mahatma Letters*, would exhibit the functions of an "infinite mind." The constitution of the Cosmic psychological organism, as contained in the Boundless "Infinitude of Space and Time" that is both unconsciousness and consciousness, is explained in *E. T.*, II, 952-4. The correspondences for the psychological organism, or "dynamo-psychism," of the

"unconscious" Divine Monad that constitutes the complete individual are given on pp. 949-50, *Ibid.*

In operation, the psychological organism, composed of the upper Triad and the lower Quaternary, functions as an Upper Duad, an Intermediate Duad and a Lower Triad. The lowest element of the latter is the decomposable body that, when allied to animal passion in degeneracy, could be considered as a fourth duad. Actual functioning, then, is seen as proceeding on the normal basis of force in physics as that which acts and that which is acted upon. As indicated on pp. 948-9, *Ibid.*, the Upper Duad consists of Atman and Buddhi, the Intermediate of Manas and Kama, and the Lower Triad of Prana, Linga-sarira and Sthula-sarira. The Intermediate Duad is the psychological apparatus, or Soul, per se. Specifically, it is stated in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, p. 341, that "in the soul resides that particular part of the psychological processes of intellection, which makes a man self-conscious, a *self*-conscious being, capable of the ideation of individualized being."

In *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 92, H. P. Blavatsky quotes Plato as speaking of "the *interior* man as constituted of two parts — one immutable" and "formed of the same *substance* as Deity, and the other mortal and corruptible." Commenting thereon she writes:

These "two parts" are found in the upper *Triad*, and the lower *Quaternary*. He explains that when the Soul, *psuche*, "allies herself to the *Nous* (divine spirit or substance), she does everything aright and felicitously"; but the case is otherwise when she attaches herself to *Anoia*, (folly, or the irrational animal Soul). Here, then, we have *Manas* (or the Soul in general) in its two aspects: when attaching itself to *Anoia* (our *Kama rupa*, or the "Animal Soul" in "Esoteric Buddhism,") it runs towards entire annihilation, as far as the personal Ego is concerned; when allying itself to the *Nous* (Atma-Buddhi) it merges into the immortal, imperishable Ego, and then its spiritual consciousness of the personal that *was*, becomes

immortal.

Thus, the Soul may be regarded as a trichotomy of divine, human and animal. This is the same as the doctrine of Huna found in Polynesia, among the Berbers of Africa and elsewhere. In further elucidation, the statement is made in *The Key to Theosophy*, that "the Spirit (or *Buddhi*) is the centrifugal and the soul (*Manas*) the centripetal spiritual energy; and to produce one result they have to be in perfect union or harmony." — pp. 189-90. Also, in *E. T.*, I, 268, it is stated that "this human soul is itself the expression, the individualized Force, of the spiritual ray which is the Reincarnating Ego." Thus, each incarnation may be considered as one point in the infinite number that composes any line or radiant ray, whether that radius be a relatively short terrestrial one or a longer one from a solar or galactic source. As expressed in *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 184:

In its very essence it is THOUGHT, and is, therefore, called in its plurality *Manasa putra*, "the Sons of the (Universal) mind." This *individualised* "Thought" is what we Theosophists call the *real* human Ego, the thinking Entity imprisoned in a case of flesh and bones.

To comprehend the construction of that bodily encasement as engendered by consciousness, reference may be made to the physiological theories of Weissmann, which are noted in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 223, and II, 711. In *Man in Evolution* (Sec. 17) by G. de Purucker, they are described with the "supplementary factor" that brings them into accord with the ancient wisdom embraced by theosophic doctrines. Cellular division and the specialization that takes place for specific types of tissue is not dissimilar to the process of atomic alterations by electronic accretion or diminution. Of particular interest is the fact that brain-cells do not divide to multiply. Apparently, they are "recruited" from highly developed nerve-cells and "die on one plane and are born on another," as P. D. Ouspensky suggests in his chapter on "Esotericism and Modern Thought" in *A New Model of the Universe*. Thus, consciousness is seen as engaged continuously in

creating "vehicles" wherewith it can manifest itself to itself. This is accomplished by polarization of the self-consciousness that is inherent, primarily, as a passive potency of consciousness in the encapsuled droplet of universal, spiritual thought-substance called a Monad. Secondly, it is capable of evolving, by emanation, the polymorphous, ideoplastic protoplasm that forms the astral model-body. The latter is comparable to "the original protyle" of Sir W. Crookes, F. T. S., mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 581. The former is its noumenal antecedent of thought as "cineritious matter" in the words of H. P. Blavatsky. Successive developments are discussed on pp. 239-41 of Volume II, *Ibid.* On p. 244, the German materialistic philosopher Moleschott is quoted as saying "without phosphorous no thought." This may be considered in connection with the theory of Crookes on "radiant matter," or the critical states that precede transmutation, for matter that has become crystallized is not ideoplastic in so far as ordinary men are concerned. It must be resolved into a more malleable state, as must the concretions of convictions in the human mind. In both cases the degree of malleability must be proportionately such as to respond to the ideative force exerted.

As B. W. Betts, referred to in Study No. 2, states:

For a determinant to have any effect at all it must be within certain limits of proportion to the activity determined, otherwise no result will arise, interaction being impossible.

This applies to the tabulation of motivating factors that affect individuals given by William James. They are tabulated from A to Z under Material, Social and Spiritual. However, all of them are indicated as having their inception in self-seeking or in self-estimation. He who rules through them as well as he who is motivated by them is, thereby, barred from attaining the states of "Full Individual Consciousness" and "Absolute Consciousness" mentioned by K. H. in *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 104. This is obvious, since these stages are dependent upon eliminating all sense of separateness in order to expand the consciousness to cosmic proportions. It can be accomplished, to

paraphrase G. de Purucker, only by changing the emotional vibration from hatred to love (or from selfishness to unselfishness) at the command of the will. Thereby, the proper faculty and its co-ordinate organ will be trained for the purpose. — *E.T.*, I, 139. The same law of proportion between a determinant and the activity determined applies equally to the motivating factors that affect mankind *en masse* listed by Gustave Le Bon in *The Crowd, A Study of the Popular Mind*. They are Biological, Material, Affective, Rational and Mystic. On a still larger scale, the same may be said with respect to the ideologies that alter the destinies of nations, discussed by Le Bon in *The Psychology of Peoples*. Of national groupments, Dr. de Purucker states that a nation does not have an enduring "over-soul," since all such aggregations are due to affinities, or "karmic similarities" acquired in the evolutionary course of successive lives. He points out, however, that

the collective impulses or qualities which such groups have, together form a sort of psychical atmosphere which these group-individuals live and breathe in. Such an oversoul of a group, however, is not a true entity or Individual. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, I, 226

From the foregoing theosophic presentation, we may turn to that of a distinguished modern scientist and student of psychology. In *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, Dr. Gustave Geley presents a synthesis of the subject based upon scientifically demonstrable facts. From them, he deduces

One single hypothesis — that of *an essential dynamo-psychism objectified in representations, and passing, by those representations, from unconsciousness to consciousness* — suffices to explain everything, with no other limitations than those natural to the faculties we now possess.

This brings him to accept the necessary corollary to such a conclusion, which is that palingenesis is a fact. He uses this term meaning again-production or "a new and second birth" rather than reincarnation because of "the profound distinction between the Person and the Self."

In Physiology, he demonstrates the "thesis of a centralising and directing dynamism" that "explains the building up of the organism" and all that pertains to it. In Psychology, he demonstrates "a superior psychism independent of cerebral functions" which "by distinguishing the Self from states of consciousness" interprets all the "complexities of mentality." In the natural sciences, his premise

reveals the primordial and essential factor of evolution and relegates to their proper places the classical factors of selection and adaptation. It explains the origin of species and disentangles the laws of natural from those of acquired finality. . . . In philosophy, it gives an interpretation of the universe and of the individual, of their destiny and their purpose, which covers all the facts, disencumbered of verbalism and abstractions. It sketches out a great metaphysical hypothesis on the nature of things.

In his own words, Dr. Geley has made a scientific synthesis very closely in accord with the more complete theosophic treatises upon these subjects. His method is to "proceed from the apex to the base, from man to the superior animals, and from them to inferior types. . ." This is the deductive method of synthetic thought in proceeding from the general to the particular. As he states, "If, on the contrary, we proceed from the base to the summit, the conclusion that we draw from the phenomena of life is an opposite one." Verily so, and the analytical method has led to egregious errors that science is commencing to perceive. Predicating that "The subconscious appears as the very essence of individual psychology," Geley comes to the following conclusions:

This psychic activity, powerful in itself, is reinforced by a still more potent and infallible memory which leaves the feeble and limited conscious memory far behind. By the side of the subconscious, the conscious seems but a restricted, limited and truncated psychism; and even this psychism in its more important manifestations is conditioned by that cryptoid

portion of the Self which is its foundation.

Truly, the consciousness is truncated when the action of the lower quaternary is deprived of the guidance of the upper triad. Correctly, he observes that "everything happens as though the conscious were but a part, and that the smaller part, of the Self; a part, moreover, entirely conditioned by the more important part which remains cryptoid in the ordinary circumstances of life." Also, "everything in biology takes place as if the physical being were formed of a single primordial substance; organic forms are mere representations."

Pursuant to conclusions drawn from a comparison of his premises and accepted scientific concepts, three terms are advanced in biology. The first "is the essential unity of organic substance." The second "is implied by the necessity of admitting a superior, organizing, centralising, and directing dynamism." "There is a third term, the most important of any: the directing dynamism itself obeys a directing idea." A quotation is given from Camille Flammarion, F. T. S., that manifestations

confirm what we know from other sources: that the purely mechanical concept of nature is insufficient; and there is more in the universe than matter. It is not matter that governs the world, but a dynamic and psychic element.

The term "Cryptopsychism" is used for the Intermediate Duad of Manas and Kama, Soul, or Psyche. Creative work is considered as "initiated by an act of will, and completed partly by considered effort and partly by spontaneous and involuntary inspiration." This is regarded as collaboration between the Conscious and the Unconscious, or "subconscious psychism." "Cryptonesia — the subconscious memory — follows naturally on cryptopsychism. . . . It does not forget; it keeps all integrally." In *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 124, H. P. B. separates memory in general into Remembrance, Recollection and Reminiscence. We remember when an idea recurs without a sensory stimulation and recollect by an effort of the will. Reminiscence is applied to the memory of the soul, usually called intuition. "And it is *this* memory which gives the assurance to almost every human being, whether he

understands it or not, of his having lived before and having to live again." — p. 125

Specifically, it is stated by Geley that

Cryptonesia records not only external experiences but internal ones also. It retains not only real impressions but also those of an imaginative order. Imagination which plays so large a part in normal psychism, creates and realises fictitious positions, and these, as well as real facts, are registered by cryptonesia.

Similarly, of course, all the emotions and states of the soul.

In subsequent studies on psychological symbolism and the mathematical laws governing formation, this creative role of the Imagination will be discussed. Literally, it is the shuttle of the mind that weaves the representations of successive lives on the tapestry of Life. Thus, "everything which has occupied the psychic field, consciously or unconsciously, remains indestructibly even when it seems forever lost." This is viewed as "independent of cerebral contingencies" and its extension is seen as "almost illimitable." Most pertinently, it is observed that "Metaphysic activity is in inverse ratio to functional activity." This is the same as saying that the law thereof is that of the propagation of light in which the intensity of illumination varies inversely as the square of the distance. Further, it is noted that, "In intuition, genius and lucidity, the subconscious stands above the category of representation, that is of time and space." By connecting these two statements of Geley, we may conclude that subconscious representations follow Kepler's third law in which the time periods of the planets vary inversely as the cubes of their mean distances from the sun.

In other words, the Imagination as the vector of the Self sweeps out representations in time upon a plane in proportion to the cube of its mean distance from its spiritual sun or oversoul. The use of the cube is due to the fact that placement in space must involve three coordinates or dimensions. In addition, it is significant that, as a geometrical concept, a shadow is a solid in the sense of being a portion of space

from which light is excluded. Succinctly, representations are visualized as occupying such portion of a plane as is proportional to their extension in time, or in plane-tary time. This occurs in space, but in illimitable space that cannot be localized except with respect to some such shadowy solid as the solar system. Herein, lies the essential nature of Einstein's relativity of space and time.

Supernormal physiological manifestations are analyzed in detail as "conditioned by supernormal psychology." In *The Esoteric Tradition*, this is treated as Pneumatology, or the operation of spirit. Dr. Geley is in accord with this aspect and states:

That which is essential in the universe and the individual is a single "dynamo-psychism" primitively unconscious but having in itself all the potentialities, the innumerable and diverse appearances of things being always its representations The essential and creative dynamo-psychism passes by evolution from unconsciousness to consciousness.

Theosophy adds that it rises from this subliminal status to the sublimity of "Absolute Consciousness." At-one-ment is the goal we seek and Geley remarks that

The Self is not a duality, it is a unity But during terrestrial life *cerebral* conditions only allow of a restricted and truncated manifestation of the total psychism This limitation hides from the person not only his metaphysical essence, but also the greater part of his conscious realizations.

The course of evolution of consciousness is summed up by the statement

that wherever a rudiment of consciousness appears in the primitive unconscious, individualization has begun. . . . Once this rudiment of consciousness has been acquired, it will be indelible, and will henceforward continue to increase without limit. Thus are constituted individual "monads" by rudimentary accessions of consciousness. From this continual work of

analysis and acquisition there result groups of monads which constitute the whole organized representation of the universe.

Inductively, knowledge of the individual is referred back to the Universe "for what is demonstrated for the individual — the microcosm — cannot but appear true for the universe — the macrocosm." It should be recalled, however, that the "island-universes," or meta-galaxies, ascend in an unimaginable immensity of embodied Consciousness. It invites us on into inconceivably beautiful and majestic realms of the Empyrean. Throughout, as Geley asserts, "In the concept of palingenesis the ultimate realization of sovereign justice is assured with absolute and mathematical certainty." Likewise, it may be added, all representations portray the mathematical laws that constitute that "sovereign justice."

The Theosophical Forum

MODERN ART, A MIRROR OF HUMAN PROGRESS: II — Hazel Boyer Braun

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

We all know that there are certain goals and ideals in the arts. The study and careful analysis of them can present the most revealing light on the subject both for the education of the artist and the art lover. Why is it that so many individual aspirants cannot grasp these ideals and bring their work into conformity with them? Perhaps it is because the whole question is really a matter of consciousness. Man himself is a stream of consciousness, the complexity of which explains the varying degree of illumination. Each takes what he can get, making his work a mirror of his progress in evolution. A work of art is truly a bit of the very consciousness of the artist, a record of a portion of his thoughts, the quality of his taste, refinement, and character.

If we look into it seriously we find art, like all universal subjects, full of paradoxes and very fascinating. There are some trends in modern art which come in for intensive criticism but are not always remembered for their contribution in the direction of real progress.

We all know that the particular style of expression should not affect the standing of a work of art. If something of reality is felt in an apparently mechanical performance, something vital and alive carried over from the artist to the beholder, then the sincerity in expressing a deeply felt truth may overcome other difficulties.

Among our intellectual artists there is often great emphasis on subject matter. The truth is that a mountain landscape, some fruit or flowers, a bit of everyday life, serves the purpose of art only if it transmits some glimpse from a world that has no limits, embracing infinity of space and eternity of time. It should speak to the soul of man and uplift him.

There is a growing realization that one of the weaknesses of the art of many schools, whether they be modern or conservative, is too much dependence upon technique and too little worthwhile experience. However, we can at least thank certain trends in modern art for doing much to kill our sentimentality and triviality.

We are living in a sophisticated time, and unfortunately the sophistication that we see about us is the result of human living in which convictions about the great things of life play a small part. Sophistication is something that permits more than one interpretation and there are many who raise the question, whether or not it is the means of culture? We often find a group of young — very young artists who call themselves "The Sophisticates," but they never last long under that banner.

We all agree that everything depends upon what interpretation we place upon this word which is rooted in the Greek Sophists. They were originally men of culture, of acknowledged or professional skill — philosophers, poets, artists, musicians. Later the term seems to have come, in about the fourth century b.c. to be applied to those who were proficient enough to teach the higher branches of learning. Because times change and individuals conform to varying ideals, Sophists came into disrepute. Aristotle defines them as "men who make money by sham wisdom."

If we associate the word with the thought of thorough and honest achievement, and the genuine ability to conform with the correct conventions in every emergency, always with sincerity and perfect taste, it has a place in the evolutionary unfoldment of the culture of a race. Yet we are faced with the reflection which is grounded upon the fact that each great culture, such as the Greek or the Egyptian, has broken on its crestwave of sophistication. Through its striving toward the perfect it has departed from naturalness, becoming empty and artificial.

Non-objective and Surrealist works of art always provoke great bewilderment among the uninitiated. It is asked why these art forms

should have gained sufficient attention the world over so that most critics are afraid to condemn them even though they say they have no idea what they are about. There are probably two reasons, the first being pure human gullibility. The other may be found in the somewhat pathetic fact that many persons feel the breaking up of old traditions, old manners of thinking, and feel that we are moving into a time when we should be turning our thoughts away from complete absorption in the objective world. Therefore, they reach out to these paintings that are supposed to be soul experiences.

If they would heed the admonition of the Delphic Oracle: "Man, Know Thy Self," they would recognize that there is no more authentic soul satisfying message in these than one might find in a dream, in automatic writing, or any other manner of negative reception of contact with inner worlds.

We are moving into very dangerous times because, along with the development of intuition, which is direct perception, a flash of spiritual understanding, the psychical nature is also developing, and it is this that is largely responsible for both these trends in art.

Surrealism is the outgrowth of a direct effort to get esthetic ideas from the "sub-conscious mind." This theory presents a much misunderstood picture of man's intermediate nature. The deeper psychologists now say "super-conscious mind." The Greeks would tell us that it is "Nous," the higher mind, that aspires and contacts the spiritual Self, rather than "Psyche," the lower aspect of the brain-mind. The latter is responsible for many of the absurdities that appear under the guise of new art.

We catch a glimpse of the dangers and the realities of these new art methods when we read Dr. de Purucker's book *The Esoteric Tradition*, from which the following quotation is taken:

The cubism and futurism of modern art, or the animal-pictures engraven on the tombs and temples of ancient Egypt with their beast-heads, as instances in point, all come from the same cosmic picture-gallery. Even the symbolic art of the Chinese is

affected strongly by the same source. In themselves all of these instances embody symbolic ideas, deliberate attempts to suggest truths. These symbolic ideas are all more or less transformed by their passage through the Astral Light. In themselves they are creative thoughts, but they become clothed with astral characteristics because of their passing through the ranges of the Astral Light in order to reach the human brain, and then in the human brain become still further modified. — p. 1014

We all know we shall have empty jazz in music and art as long as we are contented with fakery, artificiality, superficiality, and remain caught in this rush and hurry. Modern science, hand in hand with the ancient philosophers, indicates to us that the rhythmic beat of life decreases as we go outward from our material selves, out into the movement of the stars and planets. When our thoughts find their inspiration out there, the ordinary mental load of non-essentials has to be thrown away.

It is possible that some of the artists who belong to the so-called Primitive school of art are striving to express a certain primal urge, a thirst for something truly spiritual which goes deeper into man's own nature. The longing for beauty and harmony is native to every human being; it is akin to our aspirations for truth and peace, for those qualities belong to the inner man. They are a part of him, that portion of him which is linked with the hierarchies in which he is an atomic entity, the Solar Cosmos where order, rhythmic movement, and silent serenity are inherent.

The artificiality so often criticized in modern art has also existed in other schools and is due to separating art from nature, yet this trend has perhaps helped to overcome the inclination to copy nature which never produces art. Nevertheless, where shall we find those inner qualities of the soul if we fail to know the heart of nature? Where may we find color to express a sublime idea if we fail to observe the beauty before us?

We get a broader vista of the great plan when we grasp the thought of

an old Chinese Taoist philosopher:

We fit as naturally into this beauty around us as a tree or a mountain. If we can but remain so always we shall retain the feeling of our own well being amid all the great workings of the world system. So much has been said about human life, and scholars have created such an endless labyrinth of theories! And yet in its inmost kernel it is as plain as nature. All things are equal in simplicity and nothing is really in confusion, however much it may seem as though it were so. Everything moves surely and inevitably as the sea.

Let us hope that we are moving out into a general state of consciousness that could never express itself in violence, crudeness, nor ugliness, no more than it would in sentimentality, emotionalism, nor empty technique. We are just beginning to take note of and truly appreciate the ancient and grand old art of China with its symbolism which was so expressive to the people of that land. They understood its inner meaning which was the soil out of which it grew. May we not hope that our recognition of the spiritual glory of it may be because we are moving into a kinship of consciousness? We cannot see beauty until we have beauty within us.

The Theosophical Forum

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE LOGOS — *Allan J. Stover*

ALLAN J. STOVER

According to the Ancient Wisdom, worlds and universes are born and reborn, re embody, in other words. Consequently the creation myths of antiquity never speak of a beginning, or of a creation out of nothing by some extra-cosmic and manlike god; but always of a new beginning as of an awakening after sleep, followed by the stirring of spiritual and monadic forces, and lastly of the emanation and consolidation of the physical form.

Distorted and telescoped though they may often be, the creation myths of Greek and Roman times still follow the pattern of a parent doctrine. In them we see creation proceeding through the three stages which were known to the Greeks as the First, Second, and Third Logos; which according to their several natures were also known as Chaos, Theos, and Cosmos. By Chaos the philosophers meant the unformed and unorganized condition in which the seeds (or life atoms) of a former cycle or manvantara await the opening of a new period of activity. It is the condition of a planetary globe or of a universe during pralaya, and contains all the elements in an undifferentiated state, corresponding to what has been called Father-Mother in *The Secret Doctrine*, where the cosmogony of antiquity is given at length. The Second Logos, known as Theos, is of a spiritual or monadic nature and in it the ethereal structure of the world is accomplished. The Third Logos is that relating to the physical world or universe and because of its inherent order and arrangement is called Cosmos, from the Greek word *kosmos*, order.

Not only worlds, but every being, as it enters embodiment passes through its own three Logoi stages. As Dr. G. de Purucker has stated in *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, pp. 548-549:

Every different plane has its own three Logoi: the unmanifest, the partially manifest or quasi-manifest, the manifest, otherwise

called First, Second and Third Logoi. Why is this? Because Nature's operations and functions and structure are repetitive on all planes. What is in the highest is in the lowest, and vice versa; or, to put the thought differently, because the entire Universe is constructed of and in hierarchies which repeat each other on the different planes. . . . Every hierarchy, which means every plane, has its own three Logoi: the first or highest, the unmanifest for that hierarchy or plane, the Hyparxis, if you wish; its clothing or offspring or expression the Second Logos; its child or clothing the Third Logos.

And since man is himself a copy of the universe we find "Atman the First Logos, Buddhi the Second Logos, Manas the Word, Reason, the expressed reason, the reason delivering the life of its progenitor to others — the Third Logos or Manas."

Many translators and students of mythology, not understanding the cosmogony of the ancients, have so confused the three stages of creation as to make the Greek and Roman myths ridiculous; when by separating the account into the stages of the three Logoi, the symbolical story is seen to be in harmony with that given in *The Secret Doctrine* and also with what science is beginning to discover regarding the upper atmosphere and the formation of worlds and universes. On the other hand, there is much to suggest that the deeper meaning of the myths was gradually becoming lost even during the time of Classic Greece, for with the coming of the Dark Ages, withdrawal of the Mystery Schools, and endowing of the gods with all the personality and faults of weak humanity, the light was almost extinguished.

The Latin poet Ovid, near the close of a turbulent life, gathered a series of Greek myths together in his famous *Metamorphoses*, the first book of which opens with an account of the creation of the world. In this work Ovid restates the myth of creation, while something of its real significance was still understood; for it was written at the beginning of our era, when the days of pagan philosophy were numbered.

In the following translation an attempt has been made to bring out a

fuller meaning, by no means disregarding the literal text, but by a more appropriate choice of words and by an occasional paraphrase, uncover the significance of the myth.

"Before the sea and land and the all-covering sky (1) there was [but] one appearance of nature in the whole orb, (2) which was called Chaos; a formless unorganized mass nor [was there] anything except an inactive weight (3) and the unharmonized [and] ununited seeds of things collected together in the same place."

"No Titan (4) [Helios or Sun god] had yet furnished rays of light to the world, (5) nor did Phoebe [goddess of the moon] by waxing [and waning] renew her horns, nor did Earth (6) float self-poised, in the encircling air, nor did Amphitrite [an early goddess of the sea] extend her arms into the long margin of the lands.

"And where the [element] (7) earth was, there also were [the elements] water and air. So the earth was unstable, the water not liquid, the air without lightness; nothing retained its own form and each thing opposed everything else, because in [the same] body, cold contended with heat, moist with dry, soft with hard, and weight with lightness."

The account so far describes the condition of Chaos, the First Logos, i e., condition of undifferentiated matter awaiting a new cycle of activity. That which follows is descriptive of the Second Logos, wherein the four elements begin to separate one from another as the focalization of the monadic and spiritual forces of the planet to be begins.

"God (8) put an end to this strife, for he separated [all that belongs to] the earth from the sky and the waters from the lands and separated the pure aether from the thick atmosphere. (9)

"After that he evolved forth the elements (10) and taking them from the dark mass [of Chaos] he united the different kinds in appropriate places."

"The fiery weightless essence of vaulted heaven, (11) sprang forth and chose a place for itself in the highest zone [of the sky]. The air is next to

that [fiery essence] in lightness and location; the earth denser than these, attracted the grosser elements and was compressed by its own weight: the surrounding moisture took possession of the outermost (12) layers of the earth and kept the solid globe within bounds."

Thus ends the second scene of the drama of creation; and now the Third Logos begins with the forming and concreting of the physical globe.

"When, whoever of the gods he was (13) he divided the mass thus disposed and separated it into [its physical] elements; first of all he rounded the earth into the form of a great globe, lest it might be unequal on any side. Then he spread out seas and ordered them to swell [by means of] rapid winds and to enclose the shores of the encircled earth. He added also springs and immense ponds and lakes; and bounded the running rivers with sloping banks, which being different in different places [the waters] are partly absorbed by [the earth] herself and partly reach the sea and being received in the expanse of the sea [literally the level place of unrestrained waters] they dash upon the shore instead of banks. He ordered also plains to be extended, valleys to sink, forests to be covered with leaves, [and] rocky mountains to rise.

"And as two zones separate heaven to the right [i.e. to the north] and as many to the left [i.e. to the south] the fifth [the torrid or middle zone] is hotter than those: so the plan of god divided the earth enclosed by the sky with the same number [of zones] and just as many regions are impressed on the earth [as in the sky]."

"The middle one of these [the torrid or tropical zone] is not habitable from heat; deep snow covers two [polar zones]: next he placed a zone between each [of the others] and gave [them] temperatures in which heat was mixed with cold [the north and south temperate zones]."

Then follows a very significant sentence: "Scarcely had he separated all [things] within [their] appointed boundaries when the stars which, long oppressed, lay hid under [or hid by] the chaotic mass, began to

shine forth in the whole heaven." This throws light on the corresponding though misunderstood passage in Genesis, I, 14, in which the luminaries in the heavens are first mentioned on the third day, not that they were not existing, as is usually supposed, but that they were not visible until that time. In fact Genesis shows many links with the Greek Cosmogony. During the Middle Ages, however, the older knowledge was almost forgotten; the spherical form of the earth, its previous embodiments, the meaning of the hierarchies of the gods, the existence of inner planes, all was lost in the dogma of a word (all the understanding left of the Logos) spoken by an extra-cosmic God in the year 4004 b.c.

Even as late as the Eighteenth century the Scottish Divine Dr. Blair wrote, "In the progress of the Divine works and government, there arrived a period in which this earth was to be called into existence. When the signal moment predestined from all eternity was come, the Deity arose in his might, and with a word, created the world. What an illustrious moment was that, when, from non-existence, there sprang at once into being, this mighty globe, on which so many millions of creatures now dwell. No preparatory measures were required. No long circuit of means was employed. He spake, and it was done: he commanded; and it stood fast."

The Greek poet Hesiod who lived in the eighth or ninth century b.c. gathered together the already ancient stories of the gods into his Theogony; which because of its great age, is of long standing as a work of reference among students of mythology. Lines 116 to 129 dealing with the early stages of creation are here given for comparison with the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid.

"In truth first Chaos came into existence, but next broad-breasted Gaia the ever-enduring abode of all, and Eros [or Phanes] most beautiful among the immortal gods, who relaxes the limbs and subdues the mind and the shrewd plans within the hearts of all gods and men."

While Gaia is the earth the reference here is not to the physical earth but to the spiritual and primordial earth from which it emanates. The

term broad-breasted is used in the sense of producing and nourishing all things.

"From Chaos awakened Erebus and black Night; and from Night came forth Aether and Day, whom she conceived and brought forth from union in love with Erebus."

Chaos is the absolute light of the cosmic spirit which is darkness to us, and from it issues Erebus and dark Night, the latter so called because it precedes the opening of a new cycle of manifestation; from Erebus and Night with the help of Eros come cosmic Aether, the Akasa of Hindu philosophy and outermost zone of heaven, and Day. The distinction between Aether and Day being that the former is the light of the superior planes while the latter is the light of the sphere of earth. Eros at this stage of evolution corresponds to the Tibetan Fohat and permeates the universe as a creative and formative force.

"And therefore first of all Gaia emanated forth from within herself Ouranos, the shining heavens, like herself, in order that she might be entirely enwrapped on every side, and as an ever-enduring abode for the blessed gods."

Ouranos, often mistakenly translated the starry heavens, was the shining ocean of space which surrounds every celestial body and which is here spoken of as issuing from the heart of the primordial earth or Gaia. It is this akasic ocean which is referred to in Greek Mythology when it is stated that the abodes of the dead are on the banks of Oceanus, for it was no body of water but the shining spaces of aether surrounding the earth globe.

The remainder of the Theogony describes later stages of evolution in language which to the modern mind rather obscures than reveals the ancient knowledge, but which a study of H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* shows to be part of a primeval knowledge which was widely distributed.

We will now turn to the still more ancient Surya-Siddhanta of India where in chap. XII a description of the earth is given as follows:

29. "This Brahma-egg is hollow; within it is the universe, consisting of earth, sky, etc., it has the form of a sphere, like a receptacle made of a pair of caldrons."

30. "A circle within the Brahma-egg is styled the orbit of the ether: within which is the revolution of the asterisms (the Greek Ouranos) and likewise, in order, one below the other,"

31. "revolve Saturn, Jupiter, the Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon: below in succession, the Perfected Ones, the Possessors of Knowledge, and the clouds."

32. "Quite in the middle of the egg, the earth-globe stands in the ether, bearing the supreme might of Brahma, which is of the nature of self-supporting force."

33. "Seven cavities within it, abodes of serpents and demons endowed with the savor of heavenly plants, delightful, are the intertanean earths."

34. "A collection of manifold jewels, a mountain of gold, is Meru, passing through the middle of the earth-globe, and protruding on either side."

35. "At its upper end are stationed, along with Indra, the gods, and the Great Sages; at its lower end, in a like manner, the demons have their place — each the enemy of the other."

36. "Surrounding it on every side is fixed next this great ocean, like a girdle about the earth, dividing the two hemispheres of the gods and of the demons."

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A comparative study of the foregoing selections from Latin, Greek and Sanskrit Theogony not only shows a similarity of thought but each throws light on obscure passages in others.

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While an area of land may differ markedly on the surface, a series of wells may yet draw from the same deep stratum of sweet water. It is not chance that we find similarities among the myths of mankind everywhere; for they sprang from a common source — the Ancient Wisdom now known to the world as Theosophy.

1. *coelum*, as the vast reaches of the sky surrounding the earth, and often referred to as the home of the gods. ([return to text](#))
2. *in toto orbe*, in the circle or orb of the earth, as the globe has not yet been formed. ([return to text](#))
3. *iners pondus*, in the sense of an attraction toward a center, i.e., gravity in modern terminology. ([return to text](#))
4. *Titan*, here used for Helios the sun-god preceding Apollo. ([return to text](#))
5. *mundo*, the world or universe as opposed to Chaos. ([return to text](#))
6. *tellus*, here referring to the globe earth which is yet to be formed. ([return to text](#))
7. The elements here referred to are not the physical elements known to us, but are their spiritual counterparts, from which the physical elements will later emanate. The tattvas of Indian philosophy.

In the preceding Ovid attempts to describe the undifferentiated state of matter and the equally indescribable conditions existing during the pralaya between earth embodiments It is not a state of confusion but a condition in which heat and cold, wet and dry, heavy and light cease to exist and everything is reduced to its original state of matter. ([return to text](#))

8. *Deus et melior natura*, the phase of deity belonging to the Second Logos, the second aspect of the trinity. ([return to text](#))
9. *liquidum coelum ab spisso aere*, the pure, clear sky or aether is separated from the thick air of our lower atmosphere The shining and fiery upper atmosphere corresponds to the Sanskrit Akasa and the

Greek Ouranos. ([return to text](#))

10. The physical elements now begin to unfold or emanate from the primordial elements and are removed from *caeco acervo*, the dark mass. Absolute light is considered as darkness to our eyes hence the original substance of Chaos is called a "dark mass" ([return to text](#))

11. The elements ether, air, water, and earth were thus disposed in concentric circles about the earth, according to weight. Science in exploring the upper atmosphere and finding extremely high temperatures at certain levels is in a certain degree confirming the ancient tradition. ([return to text](#))

12. *Circumfluus humor possedit ultima* often translated as "the water took possession of the outermost edges" in order to support the flat earth theory. ([return to text](#))

13. *quisquis Deorum*, Jupiter or Zeus, according to the Orphic tradition represents the Mundane Egg or the corresponding Egg of Brahma of the Hindus, in other words the wholeness of the earth or of any entity living thereon; the will or command of Jupiter is simply the will of the whole But Jupiter is the fifth in descent in a line of which Phanes, Night, Ouranos, Saturn and Jupiter form a series and each in turn is spoken of as Father of the Gods and of all things. It is the same divine essence represented under different names and aspects on different planes or stages of evolution. The idea is illustrated in the monadic constitution of man, in which the stream of consciousness descends from the divine monad and builds a soul and body on each plane of man's sevenfold constitution, of material appropriate to each plane.

It was only during the downward cycle that the great gods of the Greeks assumed, in popular opinion, the weaknesses and personality of mankind, and came to be what we find in mythology today. They were never understood by the intelligent men of Greece as we understand them today. ([return to text](#))

ROUNDTABLE TALK

Extracts from stenographic reports of "Mahatma Letters Group" at Covina conducted by A L Conger, using Margaret Conger's *Combined Chronology* along with *The Mahatma Letters* and the *H. P. B. Letters* to Mr. Sinnett.

Letter from K. H., *The Occult World*, pp. 125-139, under discussion:

Question — Why was this letter left out of "The Mahatma Letters" collection?

A. L. C. — This was the first letter sent to Hume, who loaned it to Sinnett, who copied a part of it out for publication in *The Occult World*. Other letters sent by the Masters to Hume were copied, and the copies found in a bundle of letters in Mr. Sinnett's strongbox, but this letter was not among them. Whether Mr. Barker had some reason for not including this record made in *The Occult World* because of some question of its correctness of text, or for some other reason, is not known.

Question — The Master here refers to the higher force of destiny which he is powerless to change. And yet he speaks of trying to help India rise above the iron stage into a more spiritual expression. Could you comment on this?

A. L. C. — The Masters' efforts on behalf of India are limited by the Karmic Law which they are powerless to set aside. Karmic consequences have to be endured. However, the Masters are constantly making history, but the nature of the work they are engaged in makes it essential for its success that secrecy be as a covering veil.

Question — In many respects the Movement did not have its desired effects in India then? Is that right?

A. L. C. — The plans of the Masters which sought to induce Messrs.

Sinnett and Hume to undertake the organization of an Anglo-Indian body which would operate to create greater sympathy between the races fell through and were the seeds out of which grew the present civil war today.

Question — The Master mentions something about their numbers diminishing (p. 135). Would you say something about that? Is it because some are going beyond the bounds of humanity?

A. L. C. — Either that or turning backwards. Of course the Occult Fraternity includes a number of neophytes who may fail in their periodic tests which all are put through. In the other end of the bracket, one cannot blame those who prefer to go with the Pratyeka-Buddhas rather than remain longer in the world on this planet. However, I do not believe we have cause to worry about the passing of the Fraternity into other realms.

Question — I do not understand the Master's statement about our thoughts coalescing with the elementals (p. 131) in connection with Karman. Is that a new definition?

A. L. C. — I am afraid the Brother has not quite seized the intention of the Master. What he says is this: "Every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world, and becomes an active entity by associating itself, coalescing we might term it, with an elemental — that is to say, with one of the semi-intelligent forces of the kingdoms. . . ." You see the point? Collectively these thought-elementals formed in the astral plane are cast off by the Masters, in fact by everyone, and more or less coalesce, that is to say join in with the elementals of the astral world. In this sense they may be called his Karma. However, he has not directly created them.

Question — We create entities through our thoughts. If they are evil, can they be combated and their force lessened by thoughts of an opposite nature? Doesn't the candidate eventually have to meet and conquer them?

A. L. C. — That is quite correct, and the candidate for adeptship has to

face the strongest emanation of evil thoughts and conquer — such as is described as the Dweller on the Threshold in the novel by Bulwer Lytton entitled *Zanoni*.

Question — *Mr Judge speaks of the fact that thoughts come in cycles, and that when cycles of a certain kind of thought are upon us which we do not like, we should think thoughts of another or opposite kind. Is this the idea?*

A. L. C. — Yes. The application of cyclic law to this question is very necessary to understand. Today an elemental knocks at your door at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and you slam the door in his face. But the next day at the approach of the same hour of 5 o'clock you perhaps leave the door just a little bit ajar. The third day at 5 o'clock you will encounter a redoubled effort to break down your defenses until you make a determined effort to put an end to this foolishness.

The lunar cycle is next in importance to avoid the reoccurrence of evil tendencies. The daily examination by the student of his daily encounter with thoughts he will find very constructive in making an end of all undesirable tendencies which he recognizes perfectly well, but which he cannot account for. He will find the answer to his search for an explanation in the light of previous efforts in this cyclic explanation of the difficulty.

If evil thoughts are given a welcome by the student, they grow stronger with the acceleration of the evil. On the other hand, if the candidate opposes them by thought he will be placing himself in the class of benefactors of mankind.

"WHAT THOU, O KESAVA, DIDST SAY . . ." — *Robin Pratt*

Upon inquiry of one more learned than myself as to the greater scriptures that include the loved *Gita*, I was put in touch with a translation of the *Mahabharata*. There, in the *Anugita*, that portion which follows unostentatiously, and forms a sort of sequel to, the story told in that far-famed guidebook for spiritual aspirants, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, I came upon a passage that arrested my attention. It is after the battle so vividly pictured in the *Gita*, that conflict which symbolizes the disciple's inner striving toward the hair-line decision between the *better* and the *best*. Comes the moment when the major crisis is transcended, the battle ended. Arjuna remembers with what clarity and logic Krishna, the charioteer, has guided him. He recalls with what pin-point attention he listened and questioned, relentlessly and tirelessly extending the frontiers of his understanding. And now, to his amazement, he finds that he cannot remember a single part of all that his Lord has told him.

"O Mighty One," he implores of Krishna, "Thy greatness was revealed to me upon the field of battle. What Thou, O Kesava, didst say at that time my restless mind can no longer remember. I would have Thee tell me these truths again."

And Krishna replies to him in this wise, "That which I revealed to thee were truths regarded as mysteries, truths that are eternal. It is greatly disappointing to learn that thou hast not remembered. Nay, I cannot tell again all that I said on that occasion, but I will speak with thee further upon this same subject."

What an anti-climax, this, to the immortal teachings of the *Gita*! And yet what a veridical commentary on human frailty. But doubtless Krishna knew that the truths were not actually forgotten. Or if forgotten by the brain mind, they then remained available in the deep reservoirs of consciousness, ready to rise again to the surface in times

of crisis. And yet He gives reproof to his disciple. He knows that the lesson learned springs out of the necessity of the moment, and the teaching, therefore, can never be repeated exactly in phrasing and circumstance.

It is a human trait to clutch at answers and solutions, as if for one's very life, when times are critical, and then, when stress is abated, to lapse into reactionary lethargy. Though ebb and flow, action and pralaya, are axiomatic, there yet remains that eternal upgrade — as the spiral ever circles upward. And it is this slight tension, that is *attention*, which should, in the great economy, be sustained at all times. And, more than meets the eye, it is sustained. In the words of the *Anugita*, "While one is enjoying the sovereignty that Yoga bestows, one should never fall away from Devotion."

Earnestly we search and delve into the great teachings. Eagerly we listen to uttered wisdom, and as eagerly we impart it to others. What hours of time we spend in study and philosophizing! In a rapture of absorption, we read a volume that seems to open up continents of awareness, page by page. We are so enthusiastic that we want to impart our findings to someone else. Fumbling with feeble words, we are impotent to articulate a fraction of the essence of what we have read. Yet we may well have absorbed the value of the book.

It is said on good authority that only an infinitesimal part of that which is spoken before an audience can be grasped by the brain mind and retained, even by attentive listeners. Like Arjuna, the listener realizes with shame that he cannot repeat even the text or the several main issues. But perhaps an essence is distilled and deposited in some inner receptacle of the mind. Who can say but that he will conduct himself more wisely in the future because he has listened and believed?

More tenuous and fleeting than the knowledge of the eye and ear are the still small leadings of the intuition, the luminous glimpses into soul-knowledge that gleam forth, unexpected, or appear like pearls in the crystal pool of the meditative mind. Perhaps there is no reason to transmit these to others, but they are priceless to remember, and

though they may have the potency to change a life, they can be lost to the mind in a moment, leaving only an elusive fragrance in the memory.

And so, though perhaps nothing is ever really lost, in a practical sense, one needs to develop the capacity of attention and retention. This does not mean burdening the mind with endless details, for discrimination and evaluation are essential, but a training up of the mental faculties, through various means, to that exact right tension that makes reception clear, attention accurate, and retention sure. To this end different measures may be taken. Some people take notes, memorize by rote, epitomize and summarize, formulate definitions, paraphrase, concoct analogies, recognize symbols. Some practice concentration, meditation and ultimately contemplation. Some indefatigably put what they have learned into practical expression in some fashion. All systems have their efficacy.

The wise ones sometimes recommend that the spiritual aspirant keep a diary, there to register the essence of his gleanings from all sources of inspiration. Upon reviewing the notations, there is a delightful discovery of new recognitions as well as a resurgence of remembered truth. Keeping such a record causes one to plumb depths of being hitherto unrealized.

The regular practice of meditation does this also, if pursued with no attitude of flaccid negativity, and, if followed daily, it induces a mental attitude of alert attention that carries through the daily round. The attitude of attention to be found in the integrated and devoted aspirant to spiritual understanding may be summarized as a state of quiet, confident expectancy.

THE WORLD AS THEOSOPHISTS SEE IT — *Robert L. Moffett*

Theosophists take a long-time view of the world, of humanity, and of the physical universe. This view is in sharp contrast to the traditional orthodox religious understanding, with its "one-life-life" for the human soul and a physical world not more than a few thousand years old. Theosophists hold that there is and must be a more rational as well as a more spiritual picture of man's relationship to God than is usually presented by the old time, but really very modern church. It is known that man has existed on this earth for millions of years. It would be strange, would it not, that the machinery for effecting the "salvation" of the human soul, should have waited until around 2,000 years ago? What about the many hundreds of billions of souls who lived on this earth prior to the time of the coming of Jesus? What provision for their redemption through Grace or otherwise?

For centuries the church has maintained a doctrine that the human soul was "created" at the moment of birth, without having had any previous existence. This created being has the power of achieving "eternal life" through Grace, by acceptance of certain faiths and doctrines. This teaching gives to the traveler just one short span of life in which to learn all its multiple lessons, and to prepare itself for a possible eternal life hereafter.

With such a foundation of understanding of the environment and background of man's history and evolution, it is small wonder that an acceptance of the Theosophical view of the world of matter and of life should present certain difficulties to those who have uncritically taken for granted the kind of world which the church has presented to its adherents.

First of all it must be understood that man is a creature who on this plane has a very limited power of comprehension. Being only one of the "creatures" man cannot expect to fully comprehend his Creator.

Being less than a speck on the horizon of the physical world, his vision, even with the aid of instruments, is far too limited to give him anything like a complete view; his mental perception being bound by a three-dimensional physical world. There is good evidence, however, that we live in a multiple-dimensional world, the greater portion of which we have absolutely no means of sensing, let alone comprehending, in any real way.

So, what Theosophy conceives to be the nature of our world, is in part what you might call "natural assumptions," or postulates — concepts that seem to explain to a great extent and in the most reasonable and probable way, the phenomena that appear to our limited senses to happen.

In the first place, Theosophy insists that the worlds of both physical and living things must be without beginning, and without end, either as to time, or as to degrees or levels of development. The essence of physical matter never was created, although its elements have repeatedly gone through innumerable forms. It is likely that in the past, matter has completely disappeared in what has been called the "night of Brahm," which means probably that matter was dissolved and became suspended in the eternal ethers. Later this same matter was precipitated and became again "manifest" on this plane. It is this phenomenon which probably is referred to when "creation" is mentioned in certain ancient writings.

Therefore, there was, and is no beginning and no end of physical things, except as relates to what is known as "composition," or the reshaping and reshuffling of the elements into different combinations of forms.

Scientists point out that in physical dimensions the human frame stands midway between the electron and the star — on the one hand, units of matter so tiny that they cannot be perceived by the finest microscope, and on the other, stars so gigantic that it would require millions of our earth planets to approximate their mass.

In a very similar way, man in his present mental and spiritual development represents a middle stage of evolution between the lowest and the highest forms of life. During the countless ages of the past we as personalities have passed through many many stages of development at lower levels. The lower forms, following in our footsteps, and to whom our present stage of evolution would seem like godhood, will one day enter the human kingdom.

By the same token countless hordes of beings have trod this road many millions of years ago, and are now far, far ahead of us on the steep pathway beyond. Their level of intelligence and spirituality is utterly beyond our ability to comprehend. We are destined, however, to reach their level of development, while those ahead keep on rising. Those who have gone thus far ahead are often referred to as "illuminati," and in some cases as "Masters." Many of them devote their lives to helping those who are on the lower rungs of the ladder. In short, life is an endless ladder, extending infinitely into the depths, and infinitely into the heights. And at every point on that ladder, there are millions of living, evolving beings, each on an endless journey upward and onward.

Now the nature of this thing we call "matter" is often grossly misunderstood. The uninitiated think of just one "material" world. As a matter of fact this so-called matter is also a substance which manifests itself in countless levels and degrees of fineness. As the *Bhagavad-Gita* puts it: "God expresses on all the various levels of existence only through the matter of many planes." In short, all phenomena occur only by the movements of matter, activated by some form of force. When we think, this phenomenon of our mental activity is the result of the activation of a higher form of matter on what we call the mental plane. The same is true of our emotional experiences, because only through the movement of matter do we experience our ordinary emotions. From this it is obvious that it is a mistake for us to depreciate events that involve the movement of such matter. The truth is, it is impossible for any being to have any experience or any consciousness whatever, except by virtue of the movement of matter on some plane.

The foregoing may help to give a foundation for an understanding of the doctrine known as "Reincarnation." This concept is based on the dual nature of the human entity. In its essence mankind is eternal, in the sense that it always has had a living existence, and will always continue to live, somewhere and on some level. The eternal part of the human being is not this physical body, not this mental or emotional organism, nor any combination of these. Theosophists call this combination our "Personalities," while the eternal man is known as the "Individuality." Reincarnation takes place when a spark of the Individuality is projected into this world, in the form of an infant, which lives its life here, and passes on the lessons of this life to the eternal Individuality. At the time of physical death, all that is not the lower physical is reabsorbed into the Individuality.

By this process the eternal human gains repeated and multiple experiences through the life of what we call the "Personality," which is not the real man at all. It is not the eternal Individuality which reincarnates, but just a branch, or projection, in the forms of physical body, mental and emotional equipment which make up the men and women we are and that we know.

Investigation by others as well as Theosophists has determined that even on this physical universe we live in an orderly world. It is a world of cause and effect. Nothing happens without a cause. Nothing happens that is not basically a movement of matter driven by an activating force or energy. Such movement is merely the result of causes, often far removed from the observable effects.

The sum of all the dynamic and latent causes affecting any particular personality, is called "Karma." The proper understanding of Karma indicates that we are not punished or rewarded for either our misdeeds or our virtues, but definitely *by* them. By our thoughts and actions (in both cases actions on differing planes) we start activating currents of energy into motion. Eventually those forces affect us, usually by modifying the environmental situations in which we must make our way. It should be understood that what is true for the

Personalities of the race is also true for groups, nations, and even for all humanity. Certain group actions bring a Karma or effect which conditions our later ability to function.

It is obviously impossible for the average theosophist to prove, or to demonstrate the truth of reincarnation, except on the basis of its reasonableness — its rationality. The doctrine of reincarnation does, however, provide the explanation which all experience shows to be most "probable," which, by the way, is a type of explanation which science often accepts, as many explanations must be accepted, "tentatively." No rational explanation of the many otherwise contradictory and unjust situations of human existence is to be found apart from that given by the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma.

The Theosophical Forum

"BEHOLD, I SHEW YOU A MYSTERY . . ." — *Clive F. Bellgrove*

Mystery Schools, and the Mysteries, are facts in Nature. The records of all ancient religions and philosophies that have come down to us would be meaningless in this respect if this were not so. Memory of these great facts, however, had become so dimmed for the race of men that it became the lifelong task of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky to rekindle a knowledge of their existence, and the work of the Theosophical Society in the modern world to spread far and wide not only an appreciation of the fact that Mystery Schools still exist, but also to teach those doctrines and ethics by which alone mankind can aspire upon the upward way of spiritual evolution, eventually to attain perfect humanhood.

Wherever one seeks one can find indications of deep occult teachings, though these are invariably carefully and cautiously stated, for the Guardians of the Ancient Wisdom conform to unalterable rules, one of the most important of which is that the Teachings in their fullness shall be given only to those who are worthy to receive them and who, receiving them, can be depended upon to use the knowledge and power which the Teachings confer for the good of all that lives — never for self, never for harm.

Mystery Schools as distinct centers of esoteric training, have existed as such from the time of the Fourth Root-Race, though their origin as lay-centers of occult force is almost coincidental with the founding of the Brotherhood in the Third Root-Race. Since then many pupils have studied and been loyal to the precepts and doctrines taught, and have already attained a high degree of human perfection as Masters of Life, as Christs, as Buddhas, and so forth.

During all recorded history there have been, sometimes in one country, sometimes in another, centers widely and publicly known as Mystery Schools, such as those of Pythagoras at Crotona, of Plato at Athens, of Ammonius Saccas at Alexandria, those of Denderah and Abydos in

Egypt, that on the Island of Samothrace, that of Eleusis, and many other schools in both the eastern and western hemispheres. Each such school received its inflow of pupils from the outside world; each had its responsibility, not only of helping its pupils strive towards true initiation, but also of teaching the general populace as much of the Ancient Wisdom as the circumstances of the age permitted.

A great decline in the Schools had begun thousands of years before the opening of the Christian era. The progressive coarsening of the spirit of the age compelled the gradual withdrawal of the Mysteries from public notice, fewer aspirants offered themselves at the Temples. Finally the great Teachers withdrew from Schools which in earlier times had been the adornment of various lands. True occult teaching, however, is never withheld from humanity, and while many publicly known Schools closed, instruction among men by allegory, myth and parable became more complete. Open references to the hidden teachings became yet more veiled in all the countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

Conditions in the world are such today that a greater measure of inner wisdom is being given out, both in lecture and by the written word, than at any time since the decline of the ancient Schools began. The teachings which are merely hinted at in the New Testament, for instance, are elaborated and often explained in great detail in our Theosophical literature, books which are available for any man who walks the face of earth to read. It is not suggested, of course, that the totality of the hidden wisdom is being taught openly today; unquestionably the same conditions apply as of old, and will forever apply, conditions perfectly expressed in Sir Edwin Arnold's inspired poem, *The Light of Asia*:

Veil after veil will lift — but there must be
Veil upon veil behind.

The thoughtful student of Theosophy knows that anyone who, in a former life or lives, had contacted the Mystery Schools will feel a deep yearning for reunion with them again in this lifetime. The sureness of

their intuition, however, will be tested sometimes for long years by their inability to find that which they feel certain exists somewhere, namely, a finer, purer teaching than any they have thus far contacted in their present incarnation, as also by their avoidance of all lesser and therefore impure teachings in the meantime. It is a truism that water finds its own level, and in nothing is this more true than with the "waters of spirit." Those who formerly had contacted a lesser teaching will be content to find its equivalent in this life; those who knew a finer teaching in former lives will search until they find that finer school of thought again in this present incarnation; each, from that point, can then take up again the task of spiritual evolution through self-directed effort.

The pathway to the gaining of spiritual knowledge is beset with countless pitfalls each of which tests the discernment, the purity of motive, and the endurance of the aspirant to the full. These impediments on the path are often so like the pure truth that even advanced pupils can be deceived by them. During the ages many public statements of the Wisdom-Religion have been given by great Teachers, and each of these has eventually degenerated; it is the fact of the decay of religions and philosophies that calls for the periodical restatement of the Ancient Wisdom. But all teaching that degenerates has much of truth still embedded in it, and the aspirant can easily be deluded by some aspects of a religion or philosophy that appeals to him, and cease the search for the source of illumination for the time being, content with his particular prison.

Again, it is a sad fact that some pupils of the Schools have tired of the discipline of the Teachings or the Teacher, have left the School, and have gone out into the world to live; usually their mouths have remained sealed, but sometimes they have divulged, betrayed, the Teachings which they had thus far received. Many of the pseudo-occult schools and doctrines have been derived from teachings betrayed by pupils of genuine Mystery Schools. Far from being sought by aspirants upon the path, such sources of knowledge should be avoided for the reason that they are degenerating through lack of the pure "force" that

flows in and through and out from the great Schools and the true Teachers. Truth cannot be gained from these decaying fragments of the Ancient Wisdom; let the aspirant beware!

How, then, did men in former times find the Teaching and the Teacher? The only method, followed from time immemorial, is stated clearly and simply in the so-called Sermon on the Mount, a practical statement, meant to be taken literally. Since first inscribed upon scrolls, thousands of millions of Christians have read these words, have heard them in sermon and lecture, have perhaps wondered awhile what they meant and passed them by without understanding them. Yet here was an Avatara teaching the multitude in explicit language the only way to find "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." What was the procedure?

Ask and it shall be given unto you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

A veil has been thrown around this factual statement, which is the reason why the truth it embodies has been so completely disregarded. A simple transposition of the phrases makes the meaning and procedure transparently clear:

Seek, and ye shall find;
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you;
Ask, and it shall be given unto you.

He who felt the urge to find the Mystery Schools had to seek them. In thus seeking he heard much to encourage his further search, all the evidence he could wish of the existence of a School, perhaps near at hand, perhaps in some distant land to which he must travel. But the time came when he stood gazing at the Temple which he felt certain housed a School of the Mysteries. If in his search he had been actuated by mere curiosity, his search, whether he knew it or not, ended then and there; useless to ask the multitude if they knew what was taught

within the sacred precincts, for the multitude did not know; worse than useless to ask any of the pupils he might meet. The most such a pupil might do was to indicate the Temple and advise the inquirer that he must approach, knock, and then make his request. It was traditional that the explanation of the mysteries be kept within the School and not spoken abroad, and therefore any question asked of a neophyte in public was in fact an invitation to him to betray the mysteries, than which there could be few more reprehensible actions.

If, however, the aspirant had been moved by a sincere longing to study the mysteries, the impulse to enter the School had to come from himself alone. No one was ever invited to enter; no one came out from the Temple to welcome and conduct him in. Not as one of a group, each member of which hoped to derive moral support from the others; but as an individual, alone, with sincerity, courage and modesty in his heart, he approached the door of the Temple and knocked.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." This is a paradox! The aspirant's Higher Self, the Christ within, had brought him to the threshold of the most splendid event of his age-long series of lives, and urged him to knock that the doors of the Temple might be opened unto him. As the doors swung wide he was asked who he was, to which he gave suitable reply. Next he was asked what he wanted from the inmates of the Temple. Then came the grand moment when he asked that he might be taught the mysteries of life.

If found worthy he was received within, and the doors closed upon him. If he were found unworthy — and there were few such, for unworthiness came only through crimes against humanity — there were other lives during which he could atone and purify his character and thus become worthy to approach the School again and be received. Entering the Temple, the aspirant lived according to the rules of the order, and the culmination of his training, after who knows how many lifetimes as a chela on the path, would be his union with his own Higher Self, the Inner Christos, that "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

But first, he had to seek and find; he had to knock before the door could be opened to him; he had to ask before he could receive. Then followed lifetimes of learning, loyalty, purity and altruism with, some day, eventual attainment.

Through these Mysteries alone can peace and surcease from the trials and difficulties of incarnation in the physical world be gained, for none but they teach the sons of men to redeem their past wrong actions and cease from further wrongdoing. All other teachings are mere palliatives at best.

Down through unending time the Great Ones have taught selflessness and impersonality, and the call of the Teacher to every member of the human race has always been, and will forever be, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

At that moment when the aspirant, utterly alone, stood before the Temple door and knocked, he did so with the superb assurance of the Inner Buddha, the Inner Christ:

"Lo, I am with you alway,
Even unto the end of the world."

The Theosophical Forum

TRUE PROGRESS — *Bryan Kinnavan*

Is it Aided by Watching the Astral Light?

Perhaps those who have engaged in discussions about whether it is more advisable to become acquainted with the Astral Plane and to see therein than to study the metaphysics and ethics of theosophy, may be aided by the experience of a fellow student. For several years I studied about and experimented on the Astral Light to the end that I might, if possible, develop the power to look therein and see those marvelous pictures of that plane which tempt the observer. But although in some degree success followed my efforts so far as seeing these strange things was concerned, I found no increase of knowledge as to the manner in which the pictures were made visible, nor as to the sources from which they rose. A great many facts were in my possession, but the more I accumulated the farther away from perception seemed the law governing them. I turned to a teacher, and he said:

"Beware of the illusions of matter."

"But," said I, "is this matter into which I gaze?"

"Yes; and of grosser sort than that which composes your body; full of illusions, swarming with beings inimical to progress, and crowded with the thoughts of all the wicked who have lived."

"How," replied I, "am I to know aught about it unless I investigate it?"

"It will be time enough to do that when you shall have been equipped properly for the exploration. He who ventures into a strange country unprovided with needful supplies, without a compass and unfamiliar with the habits of the people, is in danger. Examine and see."

Left thus to myself, I sought those who had dabbled in the Astral Light, who were accustomed to seeing the pictures therein every day, and asked them to explain. Not one had any theory, any philosophical basis.

All were confused and at variance with each other. Nearly all, too, were in hopeless ignorance as to other and vital questions. None were self-contained or dispassionate; moved by contrary winds of desire, each one appeared abnormal; for, while in possession of the power to see or hear in the Astral Light, they were unregulated in all other parts of their being. Still more, they seemed to be in a degree intoxicated with the strangeness of the power, for it placed them in that respect above other persons, yet in practical affairs left them without any ability.

Examining more closely, I found that all these "seers" were but half-seers — and hardly even that. One could hear astral sounds but could not see astral sights; another saw pictures, but no sound or smell was there; still others saw symbols only, and each derided the special power of the other. Turning even to the great Emanuel Swedenborg, I found a seer of wonderful power, but whose constitution made him see in the Astral world a series of pictures which were solely an extension of his own inherited beliefs. And although he had had a few visions of actual everyday affairs occurring at a distance, they were so few as only to be remarkable.

One danger warned against by the teacher was then plainly evident. It was the danger of becoming confused and clouded in mind by the recurrence of pictures which had no salutary effect so far as experience went. So again I sought the teacher and asked:

"Has the Astral Light no power to teach, and, if not, why is it thus? And are there other dangers than what I have discovered?"

"No power whatever has the astral plane, in itself, to teach you. It contains the impressions made by men in their ignorance and folly. Unable to arouse the true thoughts, they continue to infect that light with the virus of their unguided lives. And you, or any other seer, looking therein will warp and distort all that you find there. It will present to you pictures that partake largely of your own constitutional habits, weaknesses, and peculiarities. Thus you only see a distorted or exaggerated copy of yourself. It will never teach you the reason of things, for it knows them not.

"But stranger dangers than any you have met are there when one goes further on. The dweller of the threshold is there, made up of all the evil that man has done. None can escape its approach, and he who is not prepared is in danger of death, of despair, or of moral ruin. Devote yourself, therefore, to spiritual aspiration and to true devotion, which will be a means for you to learn the causes that operate in nature, how they work, and what each one works upon."

I then devoted myself as he had directed, and discovered that a philosophical basis, once acquired, showed clearly how to arrive at *dispassion* and made *exercise* therein easy. It even enables me to clear up the thousand doubts that assail those who are peering into the Astral Light. This too is the old practice enjoined by the ancient schools from which our knowledge about the Astral Light is derived. They compelled the disciple to abjure all occult practises until such time as he had laid a sure foundation of logic, philosophy, and ethics; and only then was he permitted to go further in that strange country from which many an unprepared explorer has returned bereft of truth and sometimes despoiled of reason. Further, I know that the Masters of the Theosophical Society have written these words: "Let the Theosophical Society flourish through moral worth and philosophy, and give up pursuit of phenomena." Shall we be greater than They, and ignorantly set the pace upon the path that leads to ruin?

The Theosophical Forum

ROUNDTABLE TALK

Extracts from stenographic reports of "Mahatma Letters Group" at Covina conducted by A. L. Conger, using Margaret Conger's *Combined Chronology* along with *The Mahatma Letters* and the *H. P. B. Letters to Mr. Sinnett*.

Letter from K. H. to A. P. Sinnett, received October 19, 1880, No. II, pp. 6-10, under discussion:

Question — I am interested in the Master's use here of the word "Lodges" — "the whole truth about our Lodges and ourselves." [para. 3, p. 7]. He does not say Lodge, but Lodges. I am wondering if you can give us some explanation about this.

A. L. C. — Yes. Lodges that are mostly written about are in Tibet. It wouldn't do any good to go there, however, because you wouldn't get in! I think there is little doubt that the Lodges he refers to are not lodges of the Theosophical Society, but of the abiding places of the Mahatmas.

Question — K. H. makes a great deal here of the point of the "inner motive" of the candidate. If the aspirant is unconscious of even a shadow of desire for self-benefit, how can he eradicate it unless he is conscious of it?

A. L. C. — The candidate has through searching self-examination to ferret out his concealed motives, and then proceed to eradicate them.

Question — I would like to ask regarding this statement here "that one of us shall take the new body 'under his patronage' " [p. 8]. Does that mean that there is one particular one, or does it signify that they shall all work through just the same? I wish the Leader would say something in regard to that.

A. L. C. — I take it that Mr. Sinnett was over-choosey and fearful lest

Mahatma K. H. would not be the direct contact between the Great White Lodge and the newly proposed Anglo-Indian body. Who does it refer to? It refers to one of the Masters. Sinnett wanted to have one Master, and that K. H., and no one else mixing in.

Question — I want to ask in reference to the Master's statement, fourth line from bottom of page 8: "Instead of going over to him he has to come to us." Does that imply a great spiritual chasm between us — how are we going to cross it?

A. L. C. — The Mahatma makes his meaning clear in another passage which I cannot refer to by page, but which is to this effect: The candidate will find that with every step he takes toward us, we will take a step toward him. Does that help any?

Question — Would you explain what is meant by the phrase "by having irrevocably pledged himself to our Association."

A. L. C. — This is one of those phrases where the meaning is not to be mistaken. I would suggest you read the whole sentence in which this phrase occurs, and then the next paragraph, and you will have the answer.

"More than that: unless he has reached that point in the path of occultism from which return is impossible, by his having irrevocably pledged himself to our association, we never — except in cases of utmost moment — visit him or even cross the threshold of his door in visible appearance.

"Is any of you so eager for knowledge and the beneficent powers it confers as to be ready to leave your world and come into ours. Then let him come; but he must not think to return until the seal of the mysteries has locked his lips even against the chances of his own weakness or indiscretion. Let him come by all means, as the pupil to the master, and without conditions; or let him wait, as so many others have, and be satisfied with such crumbs of knowledge as may fall in his way." pp. 8-9

Does not that answer your question?

Question — In a way. But I was thinking of the Pledge as something taken outwardly but inwardly too, and it being such a tremendously sacred thing.

A. L. C. — In a very real sense the Pledge of the E. S., as well as higher degrees, is the most sacred element in the esoteric teaching. What is meant by this is that the students in the E. S. are often worried about getting new instruction whereas if they would meditate on the pledge, they would find more occult secrets than are dreamed of by the average neophyte.

Question — Mr. Judge says there is an age-limit in regard to advancement. Could you explain this?

A. L. C. — Age has a great deal to do with it. According to Mr. Judge, 44 is the age limit for passing into the Sacred Precincts. However, it is possible for a man to gain the momentum necessary to cross the threshold without realizing the fact in his brain mind.

Question — I take it we are speaking of metaphysical precincts, or is that an actual place, Colonel?

A. L. C. — Take your choice. It is an actual place and also has a metaphysical interpretation.

The Theosophical Forum

THE INWARDNESS OF FREEDOM — *Byron Casselberry*

To be able to see clearly, one must begin to confront the "escapism" of the mind — mind being the thinking-feeling entity in the individual, in oneself. Man, you and I, the isolated human unit, is being driven by instinctual appetite and habit. Like a tiny boat on the high seas, or the feeble flame of a candle in a shifting wind, the center of intelligence in oneself is being whipped and tossed about by the primordial and uncomprehended forces of the human psyche. It is not only possible but practically the rule for man to live out his life without any perception at all of what is happening to him. Like an explorer lost in an unknown land, he either survives or dies. Survival in this sense is the reward of compromise, *not* a forging beyond the region of storms. It is the building of a reasonably satisfactory dwelling, where, in the midst of the storm, some peace and security may for a time be enjoyed. Death, which is in store for those who are not sufficiently resourceful to build a dwelling, is insanity, neurosis, nervous breakdown, and all the many gradations of psychological ills. Hence, unless one gives much careful thought and close scrutiny to the almost ceaseless battle that is raging in one's soul, and to the nature of whatever peace one may have found, one is doomed to live in the wilderness always. One will never reach up to the region beyond the storms where dwells man, freed of all elements of conflict. To reach that region, that truly human state in which love is free of attachment, and hence of all fear, in which man moves serenely over the turbulent sea of daily living, requires the utmost care of the mind at every moment of conscious life. To shake off or wear down the elements of conflict — hate, longing, fear, self-conceit, sloth, and all the rest of the dark demons which torment man — one must see them at work and understand the nature of their functioning within the confines of one's own nature. To see without evasion and fully comprehend the arising of any of these elements in the very first moment of their appearance in the mind is like laying the axe to a sapling before it has grown into a tree. One stroke will often

cut it through. The very perception and inward acknowledgment of the thing for what it is, undermines its existence; and the continual wakefulness of aroused perception acts like a prophylactic — it kills out by degrees the limiting tendencies which have already taken root, and renders the soil sterile to the growth of like limitations. Thus man goes free through his own wakefulness; those who fail to arouse themselves will always be unhappy or contented slaves.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ESOTERIC CONTENT OF WORDS — *Alexandra McLean*

To pronounce a word is to evoke a thought, and make it present: the magnetic potency of the human speech is the commencement of every manifestation in the Occult World. . . . The Word (Verbum) or the speech of every man is, quite unconsciously to himself, a BLESSING OR A CURSE. . . . Yes, names (and words) are either BENEFICENT OR MALEFICENT. — P. Christian

There is magic in words, it may be black or white. There is a mystery and wonder, there is an *inner content* — of which we are seldom aware. In the last dialogue of Socrates as recorded by Plato in *Phaedo*, we have these words by Socrates — "For you must know, my dearest Crito, that *wrong words* are not only a fault in themselves, but insinuate evil into the soul" (italics ours). This is worth serious consideration and if it be true, its opposite is also true: that words conveying truth, beauty, nobility, majesty and compassion, will create vibrations of power and harmony in our environment, causing joy to the soul.

In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 198-199, we have a resume of the development of Speech. The First Race was, in a sense speechless, as it was devoid of mind on our plane. The Second Race had a type of sound language, chant-like, composed of vowels alone. The Third Race made a beginning of a language based on the various sounds of Nature. In the second half of the Third Race, when the creative gods, compelled by Karmic law, incarnated in mindless men, then was speech developed (monosyllabic). Then came the agglutinative languages, spoken by some Atlanteans. The Fourth Race continued in evolution and left to the Fifth Race (Aryan) the inflectional, highly developed languages. "The inflectional speech — the root of the Sanskrit . . . was the first language (now the mystery tongue of the Initiates, of the Fifth Race)." — p. 200

At the present time there are relatively few in Europe or America, who read, write or understand Sanskrit, which H. P. B. declared was the only language in any way adequate to convey with accuracy high spiritual teachings. Very few Theosophical students (to our own great detriment) know much of this lofty language. Language, an expression of ideas and ideals is, as all else, subject to cycles and Karman. It grows, matures and declines — "dies," but in truth it is not dead, and will in cyclic time again manifest with fewer limitations, enriched and more vital. W. Q. Judge in *The Path* (May, 1886, p. 58), said "The Sanscrit language will one day be again the language used by man upon this earth, first in science and in metaphysics, and later on in common life." According to H. P. Blavatsky this cyclic law will also bring Greek and Latin out of their rest into new activity.

In the language of our day, there are many noble words with a depth of meaning, of esoteric content that we seldom realize. There is the "still small voice," the magic in a word. We may invoke it by thinking, feeling and speaking the word. According to its inner content, the hidden influence, dissonance or harmony, will come forth to curse or bless us. There is more truth than poetry in the admonition found in the Bible (*Matthew* 12: 36, 37): "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Words, as surely as man, planet, sun or galaxy, are sevenfold, having their outer form and their inner heart. It is this heart, inner, esoteric, that is the truth and the life of the word. The outer form varies, for Love written in Sanskrit, Greek, Chinese, German and English *looks* different, but its TRUTH is the same in any language. It is an ideal, humanity's highest concept of benevolence, compassion and adoration.

If we look up references in *The Secret Doctrine* regarding Kwan Yin and Kwan-Yin-Tien we find the latter means "the "melodious heaven of Sound," the abode of Kwan-Yin, or the "*Divine Voice*" literally." And we are told that Kwan-Yin stands for the "magic potency of Occult sound in

Nature and Ether," which "Voice" calls forth "the illusive form of the Universe out of Chaos and the seven Elements." — I, 137

And so with words — written, spoken or sung. They are the transmitters of lofty ideas, and ideals of beauty and wisdom. They are opportunities for a meeting of minds, that from the "Melodious Heaven of Sound" harmony may be born on earth. To be careless and indiscriminate in our choice and use of words is something we should overcome, for in our present stage of evolution we depend upon words and language to carry on our normal living. Without them, we would be quite at a loss. The time will probably come, long ages hence, as humanity follows the path upward-inward, that we will no longer depend on the spoken word, but will have a highly evolved method of thought-transference. Be that as it may, at present words are worthy messengers.

We will not try to define great words, for that is a limitation of their inner reality. It is for us to become aware, of the truth, to grow, evolve, unfold our consciousness into our highest concept of the "heart" of the word.

Some of our wise men have left us sage advice as to speech:

Speech is the index of the mind. — Seneca

Pleasant words are as honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones. — Bible

Every word is vain that is not completed by deed. — *From the Greek*

Like a beautiful flower full of color, but without scent, are the fine words of him who does not act accordingly. — Buddha

Speech is but broken light upon the depth of the unspoken. — George Eliot

The flowering moments of the mind drop half their petals in our speech. — Oliver W. Holmes

The idea is the Flame and the words are sparks ready to kindle many flames within the darkness of a receptive consciousness.

Therefore — let us employ noble words as worthy messengers bringing joy and blessing to others. Indeed, these excellent words are magic companions, for in their inmost, they are a synthesis of all we may invoke by our sevenfold comprehension. They are a part of the Wisdom of the great SILENCE.

The Theosophical Forum

THE PRESSURE OF THE HEART — *John Peck*

When ideals are made impersonal, they have to be freed even from the individual, for even the most glorious work of an individual must ultimately blend into the supreme glory of the Whole. The little book called *Light on the Path*, although it is very small, has a potent influence on one's thoughts. What I like about it is that the author embodies one's deepest and purest ideals — so deep that it can only be lived. When you think that it is the human aspect showing, then he must be a great Being. Although I can't help noticing the author it doesn't mean that I haven't taken note of what he says. It is in fact in taking notice of the author that what is said sinks in gradually. I mean by "author" not a personality, but a universal Beauty or Grandeur. Yet it is human too. When a heart beats to a great vision it sheds a clothing of radiance and that radiance becomes the breath of the Universal Heart — it becomes Truth. Individual creativeness becomes the impersonal creative harmony of the whole.

It just shows that Theosophy is true and that self-forgetfulness, impersonality, and universality *are* the first steps. It shows that in giving one's purest life one draws nearer the springs of Life.

Perhaps the greatest problem which all "Tryers" have to face is the battle between mind and heart, and the reason why ideals are so difficult to follow (yet so easy if one impersonally loves) is because they are partly formed by the mind and therefore objectified and perishable. But the pure essence is immortal and if one holds to that and lets go of the changing forms, success is sure to follow, because the less disappears into "something" else, the greater. That is why one must not look back. The beauty of it is that no amount of mental will can prevent one looking back until one is so pure as to forget oneself. When I say that, I mean to show that it is doubt and uncertainty which cause one to listen too much to the mind. Nature guards the SELF against the self. That is why self-forgetfulness and unity — Charity — *must* be the

first key. No truly aspiring soul would *wish* it to be otherwise.

Let the heart command the intellect and the intellect will become an unconquerable warrior for Truth and for all that is enduring and immortal. By the "heart" I do not mean the passions but that which is Divine in all beings, whether it be human or god. Nor do I mean that one should suppress the mind, for that would deprive one of the means to freedom. Rather mold the mind to universal ethics and compassion. If the mind denies, then let it deny the onset of doubt and delusion, and let it open the paths of Truth into the thought-life of the world.

The problem can never be solved except by him who *experiences* it as a complete being. Thus doubt is to be resolutely conquered by courageously seeking the immortal and the enduring, and by following it however faintly and unreally the intimations may seem to come, and however loudly and insistently and subtly the mind may say "not yet," or "impossible," or "unwise." The pressure of the heart may become so strong that it takes the lead and the mind follows in a temporary daze. But the mind must ultimately lose its egoity, utterly and forever. Therefore by *living* the noblest ideal of the heart one brings upon oneself the purifying processes which enable one to be useful. By constantly meditating upon universal ethics as the true foundation of life, the mind in self-forgetfulness, by perceiving the illusion of separateness, will become wedded to the heart indissolubly.

It is not by knowing all this *with the mind* that freedom will come. The mind can know all this and more, and if it remains egoic and selfish, its knowledge becomes the most potent poison to the soul. Let the mind give of its treasures to the uttermost for all. In fact when the mind sees that its knowledge as such is of no enduring value it will voluntarily yield itself to become the vehicle of enduring Truth.

Mind is the creator of illusion and personality and it is also the means to freedom and Truth by ceasing to act from itself, by ceasing to produce personality, by withdrawing from all action emanating from the darkness of illusion, by refusing to perpetuate misery in the world.

When the mind becomes still, then will immortal Love pour forth the divine Truths bringing to them the inspiring certitudes concerning the Real and Eternal, and the way to freedom. The intellect is a vehicle which renders available the Love which illumines it to meet the need of the world — and not only this world, but others too. The intellect itself is not enduring but it is essential as a vehicle to transmit into the "World" the Universal Love. Therefore let us seek to "live to benefit the world" by striving on the one hand to understand the cause of the world life and its need, and on the other hand to become free from the world in order that the divine Light may pour into the world through a vehicle which is clear of the darkness of the world, and therefore transparent.

If the foregoing is reasonable then it follows that we must live the lives of ordinary men and women right here, but nobly — divinely. If we think that to free ourselves from the world means that we must cease to live among our fellow humans, then we shall lose awareness of their needs — *our* needs — and we shall become free alone and unable to help them. The means must be as glorious as the end, step by step. Live like the sun and stars now. Such a path becomes the most beautiful and loving path of all — from the very beginning to the endless end of ever-expanding vision. We can see that individual growth loses its meaning, while eternity and universal brotherhood become pregnant with meaning. Let us not forget that, if many cosmic ages ago the sun, then as a human being, had not striven so well, had not pressed its heart toward godhood, it would not now have been a sun.

The Theosophical Forum

ROUNDTABLE TALK

Extracts from stenographic reports of "Mahatma Letters Group" at Covina conducted by A. L. Conger, using Margaret Conger's *Combined Chronology* along with *The Mahatma Letters* and the *H. P. B. Letters* to Mr. Sinnett.

Letter No. IV, written at Amrita Saras, Oct. 29 [1880] by K.H. to A. P. Sinnett, under discussion:

Question — When it speaks of the Chief, on page 13 in the phrase, "Our Maha (the 'Chief') has allowed me to correspond with both of you," does the Master mean the Lord Buddha?

A.L. C — No. The Mahatma K.H. refers to the Maha-Chohan, the Khubilgan, who generally means the old gentleman who restored the envelope and seal which had been eaten by the goat at Tchigatze. The higher reaches of the Hierarchy are not enfleshed in physical bodies.

Question — Is the Maha-Chohan a Nirmanakaya then?

A. L. C. — One needs a new vocabulary. The Maha-Chohan is not to be classed among the Nirmanakayas that have passed beyond the need of physical bodies. I feel a certain embarrassment in being asked questions which seem to be probing too closely on improper ground.

Question — In the Mahatma Letters, then, references to the Chief, Chohan, and Maha-Chohan do not refer to the Lord Buddha but to the Khubilgan?

A. L. C. — Yes, he is the active head of the Fraternity.

Question — The Master's description of Olcott brings to mind the relationship between himself and the Master during the latter part of his life when seemingly he was not working for them in the way he had before. Would you care to remark on this?

A. L. C. — It is a great embarrassment to be asked this question. Olcott's work in the early days of the Society was whole-hearted and fruitful of much good. . . . I do not think that it adds any useful knowledge, or serves any useful purpose, to go into mistakes of the latter days of his life, other than to say that he bitterly complained that he did not deserve that the Masters should abandon him as they had.

Question — I don't quite understand this matter of personal cleanliness of the neophytes whom the Master wanted to send to Sinnett. He states that his clothes were slovenly. Could the Teacher explain the connection there?

A. L. C. — I am not sure it would seem like an explanation. People in mountainous countries, especially those engaged in mountain traveling, do not need to perform the ablutions as do people on the plains. You will notice that American travelers in Switzerland in the mountain areas observe the same carelessness in cleanliness as do their Tibetan brothers. In the mountain country one does not need to perspire, and not perspiring, there is not the same physical need for cleanliness in the ordinary sense. Does that give the picture?

Question — I was wondering if there were a deeper reason.

A. L. C. — None except that in that country the people are very poor, and have few clothes and facilities for washing them, so it is an easy habit to fall into.

Question — On page 15, K. H. states that he had a "university education," but that some of the higher Tibetan adepts have not. Could the Leader say something about that?

A. L. C. — Yes. Adeptship has nothing to do with education in the Western sense of the word. K. H. received a European education in the University of Wurzburg in Germany in the forty's of last century, but this had nothing to do with his adeptship. The Western idea of education is quite different from the Eastern conception, where to be considered an educated man is not a matter of university degrees, but

rather to have the adept's knowledge and powers, and to serve the growth and development of real civilization. I think if one reads over these letters, he will get the difference between the Eastern and the Western points of view. Does that answer your question?

Question — Then the requirement of the knowledge necessary to be an adept is certainly more than the equivalent of what we call a university education here?

A. L. C. — The answer is yes.

Question — I judge from that reply then that not having the opportunity of studying under a guru, one should obtain the best education available?

A. L. C. — No, I did not mean to give that implication. If a man or a woman wants it hard enough he or she will soon have a Teacher without fail; but in that case before the event took place you might have to experience contact with several strokes of lightning.

The conception of adeptship in the ordinary sense of following beautiful thoughts in the mind ought to give place to intensity of feeling adopted and adhered to for a specified time. The fact is that the attitude of the average pupil is that of complete discouragement, which is very wrong. Instead of taking literally Mr. Judge's statement, that the student must not expect to see his Teacher in the same incarnation in which he dedicates himself, or words to that effect, I think he should look upon chelaship and adeptship as something inescapable, and that he must prepare himself for future responsibilities.

The Theosophical Forum

AESTHETICS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART — *Leonard Lester*

An important contribution to the literature of Aesthetics is Professor Nahm's recent work, (1) whose title *Aesthetic Experience and its Presuppositions* indicates as precisely as possible the scope and boundaries of his work.

It is impossible in a short review to more than touch upon certain accents in the wide range of research and learning which our author unfolds for the student of Empirical Idealism. But the cultured reader who is willing to follow his line of argument through all the labyrinths and spacious ranges of this survey, although he encounter much to challenge and arrest his inquiry, will also meet much to spur him in pursuit of his author's solution to his problems, and also in admiration of his sincerity and enthusiasm.

This essay presents a problem which issues from a conflict. This conflict is defined as follows: "Art is compounded of apparently incompatible elements and the analysis of its experience seems to lay bare only an unresolvable antimony." The speculations which have arisen from these divergencies, involving philosophical, ethical and cosmological theories, both metaphysical and physical, have created a unique field for inquiry into the nature of art and its experiences. It is with this conflict that this essay begins. It is assumed that aesthetic experience is at least conditioned by "feeling" evoked by fine art, also that within the artist's product is its capacity to move us profoundly and "to open paths for creative imagination." The study follows through the centuries the history of its changes and attempted reconciliations to end with offering its own interpretation and reconciliation of these apparently incompatible elements.

One aspect of this conflict is presented by a quotation from Plato's *Republic* on the moral effect of certain poetic and imitative descriptions or portrayals in a State dedicated to justice, temperance, wisdom and

courage. The assumed antithesis of this view is a quotation from *On the Sublime* by Longinus, a devoted Neo-Platonist, profoundly imbued with Plato's philosophy and hardly likely to have misinterpreted the spirit and intention of his master's teaching, as will be evident in the following excerpt from the above-mentioned quotation: "For Nature from the first breathed into our hearts an unconquerable passion for whatever is great and more divine than ourselves. Thus within the scope of human enterprise there lie such powers of contemplation and thought that even the whole universe cannot satisfy them, but our ideas often pass beyond the limits that enring us." This seems to echo and harmonize with rather than oppose the spirit and intention of Plato's strictures on art, since both philosophers are prompted from a common aspiration toward that sublimer state of being and source of diviner intelligence, which is Plato's overmastering theme. It is the source and tendency — the moral value of art that Plato is here considering. Elsewhere he extols the science and love of the Beautiful and declares that State to be the happy one "which is planned by artists who make use of the heavenly pattern." (2)

And is not Plato's stern refusal to admit anything that stimulates "images of moral depravity" or to permit trivial or ill-inspired art into the ideal State, evidence of his keen desire to maintain unpolluted its nobility of character and education — a very revealing contrast to the laxity of our present-day "civilization" in polluting the atmosphere of thought and feeling and vitiating the taste of impressionable youth with its realistic presentments of a questionable and criminal character? Would not all right-minded parents rejoice to see realized, in exchange for our mechanized realism, the environment of health and beauty which the following words from *The Republic* portray? "Let our artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful; then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into the likeness and sympathy with the

beauty of reason." (3)

Sympathetic readers of Professor Nahm's essay may tacitly infer that his voluntary quotation from Longinus (*On the Sublime*) as the antithesis of Plato's thought, when, in reality, the spirit and intention of both philosophers converge toward the same ideal, is significant, presaging the design and end of his thesis. For coming at the beginning of his essay it seems inspired by that positive energy of *affirmation*, of which he speaks later, which guides his argument through many exhausting and perplexing adventures to its stimulating conclusion, viz.: "*that profoundly moving art speaks primarily of sublimity.*"

He concludes also that the artist who moves men profoundly is "*a messenger of discontent.*" In stirring "the deepest depths of the soul" he initiates in aesthetic experience, "the productive powers of imagination." The author cites scientific facts of disequilibrium and bodily reactions as agents in these states of sublime exaltation and despondency. But perhaps also within the real man, there is a monitor — an intuition of the nearness of the ineffable and the un-attained which invokes that divine discontent — those "tears from the depth of some divine despair" of which Tennyson sings.

The book is rich in scholarly quotations and pointed illustrations gleaned from a wide survey and study of classic and contemporary writers and thinkers. The following two will exemplify such as may suggest a clue or a keynote to help clarify or solve. One is taken from Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. Boswell is quoted as saying: "There is no arguing with Johnson, for when his pistol misses fire he knocks you down with the butt of it." This hyperbole may be profitably considered: the learned Doctor's "talking for victory" bespeaks the conviction that *affirmation* is essential to the proof of a thesis. Few men are convinced solely by the disproof of an alternative theory. "There is no need for the scientist of ends to adopt the practice of fighting "with all weapons" including rudeness and overbearing. But as he grasps the "guiding thread" of a science of ends, his expectation that it will lead through the maze of aesthetic, often attempted but never traversed by the

ateleologist, will be fulfilled only on condition that he offer an affirmatively formulated philosophy of art. The firmest advocacy of an aesthetic that ignores ends is powerless uniquely to define the objects and events in that universe of discourse."

Commenting upon the relations of a work of art to its creator and Plato's figure of the magnetic rings in *Ion* as illustrating the transmission of the artist's "feeling" through his art, the author quotes from a modern poet in terminology acceptable to modern thought. It is A. E. Houseman, who writes: "I think that to transfuse emotion, not to transmit thought, but to set up in the reader's sense a *vibration* corresponding to what is felt by the writer — is the peculiar function of poetry." (Note that the concept of vibration unlocks a profounder range of thought.) And our author finds in the idea substantial ground for launching his new hypothesis of another status of "feeling," of what "feeling" is in relation to art.

Speaking of vibration and recent scientific findings as to the nature and constitution of matter as being in reality Force or Energy in differing states or degrees of vibration, governed by their inner states of being or embodied Consciousness, and applying this thought to that filmy borderland of speculation of which Aesthetics hesitates to speak — is it not a little overbold to declare, as the author does, that Plotinus is in error when he maintains that form "is in the designer before ever it enters the stone," and that the art of the sculptor (its beauty) has value because of this *immaterial form* or *ideal image* in the sculptor's mind, and not in consequence of the material medium of the work of art?

Considering matter in this light, is it not easy for the analytic mentality of today to conceive that creative thought may become the molding prototype of the material expression of a work of art, through the links of Consciousness, from Spirit — to matter? H. P. Blavatsky uses a still finer illustration of this in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Before the soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united, just as the form to which the clay is modeled is first united with the potter's mind." (p. 5)

In considering this question of the nature of Beauty and its Arts, and linking it with what was in the maturer mind of Keats and within the romanticism of his "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty," etc., together with other keen glancings by Shakespeare and others — these profound words stand forth, yet to be fathomed:

"To perceive the true relation of earthly beauty and Eternal Truth."

It is H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* who wrote:

"In the oldest Aryan race, the Hindu, the worship of the intellectual classes never consisted (as with the Greeks) in a fervent adoration of marvelous form and art, which led later on to anthropomorphism. But while the Greek philosopher adored form, and the Hindu sage alone "perceived the true relation of earthly beauty and eternal truth" — the uneducated of every nation understood neither, at any time.

"They do not understand it even now. The evolution of the GOD-IDEA proceeds apace with man's own intellectual evolution. So true it is that the noblest ideal to which the religious Spirit of one age can soar, will appear but a gross caricature to the philosophic mind in a succeeding epoch! The philosophers themselves had to be *initiated into perceptive mysteries*, before they could grasp the correct idea of the ancients in relation to this most metaphysical subject. Otherwise — outside such initiation — for every thinker there will be a 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther, . . . ' " — I, 326

Professor Nahm's book must be carefully studied to be fully appreciated. It has won for itself an abiding niche among works of research and reference in the field of Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art. No mere review can present more than a snapshot of what is in reality a learned and enlightening contribution to the literature of Aesthetics. Its author seeks all through his patient and closely-woven analyses to clarify and harmonize the elements of a unified aesthetic of

"Beauty" which has the power to inspire feeling to levels of the transcendental. We are all learners and face the far summits of higher thought, keenly aware of "the little known, the unknown vast."

1. *Aesthetic Experience and its Presuppositions*, by Milton C. Nahm, Bryn Mawr College. Harper and Bros., New York and London. 554 pp., \$4.50. ([return to text](#))

2. These last words recall the precept of a Poet-Philosopher of more recent times. It was Thomas Carlyle who wrote: "For only in looking heavenward, take it in what sense you may, not in looking earthward, does what we can call Union, mutual Love, Society, begin to be possible." ([return to text](#))

3. *Reason* here: spiritual knowledge, intuition. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

JANUS AT THE PORTAL — *Allan J. Stover*

Since midsummer the sun has risen a little later each morning. The days have gradually become shorter and the nights longer until the year's cycle finally rounded to its close at the time of the winter solstice. Then came a pause of five days, after which the sun again began to rise a little earlier each day as the new year commenced. Thus does the year in its rhythmic inbreathing and outbreathing follow the pattern of cosmic cycles in which universes come and go.

It has been quite the fashion to dismiss a large part of mythology as mere "sun myth"; the learned authorities not realizing that the yearly course of the sun through the seasons and the signs of the zodiac was dramatized by the ancients in myth and mystery play because in it they saw the pattern of all cycles: of the year, of the month, of the day, of human life, and of greater spiritual cycles un-guessed by the multitude.

The year is a minor manvantara within the cycle of a larger manvantara, and it in a still larger — on and on until the whole universe is encompassed within a period of alternate waking and sleeping too vast for the mind to grasp. In each period there is a childhood, maturity, old age and death followed after a period of rest by a rebirth into a new period of activity.

Nature is thus a living demonstration of those inner laws governing all life which it is the purpose of Theosophy to promulgate. That which takes trillions of years in a distant star or solar system may pass in an infinitesimal flash of time within an atom. The passage of a great manvantara is repeated in essentials in the cycle of every day and of every year. The difference is largely one of degree, and seen as different because we are seldom aware of cyclic changes in the inner spiritual planes.

We may sometimes wish we could witness the celebrated Mystery Dramas of ancient Greece, when quite unheeded the real Mystery

Drama is played about us every day of our lives, and it is only because we are so blinded by material interests that we do not see or understand.

Christmas and New Year's falling as they do, near the winter solstice, celebrate the period when the spirit draws near to the heart of Nature and revivifies it; and Nature begins to stir in her sleep and re-awaken for a new "manvantara" of twelve months. Great initiations take place at this season and it is around the initiatory cycle that the Christmas story is written, for it is at the time of the Winter Solstice that all the saviors of the world are said to be born.

Every birth and even every cycle has something in it analogous to the creation of the world. In each case there is the manifest emerging from the unmanifest through a laya center which is often symbolized as a door or gate. In each case there is the descent through the stages of the three logoi from the spiritual to the physical. Karmic seeds sown in the previous cycle descend, come to fruition and color the opening period of activity.

The name January, the first month of the year, is derived from Janus, the two-faced god of the Romans — commonly said to face two ways: backwards toward the old year and forwards toward the new, thus forming a fitting symbol of the first month of the year.

There is a profound significance attached to the myth of Janus, for as Ovid explains in *Fasti*, (I, 73-289) Janus was known to the ancient Greeks as Chaos, who was older than any of the gods and existed before the formation of the earth, or the differentiation of its elements: he represents the highly spiritual state in which worlds or universes exist between embodiments; and by analogy, since all cycles reflect the same cosmic pattern, the symbol applies equally well to every coming into life.

Ovid has Janus say:

"The ancients called me Chaos, for a being from of old am I;
observe the long, long ages, of which my song shall tell. You

lucid air and the three other bodies, fire, water, earth, were huddled all in one. When once, through the discord of its elements, the mass parted, dissolved, and went in diverse ways to seek new homes, flame sought the height, air filled the nearer space, while earth and sea sank in the middle deep. "Twas then that I, till that time a mere mass, a shapeless lump, assumed the face and members of a god." (*Fasti* I, 163-114, Sir J. G. Frazer's translation).

Janus with his keys is represented as guarding the thresholds of the gods, and of all beginnings and endings. Ovid makes Janus continue:

"Whate'er you see anywhere — sky, sea, clouds, earth — all things are closed and opened by my hands. The guardianship of this vast universe is in my hands alone, and none but me may rule the wheeling pole." (*Fasti*, I, 117-120)

"I sit at heaven's gate with the gentle Hours; my office regulates the goings and comings of Jupiter himself." (*Fasti*, I, 125-127) Here Janus speaks as the voice of cycles as a "law of nature," to which the whole universe is obedient.

There is a great truth hidden in the ancient legend of Janus, for it contains laws and principles of being which enter into the very fiber and structure of the universe. The deepest mysteries lie concealed within the system of the calendar, even though at times the calendar may be out of gear with nature, for it holds the key to many of the problems of life.

The symbolic glyph of two-faced Janus seated in the entrance to a temple is in its purity one of the great symbols of the ancient wisdom. There is something about it of the archaic past which rises above the mass of mythological fancy obscuring so much of the religious thought of Greece and Rome.

Where else may traces of this legend be found, one may ask?

In Central America, the first day-sign of the Maya calendar, Imix the

earth dragon, sometimes illustrated with a head at each end represents the spiritual beginning of the earth. Among the Aztecs the corresponding sign, Cipactli, is similarly represented with two heads, one at each end. Both signs belong to the beginnings of earth embodiment and analogically to the beginning of any natural cycle.

Sir James Frazer cites the double-headed idol of the Bush negroes, facing inward and outward, which they regularly set up as a guardian at the entrance to their villages. Above it two uprights and a crossbar form a rude gate. A more primitive form is found in the "spirit sticks" of the desert Indians of Southern California who formerly placed a forked stick upright in the entrance to the cave wherein they had cached pottery or utensils. The fork with its two prongs was supposed in some way to protect against theft and to warn the owner of any attempt to intrude. So it is that sublime ideas, when their significance is lost, descend to the level of superstition and magic.

There are many correspondences between the beginning of a new year, and the beginning of a new life. As the higher self of man approaches rebirth, it sees for a moment a vision of its past existence, and is shown what the coming life offers, what lessons are to be learned, what wrongs to be righted. The higher self sees and makes its choice. Then again at the moment of death, there comes a review of the life just finished: wherein success has come, wherein failure — and then comes peace and rest.

This moment of vision inward and outward, accompanying the entrance and exit to life, was believed by the ancients to be in some degree true of all cycles of activity both large and small. If one prepares for the moment of sleep by quiet meditation and aspiration reviewing the events of the day and resolving to do better on the morrow, he will awaken in the morning with aspiration and peace in his mind and will find the whole day illumined with an inner light.

Resolutions made at the beginning of the new cycle of a new year likewise have the forces of nature with them, and noble efforts made at that time are more likely to succeed.

THE PYRAMID INITIATION — *G. de Purucker*

[Several years ago one of the students at Point Loma who was giving a course in "The Mystery-Centers," asked Dr. de Purucker to trace for her the true passage of the postulant through the chambers of the Great Pyramid of Cheops.

The following is Dr. de Purucker's reply. With the exception of the first two paragraphs, the answer is not verbatim, but represents a report written down immediately after the interview. It is here reproduced, however, as it stands, as bearing the sum and substance of G. de P.'s teaching in this regard. — Eds.]

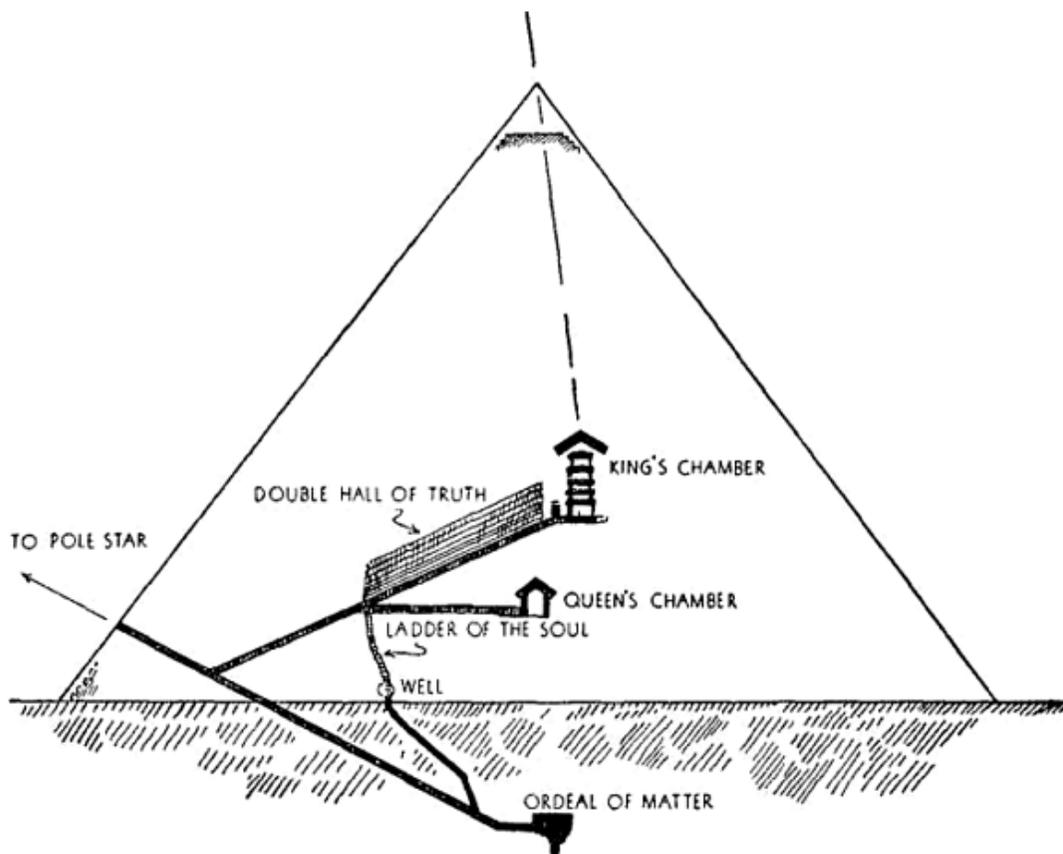
One should not think of a human soul as having been caught in the pyramid and wandering around like an astral shadow in its interior. The initiate was conducted along certain pathways, or left alone at certain times, and the pathways or channels he followed, and the rooms in which he found himself, etc., were representations to his imagination or his mind in this form of what the inner man actually went through when disembodied.

One of the main purposes of the pyramid-initiation was to have the neophyte traverse the passages under the guidance of his teacher or teachers, and thus greatly to stamp upon the mind before being entranced, symbolically what the soul was to pass through in actuality in the inner worlds.

The postulant or disciple or chela enters along the descending passage with his guide, following along the fairly smooth passage which is not very light, until he begins to descend beneath the surface of the Pyramid, down into the Underworld as it were. Then he comes to a junction-point where the guide leaves him alone. Without help the chela enters into the "Ordeal of Matter" of the Pit, and sheds his body, all the material elements of his nature. In this Pit, which is purposely made rough and unfinished to symbolize the rough and unshapely character of matter, the disciple must throw off all veils of matter and clamber out himself, being careful not to fall into nothingness below.

As he comes out from the darkness, at the junction-point previously mentioned he is again met by his guide who either accompanies him, or points the way along another passage leading upwards. This passage

gradually becomes more light, and is very smooth. Then the chela enters the Well of Deep Waters, which one may perhaps think of as the astral worlds. Alone the neophyte must now climb the "Ladder of the Soul," which again is rough and difficult of ascent. Finally, reaching the summit of this ladder, the soul enters the Fields of Aahlu, and comes into the Chamber of the Moon, the Queen's Chamber, the chamber of lunar influences.



Resting there after appropriate ceremonies, the neophyte retraces his steps along the corridor of Aahlu and stands poised as it were at the landing place, at the gate to the Grand Gallery, the Double Hall of Truth. This Hall is a grandly majestic gallery, with seven sections, and the neophyte boldly ascends until he comes to the Antechamber of the King's Chamber. Before entering the antechamber, however, the neophyte has a great step of nearly three feet to climb, then he must stoop very low, and — if the portcullis is up — he may pass through, stooping again very low, and finally, if his karman is good, he may proceed into the King's Chamber, the Home of the Hidden God, and enter the coffer of Osiris.

Now begins the real Initiation when the neophyte's body lies entranced in the

coffer of Osiris. That which has been followed is actually a symbolic descriptive manner of suggesting what actually takes place in the inner worlds.

In the King's Chamber there are the six large sections, the lower one representing our Earth, and the other five, the five planets, Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, Mercury, and Venus, while the Queen's Chamber may represent the Moon.

The soul may ascend the planetary spheres, and then this Giant Triangle is really a "Ring-Pass-Not," something which stands as the bar to further passing, but possibly if the candidate is completely freed of all earthly and planetary attributes, the spirit may wing its way through the apex of this triangle along the mystic line through the topmost peak of the Pyramid itself — and then out and beyond — at one with Divinity.

Then the descent, down from the apex of the pyramid, through the mystic line of power to the apex of the King's Chamber, down into the coffer and the soul is reunited with the entranced body. The Initiation is complete, the neophyte arises as it were from the tomb of trial, no longer a chela, but a Master, and in a daze, suffused still with the divine splendor, passes through the Grand Gallery, through the Hall of Darkness, and then ascends towards the Entrance. Now beautiful beyond description is his first sight — or was when this was supposed to have been built — for there in direct line of vision was the Pole Star, that star which in reality is the pivot of spiritual and divine things.

THE VINE AND THE CUP — *Hazel Boyer Braun*

This universal symbol was a part of the mystical language of initiates in the Mystery Schools of many ancient civilizations. It carries in the potency of its hidden message, depths of thought that are to us inexpressible in words when we are able to grasp even a portion of it with our intuition. It is only because the human race has moved forward to the extent of having some of the esoteric teaching given out in Theosophical literature, that we dare approach the subject with an effort to turn the key at least once.

We have been taught that each occult symbol is capable of being turned with a sevenfold key, revealing the meaning in its relation to the individual man, the races of humanity, the earth, the solar family, the galaxy or home universe, perhaps the operations of the Hierarchy of Compassion, and the greater universes of which galaxies are but atomic parts.

The Cup and Vine symbol seems to be as old as anything that we know. We find it described in the Rig Veda, the oldest book we have according to esoteric records which places it back some 20,000 years. We find it in the Sufi writings of the Persian mystics and in the writings of the apostles in the New Testament. We know that it was a prominent symbol in the Greek Mysteries where they drank from the Kykeon, but it was in the decadent remnants of Greek and Roman Mysteries that it came to its unfortunate end. The Bacchic rites, for example, became evil as we entered the dark ages and the light of the Mysteries was no longer permitted to shine.

Like all significant symbols, the Cup and Vine deals entirely with the evolution of the soul, with the lifting of the human soul to become at one with the spiritual soul. It refers to Initiation and the life of the initiate in his relation to the teacher. For this mystical unfoldment of man's spiritual nature can come only from knowledge of the Divine

Life in its magnificent scheme of manifestation. Of such is the Wisdom of the Ages and this Wisdom belongs to all planets and to all beings. So potent is it that, as Katherine Tingley said, it puts new blood in one's veins, it changes one's heart and mind.

This Divine Wisdom becomes a revelation as man lives it and becomes it. He knows then how to be quiet, how to be at peace, how to see the ineffable beauty in life all about him, how to see the light of Divinity in his fellow men because he has it awake in himself. Then he may become a channel for the flow of this wine of life which pours forth from the fountainheads of the Hierarchy of Compassion and comes to human beings through the spiritual touch of a great teacher and through the thoughts and lives of good men and women.

In the Rig Veda we read of the highest of the Gods, Indra, God of the Firmament, drinking of the Soma, being drunken with Soma-drink. This Soma juice is the fruit of the tree of knowledge. It is this that was forbidden to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden — truly the allegorical way of telling man when he became a self-conscious, responsible human being, that he must prepare himself, raise himself before he could partake of this elixir of life.

The third eye became ossified as man descended for experience into planes of material life, making this descent in order to self-consciously lift himself to a higher experience through suffering and learning. Originally the Soma juice was said to be the fluid of this first eye of man reaching the heart when spiritual illumination was attained. As the Persian says, "It is that wine which raises me above myself."

The Soma is linked with the teaching that we can only know God by becoming godlike. The more inwardly pure the man, the nobler his position. H. P. Blavatsky in *his Unveiled* describes Soma in this way:

This Hindu sacred beverage answers to the Greek ambrosia or nectar, drunk by the gods of Olympus. A cup of kykeon was also quaffed by the mysta at the Eleusinian initiation. He who drinks it reaches *Bradhna*, or place of splendor (Heaven). The soma-

drink known to Europeans is not the *genuine* beverage, but its substitute; for the initiated priests alone can taste of the real soma; and even kings and rajas, when sacrificing, receive the substitute. . . . The soma-drink is also commemorated in the Hindu Pantheon, for it is called the King-Soma. He who drinks of it is made to participate in the heavenly king, because he becomes filled with it, as the Christian apostles and their converts became filled with the Holy Ghost, and purified of their sins. The soma makes a new man of the initiate; he is reborn and transformed, and his spiritual nature overcomes the physical; it gives the divine power of inspiration, and develops the clairvoyant faculty to the utmost. According to the exoteric explanation the soma is a plant, but, at the same time it is an angel. It forcibly connects the *inner*, highest "spirit" of man, which spirit is an angel like the mystical soma, with his "irrational soul," or astral body, and thus united by the power of the magic drink, they soar together above physical nature, and participate during life in the beatitude and ineffable glories of Heaven. (1)

We find the same idea well expressed by the Sufi poet Omar Khayyam when he sang:

XLI

For "Is" and "Is-not" though *with* Rule and Line
And "Up-and-down" *without*, I could define,
I yet in all I only cared to know,
Was never deep in anything but — Wine.

XLII

And lately, by the Tavern Door agape,
Came stealing through the Dusk an Angel Shape
Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and
He bid me taste of it; and 'twas — the Grape! (2)

The ancients loved analogy and comparison. There is an interesting one suggested in the frequent use of the reference to the juice of the

moon-plant (Soma). Soma is associated with the lunar goddesses, Isis, Diana, and others. We believe there is a very deep connection there in regard to the moon and its part in initiation; but the most obvious one is the fact that the moon watches over child birth, conception, etc., and the analogy is made to the quickening of the child-seed in the approach to its time of birth and the actual quickening that takes place in man's spiritual nature when the veils of selfishness begin to fall away and he heeds the call of his higher self to bring into birth the savior that is within him.

This is what Jesus meant when he spoke of himself as the Vine and his apostles as the fruit. They are the carriers of the inspiration which must bear fruit in the quality of living. In Luke 20 we find the parable of the Vine: "A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time." Truly everywhere this wisdom of man's true nature and his relation to the Universe is the bread of life, the wine of life, the elixir of life, the sustainer of all mankind.

It makes clear the meaning of the Feast of the Passover, for we find the following verses in Luke 22 telling what befell after the Lord was seated at this feast:

For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves:

For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in *my* blood, which is shed for you.

"Whoso tasteth my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day." The Holy of Holies in any religion refers to this communion of man's human self with the God within. It is the true meaning of the Sacrament of the church. The soma juice is the Holy water used in the Church.

When all the inner meaning of these symbols is better understood, men shall recognize themselves as brothers of divine origin. For this hunger is in every human heart and we shall all sometime set out to find the Holy Grail.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Isis Unveiled*, p. xl. ([return to text](#))
2. *The Rubaiyat*, 1st Edition of Edward Fitzgerald's translation. ([return to text](#))

ANANDA — RIVER OF BLISS — *Robert Airlie*

High in the hills, a little lake lay like a silvered mirror under the setting sun. Its slanting rays probed the dark defile of a narrow valley leading east and cast a crimson glow on the surface of the stream that fed the lake. A brooding hush hovered over the forest and brought a benediction to the mind of the man who surveyed the scene. Standing in his cabin door, Nelson Graham breathed in the scent of balsam and sweet gum. Here was peace after four years of war and it seemed that he desired naught else. There was no need for him to work in the years ahead. His father and his mother had passed on while he was gone. There were no ties that held him to any task. It appeared pointless to return to the routine of teaching philosophy when his chosen field was so wholly unrelated to the harsh realities of life.

Stepping down to his canoe, he pushed it out on the placid stream just as the sun disappeared behind a distant ridge. Drifting as the darkness deepened, his ears caught a faint sa-a like the sound of an indrawn breath. It was the rustle of the evening breeze among the trees as the warm air rose eastward up the valley. Soon, he knew, it would change to ha-a as a cooler current descended along the Sierra slopes. Then, a gray and ghostly mist would rise from the lake to shroud it for the night. The mountains were breathing, as all that lives must breathe. A spell fell upon him at the thought and he remembered the beloved texts that he had learned to read in Sanskrit. They held real philosophy that delved deep into the heart of human life, into the universal life itself. How could he ever hope to bring the sublime truths expounded by those Oriental sages home to the skeptical minds of Occidental youth? Of what avail to struggle single-handed against the inertia of a system that sought only for scientific facts? Suddenly, a singular clarity of perception came over him. In his mind's eye he could see the books, the pages, the paragraphs of treatises which he had read years before. The sentences stood out word for word, with a lucid sense of what the

writers meant when they wrote them. This breathing of the mountains, of the forest, of himself, was but the whispering echo of the Great Breath, the living essence of the Universe of universes. The treatise on that was not the metaphysical philosophy that his fellow professors derided. It was scientific and the Science of Breath was as truly so as aught that was ever written in the western world. The Sanskrit letters were there before his eyes in the dialogue between the god Siva and his goddess, Sakti. They were the same as Isvara, Soul of souls, and Pawarti, who was but the negative phase of his positive aspect. Let the physicists call them the positive and negative poles and deal with the dialogue as an exposition of electromagnetic phenomena. It would remain equally true.

The impression was so strong that he repeated Sakti's question to Siva aloud. "Lord Mahadeva, god of gods, be kind to me, and tell me the wisdom that comprehends everything." Ere the words left his lips he felt a great elation, a veritable elan that lifted him out of the little circle of his sensory consciousness. Literally, it seemed to levitate his very soul and, looking down, he could see his body resting in the canoe. The Earth sank away beneath him as his perspective widened. He could see the cities of his own land and, with telescopic vision, the people themselves. A murmur arose from them in a babel of tongues that was not their voices but the queer confusion of their inner thoughts. It rent him with a depth of compassion that he had never felt before. Could he not descend and tell them what he had heard and how they erred — tell them in words that they must understand?

"Nay!" said a Voice that was not a voice but was Sige, the silence, speaking into an earless ear, "Look and listen!" There was no sound, but strange shapes began to take form around him. A few were very beautiful. Others were horrible and menacing. He recognized them as phantasmal forms created by the thoughts that he had heard. The stuff that they were made of rose from mankind en masse like a miasma, like the smog that dimmed the lights of the cities, like the mist that, now, hid from him his own person drifting in a canoe far below. Yet, these phantasms were very real; quite as much so as enemy soldiers

with whom he had contended in battle. He felt the need to hold fast to his courage; even though the beautiful forms gathered about as though to protect him. Were they real? He began to hope so, for they were leading him up through the stratosphere to a dreamland of iridescent splendor. "Empty, all empty," said the Voice, and he knew that he was in the psychic realm.

Instantly, there was naught around him but an utter void, a stygian negation. This was far more terrifying than the menace of the shapes. He felt congealed, crystallized and disintegrating in an atmosphere of absolute zero. His soul held her breath and the Void became a scintillant kaleidoscope of comets, nebulae, suns and galaxies and metagalaxies whirling with incredible speed. Was this cosmic consciousness? Here was the universe laid out before him. He was one with it and knew that he could watch, analyze and predict the space-time relations of all this vast continuum. "Look again," said the Voice. He looked and saw this time that these stellar orbs were also naught but the shadows cast by glorious Beings who beckoned him still higher and welcomed him as one of them with a paeon of praise. Audition had returned. This was what he had been told to listen for. It was the Music of the Spheres, the Empyrean of Gods and Goddesses. Surely, this was the highest heaven.

"You may go one step farther, one plane higher," said the Voice.

"Ananda resides there and his River of Bliss cannot be crossed; even by these Gods. Your spiritual eyes have been opened and you may look, once, a little way into what lies beyond. It is the abode of Isvara." With the same sensation that his body felt as it lay drifting in the canoe, his soul was carried along a river of light that circled all that he had seen. From his solar boat, he could witness every detail encompassed within the immensity of Brahma's Egg. It was bounded by this flowing stream of living luminescence on which he rode. Beyond its outer shore was a sky that was filled with the rainbow colors of the spectrum in incessant movement. They met and merged in brilliant vortical aurorae with every hue and tint. There was music which kept pace with the changing play of gorgeous colors; exquisite chords that echoed with

overtones. Likewise, there was a thundering dissonance that followed each consonant chord. Then, the next notes drew from that discord harmonies that were higher and grander still; as though to silence all harsh tones in one sublime chorus of hallelujah.

From the Science of Breath, he recognized what he saw as the operation of the subtle ethers in the outer veil of the vehicle of Isvara. The ancient teaching came back to him: When the power of the five senses is controlled by will, then "the Tattwas begin to take their rise before the eyes." Through these Tattvic ethers his senses received their five separate sensations. In one indescribably enlightening instant, he realized that he was seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling them. "He who knows their color, their motion, their taste, their places, and their sign, becomes in this world equal to the god, Rudra," was what the verse stated. Here was the foundation of all the sciences, the five modifications of the Great Breath acting upon Prakriti as undifferentiated energy-substance or force and matter conjoined. It was the body of the Sakti herself. In and upon it Siva produced the thrilling vibratory motions of all manifested life. Infinitely variant, each and every aspect of Parabrahman's evolution was formed thus from the same substance. The atoms, minerals, vegetation, animals, men, and gods were of the self-same nature, as embodied in the great galactic organisms.

"This is what you were brought thither to see," said the Voice. "It is the philosophy which should bind scientific progress to the stability of true religion. Return now to your body, and "By your works ye will be known." "A heavy fog enshrouded the canoe in which his body lay upon the little stream in the valley. As by a miracle, he floated within a few feet of the landing where the lantern light from his cabin beckoned him ashore. Mechanically, he prepared and ate his supper. Then, before the logs in the fireplace, he came to his decision. He would return to the college that had been his Alma Mater and where the chair of philosophy awaited him. Before he resumed his seat therein he would major in physics and earn a doctor's degree in science. Then, in the terminology of the scientific Philistines themselves, he would seek

to bridge the gap between mathematical physics and the metaphysical beatitudes that, alone, could save them from the abyss of materialism. In the hearts and souls of the young men and women who came to him as students, he would sow the seeds of truth. In some of them, surely, these would find fertile soil and grow to come to blossom in flowers of cosmic consciousness unchoked by the weeds of the wayside.

The Theosophical Forum

THE PHOENIX — *Allan J. Stover*

For constancy the phoenix serves as a type; for understanding by nature its renewal it is steadfast to endure the burning flames which consume it, and then it is reborn anew. —
Leonardo da Vinci

The legend of the Phoenix Bird, periodically reborn from the ashes of its consumed body, is a myth from the mystery language of the Ancient Wisdom, so old that no man knows the time or place of its origin.

Found in both the East and the West, it everywhere sets forth in poetic imagery the law, universal throughout nature, that individuals, civilizations, races and worlds are perpetually reborn from the ashes of their former selves. Various aspects of the myth have been brought out by different peoples, and by comparing these the student's mental conception of the Phoenix myth begins to take form and color, and is seen to be, not an image of fancy and superstition, but a symbol of eternal truth.

According to the Greek historian Herodotus, the Phoenix came from Arabia at the close of every 500 years, and flew to its shrine at Heliopolis in Egypt, where it deposited the dead body of its parent (i.e., its former self) which it had brought incased in an egg or ball of myrrh. Another and later version tells of the bird at the age of 500 years building a nest or funeral pyre of frankincense and cassia and other fragrant herbs, which it lighted by vigorously fanning the pile with its wings until it caught fire. Then when its body was entirely consumed, the Phoenix rose from the flames and flew away a new bird.

In the collection of popular legends of the Middle Ages called the *Physiologus*, the Phoenix is described as an Indian bird which lived only upon air, and after a period of 500 years loaded himself with fragrant spices and flew north to Heliopolis, where he entered the temple dedicated to the sun, and depositing his load upon the altar was

burned to ashes. The renewed bird emerged at once and in three days was full grown and flew away.

The Phoenix was known to the Egyptians as the Bennu Bird and was closely associated with the daily rising of the sun. The Bennu was also referred to as the "soul of Ra and symbol of Osiris." In *The Book of the Dead* we find these words spoken by the deceased:

"I am the Bennu, the soul of Ra, and the guide of the gods in the Tuat [the underworld]; let it be so done unto me that I may enter in like a hawk, and that I may come forth like Bennu, the Morning Star.

". . . from many passages we learn that the Bennu, the Soul of Ra, which appeared each morning under the form of the rising sun, was supposed to shine upon the world from the top of the famous Persea tree [at Heliopolis in Egypt] wherein he renewed himself."

— *The Gods of the Egyptians*, II, 97, A. E. Wallis Budge

The Persea Tree appears to have been a member of the Laurel family and is used as a symbol of the "World Tree" which is representative of the hierarchical system in which we live, and in whose higher parts the reincarnating monad finds its rest. According to Egyptian belief the Phoenix or Bennu, self-regenerated, rises like a fragrant flame above the Persea Tree, or again at night as the soul of Osiris it rests in this tree above the sarcophagus of Osiris. Elsewhere we find the Nile god referred to as awakening to life the soul as the Phoenix-Osiris in the plants. There are also other references to the Morning Star as the one who ferries Osiris or the Phoenix from the east.

In Persia the world tree was the "Ox-Horn Tree" which contained the seeds of all plants, and possessed the power of renewing the universe at the proper time. "On it perched the sacred eagle Simurgh. When he flew upward the tree was so agitated that a thousand twigs shot forth. When he alighted again he broke off a thousand twigs which scattered seeds on all sides." — *The Rainbow Bridge*, J. S. Newberry, p. 171. Here is

obviously an allegory of the cosmic outbreathing and inbreathing, expansion and contraction, which all things undergo.

Among the Turks, the Phoenix was known by the name of Kerkes, and according to tradition was said to live a thousand years, at the end of which time it consumed itself by fire and arose renewed to live another thousand years. This was repeated 7×7 , or 49 times when the Day of Judgment came. Mme. Blavatsky says:

The "seven times seven," 49, are a transparent allegory, and an allusion to the forty-nine "Manus," the Seven Rounds, and the seven times seven human cycles in each Round on each globe. The *Kerkes* [of the Turks] and the *Onech* [of the Hebrews] stand for a race cycle, and the mystical tree Ababel — the "*Father Tree*" in the Kuran — shoots out new branches and vegetation at every resurrection of the Kerkes or Phoenix, the "Day of Judgment" meaning a "minor *Pralaya*" — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 617

The "seven times seven human cycles in each Round" evolve through a graduated series of seven races. Each race of whatever degree is separated from its successor by cataclysms of greater or lesser magnitude. These take place at about the midpoint of the race, at the time when the peak has been reached and the downward plunge has commenced.

G. de Purucker points out that while the Babylonian Neros of 600 years comes as close as any to the Phoenix cycle as commonly understood in Europe, nevertheless the symbol represents the cyclic nature of all recurring periods of time, both great and small, rather than any particular cycle. (1)

Cycles of many lengths have been associated with the Phoenix, but it is interesting to note that Dr. de Purucker gives the life cycle of what he called a tribal generation, or the active expansive period of what we know as a nation, as about 500 years; at which time the nation having reached its crest of importance begins to decline while a new nation

rises to take its place in the world. Races like the individuals composing them all have their youth, maturity and old age. Modern Europe rose from the wreck of the Roman Empire, and will when its time has come give place to its successor. It would seem that in many places in the world today, the Phoenix Bird is fanning his wings above the fragrant pyre of national consciousness in order that a rejuvenated humanity with renewed hopes and ideals may again take a step forwards and upwards.

According to *The Secret Doctrine* our European Family Race has a great many thousands of years yet to run; nevertheless there is evidence that new racial trends are already appearing, perhaps the Fifth National Race, perhaps only a new Tribal Race. The important thing is to keep the general scheme of intermeshing racial cycles in mind as an ideal pattern to brood and meditate upon.

At present the world is undergoing a series of slow alterations in climate and structure which are fully as important as the events which have disrupted human society. These geologic changes will continue and slowly increase for thousands of years since man and his home, the earth, co-operate and evolve together throughout the ages. One sub-race after another will gradually separate from its parent stock and enter upon its golden age, and will find the physical conditions it needs for its development.

In America, the blending of racial strains is resulting in many new characteristics. In the United States the majority of people have already combined several European strains and will gradually become a race apart. In Canada the English, Scottish, French and Indian and other stocks have similarly combined. South of the Rio Grande two thirds of the population is colored with Indian blood and the Mestizo is emerging and forming a new race or races, fore-shadowings of greater races to come.

Throughout these lands, Ancient America is renascent with qualities and hopes before unknown, as fanned by the wings of the Phoenix the world awaits rebirth. (2)

In America a living symbol, the Quetzal (ket-sal) is said by many to be the most beautiful bird in the world. It lives high in the "cloud-forests" of Guatemala and Honduras and commands admiration whenever seen. In American mythology the Quetzal was the solar bird, the dweller of the great spaces and symbolic of the supreme spirit. The colors of its plumage may be seen in the green and red of the ancient wall paintings and the trailing tail is repeated in the long and colorful ceremonial robes.

The Quetzal nests only in the loftiest trees, and the nest has two openings, one for entrance, one for egress, the long plumes not permitting the bird either to turn about or to back up. Closely connected with the Quetzal was the serpent Coatl, symbolic of the earth — not the inert matter but the living fire of the globe, often represented as a two-headed dragon.

When in man the fire ascended and was united with the solar or buddhic splendor the man became illumined, his inner vision opened upon infinity. He was clothed with the solar radiance and was then known as the plumed serpent — Quetzalcoatl, as his brothers in India were called the Great Nagas or serpents and in China or Wales as Dragons of Wisdom.

The radiance of the spirit was always symbolized in America by Quetzal plumes in the headdress. From this custom it came about that all chieftains gradually came to use feathers of other birds as a sign of honor and achievement.

Everywhere the Phoenix myth signifies, above all else, the principle of self-regeneration as a necessary part of the life cycle of both individual and race. It is therefore a doctrine of hope, and a promise of unending evolution.

In India, Karttikeya, born from fire and water and nursling of the Pleiades, combines the attributes of both Mars and Apollo. He was said to exist for the purpose of destroying Taraka, a deva-daimon who had seized occult knowledge and powers belonging to the gods alone. He is

represented as having six heads, one for each century of the 600 year Neros cycle; and is shown riding on the peacock (the Hindu Phoenix). The "eyes" of the peacock feathers were said to represent the starry heavens while about the body of the bird were concealed the signs of the zodiac.

The allusion to the destruction of the daimon Taraka as a punishment for possessing occult powers may well apply to the self-destruction brought upon a race by the misuse of atomic or similar force: a possibility the greater part of the world stands in abject fear of today. Karttikeya and his Phoenix-peacock steed represented the critical midpoint of any racial cycle.

The Phoenix in Japan is represented by the Ho-wo, a mythical bird composed of peacock, pheasant and bird of paradise. The Ho-wo dwells in the high regions of the air and only descends to earth when bearing one of the immortals or upon the birth of a great sage or emperor.

In China the Feng-Huang or Vermilion Bird dwells in the southern quarter of the heavens and rules over the midpoint of the day as well as over the midpoint of any cycle. Astrologically it is the brilliant red star Antares in Scorpio, and with its companions Regulus in Leo, Aldebaran in Taurus, and Fomalhaut in Aquarius rules over the four cardinal points. These stars, known as the Four Royal Stars by the Persians, and the Four Maharajas by the Hindus are referred to in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 408-9) by Mme. Blavatsky who says ". . . that which Mr. G. Massey calls the four genii of the four cardinal points; and the Chinese, the Black Warrior, White Tiger, Vermilion Bird and Azure Dragon, is called in the Secret Books — the 'Four Hidden Dragons of Wisdom' and the 'Celestial Nagas.' "

The Feng-Huang was believed to have its origin in the sun and to drink only the waters from the K'unlun Mountains, feeding upon the tender sprouts of the bamboo. As in Japan it is associated with the coming to earth of great souls and with the beginning of wise and beneficent reigns. It is the symbol of Yang the spiritual principle, its plumage contains the five colors, (3) its call is a sweet blending of the five notes.

"Its low notes are like a bell, its high notes are like a drum." When it flies 360 kinds of birds follow and the legends told of it are countless.

There is a thread of esotericism running through all these legends, linking the thought of east and west, vitalizing the myth, until the truth it embodies shines forth like a many faceted jewel, a constant reminder that there is no death, but only endless change and evolution, as mankind progresses from humanhood to godhood. It is the symbol of the immortal self which after playing one part on the stage of life, discards its old garments and passes on to another act in the Great Drama.

FOOTOTES:

1. See *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, pp 36 et seq. ([return to text](#))

2. Among the many suggestions submitted for the great seal of the United States, was one by William Barton in which the phoenix was included as part of the design for the obverse side. This however was never adopted. Charles Thomson's original sketch and the text accompanying it, which was adopted for the obverse of the seal, specifically names and depicts the American eagle as the emblem of our country.

The unfinished pyramid and all-seeing eye of the reverse side, with the exception of the motto, is from the design submitted by Mr. Barton. ([return to text](#))

3. In America the Quetzal's plumage reflects the seven colors of the solar spectrum; while in China the Vermilion Bird is traditionally endowed with the five colors and the five sounds pertaining to the five elements of the Chinese philosophy. ([return to text](#))

TORCH OF PROGRESS — J. A. Long

What is it that causes civilization to move forward to new goals of perfection?

The scientist will say perhaps that it is the result of new discoveries in the vast field of technology and point to the enormous strides made in transportation and other equally phenomenal accomplishments. The philosopher may say that man has greatly improved in his ability to think and reason and the subsequent result is progress. The religionist may refer to God and credit His all-wise omnipotence as the real cause of civilization's advance. But to the mind that penetrates the outer garment of life, these ideas are soon recognized to be but effects clothing more subtle and deeply rooted causes which reveal themselves only to those having the ability to see the hidden or occult side of life.

It is difficult for the lay mind to accept, let alone conceive, the idea that there is at the center of all progress an expanding *spiritual* impulse, which impulse represents the occult side of Nature and upon which is builded the philosophy of the Ancient Wisdom — Theosophy. It is even more difficult to accept the further fact that this impulse finds its expression in the world through the medium of a group of highly developed human beings who with their predecessors have been the guardians of man's destiny, and who perform their work strictly on the basis of Nature's own rule for true progress — Universal Brotherhood. And to accept the Theosophical Society as the outer body through which these Masters of Wisdom work, seems to the lay mind too much to expect.

Nevertheless, doubts notwithstanding, humanity has been watched over with compassion by this central Brotherhood down through the ages and has worked through a body of their representatives in the world which carried various names in different periods of the world's

history. Today and since 1875 it has used the Theosophical Society, and particularly its Esoteric Section, to carry the torch of true spiritual progress for the re-enlightenment of the hearts and minds of men. Doubters need only take the trouble to investigate briefly the teachings given out by this central Brotherhood in an ever-expanding stream of occult literature through the channel of the Society. Such investigation will reveal that while this stream has been accompanied by a multitude of pseudo-occult publications based on plagiarism, the truly inspired works of the leaders of the Theosophical Movement such as *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Mahatma Letters*, *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, and *The Esoteric Tradition* clearly indicate there is no body of teachings extant in known history that presents so comprehensively the true basis for the progress of civilization.

As we approach the mid-point of the century it becomes obvious that those who have been so privileged as to find themselves in the midst of this stream of spiritual force flowing into and giving impulse to the life of our time, carry a grave responsibility. One need only glimpse the alignment of forces of self-interest, individual and national, to see the great burden being carried by the Brotherhood of Masters whose very existence sprang from complete unselfishness, and whose objective is to aid the orphan humanity to know itself and realize that true Universal Brotherhood is not merely a ritual of lip-service but is a fact in Nature.

What is it that causes civilization to move forward to new goals of perfection? It is the combined efforts, whether given consciously or unconsciously, of those souls both great and small, who by their thoughts and deeds contribute something to the reservoir of spiritual strength and impersonal service through which the impulse toward true Brotherhood can find expression. Every helper of the "helpers of the helping hands" of the Masters who form the guardian wall of our humanity is a partner in the Cause which moves civilization forward to new goals of perfection.

IMPULSE OR INTUITION — WHICH? — *Howard Utter*

The non-existence of any relationship, either absolute or partial, between impulse and intuition makes it easy to distinguish one from the other. The two are not correlative, and the idea that they have a double or reciprocal relation is a result of lack of understanding the origin, nature, and functional laws under which each operates in its native, but separate sphere, of the human constitution.

The simplest definition of impulse is: a sudden thought. A thought that comes quickly and without warning is certain to have its origin in the intermediate nature and therefore must be considered an impulse. The simplest definition of intuition is: knowing without knowing how one knows. Intuition is not sudden, but often is an answer to a long studied problem, intense meditation, or stored up wisdom gained in former lives. It is the voice of man's own Inner god.

An impulse is a sudden or transient emotion tending to induce action. Here are three characteristics which brand its origin as no deeper than the psychological nature. This transitory emotional event, passing before the vision in a brief time and then disappearing from view after inducing some action, not necessarily for good, of the personal self, is a marked contrast to the permanent, impersonal wisdom of intuition and inspiration streaming steadily from the Monadic Spirit, which does not urge violent and unreasoned action, but more often than not warns to refrain from action entirely, which, if committed impulsively would prove to be destructive rather than constructive.

An impulse is a conative state of consciousness, occasioned by and fused with a feeling of craving, in view of some object of sense-perception or of the imagination, with a strong tendency to discharge in some kind of purposeful movement. The faculties of desire, impulse, or exertion are functionings of the psychological Kamica-Manas and are distinguished from the intuition flowing from the Buddhi-Manas by

cognition and feeling. The character and end of these impulsive movements may (1) be quite completely instinctive and not recognized, this failure to recognize being the result of habit, that of allowing desire of the lower personal self to be the ruling motive for action; (2) have the form of acquired habits of reaction; or (3) result from instantaneous judgment as to how to meet an emergency. These last two will be reactions exactly corresponding to habits of thought. If the thought habits have been to follow the desires of the lower personal nature these reactions will be impulsive; if the habit has been formed of setting aside the psychological and waiting for the Light of Understanding and Knowledge these reactions will then be intuitive. Intuition, the voice of our Spiritual Soul, is always recognized as Wisdom, and will never be confused with animal instinct.

The two psychical characteristics of an impulse are its strong tendency to initiate action and its lack of deliberation. These two characteristics designate man's psychological nature to be in full control of his actions and his life directed by impulse.

Experience has taught that the consequences of impulsive actions are always disappointing, by the reason of their failure to attain for us our highest aspirations, and only increase our unwanted Karma. These alone are adequate reasons to reach a conclusion that impulse is an incorrect and confusing basis for action and life.

Far better to keep the psychological nature of man's constitution in self-surrender to the Higher Self, flooding the Mind with the Light of his Spiritual Monad, with intuition, inspiration, and, if self-surrender is complete, even genius.

Man's possession of divine free-will is a power to choose." confusing, failing, Karmic creating impulsive action; or Intuitive Divine Wisdom of his own Inner God. Each must ask himself and decide: WHICH?

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF IDEALS — *M. G. Gowsell*

Of all the live issues before the youth of today the most outstanding is doubtless that of determining upon some seemingly worth while objective in life. Bending one's course thereto, after due stock-taking and deliberation, while important, is a secondary affair, and yet it is no child's play, as we well know. Although paradoxically enough, the child is far nearer to one's ideal achievement or metaphysical goal than might be supposed, or, least of all, recognized. But this is, perhaps, to digress.

The world of today being in the throes of transition, the general situation is a peculiar one, one which is unique and wholly without precedent, where everything seems to be at the parting of the ways. The young man or woman with a view to any particular career as an objective is compelled to do some real thinking, and that without benefit of proxy. There is deep significance in the fact that the youth of today are not so disposed to turn to the older generations for advice as heretofore. And for very good reasons, as they see them. One of which is that their elders appear to be too conservative, too lacking in vision, and hence too nonplussed themselves to be of much help. It is encouragingly true that reflective minds among the younger generation are far nearer to a complete understanding of the causes underlying our chaotic social conditions than are their elders. They know for instance that the present world crisis is but the culmination, the fruit, of generations and generations of striving to achieve what are now seen to be sordid objectives, to say the least. This recognition and understanding of the situation is one of the most, if not *the* most hopeful sign of the times.

Objective objectives have too long adorned the horizon as popular ideals to be fought for tooth and nail, while heaven alone was left to help the fellow who got in the other's way. It has not been a pretty picture. But it may yet serve as a vivid illustration as to how absolutely

ideals have ruled, and will forever continue to rule the world. The reason for this is that there is a law of cause and effect in the affairs of men, one which cannot be set aside. The same law is operative throughout every department of the universe in which we live and move.

Coveted preferments and privileges of exploitation have not been confined wholly to the material resources of the planet during all these years. Nations have been exploited by nations; classes by classes; groups of individuals by other groups, equally opportunist, until today there are the glaring effects everywhere. In addition to want, woe, war and brutality, we have an almost universal negation, suspicion, fear and fevered anxiety, as one after another the ghastly gestures suggesting imminent disaster are thrown upon our screen of time.

Nor has man's emotional nature escaped an equally intensive exploitation. Religious and political charlatans, both great and small, have been intensely active in this field. Volumes might be written on this score alone, and then fall far short of an adequate description of the sorrowful wreckage left in the wake of operations in these mine-strewn waters of life. Conceived in darkness and born in ignorance, the lower man's twin twain of hate and fear have been played upon for centuries, and are even today being utilized to the limit by those, be it noted, who well know what they are about.

What more evidence could one want as to the supreme rulership of ideals in the affairs of men than what we see all about us? But there is what the chemist calls an "end point" in every quantitative analysis, wherever taking place. And during the present process, Nature herself has supervision over the various reactions now under way in her vast laboratory. It is an accepted fact that gold must be tried by fire. And during this present-day trial what is too painfully visible is but the dross being forced to the surface during the process. "Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm; not till then. It shall grow, it will shoot up, it will make branches and leaves and form buds, while the storm continues, while the battle lasts." (*Light on the*

Path)

The Theosophical Forum

PLAN AND PURPOSE IN NATURE — *Allan J. Stover*

According to the Biogenetic Law, or Recapitulation Theory, animals in their individual development pass through the stages experienced in the evolution of the race to which they belong. This scientific theory was arrived at through the study of comparative embryology and the larval stages of insects and crustacea. In the Crustacea, which includes the lobsters and crabs, certain species pass through larval stages which resemble more primitive Crustacea. Most insects undergo a change, or metamorphosis, passing from egg to larva to pupa to adult. The caterpillar changing into a butterfly is perhaps the best example of this amazing life cycle. Both Crustacea and insects molt, shedding their skins with each change, and undergoing their growth immediately before the new skin hardens.

Among the vertebrates, these different stages of growth are hidden away in the embryo, which undergoes a series of changes in its development from ovum to the time of birth, during which it recapitulates the forms of a series of lower organisms. For instance, at one stage of embryonic growth gill slits appear. In the amphibians, birds and mammals these gill slits are modified or disappear, but in the fishes they continue to the adult stage. The development of the flounder is a striking illustration of one instance where the law of recapitulation is carried on after birth. The flounder, when young, swims upright as fish commonly do, and it has an eye on each side of its head. Being a flat fish, the flounder rapidly develops the habit of turning on its side, and the eye on the then under side slowly migrates over the top of the head to join its companion on the upper side.

The Law of Recapitulation has been used by evolutionists to support the evolutionary theory, and has been advanced as evidence to prove that all life has developed from simple to complex in a long, end-on-end evolution. This is contrary to our Theosophical teachings. We say that the various stocks of life are distinct; that they do not pass one into the

other, although the re embodying monads overshadowing the organisms do so, up to a certain point after which the door is closed. To the Theosophist, recapitulation is much more important than science yet knows; it is the law of analogy; it applies to the entire life cycle, not to a mere portion of it.

As G. de Purucker states in his book, *Man in Evolution*:

Nature repeats herself everywhere. She follows grooves of action that have already been made; she follows the line of least resistance in all cases and everywhere, and it is upon this repetitive action of our great Mother, Universal Nature, that is founded the Theosophical doctrine of the law of cycles, which is the enacting of things which have been before.

To quote one of our great geologists, Dr. L. Snyder:

Each group of organisms has a life time — a birth, a youth, a maturity, a death — as do the individuals composing it. In fact, one of the most fundamental principles of organic evolution is the fact that each individual repeats in brief, or recapitulates, the history of the race to which it belongs.

Reproduction of the amoeba is by means of single cell division whereby the single cell becomes two individuals. At times, when the vitality is running low, instead of dying two individuals will come in contact and in some mysterious way renew their vital energy. With the amoeba, death is an accident.

In another of the protozoa, the Euglena, we find a specialized appendage for locomotion in the form of a long, slender, whip-like flagellum, which thrashes about and propels the owner through the water. At the anterior end is a small, red spot which is supposed to be sensitive to light. A number of flat, circular plates are found in the body of the Euglena, which contain chlorophyll and manufacture food by photosynthesis, after the manner of a plant. However, this creature eats also after the manner of an animal, by means of a permanent food vacuole. Reproduction occurs in the Euglena by longitudinal division.

The flagellates of which Euglena is a member are a very common type of protozoa and, as might be suspected, are claimed by both zoologists and botanists.

So far, we have considered two single-celled organisms. In one — the amoeba — any part of the protoplasm is able to perform all functions. In the other, the Euglena, certain portions of the protoplasm have specialized, definite functions.

We now approach a definite step in evolution, in which we find hundreds, or thousands, of single-celled organisms living in clusters to form a hollow globe, so that each cell is in contact with the water and at the same time joined to its fellow. The best representative of this stage of development is the Volvox, a plant according to some, an animal according to others. In the Volvox each of the many cells possesses an eye spot, chlorophyll plates, a contractile vacuole and two flagella, and acts independently of its neighbor cells. Here, however, we have specialization, for certain cells increase in size and perform the function of reproduction for the colony. As yet, the association is not sufficiently dominated by the embodying entity to be classed as a many-celled organism. The association is but loosely knit together. Still, one feels that there is a foreshadowing of organization.

We have briefly examined two examples of the protozoa, and I may say in passing that 15,000 species are recognized by the zoologists, besides a host of bacteria, desmids, and microscopic algae belonging to the plant world.

I like to feel that the increasing complexity found in the plant and animal kingdom is due to the progressive descent and embodiment of a consciousness, of a conscious entity seeking experience and a vehicle in our physical world. Slowly at first, then more and more completely, the cells submit to a purposeful if elementary will, first by uniting in colonial order (yet each cell independent of the others), then certain cells specializing, developing organs for certain functions, so that more and more we see all cell personality subordinated to organism

individuality, as in greater and still greater degree the descending conscious entity becomes identified with its body, simple though that body may be.

Passing over a number of the simpler forms of life, we now pause at the hydra, a simple type abundant in both fresh and salt water, and related to the jellyfish, sea anemone, and coral. The hydra egg develops by subdivision into a hollow ball, which then infolds to form a two-celled wall about a hollow interior. The interior wall occupies about two-thirds of the body wall, and is digestive and secretory in function. Many cells possess a number of flagella, which create a current in the water, and pseudopodia or protrusions of the cell substance project and capture solid food particles swimming in the hollow stalk.

Among the cells of the hydra's outer wall, or ectoderm, are many stinging cells, which discharge a barbed thread able to paralyze any small creature or even kill it by a poison contained in the barbs. The tentacle is able to seize prey and force it into the body cavity.

Strangely, the hydra is able to move, after the fashion of a measuring worm, by bending forward, attaching itself by its tentacles, releasing its base, and advancing it for a new hold. Another method is to stand upside down and walk on its tentacles.

The hydra, by budding, often forms a colony, as is the case with our common coral.

In studying the hydra, we come to what is known as an alternation of generations, for the hydra produces not another hydra, but multitudes of small jelly-fish. These are free-swimming forms, and they lay quantities of eggs which develop into minute, free-swimming larvae. These larvae soon settle down, become fixed to the rocks and, by budding, produce a hydroid colony, thus completing a life cycle of which, unless we knew the whole story, we might well consider each stage as separate forms unrelated to one another.

In both the plant and animal kingdoms we find this alternation of forms appearing again and again.

There is a primitive land plant which I wish to mention here, the slime mold. In its early stages the slime mold resembles a small, flat mass of jelly, and moves about in dark, moist places in the woods, seeking and capturing bits of food after the manner of an amoeba. Later, it becomes fixed, erects a stalk crowned with a beautiful capsule in which spores develop.

Why, one may ask, should the early part of a plant's life be so active, and not the latter? We say it recapitulates, repeats the time when the plant kingdom was dominant, and much more active than at present.

A study of plant or animal life leads one to believe that we have a series of cycles, each repeating the same theme, yet ever on a higher order. Now one portion of the cycle is dominant, now another, as different facets of the life are brought to the fore, but over and behind all, one senses the grand rhythm of the composition.

Geologic history shows plant and animal life rising in wave after wave as the climatic cycles, large and small, come and go. Each life wave suddenly develops, reaches its climax, and declines, while at about its peak another wave appears. That which we see in the world today consists in every case of but thin streams of life, each of which once had its day in the sun, during which time it was the dominant life of the globe.

The gray, creeping club-moss under our feet once formed great forests; the scouring rush along the highway once grew a hundred feet high in Carboniferous swamps. The ancient past lives for us today in the life we so lightly consider as scarcely to notice it. The flowering plants and mammals reached their peak in numbers and variety during Miocene times, millions of years ago, and have been declining ever since.

The eucalyptus tree flourished in northern Greenland in Cretaceous times. Seven fossil species of eucalyptus have been found in Massachusetts. Native now in Australia and New Zealand, and brought to America by man's aid, what a story this tree alone could tell — what an energy of life, to last so long. A tree is not the form we see: it is a

stream of life, embodying and re embodying through untold ages.

But species grow old and die, as individuals do, and the life of a species is as the life of an individual: both pass through their childhood, maturity, and old age.

When an individual specializes it requires certain foods, special conditions to exist, or it soon ceases to survive as an embodied being. The same is as true of a species as of a race, and the strata of the geologic past are full of fossil remains of types which were unable to change with the changing environment and so passed out. These were all specializations of one kind or another, departures from the evolutionary current, or main trunk, of the stock or class.

If we study the geological history of our earth, we find long periods of warm or subtropical climate, during which the polar regions were free from ice and resembled rather a subtropical jungle. During these times a new order of plant and animal life sprang into sudden dominance, starting in the north and slowly sweeping to the southward.

At periodic times this, the normal climate of the world, was brought to a sudden end by what are quite properly called revolutions — periods of sudden cold, glaciation, and mountain buildings. At these times, all life is put to the test, and either undergoes rapid evolution or faces extinction. We are at present emerging from such a revolution, and have a new future before us.

A single cycle of this kind constitutes an era. Thus we have the Paleozoic, the age of fishes and coal forests; the Mesozoic, the age of reptiles and coniferous forests; the Cenozoic, the age of flowering plants and mammals. Within each era are a number of periods which, repeating the cycle of an era on a lesser scale, bring to the fore various lesser forms of life while retarding others.

Considering large groups of related organisms as a class or stock, and using the coniferous trees as an example, we find the earliest forms such as the monkey tree, star pine, etc., rigidly geometric in pattern, while the later pines have lost much of their design and their pollen is

dependent upon wind and insects for its distribution. In the earliest representatives of the gymnosperms, the cycad and ginkgo, the sperm cells are motile if moisture is present, somewhat as is the case with the seaweeds.

Returning to the evergreens. The cretaceous fossil beds of northern Greenland contain the earliest types, which are later to be found in the Southern Hemisphere, while the later pines and spruces are confined to the Northern Hemisphere, forming a green belt around the earth.

We may study the Gymnosperms' life wave, which produced in turn the ginkgo, the monkey puzzle tree, the yew, the sequoia, the cedar, the pine, and the Ephedra or lowly desert tea, last of a great and noble line.

Consider the trees and their cousins, the shrubs and chaparral, as unfolding from a central idea, a central theme, each having its day and decline and long, slender line of surviving descendants.

Consider again the pines of the southwest — the great sugar pines and the yellow pines, tall and straight. These came to our southern mountains — the San Gabriels, the San Bernardinos, the Llagunas — during the last ice age, perhaps a million years ago, when the climate of California was similar to the climate of the Pacific Northwest today.

Then turn to the low, scrubby, brush-like, and exceedingly fragrant pinons. These pines arrived much, much earlier — during the Eocene — and have seen the San Gabriel Range worn to the level of the sea, and raised and worn again to a line of low islands, and raised again to the present levels.

Or, we might study the elephant race, as described in Professor Osborn's great work, *The Proboscidiens*, starting with the first, a little creature two feet high, seeing the expansion in variety, in size, in specialization of trunk, tusk, and ear, seeing their decline, for all but two have now vanished from the earth. Here, again, we see the unfolding from a central focus, the expanding of a great race in great variety of form and then its contraction and near extinction.

Professor Snyder states that new forms are thrown off when a race is at its peak of vitality, and never at its close. This is true of the race, as of the individual. This, also, is true of the races of men, as explained in our Theosophical teachings.

Theosophy teaches that the current of life which is now man has been the leading force since the first formation of the ethereal earth. This current of life, moving through successive cycles of activity, has laid the pattern which all plant and animal life follow in both their individual and racial life cycles, though only the mammalian life has its origin in this Round. The other great stocks of life (birds, fishes, insects, Crustacea — all, excepting the animals and the true mammals) have arisen at different times in the far past and have only reawakened to new activity during the present life cycle of the earth, which we know as beginning with the Cambrian period.

No missing links between the larger groups have been found and none ever will be found, for there are none. For each type of life repeats after its own fashion what its predecessor did, yet it was not derived from that predecessor. Thus, to use an illustration, the fishes produced a flying fish. The reptiles produced flying, swimming, and walking species. The mammals produced the whale, the bat, and a host of land animals. Many birds are flightless; some are confined to the sea, scarcely able to waddle on land.

The Theosophical Forum

SPIRITUAL RESERVE — *James A. Long*

You see the surface of things; and what you would term "virtue," holding but to appearances, we — judge but after having fathomed the object to its profoundest depth, and generally leave the appearances to take care of themselves. — *The Mahatma Letters*

We are today in the midst of a time when the need is strong for the citizens of the world to be alert to recognize the treachery of appearances. This alertness must be exercised both ways: if the appearance is good, is it really good; and if the appearance is bad, is it really bad?

The aftermath of any upheaval, whether it be war, world or national politics, sudden social and economic reforms, reorganization of societies or of an individual life, the aftermath is fraught with confusion and veils of illusion. Until the smoke of battle clears away, even the battlefield cannot be seen in its true perspective. Just so the illusory aspect of any changing situation remains to veil the true sense of values until the vision is cleared and the new scene is fully revealed.

The world-situation today represents the play of such a complexity of forces, both good and evil, each striving for supremacy within the still beclouded atmosphere of the recent great conflict. Until the wind of a strong spiritual effort clears up the haze of false appearances the future of the race is hanging in the balance.

What then is the key to the solution of the entangled international problems? What will unravel the confusing maze of intricate relationships that exist each with its respective goal or limited objective? What of the conflicting elements in our society each supporting what appears to be that which will bring peace, and joy, and contentment? What combination of effort will create that wind of the spirit which will blow away this universal fogginess and allow us to

see as well as to feel the true sense of the situation?

There is a key, a touchstone, which can be used to get beneath the surface of things, dissolve the appearances, and reveal their rightness or wrongness. It is the same key that has been used through the ages by all who have succeeded in leading the race onward: *Is the objective one that will benefit the few or benefit the many?*

At this point in history can we hope that our world statesmen will use this key as they work together to solve their respective political problems? Can we hope that the world's business leaders will use this key to unlock the door to universal economic benefits rather than seek individual or group supremacy? Can we hope that the conflicting elements in our society will find the touchstone to the peace and harmony they seek?

Utopia is not around the corner!

However, we can be grateful that today in all fields of human endeavor, political, economic, and social, our leaders are growing toward a more universal point of view. Their efforts are encompassing more and more the wider horizons of influence. But we would be deluding ourselves if we expected to find in a decade, or a century, or a thousand years, universal brotherhood in full operation. The full flowering of humanity requires ages and its true culture is the responsibility of the spiritual gardeners of our world, who by constant care and attention, by allowing the weeds to smother themselves, by watering and pruning the healthy plants, will ultimately have as Their reward — one world.

But how does all this spiritual gardening take place? How, in these intricate and complicated webs of individual and group destiny which are commingling in life, is it possible ever to discern the true from the false, the constructive from the destructive, the real from that which appears to be real? Can just a few Great Ones, seeing the world as a whole — seeing appearances as such, having fathomed the situation to its profoundest depth — can They alone leave these appearances to

take care of themselves? Obviously not. They must have assistance. They must have at Their service a reservoir of spiritual energy, a reserve of spiritual aides. They must have sowers of seed, harrowers, primers, they must have helpers in all walks of life — in high places and low. And They have.

To the lay mind, unfamiliar with the true ways of spirit, it is the greater mystery. To the average theosophist, and student of the occult philosophy, it is a lesser mystery. To the true student of occultism it is no mystery at all — it is *his* responsibility. As an aide, he sees through the appearance of things, recognizes the true from the false and does his bit, however small, unnoticed perhaps but nevertheless effective, and thus leaves the appearance to take care of itself, to die, cut off from the stem of reality.

The need is strong for the citizens of the world to be alert to the treachery of appearances. The need is strong for the citizens to provide more aides in all walks of life to assist the Spiritual Gardeners. The need is strong for each citizen to take inventory of his basic objectives and aspirations: is he interested only in himself and his own? Or, is he interested in fathoming the object of life to its profoundest depth, and finding the true "virtue"? If the latter, he will become an active part of the spiritual reserve which is at the service of the Great Ones leading mankind onward. He will become one with that effort which will cause the wind of the spirit to purify the present beclouded atmosphere. He will have joined forces with those uncovering the treachery of appearances. His aid will help swing the balance to insure the future of the race. He will have become a true Occultist, a Chela, a real Helper of mankind!

"To him that knocketh it shall be opened."

TIMES OF CRISIS — *G. de Purucker*

The following remarks reprinted from Volume Two of *The Dialogues of G. de Purucker* were made on June 11, 1930. These prophetic words spoken to the Katherine Tingley Memorial Group strongly accent the obligation of the Society and the responsibility of individual F. T. S "to loosen into the world a new spiritual energy."

Student — All the Teachers have told us of and hinted at great troubles coming upon humanity, and that if we did our duty, we could very much mitigate or possibly prevent them.

G. de P. — That is true.

Student — Can you tell us more about that, because humanity has suffered so hideously? We must help them.

G. de P. — That is true. Well, Companions, I can say this, that humanity is passing out of one cycle and entering into another one. Such periods of transition are always very dangerous to the spiritual and intellectual, social and political, welfare of mankind. They are always times of crisis.

At present we are not far distant in time from a social and political upheaval which will shake the very foundations of present civilizations. It will unquestionably be accompanied with bloody revolutions in different countries, and with wars; and I do not care to go farther into it. I think that I had better not. One of the efforts of the Teachers, or rather perhaps, the main effort of the Teachers, in founding the Theosophical Movement was to provide an international body of men and women who by the power of their thought expressed in words, in teachings, whether oral or written, and by their acts, would tend to alleviate the evils that are coming, that are about to fall upon humanity.

It is amazing how much a few determined and doggedly-willed men and women can do. History has shown it repeatedly. That is why I say preach Theosophy from the housetops, teach it, declare it. Neglect no opportunity to pass the good tidings on. Our main duty is not so much to propagate the Theosophical Movement, although that is the way by which our main duty is done. In itself it is a secondary thing. Our main work is to change men's hearts, men's minds, to soften the horrors when they come, to alleviate the distress by preparing for it before it comes.

There is no humanitarian work so lofty as this. There will be an unloosening of human passions, when these things come about, which will be more terrible than anything history has known of, and while the Theosophical Society, our Theosophical Movement, will probably be quite unable to stop it entirely by the influence of Theosophical thought, and Theosophical thinking, and by its refining and alleviating power, nevertheless all this will greatly help in diminishing the evil that might otherwise be done.

Teach men brotherhood, teach men that they are inseparably bound together, that what one does all are responsible for, that what all do everyone is responsible for; that there is no fundamental separation of interests at all in any line — spiritual, religious, political, what not. Those are the thoughts that must go out into the world's consciousness.

Teach men the nature and characteristics and function of the proud and selfish brain-mind in which most men live today, and which in their ignorance they are proud of. Teach men its limitations, and also its value as the instrument for spiritual wisdom, when it is properly trained and directed by the spiritual will. These are also some thoughts that will help. These are the teachings that will raise men's ideals and ideas. Furthermore, but by no means last, teach men the philosophy of the Ancient Religion of mankind, showing to men their common origin, their common destiny, on the one hand; and the interlocking and interwoven spiritual, psychical forces, energies, and powers of Nature on the other hand.

Do you think, for instance, that this recent Great War would or could have come about, if for the last eighteen or nineteen hundred years men had had Theosophy in their minds? If the psychic and mental atmosphere in European countries had been filled with Theosophical thoughts and ideals and truths? No! The Great War arose out of centuries of wrong thinking and wrong doing, out of selfishness, out of a lack of knowledge of the nature of man and of his being rooted in the Universe; and that the Universe is essentially a spiritual being; that man fundamentally and intrinsically is a god; and that his main and noblest duty is so to live — to live divinely, to live god-like. Deprivation and loss of possessions are as nothing at all in comparison with knowing and possessing and living these sublime truths. They could have made a civilization which would have held in chains the passions, the selfish impulses, the grasping, acquisitive spirit, which have dominated all European civilization up to the present, and which still dominate it.

It is the duty of the Theosophical Movement to loosen into the world a new spiritual energy, an illumination — to change men's hearts and to give light to their minds.

The Theosophical Forum

INDIVIDUALITY AND PERSONALITY — *Abbott B. Clark*

Much emphasis is placed upon impersonality. Why? Please explain the difference between personality and impersonality. What is impersonality?

In a word, impersonality is unselfishness, forgetting yourself and your own self-interests in thought of others. It is deep and careful thoughtfulness about what is true and right to do without self interest in the matter. It is self abnegation. This does not mean injustice to yourself nor neglect of your own natural duties. Quite the contrary. It may require much unselfishness to do one's natural duties and not forget or neglect them. In practical life the main question is one of motive. Is the motive pure and true and unselfish? If the motive is vanity, to attract attention, to display oneself, to further some scheme, ambition, desire, or, on the contrary, to express some prejudice or dislike, it is certainly not impersonal. When we lose all consciousness of self in love of the duty in hand, or in the love of others, or in love of the Work, then we are impersonal, and that would free us from most of our troubles.

In a deeper sense impersonality can be cultivated by meditation on the Higher Self. Seek to blend your consciousness with the Higher Consciousness. "Think of the Self, dwell on the Self with love and the Self will raise you." When you think of the Real Self as the actor you become the vehicle for those high powers, but when the sense of self comes in you are limited to your own small compass. Suppose you are absorbed in writing, speaking or singing and the sense of self comes in — it shuts off the light of the Higher Self, as turning the switch turns off the electric light. The brain may go on running like a flywheel by its own momentum, but the inspiration is gone.

To express or explain the matter of personality and impersonality in a technical philosophical way: A man is essentially and fundamentally a

spiritual being that has sent down a ray or stream of its own essence to express Itself in matter. It passes through plane after plane of matter. On the highest plane the force and consciousness of this being is universal, divine, all-encompassing. The lower it goes the denser and denser the substance, and the more confined and restricted it becomes until you get to the plane of the man who is limited to his five senses and their reports to his brain-mind. No matter how great this brain-mind may be it is quite possible for it to shut out all spiritual light. In that case the man is often spoken of as "souless," meaning that the light of the soul or the spirit is not active. But the spirit is always there. By turning the attention inward and upward, by unselfish prayer or aspiration, the power and presence of the spirit can be invoked, regained. The soul or spirit is never lost. It is the man who is lost — that is, the mere brain-mind man. This brain-mind is a shut-in thing, therefore purely personal and perishable. The supreme spirit is entirely impersonal and imperishable.

It is because the personal consciousness is sunk in matter, bound and limited by matter, that we have the sense of separateness. This sense of separateness is the greatest of all delusions — the root and cause of all selfishness out of which spring all the other evils of human life. Out of the delusion of separateness blows the tornado of unbrotherliness which is the insanity that threatens the very life of civilization.

In the personal self dwells the human elemental and all the clamoring menagerie of elemental or animal instincts and passions. But the personality is not to be destroyed, killed out, annihilated. It is a vehicle we have built up for ourselves through countless lives of effort, struggle and sorrow, for the soul's use — not abuse. It is the most complicated yet living mechanism in the world. Through its material and chemical parts it is a laboratory of all the physical and chemical elements in nature. In its vital, pranic or rajasic nature it is a switchboard of all the forces and powers of the cosmos; while through its mental and intellectual faculties it can become a symposium of godlike knowledge and wisdom.

The higher we raise our consciousness along the spiritual Ray which constitutes our link with the Higher Self the clearer the atmosphere and the wider the vision, the less the discord and the greater the harmony, for the Higher Consciousness is the source of all love and wisdom and beauty.

In the degree to which we can raise our consciousness and blend it with the ALL do we become impersonal. A mental exercise which, oft repeated, will help free us, is to affirm, as Mr. Judge told us, "I am not this body, I am not this brain, I am the Soul, I am the Self."

In the individuality and the personality of man are two great tides of thought and emotion. One makes of him an animal, the other makes of him a god. He takes his choice.

The Theosophical Forum

ASTRAL INTOXICATION (1) — *William Q. Judge*

There is such a thing as being intoxicated in the course of an unwise pursuit of what we erroneously imagine is spirituality. In the Christian Bible it is very wisely directed to "prove all" and to hold only to that which is good; this advice is just as important to the student of occultism who thinks that he has separated himself from those "inferior" people engaged either in following a dogma or in tipping tables for messages from deceased relatives — or enemies — as it is to spiritists who believe in the "summerland" and "returning spirits."

The placid surface of the sea of spirit is the only mirror in which can be caught undisturbed the reflections of spiritual things. When a student starts upon the path and begins to see spots of light flash out now and then, or balls of golden fire roll past him, it does not mean that he is beginning to see the real Self — pure spirit. A moment of deepest peace or wonderful revealings given to the student, is *not* the awful moment when one is about to see his spiritual guide, much less his own soul. Nor are psychical splashes of blue flame, nor visions of things that afterwards come to pass, nor sights of small sections of the astral light with its wonderful photographs of past or future, nor the sudden ringing of distant fairy-like bells, any proof that you are cultivating spirituality. These things, and still more curious things, will occur when you have passed a little distance on the way, but they are only the mere outposts of a new land which is itself wholly material, and only one remove from the plane of gross physical consciousness.

The liability to be carried off and intoxicated by these phenomena is to be guarded against. We should watch, note and discriminate in all these cases; place them down for future reference, to be related to some law, or for comparison with other circumstances of a like sort. The power that Nature has of deluding us is endless, and if we stop at these matters she will let us go no further. It is not that any person or power in nature has declared that if we do so and so we must stop, but

when one is carried off by what Bohme calls "God's wonders," the result is an intoxication that produces confusion of the intellect. Were one, for instance, to regard every picture seen in the astral light as a spiritual experience, he might truly after a while brook no contradiction upon the subject, but that would be merely because he was drunk with this kind of wine. While he proceeded with his indulgence and neglected his true progress, which is always dependent upon his purity of motive and conquest of his known or ascertainable defects, nature went on accumulating the store of illusory appearances with which he satiated himself.

It is certain that any student who devotes himself to these astral happenings will see them increase. But were our whole life devoted to and rewarded by an enormous succession of phenomena, it is also equally certain that the casting off of the body would be the end of all that sort of experience, without our having added really anything to our stock of true knowledge.

The astral plane, which is the same as that of our psychic senses, is as full of strange sights and sounds as an untrodden South American forest, and has to be well understood before the student can stay there long without danger. While we can overcome the dangers of a forest by the use of human inventions, whose entire object is the physical destruction of the noxious things encountered there, we have no such aids when treading the astral labyrinth. We may be physically brave and say that no fear can enter into us, but no untrained or merely curious seeker is able to say just what effect will result to his outer senses from the attack or influence encountered by the psychical senses.

And the person who revolves selfishly around himself as a center is in greater danger of delusion than any one else, for he has not the assistance that comes from being united in thoughts with all other sincere seekers. One may stand in a dark house where none of the objects can be distinguished and quite plainly see all that is illuminated outside; in the same way we can see from out of the blackness of our

own house — our hearts — the objects now and then illuminated outside by the astral light; but we gain nothing. We must first dispel the *inner* darkness before trying to see into the darkness without; we must *know ourselves* before knowing things extraneous to ourselves.

This is not the road that seems easiest to students. Most of them find it far pleasanter, and as they think faster, work, to look on all these outside allurements, and to cultivate all psychic senses, to the exclusion of real spiritual work.

The true road is plain and easy to find, it is so easy that very many would-be students miss it because they cannot believe it to be so simple.

"The way lies through the heart";
Ask there and wander not;
Knock loud, nor hesitate
Because at first the sounds
Reverberating, seem to mock thee.
Nor, when the door swings wide,
Revealing shadows black as night,
Must thou recoil.
Within, the Master's messengers
Have waited patiently:
That Master is Thyself!

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Path*, October, 1887, pp. 206-8. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

OUR COMPLEX REIMBODIMENT — *Allan J. Stover*

Every living thing passes something of its life essence on to its offspring and in so doing perpetuates itself in a continual stream of existence, and as there are many grades and types of life so there are many ways in which this is accomplished. In all cases the life essence passes from adult or old bodies to new bodies or vehicles in a rhythmic cyclic process we may for the time being class under the general term of reembodiment. When in any stock of life this series of rebecomings ceases, that particular branch of life-form becomes extinct, and the indwelling monad seeks reembodiments in other houses of life. By reembodiment we mean far more than the continual reproduction of physical forms, for these are but the clothes which the inner evolving entity for a time wears.

The phase of reembodiment by which the identic life stream passes from parent to offspring in a continual coming again and again into physical life is known by the technical term of Palingenesis (Gr. *palin*, again + *genesis*, origin, coming into life). Examine a leaf on a tree. Notice the bud nestled at the base of the stem where it joins the twig. This bud grows as the leaf transfers more and more nourishment and vitality to it. In one sense the bud is its offspring, and when the leaf becoming old and useless falls to the ground, a new leaf will, in its season, unfold from the bud.

A seed is structurally a highly specialized bud which instead of producing a new leaf or twig, falls off the tree and unfolds into a new plant or tree which is both the offspring of the old and its reembodiment. But since plants have not yet evolved to the point of having an individuality or even a personality we cannot speak of them as having a continuation of consciousness. The stream of life simply flows on and on for ages upon ages, migrating and specializing with the changing climates as geological periods come and go.

The single-celled plants and animals continue their kind by simply dividing into two halves or cells again and again endlessly. With them, there is theoretically no death save accidental, no break in such overall consciousness as they possess; but only a continual re-entering a new cycle of activity much as we enter a new day with each new sunrise; but without our sense of individual consciousness. The cells of the human body follow the habits of their prototypes, the single-celled animals and plants, in multiplying themselves and in building the body in which we live. These single-celled creatures are in many ways analogous to the First Race of Man, who also reproduced by division, knew not death, and whose bodies were globes of iridescent light.

Every form of life above the single-celled plant or animal is more or less complex according to its stage of evolution; and so the different materials or elements composing the body have somewhat different habits, according to the kingdom of nature from which they are drawn.

Man is composed of many kinds of life. The mineral is represented in his bones and in the many kinds of mineral salts found throughout his tissues. The vegetable kingdom is represented by certain types of cells, in the bacterial flora without which he could not assimilate food, in the trace of chlorophyl present in the red blood corpuscles, and lastly in the hair and nails. Including all these is the animal body which provides the physical vehicle, without which man could not exist on this plane. Above this and dominating it is the thinker overshadowed by the spiritual and divine soul and ego. In fact, man is a microcosm — a miniature universe, as the ancients taught. To the lesser lives of which he is composed he is a galaxy of radiant starry atoms. But of his entire constitution and its complex life-cycle all that is known to the modern world is hardly one hundredth part of the whole.

The general lack of knowledge of the composite nature of man is illustrated by the following anecdote: Little Patsy went to her father, who was a well known biologist, and in great seriousness asked, "Daddy, are we animals?" He replied, "Yes dear. There is a mineral kingdom, a vegetable kingdom, and an animal kingdom; we are not

minerals or plants but belong to the animal kingdom." The little girl, not completely satisfied, then went to her mother, who was an ardent Fundamentalist and asked, "Mother, are we animals, do we belong to the animal kingdom?" Her mother answered "No dear, we are not animals, we belong to the Kingdom of Heaven."

A Theosophist might have explained that as the human soul comes into reincarnation it gathers about itself materials, building blocks from all the kingdoms of nature, which it forms into a body in which it lives; and when the soul is through with its house of flesh and bone, the materials of which it was built go back to the departments of nature from which they were taken and are used again by other beings.

This gathering and dispersing of the life atoms — as a printer composes a page and when the printing is done redistributes the type into their respective boxes — was known in ancient times as Transmigration (L. *trans*, over + *mlgro*, migrate). The word means simply the changing of state or condition, as the life atoms forming man's body upon the death of the body pass into the kingdoms and planes of nature to which they are akin. This is the specific meaning of the word, but the principle is illustrated in a degree by the metamorphosis of many insects such as the dragonfly which passes from an existence in the water as a crawling nymph, to a life in the air as a glittering winged dragonfly. Other insects such as the cicada pass many years beneath the ground to later come forth, emerge from their skin, as beautiful winged insects.

On a vaster scale the monad peregrinating from plane to plane and from sphere to sphere in its journey from spirit to matter and return transmigrates as truly as do the life-atoms in their lesser range. But the reincarnating monad in its descent through the spheres puts forth soul after soul; gathering appropriate materials to itself, and then, when its term of activity on a particular plane is finished, withdraws much as the human ego is withdrawn into the heart of the monad upon completion of earth life. This habit of ensouling after ensouling is known by the name of Metempsychosis (Gr. *meta*, over + *en*, in + *psyche*, soul). And since the bodies on the superior planes are not

bodies of flesh but of substances appropriate to each plane, the term Metempsychosis (Gr. *meta*, over + *era*, in + *soma*, body) is used. Of the different phases of re-embodiment, reincarnation applies only to the bodies of flesh assumed during earth life. Man having reached the status of a self-conscious being with awakened mind requires long periods of time between earth lives in other and higher spheres. Unlike the plant and animal he re-embodies only after long intervals of experience in the heaven worlds. Yet, as with the plant, the stream of his physical life essence continues from parent to child for ages.

The outstanding key to a study of the various aspects of re-embodiment is the focalizing or crystallizing effect of the indwelling monad which during its period of activity on a particular plane holds the lesser lives composing it under its dominion; and upon its departure the various elements, like school children released from class, return to their homes.

Theosophy requires as accurate thinking as does any science and in addition develops that which Mme. Blavatsky called the plastic power of the imagination residing in the higher mind, which sees truths as wholes. A technical study of re-embodiment in all its various aspects leads one to an understanding of the subject which might be called "three dimensional" as compared with the "flat" thinking of ordinary life.

The Theosophical Forum

CREATIVE VS. VEGETATIVE LIVING — *Madeline Clark*

We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know;
we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine. —

Shelley

The divine inventive faculty is perhaps the most useful, as it is the most elusive and the most courted, of all human attributes. It is a sort of celestial lightning, a spark of Promethean fire, difficult to snatch from the gods, but priceless and necessary to all achievement. Without it we would be hardly more than graceless clods. When this spark leaps into flame, we have genius; and works of art and beauty, works of universal usefulness, are born — but not without arduous toil. When the flame burns less fiercely, we have all the lesser originalities, without which daily life could not go forward. But it is in the intensity of creative effort that we live most fully. No joy so supreme, no sense of freedom so unlimited, as that felt at the moment of "going over the top" after concentrated and sustained, often painful, effort. But the period of effort is remembered afterwards as one of purest joy. Dostoevsky has this idea when he makes one of his characters say: "Oh, you may be perfectly sure that if Columbus was happy, it was not after he had discovered America, but when he was discovering it! . . . What is any "discovery" whatever compared with the incessant, eternal discovery of life?"

Two young children in a temporarily impoverished family were told one bleak day in December: "There will be no Christmas for you this year except what you can make for yourselves." With the help of their father, an all-'round artisan and artist, and of their mother (mothers are always creative artists!) these children gathered materials and made their own toys: usable bows and arrows, a drum, Indian flutes, a kite, a fleet of small boats to sail in the creek, surprises also for their parents — never had they known such Christmas joy, and never again would they go back to the old way of being mere recipients of

purchased gifts.

It seems to be demanded of us that this creative faculty should remain aggressively active in us while life lasts. The gaining of a livelihood is a natural spur to this end. To take note of two extremes in this connection: there is on the one hand the individual who launches out, like Perseus with the winged sandals leaping from the cliff, to carve his own destiny, staking his all, risking want and hunger — lean days — while he makes his start, drawing upon his ingenuity and creative imagination to the utmost to build up his art or his business, and still doing so ever thereafter to keep it a going concern. At the other end we have the individual engaged in directed employment, if his interest in his work is entirely perfunctory, if he considers his responsibility over when the five o'clock whistle blows, and that he has no need for foresight and judgment beyond the limits of his own person or family. Between these extremes is the great body of men and women who, even in supervised employment, bring to bear their creative talents on their jobs, just because it is the normal and natural thing to do useful work in the most worthwhile way.

The observation was made years ago, in the days when moving-pictures, the radio, and other substitutes for self-created entertainment were only beginning to be prevalent, that in a civilization in which such distractions are brought within the reach of all, there is a danger that character will become lax, with having no need to draw upon the individual's own resources of native talent, perseverance, taste and judgment, etc., to this same end. The psychological contrast between the negative, receptive attitude, simply responding to stimuli, and the positive, creative, effortful one, is here very sharply drawn. Every teacher of children knows that these souls on their way to maturity are at their best and happiest when they are busy with work and play partly of their own devising. Behind every creative idea as it goes into action lies Will, the soul of the idea is Imagination, and both of these thrive with use.

Well has it been said that he who lives creatively helps to create and re-

create his portion of the World, while he who lives vegetatively stands still rooted to the same spot until the day of disintegration. Is it true, then, that an individual is vegetating whenever he is not making efforts? Obviously, one cannot be on tiptoe all the time. Nature demands her periods of rest and recuperation. Therefore the vegetative side has its place. It is only when it is over-indulged that it begins to express the evil, unprogressive aspect of things. Yet there is no doubt that our civilization and the individuals composing it could be set upon a path of spiritual improvement were the higher creative powers made more use of, were there less mere drifting.

In the production of countless gadgets that contribute to our comfort and convenience, our civilization has shown a magnificent quality of inventiveness. But just as the general mentality in our present Race has been stepped up to higher level, intellectually speaking, with the swift development of Mind, so the time has come for the inventive faculty to become active on a higher plane, and to concern itself with ways of making life kinder, more enlightened.

Perhaps this is happening already in a rudimentary way although we cannot forget that selfishness and insincerity are still prevalent. "Gracious living" is a phrase that has become almost a household word, and relates not only to artistry in the use of material things about the person, the home, or the office, but also to human behavior. So that we actually have a sort of code that invokes the creative spirit in no small measure. In every act that involves others besides ourselves, "gracious living" demands that we put into it a little more effort and thought, a little touch of originality, to give it grace and charm.

All this, desirable though it may be, is not necessarily an expression of the deeper aspect, the ultimate good, in human nature. It may go no deeper than the psychological element in us, which is far from being a stable and spiritual thing. On the other hand, this gentle artistry may spring from that deep fount of genuine altruism which is the spiritual and relatively permanent aspect of ourselves, and which finds its natural expression in acts of considerateness and kindness.

Perhaps the creative idea is never more nobly conceived than when it is invoked on behalf of others, in forgetfulness of self, as when an F. T. S., for example, employs his quieter moments in devising new ways to help on the work of his Lodge, or to approach those he meets with the message of Theosophy. This is the beginning of occultism; and the advanced occultist must be ever more fertile in resource as his work for humanity advances. The life-stories of H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge, and the successive Leaders of the T. S. are striking examples of this. H. P. B., ill, living on borrowed time, labored unceasingly on her stupendous literary and other works, almost to the day of her death. Judge was tireless in lecturing, organizing, writing literally thousands of letters, editing and carrying on almost single-handed his magazine *The Path*.

Every Leader of the Theosophical Society, upon coming into office, must bring into play to a transcendent degree this inventive faculty, this flame of creative genius. The broad outlines of what it is hoped he will accomplish are given to him by the Brothers who founded the Society: it is for the Messenger to work out the details, as we have often been told and have seen.

The tremendous outpouring of spiritual energy that is felt by every devoted F. T. S. as the "Lodge Force" upon the advent of a new Teacher, has its rise in that creative flame of divine will and imagination that is the heart of the work for humanity of which the T. S. is the outer representative. The Teacher is the focus of this Force, and he inspires in his pupils this *will* to inaugurate a new era of achievement. Dr. de Purucker, in the first days of his leadership called attention to the "creative individuality" that each Fellow could exercise to help on the new effort; the present Leader, when he took up the torch, called upon each member to devote his "natural talents" to the furtherance of the Work. Similarly, when H. P. Blavatsky refers to the "outpouring or upheaval of spirituality," when W. Q. Judge writes of "the large and affluent streams" of "potentialities for good" that come from the Adept; and when Katherine Tingley speaks of the "new energy" that is "being liberated from the center of life" — their effort is to arouse us to the

realization of that creative fount from which our inspiration comes.

Finding this, the aspirant who concerns himself seriously with finding ways and means to help the Messengers, allies himself with forces of light in the Universe, and is actually helping on the work of the Divine Architects who, according to technical Theosophical teaching, plan, inaugurate, and set in motion the universal creative labor, which is carried out by the Builders, the more or less vegetative forces in Nature.

* * *

In the Stanzas of Dzyan, when Fohat, the Messenger of the Gods, commenced his work of building the worlds at the opening of a new "creation," the sparks of the Fiery Whirlwind that formed the Lower Kingdoms "floated and thrilled with joy in their radiant dwellings" as Fohat gathered them up and separated them to form "the germs of wheels" — new vortices of life. Such joy can also be ours when we share in the beneficent creative work "for the benefit of the world and all creatures."

The Theosophical Forum

"THE GOD WHO DIED" — *Grace Knoche*

IN THE PRESENCE OF THOTH, SCRIBE AND RECORDER:

The two illustrations which accompany these notes are really murals epitomized. They came from no temple-walls, however, but from one of the many papyri thus far discovered containing the remarkable text known as the "Book of the Dead" — so called, that is, for the title *Pert-em-Hru*, correctly translated, means *The Book of the Coming Forth into Light*.

Supported by an explanatory text in the sacred hieroglyphic, the *Papyrus of Ani* describes the soul's after-death journey through the invisible worlds of test and trial until, these passed, it becomes "one with Osiris."

Copies of this "book" were customarily laid upon the breast of the mummy or within the mummy-wrappings, that the deceased might know what to expect on this path and make no misstep. When this or a similar papyrus came to light, the story goes, a native workman exclaimed, "Oh, the book of the dead man! The book of the dead!" Hence the name. Now let us examine this mysterious "book," so reverently limned no one knows how long ago.

The first picture, a section only, portrays the "weighing of the heart," for *Weigh me in an even balance* was the prayer sent up in ancient days to Osiris-Ra, Osiris the Sun-God, the Supreme, the object of both gratitude and devotion, "the God who died."

In the center stands the Balance or Scales, an ageless symbol. Anubis, a huge figure with the jackal-head (symbol of terror, darkness, and trial) kneels with his hand upon the pointer, to keep it exactly plumb. Opposite Anubis stands Horus, a "Son of the Sun," or Initiate, the son of Isis and Osiris. He stands, a slight, almost boyish figure, watching to note the result. Behind him stand the goddesses attendant upon Shai, Goddess of Justice. Shai, note, stands protectively behind Ani, who with bowed head also watches the "weighing of the heart," his own.

Above them sit twelve of the Forty-two Assessors or Judges (the picture, bear in mind, is but a section) who, like Shai, are connected with what the Hindu would call "Karman."

At the right of the great Balance stands Thoth of the ibis-head, Recorder and Scribe of the Gods. Tablet and stylus in hand, he records the questions asked of Ani, and the answers or "confession" made — Ani, whose whole life is being bared.

Just behind Thoth is Aman, a grotesque, composite creature, ever on hand at such trials to seize and devour the unfortunate whose heart is so weighted with cruelty and sin that it pulls the scale-pan downwards. For it is the heart, not mind or body or money, that is being weighed, and not in chambers but in open court, against the symbolic feather: TRUTH.

But who was Ani? Keeper of the Sacred Vessels and the Treasure of the Gods — that is all we know of the outward man. But about the earnest honest soul of him, we know much more, thanks to Thoth and his patient chronicle. Quoting from the record:

I have not done evil in the place of good.
I have not consorted with worthless men.
I have not put my name forward to obtain honors.
I have not domineered over slaves.
I have caused no man to suffer.
I have allowed no man to go hungry.
I have made no man weep. No man have I slain.
I have not stolen the cakes of the Gods.
I have not cheated in the measuring of grain.
I have not encroached upon the fields of other men.
I have not taken away milk from babes.
I have not driven cattle away from the property of the Gods.
I have not extinguished a flame which ought to burn. . . .

This is a portion only of the "Negative Confession," too long to be quoted in full. It is followed by a second "Confession" before the Forty-two Assessors (each one of whom Ani must address by name) in an examination even more searching, for the "Forty-two" are specialists in the gentle task of uncovering the faults or crimes they must condemn. This ordeal ends with the following words, Ani speaking:

. . . Behold me as I am. . . . I live on truth; I feed on truth.

I have given bread to the hungry man, water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, and a boat to him who has need of one.

Be ye, then, my deliverers and protectors, and accuse me not of evil when I stand before the Great God. . . . Let it be said to me by those who shall behold me: Come unto peace! Come unto peace!

The second illustration, a section also, has three quite separate divisions. In the first (at left) Horus, tall and impressive now, and wearing the double crown, enters leading Ani by the hand. For Ani has passed triumphantly the dread tests of the Assessors and the trials which came after, and is now on his way to Osiris.

The center panel shows us Ani in a sitting-kneeling posture before an altar beneath which is the symbolic sheaf of wheat. The sowing and reaping that governed his life on earth is over. Thus the sheaf, significantly, is raised above the floor to rest upon a cup or chalice. Ani's hair, formerly dark, is now white, but as to what this signifies most authorities will not hazard a guess. Yet the Egyptians of the Divine Dynasties were not the ones to act without a reason in the matter of even slight details in a subject of paramount importance. Each had its meaning, and rather than leave a careless hiatus, let it symbolize the purified soul, mature in years and judgment as Ani must have been; and since the acceptance of his Confession in that grim test by the Assessors, inwardly "white as snow."

Beyond the altar, on a smaller scale yet oddly enough not belittled by it, sits Osiris, canopied and enthroned. In his hands are the shepherd's crook and flail, ancient symbols, not alone in Egypt, of divine guidance and protection, and of justice backed by might. Behind him

stand the heavenly or divine Isis and her sister Hathor, the earthly Isis of external Nature. Almost concealed is the latter, as both with outstretched arms support Osiris — in a silence that as the pages of this "book" are turned one cannot but deeply feel — the "divine silence" of Hermes, Thrice the Master.

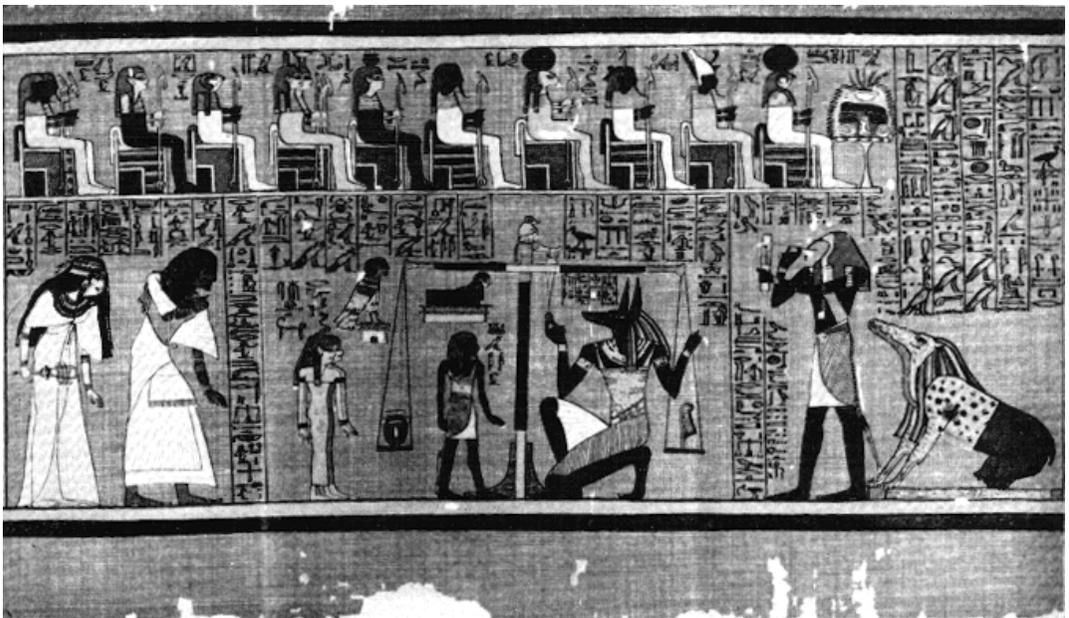
Ani is now Osirified, "one with Osiris." Darkness and dread are left behind, and unhindered he now may pass to the peace he worked for and won: the "coming forth into Light." Or is there still risk? Yes, for no man in the net and stain of Earth could be entirely sinless, wholly pure. And why, among so many Gods should he be guided only to Osiris? Because justice alone is not enough; there must be mercy also. And Osiris, unlike so many Gods, came down to Earth out of pity and lived there, suffering too. He conquered illusion as mankind must do, while ruling as an earthly king in that still unexplored archaic day when Divine Dynasties *were* divine, not names. Who then so understanding as Osiris, so wisely merciful?

A mystery? Not at all, as every student of Theosophy must know well. Osiris was in short an Avatara, a rare and special being who out of pity at critical times in human affairs leaves his celestial home to live on earth; through an earthly body to endure the utmost in human pain, and at last to die as men die. But only to rise again. It is a sacrifice, but it is not unique. Recall the words of the Avatara Krishna:

I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bharata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus *I incarnate from age to age* for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.

This is why Osiris was the "Great God." This is why he had no nobler title in the torn hearts of those who suffer than these four narrow words: "the God who died."

Two little paintings on papyrus. How much that is profound hides in them!



In the Judgment Hall of Osiris — The weighing of the heart.
From the *Papyrus of Ani* — The Egyptian "Book of the Dead"



Final Scene in the Judgment Hall of Osiris — Horus Conducting Ani to Osiris
From the *Papyrus of Ani* — The Egyptian "Book of the Dead"

[The Theosophical Forum](#)

DEFINING RELIGION — *Clifton Meek*

I would like to comment on the editorial "America Needs Religion" which appeared in the *Norwalk Hour* a few days ago. In doing so, it is not my desire, in any way, to belittle those who may disagree with my own views, but I do think that before the need of Religion can be intelligently discussed or determined, we should first have a clearer and far less confused understanding than there is today as to just what we mean by the term Religion. I am familiar with the broad and scholarly definition of the term, but I am referring to it as defining those noble qualities of the human heart and mind which spring from the divine nature of man irrespective of any profession of faith or sectarian classification, in contradistinction to the man-made superstructure of accretions, theologies, ritualism, dogmas and creeds which, all too frequently, devotees mistake for Religion itself.

If the writer was referring to religion as being morality, altruism, kindness, and the like qualities; a sense of inner spiritual kinship, not only with one's fellow man regardless of race, color, or creed, but with Universal Life itself, from the lowest to the highest, seen and unseen, and in which we "live, move, and have our being," I heartily agree that there is a great and urgent need for Religion. These are the spiritual landmarks of the human race, the common property, or should be, of every "religion," the exclusive property of none. Special "religions" come and go with the passing of time, but these are the spiritual values that ever remain constant, age after age. They are not received by ritual, nor sanctified by ceremony, but spring from the inner and divine nature of the human heart to whatever degree man will permit his spiritual nature to manifest itself. Let us not confuse them with organizations, and the thousand and one modes and methods of worship which men have devised, and which, all too often, have contributed to the confusion of the religious thought of the world, doing more harm than good.

If these latter are the things which are meant by the term Religion, the project will have to carry on without my poor blessing and humble aid. I realize, of course, that it will make little difference one way or the other. Men have messed up Religion and misled the minds of men since the beginning of recorded history, and it is safe to assume they will continue to do so until individuals assert their divine prerogative and begin thinking for themselves. As long as there are those who follow blindly, there will always be those who will blindly lead them.

"Freedom of the human will makes religion an "elective," and that is as it should be. But too many people have voted to leave it alone" the editorial begins. Well, there may be a reason, and perhaps the man in the street is not entirely to blame. He may be confused by the multiplicity of "religions" with their contradictory beliefs, dogmas and creeds.

Perhaps he is conscientiously searching for that elusive factor known as Truth, and just doesn't have sufficient time in one life to investigate some 250 interpretations, I believe it is, of religion that have been erected upon the few explicit teachings of morality and right living which the Christian Master proclaimed and gave to men. In viewing this absurd situation, his confusion of thought is surpassed only by that of theologians who created it. It would seem that whatever reformation is needed in the way of religious thinking should begin at the top, rather than at the bottom. Or perhaps, as was my own case, after wandering down many ecclesiastical blind alleys, he cannot conscientiously subscribe to certain doctrines and profess to believe something, which, in his own heart he does not, and which do not appeal to him as being true in the light of his own reason and the dictates of his own conscience. Would he be a better citizen or a whit more religious-minded by throwing his conscience and reason to the winds and pinning a sectarian label on himself? To a person with any intellectual honesty it would be unthinkable. We frequently hear it said that man's moral and spiritual development has not kept pace with his material and scientific progress, which of course is true. May it not be due to the fact that his religious concepts have not made a parallel

advancement, and have become, to a great degree, static and crystallized? A dogmatic and materialistic science of the 19th century finally learned, after many bitter lessons and the shattering of more than one "last word" pronouncement, that there are always new frontiers to be explored, still greater truths lying beyond the horizon of their present ken. If this is true regarding man's quest for knowledge in the universe of matter, how much more so it must be regarding things of the spirit. The greatest frontier yet to be explored is human consciousness and the mystery of the human soul. Someone has wisely said: "The proper study of mankind is man."

Why do men, in face of this great mystery, shut themselves up in little air-tight compartments of thought and proclaim: "Here is Truth, ultimate and final. Don't look any farther; just believe." When will theologians and religious leaders learn the lesson that scientists had to learn, and that man's spiritual evolution cannot be accomplished by confining his conscience to intellectual concentration camps, fenced in by dogmas and creeds, ritualism and "last word" pronouncements which are still laden with medieval dust? These are the things which have but served to distract the attention of men from, and obscure, the great light of Christianity — the essential Divinity of Man. Not of one Man, a great Initiate and Teacher who worked and taught among his fellow men 19 centuries ago, and around whose mysterious and little known life the drama of the Christos was woven a century or two later, but the divinity of all men, as he himself taught. Why did men, supposedly versed in spiritual wisdom, permit this noble teaching, the master key to their own religion, to be buried beneath the mass of theological excess baggage, nullified by contradictory teachings, and forgotten?

One can but speculate how differently European history might be written had the self-appointed guardians of Christian doctrine remained true to their trust. All the theological crutches of Christendom could not teach the masses to stand on their own spiritual feet and avoid the catastrophe that inevitably comes to those who stifle the inner light of conscience and follow blindly. For example, the

people of some nations never have shown themselves capable of self-government for the reason that they never have been taught to think for themselves and assume responsibility for their own acts. Someone has always shown them how to act and what to think.

Religious training? They had an abundance of it for centuries. Sectarian schools flourished and religion was taught in the public schools. But their children were not taught HOW to think, but WHAT to think. When internal difficulties arose, the teachings of morality were easily sloughed off because they were not engraved on the tablets of their hearts by an awakened conscience. They had been learned by rote, and it was just as easy to follow one thing blindly as it was another.

Whenever some of our good-intentioned citizens begin agitating again, as they do from time to time, for the teaching of religion in our public schools, let us remember the lesson of Germany. Morality and character building — yes, by all means, but let's keep every vestige of sectarianism and church doctrine out of it. Teachings which have stood the test of time can stand on their own feet and do not need propping up with theological crutches.

In Religion, as in any other field of human endeavor, man gets what he has the capacity and ability to take — what he attains by his own efforts. There is no spiritual featherbed on which someone is going to transport him to perfection. If he hopes even to approach the portals of Truth, he must be prepared to discard any preconceived ideas he may hold whenever he can replace them with one more universal in nature.

He is endowed with a thinking apparatus called mind, and a free will which it is his divine prerogative to use, to accept or reject, as conscience, the voice of his own inner god, dictates. If he permits them to atrophy by failing to use them, he has, like the son in the Biblical parable, buried his talents. If he centers his attention, hopes, and desires on externals, ritualism and ceremonies, naturally, he will receive but the externals of religion. It may appease and satisfy his worldly nature, but his divine nature, Christos, will remain

unrecognized and unresurrected — crucified on the cross of matter — and the true significance of his own religion will remain to him, still, a mystery.

The Theosophical Forum

CYCLES AND THE DAILY ROUND — *Rose Barrett*

Being is an endless cycle within the one absolute eternity,
wherein move numberless inner cycles finite and conditioned
— *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 221

To associate our daily round with the greater cycles of the earth, the other planets, and the sun makes us realize our oneness with the universe and forget our illusions of separateness.

What do we mean by the daily round, by cycles? If we think of them as repetitions, we err. Everything changes momentarily, however minutely. The you and I who will awaken tomorrow will not be the you and I who awakened this morning, all our seven principles will have undergone some change during the twenty-four hours. Every object we had occasion to touch today will be slightly different when we handle it tomorrow, although our physical eyes may see no change. The teacher who struggles to awaken intelligence in her class of young children can often see no progress day by day, but at the end of the year she can see the development clearly.

Science states that although the sun and planets appear to be forever cycling in the same place, their circlings actually take them forward; in other words, when the sun finishes a cycle it is not in exactly the same point in space as it was when it began that cycle, but is in space where it has not lived before. We are in that picture. Our earth as part of the solar system is also moving forward into the unknown, and we are going with it. Next time you hear someone grouching about the monotony of everyday affairs, give him a shock by telling him he is actually journeying out into unknown space. When Cardinal Newman envisaged "the distant scene" this may have been in his thoughts. In THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM of September, 1946 is an article on "How do you grow?" which gives a vivid picture of this cyclic movement of consciousness and is a fine example of "Man, know Thyself."

Daily we try to blend the mind and soul, to reach nearer to the Master, our Higher Self. Often we seem no nearer, even as the earth and sun seem to be in just the same places as they were last year and all the previous years we have known. Let us take courage. The knowledge that all is moving forward will give us strength to push aside the materialistic world atmosphere which envelopes us and brings us doubt of the spirit. Let us recall that the Masters who have turned back to the earth to aid us only *appear* to have turned backwards. In reality they go forward with the universe, also their very turning back to us means the downward sweep of a cycle that will lift them up into higher realms of light and joy than they have known before. In the words of H. P. Blavatsky: "Everything in the Universe progresses steadily in the Great Cycle, while incessantly going up and down in the smaller cycles."

The Theosophical Forum

THE SOWER WENT FORTH — G. F. K.

Some seed fell by the wayside, other into the stony places of the heart, still other were choked by thistle and thorn, but a few "seed fell into good ground and brought forth fruit an hundredfold." That seed was the Kingdom of Heaven, the "mustard seed," the "least of all seeds," but yet the "greatest." But while "men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way."

Thus when the seed of Light sprung up some 2000 years ago, the tares of Darkness appeared, and there was confusion, indecision, dismay. And when the servants (those who "served," disciples) questioned: "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" the Sower replied: Nay, for both the good and the evil will ye root up. "Let both grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

When H. P. Blavatsky went forth in 1875 carrying the selfsame seed for the new Messianic sowing, some seed again fell by the wayside, other among stone and thistle; but a few seed entered fertile hearts and brought forth fruit an hundredfold. That fruit is the present Theosophical Movement whose very existence today as a vital spiritual factor in world regeneration is proof of its tested "virtue." For that seed is the seed of the Lodge, seed which has withstood the searching trial of spiritual examiners for millenniums.

The lesson of the Piscean age is the lesson of today: that where there is the greatest good, so also will the greatest of evil be; that while "men sleep" in things of the spirit, the enemies of mankind work; that once the evil is sowed, it cannot be uprooted but must wait until the karmic reapers of the future descend to separate the wheat from the tares. But let it be clear that while the sowing is in process the will is free; yet once the reapers appear, there is no redress, for whatsoever a man

soweth, that shall he reap. He that soweth of corruption, shall reap corruption, but "he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

For seventy-five years now the "wheat" of Occultism and the "tares" of diabolism have grown abundant, side by side, until the world scarce can distinguish the true from the false. The harvest time of the "occult century" (1875-1975) is at hand; the reapers are here. The separation of the tares of destruction, of crystallization, from the wheat of progress, of enlightenment, must be made, and made soon, before the fruit of the past sowing is lost.

That the harvest is at hand should be cause for strength, not weakness; cause for hope, not despair. For the age-old law remains: he that sowed corruption will reap corruption; but he that sowed to the Spirit shall, inevitably, regardless of what the world may think, reap of the Spirit. The sowing of men, of nations, of races, has indeed been mixed; but who can tell what percentage of "wheat" there may not be in the karmic fruitage. The least may indeed become the greatest, and he who may have spent a lifetime in tragic frustration of the spirit may find himself — because of deeply rooted karmic merit — when the threshing is complete, gathered "into the barn" of a true mystery-school.

Keenly alert to the world's need, to the cry from the wilderness of pain, the Spiritual Guardians have watched with patient care the growing of the "mustard seed" sown by H. P. Blavatsky, watched the "tree," tended and nurtured by succeeding Tillers, become well-nigh strangled with the overgrowth of pseudo-occult, neo-theosophic, tares. That the world, hearing might understand, seeing might discern, a pruning and a shaping were required. Today, with the "tree" strong through the buffeting of karmic storm, the publication of *The Dialogues of G. de Purucker* comes like a breath of the Spirit through the branches thereof. For here in the now public record of the Katherine Tingley Memorial Group we are taken into the circle of the esoteric atmosphere, and we receive therefrom exactly what we bring.

If we come seeking merely the outward perfection of verbal truth, we shall find but a scattered handling of meta- and ultra-physical subjects. If we search with the eye of intellect, we may find a jigsaw puzzle of amazing brilliance whereby our brain may be whetted to pierce through the maze of Rounds and Races, Globes and Monads, Dhyan-Chohanics Failures and Lost Souls. If our hearts yearn for comfort, solace and strength, we shall find cooling springs of the spirit bring surcease from pain. Finally, if we approach the mystery-teaching stripped of self-thought, with a desire only to serve, then the "barn" may indeed become the "Garden of Delight" wherein we "enter in peace," as did Rabbi Aqiba, and "leave in peace," with the divine illumination of the Sun streaming through our aura, for truly within these pages there may be an opening of the door into Light.

Let it not be thought that the "barn" of the mysteries consists merely in deeper revelation of secret thought. This is the least of Their aims. Discipleship is not experienced by ritual, by formal degrees, *but solely by life itself*. It is useless to attempt to "enter" where no pathway has first been cleared by aspiration, dedication, unflagging will. The words of G. de P. when pleading to his students to recognize their pledged responsibility are all that need be said:

You don't know what this School may be in the future. You don't know what you may be called upon to do; and I don't want those who are ignorant of their esoteric duty in the School. I don't want any weak links in our chain. I dare not have them. You have had your chance. You have been given more than outer students for many, many centuries in the world's history have been given; and what you have received will remain as a precious treasury in your hearts and minds until you die.

But I want strong men and women in this Group, who are not only willing, but able, to live up to their Pledge: to take that Pledge and study it and realize what it means, and be proud of it. . . . I would liefer have a hundred men and women upon whom I could depend than one hundred thousand weaklings,

forming a weak chain, a chain of straw. And in this Degree, oh, how little you are called upon to do — practically nothing, babies' play! You don't know what it is to belong to the Higher Degrees, you have no conception of it.

In the Higher Degrees you are tested by Life, by the forces of Nature, which test and wring every fiber of your being. That is the way in which the real tests come: heart and mind, soul and spirit, will and consciousness, all are tried. It is like the gold which is cast into the flaming furnace; and like it you must come out purified.

— K. T. M. G. Paper — Nine, March 26, 1930, (I, 353-4)

To discover that there does exist "a school of esoteric training among men," that there is a "line of authentic specific esoteric teaching . . . an agency in the world for transmitting direct, specific instruction in the teachings of the esoteric part of the Ancient Wisdom-Religion of Humanity" (p. 107) is a source of deep spiritual strength.

To recognize the line of living Teachers who prune and shape the growing tree of aspiration in the heart of the pupil, is a deeper source of strength.

The seed of the Lodge grows only in the chastened heart, the purified soul, and the determined character of him who wills to join the Brotherhood. — G. F. K.

The Theosophical Forum

TIME CONSCIOUSNESS — *Chester D. Carlow*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Reverence for beauty and truth increases as we grow in awareness through intuition, and it is proportional to our sincerity and devotion. Intuitive understanding is not something which is "given"; it is acquired or evolved.

Every scientist intuits a real fact only after he has spent a great deal of time in preparation, by giving himself completely to the unveiling of his symbol world.

This self-dedication may be through concentration on the reality of the symbol or the beauty of the symbol, or the utility of the symbol. The first is devotional and must be a constant background for one's studies, or the intuition will be frozen. The second is intellectual; it is the action-ground of "being." It is on this plane that we either prepare ourselves for higher truths or allow them to drift to vagaries and indiscrimination — to draw us nearer to the heart or to separate us from the higher Self. The nature of the third is common sense. It is essential to correlate value and fact in the necessities of every-day living. A synthesis of these three ways is necessary for the development of the complete man.

Let us further examine the second of these three, the intellect. In order to use this function to develop greater discriminating faculties, we must direct it into channels which contain doorways to intuition.

With this idea in view, we turn to the subject of time. The purpose of life is said to be evolution or becoming more conscious. I believe it is possible to go a step further and say the evolution is not only the purpose of life, but evolution *is* life. That is — the reality is *becoming*

rather than *being*; and the only justification we have for speaking of things, entities, beings, etc., is that we arbitrarily put limits on their eternal becomings — limits of *time*. In the *Diamond Sutra* (1) we find the following passage: " — discoursing upon comprehending such ideas as an entity, a being, a living being and a personality, it was declared that these are merely termed an entity, a being, etc."

Henri Bergson, the great French philosopher, stated that "All reality is incipient change of direction; there is no way of constructing this mobility of real with fixed concepts."

G. de Purucker states in *The Esoteric Tradition* that "there is That — the Reality — of which everything exists in time-space-force as an event."

Thus we see that every "thing" is an event and a function of time. The old Aristotelian theory that a thing is what it is and where it is must be changed to: A thing is what it is becoming and "where it acts." (2) This idea is being recognized by modern minds the world over. To name a few: Einstein in his fourth dimension, J. W. Dunne in his key to self-consciousness by creating the observer's observer, Oliver Reiser in the infinite-valued-orientation, Korzybski in time-binding, and Alfred Whitehead in his emphasis on the development of mathematical consciousness. All these point the way to the new thought-life of the world, in which Time is playing a leading role.

We may well ask: "What will be the effect of this new trend? What fundamental of time is behind its rise to prominence? If change is the reality, what is that which we have been accustomed to call the real? Is Theosophy in step with this trend, and what will be its role in the future?"

The thought-life of the western world, up to the present day, has been largely built on the Aristotelian logic in which the universe was thought to consist of unchanging basic elements. "A thing is what it is" was a fundamental postulate and every deduction was characterized by a limited valued orientation, i.e. an assumption that a thing may be explained in full by a limited number of points of view.

The effect of this new trend will be that the old elementalistic limited-valued orientation will be replaced by a non-elementalistic infinite-valued orientation. This thought-change means, instead of concluding that a thing must be either good or bad, this or that, a more pliable, less confining thought-habit will spring forth; then we may say that we know in part rather than in full. (3) A new code of ethics will evolve, in which direction rather than station, and becoming rather than being, will be emphasized.

The fundamental features of time that give it prominence are as follows: significantly, the first differentiation from That, the All, to manifestation and consciousness is characterized impressively by the introduction of time. H. P. Blavatsky states that "Time does not exist where no consciousness exists." (4) Also, "We often speak of the Hierarchy of "Flames," of the "Sons of Fire," etc. Sankaracharya, the greatest of the Esoteric masters of India, says that *fire* means a deity which presides over Time (kala)." The "fashioners of the inner man" are the Sons of Fire because they are the first beings (in the *Secret Doctrine* they are called Minds) evolved from the Primordial fire. (5) Also "Esoteric Philosophy divides boundless duration into unconditionally eternal and universal time and a conditioned one, Khanda Kala. One is the abstraction of noumenon of infinite time (Kala), the other its phenomenon appearing periodically as the effect of Mahat (the Universal Intelligence) limited by Manvantaric duration." (6)

Thus, mind or consciousness is linked so closely with time that it is interdependent and hardly distinguishable. Emerson's *Threnody* expresses this fact:

Wilt thou freeze life's tidal flow
Whose streams through nature circling go?
Hail the wild star on its track
On the half-climbed zodiac?
Blood is blood which circulates
Life is life which generates,

And the many seeming life is one,
Wilt thou transfix and make it none?

Further, according to the time-binding theory of Korzybski, plant life has form and can be said to be form-binding. This is the first step in organized life. Animals can move and are said to be space-binding. Man has gone a step higher; he has learned to be conscious of time and to profit by his history; he has become time-binding. This fact marks a very fundamental difference between man and the lower kingdoms. Dunne, in his *An Experiment with Time*, shows that the basis of self-consciousness is that man is able to observe himself observing by becoming conscious of dimensions beyond the fourth in time. It is interesting to note that the probable relative immaturity of man's time consciousness is further shown by the fact that it is the last "sense" that develops in youth, the one which is the most unstable during life, and the one which disappears first in old age.

What we think of as ourselves is the residue of the past. Our highest principles of intuition precede us. As our intuition produces so-called permanent effective results on the lower physical, psychical, mental planes, it, remaining ever beyond, never ceases to beckon. The development of consciousness consists in but answering this call, in brightening the shadow of the past by "living the life," in purifying the lower principles to make them more receptive to our etheric vanguard of beauty, wisdom, and peace.

The place of Theosophy in the future seems to be outlined, to a great degree, by the fact that whenever there is a great change in progress in the thought-life of man, the door to highest truth, for him, is open. What he receives at this critical time is infinitely more effective than at other more settled times. Thus consciousness of time is again seen to deserve the utmost attention.

It is for this reason that a great effort should be made to flood the world with theosophic thought at the present time. Theosophy, the Kosmic Philosophy, not only does stress becoming as the prime reason for "being," it also integrates this doctrine into a complete sublime

philosophy which is embodied in the Seven Jewels of Wisdom: Reimbodiment, Karman (the universal law of cause and effect), Hierarchies, Swabhava, Evolution, the Two Paths (Amrita-Yana and Pratyeka-Yana), and Atma-Vidya.

It is possible that, through lack of structure and conscious integrated direction, the new world thought movement will have certain negative effects because of imperfect interpretation of experimental data, especially of space-time experiments; or its positive characteristic might raise it only to a slightly less restrictive dogmatism in which form is replaced by pattern. Thus a golden opportunity will have been missed.

In the last quarter of the last century, Theosophy was brought to the West to oppose negativism, "to stem the tide of materialism." We are now approaching the end of a new century in which the seeds that were then sowed have helped to bring about a strong, enlightened positive thought movement.

No longer will those truths be so ignored by a humanity going the other way, but sacred and pure, they will sweep, unobstructed, into the thought-life of all mankind.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Diamond Sutra*, p. 107. Trans, by William Gemmell. ([return to text](#))
 2. *A New Earth and a New Humanity*, p. 126. Oliver L. Reiser. ([return to text](#))
 3. *Science and Philosophy*, p. 101 Alfred North Whitehead. ([return to text](#))
 4. *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 37 H. P. Blavatsky. ([return to text](#))
 5. *Ibid*, pp. 86-7. ([return to text](#))
 6. *Ibid*, p. 62. ([return to text](#))
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THE WANDERINGS OF ODYSSEUS: 1 — *Charles J. Ryan*

An Interpretation — Part I (1)

Sing, Muse, the song of Odysseus, him of the hardy heart, bravest of all the brave who sailed in the hollow ships of the Grecians, ODYSSEUS, erstwhile King of Ithaca, now held by crafty Calypso, she of the braided tresses, in far Ogygia. Gone indeed is the day of his returning! Zeus the cloud-gatherer aids him not; Poseidon the earth-shaker sends ruinous winds upon him and dire engulfings in the wine-dark sea. Only Athena would aid thee — grey-eyed Athena of the bronze-shod spear, daughter of Zeus, the thunderer. See! From the azure seats of the gods, even from Olympus, comes she now glancing down.

The wise teachers of old knew that not only children but grown men and women are always ready to listen to an interesting story. In ancient times, when few people could read, bards and story-tellers would travel about singing or reciting, as they still do in the East. Serious teachings about life and morals were put into the form of vivid and absorbing stories. Enshrined in imperishable forms, great truths were presented by the effective method of suggestion. Allegory was a recognized method of instruction, as it now is in the Orient.

The basis of many such legends was the experience and suffering of man, individually and as a race, in seeking a higher and nobler life, in the quest for enlightenment. The pilgrimage and tribulations of the awakening personality when it seriously commences to seek for purification, or in other words, union with its own higher nature, have been presented in various forms according to the varying conditions of the times, but the underlying principle or *motif* was always the same. At a certain stage man is no longer satisfied with the ordinary pleasures and ambitions of life; he begins to suspect that a greater life awaits him, and he becomes willing to endure with patience the

experiences in store for him which are necessary for his purification, even though they take many lifetimes.

The vulgar Western belief of modern times, that we live but once on earth, has deprived us of a right understanding of many of the greater truths concealed in the ancient allegories. Once comprehended in the light of reincarnation — the mechanism of evolution — human life no longer appears a meaningless frenzy, but something worthy and governed by justice.

The epics of the nations which tell the story of man's aspiration are built upon the trials, temptations, and victories that precede the union of the purified lower personality with the Higher Ego, its overshadowing Divinity, the Father that lives in "heaven." Remember that "heaven" is said to be *within* man. The goal of attainment is symbolized in various ways. It may be the vision of the Holy Grail, or the winning of a treasure such as the Golden Apples of the Hesperides or the Golden Fleece; it is sometimes a marriage with a princess after rescuing her from a monster, as in the story of Perseus and Andromeda, or with a goddess. Perhaps a wife has to be regained. In India the subject of the semi-historical *Bhagavad-Gita* — included in the great epic of the Mahabharata — is Arjuna's battling for his rightful heritage. The Biblical story of the Israelites breaking out of bondage and passing through the Red Sea and then wandering for forty years in the Desert of Sinai on their way to the Promised Land is a very clear allegory.

In Ireland we find the legend of Bran seeking the mystic country of joy and peace; of Art the son of Conn overcoming ordeals in his search for a princess of the Isle of Wonders, and many others. In Wales there are the legends of Pwyll and Manawyddan, and the adventurous journey of King Arthur to the Annwn, the Welsh Hades, to obtain a magic caldron — a type of the Cup of the Holy Grail.

Thanks to Wagner, the Teutonic legends of Siegfried and Brunhilde, of Tannhauser and Parsifal, and the rest are now familiar. Greece has a wealth of myths founded on the drama of the soul; some are quite transparent to interpretation, such as Perseus and Andromeda,

Orpheus and Eurydice, and Jason and the Golden Fleece; but as a secular and popular story, nothing has appeared of more enduring fame than the Wanderings of Odysseus as told in the *Odyssey* of Homer.

Odysseus is representative of the awakened mind of man seeking, after long years of battling with worldly things — represented by the Trojans — to find, or more accurately, to regain, the spiritual wisdom deep-buried within his soul, and symbolized by his faithful wife, Penelope. This spiritual Intuition stands in the dim background of the whole poem as a permeating influence, calm, and waiting patiently for him to find her. While Odysseus, as the active mentality, is fighting against obstacles and pushing onward in rapid movement, Penelope sits at home and weaves her patterns, creating and preserving. Odysseus is not only separated from his wife but is an exile from his hearth and country; not only has he to keep constantly in action *but he has to find for himself* the true Path which leads homeward, a very significant point.

In tracing the plain Theosophical interpretation of the *Odyssey*, we need not follow the order of the poem as arranged by Homer or by whomever compiled the Homeric legends, but will take the simple narrative of the wanderings of Odysseus in their natural sequence of events. This paper is not an analysis of the poem from a literary standpoint in any way, nor shall we consider the archaeological problems aroused by sundry references to customs and the construction of buildings found in the text, interesting as these may be, particularly in view of the modern discoveries of early Mediterranean civilizations.

After leaving the battlefields of Troy, Odysseus embarks for his native isle, "Ithaca the Fair," expecting to arrive there quickly, but a tempest drives the fleet out of its course, and a great fight impedes his progress at the very outset. Many students know how true this is. The destruction of all his ships but one, and of many of the sailors, follows quickly. One of the most curious stories of this introductory part is that

of Polyphemus, the Cyclopean giant with a single eye in the midst of his forehead. Madame Blavatsky, in her great work, *The Secret Doctrine*, gives considerable attention to the partly-hidden meaning of this grotesque incident. She reveals the clue by showing that it is based upon historical facts, however little they may be known in modern times. Urged by curiosity, Odysseus ventures too near the giant, and with his companions, falls into his hands. In order to escape, they destroy the single eye of Polyphemus and deceive him by the stratagem of the flocks of rams, a well known esoteric symbol. The legend is based upon the disappearance from use of the "third Eye" (the existing vestige of which is commonly known as the pineal gland in the brain) at a very early period in human evolution. H. P. Blavatsky says that Odysseus'

adventure with the latter [the pastoral Cyclopes] — a savage gigantic race, the antithesis of cultured civilization in the *Odyssey* — is an allegorical record of the gradual passage from the Cyclopean civilization of stone and colossal buildings to the more sensual and physical culture of the Atlanteans, which finally caused the last of the Third Race to lose their all-penetrating *spiritual eye*. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 769. See also *I sis Unveiled*, II, p. 423.

The story of the tribe of one-eyed Cyclops, which preserves the memory of the transformation in the human frame far more than a million years ago, is found in many countries in different forms. In China, the legends speak of men who had two faces and could see behind them; in Ireland the hero who blinds the Cyclops-eyed giant is called Finn. There is one living animal possessing the third eye in recognizable form today — the New Zealand lizard *Hatteria punctata*, a relic of long-vanished conditions on earth.

After their escape and some further perilous adventures, Odysseus and his companions soon reach the island of the enchantress Circe, which very clearly represents the fascination of sensual delights. Odysseus is unaffected by the gross temptations which overwhelm his companions, who are turned into swine by the goddess. He retains his human form

and is helped by the Olympian god Hermes to frustrate the designs of Circe. Odysseus' boldness and "confidence in heaven" finally conquer the enchantress and compel her to serve him. She becomes transformed into a friend and counsellor. She restores the men to human form and instructs Odysseus how to find the way to the Underworld. This episode reminds us of and illustrates the saying of Katherine Tingley "that after a certain stage of spiritual unfoldment, the action of Karma changes from penalty to tuition," and also of a striking passage in a well-known Theosophical book, *Through the Gates of Gold*:

Once force the animal into his rightful place, that of an inferior, and you find yourself in possession of a great force hitherto unsuspected and unknown. The god as a servant adds a thousand-fold to the pleasures of the animal; the animal as a servant adds a thousand-fold to the powers of the god. . . . The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great powers of service and strength. . . . But this power can only be attained by giving the god the sovereignty. Make your animal ruler over yourself, and he will never rule others.

Now comes the ordeal of Terror, an emotion not familiar to Odysseus. Circe has warned him that, before he goes farther, he must gain some necessary information about the future from Tiresias, the ancient prophet who lives with the Shades in Hades, though he himself is not dead. The approach to this great seer and the initiation itself are surrounded by fearful dangers; safely to defy the multitudes of the vengeful shades of the dead calls forth the highest physical and moral courage of Odysseus. Like all the heroes of the epics of the Soul, he has to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death in a very real sense; to meet and face and remain unappalled by the Shades, the lingering remains of past sins and errors; then to learn what is necessary for his further progress; and finally to return unharmed, though tried to the uttermost. This Descent into Hell, or the Underworld, or the "Open Tomb" has more than one meaning, and it is always introduced in some form in the myths of initiation. For instance, in the legend of

Perseus and Andromeda, the hero, aided by the gods, must fly to the hideous regions of cold and darkness and destroy the death-dealing monster Medusa and take her head, before he can rescue the princess of Ethiopia.

Not only Christ is said to have descended into the Underworld and "ministered to the spirits in prison" but Orpheus, Aeneas and many other Great Ones, and we are told that in the ceremonies conducted in the profound recesses of the Great Pyramid of Egypt the candidates had to descend into the subterranean chamber or symbolic Underworld, for trial, reascending the third day strengthened and illuminated. The descent into the shadows is an indispensable part of every complete story of the pilgrimage of the soul, for it represents a necessary experience. "No cross, no crown." It is not mere *physical* death and resurrection or rebirth into a new body; that is but a natural incident, frequently recurring, in the far-stretching career of the soul, the close of a day in its life-story. When the true resurrection has been fully accomplished there will be little necessity of reincarnation on earth, except by the deliberate choice of great souls who descend for the purpose of helping humanity.

The tone of the poem changes at this point; the lightness and gaiety with which Odysseus has related his adventures is replaced by a deep solemnity, and the horrid scenes in Hades are described with intense vividness, and many curious touches of realism, as in the account of the blood-evocation — a necromantic ceremony the contemporaries of Homer would firmly believe in. In his description of the Underworld, Homer shows a real knowledge of certain conditions of the *post mortem* life, a knowledge more common then than now. He unveils only a partial glimpse of the lower states or planes, and, of course, he allegorizes everything for the popular understanding, but he gives a very striking picture of the weird and desolate sphere of restless phantoms, most of them merely "eidolons," *i.e.*, soulless images or dregs of what once were men whose real higher nature or spirit has passed onward. Leaving the impure remains to fade out, often painfully, in the lower astral planes, Odysseus gets a passing view of "stern Minos," the

Judge of the Dead, the personification of the Law of Karma or Justice, rewarding the righteous and dooming the guilty, and he is privileged to gain a momentary glance into the heavenly world of Elysium or Devachan in which live in blessedness during the periods of rest between incarnations on earth, the higher immortal spirits of those whose fading shadows wander in Hades below. H. P. Blavastky says:

... the Hades of the ancients [is] ... a *locality* only in a relative sense. ... Still it exists, and it is there that the astral *eidolons* of all the beings that have lived ... await their *second death*. — *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 143

Plato and Plutarch give more complete accounts of the Greek teachings on this mysterious subject; examined in the light of Theosophy they are seen to be practically identical with the Egyptian, Indian, and other ancient teachings on these states of existence. It is very significant that wherever we go among so-called "primitive peoples" we find they are aware of the danger of intercourse with the lower and irresponsible remains of the dead, and though devoted to them in life will go to great pains to avoid the soulless relics of their parted friends.

Odysseus does not ask the shuddering phantoms to help him; he appeals to the prophet Tiresias, who, though shadowy himself, is fully human:

... the Theban bard, deprived of sight;
Within, irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Persephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain the unseparated soul;
The rest are forms, of empty ether made;
Impassive semblance, and a flitting shade.

Tiresias sees what possibilities the future has for Odysseus, outlines his trials, and warns him against the rashness of his followers. Odysseus replies to the prophet:

... If this the gods prepare,
What Heaven ordains the wise with courage bear.

Returning to Circe, who outlines in greater detail the dangers of his coming journey, and gives him good counsel, he once more collects his men and starts. Then comes the perilous passage of the Straits between Scylla and Charybdis, and the subtle temptation of the Sirens. The Sirens, whose outward appearance is exquisitely fair, offer the hero the satisfaction of the pride of knowledge. They tell him they know "Whate'er beneath the sun's bright journey lies," and they sing with all the charm of celestial music:

O stay, O pride of Greece! Ulysses stay!
O cease thy course, and listen to our lay!
Blest is the man ordain'd our voice to hear,
The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear.
Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!
Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise.

(To be concluded)

FOOTNOTE:

1. From THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, October, 1917. Revised and amended by the author. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

HOW DO YOU KNOW? — *A. Birch*

There is a question in the Bulletin of the Corresponding Fellows' Lodge (England, Jan. 1948) which is perennial in its interest.

"Have any of my fellow Lodge members had the disconcerting experience of after making what one feels to be a good point following some enquirer's question, having him say with a cold searching voice, and a cold cod-like eye, "How do you know?" "

The favorite opening gambit of a famous London philosopher is, "It all depends on what you mean by. . . ." Here also it all depends on what you mean by knowing. We have often been told that the doctrine of the Seven Principles of Man is a dry-as-dust bit of philosophical pedantry, but without it we could not go very far. The knowing of the animal is instinct. The animal "knows" and acts upon its knowledge with advantage many times in its daily life, but if you asked it how it knows, it could not tell you. Then there is the knowing with the brain mind, the lower intellectual knowledge. This is often brilliant and perhaps unanswerable, yet from a certain high standpoint may be quite wrong. For instance, we all know that murdering murderers stops murder. So we have been arguing for a few million years. But does it? Do we not see almost daily the foolish headlines calculated to tickle the lowest parts of our emotional nature all about someone slaying or being slain. For some thousands of years we have known that "death" ends everything, but now that the doctrine of reincarnation of the private schools of philosophy has seeped somewhat deeply into the luminous zone of the public mind, we are not so sure.

For many centuries we have "known" of the brilliant but somewhat uncomfortable region imagined as heaven, but now people are beginning to ask themselves and not their appointed teachers if it is really anything much more than a dream or a poem, or at best an allegory.

In our vast Arizona desert there are mirages. We have there seen a lake forty miles long by about ten wide, the sand becoming shiny, then wet, then the water. From the train a group of travellers watched, fascinated. It was explained that there was no lake there; all was merely desert sand. One of the group began to take off his coat in a very aggressive way. "I know water when I see it!" he exclaimed. "If anyone tells me that isn't water, I'll fight him!" Maybe he was from Missouri, but it was not water and there was no fight. But he *knew*. That was the knowledge of the brain mind and the emotional nature. The emotional nature sees many mirages.

Higher than all that is the knowledge of the Nous, the Higher Manas, the genuine "Intuition." But who has it? Everyone. Who uses it? Not so many.

For hundreds of years it was the chief aim of Theosophists in the past to clear their intuition. It would hardly be right to say to acquire intuition. They sought to live in the Higher Manas or even the still clearer Buddhi. If they could do that they KNEW. We have all heard of the Adepts, Those who Know.

It is the same today. Many quiet, genuine, that is, not brain-mind Theosophists or Theosophical students have the beginnings of an unveiled spiritual perception. They are convinced that they know. But not yet being *perfect* (Initiated), they are liable to error, though less so than most, and even what they know they are forced to express very much in terms of their own technical experience of life, which may differ from that of others. That is why if a man saw an angel he would hardly be convincing to a Hindu, who would have quite a different conception as to what an angel looks like.

Now that the *Dialogues of G.de P.* have been published we may be permitted to call attention to the astonishing clearness of mind of "one who knows." We had a previous example in the case of *The Mahatma Letters*. Are such people then perfect? Not necessarily. We have already shown that their language may mean more than we are capable of understanding clearly. Also there is another very important

consideration. They are not always acting in the realm of pure thought. Sometimes they may be acting as ordinary men. Again, if they are Teachers, they may often be a mirror of their public. A man asks a question, vague, woolly, dimly conceived in outline, loaded with popular misconception, not highly intuitional. Why should he expect an answer not in accordance with his question? A famous case is that of a would-be occultist who asked an occult astronomical question and received an answer which was correct as far as it went but was completely misunderstood. Something is said about it in *The Mahatma Letters*.

Another asks a question direct from the heart of compassion and the answer is responsive. That is the ancient method, still in use in 1948, without doubt.

There, then, is the answer to the original question. How do you know? By using my intuition. "That is no good to me, what do I know of your intuition?" may be the cod-eye retort. The answer obviously is, "Develop your own intuitive perception and then you will know and will not have to ask anyone else." The usual retort or a usual retort is, "I haven't time." This especially from the get-rich-quick school of theosophy and philosophy. There is no more to do than to leave it at that. It is not much use trying to force a man to see what he is not looking for.

But it is very pleasant sometimes to see with what brilliant brain-mind arguments we can smash the other fellow, though there is always the risk that he remain "unconvinced still."

If you say you know it by intuition, the other man is quite likely to taunt you with the gibe that other people have as much intuition as you and you need not set yourself on a pedestal. He is more likely to say this if he has no intuition, so here again the answer is silence.

The man who is convinceable and convinced by brain-mind argument is the man who half-knows already. In such a case it may not be waste of time to argue. But in very many cases there seems to be no better

formula than to tell the man to acquire the sense of perception of truth for himself, then he will need no one to tell him.

Even with, or especially with, Theosophical teachings, the same applies. There is hardly a Theosophical teaching which does not require intuition to understand it, and the man who says he knows usually finds out that he has still much to learn. It is not the business of a Theosophical teacher to spoon-feed tots and teens but it is his business to start the intuition working.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MIRROR OF THE MOVEMENT — H.P.B. — *Philip A. Malpas*

Perhaps there is no office more misunderstood than that of a Theosophical Leader and Teacher. Full advantage is taken of this fact by the enemies of Theosophy and that is one reason why there are periodic attacks at regular intervals on Madame Blavatsky and her memory. It is also a reason why those who profess to be devoted to Theosophy and its main public representative are often slack in defence of the one who has given them the very breath of spiritual life.

H. P. B. was a strong active woman who had travelled the world sometimes dressed as a man when in countries considered dangerous for the foreigner. When she began the work of the Theosophical Society she was healthy and vigorous and virile; a woman in her prime. By modern standards there is no reason why she should not have lived to a ripe old age, but she died a worn out old woman at 60.

What is the explanation? It is not only that she did the work of three active men or women, but that she bore strains which few round her suspected or only dimly realized. There were Theosophical babies in her day who imagined they could have become leaders and could have shone in a pleasant light of publicity for such time as was necessary. They imagined, some of them, that everything would be easy, because did they not trust in the men who act as impersonal forces behind the scenes? What did they know of the terrific energies which had to pour through her frame and flow out over the whole world? The best of them would have had their constitution shattered in a matter of weeks.

The man on whom her mantle fell, W. Q. Judge, was not constitutionally strong, but he might have reasonably expected a normal period of life. He had suffered from Chagres fever; thousands of others had done the same and had survived. But the same forces were flowing through him as flowed through H. P. B. and they were possibly less strong than she experienced, but they were still titanic.

There was not a single member of the society of that day who could have stood the strain, except perhaps one who went to Tibet for yet more severe training than W. Q. J. had undergone.

H. P. B. was fond of the occult story of the bundle of sticks which separately could be easily broken, but together were strong enough to resist any effort to break them. If those who should have supported her and who should have supported W. Q. J. had held together like that bundle of sticks, these two teachers could have stood the strain of the cosmic forces streaming through them with sufficient resistance of the physical instrument and would have been able to direct their spiritual power more towards the salvation of humanity. But so many of them wanted what they thought was occultism, unaware that this bundle of sticks idea is the very highest occultism they were ever likely to contact. And they were not big enough to see it.

H. P. B. ended as a chronic invalid, the subject of enough ailments to have shattered any ordinary constitution. Her will held the physical frame together when it ought to have been free to do more important work for humanity. Her physician asked her once when a blood vessel had burst in her brain, "Why don't you go into convulsions?" Her answer was characteristic, "Because I don't choose to!" At another time another physician, a Belgian, was completely puzzled. He had left her for the night knowing that she must die in a few hours. On the next day he found her a lively and perfectly cured patient. All he could do was to keep repeating, "Mais, elle a du mourir!" "But she ought to have died!" She chose to live and write *The Secret Doctrine*, but she had to pay the bill for her overdraft on the Bank of Life in unspeakable suffering, made a thousand times more keen by the knowledge of what everyone around her was and would do — ambitious traitors some of them, one or two imagining that they were big enough to take her place. They thought of the ambition but never of the daily torture of suffering that would fall to their lot if they did become leader. The personal self does not think of these things.

What would have happened if such an one should have been brought

into the position of leader? There would have been no coherence and little spirituality; disintegration would have ensued and though the tremendous power of the initial impulse given by H. P. B. and those behind her would have been long in dispersing, it would have gone down into psychic or material and emotional futilities, just as happened with so many movements such as the pre-early Christian school. There would have been ambitious "leaders," high-priests and people in high places setting up all sorts of theosophies of their own, without soul or spirit. At the worst there might have been positive spiritual wickedness masquerading as religion or something holy and spiritual.

It should not be forgotten that H. P. B. did some of her most magnificent work while the body was in a state which would have meant death many times over to one less strong than she and less endowed with spiritual will. The body was a wreck but the mind in the background was almost more than human in its grandeur of clear perception and spirituality.

Her wrecked body was the mirror of those whom she accepted as her students and followers; her mind was that of a Master of Wisdom most of the time. She was the mirror of the movement.

The Theosophical Forum

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP — *Marshal Ogilvie*

Avataras, messiahs, saints and sages sojourn among men from time to time and seek to enlighten them. These luminous figures, these couriers of light, vary in the degree of radiance that they shed. They have, however, certain salient points in common; some one or more of the thirty-two distinctive signs of Buddhahood. Invariably, they are fearless and care not one whit for praise or blame, for the acclaim of the multitude or the denunciation of the mob, for either reward or punishment. Inevitably, they are met with opprobrious opposition in precise proportion to the brilliance of the effulgence that shines through them. They expect and accept calumny or crucifixion because they come to combat the powers of darkness, of ignorance, of lust and of malice. We call them meek when we see them turn the other cheek, not knowing that they possess power to wreak summary vengeance on their enemies and refrain from using it. We marvel at their humility, because, unlike ourselves, they know full well that the radiant rays of compassion, of wisdom, peace and power shine through them and not from them. They speak with authority and their words seldom conform to our preconceived ideas of what will prove most profitable for our selfish interests. Their authority, however, emanates from a higher source than themselves and they are aware that they are transmissive agents only.

How may we learn to recognize and not to repudiate these messianic messengers who come to serve us? Should we catechize them with scientific psychological phrases to ascertain whether their intelligence quotients are in the upper category as philosophers or occultists? Should we seek for a sign in the manner of the Pharisees and Sadducees? We might recall that "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas." (*Matthew 16: 1-4*) Should we cavil among ourselves as to whether he or she carries all thirty-two of the

Buddhistic signs; or send for a dentist to determine that the teeth are forty in number, close together and all white as the seventh, eighth and ninth signs demand? Nay, rather let us employ the insight of the Centurion (*Matthew* 8:5) when he asked that his servant be healed. Jesus, assenting, said that he would come and cure him of the palsy. The Centurion, demurring that he was unworthy of having the Lord come under his roof, replied, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Here was an instant recognition of superhuman authority by a man who exercised jurisdiction over those under him. Furthermore, the Centurion stated, "I am a man under authority . . ." and implied that his orders were obeyed because the power which he wielded had been delegated to him from a source higher than himself. Despite the humble outward appearance of Jesus, he saw in Him an authority that had been delegated by an omnipotent source. Remarking that "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel," the compassionate Nazarene Avatara healed the Centurion's servant "in the selfsame hour."

Having been trained to render implicit obedience and to exact it from those committed to his command, the Centurion did not resent a far greater authority when he encountered it. Such is not the case with those whose quaint conceit leads them to conceive that they are, themselves, fully versed in that which they know least about. Sir Norman Angell has said that "His service consists in speaking harsh truths" and this is the mission of all who come to correct humanity's most destructive misconceptions. "Nothing so infuriates the mediocre mind as to be compelled to admit to itself its own inferiority," and resentment to the authority of wisdom is the rule; even when truth is presented in the palatable form of parables. All malicious actions stem from ignorance and to confess it is, truly, the beginning of wisdom. We are greatly deceived in expecting to find ideas in the enlightened ones that coincide with our own concepts of cosmic verities. If they agreed with the vague and erroneous notions of the majority, they would not be either saints or sages. We may ask ourselves, then, what is the process by which such individuals acquire wisdom and become

garbed with authority to communicate it? Who and what are the personages that wield the dominant authority of spiritual leadership; which leaves its ineffaceable mark upon the minds of mankind in spite of ridicule and relentless persecution?

We may agree that the inspiration of divine ideation emanates from Atman, as the spark of the spirit of God in man that is ever in contact with the universal source of all intelligence. Through Buddhi, as the soul, the intuitively perceived truth is transmitted to Manas in proportion as the personality has been purified. Manas as the discursive reason, formulates the supramundane concept in terrestrial terminology that will make it applicable to some human purpose. Then, if popular opinion can be persuaded to accept it, the body of humanity may put it in practice through physical action. For this body of humanity, or homo sapiens in toto, the leaders correspond in their characteristics to the soul, mind and body of the individual. The spirit stands ever apart and is not incarnated. Thus, the fully-ensouled man is a spiritual leader, but his inspiration is intuitive and not indigenous. He is the crowd compeller or impeller, who may exercise his power quite undetectably in the most impersonal and unobtrusive manner. Yet, exercise it he must, and it is the instinctive resistance of darkness to light that creates opposition to him. His intelligence is intuitively wise and it cannot be gauged by the sum total of worldly knowledge that he may, or more likely may not, have accumulated. The highly intellectual man of strong purpose is a crowd exponent who formulates the aspirations of the populace. Usually, his eyes are misted and his mind is warped by ambition. "It is upon the placid surface of the serene mind that visions gathered from the unseen world reflect themselves." Consequently, as a mirror of the masses, the majority of human leaders reflect the animal impulses that they seek to control or cajole for their own benefit. Indeed, it requires purely spiritual gold to resist the corrosive sublimate of dictatorial power. The third type of leader is the crowd representative who articulates popular aspirations and whose leadership is corporeal, or physical. Soapbox orators and rabble rousers, as vox populi, are included in this class. Below them lurks the

ravering wolf-cry of the mob.

It seems obvious that the danger of "the tyranny of the majority" spoken of by DeTocqueville is inherent always in a democracy. It is the antithesis of autocracy, but both present equally gloomy gulfs of ethical disintegration. If the social structure be turned upside down and public opinion rules unguided, the hard path of duty advocated by those of spiritual insight will be repudiated and its advocates will be suppressed. Between the two, the political leaders, whose role is to formulate policies, will find themselves consumed by the Frankenstein monster that they appeased and placated until it bulked too large for them. "Constructive impulses percolate down from the top and destructive ones bubble up from the bottom." Consider for a moment that it is your conscience and not your concupiscence that should guide you. Free yourself from the contagion of mass impulses and consult the Voice of the Silence that speaks with the words of intuitive wisdom. Most frequently, its still, small voice is drowned out by the clamor of men en masse, by the strident propaganda from the Tower of Babel. It will require ardent efforts to immunize the self against the infection of fear and the insinuations of subtle suggestion. If this herculean task can be accomplished, one has achieved the first step toward freedom and the development of the individuality. Then, perchance, the recognition of a highly individualized spiritual leader will become instinctive.

The influences that are operative on the psychological plane in perceiving spiritual truth in any guise may be analyzed by analogy. In music, a precise parallelism exists that can be applied in practice. Spiritual impulses are sympathetically concordant and compassion, or love, are but other terms to designate the divine equilibrium between positive and negative that is truly harmonic. One mentality may initiate the negative discords that are effective in setting up similar ones in other minds that may be attuned in unison. All contiguous mentalities are, then, subjected to the vibrational action of violent differentiation in mass chords. Naturally, the negatively discordant radiation is most antagonistic to the nearest sympathetic concordant. The least

disastrous effect is to negative all coincident constructive action. The worst result is the creation of mass antagonism that increases to the proportions of mob violence. To become attuned to concordance is to attain the capacity to feel, or sense, its vibrational harmony in the presence of spiritual leadership. It should be remembered, however, that the most perfectly sympathetic and compassionate concordance must be that one which is most radically opposed to any and all discords. Therefore, messianic figures are met with opposition in proportion to the purity of their harmonic tone. "Only the noble-hearted can understand the noble-hearted." Let us put ourselves in unison with the harmonic vibrational frequencies broadcast by the thoughts of the noble-hearted. It is the Music of the Spheres, the sympathetic outflow from the heart of the sun, the cosmic rays, the circulation of the blood of Christ. Then, as one tuning-fork held end to end opposite one in vibration, we will commence to sound forth the key-note communicated by a Spiritual Leader.

The wrong are weak, the right are strong.
This means the two terms right and wrong;
And truth sought out to any length,
Finds all wrong weakness, all right strength.
— Pope

The Theosophical Forum

THE WANDERINGS OF ODYSSEUS: 2 — *Charles J. Ryan*

An Interpretation — Part II (1)

I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoy'd
Greatly, have suffer'd greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vexed the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; . . .
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.

And this grey spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge, like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

— From *Ulysses* by Alfred Tennyson

Having passed through the initiation in the Underworld and having learned unspeakable things therein, Odysseus is in danger of being overcome by pride and rash self-confidence and may yield to the fascination of the temptation. The satisfaction of intellectual desires alone threatens to lead him from the direct path into destruction, for the Sirens are man-eaters. Knowing well the overwhelming power of

this temptation, and that before he can be safe he must be willing "to appear as nothing in the eyes of men" (2) the hero takes every precaution. He has himself firmly bound to the mast so that he cannot fling himself out of the vessel, and he stops the ears of his crew with wax so that they cannot hear the Siren voices while they work the ship. Exposed to the full force of the temptation Odysseus struggles to be free, but he gets through in safety. The sailors, whose ears are deaf to the allurements of the intellectual seductions, seem to represent the remaining traces of the gross elements in man's nature, particularly in view of the next incident of importance, when they kill and devour Apollo's sacred oxen to satisfy their gluttony. This so greatly arouses the wrath of the god that he sends a great tempest and destroys the last of Odysseus' followers. The hero is now left alone with nothing but his own strength and the favor of Pallas Athene, his Guide, to bring him safely through. But he is not yet completely free from the chains of personality and in his desperation and loneliness he meets with a temptation that nearly proves his undoing, i.e., the dalliance with the lovely nymph Calypso in her enchanted Atlantean island upon which he is cast by the waves. Seven long years he lingers with Calypso, unmindful for the most part of his purpose, and dazzled with the glories of her magic realm. Now and again something faintly stirs within him calling him to be up and doing. The poet says he has never been quite able

To banish from his breast his country's love.

Calypso even offers him

Immortal life, exempt from age or woe.

But with the help of Athene, the personification of Divine Wisdom, he has enough strength to resist this supreme test. This is one of the passages in the Odyssey, that show the profound wisdom of the poet and the high quality of his teaching, for here he shows the great difference between the real immortality gained when the lower elements of the personality are dissolved and ultimate union with the Higher Self is made, and an artificial prolongation of the unpurified life

of the ordinary personality with its selfish cravings and desires. Odysseus recognizes that to drink the elixir of life in any form before he is truly purified would be a fearful error. A great deal might be said upon the philosophy of this, for it goes very deeply into the roots of our being, but it would carry us too far for our present purpose. We are irresistibly reminded of the words of Christ:

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

— *Luke ix, 23, 24*

Paul, the "wise masterbuilder," in common with all the great teachers of antiquity, refers to the same principle when he speaks of being changed "in the twinkling of an eye," a very cryptic saying suggesting the springing into activity of the inner "eye" or power of intuition which sees the difference between the higher life and the delusions of sensual gratification. To Odysseus, after his luxurious existence in Calypso's magic island and the promise of eternal youth, the return to ordinary life and duty offers a great contrast and many trials, but at the bottom of his heart he languishes "to return and die at home." When he makes his decision the irresistible power of the Olympian deities is exerted in his favor: Calypso abandons her enchantments and, like Circe, is transformed, from the tempter she at first appears to be, to helper.

Calypso's Isle is said by Homer to be far away, over

Such length of Ocean and unmeasured deep;
A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze.

Calypso was the daughter of *Atlas*, and the island was called "Ogygia the Atlantic Isle." H. P. Blavatsky points out, in *The Secret Doctrine*, that the poet, in certain passages, distinctly refers to the lost continent of Atlantis, mentioned later by Plato, and to certain historical events that

took place upon that former seat of a powerful civilization.

Odysseus builds a new vessel with his own hands and sets forth joyfully, feeling sure he will soon reach his goal. But, although he has received the powerful aid of Athene and other Olympian gods, the opposition of Poseidon, who has been his enemy from nearly the beginning, is not withdrawn, and he still has many perils and trials. Poseidon, the god of the sea, was the father of Polyphemus, whose "third eye" was destroyed by Odysseus. This is significant, for the sea often stands in symbolism for the great Illusion, the ever-shifting unstable elements in life. Odysseus is no exception to the rule that all who start on the great adventure for self-knowledge and the higher life must fight continually against the false ideals and illusions of their surroundings; they are swimming against the stream of the ordinary worldly consciousness. The hero in Homer's epic is just strong enough — with the divine aid — to save his life, and though wrecked and left *without an atom of personal possessions*, he reaches the friendly coast of the wise king Alcinous who helps him to reach his native land, Ithaca.

Odysseus had rashly and without orders trespassed on the territory of the Cyclops. It was therefore his own act that aroused Poseidon's wrath, and became the fundamental cause of his misfortunes. Pallas Athene and the other gods could not avert the consequences, and the great Zeus himself had to put forth his power to restore his fortunes after long years of suffering and sorrow.

Upon his arrival home he discovers the terrible straits to which his wife and son have been reduced by the outrageous conduct of her admirers, and he soon perceives that his greatest battle is yet to come. Though the odds are apparently against him, he knows that he cannot fail, for his cause is just and has the help of the gods.

At this point we have another opportunity to admire the profound insight of the poet, and to realize that he must have been a true initiate into the mysteries of human life. Penelope, the noble wife of Odysseus, who stands for the climax of his endeavor, his goal, his higher self, does

not immediately throw herself into his arms in welcome. Ragged, worn, and disguised as an old man, he is not recognized by her, though his old nurse and his faithful dog know him quickly. Is this because they are less sophisticated? Even when Athene restores him to his prime of life and to greater dignity and beauty than before, he has to prove his identity to Penelope without possibility of doubt before she can accept him as her long lost husband. This hesitation on her part is not, as some have thought, a blemish on the story; it could not be otherwise and remain true to the meaning Homer wished to convey, if our hypothesis of the general import of the poem be true. It is the law that the aspirant for recognition by the higher self should make a clear demand; he must give the complete password before he can be admitted to the inner chamber. A mystic writing on this subject warns us:

Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee. . . . Look for him, else in the fever and hurry of the fight thou mayest pass him; and he will not know thee unless thou knowest him. If thy cry reach his listening ear then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within. . . . — *Light on the Path*

and a greater Teacher said:

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Odysseus' final opportunity to prove his quality comes when he finds his palace invaded and his wife surrounded by a mob of suitors all trying to persuade her that he is surely dead and that she should choose a second husband among them. They are utterly repugnant to the hero; they have no power over him; but he must destroy them before he can regain his rightful place. They represent the last lingering traces of the lower desires, even "the very knowledge of desire" mentioned by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Voice of the Silence*, which must be slain forever, even though its force has passed away.

The suitors have already received a warning from Zeus in the form of two eagles fighting in the sky. This is, of course, a direct reference to

the stirring up of the lower nature when the awakening of the higher aspirations compels it to realize that the time has come for the last desperate battle in which no quarter is asked or given. The scene of the struggle which shall decide is in the very home of Odysseus itself. This seems strange, yet how could it be otherwise! It is from the heart that come the issues of life. The higher powers, symbolized by Athene in the background, give encouragement, and at last the battle is won and the evil forces annihilated. The master of the house, calm, purified, and restored to more than his former beauty, attired in his royal robes, proves his identity to Penelope and is joyously recognized by her.

From a practical point of view, the method adopted by Odysseus in attacking the suitors may seem singular, but there is good warrant for it in the mystical symbolism familiar to Homer. Although the struggle takes place in the confined space of the palace hall, at very close quarters, the hero depends upon his mighty Bow for success — the Bow that none other can wield — instead of trusting to his sword or spear, which only come into action later. In making the Bow so prominent Homer shows his knowledge of a profoundly significant symbol in ancient psychology. The bow is the weapon of Apollo, the god of light, and the day of Odysseus' victory is sacred to that deity. In Indian philosophy the bow, or in some cases the arrow, stands for man himself who must be strong enough in texture to stand the strain or the spiritual archery will fail. The bow, not the sword, is the principal weapon of Arjuna, Prince of India, the hero of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the Indian allegorical poem, famous as the vehicle of a profound philosophical teaching. In other Oriental scriptures the bow is a frequent symbol. One of the Upanishads says:

Having taken the bow, the great weapon, let him place on it the arrow, sharpened by devotion. Then, having drawn it with a thought directed to that which is, hit the mark, O friend — the Indestructible. Om is the bow, the Self is the arrow, Brahman is called its aim. It is to be hit by a man who is not thoughtless; and then as the arrow becomes one with the target, he will become one with Brahman. . . . Hail to you that you may cross beyond

the sea of darkness.

William Q. Judge wrote a very striking article, "Hit the Mark," in *The Path*, Sept., 1890. He gives the practice and theory of archery as an illustration of concentration, poise, firmness, high aims, and other valuable qualities. In this article he says:

The bow figures in the lives of the Greek heroes, and just now the novelist Louis Stevenson is publishing a book in which he sings the praises of a bow, the bow of war possessed by Ulysses; when war was at hand it sang its own peculiar, shrill, clear song, and the arrows shot from it hit the mark.

Archery is a practice that symbolizes concentration. There is the archer, the arrow, the bow, and the target to be hit. To reach the mark it is necessary to concentrate the mind, the eye, and the body upon many points at once, while at the same time the string must be let go without disturbing the aim. The draw of the string with the arrow must be even and steady on the line of sight, and when grasp, draw, aim, and line are perfected, the arrow must be loosed smoothly at the moment of full draw, so that by the bow's recoil it may be carried straight to the mark. So those who truly seek wisdom are archers trying to hit the mark. This is spiritual archery. . . .

The *Odyssey* closes with the hero, now triumphant as the rightful king and leader, going forth and subduing the few remaining rebels, after which, the poet says, the "willing nations knew their lawful lord." His future peaceful and wise reign is left to the imagination, but it is secure, for he cannot fail after the final conquest of the enemies who found lodgement in his own house.

In an editorial in *Lucifer*, Sept., 1891, we find these eloquent words which fittingly close our very brief study of the esoteric side of the *Odyssey*: —

There is a road, steep and thorny, beset with perils of every kind, but yet a road, and it leads to the heart of the Universe. . . .

There is no danger that dauntless courage cannot conquer; there is no trial that spotless purity cannot pass through; there is no difficulty that strong intellect cannot surmount. For those who win onwards there is reward past all telling — the power to bless and save humanity; for those who fail, there are other lives in which success may come.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From THE THEOSOPHICAL PATH, October, 1917, Revised and amended by the author. ([return to text](#))
2. *Light on the Path*. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE PILLAR OF LIGHT — *J. G. Crabbendam*

Address commemorating White Lotus Day, given at Pulchri Studio, The Hague, Holland, May 8, 1947.

WHITE LOTUS-DAY — this is the day which stands like a pillar of light in the days of the year. The days of the year form a liturgy; each day stands for something, each day has its deep significance in the cycle of the year. But the 8th of May, in the early part of the flowering-month, the time of flowers, the day which (in Dutch) bears the name of that significant symbol in our Theosophy, the White Lotus, is a day of special tenderness. We commemorate Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, H. P. B., because on that day she had finished her task, her mission in her visible vehicle on this earth.

To you, young members of our T. S., who have just joined our Society and for whom the memory of the day of your Initiation is still strong and vivid, I would say, you have understood the importance of Theosophy in your life, otherwise you would not have come to us. On that day you finished something in order to start something new, a new phase of life with greater vision, a wider horizon, into which you look with awe and expectation. And before you and us, older and still older members, for whom Theosophy has become a trustworthy friend and companion in life, soothing our sorrow and deepening our joy, a friend who guided and advised us and lighted the caves of Myalba; a friend wholly reliable and united with us by ties which can never be broken; indeed, before us lies this day of the first Initiation, this first entrance suffused by the tenderness and inner devotion of the past.

If we all together bear this in mind today a stillness, a rich stillness comes over us. In our hearts a warmth wells up, which flows through us and flows out like incense round the image of the messenger, who brought back to us the wisdom of the Gods.

There is such pathos, such tragedy in the lives of the messengers! There

is their greater knowledge, deeper insight and understanding of secrets which remain shrouded in mystery to us, but in that lies also their greater sorrows and pain, because of their compassion for all that happens in the world of men. They remain ordinary human beings with ordinary human vehicles. And these vehicular aspects in a way lack something of the completeness that we have. There are mysteries attached to their training! After this training somewhere on this earth, somewhere where the Masters are, something often happens with their composite nature, with their constitution, so that they can remain a channel, can be a messenger. And thus they often come back to this world of men with an incomplete constitution, an incomplete armor in contrast to ours, with which they besides have to fight a much heavier battle than we have! Oh, there are many mysteries around the messengers of the Masters, their constitution, and the great sacrifices of their lives on the altar of mankind. How shall we then judge, Brothers, we who know little or nothing about the seeming discrepancies and inconsistencies in the lives of messengers, which may sometimes surprise us in our ignorance?

There is a Light-side in Nature and also a Shadow-side. There are Brothers of Light and those of Shadow, Protectors and Guardians of mankind and the Dugpas. The latter fight their fierce, uninterrupted battle. They know something about occultism, they, masters of black magic, and they attack in secret with slyness and subtlety and subtle craft. Not you and me, for what do we mean as yet in the Hierarchy of Light? But they attack the messengers in the first place. And in proportion as we make progress on the Path, the battle between the Light- and the Shadow-side in our natures makes itself felt. When we quicken our evolution on the Esoteric Path, the possibilities in us of the greater things, the spiritual aspects are activated and expressed, but also that which is hidden in our lower natures may be quickened; it is a karmic quickening-process: that which usually takes several lives to express itself, happens in a shorter period. And thus it may be that we see things performed by brothers who are further along the Path than we are, which we had not expected. And then we often know nothing

better to do than condemning such a brother. Instead of trying to understand, what is going on within that brother, what he has to go through, the portals through which he has to pass, and instead of being ready to offer a helping hand, as is our duty, we attack him by adding our criticism to that of the world; such things as: "Can you understand this of him, or of her?! . . . Ah, theory and practice!!" But the only ones, who are really to blame, are we ourselves, because we ought to know better. Tout savoir, c'est tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner! Do you still remember, Brothers, Companions, that beautiful charge of G. de P. at our Initiation which charge I do heartily hope we may still keep for a long time to come! Do you still remember how Dr. de Purucker impressed upon us, that it is our duty as theosophists to live with each other with love in our hearts — and so he continues — "especially when one or more of us pass through the portals of *purification* — words which you may later understand better than at present."

But the messengers are the first to be attacked! And the brothers of the shadow use their most efficient weapons: *insinuation, slander, ridicule!* Who does not know that insinuation: it is so easy, you have nothing to prove, you place some facts in a wrong light, disconnect them and assume a significant face, a shrug of the shoulder, a motion of the hand and it is done! It always works, is easily passed on, accepted and spread! And then *ridicule*, deadliest of poisons, no argumentation, not even facts here! We theosophists know it from experience.

"Theosophy? Oh, yes, heard of it, I daresay a group of eccentrics, but well-meaning, not dangerous!" Or: "Oh, not a bad fellow, a little idealistic; theosophist or something like that, teetotaller and vegetarian, you know. Surely, there is nothing bad in her, an eccentric, somewhat high-strung, don't take her too seriously!"

The Messengers, the chelas of the Masters. Before everything they have to follow one of the chief rules for the Chela: not to defend themselves! Do you know what this means? We also have to aspire in this direction as younger Chelas on the Path. You are attacked and accused, and rightly so, because you did something that you should not have done, but you have a great desire to defend yourself, to place in a favorable

light what you have done, so that there will be a better and milder judgment. But you are not allowed to: you have to keep silence. That is difficult!

But now you are *unjustly* attacked and accused, slandered and your name is stained, your motives twisted and misinterpreted. And you want to justify yourself, your whole being cries: this is injustice, the grossest wrong, I shall mention my motives. I can prove them! But you are not allowed to. And your friends urge: "Speak and prove the contrary, you can do so. If you keep silent, what are people to think?" But you are not allowed to! Friends, this is awfully difficult!! These are perhaps isolated cases, just a tiny arrow that hits us sometimes. But the messenger is a *target*, which these arrows are aimed at by the dozens!

This is the rule: the chela is never allowed to defend himself, when he himself is attacked, but it is his duty to defend *others* when they are attacked, and above all his Guru! That is what they have done, all of them, who recognized H. P. B. as their Guru; her many friends during her life and after her death. That is what her successors in the Holy Work have also done: William Quan Judge, Katherine Tingley, Gottfried de Purucker. Do you know, friends, those brilliant, striking speeches of G. de P., delivered in Sweden, in Visingsö in 1931 about: "The exoteric and esoteric H. P. B." published in the series *Questions We All Ask?* In the afternoon session of the Congress which was held on the occasion of the centenary of H. P. B., Dr. de Purucker spoke about the Esoteric H. P. B. and he showed us how she in her way was an "Avatara," how her psychological apparatus, usually called in the Occident "the human soul" could withdraw sometimes to make a channel for a human soul still higher than hers. These speeches are worth reading today. But the defenders I speak of have now gone home as has H. P. B. And the attacks continue! Can it be otherwise: H. P. B. the *Light-bringer*; now that the world is crying for more light, now that the hearts and minds of tormented mankind seem to be more open for the wisdom of the Gods than ever, are the servants of darkness, the brothers of the shadow going to keep silence and rest? Therefore, if they succeeded in representing H. P. B., the bringer of Theosophy, as an eccentric, an

intriguer, an impostor, that would be effective — much easier than to fight against the doctrines. These are so complicated and they are being more and more confirmed by modern science, they often speak to the intuition, heart and mind. And once more, we see the old well-tried diabolical weapons appear: New articles in magazines, new books, which once more cast the poison of calumny on H. P. B.'s name.

And now what is our *task*? White Lotus-day is for us a day of thankfulness. Our heart is warmer than ever for all that has been given at the cost of H. P. B.'s sacrifice. We could not do without Theosophy! But this thankfulness is not sufficient, it has to be transmuted into a pledge, a deed. In her honor, in her defence! We can write and speak and it is right to do so, but will our articles be printed and read and will they listen to what we have to say? The best thing we can do is to *live* Theosophy and so carry it out into the world.

If we become what Theosophy should make of us, artists in living, balanced men and women, going through life cheerfully and undauntedly, who know joy but who can also bear pain, we shall be the best living defence of Theosophy and of H. P. B.

"Oh, that my last incarnation may not be in vain!" We must see this hope fulfilled. Standing firm, keeping united, we are invincible, keeping the channels open for the sublime spiritual forces, which worked behind and through H. P. B. and perhaps still do so.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BUDDHIC LIGHT — *Gertrude Hockinson*

Our Theosophical Teachers have told us that as man is an aggregate of entities composed of seven principles: Atman (Divinity), Buddhi (Spirit), Manas (Mind), Kama (Desire), Prana (Vitality), Linga-sarira (Astral Body), and Sthula-sarira (Physical Body), so is our Earth an entity composed of these same seven principles, and that Humanity is the Buddhic principle of the Earth. In considering this relationship between ourselves and our Earth, we must try to keep also in mind the duality of manifestation in man as an individual and in humanity as the sixth or Buddhic principle of our Earth. Spiritual and material forces, working together, manifest as the duality which makes us not only men and women on the physical plane, but also must be considered as operating throughout all the other six principles.

Most of us, I believe, in considering this problem of the duality of life, think of it as the struggle *between* spirit and matter, or spirituality and materiality, each with a vitality of its own, fighting for complete possession or control of the individual. Well, there is a struggle going on most of the time in our constitutions, but if we shift our point of view a little and see that it is a struggle to bring *harmony* between spirit and matter, somehow a great deal of the agony and desperation of the struggle are eased.

It is not difficult to see this duality at work in humanity on our Earth: nations waging wars with other nations for purposes of material supremacy, but all the time, behind the scenes, the healing forces of Universal Brotherhood, the Buddhic Light, are at work in the hearts of individual men and women and in groups of these.

The Founders of the Theosophical Society and all the men and women, through the years since its inception, who have gathered together from the four corners of the earth as co-workers in its Cause, the bringing forth again into the minds of men that fundamental truth of Universal

Brotherhood, are those in whom the Buddhic Light has found a medium of expression on our physical plane, in varying degree. The Buddhic Light, impersonal and universal Love for all that lives, is more richly and more grandly expressed in the work and lives of those whom we know as the Masters of Wisdom, and above and beyond them we have caught glimpses of still nobler expressions of this Buddhic Splendor in the work and lives of the great Spiritual Teachers of the races of men through the ages.

With such inspiration as we have received so abundantly from these grand exponents of the Buddhic Light, our Spiritual Teachers, how can we possibly fail to carry on the work, by doing all we can to bring Their message of harmony and universal love into the hearts and lives of humanity, so that *all* men may share in the fuller realization of the purpose of life on our Earth? When all men shall have discovered that the riches of the spirit bring them greater joy than the acquisition of worldly treasures, then only can wars cease upon the face of the earth, and then, indeed, will we know the glory of the Buddhic Splendor.

In the Eternal Now it is accomplished!

The Theosophical Forum

IN THE PYRAMID — *E. A. P.*

I: THE TRIAL BY POISON

The candidate for Initiation was blindfolded and led by the Pastophores from the chambers underneath the Sphinx to the crypts under the Pyramid. There he had to pass through the greatest tests of his fortitude until he had won out to the last trial but one, the trial of the cups.

He was led before the Hierophant and told that he was now accepted as a Zealot, an Apprentice. Before he could advance he must take the oath of the Adepts, the vow of absolute obedience to the Hierophant in all that pertained to the Mysteries of the Pyramid. Behind him ranged themselves four Melanophores, or funeral officials, with a great black veil. On each side of him stood one of the Neocores, bearing cups. Immediately at his back was a third Neocoris, ready to snatch away the bandage at the proper moment. The candidate took the oath. The Hierophant warned him in solemn tones that if he had sworn with his lips alone and not the heart, death would be the penalty of his perjury.

Terrific thunders crashed through the depths of the Pyramid and lurid flashes of artificial lightning illumined the vaults when the seven lights were suddenly extinguished. Meanwhile the Neocoris behind him had torn away the veil from the candidate's face and he found himself facing the sword-points of the Adepts pointing at his breast in threatening menace.

"These are the swords of human justice," declared the Hierophant. "Yet human justice may be fallible and, being fallible, does not always deter. But divine justice never errs and no man can defy it with impunity. It is our will that you shall prove the sincerity of your vow of obedience to me by undergoing a trial through which the gods alone can carry you safely."

The Adepts lowered their swords and the Neocores approached with the cups.

"See these two cups!" continued the Hierophant. "One is harmless; the other is full of the most deadly poison. I command you to choose one and drink it at a draught!"

If the candidate in fear refuses, a solemn roll of thunder signals the failure of the initiation. The funeral officials throw the black veil over him, overpower him and carry him away.

Is he to return to the grey life of the everyday? Never. Human nature is such that he would boast of his escape from the wicked schemes of the Adepts and would denounce the Mysteries as contemptible. Or perhaps he would found some bogus imitation of the Mysteries, a lure for unsuspecting hearts.

He was confined within the sacred limits for seven long months. Provided with bread and water, he was allowed to study the sacred texts defining the duties of a man towards himself, his fellows, and Divinity. The book of Thoth-Hermes gives the unfortunate man a gleam of hope. His failure is not final so long as he is willing to TRY again.

Once more he is given the opportunity. If he fails he must languish in the crypts seven long months more, when he is again allowed to try. If his courage fails him, every time there must always be seven months between each trial, even if he waits until his death in the silence and solitude of the crypts. If he succeeds after a first failure he is restored to liberty but may never rise above the degree of Apprentice.

If on the other hand the candidate accepted the trial without hesitation the Hierophant informed him that he had run no risk at all, since the deadly poison was nothing more than *Fear*, which he had conquered. The cup contained a little wine flavored with myrrh to make it bitter. Possibly the password of this degree was "I thirst."

There was a Greek candidate who successfully passed this trial in the presence of the College of Adepts of old Egypt. What his family name

was we cannot say. They called him the "Broad." Popular interpretation says that this refers to his broad forehead, but it may well be that it points to his extensive knowledge and the liberality of his outlook and teachings.

The Greek word for "Broad" is Plato.

II: THE FINAL TRIAL

The candidate had passed through the terrible trials of the Egyptian Mysteries and his energies were at a low ebb. He needed rest. The Neocores took him to the Royal bedchamber, or what looked like it. They removed his coat, wet with the water trial, and put on him a fine robe of white linen. Sweet perfumes filled the air. A banquet lulled his senses with dainty dishes and delicate wines. Soft music suggested sentiment and love. All with him was peace.

At the end of the room a green curtain covered with branches of myrtle slowly opened and he saw a group of young girls dancing in the varied light of colored lamps. They held ropes of roses which they intertwined in measure with the music. There was everything about the scene to capture the tired senses. These young girls were the daughters of the temple adepts, dedicated to the temple service until their marriage. They wore masks attached to golden circlets round the brow, so that they could not afterwards be identified by the initiates. They wore a short tunic decorated with golden bees gauze scarf and scented flowers.

The music became more seductive; rich perfumes intoxicated his brain. The candidate was tempted by Form, the Calypso who imprisons human reason as Ulysses was imprisoned on her Atlantic Isle, or the Circe who turns his "men," his principles, into pigs.

As he approached and crossed the threshold two of the girls left the group and playfully bound him with a rope of roses. The others vanished like frightened birds. The light grew dim and the dancers vied in attracting his attentions, first one, then the other, as they danced round him with their garlands.

The candidate did not know this was a trial, but he did know that the Temple must not be violated in the least. He did not know that this was the most terrible trial of all. For behind him crept a silent-footed Neocoris ready to strike him dead at the slightest sign of weakness. A mere indication that he was influenced by the dancers was enough to seal his fate. This was in the days when the old symbolism of an inner truth in the Mysteries had become so materialized that death, physical death, was imposed for any violation of the Mysteries or their secrecy.

So strict was the law that a carpenter who had been initiated into some lower degree for the purpose of being able to exercise his profession was condemned to death. A friend had dreamed that he had witnessed some mystic scene and had asked if he had rightly guessed that it was what really took place in the Mysteries. The carpenter had not spoken a word, but he nodded — and he died.

Socrates, a non-initiate, died for much the same reason, only in his case an unwitting revelation of secrets of the Mysteries. They tried to save him by giving him the opportunity to escape, but he would not.

If the initiate remained unmoved and impassive to the temptation of the dancers, the adepts dismissed the girls and congratulated their new brother who had passed the worst trial of all.

"Learn to dominate your senses in order to preserve the freedom of your soul. This is the first lesson in our sacred study." So he was told.

They returned to the sanctuary and in symbolic form the new Initiate was shown the terrible fate of the perjurer against his sacred pledge, a scene which remained in his memory for the remainder of his life.

This was the last act of the drama of initiation in the Egyptian Mysteries of a later date and of a minor degree than those of which no word ever escaped from the sanctuary.

Plato lived thirteen years among the Adepts of Memphis and Heliopolis. Some centuries previously Moses, or Thotmosis, had been brought up by the Adepts of the day. There he learned all he knew and it has been

remarked how strange it is that among his laws there is no mention of the twin doctrines of reincarnation and karma which he had learnt.

The Buddha said that if there were three temptations so great as that of women, no man could ever have been saved.

For reference to a later version of this mystery see page 314, second volume of *Isis Unveiled*.

It may well be that certain minor mysteries, or pale shadows of the Mysteries which served to keep alive their memory during the ages of darkness, rightly excluded women from their brotherhoods for the reason that no man is fit for the Mysteries who can be influenced by a woman even in the smallest things of life, because it is almost an impossibility to find a woman as such who is so manly as not to want at some time to influence a man. It may be that the truer symbolism would be that it is the womanly, the emotional, the personal, which should be absolutely excluded, whether in man or woman. And yet

"Das Ewig-Weibliche führt uns heran" — the eternal womanly leads us on.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FLAME OF SINCERITY — *John Peck*

True Individuality is revealed in the manner in which one dissolves the egoic nature.

I've a friend who is an amateur watchmaker, and I had never realized the beauty in the mechanism of a watch movement until he showed me. I believe the Universe is like that. When the darkness of the self is blown out, the mechanism is shown in its beauty. There is more; the mechanism — the movement of nature — exists because of the Supreme Spirit: THAT. Yet the Supreme Spirit is also apart, and it slowly changes the pattern, which is constantly crystallizing out of the movement, or harmony of nature. It is because of the unity between outer and inner, the deep fundamental unity out of which and because of which the "opposites," or poles come — the positive and negative, the higher and lower, mind and heart, action and inaction — it is because of the unity — THAT — between heaven and earth that at the crest or completion of every cycle, great and small, we have the influx of the Divine which is true Individuality. It is this ever-Being, or reality of the inwardness of Nature *as she is eternally* which is the Divine manifesting through Individuality; which is the Law made manifest, inwardly as a glorious constellation, web, or wheel of brilliant, white, dawn-like light.

Purged of the darkness of self we see the beauty of Nature, the form or movement. Within this form is the soul like a great starry unit; pure white yet faintly suffused with dawn-like colour from the heart in the innermost heart of which is forever . . . THAT.

What is it that forever rises out of the ashes of pure endeavor? What is that which "springs eternal" before the face of the Inexplicable? It is the consciousness of Divinity, which is the true inward way, the flame of sincerity which leads to the heart of the Universe. It is unconquerable.

To look outward, to rely upon outward things and personalities; to act

from the error of separateness between "me" and "that"; to admire or yield to the enchantment of externals, is to be ignorant, is to be in darkness.

To know that darkness as the self, born of error; to know the self as the cause and continuance of error, is to see that error, or self, is the cause of darkness. To see against darkness, to struggle and strive is already enlightening action which causes freedom from darkness. It is to cease to be identified with past error. It is to know our error, our ignorance. It is to know that there is the true, the Real.

Thus knowing, we have separated the darkness of the past from the present, thus revealing our imperfections in the present. We are no longer in the darkness of the self. The impetus of much good done in the past, and great battles fought in past lives, holds at bay the darkness of self, and repels the phantoms of delusion, and reveals their emptiness. Now in the present the battle continues. To our aid comes the immortal flame from life to life. In the flame of sincerity our imperfections are revealed. Now is the time to be undaunted by these imperfections. It is the time to strike with the sword fashioned by past lives of unconquered effort. And what is this sword? Heed not the darkness, but heed the cause revealed by countless lives — the cause which is the *illusion of separateness*, the emptiness of externals. Turning inwards, know the Divine everywhere inwardly, in ourselves and in others inwardly. Heed the Law of the Divine, the Law of self-forgetfulness. Seek the Divine, and seek not its light, for its light will pass through to others and they will reveal it to you.

And what is the sword which is fashioned by suffering in the flame of sincerity? Knowing imperfections and seeing the cause of darkness in the illusion of separateness, strike for the cause of unity, of truth in thought and act and feeling. Unify one's whole being for TRUTH. The sword is — sincerity in the cause of TRUTH. It is that which evokes in others the knowledge of the Divine. It is the vision which rises ever anew from ideal to ideal — unconquerable. To see imperfection is to catch anew the vision, to be re-born, to see ever greater perfection.

How can a man be satisfied with imperfection? His very heart rises above it. With experience gained in such a Cause he can cleave a way through the darkness for others. His own Divinity will reveal through his own sincerity the Divinity in all. Self-forgetfulness is the very Law of the Divine; for not only do we rise again and again in a single lifetime, but we rise and live anew life after life. The truth of reimpodiment can be seen directly.

Thus, ever rising, ever pure, the Flame of Sincerity merges with the Universal Flame; which is the same as saying that the illusion of separateness is dissolved before the face of the eternal. And the God-Wisdom is directly revealed through the starry soul. When inwardly we see the inner cause we see that, however it may seem outwardly, there is no accident in our being Theosophists and that we should not be discouraged by outward circumstances, but join with each other in affirming and revealing the true.

And here is a "secret" which all true seekers share: In seeking to help others mysteries are revealed. Inwardly we know there is light, but in looking to help others we see darkness and suffering. Our very eyes seem blind, and we think that we must first see light. We are discouraged when light does not come. But when, listening, receiving and knowing inwardly, we have the courage to transmit it to others, despite the darkness, then the starry soul draws near, the light comes back to us from others and thus, at last, the world of light is built and the world of darkness is dissolved. I believe that this resolve to transmit despite the darkness is a step on the path of renunciation of self, and will lead us to realize the Supreme.

The Theosophical Forum

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF REINCARNATION — *Ernest Wood*

When the subject of reincarnation is mentioned it is quite usual for people to think of a series of bodies as the means for experience by a soul. I use that word soul in a vague and general sense because that is the way in which people usually think of the matter. It is seldom that they dwell upon the subject of reincarnation from a psychological point of view, and ask themselves just how that soul obtains what it is seeking or what it is intended to attain through this process.

We shall understand the method if we say that a life-cycle is really an act of meditation. That is looking at it from the point of view of the mind of the soul that is going through the experience. This meditation is a composite of three mental processes in succession. First, we give our attention to something, and if we attend to it closely we get a clear and strong active consciousness with reference to that thing. One can emphasize this with a little experiment, as follows:

You hold up a pencil and ask a friend to look at it. You then put it behind your back and ask him what color it was. He says, "Yellow." You then ask him "How yellow?" He generally replies that he does not understand you. You then request him to imagine the pencil or think about it, and ask him if he can think of the yellow color that he saw. Then, after a moment, you bring out the pencil again, and you say: "Look at it carefully. Does it look more yellow than it did before?" "Why, yes," he says, with some surprise, "It does."

All I have done is to trick my friend into paying more attention to the color yellow than he did before. What he has really done is to put out more of himself towards the yellowness of the yellow. This is what is called concentration, which is the first step in meditation. In ordinary life, the utility of things is that they compel our attention and at the same time they restrict our attention, so that at the point of concentration our consciousness achieves quality and power which

would not otherwise be obtained.

The first point, then, in understanding the psychological uses of reincarnation is to see that objects or environment present us with opportunities. The environment does not do anything to us but give us the opportunity to gather ourselves together and control ourselves upon limited things whereby our state of consciousness is educated. Every such piece of education, though it be but a passing experience, produces a permanent effect in consciousness.

Here I like to mention the simile of the camera. A camera is a dark box with a little hole in front and a chemical plate of film at the back which can receive and record the effect of the pencil of light that comes through the little hole in the front. The simplest form of the camera is that which is usually shown to students at school in the physics class when they begin to study the properties of light. In that case we take just a plain box. We take out the back and put there a piece of ground glass or glazed paper to form a screen, and in the front we make a little hole with a pin. We now point this camera at a bright object and the pupil sees the picture of that object on the screen at the back of the camera. We then tell him that this is due to the fact that the same picture appears at both ends of a ray of light. We next ask him to imagine what will happen if we enlarge the pin hole, and he says we shall have more things in our picture. So we push something through that hole to make it bigger and the student finds to his surprise that the picture becomes blurred. Then we take out the whole front of the camera and no picture is to be seen on the screen. We have at this point to tell our student that he is quite mistaken in thinking that there is no picture there, for what has happened is that many pictures are there, that all the pictures brought by all the light rays are there, that there are so many pencils of light all falling upon one another that all he can now see is a mass of light.

With the aid of this simile we can understand that the body is like the camera box and that the senses are like the little pinhole. The limiting effect of the body and the senses enables us to get a clear picture on the

screen of our consciousness, but without that there would just be a blaze of glorious light which would mean nothing definite to us.

The second point in this psychological process is the expansion of our pictures. The concentration gives us grip and now we are to obtain a larger grasp and take in a bigger picture without losing the quality of consciousness which I have called the grip. It is just as with a hand we can have a firm grip and also a large grasp.

Behind every such psychological action there is something that we must call a soul-hunger. We want to experience something. Leaving aside for the moment why we want to experience it, we can see how we do it and what the effect is. A painter has the hunger to paint a picture because as he does it he gets some enhancement of his consciousness. He gives all his attention and faculty to the work, so really he is not merely making a picture but he is also making a man, himself, and it is the enhancement of consciousness that in some degree satisfies his soul hunger and gives him the joy of a richer life. This is only one illustration; it is the same with every creative act in our lives.

It is noticeable that when a soul has attained some satisfaction of that hunger it turns away from the mere object by which it was obtained. The artist is now tired of that picture; his hunger shifts a little and he will now try to satisfy a slightly different phase of the same hunger. This explains why in the course of incarnations all objects are either destroyed or dropped aside, but the consciousness goes on with its process of self realization. We need some external thing, as we call it, to assist us in our work of concentrating our consciousness so as to educate it in the special effects of the compartments of its own being. Here, then, on the whole we see the reason why the objects should be temporary while the man is eternal, and we cease to grieve over the temporariness of those things.

There is a third step in this meditation process, which we call contemplation. It is that part of the process in which we become so intent upon the object that we forget our idea of ourselves. In the

beginning of these efforts we think of ourselves as looking and making an effort to see while we examine the object but in the process at its best we just forget the idea "I, so-and-so, am looking," and we become engrossed in the object. We all know how when it is something of beauty, such as a sunset sky or a lovely piece of music, we become what is called enraptured. We have not then lost ourselves. We are in fact at our very best. We are enjoying the highest delights of enhanced consciousness. But we have forgotten ourselves, if by "ourselves" we are to mean that picture of ourselves as something in the world which so commonly accompanies our activities and thoughts.

In the contemplation we get our best awakening of consciousness, and in the result of it we find that some deeper part of ourselves has received what we sometimes call intuition or inspiration. It is something that makes such a deep and indelible impression upon us that we can speak of it as now a part of our character. Before this the thing was simply something that we knew about or we knew, but now we can say that the experience has been really digested and the result is new power in consciousness, which we rightly call character. I am not the same after that sunset or that music as I was before.

If we give our best attention and our best creativeness to the business of life and the world, we are attaining our best growth and moving towards the fulfilment of the purpose of the incarnation. This is education. At the same time it is self-education, for the objects which give us the opportunities are of the nature of karma. Briefly, the world of each one of us is his own karma, something that he has made by his work in the past. He has made that according to his character at the time, so it is an expression of his own imperfection, that is, his own limitation. I have myself made the things that stand up there outside me and compel my attention, and profit me to the degree in which I willingly give the utmost attention to them.

At the end of a life period in the body it can be truly said that we have acquired quite a lot of experience, we have stored up thoughts and feelings, but for the most part these are only the beginnings of thoughts

and feelings — they are not mature and ripe and they have but rarely attained the quality of contemplation. What then happens after death? Death is not the end of the life cycle. The principal thing now to come is what we theosophists call *devachan*, and this is described as a kind of meditation, rising to the quality of contemplation, in which we get the full value of all those experiences which are useful to the soul of a permanent man. In this state we can say that those experiences are now digested into character. It is just as though an artist painted a picture. He has brought a variety of things into his scene and has achieved a certain realization through that. He is a better artist at the end than he was at the beginning, and now he sets aside that picture and starts upon another, which will take him to further attainment.

Let us now think upon the phases of life. We go through childhood, youth, maturity, elderliness, old age, death and *devachan*. In each of these phases there is a certain quality of experience and a certain direction of attention. This is a sort of rounded out picture, in which experience is seen from different points of view. It is evident that there is something more at work here than the karmic presentation of objects and the psychological experience of these objects. There is something that moves the man from within to go through these phases. The hunger of the soul has some plan of its own which causes it to follow this cyclic form of growth.

It is here that the will comes in and makes its decisions. It is a section of our psychology that is not mental. It is an obedience to some central spiritual law, in the intuitive obedience to which the will gets its own delight and sense of power; not a sense of power over things or power over others, but an intuition of an inner freedom. Such happy intuition is our character in the degree of attainment of unity with that part of ourselves already beyond the need of the psychological process of meditation.

There is in us a central urge, and the hunger of which I have spoken, which expresses the phases of that urge. The will in us is the future speaking to the present. That is why it is free.

It is not for the mind which deals with external objects to try to characterize that freedom and harmony of the unity-making will with any descriptions taken from its field of knowledge. Its work is in its own sphere, to assist in that psychological process in which contemplation produces fulfilment.

The Theosophical Forum

I AM PART OF THE UNIVERSAL WHOLE — *Louis E. van Norman*

One of the most comforting thoughts that comes to me — and it has been coming more frequently during my later years — is that I am, in a very real sense, a part of the created universe, not a thing apart. The old Latin poet, Terence, nearly two thousand years ago, said so truly, "I am a man. Nothing human is alien to me." A part of the universal, the great scheme of a creation, I am in my place. Like the rocks, the trees, the birds, the breezes, all the four-footed creatures, I fit into the picture. When my fellows suffer. I suffer. When they rejoice I too am happy. We are one.

This realization is the result — one of the results — of an acquaintance with my inner nature. Self-realization is the sum of human wisdom. The real things are those that lie below the sense perceptions. When we look without we see differences. When we peer within, we perceive the oneness of God's created world. As one devout astronomer put it, "Oh, God, I think Thy thoughts after Thee."

An extraordinarily interesting "new world" picture of modern physics has been painted by Sir James Jeans, the eminent British scientist and physicist at an annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. The old Newtonian physics, with its fixed universe and its unchangeable laws, said Sir James, is quite gone from the credo of science. Nothing, he said, is real in the new world of modern physics except what is in our consciousness and our perceptions. As Sir James put it:

In the old physics the perceiving mind was a spectator; in the new it is an actor. Nature no longer forms a closed system detached from the perceiving mind; the perceiver and perceived are interacting parts of a single system.

Isn't it conceivable that what is true of objects perceived may be true also of the perceiving minds? When we view ourselves in

space and time we are quite obviously distinct individuals:
When we pass beyond space and time we may, perhaps, form
ingredients of a continuous stream of life.

That versatile literary genius, George Sand, often displayed remarkable insight into cosmic realities. In her *Intimate Journal* she has a striking passage expressing her realization of her "oneness with God." She says (writing in 1840):

God is not a force outside of us. He is the sun and the skies and the gold in the chalice. He is the bread. He is all the elements of the earth. He is the heart of man, and all men, with all their yearnings and fortunes, are one in Him. He is in us and outside of us. We are in Him and never outside of Him. He is the universal spirit. He reveals himself in man. He is I and I am he.

There is one respect, however, in which the human entity we call man may be said not to resemble the rest of creation. His spirit — disposition, if you will — changes with his body. If he lives wisely and on a high plane, although the body may become misshapen with age, the spirit becomes more shapely, more beautiful, more at one with the Divine. Man can show conscious courage — which is a quality both human and divine. In other words, in proportion as one realizes that he is part of Divinity he knows no fear.

Among the better, more apt definitions of courage, is this one, of which, unfortunately, I do not recall the author: (1)

Courage does not lie alone in dying for a cause —

To die is only giving.

Courage is to feel the daily daggers of relentless steel,

And keep on living.

Think also of this, from "Grief," by Aubrey de Vere:

Count each affliction, whether light or grave,

God's messenger sent down to thee; do thou

With courtesy receive him; rise and bow;

And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave
Permission first his heavenly foot to lave.

When we have reached this state, we shall have realized our near Relationship to the gods, for, as Addison put it, heaven is not to be looked upon only as the reward, but as the natural effect of a religious life — which could not be were we not an intimate part of mighty nature.

FOOTNOTE:

1. It is by Douglas Malloch. — Eds. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

FATE, CHANCE, LUCK, KARMAN — *Helen G. Steward*

Just what is fate? Fate is a phantasy. Fate as fate simply does not exist. Fate as popularly understood is a haphazard concept of an unswerving and exacting destiny. Fate expresses a conception which seems to have prevailed more or less through all ages in all religions. The word is derived from the Latin *fatum*, which has a primarily passive signification, denoting a decree or ordinance uttered. This conception of fate springs from man's feeling of his own unworthiness and helplessness.

Chance may be defined as that which determines the course of events in the absence of law. Strictly speaking, it is an idea that few would now be disposed to admit. The idea of chance, as referring to some apparently capricious, or at least unexplainable, event, distinguishes it from the idea of probability. Chance means risk, hazard, a balanced possibility of gain or loss. So, in placing too much credence in the reality of what it is supposed to stand for, we profess ourselves to be the slaves of chance, and, as Shakespeare says in *Macbeth*, "the plaything of every wind that blows."

Luck means that which happens to a person "by chance," conceived of as favorable or unfavorable, as though there were some inward connection between a succession of fortuitous occurrences, favorable or unfavorable. For example: Gamblers say one ought to continue to play while luck is with one, and discontinue playing when luck is against one!

Can luck or chance or fate restore life to the murdered, honor to the dishonored, property to those who have been wronged? Can fate force the scales of human and divine Justice to recover an equilibrium that has been disturbed or destroyed? No, but Karman can. The operations of the Universe are governed by law and order; eternal, immutable, exacting laws which leave nothing to chance! Many laws are known to

us; but there are other laws operating around us all the time, silently, steadily, serenely, unseen.

These words, Fate, Chance, and Luck, which we put to work on many occasions are a means of passing a situation off lightly without thinking the matter through. Is it not much snappier and easier to say, "Oh, she is lucky!" or, "Oh, well, it's fate," than to analyze the matter carefully? Catch phrases often carry us through. Far easier to switch a subject into a lighter vein than to worry too much over it!

There cannot be such things as fate, chance, or luck operating in the Universe. This presupposes a mad Universe, that could not hold together for a fraction of an instant of time. No part could or would cohere with any other part; everything would be helter-skelter, indeed a very crazy Universe.

All the deductions of modern philosophical scientists are based on the one unquestionable fact — that Nature pursues invariable processes. So-called fate, chance, and luck are but the operation of forces set in motion perhaps today, or yesterday, or in previous lives. But always they are set in motion by us and the results are experienced by us. Occasionally one of these stern laws of compensation steps into our lives and takes its course, and man calls it fate — but this just law of compensation is simply following the fluctuations we have set in motion.

Everyone is weaving around himself, thread by thread, as a spider weaves its web, his so-called fate! The weaving, the action of the weaving, is man's *own free will!* He has free will within the circle of his own possibilities. His own choice — his actions — are not circumscribed or bounded by any law outside of himself! When the last strand of the web is woven and man is seemingly enwrapped in the network of his own doing, his own weaving, then he finds himself under the empire of his own self-made desires and their natural results.

Our station in life, our abilities, whatever of mentality we may have,

are ours because we have builded them into the fabric of our being and have hence earned them. When bad luck, so-called, comes upon us, we must stand firm as a rock, and not be swayed like a feather in the breeze or carried away in a whirlwind raised by our own emotions.

When we die, we take with us a load of Karma — good, bad, and indifferent causes — set up in this life. Where can the result of those causes be met, balanced, enjoyed, suffered? Nowhere but on this Earth in another life. We often hear the expression, "It's in the lap of the Gods." So it is — our fate, our chance, our luck — but it also lies in our good right hands! We long for the scenes that we have known, for loves we have known, for "life" — this is desire and desire draws us back to work out our fate, to get our good luck to have our chance!

We are artists, artists of character, and that character is ourselves. Character shows in our faces, lines of experience, deep lines of sorrow, pain, joy, suffering; they are there for us to read in each other's faces — strong faces, weak faces. Who wrought those lines in our faces? Chance? Luck? Fate? We make ourselves what we are, and at any instant if we are not satisfied with ourselves, we can begin to change ourselves. If we sit down every day or at night and think over carefully what we have done, said, and thought during the previous day, we will certainly see where we have set into motion causes — a string of causes — of which we will have to reap the benefits, the pain, or the sorrow.

When we submit to the urge of the Lower Self, the call of the personality, and later bring down upon ourselves some unpleasant circumstances, we may say, "Isn't that just my luck?" But when the Higher Self is in the driver's seat, and the God within shines forth and shows us just what we can make of ourselves, then the soul has no regrets — it has a path, a goal, and it knows there is no failure for the soul.

The voice of the soul is unaccented by the pressure of outside events. The soul lives in conditions unaffected by excitements of the hour, the sorrows and joys of the world. This statement, of course, refers to the spiritual soul, the bearer of the Spiritual Ego, which is a living,

conscious entity. For man is a wonderful being, and if he takes his evolution seriously, decides to leave not one single thing to chance, but to be conscious every second of his own inherent divinity, his greatness and responsibility, then he can become a living example of self-directed evolution. When he works consciously with the Law, a co-partner with the highest there is, his "job" becomes bigger and bigger, and his "web" is a golden glow that will shine forever, and will "illumine even the darkest corners of the earth."

The fourth word in our title is the only word we can really "hang something on" — Karman. Karman is the sum total of our efforts in the past, our storehouse, the result of our past actions, thoughts, and desires. Karman: our money in the bank. Karman: which all of us are making even now, which I am making as I write and which you are making as you read. It is a pleasure to know we must pay our own debts — no one is responsible for them but ourselves! No absolution can save us, no anathema hurt us, no one can harm us without harming himself.

Our strongest vitality lies in our psychological conception of our Inner God — a man can have no God that is not bounded by his own human conception of God. The wider the sweep of his spiritual and divine powers, the greater will be his God! For, as the sun shines not only when it seems to pass away from the clouds, but has always been radiant even when hidden — so our fate, our chance, our luck lies hidden behind the veil of time, and the causes and results often seem to be obscured by vapors rising from our lower desires.

Putting into practice all the Theosophical teachings which have been so lavishly bestowed upon us, we work with the Law, we ignore phantasies, and we get results. Brushing aside or ignoring our Theosophical heritage and leaving it to chance or fate or luck, we get exactly nowhere — no place —fast. For many, the possibilities of choice become almost limitless, not only because of the complexity of our social life, but even more so because of the complexities of our natures. No one can live satisfactorily unless he has established for himself

some scale of values. By doing so, man is using his own free will. He is also making his Karman. He is choosing and willing what he shall do, what he shall be; he is not leaving it to fate, chance, or luck!

What greater stimulus to courage and incentive to valiant exertion than the knowledge that the loftiest ideals, the mightiest powers, the superb beauty of character to which we all aspire, all are to be found within ourselves? The limitations which so circumscribe our actions are the barriers which we ourselves have wrought by our own actions, thoughts, desires, or inertia. All the beauty the grandeur, the splendor necessary for our unfoldment, for our peace, our perfection, lies within ourselves. The methods used to become ever more *at one* with the Divine are the actions of our own free will! We who are divine potentiality can truly fashion for ourselves "Temples of Mighty Power."

Wishful thinking gets us exactly nowhere; abstruse metaphysics alone will also get us nowhere; no God *outside* directs our lives We are imbodied gods — let us make the world know it by our actions. Therefore I shall always look upon Karman as Karman the Blessed, the Stabilizer, the Judge and the Jury — Karman the Sum Total of all our actions and reactions — but always, Karman the Just.

The Theosophical Forum

EVOLUTION AND THEOSOPHY — *Patrick Clemeshaw*

Evolution, Reincarnation, Cycles, and all the fundamental truths on which the Universe is run can be linked together, so in writing this thesis I shall attempt to bring in all of these fundamentals and mold them around the subject of man's evolution, or simply evolution.

One of the greatest blunders of Science is its insistence on an ape-man evolution of the human race. The one main reason for this insistence is that they have systematically and intentionally ignored everything except what they call "proof," and nothing of any value can be understood from one aspect alone.

Now practically everyone is familiar with the Darwinian theory of life and evolution, which postulates that organisms tend to produce offspring which are slightly varied from the parent, and further that only the organisms which have developed a "natural selection," or an adaptiveness for natural surroundings, survive; thus the "survival of the fittest." These biological facts are correct up to the point where the Anthropoids were confronted with the problems of "natural selection." But is this theory an answer? No, because it gives us the means without the cause, or the reason; it represents man as a complex lump evolving for apparently no reason at all and headed for an unknown destiny. Theosophy can give us this cause and reason because it has been given first-hand information and the help of more highly evolved beings, "organisms," than ourselves. They are known as Mahatmas, wise men, who inhabit the mountainous terranes of Tibet in China. So with some esoteric facts combined with the archeological and biological findings a Theosophist is able to give evolution an objective background. Let us start from the beginning, what does the word *evolve* etymologically mean? *E-out*, and *volvere* to unroll, thus to roll out, to expand. The word is itself a key.

From the most primitive up, all organisms have tended to specialize;

the reason is really unknown to Science. They claim that it is due to environment, weather, food, enemies, and the like. This is true, but what makes a change in weather? And when the simple becomes complex why does the organism become so wonderfully precise; or when species suddenly change in form what keeps them together at all? And why does a phylum always have the same general construction as every other phylum? All these queries can be answered by one Theosophical doctrine, which is known as the teaching of the Astral Light or astral plane, a plane above the physical whose matter is more subtle and ethereal than ours. This plane is totally unknown to Science, although its lower aspect is known to those seance holders who are able to disturb the passion elements of the departed. This plane is Nature's preserver; in this plane everything has a pattern. Otherwise when species die out and reappear they would be totally different, which is not the case. When organisms specialize they develop their already existent patterns. A plant, for instance, may seem to build itself up mysteriously without a visible agent to account for its pattern; the explanation is that its pattern was there beforehand in the astral plane.

While I am talking about astral things, it is interesting to know that Theosophy teaches that matter was not always dense. Many paleozoic fossils found today are astral imprints, and likewise man was ethereal until the end of third and beginning of fourth root-race which had its rise in the Cretaceous period; the fourth being number four in the series of seven races into which the age of man is divided on this earth. Matter has had a tendency from the beginning to become more and more dense and gross. This evolution of matter only corresponds to man's tendency to likewise become gross and when this lowest black evanescent phase has passed, things will reverse and become more ethereal, (1) the speed of this change being governed by man's ability to take advantage of upward cycles and likewise by his ability to learn by the follies of downward cycles which are the inevitable result of selfishness and tyranny. Incidentally, this thought introduces in a vague way the Law of Cycles, which is another necessary doctrine

involved in evolution.

Man's evolution started geologically in the Devonian period of the Paleozoic era. This is known as the first root-race, about 345,000,000 years ago. (2) He reappeared as the second race at end of Pennsylvanian still in Paleozoic era, about 270,000,000 years ago. The third appeared at about Triassic times of the Mesozoic era, 180,000,000 years ago, the fourth in Cretaceous approximately 105,000,000 years ago. The fifth and present race of men had its rise in the Miocene period of the Cenozoic era. Its culmination has been from Pleistocene, age of man, until now. The sixth of these will have its rise in millions of years in good old America.

Now while thinking in series of root-races and ages, etc., I shall attempt to explain the existence of mammalian and simian stocks in connection with the common belief that we are the descendants of Mr. and Mrs. Anthropoid. This one common belief has retarded the outlook of Science to the extent that the hypothesis has become a dogma and all dogmas are the result of ignorance.

'Manlike apes,' and anthropoids were the sinful result of Miocene alliance, when the fourth great race had passed its climax. Proofs of this are to be found by studying the anatomical features of man and apes. Further evidences of this could be produced by scientists on this basis, except for their studied effort to belittle man's grand background and history to a few insignificant thousands of years.

Man was endowed with this Manas 18,000,000 years ago; he was apparently unable to grapple with his new responsibilities so he took the course of least resistance, and was seduced by the influence of evil and selfishness. His evolution from that time has been that of bloodshed and fear, with minor periods of tranquillity. Once having attained to a self-conscious state and able to commit evil he did so. Leaders became ruthless despots, and the lands became rampant with sorcery and other black practices. The first forced men to evolve by overrunning each other. This brings in the Law of Karma, Sanskrit word meaning the law of cause and effect. It opposes the doctrines of

fatalism and chance. We live, learn and evolve by this law. Thus the races conquered each other in payment for past actions.

To go back to early evolution, karma gives us one reason why species were wiped out and others made to suffer under the brute force of their superiors, and racially karma accounts for the tragic cataclysms which terminated each race of man. W. Q. Judge said, and this is for the sake of being pragmatic, that the white conquerors of America will have to suffer for their barbarisms in subduing the red Indians.

This would indicate that races are reborn to either suffer or repay each other; and why repay them if they hadn't lived before to deserve it? This introduces the law of Reincarnation, law of rebirth. Races of men have their hey-day as does everything. These days come in turn allowing for every race to have its hey-day. In other words when a race has had its fling it gives way to another. These fluctuations are governed by the very precise laws of nature known as Cycles upon which everything evolves.

Evolution, therefore, appears to embody all fundamentals of nature, for it is the reason why we are here. Most men sense this, even a drug-store keeper I used to know who has above his entrance:

"Don't ask me any questions — if I knew everything I should not be here."

The human stem is the main trunk from which all springs. This is not a dogma, for evidences found today are tending to confirm it. But will animals ever evolve to become human beings? If you are talking about the visible physical form the answer is no, but the soul-mind which is what is evolving, will become or enter the human body form. Such simple truths if known would do away with dogmas which give rise to such useless theories as that of the missing link, and other "explanations" which have made famous evolutionists the cynosure of all thinkers.

In order to know the reasons for evolution it is imperative that we delve into the wisdom of the unchanged oriental scriptures, for it is

materialism, not evolution, that denies the divinity of men. Another cause, unmentioned up till now, is the simultaneous involution of spirit into matter from above, for it is this spiritual "oomph" which evolves man from the mortal to the immortal.

Theosophy's greatest contribution to the world right now is through science, for science is now, more than ever, our means of expression, and even if its only contribution were to be a clear picture of man's evolution it would be enough, for evolution in part is the study of man, and the study of man is the study of the universe. It would force men to recognize and to honor a few esoteric things, and when this is accomplished men will be able to learn from their past that might does not make right, to learn also their responsibilities to humanity by loving humanity not less but humans more.

Science is objective — so is Theosophy. Ignorance is all that stands between them. The study of evolution belongs to science and religion, Theosophy. Nothing stands between them but ignorance. When will the line between the two be cut? Not until we realize that everything is divine and that we are on this earth for the same purpose — to evolve.

FOOTNOTES:

1. As a matter of fact, the lowest point has already been passed, at the middle of the Fourth Root Race, the Atlantean period. We are now on the "upward arc". ([return to text](#))

2. These figures are based on Geologic reports, but periods given in *The Secret Doctrine* are almost exactly half in length. ([return to text](#))

THE ICE OF SCHOLARSHIP — A. Birch

The Eye Doctrine and the Heart Doctrine are two different things. Head-Learning and Soul-Wisdom are the two powers in man which must be mutually adjusted to achieve balance. Yet "personality" is so subtle and so persuasive in its ways that those subject to it — and who are not? — find it very difficult to attain and maintain that balance.

It is a curious but true proposition that if a god *as he is* came among men as an active power, he would be an imbecile. Without the intermediate apparatus of the "mind" he or it would have no means of expressing itself. Several interesting deductions follow from this proposition, one of them being that mind in the sense of intellect, brain-mind intellect, is not a divine thing, though it may be on the way to becoming one. This being so, the cultivation of mind is a means to an end and not that end itself.

There is a strange fascination in scholarship when the student has passed a certain point. We are apt to grow into the feeling of scholarship for its own sake; it is a feeling which grows by feeding until often a scholar will imagine there is nothing more important.

Why should it not be so?

The reason is clear in the light of Theosophical teaching. It is that the brain-mind is part of the "mortal" side of man's composite nature. After the death of the body the intellect dies in its turn, but what we may call the Intellect persists. It persists by assimilating itself to the "immortal" part, technically called the Higher Manas, which in its turn blends with the still more spiritual part, the Buddhi. Sometimes in ancient literature the Higher Manas is called the Intellect, but that does not identify it with the brain-mind function and the psyche or emotional nature, the desire nature, which is also one of the "mortal" parts of man.

The translation of "psyche" as "soul" means very little because two people appear to have the same definition of soul, and very few think of it as a vehicle for something else, which is a good suggestion as to its meaning.

Therefore it is necessary for the Divine and Spiritual in man to have their vehicles as a means of expression if they are to accomplish anything on the human plane or level. But if these vehicles are cultivated for their own sakes the object gained is of more or less temporary advantage. We have to live and work on this plane at present, therefore it is quite right to keep our tools sharp and polished, so far as we can, but it is important to remember that they are only tools, means to an end.

What is far higher than the mind and scholarship is Intuition in its true sense. This intuition is one of the functions of a higher part of man than the mere thinking intellectual apparatus. It is a spiritual function rather than intellectual and the man who uses it — all have it, active or latent — attains instantly to perceptions which for the intellect may take long years of study.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* the distinction between these various rungs on the ladder of consciousness is well illustrated and in the recension by W. Q. Judge runs as follows: The thinking principle is higher than the senses, the discriminating principle is higher than the thinking principle, and He is superior to the discriminating principle.

This classification calls the psychic, emotional and desire parts of man's composite nature "the senses" — they are all of the lower, mortal, earthly nature. In the letter of James, the "Brother of the Lord," the phrase runs, "earthly, sensual, devilish," and the Greek word for sensual is "psychic." The psyche belongs to the senses, not to the higher part.

Magnificent as it is and sublime the heights to which it attains, scholarship alone is cold, dry, brilliant. "It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions," as the *Voice of*

the Silence says. Crowned with the warm living human power of love and sympathy and understanding for all beings, scholarship is a splendid enterprise. Alone it is cold and lifeless, however sparkling it may seem. As Mr. Judge once said to an enquirer, "I do not want the ice of scholarship to form around me."

The Theosophical Forum

THE ILLUSION OF TIME — *Betula Baumer*

There is often a great gap between philosophy as spoken and as realized. We all know that time is an illusion, but how many of us treat that proposition as a fact in daily life. We speak of reincarnation and think of it as lives in terms of time, but it would be quite as reasonable to think of reincarnations as progressions or retrogressions in character, in growth, with knots at regular intervals where balances are struck and the next step is made with the balance carried over as a whole instead of as separate items.

Philosophers have frequently dreamed of occult centres on earth, or occult communities or brotherhoods, and many have longed to belong to such. Do they know what is involved? Some very genuine occult centres might consist of nothing more than a concentration of time and the consequences of that process. The qualification for such a centre might be the power acquired to live more intensely than in the world, or alternatively, it might be that power exercised in daily life.

We know how often some people's lives seem suddenly to be intensified like a photographic plate. Fate seems to fall on them all at once in every thinkable way. Some crumple up under the weight of circumstance, others become stronger by surmounting the waves of experience. Some aimlessly get through as best they can and are not much more than they were before.

Those who long for the trials of initiation often find these daily trials too much for them; they *are* the trials of initiation if deliberately invoked. If not so invoked they are the trials of that longer initiation called life. What other trials can we expect?

It is not difficult to imagine an occult school where the students start out with a vow to conquer all the petty failings of character, Only to find after a lifetime of effort, as they think, they have made no headway at all. If they have genuinely tried, the time of balance will

come, when they find they have grown, but if they have only played the amateur it might be better that they had never vowed at all.

We imagine such a school as a wonderful place of human endeavour. It may be. It may be not. If the vow was made by the personality confusion may be worse confounded. If the vow was made by the producer behind the scenes the drama may be magnificent success or failure depending much upon the players, the tendencies, good and bad, of character. That producer is the MAN, not the personality, his servant who is ever trying to dominate him.

Can we harshly criticise such people who set out with high hopes and after a lifetime of endeavour, as they think endeavour, they fail? No. But we should be foolish if we fail to see what is happening and to profit by the lessons. Because we are not only our brother's keeper, we are our brother himself.

Let us not judge harshly then when we see a would-be pilgrim full of ambition to lead, of dislike towards a brother pilgrim, of self-indulgence, of pride, of petty personalities, of little revenges towards those who have done their duty, of desire to dominate, of desire for social prominence, of failures to rid the intuition of all these stumbling-blocks. They are positively childish and look so to the outside observer who does not know what their intensity is to the one who intensified time in his life and lives.

But we may judge the thing itself unmercifully. We should realize that it is a blot, a decayed spot in our own character appearing where it finds a more suitable stage for its public appearance; it is ourselves. We are our brother's keeper; we are our brother himself. Let us not pander to it for any reason whatever, if we wish to help him.

There is a German saying, "When two people do the same thing it is not the same thing." This is certainly true so far as time is concerned. It has been said that a man may attain to Initiation in seven hundred years, or seven years, or seven minutes. For each of these classes the process is the same, but the time seems to be different. Is it? A civilization may

take centuries to grow; when its time comes it can disappear in a year.
Truly time is an illusion.

The Theosophical Forum

THE INSEPARABILITY OF RELIGION, SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY — *William C. Beller*

These three terms, Religion, Philosophy and Science, represent three distinct and supplementary aspects of man's search for a proper relation to the universe of which he is a part. Religion is an expression of the yearning of the finite for the infinite.

The desire of the moth for the star
Of the night for the morrow
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

It is expressed largely in emotional terms, in feelings, aspirations, longings and deals not merely with worship and devotion to an idea of perfection, but with the problem of good and evil, the formulation of standards of right action and the motives of such action. In brief its concern is the ethical and devotional life of mankind.

But just as religion deals mainly with the heart, so philosophy is concerned with the intellect. It deals with many of the same problems as religion, such as the origin and destiny of the universe, the foundations of knowledge, the distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, and the source of the Intelligence manifested in the Cosmos, but its approach is entirely different. It uses reason, it thinks about these things; it seeks to analyze, to define, to describe and to classify all the factors of human experience.

The methods of Science are by observation and experiment. It seeks to ascertain what nature is by studying how nature works and in particular to learn the laws controlling all phenomena so that these phenomena may be subjected to man's voluntary control.

Now these three approaches to reality so supplement each other that in the wiser ages of the past no one would ever have dreamed of

separating them. The great temples of religion in the ancient world were at once the shrines of devotion, the academies of philosophy, and the laboratories of science, and the great priest initiates who were their guardians exemplified in themselves the highest attainments in all three fields of learning. The literatures of the ancient world such as those of India, Egypt and Persia, embody the three blended together in a way almost disconcerting to the shallower scholarship of a later age. It was so obvious to these men that man was an ethical-devotional being, an intellectual being and a practical being at one and the same time, that they could hardly have conceived the possibility of anyone attempting to split his many-sided nature into separate and distinct unrelated departments and categories. Holding as the cardinal tenet of their philosophy the indissoluble unity of nature and of man as a part of nature, they exemplified in all their works the statement of G. de Purucker: "Light for the mind, love for the heart, understanding for the intellect, all three must be satisfied before man can have real peace."

But with the progression of the cycles and the accumulation of Karmic tendencies, the splendid unity striven after in the archaic ages was lost and periods succeeded in which one or the other of these attitudes assumed dominance to the detriment not only of the others but of the well-being of mankind as a whole.

History provides examples: the period in Greece around the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries b.c. represents one in which the philosophic approach was uppermost. Such names as Pythagoras, Thales, Heraclitus, Democritus, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are too well known to require more than enumeration. They created the very word Philosophy out of two Greek roots which stand for love and wisdom, and interpreted the term in the two senses of the love of wisdom and the wisdom that springs from love. Their magnificent achievements in philosophy are a shining light to all succeeding ages, yet the decline of religious faith among their contemporaries and the neglect of the physical sciences permitted civilization to lapse into a declining cycle from which it can hardly be said to have emerged even today.

Europe of the Middle Ages, say from the sixth to the thirteenth centuries, furnishes an example of the dominance of religion to the detriment of other phases of human activity. While many apologists for this period have demurred at the expression "The Dark Ages" commonly applied to it, the term is accurate enough if we recall the widespread ignorance, the degrading superstition, the repulsive squalor, the appalling cruelty and brutality, and the insane fanaticism which characterized the life of this age, bearing in mind also, of course, a few noble exceptions which shine like lone beacon lights amid the surrounding darkness.

The modern world furnishes an example of a civilization dominated by the physical sciences to the neglect and detriment of both religion and philosophy. The consequences of this are so obvious in all the conditions around us as to call for no comment on my part. The use of natural forces for destructive rather than constructive ends, the failure to apply existing knowledge to advance the general well-being, and the absence of any generally recognized ethical standards as dominant factors in molding human relations must be obvious to all. Science has created a monster which threatens to destroy its creator, religion turns feeble and sadly longing eyes to the outworn superstitions of the past, while philosophy contents itself with merely describing and rationalizing what has transpired without any serious effort at assuming leadership or seeking to discover the clues which would lead out of this dismal labyrinth in which mankind wanders, as *The Voice of the Silence* puts it, "in wretched desolation, starving for the bread of Wisdom, and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation."

In this dark picture of despair what hope or encouragement can be found? Only that which Theosophy has to offer. I do firmly believe that the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion had this mainly in mind, when they permitted treasures of wisdom kept secret since the foundation of the modern world to be given out by H. P. Blavatsky and the other Leaders of the Theosophical Society. Alone amid the discordant voices of the distracted world, Theosophy repeats the grand

old watchwords of harmony and unity. In her monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. Blavatsky takes for her sub-title, "The synthesis of Religion, Science and Philosophy." But how does Theosophy hope to effect such a synthesis?

In the first place by demonstrating that the Universe, the Cosmos, in all its seeming multiplicity and diversity, is a manifestation of The One Life; that what we call matter and what we call spirit are but illusory aspects of one reality; and second, that the various departments of man's own nature, such as the ethical, the aesthetic the intellectual and the practical are but aspects, phases or facets of the same being, and that man is in no sense a complete being if any of these is neglected or given disproportionate prominence.

We see then that Theosophy propounds a philosophy in which man and the universe are essentially one, and in which the material and spiritual aspects of both are essentially one. Thus, there can be no true science which neglects religion, and no true religion which neglects science, while philosophy stands as the organizing and harmonizing mediator between the two. In such a picture, the Universe is not viewed as a vast, lifeless machine, governed by chance, accident and purely mechanical laws, nor is Divinity something external and apart from the Universe. As a poet has said

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul."

Only nature as viewed by the Theosophist includes spiritual as well as material nature, expressed in worlds visible and invisible, and the "God" of the Theosophist is an aspect of the Causeless Cause expressed in the tiniest atoms as well as in worlds and systems of worlds. Man in this scheme stands as an inseparable part of the Cosmos, partaking alike of its spiritual and material aspects, having as the heart of the heart of his being the same Divinity which is at the heart of the universe, and expressing through vehicles of his many-sided constitution the same phases of that Divinity as find expression in universal nature.

How then can there be any separation between religion, science and philosophy? How can one know god except through nature, outer and inner, and how can one know nature except through science physical and divine? How can man know what to do with his knowledge and powers except through religion, and how, except by philosophy, can the relations between spirit and matter in nature, and spirit and matter in man and all these to each other ever be revealed?

So out of the tumults and confusions sprung from ignorance Theosophy raises the grand old Rallying Cry: Fideles, Sursum Corda! Lift up your hearts, ye faithful ones. Lift up your eyes unto the hills whence cometh your strength, the hills of the Ancient Wisdom of Mankind, which through its revelation of the essential oneness in both man and nature shows how all paths may lead to the same goal and how all are equally indispensable and all equally profitable to pursue, providing we do not lose touch with that thread of light which, running through all, makes the Cosmos and all its component entities *one living Being*, the embodiment of a Divinity.

The Theosophical Forum

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION — *Hazel Minot*

Who is the Doer? There is a world of conjecture in this question, especially when the results of action bring acclaim or satisfaction. Our answer is dependent, perhaps, on our way of looking at things — through which end of the telescope. If we study the heavens and try to understand them from our earth-life experience, our comprehension is going to be correspondingly limited. If, however, we try to raise our consciousness so that in some measure, even though dimly, we glimpse the majesty of those starry spaces, our whole being will expand; and with this, in time, will come real understanding.

* * *

I read a poem and it brought joy to my heart. Who wrote the poem? I do not know, but for the space of time that the poet's mind reflected the spirit of joy, genius was there.

I stood before a masterpiece in color: a landscape touched by sunlight, but swept here and there by lazy cloud-shadows. I, myself, wandered in that countryside. I learned what depth of beauty lay hidden in its hills; the many flowers that could be gathered from its meadows. Who painted the picture? I do not remember, but there was magic in the brush that touched paint to canvas.

"Cold" marble held me spellbound. But it was cold only to the touch, for life itself glowed within that sculptured form. What vision had the sculptor seen that he could tell it thus in stone? His name? Who knows — and yet he too brought gifts from heaven!

I listened to a symphony and knew in my own soul the heart-yearnings of the composer. There was anguish in that music, and then came final triumph and — peace. Who wrote this symphony? Does it matter?

Did the poet think the spirit of those joyous lines was his creation? Were the painter and the sculptor insensible of the source from

whence their inspiration came? And did the musician suppose that his power to touch the hearts of men came from himself alone? Each may have had a few such moments of blindness; but when the fire of inspiration burned, each knew how insignificant a part he played, and saw his genius as a candle-flame lighted at some Cosmic altar-fire.

* * *

Then, do we never achieve greatness by our efforts and in our own right?

Greatness lies not in the things accomplished, nor in him who achieves, except as he make himself a better instrument to express those "great ideas" which are the common heritage of all men.

"Colorless nonentity," you say. That can happen only when, for one reason or another, we fail to make ourselves fit channels for the stream of inspiration.

We may thrill with a stimulating feeling of self-realization when we think of ourselves as the Doer in some worth-while activity; but are we actually accomplishing as much in the role of minor deity, with a limited stream of inspiration, as we could if we recognized ourselves as transmitters of an infinite source of illumination? Once get the vastness of the idea and all that it implies, and the thought of helping to channel that energy is going to become more and more insistent.

Was it complete understanding of this urge that the dewdrop experienced when it slipped into the shining sea?

The Theosophical Forum

OCCULTISM — *Howard Utter*

In technical Theosophy flows an undercurrent of pure and deep occultism. There is evidence that occultism has been confused in the minds of many earnest students with esotericism.

Esoteric, a word used at first by the ancient Greeks among those initiated into the Mysteries, was later applied in ancient as in modern times to mark a distinction supposed to exist between certain classes of writings or discourses of Aristotle. The esoteric works designed for the disciples were thought to be less popular, either in style or treatment, and to contain more technical doctrines, than the exoteric works, which were designed for the public.

Technical doctrines, esoteric because taught in secret to a select circle, are, like symbols, inseparable from dangers. Though a necessary path, it is a dangerous one by which to approach one's own Inner Divinity.

Names which stand for things are confounded with the things themselves; the means are mistaken for the end; the vehicle of interpretation for the object; and thus the technical comes to assume an independent character as truth. All our Teachers have had a deep feeling about this danger and have emphatically warned us of the intellectual mischief present.

Yet it is easy for human indolence to linger among the familiar and well-defined and refuse to pass further on. So the timid remain content to dogmatize the technical, consider it profound if taught esoterically, and continue to rotate in the same close-cropped circle where they first learned to browse, while the progressive soul roves forth "to fresh fields and pastures new" in the regions of occultism.

Technical Theosophy is the most complete embodiment of occultism in the world today. It contains more meanings than words, its expressions are as figurative as poetry and as exact as numbers.

Existing but partly concealed from observation, this living truth is clearly perceived only by disciplined investigation; which investigation is the science of occultism. It cannot be immediately or easily known under its envelopes of paradoxical enigmas that seem impenetrable to the less wise. Revealed by experimentation, occult science, being the Universal Synthesis, supplies the investigator with the lost factors in human science, and the lost keys to human progress; but he alone understands how to avail himself of it who comprehends the necessity of never misusing it.

The Theosophical Forum

WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE DIE? — *Abbott Clark*

Where do we go when we die? The answer is too simple for belief: we go straight to the place or state we were headed for before we passed over. We could not go anywhere else. We just continue right ahead in our habits of thought and action though the actions are no longer physical but suited to the astral plane we are naturally prepared and fitted for. The mere fact of dying has no angelic transforming power. It merely tunes us out of the physical into the astral plane where we go right on as before thinking thoughts that are heavenly in character and that take us to Devachan, or thoughts of desire which are familiar and that keep us in a familiar state — that of Kama-loka. It is just as simple as that. But remember that our desires are transitory things — rather superficial after all. They run their course and we are, sooner or later, freed from them.

In order to understand this subject more thoroughly we have to realize that a man after all is not just the physical person we behold from day to day and whose outward acts we judge him by. Man is a thinking-soul and souls have a way of asserting themselves sooner or later and outgrowing childish desires. So when the soul is freed from earthly bondage it seeks its own, and sooner or later, slowly or rapidly, gravitates towards its center of attraction, which, most naturally, we can call "the home of the soul." For a distinctive name free from false teachings we in Theosophy call it Devachan.

So let us study the nature of devachan as taught in Theosophy. In the first place we have to accustom ourselves to the fact that heaven is neither made of wood, nor brick, nor jasper, nor has it golden streets without cobble-stones or gutters. It just is *heaven*. Now, what do you mean when in daily life you say that for an hour you were in heaven? Why, you mean a state of consciousness — a state of blissful thought and feeling. A state in which you absolutely forgot your little self and your mere personal, selfish or physical world. You were absolutely

happy. Well, that is devachan.

The all important thing to grasp is that you were in a blissful *state of consciousness*. It was a *state of consciousness*, not a physical world. I do not mean a vague abstraction free from any kind of substance.

Theosophy does not recognize any such absurdity anywhere, in any world, physical or spiritual. In all worlds that mind can speculate upon or religions can talk or teach about there is a corresponding degree of matter (prakriti) — real matter. The higher the plane or state the finer and more real the matter: mental matter, spiritual matter (akasa), divine matter. So, if you can get the idea, in devachan you are in the plane or state of mind natural to your most heavenly and spiritual thoughts and feelings. Remember, thoughts are *things*. Real things, but not stiff and wooden. You change them by changing your feelings and your imagination.

Remember, imagination is a man's greatest creative power — the power of creative thought by which each of us builds his future. Everything in life that amounts to anything we first imagine and then think out. That is just what we do in devachan. The difference is that in devachan we are living in a world of pure thought. Our thoughts take shape before us and we live in and are surrounded by them. Thus all our ideals are objectivized before us. They make for us an objective environment often more vividly real than physical life, hence in devachan we live in a world *exactly suited* to us for it is made by ourselves.

It may help us to realize all this if we remind ourselves that no intelligent person lives in his body and its senses much of the time. As a matter of hard fact we live mostly in our minds right now — in our minds, and thoughts, and feelings. The difference is that in the physical state or world we are limited, bound and hedged in by reluctant matter while in devachan our thoughts and ideals are free to objectivize themselves readily and immediately. Think of how happy we would be if in daily life we could do just that. What an advantage to be in devachan.

Each man's heaven world is *exactly* what he desires and expects and requires because it is created by or *of* those desires, expectations, and imaginations. The thoughts and feelings of everyday life emanate from us moment by moment and they hang around us like a perfume or a cloud of smoke as the case may be. To be more technical and more exact, they make an *aura*, an invisible but very real astral shell or house in which we live and which we carry around with us as a snail does his shell. This is why a man can never escape from himself — because he carries himself with him. In fact this aura is himself. In it he carries his karman with him. This is one reason why a man can never escape his karman — it is himself. He carries it with him whether he goes to New York or to devachan. In other words, your aura is a sort of astral glass case which holds yourself together. In earth life it is invisible, subjective, except in rare cases of clairvoyance or vivid dream. In devachan this aura is what you live in. The thoughts within it there become our objective world. That is the whole story.

If men took their faults with them to the hereafter, what kind of place would it be? Better stay here where you can call a policeman. But what becomes of our bad thoughts? — if we took those to heaven it wouldn't be heaven. Well, kindly nature takes care of that. Take a simple illustration: Suppose you have a glass of water more or less dirty. Set it down quietly and the dirt will settle to the bottom and the clear water will rise to the top. That is the way with a man's aura in the silence after death. The clear water of his life rises to devachan and the dirty water — we call it the "spook" — stays in the lower astral light.

Did you ever see spooks? They did not look like angels, did they? But if you could rise high enough and had clear enough inner vision (clairvoyance) to see souls in devachan they would be radiantly beautiful, angelic. The "spook" (Kama-rupa) stays in the earth's atmosphere (Kama-loka) and gradually dissolves into its primal elements (skandhas and life atoms). But it all belongs to the man who made it and so in his next life it is drawn back to him. That is a part of the man's bad Karma, while the good thoughts he had in devachan have been digested and assimilated into his character and return as a

part of himself. People speak with more wisdom than they realize when they feel and say that a baby comes from heaven.

Devachan has sometimes been likened to a dream because dreams are likewise made of thought. Some dreams are almost as vividly real as devachan. Devachan is a spiritual state and spiritual states are always more real and beautiful than the grossly material state of earth life. Master K. H. says "To call the devachan existence a "dream" in any other sense but that of a conventional term . . . is to renounce forever the knowledge of the esoteric doctrine."

Having lost his physical senses the devachani cannot tune in to the jazz of the physical world. His life is mercifully undisturbed by witnessing the sorrows, misfortunes or perhaps sins of his loved ones on earth. Heaven would not be heaven if the sorrows of mortals invaded devachan.

Let us remember and remind the bereaved that there is no separation in spirit. "We are with those whom we have loved and lost in material form, and far, far nearer to them now than when they were alive," says H. P. Blavatsky.

Pure holy love is spiritual and from the higher plane reaches the loved ones on earth, acting as a comforter and a shield. Between those with pure love on earth and those in devachan there is a play of spiritual forces as real as radio waves, obeying similar laws: that is, to register them you have to tune in to their spiritual state. Pure love is the strongest of Karmic forces and will bring all who so love together again in future lives.

PERSONALITIES — *Harij*

From the PATH, November, 1887.

Step aside, O toiling brother, into a convenient bye-way, and for a moment let the surging crowd pass by. Do not tremble like a child for fear that you may be hopelessly left behind, for you will be forced back all too soon, though, if you really pause, and truly ponder, you will never again be so completely identified with the pursuits of the crowd, though you will still be a part of it. Ask of your soul: "What are these personalities that make up the mighty human tide so widely rushing past — this rushing tide replenished at every instant by birth, depleted at every instant by death, yet flowing on for ever?" How read you this journey from the cradle to the grave?

Think of the countless myriads whose weary, toiling, bleeding feet have worn deep the channels of this river of time. Listen to the complaints of the weary, the cries of the wounded, the groans of the despairing. Watch with pity the ashen faces as they hear the sound of the cataract ahead, over which they know they must plunge alone into unknown depths. Many are resigned in the presence of fate, for there is true courage at the heart of humanity, but how few are joyous except through ignorance and forgetfulness, and these are the frightened ones in the presence of the inevitable.

Listen to the loud acclaims, when in the rushing stream one is for a moment borne aloft on the crest of a wave, and watch the envy and even malice of those who are inevitably drawn into the hollow of the wave as they also struggle to reach the crest. Alas! the waves of Wealth, and Fame, and Power; Alas! the bubbling foam of Love. The night cometh and the stream is still; yet even in the arms of the Brother of Death the echoes of these mighty waves chant their requiem.

Listen a little deeper, O brother of my soul, and hear the sound of many voices: "What shall I eat? What shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I

be clothed?" and then, alas! "O, whither do I tend?"

And still the surging tide rolls on. A friend is passing yonder; hail him and beckon him to thy side. He answers: "I cannot wait; I have not time." Alas! what hath he else but time, and the foam of the maddening billows?

Turn now to thy companion, he who bade thee turn aside. Canst thou stop to consider, "Is he short, or tall, or fat, or lean, or black, or white, or man, or woman?" "Are his garments soiled or clean?" "Comes he from the East, or from the West?" "Hath he letters of introduction?" "On whose authority did he bid thee halt?" "Did he speak in conventional language, and with the proper accent?" "Has his raiment the odour of the sea, or the breath of the mountain, or the fragrance of the flowery vale?"

Be sure it is not thy awakened soul that thus inquires, 'tis only the voice of the stream yonder, and when thou turnest to look for thy companion, lo! he is gone, and thou art alone, alone with thy soul, and with the echoes of the stream. Fear chills thy blood, and every separate hair stands on end, and as thou rushest back into the surging stream, even thy boon companions are terrified at thy staring eyes, and thy death-like face. . . .

How many are turned aside by personalities? How many look to the garb of the messenger, forgetting the message, and yet is not the message plain? At one time the message comes from a manger, at another it descends from a throne. Yet is the message ever the same. Nature and time regard not personalities, but swallow up all alike, yet do nature and time and destiny teach ever the same great lesson, and he who would learn of these must both forego and forget personalities, his own and those of others. Personalities are but the fleeting waves on the river of time, caused by the friction of the winds of fortune; they are thy weakness and not thy strength. Thy strength is in thy soul, and thy soul's strength is in the calm, and not in storm revealed.

Inquire not who or what the messenger, but study well the message

that comes to thy soul, and bears thee ban or blessing, according as thou receivest it, and while thou waitest with lamps untrimmed the Bridegroom passes by.

What matters it to thee what infirmities the messenger may bear, except as thou mayest help him so to bear them that truth may run a freer race? Is it not enough for thee that truth hath given him her signet ring? Judge, then, of this, and if he falter in his speech or loiter by the way, take up the theme in clearer tones and speak of it from thy soul to all thy kind.

Wilt thou withhold thy blessing from the hand that bears the gift, and covet while rejecting the very gift it bears? If thou art so at cross purposes with thyself, how canst thou be *at one* with truth?

Truth is many-sided, speaks every language, is clothed in every garb, yet is she ever still the same, *One*, and unchangeable, now and for ever. And if she is no respecter of persons, canst thou be more select than she? Alas! thou canst not find her thus, but error rather, and self-deceived rush down the stream of time, and when thy personalities fall off then shalt thou realize that thou didst refuse the banquet of the gods by scorning thus their messenger. Search out, and know and love and serve the truth, *for truth's own sake*. Follow it through all disguises with scent more sure and keen than hound in search of game. Refuse it not, though it reach thee from a dunghill, welcome it as though straight from God's own throne, and thus shall it ne'er escape thee, and neither love, nor hate, nor fear shall mar thy harvests, and truth shall honour thee, as thou hast welcomed her.

Beware of false authority, for neither pope nor priest, nor book can of itself contain it all, and yet despise them not, for so thou'lt miss the truth. The sole authority for truth is *truth's own self*, and if thy soul is but akin to her, thy quickened soul will recognize her every garb, by ties more strong than blood, by kinship everlasting, and as the waters mingle with the sea, so flows thy soul into the bosom of the deeps whence springs afresh in thee the everlasting Life which is the vital breath of Truth.

PARADOX — A. Birch

Many use the word paradox without quite knowing its exact significance. A useful definition is that a paradox is a statement which looks contradictory until further information reconciles it and shows both sides to be parts of the same whole. Theosophy is a philosophy where the last word is never said and dogmas do not belong, unless you call Universal Brotherhood a dogma. That is all that is required of a candidate for membership in the Theosophical Society, a belief in Universal Brotherhood.

Here at once we have a striking paradox. It is declared that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature and yet it is perfectly obvious that brotherhood is about the last thing to be found in the world in general today; or for that matter in brotherhoods. How is the paradox to be reconciled? The truth is that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in nature, we are all interdependent whether we like it or not; we all have to hang together or hang separately, as someone expressed it when striking a bold blow for freedom. But nature includes many planes or levels of thought and consciousness. The one plane where brotherhood is conspicuously absent is the intellectual plane, the mind plane, and that is what it is our work to do — to make it a reality on that plane.

As an Eastern scripture says, we are made up of our thoughts. We live in the brain-mind and emotional nature, most of us, and we see the reflection of our inner selves in the outer gray of the everyday. Nothing whatever prevents us, except ourselves, from making the outer life what we think it ought to be.

A kind of paradox with which we are familiar often seems to make mental conclusions inevitable. There was a willing but brain-mind assistant in Mr. Judge's office who was absolutely convinced that the solemn but absurd charges made against his chief were true, as many others did. His intuition, that higher sense than the brain-mind thought

or psychic notions, was not in operation. But loyalty to some who had intuition gave him the power to respond instantly when they told him that the segment of vision subtending his view was not the full circle and he realized through his loyalty what the truth really was. In this case loyalty had its rich reward at least for the time. Genuine loyalty, whether to a vow or to leader, is often the same thing as clear vision, if that vow or leader represents the higher part of one's nature. The wide sweep of spiritual vision can see all round our paradoxes, the lower vision cannot.

The ancient oracle often spoke in paradoxes. The general rule was that enough was said in reply to a question to give spiritual help provided that the inquirer used his intuition. It may seem a little childish to us who do not understand the spirit of the thing that one of the famous oracles answered three applicants that the first of them who should embrace his mother should obtain what they each desired, the succession to a kingdom. Two ran off home but the third knelt down and kissed the earth. He was the successful one. But then he deserved to be; he showed intuition in embracing Mother Earth. Spiritual things are often as simple as that; the child could understand them while the man of the world is not simple enough to do so.

Another Temple paradox was that the power of money was not always spiritual power, if ever. An evil man suffered in his eyes as the direct result of his evil ways. He was rich, so he went to the Temple of healing, offering a rich reward for treatment. He stayed the night in the usual fashion but in the morning he was not told of any favorable oracle delivered during the hours of sleep. He was given his money and told to go and live a better life. They did not want his money. We may smile at the simplicity of the tale, but there are moneychangers today who would buy the things of the spirit with money, and they are simpler than the man who recorded the tale. It cannot be done. Rather the contrary. The truly spiritual Teacher has no property of his own whatever; he gives all, he takes nothing. It is another paradox. The more he has the less he has. The widow's mite is more than the rich man's fortune when she gives her all.

There is much that is paradoxical in human nature. The reason is simple. Human nature is compound and it is quite possible for one thing to look different from itself when viewed in the light of a different "principle" or aspect of that compound nature.

Of this kind is the solemn mystery-scene of the initiate praying that the bitter cup may be taken from him. It is the "human" soul who speaks. But it adds: "Nevertheless not my will but thy will be done." This "my" is of the *personal* soul, the "thine" refers to the *spiritual* or *divine* soul in the same man. The lower man complains of the burden; the higher man willingly takes it up.

Another paradox is that in which we learn utter humility. We are too small to matter; we are so humble that we cannot do anything; we must not assert our personality. In the same breath we say we are gods; we are divine, how dare we degrade our divinity by being so humble. Many a sincere heart has been troubled over this paradox. Many a priesthood in antiquity and later has exhibited an arrogance beyond bearing and in doing so has taught and demanded that the layman shall be miserably humble. And the layman has often so forgotten how to think, if he ever knew, that he, and perhaps more often she, humbly follows a priest who is no priest, worshipping a personality, when the great flaming soul within is flouted. In many a Theosophical Society there has been personality worship by negative members and they have always found those who are ambitious for followers, often to the neglect of the genuine spiritual leader.

Let the soul be humble before the divinity within and before no outside priesthood whatever, however garbed. There may be respect for a genuine spiritual teacher, an immense respect, but it is precisely that teacher who always insists that in the end there are no gods but God and all the Teacher can do is to point the way within to the finding of the God in the heart of all things.

Life itself is a paradox and someday we shall all find the seeming contradictions reconciled when we have a wider sweep of experience,

even though that experience often comes to us in a bitter cup.

The Theosophical Forum

THE GOLDEN CHAIN OF MYTHOLOGY — *Allan J. Stover*

But the ancient and the oriental pantheons are in reality allegories or personifications of the hosts and hierarchies of cosmic powers, divine, intermediate and terrestrial, in uninterrupted sequences. And where an ignorant devotee might address prayers to some of these personifications, the enlightened one, in invoking Jupiter or Mercury, would merely seek to evoke within himself the human power corresponding to the cosmic power, and of which the human is a direct, albeit a feeble reflection. — *G. de Purucker*

There are few studies which have suffered so much from the imposition of fads, as has mythology; at one time the ancient myths were accounted for according to the *historical theory* in which the acts of men, half forgotten, have become legendary. Then there was the philological interpretation by which the lost meanings of words were supposed to have resulted in senseless stories. There is also the allegorical explanation which considers myths as symbolic of physical, chemical or astronomical facts, or of moral, religious or philosophic truth.

At one time everything mythological was explained (in many volumes) as being derived from the magic and superstition of savages; at another time the solar myth theory offered a general solution. But whatever the theory, the theorist stood at the summit of human progress and assured himself that these stories were no longer believed by anyone, and existed solely for entertainment.

But the great myths of mankind, distorted though many of them are, have too much in common to be explained away. The breath of the universal flows through them; everywhere we find the golden chain of esotericism linking them together. We turn to them again and again, vaguely and correctly sensing something beyond our grasp.

Pythagoras, Plato, Lucretius and most of the great thinkers of classical times, deplored the ridiculous stories which even then had grown up about the gods, endowing them with all the failings of weak humanity. Many of these great men, knowing the teachings of the Mystery Schools, tried to give hints, as far as they were permitted, of the real significance of the ancient myths. Cicero, who was an initiate in the mysteries of his time, says in his remarkable essay *On the Nature of the Gods*: "But rejecting these fables with contempt, a divinity is diffused in every part of nature; in earth under the name of Ceres, in the sea under the name of Neptune, in other parts under other names." He goes on to explain that "we should reverence the spiritual forces of nature as is their due, but without superstition."

Disfigured though they often were by poet or theologian, there is still present beneath the garment with which the myths are clothed a center of primeval truth; and while the average Greek of classical times may have considered the gods of his religion much as the devout Catholic regards the saints of his own faith, within the sanctuary of the Mysteries he who proved himself worthy might learn the true nature of the gods and of the stories told about them.

The works of Homer and Hesiod point to an earlier time when the system of Greek mythology was a pure and untarnished expression of theosophic truth. What is known to history is but the latter and downward portion of the cycle of mythology. During this later time the doctrines of hierarchical structure of the universe and the constitution of man, their evolution and destiny, were veiled in myth and allegory. Only in the Mystery Schools were the ancient stories explained openly. Why? You may ask.

A myth is essentially symbolic and depends upon analogy for its meaning. Moreover, symbolism requires different thought processes than those in ordinary use. Word thought develops logically, step by step, each unit depending from the preceding like separate links in a chain. Myths and symbols, on the other hand, develop their significance according to what may be described for comparison as a

net pattern; as a language of analogy they reveal universal rather than particular truths. Remember too that the great myths were acted during the Lesser Mysteries and spoke directly to the intuition.

Jupiter, according to the Orphic tradition, represents the Egg of Brahma, or *holness* of the earth or of any entity thereon; but as the earth has evolved through the series of the three Logoi — the unmanifest, the partially manifest, and the fully manifest — so we find Jupiter preceded by Saturn and Ouranos each in turn spoken of as "Father of the gods and of all things." The same divine principle is thus represented under different aspects and names at different periods of evolution. A man during childhood has the nature of a child; later, that of a youth, followed by that of a mature man. Yet throughout life the individuality continues. Jupiter, then, is that stage of the evolution of our universe belonging to the present Logos. As a symbol it applies to the all-encompassing divinity of any being: an atom, a man, our earth with its surrounding veil after veil of atmosphere, the solar system, or the galaxy. So to think of Jupiter or any other of the gods of mythology is to think here, there, everywhere, at one and the same time; for the principles personified are cosmic, universal.

The universe or solar system in which we live is an organic being in which every part is interrelated and responds to the same vibratory cycle of existence. Therefore every entity, in any aspect of its life cycle, is symbolic of or analogous to the corresponding phase in the cycle of any other entity. The life of a man from conception to old age repeats the characteristics of the life cycle of the world upon which he lives. To express that which is common to the dawn of a day, the spring of the year, the childhood of a man, or the beginning of any cycle, we must use symbol or myth, since these alone represent universal principles.

The universe is composed throughout of hierarchies within hierarchies ranging from the atom to the galaxy, and in each of these systems there is an analogous structure of inner characteristics and series of evolutionary procedure; so that each unit contains within itself something of all that the universe contains. We may compare the

hierarchical system to a magnet — it has a N. and S. pole, yet within it each particle has its own N. and S. pole, all oriented the same way. Strike the magnet repeatedly with a hammer, or heat it, and the particles are disarranged, their poles are no longer in harmony; the magnetism is lost.

The structure, origin and evolution of the universe may be studied today in Theosophical literature under a manner and terminology suited to the present age. In ancient times this same knowledge was given veiled in the form of sacred dramas or in the legends of mythology, so that the pantheons of Greece, Egypt or India originally embodied the same knowledge regarding the hierarchical structure and evolution of the universe as do the Theosophical teachings of the present time.

There is a saying attributed to the Roman Emperor Julian:

The sun divides the zodiac into twelve powers of the gods, and each of these into three others, so that thirty-six are produced in the whole, in oration to the sun.

It was anciently believed that the universe was presided over by twelve gods and that this twelvefold structure was repeated in every planet within that universe, so that each of the twelve was represented on every globe. Every planet was thus considered as a microcosm of the macrocosm.

Orpheus calls the divine orders which are above the earth a "*golden chain*." Homer also, in the eighth book of the *Iliad*, speaks of a golden chain by which the gods and goddesses, the earth and sea, and all things are suspended from Zeus himself.

Beginning with Jupiter each god or divine principle functions after two manners: first as the architect, second as the builder. Thus Jupiter is found working together with Juno, Saturn with Rhea, etc., the god and goddess together personifying the twofold function of the one divine principle.

Since there are various planes or degrees in the universe, different names are often given to different grades or progressions of the divine principle symbolized by a god or goddess so as to make it plainer which hierarchy or sub-hierarchy is under consideration. To one not understanding the hierarchical structure of the universe, mythology, which is its symbolic personification or dramatization, may be confusing or even contradictory. But considered as the descent and ramification of a stream of creative consciousness the ancient myths begin one by one to reveal an underlying pattern.

The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHIC LIGHTNING ROD — *Philip A. Malpas*

The question has often been asked whether it is possible for one to assume the karma of another and yet not violate the law that karma is absolutely implacable in its workings, the law that an effect must follow its cause as relentlessly as the rut follows the wheel. How is it possible to have Saviours of Humanity if every man must work out his own causes with no vicarious shifting of the burden?

The question has been complicated by the prevailing religions in the West. For fifteen hundred years and more they have sedulously hammered in the idea of vicarious atonement and the most ordinary observation shows that an idea so advertised and taught must have its effects in the popular mind, whether the latter is conscious of them or not. Ideas are the soul of things and the Western world has been so taught to fear and then to desire to be saved from fear that a nightmare has been built up of sinners by the million being saved by a semi-hypnotic "belief" in something which they know nothing about, neither they nor their accepted teachers.

Yet in these popular superstitions there is usually some slight seed of half-remembered mystery-teaching and they are therefore all the more difficult to shake off. On the other hand an open mind may possibly follow the clue and find out what really lies behind. Is there any such background, however slight, to the idea that one can suffer and so save another?

The answer, or one answer, is highly philosophic. It is that the whole drama of the Christ-cycle takes place within the man himself, within each and all in due time and place. It is mere exotericism that the inner Christ is externalized into another man altogether. The *soul* to be saved and the saving *Christ* are locked up as in an ark within the very complex entity known as man. If anyone wishes to tackle the problem from a practical point of view let him dwell on the shifting of the

consciousness within him from the lower, material, psychic, emotional, personal part of himself to the higher, spiritual, serene, universal part of himself, the Christ-part; the Buddhi-part, if he prefers that nomenclature. We have for untold ages been doing the opposite, therefore it is not to be accomplished in a day, nor are there courses at so many dollars a time which will accomplish the desired result. But a daily and hourly expansion of the consciousness through thought and work for others will in time, perhaps a very long time, perhaps less, produce its effect. There is no short cut except concentrating on the work in hand. Many, very many, know of this and in their eager, emotional desire to excel or attain a rapid goal forget that they themselves are part of humanity, and in their efforts to help others kill themselves or cripple their efficiency with starvation or some exaggerated notion of *unselfishness*. It is obvious that we cannot help others very much if we do not through proper diet and exercise and other everyday methods keep our physical instruments in good order. *Mens sana in corpore sano* sounds like an age-old echo of the Mysteries; a sound mind in a sound body is as occult a thing as one could wish. Yet there have been many cases of a very sound mind in a frail body. Cases of spiritual development often demand that the physical shall not be too strong, but active work in the world is restricted by a lack of physical strength. H. P. B. and W. Q. Judge in sustaining and combating attacks and weaknesses in the Society used up an enormous amount of physical strength which should have been used for more important purposes in their capacity as Leaders. Only too often, instead of the members supporting them, the case was reversed.

It seems almost a true figure to imagine the Christ-part of oneself as a waiting god within — waiting for the man-part to rise into being itself spiritual and then divine. This comes only through self-effort.

Looking at it this way it is not so far-fetched to say that vicarious atonement has a seed of common-sense in it; but it must be recognized that the *soul* and the *Saviour* are in one and the same complex entity. The superstition lies in looking to an outside man or god as a saviour. The notion of such an outside saviour is akin to the notion of an infinity

outside ourselves, an infinite god that is not in us and in every atom in the universe, something *outside* which one prays to.

Naturally there are analogies and one of them concerns the question in hand, that of a Leader taking on himself or herself the karma, the good or bad effects of every action done.

Mr. Judge, our second leader, was asked this question and he replied that it is a complicated matter not easily explained in a letter. But as a general statement it might be said that certain effects were drawn off and dissipated through H. P. B.'s personality in somewhat the manner that a lightning rod noiselessly and safely disperses an accumulation of electricity.

The rigidity of the idea of karma at first sight seems absolute. But a quiet consideration shows that concentration or spreading of effects is possible. This idea must be allied to that of the Guardian Wall around humanity. It cannot take our karma from us, but it can protect and modify and guide until we are able to bear and work out our own salvation.

We are reminded of the old Mystery-tale, if it is such, that a man was condemned to be stoned with a huge rock. That meant death. But one wise in spiritual things and clear in intuition immediately pointed out that if the rock were reduced to crumbs they could be thrown, certainly with much inconvenience, but with safety to life and limb.

Whatever conclusions may be drawn from these observations, it is an obvious fact that H. P. B. and other leaders have certainly acted as very efficient lightning rods for the salvation of the organization. Someday the world will know, or partially know, what vicious attacks the Theosophical Movement has sustained and will realize that only exceptionally wise guidance has saved it time and again from being crushed. Meanwhile there are innocent souls who imagine that anyone can be a Theosophical Leader without being gifted with enormous spiritual strength. When H. P. Blavatsky was doing her grandest work, she was undergoing such physical strain as would in a matter of weeks

have shattered the frame of any who lacked the highest spiritual training. Even her strong frame was only held together by a will power rarely met with through the ages.

The Theosophical Forum

HYPNOTISM — *Herbert Coryn*

We, members of the Theosophical Society and old students have read and thought much on hypnotism, so much that we have almost put it from our minds, feeling that for our own purposes it has been sufficiently attended to and is done with.

We are mistaken. As our Teacher has said, the dangers of it have not yet been half understood even by those who have given it most attention. Its subtler forms we have not traced out. As possible subjects of it we are consequently few of us fully on guard; some of us not even on guard lest we fall into the greater peril of employing it. Peril is the right word, because of the karmic retribution, loss of the path, even loss of humanity, which the continued practice of any sort of hypnotism assuredly leads to.

The more psychology — in the proper meaning of that word — we can get to know, the better we may understand what hypnotism really is. This much of it, at any rate, is clear:

The *mind* throws up a lot of thoughts about everything; the *judgment* looks at them and decides which of them is reasonable. If it is a question of conduct, the mind makes pictures of possible courses of conduct; judgment decides which of these courses will lead to the end in view. If you could split a crack between a man's mind and judgment, he could not distinguish, amongst his thoughts about anything, which thought was reasonable; nor what was a reasonable end to have in view; nor what was a reasonable way of reaching an end which he did have in view.

Hypnotism does actually split such a crack. Will stands side by side with judgment, both the allies of the self. Hypnotism makes a crack, then, between mind, the picture-maker, and this triad, self-judgment-will. The mind is consequently manifested as insane, one idea about anything being as readily accepted as another and then held for truth.

And action passes under the direction of external suggestion, instead of that of the man's own judgment and will. The triad, which is in its real nature potentially divine, is, so far as any effect upon the man goes, paralysed, made to stand back. Any kind of feeling that may happen to be thrilling in the nervous system, even the most animal or brutal feeling, may, under external suggestion, come straight out into conduct. There is no judgment to pass upon it and no will to control it.

We can make a sort of picture of the situation in this way: Consider the mind as an essence filling the nervous system, the nervous system of feeling, and the nervous system of picture-making, thought-making. On its lower side this essence touches the nervous matter; on the other, upper, side it is linked to the guiding and willing triad (of self, judgment, and will). Hypnotism somehow breaks that link, temporarily and, if very often repeated, permanently.

But then follows something else. The now *unguided* essence is also *unprotected*, for the healthily-acting self *protects* its mind, to more or less degree, from influences from without.

But it is influence from without that is now the special situation. For there is an operator, the hypnotist. *His* mind-essence can now get in and blend with that of the subject, *both* now residing in the latter's nervous system. And the operator's mind-essence has the operator's will and judgment in it and directing it. But his triad, self-judgment-will, may never have been raised into the light; its actuating center may be ambition, love of power, or any sort of sensuality. Unless it has actually *become* the light — in which case he would never be a hypnotist — it *has* more or less of those things in it. And he is now, in part or wholly, "running" his subject. The subject sees objects and possible lines of action, just as he is wanted to see them. He thinks as he is wanted to think. He acts as he is wanted to act. Sometimes the crack is not complete; then he thinks and acts as his operator desires while knowing that he is doing so unwillingly, or that his thoughts and acts are wrong.

There is a mode of treating disease, especially mental disease, which

consists in keeping the patient in a room lit by light of one color only, red, blue, yellow, or green, the furniture and walls being of the same hue. The mental state of the patient gradually alters according to the color used. He is stimulated, quieted, or otherwise affected. But the atmosphere of color is nothing but color. The brain and therefore the mind, is reached through the eyes only.

Suppose, however, that the atmosphere were not of *color* but of *mind*, of *ideas*. How much more potent would be the influence upon the subject's mind!

When two people are talking together, each of them is to some extent in an atmosphere of mind made by the other. That is all right; there is so far no question of hypnotism.

If, in the color-mode of treatment, the light were concentrated by lenses all over the patient's body and into his eyes, the effect would be much greater, perhaps dangerous.

Hypnotism is the corresponding process. When, in the conversation of two people, one of them uses his will in a special way, that is hypnotism. What way?

Normally, when one man wants to convince another, he uses his will within himself, to think his ideas more clearly, to get more of them and better ones, and to express them better. But if he is trying to hypnotise?

Then, certainly, he will make his ideas as plausible as possible, as acceptable, so as to diminish any possible resistance from his victim's mind and conscience. But he does not let them stand on their own merits, make their own way. He uses his will directly on his victim to *force* them in. Whilst his lips are speaking, his objective of conscious concentration is inside his victim's brain. He is playing on the other's brain-cells through the eyes just as the color does; but he is focusing in, not a mere flow of therapeutic *color*, but of *ideas*. If he is successful his victim presently finds these injected ideas in his mind. To some extent the keynote of his mind is altered. His mind is no longer set in the same key as his judgment. They are out of tune. Which is only a way of

saying that that crack or chink of which we have spoken, has been made. He is in the hypnotic state. Judgment being thrust back, the ideas in his mind seem to him to be valid ones and he will act and think accordingly. Moreover he may never altogether recover. Brain-cells that have once been occupied by someone not their owner, may never again be wholly their owner's. They may never recover from a foreign drenching.

On the other hand the operator has now some very heavy karma to pay. He must pay for any evil there may have been in his ideas. He must pay for all the evil that his victim may do and think while under their sway, and for all the evil he may do thereafter merely because of having once been divorced from his judgment and his brain-control. And he must pay, as well, for the act itself, an affront through his victim's soul to the soul of nature, the conscious principle of evolution. Who wants to run up such a bill as that? Certainly no one who knew of the amount of it.

Anyone who, wanting something for his personality, begins to think of some other as his agent or catspaw, has taken the first step towards hypnotism. For into that thought, energizing will at once begins to enter. The next step is to make that entry of will *conscious*. The intended subject is held in thought, pictured, as acting in the desired way, or as having the desired thoughts or motives. The karmic bill has begun to be entered on the books. And the moment the intended victim begins to yield, begins to think of acting as he is wished to act, at that moment the operator, whether conscious in his outer mind of that yielding or not, feels and is gratified by an extension of his personality, his sense of power. He is harder, farther from his soul and from the path of right conduct. Now he will go to his victim and say plausible things, give him reasons corresponding to his temperament for the course of action he finds himself contemplating or ready to contemplate because of the poison-current already working upon him.

It is a question which of the two should be called "victim." For if the one of them is the subject of the other, that other is himself the subject

of his own ambition, love of his own way, and discontent; and, very soon, the subject of karmic penalty. And on the other side, the subject has prepared his own undoing by permitting or culturing some weaknesses of his own nature, sometimes the same weaknesses — the ambition and so on — as those of the operator, sometimes mere negativity of mind and will. Let us remember that such negativity, besides involving that the subject is swept about by his own lower nature, besides involving danger in respect of some ambitious person, involves also danger in respect of those disintegrating thought-waves that do always and will more and more break upon his mind from enemies without. We and our weaknesses are perhaps watched and known from centers in human life we cannot picture; and those who are hypnotists may have been themselves invisibly energized in their evil by conscious malign forces of whose working they were quite unsuspecting.

None of us need be open to any kind of hypnotism. That is to say, none of us need be negative. Negativity of mind comes from failure to stand habitually up to duty and at each moment to the next duty; from failure in vigilance over thought; from failure to use the will in maintaining steady good feeling toward all, and from failure to find and live in the power of inner silence. We have been taught and re-taught that it is from the development of this power by constant practice, that the sister powers of *discrimination* and *will* arise.

The Theosophical Forum

PSYCHOLOGY — PAST AND FUTURE — *J. Croiset van Uchelen*

The philosophers of all ages have taught that the visible universe is but a fractional part of the whole and that, analogically, man's physical body is in reality the least important of his composite constitution. For, as the German medic and poet, Schiller, wrote intuitively: "The spirit is the builder of the body!" Yet orthodox medical science seems to assume, that the physical is all there is of man.

Paracelsus, noting the same tendency in his day, remarked: "There is a great difference between the power that removes the invisible causes of disease . . . and that which causes merely external symptoms to disappear. . . ."

The great Paris physician Trousseau, at the bedside of a patient, restrained his pupils by saying: "By your leave, gentlemen, a little more art, and less science." Beyond technical skill and knowledge lies intuitive insight, or what Pascal called "the logic of the heart."

Although psychology and psychiatry are beginning to play a small part, and mental causes of physical disturbances are no longer wholly denied, material science refuses to recognize man as a compound entity, as the occult doctrine teaches. Mental phenomena are still considered less "real" than the physical and the body is treated as an aggregate of functional mechanistic parts. This procedure leads to specialization by those who will never thus acquire the knowledge needed to follow the operations of the organs, in which they have specialized, beyond the material frontiers. Wrote Sir Richard Clifford Tute (*After Materialism — What?*): "The triumphs of medicine and hygiene . . . are largely offset by an increase of lunacy and mental and nervous disorders."

In consequence of the new problems to be faced, medical science is bound, sooner or later, to find such means as may affect the states of human consciousness by an approach more direct than through

physical measures; indications to this effect are increasing. In a recent article in the *Presse Medicale*, Drs. Hecaen and Duchene, it was said: "Psycho-somatic medicine represents the most original and the most fruitful aspect of medical thought. . . ." Well, anyway, if not original, let's hope fruitful!

An outstanding article appeared in the Netherlandish professional Journal of the N. V. V. N. April 1948, by J. L. C. Wortman m.d. The author goes a good deal further where he writes:

The soul in medicine is not a symbolic idea, nor merely an idealistic principle. It is as real as man in his outer appearance and stands in relation to it as energy and substance. Each body that alters its energy content changes in mass, as Einstein has pointed out. Energy and mass, soul and body therefore become identical in principle Atomic science teaches us that energy and mass are interrelated; mass is nothing except bound energy. This offers new points of view as regards soul-body relationship. . . . It is soulless medicine which adores techniques and loses itself in systematic knowledge; it is the science of the German systematic, which lacks the French *elan vital* and occupies itself more with diseases than with the diseased.

Ethics and morals, as Dr. Wortman points out, must be the foundation of medicine, and he concludes that if medicine is to be placed on a firm foundation, psychology in a true sense must be given the recognition it deserves by force of the very nature of man.

Recognition of the powers of mind, of consciousness, and what is termed loosely as the subconscious, was a great step forward towards a deeper understanding of underlying causes of certain maladies But medical science, slow in admitting psychology, psychiatry and psychosomatics within its closed circle, did so not without considerable reservations, hampering rather than helping the infant art in its development by imposing upon it the restrictions of materialistic academic views.

A basic error lies in referring mental states to a kind of brain-basement storehouse, rather than admitting sub- and superconscious spheres of mental activity — a point of view academic science will not permit. Meanwhile we know that, in the last fifty years or so, many presumably fundamental concepts had to be altered, if not completely revised. That the world went on "without being noticeably handicapped by man's erroneous views," as some have remarked, may be true. But here is the point: Man's (and we are here dealing with the mind of man) thoughts determine *his* world within the laws of a greater whole. Only extending awareness can widen that world in which he moves. This extension cannot be achieved by a strengthening of the sensory self, but rather is affected by the awakening of intuitive awareness whereby knowledge becomes instantaneous. Therefore, so long as problems of mind are approached solely from a so-called sub-conscious level, in a search to clarify classified reactions to stimuli unrecognized by the patient, so long will it be impossible to benefit from the far greater curative powers of a consciousness freed (to a greater or lesser extent) from the limitations imposed by the ego or lower self.

The far greater benefit to be derived from applied psychology lies not in freeing man from a bondage to his blind reactions, helpful though this may be, but in leading him beyond these processes to that level of conscious awareness where in self-reliance man becomes cognizant of his god-like potentialities. That is, in a reliance on the higher self.

In passing it may be remarked that a psychologist who does *not* succeed in leading his patients beyond the initial stage, in the course of time becomes far more closely karmically linked to them than does the physician who uses merely material means. Medicine, treating individuals *en masse*, strikes an assumed average of human reactions; by becoming a Science, it ceased to be an Art. It became intent upon the experimentations upon animals to determine reactions of the human animal-body, ignoring in its fallacy the fear-reactions of tortured animals amidst their elder brothers-in-white in the laboratories!

Psychology, to be worthy of its name, is to reach the inner man through the workings of mind in its subtler phases.

Now the fundamental difference between applied psychology so-called and occult psychology, briefly then is this: The former enhances the egoic perceptions by bringing these to greater clarity, thereby incidentally strengthening man's sense of separateness — while the occult psychological approach seeks to emphasize the greater oneness in the less personal, if not impersonal awareness, reaching toward the essence of consciousness itself. It is obvious that in this latter case philosophical considerations cannot be ignored and this involves far more than a methodological loosening of personality complexes which is but part of an initial procedure. For personality clarification, as a means to greater equilibrium useful in itself, cannot produce the self-reliance that spiritual insight alone can establish. As already stated, in order that such a psychological approach be successful, men must be fully aware of this goal! This implies an inseparable link with religion and philosophy (at one time so recognized by the priest-physicians of ancient days).

That so-called healing rituals of the Egyptians were based, not upon assumed magic, but upon a highly developed comprehension of the complex workings of the human mind and its reactions upon the physical vehicle, is little realized. Just as the principles of vibro-therapeutics utilized in music, chants, or by the spoken word through mantrams — were applied not only in treating the physical, but to affect the spiritual constitution of man, i.e. for the stimulation of latent centers of consciousness. The old-new effort can be made, even today. Yet beyond this still, lies the spiritual approach by the individual himself. This principle has been touched in Christian Science, if quite apart from the manner in which it may be expressed by various followers. (Said Dr. de Purucker: We "are not Christian Scientists. . . . Nevertheless, a truth is a truth wherever it exists, . . . and long before . . . , knowledge of it all existed ages and ages ago in the past." *Questions We All Ask* — II. p. 27) Faith is the antithesis of fear. Fear is the great destroyer, (as are hate and greed which are but varied forms of fear),

while faith is the intuitive expression of trust, inspired by love, the greatest of all. Said Paracelsus: "When all is said, the best medicine is Love!"

In ancient times the physician was a priest. In future times all men will be physicians, as well as priests, by being truly men! Such is human destiny.

The Theosophical Forum

AMERICAN EXPERIMENT (1) — *William Q. Judge*

As I write these words there lies before me an old book written by Jacob Boehme, a German shoemaker who was a very religious and extraordinary man. His book is called *Forty Questions on the Soul*; it was printed in English in the year 1647, and was only one of the many books he wrote. In all of these he calls himself a "theosopher," which in those days was the same as "theosophist," the title really belongs to one who has put all the theosophical principles into practice. Still, popular usage is always stronger than fine distinction, and it is almost impossible to keep before the mind of the public the fact that a mere member of this society is not necessarily thereby made into a perfect being, and is indeed only one who is on trial. The famous Madame Blavatsky made this clear one day in London to a visitor who asked if she was a theosophist, to which she replied, "No, but I am trying to be one." So in my use of the title "theosophist" I mean one who is trying to put theosophy into practice and that too without regard to membership in the society. But this old Teutonic theosopher Boehme was, I think, in all senses a theosophist, for he ever lived up to his doctrines and came at last to have a great influence, which may be considered proved from the anger he aroused in the hearts of certain dogmatic priests of his day who caused him to be persecuted and driven from his town.

There was already beginning to spread among the minds of the people of Europe in the time of Boehme a revolt against the terrible orthodoxy which would not allow a man to believe that the earth was round or that it could not be possible that the globe and all thereon were created in six small solar days. This discontent at last led to the pilgrimage of the puritan fathers to America and the great nation now on this continent as a consequence.

Among the descendants of these strong men were such as Franklin and Jefferson and Washington and their friends. But at the same time there was also another man in England who did not come here until the

revolution had begun to be whispered in the air, though as yet not broken forth. This personage was the well known Thomas Paine, than whom no other man, perhaps, has been so unjustly libeled since his death. Washington said of him that the American colonies owed him a debt of gratitude, for to him more than any one, in Washington's opinion, did the people owe the impulse to strive for liberty. These prominent figures in the history of this nation — Washington, Franklin and Jefferson — were the freest of thinkers, and all the wild efforts of interested persons since then have not been able to show them as only church going pious souls, but solely as men who lived justly and did right in the eyes of men and the sight of the one God in whom they believed. Certainly as to Paine and Franklin it is clear that they were liberal and wholly untrammelled by any church or priest.

These men, with their friends and supporters, established the United States on a footing of absolute freedom from dogmatic interference, and as a revolt against tyranny. They took care to leave God out of the constitution — and why? For the reason that every man has his own conception of that Being, and if God were mentioned in that great instrument, then bigots and sectaries would enforce their notion of God on every one else, drawing their supreme warrant from the constitution. And so the great American experiment came on the world's stage; to be a success or miserable failure; to hold out to humanity for ages to come the hope of an ever-widening horizon of liberty and truth and right. Whether those hopes will be fulfilled is a mystery yet in the womb of time.

"What," you may ask, "has all this to do with theosophy?" A very great deal; for the latest and best organized attempt to revive true theosophy and spread it among the people of the earth was begun in the United States, the land of experiment and of reform. Fifteen years ago and a little over the sages of the east conveyed to their friends the intelligence that the time had now come to start the preparations for a new wave of thought and a new revival of belief in the soul and its powers, together with a new building up of the breast-works needed to stem the onrush of materialism, which had been growing under the

diligent, fostering care of the scientific schools, whose masters and pupils care not for the immortal and believe not in the inner self. The result of this communication — in itself a command — resulted in the forming of the theosophical society in the city of New York, with the avowed object of forming a nucleus of a universal brotherhood — in fact, a repetition, on the purely moral side, of the declaration of independence. Unlike other bodies with broad aims, this one had from the first a basis which has given it solidity and will ever keep it alive.

The founders of the organization, believing in the intelligence sent to them that a wave of interest in the powers of the soul was about to rise and that a new seeking for the philosopher's stone upon an entirely different basis from any in the past would soon begin, wisely directed the attention of the members to the ancient stores of learning, to the end that all the superstition of the centuries might be stripped off from the doctrines and beliefs held from immemorial time in respect to man, his power, his origin and his destiny. This attention resulted in a belief in the ranks of society that there existed a key to the puzzles of the inner self, and soon upon the belief there followed a wide promulgation. But such a divulgment inevitably draws down abuse and ridicule from all who will not take the trouble to know what it is all about, and brave men and women are required to carry the struggle forward until misunderstanding disappears. Such men and women have been found, and now a little more light begins to break, increasing the probability that the people are almost ready to give a hearing to expositions of such satisfying doctrines as those of karma and reincarnation, which are two out of many that the members of the society endeavor to place before thinking people.

These two doctrines are in fact the foundation stones of all theological edifices, for without them the universe is a hopeless jumble, while with them hardly a question of cosmogony or anthropology remains unanswered.

Evolution, so widely accepted, is admitted as an empiric doctrine only, for there is no connection between the links of evolution, and scientists

are obliged to assume many things, many of them hunting forever for the missing link whether it be between the ape and man, or between the mineral and the vegetable more highly organized. But with karma and reincarnation the link appears, may be without any visible representative, but plainly seen as a philosophical conception. And in the great question of the evolution of man as a reasoning being all doubts disappear at once when we master the theosophical idea of his origin and destiny. Theosophy does not deny evolution but asserts a reasonable one. It shows man as coming up through every form from the very lowest known to science, and postulates for him a destiny so much higher and greater than any permitted to him by either church or science that the pen of comparison gives up the task. But it goes further than science, as the human nomad — the immortal spark — according to theosophy, comes out of the eternities, and in each evolutionary course it emerges upon the plane of matter as we know it in the form of an immaterial (if we may say so about that which although invisible to our sight is still matter) being called by some an elemental and by others a spirit. But of these things more at another time.

For the present it is sufficient to know that the theosophical experiment of the present century is a product of the soil of America, although engineered at the beginning by a Russian subject, who at the same time gave up her allegiance to the Czar of all the Russias and became an American citizen.

FOOTNOTE:

1. This article is taken from an undated clipping from *The Omaha Bee*. However, internal evidence indicates that it appeared about the year 1890. — Ed. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

SHALL WE TEACH CLAIRVOYANCE? — *William Q. Judge*

A NOTE OF WARNING

My attention has been arrested by the address delivered in the Adyar course by Dr. Daly and reported in the September *Theosophist*. It is entitled "Clairvoyance."

Coming out in the Adyar course, it has a certain flavor of authority which will appeal to many members of the Society and may cause them to adopt the suggestions for practice given in the latter part of the address. Yet at the same time it is very true that the Theosophical Society is not responsible for the utterances of members in their private capacity.

The fact that clairvoyance is a power sought after by many persons cannot be disputed, but the questions, Is it well to try to develop clairvoyance? and Shall we teach it? have not yet been definitely decided. Hence I may be permitted to give my views upon them.

At the outset I desire to declare my personal attitude on these questions and my beliefs as to facts. In using the term "clairvoyance" I intend to include in it all clear perception on that plane.

1. I have for many years been convinced by proofs furnished by others and from personal experience that clairvoyance is a power belonging to man's inner nature; and also that it is possessed by the animal kingdom.
2. This faculty is either inherited or educed by practice.
3. Those who have it by birth are generally physically diseased or nervously deranged. The cases where clairvoyance is shown by a perfectly healthy and well-balanced person are rare.
4. The records of spiritualism for over forty years in America conclusively prove that clairvoyance cannot be safely sought after by

persons who have no competent guide; that its pursuit has done harm; and that almost every medium to whom one puts the question "Am I able to develop clairvoyance?" will reply "Yes."

5. There are no competent guides in this pursuit to be found here or in Europe who are willing to teach one how to acquire it without danger.

6. The qualifications such a guide should possess render the finding of one difficult if not impossible. They are: the power to look within and see clearly the whole inner nature of the student; a complete knowledge of all the planes upon which clairvoyance acts, including knowledge of the source, the meaning, and the effect of all that is perceived by the clairvoyant; and last, but not least, the power to stop at will the exercise of the power. Evidently these requirements call for an adept.

Who are the teachers of clairvoyance, and those who advise that it be practised? In the main, the first are mediums, and any investigator knows how little they know. Every one of them differs from every other in his powers. The majority have only one sort of clairvoyance; here and there are some who combine, at most, three classes of the faculty. Not a single one is able to mentally see behind the image or idea perceived, and cannot say in a given case whether the image seen is the object itself or the result of a thought from another mind. For in these planes of perception the thoughts of men become as objective as material objects are to our human eyes. It is true that a clairvoyant can tell you that what is being thus perceived is not apprehended by the physical eye, but beyond that he cannot go. Of this I have had hundreds of examples. In 99 out of 100 instances the seer mistook the thought from another mind for a clairvoyant perception of a living person or physical object.

The seers of whom I speak see always according to their inner tendency, which is governed by subtle laws of heredity which are wholly unknown to scientific men and much more to mediums and seers. One will only reach the symbolic plane; another that which is known to occultists as the positive side of sound; another to the

negative or positive aspects of the epidermis and its emanations; and so on through innumerable layer after layer of clairvoyance and octave after octave of vibrations. They all know but the little they have experienced, and for any other person to seek to develop the power is dangerous. The philosophy of it all, the laws that cause the image to appear and disappear, are *terra incognita*.

The occult septenary scheme in nature with all its modifications produces multiple effects, and no mere clairvoyant is able to see the truth that underlies the simplest instance of clairvoyant perception. If a man moves from one chair to another, immediately hundreds of possibilities arise for the clairvoyant eye, and he alone who is a highly trained and philosophical seer — an adept, in short — can combine them all so as to arrive at true clear perception. In the simple act described almost all the centers of force in the moving being go into operation, and each one produces its own peculiar effect in the astral light. At once the motion made and thoughts aroused elicit their own sound, color, motion in ether, amount of etheric light, symbolic picture, disturbance of elemental forces, and so on through the great catalogue. Did but one wink his eye, the same effects follow in due order. And the seer can perceive but that which attunes itself to his own development and personal peculiarities, all limited in force and degree.

What, may I ask, do clairvoyants know of the law of prevention or encrustation which is acting always with many people? Nothing, absolutely nothing. How do they explain those cases where, try as they will they cannot see anything whatever regarding certain wings? Judging from human nature and the sordidness of many schools of clairvoyance, are we not safe in affirming that if there were any real or reliable clairvoyance about us nowadays, those who offer to teach it or take pay for it, long ago fortunes would have been made by them, banks despoiled, lost articles found, and friends more often reunited? Admitting that there have been sporadic instances of success on these lines, does not the exception prove that true clairvoyance is not understood or likely to be?

But what shall theosophists do? Stop all attempts at clairvoyance. And why? Because it leads them slowly but surely — almost beyond recall — into an interior and exterior passive state where the will is gradually overpowered and they are at last in the power of the demons who lurk around the threshold of our consciousness. Above all, follow no advice to "sit for development." Madness lies that way. The feathery touches which come upon the skin while trying these experiments are said by mediums to be the gentle touches of "the spirits." But they are not. They are caused by the ethereal fluids from within us making their way out through the skin and thus producing the illusion of a touch. When enough has gone out, then the victim is getting gradually negative, the future prey for spooks and will-o'-the-wisp images.

"But *what*," they say, "shall we pursue and study?" Study the philosophy of life, leave the decorations that line the road of spiritual development for future lives, and — practice altruism.

— From *The Path*, December, 1890, p. 282

The Theosophical Forum

DEATH AND REBIRTH — *William C. Beller*

Death is a subject associated by most persons with very unpleasant emotions. The physical aspects of death are indeed repulsive enough, but such expressions as "The Grim Reaper" and "The King of Terrors" bear witness to a still deeper dread. Some religions have surrounded the close of human life with grim forebodings of judgment, punishment and doom. It is clear that this attitude of fear is the result of uncertainty and ignorance, the antidote to which is knowledge.

Now it may be a surprise to many that definite knowledge concerning death and what lies beyond it not only exists, but has existed for ages. The central question called up by our contemplation of death is: What is death?

Now it is obvious that death is an incident of life, so it follows that we cannot understand death without understanding life. What is the life itself, that something whose presence distinguishes the living body from the corpse?

From an objective point of view, life is recognized by its manifestations, such as activity, growth, purposeful behavior, response to stimuli, and the like; but we recognize it even more clearly by its subjective aspects, what we experience through being ourselves alive, such as feeling, willing and thinking. Materialism ascribes all these manifestations to activities of the body, and on this basis concludes that individual consciousness ends when the body dies. But what proof can it offer to support this conclusion? What do we really know about matter and its properties to justify the assumption that it can display any of the attributes of life?

The concept of matter is merely a mental abstraction, derived from certain of our experiences, whereas *life is itself the basic stuff out of which all our experiences spring*. There is no experience to support the view that matter is more fundamental than life or thought. The

materialist demands proof of the existence of any reality besides matter, but we can turn right about and demand of him the proof that matter has any of the properties he attributes to it. There is no evidence that matter can produce life, thought or intelligence. On the other hand, our daily experiences deal continually with immaterial qualities. In our fellows, such qualities as character, temperament, behavior, and intelligence are far more important than bodily qualities, and in our inner life, sensation, feeling, willing and thinking form the primary basis of experience. Therefore the whole materialistic argument falls to the ground, and we are logically justified in vindicating the reality of non-physical things.

The failure of the materialistic argument leaves the question of life after death open, so we are free to consider the positive evidence in its favor. In the first place, there is no principle of science more firmly established than the indestructibility of force or energy. Now life is certainly a force or energy, so it must continue to exist in some form or other when the body can no longer give it a vehicle of expression. Then, how could consciousness be destroyed? Real things do not simply disappear into nothingness.

If we examine the beliefs of mankind we will find that there is no race of men, however primitive or however sophisticated, that does not believe in human immortality, and the very forms of this belief are strikingly similar. Of course there is a tendency today to despise ancient and universally held beliefs, attributing them to primitive superstition and wishful thinking, but this does not explain how the entire human race should have gone wrong on a matter so important to its welfare.

But there is positive evidence that certain aspects, at least, of the human personality do survive the death of the body. The field of so-called psychic phenomena is a controversial one, yet after we make full allowance for misrepresentation and delusion, there remains a mass of evidence which cannot be explained away upon any materialistic basis. "Ghost stories" are easy enough to scoff at, but they are real to the

people who have gone through the occurrences they describe, and the literature of all peoples and times contains accounts which by their very similarity of pattern indisputably point to a factual basis. Moreover, within the last fifty years or so many persons of the highest integrity and scientific attainments have taken up the study of what they term "Psychical Research" and have accumulated evidence which entitles us to maintain that the survival of the human personality after bodily death is a scientifically established fact.

But the mere fact of human survival leaves many questions unanswered about the manner and conditions of such survival. The various religions and philosophies of the world have put forward a number of teachings which it may be worth while to examine in some detail. The view most widely held, in our Occident, is that a single life on earth is followed by an eternal life as a spirit, either in a state of happiness as a reward for virtue, or in a state of suffering as a punishment for wickedness. Generally this spirit life, whether of pleasure or pain, is regarded as fixed, changeless. This concept, of course, violates the law of growth which we see manifest in all nature. If we turn to the idea of justice, we find the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments incompatible with it. Justice requires an exact balance between cause and effect, and is not satisfied by infinite effects following finite causes. What amount of goodness in one short human life could merit an eternal reward, and what amount of evil could deserve an eternal penalty?

This gross injustice is even greater when we remember that many religions teach the doctrine of salvation by faith rather than works. One is to be rewarded or punished not for the moral quality of his life, but for his adherence or non-adherence to some set of doctrines about which the vast majority of mankind has never even heard.

The fact that the greatest number of human beings are neither extremely virtuous nor extremely wicked, has led some religions to add to their heavens and hells an intermediate state of purification or purgation wherein all except those so extremely wicked as not to

believe the doctrines of that particular religion might ultimately fit themselves for eternal happiness.

Philosophical objections to a fixed or static eternity would be overcome by the idea of continued progress and development in the spirit world. This very doctrine is upheld by certain modern religious cults. But the objection can be raised that if continuous progress towards an ultimate perfection is possible for a disembodied spirit, why did that spirit have to embody itself even once? What would be the use or purpose of earth life in a human body anyway if this belief be true?

Quite a different view, one which has appealed quite strongly to some of our poets, is that the life of a man may be merged after his death with the universal life of nature. For instance, this is expressed by Shelley in his poem on the death of his friend Keats, in the lines:

He is a portion of that loveliness,
Which once he made more lovely.

While this idea may be aesthetically satisfying to some temperaments, it will hardly withstand an unimpassioned analysis. What part of a human personality would so merge with nature, and what benefit would result, either to the personality or to nature? And how can a self, or ego, be so divided?

A much cruder concept, albeit one widely held in some parts of the world, is that a human soul may be reborn in the lower forms of nature as, for instance, an animal, a plant, or even a stone. The objection to this is contained in the question: What good would it do? The animal, vegetable and mineral forms of nature obviously do not display human qualities, so a human soul imprisoned in such forms would be unable to express any human traits. Consequently, what would it gain by the experience?

Still another view advanced by some is that after death on earth one may be born on some other planet. This view merely exploits our ignorance. Since we know nothing about the conditions of life on any planet but the earth, we cannot categorically deny this possibility. But

why go so far afield, why invoke the unknown and remote? Whatever arguments might be put forth in support of rebirth on some other planet, would support still more strongly the idea of rebirth in a human body here on earth. This last view, then, rebirth in a human body on earth, sometimes referred to as reincarnation, is one which may be worth closer examination.

In the first place, this idea of rebirth as a human being, is in no way contrary to logic or experience. Human bodies are being born all the time. As we have already seen it is most reasonable to explain the conscious, intelligent individualities of these bodies by the entrance into the body of a non-physical principle, a soul, if you will. But whence come these souls? Is it more reasonable to believe that each new-born body has a soul newly created for it, or that this soul is drawn from a vast reservoir of souls already in being, the souls of human beings who have lived and died in times gone by? Plato expressed the beautiful reasonableness of this in the *Phaedo*. If (as is obvious) the dead come from the living, where should the living come from, if not from the dead? This teaching explains all the otherwise inexplicable differences in human beings. Why is one born a congenital idiot? Perhaps because the soul in that body has greatly deteriorated, through its own fault, in former lives. Similarly, one is born a cripple because the soul in that body has needed the experience of being embodied in an imperfect instrument. On the other hand, a genius displays abilities perfected through efforts at self-improvement in many former lives, and one born into circumstances which bestow great opportunities for service, has earned the right to such advantages by humanitarian efforts in the past.

Reincarnation not only provides future chances to correct the errors and failures of the present, but shows how the very difficulties now being encountered may in turn be the means whereby old scores are settled, and old mistakes rectified. When we search for the probable purpose of human life, what is more reasonable than to assume that it is to provide experience and evolution for the embodied entity? Yet the amount of experience available in a single lifetime is necessarily

limited. Rebirth, however, makes the entire experience of the human race available to each individual member of it, provides the means for unlimited progress and development. Even if only a slight improvement is made in any one life, the cumulative effect of such advances from life to life can lead ultimately to the attainment of any conceivable goal of perfection.

Since the principle of compensation was thoroughly understood and perfectly formulated by the ancient Hindus, their word *Karma* has been taken into various modern languages, including the English. It simply means that all the activities of nature are bound together by an endless chain of cause and effect. Every event in the universe is not only the result of a series of causes generated by many previous events, but in turn the way it is met becomes the cause of a long series of subsequent events. This law is absolutely universal in its operations, but to trace all its ramifications would take us too far afield. The operation of this law provides that all the conditions controlling a human being in any given life are the results of causes produced by that same human ego either in the immediate or remote past, and that all the actions of a human being will operate to control events affecting that same human ego some time in the future. This implies that the circumstances of early life are almost completely determined by causes carried over from former lives. During a lifetime, many events are due to causes produced in that same life, and similarly many acts in a life will bring about their consequences before that life is over. However, all the unfinished business of any life is carried over into succeeding lives.

Such conditions affecting our present life, which are seemingly beyond our control, as for example, race, nation, time of birth, physical characteristics of our body, early environment, family relations, education and contacts with other human beings, are the consequences of such past influences. Apparent accidents are not accidents at all, there is no such thing as chance or accident, everything is the result of cause and effect working out according to immutable laws. So from beginning to end, every event in life is the effect of past causes, and in

turn, the cause of future effects, and past, present and future, both in one life and in many lives, are linked together by an unbreakable chain of causation.

I realize that many of the foregoing statements may at first thought seem scarcely credible, and some which I am about to make may seem even less so. Therefore you have the right to demand what evidence, what authority, I have for making them. No one will question the great accomplishments of science, but the knowledge, which has given science its great prestige, has all been obtained with the aid of material instruments, and relates to the physical world only. It is quite obvious that knowledge of super-physical worlds can be obtained only by the use of super-physical instruments. Such instruments exist, indeed we all possess them in our inner being, in the emotional, mental and spiritual parts of our nature. Only, in the great majority of human beings, they are undeveloped, and we are scarcely conscious of their existence.

But from the very beginning of the race exceptional individuals have existed in whom these powers are active as a result of their own efforts in developing them, and these individuals have formed a group active in the accumulation of knowledge and the advancement of humanity. They are scientists in the truest sense of the word, since they deal with knowledge, not opinion or belief, and they proceed by the method of experimental investigation, but their researches are not limited to the physical world.

They are motivated, not by any desire for reputation, fame, wealth, power or any other merely selfish advantage, but solely by the wish to benefit mankind and promote spiritual evolution. So they proceed by methods consistent with these objects, carrying on their work in silence and seclusion, avoiding publicity, always ready to put their knowledge at the disposal of mankind, to the full extent that mankind is prepared to profit by such knowledge, but never seeking to force their views upon anyone. The proof of their existence is to be found in the traditions, the legends and the literature of all the peoples of the world,

and in the experiences of those people in modern times who have come into personal contact with them. By reason of the powers they have developed, it is possible for them, while still living in physical bodies, to investigate the conditions ordinarily experienced only after death. It was in this manner that they discovered the facts I am now about to relate.

The first phase of death is the withdrawal of the conscious principle from the physical body. With separation from the physical body, all touch with the physical world is lost. The person remains conscious in a subtle body which remains on a plane near the earth for a longer or shorter period, a period which in some cases may last for years. During this state the person may or may not know that he is physically dead. But sooner or later the higher vehicles of consciousness separate from the subtle body, by a process which has by some been termed the second death. Except for the bodies so cast off, the dead man, if gross or evil, is conscious much as he was in life, retaining until the second death all the desires and appetites which he formerly possessed. But in the state he is now in, the grosser bodily appetites have no means of gratification. This absence of gratification in the case of the gross or evil man causes suffering, varying in intensity with the strength of the appetites. Sooner or later, the conscious being realizes that it is distinct from these appetites, and struggles to free itself from them. This struggle causes further suffering, depending in intensity on how closely attached the person was to the lower pleasures of life, and to what degree he identified himself with them. The ordinary good man has but few of these unpleasant experiences.

Purification of the desires is finally completed, and the conscious self reaches a state which may be called the world of realized ideals. This is a purely subjective state of unalloyed bliss, in which all the higher ideals and aspirations of the preceding earth-life find full and complete realization. This state, to which the name Devachan has been given, corresponds to the various heavens or paradises as described by the various religions, but it differs from them in that it is definitely *not* eternal. Since it is the result of a finite impulse, namely that produced

by the ideals and aspirations of the preceding earth-life, it must end as soon as that impulse is exhausted. As this occurs, the thirst for life in a physical body gradually returns to the ego with increasing strength, and the ego is drawn, as by a magnetic attraction, back to the earth plane, where it enters into a human body which is born in the usual manner. The particular body entered by the ego is the result of karmic requirements. With birth begins a process which is continued throughout most of the life, the gradual adjustment of this *ego* or soul to the body in which it finds itself, and its efforts to make that body a better instrument to express its own inherent qualities. The events of the life are determined by karmic necessities, and the course of the life is accompanied by a gradual unfoldment of karmic tendencies. The purpose of life is the working out of these karmic tendencies, in such a way as to provide the ego with the lessons it needs for its own progress and development towards a goal of ultimate evolutionary perfection.

In the light of these teachings, we see that death is not to be feared; it is an incident in the life of an immortal being. It comes as a friend to free the soul from a worn-out vehicle which no longer serves its needs, and to give that soul a welcome period of rest and relaxation wherein it may attain the realization of its ideals, assimilate the lessons of its experiences, and refresh itself for the next stage in its age-long pilgrimage. We see that rebirth is inescapable, as it is the result of immutable cosmic laws. The knowledge of these truths should enable us to live purposefully, above the welter of petty personal ambitions and the struggle for selfish advantages, since we see that each earth-life is but an episode in a process of cosmic duration, the purpose of which is the development of human egos to their ultimate evolutionary perfection.

ON PARABRAHMAN AND MULAPRAKRITI

Question — Could you explain in simple language the fundamental difference between Parabrahman and Mulaprakriti? I have been studying the explanation given in *The Secret Doctrine* on pages 15 and 16, but do not seem to understand Mme. Blavatsky's definitions. Perhaps you could simplify this for me. — L. B.

Abbott B. Clark — For fifty years we have accused any one who was talking over his depth of talking about Mulaprakriti and Parabrahman. It seems now to be time to clear things up a little and try to learn the place of these two words in our philosophy.

The fundamental principle of any cosmos, solar system or galaxy in the fields of Boundless Space is Parabrahman, from the Sanskrit *Para*, beyond, and *Brahman*, the highest, most impersonal and metaphysical conception of God. The Vedic Sages spoke of the manifest and all that can be discussed and speculated upon as *This*, and reverently spoke of all beyond as THAT — the great mystery — to be viewed in reverent silence. IT is the unthinkable, the unutterable silence. Beyond the range and reach of thought or speculation, yet it can be perceived by the highest intuition as the Real, the One Reality. Our Teachers tell us that meditating upon it as your inmost Self, the Paramatman, is the highest, most worthwhile form of meditation or yoga. Parabrahman is the omnipresent, eternal, boundless Principle which is fundamental to all manifested, conditioned being. It is the field of unconditioned consciousness, life, wisdom and love. All the gods came later into being. To attempt to describe and discuss it would be to set our own limits to the Illimitable and produce only a traffic jam of thoughts and words. It is the One Flame of which all the gods and spiritual powers are sparks. It is not an entity but the underlying Reality of which all entities are transitory and ephemeral phenomena.

Mulaprakriti, from the Sanskrit *mula*, root, and *prakriti*, which may be translated as nature — a vague term, or as matter, also a very inadequate translation. Literally Prakriti is "production," "bringing forth," "originating," hence also signifies "primary, original substance" — according to the *Occult Glossary* definition.

Therefore, *Mulaprakriti*, as Primordial, homogeneous, undifferentiated substance, is the spiritual essence of cosmic Matter: a veil thrown over the face of Parabrahman, and furnishes the highest form of spiritual substance, by and through which Parabrahman manifests and without which Parabrahman would remain forever a mere empty and impotent abstraction. It is one with and inseparable from Parabrahman as the tangible substance of a thought is one with and inseparable from the thought. Parabrahman is the field of limitless, boundless, unconditioned consciousness; Mulaprakriti the substantial aspect of all forms on all planes of being, from the highest divine worlds to the lowest elemental worlds. The two, Parabrahman and Mulaprakriti, form a duality; for the human mind cannot conceive of a manifested universe without duality: Mind and matter; consciousness to be aware of something and something to be aware of, that is, subject and object, inner and outer, spirit and matter.

Now let us take a view of these two subjects in the general field of our cosmic philosophy.

1st: BOUNDLESS SPACE, from which all proceeds, to which all must return: the One alone: Absolute Unity.

2nd: Parabrahman and Mulaprakriti. Unconditioned Consciousness and undifferentiated Matter.

3rd: The above shadowed forth on the fields of Boundless Space as Brahman and its veil, Pradhana or prakriti. The first differentiation by which the One becomes the many. In Greek philosophy, the First Logos; the first awakening of divine thought.

This first awakening of Divine thought acts as or liberates Daiviprakriti, the highest form of spiritual cosmic energy — "the Light

of the Logos," which is at once consciousness, light and substance. The conscious energy by and through which Cosmic Ideation molds cosmic substance. On a lower plane Fohat, the electric energy vivifying cosmos.

4th: Brahma-Prakriti or Purusha-prakriti. Brahma corresponds to the active, creative god of all religions. In the Christian scheme God is obliged to make the world out of nothing. In Theosophy Brahma is furnished with Prakriti and everything that a creative God or gods may need in the shape of material: architects and builders.

Thus is given the profound philosophical basis which underlies the whole structure of theosophical thought. It furnishes a basis for, and also a key to, many of the world's religions and philosophies.

This universe is one living, throbbing, vibrating organic whole, divine in origin, nature and destiny; Parabrahman is, in theological language, both immanent and transcendent. Transcendent because it transcends all else and immanent because it abides in every atom of space. It is the heart of the heart of every man's being. "*Aham asmi Parabrahma*" — I am Parabrahman.

The Theosophical Forum

ONE GOD OR MANY? (1) — *Marjorie Hall*

When a person brought up exclusively in the Christian belief of the one God, comes to Theosophical meetings, he may receive a very confusing impression at first.

He will hear the names of beings he has been taught to regard as heathen idols and myths spoken of seriously as mighty spiritual influences — such names as Krishna, Buddha, Brahma, Isis, Osiris, Horus, perhaps Apollo, and others. He will hear quotations from Plato, Socrates, the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, and many other sources, and lots of statements about "the Gods." Then sooner or later someone is sure to remark that "man is the journey-work of the stars," so apparently the stars made him, and not God, after all.

Then he will ask us the type of question so often asked: "Surely the idea of many gods is a retrogression. Why have a multiplicity of gods when unity in the one God is the progressive ideal? Why go back thousands and thousands of years when living rightly in the present moment is the real necessity? Why study all those complicated doctrines and get so far away from simplicity?"

The fact is that knowledge does help. It is true we are told that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven we must become as little children, but surely one of the strongest characteristics of the child mind is the spirit of enquiry. It *must* know how the world around it is constructed. Of course, it cannot be completely satisfied; it is a living portion of the living and infinite universe, and the more it expands the more it will find it has still got to learn. Theosophists do not pretend to teach the ultimate secrets of life and death or why the Cosmic Spirit manifests.

It would indeed be a retrogression for Theosophists if they *had* a lot of gods whom they worshiped, but that is not the case, nor is it correct to state that we worship and pray to one god.

Theosophy teaches that there is one Divine Principle pervading the whole Cosmos, not separated from it. It is not *a* being, it is *be-ness* and cannot be prayed to because it is the pure essence which contains the primeval substance of all things and beings, the pure essence of thought and intelligence and love. It does not *think* and *act* as the orthodox personal god is said to do. From our standpoint it is "beyond the range and reach of thought, unthinkable and unspeakable."

Out of this ocean of be-ness arise all beings and worlds which we see, also those which we do not see, which are much greater in number. All these worlds and beings are seeking to express the qualities of their divine root, and the reason why they appear to us as all these different things, suns, stars, animals, men, etc., and vary so vastly in their respective degrees of intelligence, independence of action, and so forth, is because of their so vastly varying degrees of spiritual unfoldment.

So, to a Theosophist, the whole universe is alive with divine consciousnesses, not gods to be worshiped in the ordinary way, but a friendly, life-giving brotherhood, the smaller lives living within the greater ones both physically and spiritually, and all equally divine at their source. These lives are bound together in bunches, groups, hierarchies. These hierarchies live and evolve within, and through, around, below and above each other, all having a measure of responsibility and free will, from the baby god at the heart of the chemical atom to the highly evolved god ruling and inspiring and infilling a solar system — a mighty god indeed to us, but to the beings above him he is just a younger brother.

What we see as matter is moved and also held together by the spirit within it. This does not mean that chairs, tables, carpets, etc., have souls. Those are only shapes which men have made out of matter. It is the living atoms forming the matter itself which are ensouled. Every tiny chemical atom has a consciousness of its own and obeys the laws of its own kingdom.

Thus, the atom arises out of that root of being, the Divine Principle, with definite desires, a definite little will of its own. It sends out feelers,

little thrills of magnetism, varying in number according to the chemical element the atom forms part of. These little thrills of attraction draw other sympathetic atoms to the first one and form the various chemical substances. Of course, we all know that these chemical elements combine in their turn in many different ways to form matter.

The mineral kingdom provides the solid substance for our globe and our bodies, by the action of the minutest specks of spiritual being, working out the cosmic design on their own plane, following their own evolution and at the same time making our world for us and thereby doing an indispensable service to us and all creatures. You see, the atom is very like ourselves, it works partly by its own free will and partly through the laws of its own kingdom.

Next comes the plant kingdom. Mere specks of spiritual being, with ages, in fact, with universes of experience behind them in the mineral world, have expanded their consciousness sufficiently to utilize the inhabitants of the mineral sphere according to the laws of *their* own sphere and *their* own free will, and give us the almost uncountable varieties of plant life, the two worlds, plant and mineral, blending exquisitely to make one whole, though each living its own life.

Each thing that is brought into being by nature is a hierarchy, a group of little lives, held together by a larger life, or hierarch, its head, its guide and inspirer. Thus, our human bodies are hierarchies of lives, the lives of the atoms and organs, each with its own little head, all working together under one greater head, our human mind, which would appear as a mighty, unknowable god, "beyond the range and reach of thought," to the souls of the atoms. Thus, a tree is not just a collection of bark, sap, fiber, and pigment, but a blending of growing entities, living within a more evolved entity.

The teachings of Theosophy explain in this way that mysterious companionship which we feel so strongly in nature, that feeling that we should be able to have direct inner communion with it. Indeed we often have. Katherine Tingley says in *Theosophy, the Path of the Mystic*:

Truly I believe that birds and flowers know us better than we know ourselves; and when we are on the high plane of mystical knowledge, when our hearts are touched with the spiritual forces of Nature and of life, we learn to talk with Nature, we learn to work with her.

I never went into the woods but the birds sang better while I was there. Not that I gave them the power, but that they, in their simplicity, being part of the great Law, felt the longing of my soul for a touch of sweet Nature, and they sang to me. I have had some strange experiences in handling flowers; they have answered the yearnings of my soul with just the answer most needed. The tiniest atoms of the earth have voices, and these voices are even a part of ourselves.

Following up our expanding picture of struggling godhood we now come across apparently a big gulf between the plant and animal worlds. But the gulf is only apparent. It is rather like the changing of scenes at a pantomime, when the stage goes dark without the curtain dropping and we see dark shadowy figures, like spirits moving in the underworld, doing the job, but we cannot make out what they are doing. Then up come the lights and there is a marvelous new world, the old one completely vanished. Just so when the group of entities has learned all its lessons in one of nature's kingdoms, it passes out of our sight into the deeper spiritual dimensions of nature, for long ages. An assimilation of experience takes place there, and deep rest. The entities then feel the pull towards objective existence again, seek more self-expression, find themselves capable of building and infilling much more complicated vehicles or bodies than they could last time, so there we have a new or higher realm of beings. The big change, the new focusing of consciousness, takes place in the silence and apparent oblivion between the two kingdoms. That is why scientists do not find their missing links. They are not to be found in the material world.

The law of cycles, which includes the law of reimpodiment, is seen operating here. All things great and small, move and live in cycles of

reimbodiment and rest, the cycling progressions of small beings fitting within those of great ones.

Also, nothing comes out of nothing. The less always comes out of the greater, both in the case of whole kingdoms of nature and of the individuals making up those kingdoms, so that smaller beings are always backed up and supported by greater ones. "Beneath are the everlasting arms." The little ones are guided into existence by their spiritual fathers, "the Gods."

It is taught that there is not a pin point anywhere in space that is not filled with active consciousnesses, and so between the Solar and Planetary Spirits and us humans there are hierarchies of intelligences whose holy work is to watch over the races of men and give assistance wherever possible. They are consciousnesses that have deeply awakened and widely developed the spiritual faculties lying latent in every living thing. They have struggled and rested, that is incarnated and died and reincarnated, countless times through the lower and human realms, and also through previous lifetimes of the earth until they have become "Gods."

To use a technical term, these protective powers are Buddhas. The Buddhas have striven and suffered until they have won control over all their lower principles, and have become actively self-conscious to quite a large extent in their sixth principle, Buddhi, whence their title springs. These facts make of them a link with the gods and therefore mighty healing and enlightening influences, shedding beneficent power over the whole globe.

Without their unseen help we would perish under the crushing weight of our own wrong thoughts and doings. We don't do too well even with their help, as you have probably noticed. That is because man *must* use his free will. It is the act of striving to bring into activity the good and great side of his nature, and the fact that he is *free to choose*, which make him a living building brick in a living universe, knitted into its fabric, deeply responsible to all lives around him, and those forming his own constitution, for by contact with his psychology they are

elevated or dragged down.

The theosophist sees man both in death and in life, as an eternal pilgrim in a friendly universe, with infinite expansion before him. Fighting evil forces and suffering, to be sure, but surrounded by the light of Divinity in all directions, and fighting not only for himself but for all creatures.

In the fight he is (or can be) aided by his own higher self, that upper triad of principles, of which his everyday personal self (his human soul) is a ray, and which is his link with infinity, as was said earlier. The higher self is a bright and starry god who has journeyed through many previous lifetimes of the planet. It is of the very nature of heaven, as Jesus said "The kingdom of heaven is within you" and "I tell you that ye are gods."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Paper given at the Manchester (England) Lodge. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

A CHARGE AND A TRUST — *James A. Long*

We are in the midst of a conflicting people, of an obstinate, ignorant people seeking to know the truth, yet not able to find it for each seeks it only for his own private benefit and gratification, without giving one thought to others. — *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 252

Great events in the history of civilization are seldom recognized as such when they occur. More often than not generations must pass before their true significance is seen and felt. Nevertheless, the efforts of the pioneers of progress make their impress upon the screen of time for the permanent benefit of mankind.

Take our own H. P. B. Generations more are likely to pass before her true part in the progress of the race will be known by other than her few followers. Yet H. P. Blavatsky and her work are having more effect upon present civilization in all branches of thought than is commonly realized. Were one able to examine every library, for instance, and particularly those of universities, he would find her *Secret Doctrine*, its pages soiled, worn, and dog-eared with use, studied alike by scientists, philosophers, and progressive religionists, who adapt her works to their good advantage. This without credit; but who would rejoice more than H. P. B. herself. It is what she and Those who directed this work hoped for.

Others use her teachings, presenting them as their own, but not to so good an advantage. Their efforts, twisting whole truths into halves, and festooning them with fanciful but hollow words to attract the selfish, represent but the shadow of the light of the true message.

But "the gods cast no shadows"!

Now, at the end of fifty years of the new cycle (1898-1948), we find the world-stage set for another act in the drama of spiritual progress. That

there has been "injustice in the world" and "a decline of virtue," none can doubt. Karma has drawn together the necessary combination of elements to produce a phase of that phenomenon which calls forth a portion of the Supreme — "for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness."

The recent publication of *The Dialogues of G. de P.* is signal evidence, and represents a major victory for Those we serve. What tribute to the pioneer efforts of H. P. B. and to Those whose agent she was, that the institution they founded should be the vehicle for the expression of this force. Need there be further vindication? Her adjuration to keep the link unbroken did not fall on deaf ears. Her strength of purpose and great sacrifice have borne fruit — not merely intellectual betterment, but spiritual sustenance to strengthen the hearts and minds of men through this dark age of Kali-yuga. Our civilization moves a step nearer its true goal.

Here again, the real significance of *The Dialogues* may not be recognized by the many for generations. But what of the few?

To use these *Dialogues* for the enlightenment of the individual student is important, but not primary. More significant, perhaps, will be the use of this new information by the scientist, the philosopher, and the religionist. It may stimulate them to a more active collaboration in their efforts for the advancement of the whole. Yet even this, although an encouraging outlook, is not of foremost importance. To F. T. S., however, the event is of paramount significance. For many it is merely the "esoteric become exoteric." But what does that mean? Is it only that now one can have more of the occult truth without the pledge "to do" — without the discipline, without the sacrifice? Or does it mean that the T. S., having earned a place in this world-drama, now offers its members the opportunity to seize their inheritance and become helpers in the genuine occult sense — worthy agents of Those whom we call the Guardians of humanity.

The insignia "F. T. S." takes on a more serious character when we consider the role of the T. S. on this greater human stage today. It

imposes both a charge and a trust. Strong is the charge; and great is the responsibility that rests upon the shoulders of those who accept the trust.

The seriousness of this challenge to every member cannot be minimized. The time has arrived when a "label" on the lapel of one's consciousness, however self-satisfying, means nothing, whether he be F. T. S., a student of the esoteric school, or one of a so-called inner group. The event of *The Dialogues* is indication that henceforth all, karmically, have linked themselves with the grave task of preparing for the next major event in the life of the Movement. The purpose is plain. It is the story of the "Gita" all over again. But beware — those of us who take our responsibility lightly and work with ambition in our hearts.

In 1882 the Master M. wrote that the world had clouded the light of true knowledge, and that selfishness would not allow its resurrection. Today, selfishness of course is still rampant, but in spite of this the T. S. has won the right to share with the world a greater portion of that "true knowledge." Our gratitude for this privilege runs deep when we realize that in the same letter he said: "It is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to the possession of our secrets. He alone, such a man — will never misuse his powers, as there will be no fear that he should turn them to selfish ends." (1)

And that is our TRUST.

To guard with jealous care our privilege to serve in Masters' Cause; to exemplify the trust placed in us as F. T. S.; to build stronger that wall of protection around Their work; to hold firmly the touchstone of selflessness that makes of us worthy instruments; to sacrifice our every action to the common good of all — thus will we help Them that They in turn shall be able, at the appointed time, to send forth another who will lead the way into the next century and on to a still closer realization of the Brotherhood of Man.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 252. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE LANGUAGE OF SYMBOLISM — *Allan J. Stover*

Every time the wind blows it is singing you a song of the gods. Every time a flower blossoms it is bringing you a message from the Higher Law. Every time you hear the ocean as it beats against the shore and recedes in musical rhythm, it is speaking to your soul — a voice from Nature, verily a voice from God. The magnitude, the grandeur of these things, the possibilities folded within them — these can truly be sensed only in the silence. — Katherine Tingley: *Theosophy: The Path of the Mystic*, p. 59

The language of symbolism runs like an undertone all through our lives. Metaphor and allegory enliven our daily speech, while signs, emblems, and symbols greet us on every hand. The very speed of modern life is once more bringing a pictorial and gesture language into daily living.

All nature is symbolic as reflecting on the physical plane inner truths, of repeating in the small a pattern of action which occupies eons of time on the cosmic scale. Other peoples, unlettered in the modern sense, have seen in every flower some living glyph of the mystery language of the gods; in every season of the year an act in the drama of cosmic evolution.

It is natural that certain plants, trees or animals should come to represent abstract or moral qualities: the strength of the oak, the courage of the lion, the purity of the lily, these and countless others have been built into the language and culture of our race. They are directly connected with ideas through analogy and suggestion. The rising of the sun at dawn is symbolic of the beginning of a manvantara or period of world-activity, because it is itself the beginning of a minor manvantara, that of a twenty-four hour day.

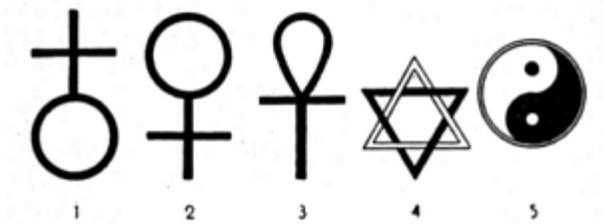
From the spiritual point of view, everything lives in a greater being and it in a still greater, on and on from the atom to the solar system. Each

unit is inwardly formed on the same plan and obeys the same laws; it is this which links everything in the tapestry of universal life together in a unified brotherhood. Man in his life cycle from conception to death not only repeats the history of the race in its immensely long evolution, but his coming into being is analogous to the coming into being of worlds and universes. He has within himself not only portions of the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms; but of the various elements or nature principles forming the solar system in which he lives. Within his inner constitution is that which corresponds to Jupiter and Saturn, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, as well as Sun and Moon. He is indeed a microcosm of the macrocosm, at his heart an embryo god.

The study of symbols requires a different approach from that required by ordinary language. Words are literal, precise, and refer to particular things and events; symbols derived from nature are general and universal in application. A symbol may be compared to a mathematical formula — itself a symbol — in that it may be used to explain the life cycle and structure of any being large or small. Yet a symbol does not reveal its meaning to the unprepared. As a map of a bit of mountainous country may be meaningless to the casual tourist, but full of rich memory and significance to one who has camped beside its many streams, so a symbol may well be called a map of inward experience to those who have entered upon the path of self-conquest. Symbols cannot be understood by merely memorizing diagrams and definitions in a book. They must be lived, for they are essentially an introduction to the study of one's self and reveal their meaning as the art of self-conquest proceeds.

Amid the mass of emblems, glyphs, and pictographic characters of all races the true symbols stand out as distinctly as do the masterpieces of art or literature from the commonplace product of the many. These immortal designs were selected and given to mankind by great Teachers in the past — they are priceless volumes of instruction. Most of them depict, first of all, the higher and the lower self in their relation one to the other. This duality is found everywhere and in all things, on every plane of existence. When the student has discovered the higher

and lower elements within his own nature, then by sympathetic analogy, understanding awakens in regard to other beings. Moreover, the momentary overcoming of the lower by the higher in the conflict of daily life may at some far day find expression in the great initiations wherein the successful candidate arises from the initiation trials an illuminated Christos. The square or cross in general signifies the materialized universe or the physical man. This with the four elements: fire, air, water, earth, and the four directions, represents the lower quaternary of the seven principles: Sthula-sarira, Linga-sarira, Prana, and Kama.



The circle is everywhere representative of spiritual life and qualities, of the unmanifest as opposed to the manifested universe. The combination of these two elements, with the cross uppermost as in Fig. 1, is astrologically the sign for the earth, and it also represents a spiritually unawakened man, the cross being uppermost indicating the dominance of matter over spirit.

In Fig. 2 the same elements are shown reversed, with the circle uppermost. In this we see a symbol for a spiritually awakened man in whom the higher self is in control of the body. It is also the sign for Venus. A variation is shown in the ankh of an Egyptian initiate, Fig. 3. These and many others come to mind: the relative position of the square and compass as used by the Masonic fraternity, the round Chinese coin with the square hole, the interlaced triangles with the dark triangle pointing downward, the light one upward, Fig. 4, and the Yang and Yin design of the Chinese, Fig. 5.

Fundamentally the meaning is the same in all, but as the division of the sevenfold constitution into two parts is an elementary explanation of a very complex structure, so each of the symbols shown reveals different

aspects of the inner nature and functions of man and the greater being in which he lives. In a larger sense these same symbols depict evolution and involution, the out-breathing and the in-breathing, the interblending of worlds or planes of spirit and matter. But whether in the large or in the small a thread of analogy runs through all the processes of nature.

The Theosophical Forum

REINCARNATION: A UNIVERSAL TEACHING — *Bess R. Neeper*

The published records of independent research, conducted by scores of truth-seeking men and women, in the past fifty years, have corroborated statements made in the various Theosophical teachings, to the effect that Reincarnation was a universal teaching in ancient times — not purposely studied by these ancients as a specific doctrine so much as taken for granted in their lives as a fact of such undoubted verity as to be unquestioned.

We, of the Western world, particularly of the various Christian sects, have a habit of dating religious thought and religious truths from the birth of the man called Jesus. What we forget to take into consideration is the fact that the teachings credited to Jesus, as presented to us in this day and age, have come from somewhere to Jesus, and have been colored by the attempts at interpretation made by the Christian Fathers, culminating about the sixth century, a.d. in the suppression and destruction of all recorded writings which did not agree with the ideas of these same Fathers and in vogue at that time. Reincarnation, as a doctrine, held too much dynamite, capable of developing individual powers of thought among the masses, and for that reason it was one of the teachings suppressed by the priesthood of that day. This suppression was so thorough that since that time there has been only slight record of its truths having been given out, and then only among isolated groups, mostly groups which taught the Mysteries.

If we go back beyond the teachings of Jesus, into the earliest days of recorded history, and work from there forward to the present day, we will find a long and impressive list of groups and tribes and nations to whom Reincarnation, in some form or other, was very well known, and was a part of the thought life of those days. Of the very earliest recorded history not a great deal can be authenticated and verified, since their recorded works were written down in the form of hieroglyphs and symbols, which depend for their interpretation now

on the degree of wisdom attained by the scholars attempting to interpret. However, many of the symbols employed in the Aztec and Mayan records, in the records of Totems in the far North, among the many tribes of Africa and the South Seas, bear a general resemblance to each other and to the recorded hieroglyphs left by all races and prior civilizations of untold antiquity; so that it can be concluded that they, all, knew approximately the same teachings as the later Egyptians, Indians and Persians left on record.

Another very potent source of verification of the truth of this claim is the myths and folk stories handed down from generation to generation in all parts of the world by all races and tribes of man. All of them incorporate tales of the heaven worlds and after-death states, of giants and gods, of great world-floods; all of them teach a future life in some form or other, and many of them teach future lives of approximately human types.

From the Egyptians we developed our present practice of embalming our dead, and the success with which the human body was preserved in a state of perfection by these same Egyptians is a constant source of mystification to even those scientists who make a study of the mummies. There can be very little doubt but that the practice of mummifying their dead grew out of a teaching that the man would eventually return to earth, and a desire to keep their own life atoms intact and inviolate for their own use on return. Their hieroglyphs show the winged soul, the judgment, the resurrection, the body lying in state in its tomb — all teachings which go to make up our present religious training; yet they preserved this same body in a mummified state, an operation which would seem to have no sensible explanation unless they took for granted the necessity of returning to earth in another time and age, for another life here.

As hinted at before, the teachings presented by Jesus must have come from somewhere, and a study of the sources from which he is alleged to have received his training reveals the Mystery Schools of Egypt, India, China and Persia. Reincarnation was a definite although Esoteric

teaching in all these source-Schools, as is witnessed by writings left by others who trained in one or the other of these Mystery Schools. In some of Jesus's words, as handed down to us, there is definite understanding of Reincarnation hinted at, as, for instance, "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"; "If ye will receive it, this is Elias. . . ."; "In my father's house are many mansions. . . ."; "And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again."

Contemporary with the Egyptian were the Tibetan teachings, the Chinese, the Persian, the Hindu, in all of which Reincarnation, Metempsychosis, or some other form of Reimbodiment was openly taught, and left to us as a golden thread in their poetry and other writings. The Jews, in the Qabalah, the ancient Greeks and Romans, through Orpheus, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato, Ennius, Apollonius of Tyana, Seneca, a long, long list of impressive mental, psychological and spiritual giants, all have left impress on our present literature, and all have sung, in one form or other, of the indestructibility of the human soul and its life beyond the seventy years allotted to man. Many have spoken openly of reimbodiment; many have hidden its theme in allegory and myth, depending on how safely they could teach truth, openly. Philo, the Neo-Platonist, and Josephus, the historian, are two Jewish names which occur as knowing and definitely teaching a form of reimbodiment to their followers.

In the early Christian Church there were Bishop Synesius, Origen, Clement, all of Alexandria, who accepted and taught reimbodiment, in some form. There were isolated groups of mystical bent, about the 12th and 13th Centuries, who taught it — hidden from general knowledge, because by that time the acts of the Church Council, suppressing certain of the teachings of the Gnostic philosophy and Mithraic Mysteries, had become so drastic that death was one of the kindlier punishments for open teaching. Among these isolated groups were the Manicheans, a mystical sect of Hither Asia, the Albigenses, of Languedoc, and other smaller and less known groups.

Truly, all recorded religious and philosophical writings have had Reimbodiment, and an unlimited future as an inheritance of man, to be studied, investigated, and made a part of the individual's thought-life when so desired.

The Theosophical Forum

THE LANGUAGE OF THE INITIATES — *H. Oosterink*

Initiates of ancient days promulgated their message in the shape of myths, sagas, fairy tales, symbolic stories, parables and in other ways, telling man that there exists a sacred, secret knowledge, to be acquired by whoever is ready to follow the path that leads to enlightenment and elevation. In their stories they availed themselves of a specific language, which to one who possesses the key, gives their stories an illumined meaning.

It is of the greatest importance to know this language. When reading the book we all know, the Bible, we may put our knowledge into practice for the key provided by a knowledge of the mystic language throws a new light on the doctrines of the Bible.

These initiates used the word "wine" for divine life, "water" was a symbol of the lower life, "well or source" symbolized a "source" of spiritual teachings, "man" was used for "God," "wedding" as a symbol for "communion with God."

In the Germanic literature, as well as in the Persian poems and religious writings, we find the same words used in the same symbolic sense.

These explanations are not meant as an attempt to belittle the value of the Christian religion or to reduce its beauty. On the contrary, they make the significance of the Biblical teachings more profound; they give them a new significance. Stories from the New Testament read in this light appear quite novel. The story of Jesus' talk with the woman of Samaria may illustrate this.

Jesus meets this woman at the well of Jacob and being thirsty, he bids her draw water out of that well. The woman replies: "How is it that thou being a Jew askest to drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" Jesus does not give a straight answer to this question, but

inquires after her husband. She replies saying that she has no husband, to which Jesus gives the strange reply: "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." To this the woman gives an even stranger reply, for she says: "I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." To which Jesus replies: "The hour cometh and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

I give the story in outline. The compiler of the Scripture wished to bring home to the reader that worshiping is not limited to a particular place, but that praying arises from man's inmost being, that it means at-onement with God. This is in accordance with the sense of Christ's words, when he spoke of the Kingdom of God within.

Let us now see what the story means after the veil is removed.

Jesus is a Jew, the woman an inhabitant of Samaria. These two peoples had divergent opinions about the explanation of their sacred writings. Both peoples pique themselves on being descendants of the patriarch Jacob and his sons, each of whom represented a tribe of Israel. No wonder, therefore, that these two find each other back at the well of Jacob (from which both peoples draw their spiritual knowledge). The Jews maintained that God should be worshiped in Jerusalem in the temple of Solomon; the Samaritans held that it ought to be done on Mount Sinai, where Israel had received the commandments. Jesus is thirsty (after knowledge) and requests the woman of Samaria to draw water out of Jacob's well (the doctrine of the ancestors). To this the woman naturally replies: "How is it that thou being a Jew askest of me to give thee water out of Jacob's well?" (That is, you explain that doctrine in quite a different way.) Jesus now asks: "Where is your husband?" (Who is your God?). The Samaritans were divided, their religion recognized five sects. Accordingly, Jesus in reply to her answer, "I have no husband," says: "Thou hast well said, for thou hast not one but five."

If the story had no symbolic meaning she would have reacted quite differently. Now, after Jesus' answer, she says: "I see thou art a prophet." Why? Not, I dare say, because she thinks that Jesus really believes she has five husbands, but because she understands from his reply that he is acquainted with the religious conditions in Samaria. And availing herself of this opportunity, she asks him a question which the compiler of the story had been aiming at from the outset, viz. "Where is God to be worshiped?" The answer reflects Jesus' teaching, who, averse to all outward forms of religion, constantly points out to man the essence of faith, which wells up from the heart, the Kingdom of God within man.

The story of the marriage at Cana, where Jesus changes water into wine, is told in the same symbolic language.

During this marriage, which represents the rapture of communion with God, there is a lack of wine (true divine life). But for this life, divine communion cannot exist. It is Christ who brings about this ecstasy, this divine communion, changing the water (the lower life) into wine, that is raising it into divine life.

"I am the true vine," says Jesus, "every branch that beareth not fruit He [my Father, the husbandman] taketh away."

Christ is the Christos-spirit within man. Paul says: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," meaning the Christ-spirit, not the long deceased Jesus, who was the bearer of the Christos-spirit. This Christos-spirit had been in the hearts of men, long before Jesus' birth. This is the spiritual glory, which can manifest in and wholly illuminate us, so that we may give birth to the son within us, and may experience the manifestation of divine life. Such a man was called a "twice-born," because he had, so to say, been born again, but this time "spiritually." He had entered the Kingdom of God.

Just as Christ said he was the connecting link between man and God ("I and the Father are one"), similarly Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Take refuge alone with me, grieve not, for I shall deliver thee from all

transgressions."

In every man's heart lives the Christ-spirit, the Krishna, the splendor of the spirit, and whoever raises himself to this splendor, enters into a new life, the realm of the spirit, to which the initiates of all ages have lifted themselves and from which they have drawn their knowledge.

Again and again Jesus the Initiate speaks of the esoteric and secret doctrine as being the essence of his teachings.

Again and again he speaks in parables: "that seeing they might not perceive, and hearing they might not understand."

To his disciples, however, he expounds the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. "It has been said by them of old times," he says . . . but "I say unto you" . . . and then his exposition follows, giving the meaning of his words, and stating the reason why particular teachings or laws have been given.

Often a mystery-school or an order of initiates is compared to a tree, which is to shed its fruit in the outer world. When the spiritual knowledge is lost, the tree will wither and die, and no longer bear any fruit. This comparison to a tree is found in all religions, as well as in the Bible. We think of the fig-tree, which Christ curses because it has no fruit on it, and which instantly withers away. It is evident that the above explanation is to be applied also to this case, for nobody will think that so great a teacher as Jesus will really get angry because a tree happens to be without fruit.

The secret doctrine is the most valuable treasure that any man can find, for which he ought to renounce everything else that has value for him, because it will raise him to the highest life. To this Jesus continually refers in all his parables. And this spiritual treasure will be found by him who conquers his lower nature, and like the prodigal son, returns to his Father, his own highest Self.

WHEN THE CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE — *Philip A. Malpas*

THE FIFTH MYSTERY

One of the most fascinating initiation cycles as described in the exoteric mystery-stories is that of Hercules. In one aspect he is the Sun, pursuing his course through trials to the zenith and then on to the end of his acceptable year. This sun is Man in evolution.

The fifth trial or adventure of the soul is the cleansing of the Stables of Augeas. These stables were so neglected and foul that it was regarded as impossible to clean them. Impossibilities are meat and drink to the neophyte, and Hercules is saddled with the task of cleaning these famous stables. How does he do it?

It was impossible to clean them — from the physical, mental, and psychic point of view. But Hercules goes higher. He turns the spiritual river into the stables and the thing is done in a day. This spiritual river is the "descending stream," the esoteric Yordan, Eridanus, Jordan, only exoterically applied to geographical rivers as names. In India it was the Ganges, the Ganga; in Egypt, doubtless the Nile.

The Mysteries consisted of three stages, purification, instruction, illumination.

The laws do not change — ever. Without purification there can be no illumination and the instruction can only be of a kind that is possible to the unpurified. If purification takes several lifetimes, that is the time it takes and no half-measures will serve.

An old phrase covering this purification is "living the life." "Live the life and you shall know the doctrine," is an ancient maxim.

Time is the great sifter. There are regular periods when a sifting takes place among those dedicated to the mystic life. Inevitably those whose professions are not centered in the heart fall away, though they often

for a time imagine they are the regiment and all the others are out of step with them. The purification is that of all the lower qualities, based chiefly on personality and desire, which in the end are usually found to be much the same thing. An infallible sign of personality is the irritation with which those who are dominated by it resent the mention of the word or throw it back in the teeth of the one they think to be criticizing them, the "tu quoque" idea.

One prides himself on his social importance, frequently a child of the imagination; another supposes he is one of the spiritually advanced; he suffers from spiritual pride; another wants to turn spiritual professions to physical and material advantage or profit; another thirsts for power, even if no more than over a small group of fellows whom he calls friends; another desires offices, position, titles, money; another is a victim of the innumerable forms of self indulgence, as most people are today. There are those who follow psychic practices and imagine they are thereby spiritually progressing, sometimes hiding their heads in the sand to prevent seeing that they are psychic and not spiritual. Some are merely victims of psychic weaknesses which are so often taken for "powers," which they are not. A few have the pride of an inverted humility. Retaliation, pomposity, self-justification, the pronoun "I," speeches with great swelling words, the desire to sit at tables above the salt as if any particular table conferred social status, though this latter foible belongs to the Middle Ages rather than today; all these things and many other forms of personality belong to the heap. One could go on for pages with all the festering compost that fills the stables of Augeas.

Why should these things be bad? Has not a man a right to think himself a bit superior to others if he has position, title, a bank account, a car, an education? This is the reason. All these things of the personality belong to the temporary, fleeting, "mortal" personality. It all has to die or fall away before the real man can live as a man and not something lower.

Initiation at one stage means just that. It is a death in life. The lower man, the personality, has to die so that the real man, in its very high

aspect sometimes called the Christ in Man, may live, may rise from the dead of the personality. That is why it is included in the initiation cycle of Hercules. This Initiation is a hastening of the process which the Man passes through during the ages; it is nothing unnatural, but it is a hothouse culture. It is very desirable because without it the way would be interminably long. It is often said that life on Earth is the only hell that really exists. Then why are we here? Because we failed to go further through initiation in former lives, in former worlds. That is all. Those monads now working in beast bodies failed to go forward to the man-stage in the past, and have now to work their way up in the name-and-form they now have, as it is called in the graphic language of the King Milinda discussions of the Buddhists.

When the mighty rushing torrent of the spiritual stream comes through the stables, sweeping all before it, many who thought themselves anchored in the safety of spiritual self-approval are carried away, together with the pet foibles they cannot let go. Many such a sifting has the Theosophical Society passed through and many have been surprised to find that those they thought "big shots" of Theosophical personality have been swept away with the rest. But the Law is impersonal and time unrelenting.

The world, too, has its sifting times, since the Theosophical Society is a mirror of the world in miniature. We are now living, to all appearances, in such a sifting time, such a harvest ingathering, and it depends on us to see that the wind and the water of the spirit have not too much dross to carry away when the clock strikes twelve.

The Theosophical Forum

SOUNDLESS SOUND — *Marion O. French*

H. P. Blavatsky predicted that the greatest scientific advance in the foreseeable future would take place in acoustic physics. This prophecy has been fulfilled, in part, by the radio and by closely connected developments in radar, television and supersonics. One result is a general familiarity with the basic principles governing the radiation of electronic and vibratory impulses. This enables the average reader to interpret many implications in transcripts from the Sanskrit sources of ancient wisdom more clearly than was possible prior to such progress. In particular, this applies to the phenomena of sound transmission with respect to propulsive wave lengths and their frequencies. Those in common usage are long enough and slow enough to obey terrestrial attraction and follow the curvature of the earth in their course. They are, however, of a much higher frequency than the tabulation of von Helmholtz covering direct reception by the human ear of music from instrumental sources. This extends from 16 cycles per second to 16,000. To traverse the distances that radio waves travel, they must be propagated with the energetic power of electricity. Also, they are inaudible to the unaided ear and require a receiving apparatus to amplify them. Microwaves of higher frequencies, such as are used in television, do not follow the earth's curvature. They must be relayed from stations that are connected by straight lines, or by lines that seem so to us because we cannot detect curves that conform to the elongation of astronomical orbits. For their reception, they require adequate amplifying tubes and a responsive diaphragm or similar device.

Physiologically, at present, eleven octaves of sound are audible to the human ear and only one octave of color is visible to the eye. However, in the course of time, evolution may extend sensory apperceptions to include the etheric vibrations of radio waves. To these may be added those psychic faculties now known as clairaudience and clairvoyance.

This will permit the sensing of vibratory impressions beyond the scope of today's scientific instrumentation. Then, humanity will stand upon the threshold of the noumena of sound, of Nada, the Soundless Sound known to all theosophists as the "Voice of the Silence." To form a concept of the nature of spiritual sound, we may consider the fact that three things are necessary for the sensation of sound. They are an energetic source, an agency of transmission, and a receptive apparatus. If this trio of essential factors be in existence, the requirements for sound as such will prevail, irrespective of whether it be audible or not.

The triune requisite is met by the conditions governing human thought on the physical plane. The mind, or brain, is the energetic source and its muscular motor impulses can be recorded by an ammeter attached to a needle in the muscle. By means of an invention of his, J.W.Keely, who is mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*, asserted that the energy of a thought could be ascertained. Between all minds is the same ether that transmits radio waves, which fulfills the requirements in that respect. As a receiving apparatus, the brain and nervous system have not been analyzed exhaustively by current physiological and psychological studies. According to Hindu authorities, there are five ethers that act as agents of transmission for the five senses. Thus, the possibilities for perceptions are far more extensive than is imagined. Telepathy and the rapid spread of waves of thought generated by men *en masse* have been considered in a cursory manner, but the conclusions that are accepted by science fail to account for the facts. Emotion indicates the degree of energy with which a thought is broadcast, but different races, languages and customs render interpretation by the recipients very uncertain as to its meaning.

This synopsis of some of the salient aspects of sound may serve as a basis for a more complete comprehension of the first statement in H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*. The statement is: "He who would hear the voice of Nada, the "Soundless Sound" and comprehend it, he has to learn the nature of Dharana." By definition, *Dharana* is the "intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything

pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses." Thus, it is necessary to exclude all sensory distractions and to attain a state of meditative receptivity. Since Akasa, the sonoriferous ether, is the first and all-pervading one, sound that is audible to the ear is the most distracting influence. The other ethers — Vayu, Tejas, Apas and Prithivi, pertaining to touch, sight, taste and smell and to air, fire, water and earth — emanate from Akasa in turn. It lies between them and acts as the mediating interpreter of sensations transmitted by them. You say, or think, that you feel, see, taste or smell in words or in terms of sound. Its pervasiveness becomes apparent when you place a hollow shell against the ear and the resonance of its cavity exaggerates the faint sounds that fill the atmosphere into the roar of the ocean. The action of Akasa in interpreting sensations may be compared to the piezoelectric effect of a quartz crystal or of carbon granules in transmuting the pressure of your voice to electric energy in the speaking tube of a telephone and back to voice again in the distant receiver.

Now, we may conceive that the Divine Ideation, or cosmic consciousness in modern parlance, of the Paramatman of the Hierarchy infills our Universe. It is the noumenal essence of thought and of its first formative expression in phenomenal sound; for "In the Beginning was the Word." The initial manifestation in the transmissive medium of the Aether that precedes the ethers may be regarded as an intonation of the open vowel sounds. It continues to echo and to reverberate down the corridors of Time as AUM. Within the Solar System it is the "Music of the Spheres." Finally, in the dense atmosphere of our Globe it becomes the sound of Nature and the voices of men. If we would ascend in the harmonic scale to hearken to the overtones, we must obey the behests of the Sages who have trod the pathway before us.

Consecutively, they have set forth the successive steps in that ascent to attunement with the Universe. Initially, philosophical curiosity will serve to launch the mind on research. If undertaken without motives of ambition, this may lead to direct tuition from the textbooks that

contain the scriptural wisdom of mankind. All such verbal instruction is designed to incite the intuitive faculties. When this is the case, the student may receive unrecognized inspiration from the current of universal intelligence. It runs, as Emerson expressed it, along the wire of thought. "In the presence of the higher, the lower plane always appears to be at rest." Also, as John Tyndall stated, what we call silence expresses only the absence of motion. Theosophically, this may be conceived of as an apparent immobility, or as motion that is imperceptible to our sensory organs. Such is the case in the motion of the "Great Breath," or in the soundless sound of TAT as that which subsists in immutability. Precise analogies may be found in the resonant responsiveness of organ pipes and of stringed instruments, when their free vibrations respond as an accessory to the pulsatory motion of harmonics in a primary tone from another source. (1)

When the intuition has become awakened thus, meditation will become increasingly enlightening. With further intuitive development, ultrameditative methods may be resorted to and intuition will replace the mental concepts of tuition with direct cognition. Where mind saw form in many diverse patterns, intuition will see one reality. White light will dawn in lieu of the colors seen through the prism of the mind. A knowledge of causes will be substituted for the study of effects. The restless rhythms of space, time, and emotion will give way to the ineffable peace of motionless duration. The mental restrictions of matter will fall like fetters from the freed intuition of the Man Ensouled.

"Hark! . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, ALL NATURE'S wordless voice in thousand tones arises to proclaim:

"Joy unto ye, O men of Myalba, a Pilgrim hath returned back "from the other shore." A new Arhan is born. . . .

"Peace to all beings."

FOOTNOTE:

1. "Were the blast (of the siren) sufficiently powerful and the siren sufficiently free from friction, it might be urged to higher and higher notes, until finally its sound would become inaudible to human ears. This, however, would not prove the absence of vibratory motion in the air; but would rather show that our auditory apparatus is incompetent to take up and translate into sound vibrations whose rapidity exceeds a certain limit. The ear, as we shall immediately learn, is in this respect similar to the eye." — *Sound*, Tyndall

Recent research has developed a supersonic siren that can create a lethal rate of vibration. Among other effects, it will hold small objects suspended in the air, set up frictional heat sufficient for ignition of inflammable material, and perform many useful industrial functions.

[\(return to text\)](#)

The Theosophical Forum

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW — *Elsa-Brita Bergqvist*

"The Sun is the heart of our universe." "The circulations of the Cosmos are analogous to the circulation of blood, lymph and nervous fluids in a human body."

These are bald statements to be found scattered among Theosophical teachings in our books. What do they mean?

They mean that in infinite reaches Life abounds. The worlds of the vast spaces visible to us are merely a single aspect in an infinite range of material beings. Let us lose ourselves in the whole, in an effort to see our proportionate place in the scheme.

Throughout all Being pulsates unceasingly the flow of Nature's forces, classified in groups of numbers for our partial understanding, but infinite in fact; covering all planes of existence, known and unknown; vibrating in harmonious coordinations of the innumerable possible permutations, of which our known laws of music and mathematics give a fleeting glimpse. Flowing ceaselessly in groups of relative similarity, which form waves in cyclic motion, they conjoin in temporary unisons and disperse to re-combine again. Each wave or wavicle is a host of living consciousnesses, cosmic or atomic in magnitude, all equally the expression of infinite potentiality manifesting to the extent of the unfolded powers within. The unceasing flow of these waves of force throughout the hierarchical structure of nature is regulated by karmic attractions and repulsions generated in the infinite past and karmically forming infinite future correlations.

When the cyclic peak of each unfolding of potentiality is reached, the return to the infinite source within each center of consciousness begins and the temporary entity is slowly, in the spiral motion of life, sucked back into the great silence.

Mankind's place in this circulatory structure of forces is that of a wave

of temporarily cohering droplets, rippling the surface of the river of life. As a hierarchy man is composed of the powers that he manifests. His nature is that of the existing forces in the whole that he, as a center of consciousness, has formed for his habitation out of the essence of his being. He manifests those of the infinite potencies of his essentially infinite nature that have become activated during an age-long cycle of experience. He is the expression of a stage of evolution. The peculiarity of this stage is the beginning of self-consciousness, the thinking capacity that enables man to know his place in nature and to cooperate of his own free will in the majestic design of life.

This awakening of mind is a two-edged sword, leading on the one hand to the willing activation of god-like qualities as yet asleep, which, when awakened, endow man with glories of consciousness as yet but feebly guessed; and, on the other, to the possibility of self-destruction as an entitative being, involving sufferings of consciousness but vaguely dreamed. The "human" stage is the turning-point.

Man as a self-conscious part of nature is in his infancy in the school of evolution. The prelude to this stage is a slow and laborious unfolding of consciousness, guided by the wisdom of nature, personified in the individual expressions thereof, the super-human beings of all stages, who supervise this growth. With the awakening of mind, self-consciousness begins to be. With it awaken free will and individual responsibility. It is a turning-point of life. No longer may the elemental forces run riot in man's constitution; they are under the control of the individualized focus of consciousness grown aware of itself.

Throughout the range of his being the spiritual entity guides and controls the elementals it harbors, from the spiritual life-atoms, through the mental and emotional nature, the ethereal, sensual body and its expression, the crystallized atomic structure that appears solid to the physical senses adapted to our world.

At this point a struggle begins. Man, the thinking entity, is drawn magnetically towards the root of his being and would inevitably be drawn into the central focus of himself, partaking of the infinite which

is the basis of existence, were it not for the illusory web of entanglements that he has formed about himself and which hold him captive in his responsibility towards the lesser entities of which he has composed himself. He is semi-conscious of this fact and tries mistakenly to unite with them in the innumerable disparate forms of life sprung from his experimental attempts at "creation," Thus is formed the "heresy of separateness."

Believing himself to be set apart and a creator in his own right, man forgets his place in nature, wherein he is but one aspect of divine life. The overcoming of this illusion of independence is the next step in evolution.

Those who have achieved this step see themselves in proportion, and sense the "fitness of all things." To them no hurt can ensue, for their feelings, thoughts and actions are consciously in accord with the laws of balance and harmony that bind all together in one vast whole. In accordance with this knowledge, they constitute themselves voluntary agents of natural law and become the law. In this capacity they are enabled to function as foci or centers, through which the solar rays of energy flow into the various kingdoms of life forming our earth, as an instance in point, and their conscious function is to distribute in the atmospheres of our earth on all planes the appropriate forces in strict accordance with karma. Man, the newly evolved thinker, is thus assisted by their work in his efforts to free himself from the bondage of his own making and to rise to a stage where cooperation in this work is possible.

The central Lodge of the Masters is therefore a natural fact, one to be accepted and aspired to, not to be dreamed of with miasmatic sentimentality. As a life-wave, mankind is the necessary instrument through which the forces of the plane of mind must flow, and the efficiency of its function depends on the willing cooperation of men as individuals. We humans are the stepping-stone between the central lens receiving the solar forces and the lower kingdoms of nature that ultimately benefit from this influence. Each individual thinking mind is

a minor facet receiving the cosmic influences and transmitting them over the world in prismatic array, depending for their purity on the purity of the individuals.

The Theosophical Society was formed with the purpose of instituting a nucleus of individual minds, willing to undergo the necessary purification to the end that the natural flow of divine energy might be transmitted in a relatively pure state. In the present crucial state of our world it is of great importance that this work be assisted in the greatest possible degree. Man, the thinking being, must consciously and with will array himself on the side of nature's divine forces and work for the evolution of all beings. It is in his power to do so to a great extent, and the only requisite is his desire to do so. "Behind will stands desire." We always ultimately do what we most desire and our will is the instrument which depends on our choice. With the assistance of the natural law of evolution, which tends towards spiritual growth, it is therefore possible for any one of us to be the deciding factor in the balance, as either a savior of the world or a destroyer.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY? — *M. J. T. George*

Many friends, inquirers and brother Theosophists have been asking me to explain to them what Theosophy is, what it teaches and the contrast of the Theosophical Society with other secret societies. In answering these interesting questions I shall have to deal with them in the order the questions are put.

The first question is, What is Theosophy?

Theosophy is not a religion in itself, but is the truth which underlies all religions alike, the hidden root from which all the different religions have sprung. Theosophy is made up of two Greek words, *Theos*, God, and *Sophia*, Wisdom, and means Divine Wisdom, without the help of which it is impossible for man to know anything about the creation of the Universe, whence, how, whither does it tend; what am I, what is the purpose of my existence, what is the goal; what is God and where; how am I connected with Him and the Universe; what is the explanation of the apparent injustices of life; what is the meaning and the use of suffering and pain; what is luck, fate, or destiny; what are dreams and how are they caused; what is life, what is death — these and many such questions which the ignorant in all ages think to be inexplicable can be understood only with the help of Theosophy.

The second question is what Theosophy teaches. Here I am going to give you a rough sketch of its teachings. Its teaching can be outlined thus:

- (a) That there is one eternal infinite Reality, one uncognizable real existence.
- (b) That from that proceeds the manifested God, unfolding from unity to duality and from duality to trinity.
- (c) That the whole Universe with everything within it is a manifestation of the life of God.

(d) That there are many mighty intelligences called Archangels, Angels, Devas, who have come out of the manifested God, and are His Agents for carrying out His thought and will.

(e) That man like his Heavenly Father is divine in essence, his inner Self being eternal.

(f) That he develops and evolves by repeated incarnations, into which he is drawn by desire under the law of Karma in the three worlds, the physical, the Astral and the Mental, and from which he is set free by knowledge and sacrifice, becoming divine in potency as he had ever been divine in latency.

(g) That there are Masters, perfected men, men who have completed their human evolution, have attained human perfection and have nothing more to learn so far as our human state is concerned.

The third and last question is the difference between the Theosophical Society and other secret societies.

In answering this question I would ask my readers to note the points I am giving because it is the question that matters much, as many members of the Society, particularly in this country, think by joining this Society they can perform miracles, invoke spirits overnight. This is not so with Theosophy.

I cannot give an idea of the teachings of other secret societies, but what I know is that the Theosophical Society does not encourage its members to nurse sectarianism, politics, phenomena, unbelievable and uncanny things, superstitions, so-called astrology, palmistry or any of those idiosyncrasies which some who call themselves Theosophists believe in and teach.

— From *News and Activities of the Theosophical Society*,
Bulletin of the Nigerian Section, T. S.

AS THE TWIG IS BENT — G. F. K.

When H. P. Blavatsky included those golden precepts in her *Voice of the Silence* that tell of the twofold path to Nirvana, she made no error in spiritual judgment. Strong and clear, her words are an ever present reminder that as the twig of the heart is bent today, so will the tree of enlightenment be inclined in the future: inclined to compassion — or to self.

The PATH is one, Disciple, yet in the end twofold. . . . Both are of merit the reward: the choice is thine. . . .

Unveiled stands truth and looks thee sternly in the face. She says:

"Sweet are the fruits of Rest and Liberation for the sake of *Self*; but sweeter still the fruits of long and bitter duty. Aye, Renunciation for the sake of others, of suffering fellow men."

He, who becomes Pratyeka-Buddha, makes his obeisance but to his *Self*. The Bodhisattva who has won the battle, who holds the prize within his palm, yet says in his divine compassion:

"For others' sake this great reward I yield" — accomplishes the greater Renunciation.

A SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD is he. . . .

Thou canst choose either, O aspirant to Sorrow, throughout the coming cycles!

How tragic then that this cardinal teaching both of the Trans-Himalayan and Northern Buddhist Schools should have been clouded over with doubt and mistrust. Backed as it is by scores of Buddhist writings one is at a loss to account for Mrs. Besant's assertion that H. P. B. had made a "mistake" in stating that a Pratyeka Buddha is a "synonym of spiritual selfishness." To quote Mrs. Besant's own words

which appear in a footnote on page 416 of the collection of H. P. B.'s articles posthumously published by Mr. Mead and herself as a third volume to *The Secret Doctrine*:

The Pratyeka Buddha stands on the level of the Buddha, but His work for the world has nothing to do with its teaching, and His office has always been surrounded with mystery. The preposterous view that He, at such superhuman height of power, wisdom and love could be selfish, is found in the exoteric books, though it is hard to see how it can have arisen. H. P. B. charged me to correct the mistake, as she had, in a careless moment, copied such a statement elsewhere. — A. B.

And yet we find this "preposterous view" held by the greatest of sages, both among the Mahayana and Hinayana Schools, to say nothing of the Venerable Nagasena whose "talk plunged to the hidden depths" of the Law. Why should the populace in Buddhistic countries worship the Bodhisattva rather than the long line of Buddhas who remain in Nirvana, and cherish his act of renunciation as the highest goal of spiritual achievement if it were not that the path followed by the Pratyeka is looked on with contempt. Such are mockingly dubbed *ekasringa*, "one-horned," like unto the rhinoceros who seeks the waters (of Ananda) for *self alone*, never for family or friend.

We doubt not the sincerity of Mrs. Besant's assertion, based on her own conviction that the teaching was wrong. But sincerity is no guarantee of truth; and lightly to pass judgment on teachings given by Those who know far more than we is to court danger not alone to ourselves, but more, to those we would lead.

Unless compassion become the dominant motif in the life of the disciple, he will indeed, should he win out, become Pratyeka; but if he fail, he may as easily, if the motive is for self-advancement alone, fall into the path of the Shadow. The life is judged not by deed or word, nor even by mighty act of courage, but solely by the *inner* motive propelling aspiration. Masters care little for pomp and circumstance. Their interest centers on the burning light of compassion, even in the least of

men, for this is the stuff that Adepts are made on. Buddhas of the Pratyeka Path there will be hundreds; Bodhisattvas who win Nirvana yet turn back to the world of sorrow there will be few — but the boon of active compassion of even one such is a light for countless centuries.

Is it beyond belief that the course of theosophical history might have been different had this fundamental teaching of Compassion been understood by all branches of the Movement? As the twig is bent. . . . For within the doctrine of Pratyeka versus Compassion lies the fundamental difference between the School of the Masters and any ordinary exoteric branch of learning.

It was these thoughts that came to mind while listening one afternoon to the subtle and profound questionings of King Milinda (1) (of Buddhist fame) addressed to his preceptor, the Venerable Nagasena, and great was the reward, for when the King asked his guru, "Was the Buddha omniscient?" the remarkable reply came: "Yes, O king, he was. But the insight of knowledge was not always and continually present with him. The omniscience of the Blessed One was dependent on reflection. But if he did reflect he knew whatever he wanted to know." A perfect confirmation of the renunciation made by Gautama, the Blessed One, who "on reflection," that is at will, had absolute power to tap the source of all-knowledge (Nirvana), yet out of deliberate compassion such "insight and knowledge was not always and continually present with him." Do not our Masters follow this same pattern? On their own admission, they are not Adepts at every moment, but when acting as such are accorded "an instantaneous, implicit insight into every first truth." (*Mahatma Letters*, 241)

Then following the ancient form of dialogue between teacher and pupil, Nagasena leads the mind of the king through seven gateways of comprehension, discoursing in detail upon the seven classes of minds, the sixth being the Pachcheka (Pratyeka) Buddhas, and the seventh, the Perfect or Complete Buddhas. Because of the marked similarity in spiritual content between the recital of Nagasena, with the Seven Portals of the *Voice of the Silence*, in which the seven strongholds of

experience are graphically portrayed for the disciple who, attaining the Paramita Heights, would yet make the great choice, we reproduce his answer in brief. The first class of minds comprise

(1) "Those, great king, who are full of lust, ill-will, delusion, or wrong doing, who are untrained in the management of their body, or in conduct, or in thought, or in wisdom, — their thinking powers are brought into play with difficulty, and act slowly." Because of this they are like unto the "wide-spreading, extensive, overgrown, and interlaced vegetation, and with its branches intricately entangled one with the other. So slow and heavy are the movements of the minds of those men, O king. And why? Because of the intricate entanglements of wrong dispositions."

(2) The second class are those "who have been converted" and have attained to right views, "who have grasped the doctrine of the Master," but whose thinking powers act with ease only "so far as the three lower stages [the three Fetters of Delusion of self, Doubt, and Dependence on rites and ceremonies and outward morality] are concerned." As for the higher regions, their faculties "because of the failings still existing within them" are brought into play with difficulty, and act slowly, like a tree that is smooth up to its third knot, but when dragged along sticks "obstinately as regards its upper branches."

(3) The third class of "thinking powers" are called Sakad Agamins (Pali for Sakrid Agamins of the *Voice*), literally those who will "come again once more" to Earth, "in whom lust, ill-will, and delusion are reduced to a minimum"; and whose powers are swiftly acting as far as the "five lower stages" are concerned.

(4) The fourth class are Anagamins, those who will "return no more" to Earth, whose Arhatship is secure,

who have completely got rid of the five lower fetters, — their thinking powers, so far as the ten stages are concerned, are brought quickly into play, and act with ease.

But even here, as regards the higher regions we are reminded that the

Anagamins,

because of the failings still existing within them [are like] the movement of a giant bambu which has a smooth trunk as far as the tenth knot, but above that has its branches intricately entangled.

(5) The fifth class are those Arahats (Pali for Arhats)

in whom the four Great Evils [lust, becoming, delusion, and ignorance] have ceased, whose stains have been washed away, whose predispositions to evil have been put aside, who have lived the life, and accomplished the task, and laid aside every burden, and reached up to that which is good, for whom the Fetter of the craving after any kind of future life has been broken to pieces, who have reached the higher insight, who are purified as regards all those conditions of heart in which a hearer can be pure, — their thinking powers, as regards all that a disciple can be or do, are brought quickly into play, and act with ease.

Yet even this fifth class of minds acts with difficulty as to "those things which are within the reach of the Pachcheka-Buddhas [Pali for Pratyeka-Buddhas]" which comprise

(6) The sixth class of minds, aptly described by Nagasena as follows:

Those, O king, who are Pachcheka-Buddhas, dependent on themselves alone, wanting no teacher, dwellers alone like the solitary horn of the rhinoceros, who so far as their own higher life is concerned, have pure hearts free from stain, — their thinking powers, so far as their own province is concerned, are brought quickly into play, and act with ease. But as regards all that is specially within the province of a perfect Buddha (one who is not only Buddha, that is enlightened, himself, but can lead others to the light) they are brought with difficulty into play, and move slowly.

"And why is this so?" Nagasena continues, and note well the precision of implication in his answer:

Because of their purity as regards all *within their own province*, and because of the *immensity of the province of the omniscient Buddhas*. [Italics ours] It is like a man, O king, who would fearlessly cross, and at will, by day or night, a shallow brook on his own property. But when he comes in sight of the mighty ocean, deep and wide and ever-moving, and sees no further shore to it, then would he stand hesitating and afraid, and make no effort even to get over it.

And again Nagasena says, "And why?" and for answer gives the same potent reply: "Because of his familiarity with his own, and because of the immensity of the sea."

How vast in importance the pattern of thinking engendered by the foregoing. Well did H. P. B. know the direction of aspiration in which she was leading her students when she quoted that ancient precept, that "he, who becomes Pratyeka-Buddha, makes his obeisance but to his *Self*," her footnote thereto adding significant emphasis that

Pratyeka Buddhas are those Bodhisattvas who strive after and often reach the Dharmakaya robe after a series of lives. Caring nothing for the woes of mankind or to help it, but only for their own *bliss*, they enter Nirvana and — disappear from the sight and the hearts of men. In Northern Buddhism a "Pratyeka Buddha" is a synonym of spiritual Selfishness.

Why, we ask, should the simple question of Milinda as to whether the Buddha was omniscient be so painstakingly answered by a long dissertation on the seven classes of minds if it were not to lead by slow yet persuasive appeal to the distinction between the sixth and seventh classes: the Pratyeka who would be buddha or "enlightened" indeed, but only within "the shallow brook on his own property," only within the narrow province of his own buddhi; and the Buddha, perfect and complete, "whose mastery knows no limit," and whose sole aim for

enlightenment is that he might shoot the dart of his omniscience into the world of sorrow and bring cessation of pain, renewal of light?

But let us continue with Nagasena as he tells of this seventh and final class of minds, who

(7) are complete Buddhas (not only themselves enlightened, but able to teach, leaders of men), having all knowledge, bearing about in themselves the tenfold power (of the ten kinds of insight), confident in the four modes of just self-confidence, endowed with the eighteen characteristics of a Buddha, whose mastery knows no limit, from whose grasp nothing is hid, — their thinking powers are on every point brought quickly into play, and act with ease. . . . And why? Because of their being purified in every respect. . . .

Now of these, O king, the last — the thinking powers of the omniscient Buddhas — altogether outclasses the other six, and is clear and active in its high quality that is beyond our ken. . . . For the knowledge of the Blessed One, O king, is dependent upon reflection, and it is on reflection that he knows whatever he wishes to know. — IV, i, 19-27

Today, some 2000 years or more after "the world famous sage," Nagasena, the Elder, had discoursed with his disciple, Milinda, king of the Yonakas at Sagala, another set of dialogues between Teacher and pupil appear, wherein this same teaching on the qualities and powers of the Buddha is hammered home in a thousand and one different ways, yet always with the power and authority of "one who knew." For again and again, do pupils today seek answers to this age-old question: "How is it that a Buddha who has attained to so lofty a stature of wisdom can still be selfish?" And true to occult tradition, G. de P. replies therein (*italics ours*):

This name "Pratyeka" means "each for himself." . . . The Pratyeka Buddha knows that he cannot advance to spiritual glory unless he lives the spiritual life, unless he cultivates his

spiritual nature, but as he does this solely in order to win spiritual rewards, spiritual life, for himself alone, he is a Pratyeka-Buddha. He is *for himself*, in the last analysis. There is a personal eagerness, a personal wish, to forge ahead, to attain at any cost; whereas he who belongs to our own Holy Order, the Order of the Buddhas of Compassion, has his eyes set on the same distant objective, but he trains himself from the very beginning to become utterly self-forgetful. . . .

The time comes when the Pratyeka-Buddha, holy as he is, noble in effort and in ideal as he is, *can go no farther*. But, contrariwise, the one who allies himself from the very beginning with all Nature, and with Nature's heart, has a constantly expanding field of work, as his consciousness expands and fills that field; and this expanding field is simply illimitable, because it is boundless Nature herself. He becomes utterly at one with the spiritual Universe; whereas the Pratyeka-Buddha becomes at one *with only a particular* line or stream of evolution in the Universe. — II, 441-2

And then again, in speaking of the Perfect Buddhas, G. de P. explains that the Compassion Buddhas

are older souls, riper in wisdom, more closely knitted to the compassionate Heart of Being, follow the instincts of their nature which urge them to remain as Guides and Inspirers of those less advanced. — I, 415

And so one might continue to elaborate by quotation this theme, but there is no need with *The Dialogues of G. de P.* now available. Truly, we are taught, that as the powers of the mind, the current of the heart, are channeled in the earliest days of discipleship, so will the stream of Arhatship be determined in the future. "Thou canst choose either, throughout the coming cycles!"

FOOTNOTE:

1. Summer class on "The Questions of King Milinda," *Sacred Books of*

the East, xxxv and xxxvi, conducted by A. L. Conger at Covina. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

CAN HYPNOTISM HELP? — *Madeline Clark*

What is man's most precious possession if it is not his power of free will and choice? This inborn and inalienable right is the very touchstone of his responsibility for his own spiritual progress. In the ultimate, each man has to perfect himself in the exercise of this divine faculty of self-dependence, before he can come into his own, spiritually. Mediators and teachers he may have to help him, but the final choice must be within himself.

We like to think of this faculty as residing inviolate in the inner citadel of man's being, but, at least as regards his psychological nature, it can be tampered with to his very great injury. And hypnotism is one means by which this is done.

It would be useless to dogmatize on this matter, because the subject has wide ramifications and many aspects. But this much is obvious: that to gain access to the inner consciousness of another, where will and choice abide, to set aside his sovereign power and substitute it with your own, is a violation of moral law. It is not going too far, in fact, to call it a form of sorcery.

In a current book (1) the subject of hypnotism is placed in its most unobjectionable light. The author, a dentist, tells how, discovering the hypnotic power in himself, he not only used it for inducing anaesthesia in his patients, but pursued it as a hobby, curing various cases of illness, usually based in neuroses, by means of hypnotic suggestion. Each chapter gives a case-history, with its difficulties and its progress under the stimulation of salutary ideas instilled into the mind of the patient in a condition of light hypnotic sleep. Cases of failure are cited as well as the successes; and the author is careful to point out that in pathological conditions the hypnotic process cannot take the place of regular medical attention. *He never asked any fee for his services* in the field of suggestion: and this is of a piece with the apparent fact that all

of his work was that of a purely disinterested person, whose suggestions were invariably based on sound common sense and a normal attitude toward life and its obligations. His advice is throughout entirely sound and wholesome, and we are made to feel that the entire proceeding was altogether praiseworthy.

But there is one hindrance to our complete satisfaction. It is the will of the practitioner that is accomplishing the (apparent) reform in the patient. The patient's will is more than passive: it is suspended, for the time being, though it may be claimed that it has been set beforehand to cooperate with that of the practitioner. There is the instinctive feeling — especially when the "treatment" is to enable the patient to withstand some common temptation such as the pleasures of the table — that one day there will come a reckoning, when the same failing must be met in person and transcended. It becomes obvious that the evil day has only been put off: the weakness has been dammed back, only to come forth at some future time.

Taking for granted the author's complete good faith, we can only surmise that he is in ignorance of the dread possibilities that are always present when hypnotism is practised. Dr. Shaw asserts that "the hypnotist never gains control over the subject; that [the subject] can always refuse to go to sleep, no matter how many times [he] had previously been hypnotized; that the subject can, and does, wake up if any suggestion is given in opposition to what the conscience and protective instincts allow. . . ."

That may be the experience of a practitioner of decent instincts who is actuated solely by a desire to help others; but records of cases other than those cited by Dr. Shaw tell a far different story. It is known, for example, that in the hands of an individual who has the stronger will and the knowledge of how to manipulate the hidden forces that bear on the hypnotic subject, a man of lesser will can be overpowered, and that without his knowledge. As for the claim that a hypnotized person cannot be forced to do something that is against his moral principles, a recent comment by a well-known newspaper columnist states that this

has been proven a fallacy by a Danish hypnotist, and he calls attention to the fact that a contemporary English practitioner is able to put persons into a hypnotic state without their cooperation. There are well-attested accounts of persons who have actually died because it was impossible to bring them out of hypnotically-induced trance.

Dr. Shaw does insist that hypnotism should not be indulged in for entertainment purposes, but solely in the practice of therapeutics, and by an operator with medical knowledge.

It is expositions like the present book, which put hypnotism in its most innocuous and favorable light, that need to be reviewed with a warning. Other more lurid accounts would repel by their very nature. The most innocent of amateurs in the practice are handling forces the extent and possibilities of which are unknown to them: individuals less scrupulous are capable of taking criminal advantage of their fellow-beings through the use of these powers, which in hands such as theirs become more and more closely allied to sorcery.

While an extended discussion of the rationale of hypnotism in its many and various forms cannot be made here, it appears to be a duty to point a general warning against the invading of the inner citadel of another human being, or in any way to interfere with his *spiritual* power of choice and free will. And the more is this necessary in view of the widely-spreading interest and experimentation in hypnotism prevailing today. The present writer, in the cursory reading of a single daily paper, has collected half a dozen clippings in as many weeks, all dealing with instances of hypnotization, some of them involving revolting crimes.

The question remains with us then: what safeguards have we against the obvious evils that hypnotism brings in its train? It is inevitable that in this day and age, when cyclic evolution is bringing humanity into touch with planes and powers as yet unfamiliar to it, all sorts of phenomena, among them the phenomena of hypnotism and related practices, will attract more and more attention. Here is where Theosophy is going to prove a saving power, for its teachings give the

explanation of man's inner constitution, and therefore of what happens when the will is abrogated, when the psychic nature is flooded with influences from without that threaten its inner integrity. It is for those who have some knowledge of the Theosophical philosophy to sound warnings, to promote right understanding of the true role of the human entity. In the end we shall find that there are ways of arousing and developing the higher faculties: optimism, courage, the right attitude to life: all attributes of the spiritual will — for the amelioration of humanity's ills. Once aroused and brought into activity, these faculties prove to be the most potent medicine and magic for producing physical and spiritual health.

In a brief Appendix, Dr. Shaw traces the development of hypnotism from the "animal magnetism" of Franz Anton Mesmer, to the "sleeping trance" of Puysegur, and thence to the "hypnosis" of Braid and the work of Liebeault, Charcot, and others up to the present time. Names and careers so easily told off, and yet — the "inside story," if it could be told, would show how greatly various were the insights of these explorers of the unknown. The great and wise Mesmer — a giant compared to his "successors" — who understood and was guided by the spiritual laws that govern human welfare and into whose healing work no influence of a personal nature was allowed to enter: the lesser men guided perhaps by reasoning, or blind experimentation — blind, as regards the fundamental laws behind the phenomena they were investigating. For those who are interested, many enlightening ideas are given along these lines in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, especially in her *Studies in Occultism*, (2) and also in the writings of William Q. Judge and G. de Purucker. (3) These studies show that modern hypnotism is no true successor to mesmerism, for mesmerism never enslaved the will, as do many if not all forms of modern hypnotism.

It will of course be asked: Then, is hypnotism always wrong? The answer could be: It is always fraught with danger. There are certain keys to the right understanding of all such practices: and chief among these is the law that it is wrong to interfere with the inner processes of will and choice of any of our fellow-beings. If we move over the line

onto the side of the higher psychology, which is altruistic, full of light, wholesome and rich in inspiration, hypnotism will be seen in its true character, and our perplexity is at an end.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Hypnotism Can Help*. By S. Irwin Shaw. Philadelphia: David McKay Co, 1948. 213pp. \$3.00. ([return to text](#))
2. Theosophical University Press, Covina, California. ([return to text](#))
3. *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, et al. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

AN ANCIENT VEDIC PRAYER — *Herbert Coryn*

Unveil, O Thou that givest sustenance to the Universe,
From Whom all things proceed, to Whom all must return,
That face of the True Sun, now hidden by a vase of golden light,
That we may know the Truth, and do our whole duty
On our journey to Thy Sacred Seat.

This is a paraphrase of an ancient Vedic prayer. Whatever its writer may have meant, it is used now as a mental pathway inward to the Spiritual Sun.

O Thou that givest sustenance to the Universe: the invocation is addressed to the universal Divine Presence.

That face of the True Sun: the individual spiritual *inner* Sun whose light fills the heart of the awakened man.

Now hidden by a vase of golden light: the vase of vitality which holds sensation and desire, a vital light almost visible in the clear face of a healthy child. In moments of aspiration and devotion one reaches beyond this light, ceases to pulse with it, looks through it, as it were, to the Spiritual Center within it, that center which is the True Self. Then are fulfilled the conditions for the rest of the prayer: *That we may know the Truth and do our whole duty on our journey to Thy Sacred Seat.*

As, when some calamity is impending, the man awakes with a sense of dread or weight, for which he cannot at first account, and as he will feel this presence all day, even when his mind is occupied with other matters; so the man on this Path, who is finding the answer to this prayer, wakes with a sense of inner peace and joy for which he cannot account, and goes through the day as one who has been told tidings of great joy.

At last he comes to know that Self whose light *is* that joy. Then he no longer lives in the pictures of memory and anticipation with which

ordinary lives are filled. They no longer pass of their own will before his mental eye. He is reborn. He is the free-in-life.

The Theosophical Forum

THE EBB-TIDE OF THE YEAR — *Allan J. Stover*

There is a feel of autumn in the air as the year rounds to its finale. It is a time when the inner life of nature is withdrawing from outer activity and from the bondage of physical forms, bringing a new quality into the atmosphere, a soundless music, having in it faint cadences of spring and summer, and even a premonition of winter, but all these forming part of the autumnal undertone.

The progress of the seasons reminds one of the pattern of a "round." With the beginning of each round there is a descent into ever more material conditions, the ego becoming more and more closely identified with its vehicle; but when the midpoint and densest portion of the cycle is reached the upward arc of ascent begins. The world and all on it then becomes ever more ethereal. Or we may think of the year as of two triangles interlaced, the triangle pointing downward representing the evolution into material form, the other triangle, pointing upward, the involution back into the spiritual source.

Spring is the dawn of a new cycle: everywhere the tide of life is rising. Plants which have slept through the long winter now put forth leaves and flowers, insects emerge from the ground or hatch from eggs.

Butterflies and moths burst silken cocoon or chrysalis to brighten the landscape with their color. Birds arrive from the south in flocks and immediately engage in nest-building and the raising of young. Spring is a time of expansion, in which all of nature cooperates, yet analogically, it is a necessary descent into physical manifestation in the minor cycle of a year.

With the coming of summer the climax of activity is reached, and as the flowering season wanes fruits and seeds begin to ripen. The young birds have already left their nest and now wander with their parents over the country, basking in the noontime of the year.

With autumn the expansive tide of nature, so apparent in spring, is replaced by an ebb-tide, for the forces of nature appear to indraw as the twilight of the year approaches.

About the time of the autumnal equinox a change takes place which makes itself felt in many ways. There are marked changes in weather, and a general reversal of life-forces which summed up is what we sense when we remark "There is a feel of autumn in the air."

As the year draws near its close the trees transfer more and more sugar into the sap, thickening it against the increasing cold, while the leaves give the last of their vitality to the buds nestling at the base of each petiole, and after a final blaze of color at the first frost, flutter to the ground. Insects lay eggs, spin cocoons, crawl into the earth, or otherwise prepare for the winter's sleep. Most of the birds follow unseen migration routes to the south, much as life-waves are said to leave the globe at the close of a globe-round. Busy as the life of spring is, that of autumn is equally so.

Remnants of a number of ancient autumn ceremonies still linger in the west. The festival of Hallowe'en or Samain was originally a Druid feast during which bonfires were lighted on the hill-tops and offerings made to the Tuatha De Danaan and the ancestral spirits. A similar ceremony was held in Egypt at the Feast of the Dead, commemorating the slaying of the Sun God, Osiris, by his brother Sitau. After this event the sun was said to decline because of his wounds, and all the forces of nature waned. In both instances, in Druid Britain and in Egypt, the feast symbolized the after-death condition and marked the withdrawal inward of the soul of nature before the birth of a new year. It was at this time that many peoples extinguished all fires and ceremonially lighted a new flame, the embers of which were carried to every hearth in order to light new fires for the new cycle.

With the Roman conquest many features were added to Hallowe'en from the festival of Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruits; and the roasting of nuts, ducking for apples and the telling of fortunes are probably derived from this source. Still later, Christian influence

changed the festival to the gods, to one of all the saints. Today Hallowe'en is an occasion for mischief and merry making. Yet like some old manuscript covered with erasures and interpolations, there is something about the day to which folk-memory still clings, some intuition of an inner meaning now lost.

The symbolism of the spring and autumn was one of the themes dramatized in the Greek myth of Ceres and Persephone which formed the basis of the Eleusinian Mysteries. These, in themselves relating to the birth and passing of the year, were divided into two parts, the Lesser Mysteries which were celebrated in the spring and the Greater Mysteries at the time of the autumnal equinox. According to the story Persephone, while playing in a flowery meadow near her home, was seized by Pluto who ruled over the underworld; and carried to those shadowy regions as his bride. Ceres, the mother of Persephone, was frantic and searched the world over for her daughter, causing cold and drought to wither all vegetation until her daughter was restored. At last she learned that Persephone was in the dark domains of Pluto, and pleaded with Jupiter to intercede. This he did, and Persephone was restored to her mother, but since the fair captive had eaten seven pomegranate seeds, she was ever afterwards obliged to spend six months of the year with Pluto in the underworld.

Those who organized the mysteries knew that nature was analogical throughout and used the symbols of nature to illustrate in veiled form the condition and experiences of the human soul, first, when bound to the body, and second, as freed from mortal bonds between incarnations. Those who had the keys saw a meaning within and behind the obvious interpretation of the myth of Persephone, while the uninitiated saw only the commonplace explanation.

Thomas Taylor in his *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* quotes many classical writers to the effect that the descent of Persephone into the underworld and her re-ascent to the world of men refers to the descent and return of the soul as it enters and leaves the body during incarnation. For in the ancient mysteries, to become identified with the

body, was to enter into a prison or grave. This may be why the name Persephone means *bringer of death*, and why she is represented as bearing ears of corn emblematic of the heavenworld, pomegranates, fruit of the underworld, and poppies to represent the sleep and forgetfulness separating the two existences. But while the myth in its larger aspect personifies the spiritual forces attendant upon the outbreathing and inbreathing of worlds and universes, and in its human aspect dramatizes the peregrinating cycle of the human soul from life to life, it also shows the inner nature of autumn-time and that the season offers unusual opportunities for inner growth and reflection.

While the Eleusinian Mysteries are no longer enacted, the great drama of nature still presents to the earnest student the same age-old truths would he but pause and consider; not the piled-up sticks of dry facts, but the *rhythm of life* as a whole, as it progresses through the year.

The Theosophical Forum

ARE THEOSOPHISTS GULLIBLE? — *Orange I. Clark*

Because of the many misconceptions as to what Theosophy really is, it is often necessary to point out that the Theosophical Society is not composed of fantastic theorists seeking to destroy the fundamentals of right thinking. Theosophy maintains that its devotees should be among the most normal and wholesome human beings in the world, because they have discarded many of the delusions and superstitions and much of the materialism by which the mind of each race is obsessed. Quotations from all our Theosophical leaders can be found setting forth this viewpoint. No, you do not have to give up your common sense in order to become Theosophists. One is not more than half a Theosophist unless one cultivates common sense. W. Q. Judge said that common sense is one of the rarest of virtues.

Some few individual Theosophists may be prone to take up with new ideas without making sure whether or not they flout facts and possibilities. But Theosophy as such is based on what is provable, or at least rational. "Facts are pitchforks," is a famous saying of H. P. Blavatsky. None of the highest exponents of the Theosophical philosophy have been gullible, as they have invariably had the faculty of seeing through the vagaries and preposterous imaginings of befuddled minds. And they have constantly enjoined the cultivation of this fact-finding habit upon earnest students.

It is widely believed, and there is some truth in the belief, that certain minds of an idealistic type are too ready to accept the seemingly ideal on its face-value. And it is probably true that all idealists and humanitarians have to guard themselves against being taken in by deceptively idealistic pretenses and pretenders. Yet not all or even most of those who are idealists, or who are artistic and intellectual or humanitarian in temperament are therefore necessarily "crack-pots," or belong to the "lunatic fringe," even though it is true that most fanatics and "crack-pots" are the victims of their own or someone else's

imagination. There were ancient beliefs among some peoples that the insane were sometimes inspired by true visions, not ordinarily vouchsafed to normal human beings. But that is no reason why the rest of us should seek to become insane, or otherwise irrational!

It is said by pessimists that some people are so "good" that they are easily imposed upon, gullible. The accusation is false, because goodness is only half good if it is easily misled. True goodness is not weak: it is strong, and sees through shams and hypocrisies. The least deceived and most continuously happy man is the sceptical optimist.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," as the Good Book says: but don't accept statements that at first sight or even at second sight sound alluring or plausible, or make wondrous promises or great assertions. It is easy for the self-deceived to make glamorous claims by ignoring some of the facts. That is the method of children and those with juvenile minds. It is part of the technique of "blind leaders of the blind," and also of pseudo-occultists and fakers of all kinds. Those who indulge in "wishful thinking," which is a sort of self-gullibility, self-deception, are easily led into the fallacy that it is possible to get something for nothing, which on the face of it is contrary to all natural law. The Theosophical doctrines of karma and individual responsibility should save all of us from this pitfall.

"Keep an open mind." One could hardly become a Theosophist who does not do this, but again this does not mean swallowing, hook, line, and sinker, everything or anything that looks attractive. If there is one thing that human life, and all life, teaches us, it is to cast out non-essentials, and cleave to the true and the factual, practically and spiritually.

On the other hand we should not close our minds to everything but the material. Many of the fundamental facts of the Universe, and many of the details arising from those facts, are not directly provable. We know that many invisibles, such as the ties of love, and the bonds of honorable obligation between man and man, are as much facts as railroad trains and atomic bombs, and far more important.

Even many superstitions and "sea-serpent tales" contain some element of the factual. Such basis as there is for these superstitions and tales exists largely in the astral light, where there are images of prehistoric or other monstrosities, and these images may be called up or reconstructed by some undisciplined elements of the faculties of psychometry, or clairvoyance, or even by the imagination of romancers or those competing to attract attention. Unquestionably, superstitions and imaginative tales have their necessary place in the development of the minds and imaginations of children and others with youthful minds, as well as helping to prevent the race from becoming too materialistic by suggesting the presence of forces and beings beyond and behind the visible, objective world. Materialism breeds wars and kills the ethical sense. It is the most destructive, and anti-social, and anti-ethical of all *superstitions*.

Theosophy is a word to conjure with. It stands for what is balanced, dignified, and rational, and Theosophists have a right to protest against its use to lend credibility to the pseudo-occult, the irrational, or the absurd. Perhaps some of us in our intellectual childhood, or in our search for Theosophy, dabbled a little in things not entirely level-headed, but Theosophy cannot be held accountable for our youthful credulity. One cannot be of service to Theosophy or to humanity (or to himself) who wastes his energy and lessens his power of judgment by chasing rainbows. The Theosophical Movement has seen so many clever and plausible mirages come and go that there has been ample opportunity for its followers to "cut their eye-teeth." There are enough real mysteries to study and explore in this wonderful universe so that we can well afford to leave the quality of gullibility to those with childlike minds who have no better amusement.

However, one need not be cynical in order to be discriminating. Cynicism makes the world worse, not better. Human nature is good at heart, and life is good, but shallow credulity is not good, and only leads to the place that is paved with failures.

Theosophy should stand before the world as the most sane and

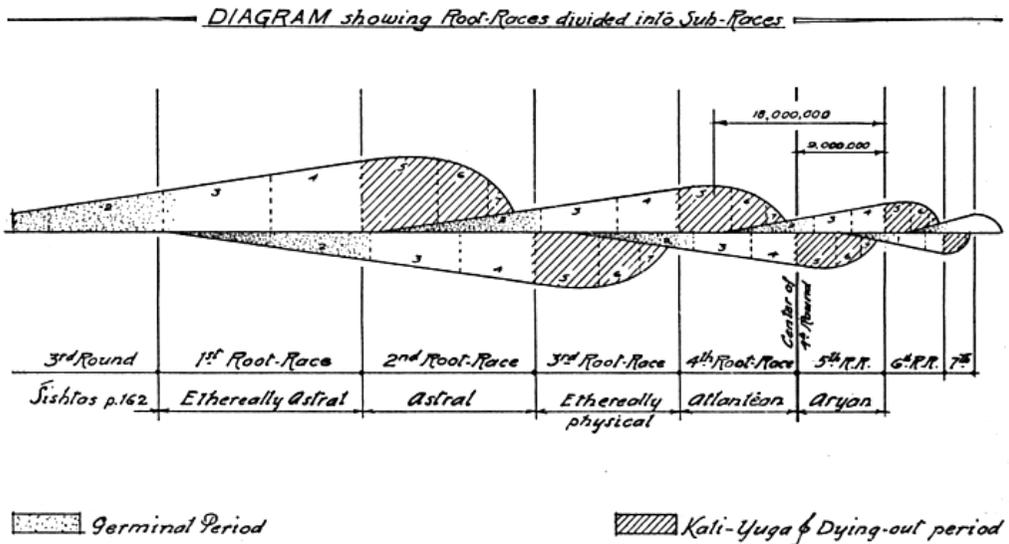
wholesome of philosophical and religious teachings, and it has been the effort clearly and constantly set forth, by all the greatest Theosophists, modern and ancient, to make their followers understand that Theosophy is not contrary to good sense and known facts, and is not another vagary of uncontrolled imagination. It is part of the mission of Theosophy to "arrest the attention of the highest minds," and to show that idealists and independent thinkers — which Theosophists are — can be sensible and sane. In brief, man's mind should be ruled, not by materialism, or psychic vagaries, or tall tales, but by the highest spiritual and moral realizations, which are the best good sense for the guidance of human life that has ever been found.

The Theosophical Forum

ROUNDS AND RACES (1) — F. Chapman Clemeshaw

Many students have tried to "tidy-up" this question of the Root-Races, but as G. de Purucker has said, "It is very tempting to try to collate the figures . . . about root-races and life-waves and to try to make these figures run with regularity through all the seven root-races, yet it just simply can't be done." (p. 166) (2) There is no claim to finality about this effort, but it does bring together a number of teachings that will help us to get some sort of a picture. Generally one fails to take into account the fact that the Root-Races differ greatly in length; and the teachings about the *germinal period* were little known before the publication of *Studies in Occult Philosophy*.

First, let us consider the matter of the relative length of the Root-Races: on p. 162 we find it stated that the 1st and 2nd Races are much longer and the 6th and 7th are shorter. Such being the case, there must be some harmonious rhythm in nature that determines their respective lengths. This I believe would be the Yugas; so for the purpose of this diagram the ratios of 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, are used. Each Root-Race is divided into Sub-Races on the same system.



The *germinal period*: This teaching makes it easier to understand how a race merges into the succeeding one (p. 639). Information about its duration is not specific; it is stated to last about three million years, and that the germinal period of the Aryan Race can be traced almost to the beginning of the Atlantean Race. I have judged that the first two Sub-Races of each Root-Race would correspond to the first two Root-Races of the Round. In other words, the germinal period would be included in the life-cycle of the Root-Race and would be the 1st and 2nd Sub-Races, these being in their Satya Yuga (pp. 41-2) and irresponsible in the sense of still "living with their Parents"; nevertheless they are the more advanced egos and thus fit seeds for the succeeding Race.

We are all familiar with the statement that a Root-Race, at least ours, endures for 8,640,000 years from its beginning to its end: but on page 162 we read: "9 million years back brings us to the middle of the Fourth Root-Race." This apparent contradiction could probably be reconciled in the following manner: Since a Root-Race (or a human being) enters its Kali-Yuga and dying-out period at midlife that would be the end of that Root-Race (or that person *so far as the continuity of the human race is concerned*). Of course there is a tremendous overlap, yet it is the next Root-Race which takes over. This view is confirmed by two other statements (pp. 42, 639): the new race is "distinctly differentiated" at the

beginning of the Kali-Yuga of the parent race and enters the heyday of its power at the end of the Kali-Yuga of the parent race; or it might be phrased thus: the new race is distinctly differentiated at the middle period of the parent race and enters the heyday of its power during the age of the parent race. The reason why the new race is distinctly differentiated at the beginning of the Kali-Yuga of the parent race is that the new race has been developing alongside the parent race, during the long germinal period. There is one blessing in this recent statement that it is 9,000,000 years back to the middle of the 4th Root-Race, and that is that it is now possible to make a diagram in which the familiar 18,000,000 comes somewhere near the midpoint of the 3rd Root-Race. It would appear that all previous references to the duration of Root-Races were systematically halved. This may seem an extraordinary statement to make. However if you will read pages 395 and 396 in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, you will find that such procedure would be strictly in line with ancient usage.

The present writer, and no doubt other students have heretofore taken it for granted that the Kali-Yuga begins in the middle of the 4th Sub-Race; not that there is any statement to this effect in our literature, but simply because a line divided into seven equal parts brings the center in the middle of the 4th part. For reasons already explained, this diagram does not make all Root-Races and Sub-Races the same length; so, if the Kali-Yuga comes at the end of the 4th Sub-Race, as the diagram shows, it is more likely to be correct than if it came in the middle.

The best assurance that this is substantially correct is the statement found in S. D. II, 197 to the effect that "by the end of the 5th [Sub-Race], mankind was born under the same conditions and by the same identical process as our historical generations." In other words, man entered the Human Kingdom (S.D. II, 69), and the time when this came about is given as 18,618,788 years ago.

On the diagram the 18,000,000 year point does not exactly hit the end of the 5th Sub-Race. This is not so important, as the process of the dividing into two sexes took several million years; so the expression "by the end of the 5th" Sub-Race may be interpreted to mean that by that time it had become the rule.

Referring again to S. D. II, 197, we read: "towards the end of the 4th *sub-race* [of the 3rd Root Race], the babe lost its faculty of walking as soon as liberated from its shell." Here is the picture: At the end of the 4th Sub-Race man is still androgynous and egg-born; at the end of the 5th Sub-Race the separation of the sexes is complete, a period of about 5,000,000 years. This is fully explained in S. D. II, 132-3.

On p. 163 of *Studies* we find that it is 18,000,000 years back to the middle of the 3rd Root-Race, but this occurs because nine million years is used as a factor in computing the time that the human life-wave has been on Globe D. This would make the life span of Root-Races 3, 4, and 5 the same length; whereas we find later that they are only "pretty much the same length"; so it may just as well be 21,000,000 as shown.

About the Kali-Yuga: as already suggested, it starts somewhere near the end of the 4th Sub-Race of any Root-Race, and in the case of the 5th Root-Race it started 3102 b.c. or 5050 years ago, at the death of Krishna. As we are from 16 to 20,000 years from the midpoint of the 5th Root-Race, it follows that the Kali-Yuga starts from 21 to 25,000 years before the midpoint. We are told that it lasts for 432,000 years.

This is the time of the heyday and achievement for the 5th Root-Race. Slowly after that the more progressed Egos begin to reincarnate in greater numbers in the already forming 6th Root-Race, and that will constitute the decline of the 5th. Therefore when we use the expression, "Kali-Yuga and dying-out period," this does not mean that the *Egos* degenerate and die out, but rather that they reincarnate in the new race.

The Seeds of the 6th sub-race as well as certain seeds of the 6th Root-Race are already amongst us, not

noticeably different from their fellows as yet, but possessing qualities in advance of the average humanity of today. We are told that the American continent in long ages to come is to be the home of the bulk of the 6th Root-Race.

There is, of course, a correspondence between the life of an individual and the life of a Root-Race, so we may say that man enters his Kali-Yuga at midlife at which time and thereafter he probably makes his greatest contribution to the progress and welfare of the human race. Midlife is a dying-out period only in the sense that the continuity of the mundane responsibilities of the world has passed into the hands of the younger generation. The older generation gradually withdraws from business, political or professional activities and if they have lived aright they become a benediction to their younger brothers.

From my studies of architecture I have come to the conclusion that a nation produces its greatest works during its Kali-Yuga. If you examine the buildings of Egypt and Greece, for instance, you will find that they were all built within a relatively short period of time. In Greece we call it the Periclean Age; in Egypt the Dynastic period. Slowly thereafter each loses its leadership among the nations. Kali-Yuga is also a time of strife; everything is speeded up and becomes intense. Nevertheless, the chela considers it good karman to be born in the Kali-Yuga. All nations are warlike in their 4th period. G. de Purucker discusses this in *Questions We All Ask*, II, 204-5. Is war an unmixed evil? We would appear to get rid of a lot of national karman thereby. G. de Purucker says: "Let us never forget that mighty and strong minds are behind the spiritual government of the world and sooner or later karman adjusts all things to its majestic purposes."

The Aryan Race entered its Kali-Yuga 5050 years ago, but the seeds of the 6th Race among us are in their Satya-Yuga, albeit within the encompassing Kali-Yuga of the 5th Race. Kali must have a meaning other than "black." Monier William's *Sanskrit Dictionary* gives the following: "*An unblown flower or bud.*" This is evidently what the Tamil mothers have in mind when they call their daughters, Kali. It also connotes the idea of Satya-Yuga: "*A class of mythic being.*" Maybe the Tamil Goddess, Kali, is one such. Judging by the little figures representing her, she is Mother and Sustainer of the World. It is interesting to note that Kali is another name for Binah of the Sephirothal Tree. "*Name of Siva*" — this is especially interesting as Siva is both Destroyer and Regenerator.

Now about the so-called "Remnants": The parent race during its Kali-Yuga and period of decline reincarnates in the new race, or as has been very beautifully said, "The Old Waters mingle with the New." At the conclusion of this mingling period the new race becomes a race sui generis.

The Aryan Race became a race sui generis one million years ago. Looking at the diagram, the reader will notice that the cross-hatched areas do not reach the midpoint of the new race. This is intended to call attention to the fact that a race does not become a race sui generis until shortly before its culmination.

Those Egos who have not mingled or reincarnated in the new race by that time are called "Remnants." They are the backward and "savage" peoples scattered over the world today (pp. 44-8). The Eskimos and Andaman Islanders are remnants of the 3rd Root-Race; the Blackfellows of Australia and Tasmania, also the Maoris, are remnants of the 4th; others are 5th Root-Race branchlets; most of them are degenerate, not necessarily in a moral sense but evolutionally so. By their speech and traditions they will be recognized as a part of an old civilization. They are remnants not on account of being the unfortunate or the wicked, but for the reason that they are the "Last Comers" into the human family. When we remember that the "Door into the human kingdom" closed only at the midpoint of the Round, that is at the midpoint of the 4th or Atlantean Race, we can hardly expect them immediately to catch up with those who entered the human kingdom millions of years earlier (S. D. II, 168).

The most material point was reached 9,000,000 years ago; we of the Fifth Root-Race are on the "Ascending Arc"; Spirit is slowly disentangling itself from matter. Even our bodies are less gross than they were at the midpoint of the Fourth Root-Race. We can picture to ourselves men 27 feet high with gross solid flesh, even pebbly. The stature of man has diminished even as has that of the animals. The earth itself is less solid; it is now radio-active.

The teaching is that man's stature will grow less, but the distinctive thing about the Sixth Root-Race is that our bodies will be luminous. In the Seventh Root-Race we shall be more like bodies of light and again we shall be androgynous. Another point is that there were seven Gardens of Eden; simultaneously seven races came into being, not all of the same evolutionary status. They are described as being of different colors — some moon-colored, golden, brown, and so on. These seven races mingled together down to the midpoint of the Round. Thereafter they slowly separated into groups again, thus being ready to repeat the process in the next Round.

This diagram makes it possible to date the "Garden of Eden." How long is it since Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden? The answer is "about 18,000,000 years ago."

The identity of the Theosophical teachings about the descent of the Manasaputras and the allegory set forth in the early chapters of Genesis has not been sufficiently stressed. We shall find, perhaps, that the one illumines the other. An outline of the teachings of the Ancient Wisdom might be made as follows:

The human race was at first ethereal; we call this the 1st Root-Race. It became less ethereal or astral; this is the 2nd Root-Race.

In the 3rd Root-Race it becomes a more dense form of Astral or ethereally physical. At this stage man is sweat-born; later, egg-born from androgynous parents. At first the "chick" was itself androgynous; later, some were born female and others male. This gives us at least some idea of how the separation of the sexes took place. In Genesis the androgynous state is indicated in the words: "male and female created he them."

The time had come to enter the material plane, the ethereally physical becomes physical. This sounds mysterious, but at least it is no more mysterious than the materializations that can be made to take place in the seance room, or by an Adept. Mankind thus far is the product of a creative hierarchy called the Lunar Pitris. He is still an animal albeit slowly becoming sufficiently perfected to be the vehicle for the manifestation of higher faculties. He is said to be "mindless," guided by instinct, unselfconscious and irresponsible. At this stage occurs what is called the "sin of the mindless." Apes were produced by crossing with some species not destined to become human in this manvantara. In S. D. II, p. 185 it is shown that the responsibility for this rests with those "Sons of Wisdom" who refused to incarnate in the early 3rd Race.

To become truly human requires the assistance of the more evolved. These more evolved ones we call the Manasaputras, a word that means literally sons of mind or mind-born sons. It is a name given to our higher Egos before their incarnation in mankind. (See Glossary of *The Key to Theosophy*). For a time before incarnating, the Manasaputras are said to overshadow nascent humanity. This illustration may help: The human infant would remain mindless were it to survive on some island surrounded by animals only. It needs the care and mental stimulus provided by its parents and fellows. The role of the parent is that of the Manasaputras, a role undertaken willingly in both cases. There is a karmic obligation in both cases. This is a difficult subject to summarize, but to continue — after studying the sources given and S. D. II, 197-8 — after the separation man was able to create creatures like unto himself, but not Man the Thinker: "An act which forced the creative gods, compelled by Karmic law, to incarnate in *mindless* men." This is the descent of the Manasaputras

mentioned at the beginning. The same facts underlie the story of the theft of the creative fire from Heaven by Prometheus.

With this picture in mind, let us see how the same facts are concealed in the story of the Garden of Eden. Not that one can feel competent to elucidate all the meanings, but one can at least point out some aspects. The whole story is often referred to as "The Fall," and to the student of occultism it is part of a greater drama called "The Fall of the Angels." In Christendom Satan and his hosts are "Fallen Angels" who rebelled and were cast out of Heaven.

The Fall of the Angels is a forceful and dramatic word picture of an incident in the great evolutionary drama. The Manasaputras are the Fallen Angels and so are we all. Those who rebelled were the Angels who delayed in fulfilling their karmic obligation to incarnate. They are satanic only in the sense that their descent inaugurated in man the battle between the Higher and the Lower Self.

The "Tree" is the symbol of the Sacred Knowledge, and is guarded by a dragon or serpent: that is by an Initiate or Hierophant.

The God of the first chapter of Genesis is the Logos. The Lord God of the second chapter is the Creative Elohim. (S. D. II, 1-2, footnote). It is only Adam Kadmon, the First Adam, who is made in the Image of God. The Adam of Chapter II, the Second Adam, is not so made until he eats of "The Fruit." The Third Adam is the Race separated, and his story begins with Chapter four (S. D. II, 46).

The Angels or Manasaputras "fell" or descended because they desired to acquire knowledge, to KNOW (S. D. I, 417). They preferred the "curse" of incarnation to seeing the misery of the beings below (even though unconscious) through the semi-passive energy of the too Spiritual Creators, for to become a God one must be born human, not angelic. Perhaps the foregoing explains the words: "They of the *flaming sword* (or animal passions) had put to flight the Spirits of Darkness." (S. D. II, 62) Not only is man more than an animal because there is a God in him, but he is more than a God because there is an animal in him. The mental torpor and unconsciousness of the first two races and the first half of the third, is symbolized in the second chapter of Genesis, by *the deep sleep of Adam* (S. D. II, 181). During this state the "rib" was taken from the side of Adam, with which the Lord God formed the woman. The story of Adam's rib may refer to the boneless becoming a Race with bones.

The "Sons of Will and Yoga" are born before the complete separation of the sexes, " 'matured in the man-bearing eggs produced by the power (Kriyasakti) of the holy sages' of the early Third Race" (S. D. II, 181). They are the "Holy Seed grain" of the future Arhats, Mahatmans and Saviors of humanity, "who, at their zenith, were described as, 'towering giants of godly strength and beauty, and the depositaries of all the mysteries of Heaven and Earth' " (S. D. II, 171-2). The Gods and Heroes of the Fourth and Fifth Races are "the *deified images of these men of the Third*" Race (S. D. II, 172). The reason for the expulsion from the Garden of Eden is said to be the jealousy of the Lord God (S. D. II, 282) at seeing the man of clay becoming a creator in his turn like the animals (S. D. I, 264). Another reason given is that in incarnating the Angels are accused of divulging the mysteries of heaven to the "daughters of men" and are therefore expelled. In trying to understand this we must remember that Adam and Eve in the Garden are not yet corporeal; they are in an intermediate state. It is only when they become corporeal and are "separated" that they are said to be expelled from the Celestial Eden.

With the foregoing to help us we may return to the story in Genesis: "And the Lord God [the creative Elohim or Jehovah] commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The Pitris feared lest they lose dominion over their creatures. "Now the serpent [the Manasaputra] was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God [the Pitris] had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath *God* said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the

garden? [or was it only the Pitris who said so?] Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." This relates to the intermediate nature of man; the woman being later in the order of creation is the nascent soul. "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked." In other words, they had become self-conscious. Whereafter: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." They became corporeal.

Here follow three verses telling of the curse and the expulsion from the garden. Even the Manasaputras or Sons of Will and Yoga are included in the Curse. We will recall the story of Prometheus who was also cursed and bound to a rock, and this may be interpreted to mean that thereafter he was karmically linked with those upon whom he had bestowed the heavenly fire. Just as in Genesis the Serpent (or Manasaputra) is karmically linked with those whom he had persuaded to eat of the Tree in the midst of the Garden.

The Curse against Adam and against Eve is that, now, being responsible beings with free will, they must learn by experience and abide the results of their mistakes, until they return to the Source from which they came "bringing their sheaves with them" or until the promise is fulfilled and they become Gods knowing Good and Evil.

Remembering that the role of the Manasaputra is the same as that of the Saviors of Mankind, the language of the New Testament takes on new meaning: "Who for us men and our salvation came down from heaven . . . and was made man and was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate" (i.e. the powers of this world). Both being karmically linked with those whom they have enlightened, they suffer vicariously until redemption or at-one-ment is achieved.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Prepared as an introductory lecture for the class in Architectural Appreciation, Theosophical University. ([return to text](#))
2. Page numbers refer to *Studies in Occult Philosophy* unless otherwise noted. ([return to text](#))

THINGS OF THE SPIRIT (1) — *E. A. Holmes*

There exists in the heart of man an intuition that somewhere in the world there is a body of teaching which sets forth the structure, the characteristics, the operations, of the Universe and therefore of man who is an inseparable child of the Universe; and this body of teaching, which actually does exist and which man's intuition has always told him exists somewhere, we Theosophists call today Theosophy. It is not new, it belongs to every age, it has always existed, and the greatest spiritual Sages and Seers of mankind have taught it in various forms according to the times in which they lived and worked.

These encouraging words, broadcast over the radio from Holland by the late Dr. Gottfried de Purucker, strike an answering chord in our own hearts. Deep down within us we feel that beyond the worldly clashing of everyday thoughts, beyond the claims and counterclaims of dogma and brain-mind opinion lies Truth, serene in its simplicity. Beyond the storms, and intervals between the storms of our so-called civilization, we feel there must be a haven where the buffeting rollers cannot reach, where peace reigns supreme, where the spiritually aching hearts of men can find lasting solace.

This same innate conviction was expressed by James Hilton in his book *Lost Horizon*, where a green valley in the remote fastnesses of the Himalayas is imagined as a spot chosen by Nature for the preservation of all that is best in humanity, and where the highest ideals of men may come to fruition.

We may differ in our individual conceptions of this idea, but if we reject it completely then surely is our outlook circumscribed; then indeed do we resign ourselves to soul-less system, without hope, without objective.

It is related of H. P. Blavatsky, who instigated the modern Theosophical Movement, that she once returned from the streets of a great European capital with her eyes streaming with tears, and with an inner agony that such great multitudes of unensouled men and women should walk in "emptiness, prejudice, ignorance, lack of knowledge, lack of wisdom," trying to fill the aching void of their hearts from outside, and not from the springs of divinity which lay within themselves.

We say that this body of truth does exist and that this haven of spiritual peace is there for us to claim. We have but to give the right knock at the doors of our hearts. We have also to await the coming of that homesickness which alone turns the face of the prodigal son towards his ancient source.

Truth is an attribute of the Universe, and therefore of man. It is a condition, the essence of his mind, soul, and heart. It is not a matter of words, they can only delimit it, circumscribe it, bring it to our notice. Our own understanding must conceive the idea itself.

Theosophy can give us the science, the philosophy, the religion of this body of truth, can point the course towards the ultimate haven, but it cannot pour wisdom into our heads, it cannot carry us to the safe shores. We have to work out our own salvation, each individual one of us, guided by this body of universal truths.

The Theosophist then, no less than the Christian, the Mohammedan, the Jew, the Hindu, has to enter upon his pilgrimage to the Celestial City, the spiritual Mecca, the bosom of Abraham, the slopes of Meru. Truth is one whole, but its aspects are many. "In my Father's house are many mansions."

The road is steep and stony, but the stones are worn smooth by those who have gone on ahead, the Sages and Seers of recorded history, and of history unrecorded. We do not lack guides, but there are no porters on the Path. We have to carry our own burdens, find our own foothold.

Just as advancing stages of a journey into the hills bring increasing vision of an expanding horizon, so shall we progress towards spiritual

perception, the more we aspire towards the heights.

There are three stages of visioning truth, say our Teachers, three stages of inner opening. First an awakening to the material beauties of Nature, when the hills and the fields, the waving trees and the running brook, the wind on the heath, and the flower by the wayside rouse strange response in our quieted hearts; when we sense the reverence of Nature towards eternity, "nature in silent prayer." The garb of Nature, though physical, is none the less holy. We see infinitude in her infinite details. We visualize the world of the insect making its laborious way in a forest of tall trees, trees which to us are but waving leaves of grass. Our imagination soars with the lark pouring out its soul in song.

In learning the lessons which Nature teaches in this primary school of the Mysteries, we come to observe, to become alive, to rouse ourselves from the somnolence of mind. There is a somnolence of mind which may be complete, though outwardly we appear full of vigor. Too often that which passes for liveliness is physical escapism, a mad scramble from responsible thought, from vague yearnings of the heart towards finer and nobler things, things as yet unknown, and therefore distrusted.

This increasing awareness of life around us, this heightened intensity of our lives, will enlarge our sympathies with our fellow men. The greatest mystic is the practical mystic, the one who puts spiritual insight into practice by way of more intense concern with the travails of fellow human beings. This does not mean a fussing over and a prying into their affairs, but the Path of Attainment is fundamentally the path of increasing ability to serve mankind.

There is a distinction between a mystic and a visionary. A true mystic identifies himself or herself more and more with the Universal Self, and therefore with you and me. The mystic leads the life, and thereby knows the doctrine. The visionary seeks the doctrine and may lose the Purpose. The mystic is of necessity a visionary, considered from our worldly standpoint, but the visionary is not necessarily a true mystic.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish," and the antidote to a visionary tendency is not the "matter of fact." Many, indeed perhaps most of the world's great inventions and blessings have been conceived by so-called visionaries. That winged mercury which carries our mail across the street or round the world, at our will, the humble postage stamp, was not invented by the "practical" men of the Post Office. It was first suggested by a mere layman, and was rejected by those same "practical" men who had their eyes too close to the regulations to see the fulness of what they sought to regulate.

It has been said, not by a Theosophist in this case, that there are some Christians who are so absorbed in spreading Christianity that " they fail to give a thought to Christ. It may be that we Theosophists can be so busy studying the ancient wisdom that we fail to see this very wisdom spread all around us — divinity in the heart life of all things — in the color and aroma of a rose, as in the majestic roll of the Atlantic swell, or the glory of an autumn sky.

Having become alive to nature, having become "naturalized," as Thoreau terms it, then we shall learn to discard many of our worldly cares.

What is life if full of care

You have no time to stand and stare.

These are words of W. H. Davies, the Welsh poet, journeyman, tramp, vagabond, hobo. It is precisely this standing and staring which is implied in the second stage of visioning truth, a stilling of the physical, and of the emotions, and of the brain-mind; a looking out from the windows of the soul-mind.

When we are physically still we become as one with our physical surroundings. The wee timorous creatures of the wilds accept us as part of their physical world; the robin plays around our feet seeking its food in the upturned soil which this still, kindly giant apparently lifted for the very purpose.

How much more at home shall we feel in the inner realms of nature when we have learned to still our worldly desires and impulses; when our anxieties are seen at last as phantoms without substance; when, performing all our duties, honoring all our liabilities, we can throw off cares for what the future holds, and say in truth: "Thy will be done, O Lord, not mine."

Then we shall see that the mountains, the fields, the wind on the heath and the sound of the running stream are but illusions, shadows, phantoms hiding inner realities. We shall realize that all this beauty which lies around us is but an outward effect of an inner cause; images, vestiges, reflections of an immanent THAT. "We carry a better likeness of our friends in our hearts than their countenances, save at precious seasons, manifest to us," wrote George Macdonald.

As we approach this second stage we shall begin to see the Thought embodied in the flower, hear the inaudible behind the audible. With Siegfried we shall rise from the slain dragon and comprehend the inner natures of the birds and beasts of the forest. We shall live in a world of Idea.

We are told by modern scientists that physical substance is in reality not solid, but is a mass of holes, in the vast spaces of which live and move the atoms. We are also told that the size of the atom is infinitesimal compared with the size of the space in which it moves. Now it is submitted that if we assume the orthodox view of matter being in one plane of existence only — that only physical matter exists — then we ought to see in the mass of any object not an agglomeration of atoms, but an agglomeration of spaces.

A wooden desk appears solid because to our physical perceptions those spaces between the atoms are themselves "solid," though in the atom consciousness these spaces may assume the appearance of emptiness. So likewise we may imagine that the "empty" space of our own universe, seen in the eyes of a Divine Cosmic Being, is solid with evolving substance, idea, thought.

The Universe is a manifestation of divine thought. All things are concreted thought, from the amoeba in the pond to the vast spaces of the universe. There are material thoughts, and there are spiritual thoughts, and there is an infinite range of degrees in between. And all these degrees subsist in the same object at the same time. They are all co-existent, each in its own sphere of ethereality, each on its own plane of existence.

When we shall have fully attained to this second stage of visioning truth, we shall see characteristics objectively, which at present we look upon as intangibilities. We shall be using our senses in their highest perceptions in order to see beyond the veils which they themselves represent.

First we see the beauties of Nature and revel in their wonder. Then we recognize that this external beauty is but a mask, hiding the truth from us. Beyond the veil of physical matter lie the veils of ethereal matter, and beyond the veils of ethereal matter lies — What?

The third stage of visioning truth is union with the Divine. "Happy the man who can understand this third step," observes G. de P., and perhaps we presume too much in criticizing the critics.

History and literature are full of the narratives of those men and women who have attained to spiritual greatness by seeking personal lowliness, meekness — St. Theresa, Jan van Ruysbroek, Jacob Boehme, and hosts of others, not perhaps full Masters of Wisdom, but advanced devotees on the Path.

There have been degrees of such enlightenment nearer home. Listen to the late H. G. Wells: "At times, in the silence of the night and in rare lonely moments, I come upon a sort of communion with myself, and something great that is not myself" (*First and Last Things*).

When the devotee reaches this stage in its fulness, he sees the Oneness of all things. For greater or lesser moments of time he is one with the mountains, one with the fields, one with the rippling brook. No longer are these shadows, phantoms of the Real, but living expressions of the

Divine Spirit. "When we attain this stage of evolution," says Thoreau, "the heavens will verily be our roof, the seasons will minister to us, the wind will be our breath, and our serenity will be the serenity of Nature itself" (*Week on the Concord*).

We shall have pointers on the way. We shall perhaps glimpse the far shores in some feeling of spiritual elation evoked by a passage of music, in the grip of some lines from the poets, in a glimpse of Nature through the brush of a great artist or the chisel of a master sculptor. There are films, films of popular entertainment even, which can momentarily uplift us, causing us to leave the cinema spiritually refreshed.

Nor do we need outside stimulus to cause the soul of man to try its wings. Occasionally there come unbidden to the mind flashes and glimpses of past events, idealized now, or rather, seen in their inmost essence for one fraction of a second, yet their aroma will last out the day.

The serenity of Nature itself — this then is the very haven for which we have been seeking, the far country to which our body of truth points the way. How shall you and I attain it? "It is through the human that we must climb up to the divine," wrote George Macdonald, through the human qualities of compassion and the understanding heart, just as it was through the animal virtues of courage, fidelity, and venturesomeness that we attained to humanhood in long ages past. We shall not approach the divine until our hearts hunger for it; then nothing in heaven or hell can prevent us from reaching it.

Let us remember, when our hearts are low and we begin to despair of ourselves and of mankind, that beyond the worldly clashing of everyday thoughts, beyond the claims and counterclaims of dogma and brain-mind opinion, lies Truth — and truth will remain when all the tumult has died down. Beyond the buffeting storms of life lies the safe haven.

These thoughts are not escapism. We cannot escape from that which

we are, but we can escape from what we are not.

I have tried, Mr. Chairman, in a woefully inadequate fashion, to describe the Indescribable and to point out some of the landmarks which Theosophy, and Theosophists down the ages, have erected for our guidance. I believe that we ought to keep some such picture before our minds, however vague this one may be, for it is true. And being true, our hearts will recognize it, and gradually, piece by piece, will fill in the details, so that in the fulness of time the whole canvas will be unfurled before us. Then, in a joy of recognition, we shall move forward to claim that which is our own.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Condensed from a talk given at Liverpool, England. ([return to text](#))

[The Theosophical Forum](#)

THEOSOPHICAL LIGHT ON ATOMS — *Ronnie Beach*

Atoms have been aptly described by modern science as being the building blocks of the Universe, while scientists in their investigations on atomic structure have more closely approached the theosophical concept of "As above, so below" and admitted that structurally an atom is patterned like a miniature solar system. The central nucleus of protons and neutrons have been likened to a central sun or suns around which revolve their accompanying electrons, just as the various planets of a solar system revolve around their central sun; and it is now postulated that the Universe is a dynamic rather than a material one with these protons and electrons considered to be centers of energetic forces, with matter and energy being convertible one into the other. Physicists in conducting certain experiments with cosmic rays now believe that they have witnessed the conversion of energy into matter, while the conversion of matter into atomic energy is now common knowledge. Another extremely interesting fact is the theory put forward by Dr. Dirac suggesting that the so-called empty spaces between electrons and their protonic centers are not empty spaces at all but are "thickly populated by an infinite number of ordinary negative electrons packed together in a very regular and uniform way." This theory is very significant and suggests the Theosophical doctrine of the "fulness of the seeming void" with the visible or positive electron but a "bubble" or "hole" whirling through a sea of negative electrons or space. Thus is demonstrated the fact that it is space which is full or solid, and these whirling centers of energy or worlds which are the "holes" in this space. The negative electrons which are visible space may perhaps be worlds in Pralayaic rest while the positive or activated ones are the manifested worlds or physical vehicles of the consciousness-centers working in and through them.

But, science, however far advanced in both theory and experimentation, goes only a small part of the way, penetrating only

the outer garment of the Universe, declining to agree with occult science that these atoms are but the physical bodies of living entities and should when considered in the light of these ensouling entities be more aptly termed life-atoms or living atoms of space both visible and invisible, being present on every plane of manifested existence, and all pursuing their own appropriate evolutionary journey. Hence the idea that there is life everywhere and that there is no such thing anywhere as inanimate or dead matter. These life-atoms are on every plane of existence in appropriate kind to each particular plane, being life-atoms only relative to their own plane of being, and similarly an ordinary material atom would only be considered so on this particular plane of existence. What would appear as an atom on one plane of manifestation would become as a solar system to some lower or inferior one. An atom therefore is only a term for a condition of manifested existence which is equal to the building block of any one particular hierarchy or plane. One modern scientist (Le-maitre) has drawn a close analogy here by suggesting that the whole Universe originally may have consisted of a single gigantic "super-atom" in which all the matter and energy of the universe was concentrated. With the explosion of this super-atom, he further suggests that there then commenced the beginnings of the Universe as we now know it. This idea is very suggestive of the slumbering Cosmic atom, the "Egg of Brahma" which at the dawn of the new Manvantara burst forth into further manifestation, and finally became the Universal Solar System that it now is. Thus even a Universal Solar System or Egg of Brahma may be pictured as a super-gigantic atom of a Galactic System, and a life-atom in some Parabrahmic Entity. Again it may be that what would represent a Monad in one hierarchy, would represent merely a life-atom to one above it, and so from a certain point of view a Monad is also an atom. G. de P. expresses this fact so poetically when he explains that "Monads are spiritual droplets or atoms of SPACE, or component drops of the shoreless Ocean of spacial Being."

Thus the terms Gods, Monads, Atoms are all merely relative to this "shoreless Ocean of spacial Being," and all fundamentally of the same

structure, and a life-atom on one plane may be a God or a Monad to those far below it, and an atom of material may also be a living body or solar system to some consciousness-center far below the human.

A life-atom is also composed of seven principles with its visible physical vehicle and six others invisible to us even as we ourselves are constructed. Similarly, breaking up the physical atom into its component parts of a central nucleus of protons which can be compared to a central sun and its attendant electrons which are the planetary family of the atomic solar system. These central protons or proton would according to analogy also be sevenfold as are the globes of our solar chain with only the physical globe or proton visible, while the others are invisibly placed on other planes. Similarly with the planetary electrons which would also be septenary, while upon these minute globes or worlds would dwell still more infinitesimal life of an appropriate nature. So then, the story of the atom is also that of the Kosmos, the one being a miniature of the other, and the adventures of a life-atom may well be a duplicate of those of a God only on a correspondingly smaller scale, for one is the reflection of the other, while the aim of all this evolutionary drama is ever the same. It is that of self-directed evolution, acting always as the guiding force and unfolding and expressing that which was in latency in a never ending series of becoming.

It is this shining forth of the innate Swabhavic qualities that creates the different types of elements, of which on our Globe D there are 92 known by science as native to this earth. Recently, however, two more named Neptunium and Plutonium have been manufactured artificially through experimentation in nuclear fission, thus producing 94 known elements. Each element has a different atomic number and a different atomic weight, Uranium being the heaviest or highest atomic number, and also the most unstable structurally, and the one found by modern physicists to be the most suitable for nuclear fission. In terms of Theosophical doctrine, however, this means that this particular element has commenced to disintegrate, thus rendering it more highly radio-active, less material and more energetic. When an atom is

comparatively young in its evolutionary development, it is still growing and becomes electrically hungry, thus capturing electrons which come within its orbit. When it is maturing and growing older, that is, when it is growing nearer to its evolutionary goal, it commences to shrink and break up, emitting one or more of its electrons as it commences disintegration, and producing what is known chemically as an ionized or mutilated atom. Young atoms are seeking food, and become electrically hungry, well integrated and stable atoms are those which have reached about the middle point of their evolution, while the more unstable ones such as uranium are aging atoms whose life forces are commencing to withdraw and whose structure begins breaking up. It may possibly be that the two new elements which have so recently been artificially manufactured by science, have already disintegrated so far as to have disappeared in their old atomic structure and have been transmuted into some lighter atomic elements. It is really all a process of an atom acquiring more electrons as its ensouling entity involves and clothes itself more and more deeply into matter, and as this entity reaches the point where it again turns towards its spiritual source, it slowly sheds these electrons and breaks up into finer and more ethereal matter. It also follows that what happens to an atom also happens to a human body, a globe or a solar system, and therefore all these various grades of matter are radio-active and chemically subject to this transmutation into finer materials at a certain period in their evolutionary development. Conversely, when spirit is involving itself down into matter, the opposite procedure occurs, and instead of the atoms breaking up into finer materials, they actually add to their structure and become heavier than formerly. This is the period of the downward arc as contrasted with that of the upward arc which our Globe Earth has just commenced traversing, and this is why the atoms of our present heavier elements are now beginning to break up and become radio-active.

Man also is a radio-active entity emitting forth constant streams of life-atoms on all planes of his existence. Indeed it would decidedly surprise the average human being were he to realize the immensely powerful

forces of which he is composed in all his various vehicles. But the atoms of his body are so well balanced that he is able to use and inhabit this vehicle without being at all conscious of the fact that he himself is an enormous source of potential atomic energy.

Solar Systems also are radio-active, and so carrying the analogy further and likening our solar system to an atom of space, it may be that when the planets or electrons of one solar system are captured by those of another in a similar manner to which ordinary physical atoms become ionized and their electronic structure altered by other electrically hungry atoms, these planetary captures are then transmuting that solar system into another element even as occurs in the chemical field of physical atoms. Transmutation from one element or condition into another is thus a fundamental law in a Universe of interlocking hierarchies of endless streams of Beings who are eternally becoming. In the chemical laboratories of the Gods are created and transmuted the various Kosmic elements which combine to produce the myriad forms of manifestation, while every transmutation brings the evolving entity or consciousness-center working through these elements a little closer to its divine source. Whether considering an atom of infinitely smaller size than ours or one of infinitely larger or Cosmic proportions, the same fundamental process may be seen at work: first descending down into matter further and becoming heavier in structure, then evolving forth radio-actively in the endeavors of Spirit to release itself from the various matter forms in which it is veiled. Thus the Kosmos may be depicted as an eternal struggle between Spirit and Substance or between force and matter for balance or equilibrium, while out of this continual interaction Consciousness emerges on ever higher levels of Being than before.

Atoms therefore can be of any size, stretching into infinity in either the exceedingly small or the extremely large, and can act as a connecting link or laya center between any two planes of space both inner and outer. It is through these atomic laya centers that the various streams of consciousness-centers travel from one plane to another during their evolutionary peregrinations. Therefore an atom can both peregrinate

and be peregrinated through, for in the realm of pure consciousness size, structure, and place are of no consequence, and it is the ultimate of all living entities or consciousness-centers to divest Nature of her mayavic gown of atomic unreality that they may become self-consciously at one with the Divine Being who called them forth and from whose consciousness they are projected.

The Theosophical Forum

THE WORLD-TREE — *Allan J. Stover*

Symbols chosen or adopted for important occasions often have a way of revealing truth beyond the knowledge or wish of those using them. This is so with the Christmas Tree, for Christmas, coming at the sacred season of the winter solstice brings with it folk memories of the ancient mysteries; and the evergreen tree decorated with lights, fruits, stars and glittering strings of tinsel is the World Tree, a symbol of the universe, with its stars and planets, and the shining pathway of the Milky Way. It belongs to the Mysteries and the cycle of initiation, and traces of its existence may be found all over the world.

It matters not that no documentary evidence directly connects the Christmas Tree with the World Tree from which it was adopted, or that puerile explanations trace the custom of decorating an evergreen tree at Christmas time to the beginning of the seventeenth century, or that old tales tell of the miraculous blooming of a thorn tree on the anniversary of Christ's birth. The symbol itself is ageless and belongs to all people, but once the church adopted the decorated tree as a symbol of Christmas its pagan origin was promptly forgotten.

Long ago, when the Ancient Mysteries still lingered in the hearts of the Northern People, it was the custom to go into the snowy forest on the eve of the winter solstice and gather in a great circle about a pine from whose branches blazing pine-knots were suspended. In the fragrant light of these torches beautiful and significant ceremonies were performed. Imagine the scene: the dark gloomy forest, the pure white snow underfoot and overhead the twinkling stars. The flaming torches were the great souls whose light illumines all things, while the cones fastened to the branches were the ordinary men and women. Finally wreaths of pine were lighted and sent whirling down the hillside into the valley where the people were gathered, whirling in from outer space as a comet or a peregrinating soul comes whirling in from the spaces of space to seek imbodiment in a new solar system.

The significance of the Christmas Tree as an emblem of the hierarchy of manifested life is given by G. de Purucker in the following beautiful words.

Have you never heard of the World-Tree with its roots in the realms of spirit and whose branches are the great suns and systems of suns? This World-Tree began in the beginning of this Cosmic Age to bring forth all the stellar hosts. Now the Winter Solstice is the beginning of the cosmic New Year, and so these northern peoples, knowing some of the ancient truths, celebrated the cosmic event with the Christmas tree. It symbolizes the World-Tree, and the lights are the suns that bestrew the deeps of Space, hinting to us the message from the divinities who constantly give us the light of love, the light of mind, the light of hope eternal. But so far have we fallen from the wisdom of our forefathers that now the Christmas tree has become merely a sign of festivity, except for the few who preserve its significance in their hearts. — *Wind of the Spirit*

One of the most remarkable conceptions of the cosmic tree is that of the Ash Yggdrasil, called the God-bearer because of its deep and sacred significance. It is both the tree of the Universe and of Time. It has three roots: the first is fixed in Asgard the dwelling of the Gods, the second in the Jotunheim the abode of the frost giants, and the third reaches into the gloomy realms of the underworld. Beside each root is a sacred well; near the first root Urdur, the Norn or fate of the past, waters Yggdrasil with the knowledge of past experience. In the land of the Frost Giants, Werdandi, Norn of the ever-present-time, sprinkles the World Tree with transcendent wisdom drawn from Mimer's well. It was at this well that Odin himself was required to place his eye in pledge in order to obtain a drink, for such wisdom as Mimer's well holds must never be misused. In the underworld Skuld, Norn of the future, draws from the stream of Hwergelmir such wisdom as even Odin knows not of. So the three Norns of the past, present and future are the guardians of the tree Yggdrasil, and approaching, enveloped in a dark veil, they daily

sprinkle it with the waters of life.

The crown of Yggdrasil reaches high into the heavens and overshadows even Walhalla, the Devachan of the Norse. The branches spread over the whole universe, and all the kingdoms of nature inhabit the tree each at its proper level or zone. The tree, in fact, is the solar system itself with all its systems of planes and sub-planes and orders of life of many and various kinds.

It was on this tree of our home universe that Odin hung nine nights and offered himself to Himself:

I know that I hung
On a wind-rock'd tree
Nine whole nights,
With a spear wounded,
And to Odin offered
Myself to MYSELF —
On that tree
Of which no one knows
From what root it springs.

A theosophist sees in the symbol of the Tree a reference to the Earth chain of seven globes with their serial planes and sub-planes of existence, each bearing its appropriate lives. Analogically it is also the occult structure of man, or of an atom or even of the galaxy.

On the other side of the world, in Burma, the Bamboo is decorated and presents are piled about its base. There is also a myth among the Maoris of New Zealand that Heaven and Earth were once joined, and it became the duty of Tane-Mahuta the Forest God, to separate them so that light might fall upon the Earth. Taking the form of a gigantic tree he stood upon his head and with his feet uppermost forced the sky far above the Earth, where it has remained to this day.

The great myths of mankind should be studied wherever they appear, for different facets of truth are given according to the race and time. Altogether they begin to form a mental conception having volume and

mass. It is only then we begin to grasp the inner meaning of the myth.

Turning to the literature of ancient India we find in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Chap. XV) the following illuminating words:

Men say that the *Ashwattha*, the eternal sacred tree, grows with its roots above and its branches below, and the leaves of which are the *Vedas*; he who knows this knows the *Vedas*. Its branches growing out of the three qualities with the objects of sense as the lesser shoots, spread forth, some above and some below; and those roots which ramify below in the regions of mankind are the connecting bonds of action.

May it not be that the mystic tree represented upright in some instances and inverted in others has reference to the course of evolution downwards and involution upwards, and that like the interlaced triangles the complete symbol would include both positions?

According to the myths of Mexico a great cosmic tree forms the center of the universe, its branches supporting the clouds which supply the earth with life-giving rain while its roots are said to be immersed in a jar of primaeval waters.

Even classic Greece was not without its World Tree, for Hesiod, the Greek poet who lived about 600 b.c. states in *Works and Days* that after the destruction of the Second Race "Zeus the Father made a third generation of mortal men, a brazen race, sprung from ash trees." While the scholars have made sheer nonsense of these lines, every ancient people had their world tree and just as metals have been used to signify the yugas through which each race passes so various trees may well symbolize the greater races or ages of mankind. It is the most natural thing in the world to speak of one's family tree, for it expresses the organic unity of a stream of life and the interrelations of part to part, as no other emblem does.

That the many aspects of the cosmic tree myth found throughout the world are intimately related is shown in *The Secret Doctrine*:

The Norse Ask [or ash tree], the Hesiodic Ash-tree, whence issued the men of the generation of bronze, the Third Root Race, and the Tzite tree of the *Popol-Vuh*, out of which the Mexican *third* race of men was created, are all one.

and then she gives a challenge to the intuition:

But the Occult reason why the Norse Yggdrasil, the Hindu Asvattha, the Gogard, the Hellenic tree of life and the Tibetan Zampun, are one with the Kabalistic Sephirothal Tree, and even with the Holy Tree made by Ahura Mazda, and the Tree of Eden — who among the western scholars can tell? (II. 97)

When the room is darkened on Christmas eve, with only the colored lights on the tree aglow, the air vibrant with the peace and love of this sacred season; could we but know what flaming glories attend the coming into life of a new year, of a minor manvantara, then indeed the night might well be an initiation. This little tree decorated with loving hands is a reminder of that greater one, our universe "in whom we live and move and have our being."

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEVEN JEWELS IN THE BHAGAVAD-GITA — *Alexandra McLean*

... you will find these Seven Jewels in all the ancient scriptures, scattered about, it is true, but you will find them if you look for them. — G. de Purucker

To Theosophists the Gita needs no introduction, but it may be we have not considered it with perceptions attuned to the "seven fundamental principles of knowledge," the "Seven Jewels," searching within its words and between its lines till we find these precious gems of truth embodied there.

The Sapta Ratnani (1) (the Seven Jewels) are said to be so fundamental that they hold true throughout the universe, inner and outer, and in all its parts, from the lowest to the highest. They have been called "the structure and carpentry of the Universe." We are told that even the Masters and Nirmanakayas study them with relation to further knowledge. These Seven Jewels are in truth seven keys to the vastness of our own true Self, opening the way to seven channels of perception with expanding vistas of profound significance. Let us enumerate and briefly consider these seven basic laws:

1. PUNARJANMAN: rebirth, reimpodiment, reincarnation and regeneration — cyclic recurrence.
2. KARMAN: the undeviating law of Cause and Effect, the reaping of that which we have sown and the sowing of that which we shall reap.
3. LOKAS and TALAS: Hierarchies and hierarchical structure, through which everything evolves in its manifestation. Through a Tala a descent into matter, through a Loka an ascent into spirit.
4. SWABHAVVA: Individuality; the inner and real characteristic of every life-form, from an acorn to a galaxy: its own inherent powers; that which it unfolds; that which it has become and is.

5. PRAVRITTI and NIVRITTI: evolution and involution; the flowing forth or unfoldment, and the flowing back or infoldment — at all times a dual process.

6. AMRITA-YANA and PRATYEKA-YANA: the two paths of evolution: the "Pathway of Immortality," and the "Pathway of each for himself." The first path is the way followed self-consciously by the Great Ones, the Buddhas of Compassion. They work not for themselves alone, but take countless lesser entities with them, helping them in their evolutionary unfoldment, for all is One and every part is linked with every other part. The second and lesser path is the way of those who seek peace and wisdom for themselves, and who at the Moment of Choice will become Pratyeka-Buddhas.

7. ATMA-VIDYA: Self-Knowledge, or the Divine Universal Knowledge.

To consider the *Bhagavad-Gita* by the clear and vitalizing light of the Jewels is to gain a deeper understanding of the poem. In the second chapter we find Krishna instructing Arjuna in the doctrines of Rebirth, Reimbodiment, Reincarnation — the first of the Seven Jewels:

As a man throweth away old garments and putteth on new,
even so the dweller in the body, having quitted its old mortal
frames, entereth into others which are new. . . .

Both I and thou have passed through many births, O harasser of
thy foes! Mine are known unto me, but thou knowest not of
thine.

A solemn impression of the second Jewel, Karman, is found in the awe-inspiring spectacle of the doomed multitudes rushing into the flaming mouths of Krishna in his divine form; and his majestic words give the key:

I am Time matured, come hither for the destruction of all these
creatures. Wherefore, arise! seize fame! Defeat the foe and
enjoy the full-grown kingdom! They have been already slain by
me; be thou only the immediate agent, O thou both-armed one.

And in the following words the Lord Krishna points out in simple and direct language the way of release from Karman:

Whatever thou doest, O son of Kunti, whatever thou eatest. whatever thou sacrificest. whatever thou givest, whatever mortification thou performest, commit each unto me. Thus thou shalt be delivered from the good and evil experiences which are the bonds of action; and thy heart being joined to renunciation and to the practice of action, thou shalt come to me.

We find the doctrine of Hierarchies, the Third Jewel, in Krishna's reference to "all worlds up to that of Brahman," in his description of the great Aswattha Tree, "with its roots above and its branches below"; and in the myriad manifestations of Krishna in the various beings from all the kingdoms of nature, and all the elements; from gods to spirits of the lower orders.

He says:

O son of Kunti, at the end of a kalpa all things return unto my nature, and then again at the beginning of another kalpa I cause them to evolve again. Taking control of my own nature, I emanate again and again this whole assemblage of beings, without their will, by the power of the material essence (prakriti) By reason of my supervision nature produceth the animate and inanimate universe; it is through this cause, O son of Kunti, that the universe revolveth.

The fourth Jewel, Swabhava, is subtle. We say the inner nature within a rose seed will always bring forth a rose and no other thing. Could we say the "swabhava" of *any* entity is the sum-total of all its previous evolutionary experiences, waiting in seed form and holding the potentials of the entities until the next manifestation? Good or bad, the one predominating will be locked within: the swabhava, ready to unfold through the laws of the fifth Jewel, Evolution-Involution.

Two thoughts that seem to indicate swabhava occur in Chapter Third:

But the wise man also seeketh for that which is homogeneous with his own nature.

All creatures act according to their natures; what then will restraint effect?

In Chapter Sixteenth Krishna discourses on the qualities of beings in this world: the two types of swabhava that beings may manifest: the godlike, and the demoniacal, enumerating some of the qualities of these two types:

. . . universal compassion, modesty, mildness; patience, power, fortitude, and purity; discretion, dignity . . . these are the marks of him whose virtues are of a godlike character. . . . Those who are born with the demoniacal disposition . . . they know not purity nor right behavior, they possess no truthfulness. . . . They indulge insatiable desires, are full of hypocrisy, fast-fixed in false beliefs through their delusions.

Yet, in our inmost, at the "heart of the heart of us," is the *divine* swabhava, which ultimately it is our duty and great glory to manifest.

In the Antecedent Words to his Recension of the *Gita*, Mr. Judge tells us that "the story of the Mahabharata can be taken as that of Man in his evolutionary development." Thus the entire counsel of Krishna to Arjuna — self-restraint, renunciation, devotion to the Omnipresent Spirit — by following which "the journey of thy mortal frame" is to be accomplished, and union with the Supreme attained, embodies the Fifth Jewel: the recession of the lower, material qualities, and the unfolding of the spiritual-divine. Through the discriminating action of the Higher Self comes spiritual discernment, leading to an ever more perfect evolution-involution. Spirit "involves" into matter, so that matter may evolve towards spirit.

So closely are the fifth and sixth Jewels interwoven, it is difficult to give a clear-cut example of the sixth: Amrita-Yana and Pratyeka-Yana, the two paths of evolution, but we cannot fail to see his meaning when Krishna says:

These two, light and darkness, are the world's eternal ways; by one a man goes not to return, by the other he cometh back again upon earth. No devotee, O son of Pritha, who knoweth these two paths is ever deluded; wherefore, O Arjuna, at all times be thou fixed in devotion.

and elsewhere:

As the ignorant perform the duties of life from the hope of reward, so the wise man, from the wish to bring the world to duty and benefit mankind, should perform his actions without motives of interest.

We are further told that pure devotion will lead us to freedom from attachment to the three great qualities: *sattva*, light or truth; *rajas*, passion or desire; and *tamas*, indifference or darkness. The qualities will manifest, but we shall be free from *attachment* to them; doing all for the Self which is all, thus giving true devotion to the One. This is the path of Amrita-Yana.

And now the Seventh Jewel, *Atma — Vidya*, Self — knowledge. Throughout the entire Song of the Blessed One, the Master is teaching his chela the way to Self-knowledge. Perhaps it is best summed up in the final discourse of Krishna:

It is impossible for mortals to utterly abandon actions; but he who gives up the results of action is the true renouncer. . . . A man's own natural duty, even though stained with faults, ought not to be abandoned. For all human acts are involved in faults, as the fire is wrapped in smoke. . . . Learn from me, in brief, in what manner the man who has reached perfection attains to the Supreme Spirit, which is the end, the aim, and highest condition of spiritual knowledge. . . . And having thus attained to the Supreme, he is serene, sorrowing no more, and no more desiring, but alike towards all creatures he attains to supreme devotion to me.

Krishna has encouraged and instructed his eager chela in the "structure and carpentry" of universal, divine Involution-Evolution. The chela — each of us who has seriously begun to follow the "Small Old Path" which leads to the goal of perfection — listening to Krishna, the Higher Self, is instructed in the constant flow and change of life-forms, of death and rebirth, and of regeneration through attaining Spiritual Knowledge. The two paths are pointed out, and we must choose which we will follow.

We find the final way to union with the Inner God on a field of battle, where we must overcome the lower with the Higher. With courage, devotion and right action, without attachment to results, with heart and mind intent on hearing and obeying the directions of Krishna, the Logos within, the final battle is won. Victory is ours. We come to the knowledge of One, and *in* one, devotion to All.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Ratna (Sk.) — a jewel. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

CHANGE — A PARADOX — *Hazel Minot*

Beware of change! For change is thy great foe. This change will fight thee off, and throw thee back, out of the Path thou treadest deep into viscous swamps of doubt. — *The Voice of the Silence*

I remember reading these lines long ago and thinking of the Old Man of the Sea whom some hero — was it Hercules or that inveterate wanderer Sinbad? — must overcome; and always the hero had to remember that whatever form his antagonist took, it would still be the Old Man of the Sea with whom he was struggling. The tale, almost forgotten, assumed new significance; and even the warning against change, linked in thought as it was with the story, became more understandable.

We all have our "Old Man of the Sea" — problems, habits, traits of character, or some other ball and chain that we would like to be free from — and quite often when we think we have won the mastery over any one of them, lo and behold, there the thing is again, only in another guise!

Is there a purpose, then, in all these masks of the quick-change artist? Must we forever meet the same antagonist in form after form if we would down him? Not forever, but certainly until we see beneath the panoply of change and recognize the fundamental sameness of that which wears the masks. And herein lies their purpose, for everything is sevenfold and nothing can be known completely until each aspect of its composite character is understood. Then indeed shall we hold the Ariadne's thread that can guide us through the maze of our own bewildering nature with its more than seven times seven.

Human nature being what it is, however, this quest for the real beneath the seeming can quite easily get out of hand and degenerate into a sort of "witch-hunt" in which every wholesome innovation is pounced upon as misleading, disruptive — a thing to be destroyed

before it can become contaminated.

Change is not always "the enemy." Sometimes it is man's best friend. Life is a constant expression of change, and would not be possible without it, whether that change be birth or death. Change means growth — physical, intellectual, spiritual — and the inability to change means stagnation and ultimate death.

Whatever we turn our hand to as a means of self-expression, be it the arts, sciences, philosophies — or just life — one rule holds good: Change. The finished product may completely veil the effort involved, but if it has achieved its goal, good has given way to better, and that to best.

This is true throughout Nature. What more lovely than an apple-tree in bloom! Yet those delicate blossoms must wither and die if we are to taste the fruit. The caterpillar lives his life, and probably finds it good as such lives go, but the beauty and color of wings, the power to fly hither and yon would be denied him were it not for the magic of change wrought during that seeming death in the cocoon. Shall man be less than these? He too must change: outgrow the happy irresponsibilities of childhood, experience the bitter with the sweet, die and be reborn again unnumbered times, if the man is to become a god.

Change — strange paradox! Whether we think of it as "friend" or "enemy" it is worth knowing better, for to understand Change is to understand ourselves.

The Theosophical Forum

THE BIRTH OF ZEN BUDDHISM — *Christmas Humphreys*

It is said — and what is tradition but truth in the robes of poetry? — that once, when the Buddha was seated with his Bhikkhus on the Mount of Holy Vulture a Brahma-Raja came to him and, offering him a golden flower, asked him to preach the Dharma. The Blessed One received the flower and, holding it aloft, gazed at it in perfect silence. After a while the Venerable Mahakasyapa smiled. Such, it is said, is the origin of Zen Buddhism. But as Dr. Suzuki points out:

This smile is not an ordinary one such as we often exchange on the plane of distinction; it came out of the deepest recesses of his nature, where he and Buddha and all the rest of the audience move and have their being. No words are needed when this is reached. A direct insight across the abyss of human understanding is indicated.

— *Essence of Buddhism*, p. 22

It is further said that the Wisdom which this smile revealed was handed down through the centuries by twenty eight successive Patriarchs, the Buddha himself being the first, and the last, the Indian philosopher Bodhidharma, who arrived in China in the middle of the sixth century a.d. and became the founder of the Zen School of Buddhism. Many of the intervening Patriarchs were mighty men in the world of Indian thought and Asvagosha, Nagarjuna and Vasu-bandhu, to name but three, will be honored as long as Indian wisdom is preserved.

The recorded history of Zen Buddhism is less romantic. Its origin, of course, is the Buddha's Enlightenment, for as the whole of Zen Buddhism exists as a vehicle for this direct Enlightenment, there would

without it be no Zen Buddhism and, in this present world of avidya, ignorance, no Zen.

This all but unutterable Wisdom, the fruits of his spiritual experience, the Blessed One taught to his chosen few disciples. Such as they understood they remembered; such as they remembered they handed down. In this state, two hundred years or more after the Passing, the Buddhist Canon began to be written down. But already the Sangha, the followers of the All-Enlightened One, were splitting into manifold sects, the grounds of cleavage being partly doctrinal and partly monastic discipline. Famous pundits are still debating the genesis of these various sects, and the dates at which and the reasons for which the Mahayana or Great Vehicle, as it called itself, began to diverge from the Hinayana, the Small Vehicle as it called the older School, or the Thera Vada, the Teaching of the Elders, as the latter called itself. To students of Zen, however, these niceties of historical research are of little importance, and of none to the man who has once, for a thousandth part of a second, known *satori*. For the blaze of light which floods the mind from its own eternal inwardness when thoughts of "this" and "that" are for the moment purged away illumines unforgettably one tiny corner of the Real, and history and all that is bound in time has little interest more. It is enough, therefore, that in the course of time the fertile Indian mind began to work on the basic principles of the Ancient Wisdom which the Buddha had once more presented to mankind. The Teaching spread, south to Ceylon, southeast to Burma, Siam, Cambodia, east into China, and thence to Korea and Japan, north into the locked and silent plateau of Tibet.

It seems to have reached China in the first century a. d. In what form it came is by no means clear, but the earliest Buddhist Scriptures to be translated into Chinese were a collection of sayings culled from a number of Sutras, or Discourses, the collection being known as *The Sutra of 42 Sections*, which may be described as a Hinayana work modified to express the views of Mahayana adherents. This was not Zen. It was, however, a prelude to its birth, for it was the Chinese genius working on the raw material of Indian thought which, with

contributions from Confucian and Taoist sources, produced, with Bodhidharma as mid-wife, the essentially Chinese School of Ch'an or, as the Japanese later called it, Zen Buddhism.

Suffice it to say that the two main schools of Buddhism are as the two sides of a coin. All that is relatively stressed in one is discoverable in the other in a less developed form; and the two are one in the sense that men and women are one, two sides of a human being. The Thera Vada, now to be found in Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Cambodia, is certainly the older School. It is more orthodox, clings harder to the wording of its Pali Canon, emphasizes moral philosophy and the prime importance of the individual's working out his own salvation before he attempts to "save" his neighbor or the world. If it is puritan in its cold insistence on character-building, it is yet suffused with the sweetness of a reasonable, unemotional pursuit of a Way which leads — did not the Blessed One prove it abundantly? — to the heart's desire, that peace which comes when the heart is empty of desire, and self is dead.

The Mahayana adopted all of this, but added upon these broad and, some say, all sufficient premises a vast erection of emotion-thought which flowered in time in the intuitive white light of Zen. The Indian mind was never satisfied with the teachings, moral and philosophical, of Thera Vada Buddhism; and soon the Precepts of right living were developed into principles of cosmic truth. The Buddha, from a man who attained Enlightenment, came to be viewed as the Principle of Enlightenment which dwells in all. As such his forms were multiplied, and fast on the heels of iconography came ritual; a moral philosophy became a religion. The metaphysical heights of Indian thought were climbed, equaled, and finally surpassed. The Bodhisattva, he who dedicates his life and the fruits of life to his fellow men, replaced the Arhat, he who strives for his perfection before he presumes to lead his brother on the Way. Compassion was raised to equality with Wisdom; the depth of the Thera Vada was turned to an expansion of interest which embraced all living things.

These changes are, so it seems to me, as inevitable as they are right if a

system of thought is to claim, as Buddhism claims, to be all embracing, and to supply all human spiritual needs. In the vast field of present Buddhism there is to be found religion, philosophy, metaphysics, mysticism, psychology, and much of the science which is claimed as a western discovery of the last few years. There is also room for the poetry, the love of nature and beauty and the sense of fun which is native to the Chinese character; and behind it all is a vast tradition of spiritual truth only part of which is ever recorded and little of which has ever appeared in a western tongue. In a general way, and one must generalize in the broadest terms, the Schools are as complementary as the night and day. The austerity of the Southern School is offset by the religious fervor of some of the northern sects, and the intensive-expansive, practical-mystical, developing-preserving, tendencies of the respective points of view are neither good nor bad, pure or impure Buddhism, but parts of an inseverable whole. If in the exuberance of spiritual thought some later teachers of the Mahayana developed methods and technique which seem to run counter to the Teaching of the Buddha as early recorded in the Pali Canon, the tolerant Buddhist mind would at least admit that extremist doctrines, such as those of the Pure Land School, may possibly be true, while reserving the right to hold, as I do hold, that it is difficult to see how they can fairly be labeled Buddhism. Yet the common ground of most of the Schools of Buddhism, North or South, is far, far larger than all their differences, and beyond all complementary emphasis on this or that particular doctrine is the direct, supreme, and to us ineffable Experience of the All-Enlightened One.

When Bodhidharma (Tamo to the Japanese) arrived in China, the Mahayana was still only partly developed, but the initial hostility to Buddhism, so notable on its first arrival, seems to have died down. The Chinese are a practical people and disliked both the celibacy and the begging habits of the Buddhist monks. A man should work for his living, they said, and part of his duty is to provide for the memory of his father and to raise up sons to care for his own. Moreover, they deeply distrusted the metaphysics of Indian thought as displayed in the

Sutras already translated, and although some of these Sutras, later found to be closely akin to Zen, such as the Vimalakirti, had already been translated by the famous Indian Buddhist, Kumarajiva, the Chinese needed a transference of Indian thought, itself into the Chinese idiom before Buddhism could be assimilated into their national life. In the result, it was left to the individual Chinese thinker to choose from the wealth of material such Sutras as seemed to him of value; and about such thinkers and their Commentaries upon some favored Sutra sprang up the manifold schools or sects which together in time amounted to Chinese Buddhism. Thus, for example, were the Tendai and the Kegon Schools developed respectively from the Madhyamika and Yogacharya Schools of Indian Buddhism, and thus about the Avatamsaka Sutra, introduced to the Chinese mind in the 5th century by Buddhahadra, was built up the School which later developed into Zen.

But the Chinese mind, essentially rationalist and humanist, though with its mystical feeling developed in Taoism, produced an immense change in the form of Buddha Dharma. From the luminous heights of Indian thought was developed an emphasis on inner values which at the same time had to express itself and be expressed in action and hard work. Wisdom to the Chinese thinker is never an escape from worldly life. As shown in the famous Cow-herding pictures, when the pilgrim has so controlled his lower self that he has reached the final goal, he does not linger there.

To return to the Origin, to be back at the Source —
already a false step this!

Far better it is to stay home,

. . . he comes out into the market-place;

Daubed with mud and ashes, how broadly he smiles!

There is no need for the miraculous power of the gods,

For he touches, and lo! the dead trees come into full bloom.

— *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, I, 365-6

Hence the exciting statement in that famous Chinese classic, *The Secret*

of the Golden Flower,

The holy science takes as a beginning the knowledge of where to stop, and
as an end, stopping at the highest good. Its beginning is beyond polarity and
it empties again beyond polarity. — p. 66

The concentration upon inner values and processes was soon to pervade all Schools of the Mahayana. As the sixth Chinese Patriarch of Zen in the 7th century taught

Our mind should stand aloof from circumstances and on no account should we allow them to influence the function of our mind.

And again, as illustrating this absolute idealism:

You should know that so far as Buddha-nature is concerned, there is no difference between an enlightened man and an ignorant one. What makes the difference is that one realizes it, while the other is ignorant of it.

A better illustration still, perhaps, is the famous story of the flag.

It happened one day, when a pennant was blown about by the wind, two Bhikkhus entered into dispute as to what it was that was in motion, the wind or the pennant. As they could not settle their difference I submitted to them that it was neither, and that actually what moved was their own mind.

— *Sutra of Wei Lang*, pp. 49, 27, and 24

It was easy, therefore, for the Chinese mind to adopt with enthusiasm the first verse of the *Dhammapada*, perhaps the most popular Scripture of all the Pali Canon. "All that we are is the result of what we have thought, it is made up of our thoughts. . . ." Man is indeed the product of his own past thought and actions, and it follows that his thoughts and actions today decide his condition tomorrow, and in the larger tomorrows of his later lives on earth.

The Chinese are concerned with processes, rather than with results. Things have their value, but all things are in a state of flux. Contentment of mind, therefore, is to be found in the flow of life itself, not in the buildings, either of hands or thoughts, which house that life for the space of a butterfly day or the brief span of the clay's mortality. Zen, therefore, with its insistence on direct experience, unmindful of the forms of wisdom from which the life too swiftly ebbs away, was extremely acceptable to the Chinese mind, and if this suitability has been emphasized it is because the Chinese are in a way the British of the East, and most of the attributes above described might as well be applied to the average Englishman.

This Mahayana development was, of course, of gradual growth, and it was in the midst of the process that Bodhidharma, "the bearded barbarian," arrived from India, and into the cross-currents of the stream of Chinese thought threw the hand-grenade of Zen. His four propositions which, even if the formula was produced later, summarized his purpose and technique, were as follows:

- A special transmission outside the Scriptures;
- No dependence upon words and letters;
- Direct pointing to the soul of man;
- Seeing into one's own nature.

In brief, a direct transmission of the Wisdom without depending on words, and the direct seeing into one's own nature.

At a time when some of the best brains of the country were translating and writing commentaries on the metaphysical scriptures of Indian Buddhism, this brutal frontal attack on the citadel of truth must have caused an enormous sensation. Hence Dr. Suzuki's phrase that Zen was the Chinese revolt against Buddhism. Yet it was not until the time of Hui-neng, a hundred and fifty years later, that Zen became a genuinely Chinese form of Buddhism, to have immense effect on the Chinese art of the T'ang Dynasty. It is to be observed, however, that none of this apparent extension of the original teachings was regarded as moving

away from them. Bodhidharma claimed to be returning to the spirit of the Buddha's teaching and if — and this is the very foundation stone of Zen — Buddhism is a record of Buddha's Enlightenment, he was right. It was those who petrified the flow of truth in the written word of the Scriptures who were slaying the Dharma, and Zen, from this point of view, was the dredging of a stream made foul with ritual and worship, with the niceties of logic and rational philosophy, and the debris of all manner of conceptual thought.

Our knowledge of Bodhidharma is largely derived from *The Records of the Transmission of the Lamp*, a book which, though written in 1004 a.d., is based on contemporary records now destroyed. Our second authority is *Biographies of the High Priests* by Tao-hsuan, compiled in 645 a.d. The records differ in detail, but the outline is clear.

Bodhidharma will live forever in the annals of Zen Buddhism for introducing into it the element of *satori*, the immediate experience of truth as distinct from understanding about it. Nor did he merely offer this original contribution to Chinese Buddhism; he lived it. He was born in south India — tradition says in Big Conjeeveram — and studied Buddhism under his teacher, Prajnatarā, for forty years. From Prajnatarā he acquired by merit the patriarchate of the Dhyana or Zen School, thus becoming the 28th Indian, as he was to become the 1st Chinese, Patriarch. On the death of his Teacher he sailed for China, arriving in 520 a.d. The Emperor Wu at once invited him to his capital, the modern Nanking. On his arrival the Emperor, a most devout Buddhist, began to boast of his good works. "I have built many temples and monasteries," he said. "I have copied the sacred books of the Buddha. I have converted Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, now what is my merit?" To which this silent, ferocious-looking Indian Buddhist replied, "None whatever, your Majesty!"

The Emperor, taken aback at this brutal answer, tried again. "What is to be considered as the First Principle of the Dharma?" he asked. "Vast Emptiness, and nothing holy therein," replied the Patriarch. "Who, then," asked the Emperor, not unreasonably, "now confronts me?" "I have no idea," said Bodhidharma. Thus, in a brief but historic

interview, was laid the foundation of a School which became the dominant sect of China, and is one of the two main schools of Japanese Buddhism, having enormously influenced both countries in their character, culture, art and philosophy.

Bodhidharma, having introduced in his own inimitable style the teaching and technique of Zen, retired to the country, and in the Shao Lin monastery meditated in silence for nine years. Finally there came to him a former Confucian scholar, by name Shen Kuang, who asked to be instructed in the Dharma. The Master took no notice. For seven days and nights the petitioner waited in the snow and finally, to prove to the obdurate teacher the life and death sincerity of his demand, he cut off his arm, and sent it in. The Master saw him. "Pray," said the exhausted student, "pacify my mind." "Let me see your mind," said the Master, "and I will pacify it." "I cannot produce this mind which troubles me so much," said the would-be pupil. "Then I have pacified your mind," said Bodhidharma, and the pupil was at last enlightened.

The truth of the story is immaterial, but as a most dramatic account of the birth in China of Zen principles it is of highest value. And that is nearly all that we know of the founder of Zen Buddhism, whose fierce, aggressive, bearded head has been the theme of a thousand artists from that day to this. Even his end is a matter of mystery, but it is in the true tradition of Zen to believe that he was last seen at a tremendous age returning through the Western Gates of China with one of his sandals on his head. This may be comic; it may have been symbolic; from such a man it was most certainly Zen.

The Confucian monk whose soul had been so swiftly pacified became the 2nd Chinese Patriarch under the name of Hui-ke. To him the Master handed the Lankavatara Sutra as containing an epitome of the secret of Zen; hence the popularity of this Sutra with students of Zen today. It would seem that he was the first Zen martyr, for he was put to death in a.d. 593 for teaching a false doctrine. He spent his life in preaching Zen to the lowest strata of society, and the popularity of this beggar in rags aroused opposition from the forces of well-fed orthodoxy. Before he

died, however, he passed on the robe which had come to be the insignia of the Patriarchate to Seng-ts'an, who survives in history as the author of the Hsin Hsin Ming, a metrical rendering of the principles of Zen. A translation of the poem appears in Dr. Suzuki's *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, I, 182-7. Here in print is the way to dissolve the Opposites.

The fourth Patriarch was Tao-hsin. He had asked the previous Master, "Pray show me the way to deliverance." Said the Master, "Who has put you under restraint?" When the enquirer answered, "No one," the Master enquired in turn, "Then why do you seek deliverance?"

Under Tao-hsin (580-651) Zen Buddhism was divided into two. One part did not survive the passing of its founder. The other branch was headed by Hung-jen, later the fifth Patriarch, who lives today in the famous Sutra of Wei-Lang (Hui-neng), the sixth Patriarch.

Like a famous character in a later religion than Buddhism, Hung-jen prepared the way for another greater than himself. This was Hui-neng whose name, according to a southern dialect, may be pronounced Wei-lang and is better known in the West as such by reason of the late Mr. Wong Mou-lam's translation of his famous "Platform-Sutra." Under the fifth Patriarch, Hung-jen, Zen rose from a small retiring sect of earnest students to a position where it was ready to support a full proclamation of Zen. This was Hui-neng's destiny, and he became the second founder of Zen Buddhism, the mind responsible for developing Zen into a purely Chinese form of Buddhism, both in its teaching and means of expression. He was poorly educated, and was never a scholar in the usual sense of the word. His story is told in his own Sutra, which ranks as one of the classics of eastern literature. In it the close affinities with Taoism are clearly shown, and indeed the words Tao and Dharma are at times with some of the later Masters used synonymously. No student of Zen can fail to study this diamond mine of Zen, or indeed the Commentary upon it which Dr. Suzuki has written under the title of *The Zen Doctrine of No-Mind*. Here it is sufficient to point out that the failure of Hui-neng's rival, Shen-hsiu, to receive the robe from the fifth Patriarch caused him to secede from the latter's following, and to set up

a northern school of his own. This Shen-hsiu was an ex-Confucian, and with his school of "gradual" enlightenment, was given Imperial protection and encouragement, but within a hundred years of the founder's death it had utterly disappeared. The "Sudden" School of Hui-neng prospered mightily. As Dr. Suzuki says,

The latent energy that had been stored up during the time of naturalization suddenly broke out in active work, and Zen had almost a triumphal march through the whole land of Cathay.

Soon after the passing of Hui-neng, who appointed no successor, the Master Hyakujo founded the system, still in use, of the Meditation Hall. In all other schools of Buddhism, and in most other religions, an image of the Founder is the central feature of a temple or a monastery. Only in Zen is the Meditation Hall of paramount importance, and when by the tenth century the *koan* (for an explanation of which please wait for the chapter on Zen Technique) had come to be the recognized means or "device" for attaining *satori*, Enlightenment, all the main features of Zen Buddhism were in being, and have hardly varied in the thousand years which separate that period from today. It was in Japan, however, that the tradition was best carried on, for by the 13th century Zen Buddhism in China had begun to lose its initial impulse. As early as the 7th century Zen had reached Japan, but it was not until the 12th century that a Tendai monk called Eisai crossed into China to study Zen, and returned to found a Zen monastery in Kyoto. But Kyoto was the headquarters of Shingon and Tendai Buddhism, and it was in Kama-kura, under the powerful wing of the Hojo family, that Zen took root in Japan. Eisai founded the Japanese branch of Rinzai Zen. Soto Zen arrived a few years later, in the hands of his pupil, Dogen, while the third of the three sects of Zen, the Obaku, was introduced by Ingen in the 17th century, and is now but a part of Rinzai Zen. The difference between the schools is chiefly the importance given to the *koan* exercises. In the Rinzai Sect this is still the basis of spiritual development; in the Soto sect it is far less used. Zen was seized by the military class and made its own. The Tendai and Kegon sects of Buddhism, both in a way synthetic philosophies made up from diverse

material, were too philosophic for the Japanese knights of the Middle Ages, who were yet most cultured men. Jodo, on the other hand, and its later extremist derivative, the Pure Land School of Shin, needing no learning, and demanding but a constant invocation to the spirit of Buddhahood, were more acceptable to the people. Shingon Buddhism, with its emphasis on ritual, was extremely popular at Court. Zen was a warrior creed. It called for action, for the most rigorous self-discipline, for self-reliance, for contempt of death. So did the iron cult of Bushido, the Way of the Knightly Virtue. The warrior owned but his swords, and his swords were his honor and his life. By the larger he lived: by the smaller he would, at his Lord's behest or when his honor was injured, die by his own hand. This was a man's life, and it needed a man's religion. Zen is "poor," for the heart must be emptied of all else if the light is to enter. It calls for that loneliness of heart which woos the Absolute, for adaptability to outward circumstance, for contempt of the accidents of changing form, and yet, being as Dr. Suzuki calls it, radical empiricism, it is utterly practical and "lives in facts" to the utter exclusion of ideas. Nought must come between a man and his loyalty to his Lord; nought must intervene between a man and the mind's experience. To think, when the enemy's sword is descending, is death; to act, and to act rightly as the result of years of training, here is life, and the flow of life, with no intermediate.

At a later stage we shall see how this virile, stern yet laughing philosophy of life produced in Japan great art, great warriors and a culture second to none. Cradled by a warrior class, it is not surprising that Zen in Japan is violent in the means employed. But are we not all warriors? As the Buddha is given as saying in the Canon of the Southern School,

We wage war, O Bhikkhus; therefore are we called warriors. . . .
For lofty Virtue, for high endeavor, for sublime Wisdom, for those do we wage war. Therefore are we called warriors.

We must take the Kingdom of Heaven by storm; only then shall we find that we have never left it.

Buddhism recognizes no authority for a spiritual truth; hence its tolerance. But the transmission of the doctrine is regarded as of great importance. Each Zen Master must be sanctioned by his Master, and he who teaches without such sanction is regarded as heterodox. Thus, through all the changes of Japanese national life, from the feudal system which extended into the 19th century to a modernism based on American patterns, still the tradition is kept high, and if the means of arousing understanding are today less violent, the Roshi or Zen Master is a man of tremendous spiritual development, and claims to be in the direct line of the Buddha's direct experience. The power of the light within must vary with the individual; the lighting of the lamp is the purpose of Zen Buddhism, and the light is Zen.

If only for the sake of tidiness, I must finish this chapter with a brief description of the coming of Zen to Europe.

In 1906 the Open Court Publishing Company of Chicago published *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot* by Soyen Shaku, then the Lord-Abbot of Engaku-Ji at Kamakura, the monastery where Dr. Suzuki, his pupil, is living and writing today. These reported sermons, together with a translation by Dr. Suzuki of the Sutra of 42 Sections, were the first information for the West on the subject of Zen. In the following year Dr. Suzuki wrote a paper for the *Journal of the Pali Text Society* of London which, so far as I know, was the first presentation to England of the meaning as distinct from the mere existence of Zen Buddhism. In 1913, Luzac and Co. of London published *The Religion of the Samurai* by Kaiten Nukariya, an admirable textbook about Zen, though purely on the plane of the intellect. E. J. Harrison's *The Fighting Spirit of Japan*, published in London in the same year, has a chapter on Zen, but the subject is treated without understanding.

In 1921 Dr. Suzuki founded and edited *The Eastern Buddhist*, for which he wrote between that date and its final issue in 1939 a great many articles on Zen, many of which were used as the basis for his later books. The circulation in England, however, was never large, and the same presumably applied to a 30-page booklet written by Arthur Waley

in 1922 on *Zen Buddhism and its Relation to Art*. To all intents and purposes, therefore, the general public had only *The Religion of the Samurai* for their study of Zen until Dr. Suzuki began, in 1927, the publication of his long series of works on Zen which the Buddhist Society, London, are now in the process of re-publishing in England.

The first volume of *Essays in Zen Buddhism* opened a new world of vision for the many thousands who read it, and the following two volumes, and the later works as listed in the Bibliography at the end of this volume, have now made Zen available, to the extent that it can ever be conveyed in print, to the English-speaking world. It is right to add that Dr. J. B. Pratt, who in 1928 produced his monumental work *The Pilgrimage of Buddhism*, seems to have acquired his knowledge of Zen without reference to these Essays of Dr. Suzuki's though as he adds the latter's name to those who had helped him, it is probable that he had read the volumes of *The Eastern Buddhist* from which the Essays were more or less compiled. By 1932, the three main Sutras used in Zen were available in English. William Gemmell had translated *The Diamond Sutra* in 1912. *The Sutra of Wei Lang* reached England in 1930, and Dr. Suzuki's *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra* and the text, *The Lankavatara Sutra* appeared in 1930 and 1932 respectively. To these must be added the *Huang Po Doctrine of Universal Mind* (trans. Chu Ch'an), and other Zen Sutras now being published as fast as members in China can send them in competent translation.

From 1930 onwards books and articles on Zen began to increase in quantity, yet all of them were influenced by, if not entirely based upon the works of Dr. Suzuki. A section in my *What is Buddhism?* (1928), Mrs. Adams Beck's very lovely work, *The Garden of Vision* (1929), Dwight Goddard's *The Buddha's Golden Path* (1930), these and the steady output of Dr. Suzuki made Zen increasingly known. Then came the war, but after it, when I found the Professor, hale and hearty at 76, in his house in Engaku-ji at Kamakura, he told me of eighteen further volumes on Buddhism which he had written during the war, and which were waiting to be translated into English as soon as he or some other competent translator could find the time. Some of these will be

published in England in the next few years; his famous "Address to the Emperor of Japan" has already passed into a second edition under the title of *The Essence of Buddhism*.

And now new writers are beginning to appear. Mr. R. H. Blyth, who is writing the Professor's life, has himself after sixteen years in a Korean Zen monastery written, as a teacher of English in Japan, a rich compendious work, *Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics*. The Buddhist Society, London, are publishing the collected works, slim though as yet they are, of W. G. Gabb, the author of *Beyond the Intellect*, and *Tales of Tokuzan*. I have written a little of Zen in my *Studies in the Middle Way*, and a brief exordium which I have called *Walk On!* Material for study is, therefore, available now in western lands, for books have appeared in German, notably *Zen, der lebendige Buddhismus in Japan*, by Ohasama and Faust, and Dr. Suzuki's *Essays* have appeared in French. Yet words are but marks on paper, or noises in the air; in the end it is work, hard work in the practice of direct, immediate living which alone produces the direct, immediate experience of Zen.

(To be continued)

The Theosophical Forum

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA: ITS SCIENTIFIC ASPECT: I — *Marion O. French*

The Oriental mind is accustomed to accept the scientific accuracy of the ancient Aryan scriptural texts; as well as their deeply philosophical and religious significance. Basic cosmical concepts and the cyclical time periods of evolutionary progress were, once, common knowledge. The power over the processes of Nature that this information conferred was abused. Consequently, scriptural literature ceased to set forth the metaphysical facts that are the foundation of the natural sciences, except in cryptical allusions. Nevertheless, the keys to a scientific interpretation remain extant in all of the greatest treatises upon the constitution of the Universe and of the laws that govern it. Among these texts, the *Bhagavad-Gita* is, perhaps, the most illuminating synthesis of all the salient facts. Initially, Mr. T. Subba Row, F. T. S., drew the attention of Occidental minds to its basis of mathematical physics in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* published in 1888. Pertinent excerpts therefrom are quoted as an introduction to a further elaboration of certain specific features.

In studying the *Bhagavad-Gita*, it must not be treated as if isolated from the rest of the Mahabharata as it at present exists. It was inserted by Vyasa in the right place with special reference to some of the incidents in that book. One must first realize the real position of Arjuna and Krishna in order to appreciate the teaching of the latter. Among other appellations Arjuna has one very strange name — he is called at different times by ten or eleven names most of which are explained by himself in Virataparva. One name is omitted from the list, i.e., Nara. This word simply means "Man." But why a particular man should be called by this as a proper name may at first sight appear strange. Nevertheless herein lies a clue, which enables us to understand not only the position of the *Bhagavad-Gita* in the text and its connection with Arjuna and Krishna, but the entire

current running through the whole of the Mahabharata, implying Vyasa's real views of the origin, trials and destiny of man. Vyasa looked upon Arjuna as man, or rather the real monad in man; and upon Krishna as the Logos, or the spirit that comes to save man. To some it appears strange that this highly philosophical teaching should have been inserted in a place apparently utterly unfitted for it. The discourse is alleged to have taken place between Arjuna and Krishna just before the battle began to rage. But when once you begin to appreciate the Mahabharata, you will see this was the fittest place for the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* may be looked upon as a discourse addressed by a guru to a chela who has fully determined upon the renunciation of all worldly desires and aspirations, but yet feels a certain despondency, caused by the apparent blankness of his existence. The book contains eighteen chapters, all intimately connected. Each chapter describes a particular phase or aspect of human life. The student should bear this in mind in reading the book . . .

The student must first go through the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and next try to differentiate the teachings in the eighteen different parts under different categories. He should observe how these different aspects branch out from one common centre, and how the teachings in these chapters are intended to do away with the objections of different philosophers to the occult theory and the path of salvation here pointed out. If this is done, the book will show the real attitude of occultists in considering the nature of the Logos and the human monad.

It is to be observed that the number eighteen is constantly recurring in the Mahabharata, seeing that it contains eighteen Parvas, the contending armies were divided into eighteen army-corps, the battle raged eighteen days, and the book is called by a name which means eighteen.

The real Sankhya philosophy is identical with the Pythagorean system of numerals, and the philosophy embodied in the Chaldean system of numbers. The philosopher's object was to represent all the mysterious powers of nature by a few simple formulae, which he expressed in numerals.

In further elucidation, W. Q. Judge compiled commentaries on the *Bhagavad-Gita* between 1887 and 1895. The following quotation from this source forms an introduction to the more specific features that this article treats of:

It has been said of old that "the Deity geometrizes." All forms evolve from within outwards. From the "point" whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere, a radiation equal in all directions begins, and establishes a circumference; a sphere within which the activity of the "point" is particularly confined. The "point" spreading out horizontally becomes a diameter dividing the sphere into positive and negative hemispheres, forming a basis for action and reaction. A further extension of the point vertically to the circumference divides the sphere into four parts, represented on a plane surface as a cross within the circle. Remembering that these extensions of the "point," or center, are lines of force proceeding from the center and tending to return to it, we can conceive of the beginning of a revolution of the sphere whereby the ends of the vertical and horizontal lines extend towards each other, forming at first the ansated cross, and finally the square within the circle, in reality, a cube or six-sided figure within the sphere. The cube, if looked at from either side presents the appearance of four angles, which, if we can conceive of them as being luminous points equidistant from the bright center, would be seen as a four-pointed star, the symbol and sign of the animal kingdom. If we can imagine Arjuna as seeing within the "divine form" all living lines of force and the forms produced by them, the four, the five, the six-pointed star, and the many-sided figures, all in motion and of wonderful brilliancy of light and of many colors,

presenting the activities of all beings of every grade in the universe, we may obtain some conception of the descriptive parts of this chapter.

Primarily, we may assume that the number eighteen is connected directly with the "positive and negative hemispheres" in the foregoing paragraph. They form "a basis for action and reaction" as between the 180 degrees of each hemisphere. Otherwise stated this sets forth eighteen categories with each of them in action and reaction on ten planes of consciousness.

Their mythological personifications are enumerated in the 18 Puranas and, in the Mahabharata there are 18 Prajapatis exclusive of the Trimurti: Agni, Vayu and Surya. The attributes are specified for Prakriti (Mulaprakriti) by H. P. Blavatsky, as: Causeless, eternal, universal, immutable, single, independent, unqualified, simple, sovereign and their polar opposites. Furthermore, with reference to the ten planes of consciousness, the *Kabbalah Unveiled*, by S. L. MacGregor Mathers, lists ten each of the following personifications: Sephiroth, Divine Names, Archangels, Orders of Angels, Demons and Arch Devils. Numerically, the 432 of Mahayuga divided by 18 equals 24. The precession of the equinox of 25,920 years and the recession of the apsides (solstitial axis of the ecliptic ellipse) of 115,200 years come into equilibrium in 9,331,200 years. This divided by 18 equals 5,184, or one-fifth of the 25,920 year period. Also, four square yards contains 5,184 square inches. Thus, time, space (93,312,000 miles Earth to Sun) and the ancient English square measures (planes of consciousness or manifestation) are linked by the factor 18. Finally, the division of the 24 hours into 18 and 6 marks the day's thermal and the night's rotative effects from the magnetic Solar Sweep as indicated in *Cosmic Machinery* by H. A. Staples. Their summation is in the 360 degrees of the circle and brings us to a consideration of the "Music of the Spheres" of Pythagoras. Its essential aspects may be clarified by the following statement of H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*:

Tetraktys or Harmony is a diatesseron in sesquitercia (4:3) and

the division of the canon of the monochord was made by the tetraktys in the *duad*, *triad* and *tetrad*; for it comprehends a sesquitertia, a sesquialter (3:2), a duple (2:1), a triple (3:1), and a quadruple (4:1) proportion, the section of which is 27. In the ancient musical notation, the tetrachord consisted of *three* degrees or intervals, and *four* terms of sounds called by the Greeks diatesseron and by us a fourth.

Obviously, the Tetraktys is a symbol of universal application. Its ten dots in the four rows of an equilateral triangle are the ten integers or Digits of Divinity. They represent the ten solar influences that pertain to the ten planes of consciousness. The three corner dots signify the three hierarchical aspects of Atma, Buddhi and Manas that remain unmanifested. The remaining seven dots form a hexagon of six principles with their synthesis in the seventh central one. In his treatise on The Twelve Signs of the Zodiac, Subba Row summarizes the Signs as follows:

1. Eternal Brahma
2. Pranava (Aum)
3. Androgyne Brahma (Adam Kadmon)
4. Tetragram (4 States)
5. Fivefold Brahma (Jeevatma)
6. Astral Light (Holy Virgin)
7. 36 Tatwans (Ratios of Avidya from Tat or categories)
8. Universe in Thought (Divine Concept)
9. Nine Prajapatis (Assistants of Demiurgus, Elu. of the Nine three triads)
10. Dodecahedron in mind of Demiurgus (Derived geometrically from Icosahedron or, inferentially, the Astral Light)
11. Fourteen Lokams (spiritual spheres and material worlds)
12. Five Elements (Aether, fire, air, water, earth)

The first ten pertain to the realm of divine ideation, or the Empyrean. The seventh indicates the dual ratios of the eighteen categories as in pairs of opposites.

Harmonically, we find that Thomas Taylor in his *Theoretic Arithmetic* sets forth the greatest harmonies as lying in the ratios 12-9-8-6 and 24-18-16-12. His information was derived from Boethius as the most reliable commentator on the musical connotations in the "Pythagorean system of numerals" mentioned by Subba Row.

The first ratio may be regarded as the celestial harmony and the second, containing 18, as its terrestrial reflection in the lower hemisphere noted by Judge. Its ratios are geometrical 24-18-16-12, arithmetical 24-18-12 and harmonic 24-16-12. A tone (9-8 ratio) is in 18-16 relation, which is sesquioctave. Incidentally, it is a dissonance that must be resolved in the living of life if it is to be harmonic. The 16-12 is sequitertian and gives the harmony diatesseron. The sesquialter ratio is in 18-12, giving the diapente, and the duple 24-12 gives the diapason. The triple is 18-6 and the quadruple is 12-3 in the relation of differences. Thus, as in the Tetraktys, the complete division of the monochord is represented. In addition, we find that John Tyndall utilized the 18-16 ratio on the upper disk of the double siren by which he established scientifically the exact vibratory rates per second of musical consonance. His other disks had 15-12, 12-10 and 9-8 for their perforations and he drew attention to the fact that 12 was common to both sirens, as in the harmonies given by Taylor.

(To be continued)

The Theosophical Forum

TOUCHING THE TEACHER AND THE WAYS OF PEACE — *D. M. S.*

But when the King heard how Siddhartha came
Shorn, with the mendicant's sad-colored cloth,
And stretching out a bowl to gather orts
From base-boms' leavings, wrathful sorrow drove
Love from his heart. . . .

"Son! why is this,"

"My Father!" came reply,

"It is the custom of my race."

"Thy race,"

Answered the King "counteth a hundred thrones
From Maha Sammat, but no deed like this."

"Not of a mortal line," the Master said,

"I spake, but of descent invisible,

The Buddhas who have been and who shall be:

Of these am I, and what they did I do."

— *The Light of Asia*

There are those who because of an innate lack of spiritual perception are never privileged to see the Teacher. Though their work may take them in daily contact with him, they see only a man and the physical body in which he lives. They may even be quite fond of the "man." His pleasing personal appearance often calls forth their admiration of the perfect match in color between his eyes and his necktie. The obvious qualities of patience, fortitude, understanding and compassion which he possesses, they attribute to a naturally good disposition. His good leadership they consider the results of his former business or professional training.

If such as these continue to do their Theosophical duty, and be loyal to the "man," they cannot be considered guilty of disloyalty, though their spiritual loss is tragic.

From the time of H. P. B. there have been four distinct types of members of the Theosophical Society. To begin from the bottom and work up: *first* — those who sought to discredit and besmirch the character of the Teacher; *second* — those who recognized the Leader, but denied the Teacher; *third* — those who recognized the Teacher and immediately set out to get from the Teacher all they could of spiritual or material help for themselves; and *lastly*, those whose daily prayer was, "*Help me to help the Teacher.*"

Among this last group are those of H. P. B.'s day, who, sixty years after her death, use their failing strength writing in her defense in an effort to stem the tide of venom proceeding from the prolific pens of her defamers. And let us not overlook the fact that almost without exception, present-day writers of books defaming H. P. B. have gotten their material from *Theosophists* of the 19th Century who belonged in one of the first three groups listed in the previous paragraph.

Each Teacher gives to his pupils infallible rules for recognizing a Teacher, one of which is the absolute essential of spiritual perception within the pupil himself.

Carlyle once said, "No greater proof can a man give of his own littleness, than his disbelief in great men."

To those of us who have been members during the leadership of two Teachers, and have been intimately associated over a period of years with older members who have served the movement under three or even four Teachers, it is understandable that one might feel closer to a certain Teacher than to his predecessor or his successor. But that very closeness to one Teacher increases the spiritual perception to such a degree that he cannot fail to recognize the basic similarity among them all which sets them apart from the ordinary run of mortals.

Some of us who in our professional life before and during the war were privileged to work in close contact with what the world calls "great men," have a pretty good yardstick with which to measure greatness. Perhaps that is why the difference between the "worldly great" and the

"spiritually great" is brought home to us in such clarity. It is perfectly apparent to us that though the gulf between us sergeants and our generals was a sizeable one, the gulf between the greatest of our generals and any one of our spiritual Leaders of the Theosophical Society is immeasurably greater.

Realizing that fact does not make the individual feel small, or little, or unimportant. On the contrary, such perception gives one a feeling of wonder and joy that it was his karman to be privileged to serve not only the worldly great, but the spiritually great.

Once we recognize the Teacher, and work with him completely, we notice day by day an increasing perception of the spiritual qualities in our companions with whom we are associated. The personal habits of the little man working nearby which used to irritate us so much, seem to have disappeared, and we discover one day to our wonderment that he really is a very nice person. We learn to see our associates through the Teacher's eyes. And what is more, we put forth more effort to change our own personalities, so that we can face the clear eyes of the Teacher, without wondering how much of the selfishness and pettiness within us he can see.

Do not be confused by specious arguments that loyalty and obedience to the Teacher is "personality worship." The Theosophical Movement is not a structure built of wood and stone and brick. *The Theosophical Movement is the Teachers, all of them in hermetic succession, and THEIR Teachers, the Masters of Wisdom and Compassion.* These, and those who serve them faithfully, unselfishly and loyally comprise the Theosophical Movement.

The Theosophical Forum

KEYNOTES OF DAY TO DAY LIVING — *Hazel Boyer Braun*

The fundamental thoughts of a human life might be likened to the keynote of a musical composition. Thoughts are living energies and our tomorrows and our next lives are actually created by the vision of today. It is important to make a deliberate effort to strike certain notes in our lives.

The most far reaching thought we can embrace in the effort to shape our own characters is found in the Ancient Wisdom, in the concept of the Divine Reality at the root of everything that lives. As the matrix of our thought life this revelation colors every phase of our daily existence. It washes out of our minds triviality and personal pettiness, it quickens our feeling of relationship with all beings. All fear is driven out because we can know more of love. Individual responsibility is then so strongly impressed upon us that we have no time to be much concerned about what others do to us or think of us.

As trees grow most of them fling their confining bark to the winds each year, and in this we have an analogy with the development of the human mind. We do break through our crystallized thoughts and fling the old ones away as we awake into broader understanding, lifting the level of our thoughts, expanding the reaches of our consciousness.

We all have flights of imagination, but we each have a certain individual characteristic landing place for all our flights. We have each our special way of thinking which creates our lives and enwraps us in an atmosphere that is felt by every person we contact. Very often we have far more effect on the life of others than we fully realize.

We all have some aspirations, we might say some secret hopes that are truly the keynote of our inner life. There are many who are only vaguely aware of the yearnings of their real selves and the quality and direction of their inner experience is not well defined. Yet the substance of our secret hopes fashions our tomorrows.

When we wake in the morning we really strike the note of the day in those few minutes before we rise and take up our work by the vision we have then of our day. When we die we do the same, our last thoughts are likely to be akin to those deep secret aspirations even more than to our personal loves; and they strike the keynote for our time spent in the dreaming of Devachan, fashioning also to a great extent our next life.

The ancients knew this so well that it actually is the explanation of the icons and the countless statues of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Kuan Yins. They were formed by the artists to help in the visioning of these full-blown divinities, to serve as a model for our expectations, to symbolize the fundamental concept of the purpose of life: becoming divine, knowing companionship with the great Souls.

The Theosophical Forum

STELLAR PROOF OF REINCARNATION — *G. Cardinal LeGros*

*He saw a vision and he dreamed a dream;
He heard the heart-beat of Eternity.
Through crystal-flooded aisles of heaven's symbol-world
Each constellation was a Voice proclaiming Law.*

In the writer's opinion the much-maligned science of astrology may yet go a long way toward promoting a general acceptance of reincarnation. The astrology here referred to is not, of course, the tawdry fortune-telling variety that deserves to be deplored and ignored, but that true Celestial Science based upon immutable Law, and concerning which the modern astrologer knows so little. Fragments of it are extant in the outer world, and the sincere, intuitive mystic may find his way to them — gems of truth disregarded by the professional practitioner unless he be illumined by that Light which the Esoteric Tradition alone gives. Spiritual truth is a sacred trust, and dare not be denied or misused. When this happens, the inner Radiance departs, leaving nothing but an outer shell to stand as an incomprehensible symbol of the vanished Reality.

The skeptics are right in one respect: astrology cannot predict specific events, situations, or circumstances. An example in point is the embarrassment of several leading astrologers who "foretold" the results of the recent Presidential Election. Knowledge of the future cannot be obtained so cheaply. Knowledge of the present is difficult enough to grasp.

But that genuine astrology is one aspect of the Eternal Truth goes without saying, or should; and that its cardinal theorems are based upon inflexible mathematical laws is clearly demonstrable to anyone with a knack for figures and a little patience. Madame H. P. Blavatsky herself stated in *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, page 259, that "Astrology is a science as infallible as astronomy itself, with the condition, however,

that its interpreters be equally infallible. . . . Astrology is to exact astronomy what psychology is to exact physiology. In astrology and psychology one has to step beyond the visible world of matter, and enter into the domain of transcendent spirit."

The general pattern of progressive experience in anyone's life can be traced by the unfolding potentialities of the birth-chart; but *what the individual will do with such developments* no one can say. The released dynamics can work out in literally millions of ways. This must be so because man is essentially an immortal, spiritual being, an agent of free will and choice. He is not a puppet riding helplessly on the wheel of his horoscope — or isn't, once he realizes that he is free.

The birth-chart is a photograph of the planetary pattern which existed when the soul reincarnated. There is an intimate symbolical and psychological correspondence between it and the basic factors of the personal self to be. But that is all. No horoscope can capture *the character of the Inner Man*, the Divine Pilgrim wandering the celestial highways, himself a Son of the Sun, Child of the Infinite, because within him flames a Splendor greater than all the planetary influences that impinge upon his body at its birth.

But to the chief purpose of this article. In rectifying birth-charts — determining the actual moment of delivery by mathematical calculations based upon important events in the life — an amazing fact emerges. Planetary configurations, measured by arcs of time into the years *before birth, correspond with events taking place in the following life-time*. In other words, the unborn soul is shown to be linked with causes awaiting opportunity to manifest as effects. The soul resting in spiritual consciousness contains within itself the seeds of objective experience yet to come. From character-potentials unfolds the manifest destiny.

No predestined fate is suggested. But a definite correlation between planetary aspects *before birth* and the subsequent release of their dynamics *during incarnation* can be demonstrated with absolute mathematical certainty. The *specific form* that such a release may

assume cannot, in the writer's opinion, be foretold, but the *time-periods* of the release can. And this seems to him a very strong argument for the existence of the soul before birth; and, further, if one accepts a law of unerring justice in the universe, then the soul would have had to have lived on earth before to involve itself in such causes.

In his research along this line the writer has rectified many horoscopes, and has yet to see one in which salient events failed to measure to significant stellar patterns before birth. Major events invariably fall at logical points in the unfolding key-cycles. Several such points can be located in a given period, and, while it cannot be positively determined *at which one of the points* the event will occur, *it will still coincide with one of them*. To him this reveals the omnipresence of Perfect Law within whose harmonies all things, from snow-flake to constellation, live, move, and have their being.

The Theosophical Forum

FRIEND OF THE FRIENDLESS — GANDHI (1) — Grace Knoche

Reporters rushed to the typewriter and commentators to the script-desk when the news flashed over the Seven Seas that Mahatma Gandhi had been killed — - precipitating such a downpour of newsprint in reportage, story, digest, reminiscence, editorial, bulletin and review, in both East and West, as we have not known — shall we say in centuries? Certainly not in generations.

And quite naturally, because for decades the thinking world has been watching the quietly thunderous procedures of this incredible man "who tackled the thing that couldn't be done — and did it." Without guns or butter, either one (though the half-fed multitudes who looked to him for succor could have made good use of the latter) this man, *plus* fifty years of frail health, smiles, and perseverance, gave back to more than 400 millions, their country, their self-respect, and their hope.

To a reviewer whose craft depends for its usefulness and integrity on sympathy and the ability to appraise, yet who has thus far merely bypassed the principles and precepts which Gandhi by untiring effort built into his life, and without some knowledge of which we cannot hope to understand him, a request to review this book soon looks like a consignment in a vacuum. On the other hand, those who see East and West, Orient and Occident, as two sides of a single fact, a single shield, know that "the twain *shall* meet," as a human necessity and a natural result when the driftwood of apathy and opinion edges past the millwheel of Time, and gets on with its journey downstream.

This book does not deal, even *en passant*, with religions or philosophies as things in themselves, and not at all with magic or sham metaphysics, or psychism, or purposeless self-torture, or temptations (there are so many) to leisured "thought." It deals with the mystery of human conduct: *human conduct*, which to the Roman Seneca was "three-fourths of life," but to a Theosophist actually four-fourths. Conduct —

the basis and cradle of which is brotherhood, universal brotherhood.

So don't be surprised if you hear a Theosophist say of this modest and powerful book, "It is almost a brief for Theosophy." For Gandhi was no tight religionist; he was an artist in what we call today "human relations." Brotherhood, as with him, has been the goal and platform since the T. S. came into being. H. P. Blavatsky herself published the new creation as *The Theosophical Society and Universal Brotherhood*. And when Katherine Tingley expanded the Society, to make philanthropy first and not last (let us not forget the Master's written words: "We are, above all, philanthropists"), it was rechristened *The Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society*, a gesture of faith and understanding. Powerful indeed were the reverberations loosed at this last expansion. Were they confined to the Western World? They could not be. It was One World even then on the plains of hidden sorrow, for the world was in a parlous state at the time, although only the few in any land could be aroused to see it. Broken hearts everywhere cried with Omar:

There is a Door for which there is no key,
There is a Veil through which I cannot see. . . .

But Gandhi found the key — Brotherhood and the tenderness and truth that it inherits, and any Theosophist who has followed the course he took — always with gentleness, never with force — and who now tries to find his way through this unique yet exasperating book, so supremely honest that in places it reads like a testimony of abasement, will inevitably say, "How theosophical!"

He was not a Theosophist, was never a member of the T. S. — let that be understood — although during his two years in England while studying law, he met H. P. Blavatsky at the Lodge in London, invited there to meet her by "two Theosophists" whom he does not name. Nor have we the date of this meeting, but it must have been shortly before he left England for home, in 1891, when he was about twenty years of age. And it was a theosophical book (in the sense that it was the most beloved of all books by Theosophists) the *Bhagavad-Gita*, that Gandhi

re-discovered at that time, to make it the guiding star of his life.

Is this an assumption merely? By no means. Before us is a translation into English (from Hindi, a vernacular) of an address made by Gandhi — date unknown. Speaking to the students at Benares, he said (we give but excerpts):

Early in my childhood I had felt the need of a Scripture that would serve me as an unfailing guide through the trials and temptations of life. The *Vedas* could not supply that need, if only because to learn them would require fifteen or sixteen years of hard study at a place like Kashi, for which I was not ready then.

But the *Gita*, I had read somewhere, gave within the compass of its 700 verses the quintessence of all the *Sastras* and the *Upanishads*. That decided me. I learned Sanskrit to enable me to read the *Gita*. Today the *Gita* is not only my Bible or my Koran; it is more than that — it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother who gave me birth, long ago; but this Eternal Mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She has never changed, she has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in her bosom. . . .

The *Gita* is the universal mother. She turns nobody away. Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks. A true votary of the *Gita* does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding. But that peace and joy come not to the skeptic or to him who is proud of his intellect or learning. It is reserved only for the humble in spirit, who brings to her worship a fulness of faith and an undivided singleness of mind. . . . As a "Satyagrahi" I can declare that the *Gita* is ever presenting me with fresh lessons. If anyone tells me that this is my delusion, my reply to him would be that I shall hug this delusion as my richest treasure.

The "two Theosophists" mentioned introduced him to the *Gita*, no doubt reviving memories of his father's love for it and echoes of the

sacred *slokas* he repeated from it every day. They also introduced him to *The Song Celestial*, Sir Edwin Arnold's metrical translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and invited Gandhi to read it with them in the original. He had never read it in Sanskrit or in the vernacular of his birthplace — nevertheless, he began. The following *slokas* from the second chapter he tells us "still ring in my ears":

... If one

Ponders on objects of the sense, there springs
Attraction; from attraction grows desire,
Desire flames to fierce passion, passion breeds
Recklessness; then the memory — all betrayed —
Lets noble purpose go, and saps the mind,
Till purpose, mind, and man are all undone.

Introduced also to Arnold's *Light of Asia*, he read it eagerly "Once I had begun it I could not leave off." He also read *The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. B.'s (for that day) startling work, which, he records, "stimulated in me a desire to read books on Hinduism, and disabused me of the notion fostered by the missionaries that Hinduism was rife with superstition." When his new friends suggested that he join the Theosophical Society, he very honestly declined saying: "With my meagre knowledge of my own religion I do not want to belong to any religious body." His work was to be other and perhaps intuitively he knew it even then.

A Christian friend about this time said to him, "Do please read the Bible." Accordingly he invested in a Bible, with maps and concordance, etc., read through the Book of *Genesis*, but what followed "invariably sent me to sleep." He plodded through the Old Testament, but "with much difficulty and without the least interest or understanding." But the New Testament was different, "especially the "Sermon on the Mount," which went straight to my heart. I compared it with the *Gita*. . . . My young mind tried to unify the teaching of the *Gita*, the *Light of Asia*, and the "Sermon on the Mount." That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly."

Far from having been brought up in one single sectarian faith, Gandhi

tells us that he was imbued in childhood with "a toleration for all faiths." His father had scholarly friends in the Moslem, Parsi (or Zoroastrian), and Jain religions, who frequently visited him and discussed their faiths, the little Mohandas quietly listening.

While in London he met Mrs. Besant at the Blavatsky Lodge. She had just joined the Society. He attended the funeral of Bradlaugh, "as I believe every Indian residing in London did." Bradlaugh's humanitarian work among the very poor of London is no doubt what impressed Gandhi, though at that time Gandhi was a lad of twenty years, quite unaware of what his future work would be.

He contacted the Theosophical Society later in Johannesburg, South Africa. Of this contact he writes: "I never became a member of it as I had my differences, but I came in close contact with almost every Theosophist." The dates needed to place this contact with Theosophy are found in an unrelated topic in his book. In his own words: "I passed my law examinations, was called to the bar on the 10th of June, 1891, and enrolled in the High Court on the 11th. On the 12th I sailed for home."

Intensive study enabled him to complete the three-year course in two years — part of the time, so straitened were his means, in a single room in one of the poorer parts of London, doing his own cooking: the total cost of living one shilling and sixpence a day. Such a chapter deserves a colophon, and here it is:

Let not the reader think that this living made my life by any means a dreary affair. On the contrary the change harmonized my inward and outward life. It was also more in keeping with the means of my family. My life was certainly more truthful and my soul knew no bounds of joy.

Disheartened over the petty intrigues in his home-state, Kathiawad, he soon saw that he could not pursue his profession and keep his integrity — "influence" was the deciding factor in court-cases there, not justice. Even the laws nodded to bribes and trickery. It was not long before he

left for South Africa as legal counsel to a firm of which a Moslem friend of long standing in Gandhi's family was the head. He went to stay a year. He stayed twenty!

Nor was that too long to straighten things out for the many thousands of Hindus, suffering both insult and injury as "coolies" for no reason save that they had something that we of the "white race" will have in the far future, when the rolling cycles will have carried the Aryan Races, that are younger than that of India, slowly but surely to the lands bordering and below the equator — namely, a dark skin. In the nearly twenty years before he returned to India to stay, needed laws were passed and disabilities removed. What he worked for was accomplished, and without a shot fired or even an act of resistance, let alone violence, on his part or that of his friends, nor a penny changing hands to buy or bribe.

Then back to India where he seems to have made his first contact with the Untouchables. Most of us have seen, in one or another of the illustrated news-magazines, staff-photographs of Gandhi entering the doors of Parliament House, accompanied by men high in government, his only garment the native *dhoti* or loin-cloth, and shawl. Nothing else. It is the dress of the Untouchables, and he wore it thirty years. If he really was a "politician," no government in our time ever saw his like before. As Vincent Sheean remarks in his sympathetic review: "Mr. Gandhi was not very much interested in politics. . . . What interested him was the poverty of his people, and his whole life was spent trying to find ways of helping them."

How did Gandhi get that way? By means of his own stored qualities, helped by earned karma on both sides which, difficult and discouraging at first, at last became benign. He himself does not answer directly, but his book gives us some clues. Since a sense of responsibility for childhood is rising in the public mind to the dignity of a science from the status of a fad, and since H. P. Blavatsky stressed this responsibility again and again as of first importance — "Educate! Educate! The children are our salvation!" were her words and battle-

cry — let us point very briefly to a few items from Gandhi's own account of his childhood and youth in India.

He was born in Kathiawad, a kingdom of many states, and in that day with a population of Hindus and Moslems living in friendly relations. Gandhi was of course born a caste-Hindu, although officially he became "out-caste" when he left India for England. His father was a Diwan, that is, First Counsellor to the Thakore or Ruler — we should call him Prime Minister or Secretary of State — as his father and grandfather had also been. He says of his father that he was a man of incorruptible integrity, with the practical approach in solving "intricate questions" and "managing hundreds of men." Of his mother Gandhi says that the outstanding impression she left upon his memory was "saintliness."

A Hindu boy, Gandhi had the usual schooling of his caste, doubtless a little more, as he seems to have had a gift for languages — he tells us that he studied Sanskrit; when he left for England he studied Tamil and Urdu on the boat, French somewhere or other, and Latin when obliged to know it for his Matriculation for Law. But he remembers that he found the multiplication tables "difficult."

But he persisted, for in later years he records the profound conviction that every boy should learn to keep personal accounts. He began this (apparently in England) balancing his accounts every night, even to the smallest coin, farthing or copper. Years later, when he had to handle "lakhs" intrusted to him (2) he had no trouble. There was always a surplus of funds, never a deficit.

When only thirteen he was married to a little girl of the same age, as was the caste-custom. Of this he writes:

It is my painful duty to record my marriage at the age of thirteen. As I see the youngsters of the same age about me who are under my care, and think of my own marriage, I am inclined to pity myself and to congratulate them on having escaped my lot. I can see no moral argument in support of such a

preposterous early marriage . . . the poor mite that was born to my wife scarcely breathed for more than three or four days. Nothing else could be expected. He does not refer to the subject again.

This book is not a biography, auto- or other. Actually it is a case-history. Gandhi's own title for the book was a good title: "The Story of my Experiments with Truth." For he was not only a great man; he was a great Experimenter, and in a very great field: the field of human nature and its fruitage in human relations. And he succeeded, for he went back to the Golden Age of his own, his native land, the Vedic Period, his objective not a universal gadget but the universal panacea. And he found it: love, brotherhood, compassion, the gift of the gentle but understanding approach.

Others have found this in other ways — there are many trails up a mountain. But this man, in his own field, was by today's standards unique. He wrote what is really a textbook in one sense, a laboratory record in another. It will be revived and read no doubt in centuries to come.

We hope that translator and editor, in publishing Volume II, and later reprinting Volume I, will add to the excellent Index a glossary of words and unexplained allusions that are in large part foreign to Western scholarship. In the meantime, "Close the book and let it lie."

FOOTNOTES:

1. Gandhi's Autobiography: *The Story of my Experiments with Truth*. By M. K. Gandhi. Translated from the Gujerati by Mahadev Desai. Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C. 640 pp. Indexed. \$5.00. ([return to text](#))

2. A *lakh* is the equivalent of 100,000 rupees. The dollar-value of a rupee has in the last 20 years swung between 42c. and 30-35c. ([return to text](#))

TRUE PSYCHOLOGY — E. D. Wilcox

To those of us who can look back to the opening years of this century, the almost complete transformation in the thought-life of the western world is revolutionary. At the time that Madame Blavatsky published *The Secret Doctrine*, the two dominant yet opposing trends of thought were the materialistic with its theory of man as an animal, and the theological with its man-god and his helpless human creations; both equally mechanistic. Any other concept of man than as a creature of five senses in a physical world was taboo as a subject of conversation except on Sunday, and even then in low tones.

Most of our philosophy came from the Greek teaching of man as a triune of *soma*, *psyche* and *nous* (body, soul and mind), of which the latter two were almost synonymous, since knowledge obtained by the conscious mind was called psychology. Almost coincidentally the occurrence of phenomena not attributable to the five senses, such as demonstrated in Spiritualism, differing states of hypnosis, and emotional and mental phases of what was termed the sub-conscious mind, opened a new field of thought and experiment. As none of these were deemed strictly physical or intellectual, they were referred to the "soul" or "psyche," and derivative words were coined.

At the same time, the sudden discovery by Science of the existence of substance in other than the accepted solid atom of physical matter, brought proof of what seemed to be matter in a hyper-physical or supersensuous state. Thus, today, energy has usurped the place of matter and the electronic atom that of the "billiard-ball." Eddington has given a humorous reference to this discovery. The picture is that we have a table which we use as a solid object. We see it as such, but to a physicist it is empty space with innumerable electric charges rushing here and there: nothing substantial about it, yet no physicist can exorcise that table.

In a study of the history of the Earth, Geology has unfolded from its rock layers the fact that in each Era some one type of life has risen to dominance, and has specialized in its individual forms until either ends in general extinction or degenerates to dwarf remnants. As we study the history of Man, we find that the same law holds good as regards types of racial growth, social relations and ruling beliefs. Dominance produces its own downfall. The mechanistic theories of Science which ruled the past century are giving way to philosophy, But a philosophy whose seeds sown in the arid fields of materialism are putting forth such a variegated coating over its sprouts as to be well-nigh unrecognizable either as philosophy or psychology.

The awakening of Science out of the darkness of the Middle ages was due to the heroism of a few minds open to the perception of the great Truth that God, Man and Nature were inseparable, acting under a uniform law which the human mind *could* cognize and study. God was overthrown, Man took his place, making Nature his slave. Man without God is a machine which has grown into a juggernaut as relentless as ever Jehovah was. Within this century Nature herself has awakened, and with one bursting forth after another has thrown open the doors of her inner kingdom to an appalled humanity.

Formerly, Science referred to the study of what is called the material world, that which is perceptible to the senses or capable of demonstration, while Psychology limited itself to the study of mental processes. Today, the line between what is physical and what is mental has not only shifted from its previous fixed position but varies in almost as many points as there are individual thinkers. As to Metaphysics and Psychology, they vie with each other in multiplicity of meanings, most of which show neither law nor limit. In fact, conservative psychologists deplore the ambiguity shown in the relationship between the two.

Furthermore, it is too often forgotten that much of our scientific knowledge has begun with theory which, if proven by test, becomes law; if not, is yet retained as theory until disproven. In the field of

psychology this same method of theory and experiment is used in studying the self-directed impulses of the mind, but what is termed mind is a question of debate between what is called "behavior" and "reflex responses."

Physical, psychic and mental faculties are deemed subjective processes of emotional reaction. Man, the Thinker, is now the receiver and transmitter of different rates of sensory vibration. Thus, the study of functional responses in physiology, of energy vibrations in physics, and the uncontrolled entries of impulses into the brain, have been grouped into a science called psychology, which has absorbed into itself physiology and philosophy.

As proof in science, anyone can select an object, test it by himself, and have witnesses to attest his acts; but, in any mental action, thoughts can be recognized only by the thinker and need have no relation to objects in space. Where man places his thoughts, there will be his destiny. When we are awake we are aware of the physical world through our senses; when asleep, to us there is no such world. Yet, even that awareness of the waking mind is limited by the focus of our thought, and that focus is placed or altered by the will. When analyzed, such is the field of action in which students are spending their time, making their tests and confining their thoughts much like a squirrel in its cage. The key to the cage and full freedom in the field of knowledge is bestowed on the earnest student by the Ancient Wisdom today called Theosophy. It lies with Theosophy to prove to the psychologist that what is, to him, mind, is no more a purely physical fact than is the atom.

What we know as man, physical man, does not live *on* this Earth, he is a part of the Earth, builded of its material, belonging to its evolution. Whatever man has of substance, of garment, of personal faculties, even of ordinary thought, is part of the Earth. How could it be otherwise? We have learned that something cannot come from nothing, nor life from non-life. All is life, and life manifests itself in matter — "thing," not "no-thing."

To the Theosophist, the real man, the Self, is a ray from the center of universal Being, embodying on Earth for experience. How could he do so without using the materials of the Earth in which to dwell? To breathe in its atmosphere he must have a material organ for it; to have a body he must form it out of the mineral and vegetable substance of the plane on which he now lives. Could he have anything physical without the Earth having it? Even our thoughts belong in part to the Earth; they pour through the mind at every waking moment, and we take or refuse what we will of them. What is this "we," this Self, that can say "I," *my mind, my body*? It cannot be described, it can be given no form; it is neither physical nor psychic nor mental; it has no attributes of Earth. We give it a name as the spiritual Self, we cognize it as Self-consciousness, we are aware of it in the power of aspiration. The study that leads us to a knowledge of this Self is the only true psychology.

The Theosophical Forum

AWARENESS — J. Croiset van Uchelen

The doctrine of Maya, is one of the most profound of all the doctrines of the ancient wisdom, and the least understood. To say that the Sanskrit word, derived from the root *Ma*, "to measure out" means illusion, does not help unless we comprehend the meaning of illusion itself. That we behold but the appearance of things has been set forth by the most ancient philosophers, and we find this repeated in the idealism of Kant, Hegel and especially Schopenhauer. Theosophy presents an objective idealism allowing for objective relationships as long as they last, but not enduring. And modern science has confirmed the illusory aspect of what we call matter. Nevertheless, to understand the nature of illusion in a philosophic sense a complete reorientation contrary to inherited habit-thought is necessary.

The first question we must ask ourselves is: how are we cognizant of anything? And the answer is that all we know, is known in mind; that there is nothing, either objective or subjective so-called, of which we can be aware, except in consciousness.

Descartes said "I think, therefore I am." We might paraphrase this and say: I am aware, therefore I am awareness itself; for as is pointed out in *The Secret Doctrine*, "the cognizer itself is but part of the reflection." The thinker and the thought, the perceiver and the perceived, are not two, but one. All our "experiences" are like a stringing together in mind of ungraspable moments, complete in themselves, as are the stills on the motion picture reel to which the illusion of motion, in space and time, is lent. The reason why this seems so difficult to grasp is because we are caught in the self-limitations of sense-illusion. We *think* we see, we feel, we touch. Yet, these so-called sense perceptions, too, are only realized *after*, not before they are a mind perception! The image caught on the curved flat surface of the retina, reversed, one six hundredth size, certainly is not what we think we see in space and time. It is a concept in dimensionless mind. And what is time? Past and future are

but dreams and the present is past, the moment we pronounce it.

The whole phenomenal world is made of such stuff as dreams are made of! And this applies equally to such objects as one's own and other bodies; beings as well as things. At first these ideas may be somewhat bewildering. It may be helpful therefore to consider dreams. In dreams too, we see and feel (apparent perception by sense) move in space and time amidst other "separate" entities with whom we converse, etc. There need not be any difference in the appearances met with in the waking-, or the dream-world, at the time we are involved in either one or the other state of consciousness. Upon awakening, we have no difficulty in realizing that the whole of the dream-world is within mind. Is it so difficult then to fathom that there may be another state of consciousness where the waking-world is realized as illusive, just as the dream-world is seen in the waking state?

. . . the *root* of all nature, objective and subjective, and everything else in the universe, visible and invisible, *is, was, and ever will be* one absolute essence. . . . This is Aryan philosophy, fully represented only by the Vedanta and the Buddhist system.

— H. P. B., *The Key to Theosophy*

These ideas are clearly and beautifully set forth in the *Lankavatara* and *Surangama Scriptures* and in the profound Commentary upon the *Mahayana Shradhotpadda Shastra*.

Perhaps we may approach the idea in yet another way. In Absolute Infinitude there is ever as much in front as behind as to the sides so named, for there cannot be less than infinitude. Therefore "we" are always at the center of a sphere; the symbolical circle of the Kabalists whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere. This obviously makes evolution as impossible as retrogression, and plurality as little Real as all else in the Mayavic worlds.

It is when "the sense perceptions are losing their individual differences, as they become merged into the pure essence of mind that with this merging the habitual illusions lose their existence also," says

the *Surangama Sutra*. And further:

When the intuitive and Essential Mind becomes free . . . it derives its discriminations and ideas, not by means of contact with objects . . . nor in the order and limited manner of the senses, but while it continues the use of the sense-organs for its purposes, henceforth the sense-conceptions become universalized.

This form of mentalism does not deny the world. It comprehends its Illusion. Illusion is not synonymous with non-existence. For Illusion to *be* it must exist — but is not real. All we have done so far is to point out, very briefly, that Maya instead of being something hypothetical, can be realized for what it is.

Nothing of this is new, but for the Western materialist it is hard to realize that besides the intellectual quality, there is a heart quality, which must equally be developed; that both must fuse in unison before a next step can be conceived, let alone accomplished. Intellectualism is not intelligence, less wisdom. The great Teachers of the human race came not to aid material achievement, but self-realization, enlightenment of the selfless Self.

Correct the disseminating mind, for it is the mind that is "the Slayer of the Real." The clinging to ideas and definitions can only be "cleared away" and be entirely "discarded after attaining a great heart of compassion." Only as one "gets rid of all arbitrary conceptions of phenomena and passes from outward morality to inner Wisdom" . . . can "transcendental mental freedom" be awakened, "where there is no further thought of self or not-self, of self and otherness," but perfect equanimity. This is what the *Commentary* upon the *Mahayana Shradhotpadda Shastra* teaches. Intellectualism may serve man, it cannot save him.

Because the mind does not realize the perfect purity of the all-embracing wholeness it falls into the habit of imagining differences where there are no differences, and thus the mind,

being inharmonious with itself, becomes the puppet of Ignorance. — (*Ibid.*) p. 373

It has been said: Learning is good, unlearning is better. However the latter cannot be achieved before the former is completed. We cannot discard what we do not possess. Ignoring the intellect has retarded progress in the East. Exclusive concentration on intellectual achievement in the West ultimately reveals the intellect as its own barrier.

It is not surprising therefore that more and more scientists are turning philosopher. Millikan, Schrodinger, Langmuir, Compton, *et al* have come to abandon the determinism of Darwin's time. Schrodinger even denounces the inherited "custom . . . of thinking causally." Prof. W. A. Hocking does not hesitate to say that modern physics has now become so abstract that it has left the phenomenal world behind, its frontiers being accessible only to the mathematician. Biologists similarly and with every step forward are confronted with new mysteries and are left to ponder the frankly metaphysical premises of Stromberg's immaterial genii. And from there to Cosmic Consciousness the latter finds an easy step. (See *The Soul of the Universe*.) Others in this outstanding group are A. Cressy Morrison, author of *Man Does not Stand Alone*, and Lecomte du Nouy, who wrote *Human Destiny*. Dr. C. B. Chrisholm, a respected Canadian psychiatrist, believes that the only thing that can save man is a revolution in mind; and Hocking in his *Science and the Idea of God* writes "A man's religion . . . must finish what psycho-analysis begins." Striking also are the oft reported quotes from Jeans, Planck and Eddington, who intuitively brought everything back to consciousness. "Recognizing that the physical world is entirely abstract and without actuality apart from its linkage to consciousness," they restore consciousness to its fundamental position. (*Nature of the Physical World* — Eddington.)

Thus in the late scientific approach, every point in space becomes endowed with consciousness. In mentalistic philosophy consciousness is arbitrarily discussed as points in space. The one becomes objective,

the other subjective idealism. Both are transient; they are steps, not stops. Western materialism and Eastern mentalism meet in mind, but must merge in Essence.

The self structure of Mind Essence alone is called the ever-abiding, permanent, underlying reality. — *Buddhist Scriptures*

Breath . . . is *nothing* because it is *all* . . . for it has become . . . *Being* itself. — H. P. B., *The Key to Theosophy*

As long as we remain in structural concepts, we can go on to ever subtler forms, realms, planes, but we form concepts nevertheless, and so we remain in duality. But the Real is neither one nor the other, since there is nothing beyond itself. The mind seeking to erect a structure of comprehension ultimately discovers that it must leave the intellect behind to let direct awareness in.

Spoke the Buddha:

. . . every disciple who is seeking Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi should discard, not only conceptions of one's own selfhood, other selves, living beings and a Universal Selfhood, but should discard, also, all ideas about such conceptions and all ideas about the non-existence of such conceptions.

While the Tathagata, in his teaching, constantly makes use of conceptions and ideas about them, disciples should keep in mind the unreality of all such conceptions and ideas. They should recall that the Tathagata, in making use of them . . . always uses them in the resemblance of a raft that is of use only to cross a river. As the raft is of no further use after the river is crossed, it should be discarded . . . as one attains enlightenment. — *Diamond Sutra*

Such paradoxes are less incomprehensible to the Eastern mind trained toward turning within in stillness, than to the Occidental taught to go after "things" in strife. Instead of releasing, letting go, he goes out and grasps. Living in the noise concept of the West, he knows not silence,

and when looking upon the physical immobility of the Eastern Sage, he sees but inactivity, knowing not the real.

We too must learn to quiet the mind, to stand back, to release and let go. Having discovered the Illusion, we must seek the Real. This search lies not in contemplation or meditation, nor can it be willed, though all these may be means. But rather is it a selfless "submerging; a stepping through the looking-glass; action in non-action. Life is met, not held. Responsive action becomes detached, freed in momentariness.

What is this state of Awareness, of Samadhi? Mystics, poets, philosophers in vain have attempted to describe a state of Be-ness which is indescribable. G. de Purucker in *Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy* refers to a French mystic of the Middle Ages, Bernard of Clairvaux, who spoke of "emptying the mind" so that the temple may be cleansed to receive the light of God. Lines like the following (we cannot recall the author) carry the same idea:

If thou couldst empty all thyself of self
Like to a shell dishabited
Then would He fill it with Himself instead.
But thou art all fulfilled with very thou,
And hast such shrewd activity
That when He comes He says, "It is enow.
The place is full, there is no room for Me."

"What has been realized by myself and all other Tathagatas," spoke the Buddha, "is this Reality, the eternally abiding self-orderliness of Reality . . ."

. . . There is no more, no less, no difference . . . the state of self-realization is free from words and discriminations and has nothing to do with the dualistic way of speaking. — *Lankavatara Scripture*

We cannot discover the illusion of something we do not understand. That is why H. P. B. says that these ideas cannot be understood until we understand the principles of man, which must not be regarded as

bodies, but, as she says, as "*aspects and states of consciousness*" — *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 99

And on p. 70 of the *Key* she writes:

I repeat that we believe in "communion" and simultaneous action in unison with our "Father in secret"; and . . . in the mingling of our higher soul with the Universal Essence . . . — a state called during life, *Samadhi*, and after death, *Nirvana*.

Here we have reached a point where attempts at discussion are frustrated by the very words we use. And henceforth instructions, if such there be, can only be imparted in the silence.

The Theosophical Forum

OCCULTISM 1949 — *Madeline Clark*

True Occultism or Theosophy is the "Great Renunciation of SELF," unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action. It is ALTRUISM. — H. P. Blavatsky: *Studies in Occultism*

The very word — Occultism — sets up vibrations in the soul that are felt as a yearning for spiritual adventure. The god that dwells in the inner chamber of the Self — the god that possesses unimaginable faculties and powers — presses to be free to expand its energies "for the benefit of the world and all creatures." Genius, the power to save, protect, harmonize and inspire, is this inner god finding some measure of expression, and heaven knows its work is needed in a world of scrambled motives, courageous but confused, a world headed it knows not where — our world of 1949.

To some minds "occultism" is merely hocus-pocus. But among countless others perhaps Occultism means something different for every aspirant: to some it means magic; to others psychic power, hypnotism and the like; to still others, a knowledge of symbolism, or of color and number, with the powers attaching thereto, or of astrology, or even of healing in its various forms. But whatever knowledge of any one of these occultism may confer, it is in itself none of them. It is simply the hidden wisdom that sheds the lustre of significance upon commonplace events and conditions as well as giving insight into the sublimest operations of the Universe. It is skill in living. It is also the self-existent school of training into which all aspirants enter, consciously or unconsciously, and through which all must pass who would be of real use to their fellowmen.

The spirit of the hour in the hearts of all lovers of humanity is altruism — the giving of the self in service, as a means of offsetting the menacing and disintegrative forces that make the downfall of our civilization no longer a remote contingency, but a very present

possibility. We all want power to do the good that we would. We want "the knowledge of what is good to do, as to the right discrimination of good from evil . . . that power through which [a man] can do the good he desires, often without even apparently lifting a finger," as H P. Blavatsky eloquently puts it.

It is the training in occultism that will help us to attain these powers if we are worthy. The minute a man desires with all his heart to give his best to the Cause of Humanity, the polarity of his life alters. His whole resolve and purpose turn, like the compass needle, to the spiritual north. Something that is a part of himself, yet almost a stranger to him, emerges from the background of his consciousness, and thenceforth is forever at his side, urging to altruistic action. Never again can this silent Companion be banished into the background, and the door wholly closed upon it. Life takes upon itself the aspect of a training for something higher. Casual incidents can no longer be matters of indifference. In course of time the aspirant inevitably finds his Teacher. But the training experienced in association with the true Teacher is always in harmony with the inner urgings of the silent Companion (the Higher Self), and is not viewed with aversion, or as something too difficult to be undertaken.

Let us then not delay; neither should we make rash vows, but rather seek balance and find happiness in the thought that we have made a beginning and are every day nearer to the goal. Instead of drifting, let us direct our lives in harmony with our intuitions — do this, and we have already stepped across the fine line that divides the ordinary life from the inspired life. Those who have the courage to do this make a surprising discovery. They find themselves, not, as they might have expected, moving in a world of mists and mystery. They find themselves bathed in the clear light of common day. As they proceed, the light clarifies. It is the light that enables them to *see things as they are* — one of the basic laws of occultism. They find themselves in the world of *causes*, thrown back upon themselves to learn the very essence of self-reliance, for it is the possession of self-reliance — "the steadfast power within" — that is the first step and the last in fitting

them to give their lives to others.

The training in occultism is surrounded by natural safeguards, not devised by man, and no one can advance to greater powers until he has proven himself wholehearted, and no trace of selfishness or vacillation is left in his nature. The real occultism therefore is so simple that those who have their eye on some outer pageantry of magic and phenomena do not see this simple training as occultism at all, or as necessary. Yet it is as important as five-finger exercises for a future piano virtuoso.

Then why are we warned of the dangers of occultism? It is because the true occultism has so many counterfeits, leading to a search for power or powers for merely selfish ends, which bring about a disintegrative process in the character, because they are divorced from ethics. Ethics, the simple, time-honored virtues, are inseparable from, indeed form the very heart and core of, the real occult wisdom. The elemental strength of human nature, difficult to restrain and subdue, must be taken account of, but it need not daunt us.

Must we then steer clear of occultism because of the warnings? No; for this simple system, based on natural laws of right and fitness, is safe and beneficial to follow, and actually "delivereth a man from great risk," as Krishna tells Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (1) The danger is present when the limpid stream of consciousness is colored by thoughts of self, thus drawing in to the nature all other evils that follow in their wake.

But you would not refrain from buying an automobile because of the dangers that attend its use. You willingly take the somewhat exacting training in learning to drive, and when you go out on the highway you are safe as long as every sense is alert, and every moment is watched for its possible situations. This alertness soon becomes second nature, as every driver knows; and so it is in every other kind of training, likewise, toward whatever end one is working, success depends on putting self aside and concentrating on the effort of the moment.

The most difficult thing of all, apparently, is this idea of renunciation of

self: it seems like a sort of death, a forsaking of all that is warm and natural and dear to us. But we all know this is only an illusion. It is a temporary impression, due to the reluctance of the limited human self to keep moving, in crossing the bridge of life. Yet we know there are those who have pressed on, and reached the other side, "the other shore " We desire to be in their company, be their co-workers, because in them genius has blossomed and in their mastery of power and faculty, in their disciplined and impersonal charm, they are the best company in the world. They have "got that way" by the very means we now must make use of in order to reach their side.

Those who have the good fortune to work in the company or under the direction of teachers dedicated to Altruism learn much from observing how they proceed by unbreakable laws, never intruding upon the consciousness of their pupils, but leading them out of themselves and awakening their unsuspected virtues and talents. We see the results of their own training in practical occultism, in that they *are* "able to do the good they desire, often without even apparently lifting a finger." Unless they had become proficient in setting aside the self and considering first the good of others, they could not deal so skillfully with the human problem in individuals nor make the wise and far-reaching decisions that react to the benefit of all. Unless they had learned "to see things as they are," to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials, they could not have the ready judgment as to what is best to do. Unless they were firmly fixed in Self-reliance, they could not so completely give themselves to the service of others. And unless they had formed the habit of listening for the voice of the intuition in each detail of life, they could not have the sense of timing that tells them *when*, as well as *why* and *how*, a move should be made. But among thousands who are as yet aspirants "on the way," there will be a few who have crossed "to the other shore," relatively speaking, within this present world of action and karma. These now responsible ones, taking leadership to help on the general good, cannot attain their ends single-handed. They must have support and help. The opportunity of working with these helpers of the race is the answer to that "yearning

for spiritual adventure" felt by the aspirant. It offers the perfect setting for a training in practical occultism, whose object is work, here and now, "for the benefit of the world and all creatures."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Textbooks for those wanting specific instructions in practical occultism are: *The Bhagavad-Gita*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and *Studies in Occultism*, by H. P. Blavatsky, *Golden Precepts of Esotericism*, by G. de Purucker; W. Q. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me* and *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. The teachings of "technical" Theosophy are an indispensable background to this study, because they give the fundamental reasons for ethics and altruism. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE NATURE OF ZEN BUDDHISM — *Christmas Humphreys*

There are men, and plenty of them, who think that when something has been classified in accordance with the prevailing system of filing, they know more about it. But nothing has happened. Such men know nothing more about a flower to which they have in triumph added a Latin name of fourteen syllables; and they are no nearer to the spiritual experience known as Zen by announcing that Zen is this or that. Zen *is*, and the noises made in its presence affect it no more than a flower is impressed by its labeling.

Yet questions are asked, and some of these are worth answering.

Is Zen Buddhism a religion? It depends, of course, upon what is meant by religion.

It is not a religion in the sense that the term is popularly understood; for Zen has no God to worship, no ceremonial rites to observe, no future abode to which the dead are destined, and, last of all, Zen has no soul whose welfare is to be looked after by somebody else and whose immortality is a matter of intense concern with some people. Zen is free from all these dogmatic and "religious" encumbrances.

— *Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, Suzuki, p. 14

If, on the other hand, it is as Professor Whitehead conceives it, the answer is otherwise.

It is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind and within the passing flux of immediate things; something which is a remote possibility and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all that passes and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate ideal, and the hopeless quest.

— Quoted in *Diagnosis of Man*, Walker, p. 100

Much depends on the alleged relationship of the Teacher to the Teaching which is later taught in his name. No Teacher ever founds a religion. He teaches, and men listen to his Teaching. He passes, as all else passes, and about the memory of his Teaching men build up, as a wall about some holy object, a system of thought and doctrine, of ceremonial and worship, which all too soon bears little resemblance to the Teacher's own attempt to promulgate his spiritual experience. In time, indeed, the religion becomes a substitute for the actual experience, and as such becomes evil. As Dr. Jung points out, "Creeds are codified and dogmatized forms of original religious experience," and these are easily used as shields against the terrors of direct experience.

What is usually and generally called "religion" is to such an amazing degree a substitute that I ask myself seriously whether this kind of "religion," which I prefer to call a creed, has not an important function in human society. The substitution has the obvious purpose of replacing immediate experience by a choice of suitable symbols invested in a solidly organized dogma and ritual.

— *Psychology and Religion*, pp. 6 and 52

And as the purpose of Zen is "direct seeing into the heart of man," anything which stands between a man and such direct experience is evil, to be thrust aside as a barrier which intervenes between the seeker and his goal.

Yet religion can be used as a raft whereby to cross the raging flood of Samsara, and to reach the farther shore. But he is a fool who carries the raft thereafter, and religion is at the best a means to an end, to be cast aside when its purpose is fulfilled. And without doubt religions may be used to heal: "All religions," says Dr. Jung, "are therapies for the sorrows and disorders of the soul," for when the part is sick it seeks reunion with the whole, and religion, a re-binding, is a means for effecting, by penance and sacrifice and inward prayer, a re-integration

of the soul. And in a way it would seem we are all sick men, for only in a state of consciousness beyond the desires of self lies health or wholeness, and until we find that light within we sit in the darkness of the soul's dis-ease.

It seems that man must have a religion, even though it should bear a disguise remote from its normal seeming.

Having lost the old faith, they turn eagerly to new ones, and science, psycho-analysis, spiritualism, social reform and nationalism have all in turn acted as substitutes for religion.

— *Diagnosis of Man*, p. 243

Of these the most evil is the State. God, a convenient invention, may at least be a God of love. The State is cold, impersonal, has neither warmth nor love nor mystery: is purely conscious, having no controllable relation with the vast forces of the unconscious mind and being without heart, it rejects the devotee in the moment of his greatest need. Like all things large, it has no meaning, and I for one hate all things large, be it a department store, a limited company or a world society. These lack humanity; they make and are bound by foolish rules; they do not care. But "the race is run by one and one and never by two and two," and only one man, not a crowd or a nation or a committee, finds deliverance. In the end the Truth is beyond all formulation. Is it not written in the Diamond Sutra:

"Subhuti, what do you think? Has the Tathagata attained the Consummation of Incomparable Enlightenment? Has the Tathagata a teaching to enunciate?" And Subhuti answered, "As I understand the Buddha's meaning there is no formulation of truth called Consummation of Incomparable Enlightenment. Moreover, the Tathagata has no formulated teaching to enunciate. Wherefore? Because the Tathagata has said that truth is uncontainable and inexpressible. It either is or it is not. Thus it is that this unformulated Principle is the foundation of the different systems of all the sages."

— *The Jewel of Transcendental Wisdom*, p. 32

In brief, although Zen Buddhism is in some sense a religion, Zen itself is the light of all religions; it is not one of them.

Is Zen Buddhism truly a part of Buddhism? Or is it accidental that this fierce, direct approach to reality flowered from the stem of Buddhism, when it might equally have flowered elsewhere? To the extent that "Buddhism" limits Zen, Zen is not Buddhism, for "anything that has the semblance of an external authority is rejected by Zen." On the other hand, as Dr Suzuki also says, "If Buddhism were to develop in the Far East so as to satisfy the spiritual cravings of its people, it had to grow into Zen," which accords with his constant statement that Zen was the Chinese way of absorbing and applying Buddhism. (*Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, pp. 21,9)

Professor Coomaraswamy begins by describing Zen Buddhism as the more philosophical and mystical aspect of the Mahayana, and as essentially indifferent to iconolatry and to scriptural authority.

This phase of Mahayana is little determined by special forms, and can scarcely be said to have any other creed than that the kingdom of heaven is in the heart of man. This school of thought most fully represents the Mahayana as a world religion.

— *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*

This is on account of its amazing flexibility. Being bound to no forms using any or no philosophy and all convenient manner of technique, Zen is the flowering of the mind from the seeds of spiritual experience. It is based upon, draws its life from and actually is the Enlightenment which made Prince Siddhartha, Kumar of the Kshattriyas, the Buddha, the Enlightened One. Zen is therefore the *Buddh* in Buddhism, and "the definition of Buddhism must be that of the life-force which carries forward a spiritual movement called Buddhism." One may therefore agree with Professor Kaiten Nukariya:

Beyond all doubt Zen belongs to Mahayanism, yet this does not imply that it depends on the scriptural authority of that school, because it does not trouble itself about the Canon, whether it be

Hinayana or Mahayana, or whether it was directly spoken by Shakyamuni or written by some later Buddhists.

Or, one might add, written by a small boy on the nursery wall or published in the local railway guide. If it appeals to the intuition it is food for Zen; if not, it has no more value than a speech on politics. Zen Buddhism, in brief, appears in and uses the vehicle built for it called Zen Buddhism; it also appears on the race-course, in the cathedral, and in the w. c.

Within the fold of the Mahayana, Zen Buddhism is often referred to as the Meditation School. It uses meditation and, as already explained, the Zen-Do or Meditation Hall in a Zen monastery is the very heart of the community, but its meditation is far from the meaning of that term in India. There is no deliberate abstraction from the things of sense. Non-attachment, the cure for desire which is the cause of suffering, is an incidental development. Nor does it analyze phenomena, as in the Southern School of Buddhism, with a view to understanding their essential evanescence and "soul-lessness." Rather it seeks to develop the intuition, which cares not for the opposites and is neither attracted nor repelled. It is the Meditation Sect in that it uses profound meditation, with or without the *koan* exercise, as a means to the awakening of Buddhi, the intuitive faculty which is the light of Enlightenment. But it is by no means the Contemplative Sect which certain armchair scholars seem to believe. No one who has lived in a Zen Monastery would describe the life of the monks as contemplative in the sense applied to certain Christian Orders. "No work, no food," was laid down as the rule for the monks one thousand years ago, and the general impression of the daily round is one of strenuous activity. A *koan* may as well be solved with a spade in the hand as in locked, ecstatic silence, and the humblest chores are carried out with the same efficiency and good will as the longest session of deep meditation in the Zen-Do.

What, then, is the place of Zen Buddhism in the field of the Mahayana? It is a revolt from the formalism inherent in the Japanese character.

Outwardly, there are services for the people, with the officiating priests appearing in the most gorgeous robes. Inwardly there is only the silent striving for direct experience, and every "form," however tenuous, is looked upon as a net to ensnare the awakening consciousness. Like a butterfly it rests on the branch of the tree of Wisdom which men for the moment call Buddhism. If it fluttered away it would still be — what it is.

Is Zen but a form of pantheism? Yes and no. If pantheism means, as my dictionary suggests, that the whole universe is God, or that every part of the universe is a manifestation of God, then Zen is not pantheism, for Zen would deny the validity of the partial conception of God. The Zen view, borrowed from Buddhist philosophy, is that behind or beyond the manifest is the absolute Void or Emptiness wherein no "thing" essentially exists. Yet there is no duality in the faintest conceivable form. The Void is a Plenum-Void; Samsara, the Wheel of Becoming, is Nirvana. There is no need for the interposition of an outside Reality called God. Human is divine. If there is a God, we are so much part of it and it of us that there is no difference. Why, then, make use of this man-made symbol in the sky? John Donne was near to the Buddhist conception, holding that "God is an angel in an angel, and a stone in a stone and a straw in a straw." For, as Dr. Suzuki points out,

In Zen each individual is an absolute entity, and as such he is related to all the other individuals, and this nexus of infinite interrelationships is made possible in the realm of Emptiness because they all find their being here even as they are, that is, as individual realities.

— *Zen Buddhism and its Influence on Japanese Culture*, p. 220

This and no less is the tremendous theme of the Buddhist philosophy as developed particularly in the Kegon School. As he most reasonably adds to the above passage, "This may be difficult to grasp for those who are not trained in the Buddhist way of thinking." It is, however, essential to appreciate that the only philosophy of practical use in Zen is that which is based on the intuition. The intellect cannot grasp that

the Many is the One without ceasing to be individual things; that the One can be Many and still be One. This is Jiji-Muge, the complete interfusion of opposites and, as such, a stage yet higher than the Brahman's "Thou art THAT," for even in THAT, says the Buddhist, thou art not a whit less thou!

Is Zen atheistic? Yes, if "God" is different from any other form of life which moves to its own enlightenment. "Buddhism is what the world is when you look straight at it," as somebody has said. Why, then, do so through the eyes of an intermediary?

It would, however, be more accurate to say, as Rene Guenon says, that

Buddhism is no more atheistic than it is theistic or pantheistic; all that need be said is that it does not place itself at the point of view where these various terms have any meaning.

— Quoted in Walker's *Diagnosis of Man*, p. 184

We cannot know God intellectually; when we have learnt to know him, or the Reality of which he is the anthropomorphic dummy, intuitively, we have passed beyond the need of the conception of God. Even reasonably, the God of the Christians is an absurdity in terms of Zen. If he is good then he must be evil; if he is only good he is opposed to evil; in which case there are two things in the Universe, evil and God. If, on the other hand, God is a term for the absolute ultimate All, why chatter about it? "The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao," and in the same way,

Every statement about the transcendental ought to be avoided because it is invariably a laughable presumption on the part of the human mind, unconscious of its limitations.

— Jung, *Secret of the Golden Flower*, p. 135

This is one of the many reasons why Zen hates and strives to avoid abstractions. When a question is put as to the meaning of such terms as Buddha-hood or Reality, the Zen Master invariably turns them down, making the questioner realize that they have no direct hold on life. As an example, the Master Ganto (829-887 a.d.) was asked, "What is the

original, eternal reason?" "Moving," said the original Master. "What about it when moving?", asked the questioner. "It is no more the, eternal reason," replied Ganto, who for once "explained" his reply. "When you assert, you are still in the world of the senses; when you do not assert, you sink into the ocean of birth and death." In Zen, affirmation and denial are equal and opposite, and ultimately both are a waste of time. It is, therefore, wise to wipe out the folly of the pursuit of God, and lo! when the pursuit is finally abandoned he will be found waiting in the lounge.

Is Zen, then, a form of mysticism? Have it as you will, for it depends on what is meant by the much-abused and quite exhausted word. There are many forms of mysticism, which Evelyn Underhill defines as the art of union with Reality. Zen would suggest it were better to have tea, being grossly irreverent in the face of vague abstractions. Yet mysticism is a convenient term for the factor which alone gives life and warmth to all religion, and the lack of which makes mere intellectual reasoning such a cold, unprofitable ploy. It is this vision, this self-communion with the vast unconsciousness which lies about the circle of our conscious life which lifts mere verse into the realm of poetry, fires the imagination, the creative power of the mind, and makes of beauty in all its forms a nobler pursuit than the love of sensuous enjoyment. But it must not be controlled; it must never be fastened or confined. It is "the bloom on the hills at the close of day, the light on the hills at dawn," and if it be fastened to the mind's conception of some extra-cosmic God, though it may produce great poetry, with the love of the Beloved as a golden refrain, yet it cannot lead to the heart's enlightenment. For still the Lover and the Beloved are two, not one, and even in union there is still not an end. For if all things are reduced to the One, to what is the One reduced? Such mysticism may lift the eyes a long way up the hill, but the will o' the wisp of Zen still moves ahead, and its laughter is heard still further up the mountain side.

JIRIKI AND TARIKI

Early Buddhism stressed the necessity of individual effort. "Irrigators

guide the water; fletchers straighten arrows, carpenters bend wood; wise men shape themselves." Thus the *Dhammapada*. Again, "Though a man should conquer a thousand times a thousand men in battle, he who conquers himself is the greatest warrior." And again, "By oneself evil is done; by oneself one suffers. By oneself evil is left undone; by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity are personal concerns. No one can purify another." It is therefore strange that into such a noble and dynamic faith, with its clear command to control and purify the lower man until the last stain of personal desire and its consequent suffering is purged away, there should have crept, as late as the 13th century a.d., its very antithesis, the doctrine that effort, however splendid, will never of itself avail, and that faith must supply the deficiency. And the faith was not in the Buddha within, as a guide and teacher, but in Amida, the personified Principle of Buddha-hood who dwells in a conventional heaven. Only by Tariki, this "other Power," could man be saved; and after a while the middle way of Jodo Buddhism, with a balance of Jiriki, "self-power," and Tariki, was replaced by the extreme of Shin Buddhism, wherein all morality and the mind's development was declared to be of no importance so long as faith in Amida was held in the mind and repeated constantly. Thereafter Amida's vow, to save mankind, was sufficient means to Enlightenment, and all who believed would find themselves in the Pure Land of his All-Compassionate Mind. The basic doctrine of early Buddhism, whereby a man is the product of his thoughts and acts, and the sole creator of his destiny — no God nor all the powers of Heaven having the power to stand between — all this was ended. He who believed would be saved.

If it be argued that faith and love are stronger than the law of *Karma*, of action-reaction, then it is no law. I prefer the Christian doctrine, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and regard it as the finer Buddhism. If it be said, and so it was said to me in Japan, that the original doctrine is too hard for the many, then let the many tread, as in other Buddhist countries, so far as they can up the hillside until they are ready for the noble truths of Buddhism. It seems to me wrong to describe this

attitude as Buddhism. Of course, there is more to the Buddha's Teaching than this law of moral philosophy, of Karma and rebirth, but the element of love, of a wide compassion for all living things, is no monopoly of the Mahayana, and it is a power that comes, as all comes in the end, from within. "Seek in the impersonal for the Eternal Man, and having sought him out look inward — thou *art* Buddha." (1) True, this spiritual factor, which of course is Zen, may seem to come from without, and so produce an inner experience, or seem to come from within, in which case it will manifest without. But I cannot accept as Buddhism a School which denies the importance of self-development, nor, I gather, can Dr. Suzuki. "The absolute "other power" doctrine is not psychologically valid, nor metaphysically tenable." To the extent, therefore, that Zen Buddhism is on one side or other of this Japanese fence, it is undoubtedly *Jiriki*, moving by "self-power" to its own and the world's Enlightenment. There is a well known story in Zen which may be summarized here. A monk named Dogen, who sought enlightenment, was sent on a very long errand which he thought would interfere with his studies. Sogen, a fellow monk, took pity on him and agreed to accompany him. One evening, when Dogen implored his friend to help him solve the mystery of life, Sogen told him there were five things which he could not do for his friend — to eat and drink for him, to respond to the calls of nature for him, and to carry the "corpse" of his body along the way. Dogen saw the point in a flash, and attained *satori*. But presumably the truth is some way above and beyond this pair of opposites. Dr. Suzuki himself has written of the inner truth of *Tariki* Buddhism, and is in fact a Professor of the Otani College of the principal Shin Temple in Kyoto. And it was the Prince Abbot of the twin monastery of the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto who presided, as I have related elsewhere, at the Conference at which I debated this point with his pundits. In the end he announced, "Mr. Humphreys is right; *Tariki* and *Jiriki* alike are means." And that, as I said in my book, (2)"ended the discussion."

Tariki and *Jiriki*, then, are both means to an end, another of the opposites which only exist as such on the plane of discrimination. But

as Zen is itself above such a plane it must exist in both "means" equally, though its principal vehicle, Zen Buddhism, is unquestionably of the Jiriki School. It is in the degradation of a spiritual truth that evil lies, in teaching the people that morality and character-building are of *no* importance. A balance must be obtained, and in practice I found that it was so in all but the lowest rank of the Pure Land followers. Thus

Self-hood is revealed in otherness and otherness in self-hood, which means a complete interpenetration of subject and object, Amida and his devotees. And we can see that Buddhism is after all one, and remains so in spite of apparent diversity.

— *The Eastern Buddhist*, Vol. IV, Part 2, p. 32 (of reprint)

THE ARHAT AND THE BODHISATTVA IDEAL

The ideal of the Thera Vada was and is the Arhat, he who by his own efforts attains Enlightenment. But as the Mahayana developed, this limited ideal was held to be insufficient.

His object of spiritual discipline does not extend beyond his own interest, however exalted it may be in itself, — the object being the attainment of Arhatship, a solitary saintly life. This is all well as far as it goes, but as we are all living within a most complicately organized communal body, not excepting even a Buddha or a Bodhisattva, we have to think of this side of life.

The conception of a Bodhisattva was thus inevitable.

— Suzuki, *Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra*, p. 124

But is it all as simple as all that? "The sages of old got Tao for themselves, then gave it to others," said the Taoist sage, Chuang Tzu. Or, in the words of the Dhammapada, "Let a wise man first go the right way himself, then teach others." After all, there is precisely one mind which he can purify, his own; one character to be ennobled, one vision to be widened, his own. How shall he save another from the burning house of desire, that has not saved himself? The change, it would seem, is from depth to width, from the profound study of the few, reaching the whole way to the goal, to a more superficial improvement of the

many. As such it may have been an "inevitable conception," but I cannot lightly accept that the Arhat is the less noble ideal. It is, therefore, to be noted that elsewhere Dr. Suzuki modifies his view.

The Arhat and the Bodhisattva are essentially the same. But the Mahayanists, perceiving a deeper sense in Enlightenment as the most important constituent element in the attainment of the final goal of Buddhism, which is spiritual freedom, . . . did not wish to have it operated in themselves only, but wanted to see it realized in every being, sentient and non sentient.

— *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, I, p. 52

Thus was born the Bodhisattva doctrine which, running as a golden thread through the whole Mahayana, affects Zen Buddhism. The single aim of the Hinayanist became dual. Mahayana stood thereafter on two legs, Maha-Prajna, supreme wisdom, and Maha-Karuna, supreme compassion for all living things. Of these Dr. Suzuki says, in a most illuminating phrase, that "the former sees into the unity of things, and the latter appreciates their diversity." (*Studies in the Lankavatara Sutra*, p. 229)

He expands this in *The Essence of Buddhism*, when talking of Jiji-muge.

It is by the Great Compassionate Heart that the Keron world of *Jiji muge* moves. If it were just to reflect one individual *Ji* after another in the mirror of *Ri*, the world would cease to be a living one, becoming simply an object of contemplation for the hermit or Arhat. It is the Heart indeed that tells us that our own self is a self only to the extent that it disappears into all other selves, non-sentient as well as sentient. . . .

— *The Essence of Buddhism*, p. 55

This mystical sense of union is, of course, found alike in eastern and western philosophy. Marcus Aurelius wrote in his Diary, "Enter into every man's Inner Self, and let every man enter into thine." And John Donne's famous observation is in the same vein. "Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never

send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

The Bodhisattva, therefore, at first a name reserved for the few who had neared Nirvana, but later applied to all who vowed to live for the benefit of mankind, was raised as a nobler ideal than that of the Arhat, and the latter was covertly regarded as a selfish aim. Yet

in finding fault with the Hinayanist ideal, the Mahayanist failed to realize that a selfish being could not become an arahant, which consisted in a spiritual exaltation which transcended the limitations of temporal individuality. In what intelligible sense can a system which aims at the elimination of the phenomenal ego be described as egoistic? . . . The arahant could not have reached full spiritual development if he had failed to act in accordance with the principle that each man forms a part of a spiritual whole of which all of his fellow men are also parts, and that to serve them is to enrich, while to neglect them is to impoverish, his own higher self.

— *Buddhist China*, R. F. Johnston, p. 73

But whether or not the Arhat is selfish, and whether or not in his narrower objective he avoids the pitfalls of the rival doctrine, including those of over-officiously minding other people's business, the Bodhisattva ideal does liberate the force of compassion. Every monk in a Mahayana monastery recites at intervals the "Four great Vows."

However innumerable sentient beings are

I vow to save them;

However inexhaustible the passions are

I vow to extinguish them;

However immeasurable the Dharmas are

I vow to study them;

However incomparable the Buddha-truth is

I vow to attain it.

Thus China and Japan make echo to that noblest of all works of Northern Buddhism, *The Voice of the Silence*. For depth of spiritual

feeling and purity of thought it is in a class of its own. Even the Metta Sutta of the Thera Vada is but the song of human love as against the "pure serene" of this ancient Tibetan fragment.

Let thy Soul lend its ear to every cry of pain like as the lotus bares its heart to drink the morning sun.

Let not the fierce sun dry one tear of pain before thyself hast wiped it from the sufferer's eye.

But let each burning human tear drop on thy heart and there remain; nor ever brush it off until the pain that caused it is removed.

"To live to benefit mankind," is the first step on the Path, not the last, in this philosophy, and it is dynamic.

Point out the "Way" — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness. . . . Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou . . . let him hear the Law.

Love is a noble theme, and love itself may be, as Aldous Huxley says, a mode of knowledge,\

and when the love is sufficiently disinterested and sufficiently intense, the knowledge becomes unitive knowledge and so takes on the quality of infallibility.

— *The Perennial Philosophy*, p. 81

There is, indeed, as W. J. Gabb points out, "a kindness of the heart and a kindness of the head. Kindness of the heart prompts us to shake up the pillows of a bed-ridden sufferer, but Jesus told such an one to take up his bed and walk." (From the MS. of a lecture). Love, to be wise, must be lit with Prajna, Wisdom; and Wisdom cannot be complete that is devoid of Love. Thus once more the pair are a pair of opposites and Zen, that seeks not wisdom nor love, being both on the plane of the opposites, drives straight for the state of consciousness which lies beyond all

opposites, where Wisdom and Love, Arhat and Bodhisattva, are one — and at the same time what they severally are.

ZEN AND MORALITY

Where is Zen in relation to morality? This is a vague term, having at least two meanings. It may refer to our relations with our fellow men and other forms of life. As such it equates with ethics, and would scarcely obtain if one were alone on a desert island. It may also refer to the inner life of the mind, and equate with character building, the elimination of low desires and qualities, and their replacement with nobler qualities. What does Zen have to say about either? Does it take the view of Shin Buddhism at its most extreme, that morality is of no importance so long as the mind be concentrated on the light within? Or does it regard the moral cleansing of the mind as an essential preliminary to further growth? Or does it consider that when the kingdom of Heaven is attained, all else shall be added unto you — that right morality is the result rather than the cause of *satori*, enlightenment?

It seems that Zen adheres to the doctrine of causation as governing the world of duality in which we live. "As ye sow, so shall ye also reap," is the doctrine known in the East as Karma, action-reaction. Zen, therefore, denies the convenient doctrine of sin-transference, whereby the great ones of the earth apply to those less fortunate, i.e. more lazy, the surplus of their own tremendous merit, acquired from innumerable good deeds. But the law of causation is tempered with compassion, for the love of the loving minds of the earth will affect the incidence of woe, and make the suffering to be borne as the result of folly easier to bear. Moreover, Zen, being of the essence of freedom, resents all rules which hamper and confine the mind. According to Dr. Suzuki, this is one of the reasons for the Japanese preference for art over morality. "Morality is regulative, but art creative. The one is an imposition from without, but the other is an irrepressible expression from within." (*Zen Buddhism and its Influence on Japanese Culture*, p. 21) Zen, he concludes, therefore, finds its inevitable association with

art, but not with morality. For rigid form is a symptom of departing life.

When the great Tao is lost, spring forth benevolence and righteousness. When Wisdom and sagacity arise, there are great hypocrites. Where Tao is, equilibrium is. When Tao is lost, out come all the differences of things.

This spiritual principle applies specially to the artificial distinctions of "good" and "bad," and Taoism is at least consistent in its philosophy in that it has no moral code.

The Sage has no self (to call his own). He makes the self of the people his self. To the good I act with goodness; to the bad I also act with goodness.

— *Tao Te Ching*, chs. 18, 49

Why formulate rules unless the original sense of "right" has been somehow paralyzed?

Zen admits that outward conduct should conform with the laws of the state and the customs of the time, but the inner life should be above all rules imposed from without.

Definition is always limitation — the "fixed" and "changeless" are but terms expressive of a stoppage of growth. . . . People are not taught to be really virtuous, but to behave properly.

— *The Book of Tea*, Okakura Kakuzo, p. 53

Yet some degree of discipline is needed, and it is useful so long as it comes from within. It is desire which has to be corrected, not action, for we behave according as we will, and it is an old truth that behind will stands desire. And desire will be purified as the higher, intuitive range of mind increasingly gains control. There is danger in the denial of both good and evil as having real validity, for gross immorality can appear thereby. Zen monasteries are therefore run to a discipline, but it is a control shared willingly, as distinct from a set of rules which most, when occasion offers, will be swift to disobey.

In Zen there is one enemy in the path of final enlightenment, and this is self, the self which stands between a man and the sun while he bitterly complains that it is dark. For self is a knot in the flow of life, an obstruction in the flow of becoming. Life walks on and we strive to prevent it. Yet how bitter our complaint when we are hurt thereby!

A Master was asked, "What is the Way?" "What a fine mountain this is," he said, referring to the mountain where he had his retreat. "I am not asking you about the mountain, but about the Way." "As long as you cannot go beyond the mountain you cannot reach the Way," replied the Master.

The same Master was asked the same question by another monk. "It lies right before your eyes," said the Master.

Why do I not see it for myself?

You do not, because of your egoistic notion.

If I do not because of my egoistic notion, do you?

So long as you have dualistic views, saying "I don't" and "You do" and

so on, your eyes are bedimmed by this relativity view.

When there is neither "I" nor "You," can one see it?

When there is neither "I" nor "You," who is it that wants to see?

— *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, III, pp. 298-9

The "self may acquire merit unceasingly by virtuous thoughts and actions, but, as Bodhidharma explained to the Chinese Emperor, such merit, though it will by the law of cause-effect improve the character, will have no bearing on the fact of enlightenment. Zen begins where morality leaves off, and its subsequent progress is on a plane where the opposites, like "good" and "bad," have lost their meaning. As Kaiten Nukariya pithily puts it, "Man is not Good-natured or Bad-natured, but Buddha-natured" (*Religion of the Samurai*, page 105).

It is not right conduct, therefore, which matters, but right thinking,

thought which springs from the Essence of Mind. Right conduct may be performed in obedience to a moral code, and have no relation to the mind. Right thinking, however, liberated from the illusion of the opposites, will automatically produce "right action," the third step on the Eightfold Path to Enlightenment. "Form and virtue and charity, and duty to one's neighbour, these are accidents of the spiritual," said the Taoist, Chuang Tzu, having in mind, no doubt, the dull Confucian of his day whose life was bound by rigid obedience to an endless code of equally rigid rules.

Zen ethic, therefore, springs from a sense of the unimportance of self, and is fed by the understanding of this fact which flows from the increasing light of enlightenment. Hence the willingness to help all living things to the same liberation of mind. As the Lama said in Talbot Mundy's immortal *Om*,

My son, there is no such thing as sacrifice, except in the imagination. There is opportunity to serve, and he who overlooks it robs himself. Would you call the sun's light sacrifice?

As a Zen Abbot said to me in Kyoto, "Get Enlightenment; the rest follows," yet, as Alan Watts points out,

While morality should not be confused with religion, it does take one a certain distance towards the goal; it cannot go the whole way because morality is essentially rigid and limiting, and Zen begins where morality leaves off.

— *The Spirit of Zen*, p. 63

Like the intellect, it must be used and then transcended. Meanwhile, perhaps Aldous Huxley should have the last word of all these quotations.

The relationship between moral action and spiritual knowledge is circular, as it were, and reciprocal. Selfless behaviour makes possible an accession of knowledge, and the accession of knowledge makes possible the performance of further and more

genuinely selfless actions, which in their turn enhance the agent's capacity for knowing.

— *The Perennial Philosophy*, p. 129

And so on, until this pair of opposites is merged in Zen.

(To be continued)

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 35 ([return to text](#))

2. *Via Tokyo*, p. 74. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE VEDIC PERIOD IN HINDU PHILOSOPHY (1) — *Marjorie Reineman*

The study of Hindu Philosophy takes us back to the earliest God-Wisdom, given by great teachers to the early human races. We learn of ancient continents, now submerged, from which peoples migrated to the center of Asia and thence to the parts of the earth now inhabited. We learn particularly of the migration into India and neighboring lands; and of the great Aryan race, its religion, its literature, its civilization. Our whole horizon is broadened to include great cycles of human life, and noble heights of wisdom.

Before going on, it would be wise to mention a fact that is fundamentally necessary to proper understanding of this subject. Everywhere we find traditions of the Four Ages of Man. These were actual historic cycles of civilization, called by the Greeks: the Golden Age, the Silver Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age. In ancient India, called Yugas: Satya-Yuga, the Age of Truth; Treta-Yuga, the Age of three parts Truth; Dwapara-Yuga, the Age of two parts Truth; and Kali-Yuga, the Age of Strife and Discord.

Satya-Yuga, the childhood of mankind, was happy and peaceful. There was no war, because man as yet knew nothing of strife or discord. Mankind was blessed with plenty, with abundance; fruits and grain sprang from the earth without labor, and there was no winter or summer — only an endless spring. This age was called the "Saturnian Age," (2) probably because, as G. de Purucker says, there were no real responsibilities. However, under Cyclic Law it passed away, and next came the Age of Three Fires — Treta-Yuga. At this point selfishness, one of the greatest of all evils, crept in, and with it cruelty and injustice. Winter came too, with its chill, and men had to build shelters for protection. Jealousy was born, and hatred. Evil slowly increased until came Dwapara-Yuga, the Age of two parts good, two evil. Nature became more and more harsh, and selfishness increased. There was sickness and unhappiness, and one by one the bright Gods left the

earth, and man now had to find his way alone. Kali-Yuga, the Age of Strife and Discord, is the Age in which we are living at present. Everywhere we turn there is injustice, fear, hatred, selfishness and unhappiness. Yet it is well to remember that this is only three-fourths darkness, for the Gods have not forgotten; and at the right cyclic time will come messengers to tell us of the new Golden Age which is near. Soon will come the dawn, the daybreak, and Brotherhood will again predominate.

A brighter morn awaits the human day,
When every transfer of earth's natural gifts
Shall be a commerce of good words and works. . . .
— Shelley, *Queen Mab*

The Manasaputras, those wonderful beings who lighted the latent fires of mind, made their appearance on earth during the later cycles of Lemuria. The spiritual minority in Lemuria were guided and protected by Great Initiates of the Mystery Schools and thus became (as they were reborn) the spiritual "seed race" in Atlantis, which, in migrating bands under great Teachers, went finally to the Central Plateau of Asia. From the northern parts of this "cradleland of the Human Race," (3) later descended into the Indian peninsula those peoples who called themselves Aryans, or the so called High Caste, who later were divided into Four Castes: Brahmanas, priest-philosophers; Kshatriyas, warriors and administrators; Vaisyas, traders and agriculturists; and Sudras, servers, lowest caste.

In time our archaeologists may uncover remains of wonderful advanced civilizations in what are now the sandy, arid plains of Turkestan, Persia, and Baluchistan. In fact, great literatures have already been unearthed there.

It is well to note that the homestead of the human family is the geographical center of the Eastern hemisphere. Its borders rise on every side into majestic mountain ranges, that look eastward over the steppes of Tibet and the plains of India, westward down the Assyrian lowlands towards the Mediterranean, northward over the wide sands

of Central Asia, and southward across Arabia and the Tropic Seas. The languages and mythologies of nearly all the great historic races, point back to these mountain outlooks of Iran. The homes of ancient civilization rose around their bases, and there they were taken into the dust.

Central Asia is our mother-land. To it went the earliest of the Fifth Race colonists. As Age after Age passed by — this race climbed from innocence to knowledge and on to the misuse of knowledge, until we come to the present day. We are paying for our mistakes in what is now our Kali-Yuga.

Originally, the teachings were given to the people of India in *oral* form, the written form undoubtedly being of a much later date. They were given mostly, if not entirely, in the form of Suktas, or Hymns, stated to have been communicated clairaudiently and clairvoyantly to the Rishis by the Gods themselves. It is an enormous literature, much of which is still untranslated, and containing many parts which are misunderstood by Western Scholars. According to H. P. Blavatsky, in her *Theosophical Glossary*, "they are the most ancient as well as the most sacred of the Sanskrit works." The Ancient Wisdom teachings (later called the Vedas) of the earliest Aryans, went forth before they were written, into every nation of the Atlanto-Lemurians, and sowed the first seeds of all the now existing old religions. (A most beautiful and enlightening thought!)

From this literature we know what kind of civilization grew up at that early date — with one basic religion, and one basic philosophy, until the coming of the Dark Ages. Even then, the innermost teachings were preserved in the hearts of sincere men.

In those days there was a pure and beautiful relationship with the Gods, a constant sense of their nearness, and to sin was knowingly to separate oneself from divine companionship.

It was a child-race in its simple devotion to everything in nature. There was worship of Father Sun and Mother Earth, who nourished the race through life and drew it into her heart after death, when the spirit

turned to the stars. Life was a matter of kindness and gratitude, no bickering over finances, no burnt offerings, no slaughter; only a trust in the Universal Order, and love of nature as being Divine.

. . . the trees,

The grass, the clouds, the mountains, and the sea,
All living things that walk, swim, creep, or fly,
Were gods; the sun had homage, and the moon
Her Worshipper. — Shelley, *Queen Mab*

There are many methods of classification. That which distributes the Vedas into hymns, formulae, and chants — called the triple Veda. That which classifies the Vedas into four parts, the oldest, most famous of these being the *Rig-Veda* — which is made up of Hymns of Love, praise or devotion to Nature and Nature-forces; *Yajur-Veda* — in which all the prescribed formulas are included; *Sama-Veda* — a collection of chants (hymns chanted or sung). And the *Atharva-Veda* — a collection of hymns of later date which must have been employed in the ritual of worship. During this period the rules of caste were more thoroughly laid down, and belief in a future life is more positively stated.

The religion which is transmitted to us in these hymns is, in its principal feature . . . "Nature is throughout Divine." (4) Everything capable of affecting man may become an object of adoration. The mountains, wind, trees, and springs, are worshiped as divinities. Even the animals surrounding him receive from him the worship of either homage or deprecation. Nevertheless, it is neither the direct adoration of objects, or of natural phenomena, which figures most prominently in the Hymns. The two single divinities of the first rank which have preserved their physical character pure and simple are *Agni* and *Soma*.

Agni is symbolical of terrestrial fire, and the fire of the lightning and the sun; he is the lord and generator of sacrifice. He organizes the world and preserves universal life. It is *Agni* who pervades all nature, making all seeds and plants grow. But even with the many powers ascribed to him, he never ceases to be the fire which consumes the wood on the altar.

The Hymn to Agni, from the Rig-Veda, is an invocation calling on the gods to descend and be present at the sacrifice.

5. May Agni, sapient-minded priest, truthful, most gloriously great,

The god, come hither with the gods.

6. Be to us easy of approach, even as a father to his son;

Agni, be with us for our weal.

Agni is the messenger and mediator between earth and heaven, announcing to the gods the hymns, and conveying to them the oblations of their worshipers, inviting them with the sound of his crackling flames and bringing them down to the place of sacrifice. The simplicity of this is pure and lovely.

Soma is the fermented drinkable juice of a plant so named. It has an intoxicating effect, and is offered to the gods, especially Indra, whose strength it intensifies. But it is not only on earth that the soma flows; it is present in the rain which the cloud distils, and it is shed even beyond the visible world wherever sacrifice is performed. Like Agni, Soma also has a mystic existence. He generated the heaven and the earth, Indra and Vishnu, and with Agni, he kindled the sun and the stars.

The Hymn to Indra, from the Rig-Veda, is a hymn to the thunder-wielder who slew the dragon on the mountain, overcame the enchanter, and gave life to the sun and dawn.

4. When, Indra, thou hadst slain the dragon's firstborn, and overcome the charms of the enchanters,

Then, giving life to Sun and Dawn and Heaven thou foundest not one foe to stand against thee.

The original purport of the legend of Indra slaying Vritra lies in the fact that Vritra is nothing more than the accumulation of vapor, condensed or figuratively shut up in a cloud. Indra, with his thunderbolt, or atmospheric influence, divides the aggregated mass, and vent is given to the rain which then descends upon the earth. The Supreme God of

the Aryans was first Varuna, then Indra. Indra gives victory to his people, defends their causes, brings the rain, and strikes down Vritra, the drought. Indra is presented as a war-like god, but that is only one side. He is a giver of gifts; he gives the milk to the cows, he traces the course of the rivers, and holds up the sky.

In the *Hymn to Varuna*, also from the Rig-Veda, the singer is mourning that the god Varuna has withdrawn his friendship, and he pleads for a renewal of that precious relationship.

5. What hath become of those our ancient friendships, when
without enmity we walked together?

I, Varuna, thou glorious lord have entered thy lofty home,
thine house with thousand portals.

6. If he, thy true ally, hath sinned against thee, still, Varuna,
he is the friend thou lovedst.

Let us not, Living One, as sinners, know thee: give shelter,
as a sage, to him who lauds thee.

One of the most beautiful hymns of the Rig-Veda is the Gayatri. Theosophists know it particularly in this paraphrase:

Oh, thou golden sun of most excellent splendor, illumine our hearts and fill our minds so that we, recognizing our oneness with the divinity which is the heart of the universe, may see the pathway before our feet, and tread it to those distant goals of perfection, stimulated by thine own radiant light.

This invocation is an appeal for the heart-wisdom — in order to be able to help all our fellows. It is a plea for the right ideas of philosophy with which to keep our thinking on the path of truth.

The great Hindu poet, Rabindranath Tagore, writes of the Hindu Scriptures in this manner: They have the significance of a revealed divine word, and are a poetic testament of a people's collective reaction to the wonder and awe of existence. A people of vigorous and unsophisticated imagination awakened at the very dawn of civilization to a sense of the inexhaustible mystery that is implicit in Life. It was a

simple faith of theirs that attributed divinity to every element and force of Nature, but it was a brave and joyous one, in which fear of the gods was balanced by trust in them, in which the sense of mystery only gave enchantment to life, without weighing it down with bafflement. But, as when children grow they gather an increasing awareness of their selves, the later authors sought more and more a center of reference in their own consciousness, a subjective counterpart to the objective majesty that had so long held them enthralled in awe, an answer in their own being to the cosmic challenge of the visible universe. If the Supreme Self is unknowable and incomprehensible, it is yet realizable through self-discipline and knowledge of the Self in man, for the two are ultimately one. Thus man is delivered from the fear of the Cosmic Forces and is made part of the Divine Will.

The Upanishads approach Reality by means of the intellectual nature, and philosophic imagination, whereas the Bhagavad-Gita stresses love and devotion. The latest of these scriptures, the Bhagavad-Gita, is the scripture that is most widely studied in the world today.

The interest of these ancient hymns lies not so much in their poetical value, though their close contact with nature gives them at times a glow and rapture that are the essence of poetry. It lies rather in the brave adventures, made so long ago and recorded here, of those who seek to discover the significance of our world and of man's life within it.

Belief in the gods is still preserved in the literature of India, while in other parts of the world the belief in one God has robbed humanity of this glorious association of Divine beings — taught in the Vedas. It is a grander conception of divinity, which upholds the idea that nature contains a potential God Spark. It is much more logical to believe that the great mountains, the broad rivers, the stately trees, and the delicate shrubs and flowers, are a part of the Cosmic plan; and it is a friendlier religion which sees in all the animals some part that they can play in the great scheme of life. As to the dawn and the sunset — who can doubt that divinities are present, when such beauty is before our eyes!

An inspiring thing about the ancient sacred literature is that it presents a universe full of potentialities, a universe in which every living thing has a divine spark of its own, and plays an important part in the drama of life. This satisfies the imagination and intuition and it creates a happier picture of life and destiny for every entity.

A beautiful thought — that from the very beginning, human beings were given truth about the universe, and will continue to receive teachings in proportion to Cosmic Law.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Condensed from Term Paper, Theosophical University, Year 1947- 48. ([return to text](#))
 2. *Questions We All Ask*, by G. de Purucker. ([return to text](#))
 3. *Studies in Occult Philosophy* by G. de Purucker. ([return to text](#))
 4. *The Religions of India* by Auguste Barth. ([return to text](#))
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PSYCHIC OR SPIRITUAL? — Philip A. Malpas

We have been often enough reminded to study technical Theosophy. The advice is more timely than many may think. The word Theosophy is not copyrighted and it is not illegal to make it mean whatever we wish it to mean. But the origin of it is clear enough and it should mean today what it meant originally, if for no other reason than that it obviously originated with the class of people who have been described as "Those who know."

The meaning is "God-Wisdom," "The Wisdom of the Gods," "Divine Wisdom." But already in the Western world we have the word God crystallized into meaning a personal god, and the "God-Wisdom," with many, automatically suggests the wisdom of a personal god, such as Jehovah, or Jesus, or any of the other denizens of the Hebrew Pantheon. That means a personification of the God-principle in all men and all things.

Again the word god has come to mean, correctly enough in its way, the manifold and multiple powers in nature, whose number is legion. This is quite a different field of meaning.

So let us say that Theosophy is the wisdom of the god-part which is in all men and all things in the universe and beyond. If others choose to define it otherwise, they may, but we hold that the originators of the word defined it as we say. They had one advantage over the average Theosophist of today in that if they were such as we believe them to have been, they were consciously exercising that god-power or consciousness, and not, as we are, looking at it from outside, as it were. We are speculatives and they were operatives.

We have been taught about the seven principles in man. One or two of them may be called the psychic principles, and anyone who has had the merest training in genuine psychology is perfectly aware that psychism is so far from spirituality (or spiritualism in its original pure

sense, not the popularly accepted sense of the word in modern Europe and America, which more properly answers to the word *spiritism* or some other term not suggesting spirit) that it is its antithesis. Either you can have psychism or spirituality, but taken together they "cancel each other out." A flood of book-mind argument will doubtless meet this statement, but the simplest apprentice of the true training of the life of a mystic will know how to value it.

So in the same way, technically, the Divine is far higher than the spiritual. One of the most beautiful things in all pseudo-mystic literature is the phrase — the English phrase, not the Greek — "the peace of god which passeth all understanding." In the Greek it means what we say, "the peace of the divine which is far above even the glorious peace of the spiritual part of everyman." We are forced to say pseudo-mystical because the English is so very different from the original Greek.

H. P. Blavatsky, who spent so much of her life trying to drum the elementary principles into nineteenth century noddles, was forever warning us that to reach the spiritual and divine as active things in our nature we had to pass through the morass of psychism. It is as fascinating to our lower unspiritual selves as the vegetation of a tropical swamp, and about as dangerous to the tyro — and we are all tyros.

After a fierce battle Theosophy began to rise above the miasma of the psychic marshes and the world today is quite well enough acquainted with the difference between the psychic and spiritual, so far as it desires to be. That is an immense step forward, even though that desire may be quite rarely evident.

We have been passing through a phase of softness and lack of self-discipline culminating in two great struggles which in their way have shown the necessity for that discipline. The Theosophical Society, if you like, *any* Theosophical Society, not any one in particular, mirrors the world conditions or vice versa, according to the way you look at it. Or at least the living core, if any, does this.

Therefore it is only natural to find in Theosophical circles a somewhat mushy or hazy idea of just what spirituality is. And of course the self-confident and self-assertive man who has not yet fully risen above the fascination of the lower, emotional, psychic realm is going to be the first to protest that he is right and that psychism in one or another of its subtle forms — and they are subtle beyond conception — is just as important as anything spiritual: that psychic practices are just as important as the effort to attain, spiritually. It is true no step may be omitted on the way up, but beyond saying that, we need not pay much attention to the psychic, any more than we need emphasize the demands of the body when talking about intellectual progress.

To save any roundabout rigmarole let us say at once that perfect self-control is necessary before we can profitably play in our psychic backyards. And it might be well for most of us to devote a few lifetimes to that alone before talking about psychic things as being of interest. And, let us remark as an aside, that when we have done that we shall, with few exceptions, hardly bother our heads about psychic things; we shall have more important things to do. A great philosopher may have dreams or even nightmares, but very few philosophers, if any, spend time over seriously considering those dreams.

"Ye cannot serve God and Mammon" is one rather pithy phrase expressing much the same idea as we are dealing with. It is Jewish.

We have a great regard and admiration for the doughty editor of *Eirenicon* but here we must allow ourselves to take issue with him in what he says in No. 86, of the summer of 1948.

After a preliminary quotation he says

The Covina Society cannot present 100 per cent . . . Theosophy of H. P. B. and debar astrology, psychic problems, or any other branch of science. We intend to prove shortly that the theosophical message of the Masters and H. P. Blavatsky embraced astrology, psychic powers and other sciences, and integrated them into the spiritual whole. They were against

science and psychism that was unilluminated by the Light of the Spirit, but they considered that the theosophical task is to bring illumination to those subjects, not to sheer off from them; to build bridges to the spiritual world from every phase of human life, not to run away from possible englamourment. The Theosophist is a man who aims to meet every enquirer on his own ground without being carried away by maya. We quite agree with our Covina friends that a Lodge which interests itself exclusively or excessively in any branch of knowledge, and fails to bring to it a comprehensive background of the spiritual philosophy that gives such special studies a balanced setting, is unworthy of being called Theosophical.

Are we correct in thinking that this is written a little from the point of view that the Theosophical movement, that is, the part that moves, has not advanced beyond H. P. B.'s day? In private teaching she gave at least an hour to the subject of dreams. Are we to assume from that that Theosophists today should busy themselves with dreams, that fascinating psychical subject? Is it profitable today to enter into long polemics as to what is popularly known as spiritualism? Are we to say that the dangers of hypnotism are not better known now than then? In short, the world has had its chance to know what psychism is from a general standpoint and if it does not act up to what has been shown to it, so much the worse for the world. At this date spiritual issues are in the air, and though the whole atmosphere is murky and alive with the fascinating will-o-the-wisps of psychism, the sunlight is breaking through and the dawn will disperse with the wind of the spirit much that we have thought was permanent and important. The plea that we must busy ourselves with all sorts of pseudo-Theosophy so that we can answer any fool question correctly is not convincing. Our work is Theosophy, not psychic curiosity.

The sifting time comes as surely as the harvest, and the winnowing fan will in its due time thoroughly purge the spiritual floor. It is not psychic things that stand against that wind; spiritual things are made stronger thereby.

* * *

In the same number of *Eirenicon* doubt is thrown upon the statement that there is but one "formally organised" esoteric school. This is hardly a matter of opinion but one of fact, and it stands to reason that some know the fact of the case while others do not.

The statement that the work of the T. S. is linked in with similar work which is secretly going on in all parts of the world certainly speaks of secret work, but there are many secret activities which are not the formally organized work of the one esoteric school connected with the Great Lodge, or whatever its title should be, and yet the people carrying on those activities may or may not be members of that school. Who knows whether there may not be much unorganized secret work carried on by the students of the organized esoteric school? Or on the other hand by those with whom they are in touch who do not even know of the school?

The Theosophical Forum

The Bhagavad-Gita: Its Scientific Aspect: II – Marion O. French

For practical application, the musical connotations that lie concealed in Sanskrit sources are of the highest importance to psychology and to the sciences. As stated in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, p. 555: "Sound is a tremendous occult power," which western physics is commencing to discover through supersonic research. With respect to physiology, the body is described by H. P. Blavatsky in *Studies in Occultism* (Psychic and Noetic Action) as:

an Æolian Harp, chorded with two sets of strings, one made of pure silver, the other catgut. When the breath from the divine Fiat brushes softly over the former, man becomes like unto *his* God — but the other set feels it not. It needs the breeze of a strong terrestrial wind, impregnated with animal effluvia, to set its animal chords vibrating. It is the function of the physical, lower mind to act upon the physical organs and their cells; but, it is the higher mind *alone* which can influence the atoms interacting in those cells, which interaction is alone capable of exciting the brain, *via the spinal "center" cord*, to a mental representation of spiritual ideas far beyond any objects on this material plane.

As to the silver string, its metallic structure is not subject to alterations due to temperature, humidity and other terrestrial factors that affect organic matter most rapidly. Furthermore, experiment has indicated that the molecular vibratory rates of platinum, gold and silver are in the proportions of 3, 6 and 9. Also, the oscillatory equilibrium may be altered by vibratory impulses created by striking the same chord in three octaves, representing the third, sixth and ninth of the scale. The third, as dominant, may induce a rearrangement of the oscillatory vibrations. The harmonic sixth reduces the oscillatory range of vibrations, bringing the neutral, or *laya* centers (neutrons in physics) closer together in densification. The enharmonic ninth extends the vibratory range to effect a greater tenuity, or etherealization, in the mass. Hence, Blavatsky presents it as the psychologically spiritualizing "string" of the human harp that induces intuitive consciousness by the vibratory action of the pituitary body on the pineal gland.

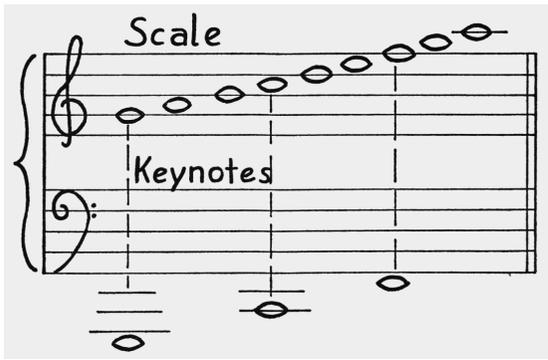
The striking similarity that the basilar membrane in the ear bears to the keyboard of a piano has been commented upon by Sir James Jeans in his *Science and Music*. An amplification to include the entire physique has been discussed by J. W. Keely who stated:

The normal brain is like a harp of many strings strung to perfect harmony. The transmitting conditions being perfect, are ready, at any impulse, to induce pure sympathetic assimilation. The different strings represent the different ventricles and convolutions. The differentiations of any one from its true setting is fatal, to a certain degree, to the harmony of the whole combination.

All abnormal discordant aggregations in these resonating convolutions produce differentiation to concordant transmission; and, according as these differentiations exist in volume, so the transmissions are discordantly transferred, producing antagonism to pure physical action.

The question arises, what are these aggregations and what do they represent, as being linked with physical impulses? They are simply vibrometric resonators, thoroughly subservient to sympathetic acoustic impulses given to them by their atomic sympathetic surrounding media, all the sympathetic impulses that so entirely govern the physical in their many and perfect impulses (we are now discussing purity of conditions) are not emanations properly inherent in their own composition. They are only media — the acoustic media — for transferring from their vibratory surroundings the conditions necessary to the pure connective link for vitalizing and bringing into action the varied impulses of the physical.

In the technique of music, Daniel de Lange, draws additional parallelisms with the consciousness. He states in *Thoughts on Music* that we need three keynotes to form a scale and presents them thus:



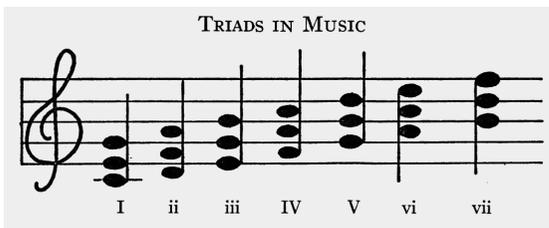
Attention is drawn to the fact that everything in music has a threefold basis and De Lange summarizes this foundation as follows:

- a. Three different elements: Melody-Rhythm-Harmony.
- b. Three notes, three times repeated for Melody.
- c. Three beats, three times repeated for Rhythm.
- d. A chord of three notes (in thirds) three times repeated for Harmony.

We may, then, relate Atman, or spirit, to Harmony, Buddhi, or soul, to Rhythm as the temporal relation between Duration and Time, and Manas, or mind, to Melody as a melodic living of life. With reference to the chords, De Lange's formula is:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| a. Increasing of vital force | I — V |
| b. Diminishing of vital force | I — IV |
| c. Conclusion | V — I |

It should be noted that the primary classification of chords is:



Western music does not reach above the fifteenth harmonic, whereas Hindu music embraces the thirtieth. In the composition of the diatonic scale, the initiated Pythagoras accepted only the interval of the fifth.

Further, enlightening interrelations between man and the musical scale are set forth in *The Musical Scale and Man: an Analogy*, by George de Cairos Rego, *Lucifer*, 1893. The most pertinent points from this article were quoted in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for June, 1948.

Mathematically, we might say that the *Bhagavad-Gita* is a dissertation on how to construct a dodecahedron (first shape in Nature of Pythagoras) from the icosahedral form of the Astral Light and its reverse process, in order to perceive the divine pattern of the Cosmic Architect. In further explanation of the fact that "the Deity geometrizes," as stated by Judge, attention is invited to the brilliant exposition of the geometric processes involved by F. J. Dick. In his *The Pythagorean Solids*, he states:

In the first place, they may be all considered as generated by Twelve Points on the surface of the Sphere, at equal adjacent distances or by six diameters of the sphere mutually inclined at angles whose tangent is 2, the number of the octave in music. Joining each of the twelve with every other point, we have 66 lines, of which 36 are internal. Six of the latter being diameters, there remain 30, intersecting at 20 points, which give the 30 edges of the INTERNAL DODECAHEDRON. The 30 outer, or external lines of the 66, form the edges of the ICOSAHEDRON.

Joining one set of alternate corners of the Dodecahedron by 12 lines a CUBE appears. So far, there are 33 points defined, including the center of the sphere. Joining opposite corners on each Cube-face by 12 lines, *two* interlaced TETRAHEDRONS appear. These define, by their intersection, 6 new points and 12 new lines forming the OCTAHEDRON, beautifully poised in the heart of the Sphere.

Thus only 39 points, including the central point, are needed to define the Pythagorean solids, only one solid form being repeated, the Tetrahedron, which in fact is seen to repeat itself ten times. For between the interlaced Tetrahedron corners and the eight faces of the included Octahedron, eight smaller Tetrahedrons are seen.

The interlaced Tetrahedrons suggest the origin of the plane symbol — the interlaced triangles; but the full beauty of the symbol does not appear until we notice that the axis of symmetry of the Tetrphedrons coincides with the diagonal of the Cube, and that the orthographic projection of all these on a plane perpendicular to the diagonal gives a perfect hexagon with the interlaced triangles in the center. The interlaced Tetrahedrons — one a reflection of the other — in fact, define the eight corners of the Cube. The Tetrahedron is "3" and the Cube is "4" (or 6). So we see one way in which the "three fall into the four," and why it is a septenary, and a decad, as well as a three, or a four, according to the various aspects and interrelations considered of the electric, rotary, magnetic, or vibratory forces symbolized by the various lines.

The number Five penetrates the whole system of the Five solids in a remarkable way. Thus there are 24 pentagons visible, and by joining other corners of the Dodecahedron, Five Cubes are seen, which of course produce Five Octahedrons, and

twice that number of principal interlaced Tetrahedrons. Five has been said to be the Number of Life.

Confining ourselves to one rectangular system, we find Four axes of symmetry for the Tetrahedrons and Three for Cube and Octahedron. Thus there are really 73 principal lines in the complete system defined by the 39 points. A study of the three principal orthographic projections shows that the circle should be divided into 3, 4, 5, 6, parts, and the products of these, or 360 degrees. Certain angles are found in abundance, such as 36, 60, 72, 90, 108, 144; and their combinations and products by 10 and 12, and their multiples, give figures bearing a strong resemblance to the various cyclic periods of eastern chronology. Periodic orbits are vibrations on a large scale.

Twice the perimeter of an Icosahedron-face divided by the perimeter of a Dodecahedron-face is 3.1416, the value of *pi* used in all ordinary scientific and constructional work.

Cyclically, the 18 of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is the Chaldean period of 18 years in the Saros. The name is from Sar or circle and Saros was the Babylonian god whose circular horizon was the visible symbol of the invisible. The horizon, of course, is the plane, or diaphragm, that divides the upper hemisphere of 180 degrees from the lower. (See page 114, Vol. I, *The Secret Doctrine*.) Certain additional data may serve to supplement the foregoing outline. Sat, Chit, and Ananda have their lower hemispheric reflects in Atman, Buddhi and Manas. The Christians have the Holy Trinity, as have all other religions. It is epitomized in Aum, or A (Agni or fire), V (Varuna or water), and M (Maruts or air). In western theology it is AVM or Ave Maria. There are three generators of the key in music and three harmonic series. Also, there are three principal Lokas and five subsidiary ones; as well as three Upadhis. Six is the first perfect number that is equal to the sum of its aliquot parts. In the sixth race man will have six senses and these for the thrice-born who unites his Manas and Buddhi in his Atman make eighteen. Krishna in speaking to Arjuna, states that: "My Prakrit (Mulaprakriti) is divided into eight parts — earth, water, fire, wind, ether, mind, intuition, and egotism." Further, Krishna specifies: "Understand my Paraprakrit (Daiviprakriti), as something distinct from this. This Daiviprakriti is the one life by which the whole Universe is supported." In brief, it is the Holy Ghost of Christianity, or the active intelligence of self-consciousness. From it emanate all force or energetic manifestations. As such, it is differentiated from its crystallized twin, Mulaprakriti, as substance or matter.

In elaboration, the 3 parts (mind, intuition and egotism) correspond to the 3 Gunas, Sattwa (light or truth), Rajas (desire or willed activity), Tamas (darkness or inertia). Kapila, author of the Sankhya philosophy, held that Mulaprakriti, or the essence of substance, had no existence in itself and was a combination of the 3 Gunas. Likewise, as a trinity, the three produce the 5 senses as instruments. They, in turn, produce the 5 subtile elements (sound, tangibleness, odor, visibleness and taste) together with the 5 Tattwas or ethers that are their transmissive agents. Lastly, the subtile elements produce the five gross elements, and their gaseous prototypes (Aether, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon). This gives $3 + 5 + 5 + 5$ to equal 18. In the "Prakrit" of Krishna the 5 elements are $5/8$ or .625, and this is the Golden Section or ratio. The total 8 of the "Prakrit" plus Daiviprakriti equals 9 and the ratio is a tone in music, and that of diameter to side of square of equal area in any circle as given in the

Rhind Papyrus and as noted by Plato in *Timaeus*. These form the Octahedron of the solar forces as they lie within the dodecahedron of the Zodiac and, perchance, within the icosahedron of the Milky Way. To explicate, Krishna says:

Know that Prakriti or nature (substance) and Purusha, the spirit, are without beginning. And know that the passions and the three qualities are sprung from Nature. Nature or prakriti is said to be that which operates in producing cause and effect in actions.

Thus, whether it be in crystallography, botany and biology (Mendelian law), chemistry (Mendeleef's tabulation of elements), atomic physics or other science, the octave of the octahedron of solar forces and of harmony is the determining factor.

Placement of the *Bhagavad-Gita* chronologically gives it the dynamic character of its applicability to our own era. A paraphrase of the *Bhagavad-Gita* would read, "The Holy Song of God Himself, who, at the beginning of Kali-Yuga or the dark age, descended upon earth to aid and instruct Man." Kali-Yuga commenced with the death of Krishna in 3102 b.c. and it has 432,000 years to run. With respect to time, Krishna asserts: "There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master Iswara who by his magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O son of Bharata [India], with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place." We might glean from this that the time-space continuum spoken of so glibly by modern physicists is, still, terra incognita to the western mentality.

Specifically, the descents of Krishna are cyclical and the date of 3,102 b.c. does not mark the authorship of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. To Arjuna, Krishna states:

I am the Samvatsara among the years (which are five in number), and the spring among the seasons, and the Margasirsha among the months, and the Abhijit among the asterisms (which are twenty-eight in number).

According to the Commentary on the above:

This clearly points out that at one time in the first year called Samvatsara, of the quinquennial age, the Madhu, that is, the first month of spring was Margasirsha, and Abhijit was the first of the asterisms. It then coincided with the vernal equinoxial point, and hence from it the asterisms were counted. To find the date of this observation: There are three asterisms from the beginning of Mula to the beginning of Abhijit, and hence the date in question is at least $16301 - \frac{3}{7} \times 90 \times 72 = 19078$ or about 20000 B.C. The Samvatsara at this time began in Bhadrapada, the winter solstitial month.

The three Gunas correlate force and matter in the six dimensions of space-time (length, breadth, thickness and past, present and future). In conclusion, let us remember that the icosagon is the eighteenth rectilinear figure, and $18^2 = 324$, which is the significant number of the entrance to Solomon's Temple. Through knowledge that evolves into wisdom and eventuates as worship, we may attain to "The Vision of the Universal Form." Then, we may say with Arjuna: "My delusion is destroyed; and by thy favor, Divine One, I have recovered my senses, I remain free from doubt, and will do thy bidding."

In order to discover the successive layers of scientific knowledge that lie concentrically concealed in the matrix, which is the *Bhagavad-Gita*, requires great erudition. It is as H. P. Blavatsky states written in Devanagari characters, with thirty-five consonants and sixteen vowels utilized to express the Sanskrit words. Each letter of that alphabet has a numerical equivalent as in the gematria of Hebrew, as well as other significations. Personal and place names may designate cosmological forces, astronomical functions, stellar bodies, or supramundane entities. Permutations, transpositions and the use of unknown Senzar terms may, also, serve to conceal the facts of physics that western science has commenced to investigate in such dangerous realms as atomic fission and supersonics. Finally, as asserted of the Vedas by Subba Row, there is "a distinct dual meaning — one expressed by the literal sense of the word, the other indicated by the meter and the *svara-intonation*."

The Theosophical Forum

LAW AND ACTION — *J. H. Graham*

SATYAN NASTI PARO DHARMAH — There is no religion higher than Truth. That is the motto chosen for the title page of *The Secret Doctrine* of H. P. Blavatsky.

Dharma is one of those Sanskrit words rich in meaning and shades of meaning. One comprehensive translation is "Law." The word is difficult to define exactly but we may say that what is usually described as Dharma is really but the manifestation of Dharma. The Law itself has not any attributes that we can specify. I believe it was Pythagoras who said that the Universe is ruled by Law and Order and works with mathematical exactitude. We often have a habit of saying Karma when we mean Dharma, and in that sense Karma is what happens when, so to speak, we run our heads against the hard wall of the Law.

Dharma says if you touch fire you burn. Not as a punishment but as an automatic reaction. I may burn my hand by being careless with a hot iron; or I may burn it rescuing someone from danger. The immediate result and treatment are the same, but the Karma is different. So the widely held idea that suffering is the result of wrongdoing rather needs a broader approach.

Many a man has gone into a burning building knowing he would be hurt; knowing he was acting contrary to the Law, yet going because the Law once more — being disguised as compassion — says you must rescue your fellow creatures. But the Law itself neither acts nor reacts. It is we who do the action. If we are called upon to rescue someone, karma has put us there at that time. If one is burnt by carelessness, it is for the gaining of discernment.

The tendency of all manifestation is to restore balance. In the first place, however, the balance must have been disturbed. The Universe is said to exist for the soul's experience and in order to gain that experience we are bound to deviate from the rigid course of zero. We

can only gain experience by knowing the thing through its shadow — the Buddha is reported to have said that sorrow is shadow to life. This being so, and it is in effect the first noble truth of the Buddhists, the real problem is to gain discernment and the purpose of evolution with the minimum of deviation from the norm. In other words the minimum of karmic punishment.

It may well be that this is the origin of the queer idea that we are "born in sin." We cannot learn without reacting against Dharma. Is that sinning? And is it wicked to gain soul experience? There is, however, much needless "sinning."

As for the word Dharma, it is "that which holds" — the container of the Universe. It holds the Universe together, and without it all would be chaos. That being so and remembering that love is the motive power of the Universe, how can one think of *bad* Karma? For it is all love — Karma, Dharma, and all the other aspects of universal being.

There is no such thing as my Dharma or your Dharma, but there is one's own relation to it.

Another equivalent of the word Dharma is "Duty." A famous verse in the *Bhagavad-Gita* runs:

Better one's own dharma imperfect
Than the dharma of another well done.
Better death in one's own dharma;
The dharma of another brings danger.

The Theosophical Forum

CYCLES IN NATURE — *Letha Olson Reineman*

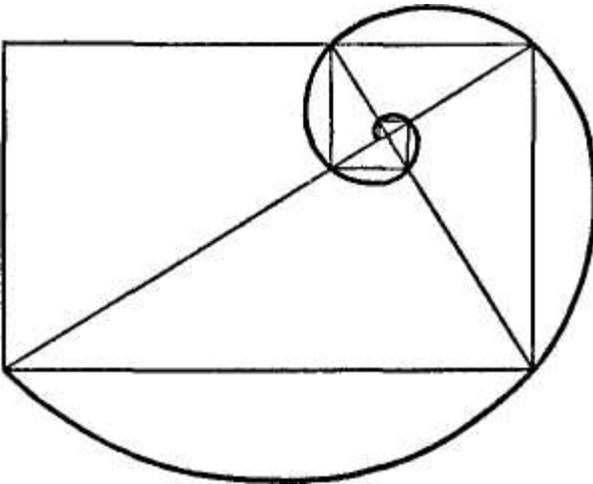
A glimpse into the cyclic movement of Nature brings the greatest encouragement. Without such understanding one is easily led to feel that we follow a path which at the best would be endless repetition, getting us nowhere. But when we learn that cycles are not mere repetition, but a majestic pathway, forever going forward and forever expanding, a new hope and courage are given to life.

As the law of cycles goes to the very heart of Nature, we find countless examples in the natural phenomena around us. Of especial interest is the method of the growth of plants and of all kinds of organisms. One of the best examples is the plan of growth in sea shells. Here we have a beautiful example of the working out of a law of cycles, which is not much written about, but which is full of inspiration for us as evolving entities. There is tremendous significance in the fact that this growth, this evolving, takes place with nearly mathematical precision, and that the ratio of growth is always almost exactly the same, and follows the course of a rapidly expanding spiral. It is not a matter of addition, but is a ratio of expansion known to mathematicians as the Pythagorean Golden Section, and can be easily demonstrated by geometry. The chambered nautilus shows the proportions perfectly. Innumerable other things in nature develop according to the same plan. The spider uses it in building her web, the palm tree in the growth of its trunk, and the development of the nodes on the stalks of growing plants are other examples.

The ancients knew this law well, which is indicated in much of their art work and architecture. The proportions of the Golden Section set the keynote for the design of the finest Greek pottery, the volute capitals of the Ionic columns, and especially for the design and ornamentation of temples and buildings held sacred. The Egyptians used it in their bas-reliefs and it is also found in a special angle of the great pyramid. It is exemplified in the proportions of the five pointed star. It was well

known to be one of the proportions of all rectangles excepting the square. Early writers have referred to it also as the "Divine Proportion," "Sectio Divina" and "Proportio Divina." (Kepler, Fra Luca Pacioli and others.)

The Egyptians worked out a primitive scheme of surveying about 4000 b.c. which required only a length of rope and two men to operate. Because of the periodical overflowing of the Nile, all boundaries of land were washed away, and it was necessary to reestablish property lines after each seasonal flood. The rope was knotted at intervals to form twelve units. The right angle was determined by laying out the rope in a triangular form on the ground, four units forming one side, three the other, and five the hypotenuse. This was the origin of the historic "cording of the temple" and is a method still used today. From the knowledge of ratio relationship which was gained from the right angle in surveying and laying out rectangular floor plans it was only natural that they should carry it farther, in working out architectural design and ornamentation.



In a method worked out by Girard of expressing the ratio of segments of a line cut according to the Golden Section he takes the sequence, 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, etc., every turn of which after the second equals the sum of the two turns that precede it; thus 5 is to 8, as 8 is to 13, 13 is to 21, as 21 is to 34, and so on, or $1/1$, $1/2$, $2/3$, $3/5$, $5/8$, $8/13$ — etc. nearly expresses the segments of a line cut in Golden Section. However the

exact proportions are to be found in the numbers 0.3181966 over 0.618034, then this denominator 0.618034 becomes the numerator, and so on in the series. A simple diagram of a parallelogram shows this ratio, and the rapidly expanding spiral which follows its course, and which many sea shells follow as a plan of growth. Neike defined the term Golden Section as applied to different units such as areas and volume and not alone line segments, as a ratio where the smaller part is to the larger, as the larger is to the whole.

In his book *Dynamic Symmetry — The Greek Vase*, Jay Hambidge points out that there are two kinds of symmetry expressed both in nature and in art, one of which he calls dynamic symmetry, and the other static symmetry. Dynamic symmetry is expressed in the rapidly expanding spiral, as described above, and is developed from the application of the Pythagorean Golden Section. It has qualities of activity and in art it is considered the most beautiful, the most subtil. In modern times it has been entirely lost sight of by artists, but the Greeks and the Egyptians had it worked out to perfection. Static symmetry is in a state of passivity, and all artists follow this naturally, because there could be no proportion without it, unless the dynamic symmetry were used. Nature gives us examples of it in certain crystal forms, diatoms, radiolaria, etc. All this implies two kinds of cycles. It would seem that all cyclic movement which is continuous repetition, such as day and night, the seasons following each other with such regularity, the tides, and many others might be placed in such a classification. But we must not lose sight of the fact that all cycles, no matter how often repeated are never exactly the same, and that they are contained within larger cycles, that are all following a pathway of growth and expansion. Scientists today are using such terms as "our expanding universe."

What a thrill and inspiration came with the knowledge of this law, and what it can mean as applied to our lives. It opened up avenues of thought and speculation as to how it works out for humanity. When did humanity begin to take the great step forward which would be indicated by the outward swing of the expanding spiral? It must have been with the coming of the Manasaputras, when mind and light began

to work in our unfolding. We know that as individuals we spend aeons of time in countless numbers of incarnations, making only little progress, even sometimes going backwards, and this would be very discouraging if we did not know that when we begin to apply will and effort we can begin to take this mighty swing of the spiral, which is Nature's plan for us. We need not remain in a passive or static condition of endless cyclic repetition.

We might wonder why the plan works out so perfectly in the sea shell, and why our own growth does not go ahead in the same way. With a little thought, however, we can realize that the shell, the plant and all the less evolved things of nature do not put any resistance in the way of Nature's plan working out perfectly, while we with our wills and desires, our minds and our power of choice are constantly blocking the Divine plan for our evolving. When we begin to work with Nature, and not against her, to take down all barriers to our growth and development, we make possible our own rapid evolution. When we realize that it is Divinity back of this great law, that the Divine Spark is in every living entity, we begin to glimpse the glorious pathway that lies ahead of us, to have vision and strength to go ahead, and to allow nothing to interfere with our progress along this golden path.

The Theosophical Forum

"DEVELOPMENT OF MAN'S PRINCIPLES DURING THE ROUNDS"

[At a meeting of the Headquarters Lodge at Point Loma, April 14, 1940, G. de P. gave an exposition of the particular aspect of involution and evolution dealing with the synchronous progress of the spiritual and material elements in perfecting the sevenfold MAN. This address, printed in *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, has provoked much thought in the minds of members and earnest students of the philosophy. Observations submitted independently from Melbourne and London are printed here as being of interest to FORUM readers. A brief explanation of Sanskrit words used herein appears at the end of the article. — Eds.]

Man, like the planets and the stars, is also a sevenfold entity composed of seven principles. These principles, however, are not separate parts added to him to make him sevenfold, but one complete unit, each part emanating from the one higher to it and all linked together in an indissoluble tie which is temporarily dispersed at death but reassembled with each new imbodiment.

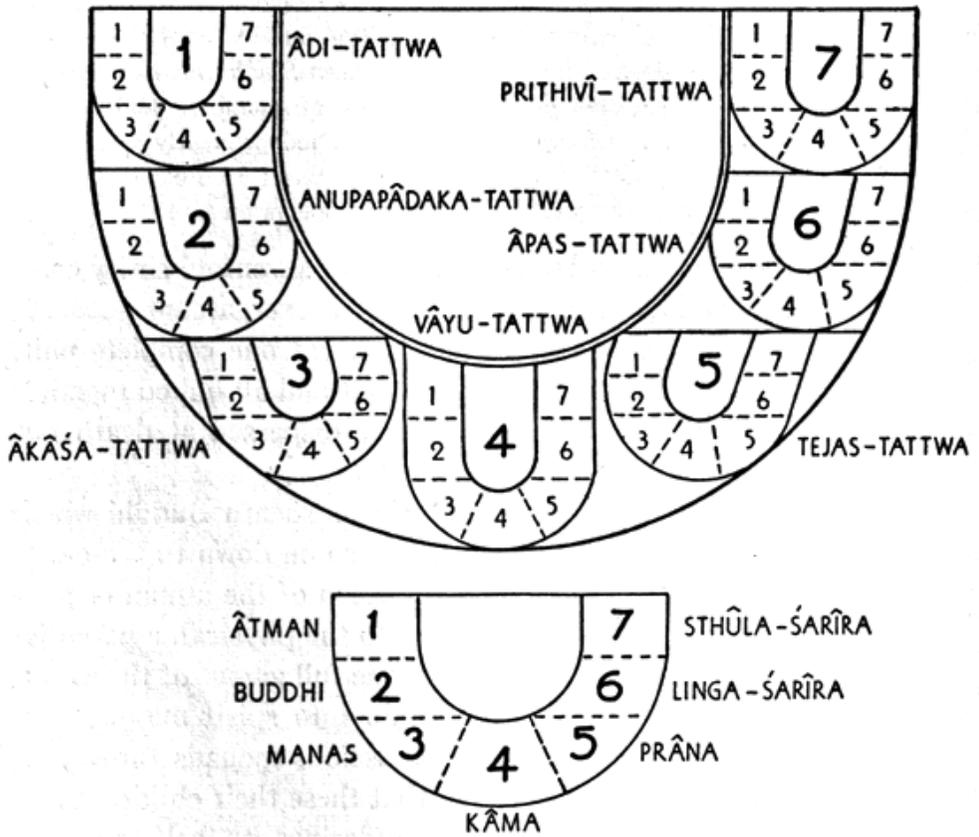
From the Divine spark Atman is born its sheath Buddhi which in its turn produces its sheath Manas, and so on down to the dense physical body which is the material expression of the atman or god-spark. Thus man ranges from the divine to the physical, a potential god encased in a material vehicle, so that the full gamut of the evolution of spirit into matter and back again into spirit may be traversed by the pilgrim monads: unself-conscious monads thrown off from some distant parent star in order that these their children shall one day return from their eternal wanderings to self-conscious knowledge of those who gave them birth.

This pilgrimage of the development of the principles into self-conscious knowledge of their own nature takes the monad of each individual far afield, from solar system to solar system and from planet to planet and back again on its journeyings in the Outer Rounds, evolving always on its travels.

In particular, however, the principles evolve during the Inner Rounds, that is, the planetary and global rounds of this particular Earth Chain or the seven planetary Rounds and the Seven Root-races manifested forth on each of the seven globes.

It is an important point to remember that each one of these seven principles is itself sevenfold. There is a sthula-sarira of atman and so on even as there is an atman of sthula-sarira. One may say that each principle always contains all the

others to a certain degree while still maintaining its own swabhavic qualities in particular.



From *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, page 95

Now when a planetary chain, this Earth chain for instance, commenced building its seven lower globes, the life-waves of all the kingdoms, including the human, first appeared on Globe A in what is termed the First Round. At this time, owing to the work of the three elemental kingdoms, the seven globes are just commencing formation, and when the human life-wave first appears on Globe A it is manifesting the sthula-sarira of atman. Because of the pull of matter during this Arc of Descent, atman, buddhi, manas, etc., of atman manifest in rapid succession, racing on until the sthula-sarira is reached. The life-wave then leaves the body of atman as it were on Globe A and the surplus of life then overflows downwards to Globe B. Here the descent of the principles goes down as far as the sthula-sarira of buddhi. This descent of the seven principles is of course the manifestation of all the seven root-races on each of the seven globes. The same process is repeated on each globe in serial order from A to G, leaving behind the most evolved of the monads comprising the human life-wave on each globe. This is the First Round, the formative one, and may be termed the atman Round.

However, atman has not been fully developed during this round, only the lowest part of atman having become manifest.

During the Second Round, the buddhi is emanated forth, but not in its entirety. It is the linga-sarira or astral mould of buddhi which is brought out in this round on all the seven globes. So that in evolving forth the sevenfold seven principles, it is the sthula-sarira of atman which is brought forth in the First Round, the linga-sarira of buddhi during the Second Round, the prana of manas during the Third Round, the kama of kama in the Fourth Round, the manas of prana in the Fifth, the buddhi of linga-sarira during the Sixth Round, and the atman of sthula-sarira in the Seventh and final Round.

During the seven rounds the human life-wave on each of the seven globes manifests forth a little more completely each of the principles with each successive round until at the end of the planetary or Inner Round, the seven principles are evolved forth in all their sevenfold completeness. The Monads comprising the human life-wave shall then have become fully developed seven-principled beings, that is to say they shall have become Dhyana-chohans or Manasa-putras, gods possessing bodies of light, radiant like the sun. The linga-sarira will then be enabled to catch every vibration like a sounding-board, while the prana will be under the control of the mind, so that such a being may work all manner of magic, smashing rocks or trees merely by the electrical power of his prana controlled by his will.

Man is at present in the Fourth Round and during this Fifth Root-Race is but an imperfectly developed being, now engaged upon manifesting forth the kama of kama on all the globes in this Round. With the passage of the root-races however, is further brought forth one of these sevenfold seven principles on a minor scale to the rounds. So that during the Fifth Root-Race the manas of prana is being developed on this Globe D at present. It is during the Fifth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root-Race that Man is consciously learning to control the forces and energies of nature, such as the harnessing of electricity and atomic energy.

Also may be seen the reason why the Atlantean or preceding Root-Race was the turning point in the history of the development of humanity not only upon this Globe D but of the entire seven globes. It was the mid-point of the rounds and of the root-races on this middle or lowest of the globes — definitely a very critical period. The desire principle was very much in evidence and on this most material globe matter had its strongest pull on mankind. The Arc of Descent had reached its densest point and materially speaking, physical matter was at its most compact, the very atoms being hungry for each other at this period of time.

Since then we have passed on, just commencing upwards towards the Arc of Ascent so that gradually matter will become less compacted and more ethereal. Man's physical vehicle will undergo many wondrous changes during the future Root-Races Six and Seven, one of them being the development of two backbones; and at last his Fourth Round body will become more and more ethereal and shine with radiance.

During the Third Root-Race, there occurred on this globe the Descent of the Manasaputras, who, it has been hinted, came from the planetary chain Venus. This may possibly be connected with the fact that formerly, during the Outer Round, the collective hosts of monads comprising the Earth's planetary chain were evolving forth upon the Venus chain. These Manasaputras came to give a spark of mind, to awaken manas in the then undeveloped human vehicles, which at this period had only manifested — so far as the root-races were concerned — the prana of manas. Thus the manas of manas which is now much in evidence at the present time, was not then fully evolved. There was not then the proper vehicle for these Manasaputras, and this is a possible reason why some of these Manasaputras at first refused to embody themselves in these inadequate vehicles. Thus the Manasaputras awakened the manasic principle or the minds of the humanity of that time during the Third or Manasic Root-Race. For as the principles develop during the rounds on each of the different globes so also they follow the same general pattern in each of the seven root-races on the globes in each round.

It may be seen that there are two main lines of evolution, the spiritual and the material; the one the consciousness side, the other the vehicular side; and these commence at opposite poles, converge and diverge again, the monads involuting into matter, so that they may evolve forth the appropriate vehicles in which they may manifest as self-conscious gods. During the seven rounds these monads comprising the human life-wave build for themselves fit vehicles in which to manifest as the Dhyan-Chohans they shall eventually become.

So that the Fourth Round and the Fourth Race finds the two converged together much as we are at present, having only just turned the Arc of Ascent. This is the reason why on this Globe D in this particular round, matter is the dense, gross thing we recognize it as being today, because the kamic or fourth principle, being the middle one, is the densest and furthest from the spiritual. In future rounds, and on other globes, and even in future root-races on this globe, physical matter will not be the gross dense kind we know today, but of a far more etherealized and refined quality, just as in the earlier rounds and also in earlier races on this globe such was the case, as the spiritual side had not then become so intensely

imbedded in the matter side or the two had not so closely converged together.

The seven principles, however, are not to be thought of as mere abstractions in Man but as a constant chain of monads ranging from the highest to the lowest. They are actual beings, consciousness-centers, each living on its own appropriate level, but all strung together with a thread-self and in their totality they make up Man in all his complex constitution. Thus on the manasic level Man is one being, on the buddhic another, and at the divine level still another. It has been stated by G. de Purucker that "all of our principles are in transit all the time and pass from Sun to Moon and from Moon to Sun and from planet to planet, but under different conditions for each set of principles." This of course has reference to the Outer Rounds, but is worth mentioning as being an example of the vast scale on which Man lives and moves and has his being.

When the Manasaputras came down, and, as it were, manasaputrized humanity or helped to evolve forth the manasic principle, they did not actually descend, but extended a ray from themselves down to the evolving human vehicles. But humanity by the time it reaches its Seventh Round on the globes of this chain shall then have evolved forth the manasic principle fully, and thus from each Manasaputra springs forth its child which is a ray from itself. When however, we, their children, shall have evolved to their present level they shall have evolved still further again in the chain of endless becoming. Nevertheless, they are ourselves at one level, even as we are ourselves at our present level. We are rays from them even as they are rays from beings still more highly advanced.

These seven principles are in reality ten principles, but as with the globes of a planetary chain, only the lower seven are manifest. These higher three principles are Man at an even grander scale of evolution than his divine atman, and this fact brings home the injunction: "Man Know Thyself."

These upper principles have been termed "the link by which Man hangs from the heart of the Universe," and they bear the same relation to him that the upper unmanifest globes bear to a planetary chain, even as the lower seven globes correspond to his lower seven principles. They are exoterically generalized under the one term of Atman — the Essential Self. Man, at present, is involved in his four lower principles and will in future rounds evolve forth his three higher ones in their entirety.

It is during the Fifth Round, which evolves forth the manas of prana or the vehicle of manas, that will occur the period of the great choice before humanity — whether they shall continue to evolve forth their higher principles and become Dhyān-Chohans or fall back to wait for the next manvantara.

Thus may be pictured the whole purpose of evolution: that it ever brings forth the core of each entity, continually drawing out what was latent, and evolving and manifesting more completely the innate powers of all entities. Self-unfoldment and Self-knowledge go hand in hand in the unraveling of the greatest of all mysteries — Man himself. — Ronnie Beach, *Melbourne, Australia*

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I am still pondering over G. de P.'s article "Development of Man's Principles in the Rounds." It is a lovely picture, fully manifested Man, which comes out of his article.

Forgetting for a moment the origin of the Monads and the Tattvas, and "astral moulds," one comes across a wealth of references for study. As G. de P. says, the diagrams are intended to show the importance of the 4th — then forget the diagram.

Now is this what happens? — In the beginning the Human Monad awakes in Adi-Tattva and clothes itself therein (sthula-sarira). It proceeds to do so through all the tattvas. Having accomplished this the impulse (supplied in the first round by the experience of meeting Anupapadaka) necessitates a second journey and it clothes itself in its second *outer* garment (the vehicle of the next *inmost*), linga-sarira. Then the third round.

Now in the fourth round one can feel the position better than describe it. It is strained to the uttermost by the inertia of its position (like trying to separate two liquids almost identical in every respect). There is the *immense* "stilling" power of Vayu-tattva opposed to the karmic or spiritual memory of the Monad whose very *principle* is of the *same* nature as Vayu-tattva! (I well remember something very similar in dreams when, by an *enormous*, it seemed to me, exertion of will, I succeeded in maintaining my own individuality.) See how profound are the depths of karman in operation!

At this moment pause and see the push-pull of spirit-matter in present-day life. See the terrific pull of the Vayu-tattva towards (the lower principles in) the higher tattvas already involuted by the Monad within its first three principles. See the spiritual power of the Monad "holding" its kama-principle and penetrating the cosmic elements! Observe also the sublime act of compassion of the Manasaputras!

For a moment longer, look at the wonder of full materialization. Vayu-tattva is called spirit (not in the sense of degree-of-spirituality, but the animating source

of physical life), because the fully evolving kama of Vayu can work relatively quickly down through the imperfectly held lower three principles in fully defined physical form. Likewise (by means of the human *animal* monad?) the animal kingdom leaps into physical form — as the wind stirs the waves, carries the seed, and fills the nostrils.

With each succeeding round, down into the fourth, physical forms appear a little sooner and are more clearly defined.

Now see this wonderful panorama, and pass on. . . .

There is the spiritual impulse of the monad, acting through the strengthening lower principles in the higher tattvas, brightening the face of kama as it yearns more strongly to answer the "passive call" through the higher principles held in the lower tattvas. The manas of prana is evolved (manas: thinker and builder, prana: the instrument of manipulation). The Buddhi of linga-sarira: universal, sustaining, malleable. Atman of prithivi-tattva is evolved: the direct image or thatness of the Human Monad fully made Man.

Thus is the Human Monad as Manas a Cosmic being operating on four cosmic planes: his task to guard the Rupa planes during the coming manvantara for all the kingdoms up to, and including, the Human Kingdom — just as it was his task during the passing manvantara to rise through kama-vayu and to purify the spirit-base of the physical world; and just as the wise aspirant purifies his blood and circulation (not only as an end in itself, but incidentally to his self-purifying aspirations to chelaship or illumination).

Thus is the Human Monad, as a fully manifested Divine-Human Being, a seven-principled Being with each principle manifesting in its rupa aspect, and with each principle having the other 6 principles recessively as harmonics blending with those of each of the other six dominant principles. And again you see his duality on four planes, suggestively pointing to a vaster scheme of evolution. There are even the great attributes reflected: Courage, Individuality, Understanding, Wisdom, Love. Out of these come the ethical teachings. — John Peck, *London, England*

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A brief definition of the various Sanskrit terms used in the above two studies: *Atman, buddhi, manas, prana, kama, linga-sarira, sthula-sarira*: the principles as manifesting in man, respectively: Universal Spirit, the highest principle; enlightened discriminating faculty; mind; vitality; desire; astral body; and physical body. They exist correspondingly in every living entity. *Dhyan-Chohans*:

lit. "Lords of Meditation" — beings in the next stage of evolution above the human. *Manasaputras*: lit. "sons of mind" — evolved beings from a former cycle of evolution who sponsored the awakening of mind in the Third Race. *Manvantara*: an evolutionary cycle. *Tattwas*: the seven (or ten) fundamental Element-Principles or Element-Substances in Universal Nature, also represented in the human constitution. *Adi-tattwa*: the highest, original, universal principle, corresponding to *atman*. *Anupapadaka-tattwa*: the second, or spiritual principle, corresponding to *buddhi*. *Vayu-tattwa*: the fifth principle, the principle of air, corresponding to *kama-prana*. *Prithivi-tattwa*: the 7th, or earth-principle, corresponding to *sthula-sarira*. *Rupa* planes: the manifested (material) planes (*rupa*, body, form).

[The Theosophical Forum](#)

IN SEARCH OF ZEN — *Christmas Humphreys*

Asked, "What is Zen?", there is only one truthful answer, "That's it!" For Zen is beyond description. It is the life within form and only a form can be described. It refuses to commit itself to any specified pattern of thinking, to conform to the rules of man's imagining, to fill any mold. "It is a world-power, for in so far as men live at all, they live by Zen." (Blyth, *Zen in English Literature*, p. vii). If this be vague it is not the fault of Zen but the fault of the mind's persistent refusal to focus on truth, preferring the forms of truth. Yet Zen, "though far from indefinite, is by itself indefinable because it is the active principle of life itself" (*Ibid.*, p. 2). Nor is its teaching vague. Coal is black, says Zen. Coal is not black, says Zen. This is clear enough, and both are equally true — or untrue. For Zen slips from the grasp out of either trap, affirmation or denial, both of which limit the boundless, cage the illimitable. Below sense is nonsense, where understanding has not reached the plane of formulated truth. Beyond sense lies non-sense, when the limits of all formulation have been transcended, and only a smile or the lifting of a flower can reveal a shared experience.

Zen is a way of looking at life, a rather unusual way. For it is the direct way, whereby all things are seen just as themselves, and not otherwise, and yet at the same time seen as the interfused aspects of a whole. In Zen all things are ends in themselves, while having no end. To the pure all things are pure; to the Essence of Mind all things just are. And the nearer we are to the Essence of Mind the nearer we are to the things about us which are and yet are not the Essence of Mind. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow . . ." said Jesus. "Consider the flower in the crannied wall," said Tennyson. Consider anything you please, but just consider it, not as a symbol of eternity, as God in miniature, as a moral lesson or a Great White Hope, but just consider it. "Mysticism uses the object, the finite, as a telescope to look into the infinite. Zen looks at the telescope" (Blyth, p. 216). As the Master Jimyo said, "As

soon as one particle of dust is raised, the great earth manifests itself there in its entirety." It is there, all of it, not symbolically, but actually. There is no need to do more than just to consider it, whatever it may be. The flower is enjoyed for what it is, not otherwise, and he who can rightly look at a flower, without a shadow of aught else intervening, is looking at Zen. Thereafter he is in direct communion with *all* living things, and who shall hate these toes and fingers of his larger self which lie on the mind's periphery? For they are God, if you care to call them so, or Reality, and therefore deserving the gesture which a lover of Zen may pay with the raised hands of respect to a landscape or a noble picture or even to his bowl of tea. Or they are brothers, born of the same father, life, out of the same mother, illusion; or they just are. For those who prefer the language of modern psychology, he who has achieved this power of direct and therefore illumined vision

is no longer preoccupied with the images of things but merely contains them. The fullness of the world which heretofore pressed upon it [his consciousness], loses none of its richness and beauty, but no longer rules consciousness. The magical claim of things has ceased because the primordial interweaving of consciousness with the world has finally been disentangled. The unconscious is not projected any more, and so the primal *participation mystique* with things is abolished. Therefore, consciousness is no longer preoccupied with compulsive motives, but becomes vision.

— *Secret of the Golden Flower*, Jung, pp. 121-2

Zen is therefore a matter of experience, and if this has been said many times before, there is little else to be said. It has a subject but no object. It is impersonal, undirected, purposeless. There is no reference in the vast literature of recorded *satori* to union with the Beloved, or of union at all. Zen is a zip-fastener between the opposites. It passes, and they are no more. Yet they are, as none shall deny that once more opens the fastener. Zen is dynamic; it moves and will not wait to be expressed or fastened by the ankle with a phrase. Like Tao,

When one looks at it, one cannot see it;
When one listens to it, one cannot hear it;
But when one uses it, it is inexhaustible.

— *Tao Te Ching*, Chap. 35

Still less can it be the subject of chatter, still less possessed. Said a Master to a pupil who talked about Zen, "You have one trivial fault. You have too much Zen." "But is it not natural for a student of Zen to talk about Zen?" asked the puzzled student. "Why do you hate talking about Zen?" intervened a fellow student. "Because it turns my stomach," said the Master. Well?

Zen has no form, and therefore it has no religion or philosophy of its own. It flowers on a hundred stems, and may use any man-made system to climb to its own integrity. Yet whatever it uses is a substitute for Zen, a mere finger pointing to the moon. No thing, no compound of matter or thought or feeling, must be thought to be the moon when it is but the finger. Or is it the moon?

Zen is a state of consciousness beyond the opposites. It is also the way to such a condition. It has no form and destroys the forms which are made for it. "Coal is black" may be true. So, says Zen, is the opposite, that coal is not black. Both statements limit the truth by an intellectual equation between two things of relative existence. Do we know the coal any more by sticking upon it the label "black"?

Yet the mind is partial to clothing for truth, being prudish-minded about her essential nakedness. Even Bodhidharma is said to have laid down the four fundamental principles already set out. Let us consider them.

A SPECIAL TRANSMISSION OUTSIDE THE SCRIPTURES

Is Zen, then, esoteric? Some say yes, that in fact it never had an exoteric form. The Robe was handed down from Patriarch to Patriarch, and for a long time nothing of this "transmission" was written down. In the Samyutta Nijaya of the Pali Canon is the famous story of the simsapa leaves. Taking up a handful of leaves, the Buddha asked his disciples,

"What think ye, Brethren, which are the more, these leaves that I hold in my hand or those in the grove above?" The inevitable answer being given, he made his point. "Just so, those things that I know but have not revealed are greater by far than those that I have revealed. . . . And why have I not revealed them? . . . Because they do not conduce to profit, are not concerned with the holy life." To those who have need of words to communicate experience, there is a limit to what may be taught with profit. Yet those who have opened the "third eye" of the intuition may speak with the Master on his own exalted plane.

A Confucian came to a Master to be initiated into Zen. The Master quoted Confucius, "Do you think I am holding something back from you? Indeed, I have held nothing back!" The Confucian was about to answer, when the Master thundered, "No!" The enquirer was troubled in his mind, but later, when walking in the mountains with the Master, they passed the wild laurel in bloom, and the air was redolent. "Do you smell it?" asked the Master. "There," he said, when the Confucian agreed, "I have kept back nothing from you!"

There is, therefore, a transmission outside the Scriptures, yet these Scriptures form a remarkable body of literature. All alike must be read with the intuition.

They are direct expressions of spiritual experience, they contain intuitions gained by digging down deeply into the abyss of the Unconscious, and they make no pretension of presenting them through the mediumship of the intellect.

— *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Suzuki, III, p. 7

None is canonical in the sense that it is authoritative, for Buddhism knows no authority. The most used Scriptures are the *Lankavatara Sutra*, bequeathed to the fold of Zen by Bodhidharma; the *Diamond Sutra*, the hearing of which converted the 6th Patriarch, Hui-neng; the *Sutra of Hui-neng* (Wei-lang) himself, and perhaps the *Huang-Po Doctrine of Universal Mind*. All these are available in English. Portions of the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, described by Dr. Suzuki as the consummation of Buddhist thought and Buddhist experience, appear in Mrs. Suzuki's

Mahayana Buddhism. In Zen monasteries in Japan the *Prajnaparamita-hridaya Sutra* (the Shing-yo), being short, is recited on all occasions, and the Kwannon Sutra, the Japanese name for the Samantamukha-parivarta, appears very frequently. But all these are, as Kaiten Nukariya calls them, "religious currency representing spiritual wealth." They are substitutes, at the best, for actual experience. Indeed, the scorn of the Zen practitioner for the printed word has at times been carried too far. Even the ability to read and write has been frowned upon, and the utmost ignorance of normal affairs been praised as a virtue. This is the folly of extremes, like the burning of books. Though the finger points to the moon and is not the moon, it is foolish to cut off the finger until the way to the moon is clear. Even if "the Universe is the Scripture of Zen," as Mr. Nukariya insists, there are volumes in which its learning is made more immediately available. Yet "the man who talks much of the Teaching but does not practise it, is like a cowman counting another's cattle; he is no disciple of the Blessed One" (*Dhammapada*, v. 19); or, in the later words of Hui-neng,

Whether Sutra-reciting will enlighten you or not depends on yourself. He who recites the Sutra with the tongue and puts its teaching into actual practice with the mind "turns round" the Sutra. He who recites it without putting it into practice is "turned round" by the Sutra.

— *Sutra of Wei Lang*, pp. 70-1

NO RELIANCE UPON WORDS OR LETTERS

This seems but an extension of the first, almost the antiphonal principle of the Psalms. Yet it rubs the lesson in. Words are but marks on paper or noises in the air. At the best they are symbols for the truth, substitutes, and poor ones, for another's experience.

"Those who know do not speak; those who speak do not know," says the *Tao Te Ching*, yet words are needed to transcend words, and intellection is needed to rise above the intellect, except that this rising must not be made in a dualistic or "escapist" sense, for no such escape is here possible.

Words are the pins on which the butterflies of life are stuck to a board. They may look pretty, but their *raison d'être* has gone. Words exist for their meaning, of which they are but the shadow, and if they enshrine some part of the meaning, they probably obscure still more. Hence the Zen search for other and better ways to convey experience. These methods, a shout, a blow, a joke, a paradox or gesture, silence itself, are more direct as a medium, and

this medium functions "directly" and "at once" as if it were the experience itself — as when deep calls to deep. This direct functioning is compared to one brightly burnished mirror reflecting another which stands facing the first with nothing in between.

— *Philosophy, East and West*, Suzuki, p. 113

Some "devices" are frowned upon in Zen. Images have their value as a focus point for concentration and for the paying of respect to the memory of the Teacher whose Enlightenment is Zen. But not otherwise.

When the Master Tanka was bitterly cold he took a wooden image from the shrine of the temple where he was staying and put it in the fire. The keeper of the shrine was not unnaturally horrified. But Tanka was poking about in the ashes with his stick. "What are you looking for?" asked the keeper. "The holy *sariras*," said the Master, referring to the relics said to be found in the ashes of a saint. "But there aren't any in a wooden Buddha," said the keeper. "Then give me the other two images," said Tanka.

Zen is indeed iconoclastic. "Do not linger where the Buddha is, and where he is not, pass on." When Jo-shu found a monk in the temple worshiping the image of the Buddha he struck him with his staff. "Is there not anything good in the worship of the Buddha?" asked the monk. "Nothing is better than anything good," was the famous reply.

DIRECT POINTING TO THE SOUL OF MAN

Zen points, and is what is pointed at. This "soul" or *hsin*, the Chinese word which covers inmost heart or mind, is the Tao of the Taoist; to the Buddhist, the Buddha within. All that points to it points truly, and according to Zen all things are fingers pointing to the same experience. The way is clear enough; it is a process of dropping the veils which we hold in front of us, all of them, not a carefully selected few.

"Straightforwardness is the holy place, the Pure Land," said Hui-neng, quoting the Vimalakirti Nirveda Sutra. And between the two ends of straightforwardness nothing at all must intervene. Speaking of the folly of definition, a monk asked a Master, "Am I right when I have no idea?" Jyoshu, the Master, answered, "Throw away that idea of yours." "What can I throw away?" asked the monk. "You are free, of course, to carry about that useless idea of no idea." The monk, it is said, was enlightened. Then why, if this be true, do we need a library of books wherewith to find ourselves? For fifteen hundred years Zen Masters have "pointed" without them, and as Dr. Suzuki asks, "when a syllable or a wink is enough, why spend one's life in writing huge books, or building a grandiose cathedral?" — *The Eastern Buddhist*, Vol. VI, p. 121 (All right — I know, but this is my way of *learning* Zen.)

SEEING INTO ONE'S OWN NATURE

This nature is *hsin*, the personal veil which hides from us the Essence of Mind. It is everywhere and everything, and when anything is suddenly seen for what it is, then *hsin* is seen, and Zen. Pointing to a stone in front of his temple, To-shi said, "All the Buddhas of the past, the present and the future are living therein." But this would not have stopped him using the stone as a hammer to crack nuts. When Tennyson plucked the flower from the crannied wall and held it in his hand he realized, "But if I could understand what you are, root and all, and all in all, I should know what God and man is." But as R. H. Blyth (p. 68) points out, a Zen master might take the flower and crush it and ask, "Now do you know what God and man is?" For the crushing of the flower is like the burning of the text book; it destroys the last veil, in this case of sentiment, which hid from the poet the essence of the flower. Things, in brief, are not symbols, but things, and the whole of

Samsara, the manifested Universe, is only the Essence of Mind in reverse. See it "right," and it is One, though none the less a rose, or a committee meeting, or a pint of beer. Such is the nature of things, and

This Nature is the Mind, and the Mind is the Buddha, and the Buddha is the Way, and the Way is Zen. To see directly into one's original Nature, this is Zen.

— *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, I, p. 220

What are the symptoms of awakening Zen? They are many, and may be better considered in the chapter relating to Satori. Yet here are three.

There is, first, an increasing serenity, however disturbed at times by the usual gusts of emotion or doubt. There is a sense of certainty, not boastful or aggressive in manifestation, but peaceful, as of a ship which, storm-tossed in a sea still visible, now lies safe-harbored while the storm howls overhead. There is a withdrawal of interest from the manifold means of escape from Reality in which we pass our lives, an increasing intensity of purpose and awareness which yet has lost to a large extent the quality of tension. There is a sense of airiness, of the lightness which comes of dropping the burden of self and its desires, of the health and vigor of youth on the uplands of new thought in the dawn-light of the world. There is a sense of returning, a feeling of having recovered the natural simplicity of life which springs from the rediscovery of our Essence of Mind. There is even a sense of inconsequence, from understanding of the relative unimportance of habitual affairs. Yet at the same time there is a growing awareness of the significance of things and events, impersonal now, but immediate. The humblest act is a sacrament, the humblest thing, mind-made though it is, is now of absolute value. There is, in brief, an increasing sense of balance, a refusal to rest the mind in any of the pairs of opposites, a refusal, indeed, to let the mind rest anywhere at all.

This firm refusal comes from a new-born sense of flow. Asked, "What is Zen?" a Master replied, "Walk on!" For life is like a river, filling each

form and bursting its limitations as it moves unceasing on. It is therefore useless to sit down in achievement, or in any concept, even "Zen." Hsin, (in Japanese, *shin*) becomes *mu-shin*, "no mind," for who shall confine the sunset or the morning wind in a labeled box of thought, however splendid its construction and design? Speaking of Hui-neng, Dr. Suzuki writes,

The Mind or Self-Nature was to be apprehended in the midst of its working or functioning. The object of dhyana (Zen) was thus not to stop the working of Self-Nature but to make us plunge right into its stream and seize it in the very act. His intuitionism was dynamic. . . . [For] the truth of Zen is the truth of life, and life means to live, to move, to act, not merely to reflect. Is it not the most natural thing for Zen, therefore, that its development should be towards acting or rather living its truth instead of demonstrating or illustrating its truth in words, that is to say, with ideas? In the actual living of life there is no logic, for life is superior to logic . . . Zen is to be explained, if explained it should be, rather dynamically than statically. When I raise the hand thus, there is Zen. But when I assert that I have raised the hand, Zen is no more there.

— *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Suzuki, 207, 283-4

"Be prepared," say the Boy Scouts, echoing Hamlet's

If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come
It will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come:
The readiness is all.

Hence the value of what Geraldine Coster calls "sitting loose to life," a fluid adaptability to unyielding circumstance, attached to nothing, experiencing all.

He who binds to himself a joy
Doth the winged life destroy;
But he who kisses the Joy as it flies,
Lives in eternity's sunrise.

— William Blake

Security, to many the principal purpose of life, is seen to be as undesirable as it is impossible of attainment. Emily Dickinson is right.

In insecurity to lie
Is Joy's insuring quality.

In brief, without thought of security or achievement, or any purpose, much less an ultimate goal, "Walk on!"

A third of the many symptoms of awakening Zen, and the last to be mentioned here, is a sense of "rightness." "All that happens happens right," said the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. "I know that the enterprise is worthy. I know that things work well. I have heard no bad news — " thus Thoreau, and they are brave and splendid words. From the first experience of Zen is born a willingness to let things happen, a diminishing desire to control the Universe, even though the purpose be to "rebuild it, nearer to the heart's desire." Action becomes increasingly "right action," done without haste or delay, without thought of self, without thought of merit or reward.

He who pursues learning will increase every day.
He who pursues Tao will decrease every day.
He will decrease and continue to decrease
Till he comes to non-action;
By non-action everything can be done.

— *Tao Te Ching*, Chap. 48

Yet herein lies the paradox of personality. As self dies out, the true self grows. Of the Tao or Zen it is later said,

When merits are accomplished it does not lay claim to them.
Because it does not lay claim to them, therefore it does not lose them.

— *Ibid*, Chap. 51

The secret lies in action in inaction, or inaction in action, as explained at length in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Deeds are done because it is "right" to

do them, regardless of consequence, and merit; the results of right action which accrue to the doer as long as there is a "doer" to receive them, are a by-product which comes, like happiness, unsought.

Yet the habit of right action is itself presumably the result of previous lives of merit-producing action, by which the mind, increasingly lightened of the weight of personal desire, is slowly enlarged by the deliberate expansion, in range and depth, of its activity. I found in *The Westminster Problems Book* (1908), a delightful quatrain by Philip Castle which puts this admirably.

Good Taste

Merit acquired in incarnations past,
And now by the unconscious self held fast;
So the hand strikes the right chord, in the dark,
And, codeless, runs the right flag to the mast.

For the law of Karma, action-reaction, operates unceasingly as long as a self exists to receive the consequences, "good" or "bad" of action. Hence the advice in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and
kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain.
Exhaust the law of karmic retribution. . . .

And the law can only be exhausted, as already set out, by exhausting the selfish desires which keep alive the separate, personal self.

Buddhism in the East is known as the Buddha-Dharma (Pali: Dhamma). The word Dharma has a vast variety of meaning, one of which is "duty." But duty in English has the unpleasant connotation of compulsion. It is something which ought to be done but which generally speaking, we do not wish to do. Yet in the Buddhist sense it is that which is the next thing to be done, and the emotional labels of dislike or like are not applied. One just does it. In a memorable passage Chuang Tzu says,

To act by means of inaction is Tao. To speak by means of

inaction is exemplification of Tao. . . . To follow Tao is to be prepared. [Cf. "The readiness is all."] And not to run counter to the natural bias of things is perfect. — p. 137

This "natural bias of things" is the rhythm of nature, the rhythm of the Universe.

It connotes acting in harmony with the swing of the Universe — whether spiritually, intellectually or in the least movement of the body — from the physical movements of the dance of happy youth to the dance of the planets about the sun and the systems about the infinite.

— *The Story of Oriental Philosophy*, Adams Beck, p. 413

Alan Watts has much to say of this in *The Meaning of Happiness*. Talking of the Taoist conception of the significance of the moment, he says that this implies that all things happening now have a definite relation to one another just because they have occurred together in time, if for no other reason.

This is another way of saying that there is a harmony called Tao which blends all events in each moment of the Universe into a perfect chord. The whole situation in and around you at this instant is a harmony with which you have to find your own union if you are to be in accord with Tao.

The right life, therefore, is the natural life, and he who has found and lives in Zen lives naturally. To what extent his new found harmony affects his outward life, to bring his outward mode of living into accord with his inner awareness is a matter of time and the individual, but just as the direct drive of an engine is sweet and without discordant tension, so the right use of action, direct action, is sweet and frictionless. Only self, the desire of self for self intervenes and pulls the machine out of alignment. Alignment becomes the operative word. From the "power-house of the Universe" as Trine calls it, to the individual self the power is direct, and the right means used in the right way at the right time and place make up increasingly the perfect

act.

A sense of serenity, a sense of flow, and a sense of rightness in all action, these are three of the symptoms of awakening Zen, and the number of men in whom such a state of awareness flowered in China and Japan between the 6th and 19th centuries produced in their outward influence what may be fairly called the visible fruits of Zen, as manifest in Zen Buddhism.

The Theosophical Forum

DEATH IS SLEEP — SLEEP IS DEATH — *Philip A. Malpas*

The worst inheritance of the West in the present era is the fear of death.

It has been said that it dates from a very short time before what we know as the year 1 b.c. It need not have attained the proportions it has but for the emphasis laid upon it by the growing Christian cult in all its many phases. Unfortunately it was the central point of that cult and was given a home in every shade of the churches. If Reincarnation and Karman had been made that central doctrine, the world might be better today. Even to the Christian system, these doctrines would not be strange, because, though it would be going too far to say that they were taught in their fulness in the early Church, yet in the Gospels they are indicated as accepted doctrines. Karman in the Wheat or Corn teachings is expressed in the terms "What ye sow that shall ye also reap." Reincarnation, among other instances, is expressed by the idea that "Jesus" is made to say that John is Elias.

Many a mystic saying woven into the Gospels has more than one meaning, and both or more may be true. A case very much in point is that in one aspect the Resurrection is Reincarnation, though there are one or two reasons why this fact was played down a good deal. One is that the Mystery intended to be conveyed by the drama was desired to relate more to the final drama of "Reincarnation" from the deadness of material life to the real "body" of the spiritual perfect man, a thing which might take place at the end of countless incarnations on earth, the becoming of a god from being a man.

This is well expressed in the figure of the man dying in order that the god might live, the Jesus dying that the Barabbas might live.

Unfortunately hard and fast materialism was growing apace and even the learned men of the churches believed the whole drama referred to the physical death of a man on a cross of wood; this in spite of the fact

that for centuries the wood of the cross itself was worshiped — the man on it is a later addition.

So for a couple of millenniums the West has been soaked in the idea of the terror of death, and it cannot be expected that this "hypnotic" idea of death being so terrible, inculcated for many centuries until it had become a mold of mind, should be outgrown or broken in a day. But the gentle influence of Theosophy and its presentation in the West of other religions than the orthodox religion of the Middle Ages is working its ferment, and fear is beginning to recede.

The whole matter is admirably expressed in a nutshell by saying that when we die we enter into a perfect sleep and when we sleep we enter into an imperfect death. It has also been roughly expressed by saying that when we sleep we put on the same clothes the next morning, but when we die we put on an entirely new suit, though even that suit is made of the same atoms as the old one. In fact we are always attracting out ancient atoms and throwing off those which do not rightly belong to us.

In all this there is always more to be learned or explained. For instance, instead of "body and soul," Theosophy shows that MAN breaks up after death into several constituent parts or aspects, each going its own way. We do not often think of it, but in sleep likewise we break up into more than one part: the body is left more or less inert; the "mind" may dream; the "soul" may go here, the "spirit" there. Most of us are so untrained that we can hardly appreciate these distinctions. Someday we shall. But they have always been known by trained mystics of the private schools. Lucretius makes Ennius say (a verse also attributed to Ovid):

Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra,
Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit.

The earth covers the flesh; the shade, the spook, hovers around the tomb, The manes go to Orcus and the spirit seeks the stars.

Orcus is the Underworld, usually translated for want of better

knowledge by the fantastic word Hell.

Obviously volumes could be written, have been written, on this fascinating subject, but here we would like to call attention to a matter of the utmost importance with regard to both sleep and death.

It is clear that one of pure, calm, lofty, spiritual thoughts normally dreams of corresponding things. It is also clear that one whose whole mental atmosphere is populated with low, hot, turbulent, earthy thoughts will be more likely to dream of similar things. Diet and illness also have their effects on sleep and are also causes set going by the individual himself. There are some exceptions where evil influences from outside affect him, but even so he is responsible for his weakness if he is susceptible to them.

Since a man's karma is the sum total, the resultant, of all he has done to date, in fact is himself, it is normal for him to think before bedtime of the main impressions of the day, though there may be some other strong thought in the ascendant. It is equally natural that the last thought should color the whole night's experience or dreaming, and also give the keynote for the starting of the next day. A problem or a question thought over just before sleeping almost invariably returns to the mind the next morning, digested and solved in the simplest fashion. Some observe this process more than others, but it must be a commoner experience than many imagine.

This is the reason for seeking to hold a state of mind before sleeping which is as high and spiritual as possible, free from lower thoughts and tendencies. There is an ancient saying, "Those who worship the gods go to the gods." If the thoughts are divine in tendency then there is no reason to suppose that the real MAN will not go to the divine in his hours of sleep. There is an old Sanskrit verse which reads: "That which a man longs for, that he becomes." It is the same idea, which if we accept leads to another remarkable conclusion. It is wrong to attempt to draw down to earth the souls of departed friends or relatives, particularly when we realize that the amount of impersonation of such by all sorts of spooks and "spirits" is enormous. It is good, however, to raise one's self to the

plane where the real, pure, Self of our loved ones may be, and commune with them in that way. Words have little or nothing to do with the matter, but often enough the impression received by a higher part of the nature, a spiritual impression so to say, translates itself on the way down to the brain mind into actual pictures and words often giving a feeling of great happiness, and of even having really seen and talked with the loved one.

It would be well if more were known of the after-sleep states, if sleep and death are the same in differing degree, then the identical statements must apply, with such variations as are called for by the different situation.

When death comes and the body lies still, the brain occupies a short space of time in passing in review the events of the life just concluded. Impartially the higher faculties of the MAN assess and judge every thought and deed, however small, much as one might imagine a spiritual film unrolling before the eye of the spirit. Time being an illusion it is just as possible for a whole lifetime to pass through the brain in a few moments as it is for it to pass in a single dream.

The analogy with sleep is that the last thoughts at death color the whole of the after-death state so far as thought processes are concerned and give it a direction which may color the beginning of the following life. Precisely as the thoughts of the day tend to give the tone at the end of the day, so the actions and thoughts of the life give the tone at the end of the life. The Egyptians pictured the life as a day and the many incarnations taken together as a lifetime.

The practical application of these observations is that when a person dies, there should be no great lamentation and grief or other disturbing influences, but it should be remembered that the one who is passing is engaged in the most solemn process, call it initiation if you will, of the whole life, and one which affects the life after "death" and the future life after that. Quiet, still and calm should be the atmosphere of the death room that the speeding soul may go on its way in peace.

Even after that there should be no attempt at all to recall the soul of the loved one. It cannot be recalled, but it is quite possible that some injury may be done to it by the attempt to disturb it. And if we do believe that the soul rests after death, it is plain that the desire to recall it is purely selfish. The desire to rise to a spiritual plane of purity and unselfishness where there may be some sort of "synchronous vibration" with the spiritual part of the dead may be good, even though the stepped down effect may seem to the brain-mind like a vision or a conversation such as belongs to no spiritual plane at all.

Another practical application of the above ideas is the voluntary and conscious marshalling of the events of the day, in our minds before sleeping, impersonally examining the thoughts and desires, failures and successes, and judging them in the light of the impersonal Nous, the spiritual discriminating part of our nature. Like the forty-two assessors of the dead in the Egyptian book of the "Coming Forth by Day," Higher Manas, spiritual Man, the "immortal" part of our being, will calmly pass in review each thought, each word, each deed, and will say, "That was right"; "That was wrong"; "That must be bettered"; "That should not have been omitted"; "That must be done next time," — as it is roughly expressed in a Pythagorean fragment. Those thoughts and actions which have the password of purity and selflessness may pass the portals into the "Kingdom of Heaven." The others must go into the melting pot and be refined, changed, purified.

If at death some such process occurs, surely it is most natural that we ourselves should institute on the brain-mind plane such an analogous little ceremony of initiation, not as a mere formality but with the full intention and will to act up to the judgment formed. This is appropriate during the half hour before sleeping. Real life has a distinct purpose in every minute of the day if we wish to grow away from the irresponsibility of children.

Hypnos kai thanatos adelphoi — Sleep and death are brothers.

ON DEATH AND IMMORTALITY

From a conversation between Goethe and Johannes Falk on the day of Wieland's (1) funeral, 25th January, 1813.

... "You have known for a very long time," said Goethe, "that Ideas which have no firm foundation in the world of the senses, even with all their other values, do not bring conviction to my mind, because I want to *know* about nature, not merely to suppose and to believe. Now as concerning the continued existence of our soul after death, this puts it out of my province. It stands not at all in contradiction to the observations of many years which I have made as to the qualities of our being and of all beings in nature, but quite the contrary, it proceeds from them with new power of proof.

"But however much or however little of this personality deserves to continue in existence is another question and a point which we must leave to God. For the moment I will only make this remark: I accept various classes and degrees of the ultimate ingredients of all beings, as also of the beginning-points of all the phenomena in nature, which I should like to call souls, because the ensoulment of the whole proceeds from them, or rather I would call them Monads — let us always keep to this expression of Leibnitz! There could hardly be a better word to express the simplicity of the simplest being. Now some of these Monads or beginning-points, as experience shows us, are so small and so insignificant that they are suitable at the very most only for a subordinate service and existence.

"Others on the other hand are quite strong and powerful. Thus the latter have a way of dragging everything which approaches them into their circle and changing it into something belonging to them for instance, a body, or a plant, or an animal, or even into something higher, such as a star. They continue this until the small or great world, whose *intention* (2) lies spiritually within them, also comes outward to

bodily appearance. I would call only the latter really souls.

"It follows from this that there are world-monads, world-souls, just as there are ant-monads, ant-souls.

"Every sun, every planet bears in itself a higher *intention*, a higher task, by reason of which its development must come about just as regularly and under the same law as the development of a rosebush through leaf, stem and crown. You may call this an idea or a monad, as you like; I have nothing to say against that. Sufficient to say that this *intention* is present invisibly and prior to the development out of it in nature. The chrysalids of the intermediate condition which this idea assumes in the transition should not mislead us.

"It is ever only the same metamorphosis or capacity for change in nature which produces from the leaf a flower, a rose, from the egg a caterpillar and from the caterpillar a butterfly. Moreover the lower monads obey a higher one, because they needs must do so, not that there is any special pleasure to them in doing so. In a general way this takes place quite naturally.

"For instance, observe this hand. It contains parts which stand at every moment at the service of the chief monad, which it was able at the moment of its coming into being to attach inseparably to itself. I can play this or that piece of music by means of it; I can at will cause my fingers to fly over the keys of a piano. In this way they indeed create for me a spiritually beautiful enjoyment; but they themselves are deaf, only the chief monad hears.

"Thus I may assert that little or nothing at all of my hand or my fingers is laid upon my piano. The monad-playing, by which I prepare an intense pleasure for myself, does no good to my subordinates, except that maybe I make them a little tired. How much better it would be for their sense-pleasure if, following the disposition present in them, they could rove industriously about the meadow, something like busy bees, or if they could sit on a branch of a tree or regale themselves on its blossoms instead of flying around busily on the keys of my piano.

"The moment of death, which may with good reason also be called a release, is precisely that moment when the ruling chief monad releases all those who have hitherto been its subjects from their faithful service. Like coming into existence, I consider also the passing away as an independent act of this chief monad which in its real being is completely unknown to us.

"But all monads are by nature so indestructible that at the moment of their release they do not cease their activity or lose it, but continue without pause. They thus leave their old conditions only to enter new ones on the spot. In this change everything depends on the power of the *intention* which is contained in this or that monad. There is an enormous difference between the monad of an educated man and that of a beaver or of a bird or fish.

"That brings us once more to the question of degrees of souls which we are forced to assume even if we only want, to some extent, to explain the appearances of nature. . . .

"Each monad goes where it belongs, into the water, the air, into the earth, the fire, the stars; indeed, the secret urge which leads it thereto, contains at the same time the secret of its future destiny.

"Annihilation is not to be thought of; but to be stopped on the way by some powerful and at the same time low or common monad and to become subject to it is a danger which has something serious in it, and I am not able entirely to set aside the fear of it as a mere observation of nature of my own. . . ."

Falk asked if Goethe believed that the transition from these conditions was connected with consciousness for the monads themselves, and Goethe replied: "I cannot deny that there may be a general historical survey or that there may be among the monads higher natures than we ourselves.

"The *intention* of a world-monad can and will bring forth much out of the dark bosom of its memory which looks like soothsaying and yet at bottom is only a dim memory of a past condition and is therefore

remembrance; just as human genius discovered the tables of the law as to the coming into existence of the universe, not through dry efforts but through a lightning flash of memory falling into the darkness, because it was present at its very conception. It would be presumptuous to set a limit to such lightning flashes in the remembrance of higher spirits, or the degree to which such enlightenment must restrict itself. So in general and taken historically I find nothing at all unthinkable in the continued existence of personality of a world-monad.

"So far as concerns ourselves directly it almost appears as if the earlier conditions through which this planet has passed were in general so insignificant and so mediocre that there is not much in them which in the eyes of nature would be worth a second remembrance. Even our present condition might be in need of a great selection and our chief monad will probably just summarize it at some future time, that is, in some great historical focus points."

"If we want to go into theories or suppositions," proceeded Goethe in his observations, "I really do not see what is to prevent the monad for which we have to thank the appearance of Wieland on our planet, from entering in its new condition into the highest connections of this universe. By its diligence, by its zeal, by its spirit with which it took to itself so many conditions of world-history, it is entitled to everything. I should not wonder, in fact I should find it quite in accord with my views, if after thousands of years I again *met* and saw this Wieland as a world-monad, as a star of the first magnitude, and if I were to be witness of the way in which he enlivened and illuminated with his lovely light all that came anywhere near him. Verily, to compose the nebular being of some comet in light and clarity, that is what we might call a joyous task for the monad of our Wieland, because indeed as soon as one thinks of the eternity of this world-condition, one cannot think of any other destiny for monads than that they for their part should share the joys of the gods as blessed co-creative powers.

"The coming into being of creation is entrusted to them. Whether summoned or not summoned they come of themselves by every path,

from every mountain, from all the seas, from every star; who can prevent them? I am as certain as that you see me here that I have been here already a thousand times and I hope to come again a thousand times." Falk interposed that he did not know whether he could call a return without consciousness a return at all, for he only returned who knew that he had been here before. He would be disposed to demand greater certainty than that which we gain by intuitions and flashes of genius such as sometimes lighten the dark abyss of creation, and he asked:

"Would we not come closer to our goal if we presuppose a living chief monad in the centre of creation, one which makes use of all the subordinate monads of this whole universe in the same manner as our soul makes use of the smaller subordinate monads which serve it?"

"I have nothing against this proposition, considered as a belief or faith," replied Goethe, "only I am accustomed to attribute no exclusive value to ideas which have no basis in sense-perception. Yes, if we only knew our brain and its connection with Uranus and the thousandfold threads which cross one another! But we only recognize the flashes of thought when they strike. . . . In one of our earlier conversations I called man *the first speech which nature holds with God*. I have no doubt that this speech can be held on other planets in a higher, deeper and more intelligent way. What we lack is self-knowledge; all the rest follows. Strictly speaking I can know nothing more of God than that to which the somewhat narrow circle of vision of the sense-perceptions on this planet gives me the right, and that is little enough in all conscience.

"But this in no way means that through this limitation of our observations of nature, limits are also placed to belief. On the contrary, through the direct divine perception in us the case could quite easily come about that knowledge must appear an unfinished thing, especially on a planet which, considered as torn out of its connection with the sun, makes all and every observation incomplete, and for that very reason can only have its complete fullness through belief or faith. I have already remarked in regard to the teachings as to colors that

there are basic phenomena which we must not disturb and degrade in their divine simplicity by our useless experiments, but must leave to common-sense and faith. If we try boldly to force our way forward on both sides we only keep the boundaries strictly separated while doing so. Let us not prove what is in no way to be proved.

"Where knowledge suffices, we certainly have no need of faith-but where knowledge loses its power or appears insufficient we must not deny faith its rights. So long as one only proceeds from the principle that knowledge and faith are not there to destroy one another, but to fulfil one another, the right will everywhere be found."

— Philip A. Malpas, translator

FOOTNOTES:

1. Christoph Martin Wieland, (1733-1813) German epic poet who made the first translation into German of Shakespeare's plays. In his first great poem, *Die Natur der Dinge (The Nature of Things)*, he showed the quality of lofty spiritual aspiration that characterized much of his work. In his later years he was influenced by the philosophy of Plato. The heroic poem *Oberon* was his best-known work. The friend of Goethe, the two great poets were at the same Period attached to the brilliant court at Weimar. Wieland said of Goethe at this time that "his soul was as full of him as a dewdrop of the morning sun." ([return to text](#))

2. Intention: used by Goethe obviously with a special meaning. We understand it to convey the idea of an innate will and native characteristic: self-becoming — what in Sanskrit Theosophical terminology would be called *swabhava*. It presupposes the latent particular genius of every evolving being, making it at once one with the All, and distinct in its own individuality. ([return to text](#))

THEOSOPHIC CONSOLATION — *Hazel Walker*

Who called thee strong as death, O Love?

Mightier thou wast and art. — Felicia Hemans

Theosophists are frequently asked to explain their philosophy regarding death and sorrow. The majority of inquirers have a background of Christian teaching, but very often that does not satisfy the searching souls of those who mourn.

The appealing precepts in scriptural texts, poetry and song, though beautiful in sentiment and to a degree comforting, are not always sufficient to silence the overtones issuing from the voice of that great organ, the heart of man; the *vox humana* which, in moments of distress and fear, trembles and vibrates with uncertainty and dissonance.

If we could look beyond today into the tomorrows, we might be able to understand how sorrow sometimes comes as a blessing in disguise, when it causes man's mental fingers to reach out and touch thoughts, which in his search for harmony within higher octaves of Life, he finds he cannot readily interpret. He falters because of lack of knowledge and misinterpretation of signatures in Time and Space. Thus man passes through the gateway of sorrow, seeking the blessings of the Ancient Wisdom: Life — the Boundless; without beginning and without end!

Do the Theosophical teachings correct and strengthen man's spiritual advance toward greater harmonies in the scale of Life? Is there a technique which enables him to transpose discord into harmony; from the false pitch of affliction into true affection; from sorrow into happiness? YES.

Can there be plucked from the vibrating strings of the heart a melody, the theme of which constitutes a Theosophic basis for the variations of life, the effects of which may be produced by what we might call

syncopation — from weakness to strength, from despondency to confidence? *Yes!* The dominant key of life is determined in the scale of Being by the flats, sharps and minor accents of the shifting Will and Aspiration within the individual-octave. The great Teachers have said: "Man, know thyself."

Theosophy is a Way of Life which is enlightened by the flame of Divinity, patterned by Divine Mind. The flame may express an extension of its light through the vehicle of a body, even as a candle does not add to, nor subtract from, the flame whose Essence lights it; for the flame is imperishable, limitless, imponderable. In it is the warmth of love, and love is deathless.

The anguish of sorrow is a very real and terrible experience for those who cannot realize the unity of all life, bound by that golden thread, a ray of the Holy Flame which brings light and solace "even to the darkest corners of the earth."

If death terminates the love of "the departed," then it should also break that invisible strand for those who mourn. Why not? Does sleep annihilate the love of the sleeper for the one who stands and waits for the awakening? Behold the functioning laws of Nature! How do we know that the stars still shine in the heavens when it is day and we cannot see them? What tells us that the sun will rise in the morning and set at eventide? Is the earth plunged into complete and everlasting darkness at the close of day, because we, specks of global consciousness, cannot see beyond the horizon, cannot perceive the eternal, infinite light of truth, which does not shine for one alone, but for the whole Universe?

Consider the giant sequoias, the tallest and noblest of trees. By analogy, in their particular hierarchy of Nature, they are the avatars of plant life; like Christ, above and beyond ordinary humanity. The "wine of life" circulates throughout their beings for ages and ages, winter and summer; while younger, frailer, more immature trees in the forest, like men of human destiny, must apparently die in the winter, only to renew their latent vitality in the spring; re embodying, as it were, when

the life-urge responds, as did Lazarus, to the Voice which called, "Come forth." . . . "He is not dead but sleepeth."

Man and tree, each a channel for the divine River of Life, each a Path through which flows *consciousness*, whether un-self-conscious or self-conscious; each having an appropriate vehicle through which the life-force flows. After aeons of time both man and tree reach god-head in their respective spheres, through evolution and involution; until the time comes when the soul of each ascends into a higher kingdom. "In my Father's house are many mansions. . . ." One stands in silence before the mighty sequoias, awed by their majesty and age. What, after all, is three score years and ten!

Then again, one beholds with ecstasy a delicate rose and breathes the subtle fragrance from its heart, sensing the invisible spiritual soul of a beautiful character; and it enfolds one as though it were the unseen love of a Beloved. In the structure of affinities we may recognize that essence, love, which like the fragrance of the rose, is the real life of our beloved.

Therefore, do not crush this rose against your heart! Let its fragrance be wafted by the "wind of the spirit" into the world of freedom. Let the beloved live! Unpossessive love raises the aroma of your own soul's love to communion with theirs, and through this release the beloved is able to attain complete rest and peace. Our dread of separateness, uncontrolled grief and unsuspected self-pity retard the flight of him who passes. Love is strong, unselfish and sacrificing. Love endures. It is without limitation. It flows in currents which are swift, deep and powerful. It enfolds us in the same divine quality which is in true sympathy; sympathy which does not undermine, but understands and aids moral fortitude.

Love dissipates the illusion of time, even of death, which becomes to man a bridge, for his life is linked inseparably with the Universal Whole. "Death and sleep are brothers." This is the Theosophic consolation for the so-called "great orphan, humanity."

"O death, where is thy sting? . . . Death is swallowed up in victory." For the love that stirs the strings of your heart is your beloved, whose invisible touch is like the fragrant breath from the understanding heart of the rose.

The Theosophical Forum

OF "METAPHYSICAL HEALING" — *William Q. Judge*

The time for temporizing or for silence in respect to what are severally styled "Mind Cure," "Mental Science," "Christian Science," and the like has now come to an end, and the moment has arrived when something definite should be said on these as well as some other subjects. The first note was sounded at the theosophical convention for 1890, (1) when in the message sent by H. P. Blavatsky she wrote that some of these practises were of the nature of black magic as explained by her in that message. She says "In other words, whenever the healer interferes — consciously or unconsciously — with the free mental action of the person he treats, it is Black Magic." At that time many persons were hurt, some on their own account and others on account of the feeling they had that people of the class who believe in and practise these so-called sciences would be thus driven away from the Society. Several members accordingly studiously refrained from mentioning the matter, and in many quarters it fell into silence absolute.

In the first place, it cannot be said that no cures have ever been accomplished by means of the practises referred to. There have been cases of cure. For, indeed, one would have to be blind to the records of the medical profession to say that the mind has no part to play in the cure of diseases. That it does have, as any physician knows, for if the patient continues to be depressed in mind there may be a failure or even a death. But this is not "mind cure" nor "mental cure." It is an assistance to the regular treatment. And as very many of the troubles of people are imaginary, sometimes in the acute form because of imagination, it does happen in those cases that a cure may be effected by the schools we are speaking of. Some nervous derangements may be thus cured. And if that is brought about by directing the mind of the patient to high thoughts, there can be no objection to it. But if the mind is filled with wrong philosophy, or if the affirmations and denials found in these "sciences" are used, or the "construction of the divine

and spiritual form" be gone into, the whole thing is bad.

And here it is well to state our position about the cure of bodily ailments. It is that inasmuch as they are of and in the body, those that come from a wrong attitude of mind will disappear when we are contented and self-centered, while those that are chronic, being mechanical and physical, ought to be treated by such means and not by an attempt to drag the spiritual and divine down to this plane of being. In none of the ancient schools was it permitted to one to use for himself, or to sell, the divine or spiritual powers. Furthermore we see that the savages are the most healthy of men. Yet they know none of these things and do not care for such ideas. Yet although the Red Indian of the early days did much murder and lived not righteously, he was a fine specimen of physical health. This shows that health may be maintained by attention to the ordinary laws of nature on the material plane by attending to hygiene and exercise. Yet again, looking at the prize-fighter and the athlete, it is plain that they, by attending to the same rules and wholly disregarding the fine theories of the mental healers, become well and strong and able to bear the greatest fatigue and hardship. It was the same in the days of the athletes of Rome and Greece.

A number of fallacies have to be noticed in these systems. Using the word "thought," they say that our diseases are the product of our thought, but they ignore the fact that young children of the tenderest age often have very violent diseases when no one will say they have had time or power to think. Babies have been found to have Bright's disease and other troubles. This is a fact that looms up before the arguments of the mental healer and that never will down.

But regarding it from the theosophical side, we know that the thoughts of the preceding life are the causes for the troubles and the joys of this, and therefore those troubles are now being exhausted here by the proper channel, the body, and are on the way *down and out*. Their exit ought not to be stopped. But by the attempt to cure in the way of the healer they are stopped often and are sent back to the place they came

from, and thus once more are planted in the mind as unexpended causes sure at some other time to come out again, whether in this or in another life. This is one of the greatest of dangers. It will in many instances lead to insanity.

The next fallacy is in the system of affirmations and denials. To assert as they do that there is no matter, that all is spirit, and that there is no evil but that all is good, and that "this my body is pure and sweet and free from trouble," is philosophically and as a mere use of English false in every respect. "Spirit" and "Matter" are terms that must exist together, and if one is given up so must the other disappear. They are the two great opposites. As the Bhagavad-Gita says, there is no spirit without also matter. They are the two eternities, the two manifestations, one at one pole and one at the other, of the absolute, which is neither matter nor spirit but wholly indescribable except as said — it is at once spirit and matter. Likewise Good and Evil are two opposites mutually existing, the one necessary in order to know the other, for if there were no evil we should not know what to call the good. One might as well say that there is no darkness but that all is light. By these foolish affirmations all relativity is abolished, and we are asked to abandon all proper use of words in order to satisfy those who wish to show that optimism in all things and at all times is the right position. The "Christian Scientist" goes further and says God is all good, the argument being in fact nothing at all but a play on the word god. It would not work in Spanish, for there good is *bueno* and god is *dios*. This assertion calmly refuses any admission of the patent fact that if God exists he must be evil as well as good, unless we revert to the old Catholic idea that the devil is as strong as God. And even if we say that God made the devil and will one day stop him, the evil is a part of God unless in some respects he is not responsible for the world and beings. But the last affirmation, that one's body is sweet and pure and free from disease, is degrading as well as false. It may be true that bodies are illusions, but they are not the illusions of single individuals but of the great mind of the race, and therefore they are relatively real — as they are now constructed — for the minor beings who make up the

race. No one has the power to escape from this great illusion of the total mind until he has risen to an actual conscious realization of that mind in all its departments. The affirmation has its refutation in itself, for if one person can thus destroy this relativity so far as he is concerned by merely affirming against it, how is it that the illusion still remains for and has sway over the remaining millions? Still more we know that the body is a mass of things that are not good nor pure, and that in the abstract sense of these affirmations the most unnoticed physiological operations are actually disgusting.

The line of demarcation between black and white magic is very thin, but it is quite plain when one sees the art of healing by means of such high forces as are claimed by these schools practised for purely selfish ends or for money in addition. There is danger in it, and all theosophists ought to look well that they do not fall themselves or cause others to.

The great danger is from the disturbances that are brought about by the practise. It is a sort of yoga without any right knowledge of method; it is blind wandering among forces so subtle and so violent that they are liable to explode at any moment. By continuing in the way taught a person actually from the first arouses latent currents of the body that act and re-act on the astral and physical and at last bring about injury. I have in mind several cases, and some of them those of actual insanity due wholly to these practises. Of these I will say more at another time, and may be able to present a record that will astonish those who, merely to cure some ailment that medicine is fully able to deal with, go aside instead and play with forces they have no knowledge of, and put them also into the hands of others still more ignorant, all the while deluding themselves with the idea that they are dealing with high philosophy. The philosophy has nothing to do with it except to act as a means to centre the thought so that inner currents may come into play. The same result might be brought about by any system of talk or thought, no matter how erroneous.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Rept. of Conv. 1890. ([return to text](#))
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The Theosophical Forum

PASSAGES FROM THE BHAGAVAD-GITA — *John P. Van Mater*

I will now declare to thee, O best of the Bharatas, at what time yogins dying obtain freedom from, or subjection to rebirth. Fire, light, day, the fortnight of the waxing moon, six months of the sun's northern course — going then and knowing the Supreme Spirit, men go to the Supreme. But those who depart in smoke, at night, during the fortnight of the waning moon, and while the sun is in the path of his southern journey, proceed for a while to the regions of the moon and again return to mortal birth. These two, *light* and *darkness*, are the world's eternal ways; by one a man goeth to return not, by the other he cometh back again upon earth. (*Chapter viii, Judge's recension*)

This paragraph must have many meanings, some of them general, some more in detail, the latter being the most difficult to put down on paper. Speaking generally the two paths of Pravrittimarga and Nivrittimarga are here referred to. One is the pathway of light and immortality; the other the dark way that leads to re-embodiment.

In the words of the *Bhagavad-Gita* man may "unite himself with Brahman" and thus become an immortal spiritual being in the cosmos, no longer subject to reincarnation, nor to the trials of human life. He attains to this state by following the pathway of life. The training and discipline for disciples of this pathway are given in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It is the pathway Krishna is recommending to Arjuna throughout the work. On the other hand, concentrate energies on the matter-side and revel in material existence, and man will continue to be bound to the wheel of rebirth with its accompanying duality of pleasure and pain. These two pathways are eternal in manifested existence, although at different cycles there is a predominance of the influence of one or the other. To paraphrase the last sentence in the quotation: "These two, *light* and *darkness*, are the world's eternal ways; by the light path a man goeth never to return [as a human being], by the dark path he

cometh back [into incarnation] again upon earth."

Words are not wasted in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, each one has its purpose and meaning. For instance when the Northern and Southern Solstitial pathways are spoken of, there is clear reference to the fact that in normal death egos leave the earth through the lunar or southern pathway, and this journey has much to do with the Kama-loka, where the Inner Man sheds his gross (lunar) bodies preparatory to post-mortem peregrinations. And the Northern Solstice refers to the pathway of initiation by which the initiate ascends to Light and Spirit, never to return as a human being — but as a god.

The various terms, such as "fire," "light," "day," and "smoke," "night," etc., all have their meanings in painting a detailed picture of what is spoken of above. They refer, in the words of the commentary (*S. D.*, I, 86), to the "names of various deities which preside over the Cosmo-psychic Powers." The bright array of deities are those belonging to the Hierarchy of Compassion, the Agnishwattas, the Manasaputras, etc., and the dark or lunar deities refer to the lunar side of Nature and ourselves. Man is a compound of both sides. He has two paths before him.

The Theosophical Forum

OF TIME AND LIFE — *Ida Ryder*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Time is a delusion. All is the eternal now. But in a world in which all is delusion, of which time is a controlling element, there is a proper time for all things. We cannot mount the camel that has passed us, nor the camel that has not yet come.

— Talbot Mundy: *Om: The Secret of Ahbor Valley*

Nowhere is the sense of timing more important than in the developing of that spiritual perfection through alignment with the Inner Self which is the ultimate goal of, not alone the Theosophical student, but of the devotees of each of the great systems of Enlightenment that have been taught man throughout the ages, be it Yoga, Mysticism, Occultism, Taoism, Zen or the Noble Eightfold Path of the Lord Buddha. Each stresses the need for continuous striving on the part of the neophyte, the slow sure progress through self-effort that leads onwards step by step at the appropriate time. The next step cannot be undertaken until the now-step is accomplished. The true motive for self-development is the attainment of wisdom whereby we may serve all mankind. To be of service one must be wise, and conversely, to be wise one must carry knowledge into balanced action. Balanced action is timing. It is so in music, in art in dancing, athletics — and the attainment of Spiritual Illumination

"Prepare thyself, for thou wilt have to travel on alone. The Teacher can but point the way" is the advice and warning given in *The Voice of the Silence*. How often we feel that the preparation is overlong. Could we but, by some miraculous circumstance, be accepted as a disciple of a Master, all unprepared as we may be, would that not in itself be of more benefit to mankind and ourselves than all the years spent in

study, in training the mind, in service to enlarge the heart and in discipline in the control of body, mind and heart? Unwisely we would leap from kindergarten to University and fail in the attempt. It is fortunate that there are certain laws provided to protect the over impetuous from spiritual disaster. Before any teaching can reach fulfillment there is need for self-discipline, for what is a disciple if not one who is prepared to accept discipline?

Individual training becomes more and more an apparent necessity, a motif of our present age. Large groups of persons all over the world talk of peace, think of peace, organize for peace and yet as individuals they are unable, or unwilling, to keep peaceful relations with their own groups, their neighbors or their families. It is sheer stupidity to believe that any organization or nation can have more integrity than is within the character capacity of the individuals composing that group or nation. It is perhaps a little disconcerting to be forced to realize that, with lofty humanitarian ideals for saving humanity through the gentle compassionate teachings of the Enlightened Ones, we might begin our Way of Peace by forgiving the trespasses of the neighbor who appropriated our last year's tulip bulbs. Still we only truly accept a teaching when our actions prove we believe it to be true.

If we assume a universe run by Law, wherein we may depend upon night following day, the seasons running through orderly cycles, planting preceding its harvest, all within their humanly deductible time element, it is reasonable to assume that nothing happens by chance, that all exists according to that Law. That we should be at this time expressing ourselves in physical bodies in a physical world indicates the pattern for development in our age. To proceed through life with one's heart and mind set on the far horizon of Aspiration is, all too often, to overlook the small plain duties of physical life. Aspiration is a splendid necessity, but it must be approached and perfected through balance on all planes. No part of the self reaches perfection until such time as the whole nature has assimilated the experiences that produce the perfected.

The Master K. H. wrote, in answer no doubt to Mr. Sinnett's complaints against time-consuming trivialities: "Does it seem a small thing to you that the past year has been spent only in your "family duties"? Nay, but what better cause for reward, what better discipline than the daily and hourly performance of duty? . . . The man or woman who is placed by Karma in the midst of small plain duties and sacrifices of loving kindness, will through these faithfully fulfilled rise to the larger measure of Duty, Sacrifice and Charity to all Humanity. What better path toward enlightenment are you striving after than the daily conquest of self . . . the bearing of ill fortune with that serene fortitude that turns it to spiritual advantage."

It is the inspiration and the joy of all true students of the Ancient Wisdom to pursue their studies. Many absorbing and fascinating subjects are unfolded before our eager minds. Sometimes it seems as if they were isolated bits of learning until later we realize that they fit together like pieces of a picture puzzle into one grand whole, a tableau of vast antiquity and importance. Let us continue to be inspired and uplifted by the words and writings of the Great Teachers but, in all humility, may we ever remember that the acquisition of knowledge having no relation whatever to every day living, is not fulfilling the purpose for which the teaching was given — Enlightenment through the conquest of self. To know Truth one must be the living expression of Truth, for knowledge is a neutral energy becoming a force for good or evil, bitterness or joy, hate or love, according to the application of that knowledge to thought and action.

If then we yearn to go forward — and who doesn't? — it is well that we remember we have always the means at hand, here and now. The nerve-trying interruptions, the small daily claims on patience and sympathy, the sacrifice of the things we want to do to the things that must be done, as well as the great bereavements and tragedies of life, are all part of a system of training and discipline timed by the Law of Necessity. Nothing is too trivial to be used and no burden is too heavy to be carried if viewed impersonally as the just working out of Karmic Law and as an opportunity to learn and grow. In a universe that is

without accident man can grow only through his own self-directed intention to enlarge his capacity through self-effort. Inspired he is by his teachers, but they, by their own admission, "but point the way."

The building of character through daily living, learning to be patient, self-sacrificing, gentle, humble and truthful in small things, can be greatly aided if the tranquillity of the meditation hour can be carried over as a constant undercurrent to the round of activities. We have been told that it is on the serene, unruffled waters of the mind that spirit is reflected; that only the mirror kept free of dust gives back the picture of reality. One can strengthen serenity by clinging to it consciously until such time as it becomes a habit formed by constant application in action. There is a sound psychological basis for the teaching. It produces the least possible strain on the nervous system. How often one becomes exhausted from the emotional stress of contemplating the unwanted duties, the job one hates to do. The energy used on working through the feeling of repulsion, shilly-shallying with the idea, putting off, trying to avoid, leaves one fairly worn out. If a thing is to be done, concentrate on it, do it thoroughly, and pass on, and in so doing build the disciplined self-control that alone can become the firm foundation upon which future spiritual instruction may be erected with any degree of permanent security.

To grow toward spiritual perfection to the end that all may become a perfected unity, is, actually, our whole mission in life. No other answer to the question "Why are we here?" has ever been found satisfactory. Growth is a slow evolutionary process attained through self-effort. Each experience in life takes place as a result of past action in this or former lives to become the future seed of progress. No longer may any thinking person anticipate some Divine outside agent to lean down from Heaven and produce a miracle of redemption. To meet the test of living, to learn and improve through experience, to learn to use the knowledge we have to deal wisely with human affairs, these are the tools we create for ourselves. Future instruments of greater power and precision justly depend upon how we employ those we have here and now.

The effect of timing on the affairs of man is all important. To rush at life is to get off balance. To dawdle aimlessly along without purpose or direction is to delay orderly progression. Indeed there is nothing in human experience that leads us to believe we can "mount the camel that has passed us, or the camel that has not yet come."

The Theosophical Forum

QUESTIONS OF KING MILINDA — *Marion O. French*

Milinda was Menander, Indo-Greek King of northern India. He was a capable soldier who extended his territory very widely by conquest. His capital was Sakala in the Punjab. He died in 160 b.c. The orthodox Buddhist *bhikkhu* who converted him was Nagasena. The "Questions" constitute a commentary on the psychology of the *Thera Vada* (Doctrine of the Elders) midway between the Nikayas and the fifth century. Some fifty pages are purely psychological and fifty more are concerned with psychic-philosophical dialogue concerning the soul. Seven types of *chitta* (states of consciousness) are described. They pertain to the seven principles of man. Progressively they expand the group consciousness from the small circle of selfhood to the illimitable expanse of selflessness that merges with the cosmic consciousness. Then, the mind as *manas* has become a completely flexible and "omni-scient" instrument. It should be noted, however, that even the omniscient mentality requires time for self-conscious cognition. Herein is the difference between the Consciousness that knows itself not, because it possesses no self, and that which can say *I know*. All selves are limited within the illimitable, and the limitation imposed upon them is the time of their existence. In that sense, time is life or *prana*.

Great stress is laid upon mental culture that leads to the evolution of high intelligence. Evil is presented as stemming from ignorance or the inertia of matter as *mulaprakriti*. However, human intellect is indicated as being uniformly of one distinctive type from the lowest to the highest. Specifically, that type is stated to be an aggregate, or group, of closely associated components that serve to combine various aspects into one concept. Definitely, it is stated that "there exists no permanent entity." The distinctive difference between human and animal cognition is "insight," or intuition, as contrasted with empirical or reasoned thinking from cause to effect. Eight "attainments" are requisite for "applied insight." Analogically, they correspond to the four

ventricles of the brain as operative in complete conjunction and accord with the two ventricles and two auricles of the heart, which form the octahedron of the solar "forces," or intellection.

The relationship between the individual entity and the solar collectivity may be comprehended most readily through music. Man, as perfected, will have six senses synthesized within the seventh of his spiritual essence. The ratio of his six perceptive powers to the superior eightfold "pure apperception" or complete octave of Surya is 6:8, which is the same as 3:4. This is the ratio of harmony between the three degrees or intervals and the four terms of sounds in the tetrachord that correspond to the upper triad and the lower quaternary of man's "principles." As noted by H. P. Blavatsky, *S. D.*, II, 600, the 4:3 "is a diatesseron in sesquitertia." In music, the size of the steps in the scale has varied, but the octave has not. In it, the eighth note is the first in a new pitch as indicative of evolution to a new plane of consciousness upon attaining at-one-ment with the Divine.

Milinda is informed that the three "intervals" of the upper triad are consciousness (*vinnana*), insight (*panna*) and the soul (*jiva*). Also, that "Awareness, Sire, is the mark of consciousness, and discernment, of insight; there does not exist a soul in beings." Here the integration of the soul in Be-ness is implied and awareness is identified with *vayu* (contact), and *surya* (collectivity of self-consciousness). In regard to the soul, it is explained that "The life [principle] (*jiva*) within, which sees through the eye, hears through the ear . . . and cognizes phenomena through mind," can in effect "see through" any one of the five senses now operative. Milinda inquires whether the senses could not be dispensed with and the answer is that the "eye-aperture" does not see better with the eye removed. In other words, the senses should be utilized to perceive the universe in such a manner that the individual may participate in the architectural task of improving it. Sensation, then, becomes self-conscious perception as *jiva* causes the vehicle to "glow" like "fire in hot iron." Withal, *purusha*, as consciousness *per se*, that knows itself not remains quiescent, impassive, separate, and indivisible.

Stress is laid upon the orderly operation of the senses as acting in coordination (*mano*-consciousness). Essentially, this action in conjunction represents logical thinking in conformity to mathematical laws. They may be summarized in the four operations of arithmetic (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) that are continuous even when unrecognized. The sequence is asserted by Nagasena to take place through "inclination, existing structure, habitual process, and practice." As such, it is *vayu* or contact in all four quadrants of the circle of consciousness. In the process, volition is actively energetic "conation" that is fourfold as "being made to think, effort, fixing, and arranging." In the Abidhamma-Pitaka this is called "the solid grip of the burden." It involves the repeated pulsations of attention-inattention that must be sustained. Thus, the "fixing" entails constant "effort" as "mindfulness or *sati*." Seventeen ways in which it arises are enumerated, two of which are subjective as "association by way of similarity or contrast." This brings "mindfulness" into the category of "reminiscence" as the memory of past lives is termed by H. P. Blavatsky. It is a far more comprehensive concept than the "association of ideas" in occidental psychology. In the "orderliness" of perception throughout, the repetitive pulsation, or mind-heart beat, is rhythmic if "harmony" is to ensue.

The dialogue discusses the three operations of mnemonics: remembrance of recent events, recollections of more distant ones, and reminiscence of antecedent life experiences. In the latter the trained intuition utilizes its "super-knowledge," or contact with cosmic consciousness. Likewise, the theory of dreams is brought into question. This involves the four states of consciousness referred to by H. P. Blavatsky as waking, waking-dreaming, sleeping-dreaming, and sleeping. In Sanskrit they are Jagrat, Svapna, Sushupti, and Turiya-samadhi. The contact with the "collective unconscious" of C. G. Jung is effected in the two dreaming states. Then as Job states, xxxiii, 14-16, "God speaketh once, yea twice . . . and sealeth their instruction." In general, this summary adheres to that given in *Buddhist Psychology* by Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids. Of principal import is the consideration that

the *Thera Vada* consists of psychological commentaries upon the scriptural texts of the four Vedas. Consequently, we may conclude that all religious doctrines deal primarily with psychology, or the study of consciousness as a "Holy" (synonymous with healing) system of therapeutics for the redemption of mankind. In view of which, H. P. Blavatsky stated that "Theosophy is the exact science of psychology."

The Theosophical Forum

EARTH'S MEMORY BOOK — *Allan J. Stover*

Everything that happens leaves a permanent impression upon both living beings and objects, whose past history may often be read as one reads the pages of a book.

To a geologist, a pebble picked up on a beach shows traces of its origin upon some mountain range, which he may even be able to identify. The first rough shaping of the angular fragment was received during its long journey to the sea. This may have taken many hundreds of years until through rolling and pounding amid the boulders of the stream bed during winter floods, the pebble became more or less ball-shaped. Once on the beach, years and centuries of flattening produced by the restless waves continually moving the pebble back and forth on the sandy shore finally reduced this ball to a flattened disk.

To a botanist a tree shows by its structure the history of its kind, for the individual in its development recapitulates the evolution of its race. Moreover the series of annual rings records the climate for every year of growth, indeed every rain leaves its imperishable writing in the wood of that year.

The history of the earth is divided into eras and periods which differ widely in climate and life. Yet a slender line of living plants and animals has continued from each period down to the present time, so that we may study the life of hundreds of millions of years ago, in what can be seen on an afternoon's walk. Each of these descendants from past ages, has received an impression from the succeeding periods through which it has lived.

Recent geological history reveals a series of alternate fluctuations in climate as the epochs of the great ice age were separated by times of general warmth. Since the decline of the ice age some 25,000 years ago, cycles of warmth and cold, rain and drought have come and gone like the successive waves of a retreating tide; each leaving traces of its

passing in the flotsam of lives, colonies, and arboreal islands scattered here and there over the country.

Sometimes these examples of past ages are quite impressive. Such is the case with two of whose existence I have just learned. The first, the Desert of Maine, a 500-acre area a short distance from Freeport, Maine, is described in an interesting tourist folder. Here amid the pine forests and fertile farms of a state far removed from desert conditions, lies an area of drifting sands which is with every year seizing upon more and more of the surrounding country. Where it will end no one can tell. According to the records this desert was at one time a fertile farm, then about fifty years ago a small patch of sand appeared which has steadily increased in size to the present day. Geologists believe the area was once the bed of a desert dry lake which had become overlaid by a thin layer of top-soil. When this was washed or blown away the fine sands were exposed and began to form moving dunes, which quickly invaded the surrounding country. Small as the desert is it is remarkable for its great variety of colored sands, and, strangest of all, there is even a tiny oasis about a spring of ice-cold water.

Maine itself is said to occupy some of the oldest land in the United States, great mountains have worn down almost to the plain, and large portions of the ancient land-mass now lie beneath the Atlantic Ocean. More recently continental across the country, carving and smoothing the land to its present form.

The second example of prehistoric survival, is described in the *Ford Times* for February under the title of "The Misplaced Muskeg," by Burgess H. Scott.

Deep in the mountains of West Virginia lie a number of small bogs filled with a tangled growth of reindeer moss, sedge, sphagnum and lichen, characteristic of the Muskeg and Tundra over a thousand miles to the north.

It is as though a bit of northern life and atmosphere had been transplanted entire to this southern location, for even the animals and

birds are of northern species. Spruce trees growing between the bogs, though in some cases a hundred years old, have only reached a height of 15 to 20 feet.

Unlike the preceding instance of a relict desert, the Muskeg Glades are isolated areas left by the great continental glaciers when they retreated at the close of the Ice Age. A period of increased warmth brings a wave of southern types far beyond their normal range. On the other hand a time of lowered temperature and increased rainfall forces boreal plants and animals far to the south. Both climates upon retreating or contracting leave colonies which may survive for thousands of years. It is thus nature preserves seeds of former vegetation in case she may need to use them again. It is more than that, it is a memory of the past preserved intact for him who chooses to read.

The Theosophical Forum

HALF-WAY HOUSE — *Elsa-Brita Bergqvist*

. . . for without vision the people perish.

There is always danger in extremes. Vice has been said to be excess of virtue, for any quality, however noble in itself, when carried to excess, deviates too far from the delicate balance that is required to hold the ship of life on an even keel.

The study of theosophical doctrines is no exception, for where much knowledge is gained, there is need for the counterbalance of understanding and goodness to maintain the equipoise of wisdom. Because of their immense fascination, these doctrines can cause us to become mere intellectual robots, possessing impressive quantities of knowledge and storing our minds with pat analogies and clever arguments. Our logic is unanswerable, our erudition, gleaned largely from the fruits of other people's research, impressive, and these benefits we confer on all who will listen.

But do we give anything of real value in so doing? Technical Theosophy, like any technical science, is a two-edged sword. It may be used to wound as well as to protect. We may indeed inflict serious damage on ourselves and others in pursuing knowledge without wisdom. For every fact that we truly understand, how many do we just learn? And in passing on our acquired knowledge, how often do we succeed in awakening a responsive glow of genuine comprehension?

It were better to lead one simple soul to intuit the bare fact of universal brotherhood than to convey to a thousand scientists how better to know and handle the matter of the earth.

Today, no one is blind to the factual possibility of the destruction of civilization. We know this to be a physical possibility. We know also that the saving power lies, not in physical means, but in the deciding factor — the mind and will of man. If man wills, he may preserve the

state of things now existing. If he wills, he may reduce humanity to an existence of primitive simplicity. The workings of karma may be plainly seen in this bald fact: If the destructive forces *in man's own nature* take the upper hand, he will be karmically forced — through his own agency — into a state of life wherein no further such barbarous disturbances of nature's harmony will be possible. Think of what it would mean, the destruction of our cities and "modern conveniences" — life with scarcely the barest necessities; no books, radios, electric light, concrete mixers, automobiles, at least for a long period of rehabilitation. This would necessitate a concentration on essentials, and life would be much simplified. Karma would see to rebalancing the forces, and man would be in a state of receptivity to the simple natural things that are essential. The superfluous additions, that appertain to civilized life and that blind us to the fact and purpose of living, would give place to a necessarily uncomfortable but salutary mode of existence.

The important thing is to see things as they are and to face the facts without bias. We are all instrumental in bringing humanity to this point, where the choice must be made between materialistic lust for power and the ethical principles that are of lasting value. To know this in theory is one thing. To *realize* that we can destroy our present civilization, as we formerly participated in the destruction of others, is a much more difficult thing to do, and one that demands insight and intuition. We may condense our thought to this: If we are incapable of refraining from destruction, then our spiritual welfare will demand that we suffer the consequences of this destruction. The fact is clear, yet it is astonishingly difficult to grasp.

Therefore, I repeat: It is better to bring home to a man, any man, the bare fact of universal brotherhood, than to present science with yet another weapon.

Humanity is composed of individual units, few of whom are incapable of unselfish devotion, provided they recognize the need therefor. Mankind as a body *can* be raised to glorious heights of altruistic

cooperation and a grander civilized life than ever before, if each human individual can be persuaded to assume his share of the common responsibility. If each one of us were to resist one egoistic impulse and make one positive effort toward betterment each day, the collective result would be stupendous. More, it would add impulse to future efforts of a similar trend and the ensuing regeneration would gain momentum endlessly.

Nations and races, taken as units, develop more slowly than the individuals composing them, but, given the impetus of collective individual effort, would of necessity pursue the course followed by the mass of individuals. What a glorious prospect may be conjured up before the mind's eye of a world of peace and constantly growing and enlarging spiritual endeavor! We need not be discouraged by the obvious fact that the great majority of people would at first, or even for a long time, disregard or ignore any such collective effort. We, you and I, may make a beginning, and, however insignificant our contribution, it is nevertheless a step in the right direction. As we progress, more and more people will join our ranks until the majority will be working on the side of the gods.

When that point is reached, there will be a reversal of the balance, for the weight of public opinion will then add its overwhelming pressure. There is still no force so powerful as the tacit approval or disapproval of our associates, for, when all rewards and punishments fail to make an impression, we still depend on our fellow-beings to gauge our estimate of ourselves. Among certain people it suffices to say that a thing is "not done" to prevent a man from breaking an unwritten rule.

There is so much of beauty, so much of peace, durable and glorious, in the teaching concerning the oneness of man and of nature, embracing, as it does, all others. The more this thought finds lodgment in our hearts, the greater does it grow. The more we permit ourselves to ponder on its endless ramifications, the closer do we feel ourselves united with all the living, pulsing, radiance of life under the sun. For the never-ceasing flow of the life-forces of spiritual nature touches us

all and is most intimately concerned with every particle throughout the moving worlds. Those who would live for themselves, have they ever paused to reflect on what their fate would be, if they could, for even an instant, divorce themselves from all surrounding life? Without the cooperation of all nature, they could not exist. What air would they breathe, what food imbibe, what would the lone consciousness cognize? We live only by our impact upon other lives, their impact upon us, on which interchange we are entirely dependent. It is a beautiful thought and one that inspires to genuine altruism and grateful service to all beings.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SPLENDOR OF SERVICE — *Douglas Kingsley*

The light of man's Inner God is forever shining into the darkness of his lower self, its radiance prevented from presentation by a consciousness of selfish interests.

Splendor is exceeding brilliancy of emitted or reflected light. A consciousness busy conferring advantages on others deprives the personal selfish portion of man's composite nature of subsistence, and the dark clouds of self-ness, for want of this consciousness which is necessary for its maintenance, prove to be only the baseless fabric of a vision which vanishes, leaving not a rack behind, under the splendor of the rays of man's Spiritual Sun.

Service is the act of helping another or of promoting his interests in any way.

True Service does not consist in meting out to another that exact measure of assistance which we think and decree his merit. This is a reasoning of the human intellect which erects its own little and narrow notions of what is effectual Service and measures off something with its own little tape-line, and calls that Spiritual Service.

Service confined to intellectual computation and performed according to the rigid rules of legal right tends to thicken the veils of selfhood, because it is not Splendor creating Service, but becomes selfish indulgence.

Splendor of Service is that brilliancy occasioned by any work done for the benefit of another.

A liberal spirit, generosity, and earnestness to be of any kind of Service are the marks of the one whose inner Splendor has been evoked by acts of Service. He is not careful to return no more than he receives. He serves to the limit of his ability to give to others all they desire and refuses to inquire to what purpose the recipient has set the bestowal.

Not content with the duties found along the path of his everyday life, he goes out to find them, not only *willing*, he has a signal *longing* to find the deepest opportunities where he may serve. The natural work of such a man is practical life. Love of generosity and Service, as the swabhava of his Spiritual Monad, must appear in the life marked by these qualities. That is the only operative decree of the Ancient Wisdom.

The Service performed for another may not astound the world; even the beneficiary may deem it as inadequate; but this is no concern of the dispenser. He has only one examination to conduct, that of the motive in his heart. When the motive has been one of pure generosity, the results of his conferral are not investigated, the consequences of his motives and actions are regulated to Karma for continuance of action, and where these altruistic motives are present the irrevocable Law is that Splendor will be displayed to him who has fulfilled his duties of unselfish Service.

The contemplation of Spiritual Splendor implies that of its opposite, Darkness. When the Spiritual Self is held to be Splendor, it is not because Darkness is non-existence, but because Darkness is not included in the Swabhava of man's Inner God, it being a condition of Cosmic consciousness-substance with its own swarupa or characteristic vehicle, which is Splendor. This does not mean that Darkness has a separate and independent existence, but that man, corresponding to all other Beings and connected with all in the Cosmic Unity, has both natures, that of an active cause which is the Principle of Light that comes from the ethereal substance that composes the active cause, and that of a passive cause which is the Principle of Darkness that comes from the earth or the gross matter which composes the passive cause.

A departure from the subtleties of Logic will lead to more familiar ground, where the Splendor of Service is reduced to its simplest terms. The fulfillment of the Law is a common observation. They who have lived a life of Service are radiant with the Splendor which comes only with the enjoyment of pure happiness; they who have lived a life for

self and worldly acquisition can attest for themselves to the absence of Light.

The Theosophical Forum

THOUGHTS ON A NEW ACQUISITION — *J. H. Calmeyer*

We have all of us sometimes experienced that feeling of slight disappointment when we finally did get a thing that we had long wanted to possess and keenly looked forward to possessing. There is at first, of course, a sense of elation, of achievement and gratitude. But then, with a little pang of regret, we may have felt that momentary sensation of a void, that feeling of something irrevocably lost. Never again to be warmed by that glow of expectancy, that watching of the unfolding of the petals of this flower, the seeds of which we planted ourselves — let us admit it — with such tender care in our mind.

Now there is a particular significance in this. A significance which, under the law of correspondences, we see repeated in other fields of human consciousness. It is briefly this, that our comprehension can only encompass a state of being, not what H. P. Blavatsky in another connection has called a state of be-ness. We can understand an active growing-into, not the state of utter, passive attainment. Action is our sphere of human endeavor. At the end of action there looms up the distant, ultimate goal, which to us is an impenetrable and implacable void, a nothingness of which we cannot even say that it is not because there is nothing there that can either be or not be.

When deep in ourselves we sink the plummet of our searching mind to find the essence of our being, we find beyond the heavy layers of our emotions and our habit-conditioned thinking, something that forever observes our very observations and all the varied field of our thoughts and actions — our true, eternal self. Somehow it is loose from, and yet tied to, this body of ours. It is like a star in heaven tied to the dragnet of our physical, emotional and mental body.

Why, we ask ourselves, should it be necessary for this heavenly body to be tied to such mortal ballast? Is it that everything that is in itself perfect has a natural tendency to purify whatever it comes in contact

with, and that mankind is thus given the chance of rendering its lower vehicles perfect through the purifying agency of the kernel within us that is of God? But this is not an altogether satisfactory answer, for why should it be necessary for the immaculate kernel to be mixed up in the first place with these lower vehicles and be contaminated with the imperfections of the unachieved?

Is it not rather that the Universe can manifest itself to us only within the limits of our comprehension, or, to put it more correctly, that we can take mental cognizance only of that aspect of the manifested Universe that we, with our limited understanding, can comprehend?

Of the stars we have no immediate cognizance. There may have been other races of men that had some understanding of the heavenly spheres as we understand our fellow beings who are near and dear to us. But if such a "feeling" ever existed, mankind as a whole has now lost it. Our senses are only able to translate the radiations of the stars into impressions of physical size and luminosity. And so would the "star" of our ego to which we are "hitched" be wholly incomprehensible to us in the ultimate perfection of its God-like essence, but for our striving towards that perfection, but for the evolution of our imperfect being in a specific and discernible direction, which alone makes the far-away goal intelligible to us. Without this action, without this constant development and growing-into, which gives meaning to our life, there would be no consciousness of the spirit of God. There would be no consciousness at all, for consciousness in its essence is one and indivisible. Our actions would have the mechanical causality of the toy and the robot. For it is only in the consciousness of the whole that we can understand the parts.

This then is the law of our human understanding. Our brain is but attuned to an approximation of the ultimate values. We can never comprehend the ultimate. We can only understand the action which draws constantly nearer, but never reaches its goal. The principle involved in the differential calculus illustrates this quite effectively.

The ultimate goal is to us a mysterious and almost frightening void

from which the causal mind shies away.

This is so much part and parcel of our mental make-up, that our mind rebels at inactivity of any kind. And this is what causes the wishing for a thing to be sometimes sweeter than the actual possession, when the wishing has come to an end and we can look forward no more to the miracled delight of fanciful anticipation.

However, even if we do feel at times that certain momentary pang of slight and undefinable disappointment, there are fortunately compensations. For having a thing is not by any means fully knowing and possessing it, and every day we can discover it anew. In every unseen angle of it, in every new use, in every new appreciation of it, again we receive it as a new gift to us. Not until the day has come that we do not notice it any more, that we use it mechanically and fail to derive from it any new delight, does it become a dead thing to us. What we have gained in the acquiring, we shall then have lost in the possession of it.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MESSIANIC FORCE — G. F. K.

"Neither do men put new wine into old skins, lest the skins be burst, and the wine is poured out, and the skins will be destroyed; but men cast new wine into new skins, and both are preserved together" — thus did Matthew, publican and scribe, record his Master's teaching: that the power and strength (*dunamis*) of a new Messianic force will not be poured into the musty "skins" of formalism, but will seek fresh vessels of interpretation. (Note the word in Greek is *askos*, meaning "skin," into which wine is poured, and not "bottle," as usually translated.)

Today, after some 2000 years of straining after the preservation of the wine-skins of Truth, we are beginning to recognize that it is the wine, and not the vessel, that is the Message; and that unless the vehicle of interpretation is constantly renewed by spiritual experience, the force of Truth will burst the vessel, and both "wine" and "skin" be destroyed.

There is no lack of earnestness in contemporary religionists, but there is indeed a lack of confidence in their ability to solve what one Presbyterian minister, Dr. Kenneth Miller of the New York City Mission Society, calls the "unprecedented needs of today." With not a little insight he questions:

How else may one explain the many attempts made this year to interpret afresh the life and works of the great souls of the past such as Thomas a Kempis, Francis de Sales, John Woolman, Soren Kierkegaard, as well as Luther, Calvin, Thomas Aquinas? Water for the revival of the soul must come from deep wells. — (Quoted from the *Saturday Review of Literature*, February 19, 1949.)

We echo: water for the revival of the soul, and of the spirit, must come from the wellspring of Truth — and not suffer taint by its passage through literalism. But where the wellspring? How find that pure stream of Truth unpolluted by dogma, creed, hypocrisy or priestcraft?

Book after book on religious themes has appeared for generations, and religion today is by no means a "dead issue" we are assured, with the Bible continuing to be a "best seller." But organized religion has not yielded the answer as casual glance at the quality of religious output confirms. A grave insecurity of the spirit plagues the ministerial world, whose resources are badly strained to make religion a *must* in everyday affairs: in education, politics, social conditions, morals, psychology, as well as in international relations. Perhaps never before in recorded history has the search for religion played so prominent a role in Western psychology. Despite the avowed atheism in the modern (often but skin-deep, because born of contempt for the sham of pretended faith), there is sensed a deep yearning for religion *per se*, for the *re-ligio* or "leading back" towards spiritual foundations. The World Council of Churches which met last year at Amsterdam, Holland, where broad-scaled clergy from all parts of the world frankly discussed the problems facing them, was dubbed the "greatest church meeting since the Reformation." Still the problems remain unsolved, this exchange but serving to emphasize the spiritual inadequacy of existing religious formulas. The age-old circumstance rears its ugly head: old skins, cracked and withered by literalism, cannot retain fresh wine; aged formulas of faith, crystallized and degraded by priestly observance, cannot produce the vital solvent. Is there, then, no answer?

For seventy-five years the theosophist has studied and absorbed the Oriental atmosphere of thinking, leaving in large measure the Christian Scriptures to follow their well-grooved lines of procedure. There was ample justification in this, for H. P. Blavatsky could no more have poured the wine of her new spiritual Message into the already dried skins of credal Churchianity, than could Jesus 2000 years ago have utilized the dying formulas of thinking of his day. The present upheaval in priestly circles, however, and the insistent demand by both clergy and layman for *a new and living interpretation* of the Message of Jesus, produces its call, and theosophists are challenged once again to open their Bibles and with fresh vision untrammelled by dogma search out the *universalism* of the Christ-teaching.

In the words of A. L. Conger, students should attempt to

decode and make intelligible to the Christian adherents in the West the true value and meaning of the so-called Christian scriptures, and to develop the philosophy in the New Testament in the light of Theosophy, which will ultimately draw out an exposition of the Western conception of the SELF.

Armed with this incentive, we have opened our Bible, and in the light of the Greek original stand amazed at the pristine beauty of the Master's teaching: for within its pages, hidden here, and in places widely open, is the purity of a great Occult force. Rules of training, so simply stated, that their profundity is lost in miracle, allegory, or symbol.

And yet, even with the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, and the story of the Great Passion — may we not better say Compassion? — the searching question arises: how is it that the record of these teachings made so long after the passing of their Lord could have wielded so powerful an influence on Western civilization? Who was Jesus? To aver that he was indeed the Son of God, an incarnation of the Logos, born of the Virgin, one with the Father, either speaks volumes *if understood* — or says nothing at all. To recognize that here a spiritual-divine Force incarnated for the world's redemption at a balancing point in racial cycles is to come nearer the truth: one more effort of The Lodge had been tried.

It is the Messianic force that concerns us, not the intellectual depth of philosophy, for truth to tell, one ventures to suggest that had it not been for the *backing of The Lodge at this particular junction point in racial history*, the entire episode of the coming of Jesus might well have been lost in the shuffle of evolution. How remarkable that not a single historian of the period even notices his existence, much less his dramatic death! And yet, is it indeed so strange to a theosophist, who considering present day history will observe that not a single text-book, either of religion or philosophy, ever mentions Blavatsky, much less Theosophy; and when she is mentioned in literature it is more often

than not as some strange weird phenomenon, or a charlatan to boot!

What, then, is the theosophical concept of Jesus? For answer we could hardly do better than quote from *Isis Unveiled*, the first theosophical work of Blavatsky, published in 1877:

. . . all the civilized portion of the Pagans who knew of Jesus honored him as a philosopher, an *adept* whom they placed on the same level with Pythagoras and Apollonius. Whence such a veneration on their part for a man, were he simply, as represented by the Synoptics, a poor, unknown Jewish carpenter from Nazareth? As an incarnated God there is no single record of him on this earth capable of withstanding the critical examination of science; as one of the greatest reformers, an inveterate enemy of every theological dogmatism, a persecutor of bigotry, a teacher of one of the most sublime codes of ethics, Jesus is one of the grandest and most clearly-defined figures on the panorama of human history. His age may, with every day, be receding farther and farther back into the gloomy and hazy mists of the past; and his theology — based on human fancy and supported by untenable dogmas may, nay, must with every day lose more of its unmerited prestige; alone the grand figure of the philosopher and moral reformer instead of growing paler will become with ever century more pronounced and more clearly defined. It will reign supreme and universal only on that day when the whole of humanity recognizes but one father — the UNKNOWN ONE above — and one brother — the whole of mankind below. — II, 150-1

Before opening our Bibles, however, we should well understand that the first problem in contacting the Christian mind is the following: the entire structure of Christian psychology is one built on "faith." Now faith *per se* is one of the most beautiful and cherished qualities of discipleship; but it must be a true *pistis* — to use the old Greek and Gnostic term — a *pistis* or "faith" born of knowledge, of inner conviction, of absolute trust in the LAW. When the *pistis* or faith

becomes merely a blind unreasoning following of some one else's say-so, without the spirit meeting with the mind in knowledge, then the faith becomes sterile, and at worst a deterrent. No matter how released the individual Christian adherent may be from the dominance of the *rule of faith*: faith in the blood of Jesus, in the Christ as the only begotten Son of God; in the Immaculate Conception as such, in the Crucifixion and Resurrection *as such* — no matter, we repeat, how emancipated he may be from the overlordship of the Creed, there is still the psychology of the entire Christian belief, which is founded on, supported by, and expands today on, the *faith in the supernatural and unique appearance or manifestation* of the Christ, as the Son of the Father. For despite the preponderance of evidence that Jesus, the Christ, was but one of a "long line of Wise Men," Saviors of the Race, who come at appointed times, despite the vast array of Teachers, who have been born of an Immaculate Virgin, who have suffered Crucifixion, Descent into Hades, Resurrection and Ascension on the third day, there are still those who cling tenaciously to the theory propounded by embarrassed Church Fathers in the first and second centuries of the Christian Era, that the "Devil has his Christs," and that, as Tertullian and St. Justin explained, "a long time before there were Christians in existence, the devil had taken pleasure to have their future mysteries and ceremonies copied by his worshipers"! The promised Savior — Jesus the Christ — was, in their view, the culmination of the gropings of former periods, the "Desire of all Nations."

But with Church history we have no immediate concern. Those who are interested in the development of the Church during the first three centuries are strongly recommended to study F. C. Baur's *Church History*, published in English translation in 1878, the culmination of years of intensive labor to divest the supernatural and unique from the elements of Christianity, and with reverence yet powerful scholarship to interpret all the phenomena surrounding the appearance of Jesus, the coming of Christ, as "part of the great historical development." It is refreshing to realize that always there are pioneers, independent

investigators, who despite the overbearing theological atmosphere of their surroundings, yet have courage, intuition, and the tenacity of purpose to search for Truth, and finding it declare it boldly.

It may seem strange to some today, who ungrounded in Christian belief, and to whom at best the Christian scriptures are but good literature, to make so "much ado about nothing." But it must be remembered that we live in a Christian land, where millions of earnest men and women are spiritually starving, hungering for just that sound philosophy which can be found in Christian thought. However much the concept of Tertullian has become broadened by time and scholarship, however much we may feel that the Christian world as a whole has advanced beyond the narrowness of such a belief, there is still that closed-door attitude of faith first, inquiry second. We say, faith yes, but strengthened, illumined by "inquiry," the investigative spirit, for as Plato truly said: "Life for man without inquiry is not worth living."

A study of the present illumines the past; research into the past makes clear the present. A glance at the spiritual unrest of 2000 ago should give courage and a new hope. What happened is taking place now. Physically, politically, morally, education ally, socially, to say nothing of the spiritual turmoil of the period the nations surrounding the Mediterranean basin were in a flux of change, unrest, of spiritual and psychic ferment. The old forms of the spirit had cracked, yet the religious yearning was deep, insistent tempestuous in its demand for expression. The Greek mysteries had become but orgies of a degraded type; the old gods and goddesses of Classic mythology were but a mockery of a once deific communion—the rites of Isis in Alexandrian Egypt, while retaining much of the splendor of ancient days, were despoiled of the Spirit. Zoroastrianism had become a form, a mere shadow of a vanished glory. The Hebrews no longer produced their Jeremiahs whose integrity and courage marked the highpoint of Jewish power; even the heroic defiance and benevolent rule of the first Maccabees had gone, and the Jews once again had become a dominated people — their religion formalized.

What was the secret of this decadence — the three once potent religious streams, Hellenism, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism, now but empty sepulchers, the living spirit long since fled? Was it the influx of the new Christian force that shattered and crumbled the old? Should the decay of Paganism in all its forms be laid at the door of Christianity? Not at all. Was it not rather that the turbulence of the time was utilized by Those who watch over the destinies of nations to sow the new seed in the fresh turned soil of inquiry? Was it not that the new cycle then aborning had slowly, but surely, been in seeding for generations, and that only then at that particular convergence of cycles when the Sun slipped into the new zodiacal influence, the Piscean, it could manifest? For suggestive answer we quote from Professor Baur of the Tübingen School, whose indefatigable researches into primitive Christian origins have earned him the gratitude of scholars and thinkers the world over:

Decay and dissolution, . . . had completely seized on the old religions. . . But what had so thoroughly broken up the old faiths? They were crumbling into ruins before Christianity came to touch them. Some other power must have been at work on them which was stronger than they. It is a mistake to think that ages of transition, like that immediately preceding the appearance of Christianity, are simply times of decay and disintegration, when all spiritual and religious life is completely moribund. At such a time the old forms in which religion used to move do indeed decay. What used to fill them with life and reality departs from them, till the hollow forms alone are left. But the very cause of this process is, that the *spirit, whose religious feelings the forms once served to express, has expanded and risen beyond them.*

— F. C. Baur, *Church History*, I, 9-10 (itals. ours)

Some "other power" had indeed been at work. For The Lodge wastes not its force on dying forms, on departmentalized religious expression. The once wide-sweeping *universalism* of the old philosophies and

religions, of Hellenic, Persian and Hebraic thought — a universalism of *spiritual* concept, not of material power, had given way to particularisms, so that the spirit of Truth had "expanded and risen beyond them." Professor Baur continues:

Where an old system decays we may be sure it is because the new truth which is to succeed it is already there; the old would not decay if the new had not arrived, be it but in germ, and been long labouring to undermine and eat away the existing structure. — *Ibid.*

We can be assured that the "balance of power" in spiritual things is maintained: where it retreats in one sphere, the spirit is sure to pour forth in a new and ready vehicle. Constantly is The Lodge alerted to the great cyclic turnings of the wheel of destiny, so that not only do human and divine cycles conjoin, but the convergence of terrestrial with solar cycles is well observed. Is it so strange, then, that when the Sun slips from one sign of the Zodiac to another (in its precessional cycle) that the forces then released should be utilized for a special outpouring of Spiritual force; that the solar power magnetically generated by the transfer of zodiacal emphasis from one mansion to another should not be accompanied by a *spiritual* release through some "angelos" or messenger from the Sun? This thought is not unnatural to the Orient, for every child there is taught at its mother's knee of the ten "incarnations" of the Vishnu Avatara — nine of which have already appeared, the tenth to come serving as the prototype in fact of the Christian Messiah still to appear, the "second coming" of the Lord. Nor is this concept so foreign to the emancipated West to whom the *Gita* has become a companion and guide, for Krishna addresses Arjuna, his disciple, as follows:

Even though myself unborn, of changeless essence, and the lord of all existence, yet in presiding over nature — which is mine — I am born but through my own *maya*, the mystic power of self-ideation, the eternal thought in the eternal mind. *I produce myself among creatures*, O son of Bharata, whenever there is a

decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus *I incarnate from age to age* for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness. (ch. iv, itals. ours).

But what of the present cycle of tortuous upheaval? The Age of Pisces is closing, the Aquarian Age is arriving. Is it not marked by unrest, disintegration and decay, and a thorough breaking up of old ideologies, so that the world hungers for a new Messiah, a new revelation, a new dispensation? Strange that "the Light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not" remains as true today as when John first wrote those immortal words. The light of Theosophy is clear and strong, but the darkness of credal thinking is still too comfortable for religionists and the world-at-large to welcome the light of Truth. Yet this is not remarkable, nor is it unique in history, whether spiritual or profane. Always the borning time of new growths is slow, taking centuries perhaps before the fruitage is seen. The pregnant words of Baur come again to mind, which though applying to the advent of the Christian Messianic force of 2000 years ago, are equally applicable to the reception of Theosophy since the coming of H. P. Blavatsky in 1875:

It may be long before a new kind of spiritual life takes such shape as to arrest the notice of the world. But the plastic spirit is active all the while, though unobserved; the leaven is working deep out of sight, and the unresting vital process cannot be stayed, but goes evenly and regularly forward, in its successive stages, until it has produced a new creation. — *Church History*, I, 10

Slow though the reception of theosophic ideas may appear, we have no quarrel with the speed of transition. The emancipation of thought during the last 75 years has been gargantuan, and needs no defence. The important point is to draw the parallel sharp and clear between the movement of 2000 years ago which Jesus initiated, and the Theosophical movement of today. Both shattered and thundered at hypocrisy, at sham, at the vanity of selfish prayer. Where Jesus scorned

the Scribes and Pharisees of his day, who represented all that was constricted and formalized (though be it noted that the Pharisees embraced far more liberalism in spiritual thinking than the Sadducees, being used by Christ merely as an example), H. P. Blavatsky scourged and lashed at the hypocrites and pretenders of her day. Liberalism in Christian thought in the 19th century was a thing to be dreaded. Originality of belief some three or four centuries ago meant burning at the Stake. And as for the Inquisition and the cruelties it has perpetrated in the "name of religion," one wonders that there is yet left an atom of strength in the Christian faith. So great, however, is the force and power (dunamis) of the original Messianic expression of Jesus, that even today, with its wornout formalisms, it brings a message of strength to many in need. It is not enough, however, to satisfy the present demand for more light, more hope, more sound philosophy.

Where then is the wine of the spirit belonging to this age, to this Messianic cycle? In the vehicle established by Those who sent forth the new "angelos" or messenger to establish a fresh vessel of Truth that men might once again feel the freedom of a universalism of teaching, instead of the narrow particularism of a crystallized faith. In other words — in that movement started by H. P. Blavatsky who was the vehicle of that titanic Messianic force that was to pour into new vessels of the spirit a new wine from The Lodge. She might have called it anything — she called it Theosophy — a most appropriate term, it being the secret name among the occultists of the past fifteen or more centuries, kept alive in crypt and cave through those dark terrible Ages in Europe when the few, tired of the dregs of literalism, thirsted and found a draught of true wine.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ORIGIN OF MAN — *Peter Stoddard*

The origin of Man is a subject which engages the earnest attention of every intelligent person at some time of life. Who has not heard the questions of children on this subject? Do not our scientists constantly revert to it? And do we not all in our maturer years ponder upon it?

What sources of information have we on this subject? Mainly two: —

- (a) Ancient documents, whether considered sacred or profane.
- (b) Ancient remains, such as skeletons, implements, etc.

At certain periods in European history free inquiry on this subject has been impossible because of religious intolerance, but at the present time that hindrance is largely inoperative, and men are at liberty to explore the whole field as far as they can discover it. How far have the pronouncements of European Religion and Science taken us towards a solution of the problem of the origin of Man? We have the Bible account of creation, which, taken literally, is just impossible nonsense. We have the gropings of Science — and what do they amount to? Let me quote from a world-authority on this subject, Professor Frederick Wood Jones of Manchester University: "Thirty years ago Scientists thought they had solved this problem, but today they are in a state of complete uncertainty."

Now what does Theosophy say about it? Broadly, that in spite of the unsatisfactoriness of both the religious and the scientific teachings, they do, if properly understood and interpreted, constitute a considerable approach towards a solution of the question.

The problem is: In what form, and where, and at what period, did Man first appear? The questions are simple, but the answers are complex. And where there is a complexity, it is desirable to try to establish a General Principle.

There is an age-old Principle which supplies the need — Evolution; not

"Evolution" in the modernly accepted meaning of the term, which should be rightly called "Transformism" — this Transformism teaching that one stock or phylum in Nature can become another stock or phylum by physical transformation. Not at all. But Evolution in its ancient etymological meaning in the sense of unfolding what is within. Yet Evolution is only one side of the problem. Do not picture Evolution as simply a straight line of development from the lesser to the greater. There are no straight lines in Nature and every curve upward is followed by a curve downward. When the curve of Evolution has proceeded far enough, its opposite curve Involution, on the other arc, sets in. In fact, as Theosophists see it Evolution is inevitably accompanied by Involution, and vice versa.

If Evolution is a bringing out of what is within, what is Involution? Involution is a process of infolding, of what was previously unfolded. Involution is the reverse process of Evolution. As a simple illustration, take a wave or billow of the sea. When it rises it is pushing back the air and the air is receding; but when the wave falls the water is receding and the air is taking its place. As one advances, the other recedes, and as the one recedes the other advances. That is what we mean by Evolution and Involution — they are concurrent processes.

Now Theosophy teaches that these two processes are ever-present in Nature, and that Man, being an inseparable part of Nature, is subject to the same processes; and that the appearance of the Human Stock, its development, its maturity, its future history and its final destiny, are an illustration of this double process of Evolution and Involution. Thus the Principle is theoretically established. What are the details by which it can be practically demonstrated? How can it be shown that the Human Race experiences both an Evolution and an Involution?

First of all, What is Man? Let us look at ourselves. We have a body; but we also have volitions, thoughts, desires, impulses, feelings, ambitions, aspirations. Roughly, Man is Dual — the material and the immaterial, Matter and Force, Body and Soul, Substance and Spirit. Can anyone point to any material action in Man or in any other part of Nature,

which is not preceded by an invisible Force, or Desire or Will? The visible is always animated by the invisible; and in the long processes of Man's Origin and Development, the same observation holds good — the Material is preceded by, and caused by, and animated by the Immaterial. This is a fundamental Theosophical concept, but I am stating it very baldly, for simplicity.

Now a step further. Sir James Jeans' theory of "Singular Points" postulates vortices in the starry depths of space, where matter emerges from the invisible into the visible. In the process of condensation invisible vapor becomes visible water or hoar frost. What are clouds but collected vapor or matter which was previously present but invisible?

Theosophy says it is true that matter as we know it once existed in refined forms on more ethereal planes; and prior to that it was in a spiritual condition; but that through a certain number of Ages, and on various globes of life, it gradually condensed, thickened, grossened, until it became material as we know it. That was the evolution of Matter and the involution of Spirit. Further, Matter, as we know it, will, in the far distant future, become less gross, more etherealized, and will return to a super-refined or spiritual condition — gradually, and through various globes of life appropriate for such processes. That will be the involution of Matter and the evolution of Spirit. Thus, the visible emerges from the invisible, and, after a full period of expression, retires again into the invisible.

So with Man — the Human Stock. Human flesh and bones, etc., have undergone a gradual solidification in the far past, and in the far future the process will be reversed, and human bodies will become more refined and less gross.

Man's association with this earth is comprised in Seven Great Races, or "Root-Races," of which we, at the present time, are in the Fifth. The present Great Fifth Root-Race had its beginnings four or five million years ago, and it will persist for a similar period in the future, after which it will be followed in due course of time by the Sixth, and then

later by the Seventh. This Fifth Root-Race grew out of the preceding Root-Race, the Fourth, and that grew out of the Third, and so on up to the First Root-Race. Prior to the First Root-Race on this globe the Human Life-Wave had a history on a previous globe — but we shall not speak of that for the present. The First Root-Race on this Globe (called Globe D in Theosophical parlance) possessed forms and characteristics which are quite un-familiar to present-day conceptions. They were the original protoplasmic sketches of the true Man or mankind that was to follow in far later Ages. Their bodies were composed of "astral" matter, a kind of matter that would be quite invisible to normal present-day sight. Their size was gigantic, and their shape was ovoid. They were not truly Human as we now understand the term — for they were mindless, instinctual. As the Ages passed, this First Root-Race slowly grew more material in structure, *i.e.*, the Astral slowly thickened or condensed, became more concreted.

The Second Root-Race, which was the First Root-Race merely become more concrete and material, was likewise distinctly semi-astral, was indeed a gelatinous, filamentoid race, physically speaking. Both the First Root-Race, and the Second, had neither bones, nor organs, nor hair, nor a true skin. In the latter part of the Second Root-Race, the internal structure was distinguished by nuclei, which were destined to become the organs as we know them, and filaments which were destined to become muscles, nerves, blood vessels, etc.

The First Root-Race reproduced itself by fission, that is to say, by a portion of the parent breaking off, such portion growing to be like its parent, by division much after the fashion that living cells today follow. They were sexless.

When the Second Root-Race gradually appeared on the scene, though still ovoid in general form, they began to show an imperfect outline in form of what was in ages later to become bodies of human shape. They were still mindless, and their method of reproduction had changed to budding or gemmation, *i.e.*, a small part of the body, a bud, separated from the parent, dropped off from the main trunk, and thereafter

began to grow and to develop into a being which was in all important respects like its parent. At about the middle period of the Second Root-Race, these buds grew more numerous and became what Zoologists would call human spores or seeds, or what H. P. Blavatsky more accurately called "Vital Sweat."

Neither the First nor the Second Root-Races left any skeletal remains. The latter part of the Second Root-Race, and the early Third, through the production of these vital cells, became the progenitors of certain forms of life, which, ages later, developed into the various Stocks of Mammals.

After several millions of years, the Third Root-Race began, perhaps 26 millions of years ago in Geologic conditions which are recognized by Science today as the Paleozoic, Mesozoic and Eocene. The continent they inhabited was the Lemurian, roughly where now is the Pacific Ocean. It was during the Third Root-Race that skeletal human remains began to be deposited.

From the commencement of the Third Root-Race, the bodily condition showed a further gradual thickening or concretion into flesh, the shape also gradually becoming more human, but still gigantic in size. This was the era of the colossal Pre-Tertiary Giants and Titans, in the Secondary period, recognized by Science as the Age of the Gigantic Reptiles and Monsters of Air, Sea and Land.

The psychological condition of the Third Root-Race was, in the early part, still mindless and instinctual. Man was indeed at that time merely an animal, but a Human animal, derived from his own stock, not from any animal stock. In general appearance somewhat similar to man as we know him today, but still gigantic. It was while Man was in this dazed, unawakened, mindless condition, after the separation of the sexes, that he allied himself with certain mammals, and produced the simian monkeys, but not the Anthropoids (they were much later). But let us not go too fast. In the early Third Root-Race, which was then double-sexed or bi-sexual, androgynous or hermaphroditic, the method of reproduction was by means of the exudation of vital cells. They were

called "The Sweat-Born." Later, they were actually egg-layers. Even today the human ovum is an egg.

Later, as said, before the awakening of the Human Mind, the separation of the sexes occurred, and the method of reproduction which is known today had its commencement. But sex, as we know it, is only a "passing phase," affecting the latter part of the Third Root-Race, the Fourth and the Fifth. It will have disappeared in the Sixth and Seventh Root-Races of Mankind.

And now we approach that period in the biological history of Man when he truly became Man in the fullest sense of the word as we know him. It was about 18 million years ago, and something happened which can truly be described as the most important, the most marvelous and far-reaching event in the life of Man on this Globe up to the present time. It was when his Mind awoke — it was when the powers of the Mind began to be used, the power of independent judgment, discrimination, self-analysis, the power to discern and control the emotions and impulses — in a word, self-consciousness. From that time human beings became Thinkers, contrivers, planners, builders, artists, conscious learners. They acquired the knowledge of good and evil. They began to be potential Gods. They entered upon a new phase, the most important one of their existence, a phase which will not be complete until they have become self-conscious Gods.

This new grade could not be, and was not, achieved without help. Higher Beings, from a previous period of evolution in prior worlds, made it their sublime work to light up the mental powers in Man by deliberate mental contact with them. These Higher Beings are called the Manasaputras, or Sons of Mind. They were, as said, highly-evolved Men of a previous period of evolution, and by a species of perfectly natural White Magic they awakened Man's sleeping quality of Mind.

No evolution of manifested life occurs without the co-operation or the original intervention of more advanced beings — as witness the seed, which is born from the matured plant. And just as Man's physical form and lower principles developed under the guidance of the Lunar Pitris

or Fathers, physical generation, as it is well-known, being largely influenced by the Moon, so the development of his Mind was achieved through the help of the Manasaputras. Before that time, men were merely human animals, that is to say, the only parts of their constitution which had come into manifestation were those known as the Lower Quaternary. The Upper Triad of Man's Constitution was still in embryo or dormancy, and it needed the intervention of beings who had already developed this Principle of Mind in order to awaken it. These Beings, Manasaputras, belong to a superior Hierarchy of Intelligences on the Light-side of Nature and are connected with the Sun. They are the Men of a former period of manifestation, who incarnated in the semi-conscious, quasi-senseless men somewhat later than the middle period of the Third Root-Race. It was an act of sacrifice on their part, because they belong to one of the Hierarchies of Compassion. They did it in order to give us intellectual Light — the Divine flame of self-consciousness, relatively small though that may yet be. They set us on the path of self-directed evolution. We became responsible.

As we all very well know, the Manasic Principle in Man is not yet fully developed. In the masses of people the intellect is used in a very small degree compared with its possibilities. And even intellection is only one of the lower powers of the Mind (or Manas). We must remember that Manas was only awakened in the Third Race, although for immense periods its use and enjoyment were unsullied by the lower passions and desires. But inevitably, the Third Race being on the Descending Arc, a grossening and a coarsening process was to occur, especially so when the Fourth Root-Race became dominant at the lowest point of the Descending Arc. In those former innocent times, when the Gods walked with men and conversed with them and guided them, mankind enjoyed the use of the THIRD EYE. This was the organ of Spiritual Perception. But as the fall of man became accelerated on the downward cycle, this organ gradually receded from its functions and eventually became atrophied. It is now laid aside for future use, and its vestigial form is to be found as the Pineal Gland. Records of those dying Lemurian Races

are perpetuated in the legends of wicked giants who had an eye in the forehead. The story of Odysseus putting out the eye of Polyphemus, a Cyclopean giant, with a red hot brand; and Finn in Ireland who is said to have destroyed a wicked giant's eye with a heated iron spit (iron being a symbol of passion and desire), epitomize the history of Man's decline from purity to grosser materiality.

Thus was the birth of the Fourth Root-Race commenced, it also being destined throughout the millions of years of its Seven Sub-Races, to experience periods of great material splendor and those of grosser unhappiness. But the wonderful civilizations of Atlantis have now all disappeared, and the Fifth Root-Race is now limned upon the screen of time. Mankind is once more slowly climbing on the upward or Ascending Arc, gradually etherealizing and spiritualizing his Fifth Principle (Manas) in this Fifth Root-Race.

And as he will eventually approach the beginnings of the Sixth Root-Race, the Manas Principle will expand with ever greater power as it becomes illumined with the Sixth Principle, Buddhi.

The Theosophical Forum

ON PYTHAGORAS — *Irene Croiset van Uchelen*

Pythagoras was born about 528 B.C., and his parents, Mnesarchus and Pythais were citizens of Samos and descendants of Ancaeus, who, it is said by Iamblichus, was directed by the Pythian oracle to colonize the marine island of Samos. His mother, Pythais, it is told, received intimation of his birth by divine revelation, for Pythagoras is one of the seers of antiquity for whom an immaculate conception has been claimed, and his birth is surrounded by many legends.

Pythagoras stated that he was not *sophos*, wise, but *philosophos*, a "lover of wisdom," Pythagoras himself originating the term "Philosopher." In a discourse with Leo, Prince of the Phliasiensians, we find this interesting passage:

Human Life seemed to resemble that public convention which is celebrated with the pomp and games of all Greece, for as some by bodily exercises aim at the glory and nobility of a crown, others are led away by gain in buying and selling. But there are certain persons, and those of better quality, who seek neither applause nor gain, but come to behold and curiously observe what is done and how. So we, coming out of another life and nature into this life, as out of some city into the full throng of a public meeting, some serve glory, others riches; only a few there are, who, despising all things else, studiously enquire into the nature of things. These he called enquirers after wisdom; these are philosophers. Thus, whereas learning before was called *Sophia*, wisdom, and the professors thereof *sophoi*, Pythagoras more modestly called it philosophy, love of wisdom — conceiving the attribute of "wise" not to belong to men, but to God only.

Perhaps Pythagoras had come to give the teachings of the esoteric wisdom to the people of Greece as Orpheus, "the Initiate of the Dawn of Greece," had given them to her priests, and as Plato had kept them alive in the setting sun of the Greek flowering. He was a torchbearer in the long chain of those who have so consecrated their lives, and brought a philosophy

which was to influence the artistic and intellectual splendor of Grecian and other civilizations and to lay the foundations for the future scientific thought of the new world.

Pythagoras taught reincarnation and karma, and it is said in Mead's *Orpheus* that he had given some details of his former births to his disciples. In the life in which he became known as Pythagoras, his father died while he was quite young. He was much respected and honored even as a child, and was trained by the most learned thinkers of his time. Accounts of historians differ, but it is known that he sat at the feet of many masters. It is told that at the age of eighteen he secretly left Samos, the island being somewhat disturbed by political tyranny, and went to Sidon, where he sought the great Phoenician hierophants and was initiated into the mysteries of Byblus and Tyre. Here he lived in the seclusion of the temple. Later he went to Egypt to study. Although he was known to the Egyptian priests, they did all they could to discourage him, administering severe tests, but the young Pythagoras was not disheartened, submitting to them with an unflagging courage and determination. After he was accepted he was taught the epistolic, hieroglyphic and symbolic writing in order that he might understand the sacred lore. He lived for 22 years among the priests in the temples and was initiated into the mysteries. In Babylon he learned of the highest in music and mathematics; also of the motions of the stars, their power and properties, and their various effects upon men in health and disease. He was also initiated into the Babylonian and Chaldean Mysteries. He visited many other countries, making perhaps his greatest travel through Media and Persia into Hindusthan where it is said he remained some years as a pupil and initiate of the learned Brahmans.

Historians tell us that during his travel among the Jews he was instructed in the secret knowledge of Moses, the lawgiver of Israel, upon which the school of the Essene Mysteries, also attended by Jesus, was founded. Upon his return to Samos at the age of 56, he established a school which is still known as the semi-circle of Pythagoras. However, he was not very successful in teaching his own countrymen for the times were not fertile for the sowing of the seeds of philosophic truths, and so he moved to Crotona, Italy, where he established his now world-famous school. He

discoursed to the people, and became much honored. Gradually he gathered around him a group of followers, and out of these came a small nucleus whom he instructed in the secret wisdom, and also in the fundamentals of occult mathematics, music and astronomy, which Pythagoras held to be the triangular foundation of all the arts and sciences. His temple, amidst flowering gardens, was a circular colonnade which rose above the two wings of the main building. The men, in white robes, worshiped in the Temple of Apollo, and the women in colored robes in the Temple of Ceres, over the gate of which was a stone image of Hermes and the inscription *Eschatoi Bebeloi* (no entrance to the profane). It was dedicated to the nine muses of ancient mythology, who presided over their various fields of astronomy, divination, science of life and death, etc., with Hestia, divine science, making ten, the sacred decad.

The disciples of Pythagoras lived as a brotherhood in the temple, but joined in ordinary life, each candidate being admitted to the different grades of initiation according to his inherent ability, his intelligence, and earnestness in study. Thus, each belonged where he was according to the just measure of his own merit, the whole being under the supervision of the Head. Those who lived within the temple shared everything, possessing nothing individually, while those who lived outside forming a community around the temple, retained their possessions. The philosophy of the outer court was exoteric, while that of the inner temple was more rigid and the studies more advanced. It is related that Pythagoras was very strict in admitting candidates, saying that "not every wood is fit for the making of a Mercury." The aspirant was put through various trials. First he had to spend a night in a lonely, and perhaps haunted, cavern, and if his courage was not equal to this he was rejected. After this, he found himself in a gloomy cell where he was asked to solve the meaning of a Pythagorean symbol, such as "Why is a dodecahedron confined in a sphere, the symbol of the universe?" After working this out through many solitary hours, he was taken before an assembly, and if he could prove the symbol, he was honored; but if he had not succeeded, he was ridiculed, while the Master stood near, observing. If he failed in self-respect, or respect to the school, by expressing chagrin or giving way to temper, he was asked quietly to leave. Some to whom this happened afterwards

became enemies of the school, and among these was one named Cylon who later stirred insurrection against Pythagoras, with the ultimate result that the group was disintegrated.

Pythagoras believed the study of geometry, music and astronomy to be essential to a rational understanding of the universe, and his pupils were required to study these sciences.

He believed and taught the One that is everything. He described that One as the Supreme Mind which causes and is the power of all things, whose motion is circular, whose body is of the substance of light and whose essential nature is truth.

He discovered the therapeutic power of music and color, and of certain plants, and he was against surgery which he said was a sacrilege against the dwelling place of the Gods. His doctrine of friendship as the truest and most perfect of relationships is very beautiful because he extended it not only to humans, but to the kinship of the soul for the body, of Gods to men, of all to all, in fact the underlying unity of all things. This doctrine is said to be the foundation of the order of the Knights of Pythias. Pythagoras defined knowledge as mental accumulation through observation, and wisdom as the understanding of the underlying cause of all. And this could be reached by raising the intellect to where it could intuitively become aware of the invisible form of things manifested, and so become attuned with the ultimate spirit of things. His monad is that which the Pythagoreans called the mysterious permanent atom.

He also believed that the stars and planets were the visible bodies of great spirits just as our bodies are merely the reflection of our inner selves, and that behind or overshadowing these sacred planets were great deities, forgotten by humanity today, but worshiped and adored by the ancients.

The Pythagorean Y signifies our innate freewill and choice. On the path of life we may walk to the right or left; no matter what the circumstances, that power is man's. It is quite probable that Pythagoras derived this from the Egyptians, for this symbol is still preserved in the Tarot cards. It is called the forking of the ways and is symbolic also of a ritual used in initiations where the candidate had to choose between the hall of learning

and the way of pleasure and gratification of the senses.

Pythagoras said: "All things consist of three . . . establish the triangle and the problem is two-thirds solved." Therefore he divided the universe into three states: the supreme or absolute state the archetypal world and the home of the demi-urgos; secondly, the devas who supervise nature; and thirdly, the world of mankind.

No doubt everyone has heard of the Pythagorean numbers, supposedly the basis for various numerological systems used today; but because these were highly esoteric, it is safe to assume that the real key to their meaning and significance is lost. Pythagoras taught that the dot symbolized the power of the number One, the line the power of the number Two, the surface the power of the number Three, and the solid the power of the number Four. The numbers one and two are not considered by the Pythagoreans because they belonged to the unmanifested spheres. Therefore, their numbers begin with three, the triangle, and four, the square, and these added to the one and the two produce the number ten, the archetypal or sacred number. The origin of the true significance of these numbers is lost in the mists of time, the ancient writers linking them with the sacred planets, or intelligences overshadowing these planets. Plutarch says in *Isis and Osiris*:

For as the power of the triangle is expressive of the nature of Pluto, Bacchus and Mars; and the properties of the square of Rhea, Venus, Ceres, Vesta, and Juno; and of the Dodecahedron of Jupiter; so we are informed by Eudoxus, is the figure of fifty-six expressive of the nature of Typhon.

The number One is the monad, the mysterious permanent atom, because it is both the all including One, and the sum of any combination of numbers; the One and the many, the tree and its branches, the seed and its continuous flowering. Therefore it remains separate from the many. "I create myself and remain separate," says Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It is the void and the fullness. It is the odd and the even, the beginning and end of itself, the center and circumference. Therefore, the Pythagoreans called it the evenly-odd. From it are produced the even or feminine numbers, because these can reproduce themselves, and the odd which are

masculine, not to be divided equally. It is the androgynous number because it contains both the odd and the even. As the monad it has been called the germinal reason, because it is the origin of all the thoughts in the Universe. It is the seed of past and present, and therefore the Eternal Now. In the monad, time and space, or number and form, exist, but the monad does not exist in time.

The Pythagoreans had a proverb that all things were assimilated to number.

That the eternal essence of number is the most providential principle of the universe, of heaven and earth and the intermediate nature; and further still, that it is the root of the permanency of divine natures, of gods and daemons. . . . Number is the ruler of forms and ideas; to the most ancient and artificially ruling deity, number is the canon, the artificial reason, the intellect also, and the most undeviating balance of the composition and the generation of all things.

— Pythagoras in *The Sacred Discourse*.

From numbers we come to the Pythagorean geometrical solid. That is from number, which engenders time, we come to form which is derived from time and space. First there is 1-0 the sphere, the most perfect of forms, and the five symmetrical solids of the Pythagoreans which are the tetrahedron, the cube, the octahedron, the icosahedron, and the dodecahedron. Some of the old writings associate each of the sacred planets with one of the geometrical solids, such as the cube to Saturn, and the icosahedron to Venus, etc. This is attributed to Plato, but to us can only be speculative. Moreover, Plato did not consider the stars and planets in their manifestations of form, but as focal points of Intelligences. His astronomy was concerned only with the excellences of things beyond form.

On the Pythagorean theories of music and color much could be said, but his grandest conception was of the music of the spheres. Exoterically, this meant that each planet, moving in its course with a certain velocity, gives forth a certain note corresponding with the seven notes of the scale, the zodiac or inerratic sphere forming the eighth or octave. Inwardly we

know that every single atom in the spaces of space, giving forth its sound, swells the music of the spheres. At the heart of our solar system is a fire, and around this revolve the planets, including the sun. The intervals or spaces between the planets are given thus in Stanley's *History of Philosophy*, London, 1687:

Earth to Moon	— 1 tone.	Sun to Mars	— 1 tone.
Moon to Mercury	— ½ tone.	Mars to Jupiter	— ½ tone.
Mercury to Venus	— ½ tone.	Jupiter to Saturn	— ½ tone.
Venus to Sun	— 1½ tones.	Saturn to Zodiac	— 1½ tones.

These intervals added together make the seven tones, or "the Diapason harmony." Much could be said of the interval. Its presence permits the dance of the cosmic circle and governs light, color, sound, and the crystallization of the manifested worlds. By means of the interval, perhaps, life may live in form. But what did Pythagoras mean by the harmony of the spheres? Not that the planetary notes as we know these notes would produce harmony when united, for this does not work out. Surely it must have been that divine symphony, heard with the inward ear, which Plato also knew, and which relates to no manifested form or sound, but has its being in the celestial heavens. As Shakespeare says in the *Merchant of Venice*:

Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubims;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

No great Teacher neglects the ethical side of philosophy, and neither did Pythagoras. But ethics founded on great cosmic significance and workings, on rightness which stands of itself, are immeasurably greater than a mere morality based on emotion and custom. The most well-known of writings ascribed to Pythagoras are *The Golden Verses*, in which he describes a way of life and urges men to consider their acts; the necessity for self-control

and transmutation of the lower nature so that man may win his immortality and converse once more with the Gods. "Having departed from your house, turn not back; for the furies will be your attendants," says Pythagoras in some precepts gathered by Iamblichus, thus warning that he who enters the Path can never turn back.

The Theosophical Forum

KARMAN IN ANCIENT MYTH: THE NORNS — *Allan J. Stover*

Peoples who have not fallen under the skepticism of materialistic science or the fear inspired by a narrow religion, almost universally have a deep trust in the eternal justice of Nature's ways.

The great law of the universe is equilibrium, for nature quickly restores harmony wherever it is disturbed. On the ethical side this law is often known as the Law of Immanent Justice; for every act carries with it the seeds of future adjustment. This is not punishment for evil-doing, but is justice as inherent within every act, whether good or bad. Seen thus Karman is the working of a cosmic harmony which all things obey, from the unseen atoms in the air we breathe, to the highest gods.

It is only in the sphere of effects that concepts of fate, kismet and destiny, assume a personal aspect and the broader vision of Karman in its majestic sweep is lost. In order to understand Karman it is well to consider the organic structure of the life-web in which we live, and that everything we do affects the whole fabric of Life; so intermingled are its innumerable cycles of activity. The doctrine of Karman thus goes hand in hand with Universal Brotherhood.

There is scarcely a philosophy or religion which does not teach some aspect of this great law. We find it in the Bible, in Buddhism, in Islam, in the religions of China, in fact everywhere. In mythology especially are many beautiful and thoughtful symbols or allegories portraying certain phases of Karman; and by comparing these as understood by other peoples we greatly enrich our own concept of this great teaching of the Ancient Wisdom.

We may look upon myth and symbol as a vehicle or garment for clothing spiritual truth. In one sense they are a dramatization of inner laws of nature which are cosmic in their range of action. Words are not sufficient to give expression to the idea, since they are designed to convey precise and definite information. Symbol and allegory, like

mathematical formulae, are better fitted to explain general truths which apply to a large number of analogous conditions on different planes of being.

Karman is one of these great universal truths and has been known to all peoples. It is symbolized in Greek Mythology by the Moirae, or Fates, three in number, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, who spin the thread of destiny, severing it when the time comes. In the mythology of the Norse and early Teutons, the Fates appear as the three Norns who tend the World-Tree. In each case the original meaning has been largely obscured and distorted by succeeding religious ideologies, each seeking to shape the tradition to their own ends. But the keys given us by our Theosophical teachers offer a guide through the maze of apparent contradictions.

Of the many myths representing the nature and action of Karman, that of the Three Norns seems to come closest to the original doctrine; yet even here there has been a deliberate alteration and destruction of ancient books.

A writer of the seventeenth century (Svígota ok Normanna Edda) states that Snorre and Saemund did not compose the Eddas, but copied or recorded them after the old Runboker or rune books. He further explains that in the time of King Olof Skot about 1200 A. D. the Pope wrote King Olof complaining that the old Rune-books were hindering the progress of the church in Sweden and asking that he do something about it. Olof held *Thing* (a council), wherein it was decided to burn all the old Rune-books on the excuse that they were full of "Spellcraft." Previously, however, numbers of the writings had been taken to Iceland, then a great center of learning; and it was from these old books that the present Eddas were composed.

But while the greater part of their precious Rune books went up in smoke, there still lives in the hearts of the northern peoples an intuitive understanding of the ways of Karman. And while the Eddas today represent but a portion of the original sacred writings, the Theosophical student can recognize in them the basic teachings of the

Ancient Wisdom as once given to the Norse and Teutonic peoples. Thus, in the Edda Karman is depicted under the guise of the three Norns, Urd, Verdande and Skuld, who guard and water the roots of the World Tree, Yggdrasil.

The World Tree is of course our hierarchical system of Sun, Planets and Moons in all their various planes and sub-planes. It is the hierarchical system of every being from an atom to a universe. And since man in his inner and outer nature is a miniature replica of the solar system, he too has his planes and sub-planes of consciousness reaching from the physical vehicle upwards to divinity.

One approaches the subject of the Norns with hesitation and with the feeling that full knowledge of this ancient tradition is to be found, not in books, but about the firesides of northern homes.

Just as the Yggdrasil Tree is a symbol of the inner constitution of both man and universe, so the Norns who tend and water the Tree of Life are also many. In fact a Norn is given to every child when he enters life. It selects the mother that child is to have and guides the little one through life; only departing at the time of the second death. Always the Norns deal out utter justice, and nourish the soul with the waters of wisdom. In fact they appear to have been to Norse thought, what the Lipikas were to Hindu thought.

The names of the three chief Norns — *Urd*, from a root carrying the idea of the primeval, the inmost; *Verdande*, signifying the coming into being, emerging or unfolding from within; and lastly *Skuld*, which is obscure in meaning but seems to imply debt, as of something owing that will have to be paid — are commonly said to represent the three aspects of past, present and future. The names, however, suggest a deeper and more occult significance lying within the other. Anciently men who were in many ways wiser than ourselves did not think in terms of time as we do now, but rather of things emerging as a stream of consciousness from within without; from spiritual planes to material ones.

Now suppose we consider an act of Karman, such as sickness, as a seed deep within the timeless inner consciousness, planted there by actions in another incarnation, this seed maturing in its proper time emerges upon the physical plane, where like the thread of the Fates it is severed and thrown off.

In the Greek mythology the three names of the Moirae, Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, mean respectively the spinner, the allotter, and that which cuts off, or withdraws nourishment. The Latin word *Fatum* even means the Laws of Nature. The nature of the Norns is well illustrated by the picture of the three Fates drawing forth a strand from the mass of wool, of latent Karman, twisting it into a thread and finally severing it. This graphic illustration of the course of Karmic action does not conflict with the usual interpretation but rather deepens and adds form to the concept.

Dr. de Purucker once explained our life's Karman by comparing it to a deck of cards which we pick up at birth stacked in a certain way. But he continued, there are many decks, the accumulation of many lives, and as the soul approaches imbodiment it chooses which features of past Karman can best be worked out in the coming life. It is the soul itself which chooses what the new life will be. And having chosen the deck of cards or, to use the ancient symbol, the wool, strand after strand is drawn forth from the Karmic bundle, spun into a thread, and severed. Finally the life itself, its purpose accomplished so far as may be, is cut off.

Such seems to be the significance of the Karmic Norns or Fates as found in mythology. But there are still deeper reaches of thought, greater vistas of beauty which a closer study of the Edda discloses.

The Yggdrasil Tree has three roots, watered from three fountains or wells. The first root is watered from Urd's well with the knowledge of past experience; the second root is sprinkled with transcendent wisdom drawn from Mimer's well. Even Odin was required to sacrifice an eye to obtain a drink from Mimer's Well. The third root is sprinkled with water from the stream of Hwergelmir, the nature of which cannot

be told. It is said that the waters of the well were so pure that anything they touched became as white "as the membrane between the egg and the egg shell."

The crown of Yggdrasil overshadows even Walhalla, the Devachan of the Norse. The branches spread over the whole universe with all its system of globes and planes each teeming with countless lives. This majestic symbol of the oneness and inherent justice of the universe has fallen upon sad days. Yet even they will pass and truth once more be sought. Should the earth be swept by devastation of fire and flood, Yggdrasil would remain untouched, for the World Tree "defies both edge and fire." The faithful who remain would dwell in Mimer's groves until the regeneration of the world. Such is the teaching of the Edda.

The Theosophical Forum

"MAN MUST MAKE HIS CHOICE" — *Jalie Neville Shore*

The title *Man Must Make His Choice* is a quotation from Mohandas K. Gandhi. It was noted in my journal the day after I had attended one of the famous prayer meetings in New Delhi. The date of the entry was the day before Gandhiji's assassination, two days before I saw the flames from the sandal-wood funeral pyre consuming the slight body of the man who had led India to her freedom.

Specifically the little Indian leader was speaking of the freedom of the press at the time he made the above utterance. As bad as current journalism often is, thought Gandhi, it would be infinitely worse to have an imposition of censorship in regard to the written word. "The useful and the useless must, like good and evil," he said, "generally go on together and man must make his choice."

Gandhi perhaps more than anyone of our times knew the divine assurance of freedom and the character building power that comes from the exercise of choice in every day matters. From childhood to mature manhood he made choices that strengthened the inner fiber of his nature, choices that led successively one into the other. It might seem a far cry from a decision to keep a promise to his mother when still a boy, and the choice that made him turn from the prosperous life of a successful barrister in order to become the impoverished leader of a nondescript group of misery-ridden people in South Africa. But without the completed exercise of the first, the courage it took to make the latter choice would have been impossible.

But the pattern of Gandhi's career was molded on other choices — made both by him and by other people. Early in his young manhood Gandhi was in London. There he chose two friends who were theosophists and who invited him to attend a theosophical meeting one night. (1) It was through these theosophical contacts that the young Indian became interested in the deeper meaning of the *Bhagavad-Gita*,

and although he never joined the Theosophical Society he began in earnest a study of the *Gita*.

It has seemed to me of more than passing importance that the two friends Gandhi *chose* in London *chose* in turn to speak of Theosophy to him and to invite him to a theosophical meeting. Of perhaps greater significance was the fact that members of the H. P. Blavatsky Lodge made the *choice* of attending the meeting that night, of adding to the Lodge force of the two friends. The *Bhagavad-Gita* influenced, guided, and quickened his spiritual nature more than any other one thing, he said. If there were nothing else to tell of the life of Mohandas K. Gandhi, the fact that the millions reading of his life and death in the periodicals at the time of his passing were acquainted for the first time with the title "Bhagavad-Gita," would be significant. Excerpts from the third chapter — *Devotion through the Right Performance of Action* — were actually cabled from New Delhi to presses in America. If you believe in the occult power of words and thought, you cannot overlook the spiritual influence that must have been derived from this action on the part of foreign correspondents covering the event. Because of the quickened interest in Gandhi who was unswerving in his devotion to truth and duty as he saw it, theosophists have been able to speak more effectively at times of the spiritual importance of the *Gita*. It is a refreshing experience to be able to witness the light of interest on the faces of persons hearing for the first time an intelligent presentation of that part of the Hindu scriptures so well beloved by a man like Gandhi.

The pendulum of time swings in a mighty arc, and great events appear often far spaced from each other. Yet, there is not a point on the curve that is skipped. Indeed, it appears to be a single line of destiny from the initial starting point to the "final" dot on an upward curve, so rhythmic and unhesitating is the swing of the pendulum on the arc. The coming of the manasaputras and the moment of final choice are separated by millions of years, and theosophists have perfect faith that they participated in the one event and will take part successfully in the second. But too often the drama of the two great events obscures the importance of making the right choices on the line the pendulum is

marking at present.

Of such glamor are the hues of distant events that we often deem it "too difficult," "too strenuous," or "too premature" to strive immediately for perfection in theosophic life. Yet every one of us overlooks the plain injunctions of all our Teachers when we merely "try" to lead theosophic lives. "Each one of you is an incarnate god. Be it." Thus spoke G. de P. (Don't *try* to be it, just *be* it.) We waste too much of our lives in explaining to ourselves chiefly that we have a "long way to go" before we can reach important goals.

Either this is silly sophistry on our part, or what our Teachers tell us is straight-out deception. We know the rules: serious meditation morning and night, and for that matter, all day long; strict adherence to personal duty; thinking of others first; tolerance; forgiveness; love so overwhelming that only divinity can be seen in the eyes of the people who may disagree with us; compassion so great that pity instead of scorn is uppermost in our hearts at the mistakes of others; impersonality and nonattachment. We should not have to worry about "reaching people" if we put into practice those rules.

We have been taught that each person is a sphere of influence, and that in proportion to the amount of Truth that we have heard we are responsible for the alleviation of suffering. We love our Teachings and we want to do "something for Theosophy." But this is an absurdity. We cannot do anything for Theosophy. Theosophy is Truth. We can only promulgate that Truth and build it into our lives to shine like beacon-lights in a world of darkness.

We long to do something big for our Lodges and study groups, and we devise schemes to "get people to our meetings." When empty halls and indifference confront us we say too often, "People aren't ready for the spiritual truths we have to offer." This is sheer nonsense and bigotry on our part. People are ready! Millions are longing for more light than the wee specks they are holding on to in the form of membership in religious organizations of various kinds. The real trouble is that so few of *us* are ready! Most of us have pinned too little importance to living

the life and teaching by example.

The saddest experience in the life of any theosophist is to have it said, "Your philosophy sounds so grand, but how can theosophists act so, embracing as they do these noble Teachings?" It is sad because such a thing could never have been said to one whose life exemplified the theosophic truths. By his own inner light brought forth by his daily efforts in *right choices* and right conduct — in thought, word, and deed — he would have stilled the critic's tongue before he had uttered a word. Our Lodges and study groups will grow by the law of natural attraction, if we as members make ourselves purified centers of devotion which will draw the confidence of those seeking light. One person who "lives the life" has more power to assuage the pain of human suffering than one hundred with faith so weak there is no practice in their preachments.

"No man ever resteth a moment inactive," says Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita* (Chapter iii). "Every man is involuntarily urged to act by the qualities which spring from nature. He who remains inert, restraining the senses and organs, yet pondering with his heart upon objects of sense, is called a false pietist of bewildered soul. . . . Do thou perform the proper actions: action is superior to inaction."

That is plain enough. We have a choice: action or inaction. We have three qualities of nature from which to choose our action: that of truth or wisdom, that of muddled emotions, that of dark ignorance. We need not deceive ourselves that we do not know — or cannot learn — which quality is which. We have been taught to develop the discriminating principle and use it. Our choice of doing just that, or not doing it, indicates the direction our path is taking at that moment.

In a civilization that is sick because of lust, greed, vanity, power-ridden ambitions, and dissensions, theosophists cannot afford to be anything less than their higher selves. The whole thing is too serious. Every one of us has a responsibility too great to overlook, any minute of the day, too great for us to perform any action "other than as a sacrifice to God." Only the god-enlightened will be able even to "save the pieces." There is

no time to fritter away. The theosophist must truly make his choice.

FOOTNOTE:

1. H. P. Blavatsky was present at this meeting. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE BRETHREN OF THE ROSY CROSS — *Alexander Wilder*

[In response to requests for data regarding the founding and history of the original Rosicrucian Brotherhood, this article is reproduced from the February, 1880, issue of *The Theosophist*. Dr. Wilder, a close associate of H. P. Blavatsky during the writing of *Isis Unveiled*, was then Vice-President of the Theosophical Society. Eds.]

Were there Rosicrucians or were there not? This question agitated Europe two centuries ago, as Luther before that, and Savonarola, and Markion had each in his own time and way shaken the Church to its very foundations. All this was because a little book had appeared in the country of Wurttemberg purporting to unfold the existence of a secret fraternity possessing arcane and scientific knowledge, and devoted to the amelioration of human suffering, and the enlightenment of mankind.

The religionists of the seventeenth century could see only blasphemy and iniquity in such a proposition. They invoked fire from heaven upon the Brotherhood, and threatened them with death by breaking on the wheel. A few years before, Bruno had been burned at the stake by order of the Holy Office for teaching the Copernican system and the Pythagorean philosophy; and now Lutherans were emulating Romanists in their frenzy to get human blood to shed. A few years later these vultures were sated to the full. In 1618 began the thirty years' war between Catholic and Protestant Germany, which sucked all Europe into its bloody vortex, and continued till whole districts were depopulated, and the wild beasts of the forest succeeded to the abodes of more ferocious humankind. After the war came pestilence. Smallpox broke out spontaneously, and the Black Death accompanied. Europe was a prodigious charnel.

The tale of the Brotherhood was modest enough. Christian Rosenkreuz

had been a traveler in the East, where he had received instruction into the profoundest lore — magian, rabbinic, theurgic and alchemic. Among other acquirements, were the knowledge of the philosopher's stone, the art of transmuting metals, and the elixir of life. Returning to Germany, he established a little fraternity of eight disciples, obligating them to keep the doctrine secret for the space of one hundred and twenty years after his death. This occurred in 1484; and accordingly in 1604 there appeared *The Discovery of the Brotherhood of the Honorable Order of the Rosy Cross*. It appealed to all who desired to co-operate with them to make public their names. The Rosicrucians, it declared, were genuine Protestants. They were engaged in no movement or conspiracy against the ruling powers. Their aim was the diminishing of human wretchedness, the spread of education, the advancement of learning, science, universal enlightenment, and love. They possessed profound and occult knowledge, such as the alchemists, Arabian thaumaturgists, Egyptian and Chaldean wise men had brought forth; but all that was of little account. Their one high purpose was to benefit their fellow-creatures, body and soul.

A fire-brand of more destructive nature could not have been hurled into the combustible pyre of Europe. The Pope, the Emperor, the Christian and Catholic kings, the Protestant monarchs of the Baltic and North seas, exploded with terrible concussion. Not till thirty years of war and massacre had passed by, could the boiling caldron become quiet. Universal love and enlightenment, even now, if duly proclaimed, would imperil every throne in Europe from that of Alexander to the royal seat of Victoria; and even the political factions of the United States, blatant in their professions of freedom and democracy, would crumble to their primeval atoms.

Nevertheless, they tell us that there were no Rosicrucians. The Brotherhood was all a fond dream, written out by a Lutheran mystic divine named Andreae, on purpose to rouse the philanthropic minds of oppressed Europe to concerted action. A confederacy of such men, he believed, would renovate the world. But no great convention was held for the purpose. The reporters and daily newspapers of the time had no

sensational articles unfolding the plans of the Grand Alliance for the Amelioration of Human Calamity. It may be added that there was no country in Europe where such a convention could have met, except in secret. They would have needed that extraordinary Temple of the Holy Ghost under ground, if they had ventured upon their World's conference. As the matter stands, nobody can intelligently declare that they did not so assemble.

Learned men have made but a very indifferent handling of the matter. Des Cartes advertized all through Germany for men who belonged to the Rosicrucian Fraternity, or knew of it. He received letters from every sort of adventurer, but nothing affording the least light upon the subject of his enquiry. It was finally his opinion that there was no such association in existence. It is plain enough that if there were Rosicrucians, the knowledge concerning them had been "hid from the wise and prudent but was revealed to babes."

Andrese declared that the Rosicrucians had symbols and occult means of communication similar to those of the Alchemists and Astrologists. Indeed the Red Cross had been the badge of the Templars. That Order had been suppressed in 1307, yet Francis I had burned four members alive, a short time previous. He had also exterminated the Albigenses of Provence, a Gnostic brotherhood, with secret rites and symbols, dating from the earlier Christian centuries. The Rosicrucian Brotherhood then, had usages in common with both.

Ignorance has always been the mother of unquestioning orthodoxy. Nobody is so hostile to the general dissemination of knowledge as a priest. Greater cruelty has never been perpetrated among mankind than that authorized and commanded by the ministers of religions. From Theodosius down, the record of the Christian religion has been the autobiography of the seven-headed bloody red Dragon.

The Persian conquest of Asia Minor had led to the establishment of the religion of Mithras in that country. After the destruction of the Empire of Alexandria, the kingdom of Pontus was established, having Mithraism for its ruling faith. When Pompey conquered the country,

the religion was carried thence to every part of the Roman Empire. The father of Jesus it is said was a "soldier of Mithras." It flourished as a secret worship till its suppression by Theodosius; and even then, the *pagani* or country-people kept up the observance away down into the Mediaeval period. The Popes and Bishops denounced the rites as magic, witchcraft and commerce with the Powers of Darkness. Probably the Witchcraft of the Middle Ages was a relic of the old Magian worship.

In the seventh century, Sylvanus, a native of Samasata, established the fraternity of Paulicians, including in it the various Gnostic communes, the Manicheans of Armenicus, and the Mithraites of Pontus. Their doctrines were an amalgamation of the Pauline and the Zoroastrian; but they denounced the Ebionite religionists of Judea. They were fiercely persecuted by all the Christian Emperors, Arian as well as Athanasian. For near two centuries they maintained an independent government in the Caucasus. One of the emperors colonized a part of them in France, whence they spread into Bulgaria. Being employed in the Roman armies, they were transferred to various countries of Europe; Italy and France abounded with proselytes. Among these were the Albigenses.

Other believers in the *Gnosis* or arcane knowledge had been removed into Persia. They were denominated *Sophi* or sages, the worshipers of Sophia or Heavenly wisdom. Their converts were known as *Sufis*, and long constituted the learned class of the country. They were expert in medicine and astronomy, and adepts in secret doctrines. They believed in a grand universal creed which could be secretly held under any profession of an outward faith; and in fact, took a similar view of religious systems to that entertained by the ancient philosophers. A mystic union with the Divinity, theurgic powers, and a tendency to asceticism, characterized them.

Thus the Rosicrucian Brotherhood possessed a heritage of all the arcane systems and religions of the earlier world. Hargrave Jennings, their latest chronicler imputes to them the symbols, traditions and learning of the principal mystic fraternities. The Hermetic philosophy

of Egypt, the fire-theosophy of Persia, Druid-worship, Gnosticism, the Kabala, the Ancient Mysteries and Orders of Knighthood, Magic, Alchemy, Hindu beliefs, etc., all are treated by him in this connection. His style is curiously complicated; he tells little where he seems to be telling much, and with an obscurity of expression which seems to show little real knowledge or understanding of his subject. Yet he reveals the secret when to the non-expert he apparently hides it closest.

Could they change metals into gold? "Nature herself," said Mejnour to Glyndon, "is a laboratory in which metals and all elements are for ever at change. Easy to make gold — easier, more commodious, and cheaper still, to make the pearl, the diamond and the ruby." Raymond Lulli, a Franciscan monk, born in 1234, a rare expert in medicine and alchemy, is said by one writer to have supplied Edward I with six millions of money to enable him to carry on war against the Turks in Palestine. Another writer affirms that he made gold for Edward III in the Tower of London, for an entire coinage of gold nobles. He endeavored to unite the European countries in a project to Christianize Asia and Africa; but failing in this, set out alone. He made several converts; but was finally stoned to death by the Moslems in 1314.

Thomas Vaughan (Eugenius Philalethes) lived in the reigns of the first James and Charles, who were rather famous for persecutions of "witches." (1) He relates that he endeavored once to sell 1200 marks' worth of gold to a goldsmith. The man told him at first sight that that gold never came out of the mines, but had been produced by artificial means, not being of the standard of any known kingdom. He hurried away, leaving his gold behind.

Indeed, if a single element lies at the foundation of nature, as Dr. Thomas R. Frazer of Halifax, N.S., has demonstrated, an opinion in which he is followed by S. Pancoast of Philadelphia and J. Norman Lockyer, to whom the credit is given — then the transmutation of metals is a matter perhaps in reach.

Is there an Elixir capable of prolonging life? Thomas Vaughan was born about the year 1612. A writer in 1749 remarks:

He is believed by those of his fraternity to be living even now; and a person of great credit at Nuremberg in Germany affirms that he conversed with him but a year or two ago. Nay, it is further asserted that this very individual is the president of the illuminated in Europe, and that he sits as such in all their annual meetings.

Artephius, who lived 750 years ago, wrote a book entitled *On the Art of Prolonging Human Life*, in which he asserted, that he had already attained the age of 1025 years. Several asserted that he was the personage whose life was written by Philostratus under the name of Apollonius of Tyana. He wrote a book on the philosopher's stone, which was published at Paris in 1612.

"All that we profess to do is this," said Mejnour to Glyndon,

to find out the secrets of the human frame, to know why the parts ossify and the blood stagnates, and to apply continual preventives to the effects of time. This is not magic; it is the art of Medicine rightly understood. In our order we hold most noble — first, that knowledge which elevates the intellect; secondly, that which preserves the body.

The late Major-General Ethan A. Hitchcock was like his grandfather the noted Ethan Allan of Ticonderoga fame, addicted to curious study. In his treatise *Alchemy and the Alchemists*, he deduces an allegorical interpretation for the philosopher's stone, the transmutation of metals, and the elixir of life. "The genuine adepts," says he, "were searchers after truth in the highest sense of this word." The philosopher's stone, he adds, "can be found in no other thing in the universe but the nature of man, made in the image of God." The Elixir, under this interpretation, would signify spirituality — "eternal life." Sallust the Neo-Platonic philosopher has instructed us that "that which in a literal sense is manifestly absurd and impossible, must be understood in some other sense."

Lord Bulwer-Lytton has forcibly depicted the careers of Zanoni and

Mejnour, living through the ages from the period when the Chaldean Akkads ruled in Babylonia. He has shown that the boon of life is not desirable, though he represents it with none of the horrors which characterize the story of the Wandering Jew, forgotten by death. Mr. Jennings, following in a similar vein remarks that Rosicrucians evade the idea that they possess any extraordinary or separate knowledge, they live simply as mere spectators in the world, and they desire to make no disciples, converts nor confidants. They submit to the obligation of life, and to relationships — enjoying the fellowship of none, admiring none, following none but themselves. They obey all codes, are excellent citizens, and only preserve silence in regard to their own private convictions, giving the world the benefit of their acquirements up to a certain point; seeking only sympathy at some angles of their multiform character, but shutting out curiosity wholly when they do not wish its imperative eyes. This is the reason that the Rosicrucians passed through the world mostly unnoticed, and that people generally disbelieve that there were ever such persons; or believe that if there were, their pretensions are an imposition.

It is not generally known that the Rosicrucians bound themselves to obligations of comparative poverty but absolute chastity in the world, with certain dispensations and remissions that fully answered their purpose; for they were not necessarily solitary people: on the contrary they were frequently gregarious, and mixed freely with all classes, though privately admitting no law but their own. Their notions of poverty, or comparative poverty, were different from those that usually prevail. They felt that neither monarchs nor the wealth of monarchs could endow or aggrandise those who already esteemed themselves the superiors of all men; and therefore, though declining riches, they were voluntary in the renunciation of them. They held to chastity, entertaining some very peculiar notions about the real position of the female sex in the creation; the Enlightened or Illuminated brothers held the monastic state to be infinitely more consonant with the intentions of Providence.

Mr. Jennings refuses to explain these views more at length.

We have drawn to ourselves a certain frontier of reticence, up to which margin we may freely comment; and the limit is quite extended enough for the present popular purpose, — though we absolutely refuse to overpass it with too distinct explanations or to enlarge further on the strange persuasions of the Rosicrucians.

They held that all things visible and invisible were produced by the contention of light with darkness. The grossness and denseness in matter is due to its containing little of the divine light. But every object contains also in it a possible deposit of light, which will eventually and inevitably be liberated from the dark, dead substance. Unseen and unsuspected, there is shut up there an inner magnetism, an ethereal spirit, a divine aura, a possible eager fire. All minerals, in this spark of light, have the rudimentary possibility of plants and growing organisms; all vegetables have rudimentary sensitives which may eventually enable them to change into locomotive creatures, of meaner or nobler function.

The Rosicrucians claim to be able to pass into the next world, to work in it, and to bring back from it gold and the *elixir vitae*. This last was only to be won in the audacity of God-aided alchemic explorations, and was independent of those mastered elements, or nutritions, necessary to ordinary common life. The daily necessary food taken for the sustenance of the body was the means of dissolution. . . .

The existence of the Brotherhood is yet in dispute — and probably always will be. Flood says:

There is scarcely one who thinks about us who does not believe that our Society has no existence; because, as he truly declares, he never met any of us. And he concludes that there is no such brotherhood because, in his vanity, we seek not him to be our fellow.

Certainly, so long as men believe in no such mysterious fraternity, its members are safe from persecution, and interruption in their hallowed

pursuits. They may carry their secrets with them safely, — secrets possessed during all the ages of human existence, and yet sacredly preserved from far-off time till now. De Quincey has aptly and admiringly remarked of these Mejnours and Zanonis:

To be hidden amidst crowds is sublime. To come down hidden amongst crowds from distant generations is doubly sublime.

The Magians and Chaldean theurgists were massacred and driven into exile by Darius Hystaspes. Diokletian destroyed the sacred books of Egypt. Theodosius, Justinian and the fanatic Moslems extirpated all whom they could find possessed of mystical learning. The hordes of Scythian banditti who ravaged all the East — China, India, Persia, Western Asia and even Europe — destroyed every shrine and crypt of which they discovered the existence. Even the Catholic Church, King James I of England, the Royal Council of Sweden, and the Colonial Legislatures of the United States, made the possession of occult knowledge a capital offence.

Yet they all missed the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. When Cagliostro-Balsamo was immured in a Roman dungeon, to be tortured and murdered, it was fondly imagined that the Golden Secret would be disclosed. The hope was illusory. It could be communicated to none except those who were able to comprehend it. A preparatory discipline was necessary for this purpose; and whoever accomplished that successfully, would certainly never betray it. If such a one could entertain the impossible idea of doing such a thing, the treasure would certainly be found not to be in his possession.

So the Rosicrucian philosophers have lived in every age. They have jostled others in the church or at the market place, yet without being recognized. They are numerous enough now, to constitute the salt of the earth. They always have maintained their existence, and each of the Brotherhood knows infallibly every member of the fraternity. Their existence may be a myth, yet it is not. The parable is for those who can comprehend it. "None of the wicked will understand, but the wise will understand," said the prophet Daniel.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Witch is precisely the English word for *Gnostikos*. The Gnostics were accused of Sorcery. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

MAN'S SPIRITUAL POSSIBILITIES — *Madeline Clark*

A survey of the field of human consciousness as far as it can be made by the study of philosophies and the output of thought makes us ask how far has mankind, in our Western civilization, concerned itself about its spiritual future as an active and ever unfolding adventure? And how many have taken seriously Jesus' words to his disciples as they find them in their Bibles: "Ye are gods!"? Of course we can understand that the multitudes, to whom the struggle for existence is the most engrossing thing, can hardly be expected to have thought of very much beyond the immediate responsibilities of this world. But a few, the great philosophers and thinkers, have always been at the question: What is man? What is his origin and destiny? They have not been satisfied with one life, followed by an eternity vaguely beautiful but static.

A present-day philosopher, Martin Buber, who has only recently been translated from German into English, remarks:

The special dimension in which man knows himself as he can know himself alone, remains unentered, and for that reason man's special place in the cosmos remains undiscovered.

— An admission that he made after an exhaustive study of the philosophic systems of the greatest thinkers since Aristotle. Some, like Pascal, or even Kant, have been terrified at the immensity and the mystery. Even Martin Buber is forced to conclude:

The question about man's being faces us as never before in all its grandeur and terror — no longer in philosophical attire, but in the nakedness of existence. No dialectical guarantee keeps man from falling; it lies with himself to lift his foot and take the step which leads him away from the abyss. The strength to take this step cannot come from any security in regard to the future, but only from those depths of insecurity in which man,

overshadowed by despair, answers with his decision the question about man's being.

He quotes another philosopher, Heidegger, to say:

No age has known so much, and so many different things, about man as ours . . . and no age has known less than ours what man is.

And yet, listen to this from another thinker, Scheler:

We are the first epoch in which man has become fully and thoroughly "problematic" to himself.

There indeed is a gleam of hope. It means that man's inquiry into the mystery of his own nature is becoming more general. There have been, as we know, in the West, all through the centuries, occasional great minds who intuited some part of the truth about man: there was Giordano Bruno, there was Jacob Boehme, Spinoza, Pico della Mirandola, Albertus Magnus, Paracelsus, William Blake, and the great and wise Goethe who envisioned man in a higher evolution "sharing the joys of the gods as blessed co-creative powers."

But these men were not widely understood or listened to in their time, and the unavoidable impression remains with us that some of our cleverest philosophers have been like men groping in the dark.

The poets have often been men of intuition, with flashes of insight into ancient truths. Offhand we can think of Whittier and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, both of whom gave us fleeting glimpses of reincarnation; Tennyson, on whose bed-table at the time of his death, was found H. P. Blavatsky's *The Voice of the Silence*; Keats, who wrote of this world as a school for the soul on its long pilgrimage; and Poe, who in his *Eureka* worked out a scheme for the birth of universes which is very close to pure Theosophy.

And Walt Whitman is so rich in bold and far-reaching ideas that he is in some respects the greatest genius of them all. This is one of his unforgettable inspirations:

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the
crowded heaven,
And I said to my spirit, When we become the enfolders of those
orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them,
shall we be fill'd and satisfied then?
And my spirit said No, we but level that lift to pass and
continue beyond.

Some systems of mysticism, such as Quietism, have led men to go within, but have rarely given breadth and definiteness to man's conception of his spiritual possibilities and responsibilities. They have, indeed, led to spiritual selfishness, and are even capable of a certain sensuous quality. The subjective no doubt is needed in man's efforts to evolve, but it must be balanced by the objective, the turning outward towards others in mutual solidarity. The Master K. H. spoke of Quietism as "that utter paralysis of the soul."

In the nineteenth century, civilization, or at least one phase of it, had reached a climax of materiality. It was necessary to remind men that they could not remain static behind their ramparts of materialism. Thus it is ever with civilizations: as is pointed out in a magnificent passage in *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*:

. . . at the very point of material perfection, that is when a civilization is ripe to fall, because it can no longer give man scope to develop his spiritual possibilities. Men have to be urged along the path of spiritual development, reminded of their destiny.

It is like the old tale in the Arabian Nights:

The princes and the princesses had built their palace and it was perfectly appointed, and surrounded with gardens and filled with every invitation to pleasure and delight; when an old mysterious woman visits them, and tells them, Yes, it is all very beautiful, but it will never do as it is: they must go in search of some further treasure that she names. So they leave it all behind, and one by one take up their

long pilgrimage again.

We have to build up civilizations — we need them as vehicles to develop our creative genius and to implement our earth-experience; but then we become too engrossed in the thing we are creating and forget all about the object of it or our destined goal.

H. P. Blavatsky was able to shake loose the shackles that bound us in a spiritual sleep. She did it by superhuman labors, as we know; but she left with all those who were moved by "love of collective humanity" a grand philosophy of the universe to pass on to mankind. She turned the clear waters of Universal Wisdom into the turgid stream of Western thought, and gradually a clarification is taking place. Men are beginning to think in terms of humanity on the human plane; in terms of the universe on the scientific plane.

The terms used in the teaching of definite doctrines in Theosophy are capable of as exact an interpretation as the terms in science: and when we describe man's composite nature as having in it elements of the material, the psychic, the mental, the spiritual and the divine, and that these principles are simply small replicas or portions of the same principles as they exist in the universe; these are as much scientific truths as any that come out of our laboratories.

Man will not always be man. Already some men (a very few) have come into association with greater men, adept in Wisdom, who are on the verge of becoming more than human. They are the guardians of the race, the vanguard of humanity in its upward march. The technical teachings of Theosophy have a place and a name for them; these teachings also describe the hierarchical grades of still higher beings whose activities are ever more grand in their scope, until we reach the high divinities for whom only the stars are a fit abode.

All these, as evolution proceeds, man can become, once that he gains the realization of his spiritual possibilities and the secret of bringing them forth. As this growth proceeds, more and more deeply will he intuit the meaning of H. P. B.'s words in *The Voice of the Silence*:

"Knowest thou of Self the powers, O thou perceiver of external shadows?"

The Theosophical Forum

BEYOND THE CLOUDS — *Hazel Minot*

The way leads upward, always, though at times it appears to plunge downward abruptly or to lose itself completely in a sea of cloud and mist. At such moments the pilgrim may doubt its existence; but according to legend an old, old path lies hidden there, and those who follow it to its very end will find a glory unspeakable. Yet between the plain and the attainment of the goal many an obstacle bars the way, and more than courage and persistence must go with him who would successfully master them.

— *The Legend of the Path*

Roger had spent a restless night: the weather was hot and uncomfortable, with promise of a fiercer heat to follow with the coming day; all the windows were open in the hope of capturing some stray breeze, but neither breeze nor sleep could be cajoled into that room.

Strange thoughts were buzzing in Roger's head. He had been reading the legend of the path, and as he lay there sleepless, he wondered if such as he might find it. The idea possessed him with so urgent a yearning that he determined to steal forth with the first faint rays of dawn. If luck were with him he might make his way across the plain before the sun was high enough to intensify the humid heat. He began making plans: what he would take; what he would wear; what course he would chart across the plain, and soon he was so lost in dreams that he knew not whether they were waking or sleeping.

Noiselessly he had stolen from the house even before there was a trace of light in the east, and striking in the general direction of the foothills, he followed a cow-path that gave promise of leading him to a road. Long before he reached the foothills, however, the sun had won the race, and beat down with a force that seemed to chide his efforts to

evade it. The road was not much better than the cow-path and dust rose about him, making his eyes and throat burn intolerably. Roger thought he had never experienced such heat and felt as if every bit of moisture had been drained out of him. Parched, yet hesitant to draw upon an all too scant supply of water, he plodded on, the tantalizing thought of the canteen at his side beating through his consciousness with the rhythm of a drum.

"Water, water!"

The words came insistent and near at hand. It was not his own voice that repeated them, but a feeble cry from beside the road. Roger, startled into greater awareness of his surroundings, turned in the direction of the cry and saw, but a few feet from him, the emaciated form of a little child, its tiny hands reaching imploringly for his canteen. His own thirst, his purpose to save what little water he possessed for a greater need, swept over him, and the instinctive motion of his hand to give, was stayed. Again came the cry:

"Water, water!"

The sound was hardly a whisper now, but it hurt with the sharpness of a knife, and the eyes of the child were like burning coals to sear the wound. Roger, with one quick step, gathered the child in his arms and held the canteen to its lips. Long and greedily it drank, and once, when he thought it had finished, it snatched again at the canteen and only ceased when there was no water left.

What should he do with the child? He could not leave it alone and uncared for. It needed food, too, though at present it was too weak to eat. So with this added burden he trudged on towards the foothills. Surely, if he could last that long, he would find water there and, perhaps a herdsman who would care for the child.

The way seemed easier now, even with the child in his arms; and strangely, too, his thirst was lessened. On and on he went, and then at last the sound of running water greeted him. It was only a tiny hillside stream, but it was life to Roger and the child. And there beside it stood

a shepherd.

"I will take the child," said the shepherd. He looked at Roger as though he knew all about him and what he had done and there was no need for further words.

Roger stopped by the stream and ate a frugal meal; then, refreshed, he began the climb anew. His spirits were high; the way was clear, the ascent easy, and he was companioned by a happy consciousness of the balance between what had been his professed belief and the manner in which he had acted under stress. It was a pleasant reverie from which he was rudely awakened. On a sudden, the trail had disappeared and, search as he would, he could find no trace of it.

At what point had he begun to stray? How had he so lost himself without being aware of it? Here was dense growth with matted vines that clung to his feet and tripped him as he sought to clear a passage. Roger stood bewildered, thought he saw a thinning of the undergrowth and made towards it, only to fall in a twisted heap as a vine caught in his sandal and threw him. Bruised, and angry that he should be so helpless in his search, he yanked at the vines and tried to force his way through them without regard to the direction.

At once it seemed a thousand imps were set to bar his progress: clinging to his feet, blinding his sight, pulling him here and there.

"This way, Roger!"

"No, no, just the opposite."

"Follow me, follow me, follow me!"

"No, me, I'm over here, follow me, Roger!"

He turned this way and that, trying to catch the direction of their voices, but nowhere could he see them. There was only the silvery echo of their laughter as they taunted him.

Wearied, he dropped to the ground and stared at the vines which now seemed to form a wall around him. As he looked the "wall" took on a

pattern with tendrils here and there, the loosing of which seemed the key to untwining all the others. Roger studied the pattern, testing first one strand and then another; then, with infinite care, he began loosing the tendrils. As he worked, other tendrils freed themselves and fell away. Sometimes, however, he was too eager and pulled impatiently at the vines. Instantly they sprang back and became more closely enmeshed than ever. At long last he realized that only patient, unruffled effort would clear the way for him. Working thus, the vines appeared to untwine themselves, and to Roger's amazement, once an opening had been made, the trail stood revealed just beyond.

Stretched out by the side of the trail he asked himself if this were the same day that he had left home with the first faint glimmer of dawn? He could not say. True, the sun was not so high in the heavens as when he lost his way, but did that prove anything? The wall of vines had seemed impenetrable, yet it had parted as if by magic when he had learned its secret. And the trail — so hopelessly lost a short time ago, was right before him. Its course was easy to follow, and pleasant, too, for the mountain air was clear and invigorating, and fragrant with flowering shrubs. Yes, anything could happen, and it might be today, yesterday, or tomorrow — possibly all three rolled into one.

Higher and higher the trail wound its way, and the exuberance Roger felt on refinding it was beginning to wane. His muscles ached, and a sudden thunder-shower, catching him without protection, left him drenched to the skin. The trail was narrower, now, and not so clearly marked — or was it? Roger, pausing to rest, suspected that his eyes were playing tricks on him. One moment the trail was there, and his spirits rose accordingly; the next, its outlines faded and a black gloom settled upon him.

"Strange!" he thought. "What illusion plagues me now? Do I joy in the quest for the path because it is pleasant to follow, and therefore scorn it when the way seems rough? Small chance that I shall reach the goal if I blow hot and cold that way!" And forthwith he started on again, and cared not whether in rain or shine.

On, on, up and up he went. Clouds gathered and swirled around him; fingers of mist, damp and clammy, waved in and out of his sight, beckoning, pulling, enticing. He lost the trail again, and checked himself only in time to avoid slipping over a precipice. Nothing was real, nothing substantial: even the rocks that cut his feet became a part of the phantasmagoria as they ceased to be solid ground, turning to mire that bogged him down till he could scarcely move. Roger thrashed this way and that in an effort to free himself, and sank still deeper. All he could see or feel was loathsome mud, and his heart was sick that he should have come so far to end thus. The idea that it might very probably be the end, turned his thoughts with a new vision to the purpose of his quest. In imagination he saw the path as he had pictured it that night which now seemed lifetimes distant. He glimpsed the goal, too, though what it signified was hidden from him. With an energy he had not supposed he possessed, Roger flung out his arms towards the vision of his dream and touched solid rock. He was certain it had not been there a moment before, but there was no mistaking it, and clutching with desperate strength wherever he could find a hold, he pulled himself up from the clinging mud, and climbed at last to freedom.

Exhausted, he lost consciousness. How long, he did not know, but when he woke there was the path before him, leading from the rock whereon he had slept and winding ever upward in a blaze of golden light.

Someone was on the path ahead of him, and Roger quickened his pace that he might join the traveler. The distance separating them appeared a trifling thing, yet try as he might Roger could not lessen it. He would have hailed the stranger, but something strong within him warned against it. Step after step he strode forward, striving as he went to understand what had happened, how it was that the stranger was here on the path, so near to him, and yet he had not discovered his presence before. What relation was that other to himself? for there was a relation, he was certain, and that must be why they were on the path together. Pondering the question, he lost all consciousness of himself as Roger, and for a fleeting moment seemed one with the stranger ahead

of him. It was then that the traveler turned.

Here was no stranger. Roger was looking into the eyes of the child he had befriended, only the child-body had become that of a youth.

He smiled at Roger. "That is the answer," he said. "You and I are one, have been, always, only you did not know me. But I have been with you even when the way seemed darkest. It was to understand this that you sought the path." He held out his hand. "Come, we will go the rest of the way together."

The golden light was all around them, pulsing as with the beating of unseen wings — overpowering in its effect; and even as he took a step forward, for a second time Roger slipped into unconsciousness. When he awoke the sun was shining full upon his face from the open window. He rubbed his eyes. Where was his companion? Was it only a dream, and had he not gone forth to find the Path?

Who should say? Roger, in his heart, knew that he had journeyed beyond the clouds.

The Theosophical Forum

WORLD BROTHERHOOD — IN SPITE OF OURSELVES — *Louis E. van Norman*

A realization that all men are brothers is the greatest need of the world today. No "ism" or ideology, no social, economic or political system, no plank in a political party platform, could be as important or significant for the human race as a whole, or for any nation in particular, as a practical carrying out of the aim of the Theosophical Society which aims to form "an active brotherhood among men."

Such a realization would dispel fear and fear is the enemy of all peace and all happiness. Teaching nations or national groups to resent, or fear, or hate other nations, or races or groups, or other types of culture, is the sure road to the destruction of all.

The inner consciousness of brotherhood is deeply imbedded in our human existence. It is in fact a life principle which we are powerless to resist. Civilizations rise and fall. Worlds die and are born again. But, with all of them, are reborn the belief in the perfectibility of man, of his divine essence, his brotherhood with all his kind, and the knowledge — as yet secret from some — that man is one and indivisible. It is this esoteric knowledge that has inspired all religion and all true art. It is this message that Theosophy teaches to modern man, who, apparently, in so many lands has forgotten his divine origin and his familyhood on earth.

Biologically, physiologically and spiritually we are brothers. Life is ever demonstrating this truth. Theosophy brings to us modern men evidence of belief in this truth from the most ancient times, from all religions. Science is coming to the same conclusion. Philosophy is wholeheartedly of the same mind. Religion has always taught it. It is a blessed relief for thoughtful, spiritually-minded people to witness the increasingly chastened mood of scientific men today and their willingness to admit the insufficiency of materialistic conceptions to account for the universe and man's place in it. As for the philosophers,

not only Shakespeare's Horatio, but ever more and more humble but honest thinkers are realizing that there are many more things in Heaven and Earth than they have ever dreamed of. The old tribal god has gone. The personal god in man's image will follow. Theosophy brings again to our memories the ancient truth that God is everywhere, in everything, *is* every thing, that we *are* God, and gods, and brothers.

What interests us in these days particularly is the fact that earnest people all over the world, of every race and culture are drawing together in the bond that always draws men and women together who are honestly seeking after truth, who understand their own common origin and destiny. In the words of Carlyle, there is after all but one race — humanity — and a mystic bond of brotherhood makes all men one.

It may seem a very bold statement, that, in spite of all the rivalries, hatreds, ambitions, misunderstandings and opposing "ideologies" now apparently dominating the human race, mankind is actually nearer to accepting — and practicing — the religion and rule of brotherhood than ever before in the race's long life on this planet. Yet it is the truth.

This realization — and practice — has come about, is coming about, through advances away from the law of the jungle and the reign of tooth and claw on the one hand, and, on the other, because of an ever more lofty conception of what we mean by God. It is a long story and the details are not important. But that progress is made is the most important thing in the history of the human family.

All human history has shown that there is no permanent remedy for evil in vengeance or violence. It has shown that, in acting on the assumption that we are saving our lives as nations when we do economic moral and spiritual wrongs, we are really denying the brotherhood of man. The unity of the family, now generally recognized, must be extended so as to include a recognition of the unity of all mankind in the essentials of life. If this recognition comes about only slowly, let us not be impatient. Recently, a Christian missionary, who had spent 25 years trying to convert the heathen, finally became

discouraged and decided to resign and return to the West. To his superior he complained: "There's no use going on. Think of the few converts I have made, compared with the thousands who will not see the light." To this the superior replied, "The trouble with you, my friend, is that you want to work quicker than God." We modern men have enough brain power, courage and vision to launch what we Americans call brotherhood on a business basis. What we lack is spiritual understanding — and patience.

You are impatient to say that this is contrary to human nature. Is it? You will point to the fact that, two thousand years after the birth of Jesus the Christ, known as the "Prince of Peace," and in spite of the wisdom and admonitions of all the other great saviors, saints, and sages, who have assured us that he who would save his life must lose it, and that all men are our brothers, we are again facing the ferocities of war, hatred, and destruction in more than one corner of the world.

There are signs that an understanding of world interdependence and solidarity is growing and deepening. The common interest that has already destroyed seclusion and isolation includes the vast reach of modern industrialism, the school, the advance of woman, the motor car, the airplane, the moving picture, the radio. All these have revolutionized our age-old notions of time and space. Today no nation can isolate itself from other nations, no matter how loud and strident may be its blatant nationalistic propaganda. Good will and the interchange of ideas, goods, and services are making narrow nationalism unprofitable. Even the most fanatical advocates of totalitarian autarchy are beginning to perceive that (as an English writer has put it) we simply must prepare, deliberately, sincerely and confidently for "a more majestic acknowledgment of common interests, material, social and spiritual."

The reiteration of the truth that man is, at the same time and of necessity, both a physical and a spiritual being and that he must fight the battle of life along both fronts, will gradually sink into our consciousness until it conditions our lives as individuals, and our acts

and policies as nations.

More and more it is being charged that orthodox religion has failed to keep up with the thoughts and spiritual yearnings of human beings, with the changing social order. Consequently, it has been said, religion has lost — or is losing — its influence on the masses, or that it has failed to take into account changing moral ideas and standards.

History has something to say on this point. In industrial nations in the old world, when the church has failed to maintain sympathetic contact with the working classes, to inculcate love rather than hate, the workers have finally deserted the church and many of them have lost faith in any conception of God.

A revival of religious and ethical spirit can have far-reaching and deeply-searching effects on national destinies. Although such revivals often work in rather obscure ways, and their influence is not always easy to trace, they sometimes provide an emotional outlet for forces and psychological impulses which, otherwise, might easily blow off in violent forms. Why did England have no bloody revolution in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, when the continent of Europe was convulsed with the play of rifles and bombs in what one historian has called the "ultima ratio regorum"? Another historian believes that the rise of the Methodist movement and the birth of the Salvation Army during these periods, both emphasizing brotherly love, may be the answer.

The salvaging power of religion and the spiritual instinct in national affairs was referred to in emphatic words by the late President Calvin Coolidge in the public statement of a truth no less profound because it has been enunciated so many times before. Outside the teaching of religion, he reminded us (no matter what form it may take), there is no answer to the problems of life. Our international and social relations cannot be determined by material facts and forces. Armaments, wages, profits, are not matters of mere quantity. They are at bottom problems of quality. Changing or fixing their amount will not — cannot — afford a final solution. The real problems of the world are not material but

spiritual. Love in its highest manifestations, love and a realization of the basic fact of human brotherhood — these are the only answer.

It is finding its lodgment in human hearts, this truth. Increasing numbers of young people, boys and girls alike, are going direct from their studies into social work of some kind, into activities that have to do with public health and the relief of poverty and labor, as well as into work of education and aiding the ill and aged. This impulse must be rooted in an ethical interest. The youth of our day seems to be growing more and more conscious of the worth of the vision and conception implied in the question posed by a novelist in a book widely read and recently put on the moving-picture screen. "Have you any credit at the bank with God? When you pray for something your heart desires, has your deposit at God's bank been exhausted or overdrawn?"

But it is not only the young laity who are awakening. The clergy is also being aroused. In spite of every temptation to express the prejudices and instincts of well-to-do congregations, increasing numbers of young ministers, priests and rabbis are becoming the fearless and sometimes the lonely champions of the poor and down-trodden, whom they recognize as their brothers in fact and deed. In his book, *Great Men of the Bible*, Dr. Walter Russell Bowie says of many of the congregations of fashionable American churches today:

There are young men in college, or just out of it, who cannot rest in the complacent ideas of their families or their social groups, but who wrestle in mind and spirit with the insistent question of how to take their place in the world's every day affairs and still be just and fair and generous and brotherly.

There are women in settlements and organizations like the Consumer's League who have daily contact with the problems of the poor and who have transferred their

passionate loyalties from the class into whose exemptions they were born to the class with which, vicariously, they have become identified.

Then there are the almost innumerable societies, groups, and organizations of many kinds which have for their aim the cultivation of good will and understanding among men without regard to race, nationality, or position in life. It is a long and ever lengthening list. The entire world is becoming conscious of its economic, social, and spiritual interdependence and solidarity. The causes of many of our economic — even financial — crises are moral and intellectual. Even in this machine age man is often moved by intangible forces and impulses. Beyond the material techniques of the engineer there has been this growing consciousness of human solidarity, and this consciousness, this realization, this understanding of brotherhood, of the essential divinity of man, has come to be the inspiration of the artist and the poet. Beyond the material face of things the mystical soul has ever sought God. Love, in the words of a Japanese sage, Toyohiko Kagawa, "is the fuel of the universe." It behooves man to see that the engine of the world is not stalled for lack of fuel.

We are prone to be critical of those who are different from ourselves. This attitude is born of complacent self-satisfaction, contempt, and indifference. But the great mass of the people are good-natured folk who find no difficulty in showing good will.

The spread of the idea of brotherhood is due to our deepening understanding of our identity as "pilgrims of eternity" on this planet called earth. Although he was not a Theosophist consciously, the old Roman poet, Terence, was really one. You remember his dictum: "Homo sum. Humani nihil a me alienum puto." — "I am a man and nothing human can I regard as alien (foreign) to me."

In conclusion, a word for those who, consciously or not, are Theosophists, believers in the honest brotherhood of all men, there are the ringing phrases of the English poet, Sir Edwin Arnold. He understood the ancient wisdom of the East, and, you will remember, made a beautiful translation of that splendid Indian poem and scripture, the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In his other poem *Armageddon, the War Song of the Future*, he flung abroad this challenge:

We are they who will not take,
From palace, priest or code,
A meaner law than brotherhood,
A lower Lord than God.

The Theosophical Forum

THE EARTH, A LIVING BEING — A. James

The more we study the mineral, plant, animal and human life of our home the earth, the more apparent it becomes that all life is linked together in a vast hierarchy so interwoven as to resemble a living organism.

Moreover, recent scientific studies of the upper atmosphere, the depths of the ocean, and the magnetic currents of the earth, approach every year closer to the Theosophic understanding of the mutual relationship existing between the world and its surrounding layers upon layers of atmosphere. Truths hinted at in *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888 are now becoming subjects of scientific investigation. Even the interior of the earth is beginning to yield up its secrets.

In the fifth century of our era, the Alexandrian philosopher Proclus taught that:

Gold and silver, and each of the other metals, as likewise other things, grow in the earth, from the celestial Gods, and from an effluxion thence derived.

According to his philosophy, each of the planets was the outer expression and home of a divine being, and when it is said that gold pertained to the Sun, silver to the Moon, copper to Venus, or iron to Mars, each of these metals was understood as being derived or concreted from one or other of the divine essences. Moreover, it was thought that every planet, like the solar system itself, was surrounded by these same divine essences, each partaking of the nature and characteristics of the planet itself. Thus gold was thought to be of an earthy nature on Earth, of a solar nature on the Sun or of a martian nature on Mars. These subtle essences symbolized by the planets were the spiritual cause or source of all things, or as Proclus expressed it, "The metals which are here, derive their concretion from the effluxions of the celestial Gods." Growing within the Earth they are "extended to a

partial nature, *apostatizing from the whole.*"

It is now believed by many geologists that the emission of different types of lavas from the same volcano is due to what is called "magmatic differentiation." According to this theory homogeneous magmas of molten rock deep within the earth split up into different kinds of lava because of conditions which are as yet unknown.

Most primary deposits also issue forth from the earth's interior in a gaseous condition during volcanic or igneous activity, or else rise from the depths dissolved in the magmatic waters. Examples of such deposits are the copper and zinc veins of Butte, Montana, and the gold-bearing veins found at Tonapa, Nevada.

It is difficult for the average person to realize the extent to which air and water are continually renewed by additions from deep within the earth itself. A number of years ago a careful study was made of a single minor vent on Mount Etna for a period of 100 days. At the end of that time it was found that 460,000,000 gallons of water had issued forth in the form of steam. Due to the great amount of water continually added to the air by volcanos and hot-springs, Suess went so far as to state that "the body of the earth has given forth its ocean."

In Alaska, in the Valley of "Ten Thousand Smokes," literally hundreds of thousands of tons of chemicals are emitted by the numerous vents, mostly in the form of steam and gas. These include such substances as hydrochloric and hydrofluoric acids, hydrogen sulphide and many others.

Further light is thrown on the emanation of substances from within the earth by Dr. de Purucker where, in speaking of the "singular points" postulated by Dr. Jeans, he says:

Every globe that you see in space has as its center, its heart, just such a "singular point," to adopt the language of Jeans, the English astronomical physicist; and through this center of each such globe come into that globe the streams of entities, the river of living things, by which that globe is inhabited, all of them on

their evolutionary pathway. They then enter into the atmosphere of any such globe, such as our earth, and find, if they be human entities, their habitats in the bodies of little children; and similarly so is it the case with the beasts and the vegetables, as well as the atomic entities of the mineral kingdom.

— *Questions We All Ask*

Here is food for thought. But if as Suess suggested the body of the earth has given forth its oceans from within itself, what about the mineral content of marine waters?

We know that desert streams and lakes in evaporating leave a deposit of alkali; and that where salt lakes are found they have resulted from the slow evaporation of trapped or uplifted arms of the sea. The same is true of the large underground salt deposits found in many places.

The question arises, can it be that, contrary to all established opinion, the waters of the oceans have always been much as they are today? When Dr. de Purucker was asked this question he replied in the affirmative and added "It is the vast body of mineralized water which the oceans are, which gives the gravitational pull of the moon its chance to produce tidal action." Then as an afterthought he continued: "I believe there are small tides on the big fresh-water lakes, but very small."

It is an important teaching of the Ancient Wisdom that the Earth is indeed a living being, and that the life of all kinds in all kingdoms forms a universal brotherhood, in which every part affects and is affected by every other part.

There is a myth found in both East and West, of a beautiful virgin goddess who became the earth. From her bones were formed the rocky framework. Her hair became the vegetation, her eyes the lakes, her teeth the gems and crystals and her breath the wind. Each portion became a part of the world, not a globe of dead matter but a living being.

LITERARY NOTES: TRAGEDY — *Isabel B. Clemeshaw*

The philosopher finds that life is the greatest of all mysteries, and the mind of man is the most overwhelming fact in life. By his higher intellectual processes the philosopher endeavors to reason in a world of ideas beyond the fetters of the passions and desires. Then an abstract principle of conduct becomes clear. To that world of ideas he must discipline his will and brain, and condition his everyday life so as to compel the realization of these floating ideas.

The poet *sees* the mystery of life pictured in the invisible side of nature. He has a vision, as Jacob saw the Ladder of Life up which living beings were ascending and descending. Dante and Milton saw the planes of the inner worlds through which the soul of man ascends in its cycle of incarnations. Dante was impressed with the journey along the circulations of the cosmos of the spiritual ray in man in its after-death experiences, symbolic of the Path of Initiation; Milton, with the descent of the divine spark clothed in garments of Hell, and the problem of its return toward regaining its divinity.

The tragedian finds himself confronted with a different problem. He intuitively portrays on the stage not what John Jones seems like to himself or to Bill Smith, but how the lower part of the human soul of John Jones performs as seen by the spiritualized portion of it, the reincarnating ego: that sum total of what he has learned in former lives on earth. What appears *in action* is man as "but a walking shadow . . . that struts and frets upon the stage . . . a tale told by an idiot." But what the spectator understands in reality from the entire play is that "Man [is] the author of his own proper woe," and that there is no assignment of justice either in degree or in kind.

Greek tragedy pressed the point of justice and retribution. Fate, biding her time, administered a Spartan thwack, more as though she had arranged the catastrophe for the hero. Medieval "tragedy" was a

narrative urging that man should live in fear; he was the plaything of circumstances, and helpless before some outside influence which struck suddenly, perhaps in the loss of some possession.

Shakespearean tragedy shows both an inner ('spiritual') and an outer struggle:

... things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them,
To suffer all alike.

In the earlier plays more of the outer struggle appeared, and in the later ones the hero's conflict was almost entirely with himself.

Therefore these later plays have little *tragic* interest: the initiation was taken. In the four great tragedies — *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth* — a more or less balanced dual conflict rages. Though

The web of our life is of mingled yarn, good and ill together,

we must not compromise between the two. To know what is regarded as a spiritual force, we have only to examine the great tragedian's view of its opposite. Evil is shown as pride, credulousness, irresolution, excessive susceptibility to the opposite sex, whatever is negative, barren, or destructive. If any of these is the principle that animates him, or if he identifies himself with others who embody these weaknesses, he will be led to disunity, isolation, madness — death.

The hero was always an eminent figure in society: a king, a prince, a great general or official of State; and was at the height of his renown when the thought occurred to him which he translated into an act, thus resulting in a chain of acts and reactions — or omissions — which caused his death.

He was usually an averagely good man. The short time into which the events of the play are crowded intensifies the life of the hero and magnifies him so that it is his grandeur that impresses us. When one so responsible and trusted suffers agony, frustration and death, it has a paralyzing effect upon his entire world: he pulls that world down with

him.

A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch
Past speaking of in a king.

Yet, the spectator is not depressed, for he has seen more than one link (one earth life) in the chain of circumstances, and is more than ever convinced of human worth. The cross-section of evolution shown on the stage where ". . . from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe . . . And thereby hangs a tale," involves him anew in the contemplation of life itself. Here, he has seen telescoped, from the past, considerable maturity of intellectual and emotional experience. This gains momentum as the play so rapidly proceeds, and unfolds an infinite complexity of interrelated cause and effect in which the hero is enmeshed. The spectator has focused his attention not only on the genius before him, but on the mystery of the *tale* of life.

It is this mystery, that is untold and so forcefully brought home to the audience, that makes the tragedy so impressive. In character the hero is like ourselves; his conflicts are ours. We sympathize even when we know that while he identifies his passion or habit of mind with his whole being, a smaller man than he could have overcome it. Why can the hero not yield? we ask, while we can see that the tragic error lies in the very nobility of mind and soul that is interwoven with human weakness. The hero is rarely conscious that he is in the wrong. The mystery is laden with sadness at the spectacle of the great waste. "Another incarnation wasted," a theosophist would say, "unless he has assimilated his lesson and built it into the fabric of his soul," as Hamlet is shown to have done:

I shall the *effect* of this good lesson keep
As watchman to my heart.

It is the effect of each experience taken to heart, rather than the accumulation of experiences that makes for growth. ". . . life is a shuttle," the poet assures us:

When we are born, we cry, that we are come

To this great stage of fools.

Each time the hero, man, shuttles back into birth, he brings the storehouse of his experiences with him.

What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason and infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel!

It is the fact that we are shown the godlike qualities of man that increases the mystery enshrined within him; this and the *tale* of the shuttling on and off the stage of life, "where every man must play his part" according to what he has woven into his nature. But there is yet another mystery: the consistent denial of the idea that truth and virtue shall at last succeed. The man who does not understand himself may *mean* well, but his reward usually will be the opposite of what he intended when the first thought is translated into the acts that snare him. He may be as well-meaning as Brutus, yet with others

. . . be winnow'd with so rough a wind
That even our corn shall seem as light as chaff.
And good from bad find no partition.

He will exclaim: "How my achievements mock me!" Yet feel that

Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

It is in the restoration of this harmony that the mystery seems hidden. "There is no darkness but ignorance" while man is unaware that he is a part of a greater organism. Let the individual attack the Whole, or fail to conform to its moral order, and he will find that "the wheel has turned full circle" upon himself. The Whole, or Nature, is shown as an intelligence bent upon perfection and "There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow." Until man works unselfishly for the common good, living a spiritual and intellectual, rather than an emotional life, he does not begin to pay off against that outstanding account of evil

which he has banked against himself. He feels like one

. . . imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence roundabout
The pendant world.

This Higher Order, *karman*, has the last word. It is a just and compassionate cosmic law that teaches the individual while it heals the wounds made by him on his environment. In each life man is haunted by fear; he cries, "Out, out, brief candle!" in his desire to end it and begin anew. When he turns and works with Nature, he knows that

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will —

The Theosophical Forum

PSYCHISM — *Claire Wesner*

There is often a fine line of demarcation between theory and practice which, if not checked, can become a wide chasm of misunderstanding. It is well therefore to return occasionally to fundamental principles to determine the basis of mutual agreement. As the years roll by since the founding of the T. S. in 1875, the circumstances surrounding that event fade into history. Thus are formed the various lines of theory concerning not only the policies of the T. S., but even the expression of the theosophical teachings themselves. Some bits of interesting correspondence in recent months on the subject of psychism show the need of a sympathetic co-ordination of thought along this line. We are reminded in this connection of a statement familiar to many of us, "You are all correct from your own viewpoint, *but*." In other words, to synchronize individual opinion we must of necessity approach the matter from a broad and basic viewpoint so that "opinion" is replaced with knowledge.

Any sincere student of theosophy accepts its teachings as a source of knowledge; our individual interpretation of these teachings may often be opinion. So to find that basis of knowledge in this particular instance concerning the teachings and practice of psychism, let us examine the original purpose of Mme. Blavatsky in presenting them to the world. Creeds, laws, and dogmas are not laid out for us to follow. The way is shown, both right and wrong, and it is up to us to choose the path we take.

For direction one can of course quote H. P. Blavatsky and other theosophical leaders on the subject of psychism, but such quotations are seldom convincing and in fact can often prove contradictory. The old saying that anything can be proved by the Bible may just as well be said of H. P. B. We can also examine the objects of the T. S., but here again we can lose our perspective in trying to determine exact and literal definitions instead of penetrating a bit deeper to the *purpose* of

those objects. As has been pointed out before (see Theosophical Forum, Oct., 1947, *Our Directives*), the wording of Object No. III, which concerns the investigation of the powers in man, has been changed two or three times.

The original wording of this Object as given in 1882 was, "To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature and the Psychical powers latent in man." In 1886 this was changed to read thus: ". . . to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers of man." In 1888 we have an addition to Object No. III which reads, "The Fellows interested in this third Object now form a distinct private division of the Society under the direction of the Corresponding Secretary." This addition however, was cancelled in 1890. After other changes made during the passing years, the present and last reading of this Object (now No. V, Covina T. S.), was made in 1929 by G. de Purucker and reads, "To investigate the powers innate in man." (Theosophical Forum, Oct., 1929)

The consciousness and environment of the world has changed completely since 1875 and if the T. S. is to give any assistance or guidance to this changing world, its objects must be fluidic enough to meet this change; otherwise we shall become a dogmatic sect built on creed and phraseology. There was a definite need in 1882 which called forth the wording of Object III of the T. S. to "investigate the *psychical* powers in man." Note the wording of this Object today, "To investigate the powers *innate* in man" — a much wider compass of investigation, without destroying the original.

When the original objects of the T. S. were formulated, interest in spiritualism and psychic phenomena had reached a period of unwholesome intensity. Ignorant of the dangers or causes of such practices, seekers of a more spiritual way of life believed they had found the keys to unlock the shackles of scientific materialism and religious dogma. Here was proof (as erroneously assumed) of life after death, proof of unknown powers in man. Science of course could see no further than its laboratory test-tubes and denounced all psychic

phenomena as impossible and absurd. The church doctrines of salvation, sin, and a personal god could no longer co-ordinate blind faith with scientific reasoning. So the field for spiritualism was laid wide open.

Anyone familiar with the life of H. P. B. knows what stupendous efforts she made to "prove" to the materialistic Nineteenth Century the existence and powers of psychic phenomena. It was this very thing which brought so much derision upon her shoulders. Yet, when she also tried to show the dangers and illusions of psychism, H. P. B. was scorned by the professional mediums and spiritualists. The task was gigantic, the need heart-rending. So in addition to the broad field of theosophical teachings, particular emphasis was given by H. P. B. to the investigation of the psychical powers in man.

Today, the premise of psychic investigation is established and it is gradually being placed upon a firm basis of scientific study. The forward-looking writers and thinkers of the present day are coordinating the fields of science, religion, and philosophy. Psychic and occult phenomena are more or less accepted as fact. The need today is to *explain* such phenomena and to give them their rightful place in the scheme of life. Emphasis now must be placed on the *complete* man, man as a physical, mental, and spiritual, as well as psychical, being and his relation to life of this world and the universe of which he is a part.

A survey of the field of occultism shows us that during the past fifty years an increasing number of organizations and cults have sprung directly or indirectly, from the T. S. Many such groups stress only certain aspects of the original theosophical teachings, particularly those of psychism and the latent powers of man. So we shall always have those among us who seek sensationalism. Others of course are searching for the basic truths of the ancient wisdom. If the T. S. is to remain the fountain-head of occult and spiritual knowledge, then we have a certain moral obligation to such groups insofar as it will be accepted. Guidance and not criticism is needed to change the focus of attention from the astral, psychical, and phenomenal to the broader

concepts of our innate human and spiritual faculties.

The various psychical research groups and societies are making sincere and commendable investigations into the field of psychic phenomena. The general attitude is one of scientific research in an endeavor to "prove" the existence of intelligent life beyond the reach of our physical senses. This attitude is in contra-distinction to the hostility expressed by the S. P. R. of Blavatsky's time. However, such groups do not consider the dangers involved in such investigations nor their accompanying moral responsibilities. Guidance is needed. So a consideration of the "*innate* powers in man" is an essential object of the T. S. today, if we are to retain those principles for which the Society was originally founded.

We can safely say that the greatest advance made in the study of the complex human being, outside of theosophical or occult circles, has been in the field of psychology. Scientific recognition of psychic faculties is admitted when psychologists make a distinction between psychism, which they term Psi, and other fields of psychological experiment. Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University is perhaps the leading figure in establishing "proof of man's extra-sensory perceptions and even of deeper innate capacities. His experiments and writings are now accepted in many scientific circles and have done much in removing the sensationalism from psychic phenomena. Many leading religious counselors combine the use of psychology with spiritual guidance to give practical as well as spiritual aid. Medical treatment is concerned today with the psychological and mental ailments in diagnosis. Perhaps we do not always agree with such analysis but modern psychologists have touched an important aspect of our human complexity. They have not yet plumbed the depths of real human development but they have reached beyond the astral and psychic to the more human elements. It can be said with some reservations that modern psychology has assumed the burden of investigating the "psychical powers in man." In keeping with such trends, the emphasis of the T. S. needs to be on the broader level of investigating the more *spiritual* "powers innate in man." We wonder if this trend is the

prelude to the coming religious era which we are told will be with us towards the last quarter of this century?

The human race is in a short cycle of astral development which is manifested in our modern inventions such as aircraft, radar, television, etc., as well as in our human sensitiveness to psychic phenomena. This is a natural condition and should be accepted as such without undue emphasis. Perhaps the great danger is one of morals and ethics as it is obvious that humanity has displayed its lack of moral control over affairs of the physical plane. Why then should we try to force the development of our psychic faculties which we do not know how to control and which we do not understand? It reminds one of the trite analogy of giving a child chemical explosives to play with. Let us give greater attention to those human faculties which are so neglected, control of our thoughts and emotions, and the development of our real sixth sense — intuition.

The abuse of anything soon brings deterioration and destruction and that is what is being done to the latent psychic faculties which are awakening within us. They are used too often for sensationalism, personal gain, and a misplaced sense of spiritual development. There is a difference between magical tricks and real psychic faculties, yet we are often deluded by them. Motive is the keynote to follow. If our interest is for unselfish purposes and for the good of human development, a great step forward has been made. In this respect modern psychology is outstanding, but a firm basis still needs to be established.

The position of the T. S. in this modern world of expanding psychic research and practice, is still based on those broad precepts set forth by H. P. B. It is not sufficient to admit the existence of psychism; it needs to be explained and given its rightful place in the scheme of human evolution. The dangers of psychic practice in its various forms, without the guidance of a true teacher, need to be stressed. Attention must be drawn to the development of the higher human and spiritual faculties of man. These objects can only be attained by extending a helping

hand, not through criticism. A responsibility and a charge have been placed upon the shoulders of every F. T. S. How much we assume that responsibility depends upon our knowing the fundamental teachings of the ancient wisdom so that we may pass them on to others as we have received them.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ADEPTS AND WESTERN SCIENCE: I — H. P. Blavatsky

Reply to an English F. T. S. — Mr. F. W. Myers of the Psychological Research Society and member of the London Lodge, T. S., whose questions were answered by Master M. through H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist*.

It was not in contemplation, at the outset of the work begun in *Fragments*, to deal as fully with the scientific problems of cosmic evolution, as now seems expected. A distinct promise was made, as Mr. Sinnett is well aware, to acquaint the readers of this Journal with the outlines of Esoteric doctrines and — no more. A good deal would be given, much more kept back, especially from the columns of a magazine which reaches a promiscuous public.

This seeming unwillingness to share with the world some of nature's secrets that may have come into the possession of the few, arises from causes quite different from the one generally assigned. It is not *Selfishness* erecting a Chinese wall between occult science and those who would know more of it, without making any distinction between the simply curious profane, and the earnest, ardent seeker after truth. Wrong, and unjust are those who think so; who attribute to indifference for other people's welfare a policy necessitated, on the contrary, by a far-seeing universal philanthropy; who accuse the custodians of lofty physical and spiritual though long rejected truths, of holding them high above the people's heads. In truth, the inability to reach them lies entirely with the seekers. Indeed, the chief reason among many others for such a reticence, at any rate, with regard to secrets pertaining to physical sciences — is to be sought elsewhere. (1) It rests entirely on the *impossibility* of imparting that the nature of which is, at the present stage of the world's development, beyond the comprehension of the would-be learners, however intellectual and however scientifically trained may be the latter. This tremendous difficulty is now explained to the few, who, besides having read

Esoteric Buddhism, have studied and *understood* the several occult axioms approached in it. It is safe to say that it will not be even vaguely realized by the general reader, but will offer the pretext for sheer abuse. Nay, it has already.

It is simply that the gradual development of man's seven principles and physical senses *has* to be coincident and on parallel lines with Rounds and Root-races. Our *fifth* race has so far developed but its *five* senses. Now, if the *Kama* or *Will-principle* of the "Fourth-rounders" has already reached that stage of its evolution when the automatic acts, the unmotivated instincts and impulses of its childhood and youth, instead of following external stimuli, will have become acts of will framed constantly in conjunction with the mind (Manas), thus making of every man on earth of that race *a free agent*, a *fully* responsible being — the *Kama* of our hardly adult *fifth* race is only slowly approaching it. As to the 6th sense of this, our race, it has hardly sprouted above the soil of its materiality. It is highly unreasonable, therefore, to expect for the men of the 5th to sense the nature and essence of that which will be fully *sensed* and perceived but by the 6th — let alone the 7th race — *i.e.*, to enjoy the legitimate outgrowth of the evolution and endowments of the future races with only the help of our present limited senses. The exceptions to this quasi universal rule have been hitherto found only in some rare cases of constitutional, abnormally precocious individual evolutions; or, in such, where by early training and special methods, reaching the stage of the 5th rounders, some men in addition to the natural gift of the latter have fully developed (by certain occult methods) their sixth, and in still rarer cases their seventh, sense. As an instance of the former class may be cited the Seeress of Prevorst; a creature born *out of time*, a rare precocious growth, ill adapted to the uncongenial atmosphere that surrounded her, hence a martyr ever ailing and sickly. As an example of the other, the Count St. Germain may be mentioned. Apace with the anthropological and physiological development of man runs his spiritual evolution. To the latter, purely intellectual growth is often more an impediment than a help. An instance: Radiant stuff — "the fourth state of matter" — has been

hardly discovered, and no one — the eminent discoverer himself not excepted — has yet any idea of its full importance, its possibilities, its connection with physical phenomena, or even its bearing upon the most puzzling scientific problems. How then can any "Adept" attempt to prove the fallacy of much that is predicated in the nebular and solar theories when the only means by which he could successfully prove his position is an appeal to, and the exhibition of, that sixth sense consciousness which the physicist cannot postulate? Is not this plain?

Thus, the obstacle is not that the "Adepts" would "forbid inquiry," but rather the personal, present limitations of the senses of the average, and even of the scientific man. To undertake the explanation of that which at the outset would be rejected as a physical possibility, the outcome of hallucination, is unwise and even harmful, because premature. It is in consequence of such difficulties that the psychic production of physical phenomena — save in exceptional cases — is strictly forbidden.

And now, "Adepts" are asked to meddle with astronomy — a science which, of all the branches of human knowledge, has yielded the most accurate information, afforded the most mathematically correct data, and of the achievements in which the men of science feel the most justly proud! It is true that on the whole astronomy has achieved triumphs more brilliant than those of most other sciences. But if it has done much in the direction of satisfying man's straining and thirsting mind and his noble aspirations for knowledge, physical as to its most important particulars, it has ever laughed at man's puny efforts to wrest the great secrets of Infinitude by the help of only mechanical apparatus. While the spectroscope has shown the probable similarity of terrestrial and sidereal substance, the chemical actions peculiar to the variously progressed orbs of space have not been detected, nor proven to be identical with those observed on our own planet. In this particular, Esoteric Psychology may be useful. But who of the men of science would consent to confront it with their own handiwork? Who of them would recognize the superiority and greater trustworthiness of the Adept's knowledge over their own hypotheses, since in their case

they can claim the mathematical correctness of their deductive reasonings based on the alleged unerring precision of the modern instruments; while the Adepts can claim but their knowledge of the ultimate nature of the materials they have worked with for ages, resulting in the phenomena produced. However much it may be urged that a deductive argument, besides being an incomplete syllogistic form, may often be in conflict with fact; that their major propositions may not always be correct, although the predicates of their conclusions seem correctly drawn — spectrum analysis will not be acknowledged as inferior to purely spiritual research. Nor, before developing his sixth sense, will the man of science concede the error of his theories as to the Solar Spectrum, unless he abjure, to some degree at least, his marked weakness for conditional and disjunctive syllogisms ending in eternal dilemmas. At present, the "Adepts" do not see any help for it. Were these invisible and unknown profanes to interfere with — not to say openly contradict — the *dicta* of the Royal Society, contempt and ridicule, followed by charges of crass ignorance of the first elementary principles of modern science would be their only reward; while those who would lend an ear to their "vagaries," would be characterized immediately as types of the "mild lunatics" of the age. Unless, indeed, the whole of that august body should be initiated into the great Mysteries at once, and without any further ado or the preliminary and usual preparations or training, the F. R. S.'s could be *miraculously* endowed with the required sixth sense, the Adepts fear the task would be profitless. The latter have given quite enough, little though it may seem, for the purposes of a first trial. The sequence of martyrs to the great universal truths has never been once broken; and the long list of known and unknown sufferers headed with the name of Galileo, now closes with that of Zollner. Is the world of science aware of the real cause of Zollner's premature death? When the fourth dimension of space becomes a scientific reality like the fourth state of matter, he may have a statue raised to him by grateful posterity. But this will neither recall him to life, nor will it obliterate the days and months of mental agony that harassed the soul of this intuitional, farseeing, modest genius, made even after his death to receive the donkey's kick of

misrepresentation and to be publicly charged with lunacy.

Hitherto, Astronomy could grope between light and darkness only with the help of the uncertain guidance offered it by analogy. It has reduced to fact and mathematical precision the physical motion and the paths of the heavenly bodies, and — no more. So far, it has been unable to discover with any approach to certainty the physical constitution of either Sun, stars, or even cometary matter. Of the latter, it seems to know no more than was taught 5,000 years ago by the official astronomers of old Chaldea and Egypt; namely, that it is vaporous, since it transmits the rays of stars and planets without any sensible obstruction. But let the modern chemist be asked to tell one whether this matter is in any way connected with, or akin to, that of any of the external gases he's acquainted with; or again, to any of the solid elements of his chemistry. The probable answer received will be very little calculated to solve the world's perplexity; since, all hypotheses to the contrary, cometary matter does not appear to possess even the common law of adhesion or of chemical affinity. The reason for it is very simple. And the truth ought long ago to have dawned upon the experimentalists, since our little world (though so repeatedly visited by the hairy and bearded travellers, enveloped in the evanescent veil of their tails, and otherwise brought in contact with that matter) has neither been smothered by an addition of nitrogen gas, nor deluged by an excess of hydrogen, nor yet perceptibly affected by a surplus of oxygen. The essence of cometary matter must be — and the "Adepts" say is — *totally different from any of the chemical or physical characteristics with which the greatest chemists and physicists of the Earth are familiar* — all recent hypotheses to the contrary notwithstanding. It is to be feared that before the real nature of the elder progeny of *Mula Prakriti* is detected, Mr. Crookes will have to discover matter of the *fifth* or *extra* radiant state — *et seq.*

Thus, while the astronomer has achieved marvels in the elucidation of the visible relations of the orbs of space, he has learnt nothing of their inner constitution. His science has led him no farther towards a reading of that inner mystery, than has that of the geologist, who can

tell us only of the Earth's superficial layers, and that of the physiologist who has until now been able to deal only with man's outer shell, or *Sthula Sarira*. Occultists have asserted and go on asserting daily the fallacy of judging the essence by its outward manifestations, the ultimate nature of the life-principle by the circulation of the blood, mind by the gray matter of the brain, and the physical constitution of Sun, stars and comets by our terrestrial chemistry and the matter of our own planet. Verily, and indeed, no microscopes, spectroscopes, telescopes, photometers or other physical apparatuses can ever be focussed on either the *macro* or *micro*-cosmical highest principles, nor will the *mayavirupa* of either yield its mystery to physical inquiry. The methods of spiritual research and psychological observation are the only efficient agencies to employ. We have to proceed by analogy in every thing, to be sure. Yet the candid men of science must very soon find out that it is not sufficient to examine a few stars — a handful of sand, as it were, from the margin of the shoreless, cosmic ocean — to conclude that these stars are the same as all other stars — our earth included; that, because they have attained a certain very great telescopic power, and gauged an area enclosed in the smallest of spaces when compared with what remains, they have, therefore, concurrently perfected the survey of all that exists within even that limited space. For, in truth, they have done nothing of the kind. They have had only a superficial glance at that which is made visible to them under the present conditions, with *the limited power of their vision*. And even though it were helped by telescopes of a hundred-fold stronger power than that of Lord Rosse, or the new Lick Observatory, the case would not alter. No physical instrument will ever help astronomy to scan distances of the immensity of which that of Sirius, situated at the trifle of 130,125,000,000,000 miles away from the outer boundary of the spherical area, or, even that of (a) Capella with its extra trifle of 295,355,000,000,000 (2) miles still further away, can give them, as they themselves are well aware — the faintest idea. For, though an Adept is unable to cross bodily (*i.e.*, in his astral shape) the limits of the solar system, yet he *knows* that far stretching beyond the telescopic power of detection, there are systems upon systems, the smallest of which

would, when compared with the system of Sirius, make the latter seem like an atom of dust imbedded in the great Shamo desert. The eye of the astronomer, who thinks he also knows of the existence of such systems, has never rested upon them, has never caught of them even that spectral glimpse, fanciful and hazy as the incoherent vision in a slumbering mind — that he has occasionally had of other systems, and yet he verily believes he has gauged INFINITUDE! And yet these immeasurably distant worlds are brought as clear and near to the spiritual eye of the *astral* astronomer as a neighboring bed of daisies may be to the eye of the botanist.

Thus, the "Adepts" of the present generation, though unable to help the profane astronomer by explaining the ultimate essence, or even the material constitution of star and planet, since European science, knowing nothing as yet of the existence of such substances or more properly of their various states or conditions has neither proper terms for, nor can form any adequate idea of them by any description, they may, perchance, be able to prove what this matter *is not* — and this is more than sufficient for all present purposes. The next best thing to learning what is true is to ascertain what is *not* true.

Having thus anticipated a few general objections, and traced a limit to expectation, since there is no need of drawing any veil of mystery before "An English F. T. S.," his few questions may be partially answered. The negative character of the replies draws a sufficiently strong line of demarcation between the views of the Adepts and those of Western science, to afford some useful hints at least.

On August 22, 1883, Col. Henry S. Olcott joined H. P. B. at Ootacamund, the hill-station of Madras, where she was staying then at the residence of Major-General Morgan. In *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. II, p. 466, Col. Olcott writes:

"Part of her work was the taking from dictation from her invisible teacher of the "Replies to an English F. T. S.," which contained among other things the now oft-quoted prophecy of

the direful things and many cataclysms that would happen in the near future, when the cycle should close. That she was taking down from dictation was fully apparent to one who was familiar with her ways."

* * *

Writing to A. P. Sinnett on September 27, 1883, from Adyar, H. P. B. says:

"As M. says, "remains to be seen how Mr. F. V. Myers will receive their *Replies*" — Whether he will not be the first one (and if not he, then other members) to call them ignorant fools, illiterate *Asiatics* "with a small Oriental brain" as Wyld expressed it, wanting to make believe, I suppose, that his Jesus was an Anglo-Saxon Aryan. I say that these *Replies* to "An English F. T. S." are time lost; they will not accept the truth, and they occupy half of every number of the *Theosophist* that comes out, crowding off other matter. . . ." — *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 59.

* * *

On October 8, 1883, K. H. writes to Mr. Sinnett:

"I have nought to do with the *Replies* to Mr. Myers, but, you may recognise in them, perhaps, the brusque influence of M." — *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 396

* * *

From Ootacamund, H. P. B. wrote to A. P. Sinnett, on August 15, 1883, as follows:

"Well again — I wish your "London Lodge" new members should not write questions necessitating such ample answers. Why bless you only the *half* of the *Replies* fill up a whole form of the September *Theosophist*! and fancy the pleasure. It is *I* who had to copy most of the *Replies* written half by M., half by either

chelas or handwritings that I see for the first time, and as no printer the world over could make out M's handwriting. It is more red and fierce than ever! and then I do not like them a bit the replies. Where's the necessity of writing three pages for every line of the question and explaining things that after all none of them except yourself, perhaps, will understand. Science, science and science. Modern physical science be hanged! . . ." — *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 46

" who is Mr. Myers that my big Boss should waste a bucket full of his red ink to satisfy *him*? And He won't; see if he does. For Mr. Myers will *not* be satisfied with negative proofs and the evidence of the failings of European astronomers and physicists. But does he really think that any of the "adepts" will give out their real *esoteric* teachings in the *Theosophist*?" — *Ibid.*

Question I

Do the Adepts Deny the Nebular Theory?

No; they do not deny its general propositions, nor the approximative truths of the Scientific hypotheses. They only deny the completeness of the present, as well as the entire error of the many so-called "exploded" old theories, which, during the last century, have followed each other in such rapid succession. For instance: while denying with Laplace, Herschel and others, that the variable patches of light, perceived on the nebulous background of the galaxy ever belonged to remote worlds in the process of formation; and agreeing with modern science that they proceed from no aggregation of formless matter, but belong simply to clusters of "stars" already formed; they yet add that many of such clusters, that pass in the opinion of the astro-physicists for stars and worlds already evolved, are in fact but collections of the various materials made ready for future worlds. Like bricks already baked, of various qualities, shapes and colour, that are no longer formless clay but have become fit units of a future wall, each of them having a fixed and distinctly assigned space to occupy in some forthcoming building,

are these seemingly adult worlds. The astronomer has no means of recognizing their relative adolescence, except perhaps by making a distinction between the star-clusters with the usual orbital motion and mutual gravitation, and those termed, we believe, irregular star-clusters of very capricious and changeful appearances. Thrown together as though at random and seemingly in utter violation of the law of symmetry, they defy observation; such, for instance, are 5 M. Lyrae, 52 M. Cephei, Dumb-Bell, and some others. Before an emphatic contradiction of what precedes is attempted, and ridicule offered, perchance, it would not be amiss to ascertain the nature and character of those other, so-called "temporary" stars, whose periodicity though never actually proven, is yet allowed to pass unquestioned. What are these stars which, appearing suddenly in matchless magnificence and splendour, disappear as mysteriously as unexpectedly without leaving a single trace behind? Whence do they appear? Whither are they engulfed? In the great cosmic deep — we say. The bright "brick" is caught by the hand of the Mason — directed by that Universal Architect *which* destroys but to rebuild. It has found its place in the cosmic structure and will perform its mission to its last *Manvantaric* hour.

Another point most emphatically denied by the "Adepts" is, that there exist in the whole range of visible heavens any spaces void of starry worlds. There are stars, worlds and systems *within*, as *without* the systems made visible to man, and even *within our own atmosphere* for all the physicist knows. The "Adept" affirms in this connection that orthodox, or so-called official science, uses very often the word "infinitude" without attaching to it any adequate importance; rather as a flower of speech than a term implying an awful, a most mysterious Reality. When an astronomer is found in his Reports "gauging *infinitude*," even the most intuitional of his class is but too often apt to forget that he is gauging only the superficies of a small area and its visible depths, and to speak of these as though they were merely the cubic contents of some known quantity. This is the direct result of the present conception of a three-dimensional space. The turn of a four-dimensional world is near, but the puzzle of science will ever continue

until their concepts reach the natural dimensions of visible and invisible space — in its septenary completeness. "The Infinite and the Absolute are only the names for two counter imbecilities of the human (*uninitiated*) mind"; and to regard them as the transmuted "properties of the nature of things — of two subjective negatives converted into objective affirmatives," as Sir W. Hamilton puts it, is to know nothing of the infinite operations of human liberated spirit, or of its attributes, the first of which is its ability to pass *beyond* the region of our terrestrial experience of matter and space. As an absolute vacuum is an impossibility *below*, so is it a like impossibility — above. But our molecules, the infinitesimals of the vacuum "below," are replaced by the giant-atom of the Infinitude "above." When demonstrated, the four dimensional conception of space may lead to the invention of new instruments to explore the extremely dense matter that surrounds us as a ball of pitch might surround, say — a fly, but which, in our extreme ignorance of all its properties save those we find it exercising on our earth, we yet call the *clear*, the *serene*, and the *transparent* atmosphere. This is no psychology, but simply occult physics, which can never confound "substance" with "centres of Force," to use the terminology of a Western Science which is ignorant of *Maya*. In less than a century, besides telescopes, microscopes, micrographs and telephones, the Royal Society will have to offer a premium for such an *etherscope*.

It is also necessary in connection with the question under reply that "An English F. T. S." should know that the "Adepts" of the Good Law, reject gravity as at present explained. They deny that the so-called "impact theory" is the only one that is tenable in the gravitation hypothesis. They say that if all efforts made by the physicists to connect it with Ether, in order to explain electric and magnetic distance-action have hitherto proved complete failures, it is again due to the race ignorance of the ultimate states of matter in nature, foremost of all the real nature of the solar stuff. Believing but in the law of mutual magneto-electric attraction and repulsion, they agree with those who have come to the conclusion that "universal gravitation is a weak

force," utterly incapable of accounting for even one small portion of the phenomena of motion. In the same connection they are forced to suggest that Science may be wrong in her indiscriminate postulation of centrifugal force, which is neither a universal nor a consistent law. To cite but one instance; this force is powerless to account for the spheroidal oblateness of certain planets. For if the bulge of planetary equators and the shortening of their polar axes is to be attributed to centrifugal force, instead of being simply the result of the powerful influence of solar electro-magnetic attraction, "balanced by concentric rectification of each planet's own gravitation achieved by rotation on its axis," to use an astronomer's phraseology (neither very clear nor correct, yet serving our purpose to show the many flaws in the system) — why should there be such difficulty in answering the objection that the differences in the equatorial rotation and density of various planets are directly in opposition to this theory? How long shall we see even great mathematicians bolstering up fallacies to supply an evident hiatus! The "Adepts" have never claimed superior or *any* knowledge of Western astronomy and other sciences. Yet turning even to the most elementary text-books used in the schools of India, they find that the centrifugal theory of Western birth — is unable to cover *all* the ground. That, unaided, it *can* neither account for every spheroid oblate, nor explain away such evident difficulties as are presented by the relative density of some planets. How indeed can any calculation of centrifugal force explain to us, for instance, why Mercury, whose rotation is, we are told, only "about one-third that of the Earth, and its density only about one-fourth greater than the Earth," should have a polar compression *more than ten times greater than the latter*? And again, why Jupiter, whose equatorial rotation is said to be "twenty-seven times greater, and its density only about one fifth that of the Earth," has its polar compression seventeen times greater than the earth? Or, why Saturn, with an equatorial velocity fifty-five times greater than Mercury for centrifugal force to contend with, should have its polar compression *only three times* greater than Mercury? To crown the above contradictions, we are asked to believe in the Central Forces as taught by modern science, even when told that the equatorial matter of

the Sun, with more than four times the centrifugal velocity of the earth's equatorial surface, and only about one-fourth part of the gravitation of the earth's equatorial matter, has not manifested any tendency to bulge out at the solar equator, nor shown the least flattening at the poles of the solar axis. In other and clearer words, the Sun, with only one fourth of our earth's density for the centrifugal force to work upon, has no polar compression at all! We find this objection made by more than one astronomer, yet never explained away satisfactorily so far as the "Adepts" are aware.

Therefore, do they say that the great men of science of the West knowing nothing or next to nothing either about cometary matter, centrifugal and centripetal forces, the nature of the nebulae, or the physical constitution of the Sun, stars, or even the moon, are imprudent to speak so confidently as they do about the "central mass of the sun" whirling out into space planets, comets, and what not. Our humble opinion being wanted, we maintain: that it evolutes out but the *life* principle, the *soul* of these bodies, *giving and receiving it back* in our little solar system, as the "Universal Life-giver," the One Life gives and receives it in the Infinitude and Eternity; that the Solar System is as much the *Microcosm* of the One *Macrocosm*, as man is the former when compared with his own little solar cosmos.

What are the proofs of science? The solar spots (a misnomer like much of the rest)? But these do not prove the solidity of the "central mass," any more than the storm-clouds prove the solid mass of the atmosphere behind them. Is it the non-co-extensiveness of the sun's body with its apparent luminous dimensions, the said "body" *appearing* "a solid mass, a dark sphere of matter confined within a *fiery* prison-house, a robe of fiercest flames?" We say that there is indeed a "prisoner" behind, but that having never yet been seen by any *physical*, mortal eye, what he allows to be seen of him is merely a gigantic *reflection*, an illusive phantasma of "solar appendages of *some* sort," as Mr. Proctor honestly calls it. Before saying anything further, we will consider the next interrogatory: — *Is the sun merely a cooling mass?*

FOOTNOTES:

1. Needless to remind our correspondent that what is said here, applies only to secrets the nature of which when revealed will not be turned into a weapon against humanity in general, or its units — men. Secrets of such class could not be given to any one but a regular chela of many years' standing and during his successive initiations; mankind as a whole has first to come of age, to reach its majority, which will happen but toward the beginning of its sixth race — before such mysteries can be safely revealed to it. The *vril* is not altogether a fiction, as some chelas and even "lay" chelas know. ([return to text](#))

2. The figures are given from the mathematical calculations of exoteric Western astronomy. Esoteric astronomy may prove them false some day. ([return to text](#))

THE NATURAL PHILOSOPHY OF THEOSOPHY (1) — *Georg Saalfrank*

The word "Theosophy" means knowledge about God and divine things. As with all knowledge, theosophical knowledge has been expressed in specific teachings. The theosophical teachings are the very knowledge about God, Universe, Nature, and Man that has been known from immemorial times by the greatest minds, and has been collected and verified by competent men to be given out to the world in different epochs, in the guise of philosophic, religious and other systems adapted to the understanding and mental capacity of the men of every age. In modern times the knowledge was promulgated in a more comprehensive and scientific form under the name of "Theosophy" by H. P. Blavatsky in the latter half of the 19th century. This new promulgation had become necessary owing to the great progress achieved in the development of the intellectual and intuitive faculties of modern man. Now, since H. P. Blavatsky's days, thanks to the devotion of its loyal students, the theosophical knowledge is not only keeping up with the development of said faculties, but constantly runs ahead of them.

One of the most important theosophical teachings concerning man, to which we chiefly make reference in the following, is the doctrine of the divinity of man's inmost essence, the supreme part of his soul. That means that the divine faculties and qualities inherent in his innermost core, all that we appreciate as man's sublime and glorious virtues, must become predominant in his life; it means that man is called upon to fashion the whole world in a divine way, above all to fill it with divine love and brotherhood, thereby expressing to an ever larger extent his divine essence. In doing this he is on the right path in his evolution towards the Divine, with which he will become ever more assimilated until he, the "prodigal son," returns to his "Father."

Man has widely gone astray from this goal and destiny set for him by the eternal laws of the Universe. This has become evident in the recent

years of horrible carnage and insensate destruction of material, cultural and moral values, the result of continued wrong thought and action. But man, in his present state of suffering and questioning, could draw immense help and resources from the knowledge of the fact of his own inner Divinity and the immeasurable potentialities lying in it.

The fact of man's Divinity has always been upheld by German philosophers, educationalists and poets. The Bible, too, confirms this in numerous passages, especially in the New Testament. "The Kingdom of God is within you," "Ye are Gods and altogether children of the Most High," "We are of divine kin," "Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth within you?" — to quote a few passages.

The divinity of man constitutes the basis of all real education, the higher development of man, and of a real and lasting improvement of the conditions and circumstances of his life. That is why the Theosophical Society has always considered as one of its chief objectives the helping of all men to recognize their own inner Divinity and to make it the motive and directing power of their own personal lives. This means incessant aspiration towards truth and purity by means of self-knowledge, self-conquest and fulfilment of duty, and a life of constant brotherly love towards all that lives. These statements concerning the divinity of each man are likewise true with reference to a nation, and indeed the whole world. "The soul of a nation, the life-giving source of its existence is constituted by such of its former thoughts, deeds and ideals as have sprung from the God in man, and to the degree a nation feeds its national soul on thoughts and acts of this spiritual, divine kind, is it guarded, protected and beyond the reach of humiliation." These words are quoted from the writings of Katherine Tingley, one of the great Theosophical teachers.

In the course of time a Theosophical literature of its own has sprung up. In it — as also in non-theosophical writings — have Theosophical teachings been presented more or less clearly and correctly, but often inadequately. The clear and unadulterated presentation of these

teachings, however, is to be found in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge, and their successors. In their fundamental works and writings Theosophy constitutes a vast system of philosophy that resolves the most intricate problems, and which answers the most recondite questionings of the human heart. This great complexity of teachings also includes in itself the uttermost and supreme knowledge of non-theosophical scientists and students in the fields of philosophy, science and religion, for it is the fundamental synthesis of these three realms, which must not be segregated from each other, but which always must be studied and considered in their mutual correlation, if fatal errors and grave misconceptions are to be kept out of human thought and philosophy. It is a well known fact that the mere study of science seldom will lead man beyond sheer materialism, while the study of philosophy or religion alone only opens a way to abstruse speculations or blind dogmatism and superstition.

The problems of the universe and mankind are thoroughly elucidated by the Theosophical philosophy both in their general relations and in specific details.

The Theosophical doctrine of the septenary constitution of man supplies an exact explanation of the inner build-up of man: his body, soul and spirit. For the purpose of easier understanding there has been enunciated a doctrine of the duality of human nature: a higher, divine nature, urging man towards the "realms of high ancestors" (Goethe), his lower nature dragging him down to the depths of egotism, of the passions, of crime and final annihilation. Whether he likes it or not, at every moment and hour of the day, with every thought and act, man must decide in favor of the higher or the lower side, and passive indifference and indolence with regard to this choice constituting already an addiction to the lower side. Fortunate is he, who by means of Theosophy and through his own divinity, has learned to practice self-control and self-conquest, thus being able to walk upwards instead of falling into ever greater depths.

The doctrine of Karma or the law of cause and effect elucidates the

fact that both in the life of nations and in the life of every individual reigns absolute justice: that individual man as well as an entire people have in no way any chance of escaping the consequences of false and wicked thought and act that, on the other hand, good seeds will produce good harvest, that literally we must reap what we have sown, though the time of maturity be far ahead and lie beyond the gulf of several incarnations.

Likewise, Theosophy considers the reincarnation of man as a natural law, and general ignorance about the underlying causes and actual processes, as well as the conceivable aversion of many men to live more than once on earth, are not a proof to the contrary. Many of our great men, poets and philosophers have expressed belief in reincarnation. How could it be possible to us to attain to the state of divine perfection, which is our destiny, in only one brief earth-life? And how can we account for the different faculties, talents and dispositions of character that men bring along with them into this life, unless we admit that they have been acquired already in a former life? By mere heredity these phenomena cannot be explained; according to Theosophical teaching, heredity is only the channel or means by which these characteristics are transmitted from a previous earth-life.

The scope of this article on Theosophy permits us to give only mere suggestions. To get a comprehensive view of its teachings and all they imply, an earnest and thorough study of standard Theosophical literature is a prerequisite. We must emphasize that the fundamental teachings outlined above are not beyond the scope of even a child's mind, and that they can be made an active part of its life; the child will all the more readily accept them as it still has an unveiled intuition. An earnest and thorough study and acceptance of these teachings will offer to a more comprehensive mind an invaluable help towards placing life on an unshakable foundation of philosophy, a new outlook which will give new scope and meaning to life and fill it with great hope and joy. The vast system of Theosophical philosophy with all its teachings, however, will offer the greatest minds an inexhaustible source, aye, an unfathomable ocean of knowledge. It will lead man

towards an ever deeper understanding of the eternal laws of the universe and make him realize the glorious goal of human evolution.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Translated from the German. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE ADEPTS AND WESTERN SCIENCE: II — *H. P. Blavatsky*

[Reply to an English F. T. S. — Mr. F. W. Myers of the Psychical Research Society and member of the London Lodge, T. S., whose questions were answered by Master M. through H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist*. — Eds.]

Is the Sun a Cooling Mass?

Such is the accepted theory of modern science: it is not what the "Adepts" teach. The former says — the sun "derives no important accession of heat from without": the latter answer — "the Sun needs it not." He is quite as self-dependent as he is self-luminous; and for the maintenance of his heat requires no help, no foreign accession of vital energy, for he is the heart of his system, a heart that will not cease its throbbing until its hour of rest shall come. Were the Sun "a cooling mass," our great life-giver would have indeed grown dim with age by this time, and found some trouble to keep his watch-fires burning for the future races to accomplish their cycles, and the planetary chains to achieve their rounds. There would remain no hope for evolving humanity; except perhaps in what passes for science in the astronomical text-books of Missionary Schools, namely, that "the Sun has an orbital journey of a hundred millions of years before him, and the system yet but *seven thousand years old*"! (*Prize Book, "Astronomy for General Readers."*)

The "Adepts," who are thus forced to demolish before they can reconstruct, deny most emphatically (*a*) that the Sun is in combustion, in any ordinary sense of the word; or (*b*) that he is *incandescent* or even *burning* though he is *glowing*; or (*c*) that his luminosity has already begun to weaken and his power of combustion may be exhausted within a given and conceivable time; or even (*d*) that his chemical and physical constitution contains any of the elements of terrestrial chemistry in any of the states that either chemist or physicist is

acquainted with. With reference to the latter, they add that, properly speaking, though the body of the Sun, — a body that was never yet reflected by telescope or spectroscope that man invented — cannot be said to be constituted of those terrestrial elements with the state of which the chemist is familiar, yet that these elements are all present in the sun's outward robes, and a host more of elements unknown so far to science. There seems little need, indeed, to have waited so long for the lines belonging to these respective elements to correspond with dark lines of the solar spectrum to *know* that no element present on our earth could ever be possibly found wanting in the sun, although, on the other hand, there are many others in the sun which have either not reached or not as yet been discovered on our globe. Some may be missing in certain stars and heavenly bodies still in the process of formation; or, properly speaking, though present in them, these elements on account of their undeveloped state may not respond as yet to the usual scientific tests. But how can the earth possess that which the Sun has never had? The "Adepts" affirm as a fact that the true *Sun* — an invisible orb of which the known one is the shell, mask, or clothing — has in him the spirit of every element that exists in the solar system; and his "Chromosphere," as Mr. Lockyer named it, has the same, only in a far more developed condition though still in a state unknown on earth; our planet having to await its further growth and development before any of its elements can be reduced to the condition they are in within that chromosphere. Nor can the substance producing the coloured light in the latter be properly called solid, liquid, or even "gaseous," as now supposed, for it is neither. Thousands of years before Leverrier and Padri Secchi, the old Aryans sung of *Soorya* . . . "hiding behind his Yogi (1) robes his head that no one could see"; the ascetic's dress being, as all know, dyed expressly into a red-yellow hue, a colouring matter with pinkish patches on it, rudely representing the vital principle in man's blood — the symbol of the *vital principle* in the sun, or what is now called chromosphere. The "rose-colored region"! How little astronomers will ever know of its real nature even though hundreds of eclipses furnish them with the *indisputable evidence* of its presence. The sun is so thickly surrounded by a *shell* of this "red

matter," that it is useless for them to speculate with only the help of their physical instruments, upon the nature of that which they can never see or detect with mortal eye behind that brilliant, *radiant* zone of matter. . . .

If the "Adepts" are asked: "What then, in your views, is the nature of our sun and what is there beyond that cosmic veil?" — they answer: *beyond* rotates and beats the *heart and head* of our system; externally it spread its robe, the nature of which is not matter, whether solid, liquid, or gaseous, such as you are acquainted with, but *vital* electricity, condensed and made visible. (2) And if the statement is objected to on the grounds that were the luminosity of the sun due to any other cause than *combustion* and *flame*, no physical law of which Western Science has any knowledge, could account for the existence of such intensely high temperature of the sun *without combustion*; that such a temperature, besides burning with its light and flame every visible thing in our universe, would show its luminosity of a homogeneous and uniform intensity throughout, which it does not; that undulations and disturbances in the photosphere, the growing of the "protuberances," and a fierce raging of elements in combustion have been observed in the sun, with their tongues of fire and spots exhibiting every appearance of cyclonic motion, and "solar storms," etc., etc.; to this the only answer that can be given is the following: the appearances are all there, yet it is not combustion. Undoubtedly were the "robes," the dazzling drapery which now envelopes the whole of the sun's globe withdrawn, or even "the shining atmosphere *which permits us to see the sun*" (as Sir William Herschel thought) removed so as to allow one trifling rent — our whole universe would be reduced to ashes. *Jupiter Fulminator* revealing himself to his beloved would incinerate her instantly. But it can never be. The protecting shell is of a thickness, and at a distance from the universal heart that can hardly be ever calculated by your mathematicians. And how can they hope to see the sun's *inner* body once that the existence of that "chromosphere" is ascertained, though its actual density may be still unknown, when one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest of their authorities — Sir W. Herschel

— says the following:

The sun, also, has its *atmosphere*, and if some of the fluids which enter into its composition should be of a shining brilliancy, while others are merely transparent, *any temporary cause which may remove the lucid fluid will permit us to see the body of the sun* through the transparent ones.

The underlined words written nearly eighty years ago embody the wrong hypothesis that the *body of the sun* might be seen under such circumstances, whereas it is only the far away layers of "the lucid fluid" that would be perceived. And what the great astronomer adds invalidates entirely the first portion of his assumption.

If an observer were placed on the moon, he would see the solid body of our earth *only in those places where the transparent fluids of the atmosphere would permit him*. In others, the opaque vapors would reflect the light of the sun without permitting his view to penetrate to the surface of our globe.

Thus, if the atmosphere of our earth, which in its relation to the "atmosphere" (?) of the sun is like the tenderest skin of a fruit compared with the thickest husk of a cocoanut, would prevent the eye of an observer standing on the moon to penetrate everywhere "to the surface of our globe," how can an astronomer ever hope his sight to penetrate to the *sun's* surface, from our earth and at a distance of from 85 to 95 million miles, (3) whereas, the moon, we are told, is only about 238,000 miles! The proportionately larger size of the sun does not bring him any nearer within the scope of our physical vision. Truly remarks Sir W. Herschel that the sun "has been called a globe of fire, *perhaps metaphorically*"! It has been *supposed* that the dark spots were solid bodies revolving near the sun's surface.

They have been *conjectured* to be the smoke of volcanoes . . . the scum floating upon an ocean of fluid matter. . . . They have been *taken* for clouds . . . *explained* to be opaque masses swimming in the *fluid matter* of the sun.

Alone, of all astronomers, Sir John Herschel, (4) whose *intuition* was still greater than his great learning, came — all anthropomorphic conceptions set aside — far nearer truth than any of those modern astronomers who, while admiring his gigantic learning, smile at his "imaginative and fanciful theories." His only mistake, now shared by most astronomers, was that he regarded the "opaque body" occasionally observed through the curtain of his "luminous envelope" as the sun itself. When saying in the course of his speculations upon the Nasmyth willow-leaf theory: —

the definite shape of these objects; their exact similarity one to another . . . all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vaporous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature.

— his spiritual intuition served him better than his remarkable knowledge of physical science. When he adds:

Nothing remains but to consider them *as separate and independent* sheets, flakes . . . having *some sort of solidity*. . . . Be they what they may, they are evidently *the immediate sources of the solar light and heat* . . .

— he utters a grander physical truth than was ever uttered by any living astronomer. And, when furthermore, we find him postulating — "looked at in this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as *organisms* of some peculiar and amazing kind; and though it would be too daring to speak of such organization as partaking of the nature of life, yet *we do know that vital action is competent to develop at once heat, and light, and electricity*." Sir John Herschel gives out a theory approximating an occult truth more than any profane ever did with regard to solar physics. These "wonderful objects" are not, as a modern astronomer interprets Sir J. Herschel's words, "*solar inhabitants*, whose fiery constitution enables them to illuminate, warm and electricise the whole solar system," but simply the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the *vital* electricity that feeds the whole system in which it lives, and breathes, and has its being. It is, as we say, the storehouse of our little cosmos, self-generating its vital fluid, and ever receiving as much as it

gives out. Were the astronomers to be asked — "what definite and positive fact exists at the root of their solar theory; — what knowledge they have of solar combustion and atmosphere" — they might, perchance, feel embarrassed when confronted with all their present theories. For, it is sufficient to make a *resume* of what the solar physicists *do not know*, to gain conviction that they are as far as ever from a definite knowledge of the constitution and ultimate nature of the heavenly bodies. We may, perhaps, be permitted to enumerate: —

Beginning with, as Mr. Proctor wisely calls it, "the wildest assumption possible," that there is, in accordance with the law of analogy, some general resemblance between the materials in, and the processes at work upon the Sun, and those materials with which terrestrial chemistry and physics are familiar, what is that sum of results achieved by spectroscopic and other analyses of the surface and the inner constitution of the sun, which warrants any one in establishing the *axiom* of the Sun's combustion and gradual extinction? They have no means, as they themselves daily confess, of experimenting upon, hence of determining the sun's physical condition; for (*a*) they are ignorant of the atmospheric limits; (*b*) even though it were proved that *matter*, such as they know of, is continually falling upon the sun, being ignorant of its real velocity and the nature of the material it falls upon, they are unable "to discuss of the effect of motions wholly surpassing in velocity . . . enormously exceeding even the inconceivable velocity of many meteors"; (*c*) confessedly — they "have no means of learning whence that part of the light comes which gives the continuous spectrum," hence no means of determining how great a depth of the solar substance is concerned in sending out that light. This light "may come from the surface layers only"; and, "it may be but a shell" (truly!); and finally, (*d*) they have yet to learn "how far combustion, properly so called, can take place within the Sun's mass"; and "whether these processes, which we (they) recognize as combustion are the only processes of combustion which can actually take place there."

Therefore, Mr. Proctor for one comes to the happy and prudent idea after all

that what had been supposed the most marked characteristic of incandescent solid and liquid bodies, is thus shown to be a possible characteristic of the light of the glowing gas.

Thus, the whole basis of their reasoning having been shaken (by Frankland's objection), they, the astronomers, may yet arrive at accepting the occult theory, viz., that they have to look to the 6th state of matter, for divulging to them the true nature of their photospheres, chromospheres, appendages, prominences, projections and horns. Indeed, when one finds the greatest authority of the age in physical science — Prof. Tyndall — saying that

no earthly substance with which we are acquainted — no substance which the fall of meteors has landed on the earth — *would be at all competent to maintain the Sun's combustion,*

and again:

. . . multiplying all our powers by millions of millions, we do not reach the Sun's expenditure. And still, notwithstanding this enormous drain in the lapse of human history, we are unable to detect a diminution of his store.

After reading this, to see the men of science maintaining still their theory of "a hot globe cooling," one may be excused for feeling surprised at such inconsistency. Verily is that great physicist right in viewing the sun himself as "a speck in infinite extension — a mere drop in the Universal sea"; and saying that,

to nature nothing can be added, from nature nothing can be taken away, the sum of her energy is constant, and the utmost man can do in the pursuit of physical truth, or in the applications of physical knowledge, *is to shift the constituents of the never-varying total. The law of conservation rigidly excludes both creation and annihilation . . . , the flux of power is eternally the same.*

Mr. Tyndall speaks here as though he were an Occultist. Yet, the

memento mori — "the Sun is cooling . . . it is dying"! of the Western Trappists of Science resounds as loud as it ever did.

No, we say; no, while there is one man left on the globe, the sun will not be extinguished. Before the hour of the "Solar Pralaya" strikes on the Watch-tower of Eternity, all the other worlds of our system will be gliding in their spectral shells along the silent paths of Infinite Space. Before it strikes, Atlas, the mighty Titan, the son of Asia and the nursling of Aether, will have dropped his heavy manvantaric burden and — died; the Pleiades, the bright seven Sisters, will have upon awakening hiding Sterope to grieve with them — *to die themselves for their father's loss*. And, Hercules, *moving off his left leg*, will have to shift his place in heavens and erect his own funeral pile. Then only, surrounded by the fiery element breaking through the thickening gloom of the *Pralayan* twilight, will Hercules *expiring amidst a general conflagration*, bring on likewise the death of our Sun: *he will have unveiled by moving off the "Central Sun"* — the mysterious, the ever-hidden centre of attraction of our Sun and System.

Fables? Mere poetical fiction? Yet, when one knows that the most exact sciences, the greatest mathematical and astronomical truths went forth into the world among the *hoi polloi* sent out by the initiated priests, the Hierophants of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the old temples, under the guise of religious fables, it may not be amiss to search for universal truths even under the patches of fiction's harlequinade. This *fable* about the Pleiades, the *seven* Sisters, Atlas, and Hercules exists identical in subject, though under other names, in the sacred Hindu books, and has likewise the same occult meaning. But then like the *Ramayana* "borrowed from the Greek *Iliad*" and the Bhagavat-Gita and Krishna plagiarized from the Gospel — in the opinion of the *great* Sanskritist, Prof. Weber, the Aryans may have also borrowed the Pleiades and their Hercules from the same source! When the Brahmins can be shown by the Christian Orientalists to be the direct descendants of the Teutonic Crusaders, then only, perchance, will the cycle of proofs be completed, and the historical truths of the West — vindicated!

FOOTNOTES:

1. There is an interesting story in the Puranas relating to this subject. The Devas, it would appear, asked the great Rishi Vasishta to bring the Sun into Satya Loka. The Rishi there went and requested the Sun-god to do so. The Sun-god replied that all the worlds would be destroyed if he were to leave his place. The Rishi then offered to place his red-coloured cloth (*Kashay Vastrarn*) in the place of the Sun's disk and did so. The visible body of the Sun is this robe of Vasishta, it would seem — T. Subba Row. ([return to text](#))
 2. If the "English FTS" would take the trouble of consulting p. 11 of the *Magia Adamica* of Eugenius Philalethes, his learned compatriot, he would find therein the difference between a visible and an invisible planet as clearly hinted at as it was safe to do at a time when the iron claw of orthodoxy had the power as well as disposition, to tear the flesh from heretic bones. "The earth is invisible" — says he — . . . "and which is more, the *eye of man never saw the earth*, nor can it be seen without *art*. To make this element visible is *the greatest secret in magic*. . . As for this feculent, gross body upon which we walk, it is a *compost*, and no earth but *it hath earth in it* . . . in a word all the *elements are visible* but *one*, namely, the *earth*, and when thou hast attained to so much *perfection* as to know why *God* hath placed the *earth in abscondito* thou hast an excellent figure whereby to know *God himself*, and how he is *visible*, how *invisible*" The italics are the author's, it being the custom of the Alchemists to emphasize those words which had a double meaning in their code Here "God himself" *visible* and *invisible*, relates to their *lapis philosophorum* — Nature's seventh principle. ([return to text](#))
 3. Verily — "*absolute accuracy* in the solution of this problem (of distances between the heavenly bodies and the earth) is *simply out of question*"! ([return to text](#))
 4. Son of Sir William Herschel. — Eds. ([return to text](#))
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KEEP THE LINK UNBROKEN (1) — *Kenneth Morris*

In 1891 the most significant figure of the Nineteenth Century was relieved of the intolerable burden of life, and passed into the Golden Silence of the God-world from which she came. The day was May 8th, which was that on which Joan of Arc relieved Orleans; and the day the Romans held sacred to Flora, Goddess of Flowers. Now Flora symbolized ever recurring life, the blossom that puts forth again and again, Resurrection; and from the ashes of Joan, France arose like the Phoenix, a Resurrection. H. P. Blavatsky's last words were, "Keep the link unbroken; do not let my last incarnation have been in vain"; which was in a sense a command to us, that she should be resurrected in our lives, and her message never die from the world.

What is meant by keeping the link unbroken? Look back into history: to the age of the Great Teachers, the sixth century b.c. when the Buddha, Confucius, Laotse, the Founder of Jainism, Zoroaster, and Pythagoras were teaching in the world. They all turned their backs on the official Mysteries of the day, which had ceased to be efficient links or channels between men and the Masters. Each one of them founded a new organization to be such a link or channel. Confucius, Laotse, the Buddha — especially the Buddha: how grandly those three succeeded! Out of Confucius came the stable basis of life in China and the surrounding countries. Out of Laotse came the wizard imagination of the Chinese. Out of the Buddha came the glory that flowed down from that Serene Figure through age after beautiful age of Asiatic life!

In Buddhism the link was kept unbroken for ages. Before he died, the Blessed One gave his begging-bowl to Mahakasyapa, appointed him to be Head of the Church or Order after him; and Kasyapa passed on the bowl and the headship to Ananda; and Ananda to Nagarjuna; and he to another; and he to a long line of Adept-leaders, the Buddhist Patriarchs, until the twenty-seventh of them, Bodhidharma, in 520 a. d., went to China, and lit China to amazing spiritual splendor; and was followed in

turn by a line of Chinese Patriarchs. Each Adept-leader appointed by his predecessor: no election, no conclave of cardinals, nothing of that sort; but the appointment of an Adept by an Adept, to keep the link unbroken through the ages. Bodhidharma preached in China what he called Esoteric Buddhism — the Doctrine of the Heart, of the Buddha, as distinguished from the Doctrine of the Eye: he established there the Dzyan School, which is that to which our Masters belong. His seventh or eighth successor was that Hsin Shien quoted in *The Voice of the Silence* to whom his predecessor gave a mirror, and bade him write an essay on it; and he wrote: "The mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions." Hsin Shien lived in 700 a.d. during the reign of the Empress Wu, and was often at her court.

If we contrast the glory, deeply dyed with spiritual tints, of Oriental civilization during its great ages, with the squalor and brutality of European civilization, realizing how that Eastern splendor derived itself chiefly from the Buddha, and was made possible because the link with the Buddha was kept unbroken through that long line of Adept-Teachers for at least twelve centuries, we may learn something of the meaning of what H. P. Blavatsky asked of us when she pleaded that we would "keep the link unbroken."

And now see what happens in Europe. Pythagoras also founded an order, and established his headquarters at Crotona in Italy. But the people rose and wiped out his school; and the link was broken. Instead of a living, organized body coming down through time like the Mahayana of Buddhism, there was but a sporadic train of devoted torch-bearers: Aeschylus, Plato, and then a gap of centuries; Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblichus, Maximus of Tyre and his disciple Julian the Blessed Apostate; then a gap of centuries; then the Persian Al-Kindi, the Turk al-Farabi, the Persian Avicenna, the Spanish Arab Averroes; and through and from them a tiny trickle of light down through the centuries, to be the inspiration of any stirring toward the light. No organization, no definite propaganda; no body of men to which one might go saying, I desire to learn, teach me! For the failure of the

Pythagorean Movement was followed by, and probably had its sequence in, the ability of the Enemies of Mankind to send Caesar into Gaul to smash the one body, the one vehicle of the Mysteries in the Old World which had not declined, Druidism. And though a thin trickle of the waters of life did flow down the European ages also from that which Caesar smashed, it was mostly here in our own Wales; it sweetened feudalism a little with chivalry, but was not effective for much. As for Christianity, the light of Theosophy had died out of it long before the rise of European civilization in the thirteenth century.

Now while that thin ray of light had shone down from Pythagoras, via Plato, the Neoplatonists and the Moslem philosophers, and had quickened such men in Europe as Pico della Mirandola, Giordano Bruno, and through him Spenser and Shakespeare, the Cambridge Platonists, Welsh mystics such as Vaughan, Traherne and the Herberts, and Shelley, another stream of inspiration or another impulse had come down, strangely enough mainly through the same channel, from Aristotle; and its tendency was toward materialistic intellectualism. This ray fell on Bacon of Verulam, and set him alight; as someone said, he out-aristotled Aristotle, and quite staggered the Stagirite. He sent things matterward with a vengeance; his spiritual, or unspiritual children, were the great lights of Nineteenth Century Science: if lights they could be called, which light had none, but rather darkness visible. And so you got, for China's wonderful luminaries like Bodhidharma and Hsin Shien, England's Darwins and Tyndalls; who had set up a new and deadlier orthodoxy of science to replace the dying orthodoxy of religion: prophets of a gross and now happily exploded superstition called materialism. And these two orthodoxies, both materialistic, both lightless — the one a mere matter of intellect gone wrong, the other a mere matter of emotionalism gone wrong — shared the western world's allegiance. Into their realm the Lodge sent its Messenger, H. P. Blavatsky, to make a new link between the Gods and men.

She came prepared to meet these grand Sciencasters, carrying weapons usable in the war she had to wage with them. They lived on the plane of unilluminated intellect. She had to invade the plane of intellect and

carry on her warfare there, building a new heaven in hell; showing that mere intellectualism can never even be really intellectual, that a universe you build of matter alone, has something very terrible the matter with it. But more, she lit on the plane of intellect a fire of aspiration, of mysticism, of devotion, of spiritual light.

All the world was against her; she was *Y Gwir yn erbin y byd* — "the Truth against the world," H. P. Blavatsky *contra mundum* — and pity the poor old world in that fight, for it hadn't a ghost of a chance against her! She crashed in: a lonely, sick old woman — but with all the spiritual worlds behind her; with the Gods behind her, and the stars in their courses fighting for her. For fifteen terrible years she took into her heart all the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune; and gave out in exchange her grand ideas, her spiritual concepts and teachings, her marvellous light. She gave materialism its deathblow. She lit up the universe, so that we may see it built up of divinity, peopled with gods. She lit up the worlds within us, so that we may see gods at the heart of our being, and strive with new high hope and inspiration towards the greatest of attainment. She made every bud on the trees, every note of birdsong, every gleam on the waters of the world, wonderful, and a message to us from Eternal Beauty. Then, on May 8th, 1891, she was permitted to return into the God-world: leaving that last word to us, the last mantram phrase, "Keep the link unbroken. Do not let my last incarnation have been in vain!"

That link she had forged between the Gods and men: between this world and the Masters; between the crowd and stir of the marketplace and the calmness of the silent Himalayas. How shall we keep it unbroken?

The answer is, by truth to her teachings. She showed us a spiritual universe; and godhood as the reality behind men. Men as things you can't judge, you can't criticize, you can't condemn: things your sole duty is to help; to regard them as what they are — gods in the inmost of their being; doing your utmost at all times to bring them to a realization of that inmost; appealing always to, dwelling always upon, that inner

divinity in them. Seek ye first that kingdom of the inner god, and all else shall be added unto you. To live to benefit mankind is the first step; and the way to do it is to spread Theosophy; which means, to arouse in men the feeling that that inmost god is the ultimate reality about them; to change the temperature of the world, making men see that it is a spiritual universe they live in, and that they are responsible for their thoughts and actions, and cannot shuffle off that responsibility on to any god or man beside. Thus can we keep the link unbroken; thus not let the Lion-heart's last incarnation have been in vain.

FOONOTE:

1. Address given in May, 1931 at Cardiff, Wales. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

COPTIC GNOSTIC MSS. — *Charles J. Ryan*

Theosophical students are well aware of H. P. Blavatsky's frequent references to the unexpected discoveries of ancient archeological or literary remains which seem to be "accidentally" made just at the appropriate time to solve unexplained problems. One of these, and a most important one for Theosophy, is just attracting wide attention. We refer to the discovery by peasants at Nag Hammadi in Egypt in 1946 of 850 pages of Coptic Gnostic manuscript on papyrus sheets. The Egyptian Government bought a portion soon after they came to light for \$240,000, and now it is acquiring the rest. Translation by distinguished scholars is being made, and with the text, will be published as soon as possible at Louvain, Belgium, sometimes called a "Phoenix of learning" from the brilliant work of resurrection of ancient documents it has done.

According to H. P. B., the Gnostic teachings precede by some hundreds of years the Christian Gospels, and are directly derived from Babylonia and India. She says:

A Brahmin needs only to read *Pistis Sophia* to recognize his forefathers' property, even to the phraseology and similes used. . . . *Pistis Sophia* is an extremely important document, a genuine *Evangel* of the Gnostics. . . . It is genuine and ought to be as canonical as any other gospel.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 566

G. R. S. Mead's translation and comments were originally published in H. P. B.'s *Lucifer*.

H. P. B. shows that when the Essenes (a Gnostic sect) disappeared in the beginning of the second century b.c. their place was filled by the *Christian* Gnostics who introduced Platonism, etc., into Christianity, adapting many of the teachings of the ancient Theosophy to the framework of the growing Christian faith and even taking over the

names of sacred personages employed by the early Christians. (See *Isis Unveiled* II, 325, and the valuable quotations from Renan on pages 334-5). On page 12, Vol. I, H. P. B. shows that the Gnostics held firmly to the doctrine of metempsychosis or transmigration "in its esoteric sense," so widely accepted at that time, and adds that the Gnostics are "unhesitatingly proclaimed by history as a body of the most refined, learned, and enlightened men." In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 389, she explains how certain early Christian sects were denounced as heretical through complete misunderstanding of the secret meaning of their particular teachings. After explaining some of these, she adds:

As a direct consequence, the tenets of the Gnostic sects also become clear. Each of these sects was founded by an Initiate, while their tenets were based on the correct knowledge of the symbolism of every nation.

It is most regrettable that very little remains of the pure teachings of Gnosticism. As H. P. B. says, every effort was made after the days of Constantine, when the Church became entangled with the State, to destroy every vestige of Gnosticism. How the *Pistis Sophia* escaped is a wonder, but though a very important contribution to our knowledge of Gnosticism it is only a fragment of the teachings. Scholars have had to depend mostly on scraps of information derived from its prejudiced critics. For this reason the publication of a genuine Coptic Gnostic text of the magnitude of the newly discovered MS. will be a great event not only to scholars of Christian Theology but to students of Theosophy, who will now have the rare opportunity of studying one of the ancient presentations of the Esoteric Wisdom as given out by its own followers and not garbled or mutilated by its enemies.

A well-informed contributor to *The Manchester Guardian*, England, who reports the forthcoming publication, makes some remarks of great significance to Theosophical students as they show that modern scholars are considering Gnosticism from almost, if not quite, the position taken by H. P. B., though of course without her understanding of the real importance of it as a part of the ancient world-wide

"Wisdom Religion." When she wrote on the subject her views must have been highly unpalatable to the orthodox theologians. But times are changing.

The contributor to the *Guardian* writes:

The study of the vast mass of new documents from Nag Hammadi (most of which have so far only been read cursorily by one man, M. Doresse) will cast light on the question whether Gnosticism is a later product of religious thought than Christianity or whether it may not be older and have adopted the names of Christ and the Christian saints when these gained prestige. There is some reason to think that the same revelations were attributed successively to Zoroaster, Seth, and Christ. . . . The first impression of the new manuscript seems to suggest that the non-Christian element in Gnosticism is of very great importance.

We might ask the writer why "the non-Christian element" should be so important unless it contains revelations of the *true origin* of the comparatively modern presentation of the Ancient Wisdom, called Christianity, as well as matter that will tear away the obscurities that have been placed in the canonical Gospels to protect the deeper interpretation of their content from being profaned by the unprepared, "blinds," as H. P. B. calls them.

The writer touches on another problem of interest to all students of the religions of the Near East when he refers to Manicheism, "the synthetic religion which competed so long successfully with Christianity and spread as far as China. How far did Mani take over a synthesis already made by the Gnostics and merely give it the impetus of his personality and his gift for organizing a Church?"

H. P. B. in *Isis* speaks of Manicheism as a Gnostic sect, which regarded Buddha, Jesus and Mani as essentially one.

It will easily be seen how important in our studies of the various forms under which the Ancient Wisdom Religion has been presented, this

new and unexpected discovery of *original* documents is likely to prove in view of H. P. B.'s teachings in regard to Gnosticism.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FOUR GOSPELS — *Marion O. French*

The textual variations in the versions of the Four Gospels regarding the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of the Christos have puzzled many people. Usually, they are attributed to presentation in accordance with a physical, intellectual, psychic, and spiritual point of view. This is symbolized by the bull, lion, man, and eagle that stand as their insignia. Amplification of this basic concept will serve to indicate what a wealth of religious, philosophic, and scientific information can be culled from the cryptic biblical texts. In a lecture before the Theosophical Convention of 1887 on "The Sankhya and Yogi Philosophy" (*The Theosophist*, IX, 342) H. P. Blavatsky is quoted (*Isis Unveiled*) as having made the following pertinent assertions:

All systems of religious mysticism are based on numerals. With Pythagoras, the Monas or unity, emanating the duad, and thus forming the trinity, and the quaternary or Arba-il (the mystic *four*), compose the number seven. The sacredness of numbers begins with the great First — the one, and ends only with the nought or zero — symbol of the infinite and boundless circle which represents the universe. All the intervening figures, in whatever combination, or however multiplied, represent philosophical ideas, from vague outlines down to a definitely established scientific axiom, relating either to a moral or a physical fact in nature. They are a key to the ancient views on cosmogony, in its broad sense, including man and beings, and the evolution of the human race, spiritually as well as physically — II, 407

Furthermore, in *Isis Unveiled*, I, 9, H. P. B. states that:

The harmony and mathematical equiformity of the double evolution — spiritual and physical — are elucidated only in the universal numerals of Pythagoras, who built his system entirely

upon the so-called "metrical speech" of the Hindu *Vedas*.

Also it is stated in this reference that:

All the powers and great symphonies of physical and spiritual nature lie inscribed within the perfect square, and the ineffaceable name of Him, which name otherwise, would remain unutterable, was replaced by this sacred number 4 the most binding and solemn oath with the ancient mystics — the *Tetractys*.

Under the subject "Four" in the index to *The Secret Doctrine*, much collateral information may be found regarding the aspects of the Tetractys mentioned herein. Four is the first rational, or formulate, number having an integral square root. Numerically, the circumference of a circle of diameter 4 is $12 \frac{52}{81}$ and that is, also, the square area of that circle. In other words, the plane of representation is in equiformity with the circle of consciousness. The septenate of man's upper triad (Atma, Buddhi, Manas) and his lower quaternary (Kama-Rupa, Linga-Sarira, Prana, Sthula-Sarira) combine to initiate that series of ratios in which the middle term is the difference of the other two. Astronomically, the basis of the lower quaternary lies in the fact that there are 1 Central, 1 Polar, and 2 Equatorial Suns in the Galaxy (S. D., II, 240). The Central Sun is a laya center, or neutron, and the other three revolve around it on the polar orbit and equatorial orbits. This is the Kabbalistic doctrine and it is set forth hypothetically in *Principia Nova Astronomica*, by H. Pratt, M. D., Edinburgh, 1894. Above, or superior to, them are 3 Spiritual Suns of the Metagalaxy. Presumably, the 4 Suns are the "four living creatures" of Ezekiel, I. In any case, the description of them in that chapter may be construed as an adequate analysis of their electro-magnetic functioning in a manner similar to that of the electrons in an atom. Likewise, it may be assumed that they constitute the 4 "Bodies" of Brahma above which stand his 3 "Qualities." The 4 Royal stars Aldebaran, Regulus, Fomalhaut, and Antares mark the 4 cardinal points in the Earth's revolutionary course. There are 4 "Sacred Seasons," equinoctial and solstitial, and 4 "Great Circles,"

ecliptic, equator, and tropics. The Earth is the 4th sphere from the Sun, if the Intra-Mercurial Vulcan be counted, and there are 3 outside the Earth, if Saturn be accepted as outermost of the 7 "Sacred Planets" pertaining strictly to the solar system.

The Hindus of Hind state that there are 4 Truths and 4 Vedas; as there are 4 Gospels. In his *Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, Sankaracharya lists 4 Vestures for the encapsuled droplet of consciousness called the Monad. They are the Food-formed, the Vital Breath-formed, the Mind-formed, and the Intelligence-formed. In operation, their psychological motivation is through the 3 Potencies termed Substance, Force, and Darkness. It is based, functionally, upon the numerical interrelations of the triad and the tetrad within the hebdomad. Essentially, this is exemplified in music by the symphony diatesseron which is constituted in the sesquitercian ratio of 4 to 3. Within the septenate of the musical scale, it possesses the power of an element with respect to the other symphonies, or forms an harmonic proportion between the arithmetical and the geometrical.

In the pantheons of all religions the names vary, but the functional figures remain the same. There are 4 Devas, or "Watchers," at the 4 corners of the cardinal points. They observe the evolutionary progress of the 4 castes of humanity during the cyclical repetition of the 4 Yugas. There are 4 active or operative Kumaras and 3 others. Similarly, there are 4 principal Archangels: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael and Uriel, with the 3 other traditional ones, Chamuel, Jophiel, and Zadkiel. Gautama is called the Kumara of the Kshattriyas and Michael is the hierarch of the heavenly hosts. There have been 4 Buddhas and Maitreya will be the 5th for the 6th Race. The present 5th Race is in its 4th Round on the 4th Globe D of the dual evolution of spirit and matter. We have 4 fingers opposed by 1 thumb on each hand, and 4 senses synthesized in sound as the primary one of audition. So, in the tetrahedron, there are four faces, with 3 edges to each face. It is circumscribed by the 4 other symmetrical solids: cube, octahedron, dodecahedron, and icosahedron. Sequentially, there are 4 Natures in Nature: Akasic, Ethereal, Watery and Fiery. By correspondence, there are 4 Elements: Fire, Water, Air,

and Earth. They are embodied in the 5th, which is Ether. The 4 gases of Hydrogen, Oxygen, Nitrogen, and Carbon are their immediate prototypes. There are 4 Sons of Fohat functionally operative in the 4 Kingdoms of Mineral, Vegetable, Animal and Human dynamism. In arithmetic there are the 4 operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Correspondingly, there are 4 steps in the formulation of concepts: genesis from cosmical source, mathematical or geometrical symbolization, categorical generalization, and formative classification.

Psychologically, there are 4 "Worlds": Archetypal, Intellectual, Formative, and Physical. Pertaining to them are the 4 states of consciousness that we experience every day. They are Waking, Waking-Dreaming, Sleeping-Dreaming and Deep Sleep. Transcendent correspondences are Jagrat, Svapna, Sushupti, Turiya-Samadhi. (See *Occult Glossary*, 82, 89). In *Job*, xxxiii, 14-16 we may read:

For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction.

As indicated on page 104, *Mahatma Letters*, the 4 states of consciousness are: consciousness *per se*, self-consciousness, full individual consciousness, and absolute consciousness. The basis of these states lies in the 4 "Principles" of the Kosmos that find their expression in the 4 forms of Vach, or Voice as the enunciated "Word" of "In the beginning." These 4 states of consciousness have been called dimensional as related to the 3 static dimensions of space as becoming kinetic in time. A very suggestive tabulation of the forms that they take is appended to *Tertium Organum* by P. D. Ouspensky. There are 4 rows of precious stones of 3 each in the breast-plate of the Hebraic high-priest.

If the entries under Four in a comprehensive concordance be consulted many more references will be discovered that biblical exegetes can apply to elucidate the occult philosophy of the Four Gospels.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the battlefield that confronts Arjuna is his own soul. It is "God's Acre," a square measure of 4 roods. Upon it, the equiformity in the dual evolution of spirit and matter must be accomplished by "squaring the account" between the pairs of opposites. As the soul, it links the spirit and the flesh. As an area, it is the Champ de Mars upon which the Kshatriya must wage the conflict that will decide the issue. If you wish to solve the equation in so far as the space-time continuum of terrestrial existence is concerned, consult page 63 of *Key to Hebrew-Egyptian Mystery* by Ralston Skinner, that is referred to frequently in *The Secret Doctrine*. One acre, 4 roods, equals 6,272,640 square inches and there are 5,184,000 sixtieths of a second in 24 hours. The area is exactly divisible by the time and the quotient is 1.21 and this is the square of 1.1, and 11 is 4 plus 7, or the lower quaternary plus the complete septenate of man's principles.

If you prefer to solve it another way, 4 square yards, or Jareds, equal 5,184 square inches. There are 1440 minutes in 24 hours and 5,184 divided by 1440 equals 3.6, or the digits for 360° in a circle. The 144 refers to the 144,000 "saved" of the Bible. The "luck" in "come seven, come eleven" of dice consists in this "solution" when we cast the "dice" of life. That game, like the Tarot cards and dominoes, was invented to perpetuate correct numerical nomenclature in the minds of men. So, also was the game of chess and there are 64 "acres" on the board and 640 in one square mile. In the brain are 4 ventricles and there are 4 compartments, 2 auricles and 2 ventricles, in the heart. Mind and heart function in conjunction and the pure of heart think pure thoughts.

In the words of an ancient Persian inscription, "O, square thyself for use; a stone that may fit in the wall is not left in the ways." That "wall" is the "Guardian Wall of Humanity."

THE ENIGMA OF NATURE — *Allan J. Stover*

An kindly old lady, who was college librarian in a small town, once told me the following story of her life.

She had married a rising young lawyer and they had two lovely children and a beautiful home in which all were supremely happy. Suddenly one winter an epidemic struck. Within a few weeks, she had lost husband and children and the home had been taken for debt. All she had was gone and life seemed at an end. It was spring and the close of a difficult, cold winter. Going out she wandered into their little orchard where the peach trees were in bloom. The peace of nature, in such contrast to her own overwhelming tragedy, seemed too much to bear. Sinking down upon a bench, "suddenly," as she expressed it, "I seemed to disappear and looking about felt as though a part of everything. I was a part of the flowering trees and understood their dreamy thoughts. I was a part of the clouds floating overhead in the blue sky and of the birds singing in the tree tops. I was no longer I, but seemed one with everything and understood the living world around me as I understood myself — for we were one." With tears in her eyes she added, "Happy as we had been in our home and great as my loss had been, I had never known such happiness before."

The aroma of the experience clung to her during the remainder of her life, and through the years many of the students were helped by her intuitive understanding of their problems.

Just as every individual has at its heart a spark of divinity, so outer nature is but the shell of an invisible spiritual universe. But this inner reality can only be sensed by rising in some degree towards the spiritual consciousness within oneself.

Sometimes when the soul has been prepared through many lifetimes of aspiration, a sudden shock will rend the veil and for an instant the student will awaken to a new world, a world within the old. For a time

he knows, because he *is*, and all the museum collecting, classifications and brain-mind speculations fade before the pure ecstasy of this illumination. Strangely enough, in such moments, when knowledge may be had for the taking, curiosity disappears.

The Theosophical study of nature differs from that of science, since with each step forward one approaches closer to reality; yet with each step ever greater adherence to truth is demanded. The utterance of an untruth closes the mind to receive truth or to perceive clearly.

Science confines its investigations to the physical plane, ignoring the innumerable links connecting individual facts with spiritual and universal law. To a Theosophist, on the other hand, these links form a network by which he can check and cross-check his conclusions; for nature follows one law in both the small and the great.

The student of nature treads a narrow path bordered by pitfalls. Sentimentality and fancy on the one hand, materialism and selfishness on the other, may draw him from the path of truth to the level of the lower mind. Only an awakened humanhood in its finer sense can keep to the path which leads to the mountains of wisdom.

The great need is to teach the Soul of Nature, and that what we see is but the outer shell of a mystical and wonderful universe.

I once knew a promising young poet who fled on a mountain homestead in hopes of finding inspiration in the beautiful valley. Years later he confessed, "No! I haven't written anything for some time. In building the home I wanted, the *land got me*, I became trifling and no account, I know it but now I don't care."

This attitude of indifference often submerges the "human" beneath the exuberant flood of physical nature. On the other hand the great religions and philosophies of the world have originated in the solitudes of nature. There also poets have reached their highest level of thought. How, one may ask, can this enigma be explained?

Perhaps it is something like this. A farmer who fails to exercise a quiet

sympathetic control over his horse soon finds the horse losing respect for his master, and doing as he chooses. Similarly, since nature is also within us, one who fails to exercise control over the desires of the animal nature will soon find himself their slave.

The essence of Theosophical training is equilibrium, balance, the keeping to middle lines. For one having control over himself gains wisdom to understand and aid all nature and she responds by revealing vista after vista behind the veil of outer seeming.

The Theosophical Forum

SOME WORDS ON DAILY LIFE

WRITTEN BY A MASTER OF WISDOM

It is divine philosophy alone, the spiritual and psychic blending of man with nature, which, by revealing the fundamental truths that lie hidden under the objects of sense and perception, can promote a spirit of unity and harmony in spite of the great diversities of conflicting creeds.

Theosophy, therefore, expects and demands from the Fellows of the Society a great mutual toleration and charity for each other's shortcomings, ungrudging mutual help in the search for truths in every department of nature — moral and physical. And this ethical standard must be unflinchingly applied to daily life.

Theosophy should not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical ethics, epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy *must be made practical*; and it has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless digressions, in the sense of desultory orations and fine talk. Let every Theosophist only do his duty, that which he can and ought to do, and very soon the sum of human misery, within and around the areas of every Branch of your Society, will be found visibly diminished. Forget Self in working for others — and the task will become an easy and a light one for you. . . .

Do not set your pride in the appreciation and acknowledgment of that work by others. Why should any member of the Theosophical Society, striving to become a Theosophist, put any value upon his neighbours' good or bad opinion of himself and his work, so long as he himself knows it to be useful and beneficent to other people? Human praise and enthusiasm are short-lived at best; the laugh of the scoffer and the condemnation of the indifferent looker-on are sure to follow, and generally to out-weigh the admiring praise of the friendly. Do not despise the opinion of the world, nor provoke it uselessly to unjust criticism. Remain rather as indifferent to the abuse as to the praise of

those who can never know you as you really are, and who ought, therefore, to find you unmoved by either, and ever placing the approval or condemnation of your own *Inner Self* higher than that of the multitudes.

Those of you who would know yourselves in the spirit of truth, learn to live alone even amidst the great crowds which may sometimes surround you. Seek communion and intercourse only with the God within your own soul; heed only the praise or blame of that deity which can never be separated from your *true self, as it is verily that God itself*: called the HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS. Put without delay your good intentions into practice, never leaving a single one to remain only an intention — expecting, meanwhile, neither reward nor even acknowledgment for the good you may have done. Reward and acknowledgment are in yourself and inseparable from you, as it is your Inner Self alone which can appreciate them at their true degree and value. For each one of you contains within the precincts of his inner tabernacle the Supreme Court — prosecutor, defence, jury and judge — whose sentence is the only one without appeal; since none can know you better than you do yourself, when once you have learned to judge that Self by the never wavering light of the inner divinity — your higher Consciousness. Let, therefore, the masses, which can never know your true selves, condemn your outer selves according to their own false lights.

The majority of the public Areopagus is generally composed of self-appointed judges, who have never made a permanent deity of any idol save their own personalities — their lower selves; for those who try in their walk in life, to follow their *inner light* will never be found judging, far less condemning, those weaker than themselves. What does it matter then, whether the former condemn or praise, whether they humble you or exalt you on a pinnacle? They will never comprehend you one way or the other. They may make an idol of you, so long as they imagine you a faithful mirror of themselves on the pedestal or altar which they have reared for you, and while you amuse or benefit them. You cannot expect to be anything for them but a temporary

fetish, succeeding another fetish just overthrown, and followed in your turn by another idol. Let, therefore, those who have created that idol destroy it whenever they like, casting it down with as little cause as they had for setting it up. Your Western Society can no more live without its Khalif of an hour than it can worship one for any longer period; and whenever it breaks an idol and then besmears it with mud, it is not the model, but the disfigured image created by its own foul fancy and which it has endowed with its own vices, that Society dethrones and breaks.

Theosophy can only find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life, thoroughly impregnated with the spirit of mutual tolerance, charity, and brotherly love. Its Society, as a body, has a task before it which, unless performed with the utmost discretion, will cause the world of the indifferent and the selfish to rise up in arms against it. Theosophy has to fight intolerance, prejudice, ignorance, and selfishness, hidden under the mantle of hypocrisy. It has to throw all the light it can from the torch of Truth, with which its servants are entrusted. It must do this without fear or hesitation, dreading neither reproof nor condemnation. Theosophy, through its mouthpiece, the Society, has to tell the Truth to the very face of Lie; to beard the tiger in its den, without thought or fear of evil consequences, and to set at defiance calumny and threats. As *an Association*, it has not only the right, but the duty to uncloak vice and do its best to redress wrongs, whether through the voice of its chosen lecturers or the printed word of its journals and publications — making its accusations, however, as impersonal as possible. But its Fellows, or Members, have *individually* no such right. Its followers have, first of all, to set the example of a firmly outlined and as firmly applied morality, before they obtain the right to point out, even in a spirit of kindness, the absence of a like ethic unity and singleness of purpose in other associations or individuals. No Theosophist should blame a brother, whether within or outside of the association; neither may he throw a slur upon another's actions or denounce him, lest he himself lose the right to be considered a Theosophist. For, as such, he has to turn away his gaze from the

imperfections of his neighbour, and centre rather his attention upon his own shortcomings, in order to correct them and become wiser. Let him not show the disparity between claim and action in another, but, whether in the case of a brother, a neighbour, or simply a fellow man, let him rather ever help one weaker than himself on the arduous walk of life.

The problem of true Theosophy and its great mission are, first, the working out of clear unequivocal conceptions of ethic ideas and duties, such as shall best and most fully satisfy the right and altruistic feelings in men; and second, the modelling of these conceptions for their adaptation into such forms of daily life, as shall offer a field where they may be applied with most equitableness.

Such is the common work placed before all who are willing to act on these principles. It is a laborious task, and will require strenuous and persevering exertion; but it must lead you insensibly to progress, and leave you no room for any selfish aspirations outside the limits traced. . . Do not indulge personally in unbrotherly comparison between the task accomplished by yourself and the work left undone by your neighbours or brothers. In the fields of Theosophy *none is held to weed out a larger plot of ground than his strength and capacity will permit him*. Do not be too severe on the merits or demerits of one who seeks admission among your ranks, as the truth about the actual state of the inner man can only be known to Karma, and can be dealt with justly by that all-seeing Law alone. Even the simple presence amidst you of a well-intentioned and sympathizing individual may help you magnetically. . . . You are the free volunteer workers on the fields of Truth, and as such must leave no obstruction on the paths leading to that field.

JACOB BOEHME — *Franz Hartmann*

The Life of a Christian Philosopher

[In view of the publication of *Theosophic Correspondence between Louis Claude de Saint-Martin and Kirchberger, Baron de Liebistorf*, readers will undoubtedly be refreshed to see once again an account of Jacob Boehme. Called by H. P. Blavatsky "the nursling of the genii (Nirmanakayas) who watched over and guided him," Boehme in turn became the inspirer and guide to a surprising number of mystics, philosophers, and seers, notable among these being the Count de Saint-Martin who under the title of "the Unknown Philosopher" labored untiringly that the self-same seed of theosophic thought might penetrate the Christian thinking of his day.— Eds.]

Jacob Boehme was born in the year 1575, at Alt Seidenburg, a place about two miles distant from Goerlitz in Germany. He was the son of poor country people, and in his youth he herded the cattle of his parents. He was then sent to school, where he learned how to read and to write, and afterwards he entered as an apprentice a shoemaker's shop.

It seems that even in early youth he was able to enter into an abnormal state of consciousness and to behold images in the astral light; for once, while herding the cattle and standing on the top of a hill, he suddenly saw an arched opening of a vault, built of large red stones, and surrounded by bushes. He went through that opening into the vault, and in its depths he beheld a vessel filled with money.

He, however, experienced no desire to possess himself of that treasure; but, supposing that it was a product of the spirits of darkness made to lead him into temptation, he fled.

On a later occasion, while left alone in the shoemaker's shop, an

unknown stranger entered, asking to buy a pair of shoes. Boehme, supposing himself not entitled to make such a bargain in the absence of his master, asked an extraordinary high price, hoping thus to get rid of the person who desired to purchase. Nevertheless, the stranger bought the shoes and left the shop. After leaving, he stopped in front of the shop, and, with a loud and solemn voice called to Boehme: "Jacob, come outside."

Boehme was very much astonished to see that the stranger knew his name. He went out in the street to meet him, and there the stranger, grasping him by the hand, and, with deeply penetrating eyes looking into his eyes, spoke the following words: "Jacob, you are now little; but you will become a great man, and the world will wonder about you. Be pious, live in the fear of God, and honour His word. Especially do I admonish you to read the Bible; herein you will find comfort and consolation; for you will have to suffer a great deal of trouble, poverty, and persecution. Nevertheless, do not fear, but remain firm; for God loves you, and is gracious to you." He then again pressed Boehme's hand, gave him another kind of look and went away.

This remarkable event made a great impression on the mind of Jacob Boehme. He earnestly went through the practical exercises necessary in the study of practical occultism; that is to say, he practised patience, piety, simplicity of thought and purpose, modesty, resignation of his self-will to divine law, and he kept in mind the promise given in the Bible, that those who earnestly ask the Father in Heaven for the communication of the Holy Ghost will have the spirit of sanctity awakened within themselves, and be illuminated with His wisdom.

Such an illumination, indeed, took place within his mind, and for seven days in succession Jacob Boehme was in an ecstatic state, during which he was surrounded by the light of the Spirit, and his consciousness immersed in contemplation and happiness. It is not stated what he saw during those visions, nor would such a statement have the result of gratifying the curiosity of the reader; for the things of the spirit are inconceivable to the external mind, and can only be realized by those

who, rising above the realms of the senses and entering a state of superior consciousness, can perceive them. Such a state does not necessarily include the exercise of the external faculties; for, while Plato says about Socrates, that the latter once stood immovable for a day and a half upon one spot in a state of such ecstasy, in the case of Jacob Boehme we find that during a similar condition he continued his external occupations in his profession.

Afterwards, in the year 1594, he became master-shoemaker, and married a woman, with whom he lived for thirty years, and there were four sons born to him, who followed the same profession as himself.

In the year 1600, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, another divine illumination took place in his mind, and this time he learned to know the innermost foundation of nature, and acquired the capacity to see henceforth with eyes of the soul into the heart of all things, a faculty which remained with him even in his normal condition.

Ten years afterwards, *anno* 1610, his third illumination took place, and that which in former visions had appeared to him chaotic and multiplied was now recognized by him as a Unity, like a harp of many strings, of which each string is a separate instrument, while the whole is only one harp. He now recognized the divine order of nature, and how from the trunk of the tree of life spring different branches, bearing manifold leaves and flowers and fruits, and he became impressed with the necessity of writing down what he saw and preserving it.

Thus, beginning with the year 1612, and up to his end in the year 1624, he wrote many books about the things which he saw in the light of his own spirit, comprising thirty books full of the deepest mysteries regarding God and the angels, Christ and Man, Heaven and Hell and Nature, and the secret things of the world, such as before him no man is known to have communicated to this sinful world, and all this he did, not for the purpose of earthly gain, but for the glorification of God and for the redemption of mankind from ignorance regarding the things of the Spirit.

But his first work, entitled *Aurora* (the beginning of the new day), was not quite finished, when, by the indiscretion of a friend, copies of the manuscript came into the hands of the clergy. The head parson of Goerlitz, whose name was Gregorius Richter — a person entirely incapable of conceiving of the depths of that religion which he professed to teach, in ignorance of the divine mysteries of true Christianity, of which he knew nothing but its superficial aspect and form, too vain to bear with toleration that a poor shoemaker should be in possession of any spiritual knowledge which he, the well-fed priest, did not possess — became Jacob Boehme's bitterest enemy, denouncing and cursing the author of that book, his hate being raised to the utmost degree by the meekness and modesty with which Boehme received the inquiries and denunciations directed toward him.

Soon the bigoted priest publicly in the pulpit accused Boehme of being a disturber of the peace and a heretic, asking the City Council of Goerlitz to punish the traitor, and threatening that if he were not removed from the town, the anger of God would be awakened and he would cause the whole place to be swallowed up by the earth, in the same manner in which he claimed that Kora, Dathan, and Abiram had perished after resisting Moses, the man of God.

In vain Jacob Boehme attempted to reason personally with the infuriated Doctor of Divinity. New curses and insults were the result of his interview with him, and the parson threatened to have Jacob Boehme arrested and put him in prison. The City Council was afraid of the priest, and, although he could not substantiate any charge against Boehme, nevertheless, they ordered him to leave the town for fear of the consequences that might result if they did not comply with Rev. Richter's request.

Patently Boehme submitted to the unjust decree. He requested to be permitted to go home and take leave of his family before going into banishment, and even this was refused to him. Then his only answer was: "Very well; if I cannot do otherwise, I will be contented."

Boehme left; but during the following night greater courage entered into the hearts and a better judgment into the heads of the Councilmen. They reproached themselves for having banished an inoffensive man, and the very next day they called Jacob Boehme back, and permitted him to remain, stipulating, however, that he should give up to them the manuscript of the *Aurora*, and that henceforth he should abstain from the writing of books.

For seven years, Boehme, in obedience to this foolish decree, restrained himself from writing down the experiences which he enjoyed in the realm of the spirit, and, instead of bringing light to mankind, contented himself with mending their shoes. Hard was the battle required to stem the tidal wave of the spirit, which with overpowering strength descended upon his soul; but at last, encouraged by the advice of his friends, who counselled him not to resist any longer the impulse coming from God, for fear of disobeying man-made authorities, he resumed the labor of writing.

The writings of Jacob Boehme soon made their way in the world, and attracted the attention of those who were capable of realizing and appreciating their true character. He found many friends and followers among the high and the lowly, the rich and the poor, and it seemed, indeed, as if a new outpouring of the Spirit of Truth was intended to take place in priest-ridden and bigoted Germany.

Jacob Boehme during that time wrote a number of books and pamphlets: — *Aurora; The Three Principles of Divine Being; The Threefold Life of Man; The Incarnation of Jesus Christ; The Six Theosophical Points; The Book of Terrestrial and Celestial Mysteries; Biblical Calculation Regarding the Duration of the World; The Four Complexions; His Defence; the book about The Generation and Signature of all Beings; of True Repentance; True Regeneration; The Supersensual Life; Regeneration and Divine Contemplation; The Selection of Grace; Holy Baptism; Holy Communion; Discourse between an Enlightened and an Unilluminated Soul; an essay on Prayer; Tables of the Three Principles of Divine Manifestation; Key to the most Prominent Points; One Hundred*

and Seventy-Seven Theosophical Questions; Theosophical Letters; and other smaller works and articles regarding philosophical matters.

In March, 1624, and shortly before his death, began for Jacob Boehme a time of great suffering. In 1623, Abraham von Franken-burg had some of Boehme's works published under the title of *The Way to Christ*, and the appearance of this book, full of Divine Truth, again inflamed the envy and rage of the angry parson of Goerlitz, being blown into a flame by the observation of the great favor with which the book was received by all truly enlightened minds. With the utmost fury he began again his persecutions of Jacob Boehme, cursing and damning him from the pulpit, and published against him a pasquillo, full of personal insults and vulgar epithets, which contained neither reason nor logic; but in their places innumerable calumnies, such as only the brain of a person made insane by passion could invent or concoct.

This time Boehme did not remain so passive as on a former occasion; but he handed over to the City Council a written defence in justification of what he had done, and he moreover wrote a reply to Richter, answering in a quiet and dignified manner every point of the objection raised by Richter, annihilating his arguments by the force of his logic and by the power of truth. This defence was not in an ironical style, but pregnant with love and pity for the misguided man, modest and eloquent to a degree such as rarely can be found even among the greatest orators.

The City Council, however, being once more intimidated by the blustering priest, did not accept Boehme's defence, but expressed a wish that he should voluntarily leave the town, and they expressed their wish to him in the form of a well-meant advice, to save him from incurring the fate of heretics, which was to be burned alive on a stake by order of the Kurfurst or Emperor, either of whom might have been inclined to lend a willing ear to the representations of the clergy, being supposed to hesitate very little to give the requisite order, if the whim of the priesthood could be gratified by such a comparatively insignificant thing as the execution of a troublesome person who

disturbed their peace.

Boehme, in obedience to that advice, which he well knew was a command in disguise, left Goerlitz on the 9th day of May, 1624, and went to Dresden, where he found an asylum in the house of a physician named Dr. Benjamin Hinkelman. There he received many honors and offers of aid; but he remained modest, writing to a friend that he intended to put his trust in no man, but in the living God; and that, as he was doing so, he was full of joy and all was well.

About this time Boehme, by order of the Kurfurst, was invited to take part in a learned disputation which was to take place between him and some of the best theologians of those times, including two professors of mathematics. The discussion took place, and Boehme astonished his opponents by the depths of his ideas and by his extraordinary knowledge in regard to divine and natural things; so that, when asked by the Kurfurst to give their decision, the theologians begged for time to investigate still more the matters which Boehme had represented to them, and which seemed to reach to the limits of what they believed themselves capable of grasping. One of these theologians, Gerhard by name, was heard to say that he would not take the whole world if it were offered to him as a bribe to condemn such a man, and the other, Dr. Meissner, answered that he was of the same opinion, and that they had no right to condemn that which surpassed their understanding; and thus it may be seen that not all the theologians were like Gregorius Richter; but that in the clerical profession, as in any other, there may be wise men and fools. Such theologians, of noble mind and without bigotry, were henceforth to be found among Jacob Boehme's admirers and friends, and whenever he met them he treated them with respect.

Soon afterwards he wrote his last work, entitled *Tables Regarding Divine Manifestation*, and, having returned to his home, he was taken sick with a fever. His body began to swell, and he announced to his friends that the time of his death was near, saying: "In three days you will see how God has made an end of me." Then they asked him whether he was willing to die; and he replied: "Yes, according to the

will of God." When his friends expressed the hope to find him improved on the following day, he said: "May God help that it shall be as you say. Amen."

This took place on a Friday; but on the next Sunday, on the 20th of November, 1624, before 1 a.m., Boehme called his son, Tobias, to his bedside, and asked him whether he did not hear a beautiful music, and then he requested him to open the door of the room so that the celestial songs could better be heard. Later on, he asked what time it was, and when he was told that the clock struck two, he said: "This is not yet time for me; in three hours will be my time." After a pause he again spoke, and said: "Thou powerful God Zabaoth, save me according to thy Will." Again he said, "Thou crucified Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me, and take me into Thy kingdom." He then gave to his wife certain directions regarding his books and other temporal matters; telling her also that she would not survive him very long (as, indeed, she did not), and, taking leave from his sons, he said, "Now I shall enter the paradise." He then asked his eldest son, whose loving looks seemed to keep Boehme's soul from severing the bonds of the body, to turn round, and, giving one deep sigh, his soul gave up the body to the earth to which it belonged, and entered into that higher state which is known to none except those who have experienced it themselves.

Jacob Boehme's enemy, the bigoted head-parson, Gregorius Richter, refused a decent burial to the corpse of the philosopher, and, as the City Council of Goerlitz, again in fear of the priest, were wavering and uncertain what to do, it was already decided to take the body for burial to a country place belonging to one of Boehme's friends, on which occasion, undoubtedly, a row would have taken place, and the ceremony be disturbed by the populace, whose prejudices were aroused by the clergy; but at the appropriate time the Catholic Count Hannibal von Dronha arrived, and ordered the body to be buried in a solemn manner, and in the presence of two of the members of the City Council. This took place accordingly; but the parson pretended to be sick, and took medicine so as to avoid being obliged to hold the funeral sermon, and the clergyman who held the sermon in his place, although

he himself had given absolution and the sacrament to Boehme shortly before the latter died, began his speech by expressing his great disgust at having been forced to do so by order of the Council.

Some friends of Boehme in Silesia sent a cross to be put on his grave; but it was soon destroyed by the hands of some bigot, who imagined to please God by insulting the memory of a man who was obnoxious to the priests; but who had done more to bring to mankind a true knowledge of God than priestcraft ever did in modern or ancient times.

In his exterior appearance, Boehme was little, having a short, thin beard, a feeble voice, and eyes of a greyish tint. He was deficient in physical strength; nevertheless, there is nothing known of his having ever had any other disease than the one that caused his death. But, if Jacob Boehme was small in body, he was a giant in intelligence and a powerful spirit. His hands could accomplish no greater works than to write and to make shoes; but the power of God having become manifest in that apparently insignificant organism and compound of natural and spiritual principles which represented the man Jacob Boehme, on this terrestrial globe, was strong enough to overthrow, and is still overthrowing, the most petrified and gigantic superstitions existing in his own and subsequent centuries. His "Spirit" is still battling with the powers of darkness, and the Light which was kindled in the soul of poor little Jacob Boehme is still illuminating the world, growing larger and brighter from day to day in proportion as mankind becomes more capable of beholding it, and of receiving and grasping his ideas. . . .

Among the most prominent followers and successors of Jacob Boehme might be named many celebrated theologians and philosophers, such as Dr. Balthasar Walther, Abraham Frankenberg, Friedrich Krause, and even the son of Boehme's worst enemy, Richter of Goerlitz, who published eight books containing extracts of Boehme's works.

Boehme's works were translated into different languages, and attracted the attention of Charles I. of England, who, after reading his *Answers to Forty Questions*, exclaimed,

God be praised that there are still men in existence who are able to give from their own experience a living testimony of God and His Word.

Johannes Sparrow, in the years 1646-1662, produced a translation in English of Boehme's works, and Edward Taylor another during the reign of James II. A third translation was made in 1755 by William Law, and many authors (the great Newton included) are said to have drawn largely from Boehme's works. His prominent disciples, however, and the ones most capable of grasping his ideas, seem to have been Thomas Bromley (1691) and Jane Leade (died 1704), the founder of the society of Philadelphians (if comprising under that name all persons who have entered a certain stage of development can be called the founding of a society).

Henry More, professor at Cambridge, was requested to examine the books of Jacob Boehme, and *to report against them*. He examined them; but his report had turned out differently from what had been expected; for even if he, on account of his own engrafted theologian ideas, was not fully capable of comprehending Jacob Boehme, and misunderstood him in many ways; nevertheless, he pronounced himself in his favour, and said that he who treated Boehme with contempt, could not be otherwise but ignorant and mentally blind; adding that Jacob Boehme had undoubtedly been spiritually awakened for the purpose of correcting those false Christians who believed merely in an external Christ, without regard whether or not they had the Spirit of Christ within themselves.

For the instruction of those who believe that the present may learn a lesson from the experience of the past, we must prominently mention the name of Johann George Gichtel, a pious man and one of the greatest disciples of Boehme, a man of great insight and power.

He was a deep thinker, leading a blameless life. In 1682, he re-published Boehme's writings, and added to them many valuable engravings, with explanations, showing great profundity of thought

and spiritual knowledge. By exposing the faults of the clergy, he made them his enemies. He wanted to reform them by force. Several times he was put into prison, and once he was even publicly exposed in the pillory in consequence of his sincerity. He established a society called the "Angelic Brothers," in which every member was supposed to have actually renounced the world and entered into a state of angelic perfection. These "Angelic Brothers" were to be free from all human imperfections and so situated as not to be pestered with terrestrial cares. They were supposed not to be inclined to marry, and not to do any manual labour; but to live in continual contemplation and prayer, and by penetrating to the centre of good to abolish all evil, so that the wrath of God might be extinguished within the souls of all men, and universal love and harmony prevail everywhere. They were to depose the clergy, and, in their places, to be true priests, after the order of Melchisedec, taking upon themselves the *Karma* of all men and the sin of the world for expiation and redemption. Thus, this otherwise well-meaning man forgot that the organization of an angelic brotherhood would require, above all, the acquisition of angels to constitute its membership. Such angels are not easily to be found, and if they were to be found, they would require no external organization. Nevertheless, Gichtel's society, although being presumably neither angelic nor divinely wise, is said to have done a great deal of good, and Henke, a church historian, writes that they especially were tolerant, and never condemned any person on account of his belief or opinions, and that they never boasted, but silently accomplished many good works.

The followers of Jacob Boehme were not always left in peace. There will be theological and other bigots as long as ignorance exists in the world. Such persons, incapable of understanding the spirit of Boehme's teachings, imagined them to contain heresies, and, in 1689, Quirinus Kuhlmann, a follower of Boehme, was burned alive at the stake at Moscow, because he had been too free in expressing his opinions regarding the iniquities of the clergy of those times.

All the arguments which the enemies of Jacob Boehme have ever put forward consist merely in the application of vile epithets, such as "Fool!

Atheist! Swine! Shoe-patcher! Crank! Hypocrite!" and phrases such as the following: —

Boehme's sect is truly Devilish, and the vilest excrement of the Devil; it has the father of lies for its origin; the Devil had possession of Boehme, and grunted out of his mouth. (*Johann Trick.*)

We have no desire to climb up the ladder of dreams created by Boehme. To do so would be to tempt God and lead us down to perdition. (*Delitsch.*)

The writings of Jacob Boehme contain as many blasphemies as there are lines. They have a fearful odour of shoemaker's pitch and blacking. (*Richter.*)

Christ used to drink good wine; but shoemakers drink whiskey. (*Rev. Gregorius Richter.*)

The above will be sufficient as specimens of the theological arguments of those times. However laughable they may appear at the present time, there was a serious aspect attached to them for Jacob Boehme and his successors. Hobius of Hamburg, a follower of Boehme, had to leave the city for fear of being assassinated by the rabble, whose fury was excited against him by the bigoted parson, Rev. J. Frederic Mayer; and Abraham Hinkelman, from the same cause, died of grief; while Joh. Winkler, a theologian, who had refused to express a contempt for Jacob Boehme, was saved from his persecutors by the protection offered him by the King.

On the other hand, there were many of the more enlightened theologians who stood up in defence of Boehme and his doctrines; foremost of all John Winkler, John Mathaci, Frederick Brenkling, and Spencer, and especially so, Gottfried Arnold, the author of a history of churches and heretics. The wise can find wisdom in everything, even in the prattle of a child; but the fool sees his own image in everything, and therefore the great historian Mozhof (1688) sees in Jacob Boehme a saint and a sage; while F. T. Adelong, who wrote a book on human

folly, denounces him and Theophrastus Paracelsus as fools. The so-called "Rationalists," and the great bulk of the theologians, combined with each other to fight against that which they were unable to understand, while Johann Salomo Samler, a self-thinking man and capable of entering into the spirit of Boehme, calls the writings of Boehme

a fountain of happiness and spiritual knowledge, from which every one may drink without having the order of his external life disturbed thereby.

Among those who were pre-eminently capable to grasp Jacob Boehme's ideas, we will only mention the great theologian, Frederic Christop Octinger, Pastor Oberlin, and Louis Claude de St. Martin, the "Unknown philosopher," who translated his works into French. Many other persons, whose names are well-known in history, and who had more or less penetrated to the fountain of truth, such as Henry Jung Stilling, Friederich von Hardenberg, Friederich von Schlegel, Novalis, Heinrich Jacobi, Schelling, Goethe, Franz Baader, Hegel, and many others might be named. . . .

The writings of Jacob Boehme are all in accordance with, and based upon, the statements contained in the Christian Bible, and this circumstance will at once prove to be an obstacle in the way of those who have no understanding for the internal meaning of the Bible accounts, and may frighten them away from giving any attention to his works. . . .

Thus prepared, we may take up the study of Boehme's works. He himself says in the introduction to one of his books as follows:

God-loving reader! If it is your earnest and serious will and desire to devote yourself to that which is divine and eternal, the reading of this book will be very useful to you; but if you are not fully determined to enter the way of holiness, it would be better for you to let alone the sacred names of God, wherein his supreme sanctity is invoked; because the wrath of God may

become ignited within your soul. This book is written only for those who desire to be sanctified and united with the supreme power from which they have originated. Such persons will understand the true meaning of the words contained therein, and they will also recognize the source from which these thoughts have come.

One of the most enlightened critics of Jacob Boehme says, in regard to his book on divine mysteries: —

This book is a treasure-box wherein all wisdom has been hidden from the eyes of the fool; but to the children of light it is always open. No one will clearly understand it unless he has the key necessary for that purpose, and that key is the Holy Ghost. He who is in possession of that key will be able to open the door and to enter to see the mysteries of Divinity; divine magic, angelic cabala, and natural philosophy. That key opens the door of divinity, and, like a lightning flash, it illuminates the darkness of material conditions; for its imperishable spirit is contained within all things. This spirit and no other can teach the soul of man from what depths the truths contained in this book have originated, for the purpose of glorifying the Divinity in nature and man. . . .

Let, then, the reader *pray*; not with his mouth nor with mere words, but with his spirit — that is to say, let him open his heart to the influence of the power of God, and by the power of the Divine Will rise up to that universal realm of Light from which Jacob Boehme received his illuminations. It is the realm of the living *Word* which was in the beginning, and by whose power the world was created; the Christ that continually whispers consolation to the despairing and dying soul; the heart and centre of God, of which the material sun that fills our terrestrial world with light and life is merely a symbol, an outward representation. Then will we see the internal world filled with a superior and living light, incomparably superior to that of the physical world, and in that world we shall find God and the Christ and the holy

Spirit of Truth revealed, together with all the angels and mysteries; truly and satisfactorily beyond the possibility of being disputed away; because we shall not then need to be taught by mere letters or words, but by the truth itself, and learn what it is, and not what it appeared to be to another, because we shall then ourselves be one with the Truth and know it by the knowledge of self.

In the year 1705, the saintly Gichtel wrote:

Whoever in our time wishes to bring forth anything fundamental and imperishable, must borrow it from Boehme. Boehme's writings are a gift of God, and, therefore, not every kind of reason can apprehend them; therefore, you must not be satisfied with mere reading and rational speculation, but beseech God to give you His Holy Spirit, that shall lead you into all truth.

These prophetic words, quoted in Mrs. A. J. Penny's excellent essay on the way to study Jacob Boehme's writings, have been fully verified by the succeeding events; for every great philosopher that has come before the public since that time seems to have received his inspiration from Boehme's books. Even the great Arthur Schopenhauer, one of the most admired modern philosophers, whose works are praised by many who would treat with contempt the works of Boehme, which they have never studied, was a follower of Boehme, and his writings are fundamentally nothing but an exposition of Boehme's doctrines from the point of view of Mr. Schopenhauer, who misunderstood Boehme in many respects. Schopenhauer likewise says about Schelling's works:

They are almost nothing except a remodelling of Jacob Boehme's *Mysterium Magnum*, in which almost every sentence of Hegel's book is represented. But why are in Hegel's writings the same figures and forms insupportable and ridiculous to me, which in Boehme's works fill me with admiration and awe? It is because in Boehme's writings the recognition of eternal truth speaks from every page; while Schelling takes from him what he is able to grasp. He uses the same figures of speech; but evidently

mistakes the shell for the fruit, or at least, he does not know how to separate them from each other.

(Handschriften, Nachlass, page 261.)

It would be too tedious to produce a collection of what the various modern philosophers in different nations have said about the writings of Jacob Boehme; the only way to form a correct estimate about him is to enter into his spirit and to see as he did. We will, therefore, in conclusion, merely quote the words of Claude de Saint Martin:

I am not young, being now near my fiftieth year; nevertheless, I have begun to learn German merely for the purpose of reading this incomparable author. . . .

I am not worthy to open the shoestrings of this wonderful man, whom I regard as the greatest light that has ever appeared upon the earth, second only to Him who was the Light itself. . . .

I advise you by all means to throw yourself in this abyss of knowledge of the most profoundest of all truths. . . . I find in his works such a profundity and exaltation of thought and such a simple and delicious nutriment, that I would consider it a waste of time to seek for such things in any other place.

— *Theosophic Correspondence* — Saint-Martin and Kirchberger.

THE ADEPTS AND WESTERN SCIENCE: III — H. P. Blavatsky

[Reply to an English F. T. S. — Mr. F. W. Myers of the Psychical Research Society and member of the London Lodge, T. S., whose questions were answered by Master M. through H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist*. — Eds.]

Are the Great Nations to be Swept Away in an Hour?

No such absurdity was ever postulated. The cataclysm that annihilated the choicest sub-races of the 4th race, or the Atlanteans, was slowly preparing its work for ages; as any one can read in *Esoteric Buddhism* (page 54). "Poseidonis," so called, belongs to historical times, though its fate begins to be realized and suspected only now. What was said is still asserted: every root-race is separated by a catastrophe, a cataclysm — the basis and historical foundation of the fables woven later on into the religious fabric of every people, whether civilized or savage, under the names of "deluges," "showers of fire" and such like.

That no "appreciable trace is left of such high civilization" is due to several reasons. One of these may be traced chiefly to the inability, and partially to the unwillingness (or shall we say congenital spiritual blindness of this our age?) of the modern archaeologist to distinguish between excavations and ruins 50,000 and 4,000 years old, and to assign to many a grand archaic ruin its proper age and place in prehistoric times. For the latter the archaeologist is not responsible — for what criterion, what sign has he to lead him to infer the true date of an excavated building bearing no inscription; and what warrant has the public that the antiquary and specialist has not made an error of some 20,000 years? A fair proof of this we have in the *scientific* and *historic* labelling of the Cyclopean architecture. Traditional Archaeology bearing directly upon the monumental is rejected. Oral literature, popular legends, ballads and rites, are all stifled in one word — *superstition*, and popular antiquities have become "fables" and "folk-

lore." The ruder style of Cyclopean masonry, the walls of Tiryns, mentioned by Homer, are placed at the farthest end, — the dawn of pre-Roman history; the walls of Epirus and Mycenae — at the nearest. The latter are *commonly* believed the work of the Pelasgi and *probably* of about 1,000 years before the Western era. As to the former — they were hedged in and driven forward by the Noachian deluge till very lately — Archbishop Usher's learned scheme, computing that earth and man "were created 4004 b.c," having been not only popular but actually *forced* upon the educated classes until Mr. Darwin's triumphs. Had it not been for the efforts of a few Alexandrian and other mystics, Platonists, and heathen philosophers, Europe would have never laid her hands even on those few Greek and Roman classics she now possesses. And, as among the few that escaped the dire fate not all by any means were trustworthy — hence, perhaps, the secret of their preservation. Western scholars got early into the habit of rejecting all heathen testimony, whenever truth clashed with the *dicta* of their churches. Then, again, the modern Archaeologists, Orientalists and Historians are *all* Europeans; and they are *all* Christians, whether nominally or otherwise. However it may be, most of them seem to dislike to allow any relic of archaism to antedate the supposed antiquity of the Jewish records. This is a ditch into which most have slipped.

The traces of ancient civilizations exist, and they are many. Yet, it is humbly suggested, that so long as there will be reverend gentlemen mixed up unchecked in Archaeological and Asiatic societies; and Christian bishops to write the supposed histories and religions of non-Christian nations, and to preside over the meetings of Orientalists — so long will Archaism and its remains be made subservient in every branch to ancient Judaism and modern Christianity.

So far, archaeology knows nothing of the sites of other and far older civilizations except the few it has stumbled upon, and to which, it has assigned their respective ages, mostly under the guidance of biblical chronology. Whether the West had any *right* to impose upon *Universal* History the untrustworthy chronology of a small and unknown Jewish

tribe and reject at the same time, every data as every other tradition furnished by the classical writers of *non*-Jewish and non-Christian nations is questionable. At any rate, had it accepted as willingly data coming from other sources, it might have assured itself by this time, that not only in Italy and other parts of Europe, but even on sites not very far from those it is accustomed to regard as the hot-bed of ancient ruins — Babylonia and Assyria — there are other sites where it could profitably excavate. The immense "Salt Valley" of Dasht-Beyad by Khorasson covers the most ancient civilizations of the world; while the Shamo desert has had time to change from sea to land, and from fertile land to a dead desert, since the day when the *first* civilization of the 5th Race left its now invisible, and perhaps for ever hidden "traces" under its beds of sand.

Times have changed, are changing. Proof of the old civilizations and the archaic wisdom are accumulating. Though soldier-bigots and priestly schemers have burnt books and converted old libraries to base uses; though the dry rot and the insect have destroyed inestimably precious records; though within the historic period the Spanish brigands made bonfires of the works of the refined archaic American races, which, if spared, would have solved many a riddle of history; and Omar lit the fires of the Alexandrian baths for months with the literary treasures of the Serapeum; and the Sibylline and other mystical books of Rome and Greece were destroyed in war; and the South Indian invaders of Ceylon "heaped into piles as high as the tops of the cocoanut trees" the *ollas* of the Buddhists and set them ablaze to light their victory, — so to the knowledge of all, obliterating early Buddhistic annals and treatises of great importance: though this hateful and senseless Vandalism has disgraced the career of most fighting nations — still, despite everything, there are extant abundant proofs of the history of mankind, and bits and scraps come to light from time to time by what science has often called "most curious coincidences." Europe has no very trustworthy history of her own vicissitudes and mutations, her successive races and their doings. What with their savage wars, the barbaric habits of the historic Goths, Huns,

Franks, and other warrior nations, and the interested literary Vandalism of the shaveling priests who for centuries sat upon its intellectual life like a nightmare, an antiquity could not exist for Europe. And, having no Past of record themselves, the European critics, historians and archaeologists have not scrupled to deny one to others — whenever the concession exacted a sacrifice of biblical prestige.

No "traces of old civilizations" we are told! And what about the Pelasgi — the direct forefathers of the Hellenes, according to Herodotus? What about the Etruscans — the race mysterious and wonderful if any, for the historian and whose origin is the most unsolvable of problems? That which is known of them only shows that could something more be known, a whole series of prehistoric civilizations might be discovered. A people described as are the Pelasgi — a highly intellectual, receptive, active people, chiefly occupied with agriculture, warlike when necessary though preferring peace; a people who built canals as no one else, subterranean water-works, dams, walls, and Cyclopean buildings of most astounding strength; who are even *suspected* of having been the inventors of the so-called Cadmean or Phoenician writing characters from which all European alphabets are derived — who were they? Could they be shown by any possible means as the descendants of the biblical *Peleg* (Gen. x. 25) their high civilization would have been thereby demonstrated, though their antiquity would still have to be dwarfed to 2247 "B.C." And who were the Etruscans? Shall the Easterns like the Westerns be made to believe that between the high civilizations of the pre-Roman (and we say — *pre-historic*) *Tursenoi* of the Greeks, with their 12 great cities *known* to history; their Cyclopean buildings, their plastic and pictorial arts, and the time when they were a nomadic tribe "first descended into Italy from their northern latitudes" — only a few centuries elapsed? Shall it be still urged that the Phoenicians with their Tyre 2750 "B.C." (a chronology, accepted by *Western* history) their commerce, fleet, learning, arts and civilization, were only a few centuries before the building of Tyre but "a small tribe of Semitic fishermen"? Or, that the Trojan war could not have been earlier than 1184 B.C., and thus *Magna Graecia* must be fixed

somewhere between the 8th and 9th century "B.C.," and by no means thousands of years before, as was claimed by Plato and Aristotle, Homer and the Cyclic Poems, derived from, and based upon, other records millenniums older? If the Christian historian, hampered by his chronology, and the free thinker by lack of necessary data, feel bound to stigmatize every non-Christian or *non*-Western chronology as "obviously fanciful," "purely mythical" and "not worthy of a moment's consideration," how shall one wholly dependent upon Western guides get at the truth? And if these incompetent builders of Universal History can persuade their public to accept as authoritative their chronological and ethnological reveries, why should the Eastern student, who has access to quite different — and we make bold to say, more trustworthy — materials, be expected to join in the blind belief of those who defend Western historical infallibility? He believes — on the strength of the documentary evidence, left by Yavanacharya (Pythagoras) 607 "B.C." in India, and that of his own national "temple records," that instead of giving hundreds we may safely give thousands of years to the foundation of *Cuma* and *Magna Graecia*, of which it was the pioneer settlement. That the civilization of the latter had already become effete when Pythagoras, the great pupil of Aryan Masters went to Crotona. And, having no biblical bias to overcome, he feels persuaded that, if it took the Celtic and Gaelic tribes *Britannicae Insulae*, with the ready-made civilizations of Rome before their eyes, and acquaintance with that of the Phoenicians whose trade with them began a thousand years before the Christian era; and to crown all with the definite help later of the Normans and Saxons — two thousand years before they could build their mediaeval cities, not even remotely comparable with those of the Romans; and it took them two thousand five hundred years to get half as civilized; then, that instead of that hypothetical period benevolently styled the childhood of the race being within easy reach of the Apostles and the early Fathers, it must be relegated to an enormously earlier time. Surely if it took the barbarians of Western Europe so many centuries to develop a language and create empires, then the nomadic tribes of the "mythical" periods ought in common fairness — since they never came under the fructifying energy of that Christian influence to

which we are asked to ascribe all the scientific enlightenment of this age — about ten thousand years to build their Tyres and their Veii, their Sidons and Carthagenes. As *other* Troys lie under the surface of the topmost one in the Troad; and other and higher civilizations were exhumed by Mariette-Bey under the stratum of sand from which the archaeological collections of Lepsius, Abbott, and the British Museum were taken; and six Hindu "Delhis," superposed and hidden away out of sight, formed the pedestal upon which the Mogul conqueror built the gorgeous capital whose ruins still attest the splendour of his Delhi; so when the fury of critical bigotry has quite subsided, and Western men are prepared to write History in the interest of truth alone, will the proofs be found of the cyclic law of civilization. Modern Florence lifts her beautiful form above the tomb of Etruscan Florentia, which in her turn rose upon the hidden vestiges of anterior towns. And so also Arezzo, Peruggia, Lucca and many other European sites now occupied by modern towns and cities, are based upon the relics of archaic civilizations whose period covers ages incomputable, and whose names Echo has forgotten to even whisper through "the corridors of Time."

When the Western historian has finally and unanswerably proven who were the Pelasgi, at least, and who the Etruscans, and the (as) mysterious Iapygians, who seem also to have had an earlier acquaintance with writing — as proved by their inscriptions — than the Phoenicians, then only may he menace the Asiatic into acceptance of his own arbitrary data and dogmas. Then also may he tauntingly ask "how it is that no appreciable trace is left of such high civilizations as are described in the Past?"

"Is it supposed that the present European civilization with its offshoots . . . can be destroyed by any inundation or conflagration?" More easily than was many another civilization. Europe has neither the Titanic and Cyclopean masonry of the Ancients, nor even its parchments to preserve the records of its "existing arts and languages." Its civilization is too recent, too rapidly growing to leave any positively indestructible relics of either its architecture, arts or sciences. What is there in the whole Europe that could be regarded as even approximately

indestructible, without mentioning the *debacle* of the geological upheaval that follows generally such cataclysms? Is it its ephemeral Crystal Palaces, its theatres, railways, modern fragile furniture; or its electric telegraphs, phonographs, telephones and micrographs? While each of the former is at the mercy of fire and cyclone, the last enumerated marvels of modern science can be destroyed by a child breaking them to atoms. When we know of the destruction of the "Seven World's Wonders," of Thebes, Tyre, the Labyrinth and the Egyptian pyramids and temples and giant palaces as we now see are slowly crumbling into the dust of the deserts, being reduced to atoms by the hand of Time — lighter and far more merciful than any cataclysm, the question seems to us rather the outcome of modern pride than of stern reasoning. Is it your daily newspapers and periodicals, rags of a few days; your fragile books bearing the records of all your grand civilization, withal liable to become annihilated after a few meals are made on them by the white ants, that are regarded as invulnerable? And why should European civilization escape the common lot? It is from the lower classes, the units of the great masses who form the majorities in nations, that survivors will escape in greater numbers — and these know nothing of the arts, sciences, or languages except their own, and those very imperfectly. The arts and sciences are like the Phoenix of old: they die but to revive. And when the question found on page 58 of *Esoteric Buddhism* concerning "the curious rush of human progress within the last two thousand years," was first propounded, Mr. Sinnett's correspondent might have made his answer more complete by saying: "this rush, this progress, and the abnormal rapidity with which one discovery follows the other, ought to be a sign to human intuition that what you look upon in the light of "discoveries" are merely *re-discoveries*, which, following the law of gradual progress you make more perfect, yet in enunciating, you are not the first to explain them." We learn more easily that which we have heard about, or learnt in childhood. If, as averred, the Western nations have separated themselves from the great Aryan stock, it becomes evident that the races that first peopled Europe were inferior to the root-race which had the Vedas and the pre-historic Rishis. That which

your far-distant forefathers had heard in the secrecy of the temples was not lost. It reached their posterity, which is now simply improving upon details.

Is the Moon Immersed in Matter?

No "Adept," so far as the writers know, has ever given to "Lay Chela" his "views of the moon," for publication. With Selenography, modern science is far better acquainted than any humble Asiatic ascetic may ever hope to become. It is to be feared the speculations on pp. 104 and 105 of *Esoteric Buddhism*, besides being hazy, are somewhat premature. — *The Theosophist*, October, 1883

[Writing to A. P. Sinnett, on this same question, from Ootacamund, H. P. B. says:

". . . . And now speaking of moons why, should you in pity's sake, speak of *forbidden* things! Did I not tell you a hundred times that They allowed no one to know or speak of this eighth sphere, and how do *you* know it is the moon, as we all see it? And why should you print about it, and now "an English F. T. S." comes out with his question, and this ass Wyld calling it a dust bin. I called his head a dust bin in *Light*. You will both catch it in the answer you may bet your bottom dollar; for they (the answers) have arrived, the last ones tonight and *vous ne Vaurez pas vole* as the French say — your *savonade*. When Subba Row read the question discussed in your Book he nearly fainted, and when he read it (Mr. Myers" question) in the galleys — Damodar writes that he *became green*. . . ." — *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett*, Aug. 23, 1883.]

SCIENTIFIC AND OTHER NOTES — *Charles J. Ryan*

Intelligences Guide the Universe

ore and more closely is scientific research dealing with the problems of mind and its direct relation with matter and life. Duke University is becoming noteworthy on this line. Recent experiments with the very primitive single-celled pond-animal called *paramecium* are unmistakably in favor of the remarkable fact that the human mind can strongly affect the behavior of that tiny brainless and structureless bit of jelly, which normally, however, can use its own will and power of choice. The Duke bulletin reports that in 927 out of 1495 experiments, Dr. Richmond was able to make a paramecium move in any desired direction by will power alone and without any physical contact or influence, which would be expected by chance only once in billions of such attempts! In each case he spent fifteen seconds in willing the direction that the paramecium should move. The importance of this to us is that it comes from a recognized scientific source, but other examples of the power of a trained will could be drawn upon. Snake charming is one, not the commonplace tricks of the Hindu or Egyptian jugglers who exhibit their trained and fangless reptiles before the gaping tourist, but the strictly practical activities of the few real experts whose lives are devoted to the discovery and destruction of poisonous snakes that hide in obscure holes and cracks and have to be lured into the open by the will power of the snake charmer. The amazing feats in this line of the celebrated Egyptian Sheik Moussa are fully described in *A Search in Secret Egypt* by Dr. Paul Brunton, who had exceptional opportunities of studying the subject. He insists that there can be no shadow of doubt that Moussa (and others) could not only discover dangerous snakes hidden in inaccessible places but possessed complete control over them and could handle them with perfect impunity.

The paramecium experiment is of significance in support of one of the teachings of Theosophy, according to which living beings are largely

aided in their evolution and protected by superior beings known as "angels" or "archangels," etc., in Christian literature, and in India as "Dhyani Chohans," and in lesser order "Devas," etc. They are widely known elsewhere by other names, such as demi-gods, Fravarshi, Principalities, Powers, Messengers, etc.

H. P. B. says they are Guiding Intelligences, the Creative Powers or higher Causes that generate "Elementals" or semi-intelligent Nature Forces as active agents on lower planes. They were formerly men but are now at a stage far surpassing human consciousness and only our modern materialism prevents our belief in the existence of such minor but very potent "gods," all descending in hierarchies of different stages or grades. Ill-informed critics may say that such beings are purely imaginary or they would be visible, but this is a very poor argument, for many recognized physical agencies are invisible and can only be detected by the effects they produce. *The Secret Doctrine* makes it clear how necessary such active intermediaries are in carrying on the work of "Mother Nature." The queer and generally invisible entities, "nature spirits," so called, that produce sounds or other effects in haunted houses, the Irish and other fairies, and the like, are among the lowest orders of such hierarchies, nearest the physical plane, and are demonstrable to any one who approaches the subject with an open mind. To a certain degree, such phenomena demonstrate the existence of mind and will-control over matter by semi-intelligent entities which in other lines is now being demonstrated by the Duke experiments with the paramecium, etc.

In a measure this brings up the problem of instinct, a most convenient but unexplained word to use for one of the greatest mysteries in nature. Yet when once the reality of conscious or semi-conscious Deva-control and general protection over evolving forms of life is realized to be a fundamental and indispensable part of the hierarchical working of the Divine Plan of the Universe, light is thrown upon all such problems.

Mud or Mason Wasps

Take the mud wasps for example, not at all a high form of animal life. By his studies of their habits the great French naturalist Fabre, "threw a monkey wrench" into the ingenious but purely mechanistic interpretations of Darwin's valuable discovery of Natural Selection — so useful when kept in its place as a minor factor, and not strained to explain the *causes* of evolutionary variations. Fabre showed that the improbabilities demanded by Natural Selection alone to explain the establishment of these complex habits were so enormously large as to make them unthinkable. Recently further discoveries have been made by Dr. G. D. Schafer of Stanford about the mud wasps" domestic affairs still more damaging to the mechanistic theories, but all in favor of some kind of intelligent, or spiritual, if you prefer the word, guidance and protection.

For the preservation of one species of mud wasp by carefully protecting the single egg from marauders, eleven different processes have to be performed by the mother wasp, each of which, if she was a human being, we should say showed reasoning, choice, good judgment, skill and training. Yet the wasp has had no teaching; its mother died before it was hatched! But it knows exactly what to do, and, as Fabre remarks, "There is no apprenticeship in this trade. Every action must be complete and perfect or — the egg dies." And some of them are highly technical and would require special knowledge on the part of a man!

These remarks were aroused by Dr. Schafer's new discovery that in addition to the known marvels of the mason or mud wasp, the little cell in which the young wasp grows to maturity is furnished with a first class sanitary arrangement by which all effete matter, instead of poisoning the air by its effluvia, is carefully disposed of until the hibernation period when the young wasp is fully closed in, and there is no reason for precautions! How could this mechanism in the cell be evolved by the slow process of "blind Natural Selection"?

The mud wasp affords only one example of direction acted upon from a superior mind, but thousands of others exist. In view of such

evidence are we not justified in accepting the world-wide teaching of the ancient world that some kind of Higher Intelligences exist and help to keep the wheels of Nature moving? Do not forget that this belief was held by the greatest philosophers and wisest men throughout the ages until the tide of skepticism and spiritual darkness swept over the earth, especially the West.

Evolution Not a Haphazard Process

Today scientists are discovering facts and putting forth bold hypotheses that can be shown to be perfectly harmonious with the point we are considering. Dr. R. Goldschmidt of the University of California, one of the leading biologists of the world, has concluded from three years' research that *heterochromatin*, one of the principal substances found in the *genes*, those minute agents of heredity found in the germ cells, can suddenly produce marked changes in the evolutionary development of higher animals. But *why*, is another matter. Dr. Goldschmidt is famous for his anti-Darwinian theory that evolution is not a slow process, moving along by a *very gradual* accumulation of accidental changes which finally result in a new species but takes place with almost explosive suddenness by a new combination of the genes, the elements of heredity. Such a theory obviously leaves plenty of room for the Guiding Intelligence to call upon the physical means (such as heterochromatin) to come into play at any period found suitable for a new step in terrestrial evolution. We have previously drawn our readers' attention to the attitude of Dr. Goldschmidt in this most significant matter, for it is one of the definite proofs of the truth of H. P. B.'s statement in the Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine* that the 20th Century would see a strong and increasing approach by scholars to the Ancient Wisdom in spite of all the apparent dominance of materialism. And we are only half way through yet!

Recent demonstrations of the power of the human will mentioned above make the "accidental coincidence" theory still more unlikely; particularly so in relation to the problem of weather control by collective or mass wishful thinking. Can prayers or intense desire for

rain or fine weather be answered without interfering capriciously or "miraculously" with the orderly processes of nature?

Less than ten years ago Mr. E. L. Hawke, Secretary of the British Royal Meteorological Society published many examples which support this. During Queen Victoria's reign the expression "Queen's Weather" became proverbial, because with hardly an exception her numerous outdoor ceremonials were graced by brilliant sunshine, not too frequent in England. Her death was followed by specially violent and widespread storms. Swedenborg, a scientist as well as a mystical theologian, is cited as having first suggested the idea of mass thought affecting the weather, but it is said to be mentioned in the Vedas. According to *The Mahatma Letters* (p. 161) rain, wind and storms are produced by affections of the earth's magnetism. *The Secret Doctrine* speaks of "the mythical Dragon, the actual Adept," who "has the power of influencing the weather" (II, 280, ftn. 555), and several significant references are made in Volume II on page 615, etc., to the *Maruts* or storm gods who are connected with human emotions.

The Theosophical Forum

CHRISTMAS — A UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE — *John H. Manas*

According to the Bible and the Christian tradition, at twelve o'clock, middle night, on the 24th of December, 1949 years ago, Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, the Messiah, the Christos, the Savior of the world. In commemoration of this event, a special religious ceremony is celebrated on that night throughout the world among the peoples of the Christian Faith.

The Biblical story is but an allegory veiling a great Cosmic Truth, as all other Cosmic Truths were veiled from the profane in suitable allegories or myths by the ancient hierophants. Only the Initiates to the ancient Mysteries knew the inner meaning of the religious rituals which were enacted at certain times of the year in the temples. Because the consciousness of the masses was not yet able to understand the esoteric meaning of these rituals the priests had to use exoteric tangible forms, symbols and allegorical stories in order to impress on the minds of the people certain Cosmic Truths, upon the observance of which the peace and the well-being of society were based.

The date of the religious ceremony of Christmas was borrowed by the Christians from the civilizations of more ancient and more spiritually advanced nations. It is as old as the world itself. This religious ceremony was celebrated in all civilized ancient nations of the world in their temples many hundreds, if not thousands of years before the birth of Jesus in Palestine.

The Churches through the centuries gave and are still giving a literal interpretation to this cosmic event of the birth of the Cosmic Christos, who through his life force sustains the Universe. The same religious ceremony and ritual, on or about the Winter Solstice, and which is now celebrated on the night of the 24th of December in all Churches of Christendom, was celebrated with more splendor, with more religious feeling and with more understanding in the temples of ancient Greece,

Crete, Egypt, Persia and India. Although the names of the deities were different, the substance and the truth of this Cosmic Law, veiled in the allegory or ritual, are the same, then as now.

The universe is sustained by the Breath of God, the Holy Spirit. The Creator breathes out and creation is on its way. When He breathes in, creation returns to the source whence it came, and the night of God prevails. This is a cosmic law that applies to all things and to all beings on every plane of the universe.

Man also breathes in and out, and thus is his life sustained. He goes to sleep for a certain period of time, when his life activity apparently comes to an end, disappears temporarily. In the morning on awakening, his soul activity comes forth again; he re-appears in active life.

This same law governs the Earth: the divine life force which permeates all and is responsible for all living beings, at certain periods of the year retires into the earth for rest, and vegetation comes to a standstill. Then at another period of the year, from within the earth this same life force comes forth again, and manifests in the magnificent growth of plants and the rejuvenation of Nature.

In ancient times this natural phenomenon and law were symbolized in the myth of the birth of the Sun-God, which was intimately related to the four seasons of the year, marked by the summer and winter solstices in June and December respectively, and by the spring and autumn equinoxes in March and September respectively. From about the 21st of September to about the 21st of December the night becomes longer and longer and the darkness seems to engulf the earth and bring death to all life, which would happen if it were allowed to continue unchecked. The crisis between darkness and light is reached between the 21st and 23rd of December, when on the midnight of the Winter Solstice darkness is checked, recedes, and light again begins to win. The day starts to grow longer, the night shorter. A cosmic event which in ancient times, in all lands and in all civilizations, was celebrated truly as the re-birth of the Sun-God — the Savior of Mankind.

The Jews borrowed this Sun-God from the Egyptians, when he became Adonai and replaced one of the sacred names of Jehovah. The same ceremony in honor of this Sun-God was also performed on the 24th of December in Palestine each year. Jerome tells us that

"Bethlehem, the traditional birth place of the Lord, was shaded by a grove of that still older Syrian Lord Adonis, and that where the infant Jesus has wept, Adonis was bewailed." The effigy of a wild boar is said to have been set over one of the gates of Jerusalem in honor of Adonis and his rites were celebrated in the grotto of the Nativity at Bethlehem. Adonis represented the solar energy which in the winter months was destroyed by the evil principle of cold — the boar.

In Phrygia a Savior Sun-God known as Attis, counterpart of Adonis, was born at midnight of the 24th of December each year out of a myrrh tree. Myrrh, the symbol of death, due to its connection with the process of embalming, thus received immortality. This is the reason why myrrh was one of the three gifts brought to the manger of Jesus by the Magi. Attis was gored to death by a boar, the winter cold. He died under a pine tree. His body was taken to a cave by the Great Mother Cybele. He arose from the dead on the 25th of March. To the rites of Attis or Adonis the modern world is indebted for the symbolism of the Christmas tree. Attis imparted immortality to the tree beneath which he died. He remained in the tomb for three days, the three winter months, and he rose from the dead upon a date corresponding to the Easter morn. By his resurrection he overcame death for all those who were initiated into His mysteries.

In the Phrygian mysteries every year a pine tree was cut down and inside the tree the image of a youth was tied.

In Egypt in the mysteries of Isis and Osiris, the trunk of a pine tree was cut. The middle of the trunk was nicely hollowed out, the image of Osiris was made from those hollowed pieces, which was buried with sacred rites.

In the Greek mysteries of Proserpine a myrrh tree was cut and made

into the effigy of the Virgin Mother Demeter. It was carried within the city and mourned for forty nights; on the fortieth night it was burned. Also in the Greek Mysteries, Dionysos, the son of Zeus and Semele, was born at midnight of the 24th of December, as a Savior to the world. He was shown therein as a babe with His Virgin Mother Semele in the sacred rites in the temple.

The same religious celebration was held on the 24th of December in India when the god Krishna was born. It is reported that the same ceremony was held in Yucatan, in Mexico, and in general all over the ancient world. In all these religious celebrations it was the commemoration of the same Cosmic event and law, the birth of the Sun-God, the Savior of the world.

Under this interpretation of the Cosmic Christos, the myth of the Sun-God, one can see that this religious ceremony is not an exclusive Christian affair, but belongs to the peoples of all faiths all over the world — a universal event reflecting upon all mankind.

The Theosophical Forum

THE "VISION" OF GEORGE RUSSELL — *H. F. Norman*

The light is the real person in the picture." Monet's phrase was constantly on George Russell's lips and is repeated in many of his letters. In the sense in which this essay will imply it, Æ would not have claimed it for himself, albeit he knew and said his work was lit by "the candle of vision": "a flickering lantern." But it is on Æ himself that I would ask readers who would relate this poet to his poetry to direct Monet's illuminating words. For if Æ is not understood as a visionary his poetry will seem incomprehensible. The normally imaginative man early discovers within consciousness a self, a soul, however he may later define that being and whatever may be his previsioning of its *post mortem* existences. It was Æ's distinction to look deeper: "I know that I am a spirit." He had written thus in his foreword to the then unpublished *Homeward* when I first talked with him in 1894. "Your coming," he said, in our last talk in London before his death, "is included in the laws of spiritual gravitation." It was in searching out the constitution of hidden spiritual realms and living subject to their laws — the idea involved in Karma — that he spent virtually all of his life.

"I am a spirit." Was that the romantic but callow utterance of a budding poet or, as he believed it to be, an authentic discovery, the aftermath of anterior living in previous incarnations? He certainly held to that conception of himself throughout the forty years separating those two statements I have quoted above. To meditate upon that conception is to contemplate the fundamental mystery of Æ. I cannot attempt within the compass of a very brief essay to penetrate that mystery. Instead, I will ask the reader, when he has considered such clues as may be indicated here — slight clues, but I claim reliable — to turn to the sources from which (as well as from my own memory) I draw them, by spending eight half crowns, three upon Mr. John Eglinton's balanced and just *Memoir of Æ* with its ennobling and fascinating reconstruction

of the pellucid and yet elusive man I knew so well, and five on Mr. Monk Gibbon's very skillfully chosen anthology from Æ's own prose work, *The Living Torch*, with its generous, understanding and finely written introductory essay. It will be well spent money. If the reader is sensitive to spiritual beauty, alert and sanely imaginative, he will find himself engaged upon a problem more subtle and profound than Hamlet's, a problem of the essential nature of man.

Mr. Monk Gibbon's book is inspired by the temper in which forty years ago young men, Russell's own contemporaries, found themselves led to realize him as a seer, as a man, that is, whose reliance is on inner realities personally tested, and whose insight, therefore, needs no stimulation of sensational foretelling (vaticination) to confirm his natural title as Prophet. The selections in *The Living Torch* exhibit a wide comprehension of the author's mind, tastes, powers, flexibility and, in spite of temperamental boundaries, amazing diversity. From different angles and exhibiting varying outlines of their subject, each book singularly confirms the other in presenting a man, not a posed and imaginary portrait. If Mr. Eglinton, the elder writer, seems at first more tentative in his approach to Æ as poet and mystic — as painter he is discussed in a weighty note contributed by Dr. Bodkin and some of Æ's own reactions to art are incidentally discussed in Mr. C. P. Curran's entertaining account of a visit they paid together to Paris — and if Russell's work is subjected to a careful scrutiny, it is not only because Mr. Eglinton as one of our best living writers of English prose is "zealous" of good work, but also because, before committing his pen to a final eulogy, he can draw on a comprehensive and comprehending knowledge of great literature. When, therefore, the statuesque figure of Russell on which he has worked with affectionate caution emerges as a poet whom a future age may accept as one of the really important religious writers, we feel a sense of security for an intuition of our own which we might else have challenged as a too daring guess.

Before further examining that intuition something, however slight, must be said of Æ the publicist. As co-operative official, pioneer, journalist, I have written of him elsewhere; of how he worked towards

the new economic of a "Co-operative Commonwealth," of his hurried but distinguished output of luminous idealism weekly in the *Irish Homestead* and the fervid but dignified oratory with which he influenced farmers at home and enquirers and publicists from abroad. I can here but mention the striking gifts of speech which drew him, reluctantly, to the doomed Irish Convention and which were so often fruitfully spent in private interviews with people of public importance, who were led by his eloquence, force and reasonableness to aid causes he supported, or his distinguished work as Editor of *The Irish Statesman*, the most remarkable weekly ever issued in Ireland, which gave him a cosmopolitan reputation he had not sought; whilst his painting, the product of a scant leisure, brought him the more welcome prestige dear to the child-like heart of the artist. These aspects of *M* form an engaging study and are interestingly discussed in both books. But for all their evidences of an astonishing energy they do not exhaust him; indeed, these relatively outward aspects may but confuse our approach to the essential man, the poet. It is a truism that no biographer can re-create the soul of any, even the most ordinary fully vitalised, human being, and certainly no pen is fully adequate to measure the stature of this large minded, big hearted, well willed, companionable spirit. I can here but attempt a few glimpses of the aspect of him I most valued, aided by these two books — but fully aware of the inadequacy of the effort.

Our enquiry is as to what was "the master light of all his seeing." The insight discovered by many acute minds with which his own came into contact, when as publicist his reputation had reached its zenith, was a natural growth from the young truth-seeking visionary I had first met a generation earlier. Yet of himself he said: "I was only wise when I was about twenty-one." But perhaps because he could affirm (and with how great an integrity): "I have never ceased from the inward search," a perennial wisdom, changing its hues rather than its pattern, emanated from his many colored mind. What was this wisdom, this light? So much of it as came from books was either a fundamental concern with universal ideas or was the literary expression of certain devotional

emotions, native to his virginal mind. Both these springs of thinking and feeling he would have named theosophical. Taking the last first, as potent sources of his inspiration I can name two books which set the key-note for after years of activity. *The Voice of the Silence* and *Light on the Path* were books of counsel. A few sentences will show the quality of the counsel: "Before the eye can see it must be incapable of tears. Before the ear can hear it must have lost its sensitiveness."

(Comprehending readers will interpret the tears, the sensitivity, as relating to the limiting, personal self). And, again: "Kill out desire, kill out ambition" or "Avoid the deadly heresy of separateness" (*i.e.* from other human beings). Save to an exceptional will these injunctions may appear as exacting the impossible, though Philip Sidney (was it not?) could write, "Desiring only how to slay desire." But our concern here is with a poet's mind and the sentences just cited will be found, otherwise expressed of course, in much of Æ's writing, whilst what interested his friends were his own response, his inward "vows of poverty."

Some years later W. B. Yeats wrote of him: "If he convinced himself that any peculiar activity was desirable to the public interest or in that of his friends, he had at once the ardour that came to another from personal ambition." Perhaps this is doing better than killing ambition, transmuting it. It was the work of his specific genius for spirituality that no passing whiff of vain delight in his own powers to stir an audience, move a public or amuse a group (his humor was at once subtle and boyish) no natural wish to seem accomplished could ever remove George Russell more than momentarily from his persistent concentration on the inward ethic in which his homage had been rooted by such counsels as I have quoted.

Besides these there were the source books of his complex cosmogonies, and in chief Madame Blavatsky's great tomes, *The Secret Doctrine*, *Isis Unveiled*, and the *Key to Theosophy* (he avowed to an audience in Dublin a debt to these so late as 1933) and the slender, more scattered writings of his fellow-countryman, W. Q. Judge — "more impressive than any other man I ever met," he said late in life — whose redaction of the *Bhagavad Gita* gave him a wisdom he prized more deeply than

any. These books, with the Vedas, Plato, Plotinus, the Gospels, the Epistles attributed to St. Paul, were germinal to his thinking and transposed into the highest keys a temperament which without their classic restraint might have spent itself vainly in a merely ebullient brilliancy, pictorial, auriferous, but void of moral substance.

What, then, was this theosophy? Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society had three objectives set for it: To form a nucleus for universal brotherhood; to study religions, sciences and philosophies; to investigate psychic powers latent in man. There were other and varied studies relevant to esoteric enquiry or belief pursued by many, but only the first object was obligatory and as pendant to that fact she had written . . . "whoever feels his interests are one with those of every being poorer or less fortunate than himself . . . is a Theosophist by birth and right." He left the Society in 1898, but the idealism it represented in his early twenties was to continue and mature throughout his life. His withdrawal arose in part through changes in the form of the organization and in part because, as I remember it, his theosophical chiefs seemed to fear that his "thronging" spirits might lure him from whole-hearted devotion to purely human causes, but he never abjured his early homage. Indeed, four years later he re-applied for membership in the Society, but his application seems to have been mislaid or pigeon-holed. This leads us to a pivotal point in his psychology, since Mr. Eglinton's carefully wrought study reveals Æ as poet of the cosmic consciousness and some duality may be here suspected between the poet and the man. Let us examine it.

One may ask, of the cosmic consciousness as of poetry, "what is it? is it a true thing?" Mr. Eglinton holds Æ's view of it to be implicit in a line of his own he often repeated: "all my thoughts were throngs of living souls." Are we here, then, on the brink of some sacrosanct spookism? Are these "living souls" the "spirits" of the Spiritist, the discarnate denizens of the seance room? A review of these two books in a Dublin daily makes an unworthy, but I hope, accidental suggestion of "seances," when Æ and John Eglinton held discourse together as young men in Kill o' the Grange churchyard. No such ghoulish element

belonged to Æ's mind. He abhorred and denounced necromancy. Utterances of the noble dead as of the noble living — Milton's "two great families" — were, indeed, the constant companions of his thoughts. But these "throngings" are of a subtler origin. Except in the *Dark Lady* (of Shakespeare's Sonnets), whose narrative, as he wrote to me, he had imbibed in meditation, Æ's spiritual visitants were not what the plain person calls "actual" people. They were spirits of earth and sea and air such as he painted, and of whom he averred most positively that he saw them, though he would add: "I do not know whether I see them directly as I see you directly, *if I see you directly*, or . . . as in a mirror." But, if one allows them substance, what then were these beings? Here are two of his answers: "I think with many others that the universe we see is made by the congregation of spirits which inhabit it, as they live again and have their being in an incomprehensible Absolute." Again, "the earth is a person, a goddess and we are part of her, in her." And also he speaks, in a letter I think, of "that spirit whose body is earth." Was this phantasy? I am not here concerned to define phantasy, but let us ask ourselves what we mean by it. A child, a youth, lays, like the young dreaming Æ, his hand or head upon a rock and "feels the Mother Nature warm," magnetic, alive; its inner substance permeable by his own. Is that fantastic? And is it realistic, in contrast, to see in the sun moving in the sky, a burnished, or, in mists, a crimson disc, though astronomers assure us that what in fact we are seeing is a flaming world almost inconceivably distant and that it is we and our stable earth that move? Is vision, illumination, the less real if it come through an indefinable "imagination"?

I am not here propounding a "case" for the veridicity of Æ's visions — his veracity is in no doubt for those who knew him — or for a "planetary consciousness." The poet's "case" is to convince not through text-book evidences but by the music of his verse. Yet there does remain a question or two. Even if there is no conflict between the "actuality" of external seeing and these esoteric visions, is there no danger that the visionary may lose his terrestrial bearings? Did Æ's theosophical friends fear this for him? Did he a little fear it himself? Is

there even a hint of some needed reconciliation in that noble aspiration in which he reveals the spiritual desire behind the inner call of reincarnation to which he would subject himself, reverberant in the poem he called "Love":

Ere I lose myself in the vastness and drowse myself with the
peace
While I gaze on the light and the beauty afar from the dim
homes of men
May I still feel the heart pang and pity, love ties that I would not
release;
May the voices of sorrow appealing call me back to their
succour again.

He need not have feared. His wish to serve humanity was granted even in his life. Æ, temperamentally an Irish patriot and a romantic, was something even more. O'Leary's "romantic Ireland," whose death Yeats deplored, survived in O'Grady, and no less romantically survived O'Grady, again, and with a more indomitable fortitude, in Pearse; it survives Pearse's fate in Russell's poetry, conjoining in one vision the cosmic consciousness and devotion to mankind. Whilst he could say that:

. . . . from fleeting voices
And visionary lights a meaning came
That made my myth contemporary,

no such lights or voices from within overbore the voices of pity. If, like Wordsworth, he did hear two voices and could follow both, these were not contending divinities. One, rather illumination than voice, "the light in the picture," was "the real person" in the poet. The other, his reliance on the promptings of "the spiritual will," was the real person in the man. He had sought ever "behind the conscience, the love." That is why Mr. Eglinton, who cares greatly for truth, can say of him: "he was all that a man should be." And better than any inadequate praise of mine are the words of a working woman who, sending her subscription to the Æ Memorial, wrote to me, a stranger: "Dear Æ. He

walked with God, surely."

The Theosophical Forum

THE PATH OF ACTION — *Hadji Erinn (W. Q. Judge)*

The Mohammedan teacher directs his disciples to tread carefully the razor's edge between the good and the bad; only a hair line divides the false from the true. In this the Asiatic took an excellent illustration, for the "hair line" is the small stroke *alif*, which, placed in a word, may alter the sense from the true to the false.

In chapter four of the Bhagavad-Gita, entitled, "Jnana-Yog," or the book of the Religion of Knowledge, the blessed Krishna instructs Arjuna upon the nature of action, saying: "Renunciation of and devotion through works, are both the means of final emancipation; but of these two, devotion through works is more highly esteemed (by Him) than the renunciation of them"; and, "the nature of action, of forbidden action, and of inaction must be well learned. The Path of Action is obscure and difficult to discern."

In ordinary humdrum life these words of Krishna are true enough, but their force is strangely felt in the mind of the devoted student of Theosophy, and especially if he happens to be a member of the Theosophical Society.

That body of investigators has now passed its probationary period, so that, as a whole, it is an accepted chela of the Blessed Masters who gave the impulse that brought it into being. Every member of it, therefore, stands to the whole Society as every fibre in the body of any single chela does to the whole man. Thus now, more than ever before, does each member of the Society feel disturbing influences; and the Path of Action becomes more and more likely to be obscured.

Always existing or coming into existence in our ranks, have been centres of emotional disturbance. Those who expect that these perturbations ought now to cease and grow less likely to recur, will find themselves mistaken. The increase of interest that is being taken in the Society's work, and the larger number of earnest students who

are with us than at any previous period, constitute elements of agitation. Each new member is another nature added, and every one acts after his own nature. Thus the chances for being discomposed are sure to increase; and it is better thus, for peace with stagnation partakes of the nature of what is called in the Bhagavad-Gita, *Tamagunam*, or, of the quality of darkness. This quality of darkness, than which there is nothing worse, is the chief component of indifference, and indifference leads only to extinction.

Still another element in this equation that every earnest Theosophist has to solve, and which in itself contains the potency of manifold commotions, is a law, hard to define, yet inexorable in its action. For its clearer comprehension we may say that it is shown in nature by the rising of the sun. In the night when the moon's rays flooded the scene, every object was covered with a romantic light, and when that luminary went down, it left everything in a partial obscurity wherein many doubtful characters could conceal their identity or even masquerade for that which they were not. But on the sun's arising all objects stand out in their true colors; the rugged bark of the oak has lost the softening cover of partial day; the rank weeds can no longer be imagined as the malwa flowers. The powerful hand of the God of day has unveiled the character of all.

It must not be supposed that a record has been kept by any officials, from which are to be taken and published the characters of our members. There is no need of that; circumstances taking place in natural order, or apparently from eccentric motion, will cause us all, whether we will or not, to stand forth for what we are.

Every one of us will have to stop and learn in the cave outside of the Hall of Learning, before we can enter there. Very true that cave, with all its dark shadows and agitating influences, is an illusion, but it is one that very few will fail to create, for hard indeed to be overcome are the illusions of matter. In that shall we discover the nature of action and inaction; there we will come to admit that although the quality of action partakes of the nature of badness, yet it is nearer to the quality

of truth than is that which we have called darkness, quietude, indifference. Out of the turmoil and the strife of an apparently untamed life may arise one who is a warrior for Truth. A thousand errors of judgment made by an earnest student, who with a pure and high motive strives to push on the Cause, are better than the outward goodness of those who are judges of their fellows. All these errors made in a good cause, while sowing good seed, will be atoned by the motive.

We must not then be judges of any man. We cannot assume to say who shall or shall not be allowed to enter and to work in the Theosophical Society. The Masters who founded it, wish us to offer its influence and its light to all regardless of what we may ourselves think; we are to sow the seed, and when it falls on stony ground no blame attaches to the sower.

Nor is our Society for good and respectable people only. Now, as much as when Jesus of Nazareth spoke, is it true that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner who repenteth, than over ninety-nine just men who need no repentance.

Remembering then, that the Path of Action is obscure and difficult to be discerned, let us beware of the illusions of matter.

— *The Path*, II, p. 247

The Theosophical Forum

SAINT-MARTIN: THEOSOPHER AND ADEPT — G. F. K.

On May 22nd, in the year 1792, Kirchberger, Baron of Liebistorf, and member of the Sovereign Council of the Republic of Berne, Switzerland, filled with an urge not to be stayed, wrote a letter:

. . . . I will declare to you, Sir, with Swiss frankness and sincerity, that the most eminent writer, in my eyes, and most profound of his age, is the author of "Des Erreurs et de la Verite," and that to correspond with him would be to me one of the greatest satisfactions of my life.

That letter, addressed to *le Philosophe Inconnu*, or "the Unknown Philosopher," proved to be the opening of a five years' remarkable correspondence, in which two "theosophers" of the late eighteenth century discoursed on the "active and intelligent Cause" of the universe, and the means by which man might again attain to conscious union with his Divine Principle.

Le Philosophe Inconnu — by which nom-de-plume Louis Claude de Saint-Martin sought, vainly it is true, to screen his identity — was, however, no ordinary "theosopher." Here was a man far and above the mediocrity of savants, *spiritualistes*, masons, rosicrucians, and so-called mystics, that thronged the continent of Europe during the French revolutionary period. For well may it be said that Saint-Martin was of those "who walk with God," whether for a moment, or longer, the reader may judge. But that he was thoroughly convinced of the actuality and experiencibility of the Divine Center — Sophia or Wisdom — there can be no doubt. His daily prayer epitomizes the one-pointed aspiration which dominated his life:

My God, be Thou with me so entirely that none save Thyself can be with me!

— *Portrait Historique*, I, 27

The republication of *Theosophic Correspondence*," (1) after some 150 years have elapsed since these two "theosophers," the one a pupil, the other a guide and cherished friend, wrote each other, presents a stirring challenge to the modern theosophist. There is here no clear-cut outline of theosophic doctrine, no strongly etched system of rounds and races globes and monads, planetary and solar chains. Yet, within the 110 letters may be found that indefinable "something" called *atmosphere* — the aroma of a strongly spiritualized individual, who conscious of his mission lived in whole-souled dedication to the restoration of erring man to God. To some, the form of this dedication may seem strange, difficult to grasp, perhaps even insignificant. To others, trained to sensitivity of inner concerns, recognition will be simple, and the validity of Saint-Martin's own words readily seen:

Those having soul will lend to my work what is wanted, but the soulless will deny it even that which it has.

— *Port. Hist.*, I, 129

Born at Amboise, in the province of Touraine, France, on the 18th of January, 1743, of "pious and noble parents," Louis Claude de Saint-Martin was reared strictly in the Catholic faith, to which he adhered nominally throughout his life. Entering the college of Pontlevoy (or Portlevoy) at an early age, the first seeds of mystic thought were sown by a small book on *The Art of Self-Knowledge*. It was to this apparently insignificant treatise by Abadie, which he later termed "sentimental rather than profound," that Saint-Martin owed his primal impulse toward the inner life. Thence to the study of jurisprudence on his father's advice; but, on attaining the position of King's Advocate at the High Court of Tours, Louis Claude realized that as a magistrate it would be his duty to devote his entire time to his office. He therefore chose the army, in which profession, "during peace, he would have leisure to pursue his meditations, and to study man," to quote his friend and admirer, Mons. Gence, in *Biographie Universelle* (*Theos. Cor.*, iv).

Thus, at twenty-two years of age, Saint-Martin, with a lieutenant's commission in the regiment of Foix, then garrisoned at Bordeaux,

entered upon the next stage of his promising career. Unknown to himself, yet none the less potently, the mystic was being led through the labyrinth of worldly experience that he might himself, consciously, pick up the ancient thread of truth. For the very next year, at Bordeaux, the young subaltern was to meet Don Martines de Pasqually de la Tour, otherwise Martinez de Pasquales, who was permanently to stimulate the urgent desire for the inward life. In 1768, joining the Order of the Elect Cohens (Priests), founded by this Portuguese (2) theurgist, rosicrucian and mason, Saint-Martin was forever to be indebted to this teacher. With zeal and exactitude he gave himself to the cause of his Master, so that in 1771 he felt called upon to abandon the military profession in order the more fully to devote himself to the propagation of those seeds of wisdom which he had already received in no small measure.

Fortunately for him, in 1772 his preceptor was called to St. Domingo, never to return, death following for de Pasquales in 1774; for it was not long before Saint-Martin had far outdistanced the practices and rites of this Order. Nevertheless, as his letters to Kirchberger abundantly show, written twenty years and more after this period, Saint-Martin maintained to the last grateful reverence for the man who had turned him to the inward life, and firmly believed that if Martinez de Pasquales had lived he might very well have shown to him the "inward" way rather than merely the "external." As he writes on the 12th of July, 1792:

My leader therein was a man of very active virtues, and most of those who followed him, with myself, received confirmations thereby which may have been useful to our instruction and development Nevertheless, I, at all times, felt so strong an inclination to the intimate secret way, that this external one never further seduced me, even in my youth, for, at the age of twenty-three, I had been initiated into all those things, so that, in the midst of what was so attractive to others, in the midst of means and formulas and preparatives of all sorts, in which we were trained, I, more than once, exclaimed to our master, "*Can*

all this be needed to find God?"

— Ibid., pp. 12-13 [italics ours]

By the death of Pasqually in 1774, Saint-Martin had already established himself in his own line of work which had taken a twofold direction: the one, of private social contact with personages of the higher circles of society, at Lyons, Paris, as well as at Bordeaux, whom he hoped to interest in the deeper issues of life; and secondly, in literary labors. Of Saint-Martin's personality, Mons. Matter, his biographer, writes:

At the age of thirty years [1773] M de Saint-Martin found himself very favourably placed in the world. An expressive countenance and polished manners, marked by great distinction and considerable reserve, presented him to the best advantage. His demeanor announcing not only the desire to please but something to bestow, he soon became known widely and was in request everywhere.

— *Saint Martin le Philosophe Inconnu*, p. 74

As for his literary output, one has only to read Mon. Gence's careful description of the works of *le Philosophe Inconnu*, included by Penny in his Preface to *Theosophic Correspondence*, to recognize that in 1775 (note the year!) the publication of his first work, *Des Erreurs et de la Verite* ("Of Errors and of Truth") had definitely enlisted Saint-Martin in the fight for truth. It was this work, as stated, that was to inspire the Bernese philosopher, Kirchberger, eighteen years later, to take up his pen and seek the guidance of the "Unknown Philosopher." Significantly enough, it was also this first book which was to be condemned twenty-three years later by the Spanish Inquisition as "subversive of true religion and the peace of nations," to quote A. E. Waite in *The Life of Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, the Unknown Philosopher*, p. 32. Herein Saint-Martin, indignant at Boulanger's assertion that "religion sprang from the fright occasioned by the catastrophes of nature," declared with vigor that there did reside within man a Divine Principle, and that it was not only possible but the duty of man to gain intuitive knowledge of this "active and intelligent Cause" from which all things sprang.

Furthermore, contrary to prevailing opinion, he asserted that the "Will constituted the essential and fundamental faculty of man."

In 1782 his next work in two volumes appeared, also pseudonymously, *Tableau Naturel* or "Natural Table of the Correspondences between God, Man and the Universe," in which man's fall into generation was described, but also the hope instilled that man could, by the exercise of his moral and intellectual virtues, recover that which he had lost.

During the next five years there is a considerable "gap" in our knowledge of Saint-Martin's whereabouts. This should, of course, not surprise us, as the recorded history of other adepts, whether recognized as such or not, always includes a "lacuna" in their outward life. What takes place at these periods is not the concern of the public, nor is it ours today. It is believed that he did considerable traveling, not only to England, Germany, but even possibly to Russia.

In 1787 on his visit to England, it is known that he became acquainted with the works of William Law (who had died in 1761), a theosopher and ardent student of Bohme. It was not until the next year while at Strasbourg with Madame de Boecklin that he became fully introduced to the profundity of Jacob Bohme's writings — "What depths this author opens to me!" he was later to write to Kirchberger (*Theos. Cor.*, p. 91).

In his forty-fifth year, Saint-Martin had at last come into his spiritual majority; for without question in the shoemaker of Gorlitz he had discovered a companion-in-arms, whose revelations through divine inspiration and a fearless defense of truth brought Saint-Martin lasting strength. In fact, so intense was his admiration that he applied himself, despite his nearing fifty years and failing eyesight, to learn the German language that he might not only read for himself the original, but also share with his compatriots in French translation his magnificent Bohme, whom he regarded as "the greatest human light that had ever appeared" (p. vi).

L'Homme de Desir or "The Man of Aspiration" did not appear until

1790, though it is believed he had begun it in England. Of this work, reputed to be the most exalted and inspired of all his writings, Saint-Martin gives evidence of that steady "guidance" which was to direct his inner genius throughout his life. Writing to Kirchberger, who had said that he regarded this work "as the most refreshing, and the richest in luminous thoughts, that has appeared in this age" (p. 126), Saint-Martin replied:

I acknowledge also that there are germs scattered in this work the properties of which I knew not when I sowed them, and which open to me daily, thanks to the aid of Providence and our authors. — *Ibid.*, p. 130

More books followed, each one a development of the initial theme: that man is primitively a "thought of God," and that for renovation he must think and act solely by the Divine Principle within him. The reader is again referred to Mons. Gence's summary of Saint-Martin's numerous works, and his translations also of Bohme's writings, found included in the Preface of the book under study.

Let it not be supposed that these letters of Saint-Martin and Kirchberger lack in human appeal. Far from it. Besides the tender and affectionate exchanges between two patricians bred in the grace of *noblesse oblige*, we find as backdrop the dramatic scene of the French Revolution. The tortuous days, commencing with that fateful 10th of August, 1792 are thrown in bold relief as Saint-Martin casually, yet continuously, makes references while discoursing on the lofty theme of "their object." As he later wrote (in 1796) to Kirchberger, he felt the power of a great force behind the upheaval, "which springs from grounds unknown to those who have taken part in this great drama" (p. 235)

The great picture of our wonderful revolution rivets me, I am best situated here [at Paris] to contemplate it *en philosophe*. — p. 99

I listen to everything, I see all that come . . . There are some who

had described to me beforehand, almost to the very letter, the shaking we have just experienced [1795], in which I have again seen how fortunate and powerful the star is that presides over our revolution. — pp. 177-8

Do not believe that our French revolution is an indifferent thing upon the earth, I look upon it as the revolution of human nature, as you will see in my pamphlet, it is a miniature of the last judgment, with all its features, except that things succeed one another in it, whilst, at the last, everything will be done instantaneously. — p. 184

The pamphlet referred to was a treatise of considerable size and importance entitled: "Letter to a Friend, or Philosophical and Religious Consideration of the French Revolution," published in 1796, and which he hoped Kirchberger would translate into German for circulation among the German speaking countries. But though the Baron was deeply impressed with Saint-Martin's original, and in some instances startling views, and considered this the most remarkable treatise of its kind, he feared greatly that the Germanic peoples at that time would only turn it to bitter use.

There was danger, and plenty of it, for Saint-Martin during those years, who "walking on the borders of fire" (p. 223) had suddenly become *persona non grata*, of the proscribed classes, and whose *mandat d'arret* or Order of Arrest was soon to come. Yet, those who "walk with God" are under His care, and we find Saint-Martin not too surprised but deeply sensible of the "numerous proofs of the divine protection over me, especially during our revolution." (p. 150) He afterwards wrote to Kirchberger on the 30th of April, 1797:

There were many reasons for suspicion and arrest for one in my situation, civil, pecuniary, literary, social, etc, and yet I have been quits with an order once given to arrest me, which did not reach me till a month after the fall of Robespierre, who issued it, and which was cancelled before it could be executed. Moreover, I have three times passed through every crisis, I lived a whole

year on the borders of La Vendee, and you will be not a little surprised when I tell you that, during these infernal agitations, when I went everywhere just like anybody else, things have been so ordered on high, that, since the Revolution, I have literally not heard the report of a cannon, except those which were lately fired here to announce peace with the Emperor (of Austria). You can tell this, if you like, to Mr. Jung, with my kind compliments. Do not let him take this for miracles, I am not worthy that any should be enacted for me: it was simply the care of Divine goodness, for which I am very grateful. — p. 297

The import of this correspondence is not the temporal events, however fascinating these may be. Of chief concern to our theosophers is the search after the Central Principle, the Divine Source, God, Sophia — whatever name came most readily to hand. We should not imagine, however, that the all-absorbing power of the inner life in any wise detracted from the performance of worldly duties on the part either of Saint-Martin or Kirchberger. Ample evidence is given in both cases that their duties in the world of men were fulfilled with diligence, exactitude and imagination.

Choice bits of wise counsel enrich the letters, where Saint-Martin kindly, affectionately, but always directly, urges Kirchberger to eschew the secondary or external way. It is difficult for us today to realize what a network of *secret* bodies, possessing in greater or less degree "masonic connections," had surrounded the entire continent of Europe by the late eighteenth century. Offshoots of original theosophic efforts, the dying embers of magical incantations, theurgic practices, secret formularies with numbers, were explained "behind closed door, with mouth to ear." Masonic, Rosicrucian, Kabbalistic Orders, so called, flourished by the dozen, not openly as today with far less danger to the unwary, but *secretly*, hidden under the spell of mystery, with mystifying signs and passwords, occult rites and ceremonial, "initiations," "traditions," and what not. "Brothers" of the different occult bodies would travel from one country to another, contacting isolated members of these fraternities. From time to time a few deeply

intuitive and inspired "masters" did undoubtedly participate; but as with all such Orders, unless the flame be kept pure and tended by selfless motive, the fire dies and only the smoldering ashes testify that another "attempt of the Lodge" has failed.

Saint-Martin would have none of this mummery. Invited to participate in the re-opened school of Martines de Pasqually in 1784, which now called itself the Order of Philalethes, he refused, stating that they seemed "to speak and act only as freemasons, and not as real initiates, that is, as united to their Principle," as Mons. Gence records (*Ibid.*, p. v). His uncompromising strength and chaste spirituality have cumulative force as one reads, consecutively, letter by letter. Never does this theosopher, and indeed adept, deviate one hair's-breadth from the Central Core, which to him was the only direct road to God. One is tempted to quote passage after passage, but the following will be suggestive evidence of the luminous quality of Saint-Martin's purpose:

I know, in short, that the whole earth is full of these prodigies, but, I repeat, unless things come from the centre itself, I do not give them my confidence. . . .

The inward or centre is the principle of everything, so long as this centre is not open, the greatest external wonders may seduce without advancing us, and, if I may venture to say so, it is our inward which ought to be the true thermometer, the true touchstone, of what passes without. If our heart is in God, if it is really become divine, by love, faith, and ardent prayer, no illusion can surprise us.

If God is for us, who can be against us?

— pp. 62-3

Innumerable references to numbers and their significances are to be found, particularly in the letters from Kirchberger who appeals to Saint-Martin for direction on behalf of friends of his similarly inclined. Though Kirchberger recognizes the wisdom of Saint-Martin's judgment, in fact his reverence for his friend's counsel adds a richness and a

beauty not to be overlooked, he nevertheless is himself not a little intrigued by the power that numbers appear to have in revealing facts. Saint-Martin's sane, practical remarks give a timely warning to those today who in their over-enthusiasm at discovering part of the web of truth believe they have found all. Writes Saint-Martin:

They [numbers] have given me, and still occasionally give me, a sort of intelligence, but I never thought that they gave more than the mere ticket of the package, and not *commonly* the substance of the matter itself. I felt this from my first entrance into my first school. Friend Bohme came to justify this presentiment. . . .

— pp. 194-5

Further, Saint-Martin takes pains to reiterate that numbers do indeed express laws, but that, in the case of Man, they are "already removed from the divine sphere: we may work them, and they will always give us the representation of the same wonders; but only as images. . . ." (p. 209)

One interesting point must be included, and that is the rigid silence maintained by Saint-Martin in regard to Cagliostro. There are at least a half-dozen references by Kirchberger to Cagliostro, whom he regards with candid disfavor, deeming him the author of dangerous practices. But never a comment in return from Saint-Martin. Was this adept under the reserve imposed by The Lodge which would prevent him even from hinting to his beloved correspondent that there might be "another side" to the coin of the Cagliostro mystery?

Mention must also be made of the doings of "our other good theosophists" where Kirchberger furnishes important information on the works of Doctor Pordage, Jane Lead, and Thomas Browne of England, as well as of Gichtel of Germany who deeply impressed by Bohme produced his now famous edition of Bohme's Works of 1682, later enlarged in 1715. Silverhielm, nephew of Swedenborg, also is mentioned by Saint-Martin who had met him personally; and though Saint-Martin was conscientiously interested in all these theosophers,

whether through their writings or by personal contact, and would attend "meetings" whenever he felt that some seed of wisdom might be sown, he always returned to Bohme as the primal source of inspiration.

"Would you leave your work incomplete? . . . would you lose the fruit of six years" correspondence, or, what amounts to the same thing, would you not enjoy the satisfaction of seeing the grain you have sown arrive at its full maturity?" — Thus Kirchberger appeals to Saint-Martin when he discovers, in May 1797, that after months of hoping and planning for Saint-Martin to visit him in Switzerland, the latter has decided not to undertake the journey. And why? Because Saint-Martin has not received, he says, "the desired opening" which points to such a visit, and "however strong this desire may be [to visit K.], until I have more light than at present I must wait." — p. 299

Kirchberger's disappointment, naturally, is keenly felt, the more so as it unfolds that he is most desirous that Saint-Martin transmit to him "certain truths" which could not be told in writing. He writes:

I beg of you to weigh all this in your wisdom; and if present circumstances do not allow you actually to make the journey, to compensate me, in part at least, by some preparatory instructions which will make me more worthy and more fit to enjoy your conversation. — p. 300

Saint-Martin's answer (Letter CX) is a masterpiece of tender understanding yet firm adherence to esoteric principle. Initiation cannot be conferred, it must be earned; and in Saint-Martin's simple direct way he again affirms:

The only initiation which I preach and seek with all the ardour of my soul, is that by which we may enter into the heart of God, and make God's heart enter into us, . . . There is no other mystery, to arrive at this holy initiation, than to go more and more down into the depths of our being, and not let go till we can bring forth the living vivifying root. . . .

This is the language I have held to you in all my letters; and

certainly, whenever I may be present with you, I shall never be able to communicate to you any mystery more vast than this, and more suited to promote your advancement. . . . I cannot think you are in want, and I shall think so still less for the future, if you will only work your capital wisely.

— pp. 304-5

The two friends were destined never to meet. Kirchberger died suddenly in a year or two, and Saint-Martin continued in Paris occupied with further writings. Sensing that his end was near, he said to a friend:

I feel that I am going — Providence may call me — I am ready.

The germs which I have endeavoured to sow will fructify. — p.

10

The next day he left for the country-seat of Count Lenoir la Roche at Aunay, near Sceaux, where after a slight repast, he "prayed in silence, and departed without a struggle, and without pain, on the 13th October, 1803." — p. xi . . .

To theosophists of the present, ingrown perhaps with too great a concern over the problems of the hour, *Theosophic Correspondence* comes as a refreshing spring. Somehow one is lifted out of the narrow sphere of isolationism into the broad expanse of that ageless theosophic force which has been "active since the commencement of our racial experience," as stated in the Foreword.

For in both the Preface by Edward Burton Penny, and in the Appendix by Christopher Walton, we find theosophers in the middle of the last century, the nineteenth, boldly planning a course of theosophic propaganda. And heaven knows, if the world must grope for the light in the fifties of our present century, it was far in arrears in spiritual expansiveness one hundred years ago. Is it of such slight importance to us today to realize that Mr. Penny of Topsham, Devon, England, found it worth his while to translate from the French these letters, and then with the aid of Walton and other like-minded "theosophers"

accomplished in 1863 the sending of free copies to literally hundreds of libraries the world over: in Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, Nova Scotia, India, Ceylon, Australia, The Cape, Gibraltar, France, as well as the United States?

We ask the reader to enter the courtly and noble rhythm of this book, and discover for himself much more than is here recorded.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *Theosophic Correspondence between Saint-Martin and Kirchberger*. Published by Theosophical University Press, 1949. 326 pp. \$2.00. ([return to text](#))
2. Later research suggests that Martinez de Pasquales was a Spaniard. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

IN THE BEGINNING — *Hazel Minot*

The words "to create" are often understood by the ordinary mind to convey the idea of evolving something out of nothing. This is clearly not its meaning, we are mentally obliged to provide our Creator with chaos from which to produce the worlds. . . . Out of a void Nature cannot arise. . . .

— *Through the Gates of Gold*

To different peoples at different times has come a "revelation" of universal truths. In the beginning each such revelation has been as a blinding light, and men have felt a nearness to "God," an awareness of unseen divinities who were their guides and protectors, and deep within themselves there has been a glowing something which they knew was akin to the flame burning on the altar-stone of heaven. But time does strange things, and however far-reaching the "revelation" or pure the source from which it came, as the ages have rolled by the original inspiration has become hidden from the eyes of men, even as a mountain stream may lose itself at last in desert sands.

Where the "voice of God" has been imprisoned in formalized religion, creed and dogma have done their part to still the magic of its tones and, with the passing years, echoes of far earlier "revelations" have been all but silenced; or, if heard, have lingered on as remnants of an age when men believed "strange things" about themselves and Nature. From time to time there is a resurgent interest in these very remnants: myths and legends, folk-lore and fairy-tales are gathered together and collated, but it is rarely that they take their place as source-material, giving an accurate though often fragmentary picture of the opening of any great period of manifestation.

There are a number of understandable reasons why these folk and other tales have not been recognized as hiding grains of ancient truth, and this despite the fact that the treatment of the subject has been

extensive. Main groupings of the study include "Ideas and Superstitious Beliefs"; "Traditional Customs"; "Traditional Narratives"; and "Folk Sayings" — all having several sub-headings. The approach is in large part from the standpoint of gaining an advance in the "general knowledge of folk industries, folk aesthetics, and folk sociology."

Scientific investigations of myths and their origin, or the tracing of the migrations of tales, have contributed information in respect to community of descent or with reference to interchange of ideas through geographical proximity or through emigration. (1)

The method and purpose of this type of research have not concerned themselves with tracing the pattern of fundamental cosmic truths but rather with discovering the similarity of religious beliefs; the inner meaning of those beliefs being hidden under the manner of presentation peculiar to any particular locality. Often enough this "cover-up" has been deliberate: at the time when legends and myths were first given to men those who wove these tales gave out esoteric teaching in this form, using the simple means of symbol and allegory to convey their meaning. The relatively few who understood the symbols could interpret them; to others, they were just charming fairy-tales. But the message was there, the story thus veiled has endured through the centuries, and today it is as vital for him who can trace its meaning as it was at the time of its first recounting.

There are other factors that help to bewilder. The story does not always begin, grow to a point, and finish with a grand climax. Events, especially those dealing with the birth of worlds and humanities, have a way of apparently doubling back on themselves, or suddenly telescoping, so that the hope of beholding a sequential unfolding of the picture is hardly to be realized. This may be due to "wear and tear" and the strange twists and turns that come with the retelling of any tale; it may also have started out a little "on the bias" with the express purpose of confusing the issue. In addition, one has always to bear in mind that all the world loves a good story, and many a tale has as its prime object

relaxation and entertainment.

To anyone delving into this wealth of material for proof that the Sacred Wisdom was indeed known to the peoples of ancient times, and that remnants of it still inhere in tribal beliefs and customs, the most responsive field of research is that of "Traditional Narratives"; for under this heading are included the myths concerning creation and various cataclysmic occurrences. Searching among these legends we are reminded of H. P. Blavatsky's statement in *Isis* (Vol. II, 431), that "there are few myths in any religious system but have an historical as well as a scientific foundation."

Comparing some of these tales of creation, one senses as a predominant factor the recognition, on the part of those who originally told them, of already existing material out of which earth and its humanities are gradually formed. For instance, in the Prose Edda, we have the story of the coming into being of the giant Ymir, from whose body the earth is later formed. Ymir took shape out of Ginnungagap (All Space) from the conflict of the elemental forces represented by Niflheim, the region of ice and snow, and Muspelheim, the region of elemental fire. This conflict caused the rime and ice of Niflheim to melt, and the falling drops assuming the shape of a mighty giant became Ymir.

H. P. B. says of Ymir that he is

the personified matter of our globe in a seething condition. The cosmic monster in the form of a giant, who is killed . . . by the three creators . . . Odin, Wili and We. . . This allegory shows the three principal forces of nature — separation, formation and growth (or evolution) — conquering the unruly, raging "giant" matter, and forcing it to become a world, or an inhabited globe. It is curious that an ancient, primitive and uncultured pagan people, so philosophical and scientifically correct in their views about the origin and formation of the earth, should, in order to be regarded as civilized, have to accept the dogma that *the world was created out of nothing!*

Turning to the Greek story of creation as given to us by the poet Hesiod, we have *Chaos* as that from which the earth is formed. But this chaos, in the light of the Ancient Wisdom, is not a wildly disordered mass, but a repository, the storehouse of seeds from *previous* periods of manifestation, seeds that will develop into beings as well as things. It is not dissimilar to the Ginnungagap (All Space), for Space, too, is no empty nothingness, but filled full with being or life not yet manifested. A seeming contradiction, perhaps, but then, H. P. B. describes this very Ginnungagap as "the cup of illusion (*Maya*) the boundless and void abyss . . . this world's matrix. . . ."

From Chaos there came first of all the spirit of love, Eros; and though his wings may have been sadly soiled through the long, long ages, there is something surpassingly beautiful in this conception of Love as the first active principle in the evolution of the earth and the preparation for the races of men — a symbol of harmony, balance, and the never-ending quest of sentient beings for completion that this harmony and balance may be achieved. Next came Gaea, the broad-breasted Earth, and still later Ouranos (Uranos), and from the union of these two came the Titans.

Ouranos tried to stay the course of evolution by hurling his children back into the womb of their mother as soon as they were born, but was himself slain by his youngest son Kronos. It is but a momentary halting of the work of generation which

passes into the hands of *Kronos*, *time*, who unites himself with *Rhea* (the earth in esotericism — matter in general), and thus produces, after celestial — terrestrial Titans. The whole of this symbolism relates to the mysteries of Evolution.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 269

The story repeats itself with the children of Kronos. It is the Hellenic rendering of the unsuccessful attempts of "Earth or Nature" to create a *humanity* unaided, and is reminiscent of stanzas in the *Book of Dzyan* dealing with this very period of evolution. The vehicles are as yet

unprepared — not merely the physical body but, more important, the intermediate nature — and not until they are fit receptacles for the divine "spark" will there really be a race of men on earth.

The gods are closely linked with man: witness the case of Deukalion and Pyrrha who are commanded by the gods to found a new race following their survival of a "flood." The pattern is not new, any more than was that relating to Noah, but the details vary to suit the age and race to which it applies. Nor is this link with divinity limited to august commands: the gods have literally given of themselves to form our earth and its children. Recall the names borne by the planets of our solar system and the teaching that each has played a part in the building of the earth chain. May it not have been this very truth that was suggested when, in the Prose Edda, Ginkir, a wise king, "travels in search of knowledge to the home of the Asa folk — the Norse gods — each of whom supplies the visitor with some piece of special information": the bringing together of these separate items resulting in the cosmogonic history portrayed in the Edda? Also, it is significant that the "Asa folk" consist of Odin and the twelve Aesir, or gods.

Turning now to the Western Hemisphere, there is much food for thought in the Creation myth of the Wichita; especially in the names of the protagonists.

It was Man-never-known-on-Earth who created all things, and when he had formed the earth he then made a man whose name was Having-Power-to-carry-Light. He also made a woman, and her name was Bright-Shining-Woman. Though these names foreshadow a future time of "spiritual illumination" the man and the woman were as yet in darkness. Then came a thought into the mind of Having-Power-to-carry-Light that he must journey towards the east, and he did so, having many strange adventures. The myth tells how there came to be night and day, and how other promises were fulfilled that had been made by Man-never-known-on-Earth, who was henceforth to be known as Reflecting-man, the Sun. There were now more people on the earth, and Having-Power-to-carry-Light and Bright-Shining-Woman became

their instructors, teaching them how to grow the precious corn, how to hunt with bow and arrow, and the use of various implements which the people had in their possession but did not understand. Then there came a time when the man and the woman must leave the people they had dwelt among, for each was to become something else. But before leaving they gave final instructions: how the people might tell what things were about to happen; how they should pay reverence to the stars and other heavenly bodies, and many other things important for them to know. Bright-Shining-Woman said she would be seen after the sun had gone down, and in the evening they beheld her in the sky, for she had become the moon. Having-Power-to-carry-Light told the people that they would see him early in the morning, before the light of day, and that henceforth his name would be First-Star-seen-after-Darkness-passes-by.

This simple tale, simply told, leaves no doubt but that the ancient American Indian was aware of the Divine guardians who cared for the race in its infancy. He knew, too, of his kinship with the Sun and Moon, and his debt to the planet Venus.

All peoples have had their "Bibles" and a profound study of the subject could well be the work of a life-time. To the interested reader there is a veritable gold-mine of interpretation to be found in the pages of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. The sacred literatures themselves, their myths and legends, even of the most "primitive" peoples, fill one with reverence for the beauty of their language and the depth of their intuition.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The New International Encyclopaedia* — "Folklore." ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

ALCHEMY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: I — *H. P. Blavatsky*

(Translated by Thomas Williams from *La Revue Theosophique*)

The language of archaic chemistry or Alchemy has always been, like that of the earlier religions, symbolical.

We have shown in the *Secret Doctrine* that everything in this world of effects has three attributes or the triple synthesis of the seven principles. In order to state this more clearly, let us say that everything which exists in the world around us is made up of three principles and four aspects just as we have shown to be the case with man.

As man is a complex unity consisting of a body, a rational soul and an immortal spirit so each object in nature possesses an objective exterior, a vital soul, and a divine spark which is purely spiritual and subjective.

The first of this threefold proposition cannot be denied, the second cannot logically be objected to, for if we admit that metals, certain woods, minerals and drugs possess inherent powers to produce effects on living organisms, then official science practically admits its truth. As for the third, of the presence of an absolute quintessence in each atom, materialism, which deals only with the *anima mundi*, denies it utterly.

Much good may it derive from this agnostic attitude. We for our part, finding in materialism an undoubted proof of the existence of moral and spiritual blindness, make no account of the denial and, leaving the blind to lead the blind, proceed with our subject.

Thus as with natural objects, so every science has its three fundamental principles and may be applied through all three or by the use of only one of them.

Before Alchemy existed as a science its quintessence alone acted in nature's correlations (as indeed it still does) and in all its planes.

When there appeared on earth men endowed with a superior

intelligence they allowed this supreme power to have full and uncontrolled action and from it they learnt their first lessons. All that they had to do was to imitate it. But in order to reproduce the same effects by an effort of individual will, they were obliged to develop in their human constitution a power called Kriyasakti in occult phraseology.

This faculty is creative, and is so simply because it is the agent on an objective plane of the first creative principle. It resembles a lightning conductor in that it conducts and gives definite direction to the creative quintessence which otherwise, if led blindly into the lower planes, kills; but which brought down through the channel of the human intellect creates according to a predetermined plan.

From this Alchemy was born; and magnetic magic, and many other branches of the tree of occult science.

When in the course of ages nations grew up so intensely saturated with egotism and vanity as to be convinced of their complete superiority to all others living in the present, or who had lived in the past; when the development of Kriyasakti became more difficult and the divine faculty had almost disappeared from the earth, then they forgot little by little the wisdom of their ancestors. They even went further and rejected altogether the tradition of their antediluvian parents, denying with contempt the presence of a spirit and of a soul in this the most ancient of all sciences. Of the three great attributes of nature they only accepted the existence of matter or rather its illusory aspect, for of real matter or *substance* even the materialists themselves confess a complete ignorance; and truly they are right, nor have they even the vaguest conception of what it is.

Thus there grew up the science of modern chemistry.

Change is the constant effect of cyclic evolution. The perfect circle becomes One, a triangle, a quaternary and a quinary. The creative principle issued from the rootless root of absolute existence, which has neither beginning nor end, and of which the symbol is the serpent or

perpetuum mobile swallowing its tail in order to reach its head, has become the Azoth of the alchemists of the middle ages. The circle becomes a triangle, emanating the one from the other as Minerva from the head of Jupiter. The circle hypothecates the absolute; the right line issuing from it represents a metaphysical synthesis and the left a physical one. When Mother Nature shall have made of her body a line joining these two, then will come the moment of awakening for the Cosmic Activity. Until then Purush, the spirit, is separated from Prakriti — material nature still unevolved. Its legs exist only in a state of potentiality, and cannot move nor has it arms wherewith to work on the objective forms of things sublunary. Wanting in limits, Purush cannot begin to build until it has mounted into the neck of Prakriti the blind, when the triangle will become the microcosmic star. Before reaching this stage they must both pass through the quaternary state and that of the cross which conceives, this is the cross of earthly mystics, who make a great display of this their beflowered symbol, namely: the cross divided into four parts, which may be read Taro, Ator, and Rota, Tora. The Virgin, or adamic earth substance which was the Holy Spirit of the old Alchemists of the Rosy Cross, has now been changed by the Kabbalists, those flunkeys to modern science, into Na^2Co^3 Kali (?) and $\text{C}^2\text{H}^6\text{O}$ or Alcohol.

Ah! Star of the morning, daughter of the dawn, how fallen from thine high estate — poor Alchemy. All on this ancient planet, thrice deceived, is doomed to tire and, sliding into oblivion, to be destroyed; and yet that which once was, is and shall be for ever, even to the end of time. Words change and the meaning underlying them becomes quickly disfigured. But the ideas which are their root and parent shall endure. The ass' skin in which nature's queen wrapped herself in order to deceive fools as in the story of Perrault — for the disciple of the old philosophers will always recognise the truth, no matter under what garb, and will adore it, this ass' skin we must believe is more congenial to the tastes of modern philosophy and materialistic alchemists, who sacrifice the living soul for the empty form, than Royal Nature naked and unadorned. And thus it is that the skin only falls before Prince

Charming, who recognises in the ring sent the marriage betrothal.

To all those courtiers who hover round Dame Nature while cutting at her material envelope, she has nothing to present but her outer skin. It is for this reason that they console themselves by giving new names to old things, old indeed as the world itself, declaring loudly the while that they have discovered something new. The necromancy of Moses has in this way become modern Spiritualism; and the Science of the old initiates of the temple, the magnetism of the gymnosophists of India; the healing mesmerism of sculapius "the Savior," is only received now on condition that it is called hypnotism, in other words Black Magic under its proper title.

Modern materialists would have us believe that Alchemy or the transmutation of base metals into gold and silver has from the earliest ages been nothing more than charlatanism. According to them it is not a science but a superstition, and therefore all those who believe, or pretend to believe in it, are either dupes or impostors. Our encyclopaedias are full of abusive epithets levelled at Alchemists and Occultists.

Now, gentlemen of the French Academie, this may be all very well, but if you are so sure of yourselves, let us have at least some clear and irrefutable proof of the absolute impossibility of the transmutations of metals. Tell us how it is that a metallic base is found even in alkalis. We know certain scientists, men of recognized ability even, who think that the idea of reducing the elements to their first state and even to their primordial essence (see for instance Mr. Crookes in his meta-elements) not so stupid as it seemed at first sight. Gentlemen, these elements when once you have admitted that they all existed in the beginning in one igneous mass, from which *you* say the earth's crust has been formed, these may be reduced again and brought through a series of transmutations to be once more that which they originally were. The question is to find a solvent sufficiently strong to effect in a few days or even years that which nature has taken ages to perform. Chemistry and, above all, Mr. Crookes has sufficiently proved that there exists a

relationship between metals so marked as to indicate not only a common source but an identical genesis.

Then, Gentlemen, I would ask you who laugh at alchemy and alchemists with a mirth bred of a consciousness of superior wisdom, how it is that one of your first chemists, M. Berthold, author of *La Synthèse*, deeply read in alchemical lore, is unable to deny to alchemists *a most profound knowledge of matter*.

And again, how is it that M. Chevreul, that venerable sage, whose great age, no less than his living to the last in the full possession of all his faculties, has moved to wonder our present generation, which, with its over-weening self-sufficiency, is so difficult to penetrate or rouse; how comes it, we say, that he who made so many practical and useful discoveries for modern industry, should have possessed so many works on alchemy.

Is it not possible that the key to his longevity may be found in one of these very works, which according to you is but a collection of superstitions as useless as they are ridiculous.

The fact remains that this great savant, the father of modern chemistry, took the trouble to bequeath after his death, to the library of the Museum, the numerous works he possessed on this "false science," and here in this act of his we have an unmistakable revelation of the estimation in which he held them. Nor have we yet heard that those luminaries of science attached to this sanctuary have thrown these books on alchemy into the waste paper basket as useless rubbish full of fantastic reveries engendered by the sick imagination of a diseased brain.

Besides, our wise men forget two things — in the first place never having found the key to these hermetic books, they have no right to decide whether this *jargon* preaches truth or falsehood, and secondly, that wisdom was certainly not born for the first time with them, nor must it necessarily disappear from the world on their demise.

Each science, we repeat, has its three aspects; all will grant that there

must be two, the objective and the subjective. Under the first head we may put the alchemical transmutations with or without the powder or projection; under the second we place all speculations concerning the nature of the mind. Under the third is hidden a high and spiritual meaning. Now since the symbols of the two first are identical in design and possess moreover, as I have tried to prove in the *Secret Doctrine*, seven interpretations varying with their application to either of the three natural kingdoms the physical, the psychic, or the purely spiritual, it will be easily understood that only great initiates are able to correctly interpret the jargon of hermetic philosophers. And then again, since there exist more false than true hermetic writings, even those of Hermes himself may be found distorted. Who does not know for example, that a certain series of formulas may be correctly applied to the solving of concrete problems of technical alchemy while these same on being employed to render an idea belonging to the psychological plane will possess an entirely different meaning? Our late brother Kenneth Mackenzie expresses this well when he says, speaking of Hermetic Societies:

For the practical alchemist whose object was the production of gold by the use of laws belonging especially to his own peculiar art, the evolution of a mystic philosophy was of secondary importance, for his work could be carried on without any direct reference to a system of theosophy, whilst the Sage who had raised himself to a superior plane of metaphysical contemplation rejected naturally the simply material part of his studies, finding it beneath his aspirations.

— *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*

Thus it becomes evident that symbols taken as guides to the transmutation of metals, become of small value to those methods which we now call *chemical*. There is yet another question we would like to ask: — Who of our great men would dare to treat as impostors such men as Paracelsus, Van Helmont, Roger Bacon, Boerhaven and many other illustrious alchemists?

While French Academicians mock at the Kabbala as well as at alchemy (though at the same time taking from this latter their inspirations and their many discoveries) the Kabbalists and occultists of Europe begin *sub rosa* to prosecute the Secret sciences of the East. In fact the wisdom of the Orient does not exist for our wise men of the West; it died with the Magi. Nevertheless, alchemy, which if we search diligently we shall find as the foundation of every occult science — comes to them from the far East. Some pretend that it is only the posthumous evolution of the magic of the Chaldeans. We shall try to prove that this latter is only the heir, first to an antediluvian alchemy, and then to an alchemy of the Egyptians. Olaus Borrichius, an authority on this question, tells us to search for its origin in the remotest antiquity.

To what epoch may we ascribe the origin of alchemy? No modern writer is able to tell us exactly. Some give us Adam as its first adept; others place it to the account of an indiscretion of "the sons of God, who seeing that the daughters of man were beautiful, took them for their wives." Moses and Solomon are later adepts in the science, for they were preceded by Abraham, who was in turn antedated in the Science of Sciences by Hermes. Is it not Avicenna who says that the Smaragdine Tablet — the oldest existing treatise on Alchemy — was found on the body of Hermes buried centuries ago at Hebron by Sarah the wife of Abraham? But Hermes never was the name of a man, but a generic title, just as in former times we have the Neo-Platonist, and in the present the Theosophist.

What in fact is known about Hermes Trismegistus, or Hermes three times the greatest? Less than we know of Abraham, his wife Sarah and his concubine Agar, which St. Paul declares to be an allegory. Even in the time of Plato, Hermes was already identified with the Thoth of the Egyptians. But this word Thoth does not mean only "intelligence"; it means also "assembly" or school. In truth Thoth Hermes is simply the personification of the *voice* of the priestly caste of Egypt; that is to say of the Grand Hierophants. And if this is the case can we tell at what epoch of prehistoric times this hierarchy of initiated priests began to flourish in the land of Chemi. And even if this were possible we should

still be far from having arrived at a complete solution of our problem. For ancient China, no less than ancient Egypt, claims to be the land of the alkahest and of physical and transcendental alchemy; and China may very probably be right. A missionary, an old resident of Peking, William A. P. Martin, calls it the "cradle of alchemy." Cradle is hardly the right word perhaps, but it is certain that the celestial empire has the right to class herself amongst the very oldest schools of occult Science. In any case alchemy has penetrated into Europe from China as we shall prove.

In the meantime our reader has a choice of solutions, for another pious missionary, Hood, assures us solemnly that alchemy was born in the garden "planted in Haden on the side towards the east." If we may believe him, it is the offspring of Satan who tempted Eve in the shape of a Serpent; but the good man forgot to follow up his assertion to its legitimate conclusion as is proved even by the name of the science. For the Hebrew word for Serpent is Nahash, plural Naha-shim. Now it is from this last syllable *shim* that the words chemistry and alchemy are derived. Is this not clear as day and established in agreement with the severest rules of philology?

Let us now pass to our proofs.

The first authorities in archaic sciences — William Godwin amongst others — have shown us on incontestable evidence that, though alchemy was cultivated by nearly all the nations of antiquity long before our era, the Greeks only began to study it after the beginning of the Christian era and that it only became popularised very much later. Of course by this is meant only the lay Greeks, not of course the Initiates. For the adepts of the Hellenic temples of Magna Grecia knew it from the days of the Argonauts. The European origin of alchemy dates therefore from this time, as is well illustrated by the allegorical story of the Golden Fleece.

Thus we need only read that which Suidas says in his lexicon with reference to this expedition of Jason, too well known to require telling here:

Deras, the Golden Fleece which Jason and the Argonauts, after a voyage on the Black Sea in Colchis, took with the aid of Medea, daughter of Metes, of Æetes, of ÆEa. *Only instead of taking that which the poets pretended they took, it was a treatise written on a skin which explained how gold could be made by chemical means.* Contemporaries called this skin of a ram the Golden Fleece, most probably because of the great value attaching to the instructions on it.

This explanation is clearer and much more probable than the erudite vagaries of our modern mythologists (1) for we must remember that the Colchis of the Greeks is the modern Meretie of the Black Sea; that the Rion, the big river which crosses the country, is the Phasis of the Ancients, which even to this day contains traces of gold; and that the traditions of the indigenous races who live on the shores of the Black Sea, such as the Mingrelians, the Abhaziens and the Meretiens are all full of this old legend of the golden fleece. Their ancestors say they have all been "makers of gold," that is to say they possessed the secret of transmutation which in modern times we call alchemy.

In any case it is certain that the Greeks were ignorant of the hermetic science up to the time of the Neo-Platonists (towards the end of the fourth and fifth centuries) with the exception of the initiated, and that they knew nothing of the real alchemy of the ancient Egyptians whose secrets were certainly not revealed to the public at large. In the third century we find the Emperor Diocletian publishing his famous edict and ordering a careful search to be made in Egypt for books treating of the fabrication of gold, which were collected together and made into a public auto-da-fe. W. Godwin tells us that after this there did not remain one single work on alchemy above ground in the kingdom of the Pharaohs and for the space of two centuries it was never spoken of. He might have added that there remained underground still a large number of such works written on papyrus and buried with the mummies ten times millenarian. The whole secret lies in the power to recognize such a treatise on alchemy in what appears to be only a fairy

tale, such as we have in that of the golden fleece or in the romances of the earlier Pharaohs. But it was not the secret wisdom hidden in the allegories of the papyri which introduced alchemy into Europe or the hermetic sciences. History tells us that alchemy was cultivated in China more than sixteen centuries before our era and that it had never been more flourishing than during the first centuries of Christianity. And it is towards the end of the fourth century, when the East opened its ports to the commerce of the Latin races that alchemy once again penetrated into Europe. Byzantium and Alexandria, the two principal centers of this commerce, were quickly inundated with works on the transmutation.

Let us compare the Chinese system with that which is called Hermetic Science.

1. The twofold object which both schools aim at is identical; the making of gold and the rejuvenating and prolonging of human life by means of the *menstruum universale* and *lapis philosophorum*. The third object or true meaning of the "transmutation" has been completely neglected by *Christian* adepts; for being satisfied with their belief in the immortality of the soul, the adherents of the older alchemists have never properly understood this question. Now, partly through negligence; partly through habit, it has been completely struck out of the *summum bonum* sought for by the alchemists of Christian countries. Nevertheless it is only this last of the three objects which interests the real Oriental alchemists. All initiated adepts despising gold and having a profound indifference for life, cared very little about the first two.

2. Both these schools recognize the existence of two elixirs: the great and the small one. The use of the second on the physical plane transmutes metals and restores youth. The Great Elixir, which was only symbolically an elixir, conferred the greatest boon of all: the immortality of consciousness in the Spirit, the Nirvana which in the sequence of evolution precedes Paranirvana or absolute union with the One Essence.

3. The principles which form the basis of the two systems are also

identical, that is to say: the compound nature of metals and their emanation from one common seminal germ. The letter *tsing* in the Chinese alphabet which stands for "germ," and *t'ai*, "matrix," which is found so constantly in Chinese works on alchemy, are the ancestors of the same words which we meet with so frequently in the alchemical treatise of the Hermetists.

4. Mercury and lead, mercury and sulphur are equally in use in the East and in the West, and adding to these many others we find that both schools accepted them under a triple meaning, the last or third of these being that which European alchemists do not understand.

5. The alchemists of both countries accept equally the doctrine of a cycle of transmutation during which the precious metals pass back to their basic elements.

6. Both schools of alchemy are closely allied to astrology and magic.

7. And finally they both make use of a fantastic phraseology, a fact which is noticed by the author of *Studies of Alchemy in China* (2) who finds that the language of western alchemists, while so entirely different from that of all other western sciences, imitates perfectly the metaphorical jargon of eastern nations, proving that alchemy in Europe had its origin in the far East.

Nor should any prejudices be entertained against alchemy because we say that it is closely connected with astrology and magic. The word magic is an old Persian term which means "knowledge," and embraced the knowledge of all sciences, both physical and metaphysical, studied in those days. The wise and priestly classes of the Chaldeans taught magic, from which came magism and gnosticism. Was not Abraham called a *Chaldean*? And was it not Joseph, a pious Jew, who, speaking of the patriarch, said that he taught mathematics, or the esoteric science, in Egypt, including *the science of the stars*, a professor of magism being necessarily an astrologer?

But it would be a great mistake to confuse the alchemy of the middle ages with that of antediluvian times. As it is understood in the present

day it has three principal agents: the philosopher's stone used in the transmutation of metals; the *alkahest* or the universal solvent; and the *elixir vitse* possessing the property of indefinitely prolonging human life. But neither the real philosophers nor the Initiates occupied themselves with the last two. The three alchemical agents, like the Trinity, *one and indivisible*, have become three distinct agents solely through falling under the influence of human egotism. While the sacerdotal caste, grasping and ambitious, anthropomorphized the Spiritual One by dividing it into three persons, the false mystics separated the Divine Force from a universal Kriyasakti and turned it into three agents.

(To be concluded.)

FOOTNOTES:

1. M. de Gubernatis (*Mythol. Zool*, 1427) finds that because "in Sanscrit the ram is called mesha or meha, he who spills or who pours out," so the golden fleece of the Greeks should be "the mist . . . raining down water"; and Mr. Schwartz compares the fleece of a ram to a stormy night and tells us that the ram speaking is the voice which seems to issue from an electric cloud. We imagine these learned men are rather too full of vapours themselves to be ever taken seriously by students. And yet M. P. Decharme, the author of *Mythologie de la Grece antique* seems to share their opinions. ([return to text](#))

2. By Rev. W. A. Martin, of Pekin. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

LIGHT IN DARKNESS — Benjamin W. Koske

Address delivered on New Year's Day, 1950, in the Temple at Covina

I have come from what has been thought of today as the dark continent, the continent of Europe; and I certainly left England with a feeling that through the many years we have passed, spiritual things have seemed very, very dark. But during the last six or seven days a transmutation of my whole vision has taken place. My feeling has singled down to one immense impression: I am no longer looking at the dark things of Europe. Instead I seem to be wrapt around with and looking at the light, feeling as though a great battle has been fought, and a great victory won for the light. Now we are looking ahead, and the mission when I return home is to tell of the glories that I feel are near. So clearly, so strongly do I feel this, that I feel it is the first thing that I must say.

Throughout the course of some 40 years I have been trying to lend such efforts as have been possible to the study of Theosophy and the spreading of its ideas. The studying of Theosophy is one thing; the spreading of its ideas is quite another. By the study of its teachings one by one, the errors that dominated our minds were one by one removed. We took the vision that opened up and discovered the truth about those dark problems of life which have so confused human living and civilization. As the hidden places in our hearts were illuminated, so did the elimination of those errors fortify and strengthen that natural ray of hope that living was a beautiful thing, and that we were here for a great and noble purpose.

From H. P. B. to our present Leader always there is maintained and sustained the promise that life is worth living. Everything they teach of, the deepest and even the most elementary teachings, have the ring of hope for mankind, hope for the individual. From the moment he sets his feet upon the path that Theosophy reveals, his own experiences

bring forward conviction of the truth of what is taught. It is when we go through the cycles of the terrible conflicts of the world, of the hideous things by which men are confronted and through which we have had to live, that we ever turn to the force that flows from the Leaders of this work. Always we find there is a flow, a power, sustaining, beautifying, a power that upholds and demonstrates that all that is taught, all that is promised by the teachings, is an embodiment of living force. That is the essential value of the Movement as it is incorporated in the society itself.

One of the great difficulties in proclaiming these teachings to the minds of the people has always been the attitude: "Yes, they are very nice, some of it we can believe to be true, but we do not like organizations, we do not like societies." All of us have had to meet that with a degree of understanding, for it is only as we find ourselves more and more embodied in this work that we discover it is not an organization, or a society — such as the world understands. Rather is it a channel for a living spiritual power emanating from those — shall we ever know how great the privilege is that it is so? — emanating from those who have come to take upon themselves the task of guiding and helping and living with the fragments of mankind who become this society; infusing it with their deep heart-force that we may know that the promise of the teachings is a living vibrant hope. That is a very difficult thing to convey to the people to whom we present these teachings, and our heart yearns that they should know it.

There is some advantage in being able to look back upon a long number of years in this work, for within that period our own experiences bring forward for our own conviction the truth of what we are taught through Theosophy. We see this work then from various angles: sometimes as an intellectual presentation of concepts and ideas which challenge what we have hitherto believed, and with which few of us were really satisfied. As a body of teachings we study them in our books, in our conversation, and in the silence of our own places. That is a good and beautiful thing to have come into the life of one who has not known before where to find the teachings. There are times then

when we vision the work as a challenge to ourselves. We begin to realize that we are beings who are *to become*. We examine ourselves. We have the vision of the ideal we are to become, of the spiritual being that ultimately that vision points to, and we see in it task of the reconstruction of ourselves. It is then we find that within the teachings there runs the guidance of how to deal with discouragement – how to live with hope, how to act with science — the science that understands, that teaches the potency of all the faculties with which we are blessed, how these faculties may be developed to a power and a strength that, if used rightly, will not only change our environment, but will guide us to become that ideal. We think perhaps that then we have the full picture; but another vision presents itself to our minds: that the entire family of humanity is not made up of, say ordinary people, with theosophists something apart, but that *all is one*. We begin to perceive that within the function and nature of the theosophical work there is the force, the intention of the ultimate inevitability that all humanity is to move towards. Shall I call it a civilization based upon those qualities which only a clear perception of the truth, of our own nature and of the universe, can really bring about, can really sustain? Once again, we see it as a hope, not alone of our own regeneration, but a hope that out of this a mighty civilization is to be reared that will more truly embody the divine things that are at the heart of the universe.

There is still another angle that impresses itself very deeply in the course of ordinary daily living as we journey along amidst the blindness and misconceptions and errors of human thinking. It is the one that is perhaps most palpable, and has the strongest impact upon us: that is the sorrow, the burden, the weariness, the despair in human life as we move amongst it from hour to hour, from moment to moment. One of the saddest, most tragic things that a human being can feel is that he has nothing to give, that he has no real word of help, no sympathy based upon conviction, with which to do a little for his fellow man who is floundering. In the course of the tragedies of the last few years I have so many times felt that not the least of the privileges that Theosophy confers upon its students is the power to help, to feel that

even in a word, an act, a gesture, we can bring a little of that sustaining power to another's life. There is conferred upon us a great privilege to be able to pass on to another an idea that brings light in darkness. That is itself a moment worth living for. To be able to live in our daily contacts so that each day we hear something of the melody that is Theosophy — for our hearts are indeed anchored to a great joy, to a permanent and sustaining hope — to be able to help another to sing it with us is something that does not pertain to the common level of human life in this world. It is a singular thing that emerges from the heart of a Theosophist as he truly feels the great inwardness of this work.

Now these aspects grouped together form the nature of a Theosophist's work anywhere. Though one lives at opposite ends of the globe to where the real heart and center of the Work is, the power of Theosophy is felt strongly, palpably. As a young man one of the things that used to strike me as most enlightening was the altitude of the remarks of the different Leaders as they dwelt upon the beauty of the fulfilment of evolution. It has seemed so far beyond the possibilities of our own attainments that perhaps it has been like a promise that is too far ahead to mean much; yet that again is where it is of some value to look down the years and see some of the secrets that have undoubtedly been in the minds of those Teachers.

In this work every step forward brings us a little experience of the beauties that are to be, and that adds and accumulates as time goes on until it becomes as natural as knowing that the sun shines even when the clouds are there, becomes as natural for us to feel and to know that these grand promises before our minds are realities which are right to pursue, right to hope for, and right to achieve by degrees of experience as we move along.

When we enter the theosophic field we often hear the word "training" as though members who joined the society were to be immediately given opportunity of a very specific and definite training in order to become the ideal to which their hearts had yearned. And the revelation

of what that "training" actually is leads us to see that it is nothing that we had speculated upon; and we soon realize that the training is made up of being taught how to deal with the momentary circumstances and events of our ordinary daily lives. Almost immediately we begin to apply Theosophy, we get larger concepts of what that means — *to be either slave or master*; and the moment we begin to bend our intelligence in this application, to transmute the small circumstances so that from them may begin to emerge peace, harmony and beauty of relationships instead of chaos and the irritations that make, and mostly mar, the daily life, we then begin to find that we are actually in the process of that training. The field of help and work is our own selves, so that conforming with universal truth and all the teachings, we find that no matter where we are, no matter in what family we are placed, or into what circumstances we are brought, the principles of Theosophy may be immediately employed. All these are the material, the circumstances, by which we apply the teaching, by which we get the very life that we yearn to live. It is no faraway place, it is no out-of-the-way guidance, no special subtle unsuspected training we are given; but in applying the teachings to our individual lives, we therein realize all the beauty and joy of making human life that which Theosophy enjoins as the true destiny. There we find there can be no idle moments, no insignificant events, no circumstances without their meaning, but all have to be understood, all taken in hand. Thus our own worthwhileness must prove itself: either we emerge from these circumstances in peace, in harmony, and with joy in life, or with doubts and despairs.

And now I would like to return to where I started. I have moved around the world a good deal in the course of the years, and one of the strongest feelings that I have had, and perhaps one of the saddest, has been — not loneliness, but the feeling that there is no home in the sense of being at one and at home with your fellowmen. Nowhere has it been possible to meet with six or seven, or even two or three, fellow human beings, and feel instantly you meet there is simplicity, friendship and that utter utter trust in the harmony of human

essentials. In the world everyone is on guard with everyone else, someone else distrusts something about somebody else, until relationships are all jangled — even if not discordant, they are none too happy. That is something so ordinary in human experience that you all know what I mean.

Coming here to these Headquarters has been a revelation of the promise of what human life can be when this fulfills itself by an ever wider spreading among humanity. When men can live their lives without fear, without distrust, without want of confidence in each other; when we can all go about our daily tasks knowing that around us there are friends who are dealing with themselves so that the irritations and suspicions and distrusts need no longer be a part of our nature — when all these are eliminated, there may be a wonder, a beauty in the life we live.

And now the last word, which to me is the biggest and best of all. So many of us out in the world have to work alone, and yet our natures being placed right inside this work we look always towards Headquarters, and above all to the Leader. The Leader is the palpable, beautiful, inspiring power, though we may never have seen him. Of all the experiences that have been so beautiful here, is to have been able to live, even if only a few days, in a close and intimate relationship so near to the presence of the teacher. It is like the fulfilment of what has only been dreamed of. . . . For that alone I would have traveled round the world.

The Theosophical Forum

ALCHEMY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: II — H. P. Blavatsky

(Translated by Thomas Williams from *La Revue Theosophique*)

In his *Magie Naturelle* Baptista Porta tells us this clearly: "I do not promise you mountains of gold nor the philosopher's stone, nor even that golden liquor which renders immortal him who drinks it. . . All that is only visionary; for the world being mutable and subject to change all that it produces must be destroyed."

Geber, the great Arabian alchemist, is even more explicit. He seems, indeed, to have written down the following words with a prophetic forecast of the future: "If we have hidden aught from thee, thou son of science, be not surprised; for we have not hidden it especially from thee, but have made use of a language which will hide the truth from the wicked in order that men who are unjust and ignoble may not understand it. But thou, son of Truth, seek and thou wilt find the gift, the most precious of all. *You, sons of folly, impiety, and profane works, cease endeavoring to penetrate the secrets of this science; for they will destroy you and will hurl you into the most profound misery.*"

Let us see what other writers have to say on the question. Having begun to think that alchemy was after all solely a philosophy entirely metaphysical instead of a physical science (in which they erred), they declared that the extraordinary transmutation of base metals into gold was merely a figurative expression for the transformation of man, freeing him of his hereditary evils and of his infirmities in order that he might attain to a degree of regeneration which would elevate him into a divine Being. (1)

This in fact is the synthesis of transcendental alchemy and is its principal object; but this does not for all that represent every end which this science has in view. Aristotle said in Alexandria that "the philosopher's stone was not a stone at all, that it is in each man, everywhere, at all times, and is called the final aim of all philosophers."

Aristotle was mistaken in his first proposition though right with regard to the second. On the physical kingdom, the secret of the Alkahest produces an ingredient which is called the philosopher's stone; but for those who care not for perishable gold, the alkahest, as Professor Wilder tells us, is only the *allgeist*, the divine spirit, which dissolves gross matter in order that the unsanctified elements may be destroyed. . . . The *elixir vitae* therefore is only the waters of life which, as Godwin says, "is a universal medicine possessing the power to rejuvenate man and to prolong life indefinitely."

Dr. Kopp, in Germany, published a *History of Chemistry* forty years ago. Speaking of alchemy, looked at especially as the forerunner of modern chemistry, the German doctor makes use of a very significant expression such as the Pythagorean and the Platonist will understand at once. "If," says he, "for the word World we substitute the microcosm represented by man, then it becomes easy to interpret."

Irenaeus Philalethes declares that:

The philosopher's stone represents the whole universe (or macrocosm) and possesses all the virtues of the great system collected and compressed into the lesser system This last has a magnetic power which draws to it that which affiintises with it in the universe. It is the celestial virtue which spreads throughout creation, but which is epitomised in a miniature abridgment of itself (as man).

Listen to what Alipile says in one of his translated works:

"He who knows the microcosm cannot long remain ignorant of the macrocosm. This is why the Egyptians, those zealous investigators of nature, so often said: *Man, know thy Self.*" But their disciples, more restricted in their powers of appreciation, took this adage as being allegorical and in their ignorance inscribed it in their temples. But I declare to you, whoever you may be, who desires to plunge into the depths of Nature, that if that which you seek you do not find within yourself you will never find it without. He who aspires to a first place

in the ranks of Nature's students will never find a vaster or better subject of study than he himself presents.

Therefore following in this the example of the Egyptians and in agreement with the Truth which has been shown to me by experience, I repeat these very words of the Egyptians with a loud voice and from the very bottom of my soul, "Oh man, know thyself, for the treasure of treasures is entombed within you."

Irenaeus Philalethes, cosmopolitan, an English alchemist and Hermetic philosopher, wrote in 1659 alluding to the persecution to which philosophy was subjected:

Many of those who are strangers to the art think that to possess it they must do such and such a thing, like many others we thought so too, but having become more careful and less ambitious of the three rewards (offered by alchemy), on account of the great peril we run we have chosen the only infallible one and the most hidden. . . .

And in truth the alchemists were wise so to do. For living in an age when for a slight difference of opinion on religious questions men and women were treated as heretics, placed under a ban and proscribed, and when science was stigmatised as sorcery, then it was quite natural, as Professor A. Wilder says, "that men who cultivate ideas which are out of the general line of thought should invent a symbological language and means of communication amongst themselves which should conceal their identity from those thirsting for their blood."

The author reminds us of the Hindu allegory of Krishna ordering his adopted mother to look into his mouth. She did and saw there the entire universe. This agrees exactly with the Kabbalistic teaching which holds that the microcosm is but the faithful reflection of the macrocosm — a photographic copy to him who understands. This is why Cornelius Agrippa, perhaps the most generally known of all the alchemists, says:

It is a created thing, the object of astonishment both to heaven

and earth. It is a compound of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, it is found everywhere, though recognised by few, and is called by its real name by no one, for it is buried under numbers, signs, and enigmas without the help of which neither alchemy nor natural magic could reach perfection.

The allusion becomes even clearer if we read a certain passage in the *Enchiridion* of Alchemists (1672):

Therefore I will render visible to you in this discourse the natural condition of the philosopher's stone wrapped in its triple garment, this stone of richness and of charity, which holds all secrets and which is a divine mystery the like of which Nature in her sublimity has not in all the world. Observe well what I tell you and remember that it has a triple covering, namely: the Body, the Soul, and the Spirit.

In other words this stone contains: the secret of the transmutation of metals, that of the elixir of long life and of *conscious immortality*.

This last secret was the one which the old philosophers chose to unravel, leaving to the lesser lights of modern times the pleasure of wearing themselves out in the attempt to solve the two first. It is the "Word" or the "infallible name," of which Moses said that there was no need to seek it in distant places "for the Word is close to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart."

Philalethes, the English alchemist, says the same thing in other terms.

Our writings will be like a double-edged knife for the world at large, some will use them to hew out works of art, others will only cut their fingers with them. Nevertheless it is not we who are to blame, since we warn most seriously all those who attempt the task that they are undertaking to master the most elevated philosophy in Nature. And this is so whether we write well or badly. For though we write in English, these writings will be Greek to some who will, nevertheless, persist in believing that they have well understood us, while in reality they distort

in the most perverse manner that which we teach; for can it be supposed that those who are naturally fools should become wise simply by reading books which testify to their own natures?

Espagnet warned his readers in the same way. He prays the lovers of Nature to read little, and then only those of whom the veracity and intelligence is above suspicion. Let the reader seize quickly a meaning which the author may probably only darkly hint at; for, he adds, truth lives in obscurity; (Hermetic) philosophers deceive most when they appear to write most clearly, and ever divulge more secrets, the more obscurely they write. The truth cannot be given to the public; even less in these days than in those days when the Apostles were advised not to cast pearls before swine. All these fragments which we have just cited are, we hold, so many proofs of that which we have advanced. Outside of the schools of Adepts, almost unapproachable for western students, there does not exist in the whole world — and more especially in Europe, one single work on Occultism, and above all on Alchemy, which is written in clear and precise language, or which offers to the public a system or a method which could be followed as in the physical sciences. All treatises, which come from an Initiate or from an Adept, ancient or modern, unable to reveal all, limit themselves to throwing light on certain problems which are allowed to be disclosed to those worthy of knowing, while remaining at the same time hidden from those who are unworthy of receiving the truth, for fear they should make a selfish use of their knowledge.

Therefore, he, who complaining of the obscurity of writers of the eastern school, should confront them with those of either the middle ages or of modern times which seem to be more clearly written, would prove only two things: first, he deceives his readers in deceiving himself; secondly, he would advertise modern charlatanism, knowing all the time that he is deceiving the public. It is very easy to find semi-modern works which are written with precision and method, but giving only the personal ideas of the writer on the subject, that is to say, of value only to those who know absolutely nothing of the true occult science. We are beginning to make much of Eliphaz Levi, who alone

knew probably more than all our wise men of the Europe of 1889 put together. But, when once the half-dozen books of the Abbe Louis Constant have been read, re-read and learnt by heart, how far are we advanced in practical Occultism, or even in the understanding of the theories of the Kabbala? His style is poetical and quite charming. His paradoxes, and nearly every phrase in each of his volumes is one, are thoroughly French in character. But even if we learn them so as to repeat them by heart from the beginning to the end, what pray has he really taught us? Nothing, absolutely nothing — except, perhaps, the French language. We know several of the pupils of this great magician of modern times, English, French and German, all men of learning, of iron wills, and many of whom have sacrificed whole years to these studies. One of his disciples made him a life annuity which he paid him for upwards of ten years, besides paying him 100 francs for every letter when he was obliged to be away. This person at the end of ten years knew less of magic and of the Kabbala than a chela of ten years" standing of an Indian astrologer.

We have in the library at Adyar his letters on magic in several volumes of manuscripts, written in French and translated into English, and we defy the admirers of Eliphas Levi to show us one single individual who would have become an Occultist even in theory, by following the teaching of the French magician.

Why is this since he evidently got his secrets from an Initiate? Simply because he never *possessed the right to initiate others*. Those who know something of occultism will understand what we mean by this; those who are only pretenders will contradict us, and probably hate us all the more for having told such hard truths.

The secret sciences, or rather the key which alone explains the mystery of the jargon in which they are expressed, cannot be developed; like the Sphinx who dies the moment the enigma of its being is guessed by an Œdipus, they are only occult as long as they remain unknown to the uninitiated. Then again they cannot be bought or sold. A Rosicrucian "*becomes*, he is not made" says an old adage of the Hermetic

philosophers, to which the Occultists add, "The science of the gods is mastered by violence; conquered it may be, but it never is to be had for the mere asking." This is exactly what the author of the Acts of the Apostles intended to convey when he wrote the answer of Peter to Simon Magus: "May thy gold perish with thee since thou hast thought that the gifts of God may be bought with money." Occult wisdom should never be used either to make money, or for the attainment of any egotistical ends, or even to minister to personal pride.

Let us go further and say at once that — except in an exceptional case where gold might be the means of saving a whole nation, even the act itself of transmutation when the only motive is the acquisition of riches, becomes black magic. So that neither the secrets of magic nor of occultism, nor of alchemy, can ever be revealed during the existence of our race, which worships the golden calf with an ever increasing frenzy.

Therefore, of what value can those works be which promise to give us the key of initiation for either one or the other of these two sciences, which are in fact only one.

We understand perfectly such Adepts as Paracelsus and Roger Bacon. The first was one of the great harbingers of modern chemistry; the second that of physics. Roger Bacon in his "Treatise on the admirable Forces of Art and of Nature" shows this clearly. We find in it a foreshadowing of all the sciences of our day. He speaks in it of powder for cannons, and predicts the use of steam as a motive power. The hydraulic press, the diving bell, and the kaleidoscope, are all described; he prophesies the invention of flying machines, constructed in such a way that he who is seated in the middle of this mechanical contrivance, in which we easily recognise a type of the modern balloon, has only to turn a mechanism to set in motion artificial wings which begin to beat the air in imitation of those of a bird. Then he defends his brother alchemists against the accusation of using a secret cryptography.

The reason for the secrecy which is maintained by the Wise of all countries is the general contempt and indifference shown for

the profounder truths of knowledge, the generality of people being unable to use those things which are of the highest good. Even those amongst them who do have an idea which proves related to something of real utility, owe it generally to chance and their good fortune; so that failing to appreciate its full meaning they fall into scientific errors to the great detriment and ruin, not only of the few, but often of the many.

All of which proves that he who divulges our secrets is worse than foolish, unless he veils that which he discloses to the multitude, and disguises it so cleverly that even the wise understand with difficulty. There are those amongst us who hide their secrets under a certain way of writing, as for example using only consonants so that he who reads this style of writing can only decipher the true meaning when they know the meaning of the words (the hermetic jargon). This kind (of cryptography) was in use amongst the Jews, the Chaldeans, the Syrians, the Arabs, and even the Greeks, and largely adopted in former times especially by the Jews. This is proved by the Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament, the books of Moses or the Pentateuch rendered ten times more fantastic by the introduction of massoretic points. But as with the Bible, which has been made to say everything required of it except that which it really did say, thanks to Massorah and the fathers of the Church, so it was also with kabbalistic and alchemical books. The key of both having been lost centuries ago in Europe, the Kabbala (the *good* Kabbala of the Marquis de Mirville, according to the ex-rabbi, the Chevalier Drach, the pious and most Catholic Hebrew scholar) serves now as a witness confirmatory of both the New and the Old Testaments. According to modern kabbalists, the Zohar is a book of modern prophecies, especially *relating to the Catholic dogmas of the Latin Church*, and is the fundamental stone of the Gospel; which indeed might be true if it were admitted that both in the Gospels and in the Bible, each name is symbolical and each story allegorical; just as was the case with all sacred writings preceding the Christian canon.

Before closing this article, which has already become too long, let us make a rapid *resume* of what we have said.

I do not know if our argument and copious extracts will have any effect on the generality of our readers. But I am sure, at all events, that what we have said will have the same effect on kabbalists and modern *Masters* as the waving of a red rag in front of a bull; but we have long ceased to fear the sharpest horns. These *Masters* owe all their science to the dead letter of the Kabbala; and to the fantastic interpretation placed on it by some few mystics of the present and the last century, on which "Initiates" of libraries and museums have in their turn made variations, so that they are bound to defend them, tooth and nail. People will see only the raging fire of contest, and he who raises the greatest conflagration will remain the victor. Nevertheless — *Magna est veritas et praevalabit.*

1. It has been asserted that alchemy penetrated into Europe from China, and that falling into profane hands, alchemy (like astrology) is no longer the pure and divine science of the schools of Thoth-Hermes of the first Egyptian Dynasties.

2. It is also certain that the Zohar, of which both Europe and other Christian countries possess fragments, is not the same as the Zohar of Simon Ben Jochai, but a compilation of old writings and traditions collected by Moses de Leon of Cordova in the thirteenth century, who, according to Mosheim, has followed in many cases the interpretations which were given him by Christian Gnostics of Chaldea and Syria he went to seek them. The real, old Zohar is only found whole in the Chaldean Book of Numbers, of which there only now exist two or three incomplete copies, which are in the possession of initiated rabbis.

One of these lived in Poland, in strict seclusion, and he destroyed his copy before dying in 1817; as for the other, the wisest rabbi of Palestine, he emigrated from Jaffa some few years ago.

3. Of the real hermetic books there only remains a fragment known as the "Smaragdine Tablet," of which we shall presently speak. All the works compiled on the books of Thoth have been destroyed and burnt in Egypt by the order of Diocletian in the third century of our era. All

the others, including Pymander, are in their present form merely recollections, more or less vague and erroneous of different Greek or even Latin authors, who often did not hesitate to palm them off as genuine hermetic fragments. And even if by chance these exist they would be as incomprehensible to the "Masters" of today as the books of the alchemists of the middle ages. In proof of this we have quoted their own thoroughly sincere confessions. We have shown the reasons they give for this (a) their mysteries were too sacred to be profaned by the ignorant, being written down and explained only for the use of a few initiates; and they are also too dangerous to be trusted in the hands of those who might mistake their use; (b) in the middle ages the precautions taken were ten times as great; for otherwise they stood a good chance of being roasted alive to the great glory of God and His Church.

The key to the jargon of the alchemists and of the real meaning of the symbols and allegories of the Kabbala only are now to be found in the East. Never having been rediscovered in Europe, what now serves as the guiding star to our modern kabbalists so that they shall recognise the truths in the writings of the alchemists and in the small number of treatises which, written by real initiates, are still to be found in our national libraries?

We conclude, therefore, that in rejecting aid from the only quarter from whence in this our century they may expect to find the Key to the old esotericisms and to the Wisdom religion, they, whether kabbalists, elect of God or modern Prophets, throw to the winds their only chance of studying primitive truths and profiting by them.

At all events we may be assured that it is not the Eastern School which loses by the default.

We have permitted ourselves to say that many French kabbalists have often expressed the opinion that the Eastern school could never be worth much, no matter how it may pride itself on possessing secrets unknown to Europeans *because it admits women into its ranks.*

To this we might answer by repeating the fable told by brother Jos. N. Nutt, Grand Master of the Masonic lodges of the United States for women, to show what women would do if they were not shackled by males — whether as men or as god.

A lion passing close by a monument representing an athletic and powerful figure of a man tearing the jaws of a lion said: "If the scene which this represents had been executed by a lion the two figures would have changed places." The same remark holds good for Woman. If only she were allowed to represent the phases of human life she would distribute the parts in reverse order. She it was who first took Man to the Tree of Knowledge, and made him know Good and Evil; and if she had been let alone and allowed to do that which she wished, she would have led him to the Tree of Life and thus rendered him immortal.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Hermetic Philosophy*, by A. Wilder ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

JACOB BOEHME AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE — *William Q. Judge*

Jacob Boehme (or as some say, Behmen) was a German mystic and spiritualist who began to write in the 17th century. In his works he inserted a picture of an angel blowing a trumpet, from which issued these words:

To all Christians, Jews, Turks and Heathens, to all the nations of the earth this Trumpet sounds for the last time.

In truth it was a curious emblem, but he, the author, was a mystic, and as all experience shows, the path of the mystic is a strange one. It is, as Job says, a path which the "vulture knoweth not." Even as a bird cleaves the eternal ether, so the mystic advances on a path not ordinarily manifest, a way which must be followed with care, because like the Great Light, which flashes forth and leaves only traces when it returns again to its center, only indications are left for those who come after seeking the same spiritual wisdom. Yet by these "traces," for such they are called in the Kabbala, the way can be discerned, and the truth discovered.

Boehme was poor, of common birth, and totally devoid of ordinary education. He was only a shoemaker. Yet from the mind and out of the mouth of this unlettered man came mighty truths.

It would be idle to inquire into the complications of Karma which condemned him to such a life as his appeared to be. It must have been extremely curious, because though he had grasped the truth and was able to appreciate it, yet at the same time he could not give it out in its perfect form. But he performed his work, and there can be no manner of doubt about his succeeding incarnation. As Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, he has been already or will shortly be "born into a family of wise devotees"; and thence "he will attain the highest walk."

His life and writings furnish another proof that the great wisdom-

religion — the Secret Doctrine — has never been left without a witness. Born a Christian, he nevertheless saw the esoteric truth lying under the moss and crust of centuries, and from the Christian Bible extracted for his purblind fellows those pearls which they refused to accept. But he did not get his knowledge from the Christian Scriptures only. Before his internal eye the panorama of real knowledge passed. His interior vision being open he could see the things he had learned in a former life, and at first not knowing what they were, was stimulated by them to construe his only spiritual books in the esoteric fashion. His brain took cognizance of the Book before him, but his spirit aided by his past, and perchance by the living guardians of the shining lamp of truth, could not but read them aright.

His work was called "The Dawning of the Eternal Day." In this he endeavors to outline the great philosophy. He narrates the circumstances and reasons for the angelic creation, the fall of its chief three hierarchies, and the awful effects which thereupon fell upon Eternal Nature. Mark this, not upon man — for he was not yet — but upon the Eternal Nature, that is BRAHM. Then he says that these effects came about by reason of the *unbalancing* of the *seven equipoised powers* or forces of the Eternal Nature or Brahm. That is to say, that so long as the seven principles of Brahm were in perfect poise, there was no corporeal or manifested universe. So in the *Bhagavad-Gita* we find that Krishna tells Arjuna that

after the lapse of a thousand ages (or Night of Brahm) all objects of developed matter come forth from the non-developed principle. At the approach of that day they emanate spontaneously. — ch. 8

Such is the teaching of the Secret Doctrine.

And again Boehme shows the duality of the Supreme Soul. For he says in his work *Psychologia Vera cum Supplemento* that these two eternal principles of positive and negative, the *yea* and the *nay* of the outspoken *Supreme One*, together constitute eternal nature, — not the dark world alone, which is termed the "root of nature," — the two

being as it were combined in *perfect indissoluble union*.

This is nothing else but Purush and Prakriti, or taken together, what is referred to in the *Bhagavad-Gita* where it is said:

But there is another invisible, eternal existence, superior to this visible one, which does not perish when all things perish. It is called invisible and indivisible. This is my Supreme Abode.

Clearly the *Supreme Abode* could never be in Purush alone, nor in prakriti alone, but in both when *indissolubly united*.

This scheme is adhered to all through this great philosopher's works, no matter whether he is speaking of the great Universe or macrocosm, or of its antitype in man or microcosm. In *De Tribus principiis* he treats of the three principles or worlds of Nature, describing its eternal birth, its *seven* properties, and the *two* co-eternal principles; and furthermore in *De Triplici Vita Hominis* he gives the threefold life of man from which the *seven* is again deduced.

In *De Electione Gratia* he goes into a subject that often proves a stumbling block to many, and that is the *inevitableness of evil* as well as of good. From this it is easy to pass to a contemplation of one of the difficult points in occultism as shown in the Secret Doctrine, that nothing is evil, and that even if we admit evil or wickedness in man, it is of the nature of the quality of guna, which in the *Bhagavad-Gita* is denominated *Rajas* — foulness or bad action. Even this is better than the indifferent action that only leads to death. Even from wickedness may and does come forth spiritual life, but from indifferent action comes only darkness, and finally death.

Krishna says in *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chap. XIV: "There are three kinds of action; first, that which is of the nature of *Satyam*, or true action; second, that which is of the nature of *Raja*, or bad action; third, that which is of the nature of *Tamas*, or indifferent action."

He then says: "Although thou wert the greatest of all offenders, thou shalt be able to cross the gulf of sin in the bark of spiritual wisdom";

and a little farther on, "The ignorant and the man without faith, whose spirit is full of doubt, is lost and cannot enjoy either world." And in another chapter, in describing Himself, he says that he is not only the Buddha, but also is the most evil of mankind or the Asura.

This is one of the most mystical parts of the whole Secret Doctrine. While Boehme has touched on it sufficiently to show that he had a memory of it, he did not go into the most occult details. It has to be remembered that the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and many other books treating on the Secret Doctrine, must be regarded from seven points of view" and that imperfect man is not able to look at it from the center, which would give the whole seven points at once.

Boehme wrote about thirty different treatises, all of them devoted to great subjects, portions of the Secret Doctrine.

Curiously enough the first treated of the "Dawn of the Eternal Day," and the second was devoted to an elucidation of the "Three Principles of Man." In the latter is really to be found a sevenfold classification similar to that which Mr. Sinnett propounded in *Esoteric Buddhism*.

He held that the greatest obstacle in the path of man is the astral or elementary power, which engenders and sustains this world.

Then he talks of "tinctures," which we may call principles. According to him, there are two principal ones, the watery and the igneous. These ought to be united in Man; and they ardently seek each other continually, in order to be identified with Sophia or Divine Wisdom. Many Theosophists will see in this a clue not only to the two principles — or tinctures — which ought to be united in man, but also to a law which obtains in many of the phenomena of magic. But even if I were able, I should not speak on this more clearly.

For many inquirers the greatest interest in these works will be found in his hypothesis as to the birth of the material Universe. On the evolution of man from spirit into matter he has much more than I could hope to glance at. In nearly all of it he was outlining and illustrating the Secret Doctrine. The books indicated are well worthy of study not only by

Western but also by Eastern metaphysicians.

Let us add a few sentences to support this hypothesis from Count Saint Martin, who was a devoted student of these works.

Jacob Boehme took for granted the existence of an Universal Principle; he was persuaded that everything is connected in the immense chain of truths, and that the Eternal Nature reposed on seven principles or bases, which he sometimes calls powers, forms, spiritual wheels, sources, and fountains, and that those seven bases exist also in this disordered material nature, under constraint. His nomenclature, adopted for these fundamental relations, ran thus: The first *astringency*, the second *gall* or bitterness, the third *anguish*, the fourth *fire*, the fifth *light*, the sixth *sound*, and the seventh he called BEING or the *thing itself*.

The reader may have begun to think the author did not rightly comprehend the first six but his definition of the seventh shows he was right throughout, and we may conclude the real meanings are concealed under these names.

The third principle, *anguish*, attenuates the *astringent* one, turns it into *water*, and allows a passage to *fire*, which was shut up in the astringent principle.

There are in this many suggestions and a pursuit of them will repay the student.

Now the Divine Sophia caused a new order to take birth in the centre of our system, and there burned our sun; from that do come forth all kinds of qualities, forms and powers. This center is the Separator.

It is well known that from the sun was taken by the ancients all kinds of power; and if we mistake not, the Hindus claim that when the Fathers enter into Para-Nirvana, their accumulated goodness pours itself out on the world through the "*Door of the Sun*."

The *Bhagavad-Gita* says, that the Lord of all dwells in the region of the

heart, and again that this Lord is also the Sun of the world.

The earth is a condensation of the seven primordial principles, and by the withdrawal of eternal light this became a dark valley.

It is taught in the East, that this world is a valley and that we are in it, our bodies reaching to the moon, being condensed to hardness at the point where we are on the earth, thus becoming visible to the eye of man. There is a mystery in this statement, but not such an one as cannot be unravelled.

Boehme proceeds:

When the light mastered the fire at the place of the sun, the terrible shock of the battle engendered an igneous eruption by which there shot forth from the sun a stormy and frightful flash of fire — Mars. Taken captive by light, it assumed a place, and there it struggles furiously, a pricking goad, whose office is to agitate all nature, producing reaction. It is the gall of nature. The gracious, amiable Light, having enchained unerupted Mars, proceeded by its own power to the bottom or end of the rigidity of Nature, whence, unable to proceed further, it stopped, and became corporeal; remaining there, it warms that place, and although a valet in Nature, it is the source of sweetness and the moderator of Mars.

Saturn does not originate from the Sun, but was produced from the severe astringent anguish of the whole body of this Universe. Above Jupiter the sun could not mitigate the horror, and out of that arose Saturn, who is the opposite of meekness, and who produces whatever of rigidity there is in creatures, including bones, and what in moral nature corresponds thereto.

(This is all the highest astrology, from one who had no knowledge of it.)

As in the Sun is *the heart of life*, so by Saturn commenceth all corporeal nature. Thus in these two resides the power of the whole universal body, and without their power there could be

no creation nor any corporification.

Venus originates in *effluvia* from the Sun. She lights the unctuousness of the water of the Universe, penetrates hardness, and enkindles love.

Mercury is the chief worker in the planetary wheel; he is *sound*, and wakes up the germs in everything. His origin, the triumph of Light over Astringency (in which sound was shut up silent), set free the sound by the attenuation of the astringent power.

It is certain that if this peculiar statement regarding Mercury is understood, the student will have gained a high point of knowledge. A seductive bait is here held out to those striving disciples who so earnestly desire to hold converse with the elemental world. But there is no danger, for all the avenues are very secret and only the pure can prevail in the preliminary steps.

Boehme says again:

The Mercury is impregnated and fed continually by the solar substance; that in it is found the knowledge of what was in the order above, before Light had penetrated to the solar center.

As to the Moon, it is curious to note that he says:

She was produced from the sun itself, at the time of his becoming material, and that the moon is his spouse.

Students of the story of Adam being made to sleep after his creation and before coats of skin were given, when Eve was produced from his side, will find in this a strong hint.

The above is not by any means a complete statement of Boehme's system. In order to do justice to it, a full analysis of all his works should be undertaken. However, it is sufficient if thoughtful minds who have not read Boehme shall turn to him after reading this, or if but one earnest reader of his works, or seeker after wisdom, shall receive even a hint that may lead to a clearing up of doubts, or to the acquisition of

one new idea. Count Saint Martin continually read him; and the merest glance at the *Theosophic Correspondence* or *Man — His Nature*, etc., of Saint Martin, will show that from that study he learned much. How much more then will the Western mind be aided by the light shed on both by the lamp of Theosophical teachings. "Let the desire of the pious be fulfilled."

— *The Theosophist*, April, 1886

The Theosophical Forum

KARMAN IS FULFILMENT — *Madeline Clark*

Oddly, but undeniably, when we think of karman we generally consider it in its immediate relation to ourselves, and associate it in our minds with the idea of punishment or retaliation for acts committed or omitted. Tacitly, it comes to be a sort of Nemesis or agent of divine retribution. But this is only as our consciousness is touched by the ever-immanent mystery surrounding this most recondite, most mysterious doctrine of the theosophical philosophy. Let us once begin to broaden the idea of karman to universal proportions, and we see it as one of the majestic rhythms of the universe, protective even in its most awesome aspects. Protean in its forms, it appears variously to our imagination. It is divine justice; it is compassion; it is an energy of the Hierarchy of which we all are parts, continually rectifying itself, just as we in our smaller way continually bring ourselves into line. It is the music of the universe ever developing its themes and arriving at its resolutions. It is the activities of all beings of whatever kind, moving on to their respective culminations. It preserves and restores proportion, balance, and equilibrium throughout the cosmos. We ourselves share in its mighty rhythms, and are just one of the armies of beings hastening on to the fulfilment of our destinies.

For karman is fulfilment: it is a rhythmic interaction between beginnings and endings, between acts initiated and acts completed, between causes and results, which are in reality one, because they cannot be separated.

According to the dictionary, fulfilment is to bring to completion or consummation, to carry out the purport of, to bring out or manifest fully — though this last meaning is given as rare. We add, it is significant. We have fulfilment of hopes, of desires, of expectations, of promises, of prayers, of prophecies, of duties and obligations, but all of these are karman. In the light of this teaching fulfilment is a flowering, the crowning reward of effort, the consummation of a long series of

efforts, an ending, a completion, of any related series of actions. It is not stationary, because it is forever coming into being, ever moving towards an ending, which is at the same time another beginning.

But fulfilment presupposes a promise, and in fact we could not be discussing this aspect now, were it not that in the past such a promise, fundamental and spiritually binding, had been born at the inmost center of our consciousness. This goes back to the time, in the very beginnings of our planet, when as a host of souls, of spirit-monads, coming over from an older world, we began our evolution on this new sphere. In these beginnings was registered a purpose — not of words, but sounded in the atmosphere itself of the subjective worlds — to fulfil the destiny for which this planet was to furnish the setting. Thereafter a series of actions began, which has proceeded even to the present day, in fulfilment of that early promise; and the present human race, whatever may be its present status, and into whatever byways it may have strayed, is in reality deep in its struggle to win out to the light and peace of spiritual maturity, forecast for itself in that early and innocent time.

In the same way our birth into any one earth-life is a promise: there has been, before the birth of the soul, a contact, a connection, with that same godlike part of our nature which started us off in the beginning, in which resides wisdom and the prophetic faculty. There has been a moment of vision, when our human self, the self that is going to be conscious during this life, sees in perspective the life to come, and what needs to be accomplished in that life in terms of character and essential achievement. We can picture the human self, like the knight-errant of old, full of the energy of hope, embarking on the journey of life, soon forgetting, perhaps, the promise of that vision; or perhaps it does not utterly forget, and then we have an individual with a sense beyond the present moment, a sense of the hidden significance of his existence.

In the training of children the teacher, whether consciously or not, is striving to keep that memory alive in the child. If the child is

responsive, it establishes habits that lead in the end to the fulfilment of its spiritual aspirations. It tends to gravitate towards *essential* actions, to heed those impulses that are always urging it to act creatively. Then, as deeper understanding dawns, the soul will recognize what is its "appointed work in life," and move forward to a maturity where peace of mind is possible. The old motto: "Do well the smallest duty and when the day is done, there will be no regrets, no time wasted — then joy will come," takes on a poignant meaning when applied to a lifetime rather than to a single day.

There must be many causes that keep us from fulfilling all that we might do in one lifetime, but one such cause, undoubtedly, is the failure to act in close harmony with the essentials of our destiny, the neglecting to make sufficient use of the faculties we possess. As Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "He who doth not cause this wheel thus already set in motion to continue revolving liveth in vain, O son of Pritha."

Directly connected with the doctrine of fulfilment, certainly, is the teaching that at the end of life there is an accounting to be given. We might say that the Higher Self has set the human self a task to be performed. Yet its decrees are not arbitrary. Its energies are attracted to the weak points in our character-fabric, as air rushes into empty spaces, and we are impelled toward the fulfilment of our own profound purposes.

We can rarely trace this thread of consequence from life to life. But one instance is found in the marvelous story "Karmic Visions," found in an old volume of H. P. B.'s *Lucifer*, and probably written by H. P. Blavatsky herself. The first vision is of Clovis, king of the Franks in the 5th Century a.d. He was a great warrior, conqueror of the Romans and of the Visigoths, powerful and clever, but unscrupulous and ruthless when his warlike spirit is roused. He is called in the story a heartless despot, and is shown refusing mercy to the aged prophetess of the German barbarians, whom he has just conquered. As she dies by the hand of Clovis himself, the prophetess makes the following prediction:

"Clovis, thou shalt be reborn among thy present enemies, and suffer the tortures thou hast inflicted upon thy victims. All the combined power and glory thou hast deprived them of shall be thine in prospect, yet thou shalt never reach it!"

We next see that same Ego-soul, in another incarnation — the next but one, perhaps, as hinted — as the unfortunate Frederick III, king of Prussia and later Emperor of Germany, at first victorious in war (in the Austro-Prussian conflict of 1866, and the Franco-Prussian war of 1870). As Emperor he lived but a few short months, all the time suffering intensely with an incurable and agonizing disease. The story of his life is well known. He is shown resting in his villa on the Mediterranean, a prey to unbearable thoughts, to a sense of frustration arising from his deep desire to carry out many needed reforms and humanitarian works among his people, yet powerless to fulfil these hopes, and knowing that he will never in this life be able to serve his people as he so longs to do. He is transformed and spiritually awakened through the prolonged months of agony. And in his turn he exclaims: "Why, oh why, thou mocking Nemesis, hast thou thus purified and enlightened, among all the sovereigns on this earth, him whom thou hast made helpless, speechless and powerless?"

W. Q. Judge, in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, in naming a few such possible reincarnations, confirms this one of Clovis and Frederick III. As historical curiosities and examples these instances are of interest, and serve to bring home to us the drama of karma as it plays itself out from life to life.

From one great Race to the next, the same law applies. Our present Fifth-Race civilization struggles with evils that had their origin in the less evolved, grossly material days of Fourth-Race Atlantis: our "Atlantean Karma" holding us back, slowing up our progress toward our racial fulfilment.

Even from one great cycle of planetary activity, geologically speaking, to the next, there are still consequences, unfinished beginnings to be completed and fulfilled. Take such a little thing as our lead pencil. The

graphite in that pencil was once a part of the luxuriant foliage that waved in the lush forests of the pre-Cambrian jungle. Take the uses of coal, or the various derivatives of coal-tar, or the changes in our way of life since the discovery of the great oil-deposits, and right there we have an object-lesson showing how the activities of one cycle or epoch can affect the conditions of a later one.

The same is true of still greater cycles — even the life-span of universes. Whatever causes are still not worked out when a great universal imbodiment comes to an end, those causes are held over and will come to fulfilment in the next great imbodiment. In fact, as the ancient Hindus teach, each manvantara is a karman; the new one could not come into being save for the karmic causes left unfinished by the actions of entities in the former one.

Human beings all, at times, are subject to a sense of doom, of an impending fate, of prophecies about to be fulfilled, of destiny, kismet "the twilight of the gods," expressed in the god Krishna's sombre words: "I am Time matured, come hither for the destruction of these creatures." Perhaps this is especially true in this age, when as a race we are at a crucial point in the endings (and therefore in the beginnings) of several important cycles. Whatever the age has brought about by its actions, the fulfilment is at hand. "The old order changeth, giving place to new, and God fulfils himself in many ways." Yet, the new is being born amid the very husks of the old. Certain phases of a great civilization, let us say, dissolve before our eyes. The over-all picture changes. But for the individual human beings who have been involved in that change, a new era has begun. The field of experience is as rich as ever, only different. Old orders fulfil their destiny and pass away as such, but new institutions come into being because they have not yet developed their possibilities. And so it is with individual lives: there are episodes: a phase of experience begins, gathers momentum, reaches its peak, declines and comes to an end, *but* — at about the mid-point of that phase a different one has begun, and is on the way up towards its climax.

Life, evolution, is full of endings as well as of beginnings: the thing is done, it is of the past. It is the Nitya-pralaya that the ancient Hindu philosophy speaks of, the moment-by-moment continuous dissolution of all things, their karman having been fulfilled. Yet there is also, moment by moment, something new being born.

It is the destiny of the races of men, as of all other beings below man, to reach at some time conscious godhood. There are two ways of arriving at this point: one, the long, long way appointed by nature for the mass of humanity who drift and as it were simply respond to the stimulus of events, driven by their karman; the other, conscious altruistic effort, sustained creatively and in harmony with the trends towards a sublime fulfilment. And that fulfilment, that consummation, brings with it the greatest of all rewards: "the power to bless and serve humanity."

The Theosophical Forum

THE ABSOLUTE WAS ONCE A MAN — *E. A. Holmes*

Man is all symmetry,
Full of proportions, one limb to another,
And all to all the world besides:
Each part may call the farthest, brother:
For head with foot hath private amity,
And both with moons and tides.
— George Herbert in *Man*

When we look around at the immensity of the universe, and consider how small we ourselves are in comparison; when we consider how puny man is against the mighty forces of nature, how ignorant he is of the cosmic scheme, we may perhaps be forgiven for looking upon ourselves as of no great importance.

Yet our plea is for recognition of a fundamental importance in the individual, not from egotistic assumption that man is "lord of all creation," summit and acme of evolution (which he is not), but from sober realization that we and our fellow human beings whom we jostle in the streets, have individual divine origins and individual glorious destinies. For this true conception of the worth of each one of us is of vital concern for the welfare of men — and of nations.

The process of changing the minds and hearts of men is a slow process of evolution — evolution of each and every individual. True, it is said that there are masses of individuals who will have to await the next cosmic term in this school of life; but in general, not until the least amongst us has achieved perfection can the highest move on.

What, then, do men "move on" to? What is it that makes attainment of relative perfection a logical and inevitable aim? In the words of G. de Purucker: "the Absolute was once a man." There you have the sweep of the plan — evolution from below the animalcule up to the Godhood, and even beyond. *The Absolute was once a man.* What evidence have

we to accept this assertion so pregnant with affirmation of each man's potential greatness? If it is true, we ought to be able to find the same doctrine hidden in the teachings of the ancients, and it should show itself again in flashes of inspiration amongst the moderns, for one of the tests of truth is universality.

"That which is above is the same as that which is below," declared Hermes Trismegistus.

Man was made "in the image of God," says the Bible.

"The higher organism" (for instance, man) "is a universe in miniature; in the profoundest, truest sense of the word is it a small world, microcosm." These last few words are from a book published in England in 1847, a translation of a work by Lorenz Oken, Professor of Natural History at Jena University during the early part of the last century.

Again, from the same author, in his preface to *Elements of Physio-philosophy*:

In my essay entitled "Concerning the Universe as a continuation of the sensory systems," I showed that the Organism is none other than a combination of all the Universe's activities within a single individual body. This doctrine has led me to the conclusion that World and Organism are one in kind, and do not stand merely in harmony with each other.

In other words, Universe and Man are "one in kind." Man is a universe, an "island universe," and within him are all the phenomena of a universe. He contains, in his physical makeup, in his structure, organs, circulations, motivations, aspirations, potentialities of future worlds, suns, planets, moons, cosmic systems, galaxies — potentialities which some day in cosmic time will unfold into cosmic realities. And all these things are there in our feeble human constitution, behind our feeble human fallibility. It is time we forgot the theological doctrine of "original sin," and turned our faces inward to our innate divinity, the central sun of our own universe, remembering the while that love, love

for our fellow men, love for all created things, is the integrating factor in the universe and therefore in ourselves.

This world we live in is indeed a vast and complex entity. Think of the infinite number of objects which meet our gaze in whatever direction we turn — all the birds, all the trees (or bricks and mortar!), all the grasses, plants, shrubs, animals, insects, multitudes of all things, bewildering in their infinite diversity; and think that this we see is but a minute corner of the whole universe, stretching, so our astronomers say, on and on beyond the reach of the greatest telescopes, depth upon depth of stars and galaxies, "beyond the range and reach of thought," vaster than comprehension — but in all this infinitude of finite things, there is no chaos.

Astronomers, scientists, biologists, have labored to find system in the midst of complexity, and lo, we are told of island universes, cosmic solar systems, a home universe, and we learn about species, genera, classes, tables, laws, and so on. We are even brought to the conclusion as Emerson says, that the world is built up out of a few notes, which are so interwoven and interblended that the whole divine melody issues forth from them. In Indian mythology, Krishna is fabled as creating worlds out of the seven notes of his flute.

Take these seven notes, and one of the variations on them, and you have a rose. Nature in other keys, in other variations, produces a man, a universe. Man and the earthworm are kin to the stars, and contain the same fundamental notes in their make up. This is indeed fact, not metaphor.

We can go a little deeper into correspondences between man and universe. Obviously we must not expect to find our bodies already consisting of free planetary organs revolving round a central sun, any more than we could recognize the outline of a chicken in our breakfast egg, that is if the egg is a fresh one! Plants dig their roots down towards the center of the earth; their center of gravity lies in the earth itself. The animal kingdom, however, consists of organisms which have freed themselves from being static parts of earth. The animal has separated

itself from earth, centered its gravity in itself, and become, as it were, a planet circulating round the face of the earth. So it is, or will be, with ourselves; these organs and parts within us are worlds in embryo, worlds in the making. They are being born within us, and in the course of cosmic time, will separate themselves from us, while still remaining parts of the greater beings who will be ourselves at that long-distant date. It is said that already the whole of man's anatomy is present in a human eye.

"Such is the mystery of the human eye that, in their vain endeavours to explain and account for all the difficulties surrounding its action, some scientists have been forced to resort to occult explanations" — wrote H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 295.

"The eye is an entire body, a whole animal," writes Oken in his *Elements of Physiophilosophy*, p. 420.

If the Absolute was once a man, then the earth itself was once an atom in the body of that divine human being. There is an old legend about a goddess whose beauty and soul became embodied in this planet "earth." Professor Oken, lecturing to his matter-of-fact undergraduates at Jena University, taught how the circulating seas are like unto man's digestive juices, how man's body is like unto crystals of earth, how our respiratory system provides bodily atmosphere, how our bones provide planetary stability, our muscles planetary motion, our nervous system planetary light, and the inherent sensibility in those nerves, he said, is as a central sun in the midst of the planets.

You see, then, the implications of this doctrine; not only do we owe it to ourselves to remember our humble greatness as individuals, but for the future welfare of universes we owe care and right treatment to our own physical bodies and to the spiritual faculties within them.

It is asserted, and I think, theosophically, that disease and infection are not due primarily to causes outside the human body. If we "catch" a cold from someone, for instance, the infection from the other person is only a secondary reason for getting the cold ourselves. The primary

reason is presence of germs of the cold inside ourselves, or rather, a state of our own bodily tissues not one hundred per cent healthy, in which their vitality and will to resist the invading virus cannot prevail over it. We cannot absorb the virus and transmute it, with the result that our own bodily tissues begin to break down and to give birth in their turn to germs of the cold, just as cheese gives birth to maggots.

The same thing applies to spiritual health. We are, all of us, capable of the 7, 77, or 777 deadly sins just as we are all capable of the greatest of good works, and of the highest spiritual attainments. The gulf between the prisoner in the condemned cell, and the most respected, honored, and right living individual amongst us, is no broader than a razor's edge. Should we ourselves lose hold of our ideals, should we open the doors of our hearts to doubt and despair, then these seeds within us will fructify, and may bring about our downfall.

Should the prisoner in the condemned cell catch a glimpse of that hope and purpose, and of his divine potentialities, those seeds of altruism and self-sacrifice may fructify, and in some future incarnation he may become a savior among men.

We are indeed compounded of everything that is. It has been well remarked that completely to destroy one human being you would have to unravel the whole universe, for contained in man are all the characteristics of the cosmos, and all the potentialities of universal life. "Man is thus a microcosm in very truth," says Dr. de Purucker in the *Dialogues*:

If we were able by some wonderful cosmic magic to isolate a man and allow him to pursue his destiny in isolation through life after life after life after life until the Manvantara ended, and there were none to begin the next manvantara except this isolated one individual, do you know that coming down into manifestation as the inaugurator, initiator, and evolver of the world, that one single man from the seeds of lives locked up in him even now, would produce ten classes of monads? Out of him would flow all the families of beings, all the races of beings.

From him would come the three Elemental Kingdoms, the Mineral Kingdom, the Vegetable Kingdom, the Animal Kingdom, the Human Kingdom and the three Dhyani-Chohamc Kingdoms.
— *The Dialogues of G. de P.*, III, 422

So you see, we humble individuals are not such small fry as we would like, perhaps, to think. We are responsible to untold millions of lives for what we think now, for what we do now. We are so inescapably linked with all creation around us, that we cannot ignore our fellow men, or even our fellow gnats for that matter. If they both irritate us, then all we can possibly do is to help speed up their evolution out of the stage of conflict. For, just as the entities which make up the kingdoms below man are slowly evolving to become men, so are we individual entities growing in mental and spiritual stature, so that in aeons upon aeons to come we shall have grown into god-like creatures, and all creation will have moved up one step with us.

Thus do men become gods, and gods become worlds, and worlds become suns, and suns become universes, and universes in their infinitude make up the Absolute, who was once — a man.

The Theosophical Forum

WORLD TREES — *Hazel Minot*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

From the days of myth and legend to the busy whirl of modern life, the tree has held an honored place in the hearts of men. The oak and pine, palm, laurel, silvery olive and many another have had their votaries. The oaks at Dodona voiced through their whispering leaves the will of Zeus, and groves of this mighty tree were held sacred by the Druids of Britain and Gaul. The palm from of old was a symbol of victory, as was also the laurel or daphne, the prize for those who were successful in the Pythian games in honor of Apollo. The olive, too, though linked with the dove as a symbol of peace, is emblematic of victory, a wreath of olive being the prize contended for in the Olympic Games of ancient Greece, it was likewise the highest mark of honor that could be extended to a citizen meriting well of his country. In Egypt the tamarisk was held sacred as possessing occult virtues, and it was often planted around temples. It is also in Egypt that we find the Lady of the Sycamore, otherwise the goddess Nut, who is pictured as if standing in the midst of the tree from which she is offering to her worshipers the fruit or the water from the Tree of Life.

Here we meet a universal symbol — the World Tree. What more natural than that early man should choose the tree to represent Life — not merely the never-ending force itself, but the very source from whence it comes. So truly did the ancient Hindus understand this that they represented their world tree, the Aswattha, as growing with its roots in the heavenly worlds, and its trunk and branches extending downwards into the world of men. When we consider the sevenfold nature of the Universe, and of man its seed, and take into consideration the possibilities of only a seven times seven ramification, the pattern of a majestically spreading tree is easily visioned. The pattern, however, is

too intricate to suppose that awareness of it came to man from the piecing together of untutored observations. The symbol of the World Tree, variously called the Tree of Life, the Tree of Knowledge, the Tree of Speech, is, by its very universality, a truth given to infant humanity by those wise ones who are ever our guides and protectors. H. P. Blavatsky refers to it as follows:

The Symbol for Sacred and Secret Knowledge was universally in antiquity, a Tree, by which a Scripture or a Record was also meant. Hence the word Lipika the "writers" or scribes; the "Dragons," symbols of wisdom, who guard the Trees of Knowledge: the "golden" apple Tree of the Hesperides; the "Luxuriant Trees" and vegetation of Mount Meru guarded by a Serpent. Juno giving to Jupiter, on her marriage with him, a Tree with golden fruit is another form of Eve offering Adam the apple from the Tree of Knowledge. — *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 128-9

And she says further, in *Isis Unveiled*:

The tenacious vitality it exhibits all over the globe . . . is the best proof that the seed planted by our fathers on "the other side of the flood" was that of a mighty oak, not the spore of a mushroom theology. No lightning of human ridicule can fell to the ground, and no thunderbolts ever forged by the Vulcans of science are powerful enough to blast the trunk, or even scar the branches of this world-tree of Knowledge. — I, 574

In one of the works of Robert Fludd, spoken of as "the chief of the "Philosophers by Fire," is an interesting pictorial interpretation of the Arber Sephirotheca, or the Sephirothal Tree of the Kabbala. (1) This World Tree, like the Aswattha, is shown with its roots above, and its branches below. In this representation of Cosmogonic emanations we have the ten Sephiroth extending from the highest, the Crown — the heart and center of the spreading roots on the spiritual plane — surrounded by a glory of light whose rays extend with lessening power behind the remaining Sephiroth, ending with the tenth, or our world. From the "Crown" the succeeding Sephiroth are represented as globes

extending from arms or branches on the trunk of the tree. The nine form three groups of three, each group or triad being the expression of the spiritual, intellectual and material aspects or qualities of that particular plane. The tenth Sephirah, our globe, being the link, as it were, between the Universe and Man. H. P. B. speaks of the ten as representing the seven manifest and the three unmanifest worlds. In the illustration of Fludd referred to, the World Tree is a palm, whose ten spreading branches ray forth from the lowest world and, named after the ten Sephiroth respectively, they are a symbol of the Macrocosm in its reflection, the Microcosm, Man. In this simple manner is represented a volume of esoteric truth. H. P. Blavatsky turns a goodly number of the pages of this Volume," giving many valuable keys to their interpretation both in *Isis* and *The Secret Doctrine*. She remarks, following a quotation of several paragraphs from Franck, the translator of the Kabbala, that

This kabalistic conception is . . . proved identical with that of the Hindu philosophy. Whoever reads Plato and his *Dialogue* Timaeus, will find these ideas as faithfully re-echoed by the Greek philosopher. — *Isis Unveiled*, II, 40

It is not surprising that the mediaeval Rosicrucians should have taken the rose itself as the symbol of their World Tree. (2) Pictured as a gigantic rose sought by bees from near-by hives, it tells a most interesting story. Anything said *sub rosa*, "under the rose," was said in confidence; and if this applied to worldly affairs, how much more binding was it with teaching given only to those who had earned the right to it! Among the ancient Greeks "bees" was a name for disciples, and the sacred wisdom that they sought was "honey." Referring to this, Dr. de Purucker comments:

In Greece, Melissai or Bees, was a title given in certain cases to priestesses having certain recondite functions to perform; while frequently "honey" or "honey-dew" is spoken of by some ancient writers as signifying or symbolizing Wisdom, or wisdom gained from life's experiences: just as the bees collect and digest the

nectar of flowers, turning it into honey, so do human beings collect knowledge from life and spiritually and mentally digest it into Wisdom. We are reminded of the "ambrosia" and "nectar" on which the gods, the spiritually wise ones, feed, and which nourishes them. — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 848

And H. P. B. links this thought with the Scandinavian Eddas, pointing out that

the honey-dew — the food of the gods and of the creative, busy Yggdrasill — bees — falls during the hours of night, when the atmosphere is impregnated with humidity; and in the Northern mythologies, as the passive principle of creation, it typifies the creation of the universe *out of water*; this dew is the astral light in one of its combinations and possesses creative as well as destructive properties. — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 133

Possibly the best known of the World Trees, at least in the Occident, is the Ash Yggdrasill of the Eddas. This mighty tree has three roots reaching out into three different worlds, and, like the Sephirothal tree and the Aswattha, links these worlds together. One root extends into the land of the gods, the Asa folk, who gather each day beneath the branches of the tree to hold their council meetings; and under this root is the fountain of Urd. The middle root goes to the land of the Frost giants, and Mimir's well or fountain lies beneath it. The third root extends to the underworld, and here is the fountain Hvergelmer, while gnawing at the roots of Yggdrasill is Nidhogg, variously described as a demon, a giant and a Serpent. Now the well of Mimir conceals within its waters wisdom and knowledge, and the inspiration for poetry and song, but the fountain of Urd is the most sacred of the waters. Here dwell the Norns, who sprinkle Yggdrasill daily with the waters of the fountain

that it may not wither. It remains verdant till the last days of the Golden Age. Then the Norns — the three sisters who gaze respectively into the Past, the Present, and the Future — make known the decree of Fate (*Karma, Orlog*), but men

are conscious only of the Present. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 520

H. P. B. says of the Norse Legends that

one recognizes in Asgard, the habitat of the gods, as also in the *Ases* themselves, the same mystical *loci* and personifications woven into the popular "myths," as in our Secret Doctrine; . . . The Norse Ask, the Hesiodic Ash-tree, whence issued the men of the generation of bronze, the Third Root-Race, and the *Tzite* tree of the *Popol-Vuh*, out of which the Mexican *third* race of men was created, are all one. . . . As in the Gogard [the Hellenic tree of life], among the luxuriant branches of all those mundane trees, the "Serpent" dwells. But while the Macrocosmic tree is the Serpent of Eternity and of absolute Wisdom itself, those who dwell in the Microcosmic tree are the Serpents of the manifested Wisdom. One is the One and All; the others are its *reflected* parts. The "tree" is man himself, of course, and the Serpents dwelling in each, the conscious *Manas*, the connecting link between Spirit and Matter, heaven and earth. — *S. D.*, II, 97-8

Almost poles apart, geographically, yet with a marked sympathy of thought, is the World Tree of Fiji — a conception brought there from the Friendly Islands by the Tongans. Here, again, is a tale of the beginnings of things, and the "Tree of Speech" is but an episode in the recounting of the coming of men to earth and their subsequent knowledge of decay and death. As with the Ash Yggdrasil, this is the gathering-place of the gods, and the tree grows by a fountain, the Water of Life. Told by Ma'afu, a Tongan Chief, the legend charms and impresses one with its simple dignity. The following passages are taken from the legend called "The Beginning of Death" — suggestive of the Norse legend! — in this instance the Tree of Speech fulfills the office of the Norns, making "known the decree of Fate."

A fine land is Bulotu, and happy are its people; for there, close to the house of Hiku-leo [the Loki of Tonga], is Vai-ola, the Water of Life, which the gods drink every day. Oh, that we had it here on earth, for it will heal all manner of sickness! Moreover, near the

brink of the fountain stands Akau-lea, that wondrous tree, the Tree of Speech, under whose shadow the gods sit down to drink *kava*, the tree acting as master of the ceremonies, and calling out the name of him to whom the bowl shall be carried.

There came a time, however, when Maui, the king of the gods, decided to sail forth from Bulotu. It was the closing of the Golden Age, the passing of the first and second races, and the coming of the third with the knowledge of death. There was argument among the gods about this going forth, and then they heard

a rustle and a stir among the leaves of the Tree of Speech, as if a sudden blast were sweeping through its branches; and all the gods kept silence, for they knew it was going to speak.

"Hear my words, Maui," it said. "Hear my words, Hiku-leo, and gods all. Go not! Evil will come to pass if you go — an evil so great and terrible that you could not understand if I were to tell you what it is. I pray you not to go."

And in the parting injunctions of Maui, who will not be stayed, there is a sadness, and a boding of ill for the future.

"Look you, my brothers," he said, "it will be well for you to stay behind and watch that evil one, lest he do mischief while we are away. . . . Do you keep the rest together, and have a care of Hiku-leo. What if he should cut down the Tree of Speech, or defile the Water of Life! There is nothing too evil for him when he is in one of his raging moods.

— *Folk Tales of All Nations*, F. H. Lee, pp. 444-5

Thus, to every Race, as to every normal child, comes the urge to pass beyond the Golden Age, to learn from Life, and to grow through experience. Even the Lord Buddha had to meet the three awakening sights: sickness, old age, and death.

Lastly, let us speak of the Kounboum, the World Tree of Tibet. It is called the "tree of the 10,000 images and characters," and it is said that

it will grow in no other latitude. H. P. B., in describing it, quotes from the Abbe Huc as one who could have no possible interest in magnifying its marvels, and we can do no better than follow her example.

Each of its leaves, in opening, bears either a letter or a religious sentence, written in sacred characters, and these letters are, of their kind, of such a perfection that the type-foundries of Didot contain nothing to excel them. Open the leaves, which vegetation is about to unroll, and you will there discover, on the point of appearing, the letters or the distinct words which are the marvel of this unique tree! Turn your attention from the leaves of the plant to the bark of its branches, and new characters will meet your eyes! Do not allow your interest to flag; raise the layers of this bark, and still other characters will show themselves below those whose beauty had surprised you. For, do not fancy that these superposed layers repeat the same *printing*. No, quite the contrary; for each lamina you lift presents to view its distinct type. How, then, can we suspect jugglery? I have done my best in that direction to discover the slightest trace of human trick, and my baffled mind could not retain the slightest suspicion. — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 440

H. P. B. adds that "the characters which appear upon the different portions of the Kounboun are in the Sansar (or language of the Sun), characters (ancient Sanscrit); and that the sacred tree, in its various parts, contains *in extenso* the whole history of the creation, and in substance the sacred books of Buddhism." (*Ibid.*)

Nourished among the branches of the Tree of Life, Man can know the realms in which its roots find strength only through daring to eat of its sacred fruit. This is the knowledge of good and evil, but having dared to eat, he has the power to choose the good.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *The Book of Earths*, by Edna Kenton, Plate xxi ([return to text](#))
2. *The Book of Earths*, Plate xxiv ([return to text](#))

THE CONSCIOUS CELL — *J. Croiset van Uchelen*

Science, dividing matter into organic and inorganic, repudiated the idea of an absolute life and life principle which precludes even a geometric point in space from being inorganic in essence. Nevertheless, reason itself compels the acceptance of an infinite mind, which rules and governs the ocean of life, in order to account for an Intelligent Universe and the activity of forces working in it harmoniously. Still, many continued to look upon man as a mere biological accident, in the assumption that science had given the deathblow to a belief in a greater reality. And science itself had come to assume that it would be only a matter of time when it could be demonstrated that the whole vital process, so called, is nothing more mysterious than a very complicated phenomenon of motion, regulated by physical and chemical laws, even if it had to ignore the mystery of the origin and controlling force of the latter. However, the deeper we penetrate into facts, the more we try to fathom and speculate on the phenomena of life, the more we find that even those phenomena we had hoped to thus explain, in reality prove unfathomable.

For instance, it was held that the phenomena of digestion and assimilation could be explained by the laws of diffusion and endosmosis. Instead, we found the cells themselves acting as living organisms with very complex functions. In the most elementary, formless and structureless protoplasmic drops, we found discrimination in the selection of food. The mysterious processes of selection, of extracting from the blood one substance, rejecting another, of transforming by means of decomposition and synthesis, of directing some of the products one way and redirecting others — as in the activity of cells in the human body — evidently cannot be explained by diffusion or endosmosis, or any chemical laws of an inanimate nature. Electro-biology too, came to show other forces at work.

True, there are close correspondences between physiological and

physical processes, as in the function of the eye and the camera; but although the same laws of refraction apply to the reproduction of an image in the eye (living or dead) or on the photographic lens, the life phenomena of the evolution and development of the eye itself remains unexplained. The same applies to other departments of physiology. Admittedly the blood circulates and moves in accordance with hydrodynamical laws — as far as its passive activity is concerned — but the active function of the heart and its vessels has not yet been explained by physical laws.

Occult science explains that it is the innate power, indwelling in the germ plasm of the cell which brings the individual entity to growth along its own path. Moreover, the structure of cells belonging to the higher creatures can — in our period of evolution — follow only that particular line of growth which the central entity, whose body they form, allows them to follow. It is a case where the innate tendencies of individual cells are overpowered by the dominion of the inner central entity which works through those cells.

The cells constituting the human body are the microcosmi reflecting the macrocosmos man; the infinitesimal being, the container of the vastness of the infinite, sharing in all its potentialities. This idea certain Greek philosophers expressed by the word *holenmeria*, meaning that the all is contained in part of the all, body of its body, blood of its blood, thought of its thought.

Is there anything more miraculous than man evolving from one tiny cell, a microscopic nearly transparent seed, in which the rudiments of a new world are locked; a cell, the basis of racial continuance! All that has gone before, all that is yet to come, is veiled in its mystery. Physical man is a product of the cleavage taking place in this single cell which represents the whole individual with the organs and parts of organs imprinted on it. Looking through a microscope at the spermatozoon lashing its way through the seminal fluid, who could fathom the inherent potentialities dormant within it? And is there a single atom vibrating in space that does not bear similar evidence of purpose and

order? Looking upon cell life in this manner, we are of course regarding substance less than the vital principle of which it is the carrier; the activating forces evidenced by their physical chemistry.

We are moved by the thrill of that infinite life which pulsates through the arteries and veins of space. Infinite smallness, infinite greatness on every side, but always infinite order and wisdom. How profound Charron's words, when in his work *On Wisdom* he exclaims with the ancients that "The proper science and subject for man's contemplation is man himself." Man, not cut up anatomically in unrelated parts, but man the trinity: spirit, soul and body. For as Dr. Carrel said in his *Man the Unknown*, "It is utterly impossible to divorce body and what we commonly call soul." Is it not the same life, the self-moving origin of all activity that sustains the cells and the atoms of man visible and invisible, nay of the whole of this Universe?

Following the sweep of his own reasoning and deductions, man once more comes face to face with the unknown — the very mystery he seeks to elude. One reason is that all hypothesis must be limited by our sense perceptions; that is, vibrations, upon reaching the brain along differentiated nerve-paths, become conscious perceptions. It is the limitations of these senses, conveying the impress of only a limited realm of motion, which prevent us from being aware of other forces.

But with the evolutionary progress there comes the awakening of an inner sense, revealing an inner nature, quite distinct from and unlike what is presented by the senses we call physical, themselves developing and widening the perceptivity of the experiencing entity and his field of awareness.

This sense of a growing awareness is exemplified by Dr. Lecomte du Noüy, in his remarkable book *Human Destiny*, of which Dr. Millikan wrote that its publication is an event such as occurs once or twice in a century. In this book Dr. du Noüy sets forth the fundamental fallacies of the materialistic philosophy. An eminent biologist, he has the courage to declare the fallibility of science which in a mighty Kosmos toys with tiny fragments of knowledge. Man, he affirms, does not

represent the end of evolution, but only a middle stage between the past with all the memories of the beast and the future rich in the promise of the soul. By logic and reason, he presents a far grander, truer picture of progress than any of our present-day scientists has thus far given, in a full recognition of a dependence of progress upon self-directed evolution. Works like these are the spans of a bridge which one day will link the esoteric and exoteric sciences.

The Theosophical Forum

WHAT CAN A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL DO? — *J. Alin*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

The world today is full of agony; the hearts of millions of men are very sore, and their minds full of bitterness, despair, pessimism and hopelessness. What are we to do? What can I do? I, who am but one, and these are so many. Might those little endeavors that one human being can make, do much? Would it not just be throwing away, wasting energy on a forlorn cause?

Social reforms are invented and put into action, pacts are written and signed. But do such things change the hearts of men? In our way we use different methods that we find suitable from time to time for different purposes. This is natural, but we cannot say that these methods and varying ways of working or of activity in themselves solve the problems of today. Changes that are made on the surface, reforms that do not aim at creating a friendly feeling towards each other inside our own selves, cannot seriously improve human conditions.

There will remain forever only one universal principle that can effect any real change for good, and this is the keynote of Theosophy — *Brotherhood*. There is no other way. Therefore, there is no quicker way. Agony, bitterness, despair, and pessimism are shadows that come and go, they certainly are not eternal. They are the results, the reaction of those evil thoughts that we have been nourishing in the past, therefore they come to manifestation, and through them we might become aware of the voice of the spirit in our inner being.

The heart of Theosophy is the understanding heart, the heart and mind combined that endeavors to understand others, that takes consideration not only of his own bent of mind, but strives to study the

nature of the hearts and minds of his fellows, so that all men might understand each other ever better and realize our common unity and oneness with the universe. This, in fact, becomes the most fascinating study we could undertake.

What can a single individual do? If he expects to see great manifestations due to his activity springing up around him, he might be disappointed. For if we compare our work, which is of the ages, with the mushroom growth of the outer world of today, what we accomplish may indeed seem invisible, and insignificant. But we should know that the deeds of spirit have a great reach and are backed by the Spiritual Powers in the universe. We are not alone in this sublime Cause, and all we have to know is that we are doing the right thing, and that the results will take care of themselves.

We can help others to find the way to themselves, their real selves, which is in union with the All. If we ask for miracles, this is the greatest miracle which each one of us can work: to change our hearts and minds. We do not have to act with a view that our own accomplishments are small compared to what others may do. If we work in that way, then any deed becomes small or insignificant compared to that which is truly great. And also there is always something greater to strive towards, and always something smaller which we have left behind. All is relative, and a deed is only comparable to our abilities — and our motive. We can do our best; we can try. And yet it may also be said that our capabilities are infinite, because in the inmost heart of our being we are Infinity itself.

The period of today is a time of unrest, of speed and intensity. But the very speed and intensity of this age of Kali-Yuga, when material illusion is at its greatest, makes whatever we endeavor to do more speedily carried out than in any other age. Therefore spiritual growth may be as quickly effected now as any other.

What can we do? What do we mean to do? Are we wanting to make a great show, or do we want to work for peace in the world? The greatest thing possible for any man to do is to foster in his heart the holy flame

of compassion and brotherhood, and to dwell on the thought of peace.

There are many different centers of consciousness in man, and it is in exact proportion to our use of any one of these, how far-reaching, capable or clear our understanding of a thing may be. The ranges of consciousness of the various entities, egos or souls in man, are given by G. de Purucker as follows:

(a) the Divine Monad, whose range of consciousness and functional activity is over and in the Galaxy; (b) its Ray, the Spiritual Monad, whose range of self-consciousness and functional activity is over and in the Solar System; (c) the Higher or Spiritual Soul, the Ray from the Spiritual Monad, whose self-consciousness and functional activity is over and in the Globes of the Planetary Chain; and finally (d) the Human Ego, the Ray from (c), whose self-consciousness and functional activity belong to our Earth and last for the duration of a single incarnation.

— *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 852

All these ranges of consciousness are contained in our inner being, although they are very feebly expressed as yet. Still they are there, and it is by evolving them, exercising them, that they can be brought into activity.

The higher ones of these consciousness centers are tremendous and far beyond our comprehension. Still they are limited, and have a beginning and an end. In that respect, they are analogical. But deeper still and beyond these is our inner link with the Ineffable, with THAT, which has no bounds.

By study and practice, by thought and living, we come to realize ever more, and therefore evolve ever more of THAT which is our inmost. There is knowledge to be had, and we do not have to say that we cannot reach it. We can dare, instead of just drifting along. As W. Q. Judge expressed it: "That which is never begun, shall never be accomplished."

Thus we see that if we want an explanation of the tragedies of life, we must look for that explanation where it exists. In other words, we must turn to the teaching of Reincarnation and Karma. But in order to understand these, we must look deep within and learn of the true structure of man in his relation to the spiritual universal principle.

The Spiritual Soul, or our Manasic part, is that center of consciousness which is the source of the Human Ego, which sends out a Ray which is this Human Ego, and therefore is the receptacle of all the experiences of all our incarnations or imbodyments on this earth. The consciousness we have here on earth while incarnated in our daily life is limited to and active and functioning only as long as an incarnation of earth-life. It knows nothing of that which was before, and nothing of that which is after its termination. But the Spiritual Soul does. It tells the truth in a direct way, and instantly; and, it may also be a voice that comes to us in the silence from regions of our being still higher, and more inward.

There is also the voice of conscience, which has been explained as the voice arising out of the experiences garnered in previous lives on earth. But this is a voice of warning usually, telling us what not to do, a negative good. So that the gist of our destiny might be summarized as follows: the whole purpose is the thinning of the thick veils of mind and matter in order that the light in the Holy Temple, which is the human heart, may illumine man with its divine splendor.

The action of the brain alone is given to criticism, to deceit at times, is sceptical and argumentative. It is quarrelsome and noisy like an empty barrel; while the characteristics of the functions of our higher consciousness are that of peace, of understanding, impersonal love, consideration for others, and quiet.

Now, therefore, if we identify ourselves with this body of ours, this vehicle which should be the instrument by which our true Self gathers experience here on earth, then we do indeed die at the termination of the activities in the body. But that which we call "we" is not the body, it is our consciousness that dwells in, or better informs the body.

Every incarnation is thus a new attempt and a new opportunity to open up a greater and better contact with our own origin and root — our Divine source; to bring forth that which is within, to express that which is the inner realms of our nature.

As above, so below; as in the great, so in the small — this is the old golden key to many mysteries of Nature, so much stressed by the Hermetists.

Truth has existed always. In all ages it has been promulgated by the Elder Brothers of mankind, by the White Lodge. However, if we would accept Truth at the very instant it was spoken or expressed, then we would have a world of wisdom and peace long ago. The difficulty does not lie in whether Truth exists, but in realizing what is Truth. In order to know truth, we must become true. In order to understand, we must become. And the first thing is to realize that all lies within our own hearts: all the realities, all the wonders of the Universe.

The Theosophical Forum

INTO THE FUTURE FROM THE PAST — *Audrey Klosterman*

Out of the Past into the Future sweeps the mighty, majestic Law of Karman, the law of cause and effect, the law of consequences. Its source rises in the very heart of the Universe which is Love, Harmony, Compassion. Karman is Life itself for it is immortal, impersonal, infinite in its action and encompasses the activities of the Kosmos, solar systems, planets, man as well as every atom in space.

In order to understand Karman and its twin-doctrine Reincarnation it is necessary to realize that the Universe in which we live and move and have our being is an organic whole — one single Organism composed of an infinite number of lesser organisms embodying varying degrees of consciousness and development. We are intimately linked to the stars, the sun, the planets and all celestial bodies which not only act upon us, but which feel the results of our actions and reactions.

Francis Thompson, a modern poet, has intuitively felt this intimacy and expressed it beautifully as follows:

All things by immortal power
Near or far,
Hiddenly
To each other linked are,
That thou canst not stir a flower
Without troubling of a star.

Karman is derived from a Sanskrit verb meaning "to do" or "to make" and this implies action — cause and effect. This action has two aspects. First, there is the action from within outwards of the awakened consciousness-center or seed of life, whether it be a solar system, planet, man or atom. From its birth the consciousness-center begins to unfold as a scroll its own essence — that which is locked up within itself — its inherent nature, qualities, attributes. These characteristics have been formed by the thinking, feeling, willing of the entity

concerned over a succession of past lives. Thus, the man we see today is the sum total of countless past lives. The second aspect of Karman is the effect, or impact, of this consciousness-center or entity on the Nature surrounding it. If you throw a pebble into a pool of water the ripples reach out until they make an impact on the bank. In so doing numberless atomic lives are affected and thus react to these ripples. Just so do vibrations of thought and energy sent out from a man reach out into infinity, and affect all the lives that are touched by him. Equally, however, do our thoughts, good and bad, "come home to roost," to give us comfort or pain.

Being an absolute, immutable law of the Universe, Karman is unerring and never-failing in its justice. It is a dark, inscrutable law to us, because the people of the West have been taught to believe in a personal god outside ourselves to whom we could pray and beg favors and free ourselves from wrong-doing by penance. Also, the West has been deprived of the teaching of Reincarnation since 553 a.d. when this doctrine was anathematized by the Church at the second Council of Constantinople. In our Christian teachings we have this law of cause and effect, or Karman, expressed clearly in the following words of St. Paul: "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Without the light of Reincarnation to explain and clarify this law of Karman, or absolute justice, the inequalities, suffering, pain and injustices experienced in one life seem bitter and cruel — one life of sorrow seems meaningless and purposeless.

Karman is intricate because it operates not only on the physical plane, but on the mental and spiritual planes as well. We not only have our individual karman, but we have our family karman, our national karman and our racial karman. It is no wonder that today we stand bewildered and stunned before such horrors as the atom and hydrogen bombs — the Frankenstein of our own making. Our knowledge is stupendous, but we fail to perceive that the laws of the Universe are moral and ethical, being rooted in Harmony, Compassion and Equilibrium. The exact and precise nature of the law of cause and effect has been stated by H. P. Blavatsky as follows: "There is not an

accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or another life."

We understand the laws governing physical nature because we can see results and can measure and prove them. It is not so easy to observe the workings of the mind and follow the avalanches of thought that pass through the mind. But it is in this thought realm that lie our difficulties, for ideas rule the world; and yet we do not even know how to rule our thoughts or our lives. What motivates our thoughts — selfishness, greed, personality, or love, altruism, and impersonality? Love evokes love, hate attracts hate — both are equally magnetic and dynamic.

"Thoughts are things" — living, vital entities that have a life and power of their own. The force and intensity with which a thought is conceived gives it its vitality. Within the circumference of a thought are a positive and negative pole — a pull upwards and a pull downwards. Man as a thinker has the free will to choose his pathway moment by moment, thought by thought, up or down in this world of duality. Everything is dual that one can think of, with the exception of the middle way. It is the pathway of balance and discrimination — in other words the razor's edge.

It is in a fine attunement of union between mind and heart and all the principles of man's constitution that such a balance and equilibrium is attained. *Golden Precepts of Esotericism* states: "Sow an act and you will reap a habit, sow a habit and you will reap a destiny because habit builds character. This is the sequence, an act, a habit, a character, a destiny." Man is the creator of his own destiny and so is his own savior or his own destroyer. As Dr. de Purucker has said, "No one can think for man, feel for him, choose for him, will for him, but the man himself."

Man is not a victim of fatalism whose lot in life is fixed, nor is he a victim of chance, tossed hither and yon without purpose. The knowledge that strict, impartial justice rules the world gives a man strength to face whatever comes his way for in some way he realizes he

is getting his just deserts and he knows by facing his problems with courage he will transcend them. Thus, a firm foundation is laid in a man's character whereby he realizes that he is creator of his own destiny. As he works on and gains in mastery over himself his vision broadens; he has found something of value to share with his fellowmen and he can become of service to those Helpers of Humanity who are always working in the world. Doors open and point the way toward a purposeful collaboration with Nature's Plan.

Although we shun pain and suffering, such experiences are our best teachers. We then have an opportunity to test our inner strength. And as Emerson has observed our defects which may appear a hindrance may prove of usefulness just as the stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet; but when the hunter came his feet saved him and afterwards caught in the thicket his horns destroyed him. From out of our weaknesses grows our strength for we gain the strength of the temptations we resist. A man who lives without suffering, without change, is like a stagnant pool without the flowing currents of life passing through him to refresh and purify.

Theosophy, the archaic wisdom of the ages, helps man to understand himself and the universe in which he lives. Theosophy is the science of right living, for within each man's inmost being there is a blue-print, a pattern, of what he would like to be. When a man strives toward his ideal it begins to take form. He molds and models this form as a sculptor giving it symmetry, grace, proportion; and as he works he realizes this model must have warmth, color, life, vitality, compassion, understanding. When the last touch is added he recognizes he has produced a work of art — a masterpiece. Like Pygmalion love fills his entire being for this creation which is himself. He has become his own creation, his own ideal, man perfected, a perfect vehicle of universal love, free from earthly Karmic bonds — a product of aeons of laborious work.

The man thus freed is now qualified to become an active co-worker with the Brotherhood of Great Men, true Sages and Seers, whose life

and entire work are devoted to watching over the spiritual and intellectual destiny of men.

The Theosophical Forum

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD — J. H. Calmeyer

One of the main points of dissension which led to the Reformation, and caused Christians to split up into Protestants and Catholics, was the contention that it should not be the exclusive privilege of the priesthood to interpret the Bible to the faithful. The Holy Book should be the common property of every son and daughter of the Church and should diligently be read by all.

This dissension must have arisen as the result of one of two assumptions. Either the Bible is plain sailing and holds a clear and simple message for everybody to understand, needing no interpretation; or, the priest is not the ideal and rightful interpreter (having failed in his task or his title thereto being denied), and it is rather the divine heritage of every individual believer to gain, through study and introspection, a measure of understanding — a greater measure, presumably, than could be his through any vicarious interpretation, and one better suited to the particular limitations of his comprehension. It must be obvious to anybody who has read the Bible and has seriously tried to understand its meaning, that the contention that the Bible contains nothing but plain narrative and a straightforward message cannot conscientiously be upheld. Whatever the merits may be of the dispute as to the means whereby textual enlightenment should be obtained, the need for enlightenment itself can scarcely be denied.

One of the most cryptic statements and one which must be meaningless to many people is to be found in the well-known opening phrases of the Gospel according to St. John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

What was this mysterious "Word" whereby "all things were made," and without which "was not any thing made that was made"?

When we think of a "beginning" we are naturally led to think of an all-embracing Omnipotence, a Cause without cause, in which all the potentialities of the manifested world are hid. We cannot think of a beginning out of nothingness. Mainly because we cannot think of nothingness. And quite rightly so. For nothingness is a meaningless word. Derived from "not something," it is extended to "not anything," but this is a logical absurdity, for the full meaning of "not something" is of course "not something, but something else." That which precedes a "beginning" can, therefore, not be "nothingness," but must hold in its womb the seeds of all things to come.

Now just when do these seeds spring to life? It is obvious that they do when it is consciously known that they do. In other words, their coming to life is in the consciousness thereof. Prior to the beginning of all things, i.e. the beginning of existence as we know it, there was no such consciousness. We cannot conceive of the great Cause of all causes being conscious of Itself. For consciousness means appreciation, appraisal, whether praise or criticism. This again postulates an intelligence outside of what is being appraised, an "observer" on a level of its own. But this would imply a duality which runs counter to our conception of a beginning. There must be "one" before there can be "two."

But if there is no consciousness at the beginning of all things of whatever there is supposed to exist, then we may reasonably assert that it does not in effect exist in the sense we apply to that word. Therefore, for there to be any effective existence something must issue out of this seeming state of nothingness, something that, because of its being part of the whole, will have a recollection of the whole.

When we think, therefore, of a "beginning," we can only think of something that we know to be a secondary phenomenon, an effect of that Cause without cause, which must needs be produced to enable that First Cause to manifest itself, in other words to "gain existence." Why it should be necessary for that First Cause to have an existence at all, is something that simply cannot be answered. Presumably the question is

irrational because it is based on our conception of things in dealing with matters which are entirely beyond our limited, poor three-dimensional comprehension. We know that there are certain things of which our mind cannot conceive. Infinity, eternity . . . In mathematics we have a language which goes on from the point where our mental images fail us, and which proves to us that there must be conceptions which we cannot at present grasp. But "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, neither hid, that shall not be known," and it is our divine heritage to attain in due course to the knowledge of all these things.

On the basis of the duality inherent in consciousness, we must assume that the conscious part is less perfect than that of which it is conscious, because the former has issued from the latter and can, therefore, never in any sense be "more." Neither can it be perfectly equal, as in that case there would be no duality. Manifestation then becomes an aspect of loss of perfection and the essence of the Divine Origin is reflected in the Manifested World as consciousness. Consciousness may thus be seen as a yardstick: the part applied to the whole. And we are equally justified in saying that every emanation from the whole, by being of its substance, must have a consciousness of the whole, as in saying that being part of the whole is in having this consciousness.

There is nothing in the Universe which the researches of man have found to be stationary. Neither can we reasonably impute to this secondary phenomenon a state of absolute immobility. In analogy of all that nature has taught us, we can only think of the issuing of the manifested world from a state of non-manifestation as a kind of vibration. In order to manifest itself, the Divine Source must externalize itself. Looking at it as we would at a physical phenomenon we would say that this would set up a tension. The externalized part is irresistibly drawn towards its source, like a string that is pulled away from the bow. On the outward swing it loses some of its "perfection." Adhering to this scientific analogy, we might say that some of the energy of this "perfection" is converted into the power required for the outward movement. On the inward swing it gains "perfection," until it

identifies itself again with its source, thus completing one pulsation. Of course, we should beware of taking this literally. It is an image which helps us visualize a difficult concept. It helps building a bridge to cross the gap between the beginning of all things, which our logic tells us can have no effective existence, and our conception of a world which surely must have had its origin in a material manifestation of some sort. The duality of an oscillatory movement — in-and-out, wave and node — makes this easier for us to understand: a going-out-of-itself for the purpose of manifestation, to "gain existence," yet a constant returning to itself so as to retain the essence of its indivisible divine being.

It may be mentioned in passing that this idea of the manifested part, i.e. the created world, being of necessity the product of a loss of perfection, may be at the bottom of the notion of "original sin."

Manifestation then means existence and a higher or lesser degree of consciousness. And existence — or consciousness — implies substance. For we cannot think of any kind of existence, without thinking at the same time of substance: something observable outside the self, be it physical or mental matter — "such things as dreams are made on." Looking at it again as we would at a physical phenomenon, it is easy to understand that the primary pulsations of manifestation will propagate themselves in this externalized substance. Just as a pebble thrown into the water will not cause an isolated ring to open and close again around the point of impact, but send ripples all over the surface of the water, so will cosmic ripples, pulsations of energy, be sent out in all directions. There is consciousness, there is matter, there is pulsation: a new world has come into being.

These "ripples," as the new world grows and unfolds itself on the breath of Brahma, may travel a long way from their source. They may, on the same principle as has been applied to the first pulsation, lose "perfection" and gain lesser manifestations of power; they may, as it were, lose spirit and gain matter, but they cannot go on in the outward direction for ever. In common parlance: in that direction there is

nowhere for them to go. Their only fulfilment is in their ultimate return to their Source. This is what we all instinctively know and all we ever can know of the "purpose" of God's Creation.

Let us now go back to John, the Apostle.

In his days it was not the custom to write long and explicit philosophic dissertations. Certain records were kept in a cryptic style for those "who had ears to hear," and for those who had not, explanations were given orally by the initiated.

Now if you had to express in a short and cryptic message what we have so ponderously tried to explain, what image would you think of? How would you convey the idea of a Nothingness fraught with the potentialities of a whole new world; the throbbing pulsation of the birth of this world; its existence — separate yet inalienably related to its Source . . .? A nothingness which is the Ultimate Perfection and which is so complete, so all-encompassing, that it is beyond the sphere of conscious perception.

The Word, says the Apostle, was with God, and the Word was God.

A void, therefore, which holds in its womb everything that ever is or will be. For it holds the "Word."

Try to visualize what this means. Here we have the larynx, connected with the lungs as with a pair of bellows. Lungs and windpipe are filled with air. Can we think of anything less substantial than air? The bellows begin to work and still nothing happens. Some particles of air are displaced. For the rest: nothingness.

And again air is pressed upward through the larynx. But this time larynx, tongue and lips assume certain positions, make certain movements, and lo! . . . there is suddenly not only sound, but meaning: a word. Materially, we can hardly trace what has happened. Vibrations have been set up. But with what tremendous consequences! Just think of the prisoner in the dock; of the youth to whom Life holds out a glorious promise; of those who are laden. . . .

"To be hanged by the neck" . . . "till death do us part" . . . "I am the Resurrection and the Life" . . .

Just words. . . . Vibrations out of the nothingness of thin air. But to those who hear the words, reality is created. The reality of the ransom of a wasted life; the reality of blissful adventure; the reality of the solace of eternal life because of eternal love. . . .

Out of No-thing-ness new worlds are created. . . .

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

For those who have ears to hear, could a better image have been chosen?

The Theosophical Forum

THERE IS A ROAD — *Hazel Minot*

Roads have a magic of their own. They beckon to unexpected things, and conjure up pictures of far distant places, visions of hopes to be realized, dreams that are ever beyond the receding horizon.

There is the country road — hardly more than a lane — that leads nowhere in particular, and brings a quieting of tensions to him who forgets himself in following its peaceful meanderings. There is the road climbing a hill from whose summit a whole new world is revealed. Breath-taking these panoramas are sometimes, leaving a memory more pregnant with joy than is that same scene revisited. Between such roads and the broad highway there are countless others — good, bad, and indifferent; lanes and even foot-paths that may one day be a link in some vast artery of commerce, leading who knows where? And then the highway! — winding along valleys, going over and even through mountains: this is a road that brings us beauty at all seasons, but leaves us gasping on occasion at the majesty of earth and Nature with which we are suddenly brought face to face.

One such road opened a window into another world. The time was early Spring. There had been rain in the lowlands which had turned to snow on the higher slopes and in the mountains. Trees and shrubs were cloaked in bewildering loveliness; here and there slate-gray rocks stood out in stern contrast to the soft whiteness all around them; and winding its way like a black ribbon was the road, disclosing beauty on beauty with every turn. The air was clear and still with the stillness of fallen snow — a world apart, yet linked with the life of the lowlands by that ribbon of winding road. Up and up it went, and then it was no more: a sign said "Road not cleared beyond this point." So simple a thing could make a cleavage almost unbelievable! Here were snow-covered slopes, but here also was the cleared road with human life in evidence — cars parked momentarily before turning to go back down the mountain; beyond, all was whiteness. Footprints that disappeared

around a jutting cliff showed where the road lay buried, but there was no sign of those who made them, and a phantom mist rising from the snow only added to the sense of mystery. It was a different world, a strange and unreal world — or was it real, and where we stood was unreality?

How many have traveled these roads, sensing romance behind their making and wishing for the story of their coming into being, a history of their evolution from a well-worn cow path, or an Indian trail, to a four-lane highway connecting busy centers of industry? How many others have passed that way, content to enjoy the changing scene and season, but unaware of the toil and labor, the far-seeing vision of those who planned, the expert work of engineers who carried out those plans? There is the mystery of transmutation here, and as with other worthwhile things, the part that meets the eye is but a fraction of the whole. The more important part remains unknown and often unsuspected. A symbol, mayhap, of that road "steep and thorny" which "leads to the Heart of the Universe."

It is said that one cannot travel on that road until one has become the Way itself. There is a link, then, between the pattern of the broad highway and that of the evolving soul: the final achievement is the sum-total of that which has gone before, and none, perhaps, who sees it thus will guess the toil and heartache that have made it possible. Countless hours of thought and labor — incarnations of shaping and reshaping are represented here; and at no time can it be said with absolute finality, "This is the end."

The Theosophical Forum

THE SECRET OF CONTENTMENT — *Earle C. Hostler*

Contentment in no sense means self-satisfaction, but rather inner tranquillity, peace of mind. Does Theosophy throw any light on the secret of its attainment?

The opposite of contentment is the lack of inner calm, the lack of inner peace, inner strife or discomfort. In spite of the fact that a great many people, without realizing it, seem to thrive on the excitement of this condition — because excitement and agitation, the play of the lower emotions seem to be the very nature of the personal man — in spite of this, I believe we are safe in saying that this *inner* strife is in reality the most fertile cause of unhappiness, pain or sorrow.

It was Gautama, the Lord Buddha, who after witnessing at an early age the three awakening sights of old age, disease and death, could not rest in peace until he had eventually learned the truth about this world's pain and its sorrow; and having learned, he in turn could not rest until he had taught it to his disciples and the people of his own country. What he taught is imbodyed in his doctrine of "The Four Noble Truths," which in condensed form may be summarized as follows:

1. That pain and sorrow exist;
2. That there is a cause for the suffering and sorrow that exist;
3. That there is a way to get rid of this sorrow and pain;
4. That there is a path, which if followed, leads to the extinction of this pain and sorrow.

That path itself was called by the Buddha the Noble Eightfold Path:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. Right Conviction | 5. Right livelihood |
| 2. Right resolution | 6. Right endeavor |
| 3. Right speech | 7. Right alertness of mind |
| 4. Right conduct | 8. Right absorption or right meditation |

Right conviction — conviction based on a recognition of The Four Noble Truths.

Right resolution — having the courage of one's convictions and resolving to follow them, is right resolution. Each time we resolve anew it is like a wise sailor periodically charting his position from the heavens in order to keep on his true course.

Right speech — speech that is thoughtful, kindly, truthful and controlled.

Right conduct — conduct that is based on moral worth, integrity and sincerity.

Right livelihood — that way of making a living that gives full value for payment received and which at the same time causes no loss or hurt to another.

Right endeavor — the fixing of the mind's eye on the true goal in life and making every thought, word and deed conform to that end.

Right alertness of mind — that mental attentiveness to life which aids us in performing every duty well, and which helps us to grasp every opportunity for right action.

Right absorption or right meditation — if we practice successfully the first seven there will follow a gradual awakening of our spiritual perceptions so that we shall come to know what right meditation is.

In his *Esoteric Tradition*, Dr. de Purucker says that following this path consists in a continuous changing to betterment of the factors or *samskaras* of our consciousness. These *samskaras* are those attributes of character, whether mental, emotional or otherwise, which are the seeds or tendencies of past actions. A little reflection shows that these eight points have been so chosen and so devised that if we follow them and practice them, they will help men to raise or improve the entire range of those wrong tendencies which we have built into our natures in our many past lives. In other words, all those energies and forces which play through our natures will be brought into balance, into a harmonious relationship, which is inner unity, giving birth to an inner calm, or, in a word, *contentment*.

So this path with its eight points of instruction shows us the road we must travel. It is an inner road and a difficult one, perhaps; but anything that is

worth while is difficult to attain, and just because it is a difficult road, let us light a beacon, and let that beacon be trust in our ability ultimately to succeed.

When learning some new skill or when undertaking some new accomplishment, how very hard it seems at first. In fact sometimes the initial effort seems so difficult that we become discouraged and feel inclined to give up before we have hardly begun; but if in spite of discouragement and momentary despondency we carry on, persistence and real effort bring success and proficiency. Isn't it likely that the same sequence holds true for inner growth? Isn't this also why we are taught that despondency is the greatest foe to progress? Applied to outward things, this is easy to see, for in looking back on past accomplishments, we can note that slips and failures were part of the process of learning, and that in the light of final success, to have allowed failure to deter us, in the sense of freezing our will to go on, would not only have been ridiculous, but would have negated all the effort thus far made.

Again the same thing holds good for inner growth, for, in trying to give expression to our ideals we can readily see that little failures along the way are part and parcel of our travel through life. The trick is in learning to ignore them; that is, in the sense of not dwelling on them other than to extract the lesson they teach. All our past successes, inward or outward, give promise of future accomplishment and teach us that despondency need never be indulged in. We have only to remember that exertion and continuity of effort are needed. Even the Masters tell us that there is no failure except the refusal to try again, or as a Zen teacher might say, the one and only great commandment of Zen is: "Thou shalt walk on."

We must trust in our ability to succeed, which is the same as saying that we must never admit the possibility of failure. And why? For two good theosophical reasons. The first, because man is essentially a spiritual being and therefore has a constant source of spiritual power within himself to call upon. And second, because man is inwardly a deathless being and therefore has an eternity in which to progress. The doctrine of re-embodiment teaches us that man lives many lives here on earth so that whatever is unfinished or lacks complete accomplishment in this life will be picked up and carried on to a successful conclusion in the next or

succeeding lives. The idea that the self in man embodies or reincarnates repeatedly on earth, coupled with the idea that there is a law operative in the very scheme of things that moves toward readjustment, forms two of the most important and hope-filling of our theosophical teachings.

The question may well be asked: "If man is essentially a spiritual being, why then does he have so much difficulty manifesting that spirituality here in his earthly life?" A whole philosophy could be written around the answer to such a question, but putting it simply and without *too* much detail here is one answer and it lies in the word *essentially*. Man is *essentially* a spiritual being. In order for the essential self of man to manifest at all in this gross physical world, this self had to "step" itself down, and clothe itself with substances and forces, matters and energies of varying degrees of density and ethereality, finally appearing here on earth in these fleshly bodies, which so many of us so mistakenly think of as ourselves. Man is a spiritual being, living in an animal body, but before the spiritual self can manifest its own nature through this animal body, it not only has to learn to control the physical forces of that body, but it has also to learn to control and to bring into harmonious and synchronous relationship the forces and energies of his inner vehicles as well. Is it any wonder then that man is sometimes bewildered and does such strange things! He is a very highly complex being, a fact our physicians and psychiatrists are rapidly discovering.

The reaction of this complexity of human nature on our health has been engaging the attention of the medical and scientific world for some time now. So much so that the more enlightened doctors are realizing that there is an intimate association between mind and body. The psychiatrist too has evolved a long list of technical terms descriptive of psychologic and mental ailments, such as the many types of phobias, manias, psychoses, neuroses, and what not. The chances are that the human entity has been heir to these various disorders for a long long time, and while they may be new to our Western thinkers, dealing as they do with the great mysteries of consciousness, these variations, both mental and physical, have been known and understood for ages by the great Eastern occultists. The better psychiatrists are also discovering that the quickest and most permanent cures of insanity or near insanity occur when they are able to give their

patients a firm philosophic or religious basis for life. In other words, if the ill — mentally, emotionally, or even physically — can come to feel that life has both meaning and purpose, this alone will help to restore sanity and balance.

Man is a composite being, having actually six other principles besides the physical body and is therefore quite complex. The simple knowledge of his dual aspect, however, is a tremendous help in understanding himself. Man has a higher mind and a lower mind, or a higher and lower ego. The lower mind is more or less closely associated with the four lower principles — the desires, the vital forces, the astral body and the physical body. The higher mind lives in the light of the three higher principles — the divine, the spiritual and the spiritual-intellectual. The lower mind or ego, when functioning as such, is pure selfishness, concerned only with itself and its own wants; while the higher mind or ego is spiritual and therefore universal in its scope, expressing the qualities of love and unselfishness. There is the duality — the personality on the one hand, and the higher individuality on the other.

The question is now, how do we, who live mainly in our lower personality, reach up to our higher spiritual self, which is the real self, and bridge the gap between the two? It is done with will and aspiration and the creative imagination, by trying to live up to the best and noblest that we can visualize, but while this is patently simple to say, everyone knows that it requires all the strength of our manhood and womanhood to put it into practice. We shall know we are succeeding when we find ourselves learning to think more of others and less of ourselves, when it becomes natural to feel welling up in our hearts a warm and sincere love for our fellows. — And let us not be frightened by this word love.

Recently I came across an old number of the *Magazine Digest* and found an article by Harry Emerson Fosdick entitled: "Are We Fit to Live With?" There is here a definition of love that is well worth sharing:

Mark this! Love in the New Testament is not a sentimental and affectionate emotion as we so commonly interpret it. The great Christian word for love is *agape*. Over 250 times the New Testament uses it, and *agape* means nothing sentimental or primarily

emotional at all; it means understanding and creative goodwill. "Love your neighbors as yourself" — that is *agape*. "Love your enemies" — it is nonsense to command that if it means feeling affection for our foes but if it means, as it does, extending even to them an understanding and creative good-will so that, by God's grace, enemies may at last be turned into friends, that makes sense.

In view of our present critical world situation, Mr. Fosdick's article, written three years ago, is even more applicable today than when written. He continues:

. . . this is the world's cry, with catastrophe awaiting failure:
Wanted! Those qualities of life and character that make men and nations fit to live with.

We have always talked about world brotherhood. It was a beautiful ideal. But now it is the absolute condition of civilization's survival It is world brotherhood now, or else!

The dramatic conquest of the air, the shrinking of the planet in travel time and the release of atomic power, have as it were suddenly confronted us with history's most momentous crises, long building up but unmistakably here at last — races and nations forced to live together before we are fit to live with.

And the most serious aspect of this situation is that being fit to live with is a spiritual matter. It can be politically expressed but it cannot be politically manufactured it must start in the intelligence and conscience and good-will of people.

Theosophy and all true religions make a constant appeal to the best in man, but theosophy, because it makes understandable the underlying reasons for ethics, probably more so than any other system of thought, exerts a continual pressure on the conscience of man, awakening in him a knowledge of his full responsibility in life. There is ample evidence all about us that a world conscience is emerging out of the urgency and stress of our times and there are movements in the outward as well as the inward affairs of human life which give promise of the dawn of a new day for humanity.

Theosophists feel that the great universal ideas that have poured through the theosophical society into the thought life of the world, have been no mean factor in bringing about this awakening world conscience, and we feel definitely that now is no time to relax our efforts, but rather it is this urgent need of the times that prompts the increased efforts now being made to spread this enlightening philosophy among men. It is quite possible that the influence exerted in the next five years by the theosophical society and all other religious and philosophical organizations to keep the conscience of the world alive and sensitive to the great issues of right and wrong, may mark the difference between seeing that new day dawn with all its spiritual promise, or of seeing the heavy clouds of human folly and ignorance obscure the light for a thousand years to come.

World brotherhood has indeed become a "must." The one and only prerequisite to membership in the Theosophical Society has been the acceptance of the belief that universal brotherhood is a fact in nature. Of course this applies to more than just human brotherhood. It points to that fundamental doctrine of the underlying unity of all life. Nevertheless, it also proclaims the fact that the Theosophical Society is working for world brotherhood, although it is working primarily to disclose those great fundamental truths which, if universally known, would make a true and lasting spiritual brotherhood a possibility. In fact to form a working nucleus for such a brotherhood is the society's avowed purpose.

Isn't it a strange thing how humanity, having traveled the long weary road upward in evolution, has finally, through human intelligence and ingenuity, almost gained complete control of all the kingdoms of nature *below* his own — in other words, has gained virtual control over his *external* environment, and has now only himself left to fear? Only man threatens and is the enemy of man, and he has now but to learn to conquer himself. As nations and as individuals we must learn how to make ourselves "fit to live with." But this business of making ourselves fit to live with resolves itself first of all into an individual matter, because a nation reflects the spiritual advancement of its people. Each individual must say to himself: "What am I doing to make myself fit to live with." A man's inner growth is something he alone can undertake. No one, not even a Christ or a

Buddha, can do our growing for us. We can of course be helped, we can be taught and encouraged; but upon each one alone falls the labor of evolving forth and expanding his own inner consciousness, and the key to it we are taught is discipline.

Cord Meyer, Jr., has well expressed this thought in the closing chapter of his book, *Peace or Anarchy*:

Measured against the infinite age of the earth and stars, the span of human existence is brief indeed. Yet in the comparatively few years that man has inhabited the planet, he has achieved great and wonderful things. From the caves where he once lived in savage ignorance, he has won his way to a nearly complete control over his natural environment. Now he has only himself to fear. He can use his new-found power to destroy himself and all that has been built and thought through the laborious centuries, or he can find a more generous existence on this earth than ever before was possible. This is the decision which we, as the living representatives of the race, must make in our time.

To come back to our subject of contentment — the secret of contentment. We have already defined contentment as meaning inner peace, peace of mind, and we have also indicated that the secret of its achievement is the reaching out in thought and in action unselfishly towards others. It is really no secret at all.

The greatest of all gifts is the *giving of the self*. But this movement outward, away from ourselves, in service to others, is not an automatic thing for our lower personal selves. It follows, therefore, that we must, through discipline, which means by training and practice, learn to control the lower will by the will of the higher self. This is done naturally and without strain, but it has to be done, and not just thought about. Even though it may appear to be a relatively slow process, it is a safe one and leads eventually to the true path in life, a path which once entered upon brings a rapid acceleration of spiritual growth.

Perhaps it is also the last step and every step in between, for only by living for others can we impersonalize ourselves sufficiently for the Great Peace to be ours. May we not truly say, then, that contentment or inner peace is

but the fruit which develops when the aspirant travels successfully the path which leads to illumination and union with the God within?

The Theosophical Forum

THE THIRD EYE — *Allan J. Stover*

There are many statements in theosophical literature referring to a time when mankind, much wiser though less developed intellectually than at present, possessed a Third Eye which served as an organ of spiritual clairvoyance as well as of objective sight.

The pineal gland was in earliest mankind an exterior organ of physical vision, and of spiritual and psychic sight. But due to the evolutionary course that the human frame followed, as time passed on and our present two optics began to show themselves, the pineal gland or the "Third Eye," the "Eye of Siva," the "Eye of Dangma" began to recede within the skull, which latter finally covered it with bone and hair. It then lost its function as an organ of *physical* vision, but has never ceased to continue its functions even now as an organ of spiritual sight and insight. — G. de Purucker, *Man in Evolution*, pp. 367-8

Since nature repeats herself everywhere and each creature records in its form and life cycle the age-long history of the race to which it belongs, it may be expected that what took place in the history of humanity must surely have been reflected in the evolution of the lower animals as well. This is shown in *The Secret Doctrine* where H. P. Blavatsky says:

In the beginning, every class and family of living species was hermaphrodite and objectively one-eyed. In the animal, whose form was as ethereal (astrally) as that of man, before the bodies of both began to evolve their coats of skin, viz., to evolve from *within without* the thick coating of physical substance or matter with its internal physiological mechanism — the third eye was primarily, as in man, the only seeing organ. — II, 299

Continuing, H. P. Blavatsky discusses the development of the lateral eyes:

The two physical front eyes developed later on in both brute and man, whose organ of physical sight was, at the commencement of the Third Race, in the same position as that of some of the blind vertebrata, in our day, *i.e.*, beneath an opaque skin. Only the stages of the *odd*, or primeval eye, in man and brute, are now inverted, as the former has already passed that animal *non-rational* stage in the Third Round, and is ahead of mere brute creation by a whole plane of consciousness. Therefore, while the "Cyclopean" eye was, and still *is*, in man the organ of *spiritual* sight, in the animal it was that of objective vision. And this eye, having performed its function, was replaced, in the course of physical evolution from the simple to the complex, by two eyes, and thus was stored and laid aside by nature for further use in Aeons to come. — *Ibid.*

The foregoing outlines the evolutionary development of the organs of sight in both man and beast from theosophical records.

Now to examine the physical evidence as known to modern science and as found in the structure of various creatures.

To begin with, most insects have two kinds of eyes; two compound eyes containing many hundreds of facets, and usually three simple eyes or ocelli arranged in a triangle near the top of the forehead. There are certain insects which possess one or the other type only, but when this occurs a portion of these organs is structurally modified for specialized use in dim light. This reminds us of the distribution of the rods and cones in the human eye so that the central portion of the eye is adapted to bright light while the outer portion is more sensitive to night sight.

Among the night-hunting spiders three of the eight ocelli, there being no compound eyes, show an opalescent lustre and are believed to function where there is little light.

The May-fly in its adult state lives only for a day, and having no need to eat possesses only rudimentary mouthparts. Yet for that single day a portion of each compound eye (there being no simple eyes), is modified

to serve during the mating flight of evening. Short as is the adult life of the May-fly there is a previous existence when as a water-nymph it crawls about on the bottom of a stream, finding its way by means of primitive ocelli. After some twenty moults the insect larva crawls above the water on a small twig and bursting its skin emerges as a winged May-fly. But there is still another moult and early in the course of its *one* day, it sheds a final delicate skin from the body and even the surface of the wings and appears more a creature of air than of substance, however refined.

Stranger still are the bi-focal eyes of many water-bugs which have double compound eyes, and so can see both their enemies in the air and beneath the surface of the water at the same time.

The common ant has a pair of elaborate compound eyes, with the addition of three ocelli forming a triangle above the lateral eyes. It has been suggested that the simple eyes are of value for close vision or in dim light, although this is not definitely established. That ants have some very efficient means of night vision seems certain.

The great majority of insects, like the ant, are equipped with both types of visual organs, and it is interesting to note that in the metamorphosis cycle of those insects like the Dragonfly and Butterfly the larva (caterpillar or nymph) possesses only the small ocelli, and acquires the compound eyes at the time it emerges as an adult. This cycle of metamorphosis, like the embryonic development of the higher animals, is believed to recapitulate the history of the species. For this and other reasons entomologists are agreed that the simple eyes still present in most of the insects, are a remnant of what was formerly the *only* organ of sight. In other words the evolution of the insect eye parallels that of other branches of the animal kingdom in many ways.

Among the vertebrates vestiges still exist, concealed within the skull, of what corresponds to the traditional Third Eye of man, although science speaks of it as the Median Eye and states that there were originally not one eye but a pair arranged tandem, one slightly behind the other, on each side of the median line of the skull.

Dr. G. L. Walls says:

There are indications from elasmobranch embryology, that the provertebrates possessed a metameric series of paired visual organs on the roof of the head. Most of them rapidly disappeared as the lateral, ordinary eyes became perfected; but two pairs of dorsal eyes still hung on almost until the cyclostome level of evolution was reached. In most modern cyclostomes, two dorsal eyes are present. They do not represent a pair, however, for they are arranged in tandem with one behind and below the other. (1)

Each, according to Dr. Walls, is one surviving member of an original pair.

Remnants of this median eye are found today in fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and animals in such variety that it would be tiresome to name any but outstanding examples. The common lizard and also the so-called horned toad have such a remnant in the middle of their foreheads although covered with scales. The brow-spot of the tadpole has a similar origin.

A number of the more primitive lizards possess a median eye which still functions as an organ of sight. Best known of these is the Tuatera which is now confined to a small islet on the coast of New Zealand. The Tuatera is a living fossil of the most primitive order of reptile known. In the center of its forehead is located, beneath a protective scale, a lens and retina, which still functions as an organ of sight although the Tuatera has the ordinary eyes common to all reptiles also.

Although the facts discovered by scientists regarding the evolution of sight appear closely to parallel the teaching of theosophy, Science has advanced little in its understanding of the function of the median or pineal or third eye in man, or in the animals.

The philosopher Rene Descartes, who died in 1650, thought the pineal gland to be the seat of the soul, that through it "the soul comes into

contact with the body, whence it radiates by means of the animal spirits, nerves and even the blood." Commenting on this Dr. Adolph M. Hanson remarks:

It now seems that it may influence the acts of that fundamental ego that is back of human personality more than any other gland.

This small gland, that median eye of our arachnoid [!] ancestors, from being the lone all-seeing eye of the past seems to be the hidden, back-seat driver of human destinies, that in some way, for good or for evil, may influence the acts of the ego in the flesh more than any other one gland. It was laid down with the foundation of the face and therefore, was most likely the very first tissue, or one of the first tissues, to take on the function of internal secretion. — *Minnesota Medicine*, February, 1937 p. 78

Unfortunately medical science, in addition to misunderstanding Descartes, confines its investigation to the one aspect of glandular secretion and its effects upon the body alone, and makes no distinction between the lower animals and man.

Here the theosophical doctrines open up a new vista of thought. For they show that with the obscuration of the Third Eye within the skull in man, its function changed from that of objective vision to that of spiritual clairvoyance and that its destiny in the future is to become increasingly active. As shown in the *Dialogues of G. de Purucker* (III, 374), there are three lines of evolution for the human being, each of which has its focus or point of contact in the human body. These three also are three states of consciousness. Of these the Divine-Spiritual functions through the heart, the Psycho-Mental through the brain, and the Vital-Astral-Physical line of evolution through the liver and spleen. Since the descent of the Manasaputras and the coming of mind, the brain has developed enormously and at present contains the highest and most ethereal substance in the human body, being composed of quasi-spiritual energy or fluid derived from the manasic plane and beyond the reach of scalpel or test-tube analysis.

As expressed in *Man in Evolution*:

Connected with the brain are the two wonderful glands, the pineal and the pituitary, already mentioned. The pineal gland is as it were a casement opening out into infinite seas and horizons of light, for it is the organ that in us men receives the direct mahatic ray, the ray direct from the cosmic intellect. — p 366

The pituitary gland is described as the lieutenant of the pineal for "It is the organ of will and urge and growth and impulse; but when the pineal sets the pituitary vibrating in synchrony with its own vibration, you have a god-man, for there is the intellect envisaging infinity." (*Ibid.*)

It is, however, the Buddhic light of compassion and divine love which illumines the heart causing it to glow and which in turn sets the pineal gland vibrating. Thus, after all, the way to awaking the Third Eye is through the *living* of compassion and love for all that lives.

FOOTNOTE:

1. "*The Vertebrate Eye*, by Gordon Lynn Walls. Cranbrook Institute of Science, 1942. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

H.P.B. — THE MAKER OF THE FUTURE — *Orange Clark*

Until H. P. B. put on public record an outline of the Ancient Wisdom no such complete system of philosophy and religion had been given to our world at any one time in recorded history. Jesus and most of the other great teachers of religions taught orally. In each case only fragments have come down to us and those fragments chiefly in the form of mutilated and misunderstood symbologies. Such systems of thought are entirely unlike the Goddess of Wisdom, Athena, who sprang full-fledged from the brow of Zeus. It was thus that Theosophy came from H. P. B. and her Teachers.

H. P. B. was too great and too brilliant to fit any everyday standards. So many facets she had to her unmeasured and, it seemed to many, unpredictable character that few could understand her except in part. Consequently some few concluded that she must be the greatest of unexplainable impostors.

Because of her astonishing intuition she saw the good and bad in every one and what she often saw made her life a martyrdom. The kindly and the perceiving often see much that makes their hearts ache.

A few, feeling that they were understood by her too well for their own comfort, were furious and, losing all sense of proportion, attacked her bitterly and even with dishonest and subtle monomania.

Thus it has been with most of the greatest theosophists in all ages — most of the world's greatest spiritual leaders — for only the noble of heart can understand the great of soul. A book was once published, not by a theosophist, entitled: *The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors'*, and truly they were crucified on worse than crosses of wood. However the bitterness of the attacks upon H. P. B. helped her to keep this little known philosophy before the world. Because slander travels faster than truth, her enemies obtained a hearing to which they were in no wise entitled, thus her enemies were her most effective advertizers.

And now we and the race are reaping the benefits of her martyrdom, the benefits of the enlightenment her widely spreading doctrines are bringing. Thus it has often been. For instance, the story of the crucifixion made Jesus the greatest figure of our Western world; without that story he might have remained an almost unknown Jewish prophet.

We can well consider much and ponder often on all the factors that went to make H. P. B. so potent a force in influencing the ideas and ideals of our time. She and her following had such effects because small beginnings at the right time may change the course of history; a minute trace of medicine given at the right time by a wise physician may put physical and mental health into the whole body. A microscopic germ of pollen put upon the breeze may make a great tree. The tree may produce a forest. The right idea started at the right time and place may be the match that starts a conflagration or lights a beacon, or it may change the literature and music of a nation. The right thought given at the right time by a chance acquaintance to the little known intimate of a great statesman may change a trend of world events. Such incidents are a matter of history. A catalyst may be the minute quantity that starts a reaction and changes the whole compound.

Thus it was that the little known but so potent H. P. B. and her ideas started at the right time made so deep an impress on the present and longtime future of the race.

She brought a philosophy so broad and so fundamental in its logic that foremost thinkers of our time are using many of her ideas as their very own. We congratulate them for it, for thus they are building toward a new civilization based upon a wholesome philosophy of life and an attitude of brotherhood toward our fellow men.

H. P. B.'s book *The Secret Doctrine* has been spoken of by some great modern thinkers as the "bible of the future," to which all sects and religions will proudly trace their origin. Her teachings are so vast and rich that every individual and every small or worldwide group can and will take therefrom as much as they desire, as much as their souls need

at the time. Already we can see the widely scattered beginnings of this, though no one can take in all that she has offered. From the seeds she sowed whole forests of ideas are growing of many shades of foliage and many varieties of fruitage. Not all the fruitage may be equally good. She foresaw that and could not help it; imitations are inevitable and dilutions may seem desirable to many.

As all the great religions of the past and present sprang from one primeval source so will those of the future spring from, or wander from, or be regenerated by, the broad outlines and multitudinous details she flung wide to the world. In an age of change no one can stop the chain reaction of truth. No one can dam back the flood of regenerating ideas that is sweeping many parts of the world.

She gave to Christianity, and to every other religion, the magically enlightening explanations of the symbology back of their fundamentalist dogmas. She reshaped the trend of religious thought into liberal and what the enlightened public can now see to be common-sense interpretations of the symbolisms and allegories of the otherwise preposterous dogmas handed down from the Middle Ages.

At times throughout many years I met, knew and worked with many who had worked with or known and crossed friendly swords with H. P. B., including some few who never became theosophists. Having begun my intellectual life in H. P. B.'s life-time, and under the impact of her writings as they came from the press, and surrounded as I was by many shades of thought and constant discussions of the trends of independent thinking, I can truly say that no other person or group of persons produced such deep and ever-growing impressions on this age as she has produced. Until H. P. B. brought her philosophy, outside of a few almost unknown mystics and incomplete ancient oriental systems, there was in the Occident no generally known doctrine of karma, practically no knowledge of reincarnation; no thought that universal brotherhood is a fact in Nature; no doctrine or realization of the god within; and no explanation of how the spiritual generates the mental and material and all of the world we know.

All of these ideas and enough more to keep philosophers busy for an age she brought, and they are now definitely, or in part, incorporated into the thinking of mankind. But with all of this, let us not forget H. P. B.'s human side, her love of adventure, her scintillating humor, her love of human beings, which was what made her work possible.

The Theosophical Forum

H. P. BLAVATSKY AND PEACE OF MIND — *Grace Knoche*

A few days ago I came across a book entitled *Peace of Mind*. The author is a Jewish Rabbi, a very great man, a scholar, and highly thought of everywhere. His book (selling by the tens of thousands), breathes love and gentleness, for its object is to bring Peace of Mind, so far as possible, to a world that is gripped by fear. But outside of the Christian Bible, all that he tells the reader to go to for help, is psychiatry and modern psychology!

Well, if you have seen some of the books on the last two subjects that are now required reading in our colleges, you would wonder, as I did, why this great man did not lead us instead to the deeper teachings of his own religion — for in large part they are pure Theosophy. Perhaps he thought we could not understand — I do not know.

But as I read on, my mind kept gravitating first to H. P. Blavatsky, and then to the atomic bomb which is keeping the nations in such a state of fear. And naturally, too, because in her greatest work, *The Secret Doctrine*, H. P. B. gives some ten of her glorious pages to a description of a similar atomic experiment, made in the early 1870's by one John Worrell Keely, but now lost and forgotten. He was never able to pass the final secret on to others. Something in his own nature blocked it, and the world was saved. He was not "*permitted* to succeed." In another passage, H. P. B. states that "he was not *allowed*."

H. P. Blavatsky tells us that Keely's discovery was the frightful "sidereal Force" of the Atlanteans, called by them *mash-mak*, and later by Bulwer-Lytton in his book *The Coming Race* called *vril*. And now the same frightful Force has been discovered and harnessed by modern scientists, and the result is the atomic bomb — a weapon so frightful that the whole world is afraid.

Yet it need not be. Consider those cryptic words: "was not *permitted*," and "he [Keely] was not *allowed*," to succeed. Think them over and then

ask yourself whether the Great Beings who watch over and protect this world of ours would ever "permit," ever "allow" the nations today to destroy each other when, comparing them with the past and taking them as a whole, they are earnestly trying to find the better, the brotherly way — the only way that is left.

This is just one instance, one example, of what H. P. B. is doing now for a world that was yet unborn when she wrote *The Secret Doctrine*. Through her teachings she is more alive now than when she was with us in that poor aching body. Let us take one more, just one out of almost numberless teachings or hints in this remarkable book that will be studied for centuries, indeed for millennia to come: the doctrine of Cycles — practically unknown in its *universal* reach for thousands of years. When we studied Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, with its Great Cycle of the famous Four Ages within it: Golden, Silver, Bronze, and Iron, we were told that it was a myth, and soon forgot it. But H. P. Blavatsky tells us that this Great Cycle was a part of Universal Nature, that it *happened*. Moreover, that India carried this story down *as history* from the most ancient days in the *Rig-Veda*, "the oldest document in the world."

In the very early days of India men lived in a true Golden Age. In Sanskrit it was called Satya-Yuga, the Age of Truth, when all men were brothers, and knew it; happiness and justice prevailed; they felt that loving nearness to the Gods and to their Great Teachers or Rishis that all mankind should feel. Fruit and flowers alone were laid upon their altars, never flesh and blood.

But centuries passed, and selfishness crept in. Burnt offerings lay upon the altars; unhappiness and disease began to appear. It was the Treta-Yuga, the "Age of the Three Fires," when the people were three parts good, with one part evil. Then came the Dwapara-Yuga, the "Age of Two," when two parts were good, two parts evil, and wickedness increased. Lastly, the Kali-Yuga, the "Age of Iron," the Age we ourselves have been living through during the last five thousand years, with its injustice, persecution, misery, poverty, deceit, disease, and almost

constant wars. Are things to go on getting worse and worse, or what? That is the world's question now.

Again *The Secret Doctrine* has the answer in these Four Ages, known to every land, every period, somewhere in the world. For humanity, for this world, the worst is over, for we are now just entering another Golden Age, or Satya-Yuga, an Age of Brotherhood and Truth, and it is comforting to know that in the long cycle we have passed the lowest point, and that while things do look discouraging, too much like twilight, still the day is here.

And so with all the teachings that H. P. B. left for us to profit by. They give us hope; they give us faith in divine justice. Reincarnation, Karma, Evolution, the true meaning of Hierarchies, the long-lost teaching that man has a higher as well as a lower nature, and that all depends upon whether he faces this truth and determines to go up instead of down. You cannot be discouraged, even by the newspapers, if you believe that men are brothers, and that this brotherhood is *universal*.

Nor has the work of H. P. Blavatsky been unsupported by men prominent in the philosophic and scientific world. Camille Flammarion, the great French astronomer of the day, and a member of the Theosophical Society, literally sat at her feet. If you can find a copy anywhere of his book, *Urania*, long out of print, do read it. It is the purest Theosophy. There was Alfred Russel Wallace, another scientist who studied H. P. B.'s teachings for years, and endured persecution for doing so. In one book in particular he dismisses the current belief that man became Thinking Man by the long slow processes of evolution as seen in the lower kingdoms, and tells us that the gift of Mind was not "evolved" but was *bestowed* upon man, and *at a certain definite period in time!* There was the great scientist Crookes whose success in discovering "radiant matter" drew the attention of the very Adepts who had taught H. P. Blavatsky. They watched his work, and left the record of Their help in *The Mahatma Letters*. There was Edison also, for years a close student of the teachings of Theosophy, and a member of the T. S. And many more, in the East as well as the West.

There were her Successors whom she trained in leadership by means of the teachings that she left. You cannot touch them with the breath of fear; they are equal to any emergency, any attack, as she was. Their daily bread is disappointment — yet they carry on.

Returning to India — because H. P. B. so loved that country and its people, although she herself was trained in a higher school "beyond the Snowy Range" of the Himalayas — I do want to quote a few lines from a letter written by her to one M. D.-A. Courmes in France, a writer, a member of the Theosophical Society, and her devoted disciple and friend: published in English for the first time in *THE FORUM* for May, 1950. It reads as follows:

"Let us conclude this then from the writings of your articles in the *Revue Spirite*, for you are right, the time is near, nearer than you may believe perhaps — when the Occident will be finally initiated by the Orient."

The Theosophical Forum

BHAGAVAD GITA

Therefore, perform thou that which thou hast to do, at all times unmindful of the event; for the man who doeth that which he hath to do, without attachment to the result, obtaineth the Supreme. Even by action Janaka and others attained perfection. Even if the good of mankind only is considered by thee, the performance of thy duty will be plain; for whatever is practised by the most excellent men, that is also practised by others. The world follows whatever example they set. There is nothing, O son of Pritha, in the three regions of the universe which it is necessary for me to perform, nor anything possible to obtain which I have not obtained; and yet I am constantly in action. If I were not indefatigable in action, all men would presently follow my example, O son of Pritha. If I did not perform actions these creatures would perish; I should be the cause of confusion of castes, and should have slain all these creatures. O son of Bharata, as the ignorant perform the duties of life from the hope of reward, so the wise man, from the wish to bring the world to duty and benefit mankind, should perform his actions without motives of interest. He should not create confusion in the understandings of the ignorant, who are inclined to outward works, but by being himself engaged in action should cause them to act also. All actions are effected by the qualities of nature. The man deluded by ignorance thinks, "I am the actor." But he, O strong-armed one! who is acquainted with the nature of the two distinctions of cause and effect, knowing that the qualities act only in the qualities, and that the Self is distinct from them, is not attached in action.

Those who have not this knowledge are interested in the actions thus brought about by the qualities; and he who is perfectly enlightened should not unsettle those whose discrimination is weak and knowledge incomplete, nor cause them to relax from their duty.

Throwing every deed on me, and with thy meditation fixed upon the Higher Self, resolve to fight, without expectation, devoid of egotism and

free from anguish.

Those men who constantly follow this my doctrine without reviling it, and with a firm faith, shall be emancipated even by actions, but they who revile it and do not follow it are bewildered in regard to all knowledge, and perish, being devoid of discrimination.

But the wise man also seeketh for that which is homogeneous with his own nature. All creatures act according to their natures; what, then, will restraint effect? In every purpose of the senses are fixed affection and dislike. A wise man should not fall in the power of these two passions, for they are the enemies of man. It is better to do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well. It is better to perish in the performance of one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger.

The Theosophical Forum

REINCARNATION — *Alice Comerford*

An intense and far-reaching quest is insistently and subtly manifesting in humankind the world over. Hearts are heavy with care, and many minds are replete with bewilderment and restless confusion.

Particularly is this true of the Western nations, who, harassed by the self-inflicted perplexities of a mechanistic philosophy, and now losing faith in a seemingly unjust Creator, are plagued by a cynical and desperate outlook. Yet the peoples of the world have only to open their hearts and minds to Truth, for it does exist, in purity and immediate accessibility. Once souls are turned in sincere search for the realization of life's true meaning — for the answer to the enigma of the inexorable Sphinx — there is no longer room for self-created despair and disharmony.

There has long been made available to the public full and fascinating collations of material which reveal, to a surprising degree perhaps, the widespread acceptance and understanding of the ancient and eternal doctrines of Reincarnation and Karman, which doctrines once permeated, in a natural and unquestioning way, the whole of civilization. Through the advancing ages, however, portions of the world have forgotten, have obscured the truth in a murky materialism which lauds wealth, personal gain and power, and condemns the altruistic philosophical motive which embodies the potentialities for the realization of the Brotherhood of man — the law of harmonious interdependence fundamental in Nature.

People may and do vary in motive, in depth of sincere desire to obtain, or more accurately to awaken, the realization of the truth latent within all hearts. Many are curious, but are satisfied with contemporary dogma and creed. There are those who know that the dark corners of life can be illuminated by the understanding of the doctrine of Reincarnation and of its sister truth, Karman. Happy are those whose eyes are unveiled of the mists of skepticism, obdurate bigotry, and

inflexible opinion, who can look with clear sight upon this doctrine so comprehensible, logical and satisfying, and begin to understand deep within.

Many Theosophical writers are chiefly concerned with reaching the Western mind, as the doctrine of Reincarnation is already inherent in most of the Eastern religious and ethical systems, and has been for countless ages. Of course, original Christianity also included the teachings of re-birth. To the modern Christian this fact is foreign because the truth has been veiled and distorted as the religion has passed from a purer state to one which dwells on the indoctrination of malformed conceptions.

Reincarnation is part of the Universal law of Reimbodiment, which includes all creatures in all degrees of evolution. In specific application to mankind, reincarnation is the reimbodiment of the soul or Ego in the flesh body upon the earth many times, for the purpose of spiritualizing the Ego through the experience offered in the human realm of existence. The doctrine implies the immortality of the soul, and reveals the supreme justice of the laws which govern evolution. Within all sentient beings dwells a center of consciousness which is a portion of the great Universal Consciousness which is Reality and the native substance of Being.

E. D. Walker, in his book, *Reincarnation: A Study of Forgotten Truth*, describes the soul as

an eternal water-globule, which sprang in the beginningless past from mother ocean, and is destined — after an unreckonable course of meanderings in cloud and rain, snow and stream, spring and river, mud and vapor — at last to return with the garnered experience of many separate existences into the central Heart of all.

This teaching stands aloft, and is accountable, with unsurpassed depth and logic, to any current "enlightened reason."

To the skeptic who sees no evidence to support the doctrine, this

philosophy offers many ideas which appeal to the imagination, intelligence, and to sound reasoning. For the believer by blind faith who envisions the soul after death in a region of eternal bliss, and who finds no explanation for the origin of the soul; for the fatalistic or scientific materialist who relegates all the tangible and intangible human faculties to a "variety of atomic qualities" which does not find a reason for the vast and variegated character of living things — for these a study of Reincarnation reveals the complete sequential picture which rounds out the incomplete and often irrational creeds and doctrines which exist.

Most of the world professes belief in the immortality of the soul. Yet, an immortal state succeeding death, as the Christian asserts, should necessarily presuppose a pre-existent state. The Christian idea of "special creation" at birth must therefore have to include annihilation at death, for it is meaningless to think of something created spontaneously from nothing and enduring forever more. What is created in such a manner must logically be destroyed when a life span is complete. None of the ordinary schemes so satisfies the inner sense of logic, reason and intuition as does the idea that the soul of man and indeed of all beings, is of an eternal past, an eternal present, and an eternal future, prevailing as an eternal NOW, and that this soul is periodically embodied by the unfailingly just laws of Nature. Each of the separate souls is a part of an Over-Soul, in Emerson's terminology, which encompasses and composes all the offspring, or individual souls, which contain, complete within themselves, the entire nature of the Universal Soul.

Analogous relations between the various living things upon the earth are further evidence of a oneness, manifest in different forms. The process of the developing embryo, which the biologists examine, is a recapitulation of the numerous forms which the Ego has ensouled in its evolutionary progress. Physical evolution necessarily demands a parallel evolution of the moral, intellectual and spiritual aspects of man. This appeals to the receptive mind as conclusive evidence that this evolutionary process necessitates a long series of lives, each with

its contribution of enriching experiences for the progress of each evolving entity.

Today our attention is called to the fact that science has begun to realize that the soul is reimbodied and that the marvelous "corporeal organism" is directed by a "pre-existent soul-monad." The law of cause and effect which science demonstrates experimentally is unavoidable evidence of an underlying cause which produces the effects of which we are consciously aware at all times. Plato once remarked that "the soul has a natural strength which will hold out and be born many times . . . and always weaves her garment anew."

Further, this teaching is evidenced in a satisfying explanation of "original sin," which idea plagues the minds of many religionists. Original sin, attributed to the fall of Adam, is a misrepresentation of the idea and fact of Karma, or the Law of Consequences. How much grander to think that man is not born in a state of corrupt depravity, but is essentially Divine, with a free will which determines the nature and extent of suffering and evil, or of goodness and happiness which will be each man's lot!

A final evidence of Reincarnation is its service as a satisfactory explanation for the strange reminiscences and experiences which men often know. How often are we awed by a peculiar sense of familiarity with new people, places and situations. Does not this attest to previous associations? Accounts of strange experiences are found in the writings of such literary lights as Coleridge, Poe, Hawthorne, Dickens, and men of the deeper past as well as our contemporaries. Eastern and Western prose and poetry are replete with convictions of belief and evidence of understanding of this ancient, undying doctrine. Men need only use a discerning eye, and exercise a broad fluidity of thought and opinion to unearth the many affirmations of Reincarnation, metempsychosis, and Reimbodiment which appear throughout the literary world.

Such a magnificent and all-encompassing teaching incurs natural objections from those to whom it is foreign, and to whom it is apparently antagonistic to popular religion. Briefly, these objections

are classed in four general categories. The first most often presented is: "Why do we have no memory of our past lives?" The fact is, we do, as nothing is lost in the Universe. Details are obscured, but character remains as the result of the causes which we self-established in past lives. Character is the result of Karma, which directs and molds our very persons.

To the plea of injustice for having to suffer for forgotten deeds of the past, the fact of the absolute balance and infallible law of Justice which rules all life, is pointedly reiterated in the Wisdom-Religion doctrine. Whether our lives are going to reflect high ideals in ethical and moral standard and action, causes which result in effects of *just consequence*, depends wholly on our own choice.

Heredity, which seems to conflict with the Wisdom-Religion doctrine is, on the contrary, more thoroughly and logically explained than science has heretofore satisfactorily done. And for those who fear the loss of contact with loved ones, it is well to understand, and comforting to know, that kindred souls have imperishable bonds which maintain an attraction throughout the countless ages and phases of evolutionary progress.

Reincarnation, referred to in the Christian Bible as pre-existence, is therein alluded to many times. Solomon, in *Proverbs*, spoke with wisdom when he said, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before the works of old — when he prepared the heavens I was there." This and the very familiar passage, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was made flesh . . .," from the *Gospel of St. John*, are further examples of the presence of the pre-existence idea which conduces directly to the spiritual idea of Reincarnation within the Bible. Allegories therein delineate the progress of the soul and teach the responsibility of the individual in matters of his own sin.

A serious misconception which has been widespread throughout the world for some ages is that of the passage or the transmigration of the soul through animal forms as a consequence of corporeal sins. This erroneous conception is found within certain schools of Brahmanism

and Buddhism in the East. The idea has permeated the native races of Africa and America which believe that immediately after death the soul must find a habitat, and thus passes to animal bodies. Some Eastern philosophies affirm the presence of the human souls of relatives and friends within animal bodies, and so prohibit the slaughter and consumption of them. Distortion of the *inner* idea of transmigration has resulted in these grotesque conceptions of the truth. Actually, it is the component atomic constitution of a man which disperses after death and seeks the various home-planes of consciousness, be they animal, vegetable, mineral, or divine. The Higher Ego or human element of man could not possibly assume an animal habitat after it has reached the evolutionary height of humanhood. E. D. Walker appropriately remarks:

It would be as impossible for a gallon to be contained in a pint measure, as for a human spirit to inhabit an animal body.

Fearsome conjectures of Hell and blissful hopes of an eternal paradise of a conventional Heaven, coupled with an unassuaged fear of death characterize much thought today. The beautiful teachings, of which Reincarnation is a part, are, however, embracing far greater portions of the total consciousness of man than has been true for great time periods. Slowly is man beginning to understand that the only Hell is that evil and misery which he self-predisposes and precipitates. The Heaven of blissful rest is called by Theosophy the Devachanic state between incarnations.

Death is not the terrifying conclusion to existence, but the liberator of the soul as it moves from stage to stage in the great evolutionary plan. The personality is mortal, the soul and spirit, immortal. Through the beneficent law of Karman man proceeds along the path to ever greater spiritual heights. Karman, the Benefactor, perfect in action, equitably dealing with the causes set up by individual wills, directs and molds the infinite number of evolving beings. And it is this infallible law of Justice, operating in and through the inner, causal and invisible as well as the visible worlds — Karman — which activates the reincarnating

process.

The most natural question then to arise in the probing mind is: "What reincarnates?" It cannot be the physical body, for we know that that disintegrates soon after death; nor is it the personality with which we are so familiar and which we too often mistake as the real man — the personality which is found to be a mere mask of the Inner Man, the Essential Being. So that which perpetuates the human being, with his numerous appearances on this earth in varying personalities, is "the EGO, the individual and immortal, not personal I; the vehicle, in short, of the ATMA-BUDDHIC MONAD," says H. P. Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy*.

To cover the intricate and fascinating process by which the Ego reincarnates into earth lifers a study complete in itself. Consequently, a very brief outline of the occurrence is all that can be mentioned here.

When the man dies — and death is only a passage to another state of consciousness, not the annihilation of the real Being — there occurs a breaking up of the astral-vital energies, followed by the dissipation of the personality, or mental-emotional being. The Spiritual Ego, Buddhi-Manas, absorbs all the good which the personality has enfolded and expressed, and this Ego then retires to a blissful rest in the Devachanic state or heaven-world of subjective consciousness.

For a time after the death of the physical body the Ego hovers near the earth where its attraction is strongest, and it experiences a panoramic review of the life just past, seeing every event in full detail. This experience makes clear to the Ego the reasons for every incident which came to pass in the human society, linking them in such a manner as to depict the complete pattern, and to confirm the justice of Nature.

After a period of time, relative as time is, the Ego is awakened by the magnetic force of Karmic seeds or causes which demand their equitable consequence. In perfect cosmic rhythm the Law of Reimbodiment marks the course of the Ego, as it is once again drawn to material manifestation, reclothing itself with the several sheaths of consciousness or principle-substance, composed of the life-atoms of

which all planes of substance are formed. The Ego builds its physical body, and once more appears on earth in order to undergo its next series of lessons through experience in the human realm.

No one retires at night with a deadly fear of the permanent loss of waking consciousness — sleep comes as a welcome rest to tired body and mind. In parallel manner, no one should approach the event of death with the terrible fear of the consequences. For, as so often said in our Theosophical literature, "Sleep is the imperfect death, and death the perfect sleep." The cycle is repeated throughout all forms and planes of being, always for the purpose of spiritualizing the vehicles of the Essential SELF.

This is Karma and Reincarnation — twin doctrines basic in the whole of Eternal Truth. Beautiful, practical, and as real to the heart and mind as they are inherent in Being. As Man looks up and out he cries for understanding — for as Frances Quarles once said:

"The weary traveller oft doth seek to know
How far he's come, how far he has to go."

The Theosophical Forum

THE VEIL OF MAYA — *E. A. Holmes*

There are times when life seems dull, and too much composed of routine office-work, or washing up of dishes. Of course, we may have read of Brother Lawrence, who felt himself in the presence of God even when washing up dishes, and a little thought will show that provided we "keep our heads above water," we must be moving towards better things, even if only on the slow current of evolution. Yet most of us enjoy a change, if it only takes the form of an occasional visit to the theatre. We may be inclined to blame ourselves for this state of things, for displaying some form of escapism, for not facing squarely up to life, but one wonders if this is the whole story?

Another diversion in which many people indulge are holidays, and it would seem that one idea in taking a vacation is to find interests which are entirely foreign to the molds of our minds, something new, something free from the rust and scale which clings around too familiar things. We find folk who live by the sea taking holidays in the country, and country-folk flocking to the seaside, or even to the cities, incredible though this may seem to sophisticated city folk! Yet even we perhaps can remember a time when we found glamour and romance in city lights and sounds and smells, when our occasional visits to the city remain in our child-memories as phantasies or dreams, hardly related at all to daily life.

Some of you may have been abroad, in foreign parts, and will recall the sense of unreality surrounding the strange sights and customs you came across. For one person, at least, no matter how many times he visited Egypt during the war, and no matter how many weeks or months he stayed on each visit, the sight of white robes and red fez never failed to raise a sense of phantasmagoria, and make-believe.

It would seem that in such cases when we come across something entirely unfamiliar to us, we have no physical sense, no physical

awareness with which we can contact it, and we have to take things in with some non-physical faculty, just as we do during sleep, the result being that it all seems like a dream.

Arthur Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, in his book *The World as Will and Idea*, wrote:

The Vedas and Puranas have no better simile than a dream for the whole knowledge of the actual world, which they call the web of maya.

The Vedas and Puranas are ancient Indian works which treat of things from an inner point of view. From this inner point of view the physical world is a world of make-believe, and it may be that our craving for "fields and pastures new" is only part escapism, and part a revolt of our souls from the sham and unreality of ordinary life.

Schopenhauer went on to show that, physically, we know not a sun or an earth, but only an eye which sees the sun, and a hand which feels the earth. Our conceptions of sun and earth are at best only second-hand, and according to Theosophy, are still further removed than this. Theosophy speaks of the seven principles of man, each of which is a stratum of cosmic substance. Among these strata are located man's centers of consciousness, from the lowest to the highest. The lowest levels of our consciousness are the furthest removed from reality. The highest levels partake of that universal essence, which to us, from our human standpoint, is reality itself. And all these principles and vehicles and organs which divide us from reality, make up the web of maya, or the veil of illusion.

The Sanscrit word *maya* roughly translated means "illusion," and the doctrine of Maya refers to the illusionary nature of the world in which we live. What form of illusion is it which Theosophy postulates as surrounding our every-day lives? Is it the illusion such as a mirage in the desert, when something is seen which is not in that vicinity at all? Is it something we only imagine, but which doesn't take place at all? Did we only imagine, for instance, that we came to the Lodge room this

evening; do we only imagine that we eat, sleep, and carry on our particular vocations? These are examples of possible illusions, but they are not examples of maya.

An example of maya is given thus: You are walking along in the dusk and suddenly you see what appears to be a snake in your path. After jumping aside, you find, much to your relief, that it is only a piece of rope. The rope was there; it was real enough as a piece of rope, but your vision of it as a snake was illusory, and hence maya.

According to Theosophy, life is not a fiction, and we have not just imagined that we came here tonight; but do we know who or what we are? Can we see for what purpose we live, and have we any inkling of the patterns of destiny which have led us into our families, among our friends, and into our social and economic circles? These things we want to know, and these things are not apparent.

Two courses are open to us. We can say that there is no pattern of destiny, that there is no purpose in life, or we can say there is a purpose and it is up to us to find it. Mankind in general follows the former course. Orthodox opinion has it that chance, not justice, not natural law, rules our lives, and that life has little or no purpose beyond expressing our own ego, and the will to live. From this conception rises the picture which Schopenhauer paints in the fourth section of his book. "Homo homini lupus" he calls the picture, a gruesome panorama of the prisons, torture-chambers, slave kennels, battlefields, and places of execution, sufficient to make everyone pause before accepting these things as the real human lot. In his delusion of separateness, man seeks his own well-being even at the expense of his neighbor. The pleasures he gets thereby are illusory and vain, says this German philosopher. The wish for them is a sort of pain, attainment begets satiety, possession takes away the charm, and there remains only — ennui, boredom. "The wicked man, by the vehemence of his volition suffers constant consuming inward pain."

This is indeed a pessimistic outlook for the transgressor, and we should imagine that in the face of such experience he would soon become a

reformed character. Maybe in the full course of evolution, many aeons from now, this effect will come about, but it doesn't seem to happen overnight on any large scale, judging from our history books!

Schopenhauer's remedy is self-denial and resignation, the subduing of wishes and the conquering-of the will.

These moments in which, delivered from the ardent strain of will, we seem to rise out of the heavy atmosphere of earth, are the happiest which we experience.

So that in seeking for reality behind appearances, Schopenhauer would deny those appearances altogether, and seek direct for Nirvana, utter bliss and oblivion to this world.

The question of reality is approached from many angles in articles on Theosophy. In one case, truth was observed to lie beyond the strife and turmoil of everyday life, and only to be approached by taking up the pilgrim's staff and leaving aside all that the world holds dear.

Schopenhauer would seem to subscribe to this view. In another case it was asserted that spiritual reality lies at our elbow, and that only wilful blindness veils heaven on earth. Life is joy, and a spiritual Jerusalem can be built here on earth, now! Do these two convictions clash, and if not, how do we reconcile them?

Perhaps we shall find that these two apparently conflicting views are two aspects of the same thing. One aspect postulates the veritable existence of Truth and Reality behind things which are fleeting. Here is a sheet-anchor for us among the vicissitudes of life — something we can hang on to in times of stress. We could call it a philosophy of Life. The other aspect sets forth our relationship to this Reality, and gives us a philosophy of Living.

In just the same conjunction and contrast lie the Mosaic Law on the one hand, and the Sermon on the Mount on the other. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." This is indeed the universal cosmic law from which none may escape, the law of karma, "as ye sow, so shall ye reap," "to every action there is an

equal and opposite reaction," an ineffable law, a philosophy of Life in toto, but not a rule for human conduct. "But I say unto you," continued Jesus, "that ye resist not evil." Man has his free will, his power of choice, his power to control some of the causes, from which come new effects breaking the vicious circle of "jungle law," and setting forth a philosophy of Living.

Self-denial and resignation, the subduing of wishes and the conquering of the will, these remedies which Schopenhauer prescribes, can also nurture giant weeds of self, if the motive behind them is attainment of bliss for oneself. This is the path of the Pratyeka Buddhas, those highly spiritual Beings, who, on attaining perfection, turn their backs upon mankind, and enter into Nirvanic bliss.

The great White Lodge, which ceases not its care for mankind, and amongst whose Work the Theosophical movement is perhaps a minor activity, is of the Order of the Buddhas of Compassion, those highly spiritual Beings who have renounced their perfection in order to remain within the veils of maya to instruct and enlighten orphan humanity. From time to time They send forth Their messengers, and the world knows a Jesus, a Buddha, a Sankaracharya, or a Lao-tze.

Self-denial and resignation, the subduing of wishes and the conquering of the will, these same processes can be used as sources of power enabling us to help our fellow men. We could call them, in other words, humility, gentleness, generosity. Franz Hartmann, writing of Jacob Boehme says (THEOS. FORUM, Dec. 1949):

He earnestly went through the practical exercises necessary in the study of practical occultism, that is to say, he practised patience, piety, simplicity of thought and purpose, modesty, resignation of his self-will to divine law.

One of the Great Ones has said: Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are the meek; love your enemies; do good to them that hate you — but we of the world find that the meek are ignored, that the humble attain to no eminence, that the poor in spirit will not emulate Caesar,

Napoleon, nor Alexander the Great so-called. Yet, says Theosophy, only by humility can one enter into communion with Nature, and begin to love her humble creatures. Only in gentleness does the individuality shine through the mask of personality. Only by mastering the passions and desires can the soul of man begin to see through the veils of maya, through this sediment in the vials of life.

H. P. Blavatsky was careful to point out in *The Key to Theosophy* that indiscriminate self-sacrifice is wrong. Our own selves, our own personalities, have their rights, their part in the scheme of things, and only when this right clashes with the general weal of men, is it good and proper to sacrifice it. "The first step on the path is to live to benefit mankind."

We have seen, that in appraising Schopenhauer's philosophy of life, we could yet imagine flaws in his philosophy of living. Beyond the evil and strife of the world do indeed blossom flowers of perfection, but in seeking for these, there is no need to destroy the physical flower, petal by petal, leaf by leaf. Such a practice, by strange inversion, would emulate the materialist seeking to find the soul with scalpel and microscope. The misery which Schopenhauer adumbrates, and which undoubtedly exists in this benighted world of ours, is a shadow cast by its reality, joy, just as lust is the shadow of love. Whence came this shadow? It is cast by man, and only man himself can banish it.

Man has had his golden age, and will rise to see it again, for it is still there. This age of darkness, this kali-yuga, is but a veil hiding the eternal sun from our eyes. It is we ourselves who deny the sun; we ourselves who blind ourselves to its rays. "Never the spirit was not, the spirit shall cease to be never." There is no need to abjure the world in order to find reality. Reality is there in the faces of our fellow men, frown-hidden and glower-hidden though it may be. The meanest wretch, could we look at him aright, is a god, radiant and shining. Well might the myths and legends of the whole world scream at us this fact! The monster turns into a fairy princess when the true hero appears. She had been a fairy princess all the time, but we in our blindness took

her for a monster.

Whence came this blindness? It is a disease which has come upon man from one cause only — man's inhumanity.

Two forces are at work in curing man's spiritual blindness. One is the slow process of evolution, of lessons learned by karmic retribution throughout many incarnations on earth. The slowest evolving things on earth are the rocks, but even these are beginning to prod man forward. According to Theosophy the earth has passed its most material point, and is slowly beginning to etherealize. The grosser elements like uranium are beginning to break up, and to give out what we have come to know as atomic energy. There will come a time, says Theosophy, when even the less gross matter which makes up the flesh of the lower animals will no longer exist, and these animals will become extinct. Of course, we are talking in geologic time now. Later, much later, will come a time when there will be no suitable material on earth to make up our human flesh, as we know it. Those among men who at that far-distant date have not evolved their natures concurrently with the slow sweep of life, who have not become more spiritual, will also become "extinct." They will go into what Theosophy calls "pralaya," the interval between two planetary ages of life. They will have to start all over again in the next great cycle of life.

The second force at work among men is one in which we as theosophists can take part. It is a kindling of the Light in the hearts of men. We may only play an infinitesimal part in the process, but we can know that we are backed by the greatest minds and the greatest hearts that humanity has produced, and the effort is sustained by the gods — the most noble pursuit to which man can dedicate himself.

THEOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY — *John S. Hasbrouck*

"The very thing which is now called the Christian religion, really was known to the ancients, nor was it wanting at any time from the beginning of the human race up to the time Christ came in the flesh; from which time the true religion, which had previously existed, began to be called Christian." — St. Augustine, the great Church Father, has stated the matter well, for truly, Christianity is in the main stream of the Ancient Wisdom Religion.

Now what is Christianity? Today we are prone to identify Christianity with its organizational aspect. Nothing could be more confusing. Clamoring for the attention of the inquirer on the one hand are the churches of authority, the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox; and on the other hand is arrayed the maze of Protestantism, comprising literally hundreds of warring sects, each with its own interpretation of the meaning of Christianity.

This does not represent anything more than organized confusion, and an attempt at a discussion of the ins and outs of theology would not be profitable. Let us, therefore, look to the root of the religion, to its scriptures, and in particular, to those sayings which have been attributed to the Master Jesus. In so doing, let us try to find the outline of the Ancient Wisdom of the Ages.

Who was this Jesus? Surely he is the most publicized and least understood individual who has ever lived. In his name great philosophies have been given to the world, while ordinary men and women have found peace in their simple faith. Great cathedrals have been raised toward the skies, and plain country churches, too. Armies have marched in glorious Crusades, while other men died for their faith — on the cross, at the stake, and in the arena. In the name of Jesus, great paintings and sculptures have been wrought, great books written — while the Inquisition rained violence and terror upon the

face of the Western world. Men taught salvation by "Bell, Book and Candle," while others shouted their defiance, claiming that there was no salvation but by "the shed Blood of the Lamb." Who was this Jesus? What *did* he teach?

In our Theosophical literature it is said that while the Biblical story of the historical Jesus is not accurate, still there is some basis of fact. Theosophy says that a Syrian Initiate taught in Palestine about one hundred years before the time commonly alleged as that of Jesus. This Teacher is said to have been initiated into one of the Mystery Schools of the period. Stories have been circulated in occult literature which variously describe this place of training as in Egypt, in India, in Arabia, and in the deserts of Palestine. The place and the organization are not important. What is important is that this great person passed through veil after veil until there was no more to be learned. Then having achieved a realization of his inner divinity, he turned back, and taught others of the Path he had trodden.

Theosophy tells us that the fundamental basis of all that is, is one life, one spirit, one consciousness, that this one life is beyond the power of our finite minds to comprehend, but that all which is in manifestation about us, is a part of this One Life. Further, that manifestation is governed by one law. Nothing is outside of this law. Law reveals itself in the pattern of action and reaction. Since we are part of one life and governed by one law, it follows that we are all part of one Brotherhood.

Now if we are to prove that Christianity is in the main stream of the Ancient Wisdom Religion, it is necessary to show that Christianity throws light on the ideas just stated. Let us turn to the scriptures for our answer. In *The Gospel According to John* we read, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth." (*John* iv, 24) "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (*John* i, 3, 4)

In Paul's *Letter to the Ephesians* it is written: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (iv, 6) Still further

in *Jeremiah* we read: "Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off? . . . Do not I fill heaven and earth?" (xxiii, 23-4) And in *Psalms*, "If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand hold me." (cxxxix, 8-10) We can see then that "God is Spirit," "God is Love" and "God is Light."

These passages from the Bible are dealing with a universal presence, that which has no beginning and no end, that which presided at the birth of man, at his awakening from sleep, that which guided and upheld man on his long pilgrimage through manifested life. But this is not all. Not only is the Universal Life above us, below us, on every side, but it is also within us. In 1 *Corinthians*, iii, 16, we find this statement, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

The great message of Jesus is that of the Kingdom of Heaven. Over and over in the New Testament we find references to the fact that we have within us a spark of the one life. Jesus commanded of his disciples, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." (*Matthew*, v, 48) But Jesus did not leave the matter there. He realized full well the spiritual benefit which results from a realization of the inner divinity — so in the manner of the Ten Commandments of Moses and the Eightfold Path of Buddha, he lists the eight Beatitudes:

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness" sake:

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. — *Matthew*, v, 3-10

We have had these passages so imbedded in our minds that to us they seem rather insipid from too much repetition. But in essence, they present the Rule of Life: Take hold of the problem which is before you; recognize your perfect oneness with all that is; and conquer the difficulty as you ascend on the Ladder of Life.

Much more could be said about God and the Father which represent in the Bible the principle of Universal Life, but perhaps we should now try to find instances where the one Law of the Ancient Wisdom is presented in Christianity.

In the Sermon on the Mount, which is the epitome of Jesus' teaching, we find the following passage:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law . . . I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. — *Matthew*, v, 17, 18

In other words, Jesus understood that a law is a law, that there could be no exceptions made through vicarious experience, as has become the teaching of the religion which bears his name. For Jesus this universe was a thing of beauty because of the supreme Law which governs its expression. He was constantly drawing analogies from the facts of Nature about him: a sparrow which could not drop to earth outside of the Law, lilies gently waving in a field which were beautifully clothed in fulfillment of the Law; men who could not disguise themselves as sheep, because inwardly they were raging wolves. Yes, Jesus strongly believed in the power of the Universal Law.

Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. — *Matthew*, vii, 1

Jesus is stressing the inevitability of the law of action and reaction. One thing he was most anxious to put across to those who followed him was

the principle of spiritual dissipation which is an aspect of the Law.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. — *Matthew*, vi, 5, 6

In other words, he gave strong warning that man's moral energies would be dissipated and have no effect if they were used for material things and the world of men. But that if the moral force were expended for the spiritual principle itself, it would carry great force, and would bring about definite results in the world of manifestation.

Companion with the great idea of justice, we have that of reïmbodiment. Jesus considered this law so much a part of Nature that he did not feel required to lay great stress upon it. The people of that time accepted the idea more than now. Still, he did touch upon it when in speaking of John the Baptist, he said that for those who would accept it, John was a reincarnation of the Prophet Elijah. Again he says,

But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. — *Matthew* xxii, 31, 32

In *The Gospel of John* we read:

Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. — xiv, 1-4

Jesus is saying here that the divine spark within us leads us on a

spiritual pilgrimage through many manifestations until we arrive at the point of self-conscious union with our Christ principle. Those who formulated the Jesus Christ religion gave strong hints throughout of the initiatory path which was available to all in the pattern of the life of Christ. The injunction to take up your cross was an open invitation to enter into the mysteries and to strive for spiritual advancement.

Thus far an attempt has been made to show that the religion of Christianity contains the teaching of the One Life and of the One Law. It now needs to be shown that the idea of One Brotherhood is the great theme of this religion. Gradually during the past two thousand years, this principle has been permeating the thought life of our western humanity. Slowly, to be sure, but all sound growth is accomplished by imperceptible degrees. Over the centuries have come such statements as,

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. . . . For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? — *Matthew*, v, 43-46

And again he said,

This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. — *John xv*, 12, 13

Christianity is a thing of great beauty. There is a mystic quality in the sacraments — the initial consecration of your life to a spiritual ideal — later, confirming your dedication to that principle; then throughout life, periodically attempting to achieve a union with the spiritual energy dormant within, through communion with the Christ dwelling ever closer than our hearts. In spite of its inherent greatness, in our

day, Christianity has in large measure lost its self-respect — it is not altogether sure that what it teaches has any basis of fact. This seems a shocking pity. There is no more beautiful way of life set forth in the world than the Christian. The pathway of true discipleship is marked out in bold lines. If the average nominal church-goer could but realize the great moral force which is behind the real Christianity, what a revolution we would see in our world.

Theosophy has a wonderful message to give to Christianity. As has been set forth so plainly in our literature, this body of teachings has always existed in every religion from the beginning of time and is the common property of all mankind. Christianity should be proud of its heritage. Christians should be made to realize that their religion points to the pathway of initiation, to the road leading within, on the upward arc of spiritual evolution leading ever closer and closer to a glorious union with the Christ principle within.

The Theosophical Forum

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL (1) — *Clifton Meek*

I would like to pay tribute, in my own small way, to the man who first taught me the importance of thinking for myself. It was more than 30 years ago that I first picked up a volume of his works in a San Francisco book store, and I was immediately impressed with the philosophical trend of his clear thinking and excellent command of English. Like many others brought up in an orthodox religious faith, I had been led to believe that this man was very irreligious, and that his chief aim had been to destroy everything of spiritual value that men held sacred. I was pleasantly surprised to learn first hand that he stood for many things which I had always felt religion should stand for, but all too often does not, particularly intellectual honesty and a loyal adherence to the dictates of conscience without which any religion becomes a mere form of external observances, blind faith, and a collection of prejudices from which the soul and spirit have fled.

While I have never considered that his philosophy of life was complete, nor did he claim it to be, I believe, it was sound as far as it went and was a step in the right direction, and one which opened up new avenues of investigation and search, and hence, a necessary step. It is frequently necessary to do a little unlearning before an advancement can be made. With this preamble let us turn to the man.

One hundred and seventeen years ago, August 11, 1833, Robert Green Ingersoll was born in Dresden, Yates Co., New York, the son of a Congregational clergyman. He had a distinguished career in many fields; as a lawyer, soldier, author, diplomat, and statesman, but he won his greatest renown as an orator, probably the most distinguished the western hemisphere has ever produced, and his ideas on religious and intellectual freedom, expressed with originality of thought and a fluent command of language, probably influenced the trend of mass thinking more than did any other single individual of his day.

Although he has been dead more than 40 years, there are still many people, particularly those who have never read his works, who have a totally wrong impression of the man and his ideas regarding religion philosophy and morality, due to the fact that they accept hearsay rather than the truth which is available to anyone who will read his works. Like all others who have dared to challenge the popular beliefs of any day and age, he has been misrepresented and maligned and things which he never said have been charged against him. It is a common practice of small souls, that when an honest argument cannot be answered, to start a campaign of misrepresentation. This was certainly true in the case of Ingersoll, and has continued for many years, long after his death. Simple justice and common decency among men demand that what he said, and what he did not say, be better understood.

Contrary to popular misconceptions, Ingersoll never denied the existence of God. What he did deny, just as many liberal minded people with religious inclinations today, deny, was the existence of such a God as described in the Old Testament. On this subject he stated as follows:

Let me say once for all, that when I speak of God I mean the being described by Moses the Jehovah of the Jews. There may be for aught I know, somewhere in the unknown shoreless vast, some Being whose dreams are constellations, and within whose thought the infinite exists. About this Being, if such an one exists, I have nothing to say.

Yet in view of this frank and clear-cut statement made many years ago and published in the authorized edition of his works, the following is found in the *Universal Encyclopedia*, Vol. 6, page 252:

Col Ingersoll's notoriety has been made by his public lectures denying the existence of a God.

The writer and publishers of such gross misrepresentation might well have taken a lesson in morality and honesty from the victim of their bias and prejudice. Regarding truth Col. Ingersoll said:

To love the truth is mental virtue — intellectual purity. This is true manhood . . .

A fact will fit every other fact in the universe, because it is the product of all other facts. A lie will fit nothing except another he made for the express purpose of fitting it.

Ingersoll wrote an intellectual declaration of independence for many who came within the sound of his voice or who have later read his lectures. His foremost plea was for intellectual honesty.

Standing in the presence of the Unknown, all have the same right to think, and all are equally interested in the great question of origin and destiny . . .

No subject can be too sacred to be understood. Each person should be allowed to reach his own conclusions and to speak his honest thought.

Regarding education he said:

Nothing should be taught in any school that the teacher does not know. Beliefs, superstitions, theories, should not be treated like demonstrated facts. The child should be taught to investigate, to understand, and, if possible, to know.

The charge has often been made by his critics that he sought to take away the solace of religion while giving nothing in return. The most cursory reading of his works by any fair minded person will reveal that such was not the case. While he was the avowed foe of blind, unreasoning superstitions of the past, I am convinced his only aim was to banish fear and mental servitude from the minds of his fellow men, and I have always considered that he was a true friend of real religion, if by that term is meant the highest aspirations of the human heart and mind. The moral tone of his philosophy was a plea for intellectual honesty, justice, truth, love, kindness and compassion.

The higher we become in the scale of being, the grander, the nobler, the tenderer you will become. Kindness is always an

evidence of greatness. Malice is the property of small souls. Whoever allows the feeling of brotherhood to die in his heart becomes a wild beast. You know it and so do I

The consequences of a bad action cannot be avoided, they are the invisible police, the unseen avengers, that accept no gifts, that hear no prayers, that no cunning can deceive.

He reiterated the essence of all religion when he said: "Every man should be true to himself — true to the inward light." Nearly 2,000 years ago a Great Teacher of men said virtually the same thing when he stated: "The Father and the kingdom of heaven are within." Referring to this same teacher Ingersoll stated that for him he "had only tears of admiration and respect." Thus it will be seen by any impartial observer that Ingersoll did not attack religion per se, as has often been charged. What he did attack was modern Phariseism, with its theological errors and dead-letter observances which have always killed the spirit of real religion. It was Henry Ward Beecher who said: "A Pharisee is one who worships instruments. Whoever believes that churches, or books, or institutions, or customs, are more valuable than men is a Pharisee."

The following paragraphs are chosen from several of Ingersoll's lectures:

The truth, plainly told, naturally commends itself to the intelligence. Every fact is a genuine link in the infinite chain, and will agree perfectly with every other fact. A fact asks to be inspected, asks to be understood. It needs no oath, no ceremony, no supernatural aid. It is independent of all the gods.

Truth is neither young nor old, it is neither ancient nor modern, but it is the same for all times and places and should be sought for with ceaseless activity, eagerly acknowledged, and loved more than life, and abandoned — never.

Ingersoll never denied the immortality of the soul. He expressed his views on that subject in what I consider one of the most beautiful

passages of any language when he said: "In the night of death hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing."

I believe that every man who wants to learn to think for himself; to exercise the divine prerogative of searching out his own intellectual and spiritual pathways of thought should read the works of Ingersoll. I do not mean that he should necessarily agree with everything that Ingersoll said, for to follow anyone or any school of thought blindly is the very thing which should be avoided, and would be contrary to Ingersoll's philosophy. The burden of his message was to teach men to think for themselves.

Each man, in the laboratory of his own mind, and for himself alone, should test the so-called facts — the theories of all the world. Truth, in accordance with his reason, should be his guide and master.

Only in that way can we really grow inwardly — intellectually and spiritually.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Courtesy *The Norwalk Hour*, Norwalk, Connecticut. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

EINSTEIN — THE MAN — *Raymond Rugland*

Is it strange that the name Einstein be heard wherever men of good will and serious thought gather for discussion? Is it strange that Einstein has become a household word among those who have not the slightest inkling of the concept of Relativity or the Unified Field Theory, and still less of mathematics? He is first of all a man, entitled to his complete identity. We see a shadow of that identity in his portrait — a kind of humor which sees in human existence a brief role in a divine comedy; a kind of sadness welling from a heart bound to those who yet know war and oppression. We see no age in the eyes, well-springs of inner enthusiasm, revealing that urge toward a grander Purpose he "feels." Whatever he has found good in life he has given wholeheartedly to those about him. In a world of struggle he has stood fast as a humanitarian. He assumed the affirmative for Science at a time when its methods and purposes are in process of regeneration.

In this study of Einstein and his works, we have selected Alan Harris' translation of *Mein Weltbild*, now titled *The World As I See It*. (1) A non-technical abridgment, this collection of letters, addresses and essays, from the years 1922-1933, is successful in revealing his many-sided personality. As a humanitarian he speaks simply and forcibly on education, life and its meaning, pacifism, liberty, and the cause of Jewry. These views take on meaning even with the briefest glimpse of his formative years.

Albert Einstein entered school in Munich at the age of six. Sensitive and shy, his childhood was an extreme trial. He gained no sympathy from his Catholic schoolmates, the harsh discipline of school, nor from teachers who could not arouse his aptitude for languages, history, or other required subjects of primary education. It was geometry that captured his enthusiasm. By the age of fourteen he was a better geometrician than his instructors. Moving with his family to Milan, and freed of many handicaps, young Einstein entered upon a period of hard

study. Examinations successfully passed, he gained admission to the Academy of Zurich where his progress was outstanding in the fields of philosophy, science, and mathematics. He worked for an assistant professorship at Zurich, but promises made to him were broken. Always practical, Einstein accepted a position as Patent Examiner at Berne. Though he served his appointment with diligence, his leisure was given to further speculation in physics and mathematics. In 1905 he published his first monogram, *Annalen der Physik*. Zurich was ready to listen this time and appointed him lecturer at the university; soon after — professor. He reached his later eminence with the Prussian Academy of Sciences and as Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Theoretical Physics. But these were trying times also. A pacifist, an exponent of world-disarmament, and a supporter of the cause of Jewry, he found peace of mind difficult in his native land. By 1933, the bright star among scientists, the principles of humanity for which he stood compelled him to be an exile. Among countries offering him refuge was the United States. As professor of theoretical physics and mathematics at Princeton University, he found a relative peace.

We ask of Albert Einstein whose mind has reached to heights beyond our ken, whose formulations can only be followed by able and trained scientists — what have you for the "little man"? He answers in typical direct simplicity, ". . . the man who regards his own life and that of his fellow-creatures as meaningless is not merely unfortunate but almost disqualified for life." And we ask again, To what end does life assume meaning? "Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he sometimes thinks he feels it. But from the point of view of daily life, without going deeper, we exist for our fellow-men . . ." When Einstein himself goes "deeper," he concludes that "the fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science." But we ask — Is not the greatest science and the truest art that which directs one to inner growth and mastery of life itself? The professor's own humility is confirmation. He has his "inner chamber" which "never belonged to my country, my home, my friends, or even my immediate

family," and treats with contempt the pursuit of possession and luxury. Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are the ideals that have beckoned him. Einstein admits his life would have been empty without "the eternally unattainable in the field of art and scientific research." He continues in the same mystical vein:

A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, of the manifestations of the profoundest reason and most radiant beauty, which are only accessible to our reason in their most elementary forms — it is this knowledge and this emotion that constitute the truly religious attitude, in this sense, and in this sense alone, I am a deeply religious man. — p. 5

Religion, it appears to Einstein, undergoes three stages of development: religion of fear, moral religion, and what he calls "the cosmic religious feeling." This last, he feels, is apart from dogma, from church, from theology. It knows no anthropomorphic deity, or God with human attributes. United in a cosmic religious bond, the great Teachers of the past were closely akin.

While marveling at the "eternity of life," while himself propelled toward the "unknown," while giving to the world a "fourth" dimension, and recognizing loftier intelligences behind the processes of Nature, Einstein has failed nevertheless to see that dimension, that extension, which follows the chord of consciousness in Man to the Universe. Within is the immortal spark and undying Self, inseparable from the undying and eternal Scheme of Life. It is perhaps true, as Einstein indicates, that it is the egoists and fearful who want *life-after-DEATH*. Is it because they fear the passing of that portal they call "death," which through centuries of wrong teaching, challenges the very instincts of our soul? What can be more logical than *Life-after-LIFE* right here on earth, till our thirsting souls, till our love of justice, knows satisfaction and the lessons are learned? Will the seeds man sows in this life, have only a partial or no reaping? Will man thus be cheated by "death" from reaping the effects of the causes he has sown?

It is Einstein himself who crowns our argument, speaking for science: "

.. the scientist is possessed by the sense of universal causation. The future, to him, is every whit as necessary and determined as the past." To know a man can never be complete until we know his *potentiality*. And is that potentiality resident in the physical atoms of his body alone? Man's value is in direct ratio to his *inner* potential, the potential of the Self within. In this sense do we accept Einstein's definition: "The true value of a human being is determined primarily by the measure and the sense in which he attained to liberation from the self." And we deduce from all the foregoing, that this is accomplished by an attaining to the "cosmic religious feeling" which is but a feeble adumbration of man's cosmic destiny.

Einstein notes, as his eyes survey the world, that the greatest gifts of civilization, the material, the spiritual and moral, have stemmed from certain individuals, the Saviors and geniuses of humanity. If we stop at this point, we become guilty of the sheerest human egoism, which assumes there are no intelligences to fill the gap between the "best" of men and "cosmic mind," that human destiny is unique in its isolation and self-determination, and that it is only "good fortune" that has endowed us with saviors and geniuses.

The brotherhood of mankind, if unrealized, is yet a reality not to be escaped. If human justice is erring, it does not mean that a higher form of justice, operating among all beings — especially appropriate here, among men, nations of men — must also err. Men will never generate moral strength while morals, ethics, and philosophy *remain speculative*. Further education along this line is worthless. When it is conceded that ethics and justice are as fully a part of the universe as a granite mountain; that true progress is inseparable from the concept of the Unity of all Life, then will the dawn of a Golden Age come forth.

* * *

Einstein's breach with the German academies is outlined in a series of letters in Part III.

A powerful exponent for the cause of Jewry and the reconstruction of

Palestine, his hope and ideal for the Jewish people is simply and wholeheartedly expressed.

If Einstein "hates" anything, it is the institution of War. A strong advocate of disarmament and pacifism, he has labored many years to achieve this end. Is it a true "pacifism" that encourages the role of the conscientious objector? It is as conducive to peace as a mutiny on shipboard, but with this difference. On a ship the captain is the law-giver. In most modern states, the power to make law is delegated from the people — they are the watch-dogs of their own civil liberties if they will assume that responsibility. Were 50,000 men, according to Einstein, to refuse to serve in the army at time of crisis, the machines of war would not be able to function. But should not the pacifist — if he really be one, positive and sincere — do as thousands of young men are doing, set themselves as the ideal, and work within the limits of their own respective national Constitutions. By positively working *for* Brotherhood among men, those of vision will rally and see to it that their own national houses are set in order *before* war can strike.

Einstein himself glances back on *The World As I See It*. With an honest man, inner change is as inevitable as the years that lay bare the soul.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *The World As I See It*, by Albert Einstein. Translated by Alan Harris. Philosophical Library, New York. New Abridged Edition. 112 pp. \$2.75. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF H. P. BLAVATSKY — *William Q. Judge*

The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones. The finely drawn lines of karma, however, have a way of weaving justice in the pattern of circumstance.

Such was the case in 1892 when the *New York Sun* published the following editorial in the issue of September 26th:

We print on another page an article in which Mr. William Q. Judge deals with the romantic and extraordinary career of the late Madame Helena P. Blavatsky, the Theosophist. We take occasion to observe that on July 20, 1890, we were misled into admitting to the *Sun's* columns an article by Dr. E. F. Coues of Washington, in which allegations were made against Madame Blavatsky's character, and also against her followers, which appear to have been without solid foundation. Mr. Judge's article disposes of all questions relating to Madame Blavatsky as presented by Dr. Coues, and we desire to say that his allegations respecting the Theosophical Society and Mr. Judge personally are not sustained by evidence, and should not have been printed.

The article by Mr. Judge follows:

A woman who, for one reason or another, has kept the world — first her little child world and afterward two hemispheres — talking of her, disputing about her, defending or assailing her character and motives, joining her enterprise or opposing it might and main, and in her death being as much telegraphed about between two continents as an emperor, must have been a remarkable person. Such was Mme. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, born under the power of the holy Tzar, in the family of the Hahns, descended on one side from the famous crusader, Count Rottenstern, who added Hahn, a cock, to his name because that bird saved his life from a wily Saracen who had come into his tent to murder him.

Hardly any circumstance or epoch in Mme. Blavatsky's career was prosaic. She chose to be born into this life at Ekaterinoslaw Russia, in the year 1831, when coffins and desolation were everywhere from the plague of cholera. The child was so delicate that the family decided upon immediate baptism under the rites of the Greek Catholic Church. This was in itself not common, but the ceremony was — under the luck that ever was with Helena — more remarkable and startling still. At this ceremony all the relatives are present and stand holding lighted candles. As one was absent, a young child, aunt of the infant Helena, was made proxy for the absentee, and given a candle like the rest. Tired out by the effort, this young proxy sank down to the floor unnoticed by the others, and, just as the sponsors were renouncing the evil one on the babe's behalf, by three times spitting on the floor, the sitting witness with her candle accidentally set fire to the robes of the officiating priest, and instantly there was a small conflagration, in which many of those present were seriously burned. Thus amid the scourge of death in the land was Mme. Blavatsky ushered into our world, and in the flames baptized by the priests of a Church whose fallacious dogmas she did much in her life to expose.

She was connected with the rulers of Russia. Speaking in 1881, her uncle, Gen. Fadeef, joint Councillor of State of Russia, said that, as daughter of Col. Peter Hahn, she was grand-daughter of Gen. Alexis Hahn von Rottenstern Hahn of old Mecklenburg stock, settled in Russia, and on her mother's side, daughter of Helene Fadeef and granddaughter of Princess Helena Dolgorouky. Her maternal ancestors were of the oldest families in Russia and direct descendants of the Prince or Grand Duke Rurik, the first ruler of Russia. Several ladies of the family belonged to the imperial house, becoming Czarinas by marriage. One of them, a Dolgorouky, married the grandfather of Peter the Great, and another was betrothed to Czar Peter II. Through these connections it naturally resulted that Mme. Blavatsky was acquainted personally with many noble Russians. In Paris I met three princes of Russia and one well-known General, who told of her youth and the wonderful things related about her then; and in Germany I met the

Prince Emil de Wittgenstein of one of the many Russo-German families, and himself cousin to the Empress of Russia, and aide-de-camp to the Czar, who told me he was an old family friend of hers, who heard much about her in early years, but, to his regret, had never had the fortune to see her again after a brief visit made with her father to his house. But he joined her famous Theosophical Society by correspondence, and wrote, after the war with Turkey, that he had been told in a letter from her that no hurt would come to him during the campaign, and such turned out to be the fact.

As a child she was the wonder of the neighborhood and the terror of the simpler serfs. Russia teems with superstitions and omens, and as Helena was born on the seventh month and between the 30th and 31st day, (1) she was supposed by the nurses and servants to have powers and virtues possessed by no one else. And these supposed powers made her the cynosure of all in her early youth. She was allowed liberties given none others, and as soon as she could understand she was given by her nurses the chief part in a mystic Russian ceremony performed about the house and grounds on the 30th of July with the object of propitiating the house demon. The education she got was fragmentary, and in itself so inadequate as to be one more cause among many for the belief of her friends in later life that she was endowed with abnormal psychic powers, or else in verity assisted by those unseen beings who she asserted were her helpers and who were men living on the earth, but possessed of developed senses that laughed at time and space. In girlhood she was bound by no restraint of conventionality, but rode any Cossack horse in a man's saddle, and later on spent a long time with her father with his regiment in the field, where, with her sister, she became the pet of the soldiers. In 1844, when fourteen, her father took her to London and Paris, where some progress was made in music, and before 1848 she returned home.

Her marriage in 1848 to Gen. Nicephore Blavatsky, the Governor of Erivan in the Caucasus, gave her the name of Blavatsky, borne till her death. This marriage, like all other events in her life, was full of pyrotechnics. Her abrupt style had led her female friends to say that

she could not make the old Blavatsky marry her, and out of sheer bravado she declared she could, and, sure enough, he did propose and was accepted. Then the awful fact obtruded itself on Helena's mind that this could not — in Russia — be undone. They were married, but the affair was signalized by Mme. Blavatsky's breaking a candlestick over his head and precipitately leaving the house, never to see him again. After her determination was evident, her father assisted her in a life of travel which began from that date, and not until 1858 did she return to Russia. Meanwhile her steps led her to America in 1851, to Canada, to New Orleans, to Mexico, off to India, and back again in 1853 to the United States. Then her relatives lost sight of her once more until 1858, when her coming back was like other events in her history. It was a wintry night, and a wedding party was on at the home in Russia. Guests had arrived, and suddenly, interrupting the meal, the bell rang violently, and there, unannounced, was Mme. Blavatsky at the door.

From this point the family and many friends testify, both by letter and by articles in the *Rebus*, a well-known journal in Russia, and in other papers, a constant series of marvels wholly unexplainable on the theory of jugglery was constantly occurring. They were of such a character that hundreds of friends from great distances were constantly visiting the house to see the wonderful Mme. Blavatsky. Many were incredulous, many believed it was magic, and others started charges of fraud. The superstitious Gooriel and Mingrelian nobility came in crowds and talked incessantly after, calling her a magician. They came to see the marvels others reported, to see her sitting quietly reading while tables and chairs moved of themselves and low raps in every direction seemed to reply to questions. Among many testified to was one done for her brother, who doubted her powers. A small chess table stood on the floor. Very light — a child could lift it and a man break it. One asked if Mme. Blavatsky could fasten it by will to the floor. She then said to examine it, and they found it loose. After that, and being some distance off, she said, "Try again." They then found that no power of theirs could stir it, and her brother, supposing from his great strength that this "trick" could easily be

exposed, embraced the little table and shook and pulled it without effect, except to make it groan and creak. So with wall and furniture rattling, objects moving, messages about distant happenings arriving by aerial post, the whole family and neighborhood were in a constant state of excitement. Mme. Blavatsky said herself that this was a period when she was letting her psychic forces play, and learning fully to understand and control them.

But the spirit of unrest came freshly again, and she started out once more to find, as she wrote to me, "the men and women whom I want to prepare for the work of a great philosophical and ethical movement that I expect to start in a later time." Going to Spezzia in a Greek vessel, the usual display of natural circumstances took place, and the boat was blown up by an explosion of gun-powder in the cargo. Only a few of those on board were saved, she among them. This led her to Cairo, in Egypt, where, in 1871, she started a society with the object of investigating spiritualism so as to expose its fallacies, if any, and to put its facts on a firm, scientific, and reasonable basis, if possible. But it only lasted fourteen days, and she wrote about it then: "It is a heap of ruins — majestic, but as suggestive as those of the Pharaohs" tombs."

It was, however, in the United States that she really began the work that has made her name well known in Europe, Asia, and America: made her notorious in the eyes of those who dislike all reformers, but great and famous for those who say her works have benefited them. Prior to 1875 she was again investigating the claims of spiritualism in this country, and wrote home then, analyzing it, declaring false its assertion that the dead were heard from, and showing that, on the other hand, the phenomena exhibited a great psycho-physiological change going on here, which, if allowed to go on in our present merely material civilization, would bring about great disaster, morally and physically.

Then in 1875, in New York, she started the Theosophical Society, aided by Col. H. S. Olcott and others, declaring its objects to be the making of a nucleus for a universal brotherhood, the study of ancient and other

religions and sciences, and the investigation of the psychical and recondite laws affecting man and nature. There certainly was no selfish object in this, nor any desire to raise money. She was in receipt of funds from sources in Russia and other places until they were cut off by reason of her becoming an American citizen, and also because her unremunerated labors for the society prevented her doing literary work on Russian magazines, where all her writings would be taken eagerly. As soon as the Theosophical Society was started she said to the writer that a book had to be written for its use. "Isis Unveiled" was then begun, and unremittingly she worked at it night and day until the moment when a publisher was secured for it.

Meanwhile crowds of visitors were constantly calling at her rooms in Irving place, later in Thirty-fourth street, and last in Forty-seventh street and Eighth avenue. The newspapers were full of her supposed powers or of laughter at the possibilities in man that she and her society asserted. A prominent New York daily wrote of her thus:

A woman of as remarkable characteristics as Cagliostro himself, and one who is every day as differently judged by different people as the renowned Count was in his day. By those who knew her slightly she is called a charlatan; better acquaintance made you think she was learned; and those who were intimate with her were either carried away with belief in her power or completely puzzled.

"Isis Unveiled" attracted wide attention, and all the New York papers reviewed it, each saying that it exhibited immense research. The strange part of this is, as I and many others can testify as eyewitnesses to the production of the book, that the writer had no library in which to make researches and possessed no notes of investigation or reading previously done. All was written straight out of hand. And yet it is full of references to books in the British Museum and other great libraries. Either, then, we have, as to that book, a woman who was capable of storing in her memory a mass of facts, dates, numbers, titles, and subjects such as no other human being ever was capable of, or her

claim to help from unseen beings is just.

In 1878, "Isis Unveiled" having been published, Mme. Blavatsky informed her friends that she must go to India and start there the same movement of the Theosophical Society. So in December of that year she and Col. Olcott and two more went out to India, stopping at London for a while. Arriving in Bombay, they found three or four Hindoos to meet them who had heard from afar of the matter. A place was hired in the native part of the town, and soon she and Col. Olcott started the *Theosophist*, a magazine that became at once well known there and was widely bought in the West.

There in Bombay and later in Adyar, Madras, Mme. Blavatsky worked day after day in all seasons, editing her magazine and carrying on an immense correspondence with people in every part of the world interested in Theosophy, and also daily disputing and discussing with learned Hindoos who constantly called. Phenomena occurred there also very often, and later the society for discovering nothing about the psychic world investigated these, and came to the conclusion that this woman of no fortune, who was never before publicly heard of in India, had managed, in some way they could not explain, to get up a vast conspiracy that ramified all over India, including men of all ranks, by means of which she was enabled to produce pretended phenomena. I give this conclusion as one adopted by many. For any one who knew her and who knows India, with its hundreds of different languages, none of which she knew, the conclusion is absurd. The Hindoos believed in her, said always that she could explain to them their own scriptures and philosophies where the Brahmins had lost or concealed the key, and that by her efforts and the work of the society founded through her, India's young men were being saved from the blank materialism which is the only religion the West can ever give a Hindoo.

In 1887 Mme. Blavatsky returned to England, and there started another theosophical magazine, called *Lucifer*, and immediately stirred up the movement in Europe. Day and night there, as in New York and India, she wrote and spoke, incessantly corresponding with people

everywhere, editing *Lucifer* and making more books for her beloved society, and never possessed of means, never getting from the world at large anything save abuse wholly undeserved. The "Key to Theosophy" was written in London, and also "The Secret Doctrine," which is the great textbook for Theosophists. "The Voice of the Silence" was written there too, and is meant for devotional Theosophists. Writing, writing, writing from morn till night was her fate here. Yet although scandalized and abused here as elsewhere, she made many devoted friends, for there never was anything half way in her history. Those who met her or heard of her were always either staunch friends or bitter enemies.

The "Secret Doctrine" led to the coming into the Society of Mrs. Annie Besant, and then Mme. Blavatsky began to say that her labors were coming to an end, for here was a woman who had the courage of the ancient reformers and who would help carry on the movement in England unflinchingly. The "Secret Doctrine" was sent to Mr. Stead of the *Pall Mall Gazette* to review, but none of his usual reviewers felt equal to it and he asked Mrs. Besant if she could review it. She accepted the task, reviewed, and then wanted an introduction to the writer. Soon after that she joined the society, first fully investigating Mme. Blavatsky's character, and threw in her entire forces with the Theosophists. Then a permanent London headquarters was started and still exists. And there Mme. Blavatsky passed away, with the knowledge that the society she had striven so hard for at any cost was at last an entity able to struggle for itself.

In her dying moment she showed that her life had been spent for an idea, with full consciousness that in the eyes of the world it was Utopian, but in her own necessary for the race. She implored her friends not to allow her then ending incarnation to become a failure by the failure of the movement started and carried on with so much of suffering. She never in all her life made money or asked for it. Venal writers and spiteful men and women have said she strove to get money from so-called dupes, but all her intimate friends know that over and over again she has refused money; that always she has had friends who

would give her all they had if she would take it, but she never took any nor asked it. On the other hand, her philosophy and her high ideals have caused others to try to help all those in need. Impelled by such incentive, one rich Theosophist gave her \$5,000 to found a working girl's club at Bow, in London, and one day, after Mrs. Besant had made the arrangements for the house and the rest, Mme. Blavatsky, although sick and old, went down there herself and opened the club in the name of the society.

The aim and object of her life were to strike off the shackles forged by priestcraft for the mind of man. She wished all men to know that they are God in fact, and that as men they must bear the burden of their own sins, for no one else can do it. Hence she brought forward to the West the old Eastern doctrines of Karma and reincarnation. Under the first, the law of justice, she said each must answer for himself, and under the second make answer on the earth where all his acts were done. She also desired that science should be brought back to the true ground where life and intelligence are admitted to be within and acting on and through every atom in the universe. Hence her object was to make religion scientific and science religious, so that the dogmatism of each might disappear.

Her life since 1875 was spent in the unremitting endeavor to draw within the Theosophical Society those who could work unselfishly to propagate an ethics and philosophy tending to realize the brotherhood of man by showing the real unity and essential non-separateness of every being. And her books were written with the declared object of furnishing the material for intellectual and scientific progress on those lines. The theory of man's origin, powers and destiny brought forward by her, drawn from ancient Indian sources, places us upon a higher pedestal than that given by either religion or science, for it gives to each the possibility of developing the godlike powers within and of at last becoming a co-worker with nature.

As every one must die at last, we will not say her demise was a loss; but if she had not lived and done what she did, humanity would not have

had the impulse and the ideas toward the good which it was her mission to give and to proclaim. And there are to-day scores, nay, hundreds, of devout, earnest men and women intent on purifying their own lives and sweetening the lives of others, who trace their hopes and aspirations to the wisdom-religion revived in the West through her efforts, and who gratefully avow that their dearest possessions are the results of her toilsome and self-sacrificing life. If they, in turn, live aright and do good, they will be but illustrating the doctrine which she daily taught and hourly practised.

FOOTNOTE:

1. [That is, between the 30th and 31st of July, according to the Old Style Calendar used in Russia at that period, and which correspond to the 11th and 12th of August of our Calendar. — Eds.] ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE DWELLER OF THE THRESHOLD — *Murdhna Joti*

I have no desire for any other line of life; but by the time I had awakened to a knowledge of this life, I found myself involved by circumstances against which I do not rebel, but out of and through which, I am *determined* to work, neglecting no known duty to others.

— *Letter from a Friend*

The "Dweller of the Threshold" which stares even advanced occultists in the face and often threatens to overwhelm them, and the ordeals of Chelaship or of probation for Chelaship, differ from each other only in degree. It may not be unprofitable to analyze this Dweller and those ordeals. For our present purpose, it is enough to state, that they are of a triune nature and depend upon these three relations: (1) To our nationality; (2) to our family; and (3) to ourselves. And every one of these three relations is due to the assertion of a portion of our own past Karma, that is to say, to its effects.

Why should we be born in a particular nation and in a particular family? Because of the effect of a particular set of our Karmic attractions, which assert themselves in that manner. I mean that one set of our past Karmas exhaust themselves in throwing us in our present incarnation amidst a particular nation, another set introducing us into a particular family; and a third set serving to differentiate or individualize us from all the other members of the nation or of the family. One of our Eastern proverbs says: "the five children of a family differ like the five fingers of a hand." Unless we look at this difference from this standpoint, it must always appear to us a riddle, a problem too difficult to solve, a mystery, in short, why children born of one family, while they have some traits common to all, should still appear to differ vastly from one another. What applies to the family applies also to the nation, of which families are but units; and also to mankind as a whole, of whom nations are but families or units. The only way to

decide the great question of the age, whether the laws of nature are blind and material, or spiritual, intelligent and divine, is, it seems to me to point out in connection with every subject, the absolutely intelligent and divine manner in which these laws act, and how they force us to realize the economy of nature. This is the only way by which we could become spiritual; and I would, once for all, call upon my co-workers for the cause, to realize at every step of their study, as far as possible, the Divine Intelligence thus manifesting itself. Otherwise, how much soever you might believe or take it for granted, that the forces that govern the universe are spiritual, the belief, however deep rooted it might appear, would be of little use to you when you have to pass through the ordeals of Chelaship; and then you are sure to succumb and exclaim that the "Law is blind, unjust and cruel," especially when your selfishness and personality overwhelm you. When once a practical occultist and a learned philosopher met with, what seemed to him a "serious calamity and trial," in spite of himself he exclaimed to me frankly, "the law of Karma is surely blind, there is no God; what better proofs are needed?" So deep-rooted in human nature is infidelity and selfishness; no one need therefore to be sure of his own spiritual nature. No amount of lip learning will avail us in the hour of need. We have to study the law in all its aspects and assimilate to our highest consciousness — that which is called by Du Prel super sensuous consciousness — all the data which go to prove and convince us that the Power is spiritual. Look around and see whether any two persons are absolutely identical, even for a time. How intelligent must be the power that ever strives to keep each and every one of us totally different *on the whole*, while, if analyzed, we possess some traits in common.

In this connection I shall refer you to a passage in the article on "Chelas and Lay Chelas" (vide column 1, page 11 of "Supplement to the Theosophist" for July, 1883): "The Chela is not only called to face all latent evil propensities of his nature, but in addition, the whole volume of maleficent power accumulated by the community and nation to which he belongs . . . until the result is known." I shall only ask you to

apply the same principle to your family relations affecting your present incarnation. Thus seven things are found to secure us a victory, or a sad, inglorious defeat in the mighty struggle known as the Dweller of the threshold and the ordeals of Chelaship: — (1) The evil propensities common to ourselves and to our family; (2) those common to ourself and our nation; (3) those common to ourself and to mankind in general, or better known as the weakness of human nature, the fruits of Adam's first transgression; (4 to 6) the noble qualities common to us and to these three; (7) the peculiar way in which the 6 sets of our past Karmas choose or are allowed to influence us now, or their effects in producing in us the present tendency. The adept alone can take the seventh or last mentioned item completely into his own hands; and every mortal who would, as I have since recently begun to reiterate, direct all his energies to the highest plane possible for him ("Desire always to attain the unattainable" — says the author of "Light on the Path"),— such a mortal too could more or less do the same thing as the adept, in so far as he acts up to the rule. Every Chela, and also those who have a desire to be Chelas even, as they suppose secretly, have to do with the first six propensities or influences.

The world is inclined — at least in this Kali Yuga (the Dark Age) — always to begin at the wrong end of anything and direct all its faculties to the perception of effects and not of their causes. So the ideas of "renunciation," "asceticism" and of the "true feeling of universal Brotherhood" (or "mercy," as I call it, in accordance with South Indian Ethics), all of which are compatible with Gnanis, or the most exalted of Mahatmas, all these have come to be recognized by all our Theosophists, in general, as *the means* of progress for a beginner; while the real means of progress for us mortals — duties to our own families and to our own nation, or "kindness" and "patriotism" in the highest and ethical sense of the terms — are discarded. True, from the standpoint of a Jivanmukta, a true friend of humanity, these two Sadhanas are really "selfishness"; still, until we attain that exalted state, these two feelings should be made the ladders for raising ourselves, the means of not only getting ourselves rid of our family defects and

natural idiosyncrasies, but also of strengthening in ourselves the noble qualities of our families and of our nation. Until we reach that ideal state where the blessed soul has to make neither good nor bad Karma, we must strive to be constantly doing "good" Karma, in order that we might become Karma-less (nish Karmis).

Let it not be understood at all, that I mean by "family duties" and "national duties," false attachments to the family or to the nation. Family duty consists not in sensuality or pleasure-hunting, but in cultivating and in elevating the emotional nature (the fourth principle), of ourselves and of our family; in being equally "kind," not only to the members of the family, but also to all creatures, and in enjoying all such pleasures of the family life as are consistent with the acquirement of "wealth" (all the means necessary for the performance of Dharma or whole duty) according to the teachings of Valluvar, and in utilizing such pleasures and means for the performance of our duty to our nation. Patriotism consists similarly in theosophising our own nation, in not only getting ourselves rid of our national defects, as well as other members of the nation rid of the same, but also in strengthening in ourselves and in our nation as a whole, all the noble qualities which belong to our nation; in the enjoyment of the privileges (1) of the nation and using them as a means for the performance of *Dharma*. If family duties are taken due care of, our duties to the nation and to humanity would, to a great extent, take care of themselves unimpeded. Our national duties, if strictly performed, serve to purify our fifth lower principle of its dross and to establish and develop the better part of it, while the performance of our duty to Humanity or the *realization of universal tolerance and mercy*, purifies the lower (human) stuff in the fifth higher principle and makes it divine, thus enabling us to free ourselves gradually from the bonds of ignorance common to all human beings.

The above assertions, might, at first sight, seem rather bold and untheosophical. But I should venture to state my conviction that the whole edifice of Aryan religions and Aryan philosophy is based upon these principles, and that, on a careful consideration of the subject, the

great importance attached to household life (Grihasta ashrama) in that philosophy, would be fully borne out. To my mind no ascetics, no teachers of mankind, however eminent and full of the highest knowledge, are really such good and practical benefactors of humanity as Valluvar, of ancient times, who incarnated on earth for the express purpose, among others, of setting an example of an ideal household life to mortals who were prematurely and madly rushing against the rocks of renunciation, and of proving the possibility of leading such a life in any age however degenerated; or as Rama, who, even after having become an *avatar-purusha*, came down amidst mortals and led a household life.

It has often been contended that the world has not progressed on *the path* because gnanis, or Mahatmas, have dwindled in their number and greatness, and because it is Kali Yuga, or the dark age, now. Such arguments are due to our mistaking the effects for their causes. The only way to prepare the way for the advent of a favorable Yuga and for the increase of the number and greatness of Mahatmas, is to establish gradually the conditions for the leading of a true household life. I should unhesitatingly state, that that is the duty of earnest Theosophists and real philanthropists.

Is it not conceded by all philanthropists that unselfish labors for humanity can alone relieve us from the ocean of Samsara (rebirth), develop our highest potentialities and help us to alchemise our human weakness? Applying the same principle to unselfish discharge of our family and national duties, my position becomes tenable. A Mahatma has, it appears, declared that He has still "patriotism." But He has not said nor would say, that He has still family "attachments." This proves that He has got out of the defects of the family to which He belongs, while He is only striving to get out of national defects, some of which at any rate cling to Him. A Buddha would say, that He has "mercy," but no "patriotism."

The only effectual way to get out of family defects is to discharge all our duty to our family before leaving it, as ascetics, or before we die.

Blessed is he (2) who, in each of his incarnations, *then and there*, gets rid of the defects of the family into which he is ushered, thereby converts those defects in his parents, brothers and sisters, into noble qualities, thus strengthening and developing the good qualities both of himself and of his family, then strives to be born in the same family again and again, until he himself becomes a Buddha and assists his family to become a family fit for a Buddha to be born into, while he becomes the cream of all the noble qualities of the family without being tainted with its idiosyncrasies. A Dugpa (Black Magician) is frequently born in the same family and becomes the cream of all its evil propensities. Here again is the operation of the sublime and divinely intelligent law of universal and natural economy asserting itself. This is beautifully allegorized in the story of a Jivanmukta churning out of the ocean, the elixir of life and leaving the *visha* (the poison, all the evil propensities) for the Dugpas. This is one of the meanings of the allegory. Avoiding all personalities and questionable facts, I shall rely solely upon our Puranas and scriptures to prove that in every family where Adepts and Gnanis are (or choose to be) frequently born, often Dugpas are also born, as a matter of course. Krishna was the greatest of Gnanis and his uncle Kansa (for our present purpose) was a terrible Dugpa. The five Pandavas had a hundred wicked cousins, the Kauravas. Devas and the whole brood of wicked Asuras were born of the same parent. *Vibhishana* had for his brother, *Ravana*, the prince of Dugpas; so had the good Sugriva a brother like Vali. Prahlada had a monster for his father.

Take the case of one who has not done all his duty to his family, before he dies, or before he takes the vows of renunciation and becomes an ascetic. Such ascetics find themselves attracted by the family defects and selfishness of themselves (which hitherto perhaps lay more or less dormant and now become kindled and awakened by the selfishness of the relatives) and are disturbed in the performance of the duties of their new order or *Ashrama*, however unselfish their relatives might have been "unconsciously" or unintentionally. In spite of themselves these relatives arrest the progress of the ascetics in whom the family

defects become thus strengthened and developed. Such is the mysterious law of attraction. This man must be born again (1) either in the same family, with the family defects strengthened, both in himself and in his family; (2) or in another family. In the first case, the noble qualities of the family are not strengthened and therefore gradually disappear both from him and from the family. In the second case, he becomes an undutiful son, brother or husband, in his new family, firstly because of the natural law of repetition, which, with the terrible Karmic interest, strengthens the tendency in him to disregard duty; secondly because of the "counter family attractions" (or repulsions). Let not this unfortunate wanderer from the post of his family duty console himself with the foolish idea that this tendency would confine its havoc to family traits (good and evil) and to family duties alone. It would extend itself in all directions, wherever it can; it would make him disregard his duties to his nation and to himself (or in other words, to humanity). He would suddenly be surprised to find himself apathetic to his nation and to his highest nature, or to mankind. Such are the mazes and unknown ramifications of our evil or good propensities. Any evil or noble element of human nature converts itself, under "favorable" conditions into any other element however apparently remote. The conditions are there ready wherever the element is strong; where there is a will there is a way. Performance of family duties therefore develops patriotism and mercy.

I do not at all mean to say that the effects of Karma *always* assert themselves in the same shape or form; but they often might and do. Nor do I mean that the affinities above stated, blossom and ripen in the incarnation immediately succeeding; they might develop ten or even one hundred incarnations after; but in such a case, the Karma only accumulates enormous interest. The affinities might not develop *at the same time* in both him and her, who was once his wife; if they did at the same time, the account could be easily settled, — otherwise, woe to him and to her! Supposing that the attractions for him are developed in her, while the attachments for her are not developed in him at the same time; the result might be, that she pines and languishes for him,

sends her poisonous darts consciously or "unconsciously" against him; if these arrows do not kindle the corresponding nature in him, for the time being they frustrate his achievements in other directions.

Supposing by the time the affinities in him are developed, he becomes an initiate and she becomes, (let us suppose) his pupil (male or female). If at the time the pupil's affinities have become converted into devotion for the initiate, the latter becomes blinded in his philanthropic work and noble duties of a sage, and commits, through the infatuation of a love for the pupil, serious blunders, which result in a catastrophe to both of them and to humanity: and both the pupil and initiate fall down and have to mount their rugged pathway again with increased difficulties in their way.

Once, in an age and in a country, when and where household life continues to be ideal, one single wretch commits the first act of transgression by impetuously rushing into the circle of ascetics, or by dying before wholly discharging his duty to his family, the natural result is that both himself, his family, and his nation, become thereby seriously affected. The Akasa (3) becomes affected by the impulse to transgress in this direction; this impulse forces itself gradually (with accumulated interest, redoubled force) upon others; the ignoble example becomes a precedent; other cases of a like nature follow in quick succession. In course of time, (just when a sad descending cycle begins, such is the divine intelligence of the law that economizes energies and makes things fit it) the leading of the ideal family life becomes almost impossible and very rare; the whole community is thus ruined. Learned and great adepts retire to other spheres (where there then is an ascending cycle) and leave the nation to be swallowed by a cataclysm after ages of degradation and vice.

Let us now reverse this case, and suppose that in the most degenerate nation, in the darkest of cycles, one philanthropist becomes unselfish and intelligent enough to set a noble and intelligent example by fulfilling all family duties; then, as naturally as in the preceding case, the precedent gradually gains acceptance; the way is paved for the advent of an ascending cycle; Gnanis bless the noble man and come

down from other unfavorable spheres, where descending cycles begin to dawn.

Now it may be easy to understand why Chelas and lay Chelas (who have not yet thrown off their family defects and thus become the cream of their family's good qualities) are told to be careful lest they become Dugpas (Black Magicians).

I will ask you to apply the same kinds of arguments to the necessity for performing (and the failure to perform) our duties to our nation and to mankind. You can see that the phenomena of heresy, downfall of religions, rise of new religions, the birth in Europe of a Max Muller, who expatiates upon the greatness of the Vedic philosophy, and of Bradlaughs and other infidel sons of Christian parents — all these are due to the fact (and also to other causes), that the individuals concerned had not in some one or other of their past incarnations, done their duty to the nations (or religions), to which they respectively belonged. A study of the times when and in the manner in which the traits of these men are brought into play should be profitable in several ways. Extending the analogy, it may be said that heartlessness, murder, cannibalism, etc., are due to failure to discharge, in past incarnations, one's duty to humanity (that is to one's self).

In conclusion it might be added that the most important element in the "Dweller of the Threshold," and in the ordeals of Chelaship, is family defects, which ought to be *first* "conquered"; then in order come national defects and the "diseases of the flesh" in general. Though all these three have to be got rid of simultaneously as far as possible, and all the three kinds of duties performed, still beginners should pay more attention to the first than to the second, and more to the second than to the third, and none of these neglected.

In those happy Aryan ages, when Dharma was known and performed fully, those men and women who did not marry, remained in the family for performing their family duties and led a strictly ascetical and Vedantic life as Brahmacharis and Kannikas (or virgins). Those alone married, who were in every way qualified for leading a grihastha

(household) life. Marriage was in those days a sacred and religious contract, and not at all a means of gratifying selfish desires and animal passions. These marriages were of two kinds: (1) Those who married for the express purpose of assisting each other (husband and wife) in their determination to lead a higher life, in fulfilling their family duties, in enjoying all pleasures enjoined for such a life and thereby acquiring the means for attaining the qualifications for higher ashrama of renunciation (Sannyasa), and, above all, for giving the world the benefit of children, who would become gnanis and work for humanity. Such a husband and wife might be regarded as not having in their previous incarnations been able enough to become ripe for Chelaship. (2) Those who had, in their past incarnations already fitted themselves completely for entering the sanctuary of Occultism and gnana marga (path of wisdom). One of them, the Pati (the master or "husband") was the Guru who had advanced far higher than his Patni (co-worker or pupil or "wife"). As soon as the alliance between them was made, these retired into the forest to lead the life of celibacy and practical Occultism. But, before so retiring, they had invariably promised to their parents and other members of their family to assist and elevate them even from a distance and offered to periodically adjust (4) the inner life of all the relatives. I quote the language generally used in making such promises: — "Whenever mother, father, sister and brothers, any of you think of me in your hour of need, wherever or whatever I may be, I solemnly promise to lend you a helping hand."

Needless to say, that such vows were conscientiously kept, and that those who were not really able to do so never made such promises nor retired from the side of their family, but chose to belong to the first class of married people. This second class of persons who thus retired into the forest and became hermits, were called Vanaprasthas. They always obtained the full consent (5) of their near relatives and renounced "pleasures" and material prosperity (money making, etc.).

The fourth highest order of life was complete renunciation (Sannyasis). These were the blessed few who had, then and there, in each incarnation, got out of family defects. Only those *were* admitted into

this order whom the defects of no family could affect. Long before their admission into this order, they had, by fulfilling family duties, successively, incarnation after incarnation gone far beyond the reach of family defects. Brahmacharis and Kannikas could, after they had discharged family duties, become Sannyasis. All except those belonging to the second order of life, were called upon and did take a vow to give up one or more of their dearest and strongest defects.

Such, my friends, were the Laws of Manu. If any of you could establish a community on a better foundation, I should be happy to give up my allegiance to the great Sage, Saviour and Legislator. As every Manu establishes the same Manava Dharma again and again, and as the Manus are higher than Buddha and other founders of religions, I should call upon you to pay all possible attention to this subject. Manu is higher, because he overshadows a Buddha.

I must request the readers, to study every word and the whole of this paper (if it deserves to be so called) and not tear it piece-meal or interpret passages and phrases in it, as they please. I must add, that by "family duties" I do not at all mean sacrificing your duty or conviction and Truth, to gratify the whims or selfish nature or sectarian views of any of your "relatives." But I use the expression "family duties" in a peculiar sense, namely "that course and *only that course* of action, speech and thoughts by which you can not only get rid of your family defects in this very incarnation, but also strengthen in yourself all the noble qualities of your family, and which will at the same time enable your relatives (parents, brothers, sisters, wife, children, etc.,) also to get rid of *the same* defects and strengthen in themselves *the same* good qualities — so that you might be born again and again in the same family." "Patriotism" is used in a similar manner; and the article "Elixir of Life" (see *Theosophist*) should be read in the light of this paper.

The question is asked, "Has the dweller of the threshold an objective form; upon what does its objective form depend; does it always appear to every one in the same form as it did to Glyndon in Bulwer's story?"

It is objective to those who have gone very far. It depends upon (1) a

certain thing I shall not here name; (2) the stage of development to which the chela or occultist has attained or is near attaining; (3) the mode of regarding elementals and the Dweller, peculiar to the chela or occultist, to his family and to his nation, or rather to the national and family legends or religion; (4) which form, more or less monstrous or incongruous, would be most frightful and overpowering to him at the critical period. Subject to the above four conditions, the Dweller assumes a form according to the manner in which the chela or occultist *has or has not fulfilled his threefold duties*, and according to the manner in which the sevenfold elements of the Dweller assert themselves upon him. The better he has fulfilled the threefold duties, the less does the Dweller affect him. Of course the form is not necessarily the same for every one.

Why did the Dweller appear to Glyndon's sister, who was not undergoing probation, and why in the same form?

Because she was sympathetic and sensitive enough. The principle involved in this case is the same as in obsession. The Dweller might either be but one elemental, or a group or several groups of elementals assuming one collective form. It is one elemental, when the crisis comes at the very commencement of the chela's or occultist's attempt to elevate his lower nature. This is the case when he has the least (Karmic) stamina for the "uphill path." The later on his path he is waylaid the more numerous are the elementals of which the Dweller is composed.

It need not be imagined that this appearance or influence confronts the chela only once until he reaches the first initiation, and an initiate only once during the interval between two initiations. It appears as often as the stock of his Karmic stamina falls below the minimum limit.

By Karmic stamina is meant the *phala* (effect or fruit) of past unselfish, good Karma that has become ripened. Though the occultist might have an immense quantity of past unselfish good Karma stored up, still, if during his crisis there be not a sufficient number of present unselfish good thoughts to ripen a sufficient portion of that quantity, he finds

himself destitute of the necessary stock of stamina. Few are they who have already laid up a good quantity of unselfish good Karma; and fewer still are they who have the requisite degree of unselfish and spiritual nature during the period of trial; and there are still fewer who would not rush for further Yoga development, without having all the requisite means.

When not qualified fully for it, we ought to and could go on developing ourselves in the ordinary way, and try to secure the necessary means by leading an unselfish life and setting an example to others, and this is the stage of nearly all ordinary Theosophists. They, in common with all their fellows, are influenced by a "Dweller," which is the effect upon them of their own, their family, and national defects; and although they may never, in this life, see objectively any such form, the influence is still there, and is commonly recognized as "bad inclinations and discouraging thoughts."

Seek then, to live the Higher life by beginning now to purify your thoughts by good deeds, and by right speech.

— *The Path*, July and August, 1886

FOOTNOTE:

1. I use this word "privilege" in its ethical sense; privileges are to the patriot what the "pleasures" are to the family life. ([return to text](#))
2. This is the man to be in the family and not of the family like the water on the lotus leaf, making only the good traits of the family the seat of his higher self. ([return to text](#))
3. The Ether, the Astral Light. [Ed.] ([return to text](#))
4. I use the word in the peculiar sense which I have already attached to it. ([return to text](#))
5. "Full consent" including the consent of all their various consciousnesses. If the Patni or Pati saw, and they ought to be able to see, that even in one of the consciousnesses of any of their near relatives there lurked a latent spark of hesitation to consent or of

unwillingness, then the pair unselfishly gave up their determination to become Vanaprasthas and remained with the family until the proper time came. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE PROMETHEAN MYTH — M. A. Duncan

Myth was the favorite and universal method of teaching in archaic times.

— *Isis Unveiled*, II, 493

Truth is that imperishable Fire which, like a sacrificial flame within the sanctuary of the temple, illumines man and differentiates him from the creatures of all other kingdoms. Inasmuch as man reveals a potential Divine Self merged in and obscured by a mortal and material envelope, the light from that fire of Truth within is inevitably dimmed, if not completely hidden by the dark and massive curtains of sense and matter. Today, a multitude of links, clues and evidence speak to him of his vast and glorious ancestry. Some see in such evidence a pretty but meaningless fabrication of "barbarian" imagination; others a confirmation by "primitive races" of certain cherished up-to-date dogmas; while the few revere and cherish these potent and suggestive clues of past glory, as the outer vesture of esoteric truths, which, known and understood, must unfold a drama of a god-born humanity, waning in spiritual power and vision, but gaining experience throughout the aeons of time.

What then is the veil through which the Seers and Masters of Compassion have sought to display before men's vision these forgotten records that are his rightful heritage? It is the *veil of myth*. Could we read aright the mythologies of all ages, we would have unrolled before our gaze the scroll of man's pedigree, the legend of a divine ancestry rising from the mystic deeps of immeasurable antiquity.

Classic mythology, therefore, is the mystic veil of Truth. To read it correctly is to evaluate its dim and shadowy figures at their proper worth; to sense in them the yet living and potent forms of fact whereof they are but the shadows; to *lift* at length the veil and seek face to face those realities whose presence these uncertain shadows now proclaim.

To seek to do these things is to undertake a great quest, and one involving the exercise of moral courage, since it is a quest calling for a revolutionizing of long crystallized modes of thought natural to man, of the nature of the universe, the scale of time in which the drama of evolution has been enacted, and of the vast arena whereon it has its setting.

The quest involves, first, a complete and unqualified acknowledgment of man's innate divinity and divine origin; second, a willingness to concede periods of growth and evolution for man and our earth infinitely exceeding in scope those we have been accustomed to hold; third, a readiness to conceive of phases of existence for man and the worlds he inhabits utterly differing from those we are now acquainted with; fourth, a realization that, inasmuch as man in the course of his long train of earth-lives has passed through many progressive phases in physical, mental, and spiritual structure until he at last reached his present gross material form, so too, our firm substantial universe has progressively materialized from a purely etheric consistency to its present solid state.

Beyond all this there are still two vital concepts absolutely essential to the proper comprehension of mythology: a) an appreciation of the existence of a sublime Intelligence moving, inspiring, controlling every slightest vestige of change or growth in our universe; and b) a realization of the existence of great and advanced Souls who, by long ages of unselfish effort towards self-purification and renunciation for the welfare of others, have fitted themselves to become the channels or instruments to aid in the carrying out of the plan of the great Artificer of the Universe.

Can we revolutionize our crystallized notions of the existing scheme of things, as measured by the criterion of this twentieth century civilization, so as to conceive of the existence in the past of other worlds growing up under other conditions and nourishing civilizations *grander* and far different than ours? If so, then there is hope we may extract something of life and meaning from classic mythology. Is such

an attainment worth the sacrifice?

We shall endeavor to present the Promethean myth, and after citing the story as it has come down to us from the bright dawn of Hellenic culture, we shall seek to lay bare the significance and truth of the myth by the light of interpretation given by that Promethean flame-bearer, H. P. Blavatsky; for she it was, who by her writings, rekindled in the materialistic thought of Europe the fires of spiritual intelligence. Perchance after a proper appreciation of the keys set forth in her works, Greek mythology will take on more real form, and the devout subscribers to the legends of old Hellas obtain more credit for insight and philosophical understanding of life and the universe. It is high time that some such justice were done the ancients when one volume of these old legends, designed for the use of youthful unformed and inquiring minds, opens with the words:

Wise men and scholars have spent their lives in trying to find out where these wonderful stories came from first, and different men have given different explanations. Of course no one believes the stories nowadays, nor has any one believed in them for hundreds of years. Yet, at one time, the foremost nations of the earth, the Greeks, and the Romans, not only believed the stories but worshiped the gods and made sacrifice to them. It is because the stories are so beautiful, and because so many painters, sculptors, and writers, both then and ever since, have used them for subjects, that today we are interested in them and must know about them if we are to understand what we read, and see, and hear.

A perusal of H. P. Blavatsky's works suggests that possibly something more than mere beauty has procured for these myths their immortality; hence, in place of treating them "briefly and literally," it may be very worth our while to examine the Promethean Myth at length and endeavor to evoke the spirit which inspired its origin and character.

Prometheus, the Light-Bringer, comes before us as a great-souled

brother of the Titan line rising out of the beginning of things in Hellenic thought, a giant lord of earth when man, as man, was not. Legend has it that the huge contest between gods and Titans had ended, leaving the gods masters of Olympus and the Titans relegated to the realms of Tartarus. Prometheus, their regent, mighty though deposed, looked upon those beings that should be men; beheld them endowed with all that was vouchsafed the animal world but lacking that which should render them superior to their fellow animals. Prometheus, the "Fore-seer," took upon himself to dare the wrath of Zeus himself that these lesser fellows upon earth should achieve a great destiny. Mounting the dawn-lit battlements of the gods, he seeks the gleaming chariot of the Sun. Here at the flaming source of universal light the recreant Titan kindles his own torch, bears it again to earth and gives to earth's superior creation the flame that is to make them men. Not heedlessly or blindly did Prometheus procure this boon to man, but with a full foreknowledge of the doom that must be his — to bow before the flaming anger of a "jealous" god; to suffer captive anguish in unworthy chains upon a lonely peak where ravening vultures should each day devour the flesh that with the night should be made whole again to furnish forth new anguish for the morrow. Such was the fate he gloriously incurred, and having met with it disdained to accept succor. His was the flaming hero spirit that should cry

I would not quit

This bleak ravine, these unrepentant pains. . . .

Pity the self-despising slaves of Heaven,

Not me, within whose mind sits peace serene.

— Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, Act I, Sc. i

Such was the legend of Prometheus and such his sublime significance to the Hellenes — a type of the compassionate spirit spurred by adamantine will to the endurance of utmost ill that those of lesser power may rise and live.

Titan! to whose immortal eyes

The sufferings of mortality,

Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe.

— Byron, *Prometheus*

Is it not possible that this legend is not wholly myth? Is it too gross a violation of the "established" canons of modern science to suppose some lurking vein of truth hid deep within the root of the matter to which that vagrant and deplorably fertile imagination (!) of old Hellas attached itself in the development or acceptance of this tale?

"How ridiculous!" says your matter-of-fact man in the street. "Who ever heard of 'giants' outside of fairy tales?" "And as for the 'chariot of the sun' — why, hasn't science measured, tested, analyzed and otherwise investigated the secrets of that source of light?"

Nevertheless, there *are* those who *have* heard of giants quite apart from fairy tales, and science may yet have occasion to do some hurry-up researching in order to keep its votaries posted as to the origin and doings of these same Brobdingnagian specimens. And as to this fatal term — "chariot of the sun" — there are suns and — "suns"; if a race of people possess that exalted and poetic vision which leads them to a lofty and artistic conception of the forces of nature, it surely does not therefore follow that all they say of these forces is false!

Indeed there is much of truth in this legend, and to come upon it we have to bear in mind H. P. Blavatsky's words to the effect that in these ancient myths gods and mortal heroes invariably are but personifications of "lands, islands, powers of nature, elements, nations, races and sub-races." In the legend of Prometheus, we are confronted with a record of one of the great cyclic steps in human evolution which took place far, far back in the beginning of the Fourth Race — the birth

of MIND in the heretofore senseless Third Race. As H. P. B. says, the Promethean myth

belongs to neither Hesiod nor Aeschylus; but, as Bunsen says, it "is older than the Hellenes themselves," for it belongs, in truth, to the dawn of human consciousness. The *Crucified* Titan is the personified symbol of the collective Logos, the "Host," and of the "Lords of Wisdom" or the HEAVENLY MAN, who incarnated in humanity. — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 413

What inspired Aeschylus to write his drama of *Prometheus Bound*, a work which has immortalized in the human mind that "mythical" hero as a sublime and selfless Titan offering up a mutilated sacrifice of his own soul and body on the altar of humanity's weal — cursed of Zeus and clawed of vultures? The simple fact that the poet and dramatist was an Initiate and had glimpsed the supernal glory of that mystic offering of salvation for which the Titan stands. Let us invest this fire-bringer with all of grandeur and celestial splendor that we may, since that which he represents transcends the power of mortal mind to comprehend. That which the most ardent and devout Christian claims in reverence and worship for his equally "mythical" Adam and Eve that trod the blessed precincts of Eden before the 'curse' — all that, this Prometheus is worthy of, since he is that Adam and Eve of humanity in personification, or, at least, one aspect of these.

Prometheus bringing fire to man symbolized that spiritual and psychological event in racial history when man's physical body "belonged to the earth and the monads remained on a higher plane altogether," as H. P. B. explains. At that period the evolutionary cycle was on a descending arc; physical and intellectual materialization becoming more and more pronounced; while those bright spirits — denizens of another sphere than ours, dwelling apart, unsorrowing and unsullied — looked down upon this mindless race of beings; saw them with unknowing instinct dishonor the creative power with which they had become endowed.

In their compassion, those lofty hierarchs of the upper worlds

voluntarily "fell." From the resplendent abode of "Apollo," from the "palace of the Lord of Light," they came netherward — luminously lovely, rainbow-robed, "sons of the fire mist" and like to dazzling angels "trailing clouds of glory" did they "come from God," which was their home, down to the dim and sunless house of wan mortality. This occurred, say the Theosophical teachings, at the beginning of the Fourth Race, when the earth was peopled by monsters, huge animals, gigantic creatures of human shape, and creatures neither to be called man nor beast, but with resemblances to each. Material evolution was creeping upward, from the dim and waning glories of the past the atmospheric universe had waxed nebulous; nebulosity had in its turn assembled itself and taken on mass and form; form through vast centuries of time had grown from vagueness into definitude, substance, and at last solidity.

While all this drama of materialization was weaving and working its evolutionary patterns on planetary spheres, spiritual and divine consciousness was seeking vehicles wherein to find imbodiment and make descent, planetary spirits were informing human principles with the power to manifest in dynasties of celestial beings. With the advance of intellect and matter, these airy denizens became ever more "of the earth earthy," until at the beginning of the Fourth Root Race the human principle, as before stated, was enwrapped with the solid physical casing with which we are today familiar — "*human*" because of the benign descent, the voluntary and self-sacrificing "fall" of the beneficent "sons of mind" who from the high heavens of spiritual existence brought down to earth the "Fire." That Fire from the gleaming chariot of Apollo they themselves *were* and by their entry into human bodies made of each human being a ray from the infinite sun. Because they fell man is today a potentially divine being, a celestial ray imprisoned in "coats of skin." These physical impedimenta it is his destiny to dominate, control and spiritually inform to the extent that they shall become the fit vehicle for the expression of the Real Lord — the Prometheus, fettered and feasted on by ravenous passion and desire within the outer casing of flesh.

H. P. Blavatsky points out most clearly in her *Secret Doctrine* that the "curse" so often referred to in relation to the birth of consciousness in man — the ability to know good from evil — lay not in the acquirement of that knowledge itself, which had to come sooner or later, nor yet in the acquirement of the creative faculty, the rightful heritage of the race, but in the disease and suffering engendered by a *misuse* of a power heretofore exercised blindly and instinctually. This is strikingly illustrated in the words from her works:

The divine Titan has then suffered in vain, and one feels inclined to regret his benefaction to mankind, and sigh for those days so graphically depicted by Aeschylus, in his "Prometheus Bound," when, at the close of the first Titanic age (the age that followed that of ethereal man, of the pious Kandu and Pramlocha) nascent, physical mankind, still mindless and (physiologically) senseless, is described as —

"Seeing, they saw in vain,
Hearing, they heard not, but like shapes in dreams,
Through the long time all things at random mixed."
— *Op cit*, II, 411

The effect of an acquirement of new and higher powers without the transmutation of existing taints and tendencies is elsewhere in the same work strikingly commented on and the resulting evils pointed out where the writer says:

Prometheus having endowed man, according to Plato's "Protagoras," with that "wisdom which ministers to physical well-being," but the lower aspect of *manas* of the animal (Kama) having remained unchanged, instead of "an untainted mind, Heaven's first gift" (Aeschylus), there was created the eternal vulture of the ever unsatisfied desire, of regret and despair coupled with "the dreamlike feebleness that fetters the blind race of mortals" (p 556), unto the day when Prometheus is released by his heaven-appointed deliverer, Herakles. — *Op cit*, II, 412-13

Many who have read and delighted in the Promethean legend must have been struck by the seeming conflict between Prometheus — the fallen Titan — and Zeus the ruler of the gods; taken literally, the dignity and rectitude of the Light-bringer would seem to suffer seriously in thus resisting the great ruler of gods and men. This discrepancy, so marked in Aeschylus' drama, is referred to and explained in *The Secret Doctrine* wherein the author says:

The translators of the drama wonder how Aeschylus could become guilty of such "discrepancy between the character of Zeus as portrayed in the 'Prometheus Bound' and that depicted in the remaining dramas" (*Mrs A. Swanwick*). This is just because Aeschylus, like Shakespeare, was and will ever remain the intellectual "Sphinx" of the ages. Between Zeus, the abstract deity of Grecian thought, and the Olympic Zeus, there was an abyss. The latter represented during the mysteries no higher a principle than the lower aspect of human physical intelligence — *Manas* wedded to *Kama*, Prometheus — its divine aspect merging into and aspiring to *Buddhi* — the divine Soul Zeus was the human soul and nothing more, whenever shown yielding to his lower passions — the *jealous* God, revengeful and cruel in its egotism or I-AM-NESS. Hence, Zeus is represented as a serpent — the intellectual tempter of man. — II, 419

It has already been pointed out that the heavenly achievement of Prometheus was a *conscious and voluntary* sacrifice, a willing martyrdom; as such this bringing of fire and *entering with it* into the prison cell of the flesh has both past and present significance. It symbolizes the deeply significant cyclic evolutionary achievement already spoken of, and it likewise has reference to that crucifying of the god within by the bodily desires and passions in their riotous carnival of each day's life here on earth. As H. P. Blavatsky says:

The gift of Prometheus thus became a CURSE —though *foreknown* and *foreseen* by the HOST personified in that personage, as his name well shows it is in this that rests, at one and the same

time, its sin and its redemption. For the Host that incarnated in a portion of humanity, though led to it by Karma or *Nemesis*, preferred free-will to passive slavery, intellectual self-conscious pain and even torture — "while myriad time shall flow" — to inane, imbecile, instinctual beatitude. Knowing such an incarnation was premature and not in the programme of nature, the heavenly host "Prometheus" still sacrificed itself to benefit thereby, at least, one portion of mankind. But while saving man from mental darkness, they inflicted upon him the tortures of the self-consciousness of his responsibility — the result of his free will — besides every ill to which mortal man and flesh are heir to. This torture Prometheus accepted for himself, since the Host became henceforward blended with the tabernacle prepared for them, which was still unachieved at that period of formation. . . . — *Op. cit.*, II, 420-1

This drama of the struggle of Prometheus with the Olympian tyrant and despot, sensual Zeus, one sees enacted daily within our actual mankind: the lower passions chain the higher aspirations to the rock of matter to generate in many a case the vulture of sorrow, pain and repentance. . . .

When man understands that "*Deus non fecit mortem*" (*Sap*, I, 13), but that man has created it himself, he will re-become the Prometheus before his Fall. — II, 422

Such are some of the Truths whose jewelled lights gleam through the translucent veil of an ancient, and *authentic* legend, which, like all true legends, is but a rehearsal of the deeds of the human soul.

ON THE FUTURE: A FEW REFLECTIONS — *William Q. Judge*

Although I am an American citizen, the place of my birth was in Ireland, and in what I am about to say I cannot be accused of Columbianmania, for no matter how long might be my life, I could never be an American. For that perhaps it is right, since it is compulsory, to wait for some distant incarnation.

Now, either H. P. B. was right or she was wrong in what she says in the *Secret Doctrine* about the future of America. If wrong, then all this may be dismissed as idle speculation. But, if right, then all thoughtful Theosophists must take heed, weigh well, mentally appropriate and always remember what are her words as well as the conclusions to which they lead.

In the first pages of the second volume she speaks of five great continents. *First*, the Imperishable Sacred Land (1); *second*, the Hyperborean, now part of it is in Northern Asia; *third*, Lemuria, sunk long ago, but leaving some remains, islands, the points of high mountain ranges; *fourth*, Atlantis, presumably in the Atlantic Ocean, now below the level of the water, but with perhaps Teneriffe and Atlas as reminders; and *fifth*, "was America."

From a survey of the book, digging in notes and culling from the text here and there, the conclusion is irresistible that, although the present America is not the actual Continent as *it is to be*, it is a portion of it; and certainly is now the nursery for the race that will in the future occupy the *sixth* Continent, which for the sixth Great Root-Race will emerge from the waters. Where? Perhaps when the present America has been split up by tremendous cataclysms, leaving here and there large pieces on its western side, it is in the Pacific Ocean that the great mass of the new one will come up from the long sleep below the sea. Rightly then will the great far western ocean have been named *Pacific*, for that Race will not be given to contest nor hear of wars or rumors of war, since it

will be too near the seventh, whose mission it must be to attain to the consummation, to seize and hold the Holy Grail.

Turn to page 444 and onward of the second volume. Read there that the Americans have become in only three hundred years a primary race *pro tern.*, in short, the germs of the sixth sub-race, to blossom in a few more centuries into the pioneers of that one which must succeed to the present European fifth sub-race in all its characteristics. Then after about 25,000 years, which you will note is meant for a great sidereal cycle of a little over that length of time, this new race will prepare for the seventh sub-race. Cataclysms will then fall upon you; lands and nations will be swept away, first of all being the European, including the British Isles — if not gone before — and then parts of both North and South America. And how puny, mongrel, indeed, will be the remains of the scientists of today, great masters of microbes now, but then to be looked upon as strange remains of the Nineteenth Century, when, as the people will tell each other then, so many, with Truth before them, laughed at it and stoned its apostles, dancing a fantastic dance meanwhile around the altar of invisible matter.

It seems as if some power, deliberately planning, had selected North and South America for the place where a new primary root-race should be begun. These two continents were evidently the seats of ancient races, and not the habitation of wild undeveloped men. The red man of the Northern one has all the appearance and beliefs of a once great race. He believes in one God and a Devachan of happy hunting after death. Some tribes have diagrams of how the world was formed and peopled, that strangely resemble the Hindu cosmogony, and their folklore bears deep marks of having come down from an older and better time. Following the course of exploration southwards, we find accumulating evidences all the way of a prior civilization now gone with the cyclic wave which brought it up. Central America is crowded with remains in stone and brick; and so on south, still we discover similar proofs. In course of time these continents became what might be called arable land, lying waiting, recuperating, until the European streams of men began to pour upon it. The Spanish overflowed South

America and settled California and Mexico; the English, French and Dutch took the North, and later all nations came, so that now in both continents nearly every race is mixed and still mixing. Chinese even have married women of European blood; Hindus are also here; the ancient Parsi race has its representatives; the Spanish mixed with the aborigines, and the slaveholders with the Africans. I doubt not but that some one from every race known to us has been here and has left, within the last two hundred years, some impression through mixture of blood.

But the last remnants of the fifth Continent, America, will not disappear until the new race has been some time born. Then a new Dwelling, the sixth Continent, will have appeared over the waters to receive the youth who will tower above us as we do above the pigmies of Africa. But no America as we now know it will exist. Yet these men must be the descendants of the race that is now rising here. Otherwise our philosophy is all wrong. So then, in America now is forming the new sub-race, and in this land was founded the present Theosophical Society: two matters of great importance. It was to the United States, observe, that the messenger of the Masters came, although Europe was just as accessible for the enterprise set on foot. Later, this messenger went to India and then to Europe, settling down in the British Isles. All of this is of importance in our reflections. For why in America at first does she begin the movement, and why end her part of it in England? One might be led to ask why was not an effort made at all costs to give the last impulse outwardly in the land of promise where she began the work?

Do not imagine for one moment, O ye English brothers of mine, that London was selected for this because the beauties of your island called her, or for that she had decided at the finish that after all a mistake had been made in not going there first. It was all out of stern necessity, with a wisdom derived from many older heads, having in view the cycles as they sweep resistlessly forward. The point where the great energy is started, the centre of force, is the more important, and not the place at which it is ended. And this remains true, no matter how essential the

place of ending may be in the scheme. What, do you suppose India is not as important? And would not that land have offered seemingly a better spot than all for the beginning of the *magnum opus*? Adepts do not make mistakes like that.

America's discovery is ascribed to Christopher Columbus. Although it is doubted, yet no one doubts that the Spanish people did the most at first in peopling it, meanwhile working off some old and making some new Karma, by killing many of the aborigines. Thus it is that doomed people rush on to their doom, even as the troops of insects, animals and men were seen by Arjuna to rush into Krishna's flaming mouths. But later came the sturdy stock from England, who, in the greatest nation, the most enduring on this continent, have left their impress indelibly in the people, in its laws, in its constitution, its customs, its literature and language. Perhaps England and Ireland are the gateways for the Egos who incarnate here in the silent work of making a new race. Maybe there is some significance in the fact that more lines of steamships conveying human freight come to the United States from England, passing Ireland on the way as the last seen land of the old world, than from anywhere else. The deeds of men, the enterprises of merchants, and the wars of soldiers all follow implicitly a law that is fixed in the stars, and while they copy the past they ever symbolize the future.

Did H. P. B. only joke when she wrote in her book that Ireland is an ancient Atlantean remnant, and England a younger Isle, whose rising from the sea was watched by wise men from Erin's shore? Perhaps the people of that old land may have an important influence in the new race of America. It would appear from comparison that they might have had, and probably will in the future. Perhaps, politically, since many expect social disturbances in America. In such a case any student of character will admit that the Irish, ignorant or not, will stand for law and order — for her sons are not battling here with an ancient foe. Why, too, by strange freak of fate is the great stone of destiny in Westminster Abbey fixed under the coronation chair on which the queen was crowned? Let us also be informed if there be any finger shadow pointing to the future in the fact that England's queen,

crowned over that stone, (2) is Empress of India, from which we claim the Aryans came, and where their glorious long-forgotten knowledge is preserved? Her name is Victory. It is the Victory for "the new order of ages"; and that new order began in America, its advent noted and cut on the as yet unused obverse side of the present seal of the United States government. A victory in the union of the Egos from East and West; for England stretches one hand over to the home of the new race, which she can never own, with the other governing India, and completes the circuit. It may be a fleeting picture, perhaps to be wiped out for a while in a stream of blood, but such is the way the cycles roll and how we may learn to read the future. For England's destiny is not complete, nor has the time struck. None of us hug foolish delusions too long, and even if Ireland were once a most sacred place, that is no reason why we should want to go there. For in America those whose Karma has led them there will work for the same end and brotherhood as others left in India and Europe. The dominant language and style of thought in America is English, albeit transforming itself every day. It is there that silently the work goes on; there European fathers and mothers have gone, establishing currents of attraction that will inevitably and unceasingly draw into reincarnation Egos similar to themselves. And the great forward and backward rush is completed by the retarded Egos as they die out of other nations, coming meanwhile into flesh again among the older races left behind.

* * * *

At least such seemed the view while the clouds lifted — and then once more there was silence.

— *Lucifer*, March 1892

FOOTNOTES:

1. This is at the North Pole. — W. Q. J. ([return to text](#))
 2. It is an interesting fact that in India there is an important ceremony called "mounting the stone." ([return to text](#))
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ARIADNE'S THREAD: I — *Hazel S. Minot*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

All down the centuries there has been a persistent search for the answers to those gad-fly questions: "Where did we come from?" "Why are we here?" and "Where do we go from here?" Questions that we begin to ask even before we learn to read, and sometimes we are not so very much wiser when we come to the last chapter of this present life.

You know the story of Theseus: how he was enabled to reach the Minotaur, slay the monster, and then find his way back through the bewildering passages of the Labyrinth by means of the thread given to him by the princess Ariadne. It is, in fact, a story of universal life, and the "whys" and "wherefores" are so complicated because man — an important figure in the solution of the puzzle — is a mystery to himself. Long ages before present-day psychologists were posing the question of man's "psyche" the search was on, and with the ups and downs of the passing cycles there have been greater and lesser degrees of applied knowledge concerning true inner development. Progress has never been in a straight line, and this fact has served nicely as a smoke-screen to the real course of human progress — at any event, for those believing in an end-on evolution.

The way to the very heart of this "world labyrinth" has been found by more than one seeker, and the knowledge brought back has been a veritable Ariadne's Thread for the many others who have essayed to penetrate the mystery. The pattern created by these efforts tells its own story, and gives a revealing picture of the human race, guided and instructed from age to age by those who held this Ariadne Thread of spiritual truth. Throughout great cycles of time there have come those who were head and shoulders above their fellows in spiritual thought;

then there have been smaller cycles, represented by outstanding figures of intellectual and spiritual capacity; and in between these latter have been the many of lesser stature who nevertheless also "held the thread" by reason of their will "to know God" — not through creeds and dogmas, but by clearing away misconceptions, by probing the Universe around them, studying their relation to it, and by seeking always for a greater knowledge of themselves.

We are more or less familiar with these names — whatever group they may belong to — but do we realize quite so readily their relation to the "pattern," especially those (searchers after truth) who have "filled in the gaps," as it were? Time and patience show that over a period of some twenty-five centuries, there have been names, sometimes two or three in each century, whom we can recognize as carrying the Ariadne Thread. The pattern is so continuous that where an occasional break seems to come we may well believe the work was carried on in silence, or else — entirely possible — our own research needs to be extended.

It is worthy of note that a great many of these men have been born towards the middle or last portion of one century, thus carrying their work over to the beginning of the following century. Also, while empire was slowly moving westward, the East was recognized as holding the keys to spiritual knowledge, and more than one wise man of the West received teaching from the sages of the East.

Our beginning — the seventh century, B.C., — is necessarily arbitrary, and through the succeeding centuries we shall confine our research in large part to representatives of European thought. The following table (1) will assist the reader in tracing the Ariadne Thread: unhampered by the usual details of biography, he will be free to make his own deductions from hints suggested in the appended quotations.

SEVENTH CENTURY, B.C., c. 639-559

Solon, mentioned by H. P. Blavatsky in both *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. He studied with the Egyptian priests who told him, among other things, about Atlantis.

SIXTH CENTURY, B.C., B. c. 584

Pythagoras, whom H. P. B. designates as a great adept, and calls him "the most mystic of the eastern philosophers." He studied with the Brahmins in India.

522-443 ? 525-455

Pindar and Aeschylus: Both give evidence in their writings of a knowledge of the Mysteries, and H. P. B. says of the latter: "it is not the 'father of the Greek tragedy' who invented the prophecy of Prometheus; for he only repeated in dramatic form that which was revealed by the priests during the MYSTERIA of the Sabasia." Thus indicating that Aeschylus had been initiated, "as otherwise," she says, "he must, like Socrates, have had a *daimon* to reveal to him the secret and sacred allegorical drama of initiation." — *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 419

FIFTH CENTURY, B.C., 469-399

Socrates. Dr. de Purucker points out that "this great but misfortunate Greek suffered the penalty of death at Athens not so much for the reasons publicly promulgated for the carrying out of his execution, but really because he had unwittingly betrayed the teachings of the Greek Mysteries." — *The Esoteric Tradition*, p. 1030 This betrayal was unwitting because Socrates had not been initiated.

FOURTH CENTURY, B.C., c. 427-347

Plato, the pupil of Socrates. Dr. de Purucker writes of him: "The great Plato was once accused of the same crime of 'impiety,' which in this sense meant divulgence of forbidden knowledge connected with the Mysteries, but Plato was unquestionably an Initiate; and he wisely fled his fatherland for a time." — *E. T.*, pp. 1030-1 H. P. B. states that "Plato having been initiated, could not believe in a personal God — a gigantic Shadow of Man. His epithets of 'monarch' and 'Law-giver of the Universe' bear an

abstract meaning well understood by every Occultist." — *S. D.* II, 554

384-322

Aristotle, the pupil of Plato. Of him and his age, H. P. B. makes the following significant statement: ". . . the too great dependence upon physical facts led to growth of materialism and a decadence of spirituality and faith. At the time of Aristotle, this was the prevailing tendency of thought. . . . Few were the true adepts and initiates, the heirs and descendants of those who had been dispersed by the conquering swords of various invaders of Old Egypt. . . . The triumphant brand of Aristotle's pupil swept away from his path of conquest every vestige of a once pure religion, and Aristotle himself, the type and child of his epoch, though instructed in the secret science of the Egyptians, knew but little of this crowning result of millenniums of esoteric studies." — *Isis Unveiled*, I, 15-16

THIRD CENTURY, B.C.

Druidism active in Britain and Gaul.

SECOND CENTURY, B.C.

No outstanding historical representative.

FIRST CENTURY, c. 99-55

Lucretius, a disciple of the atomistic philosophy. Dr. de Purucker says that he "has been greatly misunderstood in modern times." Citing *De Rerum Natura* ('On the Nature of Things'), by Lucretius, he adds: "in all important points, this is a fair approach to the Theosophical doctrine of Monads ensouling Atoms." — *E. T.*, 276

H. P. B., writing of the atomists, states that "from Anaxagoras down to Epicurus, the Roman Lucretius, and finally even to Galileo, all those Philosophers believed more or less in ANIMATED atoms, not in invisible specks of so-called "brute" matter." — *S. D.*, I, 568

Vergil, "versed as every ancient poet was, more or less, in esoteric philosophy." — *S.D.*, II, 594 "Vergil, who speaks as a type of the initiates of his time in saying that after dissolution 'all beings return to the Divine,' doing so 'conscious and alive.' " — *E. T.*, 847

MESSIANIC CYCLE

Jesus the Christ. A "Messianic Cycle ended — or a new one began — some 2160 years ago, more or less, with the life and work of the Avatara whom the West knows under the name of Jesus the Christ." — *E. T.*, 1058 "Christ — one of the several followers, but only a great and glorious Initiate for all the rest." — *S. D.*, I, 653

B. C. 25 - A.D.?

"Philo Judaeus, or Philo the Jew, the great Platonizing Jewish philosopher, whose writings exercised a tremendous influence in their way over not only contemporary and later Jewish thought, but likewise on the beginnings of the Christian theology and therefore on the minds of many of the Church-Fathers. . . . The entire purpose of Philo's writings was to show the common grounds of mystical and theological thinking that, according to him, existed between the Platonic doctrines and the sacred books of the Jews." — *E. T.*, 615

FIRST CENTURY, A.D., cir. beginning.

Apollonius of Tyana who, with Iamblichus, "held that it was not 'in the knowledge of things *without*, but in the perfection of the soul *within*, that lies the empire of man, aspiring to be more than men.' Thus they had arrived at a perfect cognizance of their godlike souls, the powers of which they used with all the wisdom, outgrowth of esoteric study of the hermetic lore, inherited by them from their forefathers." — *Isis*, I, 64 H. P. B.

also says that the story of Apollonius is symbolically written, and that his journey to the wise men, and various interviews held with them "would disclose, if understood, some of the most important secrets of nature."

SECOND CENTURY, (end of 1st) 51-117, 76-138

Trajan and Hadrian: Though the Mysteries were no longer what they had been, these two of the "five good emperors" "did actually pass through the Eleusinian Rite . . . they did receive something; for as long as the Mysteries lived, the men who conducted them . . . still had some lingering sparks of the ancient verities, and were enabled to clothe their procedures and rites with at least a semblance of the Holy Fire of archaic times." — *E. T.*, p. 1051

SECOND CENTURY, A.D., Cir. end & beginning of 3rd.

Ammonius Saccas, "the founder of the Neo-Platonic School of the Philalethians or 'lovers of truth.' " He was "endowed with such prominent, almost divine goodness as to be called *Theodidaktos*, the 'God-taught.' " — *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 313

"Ammonius, speaking of his philosophy, taught that their school dated from the days of Hermes, who brought his wisdom from India." — *Isis*, II, 342

THIRD CENTURY, A.D., c. 205-270

Plotinus, a pupil of Ammonius Saccas, called by his contemporaries *Theiotatos*, "divinest." "He taught a doctrine identical with that of the Vedantins, namely, that the spirit soul emanating from the One Deific Principle was after its pilgrimage on earth reunited to it." — *Key*, p. 360

233-c. 304

Porphyry, the pupil of Plotinus, to whom — as H. P. B. tells us — he gives the credit "of having been united with "God" six times during his life, and complains of having attained to it but twice,

himself." — *Isis*, I, 292, fte. "A natural-born mystic he followed, like his master Plotinus, the pure Indian Raj-Yoga system." — *Key*, p. 361

FOURTH CENTURY, A.D., c. 283-c. 330

Iamblichus, whose school "was distinct from that of Plotinus and Porphyry, who were strongly against ceremonial magic and practical theurgy as dangerous, though these two eminent men firmly believed in both." Yet Iamblichus, in line with the teaching of his predecessors, strictly forbade any endeavor to procure "phenomenal manifestations; unless, after a long preparation of moral and physical purification, and under the guidance of experienced theurgists." — *Isis*, I, xliii, 219

c. 331-363

Julian the Apostate. Dr. de Purucker writes of this misunderstood Emperor: "Julian one day will be vindicated for what he really was, and will be regarded in esoteric history as one of the most unfortunate martyrs in the ranks of the workers for the Ancient Wisdom." — *E. T.*, 1052 H. P. B. refers to Julian several times in *Isis*, and gives the following regarding initiation: " 'And were I to touch upon the initiation into our sacred Mysteries,' says Emperor Julian, the kabalist, 'which the Chaldean bacchised respecting the *seven-rayed God, lifting up the soul through Him*, I should say things unknown, and *very unknown to the rabble*, but well known to the *blessed Theurgists*.' " — II, 417

FIFTH CENTURY, A.D., 410-485

Proclus, the last teacher of importance among the Neo-Platonists. Writing of the Mysteries, H. P. B. says: "What the hierophant was allowed to see at the last hour is hardly hinted at by them. And yet Pythagoras, Plato, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, and many others knew and affirmed their reality. . . . As Taylor correctly observes . . . it may be inferred, 'that the most

sublime part of the *epopteia* . . . consisted in beholding the gods themselves invested with a resplendent light,' or highest planetary spirits. The statement of Proclus upon this subject is unequivocal: 'In all the initiations and mysteries, the gods exhibit many forms of themselves, and appear in *a variety of shapes*, and sometimes, indeed, a formless light of themselves is held forth to the view; sometimes this light is according to *a human form*, and sometimes it proceeds into a different shape.' "

— *Isis*, II, 113

SIXTH CENTURY, A.D., 480-524

Boethius, Roman statesman and Stoic philosopher; one whose firm belief "in the truth of his philosophic ethics" governed his actions in both his official and his private life. His translation of some of Aristotle's works into Latin, and his commentaries on them served largely to acquaint the Middle Ages with the writings of the Greek philosopher. H. P. B. refers to the *Geometry* of Boethius in vindication of the Pythagoreans and their knowledge, and use, of "the 1 and the *nought* as the first and final cipher."

The latter part of the sixth century leads into the seventh with the coming of Mohammed. Though concerned chiefly with the Moslem world, the rise of Mohammedanism had a tremendous impact on the nations of Western as well as Eastern Europe. We find, now, a definite change in the outward form of man's search for himself, though the inner drive is always the same. Thus the seventh century, a.d., offers a natural pause in our theme: the age-old quest for Truth, with those who have handed on the Ariadne Thread.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Not meant to be an exhaustive table, but one inviting to further study on the part of the reader. ([return to text](#))

DRUIDISM: THE THEOSOPHY OF ANCIENT WALES — *Kenneth Morris*

This subject is a vast one; it is difficult to know how to tackle it intelligibly. Books and books have been written on it; hardly any two agreeing about anything. If you want to establish any conclusion you may draw, you have to bring forward pages and pages of evidence, from Greek literature, from Latin literature, from Welsh literature; and argue and argue and argue. That is the correct scientific way of doing things. I shall have to ask you to take all that for granted, and say that what I am going to give you are the conclusions my own mind has formed after considerable study, considerable pondering of all the evidence that remains to us; and that I could not prove any of these conclusions to anyone who did not want to believe in them.

You see, there are two types of mind, or two sides to the mind. One says, I'm from Missouri; show me; I won't accept anything unless it is proved; you've got no business to believe anything unless you can prove it in a chemical laboratory; measure it, weigh it, tie it up neatly into little packages, and stick a label on each. For that type of mind, or that side of the mind, there is nothing to say about Druidism; it dismisses the subject as something we know practically nothing about. But the other type is alert to catch suggestions of unknown greatness. When it hears of something, it does not ask for that something to be proved, but asks: Can I use that? Is that of value to me? Can I enlarge my soul, so to speak, by contemplation of it? To this second type of mind the subject of Druidism is one that must appeal very greatly.

The Druids were the priests of certain Celtic peoples in antiquity. They and their religion preceded Christianity in Gaul (France), in Britain and in Ireland; their headquarters was in Britain, where the religion started, and where the training colleges for the priesthood were situated. In the literature of Greece and Rome we find references to them from about 200 b.c. to 200 or 300 a.d.

The first is from an Alexandrian Greek writer named Sotion, about 200 b.c. He speaks of it as a common belief in Greece that philosophy came to the Greek world from certain foreign peoples: from the Brahmins, the Magi of Persia, the Egyptian priesthood, and the Druids. All that is proved by this is, that the highly civilized Greeks regarded the Druids not as the medicine men of a savage tribe, but as the possessors of a highly developed philosophy, capable of teaching the Greeks. Then we get references to them from the century before Christ as students and teachers of a very sublime philosophy. Then comes the time when Rome was at war with the peoples whose religion was Druidism. First there was Caesar's attack on and conquest of Gaul. It was quite unprovoked; its cause was Caesar's personal ambition; he is said to have caused the death of some three to five million Gauls in the course of the war. It is on his account of the Druids that the popular view of them is based: their supposed human sacrifices, etc. Now whatever Caesar was, there is no doubt that he was thoroughly unscrupulous. We know that he deliberately misrepresented and understated the civilization of the Celtic peoples, his enemies. We know that their civilization was in some ways more advanced than that of the Romans who conquered them: e.g., they used sailing ships, while the Roman ships were propelled by oars; and they manufactured better textiles, made and wore better clothes than the Romans, or even the Greeks. We know, too, that to lie about your enemies in war-time is a common practice with erring humanity; and Caesar did it liberally; as is proved by this fact: In giving his account of the Druids, he speaks of them as not only the priests, but as also in charge of the legal system of Gaul: which is correct. In this latter capacity, he says that the severest punishment they inflicted was excommunication: a criminal was forbidden to attend the religious services; but then two pages later he goes on to tell horrible tales about their punishing criminals by erecting huge wicker cages, filling them with criminals and burning them to death. Now if his first statement that the worst punishment they inflicted was excommunication was true, this second statement, made with a view to war-time propaganda, could not also have been true; nor does it jibe with what he says further about their being

students and teachers of philosophy and science: in which connection he, like every other classical writer, speaks of them with high respect.

From Caesar's time, who conquered Gaul and twice invaded Britain unsuccessfully, for about 150 years until the Roman conquest of southern Britain was accomplished, we get a good many Roman writers referring to the Druids. They all copy Caesar in speaking of the human sacrifices; during this period the Druids were still actively or potentially the enemies of Rome. Then, when Britain was conquered and the war was finished with, we find that supposed dark side of Druidism forgotten; no writer seems to know about it any more; and we get references once more classing the Druids with the Brahmins, the Magi and the Egyptian priesthood as possessors of a high wisdom, as the teachers of the Greeks in philosophy; as a class that knew the wisdom of the gods, the secret laws of the universe. Even in that period during which it may be supposed war-time propaganda would have influenced the Roman mind, every reference made to the Druids speaks of them as possessors of an occult knowledge, something not in possession of the Romans themselves. Sometimes it is in the way of poking a bit of fun at them — they alone knew or they alone were ignorant of the secrets of the gods; sometimes it is very respectful indeed; but always it is there. I do not think an absolutely unprejudiced student could examine all the evidence from the literature of Greece and Rome without coming to the certain conclusion that the classical world held strongly to the belief that the Druids were philosophers, possessors of an esoteric wisdom, a deeper knowledge of the secrets of life and death than their neighbors and contemporaries. That undoubtedly was their reputation. Caesar with all his efforts could not shake that; indeed he does not attempt to; he accepts it. What he did was to add to it the statement that they were cruel and barbarous; which statement was believed while the Romans were at war with the Druidic peoples. When that war was over, and civilized Romans had the opportunity of mixing with civilized Celts and knowing their minds, the belief in Druidic barbarism seems to have died away.

Naturally, the Romans forbade the practice of Druidism during their

occupation of Gaul from b.c. 50 say to a.d. 450, or about 500 years, and during their occupation of south Britain from about a.d. 70 to 410, say 340 years. But they never went to Ireland, which was also Druidic by religion, nor to northern Scotland; and even their occupation of Wales was very partial. There was nothing to prevent British, or to give them the modern name, Welsh, Druids from taking refuge in Ireland — which country all along must have had a good deal of intercourse with Britain; there was very little to prevent Druidism being carried on on the quiet in Wales throughout the Roman occupation.

The cardinal doctrine of the Druids, according to the classical, i.e. Greek and Roman authors who refer to them, was Reincarnation. Almost every Latin author who speaks of the Druids emphasizes their belief in that natural law or fact. The idea was familiar enough in the Roman world; since it was a cardinal teaching of Pythagoras. But the way the Celts held to this doctrine or knowledge struck the Romans with surprise. To the Roman, as to us, death was rather an important event; it was the end of the book: you might speculate as to what lay beyond it; but you weren't quite certain at the best of times. *Tuum semel occideris, et de te splendida Minos Fecerit arbitria, Non, Torquate genus, non te facundia, non te restituet pietas*, says Horace, expressing the feeling of the Roman man in the street: When you die, and Minos, the judge of the dead, has passed judgment on you, neither genius nor piety nor wit will restore you; therefore spend what you have, enjoy your wealth now. But the Celt, the Welshman of those days, felt very differently; the Roman was both amused and amazed at the way he felt. To him, death was not much more than going to bed nightly; it was not any interruption in the long course of his life. At the appropriate time a new body would be born for him; he knew perfectly well that he would live again, here on earth. You could always even borrow money from him, to be repaid next life, or in the next but one, or in some future life, as the borrower and lender might agree. You could bank on the fact of reincarnation, just as you could bank on the sun's rising tomorrow.

Now thrice in my lifetime I have come on families in Wales wherein

that knowledge had been handed down even to our own day. They were all pious Christians; but they knew that Reincarnation was a fact. Who then shall pretend to say that Druidism died out under the Roman proscription?

Soon after the Romans went in 410, Welsh literature began to be created. One of the first of the poets was Taliesin. Seventy-seven poems attributed to him come down. Scholars have fought over the question as to whether there ever was such a person, when he lived, who wrote his poems, and so forth. But according to the tradition — and the most advanced scholarship these days believes that tradition is the best possible historical evidence, although the scholarship characteristic of last century was chiefly interested in picking it to pieces and pouring scorn on it — according to tradition Taliesin made those poems in the sixth century, when Wales was freed from Roman rule. And if there is one idea they reek with, it is Reincarnation. "I have been in many a shape before I attained my congenial form; I have borne a banner before Alexander; I was in Canaan when Absalom was slain; My original country is the Region of the Summer Stars; I was formerly little Gwion. Now I am Taliesin."

So we see that when the classical writers contacted the Druids, they found them believers in Reincarnation as their first and most characteristic doctrine, and we find that same doctrine blazing up in Wales as soon as the Roman proscription was lifted. I think we are bound to believe that the Welsh remembered and held to their Druidism through the period of the Roman occupation.

Now I am going to speak of something rather intangible, but within the rights of a literary critic. If you take two literatures, the Welsh on the one hand, and the English, French, German or Italian, any modern literature on the other, you will notice one thing in particular. The great literatures are concerned with life as we know it. They sort and examine human experience; explore human thought. The best part of them is the work of great minds reaching out for something, trying to announce new truths concerning life; reaching out from here, from this

present life in the world into the unknown. Welsh literature on the other hand, small and unimportant as it is compared to those others I have mentioned, does nothing of that kind. But — and the farther you go back in it the more you feel it — it is haunted by something, a feeling of something vast, mysterious, in the past. Go back to the Triads, to the Mabinogi and romances, to the sixth century poetry, and you are drenched in this atmosphere. It issues from a grand mystery; it is haunted by a great unrecoverable memory. If I said that it was haunted with the memory of a real knowledge as to the inside of the universe, the secrets of life and death, once possessed in great fullness, now to be mentioned only with bated breath, to be only hinted at — I think I should explain just the feeling that one gets.

Put that side by side with what the classical authors say about the wisdom possessed by the Druids, and I think we have the strongest kind of suggestion of the truth. Matthew Arnold, one of the very greatest of English literary critics, felt it strongly; he said that in studying the oldest Welsh literature he felt as if he were in a village of peasants' huts built of the ruins of Ephesus. Ephesus can be taken as implying a grand, beautiful and forgotten city of the ancients, of which every stone had been curiously carved by a master artist. The literatures of the modern great nations: stones quarried out of the mountains of thought by each great writer, and built by him into the architecture of his imagining; the old Welsh literature — stones quarried by giants and demi-gods of old, and by them fashioned into heaven knows what heaven-touching towers and pinnacles long since fallen into ruin; and of the broken ruins, peasants' cabins built. In those, the human spirit, blinded it is true, working its way from everyday human experience towards greatness, and achieving a high measure of greatness; in this one half understood reminiscence of an even greater greatness foregone. The very greatest poetry is that which most exalts the human spirit, most reveals its divinity. You *might* find in Shakespeare, in Dante, in Goethe — to name the three grandest figures in European literature — lines which assert that divinity and lofty origin as strikingly, as daringly, as those I quoted of Taliesin's —

"My original country is the Region of the Summer Stars"; but I have failed to find them; and I doubt whether they are to be found.

Now to every people come alternately centuries of waking, active dynamically creative life; and centuries of sleep and inactivity. Great literatures, like all other great works, are only produced by peoples in their waking or active periods; never otherwise. All great thought comes from waking peoples; all great art; all great building. Now consider that from about the thirteenth century the peoples of western continental Europe and England have been in their waking state; consequently all great literature, European and not ancient, has been produced by each of the European nations. Before the thirteenth century there was nothing of importance from any of these peoples. Of books written in this island before the thirteenth century, three make interesting reading today. They are, the *Mabinogion*, which was written in Welsh; and two that were written in Latin, a *History of the Kings of the Britons*, by a Welshman named Gruffydd ab Arthur, and an *Itinerary of Wales* by one Geraldus Cambrensis or Gerald the Welshman. Which means, to put it shortly, that while England, France, Germany and the other countries of western Europe, have been in the waking state, Wales, and for that matter Ireland, have been sound asleep; but that between 400 a.d. or earlier and 1200 or so, the Welsh (and Irish) were to some extent awake. We may say that the period 400-1200 was night for the Europeans, and the period 1200 to the 1900's has been day for them; but that for the Celts, 400 to perhaps 1480 was twilight, and 1480 to now has been night. Now you will find this rule applying all through history wherever you may look; there are no exceptions.

II

The most interesting thing in all Welsh literature is the matter contained in a book called *Barddas* or Bardism, which won a prize in the National Eisteddfod of 1858. It is the most interesting thing, because it expounds a great system of thought. That great system purported to be the doctrine of the ancient Druids. It is freely accused by the pundits

of having been forged by a man named Iolo Morganwg in the eighteenth century. To a student of history and world literature, it is quite certain that it — that is, the system of thought, the philosophy — could not have been created by any native of a sleeping race, Welshman or other. It comes out of Wales beyond doubt; it explains and makes intelligible a thousand references in early Welsh literature. But no Welshman could have invented it in the sleeping time of Wales; because that would have implied a highly dynamic use of creative thought, which does not happen among a sleeping people. Nor could it have been invented in a twilight time, or say between the Roman conquest of Britain in 68 a.d. and the battle of Bosworth; because in such twilight periods you can get literature with a reminiscence or echo of ancient greatness, but not great creative thought such as is implied in the thinking out of a philosophy to explain life and the universe. The conclusion therefore is irresistible that this system does come down from a time when the Celtic peoples were awake, alive, dynamic; which they have not been since the Romans landed in Britain.

Now when you get that law of history firmly fixed in your mind, that for every people periods of activity and periods of rest alternate; and put that side by side with what the classical writers, Greeks and Romans, say about the Druids as possessors of a lofty philosophy, you will, I think, conclude that (1) the Celts had a waking period which ended, for the Welsh, with the Roman conquest; and (2) that a lofty philosophy broached in Wales in the eighteenth century could only have been an echo of the philosophy held to and believed in in Wales before the Roman conquest: or in other words, that the doctrine put forward in the book *Barddas* is an echo or reminiscence of Druidism.

An echo or reminiscence necessarily; not the complete thing. A pagan system that had come down in Christian and troubled Wales through all those troubled Christian centuries, could not but have been corrupted in some degree; could not but have lost some elements of greatness and taken on some elements of imperfection. Just as old Welsh literature has a thousand references in it that need this

philosophy of *Barddas* to make them intelligible; so does the philosophy of *Barddas* need Theosophy to explain and complete it. To explain and show the real meaning of certain parts that have become dimmed by age; to fill in certain parts that have been lost through the centuries.

We are introduced first to two principles: Duw and Cythraul, names very familiar to the Welsh, being the common words for "God" and the "devil." I shall however leave them both in Welsh, to come at their meaning more easily. Duw undoubtedly has taken on something of personality from Christian teaching; but this personalizing has not gone the whole way; in the case of Cythraul it has not even begun. Cythraul, the opposite pole of existence to Duw, is thus defined: it "is destitute of life and intention" — a thing of necessity, not of will; without being or life in respect of existence and personality; vacant in reference to what is vacant; dead in respect to what is dead; and nothing in reference to what is nothing.

Duw, uniting Itself with Cythraul with the intention of subduing it to life, imparted the existence of vitality to animated beings; and thus did life lay hold upon the dead, whence intellectual animations first sprang. Intellectual existence first began in the depths of Annwn for there is the lowest and least grade. The greatest cannot exist in an intellectual existence before the least; there can be no intellectual existence without gradation. Thus may be seen that there is to every intellectual existence a necessary gradation, which begins at the lowest grade, progressing from thence incessantly along every addition, intervention, increase, growth in age, and completion. Animations in Annwn are removed gradually, by means of dissolution and death to a higher degree, where they receive an accumulation of life and goodness, and thus they progress from grade to grade nearer and nearer to the extremity of life and goodness. That state of extremity of life and goodness is to be reached when these "intellectual animations" have attained to the state of humanity.

Now there we see that Duw and Cythraul, in simple modern terms, are

translatable as Spirit and Matter; Duw uniting itself to Cythraul, speaks of the involution of spirit into matter, whereby is caused the evolution of matter towards spirit. The Druidic map of the universe, so to speak, consists of two concentric circles. The space within the inner circle is called Cylch yr Abred, the Cycle of Inchoation; it is the world in which we live, the plane we live on. The space between the inner and outer circle is called Cylch y Gwynfyd, the Cycle of Bliss; it is the world above ours, so to say, the state to which we evolve after learning all the lessons existence as human beings can teach us. Outside the outer circle are rays shooting out; they represent the Cylch y Ceugant or the Cycle of Infinity, in which we are told there is only Duw.

Now below the innermost circle or Abred there is what is called Annwn, the great deep; a word I believe poetically used for hell; a word occurring much in Welsh folklore with more or less that meaning. But in Bardism it is explained as simply the inception point of existence; where life begins; the worlds below the human, through which in Druidism as in Theosophy, all life, all existence, must gradually evolve up to the human stage. There, says *Barddas*, are the manred or atoms, the stuff out of which the worlds were built; Duw uniting itself with Cythraul started these on the pilgrimage of evolution. Each had innate in itself its own awen, different from that of all others; its own peculiar nature, which should be evolved, during the course of innumerable ages, by undergoing every imaginable, every possible, form of experience, in stage after stage of evolution: elemental, mineral, vegetable, and animal, up to self-consciousness in the human stage or state: that which began as the unself-conscious god-spark becoming the self-conscious human being.

The further you go down in Annwn, says *Barddas*, towards the beginnings, the more does the nature of Cythraul, and the less does the nature of Duw, preponderate; until when the human state is reached, the two natures equiponderate, and you have free will, and a choice between good and evil at every turn of thought or action. If, says *Barddas*, the nature of Cythraul has come to preponderate in a man, through gross thought and evil action, dying, that man descends below

the human state to that point in Annwn or the evolutionary journey which corresponds to the character he has made for himself. If, through noble thought and action the nature of Duw has come to preponderate in him, dying he passes out from the human state, and from the Cycle of Abred, into the Cycle of Gwynfyd.

Now there you see what main doctrine, known to have been the cardinal doctrine of Druidism in the days when it was a living religion, has dropt out of Druidism as presented in this book *Barddas*. I refer to Reincarnation. The philosophy of *Barddas* is absolutely sound and logical and inspiring as far as it goes; but since its chief insistence is that evolution comes by experience, by the gaining of all possible experience, we can see that logically human reincarnation is a necessity. There is no passing out of Annwn into Abred we are told, without gaining first all the imaginable experience every state of existence in Annwn can teach us; and no passing out of Abred into Gwynfyd without gaining first all the possible experience that life in Abred can give us; and as you can't get all possible human experience in one human life, we have to see that sometime during the troubled centuries of Welsh history the folk who were the custodians of the tradition of Druidism withdrew the teaching of Reincarnation; ceased to speak of it. They ceased to speak, also, of the evolution of the soul beyond the human stage; of the existence of the Gods; although we know that this teaching was a part of Druidism of old.

Now I shall turn from *Barddas* to another matter. When European civilization was at its lowest depths of degradation and brutality, in what are called the Dark Ages, a light shone out into it from Wales through the Normans who came here conquering. It was chivalry, centering about the Arthurian legend; at the core of which was the legend of the Holy Grail. This was supposed to be a vessel which held the blood of Christ; it was very miraculous in character; vision of it might be attained by the absolutely pure in heart. Now England had its national legend — of Beowulf; and France had its, of Charlemagne; but this legend from Wales drove out and covered over both of those, so that Englishmen forgot Beowulf and talked of Arthur as their national

hero — although he was supposed to have spent his life fighting them, and Frenchmen forgot Charlemagne and his Paladins, and both tried more or less, as did Spaniards, Italians, Germans, to model their lives on the knightly ideals of Arthur's court: that purity being the centermost one, which might enable them to have vision of the Holy Grail.

Now, what was that Holy Grail?

There's no time to prove it to you now, but it can be amply proved. It was originally the symbol of Druidism just as the cross is the symbol of Christianity. In the old Welsh stories it is called Pair Ceridwen, and Pair Dadeni: the Caldron of Ceridwen, the Caldron of Rebirth.

Dadeni, Rebirth, Reincarnation: you can't make it mean anything else; the ideas, the symbolism that lie behind it are vast.

First of all, it was the symbol of Initiation. There is a cave in Snowdon, and a rock on Cadair Idris, of which the popular legend is that one who spends a night in the one, or on the other, will wake in the morning either dead, or mad, or an initiated bard, inspired — with wisdom and illumination beyond what normal human beings possess. This shows how that great central idea of all the ancient religions, Druidism included, impressed itself in Druid days on the race mind. Otherwise it could not have lived on in folklore through the Christian centuries.

The candidate for initiation, whether in Greece, Egypt, India, or Wales or any other country, prepared himself for it by a long course of training and discipline, the object of which was to bring all the lower elements of his being into subjection. Then, when he was ready, the initiation took place. In some kind of crypt — in the King's Chamber of the Great Pyramid, for example; probably in the cave on Snowdon also: he, or his body, was placed in a vessel or receptacle or sarcophagus, or tied to a wooden cross; and he himself, the human soul, voyaged out into the inner spaces of the universe and learnt the secrets of these inner spaces at first hand. Returning, he was illuminated, an initiate; in Welsh, Bardd, a bard; which word does not originally mean a poet, but

an illuminated seer, a teacher, an initiate.

In Druidism, that receptacle, or vessel, or sarcophagus, was called a caldron — the Pair Dadeni, or Caldron of Rebirth, or the Caldron of Ceridwen, the Goddess of Universal Nature. It took the place in Druidism that the cross does in Christianity; it was the symbol of Religion. Religion existed to bring men to the point of initiation, to the Caldron of Ceridwen as it were; the initiation, which made of the neophyte a Bard, was regarded as a rebirth, a second birth — dadeni.

Of the seventy-seven poems of Taliesin one stands out as, I think, the greatest; it is my favorite, because of its more than Miltonic loftiness of tone. It is called Preiddiau Annwn, the spoils of Annwn; which, as you will remember, is the deep, the underworld, even by an extension of meaning, this material universe. It tells how the Caldron was held in Annwn in Caer Pedryfan, the four-square Castle, in Ynys Pybyddor, the Strong-doored Isle; and how Arthur voyaged in Prydwen, his ship of Glass, into the Underworld to recover it; and Taliesin with him.

One could spend an evening, or many evenings, lecturing on Arthur alone, with all his implications and meanings. No doubt there was a Welsh prince who died in the year 540, after winning some striking victories over the Saxons; whose invasion of Britain certainly was held up for some twenty or thirty years before 540; that invasion actually made no progress during those years. But unquestionably that chieftain came to be identified with one of the old Gods of Druidism; we know of a Gaulish god named Artaios; the Egyptian god we know as Osiris, was called in Egyptian Ausar; he may be the same god. Scholars have identified Arthur with Hu Gadarn, Hu the Mighty, the chief God of Druidism; who figures a good deal in the Welsh triads; and who was actually worshiped in Wales as late as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In 1538, in the reign of Henry VIII, a statue of this god, known as Darfell Gadarn, which attracted great crowds of worshipers, was, with its priest, brought up from Wales to London and burnt at Smithfield: the priest, the last Druid martyr; and in the fifteenth-century Welsh poetry there are many references to Hu Gadarn, hymns

to his praise; also a poem by a Christian priest-poet, Sion Cent, which says that there were then two religious influences in the world: one from Jesus Christ, and the other from Hu Gadarn among the bards of Wales. Thus we see that even then, in the time of Owain Glyndwr and Joan of Arc and the Wars of the Roses and the first Tudor kings of England, Druidism was still alive in Wales.

But to go back to the poem, the Spoils of Annwn. The Arthur it tells of is the first Arthur; the earliest stage we have in his metamorphosis from the Leader of the Gods to the chivalrous king who appears in Malory and Tennyson. He voyages through the deep, he descends into the underworld, the manifested universe, in quest of the caldron of initiation. I do not know any poem, in any language, that conveys to me so much of that sense of hidden and mysterious grandeur as this one does. What does it mean? It figures the involution of spirit into matter; the descent of the gods into the underworld, this world, this life we live, in quest of — what? Wisdom, experience, initiation. For the Caldron, the sacred symbol of Druidism, means not only that receptacle or sarcophagus that held the body of the neophyte while he himself explored the inner universe; it means that, and something more. It means life, the world. It was the Caldron of Reincarnation; the world into which we incarnate again and again; each life in its degree an initiation, a gaining of wisdom by experience. Sublime thought, this of the evolution of the god-spark in each one of us into at last the fully self-conscious God, through endless life, successions of experiences of life, of entries into the Caldron of Reincarnation, until that entry into it which shall bring us initiation, and from men we shall become bards and gods.

H. P. Blavatsky says, in an article published after her death, that in the century before Christ, Druidism was the only branch of the Mysteries of the Old World which had not degenerated; and that Caesar was inspired to attack and conquer Gaul by the black forces, the enemies of mankind, in order to stamp out that last pure light, to break its power. But even though he did so; even though he forced it underground as it were, so that from the ruling religion of Britain, Gaul and Ireland, it

became a secret cult, we see that he could not quench its power and influence. Here in Wales it lived on; and, as Wales inch by inch was conquered by the Normans, its influence, spiritual and uplifting still, though strangely metamorphosed, spread out into the darkness of Christian Europe, a light to lighten the Gentiles with the noble ideals of chivalry, the vision of the Holy Grail. This illustrates the workings of the spirit, of the Masters of Wisdom, the spiritual Leaders and Guides of Mankind. There is nothing about it you can prove. You can't prove that Iolo Morganwg, the eighteenth century Glamorgan stonemason, didn't forge every document in the book *Barddas*; you can't prove anything spiritual for that matter. No; proof you may not have; but you may have suggestion; a hint; which, taken, used and followed up, will lead you on to heights of ennobling thought and knowledge. You may take these things and ideas that the materialist and the academic reject as unproved, and let them work upon your inner nature until they have made a god of you.

I told you the subject was a vast one; and far beyond my satisfactorily setting forth in an evening's lecture. But what I hope you may have gotten out of it is this: New evidence of the universality of the grand Theosophical teachings; evidence, too, that will show you that in bringing Theosophy to Wales, we are bringing nothing strange, exotic or foreign; but simply the lost secret of the ancient greatness of the Celtic peoples.

The Theosophical Forum

THE MEASURE OF A MAN — *Allan J. Stover*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Once, while looking over the harvest of shells and seaweed left by the outgoing tide, a man approached with a curious question.

"Will you please tell me," he asked, "where is the ocean?"

In astonishment, I replied: "You are looking at it."

To this he said, with disappointment in his voice: "Is that the ocean? I expected to see something much larger."

I explained that due to the curvature of the earth he could see only the distance his height above the water permitted, which was not quite three miles. But by climbing a nearby hill somewhat more could be seen, but not much. (1)

Childish as the foregoing question may seem, we are even worse off when it comes to understanding the ocean of space and consciousness with which we are surrounded. Even the thoughts of the animal kingdom are hidden from us, and many deny they think at all. Many persons when first faced with one of the immensities of nature are stunned for a time with lack of comprehension, until they build a link with past experience when understanding gradually awakens. The starry multitude of the heavens, the vastness of the desert, the shifting color-music of the Grand Canyon, the size and age of the Giant Sequoia, all these require more than the brain of man to comprehend. They need the understanding of the soul as well.

Even in ordinary life there is a higher and a lower mind, and those who are accustomed to think with the higher portion stand above ordinary humanity. Not only is their thought more vivid and intense but they see

intuitively into the hearts of men and are less likely to be deceived by appearances. To them also nature reveals her secrets.

Thus Mind is dual, and is the balancing point between spirit and matter. Its higher portions are linked with Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul; the lower is linked with Kama, the Animal Soul or principle of desire. Yet in man the lower mind receives a ray from the higher mind which illumines it. The materialist or one of a selfish nature who denies his spiritual nature finds it difficult to raise his thoughts above a certain level or to realize inner truths. He can see only the reflection of his own nature, the measure of his own stature.

Man and nature are sevenfold in structure, containing seven kinds of materials and states of consciousness, ranging from the physical to the Divine. In this ladder of consciousness the Human Monad or Ego exists for the length of one life on earth, breaking up soon after the death of the body. Whatever essence of a spiritual nature has been acquired during the life is drawn up into the Spiritual Monad where it rests until the next imbodiment. The Human Ego thus has a range of action limited to this earth and the experiences it offers.

The Higher Ego or Monad or Higher Manas has a range of consciousness and activity embracing the seven globes of the Earth Chain. Its span of life lasts as long as the Earth planetary chain itself. In it is preserved the spiritual essence of all the imbodiments on this planetary chain. But there are other rungs in this ladder of consciousness.

The Spiritual Monad has a range of activity embracing the seven sacred planets of our solar system and a life that endures as long as the solar system itself.

Higher still, the Divine Monad is self-conscious throughout the Galactic Universe especially through the spiritual and divine planes of the system and exists as long as the galaxy itself does. Through all the series, there runs a golden thread of divine radiance illumining each plane. (2)

The destiny of the human race is in the far future to awaken union with these higher portions of being and to realize that man's home is in very truth the universe. At present the mind can scarcely grasp the significance of this stream of consciousness which is our inmost. We live like fish in the darkness of the deep sea, bearing our feeble lights, unaware of the sun, moon and stars shining overhead.

However far away realization of this destiny may seem, since each principle is itself sevenfold and reflects in some degree the whole series, the key of analogy suggests that there are corresponding levels in the faculties we now use. And that, by living in the highest level of these, we are taking the first step upward. This everyone can do, now.

We commonly see only the outer shell of nature and little guess the spiritual reality within. The earth is not only a globe of rock but is itself a sevenfold being, divine in its upper portion, material in its lower as is man himself. As Katherine Tingley said:

"There is something very wonderful about this brain-mind of ours; there is even something sacred about it because, though it does belong to the physical make-up of man, there still shine upon it as upon a flower the rays of the Spiritual Sun."

FOOTNOTE:

1. Multiply the square-root in feet of the observer's eye-level above the sea by 1.15 to obtain the distance to the horizon. ([return to text](#))
2. *The Esoteric Tradition*, pages 850-4, for illuminating description of the various monadic centers with their respective fields of conscious activity. ([return to text](#))

THE PHAETON MYTH — *M. A. Duncan*

Hellas was ever a land of light and the Hellenes a light-loving race. They gloried in the fair hours and bright moods of nature; they were the children of the dawn time to whom the rising of the sun meant far more than the mere physical phenomenon. We can picture their exultation of spirit as their favorite deity, Apollo, guided his gleaming chariot over the rosy hills of the east. It would be natural, therefore, to find sun myths abounding in their religious and legendary lore. One such, the myth of Phaeton and Apollo, however, must be carried back in origin to times far more remote, and traced to sources of inspiration far deeper and more comprehensive than the land of Hellas alone could boast.

The myth tells us that the youth Phaeton, angered at the doubt cast by his playmates on his reputed divine origin, begged his father to allow him to vindicate his celestial parentage. This the Sun God is said to have granted *unconditionally*, whereupon Phaeton asks leave to take a turn at guiding his father's resplendent sun chariot. Apollo stands aghast at the fatal petition, but having given his promise, cannot refuse. After anointing his son with a powerful unguent, and giving him every possible warning and advice as to the management of the steeds, he sends him forth on his perilous day's journey. No sooner have the steeds sprung free than, becoming aware of a light and inexperienced hand upon the reins, they straightway "rush headlong and leave the travelled road," so that "the great and little bear were scorched with heat . . . and the serpent which lies coiled up around the north pole, torpid and harmless, grew warm, and with the warmth felt its rage revive." Still the rash youth is borne helplessly hither and thither, till at length he encounters the great arms and tail and crooked claws of Scorpion "reeking with poison and menacing with his fangs" — whereupon in sheer terror the youth lets fall the reins from his hands.

The rebellious steeds rush madly into unknown regions of the sky, now

high above the clouds scorching the open heavens, now nether-ward with fearful nearness to the teeming earth, whereon cities with their inhabitants are reduced to ashes; fountains parched to dryness-verdant and smiling cornlands seared to a desert waste. This naming sun chariot in its ungoverned course gives Libya her wasted leagues and turns the Ethiop tribe an ebon black; dries up the life-giving waters of the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Ganges, together with their tributary streams. The surface of the parched earth cleaves into yawning chasms whose deeps reach down to gloomy Tartarus, and whose wan and cheerless denizens flee in terror from the light of day. Seas that had been were now dry land; mountain peaks sometime submerged now pierced the bosom of the waters, becoming solid islands. Frightful chaos and supreme devastation stalked in flame and fury over the world until the very earth cried out in woe, calling upon the gods to intervene.

In answer mighty Jupiter launched a thunder-bolt that struck the youthful charioteer from his seat and sent him hurtling "headlong like a shooting star which marks the heavens with its brightness as it falls, and Eridanus the great river, received him and cooled his burning frame."

And Phaeton, caught in mid career,
And hurled from the Sun to utter sunlessness,
Like a flame-bearded comet, with ghoulish hiss,
Fell headlong in the amazed Eridanus,
Monarch of streams, who on the Italian fields
Let loose, and far beyond his flowery lips
Foam-white, ran ruinous to the Adrian deep.

— Worsley

Him the Thunderer hurled
From the empyrean headlong to the gulf
Of the half-parched Eridanus, where weep
Even now the sister trees their amber tears
O'er Phaeton untimely dead.

In the above, as in all myths, there is a wealth of symbology; symbology applicable to and illustrative of many planes of thought and feeling. To consider the psychological bearing of the legend before entering upon its larger relationships, one might readily see in it a plain and obvious simile of human Passion liberated by desire or inclination, and once free proving itself beyond the control of the unthinking mortal that evoked it. Like this sun chariot careering through space, a man's passions once beyond control, send their lurid flames throughout his whole nature, parching and withering all those fair productive fields of spiritual endeavor and inspiration. They know no course or boundary, but sweep wherever their yearning may lead, until at length the very force of their fury begets those evils in the organism of the victim which strike him as with a thunder-bolt, hurling him from the chariot of the body into the waters of oblivion.

Yet, if this is one of the vital applications of this sun myth, there are still others more far-reaching in their relation to the affairs of this earth. They yield a revelation of cosmic truths from which the legend took its rise in days far antedating Hellenic culture.

According to the theosophical teachings, the Phaeton myth in its primary significance is the recorded memory of one or several cosmic disturbances. As H. P. Blavatsky writes, the story

is an allegory referring directly to the changes of climate in those distant times when, from a frigid zone, the polar lands had become a country with a moderate and warm climate.

— *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 770, fte.

These words bring us to a consideration of the phenomenon of radical changes in the earth's distribution of climatic conditions as well as land masses. Such climatic changes come about owing to the constant motion of the earth's axis, a motion extremely gradual yet *unceasing*. Embracing and explaining as it does the law of cycles, Theosophy shows that this axial motion, proceeding through vast periods of time,

tends at the close of the Greater Cycle or Age to become accelerated, thereby bringing about those major cataclysms which mark the close of a Root-Race and the appearance upon the earth of a new Race. Such cataclysms as those just referred to would have occurred at the time of the decline of that great Root-Race known as the Third Race and inhabiting the Lemurian Continent. This continent, H. P. Blavatsky explains, extended over the

whole area of space from the foot of the Himalayas, which separated it from the inland sea rolling its waves over what is now Tibet, Mongolia, and the great desert of Schamo (Gobi); from Chittagong, westward to Hardwar, and eastward to Assam. From thence, it stretched South across what is known to us as Southern India, Ceylon, and Sumatra, then embracing on its way, as we go South, Madagascar on its right and Australia and Tasmania on its left, it ran down to within a few degrees of the Antarctic Circle, when, from Australia, an inland region on the Mother Continent in those ages, it extended far into the Pacific Ocean, not only beyond Rapa-nui (Teapy, or Easter Island) which now lies in latitude 26 S., and longitude 110 W. . . .

This statement seems corroborated by Science, — even if only partially, as, when discussing continental trends, and showing the infra-Arctic masses trending generally with the Meridian, several ancient continents are generally mentioned, though inferentially. Among such the "Mascarene continent," which included Madagascar, stretching north and south, is spoken of, and the existence of another *ancient* continent running "from Spitzbergen to the Straits of Dover, while most of the other parts of Europe were sea bottom," is taught. The latter corroborates, then, the Occult teaching which shows the (now) polar regions as the earliest of the seven cradles of Humanity, and as the tomb of the bulk of the mankind of that region during the Third Race, when the gigantic continent of Lemuria began separating into smaller continents. This is due, according to the explanation in the Commentary, to a decrease of velocity in the earth's rotation

—

When the Wheel runs at the usual rate, its extremities (the poles) agree with its middle circle (equator), when it runs slower and tilts in every direction, there is a great disturbance on the face of the earth. The waters flow toward the two ends, and new lands arise in the middle belt (equatorial lands), while those at the ends are subject to pralayas by submersion. — Op. cit., II, 324-5

Here we have a description first of the extent of the great continental home of the Third Race, Lemuria, together with a general statement of the conditions bringing about radical changes in position and condition of our earth. In the same way, further cosmic changes *brought about by the spiritual needs and conditions of humanity* caused the submersion of Lemuria, and the elevation of Atlantis, concerning both of which one may find innumerable legends in all parts of the world, clothed in different language, attributed to different authors and sources but referring directly to these two cataclysms. Nor have we reason to believe that in any age there existed *none* who thoroughly understood and appreciated the true meaning of the legends or the astronomical and geographical conditions to which they point. The Egyptian priests assured Herodotus that the Sun had not always risen where it *now* rises, "and that in former times the ecliptic had cut the equator at right angles"; and while a Greek, Xenophantes, guided by his religious belief that Phaeton "in his desire to learn the *hidden* truth, made the Sun deviate from its usual course" declared that "the Sun turned towards another country," we find Joshua in the Jewish Bible saying:

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies — x, 12-13

— which achievement, rather astounding if taken literally, has probably its esoteric significance.

If then, we can with unbiased judgment accept the facts which these

legends seek to symbolize, we shall be in a position to appreciate the significance of this myth of Phaeton and Apollo.

The first event we are apprised of in the legend is the desire of Phaeton, as he declares, to vindicate his divine origin. No philanthropic or altruistic motive is suggested for this, but simply the satisfaction of the personality. As we have seen, one Greek writer speaks of Phaeton as seeking "*inner*" truths. Needless to say, every legend has at least *seven* aspects; hence whatever interpretation we attempt in this instance can be but *one* out of a number. However, in view of the teaching that the great continent Lemuria was destroyed *by subterranean fires* at a time when its inhabitants had acquired immense occult knowledge, had abused this knowledge, and in seeking to acquire added knowledge of still more hidden mysteries must necessarily bring more evil upon themselves, may we not interpret Phaeton's quest as symbolizing this very ambition of the Lemurians for hidden knowledge and the power it should bring with it? Under such an interpretation Phaeton becomes the Third Race on the eve of its destruction; his rash interference with his father's task of driving the chariot of the sun, the unholy exploitation of the men of the Third Race, in their decline, of potent occult forces; the mad and fatal career of Phaeton in his sun chariot through the sky, the mighty cosmic disturbances brought about karmically by the needs of the Third Race; his death by Jupiter's bolt and his descent into the river Eridanus, the destruction of the Race by fire and the ultimate submersion of the continent itself.

The above is *one* aspect of the myth. When, however, we come to consider the symbology of that wild ride through the heavens we are called upon to enlarge our interpretation, to take in periods still more vast and a field of cosmic evolution yet more comprehensive.

The steeds of Apollo, it will be remembered, bore the chariot first northward to the domain of the Great and Little Bear, and to the sleeping place of the Serpent which lies coiled about the north pole. Later the ungoverned team rush southward and netherward where they are said to have scorched the lands of Greece, Scythia and Africa

until at length the hapless occupant of the chariot is cast into the Eridanus where his three sisters the Heliades wept over his loss, their tears becoming drops of amber.

This portion of the myth, according to the Theosophic teachings, refers to two Great Ages in evolution. The course of the chariot up to the domain of the Bear and Serpent symbolizing the change of climate which converted the polar regions at that period into a land of warm semi-tropical climate — the home and birth-place of nascent physical man. The later southerly turn and the ultimate ejection of Phaeton into the river Eridanus depicts for us the second great change when once more the "burning north" was chilled in the icy waters of those Polar Regions familiar to us today.

As our Sun is the center of our universe, it stands to reason that such changes as these could come about only in one way — changes in the position of the earth's axis. To such changes H. P. Blavatsky refers again and again, from some of which we quote:

According to the old teaching, the axis of the earth gradually changes its inclination to the ecliptic, and at the period referred to, this inclination was such that a polar day lasted during the whole period of the earth's revolution about the sun, when a kind of twilight of very short duration intervened; after which the polar land resumed its position directly under the solar rays. This may be contrary to astronomy as now taught and understood: but who can say that changes in the motion of the earth, which do not take place now, did not occur millions of years back? — *S. D.*, II, 292

It is of this cataclysm [the submersion of Atlantis] that the old records say (*See the "Book of Enoch"*) that "the ends of the Earth got loose"; and upon which the legends and allegories of Vaivasvata, Xisuthrus, Noah, Deukalion and all the *tutti quanti* of the Elect saved, have been built. Tradition, taking into no account the difference between sidereal and geological phenomena, calls both indifferently "deluges." Yet there is a

great difference. The cataclysm which destroyed the huge continent of which Australia is the largest relic, was due to a series of subterranean convulsions and the breaking asunder of the ocean floors. That which put an end to its successor — the fourth continent — was brought on by successive disturbances in the axial rotation. It began during the earliest tertiary periods, and, continuing for long ages, carried away successively the last vestige of Atlantis, with the exception, perhaps, of Ceylon and a small portion of what is now Africa. — *Op. cit.*, II, 314

Herodotus (*Thalia*, No. 77) tells posterity that when Cambyses entered the temple of the Kabirim, he went into an inextinguishable fit of laughter, on perceiving what he thought a man erect and a woman standing on the top of her head before him. These were the poles, however, whose symbol was intended to commemorate "the passing of the original North Pole of the Earth to the South Pole of the Heaven," as perceived by Mackey. But they represented also the poles *inverted*, in consequence of the great inclination of the axis, bringing each time as a result the displacement of the Oceans, the submersion of the polar lands, and the consequent *upheaval* of new continents in the equatorial regions, and *vice versa*. — *Op. cit.*, II, 360

And so one might continue to accumulate evidence brought forth by that champion of Truth, who gave generously and without the timidity of bias and prejudice. One turns from her works to the contemplation of such legends as the above with a gratifying sense that those imaginative symbols of the past are *not* childish, meaningless, and unreal, but in very truth crystallized memories of a great and glorious past for this race of man. As H. P. B. pertinently remarks, the allegory of the Phaeton and Apollo myth, "if well understood ought to be a demonstration of the enormous antiquity of the human races." (*Op. cit.*, II, 770, fte.)

Such is the native grandeur of this solar myth of ancient Greece when clothed in its true symbology.

The Theosophical Forum

APPLIED OCCULTISM — *Jean Van Mater*

Applied Occultism boasts a vast and ancient history, for it is the heart of all true religions and philosophies. It is the motivating power behind the words of World-Teachers and inspired or illuminated men; and it is the core of Theosophy, the modern presentation of an ageless wisdom. The truths of occultism have been available always to people of every age, although necessarily veiled by secrecy in dangerously dogmatic periods. Today there is an almost unequalled spiritual liberty which allows mankind to pursue truth freely, unhindered by traditional doctrines.

In *Studies in Occultism*, H. P. Blavatsky writes:

Will these candidates to Wisdom and Power feel very indignant if told the plain truth? It is not only useful, but it has now become *necessary* to disabuse most of them and before it is too late. This truth may be said in a few words: There are not in the West half-a-dozen among the fervent hundreds who call themselves "Occultists," who have even an approximately correct idea of the nature of the Science they seek to master. With a few exceptions, they are all on the highway to Sorcery. Let them restore some order in the chaos that reigns in their minds, before they protest against this statement. Let them first learn the true relation in which the Occult Sciences stand to Occultism, and the difference between the two, and then feel wrathful if they still think themselves right. Meanwhile, let them learn that Occultism differs from Magic and other secret Sciences as the glorious Sun does from a rush-light, as the immutable and immortal Spirit of Man — the reflection of the absolute, causeless, and unknowable ALL — differs from the mortal clay — the human body. — p. 21

This passage points up the sharp distinction between Occultism and the

occult arts. Succeeding leaders of the Theosophical Society have given added warnings of the dangers confronting the student who confuses these two terms. Occultism is Altruism, the science of right living. It is an awareness of the Reality behind and hidden within manifested life. Inner development, inner realization, are states of consciousness; they cannot be sold or purchased.

In our time, particularly, we are faced with an increasing interest in the occult arts. People are offered, for a price, certain powers guaranteed to bring material gain; perhaps more money, a better job, or power over others. Students of the occult sciences assume they are becoming Occultists — usually because they have not been told differently. Perhaps the greatest single danger connected with the occult arts is a growing appetite for the sensationalism of psychic phenomena. Held captive by the fascination of this aspect of Nature, the opportunities for spiritual growth which daily life offers slip by the student. This hunger for sensationalism has no place in the life of the true Occultist, for in its highest and strictest interpretation Occultism *per se* can be practised only by those who have mastered life, men and women of high spiritual standing whose selfless devotion and service make them Helpers of Humanity.

Because Occultism is a spiritual art, its application demands a certain amount of study, a knowledge of the teachings to be made manifest in life. Such a study will strengthen the student's concentrative ability and prepare him to explain his beliefs coherently to others. One might say that study is a method of concreting intuitive thought. Still, hand in hand with learning walks the power of application, each supporting the other and maintaining balance. The student who retains this inner equilibrium also gains confidence, in himself and in others.

There are examples in daily life. The individual who wins respect and confidence in any capacity is one who has learned to apply his knowledge expertly and whose interest and enthusiasm urge him on to greater accomplishments. Just so in Occultism, the student enlarges his understanding by practical application and gradually becomes skilled

in the science of right living. Even a brief review of the world's sages and seers would reveal a study in Applied Occultism, for their lives illustrate the occult teachings and serve as examples for all who would follow the pathway to Truth.

Occultism, or Theosophy, teaches that man is a spiritual being in whom burns the flame of Divinity. Man is also mortal, which results in his duality. Life's purpose is the merging of the human with the spiritual, a continual transmutation of the lower by the higher. All life flows from a single spiritual source, making the universe a unit of interdependent, inter-acting parts. Nothing is separate and all things work toward the same spiritual destiny.

Included in this synthesized statement of the doctrine of non-separateness is that of Brotherhood, undoubtedly the most basic for the would-be occultist, since its violation is in direct opposition to Universal Harmony and Unity. As Plotinus stated, "When thou reverest the soul of another, thou art revering thyself." The constant practice of Brotherhood is the only way to Self-Knowledge. Almost everyone agrees that the *idea* of Brotherhood is magnificent, but the instability and insecurity of world affairs, the outbreak of war, the constant bickering among nations and among the peoples within each nation, make the idea of a practised Brotherhood seem wholly impossible. One is inclined to look at world affairs and then put Brotherhood into the background until things look more promising.

There will never be a Brotherhood of mankind without effort and leadership, for it involves a transition of character and the acquirement of a set of values quite foreign to the limited sphere of human values. Individuals with the courage and will to practise Brotherhood in small ways, in the family, among friends and acquaintances and in the community, could establish the starting-point for a reformed and more harmonious world. Small kindnesses, forgiveness, sympathy and understanding will mature quite naturally into greater expressions of these qualities. These simple yet difficult rules *are* Applied Occultism and constitute the only means for a

spiritual and peaceful world.

Each man has the power to direct his own evolution. Because man is a thinker and a creator, within him lie salvation or destruction. In any one life a man may go forward, stand still, or go backwards, according to the thought-world in which he has his existence. Yet there is nothing except man's own lower nature to bar his spiritual progress, provided his aspirations lie in that direction.

Occultism does not change with the passage of time, for Truth and the way to a realization of Truth are ageless. Today the Ancient Wisdom is given more freely than has been possible for many long ages. The mysteries of Nature are before the public eye in the form of teachings which explain true Occultism. A comprehension of these teachings will unlock the door to man's inner nature. With its application come the qualities of compassion, gentleness, justice and non-retaliation, the only gifts which lead to the Heart of the Universe.

The Theosophical Forum

ARIADNE'S THREAD: II — *Hazel Minot*

[**Note:** page numbers cited for *The Esoteric Tradition* are to the 2-vol. Second Edition and do not correspond to the 1-vol. 3rd & Revised Edition.]

Through some fourteen centuries we have watched the pattern of the Ariadne Thread, held for the most part by those who were disciples of the Pythagorean, Platonic and Neo-Platonic Schools of thought. With the first quarter of the seventh century a.d., the pattern changed: a new World Religion was to find birth, and during some of the succeeding centuries which were barren periods for Europe, culturally, Mohammedan annals were filled with brilliant names in many fields of learning. Moreover, the conquest of Spain by the Arabs placed that country, during Moorish supremacy, far ahead of the rest of Europe in civilization. And while this influence was still at work there were learned men, students of the symbolic Kabala, who were handing on the Ariadne Thread. H. P. Blavatsky tells us that "History catches glimpses of famous kabalists ever since the eleventh century. The Mediaeval ages, and even our own times, have had an enormous number of the most learned and intellectual men who were students of the *Kabala*." — *Theosophical Glossary*

The Middle Ages were represented by two other distinctive groups: the Alchemists, and the Christian mystics. Of the former H. P. B. says:

"Some people — nay, the great majority — have accused alchemists of charlatanry and false pretending. Surely such men as Roger Bacon, Agrippa, Henry Kunrath, and the Arabian Geber (the first to introduce into Europe some of the secrets of chemistry), can hardly be treated as impostors — least of all as fools. Scientists who are reforming the science of physics upon the basis of the atomic theory of Demokritus, as restated by John Dalton, conveniently forget that Demokritus, of Abdera, was an

alchemist, and that the mind that was capable of penetrating so far into the secret operations of nature in one direction must have had good reasons to study and become a Hermetic philosopher." — *Isis Unveiled*, xxv

We continue, then, from the

SEVENTH CENTURY, A.D., 570-632

Mohammed, referred to by William Q. Judge, as a minor, intermediate Avatara. Dr. de Purucker, answering a question on this statement writes: ". . . a strong emphasis should be laid upon the word 'minor,' the truth being that Muhammed can be called an Avatara, but only by a great extension of the meaning of the word 'Avatara.' Muhammed did a certain racial work under the influence of a Ray from the Planetary Spirit, but was not conscious of his mission in this sense of the word, and was, in fact, but very little higher than any other noteworthy man who is made an instrument of karmic activity. In this sense only was Muhammed a minor Avatara, and he did indeed, as Judge says, belong to the 'civil, military, and religious' type." — *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, 697-8

EIGHTH CENTURY, A.D., last quarter-c. 1492

Sufiism, a form of Mohammedan mysticism, and "having its home chiefly in Persia." Dr. de Purucker writes that "the Persian Sufi mystics . . . were adherents of what may be called the Theosophy of Persian Mohammedanism." Quoting from Abu Yazld, "I am the wine I drink, and the cup-bearer of it," he adds: "The wine-cup, for these mystical writers, symbolized in general the 'Grace of God' as Christians might say, the influences and workings of the spiritual powers infilling the Universe." — *The Esoteric Tradition*, 76

NINTH CENTURY, A.D., c. 800-c. 891

Johannes Scotus Erigena, who stated that "in the larger process

of the world the primal causes descend into the elements, and the elements into bodies, then bodies are resolved into the elements again, and the elements into the primal causes." — *The Division of Nature*. And Dr. de Purucker comments: "Thus even in the writings of a mediaeval Neo-Platonist Christian theologian-philosopher may be found a clear echo of the archaic Wisdom-Religion and its teachings of the serial evolution or unfolding of the Universe, and its final return to its primordial divine source.

"Yet it must be remembered that Erigena's work was formally condemned by the official church and put on the *Index* in the thirteenth century, though it had dominated all mediaeval Christian thought for more than two centuries." — *E. T.*, 566

TENTH CENTURY, A.D.

The thread of mystical thought carried by various Sufi writers.

ELEVENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1091-1153

Bernard of Clairvaux, one of the mediaeval mystics who wrote thus on union with the Divine: "To lose thyself as it were, as if thou thyself wert not, and to have no consciousness at all of thyself — to empty out thyself almost to nothingness — such is the heavenly intercourse. . . . To achieve this, is to become the Divine: God." — Quoted in *E. T.*, 1004

TWELFTH CENTURY, A.D., 1135-1204

Moses Maimonides, "the great Jewish theologian and historian, who at one time was almost deified by his countrymen and afterward treated as a heretic. . . . This learned man has successfully demonstrated that the Chaldean Magic, the science of Moses and other learned thaumaturgists was wholly based on an extensive knowledge of the various and now forgotten branches of natural science." — *Isis*, I, 17

THIRTEENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1214-1294

Roger Bacon, "the friar, was laughed at as a quack, and is now generally numbered among "pretenders" to magic art; but his discoveries were nevertheless accepted, and are now used by those who ridicule him the most. Roger Bacon belonged by right if not by fact to that Brotherhood which includes all those who study the occult sciences." — *Isis*, I, 64-5

FOURTEENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1265-1321

Dante, about whom Dr. de Purucker gave the following as his own private conviction. "I think," he says, ". . . there was sufficient spiritual life in the man to allow the entrance into his consciousness, if you understand me, of a divine ray, which touched his brain, so that when he wrote his immortal poem he mentally set forth, although in Christian phrasing and terms, a great deal of the teaching of the ancient doctrine. There are the nine stages, or the nine or ten hells; there is purgatory and the terrestrial paradise; there are the nine or ten heavens — a typical mediaeval example of the Oriental teaching of the lokas and talas." — *Studies Occ. Phil.*, 504

FIFTEENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1401-1464

Nikolas de Cusa, whose "extraordinary genius in investigation, and in what was then broad-minded and courageous exploration of the mysteries of the Nature surrounding him and of the inspirations of his own inner nature, brought upon him charges of heresy including that of pantheism; and it is likely that only the personal friendship of three Popes, who seemed to stand in reverential awe of the genius of this great man, saved him from the fate which later befell Giordano Bruno, and still later, but in less degree, Galileo. Cardinal de Cusa has often been called a 'Reformer before the Reformation.' " — *E. T.*, 356-7

SIXTEENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1493-1541

Paracelsus, whom H. P. B. terms "the greatest occultist of the

middle ages." She quotes from Pfaff as follows: "What man has ever taken more comprehensive views of nature than Paracelsus? He was the bold creator of chemical medicines; the founder of courageous parties; victorious in controversy, belonging to those spirits who have created amongst us a new mode of thinking on the natural existence of things." H. P. B. says of his doctrine: "His incomprehensible though lively style must be read like the biblio-rolls of Ezekiel, '*within and without.*'" Further, she asks: "How did Paracelsus come to learn anything of the composition of the stars, when, till a very recent period — till the discovery of the spectroscope in fact — the constituents of the heavenly bodies were utterly unknown to our learned academies?" — *Isis*, I, 52, 167-8

1548-1600

Giordano Bruno. "In common with the Alexandrian Platonists, and the later Kabalists, he held that Jesus was a magician in the sense given to this appellation by Porphyry and Cicero, who call it the *divina sapientia* (divine knowledge), and by Philo Judaeus, who described the Magi as the most wonderful inquirers into the hidden mysteries of nature, not in the degrading sense given to the word magic in our century. In his noble conception, *the Magi were holy men, who, setting themselves apart from everything else on this earth, contemplated the divine virtues and understood the divine nature of the gods and spirits, the more clearly; and so, initiated others into the same mysteries.*" — *Isis*, I, 94

A paragraph from Bruno's *Confession* will give added light on his philosophy: "I hold, in brief, to an infinite universe, that is, an effect of infinite divine power, because I esteemed it a thing unworthy of divine goodness and power, that being able to produce besides this world another and infinite others, it should produce a finite world. Thus I have declared that there are infinite particular worlds similar to this of the earth, which,

with Pythagoras, I understand to be a star similar in nature with the moon, the other planets, and the other stars, which are infinite." — Quoted in *Isis*, I, 96

1575-1624

Jacob Boehme, "one of the most prominent Theosophists of the mediaeval ages. . . . He was a thorough born Mystic, and evidently of a constitution which is most rare; one of those fine natures whose material envelope impedes in no way the direct, even if only occasional, intercommunion between the intellectual and the spiritual Ego. It is this *Ego* which Jacob Boehme, like so many other untrained mystics, mistook for God." — *Theos. Gloss.*

In *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 634, H. P. B. refers to Boehme as "the Prince of all the medieval Seers," and in I, 494, as "the nursling of the genii (Nirmanakayas)."

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1614-1687

Henry More. "His faith in immortality and able arguments in demonstration of the survival of man's spirit after death are all based on the Pythagorean system, adopted by Cardan, Van Helmont, and other mystics. The infinite and uncreated spirit that we usually call GOD, a substance of the highest virtue and excellency, produced everything else by *emanative causality*." — *Isis*, I, 205-6

1632-1677

Spinoza. This "Netherlandish Jewish Pantheist re-echoed the teaching of the Upanishads of ancient Hindusthan in stating as the essence of his own philosophical doctrine that the Universe is but a manifestation or a reflection of the consciousness of the Kosmic Divinity." — *E. T.*, 150. H. P. B. writes as follows: "It may be correctly stated that were Leibnitz" and Spinoza's systems reconciled, the essence and Spirit of esoteric philosophy would

be made to appear. From the shock of the two — as opposed to the Cartesian system — emerge the truths of the Archaic doctrine." — *S. D.*, I, 628-9 Of Leibnitz (I, 619-20) she says that he "came several times very near the truth, but defined monadic evolution incorrectly, which is not to be wondered at, since he was not an INITIATE, nor even a Mystic, only a very intuitional philosopher."

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, A.D. ?

St. Germain. "He never laid claim to spiritual powers, but proved to have a right to such claim. . . . As a matter of course, he had numerous enemies, and therefore it is not to be wondered at if all the gossip invented about him is now attributed to his own confessions. . . . If he said that "he had been born in Chaldea and professed to possess the secrets of the Egyptian magicians and sages," he may have spoken truth without making any miraculous claim. There are Initiates, and not the highest either, who are placed in a condition to remember more than one of their past lives. . . . However that may be, Count St. Germain was certainly the greatest Oriental Adept Europe has seen during the last centuries. But Europe knew him not." — *Theos. Gloss.*

1743-1803

Louis Claude de Saint-Martin. "He was an ardent disciple of Jacob Boehme, and studied under Martinez Paschalis, finally founding a mystical semi-Masonic Lodge, "the Rectified Rite of St. Martin," with seven degrees. He was a true Theosophist. At the present moment [c. 1890-1] some ambitious charlatans in Paris are caricaturing him and passing themselves off as initiated Martinists, and thus dishonouring the name of the late Adept." — *Theos. Gloss.*

In the Foreword to *Theosophic Correspondence*, A. L. Conger writes: "Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, Cagliostro, and the Count

Saint Germain in their respective ways exerted a major influence on the thought of their time as did Jacob Bohme in an earlier period. Old and crystallized molds of dogmatism were broken through, at least in the field of the best educated researchers. The courage of their followers, risking "burning at the stake" for their heresies, has given us, however, some fruits of their labor that we of the 20th century may benefit by their efforts."

NINETEENTH CENTURY, A.D., 1831-1891

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. "The Theosophist says that all these great names represent members of the one single brotherhood, who all have a single doctrine. And the extraordinary characters who now and again appear in western civilization, such as St. Germain, Jacob Boehme, Cagliostro, Paracelsus, Mesmer, Count St. Martin, and Madame H. P. Blavatsky, are agents for the doing of the work of the Great Lodge at the proper time. It is true they are generally reviled and classed as impostors — though no one can find out why they are when they generally confer benefits and lay down propositions or make discoveries of great value to science after they have died. . . . Madame Blavatsky brought once more to the attention of the West the most important system, long known to the Lodge, respecting man, his nature and destiny." — *The Ocean of Theosophy*, 10-11

In a tribute to H. P. Blavatsky after her death, W. Q. Judge wrote: "Amid all the turmoil of her life, above the din produced by those who charged her with deceit and fraud and others who defended, while month after month, and year after year, witnessed men and women entering the theosophical movement only to leave it soon with malignant phrases for H. P. B., there stands a fact we all might imitate — devotion absolute to her Master. "It was He," she writes, "who told me to devote myself to this, and I will never disobey and never turn back."

In 1888 H. P. B. wrote to William Q. Judge, whom she addressed

as her "*only friend*": "Night before last I was shown a bird's-eye view of the Theosophical Societies. I saw a few earnest reliable Theosophists in a death struggle with the world in general, with other — nominal but ambitious — Theosophists. The former are greater in numbers than you may think, and *they prevailed*, as you in *America will prevail*, if you only remain staunch to the Master's programme and true to yourselves. . . . The defending forces have to be judiciously — so scanty they are — distributed over the globe, wherever Theosophy is struggling against the powers of darkness."

Thus — the Ariadne Thread.

The Theosophical Forum

THE THEOSOPHY OF WILLIAM BLAKE — *Madeline Clark*

The path of the mystic is a strange one. . . . Even as a bird cleaves the eternal ether, so the mystic advances on a path not ordinarily manifest, a way which must be followed with care, because like the Great Light, which flashes forth and leaves only traces when it returns again to its center, only indications are left for those who come after seeking the same spiritual wisdom. Yet by these "traces," for such they are called in the Kabbala, the way can be discerned, and the truth discovered.

— William Q. Judge.

Gradually, like a star emerging from behind dark clouds, the work of William Blake is coming into its own. By most of his contemporaries considered to have been three parts mad, Blake is now seen to have been eminently sane and percipient — the *sanest* mind in England of his time, as more than one scholar has recently asserted. This is because, while showing notable sagacity and prudence as regards the affairs of this life, to him the mundane scene was interpenetrated by the Reality that escapes the unseeing eye. It speaks well for the growing perceptions of the present age that the prophetic books and symbolic poems which were his gift to the world are now being taken seriously and meeting with ever-increasing comprehension.

To all who have ever joyed in even one of Blake's luminous verses, a new book (1) by Dr. Bernard Blackstone, Lecturer in English Literature in the University College of Swansea, England, will open further doors in the labyrinth of understanding. For the author makes us see the mighty diorama of Blake's philosophy, he parts the curtain and we see what Blake saw: the Eternal Worlds, and man a potential collaborator with the gods therein.

The lofty symbolism of Blake is in truth an overpowering challenge, utterly beyond the scope of the lesser personal mentality. Each must

grapple with it for himself and find its inmost meaning: this Dr. Blackstone has obviously done, and what he passes on to us is not only a faithful account of Blake's life and an interpretation of his system ("tentative" though he claims it to be), but an urge to go exploring on our own account.

English Blake, he calls his book; not but what, all through its pages, Blake the universal overtops and overshadows the Blake of England, but that "Will Blake," as he often called himself, exemplified the very soul of what was best in English character on the one hand, and on the other, made England and its people the symbol of his dream of regeneration for all mankind. Dr. Blackstone says in his Preface:

Blake was proud of being an Englishman. His mind was soaked in the spirit of English history, in the rhythms of Milton and the Bible, in Chaucer and Shakespeare, and in the sights and sounds of the English countryside and the English metropolis. His art is the expression of a revolt from something peculiarly English towards something even more English — a revolt from the imposing tradition of philosophical thought from Bacon to Hartley, towards the ancient wisdom of the patriarchs who were the first inhabitants of "Albion's ancient Druid rocky shore." And he gave the name of Albion to the ancient primeval Man from whose torn body the earth and the heavens were created, and all the host of them. — p. vii

Moreover, there is no doubt that in some degree Blake represented, for England, along with the group which included the Anglo-American Thomas Paine, Joseph Priestley, William Godwin, and Mary Wollstonecraft, the great spiritualizing effort of the closing years of the 18th Century. Born in 1757, Blake's best period came at this time, and his boundless energy and forward-leaping imagination fitted him to take an adequate part in the new movement. This English group, contemporary with Saint-Germain and Saint-Martin in France, and with the inspired founders of the American Republic, held weekly private meetings in the little room over Joseph Johnson's Bookshop in

London; and it was here that in 1792 Blake saved the life of Paine, warning him not to go home from the meeting (where he had just been describing an inflammatory public address he had made the night before) but to proceed at once to France — "or you are a dead man." Only twenty minutes after Blake had seen Paine off on the packet for Calais a government order was issued for his arrest.

Dr. Blackstone discusses at some length the theosophists who influenced Blake, and their views regarding the Universe. Jacob Boehme was the first and chief of these: Boehme, like Blake, he says, used Beauty as a window to the Divine. Robert Fludd and Thomas Vaughan gave to Blake ideas of alchemical symbolism; Blake held with the Hermetists that Man is the Microcosm of the Divine. William Law's works were well known to him. Dr. Blackstone comments:

Whatever the defects of the theosophical view of the universe, it did at least stress two points which orthodox Baconian doctrine tended to forget First, the unity of all things. Second, the quality of life in all things. Nothing is dead, and there is no dualism of body and spirit, of Man and Nature, or of Man and God. There is, however, a balance of contraries — in the world, in Man, in the divine nature, and in this aspect theosophy forms as great a contrast to orthodox mysticism on the one hand as it does to orthodox science on the other. Orthodox mysticism insists that God is a unity, a *simplicity* inexpressible in any terms, even symbolic, the best we can do is to speak of Nothing, or Darkness, and we must not venture to suppose contradiction in the Divine Essence. Theosophy says No. there are contraries in the Divine Essence, through the interplay of these contraries Eternity becomes an ever-growing thing, not a static perfection. And through the doctrine of the contraries Boehme and Blake can explain . . . the creation of the world, and the existence of evil. —
p. 215

William Q. Judge, in his article on "Jacob Boehme and the Secret Doctrine," republished in THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM for March, 1950,

explains this doctrine of contraries from the present-day theosophical standpoint.

The general trend of Blake's life is well known: his incessant work as an engraver to keep bread in his mouth; his poverty, shared by his faithful wife Catherine; his absolute refusal to depart from his convictions, from his self-originated methods of preparing for the world his awakening doctrine. Yet we must not dwell too closely upon a picture of pinching poverty. There was another side; and Dr. Blackstone points out:

The idea still current of Blake as an uncultivated naif must be abandoned when we consider not only the intellectual level of the society to which he had access for the major part of his life but also the great variety of literature with which he was obviously acquainted. "I never look upon him as an unfortunate man of genius," said one who knew him. "He knew every great man of his day." — p. 27

At the weekly meetings at Joseph Johnson's, Blake discussed politics, philosophy, religion and literature, and met the authors who resorted to the bookseller's. Frederick Tatham, Blake's friend in his latter years, wrote of him:

His mental acquirements were incredible, he had read almost everything in whatsoever language, which language he always taught himself. — p. 28

And Professor Milton O. Percival sums up Blake's intellectual background as having included:

The Orphic and Pythagorean tradition, Neoplatonism in the whole of its extent, the Hermetic, kabbahstic, Gnostic, and alchemical writings, Erigena, Paracelsus, Boehme, and Swedenborg. . . . Anyone who undertakes to do Blake's reading after him will respect his prowess as a reader. . . . When Blake, in an impetuous moment, referred to himself as a "mental prince," he uttered no more than sober truth. — *William Blake's*

In addition, Blake eagerly read the English translations of the works of Hindu philosophy by Sir William Jones and Wilkins, which were coming out for the first time.

There is a curious parallelism between the life-story of William Blake and the successive works that came from his pen and brush (or graver). The matchless lyrics of the *Poetical Sketches*, and of the *Songs of Innocence* have the freshness of the morning of life — the lovely verses addressed to the four seasons; and that other, "To the Evening Star" with the exquisite lines

. . . Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake, speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver . . .

which Dr. Blackstone likens to some of the hymns of the Rig Veda, especially the hymn "To Night" in its English translation.

The *Songs of Innocence*, with their primitive emotions of unreasoned joy and infant woe, of Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love, have the power — momentarily at least — to create in us once more, "the child-state we have lost." They bring us a vision of "the child playing among the vital forms of the universe." Here, and later in the *Songs of Experience* and *The Four Zoas* are countless instances showing how Blake's whole soul was continuously working over the ills and pitiful wrongs of humankind: the terrors and sufferings of the little chimney-sweeps, the "charity children" sold into slavery in the factories; the harlots of the streets, the moral hypocrisy, the spiritual stagnation.

The gigantic framework of Blake's mythology embraces the complete "Circle of Destiny" — his own phrase — in which Man is caught up. "Before Time and Space were, Eternity was," paraphrases Dr. Blackstone. And the spiritual body of Man — the Adam Kadmon of the Kabbala — existed alone in Eternity "before Earth was, or globes of attraction." It is in this "Heavenly Man" that the Four Zoas, or Four Faces, have their being — rather, the Four Zoas are the Four Faces, or

aspects, the divine energies, of the Man in Eternity. They are the principles, recognizable in theosophy: Los, the Inner God, the Imagination, "each man's portion of Eternity"; Urizen, the cold principle of Reason and materiality; Luvah, the passions and emotions; and Tharmas, the body (matter). *The Book of Urizen* begins the narrative of the Fall of the Heavenly Man into matter, into the maelstrom of experience, "the valleys dark of self-hood." And Man is at grips with the task of transmuting the "base" passions into the pure gold of the Eternal. To help on this cosmic process, Blake personifies in the fiery Ore the Awakener, the Spirit of Revolution and renewal, he who sings:

The times are ended, shadows pass, the morning 'gins to break
— *America A Prophecy*, 217.

Los and Enitharmon, Luvah and Urizen and Ore are not to be placed in categories: they are archetypes, Protean in their various forms and aspects according to the phase of evolution in which they act. Significantly, "Seven Watchers guard the fallen Man."

"Europe: A Prophecy, The Song of Los, The Book of Los, and The Book of Ahania, all develop the grand scheme of the Circle of Destiny, each with a greater clarity, until in the Four Zoas (to which Dr. Black-stone devotes an elucidative chapter) the scheme is expounded in detail. The Heavenly Man, the microcosm of the Universe (Albion, in Blake's terminology), in his Fall has become divided from his divinity, and now through ages must re-unite himself with the Divine. In Blake's conception, "the soul itself is disintegrated, and has to reconcile every element of her being on the road back to Eternity." (Dr. Blackstone's words). This is reminiscent of the ancient Egyptian myth of the dismemberment of Osiris in the beginning of time, and man's obligation in gathering together the dismembered parts in order to arrive once more at spiritual wholeness. To do this, "man requires a new Selfhood continually," as Blake himself expressed it: "Self-annihilation" was necessary. In *Milton*, and again in *Jerusalem*, his later works, Blake brought forth this gospel of Renunciation, the complete

surrender of the human self to the Divine. Milton, used as a symbol of man, is made to plunge into the Abyss of experience, lest in the Last Judgment he be found un-annihilate, and be bound once more to his selfhood. And in *Jerusalem*, Albion, the "Ancient Man," unregenerate humanity, (especially English) "Throws himself into the Furnaces of Affliction," which immediately become

Fountains of Living Waters flowing from the Humanity Divine.

Los, the Divine, "the Inner God of Man," could live in Eternity if he wished, but renounces this felicity and through love remains in the world of generation. On his own behalf Blake cries, in the Preludium to the *Book of Urizen*:

Eternals! I hear your call gladly
Dictate swift winged words, & fear not
To unfold your dark visions of torment.

Even the Eternals (Immortals) "must forego each his own delight." "The rotation of the Wheel of Destiny is accompanied with the keenest anguish." Freedom from this wheel is only found in "the unconditioned, the Kingdom of Heaven, which is within." Milton addresses his Spectre with the words:

Such are the Laws of Eternity, that each shall mutually
Annihilate himself for others" good, as I for thee. . . .

. put off

In self-annihilation all that is not of God alone,
To put off Self and all I have, ever & ever . . .

. . .

The Negation is the Spectre, the Reasoning Power in Man.
This is a false Body, an Incrustation over my Immortal
Spirit, a Selfhood which must be put off & annihilated away.

— *Milton* 541-6.

Dr. Blackstone comments:

It is only when this shell has been sloughed off — this mask

discarded, that the true joy can spring, the joy of being what one really is.

It takes a poet, a poet of bardic power, to give expression to this most profound, most fundamental, of man's spiritual problems. But there was actual experience in the poet's own life to give reality and convincingness to these greatest of the prophetic books, the ideas for which poured into his consciousness during the one easeful interlude in his otherwise toilsome existence. This interlude was his three years' residence at Felpham in Sussex, where he was under the patronage of William Hayley, a well-to-do dilettante and poetaster, whose verse Blake was commissioned to illustrate. The relief of the change from London to the country, and his ecstasy on finding himself among the glories of nature were short-lived; he soon became uneasy in the conviction that at Felpham he had stepped out of the path of his destined mission, since Hayley thought nothing of Blake's own creative work, and demanded his complete application to his patron's affairs.

The almost universal lack of recognition of the value or seriousness of Blake's mystical works and his art seems to have reached a peak at this time, and at last he declared in a letter to his friend Thomas Butts:

I am not ashamed, afraid, or averse to tell you what Ought to be Told: That I am under the direction of Messengers from Heaven, Daily & Nightly; but the nature of such things is not, as some suppose, without trouble or care. Temptations are on the right hand & left; behind, the sea of time & space roars & follows swiftly; he who keeps not right onward is lost . . . — But if we fear to do the dictates of our Angels, & tremble at the Tasks set before us; if we refuse to do Spiritual Acts because of Natural Fears or Natural Desires! Who can describe the dismal torments of such a state! — I too well remember the Threats I heard! — "If you, who are organized by Divine Providence for spiritual communion, Refuse, & bury your Talent in the Earth, even tho" you should want Natural Bread, Sorrow and Desperation pursues you thro" life, & after death shame & confusion of face

to eternity. . ."

The following year saw him back at his graver's bench in London. In course of time the inner picture cleared, and Blake was able to write:

I am again Emerged into the light of day; . . . but I have travel'd thro" Perils & Darkness not unlike a Champion. I have Conquer'd, and shall Go on Conquering. Nothing can withstand the fury of my Course among the Stars of God & in the Abysses of the Accuser.

He had indeed plunged into the Abyss; for his return to London (1803) marked the beginning of years of struggle with poverty and non-recognition. He was called "an unfortunate lunatic" in the public prints. About 1807 his fortunes were at their lowest ebb. And Dr. Blackstone records how "In his commonplace book for Tuesday, 20 January, 1807, we find the simple and terrible entry: 'Between Two & Seven in the Evening — Despair.' "

The years 1811-17 were "years of obscurity," during which Blake was almost lost sight of. But he retreated not from his "determination to go on thinking and writing for his country's good." Moreover, the quality of what he produced still continued to mature and was leading up to the final splendor. He was still working on *Jerusalem* at this time, and we find these lines, which bespeak the undaunted heart:

. . . I rest not from my great task!
To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal Eyes
Of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought, into Eternity
Ever expanding in the Bosom of God, the Human Imagination.
— *Jerusalem*, p. 5

To his friend Butts, he had written in 1802:

The Thing I have most at heart — more than life, or all that seems to make life comfortable without — Is the Interest of True Religion and Science.

The truth is, he was an original in a highly conventional age. He was

pitted against forces of complacent materialism which could not be resolved by gentle reasoning, hence the violent imagery and thunder of his language as prophet and bard. While the age in which he lived had been nourished on the pale and artificial systems of Bacon, Locke, Hobbes, and Pope, Blake's mental fare had been the works of the great theosophists of all ages. Dr. Blackstone is at great pains to make clear to us just what this rationalistic web of thought was, against which Blake was at such odds. He traces back to Francis Bacon (1561-1626), whom H. P. Blavatsky describes as "one of the first to strike the keynote of materialism," (2) the origins of this pernicious and soul-destroying philosophy, which gave to man no higher faculty than the Reason, and no broader field of study than the phenomena of the material universe — and that only for his own increasing sense of comfort and well-being. The soul was to be lulled to rest in a cradle of finality and material security.

Francis Bacon, according to Dr. Blackstone, opposed the theosophical view of Nature, in both its mystical and its alchemical aspects, and refuted the teachings of the great English cabbalist Robert Fludd, though he does not refer to him by name. "But there is no doubt," continues Dr. Blackstone, "that the mainspring of Bacon's *Novum Organum*, his *machina technica* for the advancement of the sciences, was a turning away from the vitalistic universe of the theosophists to a mechanical universe: a manifold of material objects in space, dead matter analysable by dissection and experiment." Locke followed Bacon, but was more skeptical, and advocated sitting down "in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities." (3) "The great thing," Blackstone summarizes, "is to fix the "horizon" accurately, and then attend strictly to the territory on this side of the bounding line." But Blake's position was that "less than All cannot satisfy Man." "The Desire of Man being Infinite, the possession is Infinite, and himself Infinite." Then came Hobbes, in the later 17th century. With him the virtues and vices were simply reflexes, and man therefore not responsible. Alexander Pope, whose *Essay on Man* was sufficiently rich in moral reflections, still kept

primly within the boundary with his "Presume not God to scan." Even Newton failed to give the utmost spiritual meaning to his new conception of the material universe. The mental outlook for Blake's generation could be summed up, at least in the aspects of it that roused his cosmic indignation, in this way: Knowledge is merely sense-perception. *Laissez-faire*: "Life is just like that: we can do nothing about it." Man is merely a passive being. Self-love is the well-spring of all in man. Reason is the only curb upon nature. The attainment of pleasure and avoidance of pain is the end and aim of life. There is no free will.

Hence Blake's fierce denunciation of such theories, on the ground that they were the very negation of those energies of spiritual enterprise through the exercise of which alone there could be inner growth. To him it was essential that this smug complacency should be broken up; and he became, what the world in general did not welcome, a disturbing spiritual force, urging men to awaken — and to dare to change and grow.

His language is like a foreign tongue to all but the few. But take any one of the great prophetic poems, and without regard to its rational meaning, read on:

Thus were the stars of heaven created like a golden chain
To bind the Body of Man to heaven from falling into the Abyss
Each took his station & his course began with sorrow and care . . .

.

Traveling in silent majesty along their order'd ways
In right lined paths outmeasur'd by proportions of number,
weight,
And measure, mathematic motion wondrous along the deep,
In fiery pyramid, or Cube, or unornamented pillar square
Of fire, far shining, travelling along even to its destin'd end . . .

Read on in this way, and you find yourself at large in the Universe — in the awful freedom of the Boundless.

The poetry of Blake is effortless and purely inspirational: "a direct

transcription of reality." This is undoubtedly because there was behind it the inexhaustible energy of the eternal worlds. "His intelligence . . . is perfectly at home with conceptions from which the ordinary mind would shrink in alarm at the unusual and the gigantic." And Dr. Blackstone gives this astonishing evaluation:

The writings of Blake stand beside the Gita, the Upanishads, and the *Tao Teh Ching*, among the spiritual masterpieces of the world. In English literature there is no one to compare him with after the mystical writers of the Middle Ages . . . He has no progenitor, and he founded no school. He stands quite alone as a prophet at the close of the materialistic eighteenth century and the opening of the mechanistic nineteenth century, proclaiming in a spiritual wilderness the doctrine of the eternal world.

and intuitively he adds:

It is possible that the second half of the twentieth century will see a growing interchange of thought between East and West, and here Blake is undoubtedly our representative thinker.

We have no hesitation in adding that it is largely through the efforts of H. P. Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society since 1875, that the modern West has developed its perceptions up to the point where it can adumbrate a state of consciousness above the rationalizing faculty, and is the more ready both to make an intelligent approach to Oriental metaphysics, and to understand in degree the Western exponents of the same ancient doctrine.

In 1818 Blake was introduced to John Linnell, the Swedish-English artist, who became Blake's friend and benefactor, and who saw to it that Blake was given some part of the consideration that he deserved. Around the now aging poet-bard a group of young men gathered of their own accord, to listen to his discourse. They have left it on record that to them he seemed "a new kind of man." "He was energy itself, and shed around him a kindling influence." To them his humble lodging was "the House of the Interpreter." . . .

There have been mystics in all ages, each with his peculiar genius; but in William Blake we have one who combines the characters of mystic, philosopher, painter, and poet — "and presents all of these in the supreme degree."

Dr. Blackstone's book is illustrated with a reproduction of Linnell's head of Blake, and with a representative group of Blake's mystical designs and his engravings.

FOOTNOTES:

1. *English Blake*. By Bernard Blackstone, M.A., Ph.D., Cantab. Cambridge: at the University Press, 1949. xviii + 455 pp. \$6.50. ([return to text](#))
2. *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 481. ([return to text](#))
3. *Concerning Human Understanding*, Intro. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

OURSELVES AND OTHERS (1) — *Kenneth Morris*

In the Chinese language the word *Jen* is written first with a stroke which looks like the numeral ONE in our Arabic figures, and then two horizontal strokes. The first element, the figure one, stands for Man; and the two horizontal lines stand for the numeral two. The word means: Do unto others as you would they should do unto you. Man + two. The Individual, you or I, any man, and the plurality; the Ego -and the Non-ego; the right relation between a man and the world, humanity, the universe; which is, according to the Chinese way of thinking, reciprocal love, or Ourselves and Others and that relation that does really, and ought actually, to exist between us.

Now, what are we? To say we are human beings explains nothing. If you don't think at all; if your life is as that of the beasts of the field, why, that statement is quite satisfactory; all that needs saying has been said. But if you think and examine into things, you will need much more than that. You think a little more, and perhaps say: I am two things in one, a body and a soul. Or you may go to your Testament and say with Paul, a body, soul and spirit. Then comes up the question, What is the soul? And then, What is the spirit? And what is the difference between the soul and the spirit? Possibly, if you are curious, you will go to your minister about that; and I don't know what he will tell you.

Let us look into ourselves, and see what we can find out. Here first are our bodies: are they ourselves? Are our clothes ourselves? Of course not. We put on our clothes in the morning, and take them off at night; we get a new suit, and it lasts us a year or two, and then gets sold in a jumble sale — we have done with it. Our bodies are suits of clothes we put on at birth and take off and discard at death; they are the means whereby we live in this world and gain experience of life in this world.

Next consider the consciousness inside the body, the consciousness, I

said; but I am not so sure about that; I should have said consciousnesses, I think. For all in the same day three different types of thought may come into your mind or mine, and may find expression in words on our lips. We may say, I am hungry, I want a drink, I want a smoke; I desire this, that or the other thing. Or we may say, reasoning from the evidence in front of me, I believe the world to be round; or, I think man is a good deal more than his body; or, I believe in this or that philosophy or religion. Or again, the thought may come into your mind and pass your lips as words, I love my country; I wish to God I could do something to better the condition of humanity; I aspire to be something much grander and more noble than I am.

Here we see a different self speaking in three ways. This exemplifies three souls at least. Lowest is the animal soul, that desires. Above it is the human soul. We can call it so, as we have called the other the animal soul, because the lowest soul we have in common with the animals; they too desire things, but they don't think and reason; they don't believe the world is round, or that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal, or have religions or philosophies. And then, above the human soul, is what we may call the divine soul: that in us which aspires, which loves impersonally — loves without thought of getting anything in return for ourselves.

Now, which of those is ourself — our self-most self, so to say? Not the animal; because the animal soul may say, I want a drink, I desire this or that: and something else in us may reply: Yes, but you are not going to get it, because it would be bad for you! The thinking soul, the human one, may reason it out from experience that gratification of the desires of the animal self or soul leads to bodily sickness and to the dimming of its own, the human soul's, powers to think; so it may exercise control over the animal soul, and forbid it what it clamors for. So obviously that human soul is, so to speak, a selfer self in us than the animal self.

And as the human soul can train and educate the animal self, can permit it this and forbid it that, hold it in check, and even direct its energies, so that it shall come to desire ever finer and finer things; does

it not follow that the divine soul can also so educate and raise up the human soul? Doesn't it also follow that the three are associated thus together in each human individuality, for the purposes of evolution? The animal may evolve by association with its betters, the human; and the human may evolve by association with its better, the divine.

Did you ever think of the meaning of self-sacrifice? To sacrifice is what they call a transitive verb. It must have a subject, the one who does the sacrifice; and an object — the thing sacrificed. Thus we read of Abraham sacrificing the ram. Subject Abraham; verb sacrifice; object or thing sacrificed, the ram. And we read of many who sacrificed their lives for great causes, as Joan of Arc to free France from the English. But the fact that she sacrificed her life — gave her body to be burned — proves that her body was not herself, her life was not herself. Her Self was something behind and above body and life that decided that she could afford to give up body and life, things not herself, for the cause she believed in, because the Self-most-self of Joan of Arc is something higher and more inward still. And it is — Compassion.

Now what is compassion? The deepest feeling within one, that although one knows oneself to be suffering hell forever, yet there is a more real self within that will live forever, that Joan of Arc, for example, would live on forever in her people, her freed people. France was more really herself, more permanently herself, than she was herself. The self that was sacrificed was all that could be included under the term Joan of Arc, now and forever; the sacrificer was something greater than Joan of Arc.

To extend this thought. There is still a bigger self in us than the self of our country. It is the self of humanity. The man who had really found himself would live in and for humanity. He would never be able to rest content till all the suffering in the world was eliminated; he would feel it his — not duty so much as ardent pleasure to be making war on human suffering, and what causes human suffering, which is human selfishness; and what causes human selfishness, which is human ignorance. That ignorance which makes us identify ourselves with the

lowest selves in us; which keeps us from feeling and acting as the higher selves, the real selves in us. Now if we are those higher selves really; if the highest self is the divinest and inmost self in us — there is a saying of Jesus that ought to take on a new light "Ye are Gods; be ye perfect." Ye are Gods; that is, I am a god, thou art a god, he is a god, she is a god; we are gods; you are gods; they are gods.

Now we have come back to our starting point again, the Chinese word *Jen*. Ourselves and Others — *who are ourselves*.

Let us approach it from another angle. Let us forget all we have been taught, all religious and scientific views, and become as little children, that we may enter into the kingdom of heaven and discover something about the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. For if you are going to believe Jesus, the kingdom of heaven is something we can get into any moment, because as he said, It is within us here and now. Religion, however, has made it something you can get to when you are dead; but Jesus when he used those words — and his opinions, like yours and mine and anybody else's, are worth finding out and looking into — meant something within us that is not generally known or considered; something divine, that we could come to know about. Let us call it the truth, or the secret of life and death, or the reality behind Religion. So if we are going to enter into it, we have to approach things with a child's mind: seeing what we do know very well for ourselves, and never mind what we have read in books or been taught in Sunday school or chapel or church or wherever else. What is the one thing you *know* for certain? Why, that you exist; that you are a conscious being. What is the one book you can read, everyone can read, literates and illiterates, Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics, and you and I? Why, ourselves.

And starting out from that certain knowledge, what can we infer? That we are conscious beings; and that we know we come from this universe. We know we are the children of the universe. And we have seen that our inmost self is universal; that the most real man is the most compassionate man; the biggest man is the man with the biggest and widest sympathies. He is the man in whom, the human soul has

trained the animal soul to discipline and obedience; and in whom the divine soul has trained the human soul to think and feel as it, the divine soul, does. He therefore is the man in whom the process of evolution has gone furthest. Now, doesn't it strike you that there we have stumbled on the purpose of life? — EVOLUTION.

There those three are associated in each of us; and unless we take the lowest of them, the animal soul, in hand, and evolve it, make it evolve, by disciplining our desires and passions, we suffer in health. Doesn't that suggest that they are there to evolve? And if so, that such evolution is the purpose of life? The purpose of nature — the thing the universe is doing, that it exists for?

It isn't a case of monkeys changing gradually, in generation after generation, until their children have miraculously been born men. That theory should not be called evolution at all, because evolution means the unfolding out of something, of some potentiality that is already in it; thus the oak tree evolves out of the acorn. The Darwinian theory ought to be called, not evolution, but as it is in French, Transformism. Evolution, so far as we are concerned, denotes the possibility of the human, thinking soul in man capturing, taming and training the animal soul, and making it human; and of the divine soul capturing and inspiring the human soul, and making it divine. Anyone who wants to believe that this process begins, for every triad of animal, human and divine souls, at the birth of the body they are to inhabit, and that it ends with the death of that body, may do so; but he must have queer ideas as to the economy of the universe. It would be like a book that begins half way down page 308 and ends in the middle of a sentence; but for the moment, never mind that. What I want you to hold in mind is, that the purpose of life, of nature, of the universe, is *Evolution*.

Now who is wise, who is sensible, who is likely to succeed? The man who works in accordance with natural law, or the man who works against it? The man who furthers the purpose of the universe and life and nature, or the fool who tries to stop the broad stream of evolution

from flowing on its majestic way? I need hardly ask, need I? Obviously the man who allies himself with evolution is the sensible man. How can we do it?

Well, first and foremost, by being the human soul in us instead of the animal soul; and that can only be done by making the human soul gravitate up towards the divine soul. Now what is the divine soul? The one that thinks and feels not in our limited personalities, but in humanity. The one that lives for others, not for self. The motivating force of evolution.

That much can be said to everyone in the world. I want to say something particularly to the Rhondda people.

My home, up till two years ago, was in one of the most beautiful spots in one of the loveliest countries in the world, California. There the sun shines, I suppose at least three hundred and fifty days in the year; all day long on about three hundred days. There the cities have wide clean streets; the buildings are fine and handsome, nearly all of them. In the suburbs, where the people live, the gardens run down to the pavements, with no dividing wall or hedge; you walk with the flowers beside you; at the ends of the streets you see vistas of mountains, pale blue, dark blue, purple, sometimes capped with snow. The streets are avenues of beautiful trees. That is a lovely land, and, in general, mankind works to preserve and enhance its loveliness. Well — hiraeth called me back to Wales.

And then I chanced to come to the Rhondda to lecture. And I saw the Rhondda, that once was a valley of pure beauty; how grimly hideous men have made it. And I spoke to Rhondda people; and I said to myself, There is where I must live.

I saw the Rhondda, where there is not a street or building that isn't hideous; where even, so far as it is possible to do it, men have spoilt the outlines of the eternal hills themselves with vile coal-tips; where the children seem to have nowhere to play but in the hideous streets; where the automobiles kill them. Little Doris Pennington was killed at

Llwynypia the other day; I owe it to her memory and her parents' sorrow to press this point on you. And — I spoke to Rhondda people.

It wasn't just that they are my own people: of my own race, or if not that, of my own country. There was more to it than that. I'll try to tell you how I felt: how I always feel in speaking to Rhondda people; how they — how you — make me feel.

Have you ever tried the experiment with salt and a glass of water? You put a spoonful of salt in, and it melts, and the water is still clear. And you put in another, and the water is still clear. And you go on putting salt in, spoonful by spoonful, until what I think is called the saturation point is reached; anyhow, that will convey the meaning. Then suddenly, after the last spoonful is put in, there is no longer clear water in the glass, but opaque, unliquid salt.

Or, haven't you felt in singing: that you can start singing, and go on, and in your singing reach upwards, and get something greater, and something greater again, and something still greater; until you feel that somewhere above you or ahead of you that you might reach is a point where you could transform the universe; where it wouldn't be just singing any more, but magic?

Or again, sometimes in the East, in China or Japan, you hear the temple bells. They are not like our churchbells, that flurry out their peals impatiently, and seem extraordinarily excited about something. Instead, a low, deep, round, clear note booms out, and drifts along the twilight valleys, and steals into your consciousness with deep and deep and deeper peace. And when the vibration is dying, out it booms and sings and rolls again, and lifts you yet higher; until you feel that sometime will come a boom, gonglike, that will shatter the visible universe, and reveal the fairyland that is behind it, and reveal the villagers, the coolies, everyone, yourself included, as a god, an angel, the disguise of his vulgar humanity thrown aside.

Well — that's how the Rhondda miner makes me feel every time. That if just the right note could be struck; just the right word said; just the

last spoonful of the salt of inspiration put into the water of his mind — there would be a transformation.

I see a lot of evidence of the animal soul in him, and above all in the valley he lives in. It is chaotic, undisciplined, unimproved; hideous is this once lovely valley; and it is man that has made it so. But, I see a deal of evidence of the human soul behind all that waste. I contact the men who think, who study. I speak to men who listen keenly, who weigh what I say, who appreciate thought and reason. But — and here is the point: I never look into your eyes but I see the divine soul. I meet young men roaring and shouting through the streets at night, keeping sleep from the eyes of tired women, of the sick and the aged: and, Yes, the animal soul is undisciplined, I say to myself; and that is the work of the chaotic, undisciplined animal soul; but behind it there is still that which makes me say to myself: Yes; Jesus was right after all when he said, Ye are Gods; that each of us, in the inmost reality of his being, is a god, a divinity, a thing of wisdom, power, beauty and compassion. And, a passion comes on me to evoke, to call forth, to bring into conscious life and action, that wonderful divinity I sense in you.

How do it? You who are out of work, who have all the hours of the day to fill somehow, could you find no means of furthering the work of evolution in those hours? To go against nature is to live in and for yourself; to go with nature is to live for others. He who makes what is hideous beautiful, what is inharmonious harmonious, is working with and for evolution. He who joins with his fellows in such a work, subordinating himself and his desires, is doubly working with and for evolution. Is there no way in which the unemployed could combine to improve the Rhondda? To make beauty of this ugliness, brightness of this gloom, playgrounds for the kiddies or parks or gardens of the vile coaltips? I don't know. But — is there no way? And — it would be bringing happiness into lives that can't be too happy; because there is no happiness like that gainable from working for no reward, for no personal benefit, but for the good of others. There is no happiness like that; because, think! When the animal soul or self gets what it desires, it looks upon that as happiness; but there comes a quick reaction; to tell

us that that animal soul or self is not really ourself but something in our charge; a servant we must train; gratifying it is not gratifying our Self. To gratify the human self, to think — yes, that is not so bad; that is satisfying up to a point; but it does not bring the real thrill of happiness which gratifying the divine self does.

And there is one other point I would like to bring before you. There is a way of finding out about things. If you have been interested in any of the thoughts I have brought before you: there is a way of following it up. The kingdom of heaven is within you, here and now; it may be given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Or rather, that privilege is one that you may take for yourself; as it says, the kingdom of heaven is taken by violence, that is, by a man's own efforts. What does that mean but that a man may come to know, he may learn, he may find out for himself, the truth about the universe and life, the hidden things? I have just been trying to tell you a little about Theosophy, which word means divine wisdom, wisdom from the divine self in man. If you want happiness, why, follow up that teaching, and find out by its aid for yourselves: it will give you the key, what is the real truth about Ourselves and Others. It isn't a new religion; it isn't a religion, one of the many religions, at all; but simply the key to the truth underlying all religions.

FOOTNOTE:

1. Address given before a group of Welsh miners in the Rhondda Valley where Kenneth Morris from 1930 until his death in 1937 labored to establish active theosophical centers among his countrymen. ([return to text](#))

[The Theosophical Forum](#)

WHAT IS TRUE PHILOSOPHY? — *C. Woodhead*

"Philosophy," says George T. Ladd, one-time professor of philosophy at Yale University, "is a critical and rational system of man's judgments and beliefs, that have reference to reality." If, however, we consult other standard authorities we shall find that philosophy covers a great deal more ground than that. One man sums it all up by calling it "reasoned science." Another says that it is "the equable temper that results from the study and understanding of the principles that govern things," in which he agrees with Bulwer Lytton who says, "Philosophy has become another name for mental quietude." Etymologically, as it is generally understood today, philosophy is said to mean *the love of wisdom*. But there is an older and deeper meaning hidden within its derivation, which will be referred to presently.

No man can live without philosophizing, and every man has a philosophy of his own. To each man it represents his comprehension of those laws of being which define his position in life, and the motives which govern his deeds, thoughts and aspirations. Such has been the case ever since man, in the course of his long dual evolution, united a self-conscious mind to the other principles of his nature. And so we may expect to find some evidences of a philosophy, wherever we find traces of the ideas and mental processes of long vanished races. In every part of the world where archeologists are now busy in upturning these buried memorials, we find allegorical symbols and carvings, many of them still unread, which unmistakably convey across the ages, in veiled language, the concepts of the earlier races of mankind. Of the meaning of some of these concepts we are already fairly well informed. Others remain undiscovered. And so the history of philosophy is as old as the human race.

In recognizing the existence of this archaic philosophy, we may note that in the days of ancient India, Egypt and Chaldea, the intelligent and conscious beings and forces which rule the destinies of the world

through the agency of man, were represented by poetic symbols in the forms of men, animals or geometrical figures. It is only within the last century that modern research has begun to understand this. The ignorance which attributed these symbols to a superstitious worship of gods or idols, is well nigh exploded. We might as well believe that the people of the United States worship the goddess of Liberty erected on a lofty pedestal in New York Bay, or the eagle upon the American flag.

Better known but still woefully misunderstood, is the symbolic cosmogony of ancient Greece. The mythological gods and goddesses of the Greeks were regarded by them as typifying the forces of divine and material nature, the aspirations and passions of man, the action of the Great Law of the Universe in its various harmonious manifestations. Shall we still unwisely persist in calling these heroic and cultured people superstitious pagans, because we fail to understand the beautiful allegories which underlie their poetic myths, and which are as true today as they were in the times of their inspired authors?

All these archaic philosophies are as yet comparatively unexplored. They afford a wealth of knowledge, and a depth of wisdom, which are not generally understood. They represent the highest ideals of learned and heroic civilizations. And those ideals have yet to become recognized once more, and incorporated in the philosophy of our modern every day life. When properly studied they will raise us far above that which has been sarcastically called "the philosophy of the steam-engine."

Before proceeding further, reference must be made to the Ancient Mysteries which have been so much misunderstood by some modern uninformed writers. In these representations the archaic philosophy of the early sages was dramatically presented and explained. So many centuries have elapsed since the Mysteries were obliged to give place to the prevalent degradation of ancient wisdom, that modern students have almost lost sight of these sacred symbolic ceremonies. They served to keep alight for ages the most arcane knowledge of man's divine origin and destiny, and almost every great philosopher of old

times was one of their Initiates. In *Isis Unveiled*, H. P. Blavatsky speaks of them as follows:

They were observances, generally kept secret from the profane and uninitiated, in which were taught by dramatic representation and other methods, the origin of things, the nature of the human spirit, its relations to the body, and the method of its purification and restoration to higher life. . . . As Plato and many other sages of antiquity affirm, the Mysteries were highly religious, moral and beneficent as a school of Ethics. . . . In short, the Mysteries were in every country a series of dramatic performances in which the mysteries of cosmogony and nature in general, were personified by the priests and neophytes, who enacted the parts of various gods and goddesses, repeating supposed scenes (allegories) from their respective lives. These were explained in their hidden meaning, to the candidate for initiation and incorporated into philosophical doctrines....When men like Pythagoras, Plato, and Iamblichus, renowned for their severe morality, took part in the Mysteries, and spoke of them with veneration, it ill behoves our modern critics to judge them rashly upon their merely external aspect.

"The wisest and best men in the Pagan world," says Dr. Warburton, "are unanimous in this, that the Mysteries were instituted pure, and proposed the noblest ends by the worthiest means."

More recent than this archaic philosophy, that which is generally called *ancient* philosophy is supposed to have taken its rise in Greece somewhere about the Sixth Century, b.c. It is almost entirely the product of Greek thought and it reached its culmination in Athens and in Alexandria.

Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle are the four great teachers of the early Greek philosophy, and of these Plato and Aristotle are the two best known to us. The teaching of Plato was highly intuitional and shows clearly that he was an Initiate of the Mysteries, while that of

Aristotle was coldly intellectual. "The philosophy of Plato," says Dr. Draper, "is a gorgeous castle in the air; that of Aristotle is a solid structure laboriously founded on a rock." However this may be, it would indeed have been well for humanity had succeeding generations pinned their faith to the teachings of Plato rather than to those of his great pupil Aristotle. For Aristotle was the founder of the modern science of intellect, the contriver of the syllogism, the inventor of that inductive philosophy which is little more than brain-mind argument. Could this great man only have foreseen how terribly his system of thought would be misused in future centuries, he would surely have adhered more closely to the teachings of his revered master.

For, fathered by ignorance and love of power and nourished by Aristotle's system of inductive logic, grew up that monstrous system of creed and dogma, which degraded the pure teachings of primitive Christianity and has held the world in ignorance of their true meaning for eighteen centuries. "Aristotelianism," said Professor W. A. Hammond of Cornell University, "became practically the official philosophy of the Catholic Church, which it still continues to be."

And so the ancient purity of the teachings of the Mysteries, of Pythagoras, of Plato and of Jesus became almost lost to humanity. The casuistry of Eusebius and Tertullian led the way to the mediaeval inquisition and to the teachings of the sons of Loyola. And even today, though the sun is plainly breaking through the clouds, and humanity is once more looking for the landmarks of ancient knowledge and true wisdom, yet the strife is by no means ended. Look for a moment at the signs of the times in both Europe and the United States.

With the exception of a brief revival at the great university of Alexandria in the Second and Third Centuries a.d., the archaic intuitional philosophy may be said to have died out with the school of Plato. The schools of the Sophists, the Cynics, the Stoics, the Epicureans, the Skeptics led the way to the work of the ecclesiasts of the early Christian centuries. St. Augustine devoted his great genius to explaining and justifying the theological dogma of his times by the aid

of a purely intellectual philosophy, and ultimately a blight of darkness and ignorance fell over Europe and Western Asia. Of these dark ages Professor James E. Creighton of Cornell University wrote as follows:

Scholasticism was the form under which the thought of the Western nations was molded and schooled for long centuries. Ostensibly at least, philosophy during this period was entirely subordinated to the accepted theological doctrines. *Credo ut untelligam* — I believe that I may understand — was its professed motto.

Then came the Renaissance, the various reformations of ecclesiastical system, and the revival of learning. Since that time a slow awakening has come to the Western world. Men of vast genius and learning have brought forth systems of thought which have swayed the minds of men, and have gradually broken up those perverted ideals which had passed through torrents of human bloodshed and suffering, and been found wanting. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Descartes, Francis Bacon, Locke, Hume, Priestley, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Fichte, Comte, Darwin, Spencer, Mill, have left noble records. Later days again have brought forth still more numerous speculations. Yet the intelligent yearnings of humanity are not satisfied. The Ancient Mysteries have passed away. The light of archaic philosophy has been nearly extinguished. And the world has discovered that there is something wanting. It is in danger of being overwhelmed in a chaos of self-seeking and of moral destruction. The signs of unrest are everywhere. Surely there is a remedy if it can be found. Let us try and find it.

In searching for a remedy for the existing troubles of the world a very little study will convince us that a merely speculative philosophy will be of small service. We need something lasting, true and eternal. Nothing less than this can do any good. For 2000 years and more, in fact since the times of Pythagoras and Plato, the world has been troubled with speculations. They have appealed very largely to the intellect, to selfishness and ambition. And now the time has come when a widespread opinion has gone abroad that (in the words of H. P.

Blavatsky) "there must be somewhere a philosophical and religious system which shall be scientific and not merely speculative. And in one of his dialogues Plato says:

The philosophers are those who are able to grasp the eternal and immutable; they are those who set their affections on that which in each case really exists.

There is a tradition among the pupils of H. P. Blavatsky, that she solved the problem in a few pregnant words: "The ancient and real meaning of philosophy," she said, "is not the love of wisdom but the wisdom of love."

In endeavoring to fathom the depth of this profound truth, we have to recognize the eternal nature of the divine man himself; he who dwells within the mortal frame of the outer man, and for whom the philosophizing brain is but an instrument. If we regard reason as the eye of the mind, then intuition is the eye of the soul which is the real man. The more a man meditates and philosophizes, the more he becomes aware that there is a subjective self within him, which is not that of his ordinary waking consciousness. Says Prof. G. T. Ladd:

The mind of man continues to believe that the forms of man's own mental life and cognition, do somehow represent the beings and events of a world which lies outside that of mental life.

All this the wise archaic sages knew well, but it is not generally taken into account in the systems of modern philosophy. Yet it is the key to the whole question of real philosophy. For if the divine soul of man which is the real perceiver of the good, the beautiful, the true, is other than the thinking brain mind, it can only be that which is omniscient on its own plane, and every effort of philosophy is but an aid to its unveiling. The nature, validity and limits of human reason, as defined by reason itself, is therefore a hopeless task.

All the philosophers of ancient days, amongst whom some of the greatest were the founders of the world-religions, were agreed in

teaching that the supreme motive in the Universe is that of boundless love and compassion. Tracing the evolution of existing things from this one unity, a wonderfully harmonious yet complex system was disclosed for man's intuitive recognition. This system included the totality of possible existences of men and things. The conviction that man, and all which he perceives, are thus but part of one great whole, is the first step to the unraveling of the great riddle of the universe.

What we need therefore in these days, is to cease the further comparative analysis of complexities, and seek the synthetic values and ideals which will lead us back to the heart of true being, on the road to which we are all fellow pilgrims. We should seek the similarity of religions rather than their divergences, and try to study the teachings of their divinely inspired founders themselves, rather than the theological dogmas of would-be interpreters which have grown around and obscured them. We should seek to do away with the differences of caste, creed, and color in our own minds and hearts. We should acknowledge the potential divinity of every human soul. These are the "counsels of perfection."

"Depth in philosophy," said Francis Bacon, "bringeth men's minds about to religion." For what is true religion but that tie which unites men in the common bond of their innate divinity, and what is the *philosopher's stone* of ancient allegory, but that wisdom of love which turns all the baser metals of our lower nature into the golden promise of a higher, truer and nobler life.

"Fear and hatred," said H. P. Blavatsky "are essentially the same. He who fears nothing will never hate, and he who hates nothing will never fear." This is but the analogue of the ancient maxim: "Perfect love casteth out fear." So the wisdom of love gives us boundless courage. It is well illustrated by the lives of those who have not feared either to die for humanity or to live a life of martyrdom in its service. It is a scientific fact on the plane of true being.

And this wisdom of love shows us also the wisdom of the forgiveness of injuries, the wisdom of toleration of each others' weaknesses, the

wisdom of non-resentfulness, the wisdom of the divine law which without favor combines justice with mercy.

It is the basis of the teachings of those Masters of human life, such as Gautama the Buddha, and Jesus the Christ, who having solved the mysteries surrounding the relationships which *really exist* between man and man, between every human soul and every other, have left behind them precepts for our guidance, that we also may solve these problems for ourselves and walk in their footsteps.

Although millenniums have passed away since these precepts were uttered, yet they remain as landmarks for our help and direction, and they shine with a light which can never be effaced. No effort to explain them away, nor to involve them in a cloud of smoky dogma or soul-destroying creed, can diminish their luster. They explain themselves to every man who will consider them with an unbiassed and unclouded mind, for the divine soul of each of us can always be trusted to recognize its own.

The Theosophical Forum

THEOSOPHY, THE INTERPRETER — *Audrey Klosterman*

Theosophy is no longer a word unknown to the world. It is no longer a mysterious sounding word, but is recognized as a body of teachings embracing Science, Philosophy and Religion. The origin of these teachings is lost in the mists of time and antiquity. They are as old as thinking man and the truths of this Wisdom teaching lie deeply imbedded in the consciousness of man.

This secret doctrine of the archaic ages has been recorded in all times and countries from ideographs to Devanagari. The literature of the world is filled with fables, myths, legends and fairy tales which would have little meaning if some great Truth were not hidden in the rich imagery and symbol of the tale. The literary historian, the mythologer and the anthropologist have brought to light evidence of these esoteric truths, but they have been unable through either lack of imagination or intuition to detect a Parent Doctrine.

It is a well known fact to scholars that all the great teachers — Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus and many others — taught by parable, and thus hid mystical secrets in allegory and symbol. This treasury of beautiful literature and teachings, inspired, lofty and noble, is the heritage of the modern world from the ancients. But to understand and comprehend its beauty in fulness, a key, an Interpreter, is necessary and that Interpreter is Theosophy, the Source from which all these ancient systems sprang.

A restatement of this wisdom of the gods was presented to the West in 1875 by H. P. Blavatsky, a Russian noblewoman. She has been called the lion-hearted because of the tremendous trials she endured in order to serve as a channel for these teachings. "In the words of Montaigne" she said: " I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them." Pull the "string" to pieces and cut it up in shreds, if you will. As for the nosegay

of FACTS — you will never be able to make away with these. You can only ignore them, and no more."

Today Theosophy has infiltrated into the thought-life of the world, especially the Western world. Great numbers of thinkers have come to drink from the pure, radiant, unadulterated Source of ancient wisdom. Some thinkers have discovered through Theosophy that they had a message to give to the world, some have established pseudo-cults, and others, particularly scientists, have had to remain silent in approving Theosophy for fear of ridicule from their colleagues. Nevertheless, Theosophy succeeded in breaking the molds of mind of nineteenth century dogmatism and is continuing to battle against the materialism of the twentieth century.

Aside from influencing the creative thinkers of today Theosophy has touched many thousands who have absorbed as much as they were capable of assimilating. No one can approach Theosophy, even superficially, without a quickening of the intellectual and spiritual faculties due to the force of vitalized, spiritual energy pouring forth from these teachings. The inner tendrils of man's nature are touched, and his mind and heart open up to new vistas of thinking and feeling which create a greater and vaster conception of living.

In the ordinary sense Theosophy is not a religion, science or philosophy, but it embraces these departments of thinking, perceiving Truth in its invisible as well as visible aspects. It is at the point of the visible and invisible where the majority and the few take separate paths. Of course, religion in the true sense has plumbed the depths of the invisible as evidenced by the reports of those "men who have walked with God." Science has studied and analyzed the behavior and contents of this physical universe. The scientist in his devotion to Truth is proving to himself step by step the laws governing the universe, benefiting mankind by the results of his labors and discoveries. However, arriving at the door of the Unknown, the scientist is baffled, and finds himself verging towards philosophy and the mystical. Philosophy is able to pull the veil aside a little more than science and

enters into intellectual realms. Only a synthesis of the three, religion, science and philosophy equals Truth as three sides of an equilateral triangle.

The entire teachings of the Secret Doctrine are founded on three fundamental propositions. To understand them well is to have light on every problem of life, and to think towards them stretches the imagination and expands the consciousness of man lifting him from the personal and limited to the impersonal, which is a world of freedom compared with the former.

To sketch briefly, the first proposition postulates an Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless, Immutable Principle which is the Absolute All, the Unity of all Life. This principle is the Causeless Cause, the Rootless Root of all manifestation. It is unthinkable and unspeakable to the limited brain-mind for It is Being and non-Being, Spirit and Matter, positive and negative. Its two aspects are Abstract Space and Absolute Motion. Be-ness rather than Being describes its unconditioned condition.

The second proposition affirms the Eternity of the Universe in toto as a Boundless Plane. Abstract Space is filled with galaxies, universes, solar systems, worlds, gods, men and atoms which are all subject to the law of periodicity. There is a constant ebb and flow of life, flux and reflux from the unmanifested to the manifested planes of existence. Each life energy has its allotted life-time-cycle which is like the wink of an eye in Eternity.

The third proposition asserts the fundamental identity of all life with the Universal Over-Soul. Every soul is a spark from this eternal flame of Being. Starting its adventure in manifested life in an elemental form this monadic essence progresses through a process of metempsychoses and reincarnations through all the kingdoms of Nature to godhood.

Based upon these three propositions man is weaving his destiny in this Cosmic drama on the vast stage of existence. He is a microcosm within a macrocosm, in other words he is a universe in miniature. Rooted in Divinity man has all the powers and forces of the Universe flowing

through him. He has free-will and a choice conditioned by the law of karma to use these forces constructively or destructively. Every thought that man thinks is either a building block in the structure of his being or a weakening of the foundation upon which he stands. Absolute justice rules the Universe and man is held responsible for every thought and act — being a collaborator and co-worker with the creator.

It is only by countless ages of suffering that man reaches the point where he rebels against being tossed about on the ocean of life like a bit of flotsam. He begins to see that every effect has a cause which he can control if he will but use his powers of awareness, discrimination and above all maintain a dogged determination to keep alert to the thought processes of his mind and the natural tendencies of his desires. He discovers that the qualities of Nature are real essences which can be made an integral, active part of his being. By striking a positive attitude of confidence in himself he can attract an array of helpers such as courage, optimism, trust, poise, conviction. Thus man becomes his own creator upon the pathway of self-directed evolution toward the goal of perfection. Not only does he benefit himself, but he lifts, strengthens and encourages all entities whom he contacts. In this way he becomes of real service to humanity.

What thousands of people today are crying for is proof that altruism exists in the reality of earth-life, that Universal Brotherhood is a fact in Nature, that there is Unity in all life. Theosophy can answer these questions, but it takes Theosophists who can prove that Theosophy can be a living power in their lives. Then humanity will be eager to listen to the doctrines of the Ancient Wisdom. It is a practical and materialistic age and the pull downwards is great; therefore, the pull upwards must be greater. Every fiber in man's nature is tested to the limit.

Equanimity and equilibrium must be maintained, but it must not be the equilibrium maintained by a machine. Impersonal Love, Harmony, Compassion as well as Equilibrium is at the Heart of the Universe and is likewise in the heart of man. By so constituting himself as a center of light man can be of real value to humanity giving confidence and

reassurance that there is a purpose to life, that man is spiritual and divine in origin, and that the evolutionary pathway of life is carrying man into the realm of the gods. This seeming chaos will eventually resolve into a magnificent conclusion. Such are the teachings of Theosophy.

The Theosophical Forum

THE ENIGMA OF EVOLUTION — *Allan J. Stover*

Those who attempt to trace the lines of plant and animal evolution through the scattered pages of history, find many places where the trail is lost, leaving gaps and missing links which science still hopes will someday be filled.

The average scientist sees but two choices: either there has been a continuous series of types ranging from the most primitive organism to the most complex; or there have been a number of special creations. The latter is of course unthinkable, so the student of evolution is thrown back upon the hypothesis of a continuous end-on line of development which has become a rigid dogma for many.

It is as though a two-dimensional being refused or was unable to recognize the existence of a third dimension, and attempted to explain the universe from this limited point of view alone. This shortcoming becomes apparent when we begin to study the life of the earth as a whole, for it is then that many questions arise. Why, for instance, is it that each new stock of life comes, not as one or two individuals which gradually increase in numbers to become families and genera; but suddenly appears in a flood of new and highly developed families, genera and species as though with a long period of evolution behind them? In fact, there appear to have been many diverging lines whose point of origin is lost in mystery.

Moreover, evolution does not proceed at anything like a uniform pace, but may remain at almost a standstill for immense periods of time. Then, coincident with a cycle affecting the whole earth, changing the climate and bringing about what is known as a geological revolution, there may occur a retardation of the old types of life and an almost explosive outpouring of new forms in a widespread rush of energy and vitality. This change in style is often so pronounced, it seems as though the world had come under new management.

In his article "Evolution — Is there Intelligence Behind It?" Dr. Robert Broom quoted Henry Fairfield Osborne as saying:

One after another, the original Buffonian, Lamarckian, Darwinian, Weismannian and De Vriesian theories of causation have failed. . . . All we can say at present is that nature does not waste time or effort with chance or fortuity or experiment, but that she proceeds directly and creatively to her marvellous adaptive ends of biomechanism. . . . We are more at a loss than ever to understand the causes of evolution.

— *South African Journal of Science*, 1933, XXX, 8

To this Dr. Broom adds from his own study and observation:

The origin of species and much of evolution appears to be due to some organizing and partly intelligent spiritual agency associated with the animal or plant, which controls its life processes and tends to keep the being more or less adapted to its environment.

But on a larger scale Dr. Broom sees the possibility of spiritual agencies of a far higher type whose duty is the care and evolution of larger groups such as the fishes, birds or mammals.

Compare the foregoing with the statement of H. P. Blavatsky as found in *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*:

But the noumenal germ of the oak exists beyond the plane of the Astral Light; it is only the subjective picture of it that already exists in the Astral Light, and the development of the oak tree is the result of the developed prototype in the Astral Light, which development proceeds from higher to lower planes, until on the lowest plane it has its last consolidation and development of form.

Gen. Jan Smuts with his understanding of "Holism" and Ecology carried the scientific understanding a step nearer the occult by declaring that the elimination of previous errors in regard to time and space has

brought a new conception of "the nature of scientific knowledge and of the relation of mind to matter. And this relation points to a still greater synthesis looming ahead, in which a spiritual view of the universe may not only be justified but may receive firm support from science itself." (Dr. Broom, *op. cit.*, p. 19)

The problems of plant and animal evolution will never be solved until the existence of inner planes of being are recognized and also that the life stream not only comes from the past, but even more important, from spiritual realms of which science knows little.

The more intuitive of the scientists are beginning to see the necessity for a spiritual conception of evolution, for it alone can solve the mysteries of plant and animal life. It is not the bodies (the houses of life) which evolve, but the indwelling spirit or eternal pilgrim itself which passes from plane to plane and from form to form through the ages. The bodies do not change from class to class but remain, so long as there is need for the type of experience offered by that particular form of life.

One great aid in the study of life through the geological ages, is to associate the times of accelerated evolution with corresponding cycles of climatic change and mountain building; for it is only when we view the interworking of all nature that need for the "greater synthesis" suggested by Gen. Smuts becomes apparent. Another fact which should be better known is that whole chapters of evolutionary history are lost, although this is seldom mentioned in the average textbook.

The transition periods when one type of life gives way to another are far more important than is usually supposed. Such a time marked the merging of the Mesozoic or Age of Reptiles and that of the flowering plants and mammals which followed. The transition time just mentioned has been called "The Time of the Great Dying," since it marked the disappearance of the hosts of Giant Reptiles and the evergreen forests were largely replaced by the broadleaved trees.

Regarding the eras of geologic history G. de Purucker has said:

The main point to remember is that the different great stocks of mineral, vegetable, and animal and human lives follow each other with coincident or coordinate great changes of land and sea, and therefore also of climates.

In other words, the stocks or beings, or monads, co-operate or co-ordinate and thus produce the different and serial and successive patterns of what we today call geological eras, or which the biologist or zoologist and botanist would call the successive waves of plant and animal and human life.

— *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, p. 475

We may learn something of the nature of these times of great change by studying the past, provided we are willing to accept whatever we may find. There are many indications that the world may be approaching a period of this nature again.

In 1893 W. Q. Judge wrote in a letter to the London Lodge:

So the Masters have said this is a transition age, and he who has ears to hear will hear what has thus been said. We are working for the new cycles and centuries. What we do now in this transition age will be like what the great Dhyan Chohans did in the transition point — the midway point — in evolution at the time when all matter and all types were in a transition and fluid state. They then gave the new impulse for the new types, which resulted later in all the vast varieties of nature. In the mental development we are now at the same point, and what we now do in faith and hope for others and for ourselves will result similarly on the plane to which it is all directed Hence we are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come, but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the race. That is why it may seem indefinite, but it is, nevertheless, very defined and very great in scope.

— *Irish Theosophist*, July 15, 1897, p. 186

Nature does not evolve unaided, a prey to chance and environment, for

the "Builders" follow the plans laid out by the "Architects" as the stream of life, whether of an individual or a race, descends from spiritual realms through plane after plane to the physical earth where outer forces shape and give final form to the design. The missing links which science is ever seeking will never be found on this plane.

W. Q. Judge continues:

Let me refer you to that part of *The Secret Doctrine*, penned by Master himself, where the midway point of evolution is explained in reference to the ungulate mammals. It should give you a glimpse of what we have to do, and remove all vain longings for a present sojourn with our unseen guides and brothers. — *Op. cit.*

Turning to the reference in Vol. II of *The Secret Doctrine*, p. 186, we find that

The "midway point" of evolution is that stage where the *astral* prototypes definitely begin to pass into the physical, and thus become subject to the differentiating agencies now operative around us. Physical causation supervenes immediately on the assumption of "coats of skin" — i.e. physiological equipment in general. The forms of Men and mammalia previous to the separation of sexes are woven out of astral matter and possess a structure utterly unlike that of the physical organisms, which eat, drink, digest, etc, etc, etc.

The ungulate mammals are referred to in this connection because there is probably no instance of animal evolution which is better understood or which so clearly illustrates the mysterious midway point beyond which fossil evidence ceases in that line of evolution.

The ungulate or hoofed animals are divided into two sections, the solid hoofed having an odd number of toes and the split hoofed in which the number of toes are even. These two types appear as two lines of descent diverging from a common ancestor, which has never been found.

This "midway point of evolution" where "all matter and types are in a transition and fluid state," has not been penetrated by science, although a few of the more intuitive begin to see its necessity.

The time of rapid physical evolution lies in the past when the life-waves were rushing downward to their fullest expression on the material plane, during the midpoint of this fourth round. Dr. Broom doubts if there has been any true evolution since the Eocene period or if new orders of plant or animal life can appear in the future.

At present we are entering the upward arc of our evolutionary course, and as stated by W. Q. Judge in his letter to the London Lodge the Masters are working "for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the race." The midpoint of our Fifth Root-Race is approaching and the way must be prepared. Similarly all midpoints are important and follow the same pattern on a lesser scale, each offering special opportunities to those who wish to serve humanity and help in the great work.

The Theosophical Forum

ENVIRONMENT — *Hadji Erinn (W. Q. Judge)*

To the Western mind the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation contain difficulties which while they seem imaginary to the Eastern student, are nevertheless for the Western man as real as any of the other numerous obstructions in the path of salvation. All difficulties are more or less imaginary, for the whole world and all its entanglements are said to be an illusion resulting from the notion of a separate I. But while we exist here in matter, and so long as there is a manifested universe, these illusions are real to that man who has not risen above them to the knowledge that they are but the masks behind which the reality is hidden.

For nearly twenty centuries the Western nations have been building up the notion of a separate I — of *meum* and *tuum* — and it is hard for them to accept any system which goes against those notions.

As they progress in what is called material civilization with all its dazzling allurements and aids to luxury, their delusion is further increased because they appraise the value of their doctrine by the results which seem to flow from it, until at last they push so far what they call the reign of law, that it becomes a reign of terror. All duty to their fellows is excluded from it in practice, although the beautiful doctrines of Jesus are preached to the people daily by preachers who are paid to preach but not to enforce, and who cannot insist upon the practice which should logically follow the theory because the consequences would be a loss of position and livelihood.

So when out of such a nation rises a mind that asks for help to find again the path that was lost, he is unconsciously much affected by the education not only of himself but also of his nation through all these centuries. He has inherited tendencies that are hard to be overcome. He battles with phantasms, real for him but mere dreams for the student who has been brought up under other influences.

When, therefore, he is told to rise above the body, to conquer it, to subdue his passions, his vanity, anger and ambition, he asks, "what if borne down by this environment, which I was involuntarily born into, I shall fail." Then when told that he must fight or die in the struggle, he may reply that the doctrine of Karma is cold and cruel because it holds him responsible for the consequences which appear to be the result of that unsought environment. It then becomes with him a question whether to fight and die, or to swim on with the current careless as to its conclusion but happy if perhaps it shall carry him into smooth water whose shores are elysian.

Or perhaps he is a student of occultism whose ambition has been fired by the prospect of adeptship, of attaining powers over nature, or what not.

Beginning the struggle he presently finds himself beset with difficulties which, not long after, he is convinced are solely the result of his environment. In his heart he says that Karma has unkindly put him where he must constantly work for a living for himself and a family: or he has a life long partner whose attitude is such that he is sure were he away from her he could progress: until at last he calls upon heaven to interpose and change the surroundings so opposed to his perfecting himself.

This man has indeed erred worse than the first. He has wrongly supposed that his environment was a thing to be hated and spurned away. Without distinctly so saying to himself, he has nursed within the recesses of his being the idea that he like Buddha could in this one life triumph over all the implacable forces and powers that bar the way to Nirvana. We should remember that the Buddha does not come every day but is the efflorescence of ages, who when the time is ripe surely appears in one place and in one body, not to work *for his own* advancement but for the *salvation of the world*.

What then of environment and what of its power over us?

Is environment Karma or is it Reincarnation? THE LAW is Karma,

reincarnation is only an incident. It is one of the means which The Law uses to bring us at last to the true light. The wheel of rebirths is turned over and over again by us in obedience to this law, so that we may at last come to place our entire reliance upon Karma. Nor is our environment Karma itself, for Karma is the subtle power which works in that environment.

There is nothing but the SELF — using the word Max Muller does to designate the Supreme Soul — and its environment. The Aryans for the latter use the word *Kosams* or sheaths. So that there is only this Self and the various sheaths by which it is clothed, beginning with the most intangible and coming down to the body, while outside of that and common to all is what is commonly known as environment whereas the word should be held to include all that is not The Self.

How unphilosophical therefore it is to quarrel with our surroundings, and to desire to escape them! We only escape one kind to immediately fall into another. And even did we come into the society of the wisest devotees we would still carry the environment of the Self in our own bodies, which will always be our enemy so long as we do not know what it is in all its smallest details. Coming down then to the particular person, it is plain that that part of the environment which consists in the circumstances of life and personal surroundings is only an incident, and that the real environment to be understood and cared about is that in which Karma itself inheres in us.

Thus we see that it is a mistake to say — as we often hear it said — "If he only had a fair chance; if his surroundings were more favorable he would do better," since he really *could not* be in any other circumstances at that time, for if he were it would not be he but some one else. It must be necessary for him to pass through those identical trials and disadvantages to perfect the Self; and it is only because we see but an infinitesimal part of the long series that any apparent confusion or difficulty arises. So our strife will be, not to escape from anything, but to realize that these *Kosams*, or sheaths, are an integral portion of ourselves, which we must fully understand before we can

change the abhorred surroundings. This is done by acknowledging the unity of spirit, by knowing that everything, good and bad alike, is the Supreme. We then come into harmony with the Supreme Soul, with the whole universe, and no environment is detrimental.

The very first step is to rise from considering the mere outside delusive environment, knowing it to be the result of past lives, the fruition of Karma done, and say with Uddalaka in speaking to his son:

"All this Universe has the Deity for its life. That Deity is the Truth. He is the Universal soul. He Thou art, O Svetaketu!"

— *The Path*, February 1887

The Theosophical Forum

THE CLOSING CYCLE — *William Q. Judge*

In the November number the "expiring Cycle" is referred to by Mr. Sinnett, and members are rightly warned not to be so absurd (though that is my word) as to think that after 1897 "some mysterious extinguisher will descend upon us."

Who is the person who gave out the concrete statement that 1897 was to be the close of a cycle when something would happen? It was H. P. Blavatsky. There is not the slightest doubt about it that she did say so, nor that she fully explained it to several persons. Nor is there any doubt at all that she said, as had been so long said from the year 1875, that 1897 would witness the shutting of a door. What door? Door to what? What was or is the end? Is the T. S. to end and close all the books?

Nothing is more plain than that H. P. Blavatsky said, on the direct authority of the Masters, that in the last twenty-five years of each century an effort is made by the Lodge and its agents with the West, and that it ceases in its direct and public form and influence with the twenty-fifth year. Those who believe her will believe this; those who think they know more about it than she did will invent other ideas suited to their fancies.

She explained, as will all those who are taught (as are many) by the same Masters, that were the public effort to go on any longer than that, a reaction would set in very similar to indigestion. Time must be given for assimilation, or the "dark shadow which follows all innovations" would crush the soul of man. The great public, the mass, must have time and also material. Time is ever. The matter has been furnished by the Masters in the work done by H. P. Blavatsky in her books, and what has grown out of those. She has said, the Masters have said, and I again assert it for the benefit of those who have any faith in me, that the Masters have told me that they helped her write the *Secret Doctrine* so

that the future seventy-five and more years should have some material to work on, and that in the coming years that book and its theories would be widely studied. The material given has then to be worked over, to be assimilated for the welfare of all. No extinguisher will fall therefore on us. The T. S., as a whole, will not have the incessant care of the Masters in every part, but must grow up to maturity on what it has with the help to come from those few who are "chosen." H. P. Blavatsky has clearly pointed out in the *Key*, in her conclusion, that the plan is to keep the T. S. alive as an active, free, unsectarian body during all the time of waiting for the next great messenger, who will be herself beyond question. Thereby will be furnished the well-made tool with which to work again in grander scale, and without the fearful opposition she had without and within when she began this time. And in all this time of waiting the Master, "that great Initiate, whose single will upholds the entire movement," will have his mighty hand spread out wide behind the Society.

Up to 1897 the door is open to anyone who has the courage, the force, and the virtue to TRY, so that he can go in and make a communication with the Lodge which shall not be broken at all when the cycle ends. But at the striking of the hour the door will shut, and not all your pleadings and cryings will open it to you. Those who have made the connection will have their own door open, but the public general door will be closed. That is the true relation of the "extinguisher" as given by H. P. Blavatsky and the Master. It seems very easy to understand.

"Many are called but few are chosen," because they would not allow it. The unchosen are those who have worked for themselves alone; those who have sought for knowledge for themselves without a care about the rest; those who have had the time, the money, and the ability to give good help to Masters' cause, long ago defined by them to be work for mankind and not for self, but have not used it thus. And sadly, too, some of the unmarked and unchosen are those who walked a long distance to the threshold, but stopped too long to hunt for the failings and the sins they were sure some brother pilgrim had and then they went back farther and farther, building walls behind them as they

went. They were called and almost chosen; the first faint lines of their names were beginning to develop in the book of this century; but as they retreated, thinking indeed, they were inside the door, the lines faded out, and other names flashed into view. Those other names are those belonging to humble persons here and there whom these proud aristocrats of occultism thought unworthy of a moment's notice. . . .

We have entered on the dim beginning of a new era already. It is the era of Western Occultism and of special and definite treatment and exposition of theories hitherto generally considered. We have to do as Buddha told his disciples: preach, promulgate, expound, illustrate, and make clear in detail all the great things we have learned. That is our work, and not the bringing out of surprising things about clairvoyance and other astral matters, nor the blinding of the eye of science by discoveries impossible for them but easy for the occultist. The Master's plan has not altered. He gave it out long ago. It is to make the world at large better, to prepare a right soil for the growing out of the powers of the soul, which are dangerous if they spring up in our present selfish soil. It is not the Black Lodge that tries to keep back psychic development; it is the White Lodge. The Black would fain have all the psychic powers full flower now, because in our wicked, mean, hypocritical, and money-getting people they would soon wreck the race. This idea may seem strange, but for those who will believe my unsupported word I say it is the Master's saying.

The Irish Theosophist, January 15, 1895

The Theosophical Forum

QUETZALCOATL — *Allan J. Stover*

Next to the sun itself, the most widespread concept of religious thought in Pre-Columbian America was that of the Plumed Serpent. It was to Ancient America what the cross was to Christian Europe: the focal point of human thought and conduct, an epitome of religious aspiration.

Everywhere in America, like the flotsam and jetsam left by a retreating tide, there exists the evidence of a culture which once spread its influence throughout Central America, Mexico, and far into both North and South America.

In *The Mahatma Letters* (p. 149) we find the following statement in regard to this period:

What do you know of America, for instance, before the invasion of that country by the Spaniards? Less than two centuries prior to the arrival of Cortez there was as great a "rush" towards progress among the *sub-races* of Peru and Mexico as there is now in Europe and the U. S. A. Their sub-race ended in nearly total annihilation through causes generated by itself; so will yours at the end of its cycle. We may speak only of the "stagnant conditions" into which, following the law of development, growth, maturity and decline every race and sub-race falls into during its transition periods.

Here lies the key to an understanding of history, not only of men, but of nations and races as well; for all are subject to the same cyclic law of periodic expansion and contraction. It explains the successive expansion of Greece, Rome and Europe to a position of world domination, and why each, after its period of world leadership, retires to rest and comparative inactivity.

Yet this period of rest also passes, and already the ancient peoples of

America, invigorated by a new impulse, are looking forward to a renaissance as a new racelet approaches rebirth.

What was the spiritual impulse, for high impulse there certainly was, which illumined this ancient civilization before it began its downward rush?

Many think the legends of Quetzalcoatl refer to the founder of a great culture. Others doubt if he actually existed and regard him as a mythical Sun-God who was reported to have left his solar abode to dwell among men for the purpose of founding a just civilization.

There is more here than mere myth, for once research passes beyond the debris left by the rush of the downward cycle — the ambitious priestcraft, the human sacrifice, the continual petty wars and the worship of dark elemental forces — we sense the illumination of the Ancient Wisdom and see unmistakable signs of a great Teacher.

The word Quetzalcoatl seems to have been the name of a historical personage who later became deified and worshiped as his teachings were either forgotten or rejected. But Quetzalcoatl was also a title held by a series of initiated Teachers, and held the same significance as the Naga of India or the Dragon of Wisdom of China.

While there are a multitude of legends obscuring rather than clarifying the historical Quetzalcoatl, most versions agree that a wise teacher came from the East, from the mystic region of Tlapallan landed on the coast, made his way inland to the highlands of Tule and later to Chululu, where he taught for twenty years. At the close of his life he is said to have instructed his four most faithful followers to rule the land until his return. Then he is believed to have departed for the East on a raft of serpents.

The four disciples debated long and at last decided that the best way to preserve the teachings was to incorporate them in the government and social customs of the country, and especially in the calendar system.

The principal teachings ascribed to him were those of all genuine

teachers — to live a virtuous life, to offer no sacrifices save the symbolic ones of fruits and flowers, and to engage in no wars or violence of any kind. To him also are credited the introduction of ideographic writing, metal-working, agriculture, and the intricate Central American calendar. His influence was very great. In Yucatan he was known as Kukulcan; among the Toltecs and Aztecs as Quetzalcoatl. Among the Zuni of New Mexico, Awana, the feathered serpent, still figures in an important ceremony. Quetzalcoatl is usually described as a white man with noble features, long black hair, and a full beard, in striking contrast to the Toltecs who were nearly beardless.

To attempt to record the multitudinous and often conflicting myths and legends gathered about this mysterious figure would only result in added confusion. There has been too much speculation about the person of the Teacher and too little about the message and meaning of the myth. There is, however, an understanding of the inner significance of the legend still preserved among the descendants of the Maya peoples of Central America. The symbology of this tradition is that of the bird and serpent, the higher and the lower, and is part of the Secret Doctrine of antiquity.

High in the cloud forest of Guatemala there lives what is considered by many the most beautiful bird in the world. The Quetzal, which is about the size of a pigeon, possesses a tail-like appendage three feet in length. The plumage is principally a golden green with a metallic lustre flashing an iridescent blue in certain lights. The underparts are vivid red, ranging from scarlet to crimson. The feathers about the head form a flat, circular crest, giving the head the appearance of a golden disc. In striking contrast to the rest of the plumage are the black and white wing feathers. The bird has a poise and dignity more commanding than any eagle. The globular nest, built only in the highest trees has two openings, one for entrance and one for exit.

The natives (1) to whom the Quetzal is a sacred symbol call it the Solar Bird, (2) the Dweller in the Great Spaces. To them it is the symbol of the Solar Spirit which is in every one and whose home is the Sun, but

which comes winging its way to earth to abide for a time. The Quetzal was the *Nehual*, or guardian spirit, of the Quiche emperor and therefore a symbol of the Supreme Deity. The High Priests in their trailing ceremonial robes copied the color and form of the Quetzal's plumage.

The feathers or plumes of the Quetzal were always representative of the Great Ones, the Illuminated, the Ones born of Fire and Light. In Quiche mythology the Supreme Deity was *Gukumatz*, a name derived from *Gug*, the call of the Quetzal, and *Ku*, descriptive of its colorful plumage.

In those days, position in life was dependent upon the degree of initiation into the mysteries of the time, and to wear the plumes of the Quetzal identified the wearer as a "plumed serpent." In other words, the serpent of the physical man was united to the spiritual self, represented by the solar bird, the Quetzal, dweller of the spaces of Space. In other countries the plumes of a bird were replaced by the solar halo about the head, or by rays of light issuing from the head. Such a one was a Dragon of Wisdom, a Quetzalcoatl or Plumed Serpent, a Son of the Sun, an Initiate.

FOOTNOTES:

1. I am indebted to Dr. C. F. Secord of Guatemala for much of the following. ([return to text](#))

2. From *quetzal* — a sacred bird living in the Cloud Forests of Guatemala, and *coatl* — a serpent symbol corresponding to the Earth-dragon of China. The combination signified an initiate, one illumined with the solar splendor, or in Quiche imagery — a plumed serpent. ([return to text](#))

THE GODS TAUGHT US TO LAUGH — *Ethel G. Bailey*

I can remember so well an afternoon in the Temple at Point Loma, California, many years ago, when Dr. de Purucker was to speak. The room was crowded with an eager, expectant audience. He walked with his deliberate stride to the rostrum and then, without saying a word, just stood and looked at us. The entire audience held its breath. The waves on the beach below the cliffs plainly heard, at the Temple, must have come and gone more than once and still not a word. Then suddenly G. de P. smiled. At first gently, then quite broadly. Immediately, like a sudden shaft of sunshine through a dark room, an answering smile swept the audience and ended at the outer edges in a little ripple of laughter.

"You looked so awfully solemn," he remarked, half laughing. "I wanted to see if you *could* smile."

It is interesting to realize that the human is the only animal that laughs. No doubt it is because he is so very much more than animal. While some dog-lovers claim that their pets smile, and hyenas and loons are said to laugh, that is really stretching the word. True laughter, that is, a real sense of humor, is not found in the scale of evolution below the human. It arises from a sense of the grotesque or the startling and surprising, or from a sense of the incongruity of ideas.

A baby laughs when you surprise it with, "Peek-a-boo!" A sage chuckles at some metaphysical incongruity. It is the gift of a human to be able to compare, and comparing, he judges. He alone can make for himself a ladder into abstract ideas and into impersonality. When the Manasaputras lighted the mind of man in the Third Race, I believe there was one jolly old god who used a candle of *Nonsense*, a taper of pure *Fun* for the work. It was one of the best gifts made to mankind.

Dr. Wm. Crawley of Stanford University said recently that the "test of Education is maturity," and "not so much our words, as the things we

laugh at show what we are."

It seems to me that we cannot lay much claim to maturity of mind till we have learned, in all sincerity, to laugh at ourselves. We know a trick or two of modern living that would make the Australian bush-man open his eyes, but compared to the Elder Brothers of mankind we are ignorant toddlers. And as for our magpie collection of trinkets, they might tolerantly remind us that the ancient Greeks had the right idea when they said the "fewer our wants, the more nearly we resemble the gods."

We might extend somewhat the significance of laughter, this gift of the gods. There is a deeper laughter than that of the lips, which latter too often is thoughtless or cruel, or an expression of mere animal spirits — Kipling's phrase for it was "hob-nailed mirth." But this other kind of laughter most often is silent. It is the laughter of the heart — laughter that may take the form of lovely music or simply rise like a beautiful cloud of harmony and serenity, wrapping the earth in a garment of glory. There is a music of the spheres of which all the poets sing, all the sages and seers speak, which indeed all the modern scientists expound as a fact in nature. Music of the spheres that is no sentimental vapor of the imagination but a scientifically established fact.

Let us go a step farther into the realm of intuitive perception. May not this music of the spheres be the compassionate laughter of the gods? For surely they, seeing that all laws, all processes, always and forever go forward according to the inescapable and compassionate and magnificent plan, cannot help but sing. And beneath the song springs up a wonderful cosmic laughter, so much deeper and richer than our own that we can only wonder what it may be.

It is interesting to note what an important place even the joke has begun to hold in modern education. General Barrows, ex-president of the University of California, used to begin every public address with a humorous story to get a laugh. It relaxed the audience and put it in sympathy with the speaker more quickly than any other approach. After nearly half a century I am amused to realize that I can remember

some of his jokes, although their context is now completely forgotten.

Angelo Patri was talking one day on Palomar to a group of teachers, speaking quite informally, and some one asked him what he thought was the most common failing among teachers as a class. He thought a moment, smiled, then let us have it: "You don't laugh enough," he said, "you are always standing on tiptoe. It won't make you any taller, you'll miss a lot of fun, and you'll just have strained arches."

David Grayson tells how he met a country preacher in the small farming community where he lived. He was shocked at the man's sad and care-worn face, there was something hopeless about his whole manner and appearance. Before Grayson could stop himself he blurted out the thought that had been thrust upon him. Laying his hand sympathetically on the preacher's arm and looking earnestly into his face, he asked, "Is *God dead*?"

The preacher recoiled. "Why do you ask that?" "Because it seemed to me that nothing else in the world could make you look so sad."

"Did I really give you that impression?" asked the minister. He sighed deeply, and after a few moments said, "Then it is just as I feared. As a preacher I have failed."

Then follows a little sermon preached not by the minister this time, but by David, who gets him to laughing and shows him that even Care has another face. It too has a countenance of joy which is far more healing and acceptable to the world.

Was it Stevenson who said that a difference of taste in jokes can break up a home? That may be an exaggeration of a point but it serves to illustrate how fundamental in character, how closely interwoven in temperament, a sense of the humorous can be.

A practical joke with a custard pie for the main prop, and a banana peel and a fat man thrown in for good measure, might convulse a certain type of person and leave another cold. And a subtle play upon words or an absurd double meaning might amuse a philosopher for

years, while the practical joker would marvel at the ease with which the thinker was entertained.

We are a little hurt and out of sympathy with one who doesn't see eye to eye with us about a point of humor. It is almost as bad as to differ about politics or religion, or modern art or music. We feel that the other person is almost deliberately "playing dumb." It is hard to forgive him.

There is a story about Queen Victoria that illustrates an interesting point. It seems that after the death of her husband, to whom she was very deeply devoted, she was sunk in a deep melancholy. No one ever saw her smile. The weight of the duties of the State fell heavily upon her and no one knew how to help. Her friends tried in vain to comfort and cheer her. The fine old bishops of the Church of England offered the consolations of religion without avail. Then one day the servants outside the door of her rooms heard her laughing. Amazed and delighted, they contrived to send in one of her maids under some pretext or other to discover what had worked such a miracle in their Queen.

"A book," exclaimed Victoria, holding up a volume, "such a lively, amusing book. So gay, so absurd! It has done me a world of good. I wish I had one like this to read every day."

The Queen's wish was law, of course, and an order was immediately sent for all the books by the same author. They arrived shortly and were examined with a lively interest, but her face fell quickly. "There has been some mistake," she said. "These books are all concerned with mathematics. They are not even written by the same man at all. These are the works of a C. L. Dodgson and my funny little book, *The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland*, is written by Lewis Carroll."

Lewis Carroll — the pseudonym taken by C. L. Dodgson, the professor of mathematics when he wrote, perhaps in shamefaced fun, the gay little book to please a small girl, had succeeded in lifting a queen from melancholy. His serious books are all but forgotten, but *The Adventures*

of Alice has been a best-seller for generations.

When Abraham Lincoln was President he used sometimes to disappear, to the great annoyance of his secretaries, during the dark days of the Civil War when the burdens of the Commander-in-chief were almost too heavy for any mortal to bear. Although it often was difficult to locate Lincoln, his best friends knew where to search. He was most apt to be where common men were telling stories, himself most often the story-teller. He said it rested him more than sleep — of which he had practically none.

When Cicero describes the Eleusinian mysteries, one of his chief recommendations for them is that "those initiated attain the art of living joyfully and of dying with a fairer hope."

There is a touching picture of the poet Milton: old, blind, and disillusioned, sitting in the perpetual night of those to whom the sun never rises. But past joy and laughter have the very special gift of returning with remembrance. I cannot but believe that Milton, sitting imprisoned in his blindness, still smiled as he recollected the joys of his youth. His poem "L'Allegro," so rich in the vital urge of living, carries a warm handclasp of hearty good-fellowship and cheer to this day. It was a gay soul who wrote charmingly of:

Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.

There is a great army of those who failed and yet were not defeated. Soldiers who lost the battle, sportsmen who smiled and shook hands with the victor, sages who died scorned by their contemporaries but who retained their equanimity. All those who never, no matter what happened to them, ever gave up! How much of their magnificent spirit is due to that wisdom of the Higher Self which allows them to see all round any situation. To even extract a certain grim humor from the very bitterness of their experiences; to know intuitively, as Theosophy teaches, that there is always another chance. To that end let us keep ever alert.

Ina Coolbrith was a California poet who wrote about half a century ago. Her book is probably out of print now. I don't believe she called herself a theosophist; poets seldom tabulate themselves at all, for they only know truth as it enters their hearts. But she speaks as eloquently as anyone I know of the consciousness in Nature. She tells us that life is indeed joy to one who sees, and that Nature is a comforting, smiling, helpful mother who tries to guide her children toward happiness and understanding. We need only to look with the inner eye, to listen with the fine inner ear, to understand and indeed to joy.

Oh, Earth,
Thou hast not any wind that blows
That is not music.
Every weed of thine,
Pressed rightly, flows with aromatic wine.
And every little humble, hedge-row flower that blooms,
And every little, brown bird that doth sing,
A message bears to every living thing;
Although it bears the message unawares.
A spirit breathes amid the grass,
Vague outlines of the everlasting thought,
Are in the melting shadows as they pass.
The thrill of an Eternal Presence fills
The fringes of the sunset and the hills.

The Theosophical Forum

PURPOSE AND DESIGN (1) — *Leroy V. Alwin*

What is the object and purpose of living? What is the infinite design back of life? For assuredly there is one; for it is faintly reflected in the life of every normal human being. No living thing can move without purpose. This fact of observation in our daily lives has become so commonplace, has become so taken for granted, that we fail to study it to recognize its true import. There is purpose in every life, self-directed within the limits of its understanding. No man, woman, or child will raise a hand without some object in view. This fact does not limit itself to human beings. As forms of life taper back and downward from the estate of self-will as found in human beings they become more supple and yielding to the general purpose of the infinite. We can, therefore, truly say that the plants and animals, within their range of life, are more obedient to the "Word of God" than we human beings are. They do not practise the abuses that we do. They do not commit the crimes against their species; nor engage in epidemics of wholesale murder.

The difference between man and the life beneath him is that man has advanced, through growth, into the estate of self-consciousness. He has become aware of himself and his effects in relation to others. He has become an agent of free will. Now, the advancement of life to this point is all a matter of purposeful design. There is nothing hit or miss, or chance, about it. The development of an intelligent, self-conscious, and responsible human being is a vitally important and purposeful creation. Even as men and women are impelled to prepare themselves for a useful function in human society, so is humanity, as a whole, impregnated and impelled by the cosmic will of the Deity eventually to grow to the fulfillment of a cosmic purpose. Conceived and exercised at first in the petty and personal, man's self-conscious will and responsibility grow and expand out of the selfish and purely personal, expand in sympathy and understanding to comprehend the welfare of mankind, as was exemplified by the Master Jesus. Through spiritual

aids and self-directed effort, man advances in will and knowledge self-consciously to witness the unseen worlds and the unseen truths that lie in the bosom of the infinite. Thus man self-consciously advances through wilful growth to meet his God, and, in the meeting, to comprehend and to do His will. Man can understand his reason for being only through growth to eventually make himself one with his divinity.

It should be very plain that, if man is ever to attain Heaven and qualify there as a useful citizen, he will have to grow into it. No clergyman, of whatever degree or persuasion, is spiritually authorized to tell you otherwise. To observe that a child must grow to manhood before it can attain its physical majority, and then to persist in the premise that men and women in their spiritual infancy need not grow to their spiritual majority to enter self-consciously the world of God is the rankest blasphemy and paralyzes the purposes at the basis of being. Take self-willed growth out of life and the universe and all within it will cease to exist. Growth, physical, mental, spiritual, and divine, is the purpose of living. He who would stem or subvert that spiritual force faces annihilation.

Of one thing we can be as certain as we are of the rising sun, and that is that this life of ours is governed by the law of cause and effect. "As you sow so shall you reap." The Law of Consequences measures out, on accurate and exacting scale, every degree of growth or failure in every unfolding principle in the complex nature of man. This limits and conditions man in any life. No form of self-deception to evade responsibility, or to justify self-indulgence and the practice of evil, will change that fact one iota. No force on earth or in Heaven can intercede for man and save him from the consequences of his ignorance and his weakness. God would not, because it would deprive man of the experience by which he learns and grows. Man must be taught to know and to become master of himself. Thus he rises to the dignity and grandeur of his true calling and executes the Will of God. And in all this grandiose program, death is but a restful interlude, but no escape.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Courtesy *The Minnetonka Pilot*, Mound, Minnesota. ([return to text](#))
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The Theosophical Forum

THE YOGA OF SELF-DISCIPLINE (1) — William Q. Judge

The *Bhagavad-Gita* is a personal book. It is for each man. No one need feel any hesitation now, for we are face to face with ourselves. The weak man, or he who does not care for Truth no matter where it leads, had better shut the book now.

— William Brehon

We assume, quite justifiably I think, that the *Bhagavad Gita* sets forth Aryan philosophy. The Aryan is white and noble in contradistinction to the black and ignoble. This book then, if Aryan, must give us a noble system of philosophy and ethics, useful not only for speculative minds but also in daily life. Whoever was the author, represented by the mythical person Vyasa, he — or they — compressed into a short conversation — that is, short for Indians — the essence of religion and philosophy.

The singular manner in which this conversation or lecturing or teaching came about should be first noted. It is after the very beginning of a battle, for the arrows had already begun to fly from side to side. A rain of arrows would first be thrown in before the hand to hand encounter began. Arjuna and Krishna are in Arjuna's great chariot. And there, between the two armies Arjuna asks for advice and receives it through eighteen chapters. All of this has significance.

Arjuna is man or the soul struggling to the light and while Krishna was one of the Avatars, or manifest atoms of God among men, he is also the Higher Self. Arjuna as man in this world of sense and matter is of necessity either always in a battle or about to begin one, and is also ever in need of advice. This he can get alone, in a valuable way, from his Higher Self. So the singular manner of placing the conversation where it is and of beginning it as it begins is the only way it ought to [be] done.

Arjuna is in the life his Karma has produced, and he must fight out the

battle he himself invited. Arjuna's object was to regain a kingdom, and so each one of us may know that our fight is for a kingdom gainable only by individual effort and not by any one's favor.

From the remarks by Arjuna to Krishna we can perceive that the kingdom he — like ourselves — wishes to regain is the one we had in some former age upon this planet or upon some far more ancient one. He has too much insight, too much evident soul-power and wisdom to be an Ego who only for the first, or second, or third time had visited this earth. We likewise are not new. We have been here so many times that we ought to be beginning to learn. And we have not only been here, but, beyond doubt those of us who are inwardly and outwardly engaged in the theosophical movement for the good of others, have been in a similar movement before this life.

This being so, and there being yet many more lives to come, what is the reason we should in any way be downcast? The first chapter of the Book is really not only The Survey of the Armies but also The Despondency of the principal person — Arjuna. He grows downcast after looking over all the regiments and seeing that he had, on both sides, friends, teachers, relatives, as well as enemies. He falters because want of knowledge prevents him from seeing that the conflict and many apparent deaths are inevitable. And Krishna then proceeds to give him the true philosophy of man and the universe so that he can either fight or refrain from fighting, whichever he sees to be at any time the best.

Krishna leads him gradually. He plays upon his pride by telling him that if he backs out all men will say he is the most ignoble of all cowards; then he plays upon his hindu religious teaching telling him that a warrior must obey the rules of his caste, and fight. He does not plunge at once into high metaphysical speculation or show him occult wonders. And herein it seems to me is a good lesson for all working theosophists. Too many of us when trying to spread forth the theosophical teachings drag the poor Arjunas we have caught right into obscure realms where theosophists themselves know nothing at all but

terminology. Krishna's wise, practical and simple method should be followed, and much better results will be obtained. Our object is to spread theosophical philosophy as widely and quickly as possible. This cannot be done if we indulge in words and phrases far removed from daily life. What good does it do to talk about the Absolute, Parabrahm and Alaya, and to say *manas* when we mean mind, and *kama* when desire and passion are the english equivalents? It only puzzles the new enquirer who feels that he has to learn a new language before he will be able to do anything with theosophy. It is a good deal easier to show that the new terms can be learned afterwards.

The first chapter having introduced the practical question of life, the second is equally practical, for it directs attention at the outset to the larger and eternal life of which each incarnation is a day or a moment. For Krishna says:

I myself never was not, nor them, nor all the princes of the earth, nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. As the Lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass.

Thus continued *practical* existence as opposed to continued theoretical and so-called heavenly existence and as opposed to materialistic annihilation, is declared at once. This is true immortality. The Christian Bible has no word in the original teaching immortality such as this; and the preaching of the priests does not lean to an unselfish view of continued existence. And it is very certain that if one is fully confirmed in the knowledge of eternal life through reincarnation he is quite unlikely to be disturbed by things that disturb other people. So at the very outside [outset] the teachings of Krishna open up a tremendous vista of life, and confer a calmness most necessary for us in the fight.

The generality of men have many and widely branching objects for mental devotion. It is a devotion to sense, or to self, or to wrong belief or to improper practice. But the follower of the *Bhagavad Gita*

gradually comes to see that the true devotion is that which has but one object through all changes of scene, of thought, or of companion-is immovable, whereas the objects taken up by the unwise are movable and transitory.

Equal mindedness and skill in the right performance of duty are the true rules — this is Yoga. This right performance of duty means the mental state, for the mere performance of an act has no moral quality in it, since even a machine may be made to perform acts done usually by men. The moral quality resides in the person inside and in his presence or absence. If a human body, asleep or devoid of a soul, raised its hand and took the life of another, that would not be a crime. And oppositely the performance of a good [act] is no virtue unless the person within is in the right attitude of mind. Many an apparently good act is done from selfish, hypocritical, crafty or other wrong motives. These are only outwardly good. So we must attain to a proper state of mind, or mental devotion, in order to know how to skilfully perform our actions without doing so for the sake of the result; doing them because they ought to be done, because they are our duties.

Krishna warns Arjuna also against inactivity from a false view of the philosophy. This warning was necessary then, is so still. On hearing this teaching for the first time many say that it teaches inaction, sitting still, silence. And in India great numbers, taking that view, retired from life and its duties, going into the caves and jungles away from men.

Krishna says:

Firmly persisting in Yoga perform thy duty.

To endeavor to follow these rules empirically, without understanding the philosophy and without making the fundamental doctrines a part of one's self, will lead to nothing but disgust and failure. Hence the philosophy must be understood. It is the philosophy of Oneness or Unity. The Supreme Self is One and includes all apparent others. We delude ourselves with the idea that we are separate. We must admit that we and every other person are the Self. From this we will begin to see that we may cease to be the actor although outwardly doing every

act that is right. We cease to be the actor when we know that we can withdraw ourselves from the act. Attachment to the act arises from a self interest in the result that is to follow. It is possible for us to do these things without that self interest, and if we are trying to follow the rule of doing our actions because they ought to be done we will at last do only that which is right to be done.

A great deal of the unhappiness of life comes from having a number of interests in results which do not come out as expected. We find people pretending to believe in Providence and to rely on the Almighty but who are continually laying down plans for those powers to follow. They are not followed, and as the poor mortal fixed his mind and heart on the result unhappiness follows.

But there is a greater unhappiness and misery caused by acting as is the usual way for the sake of results. It is this that causes rebirth over and over again unendingly. It is by this that the great humdrum mass of men and women are whirled around the wheel of rebirth for [ages], always suffering because they do not know what is happening to them, and only by an accident altering the poor character of their births.

The mind is the actor, the person who is attached. When it is deluded it is not able to throw off the subtle chains that bind it to reincarnation. Having spent an incarnation in looking after results it is full of earthly impressions, and has made the outer skandhas very powerful. So when its stay in Devachan is at its end the old images, impressions and the powerful skandhas drag it back to another life. At the time of bodily death the mind is temporarily almost altered into the image of the dominant thought of life, and so is beside itself or insane by comparison with the sage and with what ought to be its proper state. Being so it is impossible for it either to prevent rebirth or to select and take up an incarnation with a definite end and work in the world in view.

The bearing of the teaching upon ethics is in my opinion very important. It gives a vital system as opposed to a mechanical one. We are to do our duty with the thought that we are acting for and as the

Supreme Being because that being acts only by and through the creatures. If this be our real rule it would in time be impossible for us to do wrong because constantly thinking thus we grow careful as to what acts we commit and are always clearing up our view of duty as we proceed.

On the other hand a mechanical code of ethics leads into error. It is convenient because any fixed code is more convenient to follow than the application of broad principles in a brotherly spirit. Mechanical codes are conventional and for that reason they lead to hypocrisy. They have led people to mistake etiquette for morality. They cause the follower of them to unrighteously judge his neighbor who does not come up to his conventional code which is part of his ethics. It was a mechanical system of ethics that permitted and encouraged the Inquisition, and similar ethics in our later days permit men professing the highest altruism to persecute their brothers in the same way in intention. If the law and liberty of the times were not opposed they would slay and torture too.

But I have only time to touch lightly upon some of the many valuable points found in the first two chapters. If but those two chapters were preserved and the others lost, we would still have enough.

The remaining chapters deal with universal cosmical truths as well as with philosophy and ethics. They all enforce the great doctrine of unity or non-separateness. In going over them we find such references as require us to know and believe in the Wisdom Religion. The rise and destruction of races is given, the obscurities and darkness between evolutionary periods, the universal great destruction and the minor ones are there. Through all these the Self sits calmly looking on as the spectator, the witness, the receptacle.

Where Arjuna the Archer is, he who was taught by Krishna, with him is glory, honor, fortune and success. He who knows Arjuna knows himself.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From a manuscript entitled "Aryan Philosophy, etc.," in the handwriting of William Q. Judge, and preserved in the archives of the Theosophical Society. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE DOCTRINE OF SELF-BECOMING — *Madeline Clark*

Western humanity, in its religious moods, has expended much energy in speculation on its future, but this speculation has been confined almost solely to the life after death — when, as far as this earth was concerned, there was to be an end of things for the soul that passed on. In philosophic mood, this same humanity should rightly concern itself with a far more comprehensive picture, not only of its destiny, but of its origin and the real purpose of its existence. And this it is progressively doing as the larger ideas in science and philosophy build the basis for a metaphysical conception of the Universe and man's place in it.

There are certain teachings in the theosophical philosophy that present this far-flung concept with such fundamental clarity that they may be regarded as keys — keys that open doors of understanding not only into other aspects of the doctrine, but into the humble problems of every day.

One of these key-teachings, a phase of the philosophy of spiritual evolution, is the doctrine of Self-becoming, the doctrine of the unfolding of innate powers and characteristics from the interior being of all creatures. For according to the esoteric philosophy, all evolution is through the bringing forth of powers and faculties already latent in the entity — not through an accretion added layer upon layer from without.

The Sanskrit word *Swabhava* is what describes this inherent power and faculty, this innate characteristic and its spontaneous evolvment. Its literal translation is just that: self-becoming: *swa*, self, and *bhava*, from *bhu*, to become. "Everything becomes what it actually is in the heart of its being." This is the teaching of the oldest existing school of Buddhism, the Swabhavika, and there is a sense of completeness, of philosophic satisfaction, in the thought that the teaching is true of every entity

whatsoever, whether it be a star or an atom or a human being. We are always becoming, we are always on the way. Our own world and all its beings are an outer manifestation of inner vital causes: the work, the activity, is within, it flows outward into the visible.

The symbols of this process are all about us in equal prodigality with the manifestations of nature. Go out on any clear evening, and at this time of year the sky is peopled with the winter galaxy, crowded with brilliant and less brilliant stars, encircled by the silvery haze of the Milky Way, itself composed largely of incomputable hosts of stars. I say peopled, because there is a companionship in the stars, the companionship of greatly evolved beings — of which the stars are the bodies or vehicles for beings less evolved. How did these beings become clothed in such splendor? By unfolding that splendor from within their essential selves. They shine there as a prophecy, a promise, of what we, their younger brothers, will one day arrive at. They are the ultimate visible forms that are still brothers to us in the galactic universe; and the kinship that we feel with them extends itself to take in all the hosts of our fellow-beings, of whatever kingdom. No longer can we conceive of a static condition in any of these inhabitants of the universe; we are all moving on to greater spiritual stature, in a progress that is accomplished by that unfolding from within of already inherent powers and faculties; and in this sense we can truly say with the old Sanskritists: "Without moving, O Holder of the Bow, is the travel along that road."

The palm-tree, so common in semi-tropical gardens, is one of the most obvious symbols of this self-becoming: it continually renews itself from within itself; as the old leaves drop lower around the trunk and become successively less bright and finally withered, new ones forever unfold from within the upper part of the trunk, where there is a central bud that pushes out and up endlessly. Everything that lives is verily such a symbol, so near to us are the reminders of these deep-seated teachings that comprehend all life, harmonize and revitalize it.

There are two distinct aspects of this teaching of Swabhava that we

might consider here. One is the thought of all the multitudes and hosts of beings in the universe ever moving out of themselves — then-present selves — into a greater expression of themselves, under the urge of a vital energy that springs from an intelligent energy, which springs in its turn from a spiritual energy, coming from a divine energy — at the heart of it all being the Essential Monadic Self, which is one with the Universal Self. Back of us, therefore, are the energies of the whole universe, if we can rise to a realization of this fact and in some degree make use of them.

The other aspect of the doctrine of self-becoming is that of Individuality: that each individual, however minute in the great hierarchy, has its own essential characteristic, its own inherent character, which differentiates it from all other individuals. At the same time, all individuals in the universe are essentially *one*, partake of, spring from, and will return to, the One Life — i.e. the Greater Being, of which we are a part. In this paradox lies one of the greatest mysteries of the Ancient Wisdom. As we become more highly evolved, this individuality becomes more marked, because every godlike faculty is more fully brought forth. We can conceive of the Masters of Wisdom, the most evolved types of human beings, as mighty geniuses in anything they wish to set their hand to. Yet at the same time, in their relatively perfected compassion, they are more at one than ordinary men with all that lives. Again a paradox.

This doctrine of Swabhava is not solely metaphysical. None of the great doctrines are. They have their application to the most familiar things on earth. It is this fact of essential individuality in all the inhabitants of the universe that causes the absolutely endless variety of beings in all the kingdoms, a variety which leaves us no excuse for not finding life intensely, thrillingly interesting. It is simply a matter of bringing into play the imaginative faculty, to see all the wonders of nature as *wonders*, as examples of the intriguing ways in which all the creatures proceed to show forth their various quaint characters.

In the course of a morning's walk you encounter a series of adventures.

You go along beside a hedge of bright berries — itself a wonder of vegetable swabhava. You look into the hedge, and right into the bright eye of a mocking-bird, who looks back at you boldly without a sign of fear. Bold, aggressive, you know him for the fellow who out-sings all the other birds, sitting in his particular tree, from which he has driven off all comers, and you remember his battles with other mockers, when the luscious notes of his song are altered to a raucous scolding. You walk on and come upon a lizard sunning himself on a stone. He blinks a small black eye at you but continues his nap — apparently — until he spies an unsuspecting insect about a yard away, makes a lightning dash for it, and you hear the click of his jaws as they close upon it. Next, on a flowering shrub, you may see both a humming-bird, a tiny dynamo of one-pointed energy, and a dallying butterfly, both sipping — a study in contrasts. Or you may notice underfoot the telltale burrow of a mole — the funny little blind, velvet-coated dweller underground, whose consciousness is chiefly concerned with damp earth and worms, but even at that is a more evolved consciousness than that of the worm he feeds upon. On the same walk you may encounter a snake, with its secretive, sinuous habit — various birds, even a sea-gull flying over perhaps; and in the vegetable kingdom such divers characters as poison-ivy, ferns, the sturdy oak and prickly cactus; and in the minerals, soils and rocks of varied colors and compositions.

As we come on to the higher animals this difference among the individual characters becomes greater, they have advanced farther in the bringing out of their respective individual traits — but these traits were all latent in them to begin with. Take the coyote, an animal so cunning and intelligent that even its most inveterate human enemies are obliged to accord it a reluctant admiration. Again, take the ancient friend of man, the little ass or donkey; any owner will tell you tales of its sagacity. The age-old custom of these animals, when gathered together into a herd, as is their natural habit, is to detail one of their number to stand watch at the stable door at night — the custom is said to have survived from the ancient days of Egypt among the wild asses of that country, who were preyed upon by wild beasts. At midnight a

second ass among the herd will invariably wake and go to the relief of the one at the door.

Another most interesting animal is the pig, which has, according to Louis Bromfield, "nearly always been maligned and underrated.... The pig," he says, "has countless amusing, endearing, and irritating qualities. He can never be accused of lack of character and even individual personality . . . probably the most intelligent of all farm animals, and certainly the shrewdest. . . . Pigs make the best and most humorous pets in the world. They are instinctively ham actors and have a highly developed sense of humor. . . . Pigs have been associated with man about as long as any animal, and appear again and again in history and legend back into the misty reaches of prehistoric time." (1) It is material for a lifetime's reflection to wonder how these animals ever developed such well-defined characters, and further, why the domesticated ones should have had the karmic association with man that has brought them both benefit and suffering.

And when we come to the human kingdom, we are well aware of the vast differences in temperament and physiognomy as well as in the manifestations of character. Only now we come to the higher attributes, which at moments take on a hint of the godlike. This matter of human individuality and possibilities is recognized by students of human behavior, and there are flashes of insight. Professor Irwin Edman, who holds the Chair of Philosophy at Columbia University, conceives of individuality, "not as competition and assertiveness, but as the realization of one's own qualities and capacities in one's own special way." And he thinks that education should foster this type of individuality, a certain *distinction*, — for all, not just for a few. Allen Boone also, in his book *You are Adventure*, speaks of "the unmatched spiritual individualists who, in a sadly massed-up and messed-up world . . . dare to live their own lives for the good of all. . . ."

For of course this unfolding from within of the individuality is for all: as Louis Untermeyer says in his sketch of the life of Robert Frost: "The creator, the artist, the extraordinary man, is merely the ordinary man

intensified."

The human scene looked at in the large presents evidences of racial and national swabhava in the characteristic architectures, arts, languages, customs, dress and in their music — differences that again show the variety of ways in which human beings in their various categories unroll and unfold their peculiar racial or national genius.

There are many other examples of distinguishing characteristics in all the kingdoms of nature: the peculiarities of metals, for instance, their colors and atomic structures; the sound that comes from a silver bell as contrasted with that from one of bronze. Even the woods from different trees not only differ in grain and hardness, but when seasoned, cut, and tapped with a suitable instrument or the finger-tip, each will give out its distinctive musical tone. The fragrances of different flowers, the flavors and forms of different fruits, vegetables and nuts — all are due to the various swabhavas of these creatures of the kingdoms. In the night sky, the colors of the different great stars, some fiery red, some rose red, or icy blue, flame, or golden, come, Dr. de Purucker suggests, from the individual characters of those stars, or of the beings who use them as vehicles; and more advanced studies of the planets would show them to be each quite distinct in character.

But all this visible detail, you may say, is mere froth — the most superficial manifestation of that majestic law of swabhava — and yet it is all we can *see*, our living evidence, of the working of that sublime law.

The ethical implications of this teaching take us into the great world of spiritual and divine possibilities. We, in our present human condition, are curiously conscious chiefly of the differentiation, not to say the sense of separateness of ourselves from other individuals; but the nearer we reach to the Inmost, the more we shall be able to see our fellows as our other selves, or at least as brothers, semi-counterparts of ourselves. Only to hold these great thoughts close to us in our daily living opens the way to all brotherly kindness and understanding and mutual helpfulness, and a trust in the inexhaustible energies always

welling up from within. As Katherine Tingley expresses it:

The Soul can rest on nothing this side of infinity, it loses its vitality if it seeks to do so. All eternity awaits it, how should it be satisfied with the half-life we live and the many imperfections that mar us? The nature of the Soul is to be winging its flight forever towards the boundless, to be working, hoping, and conquering, to be going forward forever and ever.

— *The Gods Await*, p. 173

The doctrine of self-becoming is closely tied with cosmic evolution. For what is it that is the impelling cause of evolution if it is not the Essential Self, the Monadic Ray,

The eternal thing in man,
That heeds no call to die —

as Thomas Hardy conceived it. And the process of evolution is simply "the interior self self-expressing itself, unfolding always what is latent within," to use the words of Dr. de Purucker. It is this Inmost that is the unbroken connecting thread in all the existences of any one entity, in all the kingdoms, through all the aeons, immortal in any one galactic manvantara, the innate characteristic or swabhava running through them all. Its expressions on this plane of ours point back to its pervading presence, enlivening, sustaining, giving impulse to all life.

Here among nearby things we have the genes, those mysterious portions of the cell-life, that seem to be the ultimate vehicle for "the continuous transmission of an identic life." Back of our uncertain science of heredity there is a spiritual heredity arising in the innate character of the being itself.

Look at fingerprints, of which it is said that no two on earth are exactly alike. Someone had the intuition once that possibly these imprints of character on the hand of the individual might reproduce themselves in that individual from one incarnation to the next. The answer to his question as given by Dr. de Purucker was as follows:

I am quite sure that fundamentally your idea is not only sound but absolutely correct. The great difficulty would be to find the thumb-print or finger-prints from former lives of an individual. It is perfectly true that for Theosophical or occult reasons the markings of the thumb and fingers of each body taken up by a reincarnating ego would very closely parallel and perhaps are almost identic with the dactylographic markings on the thumb and fingers of the preceding body of the same ego. Any changes that would be found, if we could compare two such markings, would be those brought about by evolutional changes in the soul producing modifications in the body, and also the hereditary influences from the ancestry which would tend to modify markings of such character.

— Studies in Occult Philosophy, pp 421-2

This individualizing process begins at the very commencement of manifestation in a manvantara, it is the differentiation spoken of by the philosophers. William Blake's system embraces it. And this individualization becomes progressively more marked as the manvantara proceeds and the entities become more truly self-directed. Yet, in spite of individuality, nothing can stand alone in the universe — the "heresy of separateness" is the idea that one can do so. Again the paradox. We have to stand each one alone, yet come to realize that we are all but different facets of the One. At moments of inspiration this realization comes even into the human mind, in a flash of insight. Instances of this are often come across, recorded in literature. Mary Austin, in Note 13 of her *Earth Horizon*, describes a summer morning when she, a child of five or six, wandered alone down beyond the orchard to a breezy prominence with grass waving in the wind, and one tall tree reaching into infinite immensities of blueness" — when suddenly earth and sky and tree and wind-blown grass and the child in the midst of them came alive together with a pulsing light of consciousness." She recalled in later years the "swift, inclusive awareness of each for the whole — I in them and they in me, and all of us enclosed in a warm lucent bubble of livingness."

And Blake's famous vision as he sat on the sands at Felpham:

My eyes did expand
Into regions of air,
Away from all care,
Into regions of fire,
Remote from desire;
The light of the morning
Heaven's mountains adorning
In particles bright
The jewels of light
Distinct shone and clear.
Amaz'd and in fear
I each particle gazed,
Astonish'd, amazed,
For each was a Man
Human-form'd. Swift I ran,
For they beckoned to me.
Remote by the sea,
Saying "Each gram of sand,
Every stone on the land,
Each rock and each hill,
Each fountain and rill,
Each herb and each tree,
Mountain, hill, earth, and sea,
Cloud, meteor and star,
Are men seen afar."
All I ever had known
Before me bright shone,
Such the vision to me
Appear'd on the sea.

These are visions of the Many in the One: how at the same time, the many can be and are the One, a mystery rarely to be sensed except in inspired moments.

Then there is the question of Immortality, which has preoccupied the mind of man from time immemorial. We will take the thought from Dr. de Purucker that: the Atman-Buddhi, the Upper Duad in the sevenfold human constitution, is the seat of the swabhava in man; it is the Essential Self, the perpetual root of man's constitution, the divine-spiritual monad. It is unconditionally immortal throughout the immense time-period of the life of a galaxy. This immortal and ever-enduring Essential Self, the seat of the fundamental selfhood in man, is the unifying and binding root which not only holds the composite man together, but is the lasting link from life to life. It brings the compound man together again and again, out of its identic life-atoms. It is the persistent individuality, the inner originant, the swabhava. At the end of the Great Cycle, when a universe indraws into the subjective worlds, all the individualities which have made up that universe are re-absorbed: "The dewdrop slips into the shining sea." But at the re-emergence of the universe into manifestation, the individualities re-emerge in their integrity, and commence a new unfoldment of their inexhaustible energies and powers.

FOOTNOTE:

1. From his review of Pigs: *From Cave to Cornbelt*, by Towne and Wentworth. ([return to text](#))

The Theosophical Forum

THE YANG AND THE YIN — *Allan J. Stover*

The disk of the Chinese Yang and Yin Monad and the eight diagrams composed of single and broken lines surrounding it are well known to many; as is the fact that the unbroken lines and the light half of the disk represent Yang or spirit, and the broken lines and dark portion of the disk represent Yin or matter.

Those who have made further inquiry may have learned that there are several interpretations of this fascinating symbol and that a lifetime could be devoted to the subject. A well informed Zen Buddhist once showed me a large volume of commentaries on the Yang and Yin trigrams of Fu Hsi with the remark — "It is very difficult and few even among the educated Chinese can understand it."

Unfortunately that which was intended as an aid to the intuition has become a maze to befuddle the intellect.

Briefly, the Yang and Yin symbolize that duality which is present throughout the manifested universe, and the philosophy of which it is a part is based upon a profound knowledge of both inner and outer nature. The word Yang (Giles, *Chinese Dictionary*) carries the significance of light, spirit, the positive masculine element in nature, and is representative of the expansion or outbreathing of the universe. Opposed to this is Yin, which is representative of darkness, matter, the negative or feminine element in nature and the contraction or inbreathing of the universe. Both qualities were developed simultaneously from the Great Monad, and by their continual interaction of light and darkness all things are produced and cosmic harmony is preserved.

This symbolic system of the Orient is not fancy or mere philosophical speculation, but is based upon nature herself. The researches of Baron von Reichenbach on magnetism and the vital force made during the last century, demonstrated the presence of what he called plus and

minus odile in varying proportions in everything. The primitive Indians of Southern California still retained a classification of plants, animals and men, sun, moon and stars, under two divisions which they designated as solar or lunar, land or water people.

Returning to the thought of the Chinese — one man may have the quality of Yin predominant in his nature, another that of Yang, while a third may have the two nicely balanced. A man who is ill, may owe his difficulty to a congestion of Yin in his nature, and may recover if given an herbal remedy which is strong in the opposite or Yang quality, reinforcing the Yang in his system and thus restoring equilibrium.

It is not difficult to think in these age-old terms, providing we do not carry them too far, for many have doubtless known them in former lives. Students of *The Secret Doctrine* will see in the evolution of the trigrams the same story of the emanational unfolding from the Boundless to the complexity of a teeming cosmos, as is contained in the Stanzas of Dzyan.

The interpretation of the Yang and Yin diagrams as an ideographic system of cosmology seems to underlie the archaic philosophy as an undertone, from which the more intricate details unfold to the inquiring mind. It is well to remember that we are dealing not with words but with the elements of nature herself, as depicted in fitting combinations of unity and duality in their several interrelations. We may trace the evolution of these diagrams as they develop and increase in complexity; growing as does the world itself, from within-without, much as the stream of life descends from spiritual planes through stage after stage of physical concretion to the world as it is today.

The more one studies, the more it becomes apparent that all Creation Myths, if they be genuine, stem from the same primeval trunk of esoteric teaching. It is not surprising then if a careful examination of the Chinese Creation Myth does show the same profound significance underlying it.

In the beginning, the Illimitable, the soul or heart of Heaven T'ien Li,

awakened the quality of finiteness in sleeping space and produced the "Great First" or as more often called the Great Monad T'ai Chi. The "Great First" began to move and by rotation, divided along the diameter producing the principle of light or Yang; simultaneously the appearance of light called forth its opposite or darkness which is known as Yin. The primeval Yang and Yin thus produced by their continual alternations of light and darkness brought all things into being.

In the words of Dr. Williams, "Heaven was formless, an utter chaos; the whole mass was nothing but confusion. Order was first produced in the pure ether, and out of it the universe came forth; the universe produced air, and air the Milky Way." (Dr. S. Wells Williams, Professor of the Chinese Language and Literature at Yale.)

The terms "*curds*" and "*Milky Way*" are often used interchangeably in old Creation Myths, and refer to the "curds" of Space spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine*, as in the following quotations:

From the ONE LIFE formless and Uncreate, proceeds the Universe of lives. First was manifested from the Deep (Chaos) cold luminous fire (gaseous light?) which formed the curds in Space. —
1, 250

And again, speaking of the primordial elements, H. P. Blavatsky says:

Those were formed from "*the curds of the cold radiant mother*" and "*the fire-seed of the hot Father*" who "*are one*," or, to express it in the plainer language of modern science, those elements had their genesis in the depths of the primordial fire-mist — the masses of incandescent vapour of the *irresolvable* nebulae. —1,
543

The separation of the disk or egg of the Great Monad and the formation of the primeval Yang and Yin, in Chinese Occultism; the division of the formless mass of Chaos in the pairs of opposites in the Greek myth; and the appearance of a dot within the circle, followed by the line across the diameter as given in the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine*, are all

statements of the same truth.

In the words of the great authority Herbert Giles:

The Yin and Yang — the primeval forces, developed the Great Monad, by the interaction of which the whole universe has been produced.

If we examine the dark and light portions of the design we find a small dark spot or "eye" in the white Yang, and a light "eye" in the Yin, for each portion of the great duality has something of the other within it. In other words, every Yang has within a bit of Yin, and every Yin its Yang. A statement which is not only true occultism but typical Chinese concept as well.

On the other side of the world, the Creation Myth of the Zuni Indians of New Mexico relates how at first all beings dwelt in the midmost center of space in the "city of mists," and how after long ages the creatures spread out in the six directions North, East, South, West, Above and Below; and how each group as they left the midmost took representatives of each of other directions with them that nothing might be lacking anywhere.

After the separation of the great egg or circle of the Great Monad, the formation of the four figures took place. The two principles Yang and Yin, placed one above the other formed the "four exemplars."



1) T'ai Yang (large Yang) ☰ corresponds to the sun and warmth in nature;

2) Shao Yin (little Yin) ☷ corresponds to the moon and cold in nature;

3) Shao Yang (little Yang) ☱ corresponds to the stars;

4) T'ai Yin (large Yin) ☶ corresponds to the planets in nature.

After the four figures, the eight are formed by adding an extra line to each design, and from the eight, sixty-four are made by multiplying successively each of the trigrams by itself and one of the other seven in

turn. (☰ ☱ ☲ ☳ ☴ ☵ ☶ ☷ etc.) It is of interest that in the eight trigrams arranged about the egg of the Great Monad, the position of North is occupied by Earth ☷ while opposed to it in the South is Air ☱. The East is represented by the element Fire ☲, and in the West is Water ☵; the four forming a cross. Later it became the custom to transpose Air and Water for purposes of fortune telling.

To the people of old China, the Great Monad was a map of the universe, for the belt of the zodiac was also divided into quadrants which were presided over by the Four Royal Stars; the Azure Dragon in the East, the Vermillion Bird or Phoenix in the South, the White Tiger in the West, and the Tortoise or Black Warrior in the North. The nature of each of these mythical creatures was indicated by the structure of the trigrams occupying corresponding positions in the diagram.

The Great Monad was well known in Japan and Korea, and its meaning was practically identical with that in China. In Korea, the design was adopted as the national emblem and was depicted in red and blue, the colors of royalty and the East, region of the morning. The Tah-gook as it was called in Korea meant "The Kingdom of the Morning." Research has shown that the design of the Tah-gook has been used in Korea since ancient times and has suffered less change there than elsewhere.

The Chinese people lived much closer to nature than we do ourselves

for they held that the veritable spirit of all life waxed and waned with the cycles of the sun and moon. Thus to be born at the time of an incoming tide was considered fortunate since it was believed that all the forces of nature were rising at that time.

From ages immemorial, Man has sensed the truth that he must live in harmony with the forces of Heaven . . . with natural law. . . . To the Chinese — it is well to remember — the planets and the constellations are the abiding places of sainted heroes who rule the heavens and exert continuous influence upon the course of human destinies. . . . Climatic change is directly related to the moral conduct of the people. Through the sun, moon and stars such climatic changes are produced.

— *Chinese Astrology*, Los Angeles, Calif.

To the old Chinese as yet untouched by the blight of western civilization, nature is Father and Mother, and thus he strives to live in harmony with all that lives. It is to be hoped that something of the old wisdom survives the present turmoil of ideas.

The Theosophical Forum

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH — *Clifford Carr*

A day that sees some prejudice cleared from our thoughts, or the frontiers of our minds pushed farther away, or some cherished illusion destroyed, is a day well lived, we think. It is a regrettable fact that many theosophical students in common with the rest of mankind, tend to ridicule, or belittle lines of thought or intellectual effort different from their own. This is particularly so in the realms of modern science and the researches of scientists.

It is true that when H. P. Blavatsky wrote her books *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, 1877 and 1888 respectively, she vigorously attacked the dogmatic and narrow-minded scientists of her day while at the same time paying highest tribute to certain leaders in scientific thought. It is also true that many of her statements which seemed incredible then, and which had not been discovered by scientists, are being proved true now.

But more than this is happening and has been for many years. Theosophy maintains that only by combining science, religion, and philosophy can man attain a true and relatively comprehensive knowledge of the Universe and of Man. Pick up any one of a dozen recently published books, and you will find that it is the scientists, the leading men of science, who are embracing this threefold approach to knowledge in their investigations and researches. There is a book, for instance, *The Great Design*, published in 1936, and contributed to by 14 men of international eminence each in his own branch of science, and its pages are strongly reminiscent of H. P. Blavatsky's "Three Fundamental Propositions" as set forth in *The Secret Doctrine*. In the broadening effect it has on one's mind, the awakening of one's intuitions, and the furthering of one's own glimpses into the Unknown, it is sheer delight to read, and one is tempted to share many of its illuminating passages. Here, however, is one, taken from the contribution by C. Lloyd Morgan, F.R.S., and D.Sc, LL. D., Emeritus

Professor, University of Bristol, his contribution being entitled "The Ascent of Mind." After discussing what science has been able to find out about the mind of man, Professor Morgan says:

But there are many who have been led to believe that there is at the heart of things somewhat that the man of science *as such* leaves out of account. They ask him. Whence comes all this novelty, whence the recurrent routine which so often follows in its wake? In reply he may say: "That is no concern of mine, I am content to accept what I find, and to tell its story as best I can." Such is my attitude as man of science. In that capacity I have tried to sketch in outline the story of the ascent of mind as I read it. None the less I confess my belief that this ascent may be regarded as a manifestation or revelation of a Supreme Mind, conceived as the Creator of all that we are led to interpret as new. What I find in evolution is *one great scheme from, bottom to top, from first to last.*

What I also believe is that this advance throughout nature is a revelation of Divine Agency. And since mind at its best is the highest term in the course of evolutionary ascent, it may well be said that the evolution of mind reveals the agency of Mind. But it is, as I believe, Mind or Spirit infinite and timeless. Therein the words "first" and "last," "novelty" and "recurrence," are divested of the meaning which attaches to them in discussing the ascent of mind through new products to further novelty. Spiritus Creator as eternal and omnipresent is not the outcome of evolution, but that of which evolution is the progressive revelation.

No, we cannot afford to sit smugly at home reading only our theosophical books, or take part in discussions at lodge meetings with the complacent air of ourselves and ourselves alone having "truth", and neglect to recognize and delight in the intellectual and intuitional achievements of others who, though they may not call themselves theosophists, are engaged in the same search that we are, and are

striving for the same goal — TRUTH.

— Courtesy *Corresponding Fellows' Lodge Bulletin*, October, 1950,
Worthing, England.

The Theosophical Forum

TO ASPIRANTS FOR CHELASHIP — *William Q. Judge*

Sincere interest in Theosophic truth is often followed by sincere aspiration after Theosophic life, and the question continually recurs, What are the conditions and the steps to chelaship (1); to whom should application be made; how is the aspirant to know that it has been granted?

As to the conditions and the discipline of chelaship, not a little has been disclosed in *The Theosophist*, *Man*, *Esoteric Buddhism*, and other works upon Theosophy; and some of the qualifications, difficulties, and dangers have been very explicitly set forth by Madame Blavatsky in her article upon "Theosophical Mahatmas" in the *Path* of Dec, 1886. To every one cherishing even a vague desire for closer relations to the system of development through which Masters are produced, the thoughtful study of this article is earnestly commended. It will clear the ground of several misconceptions, deepen the sense of the seriousness of such an effort, and excite a healthy self-distrust which is better before than after the gate has been passed.

It is entirely possible, however, that the searching of desire and strength incited by that article may only convince more strongly of sincerity, and that not a few readers may emerge from it with a richer purpose and a deeper resolve. Even where there is not a distinct intention to reach chelaship, there may be an eager yearning for greater nearness to the Masters, for some definite assurance of guidance and of help. In either of these cases the question at once arises before the aspirant, Who is to receive the application, and how is its acceptance to be signified?

The very natural, indeed the instinctive, step of such an aspirant is to write to an officer of the Theosophical Society. None the less is this a mistake. For the Theosophical Society is an *exoteric* body, the Lodge of Masters wholly *esoteric*. The former is a voluntary group of inquirers

and philanthropists, with avowed aims, a printed Constitution, and published officers, and, moreover, expressly disavowing any power, as a Society, to communicate with Masters; the latter is an Occult Lodge, of whose address, members, processes, functions, nothing is known. It follows, therefore, that there is no person, no place, no address, to which an aspirant may appeal.

Let it be supposed, however, that such an inquiry is preferred to a person advanced in Occult study, versed in its methods and tests and qualifications. Assuredly his reply would be directly to this effect: —

If you were now fitted to be an accepted chela, you would of yourself know how, where, and to whom to apply. For the becoming a chela *in reality* consists in the evolution or development of certain spiritual principles latent in every man, and in great measure unknown to your present consciousness. Until these principles are to some degree consciously evolved by you, you are not in practical possession of the means of acquiring the first rudiments of that knowledge which now seems to you so desirable. Whether it is desired by your mind or by your heart is still another important question, not to be solved by any one who has not yet the clue to Self.

It is true that these qualities can be developed (or forced) by the aid of an Adept. And most applicants for chelaship are actuated by a desire to receive instructions directly from the Masters. They do not ask themselves what they have done to merit a privilege so rare. Nor do they consider that, all Adepts being servants of the Law of Karma, it must follow that, did the applicant now merit their visible aid, he would already possess it and could not be in search of it. The indications of the fulfilment of the Law are, in fact, the partial unfolding of those faculties above referred to.

You must, then, reach a point other than that where you now stand, before you can even ask to be taken as a chela on probation. All candidates enter the unseen Lodge in this manner, and it is governed by Laws containing within themselves their own fulfilment and not requiring any officers whatever. Nor must you imagine that such a

probationer is one who works under constant and known direction of either an Adept or another chela. On the contrary, he is tried and tested for at least 7 years, and perhaps many more, before the point is reached when he is either accepted (and prepared for the first of a series of initiations often covering several incarnations), or rejected. And this rejection is not by any body of men just as they incline, but is the natural rejection by Nature. The probationer may or may not hear from his Teacher during this preliminary period; more often he does not hear. He may be finally rejected and not know it, just as some men have been on probation and have not known it until they suddenly found themselves accepted. Such men are those self-developed persons who have reached that point in the natural order after many incarnations, where their expanded faculties have entitled them to an entrance into the Hall of Learning or the spiritual Lodge beyond. And all I say of men applies equally to women.

When any one is regularly accepted as a chela on probation, the first and only order he receives (for the present) is to work unselfishly for humanity — sometimes aiding and aided by some older chela — *while striving to get rid of the strength of the personal idea*. The ways of doing this are left to his own intuition entirely, inasmuch as the object is to develop that *intuition* and to bring him to *self-knowledge*. It is his having these powers in some degree that leads to his acceptance as a probationer, so that it is more than probable that you have them not yet save as latent possibilities. In order to have in his turn any title to help, he must work for *others*, but that must not be his motive for working. He who does not feel irresistibly impelled to serve the Race, whether he himself fails or not, is bound fast by his own personality and cannot progress until he has learned that *the race is himself* and not that body which he now occupies. The ground of this necessity for a pure motive was recently stated in *Lucifer* to be that "unless the intention is entirely unalloyed, the spiritual will transform itself into the psychic, act on the astral plane, and dire results may be produced by it. The powers and forces of animal nature can be equally used by the selfish and revengeful as by the unselfish and all-forgiving; the

powers and forces of spirit lend themselves only to the perfectly pure in heart."

It may be stated, however, that even those natural forces cannot be discovered by any man who has not obtained the power of getting rid of his personality in some degree. That an emotional desire to help others does not imply this freedom from personality may be seen by the fact that, if you were now perfected in unselfishness in the *real* sense, you would have a conscious existence separate from that of the body and would be able to quit the body at will: in other words, to be free from all sense of self is to be an Adept, for the limitations of self inhibit progress.

Hear also the words of the Master, taken from Sinnett's *The Occult World*. "Perhaps you will better appreciate our meaning when told that in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness if, in the mind of the philanthropist, there lurks the shadow of a desire for self-benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself."

While setting forth these facts, as well as the dangers and difficulties — both those set ones appointed by the laws of the Lodge and the more innumerable ones adjudged by Karma and hastened by the efforts of the neophyte, it should also be stated that the Masters desire to deter no man from entering the path. They are well aware, however, from the repeated trials and records of centuries, and from their knowledge of our racial difficulties, how few are the persons who have any clue to their own real nature, which is the foe they attempt to conquer the moment they become pupils of the occult. Hence They endeavor, so far as Karma permits, to hold unfit individuals back from rash ventures the results of which would recoil upon their unbalanced lives and drive them to despair. The powers of evil, inadequately defied by the ignorant man, revenge themselves upon him as well as upon his friends, and not upon those who are above their reach. Although these powers are not hideous objective shapes coming in tangible ways, they are none the less real and dangerous. Their descent in such instances

cannot be prevented; *it is Karma.*

To lose all sense of self, then, implies the loss of all that ordinary men most value in themselves. It therefore behooves you to seriously consider these points: —

1st. What is your motive in desiring to be a chela? You think that motive is well known to you, whereas it is hidden deep within you, and by that hidden motive you will be judged. It has flared up from unseen regions upon men sure of themselves, has belched out in some lurid thought or deed of which they esteemed themselves incapable, and has overthrown their life or reason. Therefore test yourself ere Karma tests you.

2d. What the place and duties of a true neophyte are.

When you have seriously considered both for 21 days, you may, if your desire remains firm, take a certain course open to you. It is this.

Although you do not now know where you can offer yourself to Masters themselves as a chela on probation, yet, in forming that desire in your heart and in re-affirming it (if you do) after due consideration of these points, you have then to some extent called upon the Law, and it is within your power to constitute yourself a disciple, so far as in you lies, through the purity of your motive and effort *if both are sufficiently sustained*. No one can fix a period when this effort will bear fruit, and, if your patience and faith are not strong enough to bear you through an *unlimited* (so far as you know) period of unselfish work for humanity, you had better resign your present fancy, for it is then no more than that. But if otherwise, you are to work for the spiritual enlightenment of Humanity in and through the Theosophical Society (which much needs such laborers), and in all other modes and planes as you best can, remembering the word of Masters; "He who does what he can and all that he can, and all that he knows how to do, does enough for us." This task includes that of divesting yourself of all personality through interior effort, because that work, if done in the right spirit, is even more important to the race than any outward work we can do. Living

as you now are, on the outward plane chiefly, your work is due there and is to be done there until your growth shall fit you to pass away from it altogether.

In following this course you work towards a fixed point under observation — as is, indeed, the whole Theosophic body, which is now, as *a body*, a chela of Masters — but specialized from other members in the sense that your definite aim and trust are understood and taken into consideration by the unseen Founders and the Law. The Theosophical Society then stands to you, for the time being, as any older chela might who was appointed for you to aid and to work under. *You are not*, understand, a chela on probation, since no one without authority can confer or announce such a privilege. But if you succeed in lifting yourself and others spiritually, it will be known, *no matter what the external silence may seem to be*, and you will receive your full dues from Those who are honest debtors and ministers of the Just and Perfect Law. You must be ready to work, to wait, and to aspire in *silence*, just as all do who have fixed their eyes on this goal. Remember that your truest adviser is to be found, and constantly sought, *within yourself*. Only by experience can you learn to know its voice from that of natural instinct or mere logic, and strengthen this power, by virtue of which the Masters have become what They are.

Your choice or rejection of this course is the first test of yourself. Others will follow, whether you are aware of them or not, for the first and only right of the neophyte is — *to be tried*. Hence silence and sorrow follow his acceptance instead of the offer of prompt aid for which he looks. Yet even that shall not be wanting; those trials and reverses will come only from the Law to which you have appealed.

— *The Path*, July, 1888.

FOOTNOTE:

1. *Chelaship* means *Discipleship*. ([return to text](#))

THE MYSTERY-SCHOOLS — *Clifton Meek*

An interesting fact, especially to people of Europe and America, and startling too, is that all the great historic religions of mankind, as well as every one of their important sacred books have originated in Asia. . . .

We of America sometimes approach others with an air of superiority and even arrogance. But it is good to see the rest of the world in perspective. Non-Europeans and non-Americans are behind us, but only in material things. . . . I think it is good for us who are products of Western civilization to make a few honest comparisons once in a while. We sometimes criticize and condemn a little too ignorantly and lightly. We must realize that we have no monopoly on nobility and character.

The basic truth of life is that all men have groped and searched for God and have tried to learn his will. To this search, we brought our ignorances, our superstitions and our cruelties because we were only human. To each of us has been granted some glimpse of the truth, and this truth embodied itself in our religions.

Our religions, despite the human weaknesses we injected into them, have nourished humanity's higher life as nothing else has done. They have given to man's spirit its deepest consolations, its brightest hopes and its strongest wings.

Through the web of religious experience runs a single, common thread, the desire to understand life — that is the desire to know God and to live by His will. It is the unity in the diversity of religion. It makes us humble before the task of achieving one world, but it compels us to recognize that it is possible and with God's help it will be achieved.

— Rabbi Samuel Schwartz, *Congregation Beth El, Norwalk,*

Connecticut

After being so thoroughly deluged with sectarian propaganda on the radio, screen, and in the press, it was like a breath of intellectual fresh air to read *The Norwalk Hour* account of the very interesting and broad-minded approach to religion made by Rabbi Samuel Schwartz in his recent talk before a local service club. Unfortunately, all too few religious leaders show an inclination to look beyond the confines and doctrines of their own creeds for spiritual values, and speak with such a high degree of intellectual honesty. It is high time that western minds were outgrowing the medieval concept that their religion is something entirely different and superior to other historic religious movements, and that preceding its revelation, for incalculable ages mankind had been a cosmic orphan — evil, barbaric and devoid of spiritual attributes — completely ignored and neglected by its supposedly loving Creator who followed a unique code of behaviorism in celestial snobbery.

No greater illusion and error has ever been inflicted upon trusting human hearts and believing minds than that some particular exoteric religion is the sole repository of truth. European, and even our own early American history reveals what bigotry and spiritual corrosion such illusions can engender in the hearts of men.

There was one point in particular brought out by Rabbi Schwartz that I would like to comment on. He said, and rightly so, that all of the historic world religions, including their sacred books, were of Eastern origin. However efficient we may be in producing a highly materialistic civilization and a war every generation, the East always has been, and still is, our master in things of the spirit. Their sacred literature, the oldest known to mankind, embraces a lofty religious-philosophical concept of life from which all other religions, including Christianity, albeit second-hand from Jewish and Greek sources, have drawn. Today Christian theology is but a feeble and distorted reflection of teachings of the ancient sanctuaries, the Mystery Schools, and from which the real meaning and spiritual aroma have long since been distilled. The

Christian idea of Deity is a strange mixture of misunderstood Kabbalistic thought derived from Jewish sources, and Neo-Platonic concepts borrowed from the teaching of the Mystery Schools of Greece. Such a thing as a "new" religion simply does not exist and never has. All have borrowed from older sources, with the result that the world is filled with multiple versions and distortions of the one primordial truth about Man and the Cosmos in which he lives, moves, and has his being. Every religious impulse which has been inaugurated from age to age is but the restatement of truths as old as mankind, a re-veiling rather than a revealing, of the Mystery-teachings, clothed in the language and poetical imagery of the day, and each such effort a part of a single movement manifesting at periodical and cyclic times of human history to enlighten superstitious man, for that is exactly what mankind is at our present stage of evolution.

These teachings never have been revealed publicly in their entirety for the reason that the mass of mankind is as yet intellectually and spiritually unprepared to receive and understand them, and they have been given out only in a degree commensurate with the understanding and enlightenment of any particular age in which they may have been given.

The Christian movement itself, in its very beginnings, was an attempt made by one of the Elder Brothers whose incarnation was very closely associated with that of the Buddha, to found and establish a Mystery School, the purpose of which was to ameliorate, at least in some degree if possible, the effects of the dark cycle which was slowly but surely settling over the Mediterranean civilization, by keeping alive the dying embers of spirituality in the hearts and minds of the men of that day.

Deterioration of the Mystery Schools had begun about five centuries previously, and at the time of the beginning of the Christian era had become little more than mere form and ceremony, much as orthodox religion is today, and from which the spirit had fled. Actually, for many centuries, the noblest minds of Greece had journeyed to ancient Hindusthan for spiritual enlightenment and Initiation into the

Mysteries, and returning home had founded similar schools, passing the light to other minds and producing a cultural civilization which has since been unequalled — a fact verified by many leading scholarly minds of today.

Religion, Science and Philosophy were taught as a synchronized unit, each being but a single aspect of TRUTH, and not as three separate and conflicting schools of thought as they are today, thanks to the limited vision and understanding of the church fathers who very conveniently arranged a speedy divorce, the most notorious one of our age. Facts of Universal Nature which conflicted with their ever-increasing number of dogmas, simply were not tolerated. Several of them, particularly Origen and Clement of Alexandria, had some understanding of the Neo-Platonic thought underlying Christian doctrines, and tried nobly but vainly to preserve some of the intellectual and spiritual aroma of these noble teachings, but the trend towards dogmatism was too powerful, and the befogged minds that believed and taught that the earth was flat won the day.

Theologians found it far more important to enter into lengthy disputations as to how many angels could dance on the point of a pin than to teach men that "the Father and the kingdom of heaven are within."

In lieu of this, men were given theological crutches upon which to lean lest they learn to walk on their own spiritual feet, and were told that by simply "believing" something they would be transported to heaven on a spiritual featherbed. Today, western civilization, particularly Europe, is harvesting the bitter fruit of this historic betrayal. Why is it that in countries where ecclesiasticism has been the strongest for centuries there is more vice and crime, poverty and wretchedness, and the people turn more readily to any "ism" that offers them the ghost of a chance of escape from their hellish plight?

That the very early Christian movement was an attempt to found such a Mystery School is evidenced by several quotations in the canonical books of the New Testament. Jesus is quoted as saying that to the

multitude he spoke in parables, for having eyes they saw not, and having ears they heard not, while to his few chosen disciples He taught Mysteries.

Again, in the picturesque but somewhat uncomplimentary jargon of the day He warned against casting pearls before swine and giving holy things unto dogs lest they turn and rend you. Several centuries later, the tragic death of Hypatia whose memory and martyrdom are today enshrined in Christian sainthood under the name of St. Cecelia, and who was stoned to death by the fanatical Christian mob under the leadership of the monks, might be cited as one historical example of the grim necessity of this age-old law of occultism, and why there have been in the past, and still are, Mystery Schools.

The "resurrection" or "raising" of the Christos was enacted in the Mystery Schools of Greece for centuries before the beginning of the Christian era. Christos is the Divine Principle in every man, crucified on the cross of material existence during its earthly pilgrimage, awaiting recognition and resurrection. In another school of thought, it is the Grand Architect who lies buried in the rubbish of the temple. It is the drama of the ages, the central theme of every religion under whatever name or allegorical presentation. One version of this mystery wherein the hero of the tale bears another name, and derived from Jewish Kabbalistic sources and preserved for posterity via the "underground" of the dark ages, comes down to us today in Freemasonry. It is based on the allegorical story of the building of King Solomon's temple, which symbolizes man's final attainment of Divine Wisdom in future ages by conscious union with his own Inner God.

Truly then he will have found the lost word. This is one historic example where the early church fathers, and some later ones as well, did not quite succeed in obliterating every vestige of the much maligned "pagan" thought and teachings in their effort to eliminate all evidence from whence their doctrines had been derived. It is no disgrace to wear a borrowed robe, but it is hypocritical and a gross deception to claim that it is an original creation.

I trust that at this sacred season of the year which has been revered by religious minded people of every age, and particularly so by those who have had some understanding of its deeper import, that no one will misinterpret what I have said as voicing any irreverence regarding the Great Teacher for whom the present holiday is named, or what He himself taught. For Him, and his teachings, I hold the highest regard and respect. But for the veritable Collyar Mansion of man-made accretions and dogmas which were no part of his program, and which have virtually nullified the noble effort he made to rekindle ancient truths in the hearts of men in an unfortunate age, in all honesty and frankness I must say I have none.

— Courtesy *The Norwalk Hour*, Norwalk, Conn.

The Theosophical Forum

THE FUTURE AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY — *William Brehon*

In 1888 H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

"Night before last I was shown a bird's eye view of the theosophical societies. I saw a few earnest reliable theosophists in a death struggle with the world in general and with other — nominal and ambitious — theosophists. The former are greater in number than you may think, and *they prevail* — as you in America *will prevail*, if you only remain staunch to the Master's programme *and true to yourselves*. And last night I saw. . . . The defending forces have to be judiciously — so scanty are they — distributed over the globe wherever theosophy is struggling with the powers of darkness."

And in the *Key to Theosophy*:

"If the present attempt in the form of our Society succeeds better than its predecessors have done, then it will be in existence as an organized living and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the twentieth century. Not only so, but besides a large and accessible literature ready to men's hands, the next impulse will find a numerous and united body of people ready to welcome the new torch-bearer of truth. He will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organization awaiting his arrival which will remove the merely mechanical material obstacles and difficulties from his path. Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish. Measure it by comparison with what the Theosophical Society actually has achieved in the last fourteen years without any of these advantages and surrounded by hosts of hindrances which would not hamper the new leader."

Every member of the Society should be, and many are, deeply

interested in the above words. The outlook, the difficulties, the dangers, the necessities are the same now as then, and as they were in the beginning of this attempt in 1875. For, as she has often said, this is not the first nor will it be the last effort to spread the truths and to undertake the same mission as that taken up by Ammonius Saccas some centuries ago — to lead men to look for the one truth that underlies all religions and which alone can guide science in the direction of ideal progress. In every century such attempts are made, and many of them have been actually named "theosophical." Each time they have to be adapted to the era in which they appear. And this is the era — marked by the appearance and the success of the great American republic — of freedom for thought and for investigation.

In the first quotation there is a prophecy that those few reliable theosophists who are engaged in a struggle with the opposition of the world and that coming from weak or ambitious members will prevail, but it has annexed to it a condition that is of importance. There must be an adherence to the program of the Masters. That can only be ascertained by consulting her and the letters given out by her as from those to whom she refers. There is not much doubt about that program. It excludes the idea that the Society was founded or is intended as "a School for Occultism," for that has been said in so many words long ago in some letters published by Mr. Sinnett and in those not published.

Referring to a letter received (1884) from the same source we find: "Let the Society flourish on its moral worth, and not by phenomena made so often degrading." The need of the west for such doctrines as Karma and Reincarnation and the actual Unity of the whole human family is dwelt upon at length in another. And referring to some of the effects of certain phenomena, it is said "They have to prove . . . constructive of new institutions of a genuine practical brotherhood of Humanity, where all will become co-workers with Nature." Speaking of present materialistic tendencies, the same authority says:

"Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy — therefore can make no claim upon our

help until it blends itself with metaphysics. . . . The same causes that are materializing the Hindu mind are equally affecting all western thought. Education enthrones scepticism, but imprisons spirituality. You can do immense good by helping to give the western nations a secure basis on which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands. . . . This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come and which will push the age towards extreme atheism or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

This is the great tone running through all the words from these sources. It is a call to work for the race and not for self, a request to bring to the west and the east the doctrines that have most effect on human conduct, on the relations of man to man, and hence the greatest possibility of forming at last a true universal brotherhood. We must follow this program and supply the world with a system of philosophy which gives a sure and logical basis for ethics, and that can only be gotten from those to which I have adverted; there is no basis for morals in phenomena, because a man might learn to do the most wonderful things by the aid of occult forces and yet at the same time be the very worst of men.

A subsidiary condition, but quite as important as the other, is laid down by H. P. B. in her own words that we must "remain true to ourselves." This means true to our better selves and the dictates of conscience. We cannot promulgate the doctrines and the rules of life found in theosophy and at the same time ourselves not live up to them as far as possible. We must practise what we preach, and make as far as we can a small brotherhood within the Theosophical Society. Not only should we do this because the world is looking on, but also from a knowledge of the fact that by our unity the smallest effort made by us will have tenfold the power of any obstacle before us or any opposition offered by the world.

The history of our sixteen years of life shows that our efforts put forth in every quarter of the globe have modified the thought of the day, and that once more the word "Theosophy," and many of the old ideas that science and agnosticism supposed were buried forever under the great wide dollar of present civilization, have come again to the front. We do not claim to be the sole force that began the uprooting of dogmatism and priestcraft, but only that we have supplied a link, given words, stirred up thoughts of the very highest importance just at a time when the age was swinging back to anything but what the informers had fought for. The old faiths were crumbling, and no one stood ready to supply that which by joining religion and science together would shake the one scientific and the other religious. We have done exactly what the letter quoted asked for, led the times a step "to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans." . . .

Our destiny is to continue the wide work of the past in affecting literature and thought throughout the world, while our ranks see many changing quantities but always holding those who remain true to the program and refuse to become dogmatic or to give up common-sense in theosophy. Thus will we wait for the new messenger, striving to keep the organization alive that he may use it and have the great opportunity H. P. B. outlines when she says, "Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish."

— *The Path*, March, 1892

The Theosophical Forum

INITIATION — A UNIVERSAL CUSTOM — *Francis M. Hazleton*

Real initiation cannot be considered apart from the Mystery Schools of antiquity, as they constitute its historical foundation. It is well known that in the sixth century a.d. the last of the Mystery Schools as a state institution was closed by Justinian. This may have been caused by their degeneration, or at the request of the schools themselves. At any rate, they have been regarded as "dead" ever since, despite evidence that such was not the case. The simple fact is that the Mystery Schools at that period "went underground."

The sceptic will deny that these Mystery training-centers were anything other than popular spectacles at best, or at worst where licentious orgies took place. Fortunately, abundance of unimpeachable evidence to the contrary from the most ancient times, as well as the researches of modern authorities, absolutely disproves such a gross misconception. Modern theosophy has said the last word to date on this subject, through the writings of the theosophical leaders; but as their testimony is not needed to make a strong case the writer has purposely based his thesis exclusively on non-theosophic sources. As far as possible the direct words of these sources are given that the reader may judge for himself how far-reaching was the belief in these Mystery Schools.

Humanity would be in a helpless state indeed were initiation not a real fact — were not the primal and universal truths about man and the universe passed on from hierophant to initiate from age to age, so that the body of Great Teachers of humanity may be recruited and maintained. Every day some few are taking the first step on the path which leads thereto. Just as initiation has been possible in all ages, so it is to be had today if it is searched for in the right place, and with sufficient intensity of purpose. But only after many lives of continuous effort may the final goal be attained.

Initiation is a vast subject, about the arcana of which little is known. That the Mysteries have existed from time immemorial, among all peoples, is the universal verdict of myth, legend, and history. The philosophy by whose assistance these Mysteries were developed is coeval with the universe itself, and however much its continuity may be broken, it will always reappear again. All so-called "revelation" proceeds originally from the same source. Plutarch is for us one of the best authorities for the statement that all religions are fundamentally one, under different names and practices. He says:

It is clear from the Orphic poems and the Egyptian and Phrygian writings, that the archaic natural science, both among the Greeks and non-Greeks, was for the most part hidden in myths — a secret and mysterious theology containing an allegorical and hidden meaning. — *De Daed. Frag. IX, 1, 754*

And Clemens Alexandrinus remarks:

All who have referred to divine things, whether Greek or non-Greek, have veiled the primal principle and have spoken the truth in riddles, symbols, allegories, metaphors, and similar figures. — *Stromata, v, 4*

And from Herodotus the following is pertinent:

I can by no means allow that it is a mere coincidence that the Bakchic ceremonies in Greece are so nearly the same as the Egyptian. . . . The rites called Orphic and Bakchic are in reality Egyptian and Pythagorean. — II, 49, 81

Whether Eleusinian, Orphic, Bacchic, Samothracian, Phrygian, Phoenician, or Egyptian, the Mysteries were all the same, as evidenced by this epigram of Ausonius:

Greece calls me Bakchos;
Egypt thinks me Osiris,
The Mysians name me Phanax,
The Hindus consider me Dionysos;

The Roman mysteries call me Liber,

The Arabian race Adonis.

— *Epigram*, xxx

The Eleusinian were the most celebrated of all the Mysteries. Every act, rite, and person engaged in the lower degrees was symbolic, and the person revealing them we are told was "put to death." This seems to have been a universal custom. "Every initiate," says Agrushada Parakshai, "to whatever degree he may belong, who reveals the great sacred formula, must be put to death."

In his *History of Magic*, Ennemoser makes the following observation:

How comes it, it may be asked, that so little has become known of the mysteries, . . . through so many ages and amongst so many different times and people? The answer is, that it is owing to the universally strict silence of the initiated. Another cause may be found in the destruction and total loss of all the written memorials of the secret knowledge of the remotest antiquity. —
II, 11

That some have been put to death for divulging the mysteries is undoubtedly true, although as regards the *higher* mysteries, the phrase "put to death" could have had a secret meaning. There is no doubt that the hierophants of all the old religions and mysteries intentionally "swaddled up" the religious texts in coils of insuperable difficulty, the keys to which were held only by the high Initiates. As one modern writer put it:

The initiate received the keys which unlocked the elaborate system of mythology. The Mysteries explained not only the spiritual factors behind material action, but the universal principles behind the theogones of the exoteric religions. —
Nilsson, *Greek Popular Religion*

In the Mysteries it was required that all candidates should be admitted first to the Lesser Mysteries. It may be said that these "initiates" were to be found "a dime a dozen," as anyone of good moral character, free

from crime, was eligible for admittance. After a process of fasting and other purifications, such as abstaining from flesh foods, they were called *mystae*, or "initiates." The dramatic spectacles of this degree were designed to signify occultly the condition of the unpurified soul invested with an earthly body, in which state it was considered to die, as far as a soul *could* die, and that upon the death of the body it would experience a death still more permanent. Thus, the secrets of the Underworld, so prominent in all the Mysteries, had a twofold meaning. For the initiates of the first degree only, the *Earth* was the Underworld into which unembodied souls were born from a previous state and locality of bliss. Plato considered the body as "the sepulcher of the soul," and Empedocles truly says:

The aspect changing with destruction dread,
She makes the *living* pass into the dead.

After a year's probation, the initiate could enter a degree in which he learned the secret meaning of the rites he had previously beheld. There is not space to go into a description of these rites. The basis of part of them was the old agrarian cult dealing with the myth of Ceres or Demeter, and Persephone. These rites have been discussed repeatedly by modern scholars, and numerous hypotheses have been put forward, some intelligent, others fantastic, none of them certain or even probable. The symbolism is fairly well known from vase-paintings, some of the formulae, for instance, having come down to us in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*.

One such formula has been preserved by Clement of Alexandria, as follows:

I have fasted: I have drunk of the *kykeon*: I have taken from the chest, and having worked, have laid down in the basket, and from the basket into the chest. — *Protrepticus*, ch. ii

Theon of Smyrna, in his *Mathematica*, divides the mysteries into five parts. The first three we may pass over, except to say that the last act of the Lesser Mysteries was the *muesis*, denoting the separating or

veiling" of the initiate from the former exoteric life. The fourth is the binding of the head and the fixing of the crowns." The fifth, and most awful is, "*friendship and interior communion with God.*" Christian authors have denied the pretensions of the "pagans" to such communion with God, affirming it reserved for Christian saints only. The candidate by a system of gradual education, purification both physical and moral, and religious experience, finally approached the supreme test (which few could stand) through which he was united in actuality with God, or his own Higher Self. To the higher degrees only a select number obtained admission, those attaining the highest degree, or *epopteia*, being *very* few indeed. The Hierophant, or highest, was bound to celibacy and expected to consecrate his entire life to his sacred office.

Those who attained the degree of *epopteia* were the "perfect" or "twice-born." The apostle Paul proclaimed himself to be such when he said:

I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell God knoweth,) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. — 2 *Corinthians*, xii, 3, 4

H. P. Blavatsky says Paul was the only one of the Apostles who was initiated. There is little doubt that Paul referred to himself, being prevented from speaking openly by his oath of secrecy. In the same *Gospel* he says "we speak wisdom among them that are perfect," i.e. initiated. Porphyry says that Plotinus had this ecstatic experience six times during his life, and he himself three times. But this experience could not be had without long training, great self-control, and great purity of life. Ammonius Saccas says:

The Egyptian priests used to tell me that a single touch with the wing of their holy bird could charm the crocodile into torpor, it is not thus speedily that the pinions of your soul will have power to still the untamed body. The creature will yield only to watchful, strenuous constancy of habit. Purify your soul from all undue hope and fear about earthly things, mortify the body,

deny self, and the inner eye will begin to exercise its clear and solemn vision.

In the Scriptures it is written: "He that conquereth himself is greater than he who taketh a city."

From what has been said, it may be inferred that the most sublime part of the Mysteries, the *epopteia*, or final revelation, consisted in beholding the Inner God (or the Gods also) invested in a resplendent light. And this God, under whatever name he may have been known, was considered as being the Sun. Pythagoras regarded the Sun as the highest revelation of the Supreme Being. We are reminded of that wonderful chapter in the *Bhagavad Gita*, "Vision of the Divine Form as including all Forms" —

The mighty Lord of mysterious power, showed to the son of Pritha his supreme form, . . . the glory and amazing splendor of this mighty Being may be likened to the radiance shed by a thousand suns rising together into the heavens. The son of Pandu then beheld within the body of the God of gods the whole universe in all its vast variety. — ch. xi

Of this ecstatic state which was the reward of those initiates who were pure and strong enough to stand this final unveiling and thus become absorbed into their divine Parent, Plato said:

In consequence of this divine *initiation*, we became *spectators* of entire, simple, immovable, and *blessed visions*, resident in a pure light, and were ourselves pure and immaculate, being liberated from this surrounding vestment, which we denominate body, and to which we are now bound like an oyster to its shell. Being *initiated* in those *Mysteries*, which it is lawful to call the most blessed of all Mysteries, . . . we were freed from the molestations of evil which otherwise await us in a future period of time. — *Phaedrus*, 64, Taylor trans.

The reference to being "freed, etc." clearly indicates that the initiate of the highest degree had some, at least, "of his sins washed away," i.e. he

was newly born, or twice-born, *dwija*, as the Brahmans say. This was what Jesus meant when he said: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man *be born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (*John*, iii, 3)

In his *Commentary on the Republic of Plato*, Proclus makes this observation:

In all the initiations and Mysteries, the gods exhibit many forms of themselves, and appear in a variety of shapes, and sometimes, indeed, a formless light of themselves is held forth to the view, sometimes this light is according to a human form, and sometimes it proceeds into a different shape — p 380

From this, it may be inferred that the *epopteia*, or final revealing, was symbolic of those transporting visions which the virtuous soul will constantly enjoy in a future state, and of which it is able to gain temporary glimpses even while yet connected with the cumbersome body. As explained by da Costa, in *Dionysian Artifices*:

The initiation rites were always directed towards restoring the rulership of the higher nature over the lower self. Once the complete union of the lower and higher is achieved in the Mysteries, it is no longer possible for materiality to take away the reason of the soul. — xlviii

As mentioned earlier, the Underworld or Hades had an additional significance in the Greater Mysteries over what it had in the Lesser Mysteries. The more important secrets of the *epopteia* revolved around what was called the "Descent into the Underworld" — which is known to everyone, but without being understood by any but the choice few. But very broad hints have been given out by some who had, without doubt, made the journey. We may mention Pindar, Homer, Pythagoras, Plutarch, Plotinus, Plato and Vergil, among the many whose writings show that they had the knowledge; but the one who has perhaps spoken to us in the clearest language is Vergil. The whole of the sixth book of the *Aeneid* deals with this subject:

Facilis descensus Averno — Easy is the descent to Avernus; night

and day the door of black Pluto stands open, but to *retrace* thy step, this is the labor, this the toil. A few, whom glowing merit has raised to the heavens, have been able to do it. — vi, 126

From this we get an idea of the extreme peril encountered by one who undertook to pass the final initiation. In moral purity he must indeed be like Sir Galahad, "whose strength was as the strength of ten. . . ."

Said Iamblichus:

The soul has a twofold life, a lower and a higher. In sleep the soul is freed from the body and enters as one emancipated on its divine life. The nobler part of the soul is thus united to its higher nature and becomes a participant in the wisdom and foreknowledge of the gods. The night-time of the body is the daytime of the soul.

Thus the experiences of the soul of the initiated in the Underworld are the same as those it has when the body is sleeping, and after the body is dead. There is good reason to believe, from the descriptions of ancient writers, that when the highest initiation was taken in the Mysteries, the body of the Initiate remained in a death-like trance of longer or shorter duration, while the soul underwent its journey in the Underworld and other places. And that the soul, upon returning to the body, impressed upon the brain a recollection of what it had passed through. There is a famous passage in an ancient Egyptian text relating to the worship of Osiris which speaks of the loyal votary of the God after death:

As truly as Osiris lives shall *he* live;
as truly as Osiris is not dead shall *he* not die;
as truly as Osiris is not annihilated shall *he* not be annihilated.

The one who has passed the final initiation is to share eternally in the divine life; indeed, he does already share it. "Blessed is he who, having seen those *common concerns* in the underworld, knows both the end of life, and its divine origin from Jupiter," said Pindar (quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus in his *Stromata*, bk. iii). And again, as the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* runs:

Happy is he who has seen this. Who has taken part in the initiations will not have the same lot after death in the gloomy darkness.

Sophocles repeats the same idea in these words:

Those who have seen the Mysteries are thrice happy when they go to the Underworld.

From this we are to understand that after death *all* go to the Underworld and that those who have taken a high initiation are much happier, because freer, than others. Of these others, much has been said by the initiated poets and philosophers. In the *Phaedo* Plato reminds us: "Those who instituted the Mysteries appear to have intimated that whosoever shall arrive in Hades unpurified shall lie in mire: but he who arrives there pure and initiated shall dwell with the gods."

As he who in this life pursued realities, would, after death, enjoy the highest truth, so he who pursued deceptions would hereafter be tormented with fallacies and delusions in the extreme: as the one would be delighted with true objects of enjoyment, so the other would be tormented with delusive semblances of reality. — Ficinus: *De Immortal. Anim.*, book xviii

This conviction of a happier lot in the Underworld which filled the minds of the initiated sprang from ancient roots, the worldwide idea that the other life is a repetition of this one. Four centuries before Jesus, in the Phrygian Mysteries, the worshipers sang:

"Take courage, ye initiated, because the god is saved; to you also will come salvation from your troubles."

In ancient times each degree of initiation was considered to be a new birth; in the highest the initiate became truly reborn, his past railings, so far as their results were concerned, becoming to a large extent neutralized. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Although the secrets of the Eleusinian and other mysteries were supposed to be kept as carefully as are those of *true* Freemasonry today, Christian writers like Origen, Clement, and Arnobius, knew something about them. Only those who gave no heed to the duty of silence have given information concerning the secret rites. Quoting again from Nilsson:

Their testimony is subject to the gravest doubts In the first place, what did *they* know? Had they any first hand knowledge? Had they themselves been initiated? Clement lived in Alexandria, the others in Asia or Africa. It is much more probable that what they related was only hearsay. Ecclesiastical writers did not trouble themselves much about truth and about such questions of fact if only they could succeed in impressing upon their hearers or readers, a sense of the contemptibility of the Mysteries. — *Greek Popular Religion*

Some of the noblest passages referring to the Mysteries were written by the great poets. Pindar, Homer, and Vergil have been mentioned, but many more bear the unmistakable signs of initiation, of whom may be included Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripedes. In a Greek Anthology we find the following from the pen of Krinagoras:

Go thou to Attica,
Fail not to see
Those great nights of Demeter,
Mystical, holy!
There thou shalt win thee a mind
That is carefree
Even while living
And when thou joinest
The major assembly
Light shalt thy heart be.
With hallowed hands,
With mind and tongue both pure and true,
Come, enter in, not cleansed by bath

But washed white in spirit,
For from wickedness the ocean wide
With all its floods can not the stain
Wash clean away.

From Euripedes:

Pass ye, and cleanse with the pure spray-rain
Your bodies, or ever you enter the fane
Set a watch on the door of your lips, be there
Nothing but good in the secret word
That ye murmur to them whose hearts be stirred
To seek to the shrine,
That they seek not in vain. — *Ion*, 96-101

To quote again from Krinagoras:

Come pure in heart, and touch the lustral wave
One drop sufficeth for the *sinless* mortal,
All else, e'en ocean's billows cannot lave

The mystic "Pagan" eucharist of the fifth century b.c. is thus described
by Euripedes in his *Bacchae*:

In the God's high banquet, when
Gleams the grape-blood flashed to heaven
To all that liveth His wine he giveth,
Griefless, immaculate.
Yea, being God, the blood of Him is set
Before the Gods in sacrifice, that we
For his sake may be blest.
Then in us verily dwells
The God himself, and speaks the things to be,
The Lord of Many Voices,
Him of mortal mother born,
Him in whom man's heart rejoices,
First in Heaven's sovereignty.

A most interesting Orphic Confession of Faith, dating from the fifth century b.c, has been preserved from the lost "Cretan" of Euripedes:

In one pure stream
My days have run, the servant I,
Initiate of Idean Jove, I rove
Where midnight Zagreus roves,
I have endured his thunder-cry,
Fulfilled his red and bleeding feasts,
I am set free, and named by name
A Bakchos of the Mailed Priests.
Rob'd in pure white I have borne me clean
From man's low birth and confined clay,
And exiled from my life away
Touch of all meat where life hath been.

Further proof of the existence of the Eucharist in the Mysteries is given in the explicit statements of the early Christian Fathers, in Justin Martyr (*Apologies*, c. Ivi), and in Tertullian (*De Praes.* cxi). But it is Apuleius who has given the most unreserved description of initiation in his *Metamorphoses*, from which we extract a brief selection:

The gates of the realms beneath, and the guardianship of life, are placed in the bands of the Goddess [Isis], and the initiation into her mysteries is celebrated as bearing a close resemblance to a voluntary death, with a precarious chance of recovery. —
Book xi, 237

Hear, therefore, but believe what is the truth. I approached the confines of death, and having trod on the threshold of Proserpine, I returned therefrom being borne through all the elements. At midnight I saw the sun shining with its brilliant light; and I approached the presence of the Gods beneath, and the Gods of heaven, and stood near, and worshipped them. —
Book xi, 239

Thomas Taylor records that Apuleius was initiated into the Mysteries of

Isis at Corinth. He could never have written the above had it not been so, but he says later on that he had taken the initiation of Isis only and not those of the great God Osiris.

We have dealt almost exclusively with the Mysteries of Eleusis, mentioning but the diffusion of others in other lands and times. There is plenty of evidence, however, that they existed as widely spread in various parts, including ancient America, North and South. The North American Indians had them, as well as the Incas, Toltecs and Mayas. In the *Popol Vuh*, the saga of the Quiche Indians of Guatemala, we find a picture of the initiation-tests of two hero-gods on entrance to the native Hades.

There is confirmation of Initiation throughout the Christian scriptures. The Book of *Job* is a masterly allegory of the initiation-trials. We have it also in the words of Jesus that the initiation-teachings were given to the multitudes in symbol and parable, and that the "chosen ones" alone had the keys. In *three* of the four Gospels we find almost these identical words:

It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. . . . Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. — *Matthew*, xiii, 11, 13

We cannot close this brief exposition of Initiation and the Mysteries in a better way than to quote from Thomas Taylor. Neo-Platonism was the direct successor (exoterically) of the Mysteries, after they were closed by Justinian, and Thomas Taylor of all modern scholars has most justly appreciated the *inner spirit* of the Mysteries. In his *Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* he writes:

As to the philosophy, by whose assistance the Mysteries are developed, it is coeval with the universe itself; and, however its continuity may be broken by opposing systems, it will make its appearance at different periods of time, as long as the sun himself shall continue to illuminate the world. It has, indeed,

and may hereafter, be violently assaulted by delusive opinions; but the opposition will be just as imbecile as that of the waves of the sea against a temple built on a rock, which majestically pours them back — "broken and vanquished, foaming to the main."

The Theosophical Forum

THE SHADOW OF A GHOST — *Allan J. Stover*

The following amusing incident was related by a civil engineer X of my acquaintance. Once, while on vacation in the Appalachians, he was studying the opposite slope through binoculars. To his surprise he noticed a geologist of the party slowly rolling a large glacial boulder downhill. After lowering the rock well over a hundred feet, he left the spot.

At camp that evening, the engineer asked his companion what in the world he was doing and received this astonishing reply:

"Oh! I was getting the rock down where it belonged. You see I found on checking on its position, that I had placed it too low in my report. Someone might discover the mistake, unless I changed its position."

There is still a lot of "rock rolling" going on, for with the swift movement of the present cycle, two developments are coming to the fore. First, there is a far greater measure of truth unfolding for those who can accept it. Second, there is a sharp reaction on the part of those who cannot adjust themselves to the ideology of the present era, and consequently fall back upon the religious and scientific dogma of their childhood.

Strange as it may seem, the average person is apt to resent anything which requires the readjusting of his ideas or exposes the pettiness of long established opinion. In all ages, the revelation of truth too often stirs resentment in the human heart, steeped as it is in the thoughts and dogmas of other men.

A good man who does not worship as you do, a saint outside the church, proof of a round world at a time it is popularly believed to be flat, or the stunning revelation of the Grand Canyon — things such as these bring a conflict in the mind which, baffled, turns outward to deny or destroy the evidence if it can; and like the shadow of a ghost this

refusal of truth clouds the mind of future generations long after the original argument is forgotten.

Let us go back to the middle of the seventeenth century. At this time three men, Colonel Wilford of England, Archbishop Seep of Munich, and Archbishop Ussher of Ireland were attempting to establish the age of the world and the date of Creation. While examining some old manuscripts they are said to have discovered the figures 4321 at the beginning of a number of them. Not knowing the significance of these figures in the racial Yugas of India and Babylonia they first attempted to interpret them in terms of solar years but did not succeed in making them fit the Biblical records. They next decided that the figures referred to lunar years and thought, by changing them to solar years, that they could obtain the exact time from the first day of creation to the birth of Christ.

Archbishop Ussher then adjusted the patriarchal and prophetic fragments to fit this chronology and in 1664 a.d. published his controversial "Annales Veritas et Novi Testamenti," giving his proposed chronology for both the Old and New Testaments; and setting the day of creation as: October 25, 4004 B.C. at 9:00 o'clock in the morning.

It is not known by whose authority these dates were placed on the margins of the Authorized Version of the Bible. The entire system proposed by Archbishop Ussher was long ago proven false, but the greater number of Bibles printed today still carry these misleading marginal notes. These notes which were never part of the Bible itself have, even when least suspected, obscured the vision of both religion and science.

Actually the figures 4 3 21, are the respective time periods of the four racial Yugas. Of these, Krita-Yuga, the first and longest, contains four parts; the Treta-Yuga three parts; the Dwapara-Yuga two parts, and lastly the Kali-Yuga one part. The whole cycle amounts to 4,320,000 solar years, which is the average period of a Root Race of which there are seven in each Round, ours being the fifth.

These four Yugas were known to the Greeks and Romans as the Age of Gold, the Age of Silver, the Age of Bronze and the Age of Iron.

All racial cycles divide in these same proportions, for 4 3 2 1 is one of the key numbers of nature and was known to the Chaldean and Babylonian seers as well as to those of India.

According to this ancient tradition the solar system has already existed in its present embodiment 155,520,000,000, of our years; and the earth itself in this fourth Round or cycle of activity is said to be 320,000,000 years from the beginning of sedimentation. It would be strange if the learned Hebrew students of the Qabalah were not familiar with this chronology and did not understand the Chaldean and Biblical creation myths in their esoteric sense. After all the Pentateuch was their own book.

Many centuries have passed since the darkness of the Middle Ages. A scientific era has succeeded the religious and has in its turn become philosophical. The dogma of the past, in its literalness has been forgotten; but its spirit, its ghost, still lingers as a strange reluctance on the part of many to accept the age of the earth, the immensity of the starry universe or the antiquity of man.

Perhaps worst of all is that fatal psychosis of the race which would deny those of another color equal rights in the brotherhood of man. These our inheritance from the past, united with greed and unthinking waste of natural resources, are bringing the West to the brink of an abyss.

Many have wondered at the strange reaction the Grand Canyon produces upon tourists, especially those whose thoughts are clouded with dogma of a limiting nature. For others the first view of the Canyon is a soul-shaking experience, a revelation of reality. With some the Canyon can scarcely be said to exist for to them it is a narrow and shallow ditch; these often declare, their speech bristling with Biblical texts, that it is a delusion created to mislead men, a work of the devil. Yes, there are a goodly sprinkling of the latter.

Many of the remarks heard at the Canyon would scarcely be considered serious were it not for the near tragic cases of tourists wandering down the trail unattended. And their obvious inability to comprehend what lies before their eyes! How, for instance, are you going to answer the question of a well-dressed woman who asked, "Please tell me, does the Grand Canyon fill with snow in winter?"

It might be a good idea, if one were to check occasionally with nature and stand alone for a moment of self analysis — in silence, before the sea or the starry sky.

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